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Jerry Herszkopf Law

Feature Writers

Melissa MacMullin, Aaron Rothermund

Columnists

Rolyn Chambers, Selena Vyle, Cat Grant, Boyd Kodak, Sherry Sylvain

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Mailing address

205-1691 Pickering Parkway
Pickering, ON L1V 5L9
416.926.9588

IN THIS ISSUE

- 08 **Sandra Bernhard**
– Melissa MacMullin
- 12 **Brendan D'Souza**
– Aaron Rothermund
- 16 **Deep Dish: Anetra vs. the Ballroom Scene** – Rolyn Chambers
- 20 **Wigged Out: Selena Vyle** – Selena Vyle
- 22 **She Beat: Deb Pearce** – Cat Grant
- 24 **A Kodak Moment: DeAnne Smith**
– Boyd Kodak
- 26 **Beyond the Village: Club 3-38**
– Sherry Sylvain
- 30 **BUZZPicks** – Sherry Sylvain



Hello Friends, and Happy Pride!

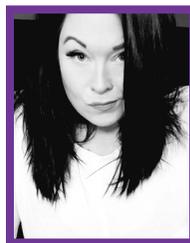
It's that fabulous time of year again – when rainbows reign supreme, the streets fill with love, and glitter is the official dress code. That's right, it's Pride! But before you get the month-long party started, let us take a moment to celebrate and honour our queer community's struggles and triumphs, to express gratitude to those who have fought for equality and acceptance before us, the resilient folks who continue to stand up for what's right today, and the rainbow warriors of tomorrow. Love will always win, and that is something we can all cheer to!

We got none other than the unapologetic, laugh-out-loud spitfire herself, the iconic queer that is **Sandra Bernhard** for our first feature. Serving up her take on the current climate of 2SLGBTQIA+ matters and other relevant political topics in the U.S., what she's been up to since her days as America's first bisexual sitcom character on *Roseanne*, and the "yet to come," our forever fearless Sandra spills all. And if you haven't heard of the self-proclaimed "nationally acknowledged nightmare" non-binary artist, **Brendan D'Souza**, thank us later. Aaron Rothermund touches base with the up-and-coming Canadian comedian and host + producer of Toronto's top comedy podcast, *Shredded: The Post Breakup Podcast*, in our second feature.

Dishing out no-holds-barred realness for *Deep Dish*, Rolyn Chambers, covers the controversy bubbling up with *RuPaul's Drag Race* star, **Anetra**, and the conflict of interest unfolding between her, Pride, and the Ballroom Scene. Whip on a wig and whip off avoiding your personal health and finances with tips from Toronto-based queen, **Selena Vyle**, our spotlight artist for *Wigged Out*. Cat Grant fills us in on the impressive journey thus far of entertainer, **Deb Pearce**, in *She Beat*. It's a Kodak Moment to remember with the hilarious award-winning, **DeAnne Smith**, as Boyd Kodak chats them up on their recent successes and accomplishments to-date. How does a gay club in Kingston, Ontario, sound? Well, having gone 20 years without, Sherry Sylvain tells us about, **Club 3-38**, a newly opened queer space.

Pride is here, we're all queer, now get ready to be BUZZed by our Pride issue – and check out our BUZZpicks for events you won't want to miss!

Mel MacMullin
Editor-in-Chief



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Catching Up with Sandra Bernhard

Forever Our Unapologetic Queen of Edgy Comedy

By Melissa MacMullin

Hold onto your hats and britches, folks! theBUZZ caught up with the one and only, wildly outspoken and admirably so, Sandra Bernhard; the revolutionary comedic legend of stage and screen, known for mixing performance art with activism, her sharp wit and tongue, her fearless attitude, and balls-to-the wall approach on self-expression and standing up for what's right, and for telling what's wrong in this world right where to go – just the way we remember her, just the way we love her, and why would we want her any other way?

Having been in the entertainment industry for about five decades, 68-year-old American actress, singer, comedian and author, openly bisexual [Sandra Bernhard](#), is still going, still unstoppable, still calling it as she sees it, and seeing is believing and worth being brought to light with the help of Bernhard's middle finger. Born on June 6th, 1955, in Flint, Michigan, but raised in Scottsdale, Arizona, Bernhard began her career in the late-70s as a stand-up comedian and quickly gained a reputation for her provocative humour. Her career has withstood the test of time due to her relentless drive to push boundaries as to challenge and wake-up society.

Bernhard had recently returned from hosting Miami Pride in Florida on April 16th when she sat down with theBUZZ. "I think people appreciated hearing from me during this very stressful time, politically. It's important that people stay focused on what needs to get done again. It's a hard time, but I think we'll come out the other side, stronger and more cohesive," shared Bernhard in response to how Florida is under fire for pushing anti-LGBTQ+ bills in outright ignorance towards the community. "There's always something brewing and lurking that could take us back in the wrong direction."

In addition to, there's been anti-drag bills sweeping the U.S. and she's having none of it. "It's theater. It's asinine. Half the people that get involved in particular proclamations enjoy drag, or they're gay themselves. They're lying and they're hiding."



Not to forget the targeted actions towards the transgender community. "There's ebbs and flows with the tide of cultural upheaval. People start focusing on the things that they think are being taken from them, which is completely insane, because nobody's trying to take anything from anybody. We all want to live our lives with autonomy and grace," a passionate Bernhard stated. "They're beautiful people living their lives, in their own community, out in the world working, and it's a damn shame and shocking that people are so threatened and willing to crush others in the name of their own insecurity."

Aside from the current and unfortunate LGBTQ+ climate in select American states, Bernhard who's worked with [GLAAD](#) and the [American Foundation for Aids Research](#), isn't holding back her thoughts on the racial injustice crisis in the U.S. either. "The black community, which to me, is the bedrock of the whole conversation here in America right now, because of racism, and misogyny, and poverty. It is so important that we continue to fight, and we continue to support," Bernhard expressed. Between her relationship with [Paul Mooney](#), the incredible comedic writer who discovered her and brought her on *The Richard Pryor Show*, and with ground-breaking fashion journalist, [Andre Leon Talley](#), it's no wonder why this is hitting her hard, and close to the heart.

