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RANDY HARRISON

Life's a Cabaret

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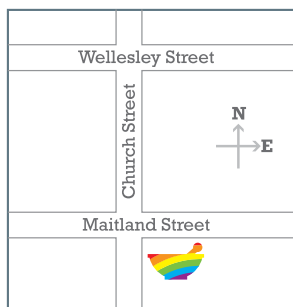
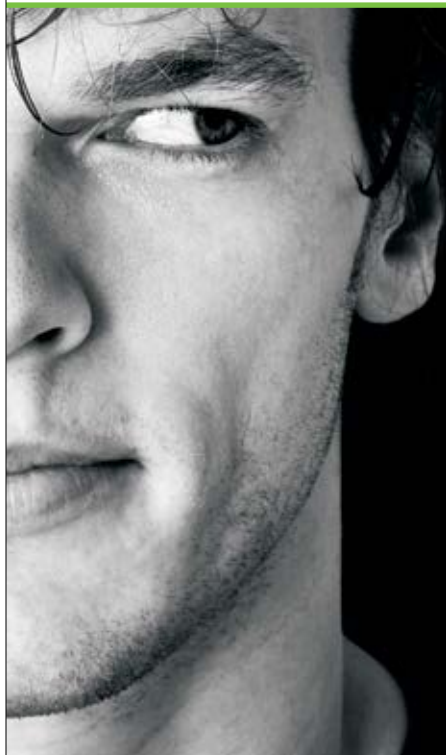
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The Editor

Greetings and salutations!

Well I have to say that despite all that's happening out there in the real world, we still have more good than bad. So I'm happy to be able to bring you what I think is one of the best issues of theBUZZ to date. Inside we showcase a wide array of talented individuals, who are all doing great things!

On the cover we have Randy Harrison, who's currently performing in the lead role of Roundabout Theater's touring production of Cabaret, playing at the Princess of Wales Theatre a limited engagement from February 14 to 19. Although the production continues into the summer, Harrison chose Toronto to end his performance run, which has had him on the road steadily for the past year. Our second feature has Daniela Costa catching up with Donna Deitch, the director behind the ground-breaking lesbian film, Desert Hearts. Deitch is currently working on a sequel, along with a couple other film projects.

Our Wigged Out column is written by local drag doll, Barbie Jo Bontemps, who looks at the trials and tribulations of drag queens dating. Cat Grant had the opportunity to chat with Canadian actor/singer Kate Campbell (Gone Girl), who has recently written a screenplay, started her own production company, released a jazz CD, and is taking flight lessons to become a pilot! Paul Bellini spoke with Studio 180 Theatre director Joel Greenberg, who is presenting the upcoming production of My Night With Reg, playing at the Panasonic Theatre Feb 10 to 26.

Boyd Kodak interviews trans photographer, Dale M Reid, who has shown her work at art exhibitions around the world. Toronto will have opportunities to see her work at both the Artist Project Contemporary Art Fair, and the Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival. Our Beyond The Village spotlight is again written by Raymond Helkio, who gives us the scoop on Toronto's duplex of fun, 120 Diner/Club 120. As always, our back end is reserved for our fab selection of BUZZPICKS, listing events in the city and beyond, all lovingly compiled by our Events Editor, Sherry Sylvain.

Thanks for picking us up. Enjoy the read!

Bryen Dunn
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RANDY HARRISON

Life is a Cabaret

By Bryen Dunn

The Emcee of Berlin's Kit Kat Klub is a leering, ghoulish, flamboyant character, one that actor Randy Harrison plays with passion in the current production of *Cabaret*, on stage for a limited run in Toronto, February 14th to 19th, 2017.

Fans of the American version of *Queer As Folk* will likely recognize Harrison, who played Justin on the groundbreaking drama series that aired on Showcase here in Canada from 2000 to 2005. Now he's back, and ready to take control.

For those few that may not have heard of *Cabaret*, it's a musical based on the 1939 partially-autobiographical novel, *Goodbye to Berlin*, written by queer author Christopher Isherwood. Set in 1931 Berlin, as the Nazi Party is rising to power, the story takes place primarily at the underground Kit Kat Klub, where artists and elitists jovially mingle side-by-side. The plot revolves around visiting American writer Cliff Bradshaw who is in Berlin to write a novel, and his relationship with the much younger English cabaret performer, Sally Bowles.

Cabaret first premiered on Broadway in 1966 and won eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical, followed thereafter by a staging in London. A film was later made in 1972, directed by Bob Fosse, and introducing international audiences to the singing sensation Liza Minelli, who won an Academy Award for Best Actress. This current remount is produced by Roundabout Theatre Company, as part of the 50th anniversary programming schedule. This is the company's second staging after their original production opened on Broadway back in 1998, where it played for six years, and garnered four Tony Awards.

So why has this story stood up to the test of time, nearly eight decades after it was written? Harrison feels the political angst that underlies the whole story is what keeps it relevant. "It's politically, socially, and artistically as relevant today, as it was when the story was written", he states. "It's less a period piece than it is a political reflection on fascism, and how that was allowed to happen back then, which in some ways is what is happening again right now here in the United States. There's a lot of scapegoating going on."

"If you're not against all this, then you're for it, or might as well be."

