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Receives Record Gift

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COVER STORY

20 Dreaming through the noise
Photo: Fleming Artists



“ Now I’ve been nominated for a Grammy – and I took my mom, which was a dream of mine – but then to be able to do this song, and to do it on this magnitude with this beautiful choir and **fucking Madonna and Queen Latifah, are you kidding me? It’s just stupid, dude. ”**

–Mary Lambert, pg. 16



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LGBT Civil Rights Pioneer Dr. Henry Davis Messer Dies

Sept. 22, 1927 - Feb. 18, 2014

BY JASON A. MICHAEL AND TIM RETZLOFF

Longtime community activist, Triangle Foundation co-founder and Lifetime Achievement Award winner Dr. Henry D. Messer died at 5 a.m. Feb. 18 following a battle with cancer. He was 86.

Born in Madison, Fla. In 1927, Messer was the only child of Henry and Sarah Messer. His father owned a Chevrolet dealership, his mother was a homemaker.

He moved to Durham, N.C. to study premed at Duke University and went onto the Duke University School of Medicine. During the Korean conflict, Messer entered the Air Force as a first lieutenant and began his specialization in neurosurgery under orders from his commanding officer at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala., where he was stationed throughout the war.

It was there that he met his partner of 62 years, Carl House. The two met after a night out with a group of gay servicemen. But shortly thereafter, an officer with whom Messer had been involved turned him in for being gay. Air Force investigators went through Messer's phonebook and the film on his camera searching for evidence. They even went so far as to travel to his hometown in Florida asking acquaintances there whether he had shown signs of being gay growing up. Messer resigned his commission after a three-month investigation.

In 1953, Messer and House moved to New York, where Messer completed his residency in neurosurgery at St. Vincent's Hospital. The couple bought a home in Greenwich Village and also several rental properties. They would live there for 14 years.

Messer began his gay rights activism early. He was a member of the Mattachine Society of New York, one



U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) with Henry Messer and Pres. Obama at the White House. Photo courtesy of Henry Messer

of the earliest advocacy groups in the contemporary gay rights movement. Among his accomplishments there, he helped craft the New York City human rights ordinance.

In 1974 Messer authored a chapter entitled "The Homosexual as Physician" for *Human Sexuality: A Health Practitioner's Text*, the first account of gay doctors to be included in a medical textbook.

Two years later he listed the chapter on his curriculum vitae when he applied to join the staff of Wayne County General Hospital in Westland, Mich., then a teaching site for the University of Michigan Medical School, so he was hired as an out gay man, perhaps one of the first in his profession.

When he and House arrived in Michigan, they learned about a new group called the Association of Suburban People, which became their entree into gay life in metropolitan Detroit.

"The president at that time was a tall, good-looking hunk named Wes Rogalski and he kind of took us under his wing and showed us around and introduced us around, because most of the people

knew each other," Messer recalled in a 2009 oral history interview. "We were the new faces in town. And so we started to know people and became part of the organization."

While working with ASP, Messer suggested having attendees sign in. These early sign-in sheets formed the basis of a database that grew to 60,000 names and addresses, which Messer cultivated over the years as he became involved in the Michigan Organization for Human Rights, the Triangle Foundation, and Equality Michigan.

Messer became a key public face for ASP. He appeared with Rogalski on the WDET radio program "Gayly Speaking" in 1977, helped organize the first Developing a Positive Gay-Lesbian Identity conference in 1980, and was profiled in *Metra* magazine in 1982.

He felt it was important to use his status as a doctor and faculty member to be as out as possible to advance the gay cause. "I'm very secure in my position," he told *Metra*. "As a result, I'm about as open as one can be. I speak freely about my lifestyle and I know that many gay people have a problem being open and speaking about gay issues with public officials. I don't."

As a board member for ASP and later for MOHR, Messer became a strong proponent of lobbying politicians directly and holding them accountable to their LGBT constituents, which in the late 1970s and early 1980s was often tough going. "It was very hard to get support in those days," Messer recalled

“ I think that it is important when we look around and see all the victories that we are having in our movement now and just remember the incredible, heroic contributions and sacrifices of early leaders like Henry, ”

- Sean Kosofsky said.

See Messer, page 15

www.PrideSource.com

Affirmations Community Center Receives \$800,000 Bequest

Largest General Fund Gift In Center's 25-Year History

BY JAN STEVENSON

FERNDALE - Affirmations has received a bequest of almost \$800,000 from an anonymous donor who passed away in late 2013, BTL has learned. This is the largest unrestricted gift to the LGBT community center's general operations in its 25-year history.

In January, the center received the first installment for \$226,094.57 from the trustee. The remaining \$571,464.35 will be disbursed to the center as assets in the trust are liquidated. The value of the gift was recognized as 2013 income on Affirmations financial statement and totaled \$797,558.92.

Sources have told BTL that the first installment could be used to pay the remaining balance due on the building's mortgage, which was \$119,228.02 at the end of 2013. That would leave the center mortgage free.

"I think it is exciting and great that we are fortunate enough for someone to leave us such a substantial gift," said Jon Fitzgerald, interim executive director of the center. "It will allow us to focus on strategic objectives, and of course for us to begin thinking of the organization's long term sustainability."

"That's fantastic!" said former board president Nancy Katz upon hearing of the gift from BTL's reporter. "That kind of infusion can make all the difference for a small non-profit like Affirmations. Just think what they can do with that money; they can expand programs, get more staff, pay off any debts and still have money they can put aside into an endowment."

Katz was the co-chair of a \$5.3 million capital campaign that funded construction of the new center, completed in 2007. That special campaign received several large donations from individuals, including a \$1 million gift from Allan Gilmour and Eric Jirgens, and Katz and her partner Margo Dichtelmiller donated over \$500,000.

Katz now serves on the center's executive director search committee. Dave Garcia, the former executive director, left at the end of January to take a position at the Los Angeles LGBT Community Center.

"I'm on the search committee for a new executive director, and this is exciting because the organization's

financial stability should make it a much more attractive job. Whoever comes in won't have to hit the ground running to raise money for the immediate operating budget," said Katz.

Affirmations was first notified of this anonymous bequest in November 2013 by the trustee. Fitzgerald said the board decided to delay the formal announcement so they could fully review all the documents. "We absolutely want to make sure we are being responsible with that kind of a gift, so we wanted to take the time to fully review everything before announcing it," Fitzgerald said.

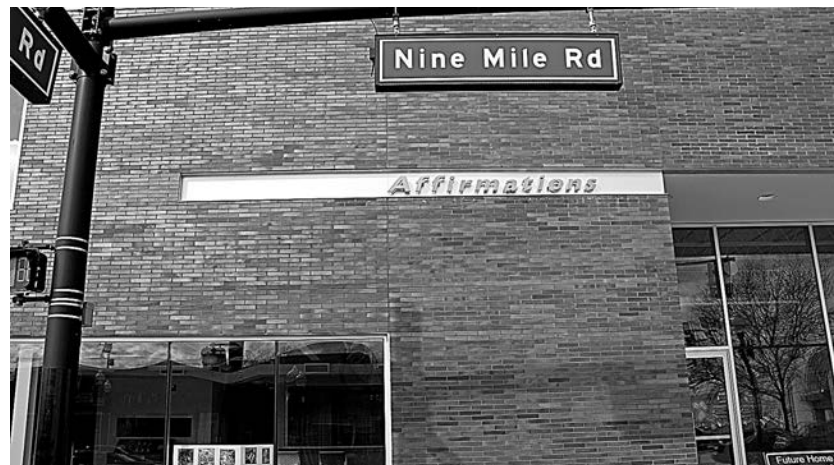
"The board is completing its due diligence and has engaged legal advice to evaluate any risk of contest of the

or other charities.

"Margo and I have a trust and have made accommodations for charities we care about. They might change as time goes on, but the principle is the same – to leave money after we're gone to charity. It's a big part of our estate planning we've done," said Katz.

"Affirmations has received other bequests, although none this large, and a couple of times they have come from people that none of us on the board even knew. It came out of the blue. It speaks to how deeply Affirmations touches people, even if we don't always realize it at the time," said Katz.

"I think right now that Affirmations is stable enough in terms of its leadership,



Affirmations Community Center gets ready to open in its new location in 2007

trust or will," said Affirmations Board President Mark Blanke via email. "For me intent is extremely vital to having the trust of the community for future donations and we are being prudent in making sure any intent is fully honored if the donor had intent.

"Of course any large gift to an organization as small as Affirmations can have significant impact and provide significant opportunity for programming and continued execution of the strategic plan," said Blanke.

Katz put the gift in context for planned giving as an important tool for community organizations.

"I think we will be seeing more gifts like this as our community ages out. We generally don't have family and children to leave money to, so it only makes sense we would leave it to LGBT organizations

outreach and operations to make the optimal use of this money. It comes at a time when the center is moving in new and very positive directions," said Charles Alexander, an early board member and volunteer curator of the Pittman Puckett Gallery.

This is the second large bequest to Affirmations within the last few years. When Lester London died in 2011 he left a \$250,000 gift to the center.

"We had talked at Affirmations about getting a planned giving program going, and it always seemed to get pushed back under the pressure to raise money right away for the operating budget. Maybe now that some of the pressure is relieved with this gift the board will be able to take a step back and put together a planned giving program that can secure Affirmations' future," said Katz.

BRIEFS

Rice Calls Ugandan President, Alaska Warms To Marriage ...

KEEN NEWS SERVICE

RICE CALLS UGANDAN PRESIDENT: White House National Security Advisor Susan Rice posted several messages on Twitter Monday, saying that she spoke "at length" with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni "to urge him not to sign" the anti-LGBT bill passed by the nation's parliament in December. She said she told Museveni that the bill is a "huge step backward" for Uganda and the world and that it will "put many at risk and stain Uganda's reputation."

ALASKA WARMS TO MARRIAGE: A Public Policy Polling survey this month showed a nine-point increase in the number of people who support allowing same-sex couples to marry. The survey of 850 registered voters between January 30 and February 1 (margin of error plus or minus 4.7 percent) found 44 percent support allowing gay couples to marry, 27 percent support civil unions but not marriage, 26 percent said there should be no recognition of gay relationships, and three percent were unsure. By comparison, only 39 percent had a favorable opinion of former Governor Sarah Palin.

TAXING COMPLICATIONS The Colorado House on Monday gave final clearance to a bill that will allow same-sex couples who have marriage licenses from other states and civil union registration with Colorado to file a joint state tax return. The state senate passed the measure in January over objections of Republicans who said it violates the state ban on recognition of marriages for same-sex couples.

IDAHO PROTEST GROWS The number of demonstrators urging the Idaho legislature to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the state's human rights law grew dramatically Monday. From 40 who were arrested February 3, to 65 who were turned away from the capitol last Thursday, the number jumped to 200 yesterday. They are also protesting against a bill, which advanced out of committee earlier this month that would give people a right to deny services to persons by claiming to have a religious belief that prevents them from doing so.

BALDWIN AMONG TOP LIBERALS It's probably not a big surprise: The U.S. Senate's only openly gay member made the National Journal's list of "The 15 Most Liberal Senators." The list, released earlier this month, shows Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc.) tied for fifth place –but because three senators were tied for first and seven were tied for seventh, it's a crowded field.

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>> www.PrideSource.com

BRIEFS

DETROIT

Event Reminder: LGBT Activist From Uganda Makes Special Detroit Appearance Feb. 20



Frank Mugisha

Uganda treats LGBT people like second class citizens. But how deep is the systemic violence in Ugandan society? How cruel is its media in the portrayal of sexual minorities? How little does the government care to protect its LGBT citizens? And why should people in America care what happens half way around the world?

On Feb. 20 at 6:30 p.m. a unique opportunity comes to Detroit, where people can learn about the plight of their

LGBT brothers and sisters in Uganda. Freedom House will host a free screening of the movie "Call Me Kuchu" followed by a discussion panel that includes Frank Mugisha, executive director of Sexual Minorities Uganda. The event takes place at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. There will also be a special VIP Reception from 5-6 p.m. for \$25 that benefits Freedom House. A panel discussion will follow the film screening. The panel discussion hopes to bring to light several perspectives in the battle for equality in Uganda.

To learn more about the event, go to www.freedomhousedetroit.org/index.php/news/upcoming-events/frank-mugisha

INDIANAPOLIS

Senate Prepares For Vote On Marriage Ban

(AP) - State senators are scheduled to take a final vote on a proposed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage after approving a version last week which would put off a public referendum until at least 2016.

Republican Sen. Mike Delph of Carmel announced Monday he would make a last-ditch attempt to place the measure back on track for a vote this November. However, he acknowledged he faced long odds.

Indiana senators advanced the proposed ban without a provision that would ban civil unions. Under the state's constitutional amendment process, the civil unions ban must be included in the amendment for it to be placed on this November's ballot.

The Senate's decision last week marked a victory for opponents of the marriage ban, just three years ago legislators approved the amendment with broad support.

TOPEKA, KAN.

Senate President Doubts Anti-Gay Marriage Bill Will Pass

(AP) - The president of the Kansas Senate says her chamber is unlikely to pass a bill that would prevent lawsuits against someone who refuses, for religious reasons, to provide services to gay and lesbians.

The bill passed the House on Wednesday, drawing strong reaction from across the country. It would prohibit government sanctions or lawsuits over faith-based refusals to recognize same-sex unions or to provide goods, services, accommodations or employment benefits to couples.

Senate President Susan Wagle issued a statement Thursday night saying a majority of Republicans in the chamber don't support the bill. She says most Republican senators support traditional marriage and protecting religious freedom, but they also don't condone discrimination.

Most Democrats in the Senate have already said they oppose the bill.

Extended briefs are available online at:

>> www.PrideSource.com

Equality Supporting County Clerks Among Catalyst Award Winners

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

DETROIT- Equality Michigan will honor several people for their work advancing human rights at the Equality Michigan Dinner Feb. 22 at Motor City Casino. The dinner has been moved up to spring due to feedback and demand, says Executive Director Emily Dievendorf, and is being held at Motor City Casino for the first time.

Among those being honored will be two county clerks who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in working to recognize same-sex marriage. Lisa Brown of Oakland County and Barb Byrum of Ingham County Clerk stand ready to issue marriages licenses to same sex couples if there is a window of opportunity following the *DeBoer v. Snyder* case. Brown is listed as a defendant in the case, where two Hazel Park women are suing the county and the state for the right to jointly adopt their children and to marry. Brown brought in independent council to represent the Clerk's Office so that she could argue on behalf of the couple.

"Equality Michigan is thrilled that Michigan's elected officials continue to come out in support of equality," said Dievendorf. "Not only do we need their support to achieve victories, but their support sends a powerful message to Michigan's LGBT communities that they are both welcome in Michigan and important to the people we have elected to represent us."

Brown and Byrum will be presented with Catalyst Awards. Other winners include individuals and organizations from across Michigan that have positively impacted and promoted the mission of Equality Michigan.