If you remember the once-popular sitcom, *Roseanne*, you'll recall Bernhard's unforgettable role as Nancy Bartlett. In 1992, Bernhard made history as the first out and open recurring bisexual character on a U.S. sitcom. "First of all, people were still sort of in the 'eye opening' period of our culture. Every time there was a new character that was gay who got introduced, people were like, oh, it was sort of like a big deal then." Appearing in 33 episodes, Nancy Bartlett's character had been married to a man but started dating women after her divorce. "I think that it opened a lot of people's eyes, and it made people very comfortable with the idea of a gay person or a woman who was strong."

Speaking of strong women, Bernhard has never been one to shy away from women's rights and relevant political issues. Weighing in on what requires immediate focus, Bernhard relayed, "... meaningful gun reform and control, and health care, like women's reproductive rights. If you don't want to have an abortion, if you don't want to control your destiny and how many children you have, feel free. Good luck. For the rest of the women, I'm saying 85 - 90% of the population, get the f**k out of our business and go f**k yourself." A dedicated activist and philanthropist, she has worked with numerous organizations, and has been a vocal supporter of political causes.

In 2018 – 2021, Bernhard played Nurse Judy, who ran the AIDS Ward at Roosevelt Hospital in the FX series, *POSE*. "It was amazing to put all of that emotion into such a great character – and to work alongside all these incredible trans actors." Bernhard forged a tight relationship with actress, **Mikayla J. Rodriguez**. "I'm so proud of the people who back in the day would never have had that opportunity to have the success that they're having now. It came full circle in a beautiful way, and I was so happy to be part of it." Bernhard most recently appeared in another FX series, *American Horror Story: New York City*, the 11th instalment of AHS.

Her hour-long radio show, *Sandyland*, has been on **Andy Cohen's** SiriusXM channel for seven years now. "Over the first couple years, I did it five days a week, and now I'm doing it once a week. I love it, because I can open with a topical monologue and take phone calls from people. I kind of have my finger on the pulse of how people react to what I'm doing." But don't hold your breath on a Sandra Bernhard podcast. "I don't really want to do a podcast. I love the nature of law, anything alive, like a live performance or a radio show because it goes out in the moment. Any time people are listening to you in the moment, it has a bigger impact." The highly-acclaimed, Grace Award-winning radio show, *Sandyland*, is available in Canada.

What does Pride mean to Sandra Bernhard? "Now more than ever, it means really being in the trenches. We have to do the work, and it seems like the working never stops but it's the way it is. When you're chosen in the world to be unique, then it's your responsibility to always stay engaged with other people and lift them up – that's what pride really means to me." Bernhard feels like nothing is behind her, or us, everything is in front. The most rewarding part in life for her is knowing there is so much ahead. "I'm most proud of the fact that people are still excited about me because I'm still excited about the work I'm doing. I can't look back and say how I felt when I was 19 years old, which is how old I was, when I started performing. It's not applicable to who I am now."

Bernhard has been busy writing a new project-to-turn-series for over a year with her friend, **Judy Gold**, who is a comedian, too. "I'm sure she's played up in Canada many times as well, she's gay. We play two cousins, who reunite against the backdrop of a 55+ active adult community in Florida. **Wendy**



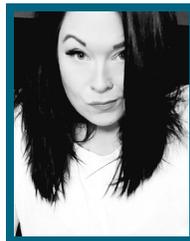
Photo: Brian Ziegler

McLendon-Covey is one of the producers who will also be on it." She also hopes to return to Canada to perform live and to re-connect with her Canadian fans who've supported her career through the years. "I'm trying to get back to Toronto and Montreal. The two years of the pandemic really sort of threw a wrench into the work. I am actively pursuing getting back there. Fingers crossed that will happen sometime within the next six or eight months."

She's had her share of high-profile lovers in the past but has been with partner, **Sara Switzer**, for 24 years. "For me personally, if I can't make somebody laugh, and they can't make me laugh, then it's a deal breaker. Sara's incredibly smart and so damn funny. Like with any relationship, there's ups and downs that you contend with and ride through. It's not always easy but if you find the person you really connect with, you want to make it last and make it work." It may come as a surprise to some, but Bernhard is a homebody. "I like to clean, do laundry, and do dishes. We have a dishwasher but I never use it. I wash my dishes by hand."

Continuing to remain an uber-talented and unfiltered fabulous force not to be f**ked with, tackling controversial topics through her unwavering commitment to speaking her truth, we can only hope Sandra Bernhard will stick around for another 68 or more years to come. "It's the highest compliment knowing that I have been able to break through and be a part of important conversations. I'm going to continue to do what I've always done and do it in any way I can get it out there for people to have access to it."

Melissa MacMullin is a freelance content writer and journalist for leading publications. A strong distinct queer Canadian voice with pride and purpose. Author. Screenwriter. Performer. Part-time adventurer.





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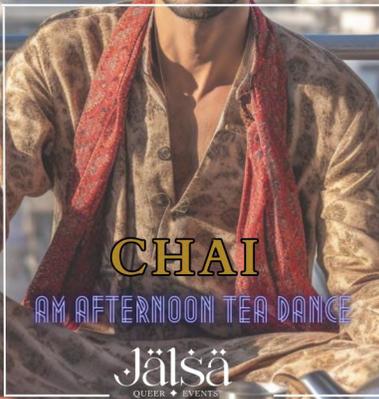
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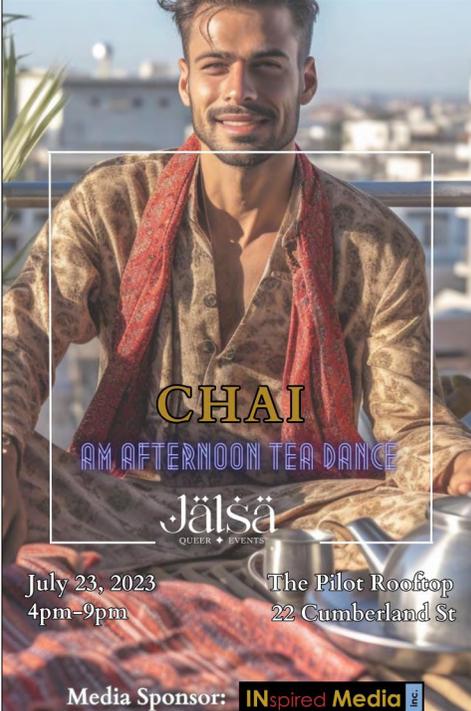
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COMEDIAN BRENDAN D'SOUZA

ON BOUNCING BACK FROM LOVE AND THE PANDEMIC

By Aaron Rothermund

Brendan D'Souza is a non-binary artist (writer, performer, and comedian) based in Toronto. "My stand-up is experience based; everything comes from my lived experience. I'm not good at observational humour. I tell my stories and make them funny," he told *My Gay Toronto* in 2019.