~ Harrison's favourite line from *Cabaret* ~



Harrison was well aware of the story before taking on his role. He actually saw the original Roundabout production a few times, and watched the film version as well. The original Emcee role was played by Alan Cumming, who Harrison admits he greatly admires. He also stated that being in a touring production that relocates to a different city every week is quite exhausting. "I'm more of a homebody, so it does get tiring sometimes. However, it's a great opportunity to see different parts of the country", he admitted.

As Emcee, one of his key responsibilities is to fully interact with the audience, to rope them in if he finds they're losing interest, or to play with them further if they're enjoying themselves. "A large part of my role is improvised based on audience reactions, and I often adapt my dialogue to fit with where we are at that night", he explains. Sometimes he even ends up in the audience, carousing and dancing.

Another rush about playing the Emcee role is that he is able manipulate the audience, and turn what is essentially a tragedy, into satire. It allows him to have the confidence to own that space for a couple hours. "On stage I'm playing the Emcee 100%, but I also get to be myself 100% as well. I behave in ways I might not in real life, yet I get to inflict my own

humour, sexuality, and political slant. I enjoy breaking down that fourth wall with the audiences, and having them laugh at something they know they shouldn't, then they feel disgusted about it. I set up the scene, then pull the rug out from under them", he smirks.

Leave your troubles outside—life is beautiful at the Cabaret!

The Emcee role also involves quite a bit of singing, something that Harrison can easily adapt to, having graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in music and theatre from University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music. He's also had previous roles in *Amadeus*, *West Side Story*, and *Tommy*.

This is not the first time that Harrison has taken on subversive roles either. He performed in such productions as *Shopping and Fucking*, as well as *Pop!*, where he got to play Andy Warhol. "I've always been fascinated by Warhol. I actually watched all of his movies. I think all that he accomplished at The Factory in New York was amazing", he remarks.

Harrison has a real fondness for Toronto, having spent a good deal of time here during the five years of filming *Queer As Folk*. So is he looking forward to his

return? "I love Toronto!", he proclaims. Ten years have passed, so he's looking to rediscover the city again. "I heard the scene has moved further west now. When I was there I use to hang out along College and Queen West. I heard my favourite record shop, Soundscapes, is still there so I'm excited to stop by."

"I wanted to end in my old home city"

So what does the future hold for Mr. Harrison? While the production continues on until the summer, he did divulge that Toronto will be the last stop for him in *Cabaret*. "I wanted to end in my old home city", he says. He'll then be turning his focus to new ventures, including the production of a web series titled, *New York is Dead*. "It's a dark comedy about displaced artists", he states.

As for the question about a QAF reunion, he said the cast are all into it, but no networks have expressed serious interest. He'll also be turning 40 later this year. Yep, little Justin is all grown up. "I'm pretty happy where I am right now, and I actually feel that my best acting roles will be when I'm in my later years", he divulges. Oh, and for those curious, he's currently living in Brooklyn, and not dating anyone.

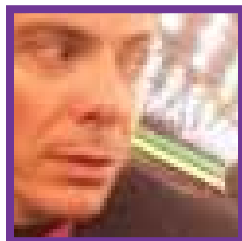
As the reprise begins, Cliff Bradshaw leaves Berlin and begins to write his novel on a train to Paris, reflecting on his experiences at the Kit Kat Klub. "There was a cabaret, and there was a master of ceremonies... and there was a city called Berlin, in a country called Germany...and it was the end of the world."

Or shall we call it, 2017?

Cabaret is onstage February 14 to 19, 2017 at the Princess of Wales Theatre, 300 King Street West. The production runs 2 hours 30 minutes including one intermission.

Tickets - www.mirvish.com/shows/cabaret
Info - www.cabaretmusical.com.

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto with a focus on tourism, lifestyle, entertainment and community issues. He has written several travel articles and has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities.





