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Ron Owens with Gretchen Whitmer at Motor City Pride 2018. Photo courtesy of Ron Owens.

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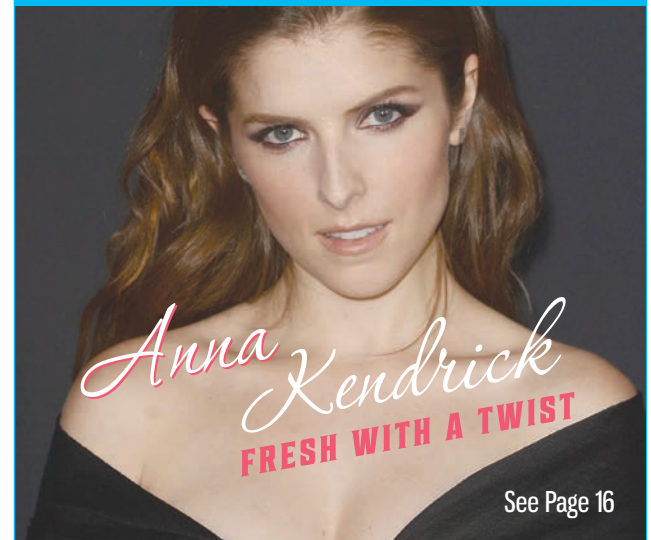
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# THE '90S - 1998

## January - Let It Be Resolved:

A proposed resolution intended to help stop anti-gay attacks in Ferndale was both presented and unanimously adopted by the Ferndale city council. This is the first time that any elected body in Ferndale has ever passed anything to do with gay and lesbian people, according to Craig Covey, president of the Friends and Neighbors of Ferndale. This was in response to an upsurge in the number



## February - Detroit AIDS Housing Approved by City Council:

Wellness House and Cass Corridor Group collaborated to renovate Temple Towers. The housing development with 60 housing units was only the second project in the nation to bring together a neighborhood-based organization and AIDS service agency to provide affordable housing for homeless people living with HIV/AIDS. Pictured: Rob Fetzer, executive director of Wellness House

# FLASHING BACK TO THE PAST:



## April - Greek History:

Greg Gruley, a 22-year-old psychology major, became the first openly gay man at Central Michigan University to be initiated into a Greek social fraternity on April 26.

## November - Vanity Plate Okay:

In an effort to increase LGBT visibility and to support his gay son, PFLAG member Mike Neubecker purchased a state of Michigan license plate that reads "GAY SON." The Secretary of State delayed the process, stating the controversial auto tag "might be offensive" and that it "might not be in good taste." With help from statewide organization, the Triangle Foundation, the plate was issued and delivered on Nov. 5.



## July - Serving LGBT Students:

E. Frederic Dennis, coordinator for Residence Life at Emory University in Atlanta, was named director of the Office of LGBT Affairs at the University of Michigan. He was the first African-American to head the office in its 27 year history.

# GAYS IN THE WORKPLACE

**1995:** GLOBE became an official ERG in 1995 for salaried, hourly and retired employees of Ford Motor Company, its subsidiaries and agency personnel who are LGBTQ and their allies who support an inclusive and safe workplace for all employees. GLOBE has expanded to more than 480 members with chapters as far reaching as Mexico, Germany and the United Kingdom.

**1996:** On Sept. 19, "Big Blue" IBM (International Business Machines)

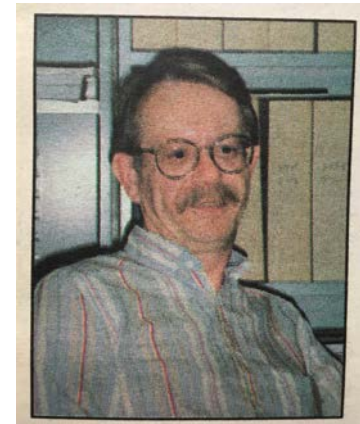
announced it will extend medical benefits to domestic partners of gay and lesbian employees. They joined Time Warner, Xerox, Apple and Eastman Kodak, among others.

**1997:** On June 15, Chrysler Motors officially recognized People of Diversity (POD), a gay and lesbian employee group.

**1998:** The Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents granted domestic

partners benefits to same-sex partners of faculty members on March 17. Michael McGuire (pictured), co-founder of the LGBT Faculty and Staff Advocacy Coalition, was instrumental in getting sexual orientation added to all EMU policies.

**1999:** Marquette's Internet Bagel Cafe made it clear that it will not discriminate during hiring or service to customers. The Cafe is known in Marquette as one of the more



progressive employers in the city because it states up front that it will not discriminate for any reason, including sexual orientation. The Cafe joined two other gay-friendly employers, Taco Bell and the Metz Bakery.



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# Ron Owens: Right-Hand Man and Rising Star

## Gretchen Whitmer's Deputy Political Director is Democratic Standout

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

### Political Beginnings

At 22 years old, Ron Owens is a force to be reckoned with. Last September, the openly gay, politically active, then-student decided to take time off from his senior year at Michigan State University's James Madison College to seize the opportunity to hit the road with Gretchen Whitmer's gubernatorial campaign. Known for her 15-hour days and campaign stops in each of Michigan's 83 counties, Owens has been with Whitmer every step of the way. But as her deputy political director, Owens is far more than just a travel companion. He is tasked with maintaining existing relationships and fostering new ones to help propel Whitmer toward a November win and then on to govern in 2019.

"I am always on the phone talking with our elected officials making sure that they are looped in on the things that we are doing on the campaign, and making sure that we get feedback so that we can better run a campaign here in Michigan," Owens said. "Also, early on I helped with the endorsement process, getting a lot of the endorsers on board for Sen. Whitmer. I'm also kind of like her right hand."

Owens expresses nothing but praise for Whitmer and loves his work joining her on the campaign trail. He said that the experience has given him an even greater appreciation for the state.

"Every day is different on the road. One thing that I'm really grateful for is Gretchen's energy. She is always energized and loves talking to voters. I thrive off of her energy, and her love for Michigan. Before jumping on this campaign, I was always thinking of, 'What are my goals? What do I want to do next?'" Owens said. "But working on this campaign and being so close to Gretchen has given me such a love for our state. We have such a beautiful state, and it's filled with such amazing people. And this is a place that I want to continue to grow my career and my life and my family."

### Passion for Politics

Owens grew up in Saginaw, and it was there, in high school, that he discovered his calling. It began with fulfilling a high school requirement for community service hours, for which he knocked on doors for some local candidates. In his freshman year of college, Owens interned for state Rep. Adam Zemke, then for Congressman Dan Kildee and Sen. Debbie Stabenow in Washington, D.C. the following summer. He has also worked for State



Ron Owens (right) next to his friend Charlie Callis celebrating pride. When not on the campaign trail, Owens enjoys spending time connecting to the LGBTQ community. Photo courtesy of Ron Owens.

House Democratic Leader Sam Singh and was an organizer for Hillary for America.

Owens' passion for public service is rooted in the values that his mom, a single mother of three, taught him by example. His mother, grandmother and great-grandmother are all nurses.

"One thing that my mom instilled in my siblings and me, was to one: always be kind to other people; two: always work twice as hard as anyone else; and three: whenever you're working you should always be doing something that is benefiting others," Owens said.

When asked to name his role models, Owens cited his mom as one of his greatest inspirations.

"With the odds against her, with a lot of issues that may have come up in the household, she taught us to stay true to our values," he said. "But she also made sure that we drove to go the extra step ... made sure that we know that all the dreams that we asked can be accomplished as long as we put a plan forward."

Owens' other role models are political ones. There's Whitmer, of course, and he said he is grateful for the friendship they've built.

"I talk to her about ... anything that I want, because ... we have that comfortable relationship," he said. "I told her about this

interview, I told her about the struggles that have come with trying to come out to my mom."

Owens also admires President Barack Obama as well, calling him one of the U.S.'s greatest presidents.

"He beat the odds," said Owens, "and accomplished so much for our country."

Owens was in Washington D.C. when marriage equality became the law of the land, and that experience became one of the highlights of his early career when he saw the White House lit up in Pride colors.

### Not Without Obstacles

Like Obama, Owens said he has experienced the kind of racism that presents itself when white people seem to act "pleasantly" surprised that black people can be "well-spoken." Owens went on to describe those microaggressions.

"I remember interning in D.C. at one point, and people are always like, 'Oh my gosh, you talk so well!' So those were always things that came up since ... I remember in high school to now," he said. "That kind of stuff still happens."

Because of his sexuality, Owens has faced additional challenges, too. He said his extended family can sometimes be closed-minded about

the LGBTQ community, along with people in his hometown. Still, he remains positive.

"There are a lot of beauties that come with being a black gay man in America ... I think that there just needs to be some exposure in order to get folks comfortable with people standing in their own light and loving who they love," he said. "I think there are some challenges, but I see a path to us all eventually being on the same page."

Today, Owens is confident and seems to be comfortable with his identity, but that self-assuredness wasn't easy to build. He came out to himself and some friends only a few years ago, and, even at his first inklings of being gay, Owens had a hard time accepting that truth.

"My mom made sure we were at church every Sunday, and I remember, at night, hoping that it wasn't true. That God did not make me gay," he said. "But ... ever since I have come out to myself and to my friends, I love the person I am. I am proud to have stayed true to the values that my mom instilled in me, and did it while being fabulous."

Now that Owens is able to embrace who he is, he has a message to share with others who may be questioning themselves.

"If there is anyone out there that's reading this article, that has had similar experiences as me, or is struggling to come out to other folks, I say just stay true to yourself. Stand in your light, but do it at your own time," Owens said. "And make sure that you have a support system that has your back."

### A Progressive Future

Accepting himself has made Owens more confident in his career, too. While he doesn't have a set plan for his future yet, when asked about it, he recalled the words of a favorite teacher, "A goal without a plan is just a dream."

"I am usually looking at, 'What are my next steps?' he said. "Hopefully, not getting ahead of my skis here, but if Gretchen is elected governor, I would love to, after being on this campaign for so long, help set an agenda. A progressive agenda, here in Michigan that moves families forward."

And his own political campaign is definitely something that Owens has been considering.

"One day I could see myself running for office. I think that Michigan is a beautiful state with beautiful people, and I would love to be able to serve people in any capacity that I can throughout my lifetime," Owens said. "But right now, I am determined to win this election in ... November and see what happens next."

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The guide also offers voters an opportunity to support the candidates who share our values by donating to their campaigns or volunteering to get out the vote. The 2018 Progressive Voter Guide will make voting for the right candidates easy. The online Guide [mivoterguide.com](http://mivoterguide.com) will be updated now through Election Day, and it's easy to find the candidates in your area. All you have to do is enter your zip code.

## Wayne State to Host Opioid Awareness Day Sept. 18

BY BTL STAFF

The opioid epidemic has devastated families across the nation, prompting Wayne State University to host an informative day on Tuesday, Sept. 18 from noon to 5:30 p.m. to educate others about the misuse, abuse and consequences of opioids. Through this day-long event, Wayne State University aims to better understand the scope of this crisis and how it impacts the local community. All students, faculty, staff and community members who are interested in gaining insight on opioids are welcome.