In fact, Brendan gathered so much momentum they were nominated for the I Heart Jokes Award for Newcomer Comic of the Year in 2019. Then in a shocking twist of fate Brendan's romantic relationship abruptly ended on January 1st, 2020, just as an unclassified virus began spreading across the globe.

"I HIGHLY recommend going through a breakup during a pandemic, it's so much easier to deal with it when you have zero social obligations or external stimuli," Brendan explains. "The most important things you need in a breakup are time and space, and a global lockdown provides you with a bounty of both. I regret taking those for granted at the time, but in hindsight I'm glad both my ex and I had forced exile to grow on our own."

At first Brendan was devastated, and they self-medicated in a way that they now consider to be harmful. "I put my poor therapist through the ringer there for a bit," Brendan admits. "But I definitely learned a lot about how to live by myself and negate self-destructive tendencies."

After having some time earmarked for debauchery, Brendan decided to capitalize on their traumatic experiences by writing comedic essays for **CBC Arts** and keeping activated with other like-minded individuals in virtual spaces.

"Every comic I know has either talked about live streaming their stand-up or already done it. More than anything else, watching my peers adjust to this new normal has been the most calming element of this whole thing for me," Brendan D'Souza writes in the **CBC Arts** series, *Pandemic Diaries* in 2020.

Brendan found creative rejuvenation in the process of producing the highly regarded *Shredded: The Post Breakup Podcast*. "One of the fundamental goals of my work is to give language for difficult concepts. So, while going through this breakup, having a podcast where I was regularly discussing the experience, and sharing stories with people who'd gone through similar things was incredibly cathartic," Brendan writes. "The podcast *did* start as a way for me to process

my breakup, but it very quickly became a way for me to just hang out with friends I hadn't seen in months because of the pandemic. It made me feel connected to the community again, and then the feedback I would get from listeners who said it had helped them deal with their own grief was mind blowing."

Although Brendan considers themselves a narcissist, they're not blindly accepting praise. "I'm just walking through the doors that were opened for me by other marginalized artists before me, and trying to hold them open for whoever comes next. I don't consider myself any more vital than anyone who would come before, with, or after me, we're all just links in a chain," Brendan tells me. "I guess I also don't really see self-deprecation and positive representation as a dichotomy that needs to be balanced. Self-deprecation has always been a part of who I am and my sense of humour. It's a defense mechanism against any voices who would disparage what I do, a reclamation of language that's been used to define me in the past, and a hyperbolic descriptor of what I do to the point where it loses its meaning. I don't think it has anything to do with judgmental voices if it's about me reclaiming my narrative on my own terms."

In their essays for **CBC Arts**, Brendan speaks to having "stuck home syndrome," but since the pandemic ended, their re-entry anxiety has gratefully faded away. In response to their level of stage-fright, Brendan says, "OH, it is GONE baby. Stage fright? Never heard of her. Alexa, play *The Bitch Is Back* by Elton John, covered by Tina Turner." Then they add, "I just don't care anymore, lol. I'm not getting on a stage to prove anything to anyone, I'm getting on stage to have fun and try to make sure the audience has a good time as well. If they want to come along on that trip isn't up to me, I'm not making it my problem to worry about anymore."

The live performance sector faced many challenges and overcame dire odds during the pandemic, but although we have lost some performance companies and venues Brendan believes others have sprung up to make up for the deficit. "The Monday open mic at the Ossington was a really special space that was such a community hub and it really blows that that's gone," Brendan contemplates. "I think Nothing Fancy in Kensington Market fills (and improves!) that void so it's neat to have a space like that. I think I mentioned in one of the essays about how anxious I felt about venues closing, but Toronto comedians have yet to find a bar basement that they can't set up a karaoke mic and spotlight at, so I think we're going to be just fine."

Since coming out as non-binary on camera during the filming of *The New Wave of Stand-up (CBC Gem)*, Brendan feels encouraged that "audiences are more open to new perspectives now." After three years of a slower pace, Brendan feels they have been able to refocus on personal goals and have developed broader skills in listening and responding in a more present way.



Photo: Howard Gordon

"I've always written about myself and my identity in whatever shape that took," Brendan writes. "I think the past year has really galvanized my style and made me more aware of the techniques I use when crafting a joke, so I feel like my writing is more focused than before. If anything, I would say that my focus has shifted away from downplaying my identity for an easy laugh and towards celebrating it and inviting the audience in to share that experience."

In the future, Brendan wishes to focus less stage time on their gender and sexuality spectrums and engage their audiences on various topics filtered through their personal experiences. "I'm in the process of transitioning (pun not intended) away from material that's focused solely on my identity," Brendan explains. "I love writing about my gender and sexuality, but I also think I (and the culture) have grown past the need for queer artists to be constantly introducing themselves in their art. I don't want to be a 'Queer Comedian', I want to be a comedian who is queer, and I want to talk about how my identity informs my opinions and experiences instead of exclusively explaining myself. For someone who spent so much of their early career explaining their identity, I never did say all that much about myself. I'm excited to find out what I have to say underneath the labels."

