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The Editor

Greetings and salutations!

Everything old is new again, so why reinvent the wheel?

This rings especially true when it comes to music. Our main feature is titled, **Retro Is All The Rage**, where we take a look at musicians who are still rocking out decades into their careers, putting out new music and touring the world.

Bananarama, who are featured on the cover, had their most successful single by creating a dance version of *Venus*, by 1960s Dutch band, **Shocking Blue**. Be sure to catch them live on stage when they play all their hits at The Danforth Music Hall on February 23. We also look at other “retro” acts coming to town, including **OMD**, **Rod Stewart**, **Cyndi Lauper**, and **Erasure**.

Our second feature is written by theatre aficionado Raymond Helkio, who took the opportunity to chat with theatre veteran, **Sky Gilbert**, about his latest creative endeavours. Gilbert is well-known in Toronto circles as the founder of Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, or as Helkio references him as, the *Grandmother of Queer Theatre*. Gilbert’s latest production, *I Cook, He Does The Dishes*, is having its premiere on March 22 at the Theatre Centre. He also has a couple other works in progress, *Chéri The Musical* for the Toronto Fringe Festival, and *Shakespeare’s Criminal* for Buddies 2018/19 season.

Our regular columnists bring us the latest exciting entertainment news and views, and we’re super excited to have **Carlotta Carlisle** return as our Wigged Out guest columnist, helping us cope with those love hangovers. Cat Grant chats with the energetic writer, **Joie Lamar**, who has a new book out, and Boyd Kodak caught up with **Max Denley**, a musician, photographer, athlete, and Director of Facilitation for *The Get REAL Movement*. Paul Bellini looks at the various ways to celebrate Valentine’s Day, from bouquets to bathhouses, and Raymond Helkio takes a look at what’s happening music wise out along Danforth Avenue. Be sure to flip to the back pages as Sherry Sylvain once again tells us where to go with her clever selection of entertaining BUZZPICKS.

As always, thanks to Mychol Scully for the wonderful design, and the welcome guidance from our behind the scenes team.

Thanks for picking us up. Enjoy the read!

Bryen Dunn

Editor-in-Chief

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RETRO IS ALL THE RAGE

By Bryen Dunn

OMD

While Beyonce, Britney, and Beiber lose their aging fan base as quickly as you can say, Backstreet Boys and Spice Girls, there's a multitude of acts who had their heyday back in the 1980s, or earlier, who are still putting out critically-acclaimed new music and touring to sold out audiences several decades later.

One just has to take a look at the concert listings in the city to see that retro is all the rage. **Robert Plant** (Feb 17 – Massey Hall), **Bananarama** (Feb 23 – Danforth), **Book of Love** (Mar 9 – Lees), **Clan of Xymox** (Mar 20 – Lee's), **Rod Stewart** (Mar 22 – ACC), **Ministry** (April 14 – Opera House), **The Breeders** (May 6 – Phoenix), **Bon Jovi** (May 12 – ACC), **Def Leppard/Journey** (Jun 1 – Rogers), **Hall and Oates** (June 5 – ACC), **Jethro Tull** (July 3 – Budweiser), **Weezer** and **Pixies** (July 14 – Budweiser), **Eagles** (July 15 – ACC), **Erasure** (July 24 – Queen Elizabeth Theatre), **David Byrne** (Aug 3 – Sony Centre), **Rod Stewart/Cyndi Lauper** (Aug 10 – Budweiser), **Lynyrd Skynyrd** (Aug 11 – Budweiser), **Jeff Lynne's ELO** (Aug 18 – ACC), and the king of queens, **Elton John** (Sep 25/26 – ACC) on his *Farewell Yellow Brick Road* tour.

So what is it that keeps these musicians doing what they love, and fans showing up to support them, often with sold out performances? There's obviously that nostalgic factor for those who are old enough to have been there for the first wave and want to relive some of their youth. Then there's also a whole new younger demographic that have been hearing the music on the radio, in clubs, or grew up listening to it through their parents or older siblings. In fact, there's often parent-child outings to these retro revivals, and the age demographic is quite wide ranging.