EVENT INFO

Equality Michigan Dinner

The dinner event includes a reception, silent auction, remarks by community leaders, and the presentation of this year's Catalyst Awards recognizing excellence in LGBT and HIV advocacy. Tickets and more information are available online at equalitymi.org/dinner or by calling 313-537-7000.

>> www.equalitymi.org

The Award Goes To...

Badlands Strategy will receive the first-ever Catalyst Partner in Progress Award for engaging in behind-the-scenes work that too often gets overlooked. Badlands has played a major role in organizing the Unity Michigan Coalition since its inception, and recently performed many essential tasks for the One Royal Oak campaign.

Megan Bauer will receive the Henry D. Messer Youth Activist Award for emerging as a powerful force in Michigan's LGBT equality movement. As the Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center's community engagement coordinator since late 2012, she has had an impact not only in the Kalamazoo area, but all across Michigan. Beginning with KGLRC's I Commit Campaign, she has continued to foster civic engagement and grow the LGBT equality movement. Last fall spent weeks away from home helping make the One Royal Oak campaign a success. A Kalamazoo College graduate, she has worked with Habitat for Humanity as an AmeriCorps volunteer and with Queers for Economic Justice in New York.

Dusty Farmer will receive a Catalyst Award for playing a pivotal role in the recent passage of Oshtemo Township's LGBT inclusive non-discrimination

ordinance. As an Oshtemo Township Trustee she took the initiative to not only introduce the ordinance, but see it through to a successful outcome. After being elected in November 2012, she immediately showed her public support for LGBT equality and began discussing the ordinance at her first meeting.

KICK The Agency for LGBT African Americans will receive this year's Heather MacAllister Catalyst Award for long-term commitment to equality and promoting intersectional work by serving Detroit's African American LGBT communities since 1994. Led by their founder and executive director, Curtis Lipscomb, this year alone KICK led a successful "LGBT In The 'D'" ad campaign, LEAD Academies developing local leaders, and educated Detroit voters with candidate forums and community panels. The organization has played a vital role in LGBT outreach, service, and advocacy in Detroit, and will be a major player in the upcoming marriage equality campaign.

Hank Milbourne is receiving the first-ever HIV Advocacy Catalyst Award for his years of service to people living with HIV in Michigan. Currently the chief program officer at AIDS Partnership Michigan, he has fought stigma, discrimination, racism and homophobia quietly through his own example since 1990. Hank was instrumental in the creation of the REC Boyz program to empower and support young gay men of color, and he served for eight years as the president of Detroit's Black Pride Society.

"Equality Michigan is proud to be honoring some of the people whose work this past year had such an amazingly positive impact on our efforts to bring full equality to all Michiganders," said Dievendorf.

Michigan Marriage Trial Begins Feb. 25



Trial Information

The trial scheduled to begin 9 a.m. Feb. 25 at the United States District Court, Eastern District Of Michigan Southern Division, Theodore Levin U.S.

Courthouse

231 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226

Case: *DeBoer v. Snyder*

Presiding Judge: Judge Bernard A. Friedman,

Case Number: 12-CV-10285

Financial Support

The trial is expected to cost between \$555,000 - \$767,000. You can support this effort by visiting www.MichiganMarriageChallenge.com.

Executive Director Zach Bauer Announces Departure From KGLRC

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center Executive Director Zach Bauer is passing the torch after three years of managing the community center. Bauer has accepted a position on the Community Investment team of the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, where he will be able to help multiple organizations thrive in the area.

“Serving as the KGLRC Executive Director has been a blast, I’ve got to serve with some of the most outstanding individuals - staff, board and volunteers - the work we’ve done together has made the organization stronger. Now, it is time for me to move on to my next adventure,” Bauer said on his Facebook page. Bauer will officially depart from KGLRC on March 6.

KGLRC experienced tremendous growth with Bauer at the helm. His work with Kalamazoo Pride and the Winter Gala fundraiser brought interest and investment to the center, as he also helped expand programming and doubled the size of the staff.

KGLRC Board President Carol Anderson said “I would like to thank Zach wholeheartedly for all that he has done for the KGLRC - and for Kalamazoo. He has brought the [KGLRC] to where we are today, which is a vibrant and exciting place to be.”

Bauer fell in love with Kalamazoo over a dozen years ago when he came to study political science and economics at Western Michigan University. While there he tasted activism, working with the school’s LGBT club, OUTspoken. His passion for politics and activism grew as he worked on a campaign to elect Mayor Bobby Hopewell, who became a friend and mentor.

Though his job with a large bank took him back and forth between Michigan and Pennsylvania, Bauer remained active as a volunteer in political campaigns, and providing his expertise for the 2011 pride festival. When the previous executive director, Dave Garcia, left to work with Affirmations Community Center in Ferndale, Bauer was a natural successor to step in.

Programming at KGLRC includes outreach to youth, transgender community members and those working to build bridges with communities of faith. The center also offers various support groups and healthy activities like yoga and a running/walking group. Politically, Bauer helped KGLRC join forces with the Community Center Network for statewide cooperation on initiatives. He’s reached out to local businesses for fundraising and awareness partnerships, like working with Bell’s Brewery to create a diversity-themed logo for t-shirts to raise money during Pride. His staff and KGLRC volunteers have worked with Unity Michigan to get human rights ordinances passed in the area.

“The board of directors, together with the KGLRC staff, will implement a smooth transition that will ensure the organization’s operations and vital programming continue to be delivered at the same quality the community has come to expect from the KGLRC,” reads the KGLRC press release about Bauer’s departure.

“It is my firm belief that the brightest days lie ahead for the Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center.” Bauer said.

For more information about KGLRC, go to <http://www.KGLRC.org>



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Charles Pugh: An In-Depth Look At The Rise And Fall Of A Local LGBT Hero



Detroit City Council President-elect on election night 2009. BTL file photo: Andrew Potter

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

His beginnings were humble, if not downright horrific. His mother was murdered when he was only three. At seven, his father shot and killed himself in the bedroom across the hall from his, leaving little Charles to call 911.

He was raised by his grandmother and excelled at academics. He graduated with honors from Murray Wright High School and received a scholarship to the University of Missouri. He studied broadcast journalism and worked in three smaller markets – in Kansas, Indiana and Virginia – before landing a job with Fox 2-Detroit, not only his hometown but a major market.

He quickly became a popular on-air personality. He advanced in time to the anchor desk, co-hosting the weekend morning show. But Pugh always wanted to do more, be more, give more. So in addition to his full-time job with Fox, he took on the news director spot at radio station WJLB, offering up the morning news weekdays from 6-10 a.m. and even hosting a Sunday evening talk show on the station.

In 2004, Pugh publicly came out in an interview with BTL before hosting a Detroit town hall meeting on homophobia.

“I’ve worked hard to make myself a role model for young men in this city, and young people in general,” Pugh said at the time. “A lot of people do look at me as a role model since I’m a Detroit Public Schools graduate, someone who’s a college graduate, someone who has been able to secure a solid, forward-moving career, and also someone who has a pretty stable private life.”

Call To Public Service

Surprising many, Pugh gave up his “solid, forward-moving career” – it’s been reported he earned an estimated \$240,000 a year with Fox 2 – and signed off from WJLB to run for a seat on the Detroit City Council in 2009.

“Detroit is frustrated and embarrassed,” he said in announcing his candidacy in an interview with BTL. “We need people who are going to make us proud and, at least, that we respect for the job that they do.”

His campaign was not without struggle.

A Meteoric Career Dashed By Scandal Involving 18 Year Old

He was openly gay, yet he managed to secure an endorsement from the Council of Baptist Pastors. He lost endorsements from both the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press late in the game, however, when it was revealed that his Brush Park condominium was in foreclosure. Then City Council President Ken Cockrel called on Detroiters not to vote for him.

But they didn’t listen. Instead they voted for him in huge numbers, giving him an 8,000 vote lead over his closer competitor. The fact that Detroit elected an openly-gay man as president of the city council made national news. He received a feature in Time magazine. The New York Times followed him around on the day he was sworn in.

Leading the council would prove a bigger challenge than being elected to it though. Detroit, still reeling from political scandals involving Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and City Councilwoman Monica Conyers, was now teetering on the brink of financial collapse. Though Pugh promised a new era of civility on the council, relations between the council and Mayor Dave Bing were contentious. The two sides argued over severe budgets cuts and deciding how to best keep Detroit out of bankruptcy. In the end, they couldn’t.

Pugh’s tenure on the council proved to be controversial as his personal problems often overshadowed any principled leadership he tried to provide. In February 2010, Pugh crashed his city-owned car on a Friday night and didn’t call the cops to report it. Instead, he drove the vehicle, which had two flat tires, home and waited three days to notify police. In January 2011, Pugh was forced to close down his Pugh & You: Detroit Move Forward fund after media outlets compared it to Kilpatrick’s highly controversial Civic Fund, proven by federal prosecutors to be nothing more than a slush fund.

The following January, Pugh, facing foreclosure for a third time, announced he was walking away from his condo. And in March of the same year, Pugh made perhaps his most controversial move. In the midst of the city’s financial crisis, Pugh released a workout video on YouTube showing him shirtless and with six-pack abs. The video left many to wonder why Pugh was more concerned with his body than Detroit’s business.

On LGBT issues, Pugh did manage to rack up some points. He employed a largely gay and lesbian staff, he started the Detroit Safe Schools initiative, which provided training to public schools on LGBT concerns, he appointed openly gay attorney Alicia Skillman to the Detroit Ethics Board, he participated in the Hunger 4 Equality hunger strike, he worked toward creating an LGBT business district within the city limits, and he traveled with an elite group of gay leaders to meet President Barack Obama at a White House LGBT Pride Month reception.

“The two things that he led that I participated with, the Detroit Safe Schools initiative and the LGBT district meetings, I know that those are projects that he lent his energy to on non-work time,” said Curtis Lipscomb, executive director of KICK. “So that work would have had significant impact had we been able to move past the steps that we engaged in.”

Though at one time polls showed him among the top three contenders in the 2013 mayoral election, Pugh, who had previously expressed an interest in both the mayor’s office and a seat in Congress, declared last February that he was leaving politics and returning to journalism.

“I think the move from being a commentator and an analyst of governmental policy and process represents a very important skill set, but it doesn’t immediately translate into being a frontline policymaker,” former city

One of Pugh's signature accomplishments, literally, was the Charles Pugh Leadership Forum, a mentoring program he founded at his alma mater, which had since been renamed the Frederick Douglass Academy for Young Men. There, Pugh and members of his staff met regularly with students to prepare them for college, help them secure jobs and conduct themselves as young professionals.

councilwoman and current Wayne State University professor Sheila Cockrel told the Free Press. "I think he was sincere in his wish to do great things for Detroit."

One of Pugh's signature accomplishments, literally, was the Charles Pugh Leadership Forum, a mentoring program he founded at his alma mater, which had since been renamed the Frederick Douglass Academy for Young Men. There, Pugh and members of his staff met regularly with students to prepare them for college, help them secure jobs and conduct themselves as young professionals.

"The purpose of the program is to emphasize leadership among young men, particularly young men from the inner city of Detroit," Pugh staffer DeAndree Watson told the Free Press, going on to say that the program was "not only about preparing for college, discussing academic excellence or professional etiquette. It's also important to have frank and open dialogue about issues that are facing them growing up in the community."

In looking into the program, it's clear it did a lot of good. Former Frederick Douglass student Tevin Hill, who is now a sophomore at Bowling Green University in Ohio, said Pugh and his staff continued to help him even after he graduated. Having a difficult first year at college, Pugh and other mentors actually tutored Hill via Skype. And Pugh personally sent Hill \$100 to help pay for books.

"My own flesh and blood was telling me I was going to fail," Hill told the Free Press. "They (Pugh and staff) lifted me up and made sure I got through my freshman year."

Lapse In Judgment

On May 31, Pugh made a controversial move that many feel was highly unethical. He threw an end-of-year pizza party on the last day of classes. Later that day, Pugh decided to help one of his mentees – an 18-year-old we'll call "X" for the purposes of protecting his identity – prepare for a job interview. Pugh took X to Madison Heights to pick out some new dress clothes and purchase him a cell phone. This is the point at which many say Pugh crossed the line.

In December, Madison Heights police released the full text message exchanges between X and Pugh to the press, a portion of

which follows:

"Can I trust you?" Pugh asked X later that night after purchasing the phone for X.

"Trust me to what?"

"Keep our friendship our business."

"LOL. Sure!"

"If I can trust you, then the sky is the limit for you, sir. You can have whatever you need or want. Just ask. And most times you won't have to."

Pugh continued his back and forth with X, asked about what video game systems he liked and what he could purchase to entice X into coming over to his "crib." But before long, Pugh escalated things. He told X about what he called his "straight friend special." It was an offer of \$100 for solo videos featuring masturbation.

"I'm very generous to my straight friends I can trust," Pugh said. "Those with big mouths miss out."

"So if I f*** a girl and record it, then let you see it I can get \$100?"

"Is this just between us, bro? I can't have you showin' people our texts or tellin' folks, bro. This is some grown man shit. LOL."

"LOL. Yes. This is between us."

X initially voiced no surprise over the request, but Pugh continued to show his concern for privacy.

"Dude, if anyone finds out about this I'm dead," Pugh sent. "So please keep this between us. My straight friends who do it see it as a major convenience. It can help you have EXTRA money all the time."

X made no promises, but the next day, June 1, he initiated contact with Pugh, telling him he needed \$160 for a hotel room for after prom. Pugh again encouraged X to make an X-rated video for him and gave him instructions on how to do so, such as taking a shade off a lamp and placing it in front of him and encouraging X to make noise when he was about to orgasm.

Despite the instructions, X did not immediately make the video. But he contacted Pugh the following day, June 2, again asking for help.

"I need games and money," he said in his opening text.

"I got you," Pugh told him, encouraging him yet again to make the video. "Just quit being so damn scared."

"I'm making the vid when I get home," X

told him. "I'm serious as f***."

"You guys need to know how to WORK the guys with power and money who have crushes on y'all," Pugh told X. "You got the HOOKUP, bro. You just don't know how to work it. You could get anything you want from me."

It wasn't until the following night though, June 3, that X texted Pugh and told him to pick up the video. Pugh rushed over, picked up the video, which was on an iPod, and was texting X again within hours. Pugh was exuberant, saying it was the best video anyone had ever made for him and that he achieved orgasm four times while watching it. Then Pugh pushed the envelope, again promising a video game system and games in exchange for X allowing him to perform oral sex on him.

"I guarantee it's the BEST head you'll ever have," Pugh promised. "Part of the reason is because the other head had no money or gifts attached to it. The MAIN reason is because my head game is SICK!!"

Pugh also admitted to having liked X for some time.

"Truth is, I had a crush on you all year," he

wanted to go that far. His mom had gotten hip to the financial help Pugh has been providing X and sensed something was amiss. She not only became angered, but according to messages X sent to a friend, she became hysterical.

"My momma's having nervous breakdown and shit, and it's crazy," X said. "She's cryin' and yellin' and screamin' and shit, actin' retarded."

By the next day, X tells Pugh that their relationship has come to an end.

"Everything between us has to stop," he said. "My mom knows what is up and is going to report you. Don't text back."