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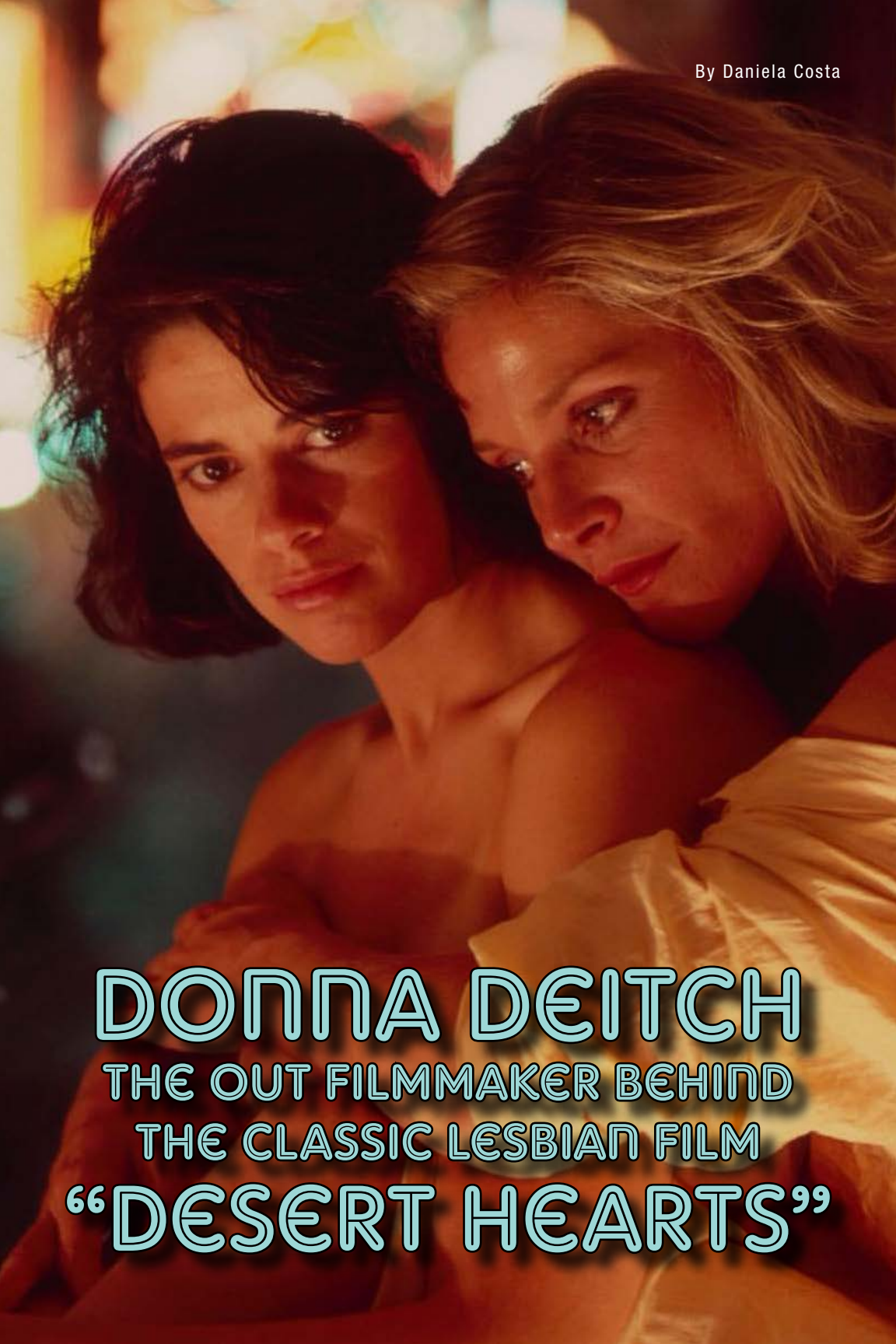


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By Daniela Costa

DONNA DEITCH

THE OUT FILMMAKER BEHIND
THE CLASSIC LESBIAN FILM
“DESERT HEARTS”



If you're one for predictions, it's still hard to imagine that 1959 Reno, Nevada would be the setting for what many critics call the first lesbian story with a "happy ending" shown on film. Hell, even at the time of the film's release in 1986 it was surprising to see a lesbian relationship portrayed in a positive light.

Perhaps that's partly why now, more than 30 years later, that film, *Desert Hearts*, is still held in such high esteem and has seen a resurgence in popularity. That and the fact that we're dealing with a truly beautiful film.

"Every film that I had seen about a lesbian love story had ended in either a bisexual triangle or a suicide," says Donna Deitch, the film's director. "I wanted to make a film that was more authentic."

But she didn't know what that film would be, until she came across lesbian author Jane Rule's 1964 book, *Desert of the Heart*. American-born, but based in Canada, Rule wouldn't be the film's only Canadian connection. Helen Shaver, the film's star, was born in St. Thomas, Ontario, and *Desert Hearts* would eventually screen at the Toronto International Film Festival. While she says the Canadian connection was coincidental, Deitch credits Rule for the movie's initial popularity in Canada.

"She was so well known, and I think that really helped the visibility of the film when it came out."

Making the film a reality, however, was not easy. "I ultimately became the biggest investor in the film," says Deitch, who sold her house to finance the film. She also sold shares in a limited partnership of \$15,000 USD each, raising close to a million dollars at the time.

Money though was not the only barrier. Casting for the film proved quite difficult, because of agents' fears over what participating in a lesbian-themed movie could mean for their clients. "There were people who refused a meeting, or refused an audition."

Nonetheless, Deitch says she didn't miss out on casting any top choices. She was certainly thrilled with the film's stars, Shaver and Patricia Charbonneau, with whom she had some frank discussions before sealing the deal. At the centre of those conversations was a love scene still credited today as one of the best lesbian sex scenes ever shown on film.

"For me, that love scene was at the heart of this movie," says Deitch. "Knowing that this was going to be a full out love scene and involve nudity, I obviously discussed this in great detail with both of the actors and made sure I had their commitment before hiring them."

How was she able to get away with such a scene in 1986? "I sold the film intact. In other words, without the ability to edit it." She sold *Desert Hearts* to the Samuel Goldwyn Company, who unfortunately opted not to release a soundtrack for the film. Deitch, who paid a pretty penny to have tracks from the likes of Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Patsy Cline, Buddy Holly, and more featured in the film, says movie soundtracks were



still in their infancy stage in 1986. "The soundtrack was singled out in Rolling Stone as one of the best movie soundtracks of the year," she recalls.

In 2007, Wolfe Video came on as the film's distributor. Now in 2017, The Criterion Collection will step into that role. "It has been in constant release since it first came out," says Deitch, citing this as one of the main reasons for the film's popularity.

This has meant many new fans, including young ones, being able to access the film. Many have come up to her at the film's 30th anniversary screenings hosted by the likes of the British Film Institute, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Sundance Film Festival.