The opioid awareness day event will be hosted in two segments: informative tables and a panel discussion. The four informative tables will have engaging activities and demonstrations aimed at further understanding the opioid epidemic.

The panel will consist of physicians who interface with the epidemic, a family member of a victim of opioid abuse, a former Drug Enforcement Administration agent and others who have experienced the crisis firsthand. The varying perspectives of the panel members should promote conversation and offer insight into the complexity of opioid use.

Panel members include Dr. Mark Greenwald, the associate chair for research in the department of psychiatry and behavioral neurosciences at WSU; Dr. Melissa February, assistant professor of pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of Michigan; Richard Isaacson, community outreach specialist at Links Global USA; and Mike Hirst, the founder of Andy's Angels.

*The informative tables will be located in Gullen Mall. Should there be inclement weather, the event will be held in the Student Center at 5221 Gullen Mall, Detroit. The panel discussion will be held in the Spencer M. Patrich Auditorium, located in the Wayne State Law School located at 471 Palmer Ave., Detroit. For more information, contact Brittani Lyons by phone at 586-260-9746 or by email at brittanii.lyons@wayne.edu.*

# The Struggles of Organizing as Trans Women of Color Founder, Executive Director Gets Flak for Relocating Out of State

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Trans Sistas of Color Project Detroit (TSCOPD) Founder and Executive Director Bre' Campbell shocked many at the beginning of the summer when she announced in a post on Facebook that she had actually left Detroit and relocated to New Mexico more than six months ago. She made this announcement while expressing resentment toward a funder, whom she did not name. Campbell said they had threatened to take back their money upon learning that Campbell was no longer living in Michigan.

"I get the [funder's] concern but I often times feel like the conversation often doesn't come from a place of concern," Campbell said. "People threaten to take away my funding without actually asking me if I'm OK. So I think that for me is the bigger problem. People expect us to perform miracles. They expect us to do work on behalf of communities who don't support us and don't really understand the work that we're doing."

Campbell said for the last three years before leaving Michigan she was spending large periods of time out of the state on actual work for the agency. She was literally zigzagging across the country in search of funds.

"We don't get supported in Detroit," Campbell said. "I actually moved around to work for us. For the last three years, I've literally been traveling across the country to get money for our organization so that we can do the things that we do."

Since leaving Michigan, Campbell named the interim executive director of Affirmations, an LGBTQ community center, Lilianna Reyes the co-executive director of the TSCOPD.

"We get no local Michigan funds," Reyes said. "Not one foundation in Michigan supports us. Most of our support comes from either New York or D.C. They come from either AIDS-focused grants or they come from (the) marginalized Third Wave Fund, and there's some other smaller funding that goes into specifically marginalized communities. So, it's very intentional money that we get. We don't go after the DTEs or the GMs because there's so much red tape, and most of those grants have strict requirements about not giving money out."

However, giving money out directly has become TSCOPD's first priority. Through their emergency assistance program, the agency allows trans women of color who were either born in or live in the city of Detroit to access funds quickly.

"You can get up to \$500 a year," Reyes said. "Every now and then in dire circumstances we'll do two. But that doesn't mean they'll get \$500. They could get \$250 or they could get \$300. It depends on how much we have on hand at the moment and how many girls are applying. For

instance, we gave \$300 to a trans young woman of color who was doing prom, one woman from Detroit was involved in the shooting in the Las Vegas club so we gave her funds. We usually do housing costs, court costs, medical costs, transition costs, name change costs. You fill out something online, and within 10 days you'll have your check."

The current program was not the initial direction in which the agency intended to go when Campbell created it three years ago, but upon examining the needs of the community they served, TSCOPD was compelled to create it.



Trans Sistas of Color Project Detroit (TSCOPD) Founder and Executive Director Bre' Campbell

"When we first started TSCOPD, a lot of our funders at that time and even Equality Michigan, who was our fiduciary, were really pushing policies," Reyes said. "I think some people think if you change policies you'll change all of this. When we started to do that lots of trans women of color were like, 'We don't care about policy. Policy is this long, drawn out battle. I'm working on Six Mile and Woodward and I'm selling my body and I'm going through all this stuff. You think I'm going to wait a year? You think I'm going to help you canvas? It's just not happening.'"

"So, we asked the girls, 'What do you need?'" Reyes continued. "They said, 'We need money. We need some kind of economic re-disbursements, because, otherwise, the reason we're in this is because we can't eat, we don't have transportation and we don't have sustainability with economics.'"

That's when their goal became clear. But, to fund the emergency assistance program, Campbell and Reyes quickly learned they'd have to look outside of Michigan.

"The grants at a bigger level that are emergency assistance grants still come with lots of red tape and lots of bureaucracy and don't just give out the money," said Reyes. "So

what we do is we find a lot of operating non-restrictive grants, capacity building grants, and then instead of paying staff we hold it for emergency funds. Every time we've gone into a funding situation it's always been 'We can't give you money so you can turn around and give it back out to the community.' So we've kind of given up on anything local."

Reyes credits Campbell for generating much of the funds they do receive from outside of Michigan.

"Ninety percent of our grants have come from organizations that literally have worked with Bre,'" said Reyes. "She's literally going to trainings and to conferences with different funders so they can see us on a national platform. Really, her face is the reason we get a lot of the funds. They know her. They can speak to work."

"It started when she got really big in the national HIV movement," Reyes went on. "When she was doing work with MTV it pushed her into a space where more funders were saying we want to support your work. So she used that to catapult Trans Sistas of Color."

Jerry Peterson is executive director of the Ruth Ellis Center, TSCOPD's current fiduciary. He agreed that's imperative that Campbell continue to keep a national presence.

"In some larger cities where acceptance, support and protections are more widely available, trans women of color are organizing successfully," Peterson said. "Bre' and Lilianna are connected with those communities and bring that learning from the national landscape to impact their work in Detroit. Participating in national networks and collectives is vital to the long-term health and well-being of the Trans Women of Color Project. As a result, Detroit benefits from Bre's standing and influence in those circles."

Yet for what she's getting, Campbell said the need is still far greater.

"I'm always in a place where I have to say this is not enough," she said. "I feel it's wrapped into this whole anti-blackness. We don't trust black people with the things that they say they're going to do," she said. "And especially with black trans organizers, we're fighting for scraps and when we get those scraps those same funders who give other people hundreds of thousands of dollars expect us to produce the same results on a fraction of what others received."

Peterson said he still meets regularly with Campbell – at least once a month – and that wherever she may be calling home these days, she is still very much a part of the Detroit scene.

"Bre' handles national networks and relationships and Lilianna handles local issues," he said. "Bre is highly engaged with Lilianna and their community and her activities on a national scope benefit the work here. Bre's presence and impact are still very real and active in Detroit"



# Stand with Trans Youth Empowerment Workshop

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

The fourth annual Stand with Trans Youth Empowerment Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 6. The workshop is open to gender expansive young children, trans youth ages 12 to 24 and parents and caregivers of trans youth. It will once again take place at the Orchard United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills. This year's theme is "I Am."

"We are so much more than our gender," said Stand With Trans Founder and Executive Director Roz Keith. "This is about encouraging youth to identify all that they are."

Youth sessions offered this year include How Do I Know When to Transition? and What to Do? led by Anthony Beasley, LMSW, MSW; Struggling with Self-Harm led by Nick Zielke, MSW; Being Trans and Dealing with Law Enforcement led by Corp Dani Woods, LGBT Liaison to the Detroit Police Department; Job Hunting – What Do I Have to Disclose? led by the ACLU's Jay Kaplan; Improv run by Go Comedy! Improv Theatre; and How to Cope When Family Members Aren't

Accepting led by Monica Sampson who is the director of Second Stories program at the Ruth Ellis Center.

Parent programming includes Social and Medical Transition led by Antonia Caretto, Ph.D. and Dr. Dan Shumer; Navigating the Legal Process led by attorney Erica Moise; Self-Care led by Tejinder Gill; You're Human and This Is Hard led by Lisa Goyette and John Ball; Trans and How To Prioritize Your Children's Needs led by Melissa Farrell, Psy.D.; and Therapy – When Is it Appropriate and How to Find the Best Fit? led by Nicole Law, Ph.D.

"Every year the theme is different and all content is youth and parent informed," said Keith. "Many of the sessions are new as we learn from the prior year. We get feedback via surveys and then we bring youth and parents together for brainstorms/focus groups to better understand their needs."

The youth, Keith said, are very smart. "They have a lot to say and they want to be heard. They want to make friends and look forward to this event to connect with others like them who understand what it means to be transgender.

Parents feel really lost and are hungry for the information. It is important for the parents to meet other parents who are in the same boat," Keith said. "The connection strengthens the community bond and the parent child bond. And, while it's become more prevalent in the news to hear about transgender individuals, each person has their own journey to navigate. There are still personal hurdles and family hurdles even though we are talking about it."

The workshop can accommodate approximately 25 young children and the trans youths and trans parents tracts can accommodate 75 each. There are three choices of session at each time slot throughout the day. This year's sponsors include Springmatter, Mercedes Benz Financial Services, Cripps & Silver Law, The Human Rights Campaign, Premier Pet Supply of Novi, Trans Kids Purple Rainbow Foundation, Nakisher Orthodontics, Arbonne Charitable Foundation, Sephora, Between The Lines and Dominos.

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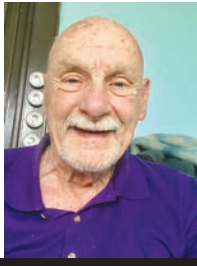
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# Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

## The Queer Occasion of Sin

It's been almost 125 years since the story, "The Priest and the Acolyte" was published in a collegiate, gay magazine, "The Chameleon," in London, England.

It was quickly labeled banned, shocking reading. The tragic tale was actually written in 1894 by John Francis Bloxam, a gay Exeter College undergraduate.

The so-called romance, once attributed to Oscar Wilde, is about a Roman Catholic — or Episcopalian — priest and an altar boy who fall in love and eventually die in each other's arms by a touching agreed-upon suicide.

Since that "fairy tale" point of demarcation, so to speak, all hell has broken loose for the RC Church worldwide, because of priests who sexually abuse boys, and occasionally girl acolytes and youth parishioners, in, and out of, their dioceses.

It's no exaggeration that the cost of lawsuits, punitive legal actions, embarrassment, resignations, incarcerations, defrocking and attempted cover-ups by priest relocations has cost the Church billions and billions of dollars.

One published estimate this year alone has reached \$8 billion, and that 300 priests in Boston were recently identified as sexual abusers!

And, a week ago, the New York attorney general's office issued subpoenas to every Catholic diocese in the state to embark on an expansive investigation of sex crimes committed and covered up by Catholic priests. And on rare, but impious occasions nonetheless, by offending 12-inch ruler nuns.

A few journalists, sexologists, social workers and gay priests, to be sure, saw the handwriting on the wall, almost two decades ago, when an innovative and shocking blog first appeared: [bishopaccountability.org](http://bishopaccountability.org).

It started in June of 2003, and the blog was kept by the courageous, lone voice of journalist Kathy Shaw. For 15 years, she researched, reported and exposed priest abuse of the young. She died this year, age 72.

