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TORONTO'S GAY & LESBIAN NEWS

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CIRCULATION

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Igniting the  
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#750 JULY 25–AUG 7, 2013

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## LGBT HEALTH

### THE BILL 7 AWARD: APPLY BY AUGUST 2

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An informal support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer, people who are in the process of trying to conceive.

No registration required. <http://www.lgbtqparentingconnection.ca/stilltrying.cfm>

### DYKES PLANNING TYKES DROP-IN SESSION:

MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 6:30 - 8:30 PM  
2ND FLOOR SHERBOURNE HEALTH CENTRE

Nila Gupta, one of the facilitators of the Dykes Planning Tykes course, will be available at Sherbourne Health Centre to provide information, resources and support to lesbian, bi, queer women and/or trans people who are considering parenthood. Content of each session will be determined by participants.

No registration required. <http://www.lgbtqparentingconnection.ca/familyplanning>

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## XTRA

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STAGE

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CYLLA VON TIEDEMANN

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**'Terrifying and surreal'**  
Lesbian couple in Kingston targeted with threatening letters

**Tim Horton's apologizes**  
Canadian coffee giant blames blocking of Dailyxtra.com on third-party web filtering service

**Video**  
Will Tolstoy's Anna Karenina be banned in Russia due to gay content?

COVER PHOTO:  
ALEJANDRO SANTIAGO  
COVER MODEL:  
REGINA THE GENTLE LADY

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## Keep calm and carry on... slowly



EDITORIAL  
PHIL VILLENEUVE

Summer is finally here, and since we're in the thick of it, I want to keep things light — literally. Light, breezy clothes, short haircuts, upbeat summer jams and no strict schedule.

Leaving one's calendar open to whatever comes up is a great way to transform a summer. There's nothing wrong with planning the odd barbecue in advance, but that's as far as it should go.

I've been trying very hard not to make plans after leaving the Xtra offices every day, just going with the flow, and it's led to a lot of fun.

A random trip to Toronto Island, tall cans in a park, heading down to Echo Beach (along with an army of gay men and women) to watch Björk with some last-minute tickets, sneaking into a public pool or just riding my bike very slowly and absorbing whatever is happening around me (I caught a screening of Jurassic Park on a hill in Trinity Bellwoods a few weeks back!) is calming and refreshing.

Like a tall glass of watermelon-tequila punch (which I stumbled upon the other night at the new El Catrin in the Distillery District), slowing down the pace and mixing things up is key.

Our cover story came about this way. Regina the Gentlelady has been popping up at parties and in Facebook photos around the city, spreading her unmistakable 1990s, sexy-secretary look and breath-of-fresh-air attitude. She's a fascinating work in progress and still homing in on her look and drag craft, but she's got the music side of things down pat. And it was the

simple fact that Regina was out and about and having a good time that I discovered that her band Light Fires has a debut album coming out and that they are launching it in August with a high-energy release party.

All those details equalled summer cover feature to me. A good look, an interesting story and an electrifying new dance record from a Toronto duo? Yes, please!

I've always been an advocate for Toronto's gay cultural scene, which is why I'm harping on about it now. In this issue, we have pieces on the new production of Angels in America, the launch of a book about some

Like a tall glass of watermelon-tequila punch, slowing down the pace and mixing things up is key during summer.

of Toronto's early activists, and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. On our new website we have features about Leather Pride, which is hosting its first-ever Toronto Leather Pride march (see our Cultural Listings section for details), gay gamers, trans programming at the SummerWorks Theatre Festival, and all things gay at this year's Caribana.

There are spectacular events being thrown all over the city, and now that we can wear stretchy, flow-y clothes, let's get out and take it all in — at a slothlike pace.

.....  
*Phil Villeneuve is Xtra's arts editor.*

## FEEDBACK

### Vancouver Pride and nudity

This article contains many inaccuracies and does not accurately represent my issues with Vancouver Pride at all ["Vancouver Pride Censoring Nudity, Says Foreskin Pride Founder," xtra.ca, July 15]. Full-frontal nudity is not an essential part of the "Foreskin Pride Salute" piece — but I do it with nudity where I am permitted to do so. I do it with nudity in Toronto, I do it without nudity in Victoria. Different cities, different rules. I happily wore pants in the 2010 and 2011 Vancouver Pride parades, and I will happily wear pants in 2013 and beyond. I didn't wear pants in 2012 because I cleared this with Vancouver Pride parade director Tim Kraumanis. My primary complaint is that the Foreskin Pride contingent is being punished by Vancouver Pride for something a VPS director condoned at the time. (Presumably my nudity ended up being more controversial than expected, so instead of taking responsibility for it, Kraumanis sold me out.) The secondary complaint is that Kraumanis claimed in an email that Foreskin Pride's exclusion from the parade was partly based on harassment complaints filed against last year's contingent for allegedly harassing other parade marchers. I want to see these harassment complaints, and I want an explanation for why I was not informed of their existence until 339 days after the alleged harassment occurred. I demand that the VPS reveal the identities of the people responsible for banning Foreskin Pride from this year's parade, disclose the harassment complaints and other documentation that formed the basis of their decision, and explain why these issues were not brought forward in a timely manner. If Lam, Kraumanis or the as-yet-anonymous officers who decided to ban us are found to have acted unethically in this matter, I expect an apology from the VPS and for Foreskin Pride to be included in this year's Pride parade. No full-frontal nudity, I promise.

GLEN CALLENDAR  
TORONTO, ON

This report failed to mention why Glen Callender was marching pants-free in the first place. This was a protest against genital mutilation of children! You reported that Ray Lam said, "I want to be clear, the Foreskin Awareness group was not turned away because of nudity." Then Lam goes on to explain that it was

“What good is ‘WorldPride’ if it neglects voices and concerns of queers in other parts of the world?”

CENSORING QUAlA



because of nudity. And space restraints: Which other applicants were turned away for space restraints? Where is the investigative reporting?

JAMES LOEWEN  
TORONTO, ON

### Censoring QuAIA

It never ceases to amaze and annoy me that non-LGBT people, especially those representing religions with various sects antagonistic towards LGBT people, seem to think they know better than LGBT people what Pride is really about, what it is or how we should celebrate it ["Strange Bedfellows Team Up to Fight QuAIA," xtra.ca, July 4]. It's like queer atheists telling devout Jewish people what Yom Kippur is really about and how they should celebrate it or Christian fundamentalists what Easter is really all about (obviously chocolate) and how they should celebrate it.

RICH  
TORONTO, ON

Exactly how does QuAIA equate to queers against Jews? Some of the biggest critics of the discriminatory policies of Israel's rightwing government are Israelis and Jews themselves. In fact, there are always groups demonstrating against their government policies at the Tel Aviv Pride parade in Israel. I am not saying that Israel practises apartheid, but queer Palestinians are not allowed to walk on the same road and live in the same neighbourhoods as their Jewish counterparts. Queer Jews carry a different-coloured ID card than queer Palestinians, and they do not have to go through checkpoints

like the Palestinians do or have their movement restricted. With this in mind, heterosexuals, homophobic ones at that, are trying to censor queer solidarity in Canada for queers in other parts of the world. This is not only absurd, but dangerous. What good is "WorldPride" if it neglects voices and concerns of queers in other parts of the world?

SAMI  
TORONTO, ON

### Slack's closure

I totally disagree with the citing that Slack's closed down due to changing times ["Slack's Closes Just Before Toronto Pride," xtra.ca, June 27]. Slack's saw declining business because the two women who ran it were not in tune with their clientele. I can't tell you how many women unanimously would say that the place was fantastic back in the days when "Chris" was manager and the music was poppin'. If the owners were more in tune with their clientele, they would have seen time and time again that women would come in groups and leave in 15 minutes annoyed with the music and DJ choices. Music sucked there — and has sucked for a long time — and they were told many times that it sucked. The same women who would come in would then walk down to Crews and hang out.

PIA PRINGLE  
TORONTO, ON

### Toronto Pride

Kudos to Toronto Pride 2013 ["The Dress Rehearsal Is Over," Xtra #749, July 11]. There were four free, outdoor stages with shows or DJs. Five additional stages also had rotating shows. Kudos to Toronto councillors for allowing last call to be extended to 4am and the outdoor sound curfew to 1am. Thank you to Toronto police for being tolerant of the music spilling out of one restaurant well past 4am, with revellers dancing on the street. Thank you to councillors for issuing an extension of the parade route to Yonge-Dundas Square. This year's event was a fantastic prelude to next year's WorldPride.

CLIFFORD CHAN  
VANCOUVER, BC

The outcome that we seek is this — gay and lesbian people daring together to set love free.

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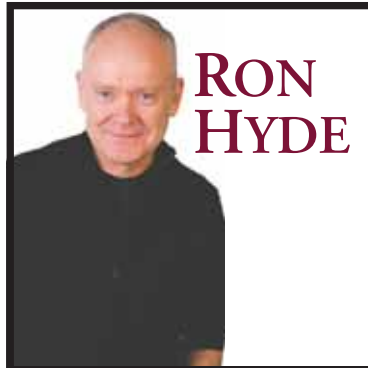
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**Joan Rivers: 'Enough with the sensitivity about race'**

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'The only celebrities who impress me are writers. I follow no god, no celeb, no master, no myth.'

APC founder Jean Touitou, when asked if he reserves limited-run designs for celebrities.

### Aesop

Australian skincare line that APC has also collaborated with.

### 'Post-poo drops'

Bathroom deodorizer the companies teamed up to create.



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Cost of one bottle of post-poo drops.

**\$29 million**

Amount the Vatican has invested in a building that is home to Europe's most prominent "gay spa."

### Europa Multiclub

The name of the spa.

**15 euros**

The spa's summer entry fee for men over 30.

**15 grams**

Amount of protein in our new favourite office snack, Simply Protein Chips — chili flavour.

### Penises

A new study conducted by Current Biology finds that a particular protein released during birds' development stops penis growth.

**5.6"**

Average length of an American man's erect penis, according to a survey published in the Journal of Sexual Medicine.

“Everyone said I was a lesbian, but I’m like, ‘Being a lesbian isn’t a bad thing... Being a lesbian is a compliment more than what else they call me.’”

— Miley Cyrus, commenting on the reaction to her getting her hair cut short.



### FROM THE PTP ARCHIVES 20 YEARS AGO

**XTRA #229  
AUG 6, 1993**

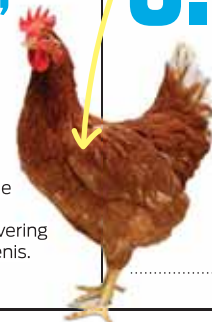
Quentin Crisp visits Toronto to promote the film adaptation of Virginia Woolf's Orlando, in which he plays Elizabeth I. Crisp has this to say about Britain's current monarch: "[Elizabeth II] never found a way to tell us all that she loved us. Perhaps it should have been Bette Midler. If she were the Queen of England, then we would know that she loved us."

For more on Quentin Crisp turn to page 16.



“I was feeling uncomfortable and finally this guy in the tub grunts and points to my head, and then grunts and points to my private parts.”

— Hugh Jackman during his visit to the hot water tubs at the base of Mount Fuji. He placed the towel used for covering genitals on his head instead of his penis.



### OUT ON THE STREET BY KYLE BURTON

## What's your favourite patio in the city?



**Jack**  
UNEMPLOYED

Scoop and Bean Café on Bathurst. It's nostalgic because it's close to where my daughter lives.



**Elisha**  
LAWYER

I like The Watermark Irish Pub and Restaurant down by the Harbourfront Centre because you can see all the sailboats.



**Keiko**  
SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

I'm pretty new to the city, but I would say Gusto 101 at King and Portland. It has a glass retractable roof.



**Adam**  
TEACHER

I like O'Grady's on Church. There's lots of seating and plenty of cute guys. And the food's not bad, either!

