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*Spring Home Guide*

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LGBTQ Community

PAGE 6

Cinetopia's LGBTQ  
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**NEWS**

6 HRC, SAGE Partnered to Form Long-Term Care  
Equality Index for LGBTQ Elders

9 10th Annual Cheers to HELP Friday, May 10

12 Legislation Introduced to Ban Conversion  
Therapy in Michigan

**HOME**

10 A Q&A with Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams

12 Art Deco Burlesque Brought Back by Tundra-  
Mae Fury

14 Detroit Builds Cooperatively

16 How the Best Landlords and Tenants Do it

18 Publication Presents Legendary American  
Photographer Berenice Abbott's Work

19 Real Estate Entrepreneur Releases E-Book for  
LGBTQ Home Buyers

**OPINION**

10 Parting Glances

10 As in a Mirror

11 Creep of the Week: Jacob Wohl and Jack  
Burkman

**LIFE**

20 Cinetopia 2019 Makes Room for LGBTQ  
Audiences

22 Love, Fear, Freedom

25 Como's to Reopen Under New Ownership

28 Deep Inside Hollywood

**COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

26 Happenings

29 Puzzle & Crossword

30 MOCAD Hosts Self-Perception and Storytelling  
Exhibit

30 Ferndale Pride Annual Hot Daddies Contest  
Fundraiser

30 Detroit Calls on Artists to Save Art Space



14 Cover Story: Detroit Builds  
Cooperatively  
BTL Photo: Andrew Potter

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## 10th Annual Cheers to HELP Friday, May 10

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Scheduled for Friday, May 10, Corktown Health Center will host the 10th annual Cheers to HELP benefit to aid in funding the LGBTQ-specific health center. Patrick Yankee is the Center's chief development officer and he said this year is bigger than ever before for a variety of reasons.

"Because it's the 10th anniversary we tried very hard to step it up and make it a little bit of a larger of an event and I think this year we have it," Yankee said. "We have more sponsors than ever before, more silent auction items than ever before and we have a new venue this year. We are having it at The Eastern, which is in the Eastern Market on Russell Street and it really fits. It's in a good location, good parking and, in the past, we were doing it at the Corktown location and we would turn this building into an events center, and it just doesn't work anymore."

At the event, attendees will be able to enjoy a strolling wine tasting, a variety of hors d'oeuvres, assorted desserts, a silent auction and a performance from Ben Sharkey. Beyond that, Yankee said he's excited to introduce more people to the work of the Corktown Health Center, along with the programming that attendees will be supporting.

"Because it has evolved, and the event has evolved like the agency has evolved," Yankee said. "This event benefits the programs at Corktown including the HIV program, but what we are doing also is we are going to be presenting our second annual LGBTQ Health Heroes Award. This year, it will be presented to Laura Marble who is the vice president of Blue Cross Blue Shield."

Marble will be recognized for her dedicated work in the non-profit community to strengthen services to people living with HIV and for her support of Corktown Health Center's efforts to address the health needs of LGBTQ people across the state of Michigan.

*To find out more information about attending the event visit [cheerstohelp2019.eventbrite.com](http://cheerstohelp2019.eventbrite.com). Visit [corktownhealth.org](http://corktownhealth.org) for more information about the Center's work.*

# HRC, SAGE Partnered to Form Long-Term Care Equality Index for LGBTQ Elders

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Announced officially last month, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, the educational arm of the LGBTQ civil rights advocacy organization HRC, and SAGE, the world's largest and oldest organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBTQ older adults, joined forces in a partnership aimed at helping LGBTQ elders across the country. The inaugural project taken on by these groups is the Long-Term Care Equality Index: a nationwide assessment intended to rate the quality of life LGBTQ people have in long-term elder care facilities.

"All too often, LGBTQ elders do not receive the care and support they deserve," said HRC President Chad Griffin. "With experts predicting that as many as 4.7 million LGBTQ elders will be seeking care and services by the year 2030, the time to act is now. It is incumbent on us to ensure that all LGBTQ elders are treated with dignity and respect, and HRC is proud to join with SAGE in this historic effort to fundamentally improve the experiences of LGBTQ older adults as they seek long-term care and services."

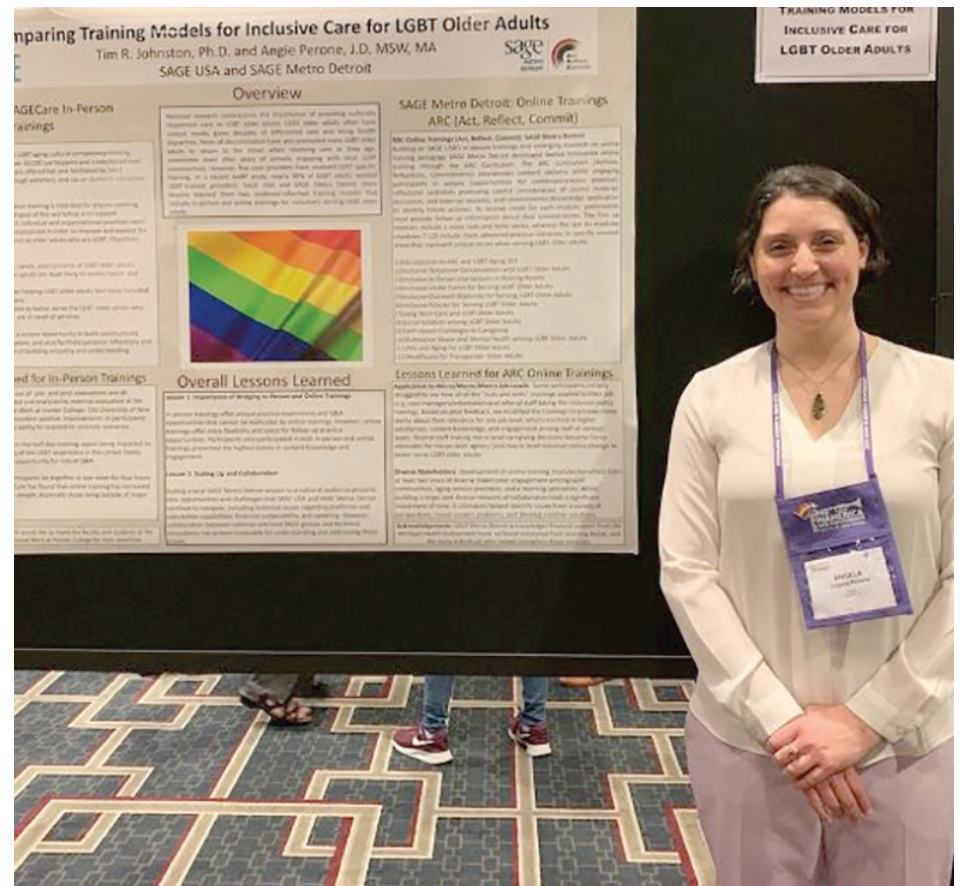
## The LEI in Four Steps

As it stands, there remains a lot of work to be done before the LEI is fully completed, but it will operate similarly to an existing index, said Tari Hanneman, director of the HRC Foundation's Health Equality Program.

"I think the LEI will probably be closest to the Health Care Equality Index," she said. "We'll be looking at some fairly similar kinds of criteria, so making sure that an area has LGBT-inclusive non-discrimination both for their residents, visitors if applicable and their employees — that's key — and then foundational is having some training. And that's one of the strengths that SAGE really brings to the table, they have a great training program that's really working with a lot of long-term care providers so that training really helps bring those policies to life."

Kat LaTosch founded LaTosch Consulting, an organization that aids non-profits in expanding diversity, equity and inclusion, and has been doing work on LGBTQ-inclusive senior services since 2013 and will serve as the Michigan project manager for the LEI. She outlined that the LEI will focus specifically on long-term care providers in institutional areas meaning assisted living, independent living, nursing care and hospice and will be a great metric for assessing if a particular organization is the correct fit for a potential LGBTQ resident's needs.

"We're talking those specific areas because



Angie Perone is the executive director of SAGE Metro Detroit. She and her team presented last month in New Orleans on their work concerning older LGBTQ adults and their care. SAGE Board Member Kat LaTosch presented, too, on her work with the Human Rights Campaign Foundation which is jointly with SAGE launching the Long-Term Care Equality Index.

they're already somewhat regulated and so we can make better inroads that way. But yes, ultimately, if I'm an aging LGBTQ person and I'm looking for a place that's not going to discriminate against me and has gone through some practices and put those in place to ensure that there are protections for me, I'll be able to check them out on this guide, I'll be able to go to this website and see a directory of listings in my area, that's the goal," she said.

For organizations interested in testing their inclusivity, LaTosch said the first step is to sign the Commitment to Caring pledge put forth jointly by both organizations to show "that they're going to make a commitment to go through the process and become inclusive organizations."

"Once they sign the pledge or the endorsement, then they'll have an opportunity — and this is in the development phases — of taking a self-assessment," LaTosch said. "Someone from the agency can go through a checklist and check off to what extent their services are LGBT-inclusive. Once they get that assessment, they'll also learn how well they fare on that and they'll receive best practices and guidance on how to improve."

Then, the first round of institutional changes, if any, should begin. LaTosch emphasized that the results from this process are intentionally private, and that both HRC and SAGE will play a role in helping organizations that opt into the service raise their scores.

"Once they've completed that, they'll be ready to make some improvements and then they can take the actual index which will rank their organization," she said. "So, our approach is very much one that is educational and supportive and helpful by providing best practices by providing guides and tools and resources."

Regarding Southeast Michigan specifically, LaTosch said she's observed a general willingness to participate from the currently existing elder care facilities.

"Additionally, our rainbow resource guide now has tons of referrals, all of which have pledged a commitment to care for LGBT older adults and agreed to treat them with dignity and respect and not discriminate," she said. "So that's a good combination in Metro Detroit."

And statewide, the results look promising, too. Of the 16 LGBTQ care facilities in Michigan, six have already partnered with

SAGE and HRC and three have started their own work — meaning that already more than half the state is interested in fostering positive relationships with the LGBTQ community.

“I think the LEI will provide an added encouragement for more companies to do that, more private services, because now they’re saying, ‘This isn’t just Michigan, there’s states across the country that are doing this.’ It’s really to help push that wave of forward movement ahead,” she said.

## Fear of Discrimination is a Lasting Concern

Perhaps one of the starkest examples of the necessity for an accurate LGBTQ elder care index is in the rates of anxiety and fear that elders have about their quality of life when they retire to a senior living community. According to a study updated in 2018 by The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center — an organization devoted to providing support, technical assistance and training to long-term care facilities across the U.S. — roughly 10.1 million Americans identify as LGBTQ. Of that number, nearly a

lived their lives out of the closet and it’s really hard to go back in. And, really, we know stories where people have faced definitely discrimination, sometimes even violence from [that],” Wahrman said. “I would just point out sort of an existential threat at the moment which is the religious freedom bills that are happening and 85 percent of long-term care facilities are religiously affiliated which is an insane statistic. So, it’s more important than ever that we do highlight those who are inclusive and have non-discrimination policies in place for residents.”

Hanneman said that as the LEI develops into its final stages, there will be some challenges that both SAGE and HRC will need to tackle.

“One of the biggest difficulties is that this is going to be a voluntary survey, so a long-term care facility would have to opt in to participate and agree to answer questions about their policies and practices, agree to provide us with copies of those policies and practices so that we could verify in some way that they’re doing it,” she said. “It’s going to take a lot of outreach to get these facilities to opt in and then we’re still probably only going to be serving a fraction.”

The second issue will be in ensuring that organizations are meeting the standards set



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— Kat LaTosch

third of those who were in the age bracket of 52 and older “had significant concerns about discrimination as they age and there are reports that LGBT older adults encounter violations of their rights when seeking long-term care services and supports.”

The study went on to say that a challenge of identifying rights violations traces back to the fact that incidents of abuse are often “unreported and unidentified.”