Brendan's debut comedy album, *Brendan D'Souza: Clever, Hip, and Scary* was released the first week of May 2023. "It was the scariest thing I've ever done and I'm really proud of it," Brendan shares. As for the future, Brendan says, "there's other stuff I'm not legally allowed to talk about yet, but it's on its way! Also, I'll be around and performing if you wanna come check me out and tell me how much my podcast meant to you in person, or how you wish I was single because I'm hot and funny and talented and worthy of love."

Check out Brendan on season two of *1 Queen 5 Queers* on *Crave*, or *The New Wave of Stand-up* on CBC Gem— and you can follow them on Instagram and Twitter @dasouzie.

Aaron Rothermund is a freelance writer, theatre creator, and filmmaker. Aaron has worked on articles for The Courier, Culture Days, theBUZZ, and PinkPlayMags.



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Duck Walking Off the Edge: The Controversy of Anetra vs. the Ballroom Scene



Pride is a protest, a party, and sometimes, for some, a problem. While Pride Toronto seems to be going big this year by bringing in some of the biggest and best to this year's festival (a roster of talent, the queers in the city haven't seen since World Pride), some locals are feeling less than impressed. While almost 96% of the talent booked for the festival are local drag artists, DJs, dancers and artists, it is that 4% that seem to be rubbing some people the wrong way with artists like Sugar & Spice, Plastique Tiara, Trinity K Bonet, Sasha Colby, Black Peppa, Jimbo, plus singers such as Lights, Nadia Batson, Rêve, Pamputtae, Saucy Santana and Fefe Dobson, the big names dominate.

One performer in particular though, has drawn the ire and the shade of Toronto's Ballroom scene. Duck-walking, nogueing drag queen, [Anetra](#), who rose to fame in the 12th season of *RuPaul's Drag Race* has come under much scrutiny, and so has Pride Toronto for booking her.

"Anetra performing at Pride is problematic as she openly and actively profits off of Ballroom without being a part of the culture," says a representative for [Function10](#), a Toronto-based group devoted to Ballroom culture. "During the Reunion episode, after RuPaul brought up that Ballroom folks were calling her out on her 'nogueing' (not to be confused with Virgin Vogue where new folks in the scene are learning the art) — Anetra described her style of dance as 'voguish'."

The main point of contention, however, seems to be the amount of money Anetra has capitalized off her "Duck Walk" style and her merchandise.

"Black and brown folks have been bleeding on the runway for decades, but they were never granted the opportunity because people did not want to see them. And here comes Anetra appropriating vogue."

But Anetra is also Black, you may be thinking. She apparently isn't Ballroom Black.

"While others have been working within their community, culture, and houses on their talent, this girl has just swooped in and is getting all the queers excited about 'walking that duck'. It's a poor rendition of the duck walk and a poor rendition of vogue. She did not actively participate in or contribute to it, yet she is reaping all the benefits from it."

But the drag community, as a whole, uses this style of dance all the time you may be thinking.

"And every time it's done, we cringe. Baby that's not yours to do. You didn't put in the time, the effort, the love into it to be doing that. You never learned the language because you never cared to, you never cared to learn where it came from."

But the Toronto Ballroom scene is being represented at Pride Toronto this year. Or at least they were invited to.

"Pride Toronto asked me to judge, and I brought up the fact that Anetra was on the main stage right after. In Pride Toronto's mind it would be a great opportunity to get all the (new) eyes and spectators because of the big names that would follow. But the reality is, the only reason Anetra has a platform is because of Ballroom. Pride Toronto has it twisted. We don't need Anetra to bring glory to us because we already brought glory to Anetra through her stealing elements of vogue."

Who knows what will happen at Pride Toronto's Drag Ball. Will Anetra bring it, or will a battle unfold come June 24th?

Jamaican born Rolyn Chambers grew up in the suburbs of Mississauga, before attending *Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD)*. In 2001, he began his *Deep Dish* column with *fab Magazine*, which ran for a full decade, allowing him to interview everyone from clubbers and promoters, to celebrities and politicians. *Deep Dish* has now been resurrected once again here in theBUZZ. Chambers is also the author of, *The Boy Who Brought Down A Bathhouse*, self-published by himself via YumEee! Communications. IG @rahhrolyn



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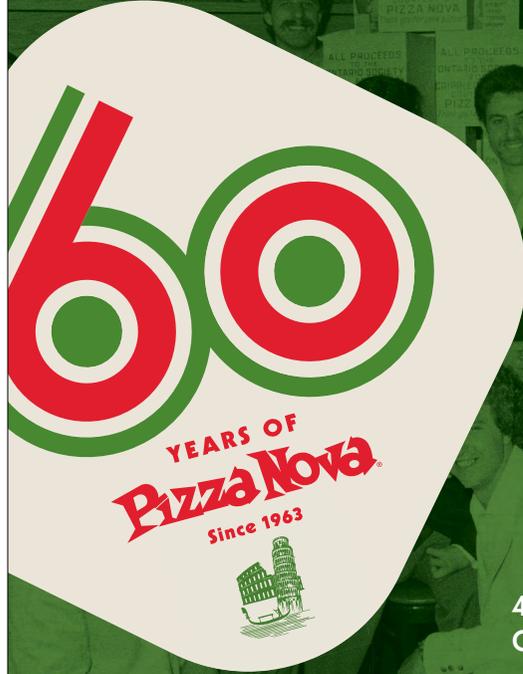
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WIGGED OUT

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BY SELENA VYLE

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I found out the minimum I need to have and stay above in my chequing account to waive all fees.

Small Goal 2: Have more money in savings than I have in debt

This is a hard one, and I walk the line every day by putting all of my drag tips toward it.

Big Goal 1: Pay off my debt

This will take me a few years.

Big Goal 2: Save upwards of \$100,000

This will take me even longer, but I'm blessed to be in demand enough to not have to take low-paying gigs at bars that delay payment.

I started to make appointments with specialists to take care of my health, too.

It took 3 years, but I've been diagnosed with Generalized Hypermobility Spectrum Disorder. Now I have OHIP-covered access to pain management treatments like physio and mental health therapy.

I've also discovered I'm a candidate for hearing aids, and the longer I delay that, the risk of dementia increases. Finding this out makes me happy I took charge of my health at the young age of 40-something (which IS young) and caught this when I did.