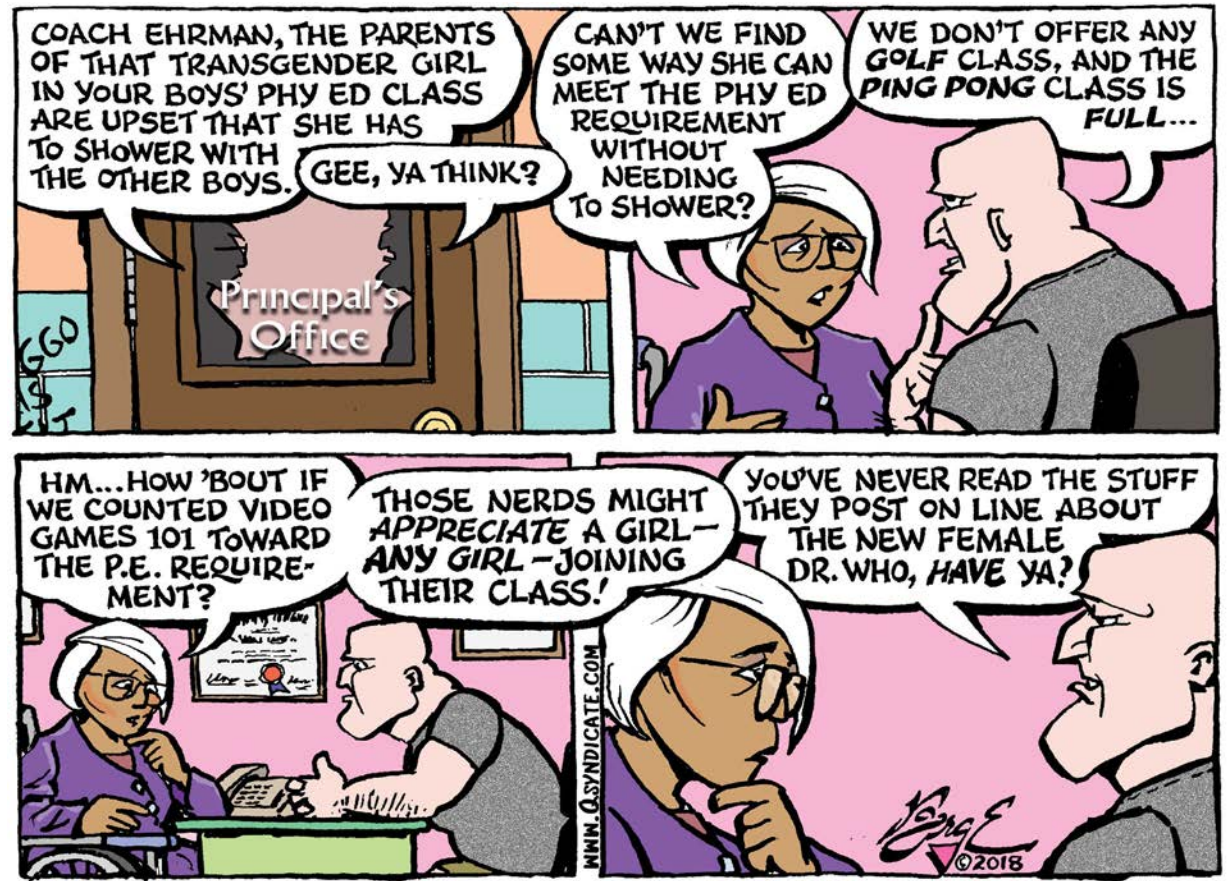
The site has grown from cautious documentation, including breaking news coverage and articles in several foreign language newspapers, and first-person accounts by victims whose families have been denied counseling, legal action and advocacy in too many instances where a victim's story has little or no validity. Rendered so because "God's servant — the priest — is "without sin."

Today, the blog is forthright in its exposure of abuse wherever it is uncovered worldwide, including numbers and names of perpetrators, cities where they serve, the number of times they have been shifted around or relocated, where they are imprisoned, and the shocking, skyrocketing dollars it has cost.

Categories include: survivors' accounts, international coverage, bankruptcy, settlements, seminaries and data on the crisis. Under the accountability category, users can find accused bishops, removed bishops and their criminal charges.

Readers are encouraged to send photos of survivors, offenders, affected parishes and important meetings and events. Along with clippings and other memorabilia "to post online." (One, perhaps, is made to wonder whether, the new forming — banned

See Next Page



## Viewpoint



# A Look at Accessibility for Disabled Members of the LGBTQ Community

BY JEM ZERO

## Pride

Some Pride events are more accessible than others. For instance, Ferndale Pride takes place along a strip of businesses, featuring vendors lining the streets and performance stages that are built onto the ground. Compare this with Motor City Pride, which takes place in Hart Plaza. The pavement in the Plaza is uneven and sometimes comprised of cobblestones, which make it extremely difficult to operate rolling ambulatory devices, or navigate with crutches or a cane. Worst of all, some of the best performances are conducted within large stone stages comprised of tiers of stairs that are insurmountable to disabled people. The rear entrance to Hart Plaza also does not have a ramp; only more stairs.

Additionally, all events have large cords strung around to connect food trucks and sound equipment to power sources, but only some put small ramps over the cords to make it easier for mobility devices to roll over them.

## Cafes and Bookstores

These are popular gathering place for LGBTQ socialites. And while these can be accessible, often the venues chosen are

See Viewpoint, continued on next page

## ► Viewpoint

Continued from p. 10

tiny, and stuffed with closely-packed tables and chairs that must be moved for anyone operating a motorized wheelchair. For many disabled people, they would prefer to stay home than be seen as an annoyance for simply wanting to participate.

## Art Venues

Frequently, these places do not have elevators to carry disabled people between floors — and often displays span across three or four levels. Sometimes, even the first level is only reachable after traversing a steep staircase — Metro Detroit doesn't see the need for very many ramps.

So, in the spirit of inclusion, LGBTQ organizers should make it a responsibility to pick venues that are as accommodating as possible — even for disabled LGBTQ people. More importantly, organizers should put an effort into making disabled participants feel welcome, not like it is inconvenient to include them.

Disabled people are often lonely. It can be a struggle to socialize with abled people, especially when so many of them have negative attitudes toward the disabled. Dating is especially hard. In the whole of society, disabled people are desexualized and seen as incapable of having or enjoying sex and intimacy — the LGBTQ community is no exception. And, while straight and cis disabled people have it difficult finding partners, it's even harder for a gender non-conforming person in an area with an already tiny dating pool.

It seems that for a large part of the

community, disabled people don't factor into their image of what 'queer' looks like, but the fact that it isn't always intentional, just seen as inconsequential, is perhaps the most hurtful.

However, just like for all minorities, a major key to reducing the stigma against disabled LGBTQ people is representation. Creators seeking to depict queer people in their art or writing should consider narratives that feature individuals with both cognitive and physical disabilities. Their stories should be authentic, but fit into the tone of the piece. In a sensual, idyllic story about LGBTQ love and culture, disabled people should not be jarringly exempt from any steamy content — or worse, assigned the dreaded token straight role.

More importantly, disabled people should be given opportunities to take leadership positions where they can make decisions for themselves. Abled allies are great, but disabled people should be handed the reins to make their own decisions about what is accessible in terms of representation and physical environments.

No LGBTQ person deserves to be excluded from having support and friendship within the community. It's long past the time when many of these problems should have been addressed.

*Jem Zero is a disabled queer person with an art degree and poor volume control. By day, ze masquerades around the local community college disguised as a mild-mannered accounting major. All other times ze can be found hissing at technology or having an existential crisis about the vastness of space and sea. Zir writing and art can be found on zir website at jemzero.com or facebook/jemzero.art Connect with Jem at jemzero.art@gmail.com*

sometimes 70s and 80s, are male and human and presumably in reasonably good health. Sometimes they are subject to the demands of non-reproductive biology. They too, get horny.

One also wonders. Was priest/acolyte abuse ever a ploy to fill the RC priesthood ranks, and save the altar boys from the greater sin of having sex with women outside of marriage?

Don't let your left-behind, biblical brain know what your right-at-hand is — or, supposedly isn't — doing. Ora pro none-of-your-business! Et cum spiritu tuo a go-go boy! (WWJD?)

*Charles Alexander is prolific both as a BTL columnist (700-plus columns) and as a well-known LGBT community artist (1000 Facebook images). He is a Spirit of Detroit Award recipient and an Affirmations LGBT CENTER Jan Stevenson awardee. Connect with him at Charles@pridesource.com.*

# Creep Of The Week

## Brett Kavanaugh

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Well, gay sex was decriminalized in India, so that's great news. For those of you saying, "Well it's about TIME, India!" I'd like to remind you that the U.S. didn't decriminalize gay sex until 2003 (Lawrence v. Texas, holla!). We're also still arguing about whether women can be in charge of their own bodies and if black people's lives actually matter. So, don't



give the U.S. too much credit here.

Especially not while we're staring down the possibility of Brett Kavanaugh becoming a Supreme Court Justice.

That we allowed Donald Trump, a man who should never in a million years have been trusted at the helm of this country, the chance to reshape not only our Supreme Court but the entire federal court system IS NOT A GOOD LOOK, AMERICA. YET HERE WE ARE. And yes, I'm yelling.

As the Human Rights Campaign puts it, "Brett Kavanaugh poses a direct threat to LGBTQ equality, reproductive rights, affordable health care, immigrants' rights, workers' rights and so much more."

This was made clear when Kavanaugh was asked by President (whoops, I mean Senator but President sure sounds good) Kamala Harris if the Supreme Court case Obergefell v. Hodges, which legalized marriage equality, was decided correctly. Kavanaugh refused to give a straight (no pun intended) answer.

"I'm asking you a very specific question. Either you're willing to answer it or you're not," Harris said.

He was not willing.

"Brett Kavanaugh's refusal to answer very basic, very direct questions about the Supreme Court's historic ruling bringing marriage equality nationwide is alarming and completely unacceptable," said HRC President Chad Griffin. "The Obergefell decision is settled law. If this nominee cannot so much as affirm that or the fundamental equality of LGBTQ people and our families, he should not and must not be granted a lifetime appointment to our nation's highest court."

And yet it's pretty likely that he will. Trump's Supreme Court list was made by the extremist anti-LGBTQ group the Federalist Society, after all. We've seen the kinds of lawyers Trump surrounds himself with. It's clear he's not picking these guys himself. A willingness, even an eagerness, to overturn Obergefell v. Hodges, maybe even Lawrence, is absolutely required. Oh, and Roe v. Wade, too. It's been the goal of the extremist right from the moment the case was decided to overturn it. To criminalize

**"Brett Kavanaugh's refusal to answer very basic, very direct questions about the Supreme Court's historic ruling bringing marriage equality nationwide is alarming and completely unacceptable," said HRC President Chad Griffin.**

abortion all over again. To have women who are desperate to terminate pregnancies do it by any means necessary. I mean for Chrissake we've all seen "Dirty Dancing!"

Put simply, Trump is their best shot. That's why he can screw all of the porn actresses he wants. That is why he can cheat on all of his wives. That is why he can have so many marriages and divorces. That is why he can brag about grabbing women by the pussy. That is why he can shrug off multiple accusations of sexual harassment and assault. That is why this utterly immoral piece of garbage we call President has the complete and unwavering support of the so-called Moral Majority (spoiler alert: they are neither moral nor the majority).