“However, a majority of individuals responding to a survey (578 of the 649 respondents or 89 percent) felt that staff would discriminate against an LGBT elder who was out of the closet,” read the study. “Additionally, negative treatment, including verbal and physical harassment, by other residents was the most commonly reported problem by respondents in this study.”

Anna Wahrman is the SAGE senior digital content manager. She said those fears can sometimes become a reality, with reports of adults who have been out of the closet for decades forced to reject their LGBTQ identities.

“As the boomers age — and everyone else — they’ve been out of the closet and they’ve

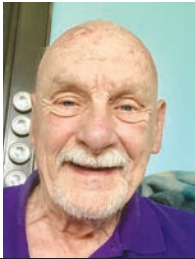
out for them.

“You can have great policies in place, but if you don’t have that training and all of your caregivers are not being fully inclusive, you could have a bad incident because of one person,” Hanneman said. “And so, making sure that these communities are really living up to these policies and practices and that they have trained their staff in a way so that, you know, everybody feels welcome and included, that’s something that is a lot harder to measure and capture in that experience on the ground because we’re not there.”

To combat these roadblocks, however, HRC and SAGE are working on putting together an advisory council “on folks from the field, folks from the aging, long-term care services sector as well as some LGBT aging advocates,” Hanneman said.

“So they will help us form this process,” She said. “We’re very excited about that and we’re making sure we’re listening to their voices as we develop this.”

*To find our more about the Long-Term Care Equality Index visit [thelei.org](http://thelei.org).*



## Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

### Nickname Footnotes to Stonewall

Fifty years ago when gay ID closets were leased for a lifetime, it was SOP – standard operating procedure – to go by a catchy nickname.

Some gay/lesbian Detroit monikers I recall as now-and-then friends are: Little Bobby, Little Pat, Estralita, Marshmallow, T.D. (Tall Dick), Savoy, B.J. (Butch Jimmy), Miss Bruce and, among Dykes Anonymous: Big Red, Skye, Petey, Speedy, Rusty, Big Birdy and – what can one say? – Drano!

Long before the tracheal advent of gay porn stars, I was actually introduced to a guy – of dubious intellectual and moral turpitude, to be sure – who went by the hustler alias of Dallas Copenhagen at the infamous Gas Station bar and pickup venue on Detroit’s 7 Mile Road at Woodward. (Now the site of a homophobic church over 10 years in construction.)

‘Cope’ for short. (I suspect he no longer holds dual citizenship, or cash-worthy turpitude of any kind, in this world, or the next)

My own ID was Angel Al. (Brando Bob when out hitchhiking in my 32-inch waist “White Goddess” Levi’s, penny loafers.)

Our nicknames provided a protective distancing till we found out who we could trust as a lover, friend, trick du jour or same-sex washroom towel attendant.

Nicknames kept nasty people from calling our folks, our employers, our shrinks – our respective parole boards – and made blackmail (an ever-present danger back then) less likely. But threatening enough.

Speaking of which: I was surprised to learn that the famous Stonewall Inn – where the modern Gay Lib movement began 50 years ago on June 28, 1969 – was a home base for blackmailers operating on a colossal two gay city entrapment scale.

According to historian David Carter’s “Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution,” the Mafia-owned Stonewall Inn did legit business under a special, loophole, membership license.

Members were allowed to bring their own booze for bartender pouring (with tips). Booze – watered down – was also sold on the premises.

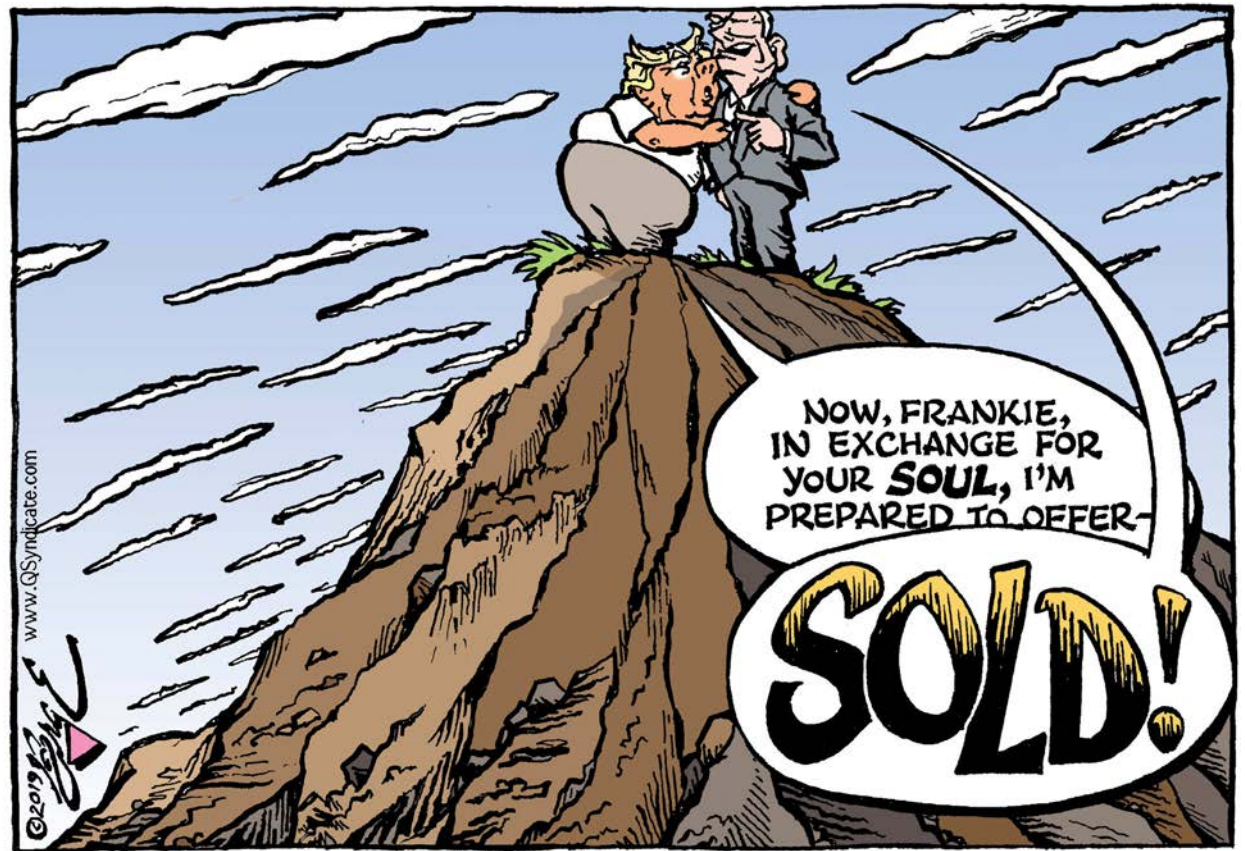
Prospective new Stonewallers filled out index cards: name, address, telephone number. Bartenders – gay-hating thugs, hand-picked for implementing set-ups and stings – sized up new customers. Cards were color-coded for blackmail eligibility ranking.

Anyone who appeared well-dressed (even casually so) – who seemed several cuts above the impoverished street queens and flamers who regularly danced there at Stonewall Inn – was game.

Cute waiters (all gay) were mafia ordered to be friendly with these “scores,” chat them up, gradually – after a few drinks or touchy-feely back room visits – finding out where they worked, what make of car they drove, whether they were married, how many kids they had. All casually fished out by buddy-buddy conversations, and body positioning.

Hustlers were also threatened by the Stonewall Inn mafia guys to come on to these newcomers, trick with them, get

See next page



THE TEMPTATION OF REV. FRANKLIN GRAHAM



BY GWENDOLYN ANN SMITH

### As in a Mirror

So often when people who are not transgender speak of transgender people, there is one important thing that is gotten terribly wrong, and I think it’s a core part of understanding exactly what it is to be transgender.

As an example, I want to talk a bit about Chelsea Manning. I’m not bringing her up to discuss whether what she did was wrong or if she is a patriot or a traitor. That can be a discussion for another time. She will, however, illustrate my point.

Chelsea Manning is back in jail, held in contempt of court for not testifying in a case against Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. Manning had originally been jailed after providing nearly 750,000 documents to WikiLeaks, but had her sentence commuted by President Obama shortly after he left office.

Oh, and Chelsea Manning is a transgender woman, who committed her initial crime while still legally under a different name and presenting in a different gender.

I mention this not to be factual about Manning’s gender identity – remember that for later – but because this becomes important when one looks at the way stories about Manning’s current incarceration hit the media.

It should be no surprise that the right-wing media has had a field day referring to Manning under her birth name and pronouns.

While they do have a hatred towards her, they also have a general dislike of transgender people and seek to reinforce the gender binary. Calling Manning by male pronouns and

her birth name is par for the course: they would do the same about, oh, Caitlyn Jenner. Or for that matter, about me.

For this group, the concept is simple: you are born a man or a woman, and that is who you are for the rest of your days. Ergo, to them, it is their duty to refer to you by the name and gender presented to you while you were still too small to even keep your eyes open.

You’ll also find similar misgendering of Manning in circles who are otherwise supportive of transgender people but do not approve of Manning’s actions. These may be people who consider themselves allies of transgender people, but their tolerance has a limit. By calling Manning by her birth name, they are declaring that their acceptance is conditional, and Manning’s actions violated those conditions.

These are the same people who make transphobic jokes about Ann Coulter, or enjoy a laugh about caricatures of Donald Trump in a dress, embracing Vladimir Putin. They may argue that they’re not attacking the “good” transgender people, but that their support requires a sort of quid pro quo.

I have bad news for this second group: you have proven yourself to not be the ally you think you are. You have shown that your support goes only as far as your comfort. You are truly not that different from the first group, wielding the same sort of willful cruelty while assuming you can cloak yourself

See next page



## ► Viewpoint

Continued from p. 9

in a guise of a supporter of transgender people.

I think there's a third group to consider: these are the people who would otherwise be supportive of Chelsea Manning, but when speaking of her life, might nevertheless revert to the pronouns she had at birth when describing her pre-transition self.

This, unlike the first two groups, is not born out of any sort of animus, but out of a misguided belief that they're being factual about Manning. After all, they might argue, at the time, Manning was using a different name and a different set of pronouns than they are today, so it would be right – even respectful – to use them to refer to who Manning was then.

While this third group doesn't display the same sort of willful cruelty, they're still revealing a lack of understanding about what it means to be transgender. They may even be approaching this from a very subconscious level, not even realizing why they might think this would be correct.

For a non-transgender person, their sense of their own masculinity or femininity is a core part of their gender identity. They don't think about if they are a man or a woman. For them, they simply are. As a result, the idea of transition is to become something different from who they are. They'd become another person, very different from who they are today.

Seen through this lens, it would make sense to think of Manning — or any other

transgender person – by their birth name and pronouns when referring to their pre-transition life. That, they might argue, would be a person's core identity before they transitioned to some other core identity.

Put in allegorical terms, the non-transgender person pictures transition as a Jekyll and Hyde transmogrification, where a person triggers a monumental change in themselves, but that core identity, under the surface, remains.

For transgender people, however, their sense of their own masculinity or femininity is also a core part of their gender identity. It simply is the opposite of what we were assigned at birth, opposite of what others raised us to understand and opposite of what non-transgender people think we are.

For us who are transgender, we did not so much transition from a core identity into another, as a non-transgender person might envision. No, we have always been ourselves and transitioned away from a body that doesn't match our core identity, and away from social expectations based on that body.

For a transgender person, we are not Dr. Jekyll, but more akin to the ugly duckling of Hans Christian Andersen. We have revealed our truth, the core being we always have been.

*Gwen Smith was going to reference the Matrix, but that's too on point. You'll find her at gwensmith.com.*

But Murphy proved a canny operator. He managed to sidestep indictment, time after time – for one important reason: a buddy-buddy photo of him with America's Big Untouchable; Federal Bureau of Investigation chief J. Edgar Hoover.

Writes Carter, "... investigation into the nationwide blackmail ring had turned up a photograph of Hoover 'posing amiably' [in drag] with the racket's ringleader and had uncovered information that Clyde Tolson, Hoover's lover, had himself 'fallen victim to the extortion ring.'"