If I could give one piece of advice to young artists, it's to take care of your finances and health TODAY, because who will be taking care of you tomorrow?

Selena Vyle is Toronto's Lebanese-Mexican bearded cabaret camp vamp! Co-host of the Canadian Podcast Award winning *Squirrel Talk Podcast*, co-writer of the Canadian Comedy Award winning *A Sketch Comedy Extravaganza Eleganza*, and voice of Rosa Mel Paquete in Ubisoft's *Far Cry 6*. See her in the upcoming film, *Queen Tut*.



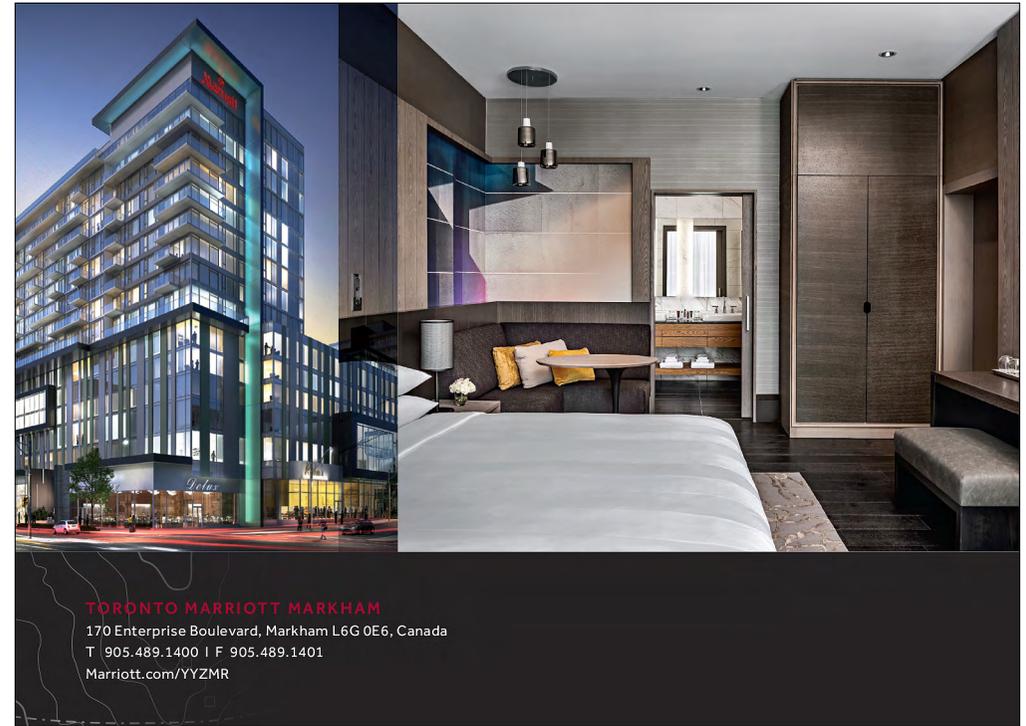
Whenever someone comes to my Sunday Brunch at [Glad Day Bookshop](#) to celebrate a birthday, and they're under 25, I ask if they're one of those young people who's afraid of aging. The answer is always "yes."

At 25 you still have 3 quarters of your life left to live. I personally spent my 20s aimlessly pursuing musical theatre, my 30s falling in love and making a name for myself in the sketch and improv comedy scene, and my 40s hitting career highs in drag and growing up.

I started doing drag at 37 and quickly realized it's an expensive art form and very hard on the body. Dancing in heels 6 nights a week takes a physical toll. I've been experiencing chronic pain for years but did a good job of ignoring that, and my finances.

Career drag artists are not provided with insurance, or a pension.

As I was about to turn 40, my father was being put into a home. He lives with Parkinson's and dementia, which have rapidly taken him from being an active man to bedridden. I



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Deb Pearce



Proving the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, it's no surprise that entertainer **Deb Pearce**'s parents were funny and musical. Born in London and raised in Peterborough, Deb, inspired by her father's work ethic, followed him into public speaking undertakings and enrolled in public speaking contests. "I won all but one contest. I remember one of my trophies being a lamp with a trophy within it."

While a winner with her personality and talent, Deb lost every job she had in Peterborough due to homophobia. "It was NEVER verbalized to me that I lost my job because I was suspected of being queer." Moving to Toronto at 19 presented the same challenge at first. Deb credits these experiences for her dedication to advocacy for 2SLGBTQIA people.

It was at a house party thrown by friends Joy and Rose where Deb was introduced to the idea of a drag king troupe. "That is when 'Man Murray' was born. Our first gig was at El Convento Rico." At one point Deb wanted to be a marine biologist. "I'm obsessed with sharks and their preservation." But instead of oceans she ended up on many stages, from the Maury Povich show to joining Cyndi Lauper at UNITY.

Deb took classes at Second City – a birthday gift from her partner and family. "It was an incredible experience and really helped boost my confidence in speaking to groups and sharpening my skills at thinking on my feet." Did you know Deb was sporty too? "I used to be a competitive synchronized swimmer and competitive tennis player that was ranked with the OTA."

Deb has emceed many events, performed in the band Mamma Jamma, worked in television and radio, including *foQus* on *Rogers, Bump!* travel show on OUTtv, 103.9 Proud FM and

92.5 JACK FM. She was even an occasional co-host for *Windy City Queercast* with Amy Matheny. "Shows like *Gays Got Talent* and *Gay Idol*. One of them featured a new up and coming artist that we were playing on Proud FM at the time, Lady Gaga!"

Mom to 11-year-old Jack, Deb allows him the freedom to ask questions and be whatever he chooses in life. "That helps me to see the world through the innocence of someone that has not been touched by some of the negative aspects of being an adult in an often cruel and harsh world." Deb also sits on boards for sporting organizations as their DEI director and is vice chair of the 2SLGBTQIA Advisory Committee of St. Catharines.