"Tell your mom to call me," Pugh responded. "We can work something out. This is crazy. I just wanted to help you."

X then advised Pugh on how to appease his mother.

"You have to act like you have never been to our house and you can't mention that iPod," he said. "Call her now and talk to her."

But Pugh could not. He was texting while sitting at the council table. Instead he pledged to call her in 20 minutes."

“I've worked hard to make myself a role model for young men in this city, and young people in general. A lot of people do look at me as a role model since I'm a Detroit Public Schools graduate, someone who's a college graduate, someone who has been able to secure a solid, forward-moving career, and also someone who has a pretty stable private life.”

- A 2004 BTL Interview when Charles Pugh came out

said. "I just couldn't say or do anything about it until [you finished school]. I think you kinda knew though."

"Yes, I did."

X went on to state that he believed he was already entitled to the video game system he wanted.

"My vid was worth the game," he told Pugh.

"LOL, Dude, I spent \$310 on clothes and shoes and belt, plus \$150 for that phone then \$160. So, bro, that video paid for more than \$600 worth of sh**!!!"

Once again, Pugh pressed X to allow him to perform oral sex on him in exchange for the game.

"You're gonna enjoy THE F*** out of earning the gaming system and games!!" he said. "You'll see."

But X never got the chance to decide if he

X's mother didn't care to talk to Pugh though. Deciding she was more interested in speaking to the press, she called Channel 7. Pugh actually telephoned while the news station was there, and X's mother let the reporter listen into the call and tape it.

In the days that followed, Pugh attempted to lay low. But that didn't last for long. He was, of course, approached by Channel 7 and asked to comment. Instead, he reached out once again to X's mother, texting her on June 17.

"Can you please help me?" he asked. "Channel 7 says they're using your interview to try and destroy me. (And drag the city through another scandal.) It's so sad. Please help me if you can."

Getting no response, he texted her again the

See Pugh, page 14



Viewpoint

BY EMILY DIEVENDORF

In Memoriam to Dr. Henry Messer

Sept. 22, 1927- February 18, 2014

Walking into the home of Henry Messer and Carl House is stepping into a densely packed nautical museum.

The small and modest 1950s ranch house is riddled beautifully with model ships in glass cases and on shelves, photos of ships, and vintage World War II military propaganda posters framed on the walls. It was my first trip to the house when I came to visit Henry and say our goodbyes.

Dr. Henry Messer, one of the founders of Equality Michigan, had always come to us at the Detroit office. He would occasionally email the current organization director and ask when he could drop by for lunch with the staff. He used to arrive to the office and cook lunch for the staff but as he got up in age he would be forced to bring food to heat for us. Still, he would insist it was his treat and Henry would always bring more food than anybody could eat and we would joke that it would surely be "meat, meat, and more meat" which our half-vegetarian staff would find a way to appreciate because you didn't say no to a person who had done so much and who just wanted to check in on the people he considered family and the place he claimed as a second home.

When I sit down next to Henry at his home he is far more alert than I expect and interested to hear about the goings on at Equality Michigan and I'm just honored that I am allowed any of his minutes at this time, in this limited time. He has been in hospice care at home for two weeks and has not eaten for a week. I push to talk about anything but the equality struggle. Tell me about the ships, the beautiful ships in your gorgeous house, I plead. He points to his long time partner Carl as somebody else in the room announces that the ships are all Carl's. "Really," I inquire, "Are you both veterans?"

Henry isn't talking much at this point in his letting go. He chooses his words carefully. He uses them sparingly. They all matter. "Not really." He answers shaking his head just slightly and somebody explains that he was in fact in the United States Air Force when Carl was in the United States Army. Henry was a neurosurgeon in the Air Force, one of our nation's first, making him a pioneer in the field, but the military was not kind to those in the gay community at the time and in 1953 he was forced to resign his position as Air Force Captain just a year after meeting Carl. I ask Henry how he met Carl if they were in different branches of the military. He tells me they were both stationed in Alabama and "you find a way." There we were, right back to the struggle. Henry, having pledged himself to

Henry's life was a play by play of the gay rights movement from the darkest closets to the modern day. .. Henry was a part of the birth of the modern LGBT advocacy movement in the United States. During that time, there were even greater professional and personal consequences for being a known LGBT advocate, and Dr. Messer was one of the few who bravely signed his own full name while checking in at Mattachine Society meetings.

his country, having supported his love in his continued service, their home being a homage to the honor and respect they both felt and yet Henry did not claim his place as a veteran because our country had not claimed Henry.

Henry's life was a play by play of the gay rights movement from the darkest closets to the modern day. While living in New York City after the military, Henry was a part of the birth of the modern LGBT advocacy movement in the United States. During that time, there were even greater professional and personal consequences for being a known LGBT advocate, and Dr. Messer was one of the few who bravely signed his own full name while checking in at Mattachine Society meetings. One evening while going out for dinner, Henry and Carl walked out of the New York subway into the early hours of the Stonewall Riots.

When Henry and Carl moved to Michigan in 1976, so that Henry could become chief of neurosurgery at Wayne County General Hospital, Henry became a figure in the Michigan LGBT communities. Having become a leader in the Michigan Organization for Human Rights (MOHR), Henry played a major role in the organization's transition into Triangle Foundation, the organization we today call Equality Michigan. We joke sometimes that a loyal or over-zealous fan would take a bullet for a cause or person but that is exactly what Henry Messer did in 1995 when a robber entered the LGBT rights organization Henry co-founded and came across Henry in the hallway only to shoot him in the hallway. The good and always resourceful neurosurgeon, after pushing the gun away from his head before the assailant ran off, gave step by step directions to the Triangle Foundation director and paramedics as to the entry and exit wound and how to save his life so that he could get back to what he was doing.

Henry insisted on a status update, and as the organization is the baby that he was leaving behind, I relented. I updated Henry on upcoming events and what was

being planned for the marriage movement in Michigan, giving him a preview of the next week as requested. When I paused in my update and talked about marriage as a real possibility, soon Carl remarked to me, "Maybe Henry would have finally asked ME." I asked how long they had been together and Henry's friend Joy answered with "62 years." Upon which point Henry released my hand to hold up three fingers to correct us all. I asked if they had ever talked about marriage and Carl shook his head no.

Perhaps Carl didn't know, but maybe he did, that in the days leading up to the last DeBoer v. Snyder hearing, Henry reached out to Equality Michigan indicating that he would like us to help make arrangements for him and Carl to marry in their homes should the court allow it. Not being a religious man, we were discussing ways to utilize clerks or other friends he had in government to officiate the wedding at his home and perhaps use proxies to fill the paperwork in person. If we could find 15 minutes to marry Henry and Carl in

Michigan, Henry was going to use it.

In a 1995 New York Times article, Henry is quoted as saying, "As gays, we don't expect to have any biological children," Dr. Messer said. "But these younger gays coming along - especially those in medicine - in a way, they're my children. I want to make the future better for them than it was for me." At Equality Michigan, and at Triangle before, we have always felt this from Henry. The day of my visit I promised Henry that we, the equality activists of the now, would take good care of things for him. He said, "I know you will."

That is a promise we must keep to Henry and to all those who fought openly and for so long before us. Henry Messer did as he set out to do and in doing so left us with a battle we can win for the right side of history so that our children can only love and not fight to. Henry and Carl pressed on without the benefit of a many swift victories to fuel them. Henry and Carl could press on under the weight of anti-LGBT oppression, laughing and traveling and telling jokes that could make the youngest and wittiest among us blush, because their fuel for change and life was each other. We should all be so lucky. Our movement is built on the shoulders of giants. Our movement has now lost one of our quiet giants, and Equality Michigan has lost a friend. To have known Henry Messer - you should all have been so very lucky and we all will remain so very moved and inspired.

Emily Dievendorf is the Executive Director of Equality Michigan.



Remembering Triangle's Henry



Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Editor's note: This column was first published Jan. 16, 2002

BTL PG 1/16/2002 - "If you want to get a Lifetime Achievement Award, you've got to kick ass. Thank you."

With these words Dr. Henry Messer, LGBT human rights activist and Triangle Foundation co-founder with the late John Monaghan, succinctly accepted a 1995 Lifetime Achievement Award given at Detroit's annual Pride Banquet.

If memory serves me, this verbal punch - coming from a noted and poised neurosurgeon at the end of a long evening of routine presentations - jolted me up from a deep state of noddy and neatly summed things up. It also brought the crowd of 325 cheering to its feet.

The award honored Henry's community involvement dating back to 1955 in New York, and Michigan and Detroit locally since 1970. Whether Henry's feisty advice will make it into "Bartlett's Familiar Quotations" remains to be seen.

Obviously Henry is a kick-ass fighter. How else can one explain his recent and astonishing medical history? He has survived an intruder gunshot wound to the stomach - monitoring the EMS team that rushed him to ER; an aneurysm - by recognizing the presenting symptoms in time to drive himself to a hospital for lifesaving surgery; and a triple heart bypass operation, with recreational recovery and up-and-about ward circulation within days.

Not bad for a surgical Clark Kent of 74!

If anyone really deserves a share of Henry's Lifetime Achievement Award it's his partner Carl House, 72. Carl is in every sense a gentle man. (Word separation intended.) He is also repose to Henry's energy, shelter to the good doc's activist storm.

They are well matched, especially when it comes to ocean liner travel on the Queen Elisabeth I and II. Or, sunny, open-house summers at their Fire Island cottage.

They met when Henry was stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala., and Carl was 100 miles away at U.S. Army Camp Rucker. Weekends Carl hitchhiked to be with Henry. (It was safe to hitchhike then. It was not safe to be gay. In the 1950s fag bagging was a double-barrel

sport.)

Henry was inadvertently outed from Air Force service. Carl escaped investigative entrapment. They moved to New York City where Henry began his residency at St. Vincent's Hospital. They also found a thriving gay community, which I too was fortunate to visit as at age 19 in 1955.

It was the beginning of a partnership that has lasted for over 50 years. (See "Men

If anyone really deserves a share of Henry's Lifetime Achievement Award it's his partner Carl House, 72. Carl is in every sense a gentle man. (Word separation intended.) He is also repose to Henry's energy, shelter to the good doc's activist storm.

Together: Portraits of Love, Commitment, and Life"; Running Press 1997.)

Henry and Carl's commitment places them among select company. (Screen actor William Haines/ Jimmy Shields, 47 years; Composers Samuel Barber/ Gian Carlo Menotti, 44 years; Writer Christopher Isherwood/ artist Don Bachardy, 33; Playwright Tennessee Williams/ Frankie Merlo, 15; Poet Walt Whitman/ Peter Doyle, 8.)

Two weeks ago Henry and Carl were honored for their half century of devotion, collaboration, and adventure. Among the 100-plus well wishers gathered at Detroit's St. Regis Hotel were Congresswoman Lynn Rivers, Congressman David Bonier, State Representative Hansen Clark, and Detroit City Council President Maryann Mahaffey.

An unexpected tribute was a State of Michigan proclamation signed by Republican Governor John Engler. It was a grand moment for Henry and Carl. (And His GOP Roly-Polyness, if not begrudgingly as well.)

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Creep of the Week

Ted Cruz

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

America is a tough place for sensitive men. Crying is forbidden unless a guy wants to be seen as some kind of fag. But there are a few select places where guys can get a pass if they shed a few tears. Weddings, for example. Everybody cries at



Cruz introduced the State Marriage Defense Act Feb. 13, which seeks to invalidate the federal recognition of same-sex marriages if those couples dare cross state lines into a state that bans their unions.

and commitment were being promised between two people. Still).

Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) is no exception. He's not afraid to declare publicly that he "weeps" at weddings. And that would be totally commendable if those were happy tears, but the weeping Cruz is copping to is a result of his sadness that gay couples are finally starting to get treated like equals in this country.

In a Feb. 13 interview with professional homophobe Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council, Cruz expressed his dismay that marriage equality has been winning over and over again in the courts.

"Our heart weeps for the damage to traditional marriage that has been done," he told Perkins.

First I'd like to make note of Cruz's use of "our heart," rather than "our hearts" or even "my heart." It's a subtle slip, but it allows a glimpse into the little known fact that Tea Partiers like Cruz share one heart between them. After all, one doesn't have to be well-versed in Tea Party policies to see that their ideology really requires no heart at all.

Secondly, the fact that Cruz is crying over the "damage" same-sex couples have done to the institution of marriage, damage that exists only in Cruz's anti-

gay fantasies, is indicative of the fact that Cruz not only lacks a heart, but a brain as well.

Cruz then goes on to regale Perkins with anti-marriage equality talking points.

"You and I both know that the best environment for a child to be raised in is a loving home with a mother and father and a strong marriage that is the foundation for that family, for the community, for the church," Cruz says.

And he's right, to a point. The best environment for children is, in deed, a loving home with two parents. But no credible research has shown that those parents have to be of the opposite sex or that the children of same-sex parents are harmed in any way.

Additionally, I agree with Cruz that strong marriages play an important foundational role in society. But again, marriage doesn't depend on one penis and one vagina for strength.

"We're seeing that marriage is under attack," Cruz continues. "We need to stand up, I believe, and defend traditional marriage and especially do everything we can to prevent the federal government from forcing a different definition of marriage that's contrary to the views of the citizens of each state."

And Cruz has just the plan to keep those dastardly homos from getting their cooties all over marriage. On the day before Valentine's Day for fucksake, Cruz introduced the State Marriage Defense Act, which seeks to invalidate the federal recognition of same-sex marriages if those couples dare cross state lines into a state that bans their unions.

For example, my wife and I live in Michigan where our marriage is not recognized by the state. But since we were legally married in California, our marriage is recognized by the federal government regardless of where we live. Cruz wants to strip federal recognition of our marriage, essentially unmarrying us simply because our marriage makes him weep.

As my Grandma used to say, "Quit crying or I'll give you something to cry about." And, thankfully, marriage equality is winning this battle, so I don't expect him to stop crying any time soon.

Fight Over Gay Marriage Moving To Federal Courts

BY MARK SHERMAN

WASHINGTON (AP) - The overturning of Virginia's gay marriage ban Feb. 13 places the legal fight over same-sex unions increasingly in the hands of federal appeals courts shaped by President Barack Obama's two election victories.

It's no accident that Virginia has become a key testing ground for federal judges' willingness to embrace same-sex marriage after last year's strongly worded pro-gay rights ruling by the Supreme Court. Judges appointed by Democratic presidents have a 10-5 edge over Republicans on the Richmond-based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, formerly among the nation's most conservative appeals courts.

Nationally, three other federal appeals courts will soon take up the right of same-sex couples to marry, too, in Ohio, Colorado and California. The San Francisco-based 9th circuit is dominated by judges appointed by Democratic presidents. The Denver-based court, home of the 10th circuit, has shifted from a Republican advantage to an even split between the parties, while the 6th circuit, based in Cincinnati, remains relatively unchanged in favor of Republicans during Obama's tenure.

U.S. District Judge Arenda Wright Allen's ruling Thursday, that same-sex couples in Virginia have the same constitutional right to marry as heterosexuals, represented the strongest advance in the South for advocates of gay marriage. She put her own ruling on hold while it is being appealed.