Oh, yes; Hoover's nickname – Dick Tracy. Tolson's: Tess Trueheart.

"After federal agents joined the investigation, both the photograph of Hoover and the documents about Tolson disappeared. Poof!" (Actually two 'poofs,' but who's counting?)

Let he who is without sin among you cast the first Stonewall (Mary)!

*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.*

## ► Parting Glances

Continued from p. 8

them stewed and steal their wallets. ID to be turned over to mafia bosses. Or else!

According to Carter, the blackmail ring operated mostly in New York City and Chicago: "[The operation's] scope and size were staggering: having operated for almost 10 years, the ring victimized close to a thousand men [netting \$2 million] who were highly successful businessmen, politicians, and prominent citizens.

"Among those listed [in an ongoing police investigation] were the head of the AMA, two army generals, Admiral William Church [a suicide], a Republican member of Congress from New Jersey [\$50,000], a Princeton professor, a leading motion picture actor, a musician who made numerous appearances on television, heads of business firms, a much-admired television personality and a British producer."

The shaved-head arachnid behind the blackmail spider web was Francis P. Murphy, known among his cronies as "The Skull." His criminal record began at conception. His den was above the Stonewall Inn bar.

# Creep Of The Week

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

## Jacob Wohl and Jack Burkman

Well hello, and welcome to another episode of "A Gay is Running for President," a minute-by-minute freakout by the conservative right and sponsored by Homophobia and The Dumb.

The gay in question is Pete Buttigieg, the current mayor of South Bend, Indiana, and his last name is pronounced "boot-edge."

And right-wingers are losing their minds over him. First, he's gay so they're against him existing, let alone running for the country's highest office. But he's also a white male, which polls well in this country, and he's getting a lot of buzz in what is a very crowded Democratic field.

Would Buttigieg be a good president? Probably. Would he be a better president than Trump? For sure. Though that's an awfully low bar. My 10 lb.-dog, who freaks out whenever he sees any living creatures not in his immediate family, is scared of his metal food bowl because his tags once clanged against the side of it, and who sometimes eats his own poop would be a better president than Trump. Because at least he isn't racist and has never stolen anyone's children.

But apparently, Buttigieg has some folks on the right nervous enough that they're trying to sabotage him by drumming up false accusations of sexual assault.

According to The Daily Beast, right-wing smear team Jacob Wohl and Jack Burkman were caught on tape trying to get a guy to accuse Buttigieg "of engaging him sexually while he was too drunk to consent."

If you're not familiar with Wohl then I congratulate you because you don't need that kind of negativity in your life. Wikipedia calls him "an American far-right conspiracy theorist, fraudster and internet troll," a description that would be right at home on the page for Donald Trump.

As for Burkman, he's a Republican lobbyist and professional homophobe. He thinks that Trump is too nice to immigrants, so that says a lot.

Wohl and Burkman also tried to drum up false accusations of sexual misconduct against Robert Mueller in retaliation for investigating their Lord and Savior Donald Trump.

And now they're doing it again! Only to Buttigieg this time because, according to an April 22 Tweet by Burkman, "2020 is shaping up to be more exciting than 2016. Looking like it will be Trump vs. Mayor Pete! Get the popcorn ready!"

**According to The Daily Beast, right-wing smear team Jacob Wohl and Jack Burkman were caught on tape trying to get a guy to accuse Buttigieg "of engaging him sexually while he was too drunk to consent."**

Now, will 2020 yield a Trump v. Buttigieg race? I don't know. But the fact that Wohl and Burkman seem to have gone to an awful lot of trouble to try to damage Buttigieg is pretty telling. Although it might be more telling about Wohl and Burkman than it is about Mayor Pete.

It's interesting to me that Wohl and Burkman want to get people to accuse Buttigieg of sexual assault, something their Dear Leader Trump has not only been accused of but has admitted to. It's almost as if one party, the Democrats, believes that sexual assault is wrong and that we need to reverse the trend of thinking everyone who comes forward with charges of sexual assault is lying, and the other party, the Republicans, does not give a fuck about sexual assault at all unless they can use it as a weapon against their political foes. It's especially clear that sexual assault against women not only doesn't interest them, but it's something they are totally fine with so long as their political agenda is being carried out. Ah, but if a GAY does the sexual assaulting then that's super badly terrible and must be punished right away.

In reality, ALL sexual assault is wrong and should be punished. But the Republicans can't possibly expect anyone to take their concerns about assault seriously while they do everything they can to prop up Trump, the Sexual Assaulter in Chief.

As for Buttigieg, he told The Daily Beast about the foiled Wohl/Burkman plot, "It's not going to throw us. Politics can be ugly sometimes but you have to face that when you're in presidential politics."

No matter what you think of Buttigieg, the man has class. Seriously, he's so patriotically wholesome I suspect he bleeds gay apple pie, which is just regular apple pie with rainbow sprinkles added for fabulousness.

Oh, also, while I was looking for info about this story online I wasn't confident that I'd be able to spell Buttigieg off the top of my head so I just Googled "Wohl Butt" and have learned that said search turns up a LOT of links to porn. And so I'm putting it in writing in case my wife has questions about my search history.

# Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams Positions Itself for the Future Under Watchful Eye of its Namesakes

## Spring Home Guide

BY JOEY DIGUGLIELMO

It's a Monday morning and Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams, the visionaries behind the Taylorsville, North Carolina-based, eponymous company that bills itself as "classic modern home furnishings," are looking at another long work week ahead but excited about the weekend's events.

It happens to be the day after Pete Buttigieg announced his presidential campaign and Gold especially is excited.

"I think he's really terrific," Gold, 68, says. As a long-time outspoken proponent for LGBT rights and author of the book "Crisis: 40 Stories Revealing the Personal, Social and Religious Pain and Trauma of Growing up Gay in America," Gold's enthusiasm is not surprising.

"I think when he first came on the scene I was kind of dismissive," Gold says. "Oh, this is some gay guy from the Midwest, he's mayor of a small town, you know, who does he think he is? But the more I saw him, especially on a CNN town hall, for me what he's doing is challenging anti-LGBT evangelicals, the Mike Pences of the world. ... In my wildest dreams as a kid, I would never have thought yesterday would happen so I was really touched by it."

The occasion is the 30th anniversary of Mitchell Gold+Bob Williams and a lot has changed since the Blade profiled the men (Williams is 57) and company, long-time business partners and at one time romantic partners as well, on its 25th anniversary five years ago. It's been a season of significant growth.

Five years ago, they had about 700 employees. It's near 1,000 now. The majority are full time. Then they had 17 stores. There are now 33. The most recent opened last year in Fort Worth, Texas. Their headquarters five years ago was about 600,000 square feet. It's now close to 1 million. Sales have doubled in that time as well to about \$230 million for all their holdings, which include a contract business that sells to hotels and an office supply arm. For more information, visit [mgbwhome.com](http://mgbwhome.com).

They were chatty — Gold especially — during a 45-minute phone interview. Their comments have been edited for space.

### What's going on these days with Mitchell Gold+Bob Williams? It sounds like a lot has happened since we last spoke.

MITCHELL GOLD: We are really working to position our company for the future to get the team really in order to take the company into



Bob Williams and Mitchell Gold today. They say their line of aspirational luxury furniture has resonated with consumers and their numbers back it up. (Photo courtesy Mitchell Gold+Bob Williams)

the next decade and we're super optimistic because the style sense that we have, the modern sensibility, whether it goes to pure American modern or more of a traditional modern, really seems to resonate with a lot of customers.

### How have trends changed from five years ago?

GOLD: We've had a lot of new competition in the last five years and a lot of our older competition has moved toward making more modern furniture. I think consumers have really moved toward the style sense we've had for well over 20 years.

BOB WILLIAMS: The other thing we've seen is color. Five years ago it was a lot more neutrals and a lot of it had to do with the 2008 recession. After about 2016, people were tired of that and wanted some freshness. That's the other big thing we've noticed.

### Have you seen trends like that before over the years?

WILLIAMS: Yes, we saw it after 9-11. People were much more hesitant and conservative and not feeling as bold and colorful. It took a few years after that before we started seeing color back on the floor.

### What does that say about our national psyche?

WILLIAMS? I think when things get tough and people don't feel secure, they get a little bit more reserved in their thinking and

buying habits.

GOLD: Now things are a little chaotic and unsettling but I think what we're seeing is a lot of people want to be happy and as Bob often says, the colors that we do are happy colors.

### What other national trends affect what you guys do? Over 30 years, for instance, the middle class in this country isn't what it was yet your sales are up. Has the one percent made up the difference?

WILLIAMS: I wouldn't say it's the one percent making up the difference. I would say it really depends on the mood of what's going on. People need to buy furniture no matter what's going on with the economy. They move into a new house, something's changed ... so it's kind of a tricky situation.

GOLD: People in our community categorize us as aspirational luxury ... and you'd be amazed how many people just starting out in their career tell me, "Oh, I bought a sofa from you, I waited till the floor sample was on clearance so I could get a price I could afford," or they bought something at more of an opening price point, all the way to people who are in charge of stuff like global retail for Nike. There are a lot more people at our more entry level price point who aspire to have our stuff and we try to make it available to them at different times of the year.

You had a spate of events at your various stores

for your 25th anniversary. Are you doing that again for 30?

GOLD: We have a few. We just had one in New York with Elle Decor magazine that benefited the Tyler Clementi Foundation. Lady Bunny DJ'ed ... she's fantastic. ... We're doing a big event in September in our Beverly Hills store with Architectural Digest and in our Texas stores next week. So yes, we have things going on all over the country for the year.

### What other causes are you passionate about besides LGBT ones?

GOLD: We work with the Sustainable Furnishings Council, an environmental group for the home furnishings industry. And Exodus Works, headed by Rev. Reggie Longcrier that helps homeless people get into their first apartments.

### How do you decide where you'll open new stores?

GOLD: There are a lot of factors — what the household incomes are, what the education levels are, what the style sense is. We also try to cluster our stores in big markets because they do more business than you would get in a remote market and you get to take advantage of the efficiencies of having two-three stories in one market like in D.C., we have a store just down the street from you and also one in Tysons Galleria that really gives us the opportunity to cover a big part of the market. Another big factor is just what's available in commercial real estate. It's much different than residential. We really want to be in great locations, great buildings and have it be the right size for us so there are always four or five balls we have up in the air looking for the right place.

### What are the downsides of so much growth? Are there headaches involved that the average person wouldn't think of?

GOLD: You have to do everything very carefully. One of the difficulties is hiring the right people, hiring them quickly ...

### WILLIAMS: Office space ...

GOLD: ... moving people around, we're going through that again. Every time you hire somebody, you have to have a space for them. Even though we try to have extra office space available, it never seems to be enough.

### Mitchell, almost exactly a year ago you were on the cover of The Washington Post (Sunday) Magazine in a piece called "The Last Frontier for

See Gold+Williams, continued on p. 18

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# Art Deco Burlesque Brought Back By Tundra-Mae Fury

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

## Legislation Introduced to Ban Conversion Therapy in Michigan

BY BTL STAFF

Legislation was introduced this week by Sen. Mallory McMorrow (D-Royal Oak) and State Rep. Yousef Rabhi (D-Ann Arbor) to make Michigan the 17th state to ban the use of conversion therapy by health professionals.

“Conversion therapy is not therapy. It is not grounded in science. It is immoral, it is unethical and it harming our young people by telling them that at their core they are broken, that they are wrong,” said McMorrow.

Senate Bill 284 and House Bill 4515 prohibit treatments that seek to force changes to sexual orientation or gender identity for those younger than 18.

On the Senate floor Thursday, April 25, McMorrow asked her colleagues to co-sponsor the bill, telling them that young residents are taking their talents and skills out of Michigan to other states, and millennials often cite demand for communities that are welcoming and open-minded.

“This practice or lack thereof not only is not effective in turning somebody who might be gay or queer into somebody who is straight, but it is irreparably damaging. It increases self-harming tendencies, it increases anxiety and depression and rates of suicide,” she said.