For straight folks or younger LGBTQ folks, marriage equality (which has translated into broader equality for LGBTQ people overall) is "settled law." Meaning the fight is over with & done, and the law is permanent, forever and ever amen.

But that's not how laws work. Which can be both good and bad. But in this case, it's bad. I'm 40 years old. I didn't think I would see marriage equality in my lifetime. But when the Supreme Court came through, man did they come through.

And yet.

"There are already cases across the country where our opponents are working to undermine the Obergefell decision and the recognition of that decision," Griffin told Variety. "There are also cases rising to the court that relate to existing federal law and the question of if current federal law protects people on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. These are all things that are headed to this court, and sooner rather than later. There is significant reason to believe ... that he is on the wrong side of all of these issues."

Call your senators. Call senators who are supposedly undecided, too. But most importantly, vote in November. Vote for Democrats, however imperfect, because they're literally our only defense.

I'm not willing to go back to when my wife and son were legally just random people I shared a home with. If you're privileged enough to not worry about which party is in charge, at least have the decency to vote to protect families that hang in the balance.

## ► Parting Glances

Continued from p. 10

by the pictures of respectable appearing Catholic clergy — and invitation to readers to participate — is either an embarrassing showbiz plus for the RC Church, or an ongoing, shaming, subliminal minus.)

It's obvious that the priesthood attracts a percentage of gay males. Some important reasons might include:

- Priests are not expected to marry, but to appear to remain celibate. This is a perfect cover for a homosexual male.

- Priests — at least before the advent of public confessions — heard daily repetitious confessions, many times of a sexual, masturbatory nature, from Catholic school boys. Some priests actually watch and collect porn. Some imagine it secondhand.

- Priests in their 30s, 40s, 50s, and

# Kavanaugh Hearings, No Comment, No Comfort

BY LISA KEEN

It was the third day of a four-day confirmation hearing for federal Judge Brett Kavanaugh to join the U.S. Supreme Court before a senator really pressed hard for him to account for his commitment to equal rights for LGBTQ people. U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) started off, trying to get Kavanaugh to agree that he wouldn't fire somebody because of the color of that person's skin or their gender.

"Of course," Kavanaugh agreed.

"Would it be wrong to fire somebody ... if the person is, gay?" asked Booker.

Kavanaugh could have said, "I wouldn't do that." Instead, he said, "in my workplace, I hire people because of their talents and abilities. ..." The response implied — but did not assert — that sexual orientation would not be a factor for him.

Booker pressed on. He asked whether, as a matter of law, Kavanaugh would "have a legal right to fire someone just because they're gay?"

Kavanaugh could have said that the law varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Or he could have said, as he did in response to a question about how his personal religious beliefs might impact his work, say that his private beliefs "have no relevance to my judging."

Instead, Kavanaugh said, "The scope of employment discrimination laws is being litigated right now and, therefore, while I'd like to talk to you about this more, because that issue is in a variety of cases right now, it'd be inconsistent. ..."

Booker interrupted to say that some people have "real concerns that, if you get on the court, folks who are married right now really have a fear they will not be able to continue those marital bonds."

Booker then noted that, in a majority of states, an employer can fire someone for posting a picture on social media that indicates they have a same-sex spouse.

He then probed Kavanaugh about what personal views Kavanaugh may have expressed about same-sex marriage when he served as staff secretary to President George W. Bush. Bush spoke out in favor of a federal constitutional amendment to ban marriage for same-sex couples.

Earlier in the day, when Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) asked Kavanaugh whether he worked to support Bush's pro-life agenda, Kavanaugh responded that he "had to assist him in pursuing those policies" and acknowledged that "some of those things might have crossed my desk. I don't remember specifics." He gave a similar response on the constitutional amendment: "When I was in the White House, that was ... something that [Bush] talked about."

Booker interrupted him again, asking if Kavanaugh, on the White House staff, "expressed an opinion" about the constitutional



amendment or same-sex marriage.

Kavanaugh said that things related to Bush's remarks on the issue "would have crossed my desk. ..."

Noting that many documents related to Kavanaugh's work in the White House between 2001 and 2006 were being withheld by the Bush archive. Booker pressed again:

"Did you ever express your opinions about same-sex marriage?" pressed Booker.

"I don't recall," said Kavanaugh. "Of course, at that time, as you are well aware, there has been a ... sea change in attitudes in the United States of America. ..."

Booker pressed again and again for Kavanaugh to say what his attitude was about same-sex marriage at that time. But Kavanaugh dodged each inquiry, saying only that there had been "debate" about the issue in the White House but that he could not "recall" what his opinion had been. Asked what his opinion is "now," Kavanaugh would say only that, "I apply the law ... the law of the land protects that right, as dictated by the Supreme Court."

## No Answer is No Comfort.

That exchange did nothing to quell concerns in the LGBTQ community that Kavanaugh is an ultra-conservative, maybe even anti-LGBTQ, jurist who will almost certainly give the Supreme Court's existing four conservative justices the fifth vote they need to vote against the equal rights interests of LGBTQ people. Nor did a similar exchange with Senator Kamala Harris (D-Calif.). She asked repeatedly whether Kavanaugh thinks the decision to strike state bans on marriage for same-sex couples (*Obergefell v. Hodges* in 2015) was correctly decided.

Earlier in the hearing, Kavanaugh did not

hesitate to call *Brown v. Board of Education*, which ended segregation of public schools, the "greatest moment in Supreme Court history." Harris echoed that remark, pushing Kavanaugh to express his opinion on *Obergefell*.

But Kavanaugh continued to evade answering Harris' questions and tried to simply eat up the senator's limited time by recounting the history of retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy's majority opinions in various LGBTQ-related cases.

Kavanaugh did paraphrase a significant statement in Kennedy's opinion in the 2018 *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado* that, "The days of discriminating against gay and lesbian Americans as inferior in dignity and worth, are over." (In his opinion, Kennedy worded it this way: "Our society has come to the recognition that gay persons and gay couples cannot be treated as social outcasts or as inferior in dignity and worth. For that reason the laws and the Constitution can, and in some instances must, protect them in the exercise of their civil rights.")

"Do you agree with that statement?" asked Harris.

Kavanaugh would not answer the question, stating only that Kennedy's opinion was precedent.

Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, called Kavanaugh's "refusal to confirm that *Obergefell* was correctly decided" as "chilling" and said it "poses an unprecedented threat to the liberty and equality of LGBT people."

Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin said Kavanaugh's refusal to answer questions about the *Obergefell* decision was "alarming."

"If this nominee cannot so much as affirm [*Obergefell*] or the fundamental equality of

LGBTQ people and our families, he should not and must not be granted a lifetime appointment to our nation's highest court," said Griffin.

An HRC paper on Kavanaugh last month characterized the nominee as a "direct threat to the constitutional rights" of LGBTQ people and other Americans.

"Judge Kavanaugh's record on reproductive rights, the right to privacy and religious liberty indicates a potent combination of ideological views that could significantly and unnecessarily reshape constitutional doctrine and nondiscrimination protections as they apply to LGBTQ persons," said the paper. The paper notes that Kavanaugh has frequently cited the late Justice Antonin Scalia, who led the dissent to *Obergefell* and many anti-LGBT opinions, has one of his legal heroes.

Kavanaugh himself has not participated in an LGBTQ-specific case in the U.S. Court of Appeals for D.C., but HRC, like Senator Booker, believes he likely does have a record on LGBTQ issues from his tenure in President George W. Bush's White House from 2001 to 2006. HRC's paper on Kavanaugh said, "It is reasonable to infer he was involved, given the central function of the White House Staff Secretary and Kavanaugh's record of participating in so many of the politically consequential decisions of the Bush campaign and first term."

Papers that have been released from Kavanaugh's work in the White House have illustrated that his acceptance of Supreme Court precedent in regards to abortion is tenuous. During last week's confirmation hearing, he told Senator Feinstein that the Supreme Court's ruling in abortion rights cases is "precedent." But with the release of some documents from his time in the White House, the public could read that, in 2003, he opined, "I am not sure that all legal scholars refer to *Roe* as the settled law of the land at the Supreme Court level since Court can always overrule its precedent, and three current Justices on the Court would do so."

One particularly interesting moment during the four-day hearing came when a Republican, Senator Thom Tillis of North Carolina, following on the heels of Booker's questions, looked into the camera — not at Kavanaugh — and said, "Quite honestly, if firing someone because of their gender identification is immoral ... if anybody even suggested it that's ever worked in my organization, they'd get fired before the sun set."

"I've been very passionate about this issue since 1997, when I set up a gay and lesbian recruiting practice at Price Waterhouse. That is becoming the norm," said Tillis. "But, he added, "It's on us [presumably referring to Congress] to fix it. It's not on the judge to determine how we're gonna get it done."

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LGBTI activists in India celebrate a Supreme Court ruling that struck down the country's colonial-era sodomy law. (Photo courtesy of Meera Parida)

# India Supreme Court Ruling Decriminalizes Homosexuality

BY MICHAEL K. LAVERS

The India Supreme Court on Thursday ruled consensual same-sex sexual relations are no longer criminalized in the country.

The ruling, which was unanimous, struck down India's colonial-era sodomy law known as Section 377.

"We hold and declare that in penalizing such sexual conduct, the statutory provision violates the constitutional guarantees of liberty and equality," reads the ruling. "It denudes members of the LGBT communities of their constitutional right to lead fulfilling lives. In its application to adults of the

same sex engaged in consensual sexual behavior, it violates the constitutional guarantee of the right to life and to the equal protection of law."

The Delhi High Court in 2009 struck down the statute, but the Supreme Court in 2013 overruled the ruling. Indian lawmakers in 2015 rejected a bill that would have repealed Section 377.

The Supreme Court in January said it would reconsider its 2013 ruling. It held oral arguments in a case that challenged Section 377 in July.

Activists across India, which is the world's second-most populous country, and around the world celebrated Thursday's landmark ruling.

"Today we are feeling very proud," Meera Parida, president of All Odisha

Kinnar Mahasangh, a group that advocates on behalf of India's transgender and gender-variant communities, told the Washington Blade on WhatsApp. "It is a win for humanity."

Omkar, an engineer from Bangalore who did not provide his last name to the Blade, recently moved to Norway. He said in an email on Thursday that Section 377 "was one of the important factors in the decision-making process when I was looking for other options outside of India."

"I am really really happy and content that I will no longer be considered as a criminal at least in the eyes of law," said Omkar. "It is a huge moral boost and it relieves that hidden mental and emotional stress that the existence of Section 377 had caused me."

Ruth Baldacchino and Helen Kennedy, co-secretaries general of ILGA, in a statement also welcomed the ruling.

"We rejoice with all sexual, gender and sex minorities communities in India," they said. "As of today, a shameful part of an enduring colonial legacy is finally history. We hope that this ruling, which was made possible by the tireless work of many human rights advocates, will have an impact also on other countries around the world where our communities continue to live under the shadow of oppressive criminal laws, especially those that share a common legal heritage with India, as far afield as Africa, the Pacific and Caribbean."