We decided to feature **Bananarama** on our cover this issue, as these ladies recently regrouped as the original threesome, and are including Toronto in one of their very limited four-date North American tour schedule. Despite still holding the record for the most singles to chart by a girl group ever, this marks the first-ever tour with the original lineup. Siobhan Fahey called in quits back in 1988, right after a performance on the Brit Awards, citing creative differences, which is often the case with band break ups. She went on to form the darker, goth-like **Shakespears Sister**, while band mates Sara Dallin and Keren Woodward continued to release music and tour under the same moniker with a replacement singer. Neither of these projects reached the height of success as the original line up, so here we are today, three decades later, and fans are ecstatic.

Despite having several chart-topping singles, the band began like many others from England during the 1980s, as disenfranchised street punks with no musical talents. That all changed as the band



formed and became a viable entity. Dallin says "We wrote our own material, or co-wrote it. I don't think people always bothered to recognize that. We weren't manufactured." Believe it or not, it will be the first time the ladies will be performing some of their hits together live on stage, outside of the studio recordings and press appearances. So expect to hear all the classics, like *Shy Boy*, *Cruel Summer*, and of course, *Venus*. As for the chance of any new music, Dallin hinted that they were looking at doing a new single, and "experiment creatively" in the studio. Either way, fans are in for a rare treat when they take the stage at The Danforth Music Hall on February 23.

Another blast from the past who's in Toronto this month is none other than **Boy George**, but not for a concert performance. The Boy is appearing as one of the mentors on CTV's original music series, where contestants perform songs provided to them in hopes of being chosen to advance to the recording stage, and become the next big thing.

George described his role as having to find the right voice for the song, which doesn't necessarily mean a better singer, but whether they are right for that piece. He says, "Certain people just capture a moment, but we see less and less of that now. Whenever I see anybody who's really an individual, I try to encourage them to celebrate who they are, and remind them that's the thing about them that's going to really make people remember them." He also gave the following advice to the contestants, "Celebrate who you are, focus on what's good about you, and not the negative stuff." Boy George's episode of **The**

Launch airs February 14, along with fellow mentor, Canadian superstar Alessia Cara. The final episode of the series airs the following week.

Of course, Boy George is most widely known as the flamboyant lead singer of 1980s pop group, **Culture Club**, who sold more than 100 million singles and 50 million albums worldwide. The band became the first group since The Beatles to have three Top 10 hits in America from a debut album, and the first group in music history to have an album certified diamond in Canada. George has performed in Toronto several times, both as a solo musician, a DJ, and with Culture Club back at the height of their career. Word has it that there's a new album and tour dates on the horizon for the original CC line up, and perhaps even a Las Vegas showpiece.

There's a very good chance this will come to fruition, as apparently some material has already been recorded. After falling into the wild rock star lifestyle during his younger days, George has been on the clean and sober path for many years now. He recently told *Gay Times*, "I eat well, I exercise, I don't drink, and I don't take drugs. Having self-control is such a revelation, being in charge and just getting shit done!" He's also entered into a new recording agreement with BMG, his first label signing in nearly 30 years, and will be releasing a solo covers album later this year. His most recent album, *This Is What I Do*, was well-received by critics as well.

A DJ since the late 70's, Boy George has had a long and successful career associated with house



Cyndi Lauper



Boy George Photo courtesy of Edge Publicity



Rod Stewart

music stemming from early acid house and Chicago grooves in the 80's, through to electro and tech house in the 90's and 00's. Away from his musical successes George has been a columnist for national newspaper the Daily Express, the author of two bestselling autobiographies, and has been the co-producer, songwriter and on-stage star of the award-winning musical *Taboo* on both New York's Broadway and London's West End. Alongside all of this he runs his own fashion label, *B-Rude*, with outlets in New York, Los Angeles, and London. Not bad for yet another disenfranchised punk from the UK.

Two other 80s acts making stops in Toronto this year are, **Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark** (OMD), who play The Danforth Music Hall on March 12. The Punishment of Luxury is the bands thirteenth studio album, released late last year, debuting at number four on the UK Albums Chart with close to 10,000 copies sold in its first week. OMD frontman Andy McCluskey describes the album as, "a metaphor for modern life, first world problems." Sexy senior **Rod Stewart** is also on tour and makes not one, but two appearances in Toronto this year. First on March 22nd at the ACC, then he returns with gay 80s icon **Cyndi Lauper** on the bill at the outdoor Budweiser Stage on August 10.