McMorrow pointed to 16 other states and the District of Columbia that have already banned conversion therapy — New Jersey, California, Oregon, Illinois, Vermont, New Mexico, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Nevada, Washington, Hawaii, Delaware, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York and Massachusetts.

“Conversion therapy is based on prejudice and has been discredited by modern medicine,” Rabhi said in a statement. “It is time to end the brutal legacy of this practice, which has caused deep psychological damage for many Michiganders.”

Watch the video of McMorrow addressing the Senate on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).

Billed as a musical tour of everything from vaudeville to low-down burlesque, dream ballets and other bombastic Broadway brevities, a highlight of the upcoming Detroit Modernism Week will be a benefit performance by Tundra-Mae Fury on Sunday, May 12, at the Willis Show Bar in Detroit’s historic Cass Corridor.

Titled “Moanin’ Low,” the “temptress” will thrill with torrid torch songs of the ‘20s, tantalizing toe-tappers from those Art Deco-era darlings Cole Porter and Libby Holman and even feature a tribute to The Beatles a la Mae West.

Tundra is the alter ego of performer Max Darling.

“I’m on the board of the Art Deco Society and when I joined it was early this year,” said Darling, 50, “they asked if I was interested in the Willis Show Bar and of course I adore the Willis Show Bar. They did a beautiful restoration and for what I do, my act is somewhere between vaudeville, burlesque, some Broadway nonsense that I throw in there, Broadway shows — it’s a mix of all of that. So I was thrilled that they were interested in me doing a revue from that era, from the ‘20s up until the ‘60s. The Willis is a great setting for that.”

For this special performance, of which there will be two shows at 6 and 9 p.m., “I’m throwing in everything but the kitchen sink,” Darling said. “I have a male singer named Omar Aragones. He’s going to sing, play the guitar. He’s going to join in on ukulele. I’m doing a tribute to torch singers in general, and Libby Holman, who is my favorite of the top three torch singers. Helen Morgan and Ruth Edding would be the other two. I’ll discuss who and what torch singers were. We’re going to then ease into Cole Porter, who is definitely in the Art Deco era, and someone who was very sophisticated but also had a kitschy sense of humor. We’re putting in the ‘Find Me a Primitive Man’ number, which is still pretty popular in his songbook.”

So how, exactly, do you describe such a show or, for that matter, Tundra herself? She has an answer.

“What I do, I think of it as a pastiche,” Darling explained. “The talent is still there. You’re doing a send-up. It could be considered camp to some. I don’t consider it that. I just consider it entertainment. What I do is a burlesque of entertainment types.”

Adding that Tundra-Mae Fury is “my burlesque queen.”

“She is the self-titled queen of burlesque. I don’t like the queen titles. If I’m considered doing drag, fine, but don’t call me a drag queen,” Darling said. “I don’t have any royalty. We live in the United States. We don’t have any royalty here. Same as diva. I don’t take to the



title, that is reserved for a female opera singer. And Tundra doesn’t have a diva attitude.”

When asked about the origins of Tundra-Mae Fury’s name, Darling said Tundra Fury came from an old Barbara Cartland romance novel he read in high school.

“I’ve had that on the back burner since high school,” Darling said. “So when Facebook started up I decided that I wanted to be on that character who was on there with her memoirs. I’ve been developing the character on FB for 15 years. People join in. The writing just kind of falls into my lap while people banter back and forth on my page.”

And for Darling’s purposes, Tundra is from Detroit.

“She’s a Detroit girl,” Darling said. “I know enough about show bars, the Flame Show Bar and the Willis and that era because I grew up here. So, I did base Tundra as a Detroit girl going back to the ‘20s and the ‘30s. By the ‘60s, when this show takes place, she’s admitted to 39. But she’s 80 if she’s a day, the old gargoye.”

And if all goes well at the Willis, Darling said he’d like to expand on the show, too.

“I am currently forming a not-for-profit troupe, a vaudeville troupe, that I will tour and

take places,” he said. “I want to package it. It’s something that I’ve done. College towns love it. The era of it is appealing. The burlesque of it brings the comedy of it, not just the tease. The striptease is popular now. It’s as popular as drag is.”

And though it’s obvious that Darling enjoys performance, when asked why he keeps performing as Tundra he said loves “the humor of it.”

“The innuendo is not lost in this day and age. I think it’s become more popular. A lot of entertainment has gotten in your face, kind of loud, kind of ugly. And this is a throwback to, I think, a fun era. The show bar, the Borsch Belt circuit. I interact with my audience,” he said. “I don’t necessarily write a full script. I like to play with the audience. And they like to play back.”

*Tundra-Mae Fury and Moanin’ Low will be presented at the Willis Show Bar Sunday, May 12. Tickets are priced at \$45 and \$55 and include two drinks and tabletop treat boxes provided by Carolyn’s Kitchen. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [gaybe.am/Xs](http://gaybe.am/Xs).*



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# Detroit Builds Cooperatively

## Spring Home Guide

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Littered with historic architecture, it's not difficult to find shining examples of craftsmanship from the 19th and early 20th centuries in Detroit neighborhoods like Midtown, Indian Village or Boston-Edison. Even outside of specifically historical spots, it's rare that the city isn't showcasing a unique architectural flair — a fact not lost on the members of Building Cooperatively, a Detroit construction cooperative based in North End. Operating since last year, they've been slowly revitalizing homes across their neighborhood, starting with their own.

"We all just started kind of working together and as a cooperative. Before we had founded the LLC, we had all worked together, essentially, on various jobs throughout each other's homes," said a co-op member who goes by Perez and who lives in a home with historical elements in North End. "My co-workers painted the columns on my house."

Currently eight members strong, Perez said that the idea for the cooperative happened while the members were attending a program offered by the Michigan Historic Preservation Network about historic trades.

"We were thinking about that in particular because a lot of us all lived on the same street or within streets of each other. They live off of King Street in the North End and I live off of Philadelphia which is three streets away, but we're all in North End," he said. "So, it was kind of just, 'Well, we all live in the same area, we all do the same things,' and we all wanted to create something that could be beneficial to the neighborhood."

Restorations include things like plaster work, painting, weatherization and the installation of fixtures — among other jobs — and each of the members provides their expertise on various specialties.

"Generally, we're looking to help our neighbors a lot, especially if we can," Perez said. "You know, the more work that we have, the more we're able to contribute to the neighborhood, so it's really important for us that we work on King Street especially right now."

However, that isn't to say that the co-op members will turn down work requests from outside of their neighborhood. Eventually, Building Cooperatively hopes to start projects across the Metro Detroit area.



Several members of the Building Cooperatively co-op on a project from left to right: Perez, Brian Corley, Mario Avila, Carlos Santacruz, Gabrielle Knox and Jason Carheart. BTL Photos: Andrew Potter

## Priority on Inclusivity

Building Cooperatively, though it's the organization's name, could be taken as a literal statement, too, when considering the co-op's dedication to creating an inclusive and fair environment for both its members and customers. For instance, the mission statement makes clear that it holds itself to "honoring and developing ethical business practices and providing competitive living wages to Detroiters."

And according to Perez, a focus on empowerment is a huge factor for those who are members.

"Word is we are the biggest and/or only construction cooperative in the state. Many of our founding members are queer and POC," Perez said in an email statement to BTL. "We view our cooperative as a means to further equity in the city amongst workers and especially in the construction industry.

We are focused on helping our neighbors and community, and have done some projects so far for local activists and friends."

Perez went on to add that Building Cooperatively's members also have backgrounds in activism, which is part of the reason its community-focused environment is a possibility.

"Everybody comes from really some kind of activist background at this point. I mean literally, everybody is some kind of artist, some kind of activist, some kind of [active] community member, so it benefits us to work with each other because we don't have to worry about those prejudices like sexism," he said. "We don't have to worry about those things as a company or as a community. It's nice to just be able to go in, do my job, hang out with my co-workers and not be discriminated against because trades can definitely be that way."

And because members are so closely tied to the LGBTQ community, or members of it

themselves, Perez said that fostering a good relationship with LGBTQ clients is a huge focus for the cooperative.

"So for me, yes, it's important to have specifically LGBTQ clients. I mean, obviously not every single person is going to be — that would just be lit and great — probably great houses," he said with a laugh. "The reality is that we're going to have to be there for each other and we have a lot of different people with a lot of different ideas, so if we can help a community member out or someone out, we'd rather participate in those kinds of jobs than anything that's just about money."

## Joining, Hiring and Advising

Beyond being specifically a physical service provider, the cooperative exists to provide advice and knowledge to those interested in pursuing their own building goals or perhaps

The mission statement makes clear that it holds itself to “honoring and developing ethical business practices and providing competitive living wages to Detroiters.”

even a career in the trades, in a kind of mentoring community format.

“If they have questions about what they can get involved in, trades even or how to go to trade schools, they can always contact us. We’re happy to offer advice or anything because I think a lot of people don’t understand how to get started,” he said.

And, of course, those interested in either lending their skills or seeking out Building Cooperatively’s services are always encouraged to contact the organization directly via phone or email or through social media.

“Maybe they’re a person who, let’s say, needs help deciding what to do with this project or they need an idea for historic restoration. Or they want to know, ‘What can I do with this?’ They can have us come over and offer advice on that because sometimes the cost of it can be so much,” Perez said. “We’re always looking in the immediate area and we’re looking for interesting projects.”



Erika Linenfelser

For those interested in learning more about Building Cooperatively and its services, visit [buildingcooperatively.com](http://buildingcooperatively.com) to view a project gallery and services list. Or, reach out by emailing [buildingcooperatively@gmail.com](mailto:buildingcooperatively@gmail.com) or leaving a message at 313-444-9604.



Members of the cooperative working on a project.

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# How the Best Landlords and Tenants Do It

## Spring Home Guide

BY ANNA BARTOLOTTA

As more rental properties appear across Michigan it is more important than ever to keep the tenants in your rental properties happy, comfortable and, most importantly, in place. Your favorite tenants are probably the ones who care for your property and pay their rent on time and possibly may just have the means to purchase and move away from your investment. If these tenants are living up to their responsibilities with you and making you happy, you have a responsibility to them as well, for happiness. Turnover is generally the largest expense you will experience in your rental year; the idea is to keep that expense to a minimum, possibly at zero.

How do you respond to your tenants when they call you? What amenities are included in your monthly rent? How long does it take you, the landlord, to repair an issue or problem? Are there outside factors that are affecting either you or your tenant's happiness?

Let's keep things fair here; being a good landlord is almost as hard as being a good tenant.



At times, it's difficult for a tenant to understand that just because the tenant pays the landlord monthly, the landlord does not work for the tenant. A lease is an agreement between two parties and one party should not have anything on the other. Expectations for the tenant and/or landlord should be stated at the beginning of the relationship and without surprises thrown in monthly throughout the term of the lease. A landlord is not your personal handyman to adjust every small thing you aren't happy within the home. Being a good tenant is not only paying your rent at the

agreed-upon time but it also means knowing what the rental owner is and is not responsible for. This is your residence, this is where you reside, the landlord wants you to stay. Make it easy for them to want you there, just as much as it is the landlord's job to make you want to stay in the house.

This is a business relationship, treat it as such; as you would any relationship that you would like to keep and continue. I would never suggest either side acting like a pushover; I am simply speaking about common courtesy for all involved.

Now, if your current tenant is determined to break the lease to buy a home you must remain calm because in all simple terms, you have an agreement. You have an obligation and so does your tenant to fulfill obligations clearly written in the lease. A start date and an end date for the lease is a powerful piece of the puzzle. When I am faced with this issue my normal response is, 'OK. You do know you are responsible for the entire term of the lease, correct? Can I begin to start showing your unit tomorrow? If I can find someone suitable to rent the address then I can release you of your obligation.'

The key words here are 'suitable' and 'release.' My only obligation would be to market the unit again and attempt to find a new qualified tenant. The current tenant's only obligation would be to continue to pay their lease until a new tenant is found. It is in the best interest of both parties to get that unit filled ASAP. When your tenant does move it is unlikely that they would want to be paying a mortgage and a rental payment and rental payments to you will most likely disappear, as did they.