Her advice for young queer artists is to listen and learn. "Don't do it for clicks and likes and followers. Do it because you feel like you have to. Do it because you have a perspective to share with the world." Deb will be the emcee at Hieeee Tea for [Pride Niagara](#) in early June and once again hosting the Dyke Stage post-Dyke March during [Toronto Pride](#).

Cat Grant (OCAD) is a multidisciplinary artist. Starting her career in dance and music, painting and photography are her main focus now. As a published poet, Cat is also the Executive Director for *The Toronto Women's Arts Festival*.

[Facebook @grantedarts](#)



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A KODAK MOMENT

DeAnne Smith

BY BOYD KODAK

Photo by Jenni Walkowiak



DeAnne Smith - Setting up a home base in New York, recording an album, working on my newest solo show, drinking coffee from Portland to Melbourne, and cultivating enough hope and delusion to keep pushing through these chaotic and apocalyptic times.

BK - That's a lot of terrific accomplishment! During that time, which was the most exciting event for you?

DS - There's a person I'm in love with that I got to kiss a lot this past year. Oh wait, do you mean career-wise?

BK - Haha, that sounds like fun. What are you looking forward to next year?

DS - Taping my solo show, continued kissing, and the collapse of capitalism.

BK - Good plan. Where can we see your work?

DS - Netflix, baby! I have a half hour I'm very proud of in the *Comedians of the World* series, taped in 2018. And guess what? It was ahead of its time! Also, just all over the internet if you're handy at Google. Oh! And you can watch "[The DeAnne Smith Experience](#)" on Crave; it's a show about relationships taped in front of an audience that included four of my exes.

BK - That's great! Future plans?

DS - I have ADHD. I'm living life one quarter mile at a time. My watch has no hands and just says the word "Now." What is this "future" you speak of?

BK - Any message you would like to put out there?

DS - Live comedy is good for your soul. Go to a show!

BK - Will do, they say laughter is the best medicine. Finish the following sentence for us, "the last thing I do before I go to sleep is ..."

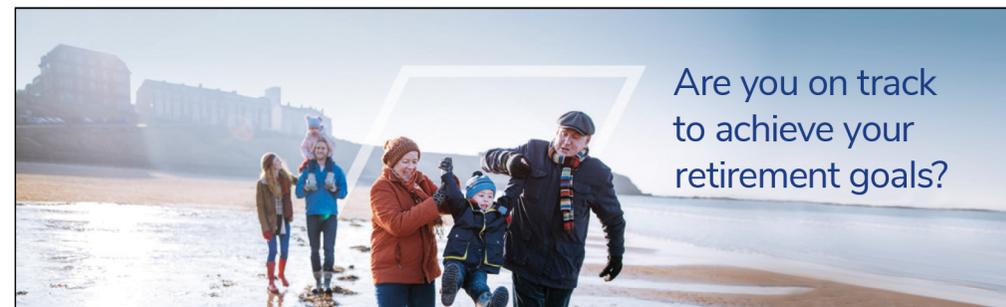
DS - I sleep like it's an extreme sport. I put in my mouthguard. I put in my earplugs. I cover my face with a t-shirt. I've got my sleep support dog snuggled in next to me. But the very last thing I do before I go to sleep is to review all the mistakes I've ever made in my life, one at a time. THAT'S GOOD AND NORMAL, RIGHT?!

Boyd Kodak is an award-winning trans activist, musician, writer, filmmaker, curator, and festival/entertainment director.



DeAnne Smith, a Canadian Comedy Award winner, has performed at comedy festivals around the world, from Just for Laughs to the Iceland Comedy Festival. Their television credits include Last Comic Standing and The Late Late Show in the U.S., as well as appearances on CBC, ABC, and BBC. Their video "*Straight Men Step Your Game Up*" has over 48 million views. You can find their critically-acclaimed half-hour comedy special, *Gentleman Elf*, on Netflix. On June 9th, they headlined the *Gay AF Comedy Pride-A-Palooza* at [Buddies in Bad Times Theatre](#).

Boyd Kodak - What have you been doing over the last year?



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CLUB 3-38

CLUB
3-38

for handicap accessibility, and accessibility for the washrooms is currently being addressed.

The bar is currently open as follows:

Wednesdays, 3:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.; Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 3:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.; Sundays 3:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. Hours may be adjusted to meet demand.

The kitchen is currently serving until 11:00 p.m., when the bar is open. They offer a selection of appetizers, charcuterie, and snacks. The bar, at least for the summer season, will have special frozen drinks and slushies.

Club 3-38 will offer a variety of drag shows mixed with a smattering of burlesque, and live music — there is a dance floor, with DJs focusing primarily on pop and dance music. As a new venue, the show schedule is still to be solidified. A cover charge will only be in effect for special events, otherwise entry is free.

Jamie/Bekka, who has a long history of community support and fundraising in Toronto, advises that their intention is to support all things 2SLGBTQIA+. While serving as Empress XXXIII of Toronto, from October 2019 through to October 2020, Bekka Blake showed a commitment to community support and fundraising, having donated a year of their life to such activities. Jamie/Bekka also indicated there will be special attention to fundraising and support for [Trellis HIV and Community Care](#) (formerly HARS), which provides stigma-free HIV/AIDS education, harm reduction, and support services across Kingston and Southeastern Ontario.

They take great pride in having this opportunity to create a Queer space in their hometown. If you're in Kingston, looking for a space where you, as a member of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community will feel safe, welcomed, and supported, check out Club 3-38 for friendship, community, entertainment, cold drinks, and good food.

338 Princess St., Kingston, Ontario

Check out Club 3-38's Instagram [here!](#)

Events Editor, Sherry Sylvain is a transgender woman who has been working in the LGBTQ+ community for too many years to count (or admit to).



There's something new and exciting in Kingston, Ontario. After 20 years without a gay bar, the landscape is changing. Kingston native, **Jamie Meeks**, a.k.a. **Bekka Blake**, a well-known Toronto drag artist and former Empress of [The Imperial Court of Toronto](#), has moved home and is opening **Club 3-38**, a new venue with a bar, kitchen, dance floor, and entertainment; the first and only gay bar in Kingston for 2 decades. Opened on June 1, 2023, Club 3-38 promises something enticing and exciting for this university city — appropriately, home to Queen's University.