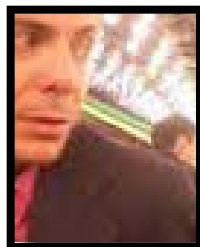
Finally, gay heartthrobs **Erasure** are making their way back to Toronto, July 24 at the intimate Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Members Andy Bell and Vince Clarke are touring on the heels of their latest album release, *World Be Gone*, and have announced a collaboration with *Echo Collective*, a Brussels-based group of post-classical musicians. This unique collaboration sees the entirety of the album given a rework entitled, *World Beyond*. Andy Bell stated, "The reinterpretations have brought such enormous

context to the songs, and created a new place for them. This can be heard on *Still It's Not Over*, which tackles the LGBT rights movement post-Stonewall, and *Lousy Some Of Nothing*, a ballad for our post-truth age.

So while the 80s continue to live on, last year also saw a 90s resurgence with the likes Front 242, My Life With The Thrill Kill Kult, Revolting Cocks, and Lords of Acid all making stops in our fair city. So will this continue, and we'll start seeing '00 bands on the horizon? With today's ADD instant-gratification, what's-next generation, there's a great possibility that the legendary musician status has become a thing of the past. Don't tell that to the Rolling Stones or The Who though!



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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Sky Gilbert: Silence, Sexuality & Shakespeare

By Raymond Helkio

Sky Gilbert is a writer, professor, playwright, and art provocateur. His legacy as founder and artistic director of Buddies In Bad Times Theatre has earned him the title, 'Grandmother of Queer Theatre'. His art predominantly explores what makes queer people unique - our sexuality. In mainstream media, gays are often synonymous with interior decorating, cozy sweaters and episodes of Will & Grace, but these are cultural stereotypes that have nothing to do with being gay. Sexuality and its impact (or lack thereof) on culture, art and politics is the intersection where Sky plays, inserting a dissenting voice into the narrative thereby presenting us with new realities to consider.

Sky's latest work, about American avant-garde leaders John Cage and Merce Cunningham, explores the little discussed relationship between the two men and its impact on their work. John Cage is best known for the composition 4'33" which is performed without sound from the musician, thus becoming a study of the environmental sounds observed by the audience. Merce Cunningham was the most significant choreographer of our time, but what is lesser known about these two is that they were lovers of thirty-five years. It's this fact that frames Gilbert's new work, "I Cook, He Does The Dishes". I spoke with Sky about this and his latest projects, and what we can look forward to in the coming year.

Why did you write "I Cook, He Does The Dishes"?

I wrote it because I was very angry when I found out that John Cage and Merce Cunningham were lovers for 35 years. John Cage was the inventor of modern music while Merce was the inventor of modern dance, and they really radicalized the whole avant-garde theatre and music scene in the United States during the 40's, 50's and 60's. Yet nobody talks about the fact that they were partners. It was in the 30's that Cage was struggling, going to psychiatrists, and married to a woman, before the threesome with Merce and his wife. This is what my play is about, but it takes a very radical form in the Theatre Centre's Incubators Space, which basically looks like a garage. The performance

“It’s what I tried to create at Buddies In Bad Times Theatre; a place for art and sex.”

– Sky Gilbert, *Death of A Bathhouse*, 2013



Photo: James Azzopard

goes back and forth between scenes from his life, while at the same time recreating the world of John Cage’s avant-garde work.

After seeing this play what do you hope people will walk away with?

I want people to think about their relationship between art and sexuality. I think quite often there is some relationship, but we don’t talk about it as much. It’s one of the things my work is about and it goes back to that core idea. The title of the play comes from a funny quote from John Cage when they ask him about his relationship with Merce, and his explanation was, “I cook, he does the dishes.”

You’re working with Dustin Peters on “Chéri The Musical”, starring Teresas Tova at the Toronto Fringe Festival. What’s this show about?

It’s an hour-long musical based on the novel *Chéri* by Colette (France, 1920), which I created it with Dustin Peters, a wonderful composer who has worked with people like John Greyson. The play is mostly from the point of view of Léa who is in love with a younger man, and it explores what happens when you get older and give up your charm and trying to look pretty.

You’re also working with Dustin on an opera, “Shakespeare’s Criminal”, for Buddies’ 2018/2019 season. Can you divulge anything at the moment?

We’re showcasing this in stages. The first will be part of Buddies’ 40th anniversary season in the Chamber. It’s a bizarre tale of Shakespeare meeting a young man who has HIV.