---

*Anna Bartolotta is owner of Grosse Pointe Apartments and Property Management and can be reached via email: [gpointments@gmail.com](mailto:gpointments@gmail.com)*

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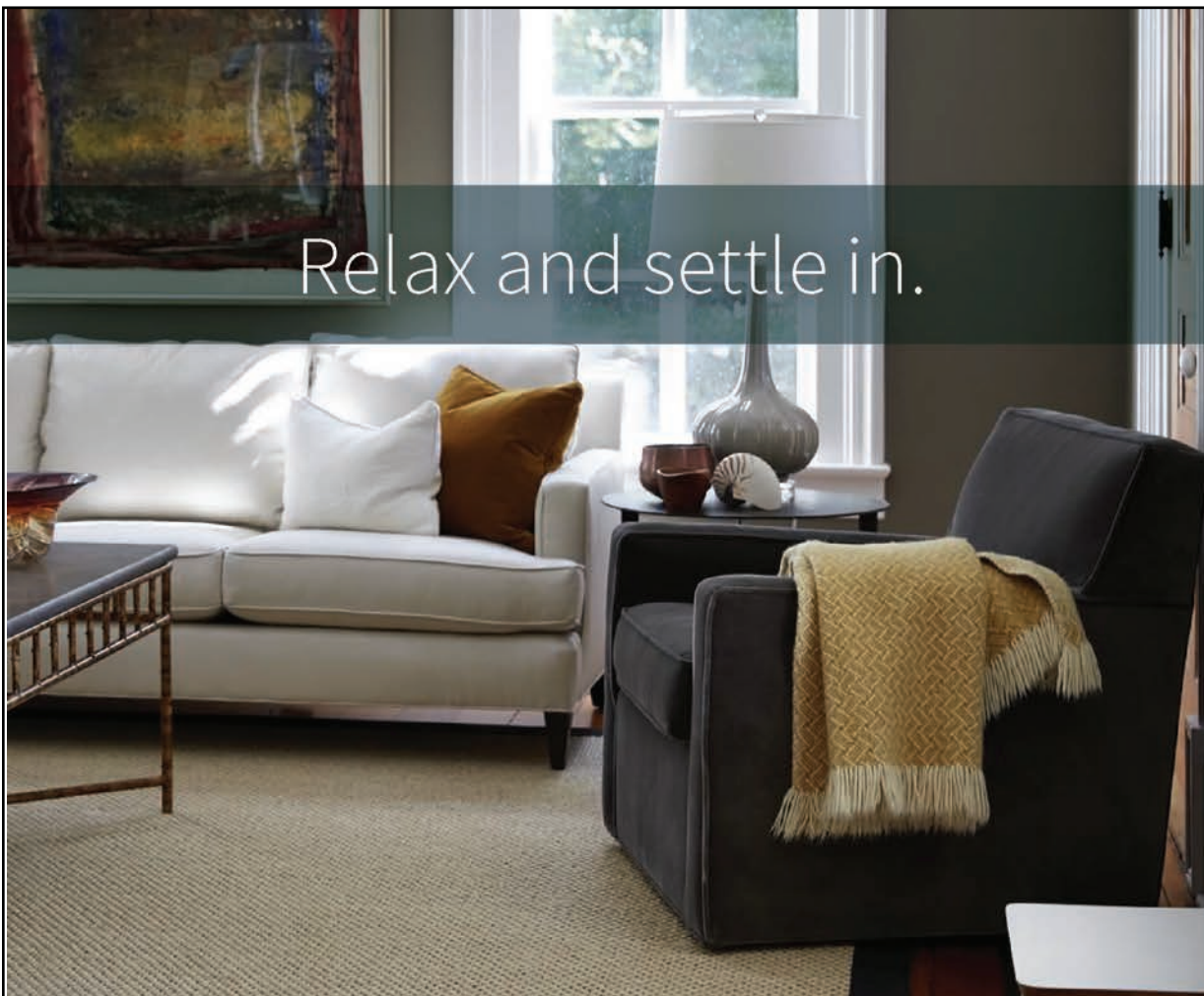
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## ► Gold+Williams

Continued from p. 10

### Gay Rights," and spoke of your work with the P.R.I.D.E. Club at a high school in your community. How was it received?

GOLD: The reaction was generally very good. ... I got virtually no negative comments that I know of, to my face. The only disappointing thing was I wish the writer had focused a bit more on people who have changed their minds (on LGBT rights). She seemed a bit more focused on people who have dug in their heels, who still believe, quote-unquote, that homosexuality is a sin. There are people, whether they're evangelicals, Mormons or Catholics, who have started to change like Rev. Stan Mitchell in Tennessee or David Gushee in Atlanta ... who stand up and say, "I don't believe it is a sin."

### Do you feel the rate at which that is happening is encouraging or will we still be debating this in 20 years?

GOLD: Mayor Pete has the opportunity to create a seismic shift and he has that opportunity because he's willing to talk about it in a way that people understand, in a way that our LGBT advocacy groups don't talk about it. It's not enough to win an election or win a court case, we have to continue educating people and getting them to understand the harm they're doing to people ... to understand why they have to change their voting habits.

### You listed the Sunbrella Collection in 2018 as one of your recent milestones. What's that?

WILLIAMS: That's a company that has been around for a long time and is really known for their outdoor fabric and for the longest time they've been trying to get in on the indoor market but their fabrics weren't quite soft enough. But they've finally found a way to re-engineer their yarn to have a softer feel and we're very excited to be part of their new indoor collection. It's easy to take care of. You don't have to worry about it staining.

### Would you like to retire someday?

GOLD: At some point I would like to work a little less. We have a search on now for a CEO to come in and transition and eventually take a lot of my responsibility.

WILLIAMS: One of the things we've been focusing on the last year is getting everything a little bit more organized for that day when neither of us are here. GOLD: We're also searching for a chief marketing officer. That could be a pretty big opportunity for somebody.

### Any other big changes since we last spoke in your personal lives?

WILLIAMS: I grew a beard, that's about it.

GOLD: I lost about 45 pounds and feel great.

### How is Mitchell Gold+Bob Williams different from Pottery Barn or Room & Board?

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### How do you relax?

GOLD: I like "Law & Order" and "Seinfeld."

WILLIAMS: He watches the first eight minutes then falls asleep in the middle and wakes up at the very end and says, "Let's watch another." Then he falls asleep again. He never knows what's in the middle of any of those episodes.

GOLD: I love to read. On the weekends, Tim and I take the dogs on long walks.

WILLIAMS: We like taking short trips and discovering new things in North Carolina. We take advantage of that as often as we can.

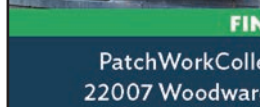
*This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.*

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## Real Estate Entrepreneur Releases E-Book for LGBTQ Home Buyers

Jeff Hammerberg is the founding CEO of GayRealEstate.com, a service connecting clients with compatible agents, and is releasing his new e-book "Real Estate Tips for the LGBTQ Home Buyer: Your Guide to Purchasing the Home of Your Dreams" for free download.

The book was written to assist LGBTQ home buyers so that they can avoid intimidation and be prepared for the many factors to consider throughout the process of purchasing a property. Buying a home will be one of the biggest financial decisions many people will make so it's important to be prepared. The book helps LGBTQ home buyers successfully navigate the real estate maze by identifying, and educating on, the critical elements of the home buying process, with particular focus on the issues facing LGBTQ community members.

The book covers important topics like understanding budgets, existing assets, credits and debts, choosing the ideal location, realizing ownership options for LGBTQ couples, choosing the right agents and lenders, mastering the preapproval process, choosing the right mortgage, making an effective offer, approaching the appraisal and home inspection process skillfully and more.

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# Cinetopia 2019 Makes Room for LGBTQ Audiences

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Lasting from May 10 through 19 this year, Cinetopia Film Festival is a locally run independent festival that has been showing movies from local and international filmmakers since 2012 on all topics. What makes it unique is its curation approach to choosing the movies it shows, along with a local Detroit-specific short film program.

“The Cinetopia team handpicks a program each year that identifies the best of the best — the highlights of global film festivals like Sundance, SXSW, Tribeca, Toronto, Cannes, Berlin and more — and brings them home for the audiences in Southeast Michigan to explore and enjoy,” wrote event organizers.

Ariel Wan is the co-director of Cinetopia and she said that the lineup of films is also driven by the positive reactions of audiences at those larger festivals, too, adding that the organization prides itself on its dedication to the presentation of diverse stories.

“One of the things that we always try really hard when we do programming for Cinetopia is to make sure that it’s diverse — diverse in content but also diverse for our diverse audiences. So, we’re always making sure that when we do our programming, we keep that in mind,” Wan said.

That means that the LGBTQ community is certainly one that Cinetopia makes an effort to not only include within its programming but to represent authentically and artistically.

“So, it comes from the beginning of when we’re curating. We don’t have a list of, ‘OK, we have to make sure we do this one, or make sure we have this kind of category,’ and actually, it comes naturally based on keeping in mind first that we’re looking for great films and when we have a ton then we start whittling it down to see what we have, but also to see what we have too much of,” Wan said. “We want to make sure that the stories that we show are not similar stories. There could be five really great documentaries about the border crisis, but we can’t show all five.”

And because of that careful curation, Wan said that the lineup of LGBTQ films this year is one of the best ones yet.

“All of the films that we have programmed for Cinetopia this year, they’re fantastic, they’re all really, really interesting and I’ve been telling a lot of people that they probably should just take half days during the week so they can see as many movies as they can,” she said, adding that Cinetopia has taken special care in its scheduling this year.

“So that if you are inclined to see a certain type of film, we make sure that another film you might be interested in is not showing at the same time so people can really just watch movies back-to-back,” she said.

Find out more about Cinetopia and its upcoming schedule by visiting [cinetopiafestival.org](http://cinetopiafestival.org).

## Here is this year’s LGBTQ film lineup:



Cassandro, *The Exotico!*

### Cassandro, *The Exotico!* (Cassandro El Exotico!)

Feature portrait of lucha libre star Cassandro and trailblazing ascent as one of the industry’s first openly gay wrestlers.

Wed, May 15 3:45 p.m.  
Sat, May 18 8:30 p.m.

### Jules of Light and Dark

In present-day Texas, Maya (Tallie Medel) and her on again, off again girlfriend Jules (Betsy Holt) total their car after a night of backwoods raving and teen mischief. They’re rescued from the wreckage by Freddy (Robert Longstreet). Daniel Laabs’ first feature solidly articulates the universality of queer loneliness and uncertainty across genders and generations.

With a special guest appearance on May 18  
Sun, May 12 9:15 p.m.  
Sat, May 18 8:45 p.m.

### Making Montgomery Clift

Nephew Robert Clift and Hillary Demmon rigorously examine the flawed narratives that have come to define Monty’s legacy.

With a special guest appearance by directors Hillary Demmon Clift and Robert Clift on Wednesday, May 15, at the State Theatre  
Sat, May 11 4 p.m.  
Wed, May 15 3:30 p.m.  
Fri, May 17 4:45 p.m.  
Sat, May 18 6 p.m.

### Man Made

“Man Made” takes us into the heart of transgender male FTM culture, revealing unexpected truths about gender, masculinity, humanity and love.

With special guest appearances by onscreen subjects Mason Caminiti on Saturday, May 11, at the State Theatre and Dominic Giovon Chilko on Thursday, May 16, at Emagine Royal Oak  
Sat, May 11 1:15 p.m.  
Thu, May 16 7 p.m.  
Fri, May 17 4:15 p.m.  
Sat, May 18 5 p.m.

### Mapplethorpe

Though he died nearly 30 years ago, Robert Mapplethorpe’s name remains synonymous today with boundary-pushing and bold artistic contrasts.

Wed, May 15 5:45 p.m.  
Sat, May 18 3 p.m.