"Overtime I have received so many stories from young women about how Desert Hearts affected them," she says. "I decided what I should do is start collecting these stories." She'll be doing so through her website. "I'm asking people to tell their Desert Hearts stories, and audiotape or videotape themselves, and I'm going to post them all as a sort of collection."

These days Deitch is busy writing the script for a Desert Hearts sequel. "This is a story that sets itself in the heart of the so-called second wave of the women's liberation movement in New York City around about 1970," she shares. "It's the story of the world of Desert Hearts. It's an unconventional sequel. It's not as though we pick up where we left off. We leap ahead."

She's also written scripts for Strange Piece of Paradise and The Catcher, which fans can read about at www.DonnaDeitch.com. All three films are currently seeking financing, and Deitch welcomes anyone to reach out if they would like to help.

Born and raised in Toronto, Daniela Costa graduated from Ryerson University's journalism undergraduate program in 2013. Since then, her writing has focused on matters concerning the LGBT community. More recently she's begun reviewing movies and recapping television shows that feature queer characters.



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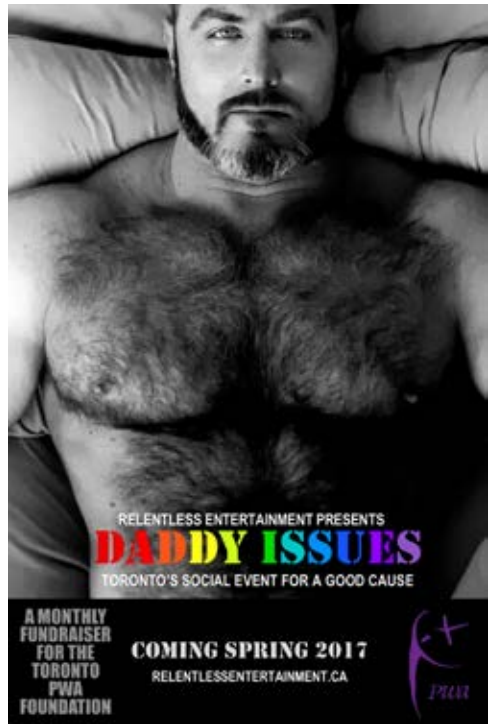
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Drag Queens Dating

"Hide your clothes, hide your wigs, and hide your high heels too, cuz there's a man coming over tonight, honey!" A friend once exclaimed to me. This phrase is all too real for drag queens who have been in the dating game. The truth is queens are men too (most of the time), and they have needs just like anybody else.

The touch, feel, smell and taste (how risqué) of a man is something that most gay men (including queens) crave. We also tend to lead double lives: double the clothes, and double the fun some might think. Combine this double life and desire of a man's touch with an increase in use of dating applications such as Grindr and Scruff, and you get one very hairy scenario.

The question I get asked most frequently is "how do you handle dating?" Well, like most things in life: very carefully. It takes a very quick Google search to reveal that dating a drag queen is undesirable to most gay men.

To be honest - I GET IT! Who wants to deal with glitter, rhinestones, feathers, constant late nights, drinking and other parts of the Queen life? It's hard on us too. What I don't get is when gay men question the masculinity/validity of a person who not only has a healthy creative and emotional outlet, but is also a contributing community member - a drag queen.

Having hosted and participated in many community fundraisers and events, I shudder to think that my contribution and those of my sisters, instead of being lauded by possible paramours, is being boiled down to - he wears a dress and is therefore not 'masculine' enough for me - but I digress.

Miss D'Manda Tension has been a fabulous drag queen and community activist for the last seven years. I asked this dear friend and sister of mine about her experience using apps for dating. She said she was always honest when people asked

her if she did drag, but that "none of [the people] were funny about it, and most just stopped talking or wanted it up the ass by a ladyboy."

D'Manda (muggle name Ryan) has since met a great partner, Mr D, who accepts both individuals for what they bring to the table. He even tried drag for the first time this Halloween, coining the name Rachel Tension. So it's possible to find love in a seemingly hopeless place.

Finally, as far as apps and dating go, we are either questioned for our masculinity or fetishized as some sort of sexual plaything. The case is simple: we are neither. Drag queens are people just like everybody else. In the words of Shylock from the Merchant of Venice "if you prick us, do we not bleed?"

I'd love to say this is some broken-hearted single man's cry for help. I've found the single life, and the single life found me. I find, however, the reticence of others to speak out about oppressive gender norms that are burgeoning in our culture, quite unsettling. Perhaps men shying away from drag queens is a product of this, or perhaps it is simply just the way it is. Either way, the fact remains: a life free of glitter is no life at all.

Barbie Jo Bontemps, lovingly known as BJ, has been a drag queen and philanthropist in the LGBTQ community of Toronto for over three years. Self-described as Toronto's foremost plus-sized hand model, BJ has been hosting and promoting FML Mondays (at Flash) for almost four years. She is particularly interested in community politics, mothering strippers and downing an ice cold glass of Guinness. www.facebook.com/BJBontemps.



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Kate Campbell

That Girl



Performing came early for Kate Campbell. As a toddler in North Ontario, wrapped in her grandmother's scarves, playing Mary to her Cookie Monster's Joseph, she had an elaborate and serious routine celebrating baby Jesus.

The desire for a professional career was born at 12-years of age, after attending a Toronto production of *Showboat*. "It changed everything. I had never experienced anything that extraordinary before and whatever that was, I wanted to do it", she confides.