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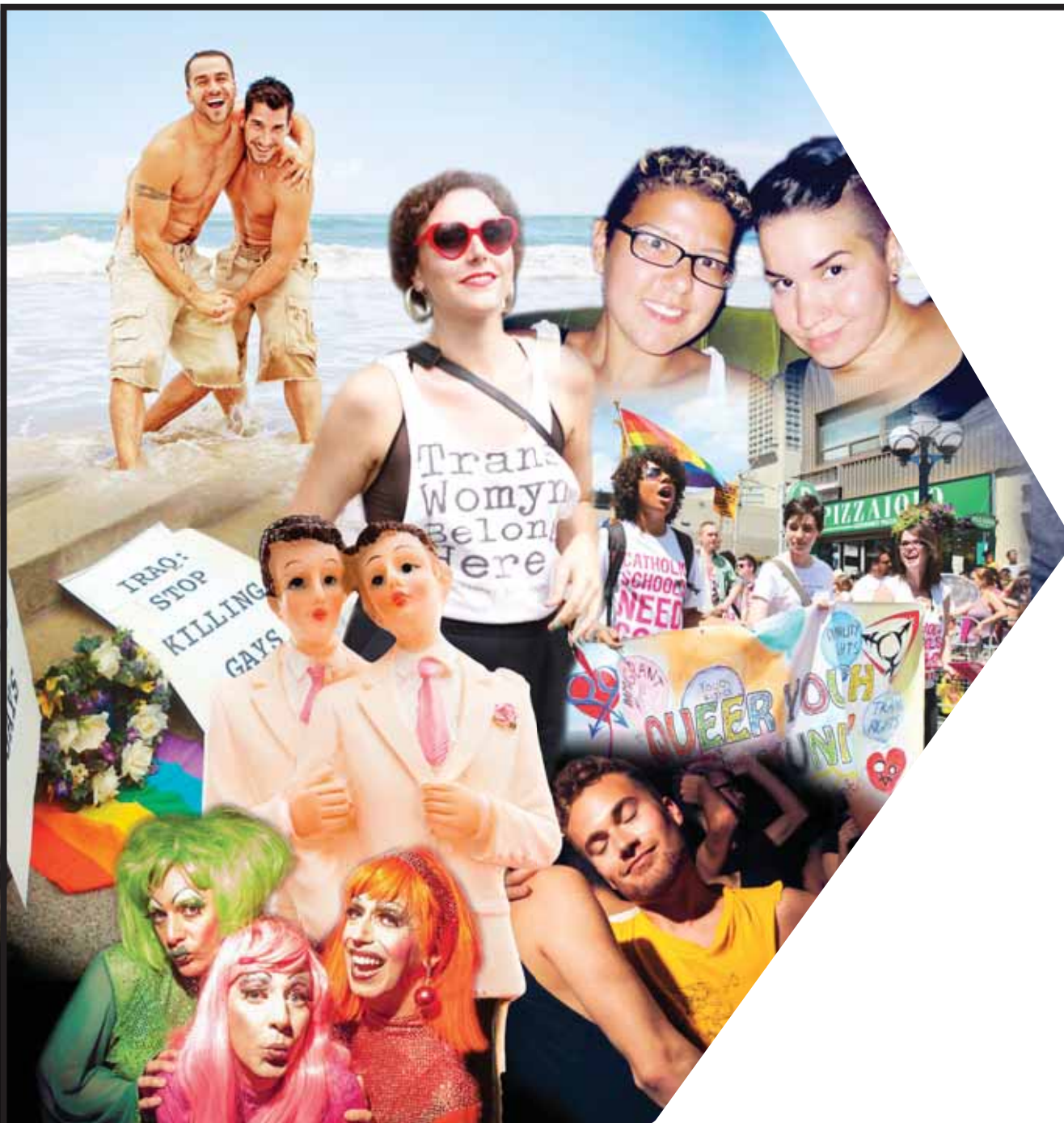
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# City council amends anti-discrimination policies

## Pride Toronto hopes motion will end annual threats to funding

**COMMUNITY NEWS**  
**ROB SALERNO**

Toronto City Council passed a slew of amendments to its anti-discrimination policies without debate on July 17, in a bid to stifle expressions of dissent against Israeli government policy at city events. The amended policy is the climax of several years of unsuccessful lobbying by several councillors to defund Pride Toronto in response to its allowing the participation of the controversial group Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) to march in the annual parade.

The amended policy singles out Pride Toronto as a recipient of city grant money and directs that “Pride and all groups with competing interests ensure that they are complying with the Ontario Human Rights Code, not contravening hate provisions of the Criminal Code and that all sides are demonstrating mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all involved.”

The motion passed by council also directs that any “Major Cultural funding for the Pride Festival be limited to support for cultural elements of the festival including the performance stages and not be used to support the Pride Parade.”

The latter point doesn’t change anything for Pride, as its cultural funding has always been used only for its performance stages and performers, not for the parade itself.



**Kevin Beaulieu, executive director of Pride Toronto, remains concerned that the amendments single out Pride Toronto even though anti-discrimination policies apply to all festivals.**

Several city councillors have been attempting to remove Pride Toronto’s funding since 2010, in an attempt to get the organization to ban QuAIA from marching in the parade. *Xtra* recently reported that these councillors

were being lobbied by B’nai Brith and fundamentalist Christians, including the anti-gay fundamentalist speaker Charles McVety.

Pride Toronto had previously told *Xtra* that it was concerned there may

be a walk-on motion from councillors who would attempt to defund the entire organization or place more stringent controls on its spending and activities. In the event, the only amendment offered was a friendly one from Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, which clarified that the standard to be used in judging whether funded events meet city objectives promoting respect and diversity would be the city’s Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Policy, Hate Activity Policy and Grants Policy. City staff have previously determined that the term “Israeli apartheid” does not violate these policies or the Criminal Code.

Pride Toronto had deputed in favour of the new policy at the committee stage, hoping that a clear policy applied to all festivals would end the annual debates over Pride funding that have gone back to 2010.

“We are still concerned, of course, that Pride is singled out by name in the motions as they have been passed by council. The policies apply to everyone equally, but Pride is singled out,” says Kevin Beaulieu, Pride Toronto’s executive director.

Beaulieu says that he believes that Pride has resolved the QuAIA dispute internally to the satisfaction of the requirements set out by council and hopes that the motion puts an end to the threats to Pride funding.

“We can certainly say that we have addressed the issue responsibly. It’s a great drain on the organization and the community generally to face this again and again. It would be helpful if we could put this behind us,” he says.

For more on B’nai Brith and Charles McVety, read “Strange Bedfellows Team Up to Fight QuAIA” on [dailyxtra.com](http://dailyxtra.com). X

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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

# UK approves same-sex marriage

The UK House of Commons burst into cheers July 17 as Speaker John Bercow announced that Queen Elizabeth II had signed a bill legalizing same-sex marriage in England and Wales.

The law was passed through the House of Lords on July 15, cleared final amendments in the House of Commons, and arrived at the Queen's desk ahead of schedule.

Gay Britons will not be able to marry, however, until the summer of 2014.

Legislation was also introduced in the Scottish parliament to legalize gay marriage in June but has not yet been debated. — *Niko Bell*

## Behave or have prison sex?

Officials in Manzhouli City, China, were forced to take down a government poster accidentally referencing gay sex in prison.

The poster featured this caption: "The court of Manzhouli reminds citizens to respect the law, or else." followed by a picture of a fresh chrysanthemum flower titled "Before Jail" and a tattered sunflower titled "After Jail." They apparently did not realize that in Chinese internet parlance, chrysanthemums are a euphemism for "anus."

Officials quickly issued a statement clarifying that the poster was intended to suggest "those who respect the law will stay in full bloom, and those who break the law will wither."

"Who knew the Manzhouli courts were so avant-garde?" joked one Chinese commenter online. — *Niko Bell*

## HPV vaccine recommended for gay men

A new study says gay men are 15 times more likely than straight men to develop genital cancer and should be vaccinated against HPV.

Experts at three British hospitals say their research shows higher anal-cancer rates among gay men, regard-



The Queen approves (gay marriage in the UK)

less of HIV status. They suggest that offering vaccines to gay men would provide "herd immunity," protecting the whole community.

"In the light of this evidence, and in the absence of universal vaccination of boys, the argument for introducing targeted HPV vaccination for MSM [men who have sex with men] up to age 26 years is strong," the study says.

Eighty percent of anal cancers are caused by the HPV virus. — *Niko Bell*

## Gay activist murdered in Cameroon

A Cameroonian gay rights activist has been tortured and killed, according to Human Rights Watch and the Associated Press.

Eric Ohena Lembembe had been missing for two days before friends discovered his burned and broken body at his home in the Cameroonian capital of Yaoundé.

Two weeks ago, Lembembe publicly warned against "anti-gay thugs."

"There is no doubt: anti-gay thugs are targeting those who support equal rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity," he said in a July 1 statement. "Unfortunately, a climate of hatred and bigotry in Cameroon, which extends to high levels in government, reassures homophobes that they can get away with these crimes."

"It is a big loss for our community, and we are a bit scared about what can happen to us," says Yves Yomb, director of the gay rights group Alternatives-Cameroon. "He was one of the leaders of this community. So what can happen to the other leaders?"

With the Cameroonian Foundation for AIDS, Lembembe, who was also a journalist, helped document violence, arrests and threats against gay people.

Homosexuality is illegal in Cameroon and punishable by five years in prison. — *Niko Bell*

# Ditch smartphones, head for woods

SOY youth discover themselves and each other while communing with nature

**GREAT OUTDOORS**  
ELAH FEDER

When they reached the lake, Elvis Tjijorokisa protested that the water was too deep, that he didn't trust his life jacket, but to no avail. Before he knew it, his campmates tipped his canoe and he was floating in Lake Temagami. "After that, I didn't want to come out of the water," he recalls with a smile.

The canoe test was a relatively minor challenge for Tjijorokisa, who just one year earlier had immigrated from Namibia seeking refugee status. Namibia does not recognize gay rights and inherited Roman-Dutch anti-sodomy laws from South Africa.

For Tjijorokisa, the decision to leave Namibia was a sudden one. It happened the day he turned 21. His aunt was hosting his birthday party, and as he was heading over, he received a text from a friend warning him to stay away, that the police were waiting for him. His uncle, suspecting he was gay, had reported him.

That evening, he skipped the party and got on a plane to Canada. "Nobody knew about it, not even my mom," he says.

On his own in a new country, he wasted no time setting up his life, quickly getting a lawyer and immersing himself in Toronto's LGBT community. Initially, public displays of affection felt risky, even receiving a hug from a friend, but he soon adjusted, going clubbing for the first time and attending his first Pride.

"Every day, it was a mission for me ... to go on Church Street and just explore," he says. Keen to try everything, when Tjijorokisa discovered Supporting Our Youth's (SOY) Get Out canoe trip, he signed up immediately.

In the documentary *Nature's Invita-*



In a canoe, Elvis Tjijorokisa discovered camaraderie and more about gay life in Canada.

tion, Robert Bateman says, "New immigrants, if they want to really partake of Canada, devour Canada, become a bit more Canadian, I think that nature is absolutely a must."

But communing with nature may not be the quintessential Canadian activity it once was. In a David Suzuki Foundation survey of Canadian youth, 70 percent of respondents said they spend an hour or less outside each day, while according to Active Healthy Kids Canada, youth spend six to seven hours a day in front of screens.

Programs like SOY's encourage youth to drop their gadgets and get some fresh air. Get Out offers free monthly events like cycling, skating and skiing to queer people under 29. No experience is necessary.

"It's about being outside and participating," says coordinator Adam Benn. "It's not about winning or losing, so I think it makes it a positive experience for everybody."

Though he had never canoed before, Tjijorokisa knew he'd love the experience. "Going out into nature, me coming from Africa, that was just a connection," he says. Back in Namibia, his family had a farm, where they would spend weekends riding horses,

climbing trees and rock climbing.

Still, he wasn't totally prepared for the Get Out camping experience. A snappy dresser, Tjijorokisa was dismayed to learn that his suitcase of clothes couldn't come along for the trip. His phone, loaded with music, had to be left behind, too.

But when they got to the lake, he felt great. "I just wanted to stay on the water and paddle and paddle," he says. On the first day of the eight-day trip, some of his campmates complained about having to share tents, but after staying up all night talking, Tjijorokisa says, the group bonded, and the week flew by with portaging, canoeing, singing and dancing.

Since that trip, Tjijorokisa has been attending Get Out events regularly and keeping busy within the queer community. He's now applying to universities and ultimately hopes to study international human-rights law. In the near future, he is gearing up for August's canoe trip, where he'll be taking on more of a mentorship role.

"People on my trip, they're going to have a good time," he promises. X

For more information on SOY and Get Out, visit [soytoronto.org](http://soytoronto.org).

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“Over time, I start believing these negative things. I think, I’m South Asian and it’s not a good thing.”