India is the latest country to decriminalize consensual same-sex sexual relations.

A judge on Trinidad and Tobago's High Court in April struck down the country's colonial-era sodomy law. The chief justice of the Belize Supreme Court in 2016 ruled a statute that criminalized consensual same-sex sexual relations in the country is unconstitutional.

British Prime Minister Theresa May in April said she "deeply" regrets colonial-era sodomy laws the U.K. introduced in Commonwealth countries. Jamaica, Barbados and Kenya are among the dozens of countries in which consensual same-sex sexual acts remain criminalized.

"We welcome the Indian Supreme Court judgment on Section 377," said the British Embassy in India in a tweet. "Nobody should face persecution or discrimination because of who they are or who they love. The U.K. continues to support LGBT and equal rights across the world."

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary James Mattis arrived in India hours before the court issued its ruling.

The Blade has reached out to the State Department for comment.

*This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.*



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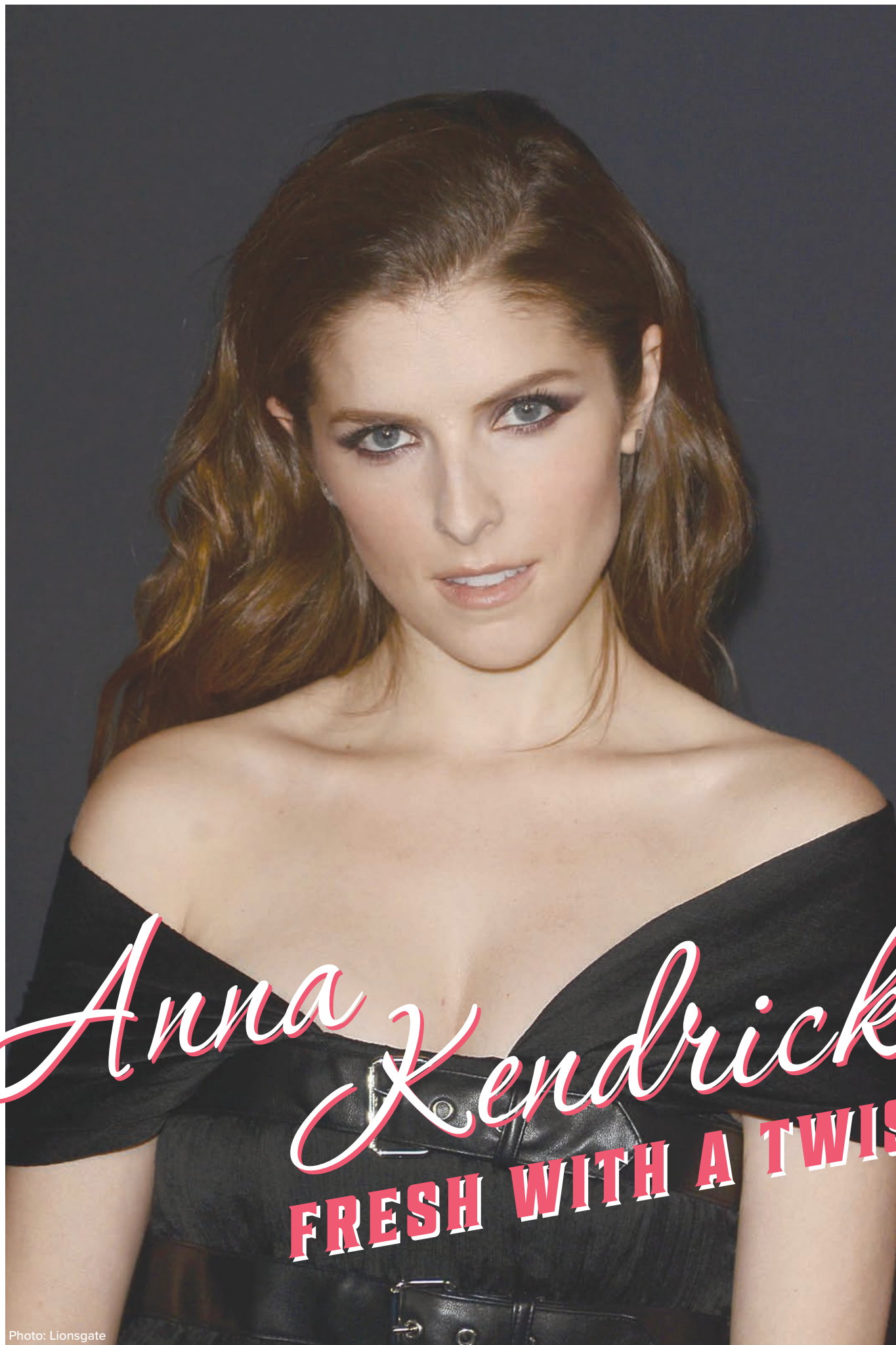
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# Anna Kendrick

## FRESH WITH A TWIST

Photo: Lionsgate

## ‘A Simple Favor’ Actress on Her Fluid Sexuality, Kissing Blake Lively and Advocating for ‘Pitch Perfect’ Lesbian Love

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

The pitch is perfectly crazy in Anna Kendrick’s walk on the dark side of filmmaker Paul Feig’s warped sense of humor, “A Simple Favor.” It’s martini-sipper mom versus martini-swigger mom. Target mom versus Met Gala mom. Aspirational versus extra.

It’s regular mom-meets-mom business, a modern mom-com – until Emily (Blake Lively) goes missing. Emily’s sudden disappearance prompts Stephanie (Kendrick) to mount an investigation by employing her keen Nancy Drew smarts and posting distressed clips of herself on her dorky craft vlog. (Friendship-bracelet tutorials are just gonna have to wait.)

A bit camp? Yep. A bit queer? Obviously. And naturally so, as Kendrick’s 15-year career is steeped in queerness: at age 17, she cut her acting teeth on “Camp,” the 2003 teen musical-comedy directed by out filmmaker Todd Graff; as Beca, she brought covert aca-gayness to the three-part “Pitch Perfect” franchise; and in 2014, the 33-year-old Oscar-nominated actress slipped into Cinderella’s glass slippers for Stephen Sondheim’s “Into the Woods.” And her long, impulsive kiss – “just another Tuesday,” Emily notes – with Lively in “A Simple Favor,” well, it’s not *exactly* straight, she says.

Here, the longtime ally talks about attempting to allow the lesbian love to bloom between queer-coded “Pitch Perfect” leads Beca and Chloe (Brittany Snow), what irks her about self-congratulatory reactions to celebs coming out and, when it comes to her own sexuality, being open like Emily.

**A car sing-along, a little camp, some martinis and a mom makeout sesh: Anna, you sure know what the gay community wants at this point in your career, don’t you?**

(Laughs) Oh my gosh! I wasn’t thinking of it in that way, but yeah, it *is* kind of camp. It takes itself a little seriously, but we’re always winking or having fun. It’s bright and colorful, and there’s an unabashed campiness to it – even though the stakes are very real in places.

**You didn’t recognize a queer sensibility going in?**

To be honest, when I was going in, there was just so much to play with. I remember having one of those conversations with Blake where we both felt like, “Are we high right now? Are we having a stoner



conversation?” Because we were talking about how in a traditional comedy there’s a slider that you’re on from how subtle to how broad, and with this it felt like you weren’t just on this linear slider – you were in three dimensions, and you could go to all these places.

It was so much fun as actors to have that, and I know that sounds really stoner-y and existential and dumb. But the world Paul created had so much possibility, and so I wasn’t really thinking about one group. I was barely getting my brain around what the movie was in the first place! But I think Stephanie is very much an underdog and she’s finding her place in the world. I feel like that’s something that queer people can relate to at one point in their lives or another.

**What was it like coming to set for the first time and seeing the giant painting of Blake-as-Emily’s vagina front and center in Emily’s front room?**

OK, this is actually really interesting: So that painting – fun fact – was never once on set. That is all post effects. Sometimes it was green screen, and sometimes it was this other painting that was very nice but very Tumblr art. It was actually Blake’s idea to have it be a little bit more, um, obscene. Certainly it’s art, but a little more shocking for Stephanie to see. Not so polished, not so pretty, not so coy. I thought that was really brilliant.

**Regarding “Pitch Perfect”: Are we ever gonna get the Beca and Chloe love story that they so deserve?**

I know. I definitely wanted to have an ending that was a Bechloe ending, and we did shoot one version where Brittany and I tricked everybody into just shooting one that was just the two of us getting together. We knew it was a long shot. It meant so much to us that there was this following around their latent relationship and, yeah, I thought it would’ve been really cool if it would have ended up coming to fruition in the end. If we ever do a four, I will fight tooth and nail for it, but I’m not sure it’s gonna happen.

**Because the studio doesn’t want to go there with their sexuality?**

It wasn’t like Universal was like, “There can be no lesbians in ‘Pitch Perfect!’” Because obviously Cynthia Rose is an openly gay character. But I think they were just confused by it because they weren’t listening to all the online chatter about it, whereas I see it every day, and I’m like, “Are you kidding? This is what they want!”

**Best lesbian Bechloe fanfiction you’ve read?**

OK, I’ve actually only tried to ever read one. It was so sweet and puppy-lovey that I was like, “Aww, I wanted to read some sauciness!” I thought I was gonna get scandalized! Instead, I was like, “Aww! This is, like, so sweet! This reminds me of ‘The Baby-Sitters Club’ books.” But I haven’t actually followed up on it.

**You once met a guy at a Gelson’s market who told you he does your “Camp” character, Fritzi, in drag. First of all, how often do you run into drag queens at grocery stores who tell you that you’re their inspiration?**

(Laughs) Not often enough! That was one of my favorite moments of being recognized, ever. And I’m sorry, what’s the second part of your question? I got too excited.

**Which other characters of yours might make good drag material?**

Stephanie has a real Sandy-in-“Grease” vibe, where she doesn’t become the bad girl, exactly, but she loosens up and shakes it off a little bit. But I do always still like Rizzo in “Grease,” who is more fun than Sandy, so I’m not sure that Stephanie is necessarily the one. She’d have to really just be letting her hair down.

**You’ve said you downplayed Fritzi’s sexuality when you filmed “Camp.”**

The thing that made me uncomfortable about Fritzi was I was 16, but it wasn’t so much that she was gay – it was that unrequited gay love situation. I think if she’d been crushing it and getting girls, I would’ve been like, “Awesome, awesome, awesome!” It was just, at 16 you don’t want to be playing the girl that nobody likes, which I totally recognize as I get older is such a silly insecurity issue. But at the time I was definitely like, “Can’t somebody just have a crush on me in a movie – god!”

**Would you have approached Fritzi differently in retrospect?**

The truth is, I think would have just enjoyed myself. Todd Graff is amazing, and I’m so lucky to have had him as my first film director. And he really got me to do everything that I think that I would’ve done as a more experienced actor, regardless, but I guess I regret that I didn’t enjoy myself more.