To The Stars



The Third Wife

### The Third Wife (Nguoi Vo Ba)

In 19th century rural Vietnam, 14-year-old May becomes the third wife of wealthy landowner Hung. Soon she learns that she can only gain status by asserting herself as a woman who can give birth to a male child. May’s hope to change her status turns into a real and tantalizing possibility when she gets pregnant. Faced with forbidden love and its devastating consequences, May finally comes to an understanding of the brutal truth: the options available to her are few and far between.

Sat, May 11 6 p.m.  
Sun, May 19 11:30 a.m.

### To The Stars

In a god-fearing small town in 1960s Oklahoma, bespectacled and reclusive teen Iris endures the booze-induced antics of her mother and daily doses of bullying from her classmates. She finds solace in Maggie, the charismatic and enigmatic new girl at school, who hones in on Iris’s untapped potential and coaxes her out of her shell.

With a special guest appearance by director Martha Stephens on Sunday, May 12, at the State Theatre  
Sun, May 12 12:45 p.m.  
Mon, May 13 7 p.m.

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Photo: Zoey Grossman

## Pop Artist Marina on Finding Herself, Painting Elizabeth Taylor For Charity & Gay Fandom

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Even though Marina Diamandis cut herself loose from pop music after 2015's "FROOT" to find the version of herself she lost to an industry touting artifice, the truth is she'd been feeling that way for a while.

During the promotional cycle for her 2012 album "Electra Heart," the 33-year-old Welsh artist, who then went by Marina and the Diamonds before recently simplifying her name (and image) to simply Marina, was already shaken by a superficial perception of her that made her "uncomfortable." Mainstream press interviews at that time were, she said in

2015, "complete shit," the questioning one-note because journalists didn't seem to believe a pop artist could be complex and multi-dimensional.

After "FROOT," she continued to demonstrate otherwise. She went back to school, studying psychology at Birkbeck at the University of London. She painted. She traveled. And then influenced by Swiss psychologist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, she recorded her latest album, called "Love + Fear," which is conceptually rooted solely in those two emotions. No "look," no artifice.

There didn't need to be. At 33, Marina has a better handle on who she is; grappling with her public and personal identity, a common theme

in her past work that has resonated with many in the LGBTQ community, is a thing of the past.

**Identity and acceptance have long been thematic mainstays in your music. With these new songs, how might the LGBTQ audience identify?**

With "Love + Fear," I don't think I'm really going through that or battling with that anymore, so there's a real clarity and a simple, direct way of communicating on the record, whereas both subjects on previous records still felt very tumultuous and undecided, like I was trying to get through something and I

didn't know how to feel about myself. Now, a lot of the things that I'm inspired by are not inside me; it's more looking outside at the world around me.

**Recently, you painted a stunning illustration of Elizabeth Taylor for a t-shirt and sales of the shirt will benefit her AIDS Foundation. It seems you have a lot in common with what that foundation stands for. How did you land on that particular cause for the shirt?**

Well, I watercolor as a hobby and, actually, I'm doing a lot of merch designs with watercolors this year for this tour. But the foundation,

they just approached me and said they were really interested in doing anything that they could, and I just suggested that we could start with a limited edition watercolor that I would paint for them and that they can sell for charity.

I hope it's a partnership that we can continue because I would like to. I think when you're doing stuff for charity it's easy to say yes to a lot of little things, but this time around I'm looking for one or two partners across the next year which I can work with and focus on doing some good things with.

But yeah, that's a really important one for me, just because it's got such a stigma attached to it. It's bad enough if you have to deal with the illness itself, without having this really silly social stigma. And I really hope that things are still progressing forward in that way. Actually, that's why I wanted to do it: because I think (we) still have to constantly work on social problems with this, and she did this so much in her life and I don't think a lot of people know about how much work she did for HIV and AIDS sufferers.

**How would you describe your relationship with your LGBTQ fans at this point in your career?**

I often get asked why I think I do have such a solid LGBTQ fanbase and I think it's because a lot of the things that I've sung about in the past are connected to identity and a sense of being able to be yourself. When you grow up with a feeling of discrimination, that's something that you carry into your adult life, so being my fourth album, it seems that I'm still very lucky in that I have the support of the LGBTQ community. I think that's the reason, because if you bond with an artist early on with their lyrics, or their lyrics speak to you, that tends to be something you carry with you through your adult life. So, I kind of understand now why that has happened.

**I was listening to "Love + Fear" when I read something Robyn recently told The New York Times Magazine that I thought might resonate with you: "There's always a gap between how I see myself and how other people see me." Can you relate?**

Anyone who has a public job, there's always going to be that. Actually, not even anyone who has a public job, but for anyone in life there is gonna be that gap. But I think it's bigger for people if you have a public job, and I think being an artist can really affect the way that you feel about yourself, because

you know who you are but you may appear to be another thing because that's a popular thing for pop artists to do. They're experts at making you think they are a certain person when the reality is they have a lot of other parts that they're not showing or that they're trying to hide, and that's part of being young. But I don't feel like that at all anymore.

Even with the name change, the reason I did it was because I knew it'd make me feel comfortable enough to be able to do this job again. It's totally worked. I feel very comfortable and confident and I don't feel like there's any obstruction now between Marina and the Diamonds as an artist as opposed to a person. It's making that easier for the average person as opposed to putting this construct in front of it all the time.

**Do you think nowadays there's more of a desire to want or need pop artists that we can relate to?**

I think that's just been a natural direction, because I think with Instagram and Twitter and other social media platforms there was

always gonna be a time where people would start to see through the veneer of staged or curated feeds, and now I think it's gone beyond that a bit, thank god, where you can be more natural and you don't have to be this epic conceptual thing all the time. Pop artists are fascinating, but at the end of the day, they are just normal people who are able to build a world around them that makes them look quite exciting. But really it's the ideas that they started out with – it's not really about how you look – and I think that's what fans are connecting with, the person themselves.

**Does "Love + Fear" reflect the heaviness you've expressed that you feel in other interviews when it comes to what is happening to minority communities in the world right now?**

I think I've felt very confused about it because there's just been, to all of us, such bombardment of awful events in a very short period of time and now, of course, with the internet we have access to all of this information, so for the human brain, on a biological level, it's like, how many bad events can you truly digest and be able to empathize? So many bad things happened in the last four years that it's really hard to comprehend and know how to deal with it, so it's more just trying to express that confusion, which I've written about a bit in "To Be Human" and "Life Is Strange." But it's a really hard topic to

*"I often get asked why I think I do have such a solid LGBTQ fanbase and I think it's because a lot of the things that I've sung about in the past are connected to identity and a sense of being able to be yourself."*

See Marina, continued on p. 24

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LOVE + FEAR



### ► Marina

Continued from p. 23

try and verbalize, to even try to condense for any of us.

**Even though you're still pursuing music, how has pursuing other endeavors like studying psychology and painting broadened your sense of identity?**

I think as adults we get less time to expand other parts of ourselves. But because music was a hobby for me - I started doing it professionally at 22 and then I hit 30, 31 and I was like, "Well, what else is there in life?" - I didn't have the normal experiences a 20-something would have. I was living quite a different type of life and that doesn't allow a lot of space for being detached from your music. Music *is* your whole life. So then you just get stuck in being - you almost become like a brand to yourself, like in your own mind. It's not even something you build, it's subconscious, I believe. So I think it was really necessary for me to just have a break in order to focus on other things that are equally important.

**As adults, we do forget to still live as kids sometimes, don't we?**

Yeah, and also just being able to try different things. Or change careers if you want to. I think adults become more nervous as we get older about change, and maybe we should think about it less seriously. You're not just a writer or a journalist - you could be a lot of different things you don't even know. You *can* experiment in life.

**What do you envision for yourself in the future?**

I hope to be able to integrate other parts of myself, like the fact that I love doing talks and I love psychology and philosophy. I still like painting. I think those are things I can incorporate into whatever role I've been able to build outside of music, but music has been a really wonderful platform to start with, because that is my main passion.

Even with this record so far, being able to do this talk recently with this organization called The School of Life, which is a philosophy- and psychology-based school, that's really thrilling to me because I'm able to contribute in a different way that's not just like, "Look at this pop video." Those are fun things, but they don't deepen my heart. They don't feel life-affirming. Songwriting is. It's just having a bit of a different perspective now, and I'm really enjoying that. I feel a lot freer. And yeah, anything can happen! It's exciting. Life is exciting.

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

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# Como's to Reopen Under New Ownership

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Popular Ferndale eatery Como's is set to reopen in May. The new owners, check out Zack Sklar and his Peas & Carrots Hospitality Group, are planning to keep the restaurant's focus on pizza. Beyond that, the restaurant is undergoing a complete renovation.

Sicilia Grego opened Como's Restaurant on the corner of Woodward Avenue and Nine Mile Road in 1961 and she ran and owned the restaurant for more than 50 years, until it closed in 2017. And for much of that time, Como's was not just a hotspot, but a safe spot, for the LGBGQ community.

"It used to be the place that if you wanted to go with your boyfriend or your girlfriend, you could go without feeling discriminated against, whereas you could go to another restaurant down the street and you would not feel comfortable at all," said Michael C. Lary, Ferndale's director of special events and projects. "And some of the ladies who were the waitstaff, they would go up some ass if you disrespected their customers."

Singer Barbara Payton was a regular at Como's, both as a diner and as a performer on Como's patio.

"I feel that Sicilia really opened up the doors to the gay community and really extended

herself at a time when I don't think a lot of businesses were open to our community," Payton said. "So, I have a respect for her in that aspect."

Payton became well known for many years for her shows at Como's following Pride in Ferndale.

"There were so many great times that we had there," she said. "I have such a fondness for all the times I played at Como's and all the PrideFests I played on the patio. I miss those times and I'm actually looking forward to making some new memories on Como's patio, and I'm looking forward to the rebirth that is going to take place. I am excited about it."

Ferndale Mayor Dave Coulter is excited about it, too.

"I'm thrilled that Como's will continued under the same name with new ownership that is committed to continuing their tradition in Ferndale of an iconic dining experience and involvement in the community," said Coulter. "They understand that legacy and want to be a part of keeping it alive."

*Como's is set to reopen Monday, May 6, and will serve dinner only the first week it's open. Lunch will be served starting on the second week and the patio should be open by the end of the month.*

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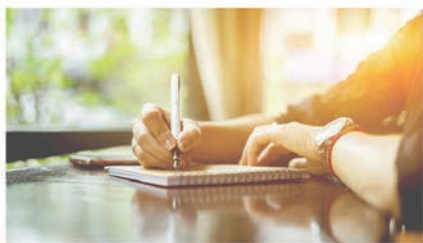


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**Florence + The Machine at DTE Energy Music Theatre May 24**

Returning to the Detroit area after a critically acclaimed tour last year, Florence + The Machine is coming back to the Detroit area to play at the DTE Energy Music Theatre. Fans will be able to hear music from the band's most recent album "High as Hope," as well as see special guest Blood Orange. Tickets start at \$39.50.

**Happenings**

Credit: Lillie Eiger

**Editor's Pick**

**10th Annual Cheers to Help Corktown**

This annual event is a fundraiser for the Corktown Health Center, an organization dedicated to treating LGBTQ patients. Held on Friday, May 10, it is located at Detroit's Eastern Market and all proceeds will go to support Corktown's programming. The event includes wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres and silent auction. Find out more and purchase tickets online at [cheerstohelp2019.eventbrite.com](http://cheerstohelp2019.eventbrite.com).

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# Editor's Pick

## Ferndale Pride Planning Meeting May 8

Held at the Affirmations LGBTQ community center, this event is designed for people to “meet others interested in welcoming all and helping to achieve” Ferndale Pride. This planning meeting will run from 7 to 8 p.m. Affirmations is located at 290 W. 9 Mile Road in Ferndale.

Find out more about the event via Facebook or by visiting [ferndalepride.com](http://ferndalepride.com).