NEIL CHAUDHURY

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# Blocked

In the world of dating apps, race is a major factor

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## TECHNOLOGY KAJ HASSELRIIS

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Neil Chaudhury wants to stop doing it. But like so many other gay guys in Toronto, the recent George Brown grad desires a boyfriend, or at least the chance to meet someone new. So Chaudhury goes on Grindr, the notorious hook-up app, even though it means risking another hit to his self-esteem.

He thumbs through other guys’ profiles and sees warnings like “No Asians.” Fellow users sometimes ask him, “Do you smell like curry?” Almost always, guys ask, “Where are you from?” When he responds, “India,” the conversation often ends there.

“I feel like there is a lot of stigma attached to being a gay person of colour in Toronto,” Chaudhury says. “I start doubting my own identity. I internalize it and think maybe there’s something wrong with me. Over time, I start believing these negative things. I think, I’m

South Asian and it’s not a good thing.”

Chaudhury has lived in Canada for almost three years, and, in that time, he’s never been turned down face-to-face because of his race. But the online dating world is an alternate universe where people express things they wouldn’t in real life — and it’s not just gay men.

Muna Mire, a recent University of Toronto grad, was excited when she first joined the dating website OkCupid. She advertised herself to men and women and started sending messages to both. What Mire got in response surprised her: a few curt responses saying, “Sorry, I’m not that into black girls.” Then she noticed people pointing out the same thing in their profiles, too, right next to preferences like “Must love dogs” and “No smokers, please.”

“It’s jarring that someone would write you off as a person without even getting to know you,” Mire says. “Black women look all different kinds of ways. It’s a matter of the door being closed to you

as a human being based on something completely arbitrary. And I’ve experienced this from both men and queer women, so it’s not really a gendered thing.”

Jaime Woo, author of the book *Meet Grindr: How One App Changed the Way We Connect*, says he never realized how much race matters in the dating world until he started advertising himself online. “I never really thought of race as a first step in terms of who I am,” he says. Then he discovered that his white friends get two to three times more responses on Grindr than he does. One day, Woo switched his profile photo from a face picture to a headless torso shot (not uncommon on Grindr) and his response rate spiked. But when guys asked for a corresponding face pic and discovered Woo is Asian, he got blocked, meaning the exchange was over.

Nowadays, it’s common for apps and websites like Grindr and OkCupid to ask users to identify themselves by race



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM COISH



“Everyone agrees who has it easiest on Grindr: fit, youthful white men.”

JAIME WOO

— and many do. It gives the impression that race is, indeed, just another preference, like enjoying long walks on the beach. But is it? “It’s not just a matter of preference; it really isn’t,” Mire says, and for evidence, she points to statistics from OkCupid.

In a document titled “How Your Race Affects the Messages You Get,” the web company spells out what Mire refers to as “love laws.” The North American dating scene reflects wider socioeconomic patterns, with white people at the top and blacks on the bottom. For instance, when it comes to women seeking men, women of all races respond to white men the most. Meanwhile, black women put out the most messages but get the fewest in return, including from black men. “This suggests an overall desirability for white men congruent to the cultural standard of beauty,” says OkCupid. It also reflects the fact that, generally speaking, men and women prefer to partner up with people from an equal or higher social status.

A 2011 poll of nearly 2,000 Lavalife users backs up OkCupid’s information. Seventy-four percent of women said ethnicity affected their dating decisions, compared to 49 percent of men. It’s not

much different for homos, either. According to OkCupid, “straights and gays share many of the same inclinations.”

Woo’s book includes a whole chapter on this phenomenon called “Race to the Bottom.” In it, he writes, “Everyone agrees who has it easiest on Grindr: fit, youthful white men. While the trendy styling of white men can change — blond and wispy for a while, more recently bearded and tattooed — their place on top of the beauty ideal and, thus, the queer hierarchy, doesn’t.”

It’s pretty clear whom most people want to date. Then why do some online users feel the need to express who they don’t want? In *Meet Grindr*, Woo tackles the phenomenon of men who write “No Asians” on their profiles. The figure is actually quite low (less than two percent, judging from a study by Australian researcher Damien Higgs), but on the other hand, the overall percentage of Asians online is also low (just four to eight percent on the website that Higgs studied). Since there’s such a minimal chance of being approached online by an Asian, Woo wonders why anyone feels the need to preemptively reject them, especially on an app like Grindr that allows so few words. Considering the types of stereotypes that abound about Asian men, Woo surmises that the guys who write “No Asians” are using it as code for what they really want: a white, “straight-acting,” so-called masculine dude.

It must be noted that white men aren’t the only ones who discriminate according to race on apps like Grindr — and when they do discriminate, it’s not always against other races. It’s fairly common to open up Grindr and see an Asian guy with a profile like “I prefer my men the way I like my chocolate — white” or a white guy with a profile like “Really like Latinos, blacks and Asians!!” In fact, Chaudhury and his best friend Kunal, a fellow immigrant from India, awkwardly admit that they prefer trading messages and making dates with white guys.

“We’ve internalized this oppression,” explains Kunal (who prefers not to publicize his last name). He finds it helpful when guys spin their racial preferences in a positive way by writing things like

“Asians preferred.”

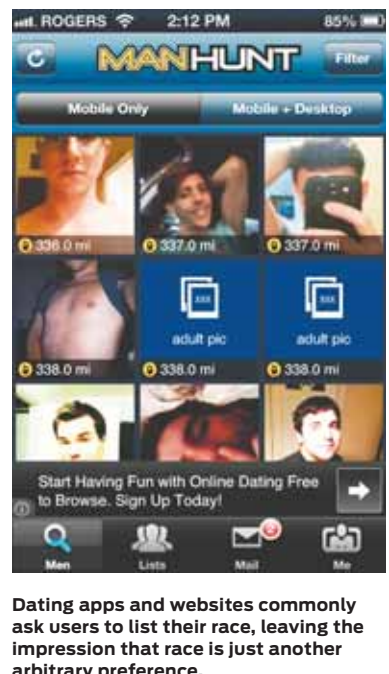
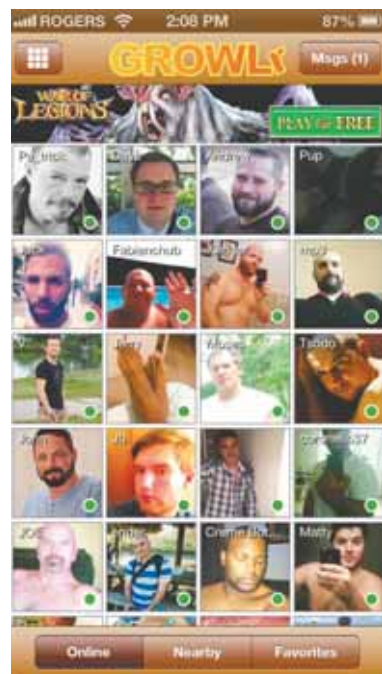
“There’s nothing wrong with that,” Kunal says. But he admits that when a white guy writes, “Whites preferred” that makes him think, “That guy’s probably a racist.”

Woo also says that, even if terms like “No Asians” or “No blacks” don’t appear that often on dating profiles, it still creates a chilling effect for people of colour. “Given the attention raised on the issue by media mentions,” Woo writes in *Meet Grindr*, “it suggests that even when a low percentage of men use these phrases, the negative, exclusionary effect resonates loudly.”

Looking on the bright side, Woo sees the trend turning, as indicated by an upswing in interracial relationships. Since the online dating world is a reflection of the real world, he figures that, as people broaden their attitudes about the “beauty ideal,” web and app profiles will evolve with the times. In the meantime, Woo encourages people to follow the advice of most dating sites and apps and state what you like instead of what you don’t. Also, if you encounter racism, there’s usually a way to report it directly to the app and site operators. And, of course, you can always confront online bigots directly. The problem is that, on most dating sites and apps, fellow users can block you before you get very far with your complaint.

Chaudhury and Kunal have experimented with another option: stretching the truth. Kunal says that he gets blocked so often when he tells guys his country of origin that he sometimes answers the question “Where are you from?” with “Canada.” Mostly, though, Kunal says he’s taken to dealing with online racism by waiting for other guys to message him instead of making the first move. “I’m just protecting myself from rejection based on my skin colour,” he says.

Mire has found another solution: quit. “I love building community online, and I thought OkCupid would be a cool way to meet people,” she says, “but I’m not so sure anymore. I’m starting to feel like I can do better in real life. I feel like when you meet me in person and talk to me, it’s a lot harder for you to write me off in the ways you would online.”



Dating apps and websites commonly ask users to list their race, leaving the impression that race is just another arbitrary preference.



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# Thanks for everything, Quentin Crisp

## England's stately homo was an unlikely activist

**HISTORY BOYS**  
**JEREMY WILLARD**

Recently, while sitting in my big claw-foot tub with my laptop propped nearby (which is how I do almost everything, risking electrocution), I introduced myself to Quentin Crisp by watching *The Naked Civil Servant* (1975). Based on (and named after) the first volume of Crisp's autobiography, the film covers his life up to middle age. John Hurt brilliantly portrays a gay man refusing to be anything but himself in 1930s London and survives his many beatings by adopting a supreme meekness, giving his voice "an insinuating blend of eagerness and caution in which even such words as 'hallo' and 'goodbye' seem not to be so much uttered as divulged."

Enrapt, I began my research. Crisp was born in 1908 in Great Britain to a middle-class family. In his early 20s he was eager to reinvent himself, so he left home, changed his name to Quentin Crisp (from Denis Charles Pratt) and continued to enhance his effeminate appearance. In addition to his girlish clothing, he painted his fingernails and toenails and wore sandals so that everyone could see. He frequented gay haunts in Soho, like the Black Cat café on Old Compton Street (now the heart of London's gay village), and worked as a rent-boy for six months. Later, he was a nude model for art classes and did this for several decades. Because he was paid by the Department of Education, he was, as he liked to say, a civil servant who was naked at work (hence, the title of his book).

Gay sex was illegal in Great Britain until 1967; Crisp could have faced the same fate as Oscar Wilde or Alan Turing, who both died (one way or another) as a result of their "gross indecency" charges. But it was crucial to Crisp that he remained one of the few visible gay men in London.



ERIC WILLIAMS

*The Naked Civil Servant* film made Crisp famous, and he developed a one-man stage show where he wowed audiences with his repartee. In 1981 he moved to New York City. In addition to his show, he published more books and appeared on film, including playing Queen Elizabeth I in *Orlando* (1992) and a pageant judge in *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar* (1995). In 2009, John Hurt once again starred as Crisp, in the film *An Englishman in New York*. Crisp continued to work until his death, at 90, in 1999.

Crisp visited Toronto several times and performed at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre in the late 1990s, but the most interesting artifact is a 1977 interview with Rick Bébout for *The Body Politic*. Crisp said lots of controversial things in his life, but Bébout's article was most keen to learn Crisp's views on gay liberation. In the interview, Crisp seems to hold the position that "might equals right" (that is, if he believes in rights at all) and since gays don't have might, they can't expect rights. According to him, people shouldn't protest, because "all that happens is that the police get

angrier and angrier at having their free time taken up by what they see as worthless." Obviously, Bébout takes issue with this and presses Crisp on Crisp's terms, pointing out that (at the time the article was written) people everywhere are fighting for and gaining rights. By Crisp's own logic, if they've the strength to achieve the rights, don't they deserve them? Unfortunately, Crisp had to leave the interview before conceding the point.

Crisp says contradictory things in other writings, so it's unclear what he really thinks. In any case, I think (and Bébout would probably agree) that Crisp had good reason to be as seemingly passive as he was about rights. In his youth he was literally beaten into submission, and it was a struggle enough to remain the way he was in spite of everything. Those tactics began making less sense to society as a whole in the 1960s and '70s, as an aggressive approach to gaining rights become more desirable — and his attitude became outdated — but I prefer to focus on the strength he showed in his youth, always reapplying his makeup after it was smudged by a punch. X





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## THE QUEER ARCADE

Trans game developer Anna Anthropy’s autobiographical project *Dys4ia* deals with her transition from male to female, detailing her struggles and triumphs throughout the process. While the game was not covered by mainstream video-game journalists, many critics within the community — including the widely respected gaming blog Penny Arcade — took notice, praising it as an effective telling of an experience not many would be familiar with.

Now, *Dys4ia* is being included in a queer video-game exhibit at Videofag. Skot Deeming, part of the Team Vector art collective, says the idea for *Queer Arcade* was born early last year, when

*Dys4ia* was originally presented at their Vector Art Festival.