As a queer playwright, what do you know now that you wish someone had told you when you started?

That being gay would go out of style. I wished someone had warned me that at a certain point people would say, “oh that’s so old, so boring, so mainstream. It’s not even a thing anymore.”

I Cook, He Does the Dishes

The Theatre Centre - 1115 Queen St W

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Raymond Helkio is an author and director of queer film and theatre including the plays “*Hamlet In A Hot Tub*”, “*RAID: Operation Soap*” and “*What’s It Like?*”. He recently returned from the sold out New York production of “*You Love That I’m NOT Your Wife*”. Raymond’s new play, “*LEDUC*” will be available summer 2018.



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WIGGED OUT

BY CARLOTTA CARLISLE

FROlicking in FEBRUARY

Well it's that time of year again, we survived Christmas, the hangover from New Year's has subsided and instead of thinking about other significantly important events like the Lunar New Year or Black History Month, our minds immediately go to little red hearts and that child in a diaper named Cupid. That's right it's Valentine's Day again.

Perhaps the most polarizing of all the holidays, drag queens like the rest of the world either love it or hate it. With Pink's new beautiful Trauma album, get ready for quite a few songs that will tear at your heartstrings without being yet another sappy ballad. If you happen to be like me and habitually single every February 14, I'm never more of a strong and independent woman than on that particular day... The Pussycat Dolls "I Don't Need a Man" is on repeat.

February also has so much more to offer than just Valentine's Day. With Lunar New Year there are a myriad of celebrations happening throughout Kensington Market (and the Mandarin for my fellow food fanatics). For me personally, and a lot of the other queens in our fair city, February is the time of year we try to ignore winter and pretend like spring might one day come.

So even if we don't see the beach for a while, get your Spring and Summer music playlist ready, put yourself in that mood, and don't forget to go out and support local businesses, like The Men's Room or Out on the Street, and start shopping for that new swimsuit. It's also a great way to motivate yourself to get rid of the few extra pounds we may have put on over the Thanksgiving/Christmas/New Year's/hibernation. That being said, I'm not losing a pound... I like that there's more of me to love.

Either way, don't wish your time away, live in the moment, and whether it's Valentine's Day as a single, getting ready for the beach with friends, or (as she says bitterly) prolonging hibernation on the couch with your... partner... February is a short month so make the best of it.



This year Valentine's Day falls on hump day Wednesday (go figure), and there are many ways that you can add glamour and some filthy jokes to your VD (how ironic that's the abbreviation). However, your best bet is to stop by to see me perform at Woodys at 11 PM (wink). So whether you choose to celebrate or commiserate, let's all drink and cheers to VD!

Carlotta Carlisle, terrorizing decent people with Glamour and an east coast mouth and sense of humour.



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Joie Lamar

Born and raised by Puerto Rican parents in New York City, writer Joie Lamar's work is humorous, dirty, real, tragic and full of love. She has published her poetry book, *Sapphoetry*, a memoir, *Mambo Lips and Salsa Hips*, and now a new crime thriller, *G*, which drops this month.

Her inspiration? Family. Joie's devoted to her wife Natalie, in admiration of her "good to the bone" father and father-in-law, and "amazed" by her grandmother, Mambuella. "I'm still recalling lessons that she taught me. She is always with me too, my spirit guide."

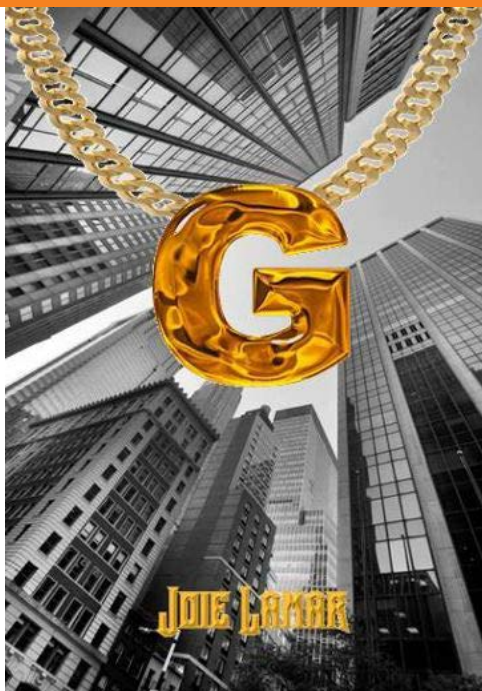
Joie's home was filled with music and salsa dancing, her mom was funny and her father creative.