Located in the heart of historic downtown Kingston, on the south side of Princess St. between Clergy St. and Barrie St., with ample parking at the rear entrance off Brock St, and close to transit routes. They're surrounded by many businesses flying Pride flags, giving the neighbourhood a feeling of support to 2SLGBTQIA+ community members. Jamie/Bekka states the welcoming neighbourhood and surrounding businesses make them feel safe. There is a small ramp at the front door

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LOCAL PICKS

Access Me

June 16 to June 24

A queer disability sex-positive performance – provocative, intimate, and hot. A fun, sexy, and all-access exploration of the lived experience of three queer disabled men.

Aki Studio, 585 Dundas St. E., Toronto
www.nativeearth.ca/akistudio/access-me/

Green Space Festival 2023

June 21 to June 25

The best alfresco parties of the summer are back with enticing music, queer performances, delicious food and drinks, and a whole lot of love. An exceptional lineup of world-class DJs, legendary music producers, extraordinary performers, drag royalty and more awaits. Free and all ages.

Barbara Hall Park, 519 Church St., Toronto
greenspaceto.org

Tkaronto Music Festival 2023

June 21 to June 24

Canada's premiere Indigenous Music Festival, founded with one goal: putting Indigenous Music on the main stage. Join in celebration of National Indigenous People's Day, and stay the weekend for a star-studded lineup of Indigenous Talent.

Stackt Marketplace, 28 Bathurst St., Toronto
tkmf.ca/

Uptown Pride Art Exhibition

June 21 to June 27

A contemporary juried art exhibition by outstanding artists from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. This exhibit showcases diverse artists from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and features different approaches to contemporary art.

Dignam Gallery, 23 Prince Arthur Ave., Toronto
www.pridetoronto.com

Big Love

June 23 and June 24

With hard-hitting, underground DJs who know their way around the 1s & 2s, this is the spot for you. Good energy, hard thumping music that will keep you dancing until late into the night. Plus, global drag superstar DJ Kitty Glitter.

OLG Central Stage, 512 Church St., Toronto
www.pridetoronto.com

Wood Street Block Party

June 23 to June 24

Join thousands of fellow celebrants to dance in the streets and enjoy the best 2SLGBTQIA+ DJs in the city. This iconic event has become a staple of Pride in Toronto, offering non-stop music, fun, and good vibes all weekend long.

South DJ Riser, Church St. and Wood St., Toronto
www.pridetoronto.com

Sober Oasis

June 23 to June 25

A safe space for the sober community to celebrate Pride, and an opportunity for others to learn more about who they are and what they do. Various sobriety support meetings, drag performances and dancing.

Paul Kane House Parkette, 58 Wellesley St. E., Toronto
www.pridetoronto.com

TD Toronto Jazz Fest

June 23 to July 2

Each year the festival is proud to present 2SLGBTQIA+ artists on stage – this year Begonia headlines the TD Main Stage, while other 2SLGBTQIA+ artists and allies include Haviah Mighty, Ashanti, Gavin Hope, July Black, Maya Killtron and Phoenix Pagliacci.

OLG Grove, Victoria College Quad, 73 Queens Park Cres., Toronto
torontojazz.com



Trans Pride Rally, March, After Party

June 23; 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Join in celebrating the resilience, strength, and beauty of the Trans community at the largest Trans March in the world! This event is a powerful and important space for Trans individuals to gather and celebrate their identities while also raising awareness and fighting for Trans human rights. The march begins at Hayden and Church.

Garden Stage, 241 Church St., Toronto
www.pridetoronto.com

Opening Night: Wake 'Em Up

June 23; 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

A night of high-energy dance performances featuring some of the best 2SLGBTQIA+ performers in the country, and live musical performances.

TD Main Stage, 100 Queen St. W., Toronto
www.pridetoronto.com

Fetish Pride

June 23; 10:00 p.m.

Whatever your fetish, grab your gear and come get your kink on at Pitbull – Fetish Pride as they celebrate everything kinky with DJ TDon. All fetishes welcome, full coat check available.

The Opera House, 735 Queen St. E., Toronto
www.pitbullevents.com/products/pitbull-pride-fetish-life



Family Pride

June 24 and June 25

Now in its 24th year, Family Pride is a fun-filled oasis on the grounds of Church Street School, filled with face painting, a magic show, storytelling, and so much more. Adults must be accompanied by a child.

Church Street Public School, 83 Alexander St., Toronto
www.pridetoronto.com

Trans Formations Summit on Trans Spiritualities

June 24; Noon to 5:00 p.m.

Join for an afternoon summit created by/for 2S, Trans and Gender Expansive folks to explore the intersections of gender and spirituality. Open to people of any and all spiritual paths. The event will conclude with an open-air concert at 4:00 pm, headlined by award-winning, nonbinary Canadian musician, Rae Spoon.

Trinity-St. Paul's Church, 427 Bloor St. W., Toronto
www.eventbrite.com/e/transformations-a-summit-on-trans-spiritualities-tickets-601815766157

Pup Your Pride

June 24; from noon

Celebrate Pride with Dogfather & Co and Miss Pickles the Pug. Browse their tables of Pride swag and enjoy doggy ice cream from Barker & Snouts. Enter the giveaways to win prizes for your pup. Meet and greet with the animal chiropractor, David Feldman. Then join them in a parade down to the festivities at Church.