Jon Davidson of the gay rights group Lambda Legal said the "very dramatic" shift in the 4th circuit under Obama was an important reason behind the decision to sue for marriage rights in Virginia, which also twice voted for Obama.

Still, one consequence of Obama's two elections has been a change in the composition of the courts. Just over 60 percent of appellate judges were Republican

appointees when Obama took office in January 2009, according to Brookings Institution scholar Russell Wheeler. Just over five years later, Democratic appointees hold more than half the seats on appeals courts — a transformation magnified by majority Democrats who changed Senate rules last year to make it harder for the minority party to block the president's nominees.

Davidson, Lambda Legal's top lawyer, said, "People frequently don't appreciate the extent to which the president influences the composition of the courts. It is a remarkable thing about how elections have impact and this is one of the very dramatic ways you see it. There is a focus on the Supreme Court, but not on the lower courts."

Five federal district judges have issued pro-gay marriage rulings since the Supreme Court's decision in Windsor v. U.S. in June that struck down part of the federal anti-gay marriage law. Three of those judges are Obama appointees, one was named by Democratic President Bill Clinton and the other by Republican President George H.W. Bush.

Nancy Leong, a University of Denver law professor who is closely following the gay marriage issue at the 10th circuit, said the lineup of judges who have ruled so far conforms to general expectations.

"You don't want to presume that just because someone was nominated by one president they'd vote a particular way, but I think in the aggregate, Republican appointees are more likely to rule against same-sex marriage," Leong said.

But every judge who has decided a same-sex marriage case since last year's Supreme Court ruling has come down on the side of gay marriage and has drawn heavily on the high court's opinions.

Theodore Olson, half of the high-powered legal team representing two Virginia couples in the case decided Thursday,

said he is confident about the outcome in the appeals courts "irrespective of the composition of any court. These arguments are so compelling...and the arguments presented against marriage equality are so weak."

Defenders of the marriage ban are far from conceding that point. "The people of Virginia understand that men and women bring distinct, irreplaceable gifts to family life, especially for children who deserve both a mom and a dad," said Byron Babione, a lawyer for the pro-ban group Alliance Defending Freedom. "Understanding that truth, the voters of Virginia approved a constitutional amendment to affirm marriage as the union of a man and a woman. The court's reasoning, however, would permit nearly every relationship to be a marriage so long as it is grounded in choice and emotion, yet that's not what marriage or true liberty has ever been."

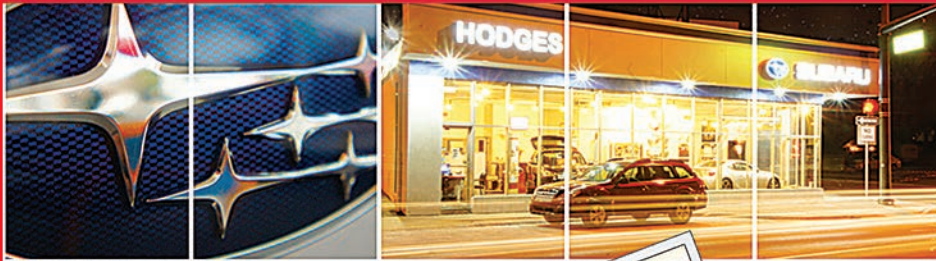
The issue ultimately is headed to the Supreme Court. When and from which state are not clear.

The justices are more likely to step into a case when a federal court has struck down a state constitutional provision, as has happened in Kentucky, Oklahoma, Utah and Virginia. The Kentucky case involves only the state's recognition of legal same-sex weddings from elsewhere.

Yet, on the same day in June that the court said legally married gay couples could not be denied federal benefits, the justices declined to rule on the merits of California's Proposition 8 that defined marriage as between a man and a woman. The effect of the decision was to allow same-sex unions to resume in California, but the high court said nothing about the right to marry.

Some justices have suggested the court should be in no hurry to do so, but the stream of lower court rulings in recent months may improve the odds of a Supreme Court decision on gay marriage in June 2015 or the year after.

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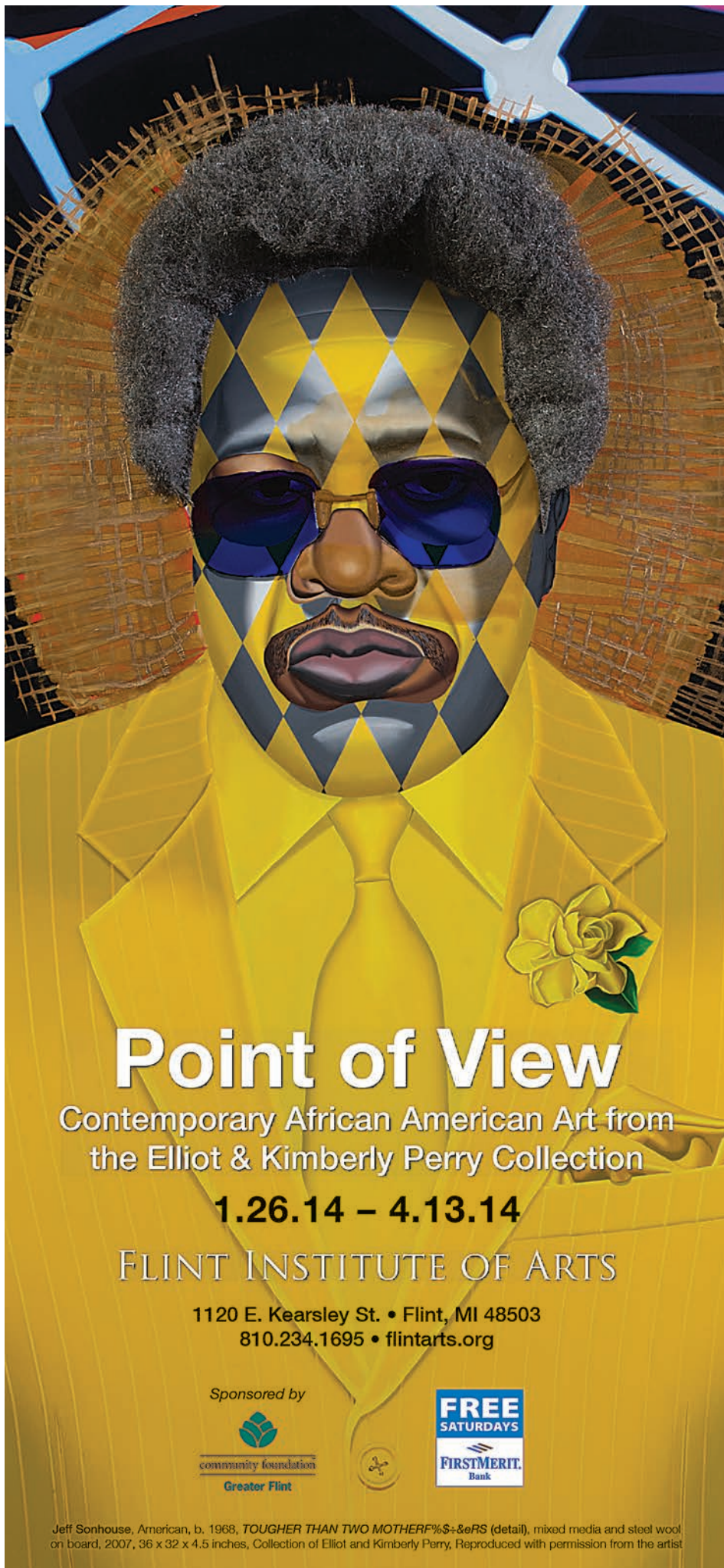
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► Pugh

Continued from p. 9

following day.

“This will destroy my chances of ever working in Detroit again and would cause me to have to resign from council. Please can you call them and ask them not to use your interview AT ALL. I’ve ended the program at Fred D. I’ll do anything else you want me to. Please don’t allow them to move forward with your interview. This would DESTROY me. Please, Ms. ***** , I beg you.”

Growing ever more desperate, Pugh texts her again two days later.

“Please,” he persisted. “I can meet y’all someplace for dinner. Maybe we can go to church together on Sunday and pray together. Is there anything we can work out?”

Ms. X, however, was already working with an attorney.

The question now is, is there any future for Pugh in his hometown, and can the fallen hero ever redeem himself?

The Fallout

The rest of the story is well known. Channel 7 aired their story and soon the other networks followed suit. Pugh requested a month-long medical leave from council, which Detroit Emergency Manager Keith Orr denied. Instead, he stripped Pugh of his pay and benefits when Pugh failed to show by the appointed deadline he gave. And then Pugh disappeared into the night. It would be three months before he would officially submit his resignation to Orr. By that time he had relocated to an undisclosed location and all Detroiters were left with were lingering questions.

Some of those questions were answered in December when Madison Heights Police released the content of the police report and the text messages to the media. But the full details have not been disclosed until now. Technically, we now know that Pugh did nothing illegal – the young man was 18 and had completed the last day of his senior year before Pugh approached him – and the Oakland County prosecutor’s office declined to file any charges against him.

Confronted with the details of Pugh’s interaction with X, public reaction has been mixed. Community activist John Trimble is nonchalant about the whole affair.

“I think a lot of this controversy was fueled by the mother more so than the young man,” Trimble said. “Was it inappropriate? Absolutely. Was the young man old enough to make his own decision to contribute to this



Then Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh taking part in the Hunger for Equality campaign, held at Affirmations, day 25, during the summer of 2012.

situation? Absolutely.”

Others, meanwhile, aren’t taking the revelations so lightly. Johnny Jenkins worked with Pugh in creating training for the Safe Schools Initiative.

“Although this young man was 18 it appears as if it was planned,” Jenkins said. “It was very manipulative of a youth at a very vulnerable age. They’re kind of like a livewire when it comes to their sexuality period. So to have some older adult come take advantage of that is disturbing. And the fact that he put himself in a place that he’s working with youth, with young black men, is even more disturbing. He was considered a leader in our community and a highly visible one, so it’s disturbing on all those levels and it makes life difficult for all black gay men in Detroit.”

Lipscomb said that Pugh’s problems will not hurt the Detroit LGBT community’s efforts to move forward.

“You can’t say that if a man cheats on his wife, that all men are bad,” he said. “You can’t say that. That’s ridiculous. So you can’t say that if a gay man has an indiscretion it impacts the entire community. That’s wrong,” said Lipscomb.

“There are a lot of deep wounds he left behind with people who trusted him, who had high expectations for him and he failed them on every level,” Jenkins said. “I think everybody should have a chance at redemption, but you have to put the work into it and he’s not here to put the work into anything.”

The question now is, is there any future for Pugh in his hometown, and can the fallen hero ever redeem himself?

► Messer

Continued from p. 4

in 2009. "I met with John Dingle a couple of times and he was not about to support anything gay in those days. Of course now he's gung ho gay, but he wasn't then."

In January 1985, an undercover police officer arrested Messer at the Irving Art Theater for alleged indecent behavior. He was convicted, fined, and placed on one year's probation. Messer used the MOHR newsletter to broadcast his story of entrapment to the membership. As a result of his conviction, New York State revoked his medical license. Although his Michigan license was never in jeopardy, Messer decided to retire at age 60.

In 1991, at age 63, he co-founded the Triangle Foundation. "Pioneer is an often overused term but in this instance he was a true pioneer," said Jeff Montgomery, Triangle's longtime executive director. "He took many, many risks, from the time he was in his early 20s, and never looked back in terms of fighting for equality and respect and legal rights. We all owe him such a huge debt."

A member of Triangle's board of directors for many years, Messer was also an active volunteer for the group. He performed data entry at Triangle's office in Northwest Detroit and often made lunch for the office staff. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the annual Pride banquet on June 15th, 1995. Thirteen days later, on June 28th, he was shot and wounded while working in the Triangle office. The act of anti-gay violence received national attention.

Sean Kosofsky, who worked with Triangle for a dozen years before relocating to North Carolina, traveled home to be near Messer in the end.

"I think that it is important when we look around and see all the victories that we are having in our movement now and just remember the incredible, heroic contributions and sacrifices of early leaders like Henry," Kosofsky said. "He has given so much to the world and the Michigan LGBT rights movement."

On the occasion of his 50th anniversary with House in 2002, Messer received a Congressional recognition when U.S. Rep David Bonior (D-MI) stood and acknowledged the couple's anniversary and their many years of activism on the House floor. The couple also received a controversial tribute from Michigan Governor John Engler. The tribute, requested by State Rep. Pan Godchaux (R-Birmingham), was signed on a machine and Engler's office said later he was unaware he was paying tribute to a gay partnership and likely wouldn't have signed the tribute had he known.

Ten years later, in 2012, a diamond anniversary event, celebrating the couple's 60th anniversary and benefiting Equality Michigan, took place at the Regency Manor & Banquet Center in Southfield. In attendance and making remarks was Congressman Hansen Clarke (D-MI).

Now that he's gone, Montgomery said it's important we remember Messer as we continue with the work of fighting for LGBT equality.

"He was very committed to bringing along new activists, new leaders, sharing his incredible knowledge, trying to help teach his kind of instinct, and many, many people benefitted from his approach," said Montgomery. "It can't be overstressed how much of a difference he's made. It's an unfathomable loss and I think we're all called on now to continue working as hard as he has, keeping in mind the kind of guidance he gave to so many of us. This is a time to rededicate ourselves to the work that still needs to be done. That's the most fitting memorial to Henry Messer."

Kosofsky said that Messer's impact would undoubtedly be lasting.

"He was a mentor and hero to many of us," he said. "I'm just honored to have been able to be with Henry in his final days. Our entire movement is owed to people like him."

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TEARING IT UP



Mary Lambert On 'Same Love,' Grammy Night & Madonna Drying Her Tears

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

“I’m not crying on Sundays,” Mary Lambert assures herself on the song that got her to the Grammys. But this Sunday was different. This Sunday was better. Singing the heart-lifting chorus to Macklemore’s “Same Love,” which was nominated for Song of the Year, Lambert made her Grammy debut on Jan. 26.

That’s when she lost it. But these weren’t tears of sadness or shame. These were tears of joy. Tears of being inspired and moved and all those things you feel when you share the stage with gay couples who are finally able to get married, a monumental celebration that took place at the awards show, with Queen Latifah officiating.

Emotions ran high that night, but Lambert, 24, had a new friend nearby – a new friend by the name of Madonna. And the icon didn’t just sing Lambert’s words, but, like something out of a fever dream, swooped in and wiped away her tears.

Lambert, who just released her own solo EP called “Welcome to the Age of My Body,” was still emotional when she spoke about that unforgettable night.

You must be pinching yourself. What was your Grammy experience like?

It was really emotional from start to finish. I already feel like Cinderella because I was bartending last year and didn’t know how I was gonna pay rent. Now I’ve been nominated for a Grammy – and I took my mom, which was a dream of mine – but then to be able to do this song, and to do it on this magnitude with this beautiful choir and fucking Madonna and Queen Latifah, are you kidding me? It’s just stupid, dude. If I really think about it, I lose it.