"He did some very unique arrangements with tropical flowers and cut mirror in vases for a time, and was once commissioned by Jackie Onassis. It was not a sustainable living so he never gave up being a paralegal."

Joie also maintains a second successful career, having earned her Bachelors of Science in Electrical Engineering, where she minored in Computer Science, from Rutgers University. "A few years ago I came very close to completing my Masters in System Design and Management at MIT, but chose to take my thesis commercial and patent my work"

It's these skills that make her the perfect lead for a trip to help the beleaguered people of Puerto Rico in the upcoming weeks. "Imagine yourself standing in the dark, naked, and your entire life is gone - work, school, travel, routine, furniture, your home, maybe even loved ones. That is how many are existing in Puerto Rico today. Anything we can do will be an improvement."

Joie's compassion for life has resulted in her creating a beautiful new coffee table book featuring 49 artists to each represent a life lost during the mass shooting at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida. "I am Latina, lesbian, I lived in the area, and I recognized one of the victims. I knew the only way to fight hate was with love, and the vision for 49 (Cuarenta y Nueve) became a calling. Still, I could not do it by myself. It was too painful. My friends and family came together to help. All 49 of the contributors are angels sent to help me honour more angels."

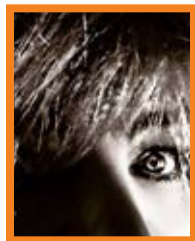


The future is bright for Joie who has also co-written a screenplay based on her memoirs with award-winning filmmaker Kate Johnston (Tru Love). "Las Alas (The Wings), is based on my memoirs. Kate did the heavy lifting and I infused it with all of the Latin, Puerto Rican spice that it needs. We have some major, well-known actors and actresses slated for the film which should begin shooting in the fall of 2018. It has already been compared to *Moonlight*, as far as recognition of the script, and will be the first Puerto Rican lesbian movie to hit the big screen. I'm super excited about this. It does not get any better than that!"

Reach out to Joie directly if you are interested in helping with her Puerto Rico recovery efforts.

www.joielamar.com, www.cyn49.com

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

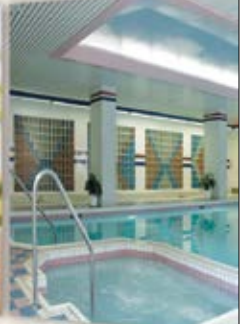


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THERE'S MORE TO FEBRUARY THAN ROSES AND CHOCOLATE



February isn't the best month for weather, but it can still be a lot of fun.

For instance, those are the weeks leading up to the Academy Awards, so people like myself are very busy running around trying to see all the nominated movies beforehand so that we can win the Oscars poll.

It is also the month for Super Bowl, featuring a fabulous 20-minute production number right in the middle of some endless football game. But most significantly, February is the month of Valentine's Day.

Originally a Christian holiday to celebrate a bunch of saints all called Valentine, it became associated with courtly love in the 14th century. Now, it is celebrated in most countries around the world, and almost all in the same way - with roses and chocolates.

As a child, I was conflicted by this occasion. Chubby and short, no Romeo, I often felt that Valentine's Day was just for the cool kids. When most of the cards I received were from people like my grandmother and our local Member of Parliament, I certainly didn't feel like one of the cool kids.

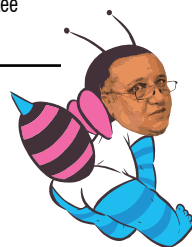
When I hit my early 20s, I was perpetually dateless. I had to suffer the sight of popular, good-looking kids exchanging roses and chocolates. I was feeling left out. Being single, I'd do things to offset the pain. For instance, I'd throw a Venereal Disease party instead (always well attended). Or I'd go to Montreal and immerse myself in strippers. Later on in life I started dating, and Valentine's Day actually became an opportunity to not just express love, but also to have sex. My current boyfriend and I went one further - we celebrate our

anniversary on Valentine's Day (although technically, we got together the day before).