**You recently won the Choice Twit award at this year’s Teen Choice Awards, and I wouldn’t be surprised if this was your crowning tweet: “Lot of people seem really proud of themselves for announcing they ‘already knew’ Barry Manilow was gay. Yeah. . . .ur the true heroes today guys.”**

When a public figure comes out, taking the attitude of like, “Duh, we knew,” is the weirdest thing to me. Even when celebrities announce that they’re pregnant, people aren’t like, “Duh, we could tell three months ago.” They’re like, “Aww, she’s finally ready to talk about the fact that she’s pregnant! That’s amazing!”

And you would think that your sexuality would just be really supported (because) they feel comfortable talking about it now. It’s a really weird topic to feel a sense of superiority that you figured it out first.

**So much of what you do is just a bit gay. Was that the case for your role as Santa Claus’s**

See Anna Kendrick, continued on p. 18



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► **Anna Kendrick**

Continued from p. 17

there's just this moment and they both get caught up in it and it's a little uncomfortable. Yeah, it was a fun day.

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**daughter in the forthcoming "Noelle"?**

Again, I would say "Noelle" has a touch of camp, so hopefully that will be enjoyable. It's been so long and I haven't even seen a cut of it, so I'm like, "What did we make?" Oh, but they did make a point to have same-sex couples wherever we went, whether we were at the North Pole or outside the North Pole.

**Getting back to "A Simple Favor": Where do you think Stephanie and Emily fall on the Kinsey Scale?**

That's a good question. I think Emily is a surprise for Stephanie, and she is completely in love with her in a way that she can't totally understand. I do think that Stephanie probably would define herself as straight, except that there is this woman and she really is kind of in love with her and there is a part of her that is attracted to her.

That scene: I remember Blake and I both feeling like neither of us wanted to be the aggressor in the scene. Blake was worried that she would come off as taking advantage of me in that scene because I'm in a very vulnerable place, and I was worried that I would come off like I wanted so much more, and that Blake is just kind of playing and Emily is very comfortable with the fluid aspects of her sexuality, whereas Stephanie has more of an emotional component to it. So, I was worried it would be, like, really sad. We definitely struggled to find that perfect balance of,

**You've been open about your girl crushes over the years. Have you ever had a girl crush that was or could have been romantic?**

Let me think about that. I definitely – there's somebody I'm still friends with, and when we met we kissed. This was after high school, and it was the first time I had kissed a girl where it wasn't just like, we're at a party and boys are watching! That horrible performance silliness. But I think I haven't had that emotional love for a lady, which isn't saying it could never happen to me, but I think I'm more of an Emily than a Stephanie.

**And your lip-lock with your longtime girl crush Blake Lively in this movie – thoughts?**

(Laughs) I mean, all I'm ever thinking about in (kissing) scenes is, who has gum? Who has a mint? And I think Blake is probably the same because I've never experienced a guy, like, searching for a mint and searching for gum. So, we were the mintiest, freshest two people to have ever kissed in the history of America.

**Congratulations!**

Thank you. Call Guinness.

As editor of Q Syndicate, the international LGBTQ wire service, Chris Azzopardi has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. Reach him via his website at [www.chris-azzopardi.com](http://www.chris-azzopardi.com) and on Twitter (@chrisazzopardi).

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# Penny Seats Theatre Company Features 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'

BY BTL STAFF

ANN ARBOR — The Penny Seats Theatre Company offers “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,” an adaptation of the classic Robert Louis Stevenson story by playwright Jeffrey Hatcher from Oct. 12 through 28 at the College Theater located at Washtenaw Community College.

“The play absolutely thrilled me,” said play curator Joseph Zettelmaier. “It’s incredibly theatrical, the kind of play that only works as a play. In particular, Hyde is actually played by four different actors in the ensemble, really riffing on the concept of identity. And like all the great horror stories, it speaks to something fundamentally human in us ... the idea of what we become when our worst selves are brought to the forefront. Hyde is brutal, sinister ... but he’s a part of us all, the part that holds nothing back, that acts on pure instinct.”

The cast features David Galido, Julia Garlotte, Michael Herman, Dan



Johnson, Alysia Kolasz and Josie Lapczynski.

The Penny Seats Theatre Company

has announced that it will be bringing classic gothic horror stories to Ann Arbor stages every October,

such as “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” starting this year, as part of its new Penny Dreadful Series. Created and curated by award-winning local playwright Zettelmaier, the Penny Dreadful Series aims to add theater to the yearly tricking and treating of Michigan audiences.

“The primary focus is on the gothic, the sort of horror that evokes images of decrepit mansions, gargoyles, foggy London streets, wolves howling in the woods ... atmosphere over gore,” said Zettelmaier. “I’ve been fortunate enough to work many times with Illinois’ First Folio Theatre, a gorgeous (Actors’) Equity (Association) company set in an honest-to-God mansion. Every year, they do horror-themed plays in October and it’s gone from being just a night at the theater to a legitimate event.”

Zettelmaier’s plays “The Gravedigger: A Frankenstein Story,” “Dr. Seward’s Dracula” and “The Man-Beast” have all haunted First Folio’s stage.

“Audiences members have shown up in costumes. They’ve had massive Halloween parties ... it’s everything I love about theater, a real sense of fun and excitement.”

Inspired by the success of last year’s “The Turn of the Screw,” Penny Seats will be bringing these stories to locales around Ann Arbor, each fitting in some way the theme of the play. This year’s selection is “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.”

Over the last year, Zettelmaier has been collecting a wide variety of gothic horror plays in preparation for future Penny Dreadful productions.

“I have to keep the secrets in the crypt, but I can say you’ll see a lot of classic horror stories presented and reimagined in the coming years,” he said. “From classics like ‘Dracula’ to uniquely American horror like the Salem witch trials.”

*The event will be held at 4800 E. Huron River Drive, Ann Arbor. Tickets for “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” will be available online at pennyseats.org.*

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## Jim Toy Community Center September LezRead Features 'The Stone Sky'

BY BTL STAFF

Queer women looking for an LGBTQ-friendly book club can stop their search with the Jim Toy Community Center's LezRead group. Meeting every fourth Saturday of the month from 4 to 6 p.m., attendees will spend the first hour of the meeting chatting about literature and then spend the second half getting drinks and snacks at Aut Bar. This time around, the book club will read the third novel in the Broken Earth Trilogy.

"For September, we're revisiting N.K. Jemisin's Broken Earth trilogy. 'The Stone Sky' is the third novel in the series," write event organizers. "We can't say enough great things

about this two-time Hugo Award-winning author! Most book club members agree that the books live up to the hype. Jemisin has truly changed the face of science fiction. Don't worry about where you are in the books. All are welcome to join the discussion!"

Interested new members should email [kerenem@jimtoycenter.org](mailto:kerenem@jimtoycenter.org) to join the private Facebook group. Potential attendees are reminded to bring a small cash donation for the use of the community center.

*The event will be held at 319 Braun Ct. from 4 to 6 p.m. in Ann Arbor. More event information can be found on the event's Facebook page.*

## Aut Bar Celebrates 23rd Anniversary

BY BTL STAFF

Alongtime mainstay for Ann Arbor's LGBTQ community, Aut Bar is set to celebrate its 23rd anniversary on Saturday, Sept. 29 with a homecoming party.

Since the late '90s, locals have been seeking out Aut Bar as a place to grab drinks, dance a little and meet up with friends. For more information about the event and about the bar, visit its Facebook page or head to [autbar.com](http://autbar.com).

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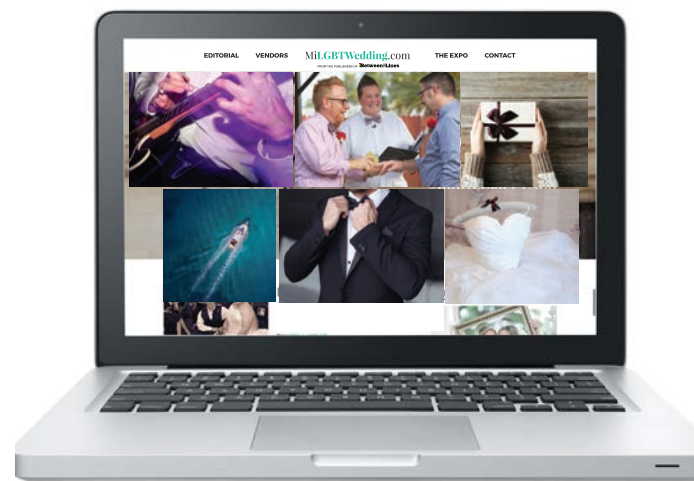


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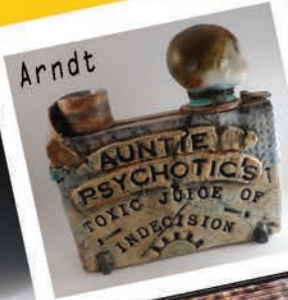
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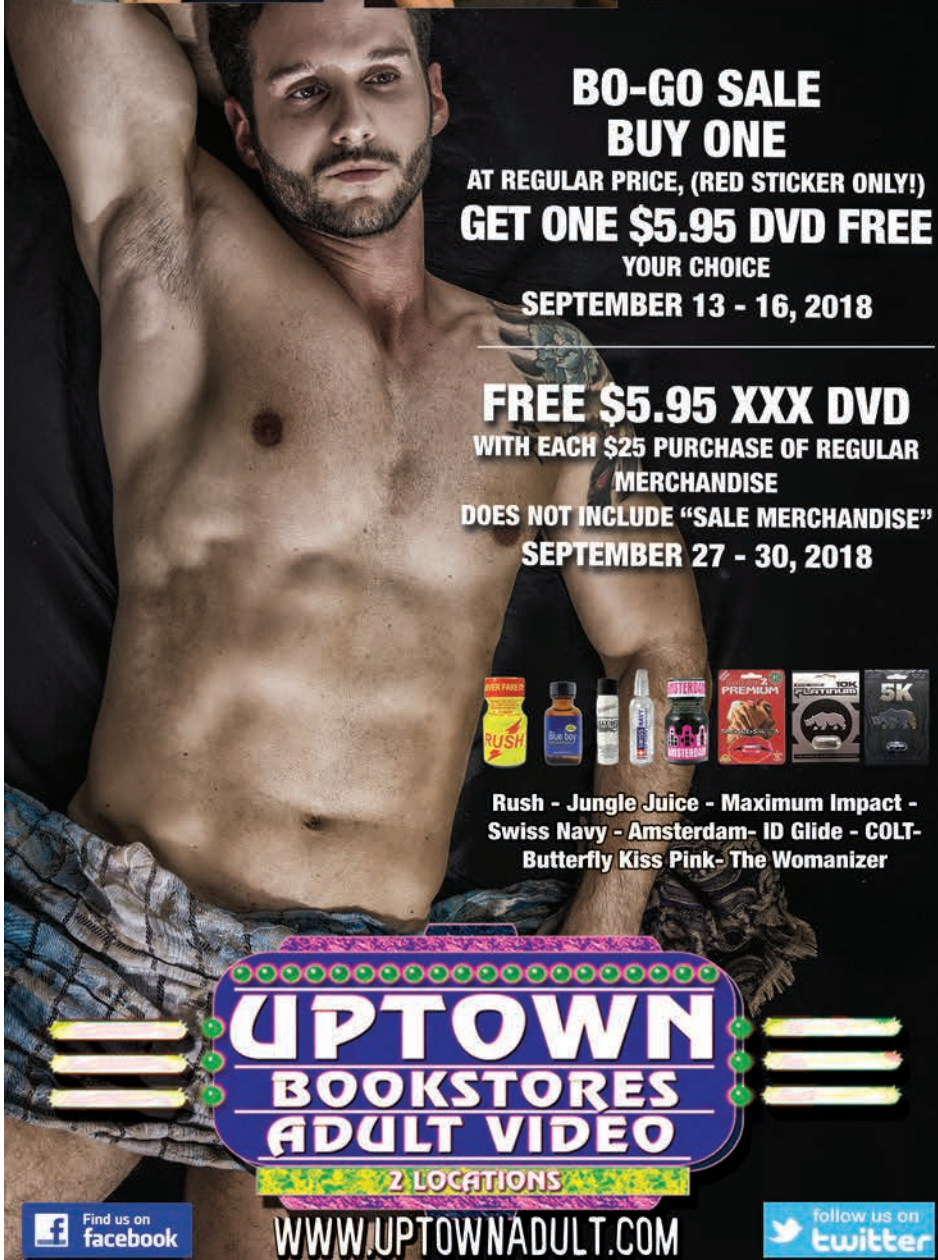


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# Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## Thought they were goners? Nope, the 'Cats' have a release date.

When Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical "Cats," based on T.S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats," was the hottest ticket in musical theater, film studios weren't exactly lining up to make any sort of movie musical, much less one that involved the entire cast frolicking about in kitty costumes. And when they did decide to make one, it was "A Chorus Line." But that was before the film musical resurgence; before "Chicago," before "Les Miserables," before "Dreamgirls" and whatever "The Greatest Showman" was supposed to be. It's been so long that the show became a pop culture joke for decades before regaining some revival respect. It's been so long that rumors of film versions died more than nine times, and at least one of the upcoming movie version's stars, Taylor Swift, hasn't been alive long enough to even know about all this stuff. But now there's a release date: December 20, 2019. It's going to go head to head with a new "Star Wars" movie, unafraid. It's got "Les Mis" Tom Hooper as director, Ian McKellen co-starring, and Jennifer Hudson as Grizabella, so at least you know "Memory" is in capable hands. Now it seems almost real, and it only took almost 40 years.

## 'Mrs. Fletcher' goes to series at HBO

We write about pilots sometimes, and then that piece of TV hope vanishes into the ether without a trace, abandoned by the network suits, leaving you thinking thoughts like, "Wasn't 'The Corrections' supposed to be a show at some point? Did it happen? Is it on Starz and nobody told me?" So it's a pleasure to see one we were hoping would go the distance actually get a series order. The latest project from the amazing Nicole Holofcener, "Mrs. Fletcher," starring Kathryn Hahn, has an HBO pickup with no set air date. The show co-stars "Happy Endings" alum Casey Wilson and transgender actress Jen Richards ("Her Story") in currently unknown roles, and the series will follow the lives of an empty-nester Mom (Hahn) and her college freshman son (Jackson

White) as their lives are impacted by internet porn. Holofcener alone makes this appointment television, because if anyone can deal with adult sexual entertainment thoughtfully, it's her, and we love this cast, as well. One question: will there be promotional tie-in events with Pornhub?



Garrett Clayton. Photo: KathClick

## Actor Garrett Clayton comes out

Millennial-aged actors are coming out in numbers that feel overwhelming compared to the not-so-recent past when virtually no one did, and they do it on Instagram, which is always a nice, casual touch. So this is an unofficial LGBTQ+ welcome to 27-year-old Garrett Clayton, whom you've seen in "Hairspray Live," "King Cobra," on shows like "The Fosters," and - if you're very young - in Disney Channel productions like "Teen Beach Movie." He sings, acts, dances, and looks like Zac Efron's little brother, which doesn't hurt at all. And he has half a dozen upcoming projects under his belt, including the bullying

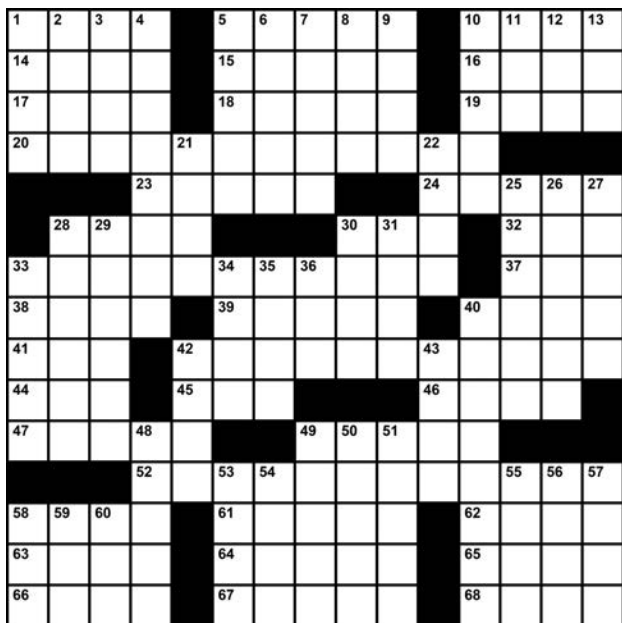
drama "Reach" and the Nicolas Cage drama "Between Worlds," both slated for this year, and the horror film "Killing Games," currently in production. We're always happy to report news like this, so go forth and conquer, young gay dude.

## 'Boy Erased' promotes responsible podcasting

The upcoming fall film "Boy Erased," which stars Lucas Hedges, Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe, is the true story of a Baptist pastor's son forced into discredited conversion therapy run by conservative Evangelical Christians. And the filmmakers have hit upon a unique and truly valuable bit of promotional content. They'll be launching a four-part podcast, "UnErased" to coincide with "Boy Erased"'s release. Author Garrard Conley, whose memoir forms the basis of the film, will participate in the podcast, which will focus on real stories of young people forced into the abusive programs, which have affected an estimated 800,000 people since their inception. "UnErased" will be made available exclusively to Stitcher Premium subscribers in the weeks before the film's Nov. 2 release, and available everywhere podcasts are hosted coinciding with that release. There are already laws on the books in some states banning these programs for minors. Let's hope projects like this help turn the tide and protect queer youth in even more places.

Romeo San Vicente is happy to give your podcast's Patreon at least one dollar.





## Peppermint Twist

## QPuzzle

### Across

- 1 Homeland of the Singing Nun (abbr.)
- 5 Cockeyed
- 10 Madonna's "\_\_\_ Don't Preach"
- 14 A strong one found in the gym
- 15 Lauren Wright Douglas' "\_\_\_ Life"
- 16 Apple that isn't a fruit
- 17 Super's apartment, maybe
- 18 Look at someone using hate speech
- 19 A pound of Rupert Everett

- 20 Aretha song featured in the movie "Goodfellas"
- 23 Crawled out of bed
- 24 Laughter at a Margaret Cho routine
- 28 Avis adjective
- 30 Hereditary chain
- 32 "Orange Is the \_\_\_ Black"
- 33 "Title" for Aretha Franklin
- 37 Bird from down under
- 38 Annapolis sch.
- 39 Judged "Dancing with the Stars," e.g.

### Down

- 1 Tube opening?
- 2 Barry Humphries' Dame
- 3 Leopold's partner
- 4 The South, in "Gone with the Wind"?
- 5 Like the Jets, in "West Side Story"
- 6 Missile housing
- 7 Thief of the tarts of the Queen of Hearts
- 8 To be, in Brest
- 9 Milk component
- 10 Prick
- 11 "The Simpsons" storekeeper

- 40 "It's showtime!"
- 41 NASDAQ rival
- 42 Aretha song from the "Young, Gifted and Black" album
- 44 Hyundai rival
- 45 Pub offering
- 46 Places for sweaty embraces, perhaps
- 47 Leaves quietly, with "out"
- 49 Saloon seat
- 52 Aretha song that won a Grammy Hall of Fame Award
- 58 Albee's "Three \_\_\_ Women"
- 61 Stallion's sound
- 62 Stonewall memory
- 63 "Baby Doll" director Kazan
- 64 Rita Mae Brown output
- 65 Cinder suffix in a fairy tale
- 66 "It \_\_\_ Necessarily So"
- 67 Place atop
- 68 One of Cary's exes

- 12 Polynesian paste
- 13 Word on a dipstick
- 21 Caspian Sea land
- 22 Lesbian character in "She's Gotta Have It"
- 25 No zip
- 26 Fruit in a slot machine
- 27 Tried to hit a pitch
- 28 Election fixer for the Homophobe-in-Chief
- 29 Trojan hero
- 30 Active partner
- 31 Michelangelo's David, e.g.
- 33 San Francisco event of 1906
- 34 By word of mouth
- 35 "Mommie Dearest" star Dunaway
- 36 Risk with careless sex
- 40 Got on one's knees and begged
- 42 Sprint at the Gay Games
- 43 Dating from
- 48 Dazzling success
- 49 Some stick it where it doesn't belong
- 50 Trunk of Charles Atlas photos
- 51 "I have \_\_\_ walked down the street before..."
- 53 Venom sources
- 54 With respect to
- 55 Ready to be rubbed the right way
- 56 "Damn Yankees" girl
- 57 Trey does his voice on "South Park"
- 58 Drink with jam and bread
- 59 Hillary's Wellesley classmate MacGraw
- 60 Memorial designer Maya



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(for gender expansive young children, transgender youth and parents/caregivers of trans individuals)

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**Come together as a community.**  
All day skill building, learning, and activities. Lunch and snacks included.

**Workshop Location:**  
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**Registration link:**  
[www.standwithtrans.org/upcoming-events/2018-workshop](http://www.standwithtrans.org/upcoming-events/2018-workshop)

**For updates visit:**  
[www.facebook.com/standwithtrans](http://www.facebook.com/standwithtrans) or [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org)

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Tuesday, 9/18, 8 pm

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SEPTEMBER 23-25

**120 Artists to be Featured at 2018 Funky Ferndale Art Fair**

From Sept. 21 through 23, art admirers can attend an event that organizers write is "twice as funky as the average art fair." The fair will feature 120 juried artists who are showcasing a variety of 2D, 3D and wearable art. Additionally, attendees can listen to live music and attend the "little sister event" across the street, the DIY street fair. More information can be found online at [funkyferndaleartfair.com](http://funkyferndaleartfair.com).




**Happenings**

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## OUTINGS

### Thursday, Sept. 13

**Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce Merge & Mixer** 6:30 p.m. All are welcomed to network. Check website for monthly location, RSVP is Required. Soho, 205 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-542-7646. [info@detroitlgbtchamber.com](mailto:info@detroitlgbtchamber.com).

**Farmington Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups** 7 p.m. Free. This youth group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at Orchard United Methodist Church. 30450 Farmington Road, Farmington. 248-626-3620. [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

**Toastmasters International SpeakOUT!**

**LGBTQ Meeting** 7 p.m. Professional & personal communication skills development. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. [speakout.toastmastersclubs.org](http://speakout.toastmastersclubs.org).

### Saturday, Sept. 15

**U.P. Pride Fest** 12 p.m. Featuring a deaf speaker, kids activities, a drag show and more. [uprainbowpride@gmail.com](mailto:uprainbowpride@gmail.com). [uprainbowpride.org](http://uprainbowpride.org).