Singing and acting aside, throughout her school years Kate was a gold medal track and field athlete competing at the national level, and was offered several athletic scholarships which she turned down. Choosing her heart's desire, performing, she enrolled at Sheridan College for musical theatre performance.

Television and film projects soon followed, including co-hosting the Latin American awards. She co-produced and starred in a hit production of Neil Labute's "The Shape of Things", and co-directed a benefit concert for St. Michael's Boys' Choir,

featuring The Barenaked Ladies, John McDermott, and Michael Burgess.

Kate then packed her bags for Hollywood in 2008, "I was 26 and thought, if I don't do this now, I'm never going to." That leap of faith garnered her numerous jobs in films and television series, including her current best known role in, "Gone Girl".

Creatively diverse as a singer and jazz enthusiast as well, she has sung with Robbie Krieger of the Doors, collaborated with award-winning jazz musician Nick Mancini, and is the vocalist for L.A. based band The Martini Kings. She recently released her own jazz E.P., "I Am That Girl", which she claims was a wonderful experience. "I recorded it with Patrick Avalon, who is a dream to work with."

She has always been influenced by strong women, like the legendary Hollywood great Katherine Hepburn, and Bette Davis, who one day she would like to portray on screen. But perhaps her greatest inspiration is her grandmother.

Kate has written a historical fiction screenplay called, "Boundless". "The film is inspired by my grandmother who became a pilot to overcome her fear of flying, and it's also a dedication to all the women pilots of WW2. The story reveals what it looks like for a woman to fight and find her liberation... the loss that's involved...the courage and the struggle", she explains.

Walking her talk, Kate has been taking flight lessons to also become a pilot. She also officially launched her own production company, S.H.E. Lifts Off Films. "The S.H.E. stands for shine, heal, and elevate. It will be a platform for women driven material. We need to speak up. I am blessed that I was lucky enough to have found a woman named Michèle Lonsdale Smith, who runs LS & Co., an extraordinary collective of actors and artists in L.A., N.Y., Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa. We are encouraged to become the best and most truthful versions of ourselves", she proclaims.

You can find out more about this lovely Canadian at www.katecampbellactress.com and www.sheliftsoff.org

Cat Grant is a multimedia artist. She is also a published poet currently writing a book. She contributes to *Home Life* and *Jingobox*.



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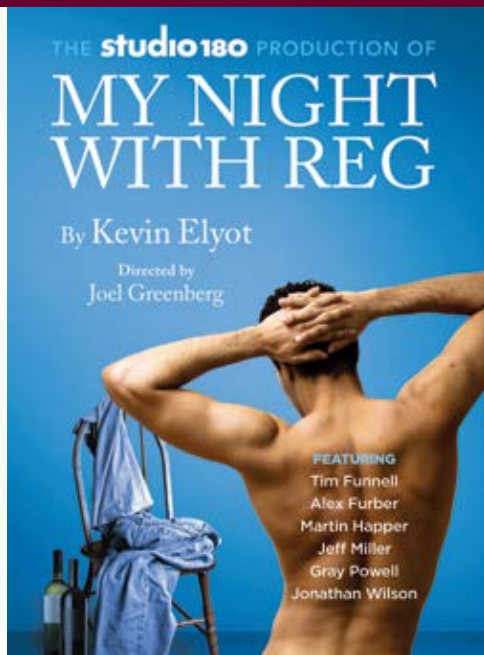
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MY NIGHT WITH REG – JOEL GREENBERG



Are you ready to spend a night with Reg? Written by British playwright Kevin Elyot in 1994, *My Night with Reg* is the story of a guy named Guy, perpetually single and hung up on an uninterested friend named John. They belong to a wider circle of gay friends, including Reg who is mentioned constantly, but not actually seen in the play.

It turns out Reg has had sex with everyone except Guy. Poor Guy also gets raped on vacation and becomes HIV positive. The show ends after his wake, when it is revealed that Guy has willed his flat to John, who doesn't need it because he's rich. Guy is such a loser that he is rejected even in death. It all sounds pretty dire, so you might be surprised to find out that it was the recipient of the 1994 *Evening Standard* Award for Best Comedy.

"It has the elements of a West End farce, but it throws you off balance," explains Studio 180 Theatre director Joel Greenberg. "It is brilliant how Elyot collapses time. He shifts the tone of the play often, so the audience never knows what's about to happen. There are no act breaks, as it's important that it's watched in one sitting, because even though it spans three years it should feel like one long day."

Greenberg is familiar to theatre goers for directing such productions as *The Laramie Project*, *Clybourne Park*, *Cock*, and *NSFW*. I am a huge fan of his production of *The Normal Heart*, that played at Buddies in Bad Times a few years back.



I went to a matinee full of school kids, and by the end I was reduced to tears.

"With *The Normal Heart*," said Greenberg, "it was startling to us to know so much more than those characters ever could have known about AIDS back in 1985. *Reg* is about friendship, loyalty, betrayal and lies. It's a far more human play than *The Normal Heart*, in that all of the characters in *Heart* are mouthpieces for Larry Kramer's arguments, agitprop theatre at its best. But *Reg* isn't like that at all. Elyot wasn't interested in writing about the politics of AIDS. It isn't even mentioned in the show."