Thanks to the digital age, Valentine's cards are more popular than ever because it is now possible to find them and send them absolutely free. Just do a Google search and you can find a card to suit every occasion. There are themed cards using characters and dialogue from *The Simpsons*, *Star Wars*, *Game of Thrones*, *Harry Potter*, even the *WWE*. I adore professional wrestling-themed Valentine's Day cards. My favourite is of Hulk Hogan screaming "Be Mine!" Who could resist a declaration like that? But why stop at fictional characters? People who are into historical figures will love the Valentine designs from illustrator Ben Kring using famous people as the punchline. Hands down, the weirdest one is of Hitler saying, "Be mein", but be careful to whom you send that one to.

Giving someone a Valentine can be a gesture of love and kindness, an opportunity to indicate a romantic interest, or the ultimate ass kiss. Regardless, we all benefit from a bit of warmth and good cheer in the middle of the year's coldest month. And even if you are currently single and bitter, use Valentine's Day as an opportunity to give yourself roses and chocolates. Or just go to the baths. I guarantee they will be full that day.

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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A KODAK MOMENT Max Denley

BY BOYD KODAK

Max Denley lives in Toronto and works as the Director of Facilitation for The Get REAL Movement, where he is able to share his personal journey of perseverance and self-discovery through mental illness and transition for the purpose of energizing LGBTQ+ youth and their allies to embrace their own stories. The 24-year-old is also a talented musician, athlete, and dog lover.

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

Max Denley - I've been working as the Director of Facilitation for the youth-focused non-profit organization, The Get REAL Movement. We offer inclusivity workshops and leadership development through our chapter programs across North America. Our programming aims to break down prejudice, promote unity, and foster compassion in our world. I hope that my openness and vulnerability lets kids see that trans people are not that different than they are, and also allows trans students to see a relatable role model that I was missing in school.

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

MD - Speaking at my old high school was a pretty exciting moment for me both professionally and personally. The visit inspired a lot of self-reflection on my own journey, who I was in high school and how far I have come since. We also launched our new after-school program for LGBTQ+ and ally youth in the Toronto area this past fall, and that has been a very exciting process to be a part of.

BK - What are you looking forward to over the next year?

MD - Continuing to reach more students across the country through the workshop program, and building/expanding the after-school program further. Some of the best parts of doing what we do is getting to see Canada and meet people from all over. So many unique people with meaningful stories to share.

BK - Where can we see your work?

MD - Get REAL's website is www.thegetrealmovement.ca, and we are also on social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter (@getrealmovement.) Personally, I am quite



Photo: Ryan Bolton

active on Instagram (@tothemax). I can also be reached at max.denley@thegetrealmovement.com

BK - Future plans?

MD - I hope to continue to spread Get REAL's message of kindness and inclusion, and live by those values in my own life as well, and see where that takes me!

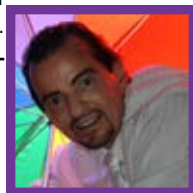
BK - Any message you would like to put out there?

MD - At the end of the day, we may not completely understand everything someone else is feeling or experiencing, but we can still be kind. I think that's so important to remember when it comes to anything that may seem "different" than what we personally know or understand. Different does not equal bad or harmful, and we are all human. It's so much easier to just be kind to one another.

BK - Life wouldn't be the same without?

MD - My dog! I'm a huge dog person and my dog is a major part of my life.

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



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OUT ON THE DANFORTH



Size Matters, Smaller IS Better

Gone are the days of the massive, over-priced mega parties, concert venues and over-the-top theatrical events. While the larger-than-life night out still has its place, it seems to have reached its peak long ago. Today, smaller venues are attracting big crowds who are looking for a few hours of entertainment without breaking the bank.

Don't get me wrong, I love large venues like the Air Canada Centre (ACC), but the price tag coupled with the effort to get there makes it less appealing as a regular entertainment option. The **Danforth Music Hall** may be small in comparison, but as an event venue they host big name diva's, drag queens and bands for a fraction of a big ticket concert. Catch the hottest girls from RuPaul's Drag Race like the upcoming *Bianca Del Rio* (Mar 20), and musical acts like *Bananarama* (Feb 23), *OMD* (Mar 12) and *Why Don't We* (Apr 14). The recently opened **Danforth Sidebar** is adjacent to the Music Hall, and owned by the same team, making it the perfect spot to begin or continue your entertaining evening.