## OUTINGS

### Friday, May 3

**LGBT Social Meet Up** 6:30 p.m. A group for all LGBTQ people who want to meet and have lighthearted discussions and social activities. All welcomed. Hazel Park Community Center, 620 West Woodward Heights, Hazel Park. 248-632-8274. [redbellysenegal90@gmail.com](mailto:redbellysenegal90@gmail.com).

### Saturday, May 4

**LGBT Community Chat** 11 a.m. Saturday LGBT Chat is an ongoing social discussion group meets every week to discuss issues LGBTQ people face. Coming out, dating and much more. Java Hut Ferndale Michigan, 165 W 9 mile, Ferndale. 248-632-8274. [redbellysenegal90@gmail.com](mailto:redbellysenegal90@gmail.com).

### Wednesday, May 8

**Affirmations Senior Koffee Clatch!** 1 p.m. A discussion and networking group for people 45 and older. Various discussion topics, social outings and potlucks are held throughout the year. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org).

### Thursday, May 9

**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. [lawrencemoeb@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencemoeb@gmail.com).

### Friday, May 10

**Cinetopia Film Festival** 8 a.m. The eighth annual CFF kicks off a month earlier this year starting on Friday, May 10, and concludes on Sunday, May 19. Spanning 10 days, Cinetopia brings films to local theaters and venues. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. [info.cinetopiafestival.org](http://info.cinetopiafestival.org). [cinetopiafestival.org](http://cinetopiafestival.org).

### Wednesday, May 15

**30 by Jim Luckey – VIP Reception** 6 p.m. A fundraiser for the Ruth Ellis Center, a VIP ticket includes complimentary valet, hors d'oeuvres, sparkling wine, runway show

and an opportunity to win a bespoke pair of Jim Luckey pants! Planterra Conservatory, 7315 Drake Road, West Bloomfield Township. 248-661-1591. [planterraevents.com](http://planterraevents.com). [ruthelliscenter.org](http://ruthelliscenter.org).

### Friday, May 17

**Love, Dating, and Marriage: In times of HIV, PrEP, & Criminalization** 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Presented by LGBT Detroit and The Black Bear Brotherhood at 20025 Greenfield Ave., Detroit. See ad on this page.

### Thursday, June 6

**Ford GLOBE 25th Anniversary Dinner, In partnership with the Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce** 5:30 p.m. Keynote speaker will be former NFL player and motivational speaker, Wade Davis. Allan Gilmour, former Vice Chair of Ford Motor Company, will be presented with the inaugural Allan D. Gilmour Outstanding Leadership in Inclusion Award. All The Dearborn Inn, 20301 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. 313-673-3001. [info@detroitlgbtchamber.com](mailto:info@detroitlgbtchamber.com). [detroitlgbtchamber.com](http://detroitlgbtchamber.com).

**Pride Night at Thunderbowl!** 7 p.m. Meet & Greet First Thursday of every month, unlimited bowling, shoe rental, private room, private bar area, drink specials, billiard room, 250-foot video wall. Thunderbowl Arena, 4200 Allen Road, Allen Park. 313-928-4688. [thunderbowl.org](http://thunderbowl.org).

## MUSIC & MORE

**Flint Symphony Orchestra Presents 'Mahler's Resurrection'** May 11, 7:30 p.m. FSO bringing you yet another Classical Concert featuring Enrique Diemecke, conductor with the Flint Symphony Orchestra. Pre-Concert talk at 6:30 p.m. Flint Institute of Music, 1025 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 810-238-1350. [thefso.org](http://thefso.org).

**Cabaret 313 Presents Kate Baldwin** May 18, 6:30 p.m. Kate Baldwin makes her Cabaret 313 debut in “How Did You Get This Number?” a new stage show featuring signature songs from her acclaimed performances in “Finian’s



a relapse prevention plan and creative, effective strategies to handle both everyday and high-risk situations. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti. 734-485-8725. [dawnfarm.org](http://dawnfarm.org).

**Co-Occurring Disorders: Understanding Self-Medication and Complex Recovery** May 28, 7:30 p.m. Jeremy Suttles will provide an overview of what co-occurring disorders are, how they are identified, their prevalence, and a comprehensive model of recovery. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti. 734-485-8725. [dawnfarm.org](http://dawnfarm.org).

**Movie Music of Spike Lee** June 2, 4 p.m. The Movie Music of Spike Lee & Terence Blanchard showcases stunning scores and songs. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org).

**Makoto Ozone Trio** June 5, 7 p.m. Japanese pianist Makoto Ozone is a unique force in both jazz and classical music, blending sound worlds and a host of influences into his performances. Join us for a one-night-only set with Ozone's jazz trio. The Cube, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. [dso.org](http://dso.org).

## ART 'N' AROUND

**2019 Spring Open Studio** May 3, 4 p.m. Join us for this free event, open to the public, families with children welcome! Watch or take part in glassblowing demonstrations, shop in our gallery for one-of-a-kind sculptures and unique handmade gifts. Kensington Metropark, Martindale Beach, 4570 Huron River Parkway, Milford. 810-227-8910. [eve@integrityshows.com](http://eve@integrityshows.com). [metroparks.com](http://metroparks.com).

## THEATER

**Angels in America – Parts I and II** In this two-part epic, Prior Walter, a young man living in NYC in 1985, is diagnosed with AIDS. His boyfriend, Louis, struggling to cope with the disease and his own fears, abandons him. Hillbery Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. [theatreanddance.wayne.edu](http://theatreanddance.wayne.edu).

**Angels in America: Part Two – Perestroika** Following the events of Part I: Millennium Approaches, Perestroika continues the complex and fantastical examination of homosexuality, race and AIDS in 1980s America. Hillbery Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. 313-577-2972. [wsushows.com](http://wsushows.com).

**Stagecrafters Baldwin Theatre Second Stage Presents “Southern Comfort”** Southern Comfort is based on the true story of Robert Eads, a transgender man with ovarian cancer, who lives in rural Georgia with his chosen family of transgender friends. Baldwin Theatre, 415 South Lafayette, Royal Oak. 248-541-8027. [stagecrafters.org](http://stagecrafters.org).

**Detroit Repertory Theatre Presents “Aubrey”** Aubrey Gagnier, a heroin addict, haunted by her role in her lover's overdose death, seeks out the grave digger and coffin maker. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. 313-868-1347. [DetRepTh@aol.com](mailto:DetRepTh@aol.com). [detroitreptheatre.com](http://detroitreptheatre.com).

**Stagecrafters Baldwin Theatre Presents “Oklahoma!”** Oklahoma! is classic Broadway at its best. The story opens in the Oklahoma territory just after the turn of the century, when cowboys and farmers eked out a living on the Western frontier. Baldwin Theatre, 415 South Lafayette, Royal Oak. 248-541-8027. [stagecrafters.org](http://stagecrafters.org).

**Jersey Boys at Music Hall!** They were just four guys from Jersey, until they sang their very first note. They had a sound nobody had ever heard. Detroit Music Hall, 350 Madison St., Detroit. 313-887-8501. [musichall.org/broadwayindetroit.com](http://musichall.org/broadwayindetroit.com).

**Detroit Repertory Theatre Presents “Williston”** Three energy reps travel to Williston, ND, to get mineral rights to the last big piece of undeveloped land. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. 313-868-1347. [DetRepTh@aol.com](mailto:DetRepTh@aol.com). [detroitreptheatre.com](http://detroitreptheatre.com).

**Movie Music of Spike Lee** June 2, 4 p.m. Spike Lee and Terence Blanchard have enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship as filmmaker and composer over the years. The Movie Music of Spike Lee & Terence Blanchard showcases the stunning scores and songs from Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. [dso.org](http://dso.org).

**Ann Arbor Civic Theatre Presents “Curtains”** 1959. Boston, Colonial Theatre. Opening night of Robbin' Hood, a new western musical starring film star Jessica Cranshaw, turns into closing night for her – forever! Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, 911 North University, Ann Arbor. 734-763-3333. [a2ct.org](http://a2ct.org).

**The Grapes of Wrath at Michigan Opera Theater.** Sat. May 11 at 7:30 p.m., Wed., May 15 at 7:30 p.m., Frid., May 17 at 7:30 p.m., and Sun., May 19 at 2:30 p.m. at the Detroit Opera House. Tickets 313-237-7464 or [MichiganOpera.org](http://MichiganOpera.org).

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# Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## Lena Waithe goes west

Sometimes Emmy Award winner Lena Waithe takes a break from being the Power Lesbian of All Hollywood, a breather from creating or writing or executive producing and running TV shows like "Master of None," "The Chi," and most recently BET's series adaptation of the Eddie Murphy film "Boomerang." Sometimes she just wants to relax and be an actor, which is what's going to happen on the next season of HBO's sci-fi head-scratcher "Westworld." The details of Waithe's role is being kept under wraps, of course, so we don't know if she's going to be a human being or a robot who looks like a human being, or even how long she'll visit or if audiences will understand anything that's going on at all. But what we do know is that when we get the opportunity to enjoy her in front of the camera, we take it, happily, and if Marvel or DC ever decided they needed a butch lesbian superhero, she'd be our first pick. "Westworld" returns to HBO in 2020 so there's time for this wish to be granted. And we're waiting.



Lena Waithe

don't care about the staggering entertainment value of weird Fyre Festival-style schemes that happily separate rich people from their money, then you've heard about Elizabeth Holmes and her "company," Theranos. She's the one who decided to make a fake startup for blood testing that, instead, was a massive scam that wound up seeing her indicted on multiple counts of wire fraud. Her bizarre story became the subject of a podcast called "The Dropout," then an ABC News documentary that aired in March, and will now become a limited series for Hulu starring Kate McKinnon. Not only does McKinnon look like Holmes, we have absolute confidence in her ability to ride that strangely delicate line between playing it straight and mining the extremely weird comic potential inherent in this freakish demonstration of the follies of capitalism.

## 'Love, Simon' coming to Disney+

Did you see last year's adorable gay teen comedy "Love, Simon"? It was the John Hughes movie John Hughes never got around to making, and its sleeper hit box office status and devoted fan base of The Youngs was crying out for a small screen adaptation. So the executive producers of "This Is Us," Isaac Aptaker and Elizabeth Berger, who wrote the film, are developing the series version for Disney+, the Mouse's new streaming channel that launches later this year. There's no cast yet, and it's unknown if the series will revisit the plot of the film - closeted gay teenage boy with a crush on a close friend has to come out and risk it all - or if it'll pick up at the movie's happy ending and move forward from there. But we don't care. We're ready. It was time for an all-queer "DeGrassi," and this could be the fulfillment of that obvious and clear gap in the TV content market.

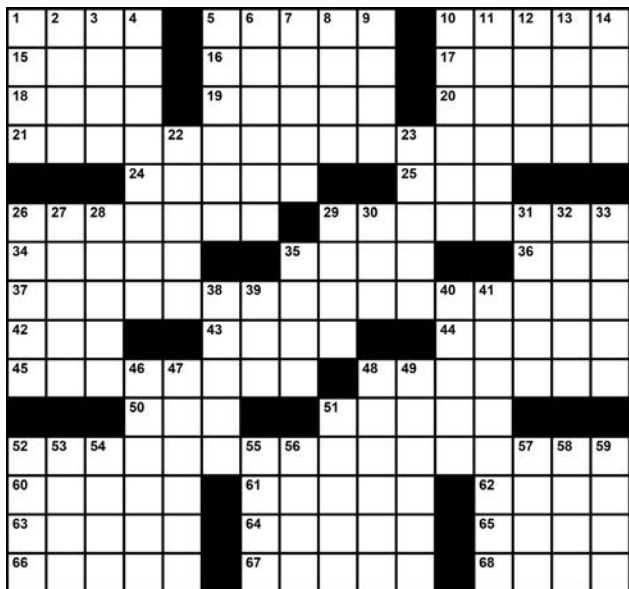
## Grease is the word again

"Grease," that stupendously successful film musical of 1978 that people still adore, was truly one of the gayest pop culture products of that decade. It was, after all, masterminded by one of Hollywood's legendary queens, Allan Carr - see the wild documentary about his life and work, "The Fabulous Allan Carr," for full backup on this fact - and though the film was about heterosexual love in the 1950s, everything about it was tailor-made for queer eyes to enjoy. So here comes the prequel, currently titled "Summer Loving." As you surely recall, the film's opening production number told the story of Danny and Sandy's pre-"Grease" summer romance (his details raunchy, hers chaste), and that's what this story will explore. John August, gay screenwriter of "Big Fish" and "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," will work on the script, and we've already envisioned something splashy and weird, the extreme opposite of bland and straight, and hopefully starring Vanessa Hudgens as Rizzo. We've made our choice here, so Hollywood please listen.