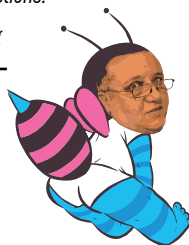
It all sounds very interesting, but as a casual theatre goer, there were two things I still really needed to know about the production. First, will there be British accents? "Yes," he tells me. "We have a dialect coach that works with us, and the actors are really skilled at accents."

And more importantly, being that it is a gay play and all, will there be nudity? "There is nudity at the beginning of the third scene", Greenberg reassures me, "but there's no depiction of sex in the play." Well, you can't have everything. One thing is for sure - *My Night with Reg* sounds like a rollicking night of theatre that can't be missed.

My Night with Reg, produced by Studio 180 Theatre, runs from February 10 to 26, 2017 at the Panasonic Theatre, 651 Yonge Street, Toronto. Presented by Mirvish Productions.

www.mirvish.com/shows/my-night-with-reg

Paul Bellini is an award-winning television comedy writer (*Kids in the Hall*, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*). He also teaches comedy writing at George Brown College in Toronto.





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*Weight loss should not be considered typical. **Income level achievements are dependent upon the individual Associate's business skills, personal ambition, time, commitment, activity and demographic factors.

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Dale M Reid



Contemporary fine art photographer Dale M Reid has gone through many transitions in life: from leaving the corporate world and entering the art world, to the discovery of inter-femininity and a new outlook on life.

What have you been doing over the last year?

Last year was truly incredible with exhibitions in Toronto, New York, Los Angeles, Berlin and Chicago. As well, I am continuing to receive international recognition for my artwork through my participation in competitions. In addition, at the Los Angeles and Chicago exhibitions, I introduced large scale canvas prints.

Networking is one of my critical activities. During this last year, I started to develop inroads into the design industry. In addition, I continue to attend fund raising events. During the later part of the year, I released twenty new images. Also, I still have additional images created in 2016 that I will be releasing this year.

During that time, which was the one most exciting event for you?

It is hard to pick just one event from last year. There were two standout events. My second solo exhibition in NYC at National Association for Women Artists during May 2016. The timing of the exhibition coincided with a number of design events and fairs. This allowed me to connect with design professionals.

The second event was my participation in the 2016 Berlin Foto Biennale, which was part of a month of photography. This was the first time that my work was being exhibited in Europe, so I decided to attend the opening. While in Berlin, I visited a number of galleries looking for potential opportunities for representation.

What are you looking forward to over for the next year?

In addition to creating new artwork and continuing my networking activities, I will be developing plans for increasing my exposure in Los Angeles and developing a plan for exhibiting in Europe.

Where can we see your work?

From February 23 – 26, 2017, I will be exhibiting at The Artist Project, Contemporary Art Fair (www.theartistproject.com/). The fair is located in The Better Living Centre at Exhibition Place. This is the fourth year participating in the fair and you will be able to find me in Booth #407.

My 2017 Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival exhibition, "Whimsical", will be held at my studio during May. Watch my website for more information. At any other time, I would be glad to schedule an appointment to meet individually at my studio in South Etobicoke (146 Thirtieth Street, Studio 230).

Future plans?

One area that I haven't addressed relates to the production of a coffee table art book. It is something that I have thought about, but I am not sure of the timing.

Any message you would like to put out there?

In creating my artwork, I exclusively use black and white film, and traditional photography methods. The lack of color allows the viewer to focus on the variety of textures, and the richness of interesting lines and shapes that engage in an elegant visual synthesis onto each photograph.

What would you wish for?

I wish for a continued happiness and fulfilling life.

www.dalemreidphotography.com
www.dejeuner-photo.com

Boyd Kodak is an award-winning trans activist, musician, writer, activist, filmmaker, curator, and festival/entertainment director. Boyd has put together both educational and artistic programs for festivals worldwide. In 2012 he was inducted into the International LGBT Hall of Fame.



Photo: Todd Asmoucha

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THE WORKPLACE

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120 DINER / CLUB 120



Club 120, formally Goodhandys, is no ordinary space. It's a pansexual playground, a club, and party central for many in the community, while the lower level 120 Diner is a restaurant and a (mostly queer) musical hub. According to co-owner Mandy Goodhandy, Club 120 hosts the longest running T-Girl party in North America on Thursday nights, and she's also the self-proclaimed first stand-up trans comedian in Canada.

"The funniest moments for me are when I do my stand-up in the mainstream comedy clubs. I don't mention that I'm a trans woman until a little bit into my routine. Up to that point any tables of men are usually bright eyed and attentive, and tables of woman are usually pleasant, but reserved. Once my trans woman status is revealed in my matter-of-fact, but humorous announcement, that changes", explains Goodhandy.

"The men become a bit more reserved, and the woman find it titillating, but eventually everyone in the audience relaxes and just enjoys the show. Maybe its because they realized that trans woman are like everyone else, and the unexplored veil has been lifted."

theBUZZ asked some Club 120 regulars about their favourite experiences.

Travis L'Henaff, Model, actor, bon vivant

Being almost completely naked, except underwear and a clear rain poncho, then getting covered in paint while drinking and dancing. I wish I had brought goggles.

Rolyn Chambers, social columnist, club king, cat owner

The glow in the dark paint party, and redesigning Travis' face with paint.

David Bateman, Poet, author, actor, drag queen

Wearing a 'Sleep No More' mask from New York's Macbeth theatre installation at a naked Halloween party. The only other thing I was wearing was a crotchless-onesie, and I saw another naked guy wearing an identical mask. We chatted about our masks and I think we made out, but I'm not sure because I was

wearing a mask, which made for limited sight-lines. It could have been someone else.