### Sunday, Sept. 16

**Wyandotte Stand with Trans Support Group** 4 p.m. Free. Meets 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month @ St. Stephens Episcopal Church. 734-747-4363. St. Stephens Episcopal Church, 2803 1st

St., Wyandotte. [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

### Wednesday, Sept. 19

**Livonia, Wayne County Stand with Trans Support Groups** 6:30 p.m. Free. Group meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 34567 7 Mile Road, Livonia. [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

### Tuesday, Sept. 25

**Ann Arbor, Washtenaw, Strand with Trans Support Groups** 6:30 p.m. Trans Support Group meeting the 4th Tuesday of each month at Journey of Faith Christian Church. 1900 Manchester Road, Ann Arbor. [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

### Friday, Sept. 28

**Tig Notaro at Masonic Temple** 6:30 p.m. Stand-up comedian, actor, writer, producer and director. Detroit Masonic Temple, 3011 W. Grand Blvd, #1100, Detroit. 800-854-2196. [templetroit.com](http://templetroit.com). [themasonic.com](http://themasonic.com).

### Saturday, Sept. 29

**Mega March for Animals, Presented by Sellers Subaru** 9 a.m. Join 1,000 attendees and their dogs. Cullen Plaza, Detroit. 313-566-8200. [events@michiganhumane.org](http://events@michiganhumane.org). [MichiganHumane.org/megamarch](http://MichiganHumane.org/megamarch).

**10th Annual Fall Fundraiser - An Evening with Ozone House** 6:30 p.m. Food, drinks, music and performances. Domino's World Resource Center, 30

## Editor's Pick

### Michigander at Blind Pig

Nostalgia-infused Americana with a twist of alternative rock sums up Michigander's sound. The group, led by Grand Rapids-born Jason Singer, has graced sold-out shows in New York and Chicago, as well as the stages of Audiotree, Daytrotter and Detroit's Mo Pop Festival. Now on tour, the group is heading to Ann Arbor's Blind Pig on Friday, Sept. 21. Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$14 at the door. More information can be found online at [blindpigmusic.com](http://blindpigmusic.com).



## Editor's Pick

### Native American Heritage Day Contest Pow-Wow

The North American Indian Association is hosting a Native American Heritage Day Contest Pow-Wow on Saturday, Sept. 22, from 1 to 4 p.m. featuring dance categories for men, women and children with cash prizes as high as \$300. Native American food will be available for purchase, along with arts and crafts. More information can be found by calling 313-535-2966 or by emailing naiadetroit@gmail.com.



Frank Lloyd Wright Drive, Ann Arbor. 734-930-3030. [hruud@ozonehouse.org](mailto:hruud@ozonehouse.org).

**Tig Notaro at Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids!** 7:30 p.m. Stand-up comedian, actor, writer, producer, and director. Rolling Stone Fountain Street Church, 24 Fountain Street NE, Grand Rapids. 616-459-8386. [fountainstreet.org](http://fountainstreet.org).

#### Tuesday, Oct. 2

**Lake Orion, Oakland County Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups** 7 p.m. Free. For parents of transgender kids, this group meets the 1st Tuesday of each month @ St. Mary's In The Hills Episcopal Church, 2512 Joslyn Court, Lake Orion. 248-391-0663. [stmarysinthehills.org](http://stmarysinthehills.org).

#### Sunday, Oct. 7

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Adrian-Lenawee County** 6:30 p.m. Hilltop Counseling, 115 W. Maumee Street, Adrian. 313-909-5408. [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org). [hilltopcounseling.org](http://hilltopcounseling.org).

#### Wednesday, Oct. 10

**Culture Lab: Screening of Original 'RoboCop'** 8 p.m. Senate Theater, 6424 Michigan Ave., Detroit. 313-894-0850. [senatetheater.com](http://senatetheater.com)

#### Thursday, Oct. 11

**Culture Lab: 'The Aesthetics of Tomorrow'** 6 p.m. Features artists and theorists working on the cusp of technological innovation: Mark Pauline and Eyal Weizman's. Senate Theater, 6424 Michigan Ave., Detroit.

#### Friday, Oct. 12

**Culture Lab: Seeing and Being Seen** 6 p.m. Three artists explore identity. The Church of the Messiah, 231 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit. 313-267-1010

## MUSIC & MORE

**Osborne Macharia with Blinky Bill** Sept. 13, 5 p.m. Osborne and Bill will premiere "Remember The Rude Boy." Stamps School of Art Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. [pennystampsevents.com](http://pennystampsevents.com).

**23rd Annual Artworks Detroit Auction and Fundraiser** Sept. 13, 6 p.m. Food and drinks, live music, fashion show and more. Wasserman Projects, 3434 Russell Street, #502, Detroit. [inquiries@matrixhs.org](mailto:inquiries@matrixhs.org). [matrixhumanservices.org/artworks](http://matrixhumanservices.org/artworks).

**Matrix Theatre Presents the 7th Annual Cabaret Fundraiser** Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. This year's theme is "Tears and Laughter." Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley St., Detroit. 313-967-0599 [info@matrixtheatre.org](mailto:info@matrixtheatre.org). [matrixtheatre.org](http://matrixtheatre.org).

**Royal Oak Barktoberfest!** Sept. 15, 11 a.m. Dogs, craft beers, music and more.

Enjoy the Howl-a-ween Costume Contest and more. One event on Sept. 16 at 11 a.m. Memorial Park, 31050 Woodward, Royal Oak. [royaloakchamber.com](http://royaloakchamber.com).

**Health is The Gift You Give Yourself** Sept. 18, 6:30 p.m. Learn about the health benefits of a good diet. Groves High School, 20500 West 13 Mile Road, Beverly Hills. 248-919-8726. [pbns.org](http://pbns.org).

**Addiction 101** Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m. An overview of substance use disorders.. Free. Sponsored by Dawn Farm. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti. 734-485-8725. [dawnfarm.org](http://dawnfarm.org).

**Michigan Burlesque Festival – Dirty Martini** Sept. 21, 7 p.m. Honor one of Detroit's own burlesque legends and burly "mama," inspirational Toni Elling! Hastings Street Ballroom, 715 E. Milwaukee St., Detroit. 313-873-2955. [tangentgallery.com](http://tangentgallery.com). [michiganburlesquefestival.com](http://michiganburlesquefestival.com).

**Addiction and Families** Sept. 25, 7:30 p.m. Dr. Lynn Kleiman Malinoff, Ed.D. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti. 734-485-8725. [dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series](http://dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series).

**2018 Voices – A Detroit Legacy** Sept. 27, 6 p.m. Save the date for 2018 Voices, VIP Reception at 6pm, Main Event at 7 p.m. Tickets available at [ruthelliscenter.org](http://ruthelliscenter.org). Motor City Casino Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 313-309-4700. [motorcitycasino.com](http://motorcitycasino.com). [ruthelliscenter.org](http://ruthelliscenter.org).

**Star Wars: A New Hope in Concert** Sept. 28, 8 p.m. See "Star Wars: A New Hope" as the full feature film is projected onto a large screen in Orchestra Hall, with John Williams' Max M. & Marjorie S., Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org).

**Mega March for Animals, Presented by Sellers Subaru** Sept. 29, 9 a.m. Join 1,000 supporters of the Michigan Humane Society and their dogs. Detroit RiverWalk, Cullen Plaza (formerly Rivard Plaza), Detroit. 313-566-8200. [events@michiganhumane.org](mailto:events@michiganhumane.org). [detroitriverfront.org](http://detroitriverfront.org). [MichiganHumane.org/megamarch](http://MichiganHumane.org/megamarch).

**Big 80s Flashback Bash!** Sept. 29, 8 p.m. Big '80s Flashback Bash celebrates all genres of 80s music all night long! Proceeds to Hater Kitty Cat Rescue PJs Lagerhouse, 1254 Michigan Ave., Detroit. 313-961-4668.

**Gil Shaham and Enigma** Oct. 5, 8 p.m. "Resplendent," raves the Los Angeles Times of Gil Shaham. "The performance of a lifetime." Shaham plays Prokofiev's blistering First Violin Concerto. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Avenue, Detroit. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org).

**Dancing in the Street: A Symphonic Tribute to Motown** Oct. 12, 10:30 a.m. Celebrate Motown and artists like Marvin Gaye, The Four Tops, Martha Reeves, Diana Ross and The Temptations. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org).

**Addiction and Older Adults** Oct. 16, 7:30

p.m. Social workers discuss addiction in older adults. Free. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti. 734-485-8725. [dawnfarm.org](http://dawnfarm.org).

**The Firebird** Oct. 18, 7:30 p.m. Experience Stravinsky's "The Firebird" under the dynamic Fabian Gabel, plus Stravinsky's beguiling "The Song of the Nightingale, and Tchaikovsky's stormy. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org).

## ART 'N' AROUND

**Star Wars and the Power of Costume** 10 a.m. Explore the challenges in dressing the Star Wars universe from the Galactic Senate and royalty to the Jedi, Sith and Droids". Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-833-7900. [dia.org/starwarsattheDIA](http://dia.org/starwarsattheDIA).

**16th Annual Michigan Renaissance Festival** 10 a.m. Take a time-travel adventure into the 16th century. 12600 Dixie Hwy., Holly. 248-634-5552. [info@michrenfest.com](mailto:info@michrenfest.com). [michrenfest.com](http://michrenfest.com). [tickets.vendini.com](http://tickets.vendini.com).

**Osborne Macharia with Blinky Bill** 7 p.m. Artists will discuss their recent creative collaboration entitled: "Remember The Rude Boy." Charles H Wright Museum, 315 E. Warren Ave., Detroit. [thewright.org](http://thewright.org). [pennystampsevents.com](http://pennystampsevents.com).

**Passages** Sept. 15, 6 p.m. Features paintings by John Michaels and Ken Walker that explore themes of conflict and oppression. Office Space Gallery, 2870 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit. 313-478-6722. [mosaicproductionsllc.com](http://mosaicproductionsllc.com).

**Morag Myerscough** Sept. 20, 5 p.m. Myerscough explores the theme of "belonging" in her work, using it to transform public spaces. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. [pennystampsevents.com](http://pennystampsevents.com).

**Have We Met: Dialogues on Memory and Desire** Sept. 21, 6 p.m. Curated by Srimoyee Mitra. Stamps gallery, 201 S. Division St., Ann Arbor. [stamps.umich.edu/exhibitions/detail/have-we-met](http://stamps.umich.edu/exhibitions/detail/have-we-met).

**Michigan Burlesque Festival – Dirty Martini** Sept. 21, 7 p.m. Hastings Street Ballroom, 715 E. Milwaukee St., Detroit. 313-873-2955. [tangentgallery.com](http://tangentgallery.com). [michiganburlesquefestival.com](http://michiganburlesquefestival.com).

**Ariel Waldman** Sept. 27, 5 p.m. She sits on the council for the NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts Program that aims to nurture radical, science-fiction-inspired ideas. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. [stamps.umich.edu/stamps/detail/ariel\\_waldman](http://stamps.umich.edu/stamps/detail/ariel_waldman).

OPENING NIGHT

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