You cry?

Yeah, like, “I don’t deserve this.” I’m still working on my positive self-talk. (Laughs)

What was it like being part of the wedding ceremony?

Honestly, that was the most emotional part. Being in rehearsal and hearing Madonna sing my words and hearing the choir come in, that was emotional, but being in the dress rehearsal at the Grammys and watching the couples come in, I couldn’t get through the song for almost every rehearsal. I wasn’t sure how I was gonna perform because it was so beautiful. You saw on their faces how much it meant to them, and I knew how much it would mean to the viewer. How do you process that? It’s the most beautiful thing that exists in the world.

What were rehearsals with Madonna like?

We had long rehearsals – and I wouldn’t say we’re close, but we got to know each other’s mannerisms and how we operate. I consider her a friend. She was very kind to me, and because we had to work together, I had to be like, “Hey, this is how I sing the song.” (Laughs)

Is it weird telling Madonna how to sing?

Uh yeah! Everybody froze when I was like, “Hey, Madonna, do you think you could try singing it like this – the way I sing it?” (Laughs)

See Mary Lambert, page 23

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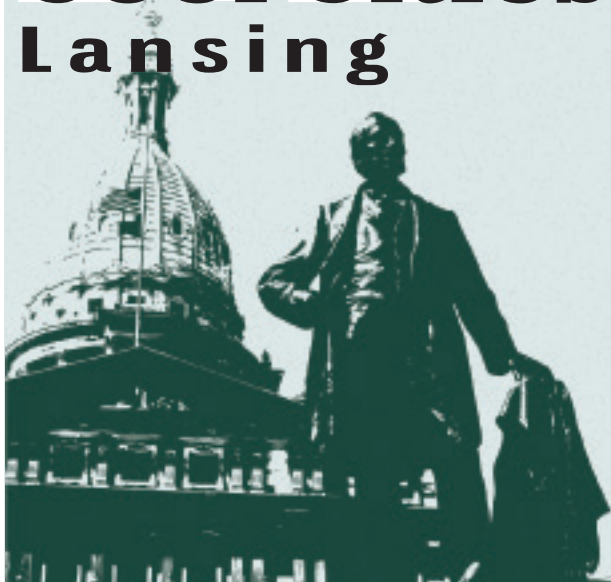
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Spiral Into Lansing Dance Bar

BY SHELBY CLARK

Spiral Dance Bar of Lansing is heating up February with an array of events every week including themed parties and drag extravaganzas.

Recently, renowned Michigan Drag Queen Sabin made an electrifying return to the bar. A Valentine's Day-themed event, "Queen of Hearts," dominated Feb. 14.

The weekends start at 9 p.m. Thursdays at Spiral with "Tease A Rama." The weekly event features burlesque, drag and girl fights. Tickets for this event range from \$5-\$10.

Later on Thursday evenings, and starting at 1 a.m., check out "Twisted Games." Hosted by resident drag queen Ace Deville, the event features party games and fully nude strippers.

The club offers special cover for students on Fridays' College Night. DJ Restless, DJ Highjakk'd, DJ Rachel and She J Blondi3 spin music throughout the night.

DJ Cruz keeps the weekend going with Saturday's "Unzipped," featuring "wild



shows" and "sexy barstaff."

On Sundays, look for "Showbiz Sunday" starting at 10 p.m. – one of their most popular nights. The show features DJ Lippgloss, with Ace Deville, Delicious and Maria Mirelez serving as the drag queens throughout the night. Additional showtimes for the evening are 11 p.m. and 12 a.m.

The bar is also available for private events and parties.

Spiral Dance Bar is located at 1247 Center St. in Lansing. A free shuttle is offered to the bar from the East Lansing area. For more information on the shuttle or the bar, call 517-371-3221 during working hours, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Wednesday through Sunday. Check out Spiral's website at www.spiraldancebar.com.

For other events in the Lansing area, visit BTL's calendar at www.pridesource.com/calendar.html.

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Dreaming Through The Noise

Equality Cabaret Performer Vienna Teng On Being An Ally, Moving To Detroit

BY CHRISTOPHER JOHN TREACY

We could all stand to learn a thing or two from Vienna Teng.

As an Asian-American woman and singer-songwriter-pianist on the fringes of pop music, Teng understands being an underdog. And yet, she radiates the Zen of acceptance. She's not actively fighting against the grain, not struggling to be a brighter star in our muddled mass consciousness; instead, she comes across as a fiercely intelligent woman that's perfectly content to do her part in inspiring positive change, whatever that may entail. She's living life on life's terms, and doing so with an admirable degree of grace.

Teng will be adding her voice to the lineup for the Equality Cabaret fundraiser, presented by the Jim Toy Community Center, beginning at 1 p.m. Feb. 23 at The Ark in Ann Arbor. It's an opportunity to align her vision with that of a local lesbian couple that's come up against Michigan's Marriage Amendment, passed by voters

back in 2004, which prevents gays and lesbians from forming legally honored unions.

April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse have been partnered for over a decade and became licensed, as a unit, to provide foster care. They've since raised three abandoned newborns, all with varying degrees of special needs. But because the couple's union is not legally acknowledged, they aren't able to formally adopt the children as co-parents. Instead, one has been adopted by one of the women, and the other has adopted the remaining two. On the surface this may seem like a reasonable solution, but it gets complicated if either of the women were to pass away unexpectedly; the children (and the remaining partner) are left vulnerable to be split up since they are not legally protected under a single, unifying umbrella. The fallout for a household like DeBoer and Rowse's is unimaginable. Sunday's event is to help raise money (and awareness) about the case, which is three years in the making.

"I feel like I've been a ally for a long time," Teng says of her feelings toward the LGBT community at large from over the phone during our recent chat. "And this event makes a lot of sense to me as a songwriter because it involves a particular family. Personal stories are highly impactful. It speaks to something I've struggled with for a long time, in that I don't think of myself as an activist songwriter. That's not what I do. But I very much want to participate in changing the world for the better. I eventually landed at a resolve to tell stories about people grappling with various things. Music often makes an idea hit home much harder than with other mediums."

Teng's gentle brand of vicarious activism is plenty prevalent on her tune "City Hall," which was featured on 2006's "Dreaming Through the Noise," produced by Larry Klein (Joni Mitchell, Shawn Colvin, Rebecca Pidgeon). The uplifting, spiritual feeling track is sung from the perspective of someone about to marry their longtime

See Vienna Teng, page 25

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Cheeky Commitment Is Key To This Slam-Dunk Musical

BY CAROLYN HAYES

Crucial to the success of any theatrical endeavor is properly matching the entertainment value to the entertainment. Take, for example, a tongue-in-cheek, fluffy musical like “Lysistrata Jones” (book by Douglas Carter Beane, music and lyrics by Lewis Flinn): With its bon mot lyrics and conspicuously featherweight story, there’s plenty of ingrained pep for viewers to enjoy without much added effort. This is worth noting only because Meadow Brook Theatre’s manically high-energy production so handily clears that bar, going all-out in every moment in its dogged pursuit of maximum amusement.

Director Travis W. Walter takes the reins of an age-old story (literally), inspired by the bawdy ancient Greek comedy “Lysistrata,” here yanked into the present day. Then, the eponymous Lysistrata rallied her Grecian sisters to stop their men from warring by initiating a sexual strike. Now, the titular Ms. Jones (Kara Dombrowski), a newly arrived transfer student to Athens University, wants to use the same tactics to galvanize the school’s dismal basketball team into trying to win even one game.

Facile? Trite? Downright childish by comparison? Absolutely. But if anything, the script takes full advantage of the misappropriated motivation. And thanks to some deft writing and a grounded character foundation by Dombrowski, Walter raises the stakes to where they need to be.

It’s not hard to stay interested or even get invested in the doings of these 11 students, whose individual stories diverge as men and women face off in a battle of stubborn wills and soul searching 101. This is helped in no small part by a tone that calcifies its characters into a rarefied kind of “High School Musical” wholesomeness. The aggressively chipper deliveries work in moments of earnestness and avarice alike, and only grow more absurd as the subject matter creeps necessarily toward the degenerate. In the expert hands of this ensemble cast, the show’s moments of self-referential humor and sly commentary on race, class, masculinity, theater and pop culture



Teddy Toye, from the original Broadway cast, as Mick and Kara Dombrowski as Lysistrata in “Lysistrata Jones” at Meadow Brook Theatre. Photo: Rick Smith

REVIEW

Lysistrata Jones

Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Wednesday-Sunday through March 9. 2 hours, 10 minutes. \$25-40. 248-377-3300. www.mbtheatre.com

slip in without deviating from the through line.

No ancient Greek knock-off is complete without an ancient Greek chorus; here, Tamara Anderson’s voice is brazenly omniscient as narrator Hetaira, and her suave, world-weary wisdom is terrific in scenes harkening back to the oldest profession.

Dombrowski proves a stellar leading lady, whose dim but determined “Lyssie J” courts the audience with effortless punch lines, sweetly high hopes, and killer vocals. In fact, the exceptional individual performances extend all down the bench and across the board, from the clique of differently motivated girlfriends (Karen Burthwright, Kathryn Terza, and Minami Yusui) to the starting lineup (Teddy Toye, Tim Dolan, Jason Williams, Michael De Souza, and Jake Wood) to the unpopular/angsty set (Hannah Dubner and Ben Holtzman). Just as importantly, they assemble into a stupendous team.

Beyond the many comic punches, the show and its ensemble join forces

to deliver unending spectacles of sight and sound. The athletic choreography by Raquis Da’Juan Petree and dance captain Yusui feels almost infinite, extending even through the basketball game sequences. The show’s pleasant, upbeat rock-musical numbers are uplifted by Mike Duncan’s sound design, which keeps the instrumentals driving and the lyrics bouncing. For his part, music director Greg Kenna delivers the goods from on high, conducting the impeccable band from its cinderblock perch above Brian Kessler’s transformable gymnasium set.

Indeed, as much as the production’s tenor is sprightly, sharp and sparkly, the entire harmonious design scheme is right in step. Kessler leads with screaming school colors, and costume designer Corey Globke follows with loud and proud statement pieces that accentuate the garish hues. When the location changes, Reid G. Johnson’s lighting effects complete the transition, as well as having their own over-the-top say in moments of extreme grandeur.

The result is a textbook example of choosing an approach and attacking it from all aspects, in perfect accord. This cacophonous, ribald, energetic end product is so singularly campy, it transcends blasé crowd pleasing. Some may not be poised to enjoy “Lysistrata Jones,” but the many who do should have a blast from beginning to end.



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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Feb. 20

Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933-1945 The story of what happened to homosexuals in Nazi Germany is the subject of the exhibition. Holocaust Memorial Center, 48123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. 248-553-2400 x24. Holocaustcenter.org

Detroit Elders 5 p.m. Discuss and address issues specific to the LGBT community as we "age in the D." Detroit Elders, 4750 Woodward, Detroit. 313-833-1300. belcrest5440@yahoo.com

The Parent Network 6 p.m. This group aims to assist parents in understanding their child's identity, while also giving parents the opportunity to socialize with other adults who have LGBT children. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. Kglirc.org

Out as an Ally: A Step Forward in Understanding 7 p.m. Ally training program. Pizza provided. Free. Holocaust Memorial Center, 48123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. 248-553-2400 x24. Holocaustcenter.org

Trivia with Terry 7 p.m. Join Terry for Trivia upstairs. No registration required. Aut Bar, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-994-3677. Autbar.com

Whole Lives, Healthy Lives Adult Support Group 7 p.m. This one-of-a-kind program in Berrien County helps attendees support each other in healthy ways through active listening and caring feedback. OutCenter, 132 Water St., Benton Harbor. 269-925-8330. Outcenter.org

Pagan Chat Nights 7:30 p.m. Come socialize with FOCAS members and other area pagans! Michigan Pagans, 21700 West Road, Woodhaven. Meetup.com/michiganpagans

Polyamory Network 7:30 p.m. Open and inclusive community of people living polyamorously, people interested in polyamory and people of, friendly to and curious about polyamory. Welcomes diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity. Meets the third Thursday of every month. Polyamory Network, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. jimtoycenter.org

Convocation 8 p.m. A convention of the many mystical spiritual paths and faiths and the people that follow them who desire to teach each other and promote fellowship among all esoteric traditions.

Michigan Pagans, 5801 Southfield Expressway, Detroit. Meetup.com/michiganpagans

Friday, Feb. 21

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Journey to Kafiristan. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Feb. 22

LAHR Breakfast Club 10 a.m. Meet at Flap Jack near Frandor. Lansing Association for Human Rights, Lansing. beachlerb@sbcglobal.net lahronline.org

LezRead 4 p.m. Ann Arbor's book group for Lesbians. Meets the last Saturday of every month. LezReads, 319 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. Lezread@yahoo.com LezRead.com

Men's Discussion Group 6 p.m. Lighthearted or in-depth discussion on a variety of topics. For gay, bi-affective, and transgender men 18 and up. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

2014 Annual Dinner 7 p.m. A celebration of Equality Michigan's accomplishments and to recognize the catalysts to those successes. The evening begins with a reception and silent auction-your chance to network, meet fellow supporters of equality, and bid on some cool stuff. Tickets: \$175-300. Equality Michigan, Detroit. 313-537-7000. Equalitymi.org/dinner

Step Inside the Box Gala 7 p.m. Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and silent auction. Tickets: \$50. AIDS Walk Detroit, 316 E. Eleven Mile Road, Royal Oak. 248-399-WALK. Aidswalkdetroit.org

Drag Queen Bingo 8 p.m. Reservations required. 18+. Drag Queen Bentley James. Ticket: \$20. Leaf & Berry, 6385 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield Township. 248-671-6011. info@leafnberry.com Leafnberry.com

The 27th Erotic Poetry & Music Festival 8 p.m. Features provocative poetry, dirty spoken word, erotic art, music, and dance performances by some of the city's top performers. A portion of the proceeds benefits Paws with a Cause. Static Network, 715 E. Milwaukee, Detroit. 313-873-2955. info@staticrecords.com Facebook.com/EroticPoetryandMusicFestival

Open Meditation Saturdays 9 p.m. A communal, non-hierarchical meditation space open to all. Affirmations, 290 W.

Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Sunday, Feb. 23

The Southfield Pavilion Antiques Exposition 11 a.m. Tickets: \$8-10. M&M Enterprises, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield. 586-465-9441. Antiquesexposition.com

Tashmoo Biergarten 12 p.m. Pop-up European style beer garden with Detroit sensibility. Food, beer, games, and more. Location often varies. Tashmoo Biergarten, 1420 Van Dyke, Detroit. guten-tag@tashmoodetroit.com Tashmoodetroit.com

Equality Cabaret 1 p.m. To benefit the Michigan Marriage Challenge. Tickets: \$25-250. Jim Toy Community Center, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

Blue Is the Warmest Color 2 p.m. The award-winning French drama in which a teenager finds her perceptions of sexuality challenged upon meeting an older woman. Tickets: \$4-6. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 810-234-1695. ebradley@flintarts.org Flintarts.org

TransCend TransCend provides support and resources to the Southwest Michigan transgender community, their significant others, family, friends, and allies. Meetings occur twice per month on the 2nd Wednesday and 4th Sunday. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., Kalamazoo. 269-349-4234. Kglirc.org

Fellowship for Today 5:30 p.m. Open and Affirming. Lansing Korean United Methodist Church, 2400 E. Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing. 517-337-4070. info@fellowshipfortoday.org

Showbiz Sunday 10 p.m. Ace Deville, Delicious, Maria Mirelez, DJ Lipgloss, and more. Additional showtimes at 11 p.m. and 12 a.m. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., Lansing. 517-894-1315. Spiraldancebar.com

Monday, Feb. 24

Holy, Black and Gay: How Far Have We Come? 5:30 p.m. Film Screening: "Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin" and Dialogue with Bishop Allyson Nelson Abrams, Rev. Roland Stringfellow, and UDM Director of African American Studies Terri Laws. University of Detroit Mercy African American Studies Program, Detroit. 313-578-0404. lawste@udmercy.edu

See Happenings, page 24



Out as an Ally begins at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 20. The Holocaust Memorial Center is at 48123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. The event is free. For more information, visit www.holocaustcenter.org or call 248-553-2400, ext. 24.

Editor's Pick

The Holocaust Memorial Center will offer a special ally training program this week titled, "Out as an Ally: A Step Forward in Understanding." The free event includes a pizza dinner.

In the training, expect to examine the concepts of gender, sexual orientation and human rights while learning how Allies can be some of the most powerful voices of the LGBT movement. Learn to convey the importance of equality, fairness, acceptance and mutual respect.

“I’m like, ‘What the fuck is my life?’ Like, what do you do? You just let Madonna wipe your tears, that’s what you do.”

– Mary Lambert on meeting Madonna at the Grammys



Photo: Mike Ruiz

► Mary Lambert

Continued from p. 16

Were you at all intimidated by that?

I was a little shaky when I first met her because her entourage came in and she said, “I’m Madonna.” But, I think it was during dress rehearsal, she had her leather gloves on and I’m sobbing watching these people who are about to exchange their vows and she leans over – and she’s wiping the tears from my face with her leather gloves and looking at me! I’m like, “What the fuck is my life?” Like, what do you do? You just let Madonna wipe your tears, that’s what you do. (Laughs)

Your first performance was when you were a kid, for a gaggle of Beanie Babies. What’s it like performing for real people?

It’s how it should be! I feel like I was made to be a performer and I just depend so much on the energy – like, warm, breathing bodies. (Laughs)

You struggled with your sexuality when you were a teenager. And, really, in many ways you epitomize the “it gets better” story, don’t you?

Yeah, but I had a really amazing

support system. The conflict was not external; the conflict definitely had to do with reconciling my faith and my sexuality. There was no enemy, you know?

Just yourself?

Yeah. When I was a kid, I wanted to be in love so badly. It was more of this obsession with being in love, and so I always had a boyfriend, but I knew that I found girls much more physically appealing. Honestly, everything that I thought I was is how I thought everybody else felt. I thought that other girls would try to make out with their friends too! (Laughs) I just thought that was something that girls did – that they fantasized about boobs! I just thought that was a thing. I thought everybody preferred to be with women, but the weird thing is that my mom is gay so it’s not like it wasn’t OK. It just didn’t occur to me that I could be that way. I questioned it a lot. Like, “I think I could see myself having sex with a woman” – and this is me at 12 years old saying these things. (Laughs) I was highly analytical.

At 12 years old?

Yeah! (Laughs) I’ve always been sure of who I am. In high school, there was one bi girl who was like, “I

date girls.” I was like, “You can date girls and that’s OK?”

The real turmoil of it happened when I was 18 or 19. I was attending an Evangelical church and I met this girl and I was in love with her. I wanted to be with her but I didn’t want to sin.

How was writing cathartic for you at that time in your life?

That was everything to me. It was the only way I could have gotten through it. I discovered spoken word around the time I came out, maybe two years afterward, but about the peak of my suicide attempt is when I wrote my first poem. It was about being conflicted about the Christian church and being gay and how difficult that was. Poetry really got me out of it.

How does it feel to sing “I’m not crying on Sundays,” then, during the chorus of “Same Love”?

It’s so empowering. It’s the most empowering thing. It feels like a declaration for me, but I also know that it’s so many other people’s stories. I think that’s what makes me feel so strongly about it. Not that the gay community is silenced and I’m speaking for them, but like I can be an advocate. I really just wanted to bring a universal truth to

the song rather than politicize (the issue) any more than it’s already become.

The biggest declaration for me is definitely saying “I’m not crying on Sundays.” I spent every Sunday for a year crying in church. It was just guilt and so much shame, and so for me that’s a declaration, like, “Fuck shame, I’m not sorry, I’m not apologizing for who I am.” I’m not gonna cry anymore about being oppressed.

Was the chorus of “Same Love” written about your girlfriend, Michelle Chamuel of “The Voice”?

Umm ... that song has seen many different incarnations. It’s been about a series of really great loves that I have had, so I wouldn’t say it’s about anyone super in particular.

Were you surprised to hear the song on the radio?

When it first made its debut on the radio it blew my mind, but when it hit hip-hop radio I was like, “Oh, it’s fucking over.”

How does it feel to be a Grammy-nominated artist so early in your career?

I’m trying to wrap my head around it. The whole thing just feels like a

fluke – and like someone’s gonna take it away. (Laughs)

Are there any plans to work with Macklemore in the future?

I would love to. He shot to a place that is bananas, so honestly I just think it’s about timing and scheduling. We both really respect each other as artists, and he’s so supportive of everything I do. We’re buddies, you know?

You’ve done some tour dates with Tegan and Sara. What was it like hanging out with them?

I don’t know if Tegan knows this, but maybe it’s just time for it to come out: In all of my previous relationships, Tegan has been that one person who I’m allowed to sleep with. She was my pass.

We were performing “Same Love” for an iTunes show and I’m like, “I am meeting Tegan and Sara today!” They were performing right before us and I was like, “Oh my god, they’re gonna see me perform. I have to make sure my cleavage looks great.” So I’m sitting in the dressing room, which happens to be a bridal suite and so there’s wedding pics everywhere, and I walk in and go, “This is how it happens.” They’re just totally awesome. No makey-outy time, though.

What do you hope to accomplish with “Welcome to the Age of My Body”?

The word I kept telling myself surrounding this album was empowerment. I want to empower myself and empower and mobilize other people with art. If I’m unsuccessful, I’m unsuccessful, but it’s worth trying.

What I hope this record achieves is a sense of vulnerability. I want to be as vulnerable as possible with my audience, because I think there are a lot of issues that I’m working out. It’s more of me opening up and hoping to be held, and then also hoping my voice can encircle a hug.

Because this is mostly a spoken-word album, does it feel like a risk to release it on a major label?

I’m fucking terrified. I know in my heart what it can do, but there’s no formula for it. I don’t know if it’s been done before. Either it changes something or it totally flops – I don’t know if I’m supposed to say that – but I have faith in it. I have faith in the power of what words can do.

▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 22

Fun Run & Walk Program 6:30 p.m. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org



on 715 E. Milwaukee, Detroit. A portion of the proceeds will benefit "Paws with a Cause." For more information, call 313-873-2955 or visit www.Facebook.com/EroticPoetryandMusicFestival.

Nest Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Monthly Bible study focusing on LGBTQ issues. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 508 Denner St., **Kalamazoo**. Kglrc.org

Center Open-Drop In 7 p.m. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. Jimtoycenter.org

Mad Hatter's Writing Group 7 p.m. This group meets the fourth Monday of each month. It's a working group focused on using various tools and techniques to move any current project forward toward completion. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Movement with Kristi Faulkner Dance 7 p.m. A different genre of movement each week, including modern dance, ballet, jazz, hip hop/breaking, soft shoe tap dance, and stretch and strengthening. Workshops are designed for beginning/intermediate movers ages 16-55. Tickets: \$5. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Writing Group 7 p.m. Different focus for each meeting. Meets fourth Monday of every month. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Tuesday, Feb. 15

Grand River Connection Creative class. Lansing Association for Human Rights, **Lansing**. grandriverconnection.com

Older Adult and Senior Helpline 4 p.m. Provides peer counseling, empathy and community resources for LGBT adults. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 1-800-398-4297. goaffirmations.org

Trans/Genderqueer Peer Group 4 p.m. EMU LGBTRC, **Ypsilanti**. 734-487-4149. Emich.edu/lgbtrc

Aff Action Night 6 p.m. Educating others about how to make Michigan an equality state. Pizza provided for volunteers. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Talk Tuesdays 6 p.m. Free. KICK, 41 Burroughs St. 109, **Detroit**. 313-285-9733. e-kick.org

Annie's Ghosts Book Discussion 6:30 p.m. Members of the public were asked to share their dark, happy, trivial, or profound family secrets with us. To be compiled into a book called "Annie's Ghosts: A Journey into a Family Secret." The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, **Detroit**. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

listen-to others who share similar experiences. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Open Arms Support Group 7 p.m. Southeast Michigan's lonest running peer-run HIV/AIDS support group for those infected or affected by HIV or AIDS. Michigan Aids Coalition, 429

and building community connections. Tickets: \$35 per person. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

20 Somethings 7 p.m. Social group for young adults. Followed by an evening out. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Toastmasters International SpeakOUT! Club 7 p.m. Toastmasters will show you how to listen more effectively, think on your feet and speak confidently Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-995-9867. Jimtoycenter.org

Drag Queen Bingo Un-Leashed 8 p.m. "No Holds Barred" Thursday edition! 18+. Tickets: \$20. Five15, 515 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. Five15.net

Friday, Feb. 28

Alexander: Art Bi-Polar A solo exhibition of work by Charles Alexander. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, **Detroit**. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

Open Mic Night with Michelle Brown 6 p.m. Whether it's poetry, singing or anything in between, this is your opportunity to express yourself on stage. All ages welcome. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: The Long Walk Home-Sissy Spacek stars as Miriam Thompson, a Montgomery, Ala., housewife who finds herself in the midst of a civil rights revolution when she helps her black maid, Odessa (Whoopi Goldberg), during the infamous bus boycott of the 1950s. When Miriam discovers Odessa is forced to walk the 9 miles to her house and back, she volunteers to give Odessa a ride -- much to the dismay of Miriam's husband and social circle. Affirmations,

Livornois, **Ferndale**. 248-545-1435. openarms@michiganaidcoalition.org Michiganaidcoalition.org

Significant Other Support 7 p.m. Discussion and support group for friends and loved ones of LGBT. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Sistrum Weekly Rehearsal 7 p.m. Sistrum, Lansing Women's Chorus, 215 N. Capital Ave., **Lansing**. Sistrum.org

Young@Heart 7 p.m. Socializing and conversation for those 45 and older. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Whiskey Wednesday 8 p.m. Country line dancing. Free juke box. MaleBox Michigan, 23365 Hoover Road, **Warren**. 586-806-2390. Facebook.com/Male

Karaoke Night 9 p.m. Lansing Association for Human Rights, 1250 Turner St., **Lansing**. 517-487-5338. lahronline.org

Thursday, Feb. 27

Twisted Games Party games and fully nude strippers. Hosted by Ace Deville. 18+. Spiral Dance Bar, 1247 Center St., **Lansing**. 517-894-1315. Spiraldancebar.com

New Volunteer Meeting 5:30 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Connections 6 p.m. Open to all LGBTQ and Ally youth from 13-18. Join us to meet other LGBTQ and Ally teens and socialize in a safe space. Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, 629 Pioneer St., **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234. Kglrc.org

Gender Hormone Counseling Sessions 6 p.m. Darnell Jones, RPH and GNA, will conduct one on one counseling sessions for the transgender community. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Relationship Skills Class 6 p.m. A series for LGBTQ people and their friends and loved ones. Topics include: exploring personal and cultural relationships, values, arguments and making agreements, accountability

Editor's Pick

Did you miss a chance to go to the Dirty Show? Don't worry, you still have a chance to get your erotic fix in with the 27th Erotic Poetry & Music Festival.

Presented by the Static Network, the festival will feature various performance art. Look for provocative poetry, dirty spoken word, erotic art, dance and music. Some of the city's top performers will be presenting their craft.

The festival begins at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22 at The Hastings Street Ballroom

gay night. 18+. Guys with college ID get in free before 11 p.m. Cover: \$5+. Necto, 516 E. Liberty St., **Ann Arbor**. 734-994-5835. Thenecto.com

MUSIC & MORE

Classical

Berman Center for the Performing Arts "Haifa Symphony Orchestra" First time touring the US. Tickets: \$62-67. Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 8 p.m. Feb. 20. 248-661-1900. Theberman.org

Cranbrook Art Museum "A Concert with Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings" Concert preview at 2:15. Tickets: \$10-30. Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. 3 p.m. Feb. 23. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings "Strauss Deconstructed" Tickets: \$22-25. DeSalle Auditorium, Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. 3 p.m. Feb. 23. 877-462-7262. Detroitchamberwinds.org

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Divine Dvorak". Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Feb. 22. 313-576-5111. Dso.org

University Musical Society (UMS) "St. Petersburg Philharmonic" Tickets: \$10-85. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 22. 734-761-1800. Ums.org

Comedy

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Comedy Jamm" It's cut-loose comedy as we present the comedy of 12 of the current rising stars in the Detroit Metro area and beyond. Tickets: \$5. Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Aug. 8-March 26. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

Blind Pig "Joe Pug" 18+. Tickets: \$12-14. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 20. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

Cathedral Choir "Choral Evensong" An organ recital by a guest organist follows Evensong at 5:10 p.m. Cathedral Church of St. Paul, 4800 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 23-March 23. 313-833-7547. Facebook.com/detroitcathedralmusic

Kerrytown Concert House "The Ellen Rowe Quintet" CD release of Courage Music. Tickets: \$5-30. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 23. 734-763-4186. Kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Macomb Center for the Performing Arts "Ladysmith Black Mambazo" Tickets: \$15-38. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 21. 586-286-2222. Macombcenter.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre "Alfie Boe" All ages. Tickets: \$35. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. 7 p.m. Feb. 20. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Hempy Keyboard Series with I-Chen Yeh" Tickets: \$0-10. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. 2 p.m. Feb. 23. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

St. Cecilia Music Center "Gregory Porter" Hot Jazz. St. Cecilia Music Center, 24 Ransom NE., Grand Rapids. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 20. 616-459-2224. Scmc-online.org

The Ark "Nuala Kennedy Band" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 20. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

The Ark "Nora Jane Struthers" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 21. 734-761-1800. Theark.org

Editor's Pick

Tony Kushner's "Angels in America" is that rare entity: a work for the stage that is profoundly moving yet very funny, highly theatrical yet steeped in traditional literary values, and most of all deeply American in its attitudes and political concerns. Although the story is told over two full-length plays, the Ringwald Theatre in Ferndale will present "Part 1: Millennium Approaches" (for now) for an exclusive 12-performance run beginning Friday, Feb. 21.