“Vector has a great deal of programming surrounding issues of gender in games, largely discussions of feminist practice within the medium,” Deeming says. “[But] we felt that, even including a game such as Anthropy’s *Dys4ia*, there still wasn’t a great deal of queer games being represented.”

Deeming hopes *Queer Arcade* will bring more projects like Anthropy’s into the limelight, showcasing a variety of games that represent a queer narrative. “There are members of the queer community using games to represent themselves and their experiences in ways in which, we be-



lieve, other media has yet to accomplish. It’s important to Team Vector to champion these works as forms of contemporary art.”

The two-day pop-up arcade will range in tone from playful to sombre, but Deeming is clear about Vector’s goals for the show. “What we’re trying to accomplish is to show the range of

work being made by queer game-makers across the continent and illustrate the expressive power of games as an art form.” — Andrew Jacome

*Queer Arcade* begins Sat, July 27 and runs until Sun, July 28, 7–10pm, at Videofag, 187 Augusta Ave. [queerarcade.tumblr.com](http://queerarcade.tumblr.com)

## Scotland-bound funny boys

Two of Toronto’s best-loved gay comedians, Shawn Hitchins and Gavin Crawford, will soon pack their sassiest tartan G-strings and head to Scotland for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Hitchins has spent the last few months polishing his ginger-themed solo show, called *Ginger Nation*, which centres on his recent experience as a sperm donor. “I parallel that with trying to save gingers from extinction by making more of them, one lesbian at a time,” he says.

He’s excited that his hope of holding a ginger-pride parade in Edinburgh is on the verge of official approval: “On Aug 10, I’m going to try to rally 20 to 50 gingers to walk together as a community.” The parade will likely have fewer than 50 people, which is probably for the best, because gingers are like teens: one is fine, but a pack is terrifying.



Crawford, who recently won a Dora Award for his role as a 58-year-old British lady in Sky Gilbert’s *A Few Brittle Leaves*, gave Hitchins his first



TV job years ago, on *The Gavin Crawford Show*. Hitchins claims not to have been very good but says Crawford was always very kind, and he’s thrilled that

they’re going to Edinburgh at the same time.

Crawford’s performance, *A Bummer Abroad*, consists mostly of material from his live shows, including standup bits and character monologues. The punny name indicates his insecurity about performing for the first time at the notoriously overwhelming Edinburgh Fringe. It also prepares audiences for jokes about flouncy gay subjects, like gay sex, gay marriage and the homosexuality of Cole Porter.

“I don’t really know what to expect,” Crawford says. “But it’ll be fun to strike out internationally a little bit.” — Jeremy Willard

*The Edinburgh Festival Fringe* takes place Fri, Aug 2–Mon, Aug 26. [edfringe.com](http://edfringe.com)

## ENCOUNTERING GAY AUTHORS

Ian Young’s new memoir, *Encounters with Authors*, deals with three deceased gay authors from Toronto: Scott Symons, Robin Hardy and Norman Elder. According to Young, they were “well known in their time but are now in danger of being forgotten.” Young was acquainted with all three, and his book deals not only with their literary accomplishments, but also with their fascinating lives.

Scott Symons came from a wealthy, establishment family, and in 1967, two years before gay sex was decriminalized, he published *Place d’Armes*, a novel about a man who goes to Montreal and has sex with hustlers. It caused a scandal, but even though “the *Toronto Star* called him the ‘monster from Toronto,’ it sold fairly well,” Young says.

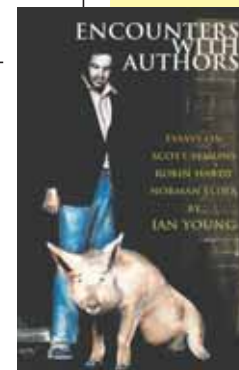
Robin Hardy wrote for *The Body Politic*, and Young describes him as “a very handsome man, a sex god and a cutie pie,” meaning “pretty much everybody was attracted to him, including me.”

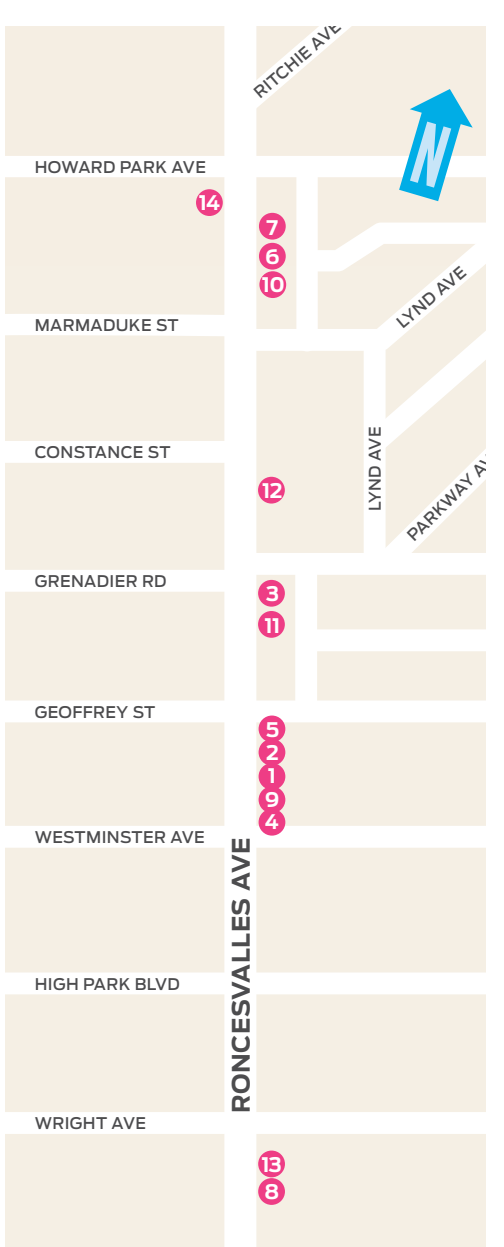
Hardy wrote many things, including a short story called “The Day the Homos Disappeared: A Cautionary Tale” (1980), which, Young says, was “eerily predicting of the AIDS crisis.”

Norman Elder explored the world, travelling to such places as the upper headwaters of the

Amazon River, Papua New Guinea, Namibia and Madagascar. His book on the Amazon is called *This Thing of Darkness* (1979). He brought back all types of animals, including snakes, monkeys and tortoises, which he kept at his mansion on Bedford Road. “All three of these guys were a little kooky. Their stories are worth knowing,” Young says. — Jeremy Willard

*Encounters with Authors* launches Thurs, Aug 1, 7:30–9pm, at the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, 34 Isabella St, and is available at Glad Day Bookshop. [clga.ca](http://clga.ca), [gladdaybookshop.com](http://gladdaybookshop.com)





# A quirky, homey, working

## Roncesvalles' village atmosphere is anything but skin-deep

### NEIGHBOURHOOD SERAFIN LARIVIERE

*Been up and down this road  
I hear it's paved with gold  
Or so the story is told  
Gonna follow this trail  
Straight down to Roncesvalles  
Where I hear love overflows*

As Jully Black sings in her song "At the Roncies," there is a lot of love out there for Roncesvalles, one of Toronto's quirkiest and homiest neighbourhoods. Maybe it's the historic storefronts running south of Dundas Street West down to King Street, or maybe it's the absence of shopping behemoths like the Gap. Either way, it's certainly refreshing to see a slice of Toronto that isn't dominated by condo towers and golden arches.

Unlike Yorkville or even Cabbagetown, Roncesvalles is very much a working neighbourhood. Sure, some of the shops are downright adorable with old-world bijou out the yin-yang, but a body could get everything needed to survive and thrive without having to leave the 'hood.

For starters, this is a great place for food lovers. There are specialty foods, bakeries and an honest-to-god fish market, complete with a bubbling waterfall window display that makes me feel like the Little Mermaid — or at least the fat old sea witch. For those of us who are accustomed to scrounging for the least-dead offerings at the supermarket's meagre fish counter, **De La Mer** ① (291 Roncesvalles Ave) is a revelation. The cod is shiny and fresh, and the staff is well versed in both product and cooking suggestions.

Just a few doors down, you can find the perfect accompaniment for your seafood entrée at **The Mercantile** ② (297 Roncesvalles Ave), a specialty-foods mecca that looks like the film set from every chick flick ever made. Chutneys and jams stand alongside exotic spice mixtures and tea blends, and the smell of fresh baguette is absolute bliss.

For dessert, **Mabel's Bakery** ③ (323 Roncesvalles Ave) has everything from glossy, elaborate cakes to the most delicious cookies I've had since my Great Macaroon Pig-Out of 2007 (I was in North Carolina, and those scary church ladies know how to bake!). Spooned up with a little

frozen yogurt from **Gurts** ④ (283 Roncesvalles Ave) and you have a meal to die for.

Of course, if you don't feel like cooking, Roncie boasts several unique and delicious restaurants. **Barque Smokehouse** ⑤ (299 Roncesvalles Ave) may not be the ideal destination for your vegan friends, but this place boasts authentic pit barbecue cuisine and a brisket that positively melts in your mouth. My arteries might be clogging, but my stomach is in rapture. If you like live music with your meal, **Gate 403** ⑥ (403 Roncesvalles Ave) has a respectable menu and first-rate jazz acts playing both nightly and on selected afternoons during the week. Juno-nominated artist Elizabeth Shepherd, for one, got her start here.

Amidst these wonderful food shops and *boîtes* lies a truly enchanting store called **Maggie's Farm** ⑦ (407 Roncesvalles Ave). Filled with whimsy and charm, this secondhand/consignment shop is packed full of vintage LPs (Tony Orlando and Dawn!), fabulous old clothes and a paperback edition of that great lesbian literary masterpiece *Forbidden Love*. The owner, a vivacious gal named Heather, jokes that she was



Clockwise from far bottom left: Fetch; Scooter Girl; Alternative Grounds; Mabel's Bakery; Toni Cusson and Cam Cash at De La Mer; Barque Smokehouse; Shannon Doyle, proprietor of The Mercantile; Smock  
ADAM COISH



# neighbourhood

forced to open the store after she ran out of storage space at home. “I’ve been collecting stuff for 40 years,” she says. “It had to go somewhere.”

The street is certainly kid-friendly, a reflection of the many single-family homes in the neighbourhood. **Scooter Girl** 8 (187 Roncesvalles Ave) is perhaps the cutest toy store I’ve ever seen, with educational toys, imaginative crafts and just plain fun stuff loading the walls. I pick up some fair-trade finger puppets for my toddler and escape before my Visa leaps bodily from my wallet and drains me dry.

**Smock** 9 (287 Roncesvalles Ave) is another great place for the whole family, with an arts-and-crafts classroom for kids and a cool café for caffeine-deprived parents. The little darlings can get a sugar jolt afterward at nearby **Sweet Thrills** 10 (399 Roncesvalles), which stocks all the usual treats as well as a large number of British foodstuffs normally unavailable in Canadian shops. If you haven’t tried Branston Pickle, then this is the time to crack open a jar with your favourite crackers-and-cheese combo.

Books are clearly a welcome commodity here as well. There are two actual bookstores

on the same street, and neither of them is owned by Heather Reisman. **Another Story** 11 (315 Roncesvalles) sells books for children and adults, with an emphasis on social justice and diversity, while **A Good Read** 12 (341 Roncesvalles) has the rich, solid feel befitting a vendor that specializes in signed modern first editions.

It must be said that a certain hipster vibe can be felt here. Many of the stores have a retro feel, and there’s more than a passing nod toward environmental responsibility. **Ecotique** 13 (191 Roncesvalles Ave) blends both of these sentiments, with its stock of recycled, reused and repurposed items. My favourites are a line of jewellery boxes and picture frames made out of green circuit boards, salvaged from old computers and electronics. There’s also a gorgeous line of leather-bound journals with cotton pages that contain no wood pulp.

I can’t help but think that these sorts of small, independent shops wouldn’t stand a ghost of a chance in other areas of the city where corporate stores and big-ticket rents reign supreme. This is not due to a disparity in quality or variety of goods; if anything, the Roncesvalles businesses offer far supe-

rior food and sundries compared to their downtown cousins. Hell, even the ancient **Revue Cinema** 14 (400 Roncesvalles Ave), a community-run, not-for-profit heritage movie theatre, has the best popcorn in the city.