Amanda Roberts, drag queen, Founder of the Miss Canada Continental Pageant

I was there for an event Black Cat put on years ago, and there was a stripper performing. I was with Michelle Ross and a few other queens. The stripper was wearing a condom that he tossed out into the audience and it landed in my lap. All the other queens were jealous.

Amy Lewis, 2011 Queer Idol

Being a performer with stage fright and constant doubt in my abilities, Club 120 gave me the strength and support to follow my dream and win the 2011 Queer Idol title. Club 120 is like a huge extended family. I remember Mandy giving me wonderful inspirational speeches back stage as I prepared to step out in front of the crowd. I felt part of a beautiful, eclectic, and supportive community/family.

Ryan Graham Hinds, theatre artist

The first time I went to 120 Diner, I was knocked out at how good the food was! It's awesome to have a venue where the food is excellent and healthy. Todd and Mandy have really taken care to create a space that gives you a good experience from the moment you walk in the door.

Club 120/120 Diner, 120 Church Street

club120.ca

Raymond Helkio is an author, director and filmmaker. He graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design University and is co-founder of The Reading Salon.

www.raymondhelkio.com
www.thereadingsalon.ca





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COMMUNITY BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain

Ghetto Glam Bingo

Tuesdays from 9:30 p.m.

Fabulous prizes from The Men's Room Shop and as always D'amanda Tension has fab anecdotes from the weekend, or at least what she can remember of it

Pegasus On Church, 489B Church St. Toronto
www.facebook.com/Ghettoglambingo

Effervescence

Tuesdays from 10:00 p.m.

Once again the marvellous Kevin Wong and Natasha Bucheridge will be sitting in a tree. . . . Well, on a stage at least - S.I.N.G.I.N.G! 'S'gonna be fun.

Blyss, 504 Church St., Toronto
www.facebook.com/BlyssToronto

Corona Wednesdays

Wednesdays from 9:00 p.m.

9pm – Soul Sistas – Michelle Ross & Jada Hudson -1130PM – New School – A showcase of Toronto's brightest rising drag stars with host Devine Darlin at Tangos 11pm – Russell Palloo's College Night

Crews & Tangos, late night - 508 Church St. Toronto
www.crewsandtangos.com

Smirnoff Men's Chest Contest

Thursdays from 9:00 p.m.

Hosted By Georgie Girl with DJ Mark Falco. \$300 cash prizes and Steamworks Toronto Giveaways. Toronto's Hottest Staff and NEVER A COVER CHARGE!

Woody's and Sailor, 467 Church St., Toronto
www.facebook.com/WoodysSailorToronto

Karaoke

Fridays from 10:00 p.m.

Every Friday from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. Elyse Douglas is your host for Karaoke. Have a bite, have a beverage, belt out a ballad - or butcher a ballad. Just have a blast.

Fox & Fiddle, 27 Wellesley St. E., 2nd Fl. Toronto
www.facebook.com/FoxWellesley

Exposed

Saturdays – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Legendary Georgie Girl and sensational Sofonda Cox are being Exposed on Church Street at the village's newest Nightclub/Bar.

Blyss, 504 Church St., Toronto
www.facebook.com/BlyssToronto



Sh!t Show Sundays

Sundays from 9:00 p.m.

Aone of a kind industry night. Different live bands every week on the main stage. Darts in the Loft with Robbie 2pm-9pm.

Statler's- 487 Church St. Toronto
www.statlers.ca

Massive Talent Sundays

Sundays from 9:00 p.m.

Georgie Girl and guests at 9:00 p.m. Followed by Six Smokin' Hot Divas Show at 11:00 p.m.

Woody's and Sailor, 467 Church St., Toronto
www.facebook.com/WoodysSailorToronto

Heavenly Mondays

Mondays from 10:30 p.m.

Heaven Lee Hytes and weekly special guest burn up the stage starting at 10:30 p.m. Day prices all evening, and NO cover.

Blyss, 504 Church St., Toronto
www.facebook.com/BlyssToronto

FML Mondays - Industry Night

Mondays from 11:00 p.m.

Church Street's only Monday night dance party! Hosted by, and featuring performances by some of Toronto's most fabulous drag queens.

Flash, 463 Church St., Toronto
www.facebook.com/FMLMondays



CHARITY BUZZ PICKS

By Sherry Sylvain

Godboogie Jerry Johnson

Feb. 17 from 8:00 p.m.

A Concert Series for CampOochigeas, a camp for kids affected by Childhood Cancers.

Bay City Music Hall, 50 Leander Dr., Hamilton
www.facebook.com/events/210333186080274/

Get on the Brew Bus For Mobility Sake

Feb. 19 – noon to 6:00 p.m.

Hop aboard a luxury coach and tour the Waterloo region to visit three local craft breweries, while raising funds to support the KW Civitan Service Club in their quest to improve the mobility of those with spinal cord injuries in our community.

607 King St. W., Kitchener
www.eventastic.com/events/18610r

Family Day at Historic Zion Schoolhouse

February 20, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Head to the Historic Zion Schoolhouse to explore this rare, one-room schoolhouse in the heart of North Toronto and contribute to our book drive for Children's Book Bank.