## Kate McKinnon will commit fraud for Hulu

Unless you've been living under a rock, or

Romeo San Vicente is also splashy and weird.



- 42 Guns N' Roses frontman  
 43 Consider, with "over"  
 44 He's hard...to find  
 45 Heteros may change it at the altar  
 48 Manatees, for example  
 50 Helen Reddy's "\_\_\_ Woman"  
 51 Poet Sylvia  
 52 "Ironic" singer who updated her lyrics  
 60 Pesto herb  
 61 Sappho title start, perhaps  
 62 Coin of Versace's homeland  
 63 Makeup maker Lauder  
 64 Nick Adams as Johnny Yuma  
 65 Barbra's "Funny Girl" guy  
 66 Base before home  
 67 Stadium sections  
 68 Stat for Richard Simmons

**Down**

- 1 Result of a religious body's split  
 2 Colorado neighbor  
 3 Pink on the inside  
 4 Mardi Gras torch  
 5 Cro-\_\_\_  
 6 Source for some gay erotica  
 7 Husband of Pocahontas  
 8 Source of red balls  
 9 Declare untrue  
 10 Fag hags, at times  
 11 If all goes right  
 12 Angelina's tomb-raiding role  
 13 "The King and I" setting

**Isn't It Ironic**

**QPuzzle**

**Across**

- 1 Foam at South Beach  
 5 Stuck deeply  
 10 Light, woody material  
 15 Series ender  
 16 Humble home  
 17 Online sexual favors?  
 18 Irene of "Fame"  
 19 Israeli Heights  
 20 Genesis patriarch

- 21 Start of an updated quote from "Ironic": "It's meeting \_\_\_"  
 24 Brian Epstein's guy  
 25 Binges, briefly  
 26 Lurches side to side  
 29 Male member, in slang  
 34 Don't call me this  
 35 "\_\_\_ Horny" (2 Live Crew hit)  
 36 One of the T's of Socrates  
 37 End of the quote: "...and then meeting his \_\_\_"

- 14 Cathedral of Hope collection  
 22 Ready for anything  
 23 "\_\_\_ mind?"  
 26 Cassius et al., to Caesar  
 27 Amazon assistant  
 28 Iranian coins  
 29 Harden  
 30 \_\_\_Kosh B'Gosh  
 31 Prefix for da Vinci's land  
 32 Music of Ty Herndon, for short  
 33 Praise for Lammies, e.g.  
 35 Farm animal that's no breeder  
 38 Mosque leaders  
 39 "Fe fi fo \_\_\_!"  
 40 Smacks balls on the diamond  
 41 James Buchanan, notably  
 46 More microscopic  
 47 Shagged  
 48 Pitch that isn't straight  
 49 Stands next to O'Keeffe  
 51 Anal insert from a UFO?  
 52 Aid's partner  
 53 S&M unit  
 54 Italian wine region  
 55 "Boys in the Band" author Crowley  
 56 Part of an R.E.M. title  
 57 Paula Martinac's "Out of \_\_\_"  
 58 Hazard for Sheehan  
 59 Features of Disney's Dumbo

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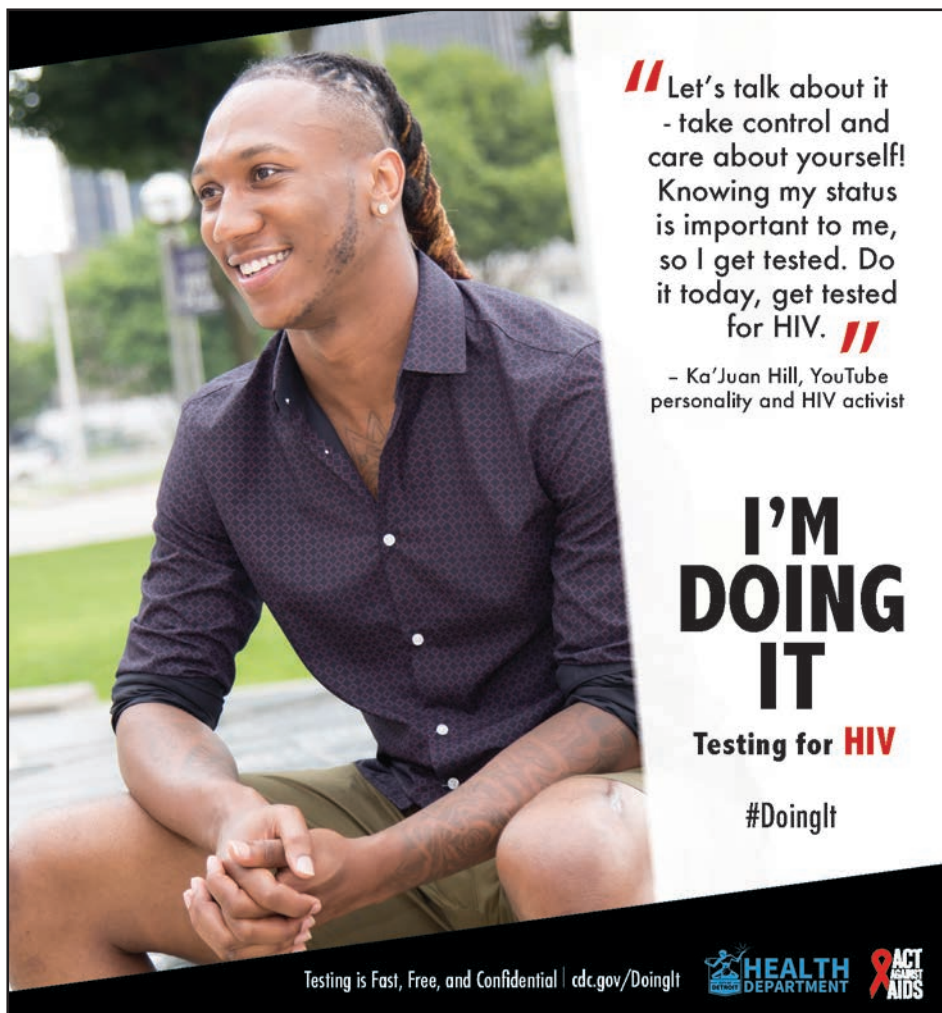
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- Ka'Juan Hill, YouTube personality and HIV activist

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# Detroit Calls on Artists to Save Art Space

BY EVE KUCHARSKI



## MOCAD Hosts Self-Perception and Storytelling Exhibit

From May 10 through Aug. 18, The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit will be hosting an exhibit targeted at challenging viewers' perceptions of themselves, storytelling and moving image, called "Unboxing: Doublespeak."

"The works in this exhibition engage the human voice as both material and technology, bending accepted conventions of vocal intonation and articulation vis-à-vis their application in film and media," write event organizers. "Comprised of a suite of video installations by Mary Helena Clark, Helina Metaferia, Laure Prouvost and Bailey Scieszka that unfold in four parts over the course of the exhibition, 'Doublespeak' asks viewers to reimagine speech as a narrative device, as well as an instrument of individual empowerment."

This exhibit is organized by Pat Elifritz, MOCAD's curator of new media and technology and is the first of an upcoming series.

"'Doublespeak' is the first installment in 'Unboxing,' an ongoing series of exhibitions, screenings and performances at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit dedicated to emerging ideas at the crossroads of technology, media and contemporary art," organizers say.



Ferndale Pride Chair Julia Music with David Essa. Photo courtesy of Ferndale Pride.

## Ferndale Pride Annual Hot Daddies Contest Fundraiser

Ferndale Pride is one of Michigan's largest annual pride celebrations. The annual street fair is an inclusive one and shows support to local charities and businesses that are LGBTQ-affirming. In advance of this year's event, a pre-pride Annual Hot Daddies Contest will be held as a fundraiser at SOHO Ferndale on Saturday, May 18.

"Hot Daddies returns to SOHO Ferndale. We need some sexy Daddies (35 and older to compete) to come out and to be crowned Ferndale's next Hot Daddy and raise money for Ferndale Pride," wrote event organizers. "Tito's Handmade Vodka will be there to make sure your drinks are flowing! Prizes for the winner and the honor of dethroning Paul Gazda to become this year's Hot Daddy!"

To find out more information about entering the contest or simply attending, visit Ferndale Pride's Facebook page.

Advertisements are commonplace in modern life, so much so that the average American likely doesn't realize that they're being exposed to thousands of them a day. And depending on one's lifestyle and location, Red Crow Marketing Inc. report one might see anywhere from 4,000 to 10,000 a day. Amid this constant stream of marketing, Travis Rix and Justin Aversano saw an opportunity to use some of the infrastructure designed to sell products to bring local art to the fore.

They created SaveArtSpace, a New York-based non-profit dedicated to creating urban museums by putting art on billboards that is now partnering with the Playground Detroit art gallery to highlight the work of at least six Detroit creators. SaveArtSpace is putting out an open call that will last through May 28 for anyone who wants to feature their art on ad space across Detroit starting in July.

"Everyone, regardless of age, skill level or background can apply and it's \$10 per image and they can submit up to 10 images," Rix said. "And, if they cannot afford that, they can send us an email with the art they want. ... The theme is your art, so whatever you've got, we want to see it and include it."

The only content exceptions are those that include logos or advertisements for companies, or ones that self-promote explicitly.

Rix said that after having toured across the country to cities like New York, Los Angeles and Miami, the best instances of showcased work were the ones that highlighted a diverse group — something that he hopes will happen in Detroit this summer.

"Ever since the beginning back in 2015 we've always been getting accessible art, like in our first show we had everyone from a 4-year-old to a 94-year-old. There

was also a young man who was autistic and then we also had professional artists, emerging artists and career artists in the same show," Rix said. "Since then, we've always tried to do something very similar and bring in as many different people as possible and put it where they live so it's not in the same hip neighborhood, it's where they'll be within the city."

Rix said that the passion he and Aversano have for this project was born out of companies taking over the local flair of their own Brooklyn neighborhood.

"Back in 2015, in that section of Brooklyn that we were living, right up until then for the previous 10 years or so there were a lot of murals throughout the neighborhood," he said. "And then, all of a sudden, they got covered by ad companies. They came in, would literally paste their ad over the mural. ... So, me and my business partner saw it happen right in front of my eyes and said, 'We have to do something, we've got to save space for art!'"

Thus, the non-profit was born. When asked why he and Aversano dedicate their time to highlighting the work of local artists across the country, they made clear the value of local creators.

"There's a better quality of life when there's public art involved. And most of the time where there are these ad spaces, there isn't a lot of art," Rix said. "We don't make a big ton of money, it's just me and my business partner and we try to do what's in our price range, which is usually in a smaller price range. But, usually, it's more personal and you can usually touch it, get a better picture of yourself with it, and it's usually in a neighborhood [where there's] a lot more community than the one on the freeway which maybe might be seen by 100,000 people or more but the people in the community [will recognize it]."

To find out more information about submitting work visit [saveartspace.org/detroit](http://saveartspace.org/detroit).

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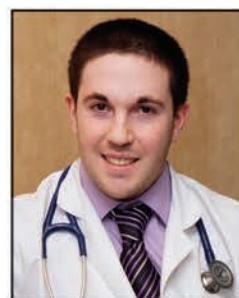
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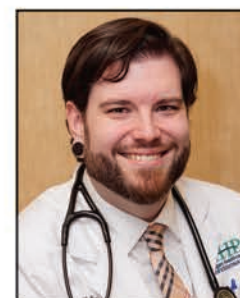
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