After speaking with shop owners and clientele alike, it’s clear that this village atmosphere is anything but skin-deep. The locals are adamant that their street continue to prosper and rallied around the beleaguered shops during a two-year period of street work that saw sidewalks torn up and the road frequently impassable. These loyal neighbours trooped through mud and across teetering plank walkways to keep the money flowing.

“They really kept us going,” says Shannon Doyle, owner of The Mercantile. “It was tough times, but people really stuck by us, and we got through it somehow.” Doyle’s been on Roncesvalles for five years, after a nerve-racking move from her previous College Street location. “I love this neighbourhood. It was a gamble to move her, but I’m so glad I did. The other storeowners are friendly, and it’s just a beautiful street to be on.”

Michael, the manager at Sweet Thrills, agrees wholeheartedly and recalls a personal crisis that showed them all how devoted their customers are. “This was my brother-in-law’s store,” he says. “He passed away three years ago, and within the hour we had people offering to run the store for us. They ran it for us for two weeks. It was the most amazing thing.” X



# Queerabana

## DJ Blackcat brings gay flair to Caribana with The Urban Jungle

### THE SCENE NICK GREEN

Mykel Hall, better known as DJ Blackcat, wants everyone dancing this Caribana. In case you're new, Toronto's Caribbean Carnival (Caribana for short) is one of the city's most anticipated annual events, appreciating and exploring all things cultural and traditional from the eponymous region. It's a colourful few weeks, invoking the carnivals of Trinidad and Tobago and serving up authentic (and delicious) food, music and performance. There's a lot to do, but for the last four years, DJ Blackcat has been a standout by giving Toronto's queers and allies the chance to appreciate some seriously wicked music.

"I feel very strongly about urban music, and I feel that it's necessary. It is needed in our community during the

major festivals and all year round. It should be readily accessible by the community." It's this passion that compels him to launch The Urban Jungle party once again. Well, that and the desire for there to be something awesome for the queer community during Caribana.

Since its inception, the party has been known for its fresh combination of hip hop, reggae, soca, house and R&B. This year is no exception, with Urban Jungle teaming up with west-end hip-hop joint Big Primpin' and a hot lineup of DJs. "This year we step it up a notch by bringing in some new blood that have been introduced at my monthly Go Hard parties" Blackcat says, meaning DJs Sikh Knowledge, his protégé Pensive, Greg, as well as Liam Skinner and Nino Brown, of Yes Yes Y'All fame.

Jully Black is rumoured to make an

appearance, and also among this lineup is, of course, Blackcat himself. With 20 years of experience in Toronto, he's the perfect artist to be heading a queer Caribana event. His Go Hard parties have been pushing people to "go hard or go home" for over three years by bringing in both established and up-and-coming DJs.

If you've been before, don't expect the same old thing. This year, in addition to the killer DJ lineup, Blackcat's using the space at Fly nightclub. "For the first time, in the lounge downstairs we're having a video dance party," he says, so get ready for some major urban sensory overload as you dance the night away.

Also, who doesn't like free stuff? "I'll be giving out my first Urban Jungle mixtape, to at least the first 200 people through the door." So get there early to avoid the line and score some swag. With a mixtape like that, you can turn your bedroom into your own urban jungle for the rest of the year! X



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# The pain of being human

## An interview with Sinead O'Connor's favourite singer, John Grant

**PLAYLIST**  
**KEVIN RITCHIE**

When John Grant answers the phone, he is stuck in traffic en route to a gig in Chicago, yet he is making the best of it.

"Ooh, there's a Nissan next to us and it's a beautiful blue colour," he says. "And look who's driving it! There's some hot beef on this highway."

The 44-year-old baritone-voiced musician has a way of finding humour in more dire circumstances. Formerly the front-man for Denver rock group The Czars, Grant has chronicled his battles with addiction and depression, homophobia, a particularly devastating breakup, and an HIV diagnosis on solo albums *Queen of Denmark* and *Pale Green Ghosts*, which came out earlier this year.

His candour and heartbreakingly self-effacing songwriting has attracted Sinead O'Connor, who covered "Queen of Denmark" on her most recent album and sang backup on five *Pale Green Ghosts* songs, and Elton John, who invited Grant to cover "Sweet Painted Lady" for an upcoming reissue of his 1973 album *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*.

Recorded with producer GusGus's Biggi Veira in Grant's new home base in Iceland, *Pale Green Ghosts* is largely about his adolescence. It's full of squelchy synths and icy balladry that nods to the dark new-wave music he grew up listening to in the 1980s, a sound he plans on incorporating into his music from now on.

### Why did you move to Iceland?

I had always wanted to go and spend time in Iceland, since 1987, when I discovered The Sugarcubes and saw pictures of the landscape. It was a long time coming. And then, when I went there, I met lots of great people and Biggi, and we hit it off. I went there to do my record, and I ended up staying. I like the silence. I like that there aren't so many people. I love getting to know new cultures and tackling new languages.



John Grant - anything but a Pale Green Ghost.

### Does learning different languages influence you as a songwriter?

My love for languages shows in my songs. The greatest way it's impacted my songwriting is that it's forced my English to get better. You can't learn another language without really knowing your own language. It's going to make it a lot easier for you to build into other languages if you understand your own first language.

Just because you were born in America or England doesn't mean that you've mastered the English language. That's something that I've learned.

### With this album you revisited the 1980s, sonically and thematically.

It's as if I'm taking inventory of my life. *Queen of Denmark* was more based on my childhood and the '70s. Next is the '80s, where I really discovered my love,

which is electronic music, synthesizers and new wave and all the music I still listen to. You'll hear that more in my music from now on. I was just starting to discover those things. It does seem to make a lot of sense, even though I didn't consciously plan it that way.

### Can you tell me about the song you wrote with Hercules and Love Affair, "I Try to Talk to You"?

It's me expressing sadness about how I never had a dialogue with myself in a loving manner, and how I wasn't able to be gentle with myself or see myself as a human being. The total rejection of the self is what led me to escape into alcohol and drugs. That self-destructive behaviour is something I was still holding on to when I went out and had unprotected sex and got HIV. That song is expressing the regret about not being able to love yourself, protect yourself or take care of yourself.

### You use a lot of film references in your lyrics. Can you tell me about the song "Ernest Borgnine" and why you like him?

I always liked his face and his voice. He was just a part of growing up — he was always there. I was never sexually attracted to him, but I loved him as an actor. The song is about my love for Woody Allen movies. He has one called *Purple Rose of Cairo*, which is about a woman who escapes into a movie. "Ernest Borgnine" is loosely based on that. It's about me escaping from reality, the psychological mind-fuck of dealing with the diagnosis and dealing with forgiving yourself because you only have yourself to blame, in my case, anyway.

### There is a lot of anger on this album. How has it been revisiting that on tour?

There are some nights where I think, "Oh fuck, I don't want to think about this or talk about this right now," but once you get into the song, it's fine. It's not something that weighs on me for more than a few moments. I'm an adult, and I can understand that everybody has a bunch of shit going on. I also don't think that negative things are necessarily negative. There are a lot of people who could think, "Why are you talking about this shit? This is a total buzzkill, dude!" But I don't see it that way. I don't think of confronting these issues as a bummer.

### The best pop songs are often about subjects that might not seem suitable for pop songs.

It's good to do that. There is a lot of humour built into my songs, which indicates that I'm aware that the pain I talk about is a universal theme. I'm not talking about *my* pain; I'm talking about *the* pain of being human. X



PHOTO BY ALEJANDRO SANTIAGO



# Igniting the *Flame*

Regina the Gentlelady strikes a chord with her Light Fires debut album

## LAURYN KRONICK

On a sunny afternoon on the patio of what could be her second home, at The Beaver on Queen West, Regina the Gentlelady sits elegantly poised, dressed in a black bra top under a studded jacket, accompanied by leopard-print pants, heels on her feet and beer in hand. Her blonde curls frame her face, which features piercingly bright, shimmery made-up eyes.

Regina is the face of Light Fires, the two-piece electro-pop group that has been making waves in Toronto and gaining momentum across the country. Regina, the lyricist, whom you may also know as Gentleman Reg, along with bandmate James Bunton (who provides the catchy, pulsing beats but does not grace the stage) are releasing their full-length debut album as Light Fires next month, appropriately titled *Face*.

Regina says that *Face* has been in development for a few years. Light Fires had already recorded many songs, released a seven-inch LP and a video but, with an iTunes library full of material, it was time to choose 12 tracks and make the album.

"I think of us in the vein of Robyn — we make intelligent dance and pop music with really accessible, outward-looking lyrics," Regina says. "These are pop and dance songs with clear intonations vocally so you can hear what I'm singing. They make a grand statement."

Prior to Light Fires, Bunton was making music

with Ohbijou, and Gentleman Reg was Regina's primary performance role. While on tour, Bunton sent Regina some beats he had created, which she calls a "really serendipitous thing — I immediately wrote a bunch of songs." Regina had made some dance beats previously, but this was new territory.

"Being able to make an album in your bedroom is fascinating as someone who comes from bands. Same with the drag fitting so well — so did the band. We didn't think it would ever take four years to make an album, and as Regina I wasn't ready. Now I actually am," she says.

While we're sitting on The Beaver's patio, we talk about how the venue was her old workplace, and it's also where "Regina" materialized. She credits the late Will Munro, who co-owned the bar and worked in the kitchen and encouraged Reg to try drag. (It's worth noting that the Light Fires song "Last of His Kind" is about Munro.)

"I never thought of doing drag, as I wasn't sure what I would

bring to it. And it wasn't interesting as something for me to pursue unless I was going to do something unique with it.

What's so fascinating to me now about this is how someone like Will was able to see that I would be capable of this before I was," she says.

Regina was surprised at how quickly she felt comfortable being in drag. Her debut was at The Beaver. "The HotNuts girls asked me to perform at their night, and Miss Margot came up with the look. On the day of the show, I had no idea what Regina was

going to do or wear. Once Margot did my face, people didn't know who I was or whom I worked with; it was that transformative," she says.

Her character was a work in progress. Reg would write songs and then present them as Regina. She mentions Peaches, who sings as Peaches, not as Merrill Nisker, as an example of someone she looked to as an influence. "I don't want the drag to take away from the seriousness of the songcraft," Regina says. "I don't want people

to think [Light Fires] is a joke band; this is a way of presenting differently. The band began before Regina was created at The Beaver, and then they just morphed."

Regina describes her style as "real girl" drag, which, she explains, is less pageanty and character and more focused on a "real girl." At the beginning, she notes, took a lot of work. She didn't know much about women's clothing or makeup, and it took time for her to learn and develop Regina's identity. She goes for a Blondie, 1980s, new-wave look mixed with a late-1970s punk-rock vibe and finds her clothing at vintage stores, H&M and even Forever 21.

"There are so many different ways of doing drag, and I don't think the general public realizes this. I think they lump drag queens as one thing, but the spectrum is so diverse, and I just fit in as one example of maybe a slightly less extreme, more utilitarian form of drag," she says.

Regina has a busy rest of the year following the launch of the Light Fires' album. She will appear in her first film, *Portrait of a Serial Monogamist*, several music videos and would eventually like to do a one-woman show. She also continues to DJ.

"I only DJ as Regina. It's so much more fun," she says. "There are possibilities with DJing that don't get explored a lot; you're a persona and a character. I could sing one of my songs in the middle of my set. When I DJ at The Beaver, sometimes I'm on top of the bar doing runway." X

“THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF DOING DRAG, AND I DON'T THINK THE GENERAL PUBLIC REALIZES THIS.”

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# Blackface by artistic reasoning

Is this form of performance art acceptable in the world of drag?



**TORONTO AT NIGHT**  
**RYAN G HINDS**

Another Pride season come and gone. For many, the weekend's highlight was Blockorama, celebrating the 15th anniversary of Blackness Yes's wildly popular celebration of the black queer community. Organizers pulled out the big guns with headliners Diana King and 1990s divas En Vogue. King told me Blocko made her feel "free, strong and proud. In Jamaica, there's a law that if you're caught having sex, even in your own house, you can go to jail for 10 years. I am going to be myself with no fear. Coming out, I expected the worst, but people write me letters daily from all the islands. It's been 95-percent positive!" En Vogue's set was plagued with sound issues, but backstage afterward, Cindy Herron and Terry Ellis were nearly hyperactive about their love of Toronto. "Being here for gay pride is un-frigging-believable. We want to come back for WorldPride. Tell the organizers to have us back! We love the energy, especially here at Blocko. Shopping's good here, and oh my god, the food: roti, shawarma, salads, fish soup, sushi." They're proud to rep the 1990s, saying, "It's been so many years since we were here last, but the songs still feel good to sing. We love taking people back."