Ramsden Park Dog Park, Yonge St. and Ramsden Park Rd., Toronto
dogfatherandco.com





By Sherry Sylvain

Dyke Pride Rally, March, After Party

June 24; 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

At the intersection of Hayden St. and Church St., enjoy speakers, performances and sign-making that really get you in the mood for a rally. At 2:00 p.m. march, loud and proud, through the streets of Toronto. At the end of the Dyke March, continue celebrating the Dyke and Lesbian communities with the After Party and Community Fair at the Garden Stage. Hayden and Church, and 241 Church St., Toronto www.pridetoronto.com

Drag Ball

June 24; 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Experience the most extravagant and unforgettable drag event ever to hit the Pride Toronto stage! Featuring an incredible lineup of Toronto drag icons and special guests such as Sasha Colby, Anetra, Jimbo, Landon Cider, Icesis Couture, Gisèle Lullaby, Jada Shada Hudson, Pythia, Miss Fiercalicious, Kimmy Couture, Scarlett Bobo, Weebee, HercuSleaze, and more. TD Main Stage, 100 Queen St. W., Toronto www.pridetoronto.com



ROM After Dark Pride

June 30; 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

ROM After Dark (RAD) is the exciting 19+ themed after-hours monthly event series that allows you to explore the Museum in a whole new way. ROM After Dark channels an experiential energy, featuring curated music, visual arts, pop-up performances, and distinctive food and drink, designed for adults looking for a fun, art-driven night out. Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto www.rom.on.ca/en



TICOT Drag Bingo

July 9; 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Join TICOT for an afternoon of fun and friendship. Proceeds go to the Reign 36 Charities of Choice - Rainbow Railroad and The Toronto PWA Food Essentials Market. Flash On Church, 463 Church St., Toronto www.theimperialcourtoftoronto.com



Two-Spirit + Indigenous Pride

June 25; Fair: 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm; Performances: 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Join Two-Spirited People of the 1st Nations and Pride Toronto after the Parade for a Two-Spirit and Indigenous community gathering at the Garden Stage. They're featuring activities such as a beading circle, a sacred fire for community members, a Two-Spirit artists market, and performances throughout the late afternoon into the evening. Garden Stage, 241 Church St., Toronto www.pridetoronto.com

Scène Francophone

June 25; 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Viens danser et célébrer la Saint Jean-Baptiste avec les performances d'artistes francophones 2SLGBTQI+ sur la Scène sud du festival! Come dance and celebrate Saint Jean-Baptiste with performances by French-speaking 2SLGBTQI+ artists on the South Stage of the festival! South Stage, 322 Church St., Toronto www.pridetoronto.com

ROAD TRIPS

2023 Pride Street Festival

June 1 to June 29

Pride 2023 will feature events spread across the entire month for the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and its Allies to come together and celebrate, reflect, and advance issues of importance and acceptance. This year will feature the very popular Pride Street Festival, returning to Red River Road for one more year on June 17th.

Various venues in Thunder Bay www.thunderpride.ca

Pride in Nature

Through June 30

A series of family-friendly, nature-based events celebrating the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Halton and the surrounding areas. All are welcome, including members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, friends, families and allies.

Various venues www.pridetoronto.com

OH HAYYYYYY! Drag Show

June 10, 17, 24, July 1, 8, 22, August 5, 19, 26; 6:30 p.m.

Shout out HAAAAAYYYY as talented drag performers slay the stage with sickening looks, fierce lip-syncs, and shady comments on the mic. A changing array of performers.

The Hayloft Dancehall, 344 Salmon Point Rd., Cherry Valley www.thehayloftdancehall.com



Jann Arden

June 24; 7:30 p.m.

Jann Arden is a Canadian singer-songwriter, author and actress. She is famous for her signature ballads, "Could I Be Your Girl" and "Insensitive".

Pickering Casino Resort, 888 Durham Live Avenue, Pickering www.ticketmaster.ca/jann-arden-pickering-ontario-06-24-2023/event/10005E8CDCB537B9



JINKX MONSOON: EVERYTHING AT STAKE 18+

June 24; 8:00 p.m.

The Witch of all Witches is ready to cast her next great spell! Two-time RuPaul's Drag Race winner and Broadway breakout star, Jinkx Monsoon, presents her biggest concert tour to date with "Everything at Stake."

Centre In The Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener centreinthesquare.com



Scott Bradlee's Postmodern Jukebox - Life In The Past Lane Tour

June 25; 7:00 p.m.

Times change and trends come and go, but—like a 1961 Jaguar XK-E—the classic sounds of the past only appreciate with age. Postmodern Jukebox's Life In The Past Lane Concert Tour is a celebration of the greatest 20th century musical genres, fused with the recognizable hits of our own modern era, for the perfect patina of "vintage" and "modern."

Centre In The Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener centreinthesquare.com





Tynomi Banks LIVE

July 14; 7:30 p.m.

It's a drag and dance party extravaganza! Tynomi Banks (Canada's Drag Race Season 1) and an incredible support cast perform live at The Hayloft Dancehall - sickening drag performances and booty shaking tunes all night long.

The Hayloft Dancehall, 344 Salmon Point Rd., Cherry Valley
www.eventbrite.ca/e/tynomi-banks-live-at-the-hayloft-drag-dance-party-extravaganza-tickets-618624651987



Tina - Simply the Best

July 14; 8:00 p.m.

Get the electrifying concert experience of Tina Turner with this full stage production brimming with Tina hits from the 60s, 70s, 80s & 90s. Featuring the powerful, raspy vocals and thrilling stage presence of Caroline Borole live on stage, complete with band, brass section, backing vocalists and dancers to make this the definitive tribute, and a fabulous fun night out.

Pickering Casino Resort, 888 Durham Live Avenue, Pickering
www.ticketmaster.ca/tina-simply-the-best-pickering-ontario-07-14-2023/event/10005E6D00AD6753



BLUE BALLZ BEACH PARTY 2023

July 22; from 9:00 p.m.

Join for another beach party! Gates open at 9:00 p.m. You must bring ID as this is a 19+ event. No refunds, the event goes rain or shine. Advance Tickets are \$20, or \$30 at the gate.

Shabogesic Beach, North Bay
checkout.square.site/buy/SS7FX6PTZVLP36UKC2STN6LJ



Donny Osmond

July 22, 9:00 p.m.

Osmond is an American singer, dancer, actor, television host and former teen idol. Originally performing with his older brothers, he became a solo artist, and also performed with his sister, Marie Osmond, with whom he co-hosted the "Donny and Marie" show on television from 1976 - 1979.

Fallsview Casino, 6380 Fallsview Blvd., Niagara Falls
www.ticketmaster.ca/donny-osmond-niagara-falls-ontario-07-22-2023/event/10005E8EEF764950

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