Prior is a man living with AIDS whose lover Louis has left him and become involved with Joe, an ex-Mormon and political conservative whose wife, Harper, is slowly having a nervous breakdown. These stories are contrasted with that of Roy and his attempts to remain in the closet while trying to find some sort of personal salvation in his beliefs.

Tickets are \$10-20. Tickets are available at www.theringwald.com. The Ringwald is located at 22742 Woodward Ave. in Ferndale.

290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. Goaffirmations.org

Detroit Women's Coffee House Revival 8 p.m. A chance for us to celebrate the talent in our community and raise funds for Women musicians and artists and our local non-profit organizations in our community. GIFT, 1641 Middlebelt Road, **Inkster**. 248-943-2411. lindacbrin@gmail.com Womenoutandabout.com/calendar/detroit-womens-coffee-house/

Bear Trap 9 p.m. All new weekly party for bears, cubs and their admirers. Hayloft Saloon, 8070 Greenfield Road, **Detroit**. 313-581-8913. Hayloftsaloon.com

Pride Friday 9 p.m. The one and only

Royal Oak Music Theatre "The truTV Impractical Jokers Tour feat. The Tenderloins" 18+. Tickets: \$37. 50-87. 50. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. 7 p.m. Feb. 21. 248-399-2980. Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Concerts

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase "Ben Creed" Tickets: \$8-13. Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 20-Feb. 22. 734-996-9080. Aacomedy.com

Blind Pig "The Soil & The Sun" With Flint Eastwood. 18+. Tickets: \$10. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9 p.m. Feb. 22. 734-996-8555. Blindpigmusic.com

The Magic Bag "Peter Buck & Alejandro Escovedo" Tickets: \$27. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Feb. 21. 248-544-3030. Themagicbag.com

The Majestic "Caveman" All ages. Tickets: \$10-12. The Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Feb. 26. 313-833-9700. Majesticdetroit.com

The Majestic "Paper Diamond" With Loudpvck and Branchez. 18+. Tickets: \$17. 50-25. The Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 9 p.m. Feb. 21. 313-833-9700. Majesticdetroit.com

“ I feel like I've been a ally for a long time. And this event makes a lot of sense to me as a songwriter because it involves a particular family. Personal stories are highly impactful. It speaks to something I've struggled with for a long time, in that I don't think of myself as an activist songwriter. That's not what I do. But I very much want to participate in changing the world for the better.”

► **Vienna Teng**

Continued from p. 20

gay lover in San Francisco.

“It's a great example of how I like to approach issues in song,” says Teng. “It's an incredibly emotional day for them, partially because they've been denied the right to do this for so long. I wanted to tell it in a story rather than just standing on a soapbox somehow, and hopefully help people make an empathetic connection. I'm interested in having a conversation with people, and while I've never cut myself off from writing about political things, I do think about the idea of preserving my relationship with my audience.”

Now 35, Teng's even-minded approach to finding her place in the world has allowed her to continue building her musical projects while pursuing academic interests and, more recently, going back to working a day job. While others might kick and scream about the dissolution of their full-time music dreams, Teng says the company she's gone to work for has a flexible time program, allowing her to take larger chunks of leave time to make sure she maintains her loyal following. “It gives their employees time to be who they really are outside of the office, which ... if you're going to hire dynamic, exciting people to work for you, they need that time to nurture their interests,” she says.

A self-confessed academic junkie, Teng came to Michigan in 2010 when she was accepted at the Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise at the University of Michigan. Through the program, she received a pair of Masters Degrees and aligned herself for the dual career scenario she's now pursuing. After wrapping up the program in Ann Arbor, Teng released her most sonically diverse collection to date, “Aims,” and moved

to Detroit. Right after relocating, she went on tour. So, she's only just getting to know her new city now despite having moved there some eight months ago.

“It's not far from Ann Arbor, but it's worlds apart in terms of who lives here and how they're living,” she says of Detroit. “It's a pretty exciting shift for me, mainly because I've never lived somewhere where everyone I meet is actively engaged in the future of their city. Civic dialogue is a huge facet of being here; you can sit down at a bar and talk with anybody, and you'll find they have opinions on what's happening here, what needs to happen here. It's an excellent way to make sure my mind stays open and susceptible to change – to be influenced by the ideas of others whose experiences are different from my own.”

Despite recognizing the state's need for change in its policies regarding same-sex marriages and adoption laws, Teng feels strongly that Michigan is merely experiencing normal growing pains and isn't necessarily stuck in some legally archaic holding pattern. She says that she thinks of the Midwest as a “third coast” – high praise for someone that's lived in San Francisco and Manhattan. She says the flat, Midwestern stereotypes create a perfect metaphor about the area's hidden assets.

“This area of the country looks flat and boring when taken at face value,” she says. “But when you spend time here, you discover a subtle patience and fortitude to the landscape that reflects in behavior of the people. I really love that overall spirit and humility. Admittedly, though, I move in a pretty liberal bubble. I hang with progressive thinkers, so I'm a bit insulated from certain ideals. But to me, what's happening here regarding LGBT marriage is indicative of a much larger, generational struggle.”

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▶ Happenings

Continued from p. 24

The Palace of Auburn Hills "Paul Simon & Sting On Stage Together" Tickets: \$54-273. 80. The Palace of Auburn Hills, 5 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills. 8 p.m. Feb. 26. 248-377-0100. Ticketmaster.com

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

A Night of One Acts \$5. Richmond Community Theatre, 69619 Parker St., Richmond. Feb. 21 - 22. 586-727-9518. richmondtheatre.com

Ain't Misbehavin' \$20-30. Stagecrafters at Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Feb. 14 - March 2. 248-541-6430. stagecrafters.org

Assassins \$16-18. Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Through March 1. 248-473-1856. Farmingtonplayers.org

Deathtrap \$7-15. Twin City Players, 600 W. Glenlord Road, St. Joseph. Through Feb. 23. 269-429-0400. Twincityplayers.org

Father of the Bride \$15-35. The Croswell, 129 E. Maumee St., Adrian. Feb. 28 - March 9. 517-263-6868. croswell.org

Free Man of Color \$10-12. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Feb. 28 - March 9. 517-482-5700. riverwalk.com

Good People \$18-24. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Parish Theatre, 426 South Park Street, Kalamazoo. Feb. 28 - March 15. 269-343-1313. kazooicivic.com

Peter Pan The Musical \$12. The Franke Center for the Arts, 214 E. Mansion St., Marshall. Feb. 20 - 23. 269-781-0001. frankecenterforthearts.org

The Miracle Worker \$24. The Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Through March 1. 269-343-1313. Kazooicivic.com

College/University Theater

Hay Fever \$10-28. U-M Department of Theatre & Drama, Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, 911 N. University, Ann Arbor. Feb. 20 - 23. 734-971-2228. tickets.music.umich.edu

Prelude to a Kiss \$5-15. Lansing Community College Performing Arts at Dart Auditorium, 500 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. Through Feb. 23. 517-483-1488. lcc.edu/showinfo

Professional

'Tis Pity She's a Whore \$8-12. Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company at Dog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson SE, Grand Rapids. Feb. 21 - 23. 616-425-9234. dogstorytheater.com

1300 Lafayette East \$41-48. The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company at Aaron DeRoy Theatre on the campus of the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Through Feb. 23. 248-788-2900. jetttheatre.org

24 Hour Theatre a la Commedia Dell'Arte \$5. Hole in the Wall Theatre Company at Flint Local 432, 124 W. First St., Flint. 8 p.m. Feb. 25. holeinthewalltc.com

A Play by Franco Vitella \$15-18. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company at The Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette #113, Detroit. Through Feb. 22. 313-408-7269. Magentagiraffe.org

Aaron Radatz: Magical Entertainer \$15-25. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 3 p.m. Feb. 23. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

Almost, Maine \$32-39. The Dio - Dining and Entertainment, 135 E. Main St., Pinckney. Through March 2. 517-672-6009. diotheatre.com

Angels in America Part 1: Millennium Approaches \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Feb. 21 - March 10. 248-545-5545. theringwald.com

Awake \$8-10 in advance; \$2 more at the door. Two Muses Theatre at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Through Feb. 23. 248-850-9919. twomusetheatre.org

Beauty and the Beast \$25-32. Wharton Center, Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. Feb. 18 - 23. 800-WHARTON. whartoncenter.com

Clybourne Park \$27-29. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Through Feb. 23. 269-343-2727. farmersalleytheatre.com

Clybourne Park \$7. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 6 p.m. Feb. 23. 810-237-1530. flintyouththeatre.org

Collected Stories \$15-20. Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley, Detroit. Feb. 21 - March 16. 313-967-0999. matrixtheatre.org

ComedySportz Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 877-636-3320. comedysportzdetroit.com

I Do! I Do! The Snug Theatre, 160 S. Water St., Marine City. Through Feb. 22. 810-278-1749. thesnugtheatre.com

Lysistrata Jones \$25-40. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Through March 9. 248-377-

3300. mbtheatre.com

Moon Over Buffalo! \$12-30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Feb. 21 - April 5. 313-577-2972. hilberry.com

Murder at the Howard Johnson's \$27-32. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Through March 9. 248-347-0003. tippingpointtheatre.com

My Dearest Friend \$8-12. GEM Theatrics atog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson SE, Grand Rapids. Feb. 28 - March 2. 616-425-9234. dogstorytheater.com

My Occasion of Sin \$17-20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through March 16. 313-868-1347. detroitreptheatre.com

Oliver! \$22-32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Through March 2. 734-268-6200. theencoretheatre.org

Redwood Curtain \$18.50-42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through March 15. 734-433-7673. purplerosetheatre.org

The Great Mountain \$5-10. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. Feb. 27. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

The Improvised Shakespeare Company \$20-25. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. March 1. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

The Lion in Winter \$15-25. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Through Feb. 23. 517-655-SHOW. williamstontheatre.org

The Suit \$18-60. University Musical Society at Power Center for the Performing Arts, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 19 - 22. 734-764-2538. ums.org

The Sunshine Boys \$15-18. Broadway

Onstage Live Theatre, 21517 Kelly Road, Eastpointe. Feb. 21 - March 22. 586-771-6333. broadwayonstage.com

The Taming of the Shrew \$20. The Elizabeth Theater Company, 2040 Park Ave., Detroit. Through March 2. 313-454-1286. elizabeththeater.com

Tony n' Tina's Wedding \$63. Detroit Actors Guild Productions, Inc. at Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren. 6:30 p.m. Feb. 21. 586-268-3200. andiamoitalia.com/showroom

Venus in Fur \$22-41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Feb. 27 - April 6. 734-663-0681. performancenetwork.org

ART 'N' AROUND

Cranbrook Academy of Art and Art Museum "Waylande Gregory: Art Deco Ceramics and the Atomic Impulse" 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 16-March 23. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

Cranbrook Academy of Art and Art Museum "The Islands of Benoit Mandelbrot: Fractals, Chaos, and the Materiality of Thinking" 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 16-March 30. 877-462-7262. Cranbrookart.edu

Detroit Institute of Arts "A Throne for an African Prince" 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 1-March 16. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Let Me Show You What I Saw: American Views on City and Country, 1912-1963" 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 1-June 29. 313-833-7900. ww. Dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Foto Europa, 1850 to the Present" 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 25-April 27. 313-833-

7900. Dia.org

Downriver Council for the Arts "Mystic Sisters" 81 Chestnut, Wyandotte. Feb. 21-March 14. 734-720-0671. Downriverarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Point of View: Contemporary African American Art from the Elliot & Kimberly Perry Collection" 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 26-April 13. 810-234-1695. Flintarts.org

Gallery 1212 Old Town "Homebound: The Work of Nicolas V. Sanchez". Gallery 1212 Old Town, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. Feb. 1-Feb. 27. Gallery1212.com

Grand Rapids Art Museum "Friday Night Conversations" 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids. Aug. 9-Feb. 28. 616-831-1000. artmuseumgr.org

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum "The President's Photographer: Fifty Years Inside the Oval Office" 7400 Bay Road, University Center. Feb. 3-May 24. 989-964-7125. Marshallfredericks.org/presidents

MOCAD "Tabernacle: A Metamorphic Healing Module" 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 7-May 4. 313-832-6622. Mocadetroit.org

Pewabic Pottery "State of Flux". Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1-March 9. 313-626-2000. Pewabic.org

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Balancing Point" 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. Feb. 7-April 6. 269-857-2399. Sc4a.org

The Scarab Club "Bill Rauhauser". 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. Feb. 19-March 29. 313-831-1250. Scarabclub.org

UMMA "Three Michigan Architects: Part 1-David Osler" 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. Dec. 7-March 31. 734-763-4186. Umma.umich.edu

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Out of Town

Weekend in Savannah

BY ANDREW COLLINS

The dignified city that General James Oglethorpe put on the map in 1733 has weathered the vagaries of time in fine fashion. Savannah has survived devastating fires and been spared destruction by General Sherman during the Civil War. It's bounced back from the neglect of its historic district during the mid-20th century, enjoyed a remarkable comeback partly spurred by John Berendt's endearingly quirky, gay-tinted account of the city, "Midnight in The Garden of Good and Evil," and entered more recently into a contemporary arts-driven renaissance heralded by the rapid growth of the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), which opened only 35 years ago but now owns nearly 70 downtown buildings – some of them quite prominent.

Savannah isn't a stodgy and static vestige of a long-ago era. Carefully preserved it may be, this fast-growing Southern city is home to a thriving creative class, has a growing appetite for hotels and restaurants with a contemporary bent, and has surprising knack for accommodating all sorts of disparate elements – ardent preservationists, edgy designers, rowdy tour-bus tourists, sophisticated sybaritics, drag aficionados. The heady blend makes this leafy city a fine spot for people-watching, and a richly rewarding weekend destination. Savannah lies within an afternoon's drive of Atlanta, Charleston, Charlotte, Jacksonville and Orlando, and its airport has direct flights of two hours or less from Chicago, Dallas, Houston, New York City, Washington, and several other cities.

Here's a quick, handy itinerary for planning a three-day getaway to Savannah, along with several recommendations of gay-popular hotels and inns.

Friday

Depending on when you arrive in town, rest up a bit before planning an easygoing evening of restaurant- and bar-hopping around the historic City Market district and the surrounding blocks, which are home to several sophisticated-but-friendly mixed lounges and bars. One fine food option is A.Lure (aluresavannah.com), which presents a contemporary take on the region's classic lowcountry cuisine – don't miss the seared sea scallops with pulled-duck confit and mango-jalapeno barbecue sauce and savory sweet-corn ice cream. The more traditional Belford's (belfordssavannah.com), with its high ceilings and graceful front patio, specializes in seafood and steaks but is also an inviting stop for a cocktail to kick off the evening.

Eclectic nearby bars worth checking out for post-dinner sipping and schmoozing include the hipster-favored Sparetime (sparetimesavannah.com), known for its

creative artisan-cocktail menu; the cheerfully dive-y Rail Pub (therailpub.com); and, several blocks farther down MLK Boulevard, the Distillery (distillersavannah.com), with its extensive craft-beer list.