Not wanting to kill their post-show vibe, I didn't ask them about what I'd been asking everyone else all day: their thoughts on recent incidents of blackface in Toronto's bar and club scene. Blockorama seemed like a perfect place to gauge opinions, but I had trouble getting folks to go on the record; many

were disappointed in/hurt about Daytona Bitch's recent performance as Miss Cleo but didn't want to hurt their friendship with her, while others stood by her. Various nightlife denizens had much to say, and while their answers were wide-ranging, many were also ill-informed.

I am not someone who will stand here and say all use of blackface is bad. Ben Vereen, memorably, performed in blackface at President Ronald Reagan's inauguration, making a powerful political point about the Republican Party. I adore Spike Lee's film *Bamboozled*. Mandy Patinkin (a white actor) gave an incredible performance in *The Wild Party* in blackface as a rage-filled, psychotic vaudeville performer. These are works of art that used the tool of blackface as something more than a punch line. Many of the white Toronto performers in the past few years who've been grotesquely painted up say things like "This is my art; it's an artistic statement" but then can't follow up with what exactly that statement is.

The reality is that, for a queer person of colour, a night out in gay circles will probably involve mockery of your race, culture, heritage or traditions. In Canada, there is a long history of blackface in Toronto (even Al Jolson used to grace the stage of the Royal Alexandra singing "Mammy" with fat red lips and shuffling feet) and Quebec (with contemporary performers like Jean Lapointe and Mario Jean), so pretending that it's an American phenomenon of the past is willful ignorance. So is trying to posit blackface as something freed of its vaudeville roots; many shameful instances of black-, yellow- or brownface have stung since vaudeville died in the 1930s. Those who spoke out against Daytona's performance were told by her fans, "Get over it — don't be so PC sensitive" and "I'm not racist, but I thought it was funny." To my eye, this line of thinking implies that racism is over, racism is something we've gotten past together, and racism doesn't exist anymore.

I don't think that Daytona Bitch is racist. Based on my personal and professional interactions with her, I would encourage folks not to paint

**"The reality is that, for a queer person of colour, a night out in gay circles will probably involve mockery of your race, culture, heritage or traditions."**

her with that brush. However, it is possible for people who aren't racist to do racist things, and here I look to my own family. My Irish grandmother was one of the painfully few people of her generation who supported my parents' early-1970s interracial wedding. She danced, hosted the Irish/Dominican wedding dinner, and welcomed her new black in-laws into her family without hesitation. No racism there whatsoever. However, until her dying day she referred to Brazil nuts as "nigger toes," and when people called her out, she would say many of the things that people are saying now when they try to normalize blackface.

Please, please, please Toronto performers: if you *have* to do blackface, prepare a solid artistic reasoning. Are you doing it in a venue where there's room for context and decent artistic exploration, or are you doing it in a drunken bar scene where it's about getting a cheap laugh? As performers, we can't always go for cheap laughs. Mel Brooks, the man responsible for a movie scene of cowboys sitting around a campfire endlessly farting, once told me, "You can't always depend on the cheap stuff." We have seen time and time again that blackface imagery is often not worth the trouble it will bring you, so my challenge to you is to find a laugh that's strong, not cheap. Go for a smart laugh. Put your training and experience to use. And for the love of all things holy, do not sing "Mammy." X

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# Angels

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## CHRIS DUPUIS

"I remember this deep, white-hot rage at the realization hundreds of thousands of gay men had been allowed to die because they were considered to be disgusting and not important to society."

Actor Damien Atkins is describing how he felt the first time he read Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*. Still in college in his hometown of Edmonton, he discovered the play early in his coming-out process, along with another seminal AIDS drama, Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart*.

"I was making decisions about how I wanted to live in the world as an artist and as a gay man, and I was being confronted by the realization there are people who essentially want to see me dead," he says. "At the same time, here's the character of Prior Walter, a gay man with AIDS who's chosen as a representative of all of humanity to go to heaven and speak to the angels. That was an incredibly invigorating and inspiring moment. Not only was I not degenerate; in that universe I was incredibly important. Playing this role has always been a dream."

The word epic is often a default descriptor for works of art potentially challenging to contemporary attention spans. But in this case, it's a label Homer would applaud. Spanning seven hours, split into two parts, *Angels* is such a complex, thematically dense play that a simple distillation of its multiple interwoven storylines is near impossible.

Set in New York in the mid 1980s, it centres on two very different gay men dying of AIDS: Atkins's character Prior (a former designer and drag queen) and Roy Cohn (Diego Matamoros), based on the fiery New York lawyer who assisted Senator Joe McCarthy

during the communist witch-hunts of the 1950s. Prior's boyfriend, Louis (Gregory Prest), is struggling to support him through his illness when he falls for Cohn's protégé Joe (Mike Ross), a closeted Mormon lawyer working his way up the ranks of the Republican Party. Joe's wife, Harper (Michelle Monteith), spends much of her days in Valium-induced hallucinations, obsessing about the ozone layer and contemplating a move to Antarctica.

Much is made of the work's unflinching treatment of AIDS and sexuality (conservative critics have occasionally picketed productions), but *Angels* is about much more than that. In fact, it's kind of about everything. Love, death, faith, religion, politics, class, slavery, the Holocaust; it touches on nearly every theme imaginable.

Atkins's long-time obsession with the work finally shifted to action when he pitched a production to Soulpepper a few years ago. The last Toronto production was Canadian Stage's 1996/97 version, and Atkins (considering the piece a modern classic) proposed to artistic director Albert Schultz that it was time to bring it back.

"I'm sure he had similar conversations before," Atkins says. "The only new thing I brought to the table is that I wanted to play Prior. He has lots of people who could have played this part. I don't know why he chose me. I told him what a turning point reading the play was in my life, and I'm just not someone who can let those things slide away without at least giving it a shot. It's an incredible gift when your personal and professional lives converge in such a glorious piece of art."

When he learned he'd landed his dream role last fall, he began preparing immediately. Along with rereading



CYLLA VON TIEDEMANN

# among us

“There’s immediate shock that happens when someone is naked onstage because it’s a betrayal of the social trust that says we’re not supposed to be naked in front of strangers.”

every article, interview and related book he could find, he made trips to New York (where most of the action takes place) and San Francisco (which is also heavily referenced). Already lithe, he embarked on the time-honoured tradition of casting-inspired body modification and set out to lose some weight.

“I didn’t think it was healthy for me to approximate the body shape of someone who’s going through what Prior is experiencing,” he says. “But at the same time I didn’t want people looking at me and feeling like I didn’t look the part. I don’t want to fetishize the role because I have a huge responsibility to people for whom this is not just a piece of fiction, but who are living with it or who died from it or who lost someone, and so I’m up for anything that can make this a more truthful performance.”

Audiences will get plenty of time to check out the results of his diet/exercise regime; as per the script, he has multiple nude scenes (as do some other cast members). If he’s uncomfortable about airing his bits to a house of hundreds, you’d never know it.

“To a certain extent, it’s a play about bodies and about sex,” he says. “There’s immediate shock that happens when someone is naked onstage because it’s a betrayal of the social trust that says we’re not supposed to be naked in front of strangers. With this show, it’s absolutely

essential. It puts us all in a room together, which is one of the aims of theatre. When I’m standing there and you’re looking at my naked junk, you can’t ignore the fact that we’re both human beings.”

As a piece of literature, *Angels* has a curious resonance in contemporary culture, simultaneously addressing a reality that feels far in the past and a political situation that feels eerily current. Obviously, much has changed for those living with HIV in terms of available treatments. DOMA has been repealed and an increasing number of Americans support marriage equality and anti-discrimination laws.

“But what’s surprising is how much in the world of the play is the same,” Atkins says. “In terms of American politics, of course, we have a Democratic president, but the politics of the play are as true as ever, just in a different guise. The dialectic between humanistic collectivism and individualistic capitalism is even sharper now than it ever fucking was. The reality of a world where everyone is only concerned with themselves has come true in horrifying detail.”

**ANGELS IN AMERICA**  
Runs until Sat, Sept 14  
Parts I & II run separately  
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soulpepper.ca



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# DEEP DISH

ROLYN CHAMBERS

## Willam

FRI, JULY 5 @ MOJO LOUNGE

On one of the hottest nights of the summer, I spy with my sweaty eye two people, half naked, trying to keep cool in a walk-in fridge. Both have just finished performing to a packed crowd of dirty young things on the stage of Toronto's newest eclectic mashup nightclub experience. Sometimes more gay, sometimes more straight, MoJo Lounge on Dundas West is capitalizing on this area's hipster rejuvenation. Trendy restaurants, hip bars and chic clothing companies now dot the landscape once occupied by shops owned by Portuguese families. The brainchild of partners **Monty T** and **Joey Viola** (Mo and Jo), who worked their asses off for a couple of years building their MoJo Productions brand with one-off parties and their weekly industry-night party, FML Mondays, at The Vic. Part dance club, part lounge, part performance stage, MoJo's attracting some interesting names. **Scott Fordham**'s performed here, **Mas-sari** played here a week later, and an even bigger star is rumoured to be in negotiations to perform soon. Tonight, however, the stage belongs to opener **Cassandra Moore** and headliner **Willam**, who appeared on Season 4 of *RuPaul's Drag Race*. Both burn up the stage so much they need to cool off. Which is why they are in the fridge. "It's so hot," Willam cries out. "I'm dripping."

1) Electra Couture, Ivory Towers, Greg & Bobbie 2) JD, Phil & Mark 3) Willam & Cassandra Moore

## College Night

WED, JULY 17 @ CHURCH

On one of the hottest nights of the summer I spy with my sweaty eye two guys, dressed in denim, trying to keep cool on Church Street. Both are DJs and both work together. But not tonight. It's too hot for DJ **Blackcat** and his sidekick DJ **Pleasure** to be mixing anything other than a cocktail. It's definitely too hot inside Church, where it seems there are about the same number of people dancing to DJ **Sumation** as there are outside seeking refuge from the heat. But it is College Night after all, the long-standing mighty mid-week weekly that has seen more rebirths than Madonna's career. Papa don't preach, I'm dating a baby. Remember when College Night was at 5ive Nightclub, then briefly at Alibi, then The Barn? Messy memories. Tonight the promise of out-of-class students attracts may regulars, like fast-talking twink-terror **Nicholas Silverie** and quick-witted tranny-terror **Tatiana**. The club itself is changing weekly. A new bar one week, an improved DJ booth another, and new little knick-knacks to make the spot more visually appealing are always being added. But when it comes down to it, as the once-legendary club owner Peter Gatién once said, "You can adorn your walls with gilt and gold, but it's the people inside your club that make it last." Unless it's too hot. Then get a better air conditioner.

4) Will & Nicholas 5) Dennis, Tatiana & Michael 6) DJ Pleasure, Blackcat & Jermaine 7) Ben, Steven & Ryan





1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

# XPOSED

ANNA  
POURNIKOVA  
PHOTOS BY  
BECCA LEMIRE

1▶ **Rosetta Stoned** is wearing all of my favourite things: a Portuguese grandma-knitted child's Baptism shawl, a Mary-Mother-Of-God rose wreath and a Frieda Khalo sparkly uni-brow and matching Ashanti mustache. Can we just please stop and take a second to love her matching doily purse too. Shamazing!

2▶ **Howie** is wearing a lovely tee here. My version of this shirt would be: "Lezzie, Queer, Fenced, Tranny, Pride", though. PC be damned, these are the words I identify with. **Ozy** has got an amazing summer traveller look rocking as well. It's almost like this was taken at a bar in Thailand on the circuit instead of at Her. Love live Toronto tropical summers!

3▶ **Matthew** is cruising for a bruising in this absolutely perfectly draped crochet, boatneck chemise and boat shorts. His clavicle is so beautiful, I want to pull up a chair and eat a pulled pork sammie off it. He was also handing out friendship bracelets at the door at Her to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of OMG Blog.

4▶ Her has been quite the sleeper hit, chugging along through the madness of the come-and-goes around town. And the reason they're doing so well? A hot man alternative to College Night parties as evidenced by **Dylan, Eric** and **Patrick** right here.