Zion Schoolhouse, 1091 Finch Ave. E., Toronto
www.facebook.com/zionschoolhouse

Recipe for Change

Feb. 23 – 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

The tastiest way to promote healthy food and food literacy in schools, Recipe for Change 2017 is FoodShare's 8th annual signature fundraising event.

St. Lawrence Temporary Market, 125 The Esplanade, Toronto
www.recipeforchange.me

Slo-pitch for Autism

Feb. 25 – 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Autism is the fastest growing disorder in North America, as well as the most under-funded. Join a discussion with those affected by Autism, and their family members.

Royal City Park, 139 Gordon St, Guelph, ON
www.slopitchforautism.net

10th Anniversary Amici Breast Cancer Fundraising Gala

Feb. 25 from 5:30 p.m.

Join the 10th Anniversary Gala and celebrate with a theme that is sure to entertain all, The Great Gatsby! Once again, this event is dedicated to Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Terrace Banquet Centre, 1680 Creditstone Rd., Vaughn
www.facebook.com/events/1093872784043125

Laugh Your Heart Out

Feb. 28 @ 7:00 p.m.

Join a night of improv comedy with a group of renowned comedians who will help support the work of KW Counselling Services.

Apollo Cinema, 141 Ontario St., N., Kitchener
www.facebook.com/events/190063914797403

The Lady Ball

March 2 from 6:00 p.m.

This event includes a fantastic fashion show, amazing live and silent auctions, and fabulous cocktails all in support of Ovarian Cancer Canada.

Rebel, 11 Polson Pier, Toronto
www.theladyball.ca/toronto.html



National Ballet School's Canadiana Gala

March 3 from 8:00 p.m.

An exclusive themed fundraising event inspired by 150 years of Canadian culture.

The Carlu, 444 Yonge St., Toronto
www.nbs-enb.ca

2017 Global Citizens Gala

March 24 from 6:00 p.m.

This Gala will welcome over 500 caring citizens, community leaders, young professionals, and international guests to celebrate and support the transformational work of Empowerment Squared, a charity that works with individuals and communities to effect sustainable change.

Liuna Station, 360 James St., N., Hamilton
www.facebook.com/EmpowermentSquared

GENERAL BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain

Man in the Mirror

Feb. 14 – 19 – afternoon and evening shows

Celebrate the music of the King of Pop, Michael Jackson. This theatrical spectacular takes audiences on a musical journey through the career of one of the greatest entertainers of all time. 19+

Fallsview Casino, 6380 Fallsview Blvd., Niagara Falls, ON
www.facebook.com/fallsviewcasino

Blue Suede Shoes

Feb. 14 to 19 - varying times

A true Elvis experience! Taking place over a six day period, you don't want to miss this! Top Elvis impersonators representing six stages of The King's career.

Scotiabank Convention Centre, 6815 Stanley Ave, Niagara Falls, ON
www.facebook.com/events/763786990427113

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

February 14 – 8:00 p.m.

The unmistakably joyous and uplifting a cappella vocal music of South Africa – there is nothing quite like the energy of hearing this legendary ensemble live in concert.

Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W., Toronto
www.performance.rcmusic.ca/event/ladysmith-black-mambazo-2017



The Rhubarb Festival

Feb. 15 – 26 – varying times

Rhubarb is the place to see the most adventurous ideas in performance and to catch your favourite artists venturing into uncharted territory.

Buddies In Bad Times Theatre, 12 Alexander St. Toronto
www.buddiesinbadtimes.com

Toronto Light Fest

January 27 - March 12

Art becomes light art when light forms the primary means or medium of expression. This relatively new art form includes a wide variety of ways light can be influenced.

Distillery District, Mill St from Parliament to Cherry, Toronto
www.torontolightfest.com

GTA Home and Reno Show

Feb. 17 – 20 from 10:00 a.m.

Looking to scratch a few things off your to-do list, update the kitchen perhaps? Not to worry, all the advice and inspiration you need are waiting for you at the show.

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Road (@ Derry), Mississauga
www.gtahomeandrenoshow.com

Snowflakes and Starlight

Feb. 18 – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Join us for Snowflakes & Starlight Winter Carnival, complete with fireworks in Memorial Park! A magical evening of skating under the moonlight, music, food and hot chocolate!

Stouffville Memorial Park, Park Dr. S., Stouffville
www.facebook.com/events/1225126917569653

The Spring Fishing & Boat Show

Feb. 17 – 20

Find hundreds of exhibitors displaying endless products devoted to fishing, boating, camping, hunting and the great outdoors, all under one roof!

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Road (@ Derry), Mississauga
www.springfishingandboatshow.com

Toronto Golf & Travel Show

Feb. 24 – 26

Features hundreds of exhibitors, product demonstrations from the top brands in golf and lessons from PGA of Ontario professionals all weekend!

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Road (@ Derry), Mississauga
www.torontogolfshow.com

Toronto Spring Camping & RV Show and Sale

March 2 – 5 from 10:00 a.m.

Learn about the RV & Camping Lifestyle and talk directly to Manufacturer Representatives about the right recreation vehicle for your family.

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Road (@ Derry), Mississauga
www.torontospringcampingrvshow.com

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), and currently is proud to hold the title of Queen Mum to The Imperial Court of Toronto for 2015/2016.





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416-510-8576

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905-239-7922

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905-444-9500

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Hwy 403 & Dundas St. W
905-829-0999

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