Saturday

Start the morning with breakfast at Clary's Cafe (claryscafe.com), a no-nonsense greasy spoon serving honest favorites like French toast stuffed with strawberries and cream cheese, and crab cakes Benedict. Then get to know the city's historic district better with a guided walk by Jonathan Stalcup of Architectural Savannah (architecturalsavannah.com) – his tours typically leave from Chippewa Square at 10 a.m. (reservations required, \$20 per person). An author and architectural historian, Stalcup graduated from SCAD, has an amazing knowledge of the city's design history, and is also a helpful resource on the local gay scene.

Grab lunch downtown. Fire Street Food (firestreetfood.com), which occupies what had been Blaine's, a gone-but-not-forgotten gay bar, serves tasty international fare (sushi rolls, pad Thai, seared-fish sandwiches), while the more traditional Olde Pink House (plantersinnsavannah.com/the-olde-pink-house) is a legendary Savannah experience that every visitor should try at least once. Specialties include she-crab soup, fried green tomatoes with bacon-sweet corn cream and crab-stuffed grouper.

Spend the afternoon walking around downtown, checking out the diverting shops along Broughton Street, including gay-owned Chocolat by Adam Turoni, whose artisan sweets are as beautiful to behold and to devour; the local outpost of chic designer Marc Jacobs; and Sylvester & Co., a colorful "general store" of housewares and decorative arts with a modern sensibility.

Make time to visit the Telfair Museums, which comprise the original 1818 Telfair Academy, with its sculptures, 19th- and 20th-century paintings and period furnishings; the strikingly contemporary Jepson Center, which was designed by Moshe Safdie and contains a superb contemporary art collection; and nearby Owens-Thomas House, a fairly unusual U.S. example of English Regency architecture. Also don't miss the new SCAD Museum of Art, which has been constructed out of a the 1856 former headquarters of the Central of Georgia Railway and presents provocative rotating installations and well as works from a growing and impressive permanent collection.

For dinner that evening, try one of the relatively new hotspots around town, perhaps Public Kitchen & Bar (thepublickitchen.com), a scene-y neighborhood bistro with attractive



Jonathan Stalcup leads one of his fascinating architectural tours of historic Savannah. Photo: Andrew Collins.

indoor and outdoor seating and a menu focused on well-crafted comfort fare, from a burger topped with Coca-Cola-barbecue sauce to classic shrimp and grits. A bit more upscale, Local 11 Ten (local11ten.com) earns raves for its crisp, angular interior and artfully presented food, including charred local octopus with kale and nori aioli, and roasted half chicken with truffled sweet potatoes.

Savannah has a couple of fun gay nightspots that pack in the crowds on Saturdays. Club One (clubone-online.com) has long been famous as the home bar of the Lady Chablis, who was memorably portrayed in "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil" (and also played herself in the very movie of the same name). The shows in the upstairs cabaret are good fun, if touristy, and Lady Chablis does perform here about once a month. Downstairs, there's a big dance floor, and in the basement a cozier bar and lounge. The other option is Chuck's, a festive neighborhood bar situated among the converted warehouses on the riverfront; there's a good jukebox and a pool table in back, and the drinks are cheap and potent.

Sunday

You may not think of Savannah as a typical beach destination, but it's just a 15-mile drive to Tybee Island, a laid-back resort community with a long stretch of sugary sand fronting the Atlantic, a long fishing pier, and several lively bars and restaurants. Given that Savannah's moderate climate (highs averaging in the 60s in January and the upper 70s by April), it's nearly always a good bet for beachcombing. Along the drive out, you might also stop at one of the interesting historic sites along the way, Fort Pulaski National Monument or Tybee Island Lighthouse and Museum.

Break up your day with lunch at LGBT-owned Marlin Monroe's (marlinmonroessurfsidegrill.com), a festive venue for lunch – it fringes the beach and serves big portions of tasty seafood. If you're still hungry on your way back to Savannah in the evening, detour slightly to Savannah's South Side for dinner at one of the better soul-food eateries in the region, Sweet Potatoes Kitchen, where you can fuel up on mouthwatering peach-glazed barbecue chicken, lemon collard greens and banana pudding.



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Classifieds

01-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AA MEETINGS

Ann Arbor-Friday

7:30 pm, St. Andrews Episcopal
Church Gay AA, 306 N. Division
St. Closed/Discussion.

Bloomfield Hills-Sunday / Tuesday / Thursday

8:00 pm, North Woodward
Equality, Birmingham Unitarian
Church, 38651 Woodward,
Bloomfield Hills, lower level
classroom - enter first walkway off
Woodward entrance. Big Book/12
& 12 Meeting.

Detroit-Tuesday / Friday

8:00 pm, Downtown Gay AA, Fort
Street Presbyterian Church, 631
West Fort St. Closed/Discussion
(Open 1st Friday of every month).

Farmington Hills-Monday

8:00 pm, Suburban West Gay
AA, Universalist Unitarian Church,
25301 Halstead (Between 10 & 11
Mile Roads) Closed / Discussion.

Ferndale-Monday / Wednesday / Friday

11:30 a.m., Brown Baggers Gay
AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile
Rd. Closed/Discussion.

Ferndale-Saturday

1 p.m. Brown Baggers Gay AA,
Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd.
Closed/Discussion.

8 p.m. Go After Your Sobriety
Gay AA, Drayton Ave Presbyterian
Church, 2441 Pinecrest. Closed/
Discussion.

Livonia-Friday

8 p.m., West Side Story's Gay AA,
Providence Medical Center, 7 Mile
& Newburgh. Closed/Discussion.

Warren-Monday

7:30 p.m., Eastside Serenity Gay
AA, Odd Fellow's Hall, 830 S
Monroe St Closed/Discussion.

101-ANNOUNCEMENTS LGBT AL ANON

Diversity Wednesday AI- Anon Family Group

Wednesday 8pm
St. Luke's Parrish Hall (in
basement)
Lewiston & Livernois, Ferndale MI
Closed Meeting

Go After Your Serenity (G.A.Y.S.) AI-Anon Family Group

Saturday's 8pm
Drayton Ave. Presbyterian Church
(in basement)
Pinecrest & Drayton, Ferndale
Closed Meeting

112 ANNOUNCEMENTS - VOLUNTEERING

Ferndale Pride 2014 Volunteers

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Solution to puzzle from page 26

H	O	M	E	M	I	L	N	E	T	O	D	D		
O	N	U	S	O	C	E	A	N	O	B	I	E		
R	E	S	T	N	E	A	R	S	M	E	G	A		
N	I	C	E	H	A	I	R	C	U	T	S	I		
L	E	A	R	N	R	I	P	E	N	S				
A	N	E	M	I	C	K	N	E	E	L				
C	O	M	G	H	A	N	A	R	U	B	I	K		
E	V	E	N	S	T	E	I	N	M	A	D	E		
D	A	N	E	S	M	A	R	A	T	T	E	E		
				S	T	E	E	D	K	I	D	M	A	N
S	I	S	T	E	R	R	E	T	R	O				
C	N	N	M	E	D	O	A	D	O	U	B	L	E	
A	D	A	M	C	R	O	N	E	D	I	E	M		
N	I	R	O	T	A	N	D	Y	G	L	A	M		
T	A	K	E	S	T	A	R	E	E	E	N	Y		

Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Casting and recasting: Mara in for Mia in 'Carol'

Things change. Rooney Mara ("Her") will now be playing the lead in "Carol," the adaptation of lesbian author Patricia Highsmith's novel "The Price of Salt." Mia Wasikowska was originally cast in the main role as a young woman named Therese who falls for an older married woman (to be played by Cate Blanchett, probably perfectly), but she's dropped out. Enter Mara, whose arty lesbian fanbase was solidified by "The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo" and "Side Effects," and who can seemingly do no wrong; she's a wise choice when you want to cool-up your cast list. Furthermore, with Todd Haynes as director, an adapted screenplay by Phyllis Nagy, Christine Vachon as producer and lesbian actress Sarah Paulson ("12 Years A Slave"), this is the kind of project that would make for an avalanche of points if there such a thing as gay filmmaking fantasy leagues. Actually, who knows, maybe there are.



Emma Thompson. Photo: Jaguar PS / Shutterstock.com

company in the United States to mount the production. Nah, better just hop on that plane.

Effie Gray with a bit of gay

Euphemia "Effie" Gray was the teenage bride of the Victorian art critic John Ruskin, yet she refused to consummate that unhappy union. Instead she had it annulled before running off with Ruskin's protégé, the painter John Everett Millais. It was quite the scandal, you see, a proper aristocratic love triangle. And now, for lucky fans of corsets, tea and big hats, it's going to be a film from director John Laxton, written by Emma Thompson. Dakota Fanning (all grown up now) will play Miss Gray, and the supporting cast is populated by at least two cool gay character actors, "Being Human"'s Russell Tovey (also featured on this season of "Looking") and acclaimed veteran stage and screen presence Derek Jacobi ("The King's Speech"). But gay cast members aside, the real draws here for queer audiences are going to be the costumes, the fancy setting and that champion of sipping martinis on stage at the Golden Globes, Emma Thompson. We'll follow her anywhere, even to that weird "Saving Mr. Banks" fluff.

'Brokeback Mountain' opera opening in Madrid

The most memorable operas, the ones that inspire long-term devotion, are the tragedies. And "Brokeback Mountain," the Annie Proulx novella turned into a film and gay cultural touchstone, is nothing if not tragic. The story of two closeted ranch workers in the gay forbidden zone of 1960s Wyoming, "Brokeback" has crossed over into the world of music with a brand new opera. Composed by gay 75-year-old Charles Wuorinen, the Pulitzer Prize-winning composer whose challenging work has earned him a career filled with both the admiration of his peers as well as approval from audiences in search of new "classical" music, "Brokeback Mountain" stars Canadian bass-baritone Daniel Okulitch and U.S. tenor Tom Randle with a libretto by Proulx herself. The English-language production is being staged at Madrid's Teatro Real right now, so you can either hop on a plane or wish, hope and pray for an adventurous opera

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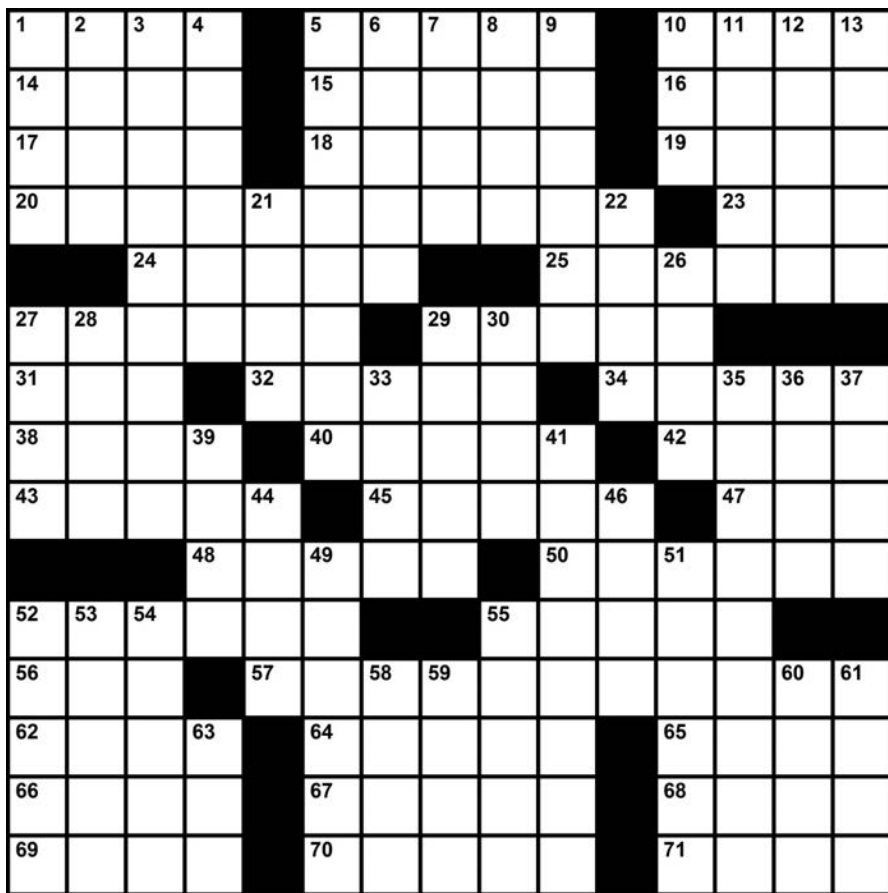
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Across

- 1 Plate of Bean's
- 5 A. A. for children
- 10 Kincannon, who a remark about Sally Kohn's photo next to Justin Bieber's
- 14 Invitation from bottoms to tops?
- 15 Rehoboth Beach setting
- 16 Village Voice award
- 17 Silence for Copland
- 18 Comes up on
- 19 Bucks prefix
- 20 Start of the remark
- 23 End of the remark
- 24 Live partner
- 25 What fruit does while preparing to get plucked
- 27 Lacking vitality
- 29 Get on your knees
- 31 End of many a web address
- 32 Kofi Annan's home
- 34 Puzzle cube inventor
- 38 Start of Sally's reply
- 40 "Rose is a rose is a rose" source
- 42 More of the reply
- 43 Ophelia and Hamlet or Claire
- 45 French Revolution figure
- 47 Start of the fairway
- 48 It comes under a jockey's shorts

- 50 Best Actress winner for "The Hours"
- 52 Goldberg or Najimy, in a movie
- 55 Back to the present
- 56 Sally Kohn's employer
- 57 More of the reply
- 62 Motherless man
- 64 Fairy tale hag
- 65 Day, to Caligula
- 66 Robert De ____
- 67 Jessica of "Fried Green Tomatoes"
- 68 David Bowie genre
- 69 End of the reply
- 70 Rubberneck
- 71 Start of a child's rhyme

Down

- 1 Saddle part
- 2 R.E.M.'s "The ____ Love"
- 3 Eye candy for gay guys
- 4 Regard
- 5 Queens, e.g.
- 6 Strand with sleet
- 7 Shakespearean king
- 8 Undercover crack investigator
- 9 Make certain
- 10 Fowl name
- 11 Too big for your britches
- 12 Words after grace
- 13 Love objects

- 21 Nixon chief of staff
- 22 Supporter of two plastic grooms
- 26 Color purple
- 27 Served like Billie Jean
- 28 Temporary superstar
- 29 Work with the hands
- 30 Drag queen's leg need
- 33 Melissa Etheridge's "Don't Look ____"
- 35 Wheels for the Dark Knight
- 36 Head output
- 37 Quick-witted
- 39 Chicken hawk's pad
- 41 What you use to watch porn?
- 44 Wineglass feature
- 46 Bro of Jacko
- 49 Becomes hard
- 51 Lowly laborer
- 52 Barely enough
- 53 Urvashi Vaid's birthplace
- 54 Lewis Carroll creature
- 55 Time off
- 58 "Nuts!"
- 59 Sometime Capote associate
Chaplin
- 60 Like some meat
- 61 TV trophy
- 63 He comes between Larry and
Curly

Solution on pg. 24

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