5▶ **Donna** is making that bathing suit work hard for the money! She's gonna cause traffic jams in them shorts too. The earrings and necklace are a great compliment to a full Pitt of hair. And I have to say that the shorts plus nylons colour scheme is a perfect match to her Rhianna topper.

6▶ I have seen **Conor** somewhere before. Can't quite put my finger on where. It's so hard to tell when they wear this much clothing. Like how am I supposed to even recognize my friends and foes on the streets when we insist on all these pants and tees? **Dallas** and **Matthew** do a great job of filling out this crew of babes at Her.

7▶ Augusta House, the home of Business Women's Special, is closing down for renovations and a change of management. So this was officially the last BWS (for now) in the space ever (for now). **Abdul** and **Fadi** came out as did many in droves to celebrate the awesome Kensington Market juggernaut that we all know and love. Romy and Michele would have been proud.

8▶ It's a testament to what a great diverse night this is in the crowd. **Gillian, Vinny, Joel** and **Brae** are a perfect example of that. Love this night, love that Clueless shirt, looking forward to attending the resurrection of BWS in the near future.

# WHAT'S ON

FOR MORE EVENT LISTINGS, GO TO [DAILYXTRA.COM](http://DAILYXTRA.COM)

## ARTS & PHOTOGRAPHY

### The Queer Arcade

Various people explore the theme of "queer arcade," with contributions that include video games, experimental "GAYmes" and queered traditional games. Sat, July 27 and Sun, July 28, 7–10pm. Videofag, 187 Augusta Ave. Free. videofag.com

### That's So Gay: Say It to My Face

This annual Pride exhibit, featuring 15 artists, examines issues like transphobia, slavery and racism. Runs until Sun, July 28. The Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St W. Free. gladstonehotel.com

### Trinidad and Tobago Film Night

Director Janine Fung's film *La Gaita: The Odyssey of Hope* is about the clash of culture, music, race and religion in Trinidad. Wed, July 31, 7pm. The Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Ave. \$8–11. revuecinema.ca

### Abstracts and Landscapes

Philip Cairns exhibits some of his vibrant acrylic paintings. Opening reception Sat, July 27, 2:30–6pm. Exhibit runs until Sun, Aug 11. Arcadia Art Gallery, 680 Queens Quay W. Free. philipcairns.com

### 21 Gay Street

Works by artists George Platt Lynes, Karl Blossfeldt and Lori Newdick. Runs until Sat, Aug 17. Corkin Gallery, 7 Tank House Lane, Distillery District. Free. corkingallery.com

### Gay Premises: Radical Voices in the Archives (1973–1983)

In celebration of its 40th anniversary, the CLGA examines how *The Body Politic* became a dominant voice in queer communities in Canada. Runs until Fri, Sept 6. Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, 34 Isabella St. Free. clga.ca

### Christian Louboutin

Curated by the Design Museum in London in conjunction with Louboutin, this exhibit presents the French designer's high-fashion shoes. Runs until Sun, Sept 15. The Design Exchange, 234 Bay St. \$18–22. dx.org

## HEALTH & ISSUES

### The 519 Legal Clinic

A free, accessible service for low-income people. Volunteer lawyers

provide legal advice, referrals and help with forms and letters. The confidential and private visits are first-come, first-served. Bring any necessary documents. Every Thursday; registration 6–6:30pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. the519.org

### Bisexual Women of Toronto

A peer-support and discussion group focused on community and solidarity. Thurs, Aug 1, 8–10pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. torontobinet.org

### Positive Routes to Recovery

A peer-led support group for gay men working on substance abuse issues. Takes place the first and third Tuesday of each month. Tues, Aug 6, 6–8pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. pr2r.org

## LEISURE AND PLEASURE

### Pitbull: Camp Boozey

Burly party boys head to a gay campground in southern Ontario. Runs Fri, July 26–Sun, July 28. The Point Campground, 906 Charlotteville Rd #2, Vittoria. \$10. get-tothepoint.com, pitbullevents.com

### Karen Williams

A comedy night billed as "She's African American. She's a mom. She's queer. She's calm, cool and collected . . . wait, no, go back." Sat, July 27, 9pm. The Flying Beaver, 488 Parliament St. \$20 advance, \$25 door. pubaret.com, brownpapertickets.com

### Chris Tsujiuchi: Back in the Saddle

After a three-night run of A Very Chris-terical '90s Cabaret at Buddies in Bad Times, Tsujiuchi returns to the pubaret with several special guests. Sun, July 28, 8pm. The Flying Beaver, 488 Parliament St. \$10 advance, \$15 door. pubaret.com, brownpapertickets.com

### Toronto Gaymers Presents: Fight Club

Fighting-game enthusiasts enjoy friendly (and not-so-friendly!) video-game matches. Many platforms available. Attendees are encouraged to bring extra systems and controllers. Mon, July 29, 8–11pm. Fuel, 471 Church St. Free. torontogaymers.ca

### Singular Sensation: A Musical Theatre Open Mic

The Jennifer Walls invites amateur crooners to perform their favourite songs accompanied by a live band.



Abstracts and Landscapes — Arcadia Art Gallery, until Aug 11. PHILIP CAIRNS

Every Monday, 10pm–12:30am. Statlers, 487 Church St. No cover. statlers.ca

### Encounters with Authors Book Launch

Ian Young signs copies of his new memoir, *Encounters with Authors*, about the lives of Scott Symons, Robin Hardy and Norman Elder. Thurs, Aug 1, 7:30–9pm. Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, 34 Isabella St. Free. clga.ca

### Pool Skills Clinic

Billiards professional Joanne Ashton teaches the fundamentals, including stop, draw and follow, as well as more advanced strategy. Pre-registration recommended. Tues, Aug 6, 8pm. Pegasus, 489 Church St. \$10. getoutcanada.com

## SEX

### Latin night

Bare-bottomed guys cruise to a Latin theme, with great music, decorations, games and a safer-sex workshop. Thurs, July 25, 8–11pm. Spa Excess, 105 Carlton St. Regular rates apply. spaexcess.com

### Toronto Burlesque Festival

The festival celebrates six years with performances from the Boylesque TO troupe and Skin Tight Outta Sight Rebel Burlesque. Runs until Sun, July 28, various

times and venues. \$20–50. torontoburlesquefestival.com

### Open Relationships for the Open Hearted

Coco La Crème hosts a workshop on non-monogamy, covering topics like negotiation, boundaries and sexual and emotional safety. Pre-registration recommended. Tues, July 30, 7–9:30pm. Good for Her, 175 Harbord St. \$33. goodforher.com

### Sapphic Aquatica

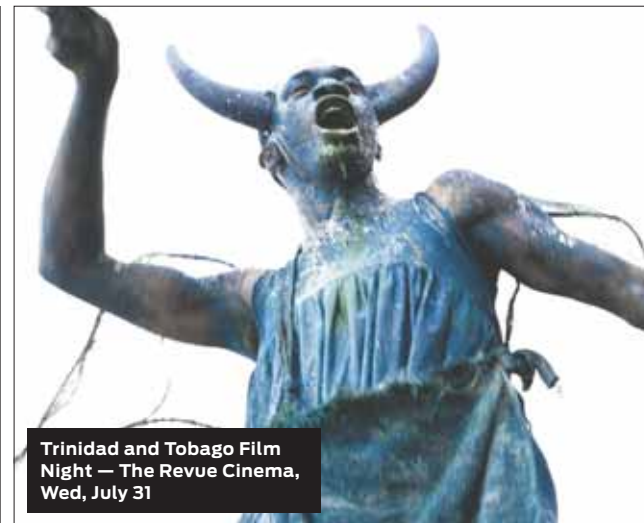
In addition to the usual amenities and icebreaker games, women and trans people enjoy a performance by Belle Jumelles and beats by DJ Lady Coleco. Tues, July 30, 8pm–2am. Oasis Aqualounge, 231 Mutual St. \$20. oasisaqualounge.com

### Ultimate Guide to Prostate Pleasure

Author Aislinn Emrizian hosts a probing workshop on prostate-related play. All genders welcome. Thurs, Aug 1, 7:30–9:30pm. Come As You Are, 493 Queen St W. \$30. comeasyouare.com

### Toronto Leather Pride

All sorts of leather-related events, from the Kinky Women and Trans Munch to the Leather Pride March. Runs Sun, Aug 4–Sun, Aug 11; various times, venues and prices. torontoleatherpride.ca



Trinidad and Tobago Film Night — The Revue Cinema, Wed, July 31

## STAGE

### Cats

Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical based on TS Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* returns with an all-Canadian cast. Runs until Sun, Sept 1, various showtimes. Panasonic Theatre, 651 Yonge St. \$59.95–109.95. mirvish.com

### Avenue Q

The musical coming-of-age story starring some puppets who live on a fictional New York City street features such memorable hits as "If You Were Gay" and "The

Internet Is for Porn." Runs until Sun, Oct 6, various showtimes. Lower Ossington Theatre, 100A Ossington Ave. \$49–60. avenueq.ca

### Secrets of a Black Boy

Actor and playwright Darren Anthony restages his sister Trey Anthony's play, a brutally honest piece that gives voice to five black Toronto men whose in-your-face stories are set against the backdrop of the displacement of families in Regent Park. A concert, a party and a play all in one. Sat, July 27; shows at 2pm and 8pm. Daniels Spectrum Theatre, 585 Dundas St E. \$25–30. regentparkarts.ca



# CLUBSCENE



Hissyfit — The Beaver, Sat, July 27 GREG WONG

## Thurs, July 25

**Give Care Help: An Evening of Music** Amy Lewis, Jen Calder, Kelly and the Kelly Girls, Two Piece Extra Spicy, Cooper Black and Snatch Adams perform onstage in support of MedicsHelp, which is sending eight paramedics to Kenya to do medical relief work. 7pm. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St W. \$20 advance, \$25 door. lula.ca

**Milk Thursday** Faux Girls returns, featuring Devine Darlin, Niema G Darlin, Miss Sylvia and Jade Elektra. Hosted by Divinesque, with DJ Relentless spinning house, hip hop and classic club beats. 8pm. Mojo Lounge, 1305 Dundas St W. \$5. mojolounge.ca

**The Dirty Hustle** DJ Blackcat spins hip-hop dance beats for the west-end crowd. 10pm–2:30am. The Steady Café and Bar, 1051 Bloor St W. No cover. facebook.com/thesteadycafebar

## Fri, July 26

**Pitbull: Camp Boozy** Bears, boys and boozers in the woods and in the tents for a camping weekend, with DJ Dwayne Minard on decks, a pool party and the second annual Boozy Olympics of competitive alcohol-driven games. Runs until Sun, July 28. The Point Campground, 906 Charlotteville Rd #2, Vittoria. Regular campsite rates. get-tothepoint.com, pitbullevents.com

**Grapefruit: Summer Night City** DJs Shane Percy and Aural return for one night only to spin pop, retro and

dance beats, with special guests. 10pm–3:30am. Fly, 8 Gloucester St. \$10. flynightclub.com, grapefruit4u.com

**Full Frontal** DJ B-Tech spins top 40, house and electro. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. No cover. waylabar.com

**Flex Friday** DJ Dwayne Minard spins deep- and tech-house music; hosted by Dale C and Chris Munro. 10:30pm. Church, 504 Church St. \$5. facebook.com/flexfridays

## Sat, July 27

**Saturday at Woody's** The Cabbagetown Group Softball League's Fundraiser of the Year at 4pm; squirt.org Best Men's Ass Contest, hosted by Chris Edwards, with Katherine Dior, \$300 in cash prizes and DJ Chris Steinbach, at midnight. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodystoronto.com

**Machismo** DJ Dee Jon on decks for the Latin night, with a wet contest, strip shows, a pool tournament and prizes. 9pm. Erotico, 461 Church St. No cover before 11pm, \$5 after. erotico.ca

**Go West** A queer dance party in the Etobicoke-Lakeshore area, with the DJ spinning top 40 and retro beats. 10pm. Jay Jay's Inn, 2847 Lake Shore Blvd W. \$10. jayjaysinn.com

**Montreal Divers/Cité Pre-Party** DJs Stephan Grondin (Montreal) and Shawn Riker (Toronto) spin serious house, with prizes and ticket giveaways. 10pm. Fly, 8 Gloucester St. flynightclub.com

**Pop Machine** DJ Shane Percy and Aural spin top 40 and fave beats. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. \$5 before 1am, \$10 after. waylabar.com

**Toastr** DJs Sticky Cuts, KLR, Delicious and Miz Megz spin for the east-end women's party. 10pm. Riverside Public House, 725 Queen St E. \$7. riversidepublichouse.com

**Hissyfit** DJ Orange Pekoe spins dance beats for pastel, candy, bubble and tiara boys, with the Sissyboy of the month, Adam. 11pm. The Beaver, 1192 Queen St W. \$5. beavertoronto.ca

## Sun, July 28

**The Hat Party** Randy, Mr Spearhead 2013, hosts the wild hat party, with barbecue, prizes for best hat and raffles. All proceeds go to Toronto PWA's food programs. 3–9pm. The Black Eagle, 457 Church St. No cover. spearheadtoronto.com

## Mon, July 29

**Singular Sensation** Jennifer Wall's musical-theatre open-mic night brings out the belting voices every Monday. 10pm. Statlers, 487 Church St. No cover.

## Tues, July 30

**Rock & Retro** DJ Chris Steinbach hits the turntables, while Lee turns the Bad Boy Prize Wheel. 8pm. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodytoronto.com

**Sapphic Aquatica** Miss F hosts this women and trans event, with a burlesque performance by

Belle Jumelles, DJ Lady Coleco on decks and a birthday party for the host. No cis men. 8pm. Oasis Aqualounge, 231 Mutual St. \$20. oasisaqualounge.com

## Wed, July 31

**Woody's Got Talent** Bunny LeBlanc hosts the Wednesday talent night, with the hump-day winner competing at the grand finale on Sept 18. 10pm. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodystoronto.com

**Toronto Drag Kings** Tyler Uptight, Cameron, Kenny and Chase Manning perform in the weekly drag-king show. Every Wednesday. 11pm–2am. Zipperz/Cellblock, 72 Carlton St. No cover. facebook.com/zipperz

## Thurs, Aug 1

**Ladyplus Party** DJ Todd Klinck spins dance tracks for T-girls, friends and admirers, with spontaneous T-girl go-go shows and private VIP dances. 8pm. Club120, 120 Church St. \$5 before 11pm, \$10 after. club120.ca

## Fri, Aug 2

**Hydrate** DJs Pleasure and Blackcat spin R&B, soca, reggae, hip hop and ratchet music to kick off the Caribana weekend. 10pm–3:30am. Club120, 120 Church St. \$10 until midnight, \$15 after. club120.ca

**Full Frontal Friday** DJ Devon spins house, top 40 and electro. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. No cover. waylabar.com

**Bearcode Dance Party** Toronto Leather Pride gets it on with the club's weekly event. DJs Cory Activate and Alain Plamondon hit the decks for the grizzlies and their admirers. 10pm–3am. Zipperz/Cellblock, 72 Carlton St. No cover. facebook.com/zipperz, torontoleatherpride.ca

**Dirty Sexy: SchLong Weekend Party** Pornstar Austin Wolf (randyblue.com) takes the stage with the Dirty Sexy dancers, with DJ Cajmere Wray spinning house beats. 11pm. Fly, 8 Gloucester St. \$11 before midnight. flynightclub.com

## Sat, Aug 3

**Daddy Next Door** DJ Dwayne Minard spins house music all



Tapette — Henhouse, Sat, Aug 3.

night for the silver foxes and their admirers. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. \$5. waylabar.com

**Heat: The Urbanesque Edition** Anopenmind Events burlesque party, with DJs Lissa Monet, Sharp and Blackcat and the Urbanesque dancers. 10pm–3:30am. The Courthouse, 57 Adelaide St E. \$15 advance, \$20 door. pollyperry.eventbrite.com

**Leather Bear Night** Steve Buczek hosts the manly night, with bootblacking services available so boots will look amazing for the rest of the week. 10pm. Black Eagle, 457 Church St. No cover. blackeagletoronto.com, torontoleatherpride.ca

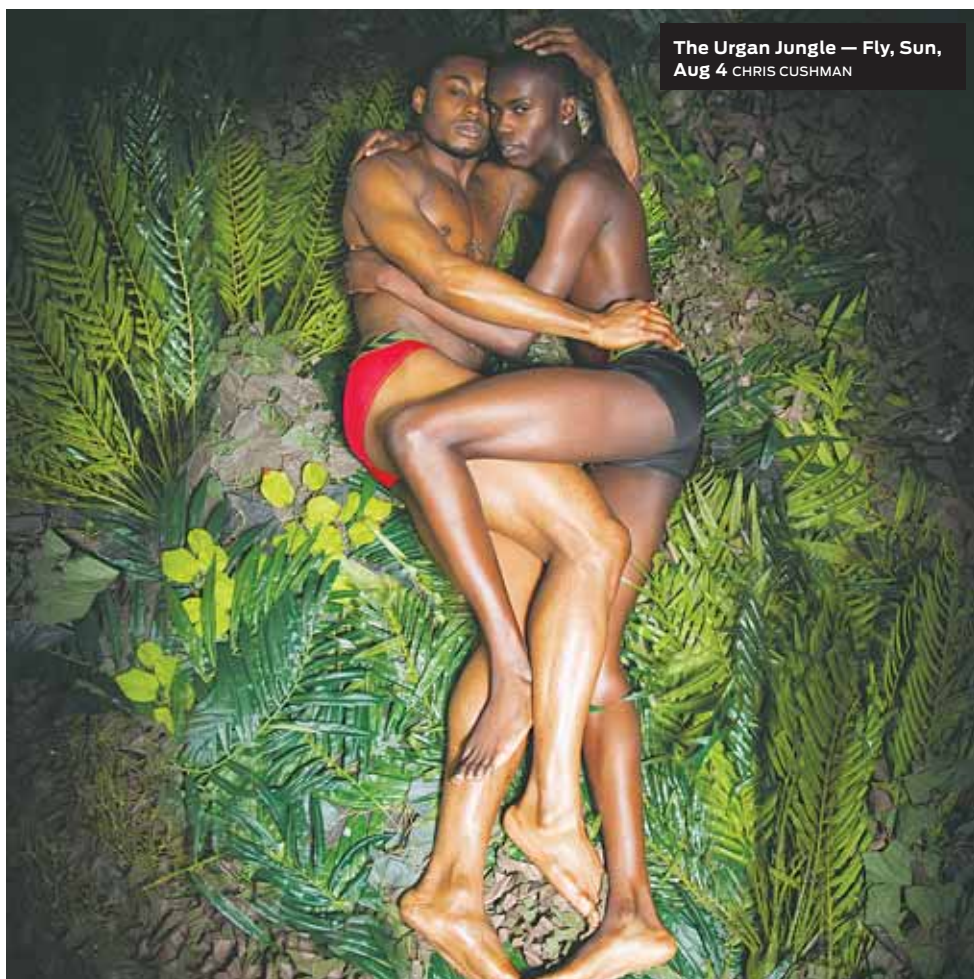
**Tapette** DJ Phil V spins baguette-bouncing French house and disco at this French-guy flirt fest. 10:30pm. Henhouse, 1532 Dundas St W. No cover. henhousetoronto.com

**Jockstrap** DJ David Picard spins dance beats for jocks and beefy guys, hosted by Dale C and Chris Munro. 11pm. Church, 504 Church St. \$10. facebook.com/jockstrapatchurch

## Sun, Aug 4

**Toronto Leather Pride Kickoff Celebration, T-Dance and Fetish Market** DJ Cory Activate spins for the kinksters munching on barbecue, cooling off in the wading pool and getting shined by bootblackers. The TLP Fetish Market has last-minute wardrobe accessories and additions. Cover included for TLP 2013 VIP pass-holders. 1pm. Zipperz/Cellblock, 72 Carlton St. \$2 suggested donation. torontoleatherpride.ca

## The Urgan Jungle — Fly, Sun, Aug 4 CHRIS CUSHMAN



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**Dirty Sexy Party, Schlong  
Weekend Edition —  
Fly, Fri, Aug 2**



**Sunday at Woody's** Hollywood Broadway Show, hosted by Miss Conception, at 6 pm; Old School Show Special Event, hosted by Georgie Girl, with a birthday show for Michelle Ross and special guest Chris Edwards, at 9pm; Five Smokin Hot Divas, starring Georgie Girl, Charo Batista, Devine Darlin and Lexi Tellings, plus DJ Blue Peter, at 11pm. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. [woodystoronto.com](http://woodystoronto.com)

**Kiss of Life** The long-weekend edition of this hidden gem of a dance party, featuring hosts Evan, Kayla and Michael spinning disco, soul, rock and indie dance-pop classics. 9pm. Henhouse, 1532 Dundas St W. No cover. [henhousetoronto.com](http://henhousetoronto.com)

**Twisted! Sunday Service Men's Play Party** A hot, sweaty and wild play party in the bathhouse. 8pm. Steamworks, 540 Church St. Regular rates. [torontoleatherpride.ca](http://torontoleatherpride.ca)

**The Urban Jungle** DJs Blackcat, Pleasure, Nino Brown, Liam Skinner and Sikh Knowledge spin Caribbean, hip hop and dance tracks for the Caribana weekend party, with songstress Jully Black rumoured to take the stage. Army wear, camouflage, black, khaki and white dress code encouraged. 10pm. Fly, 8 Gloucester St. Cover TBA. [flynightclub.com](http://flynightclub.com)

### Mon, Aug 5

**Civic Holiday Barbecue** Burgers, cold beer and hot boys. 3pm. Black Eagle, 457 Church St. No cover. [blackeagletoronto.com](http://blackeagletoronto.com), [torontoleatherpride.ca](http://torontoleatherpride.ca)

### Tues, Aug 6

**Bad Boys' Night Out: Leather Edition** The Mr Woody's/Priape title-holder reunites with the Village pub boys. 6–9pm. Sailor, 467 Church St. No cover. [woodystoronto.com](http://woodystoronto.com), [torontoleatherpride.ca](http://torontoleatherpride.ca)

### Wed, Aug 7

**CLGA 40th Anniversary** Celebrate the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives' 40th anniversary, with snacks, beverages and a special anniversary exhibit. 7–9pm. CLGA, 34 Isabella St. No cover. [clga.ca](http://clga.ca), [torontoleatherpride.ca](http://torontoleatherpride.ca)

**Meat and Greet** An evening social and chat for trans men and their allies. The first and third Wednesday of every month. 6:30–8:30pm. Fabarnak, 519 Church St. No cover. [the519.org](http://the519.org)

**Line Dancing and Toronto Drag Kings Go Leather** Line dancing with Toronto Wranglers at 7pm; special edition of the weekly Toronto Drag Kings' night, with hosts Cameron, Tyler Uptight and Chase Manning, at 11pm. Zipperz/Cellblock, 72 Carlton St. No cover. [torontoleatherpride.ca](http://torontoleatherpride.ca)

**Woody's Got Talent** Miss Conception hosts the Wednesday talent night, with the hump-day winner competing in the grand finale on Sept 18. 10pm. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. [woodystoronto.com](http://woodystoronto.com)

Submit your event listing  
[listings@dailyxtra.com](mailto:listings@dailyxtra.com).  
Deadline for the Aug 8–21 issue  
is Wed, July 31.

# Classifieds

**NEXT BOOKING DEADLINE: WED, JULY 31 @ 1PM**  
To place an ad, call **416-925-6665 xt 0** or book your line classified at **classifieds.toronto@dailyxtra.com**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PROUD LIVES

Commemorate those who have recently passed away. This space is donated by Xtra. Call **416-925-6665 xt 0** for more information. Please limit text to 50 words or less. Ideally, photos will be digital images at 2" x 3" with a resolution of 250dpi.

### IN MEMORIAM

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[www.gayfathers-toronto.com](http://www.gayfathers-toronto.com)



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# XTRA HOT

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NAME: JONATHAN ROSA  
AGE: 28 SIGN: TAURUS

Jonathan is a native Torontonian with big dreams. He spends his time updating his food blog, volunteering for ACT and producing music. "When I'm not buried in one of my many hobbies, you can find me twerking at any inclusive urban event." When it comes to men, Jonathan is looking for a highly motivated, bearded boy with abs of steel and an open mind. "I'm definitely interested in someone's outward appearance, but eventually looks fade, so it's important to find someone with a great heart and strong character."

Instagram: mrjrosa | Facebook: facebook.com/decibeldeviants

Soundcloud: soundcloud.com/decibeldeviants | Blog: porkchoppantry.com

To comment on or become an Xtra Hot guy or gal, email Drasko at [xtrahot@dailyxtra.com](mailto:xtrahot@dailyxtra.com).

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