Just across the street is **The Social Capital** which is tucked away on the third floor above **The Black Swan**, where you can enjoy comedy, improv and all things funny. If you love it enough, they also offer comedy classes so you can hold your own show. A little farther east is **Coal Mine Theatre**, Toronto's answer to the Off-Off-Broadway experience. With only eighty seats they continually curate a compelling selection of new works. Founded by Ted Dykstra (founding member of Soulpepper Theatre, and co-creator of "2 Pianos, 4 Hands"), and Diana Bentley (12 Monkeys, and Soulpepper's, Our Town).

Farther east still is **Relish Bar & Grill** which is a live musicians venue. Hosting a cabaret style stage, the Relish experience can be as intimate as it is energetic. Twenty-one beers on tap and a menu created by a New York trained chef. Owner Joanne Clayton has been running the place for over thirteen years and is a veteran in the food and entertainment industry. Like many smaller venues, her decision to offer live music (currently eleven shows per week) was in an effort to offset revenues from just operating a restaurant. Likewise, her choice to hire musicians has created a symbiotic relationship whereby both benefit. As Joanne explains "I think it's very hard to make a living as just a restaurant. It's also hard to make a living as just a musician, so this allows everyone to be able to follow their passion and have a job as well."

Danforth Music Hall	www.thedanforth.com
Danforth Sidebar	www.danforthisidebar.com
The Social Capital	www.socap.ca
Coal Mine Theatre	www.coalminetheatre.com
Relish Bar and Grill	www.relishbarandgrill.com

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.



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The UPS Store



By Sherry Sylvain

Men's ASS Contest & Show

Fridays from 8:00 p.m.

Georgie Girl hosts Woody's Men's ASS Contest & Show with special guests and DJ Chris Steinbach. \$300 cash prizes, Steamworks Toronto Giveaways, and no cover charge.

Woodys & Sailor, 467 Church St., Toronto
www.woodystoronto.com

Sensational Saturdays

Saturdays from 6:30 p.m.

630pm – Michelle Ross & special guest Carlotta Carlisle; 830pm – Devine Darlin, Jada Hudson & Tynomi Banks; 1130pm – Ivory Towers & Katherine Hytes Dior. Dancing in Tangos and The Zone.

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

OMG - The Saturday Night Drag Show

Saturdays from 11:00 p.m.

Join your hosts every Saturday Night from 11:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. and enjoy their fun and amazing show – various performers.

O'Grady's, 518 Church St., Toronto
www.ogradyschurch.com/

Bear Day Sunday Social

Sundays from 4:00 p.m.

\$5 Steamwhistle; \$5 Mixed Drinks; Half Priced Wings; Beers and Bears. Amazing retro music with KYLE hosting.

The Lodge, 518 Church St. (second floor), Toronto
www.thelodgetoronto.com/



Marvelous Mondays

Mondays from 9:00 p.m.

9PM – Glitz & Glam – Carlotta Carlisle & Katinka Kature dazzle; 1130PM – Allysin Chaynes dominates the stage with special guest(s)

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

Tuneful Tuesdays

Tuesdays, 9:00 p.m. to midnight

Natasha Buckeridge and Philippe Escayola every Tuesday from 9pm till 12pm covering all genres. No cover charge.

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

HUMP NIGHT Honeyes

Wednesdays from 11:00 p.m.

Carlotta Carlisle and Katinka Kature welcome special guests with Low Day Prices ALL Night Long! CLASSY Talent and SASSY Prices

Woodys & Sailor, 467 Church St., Toronto
www.woodystoronto.com

Jock Night Thursdays

Thursdays from 8:00 p.m.

DJ dJon in the booth at 8 PM, prizes and surprises with your hostess Morgan James at 10 PM. Drink specials, hot dancers, a witty and beautiful hostess sponsored by Jockstrap Central.

Flash On Church, 463 Church St., Toronto
www.jockstrapcentral.com/

Sexual Awakening: A 90s RnB Burlesque Tribute

February 25, 7:00 p.m.

A burlesque show tribute to 90s R&B love and sex jams. Indulge in an evening of sultry, sexy & stimulating burlesque performances set to the best R&B songs of the 90s.

ROUND Venue, 152a Augusta Ave., Toronto
www.roundvenue.com

Bianca Del Rio: Blame It On Bianca

March 20, 7:00 p.m.

She's always been hysterical, but this show really spotlights the queen's ability to sculpt jokes out of thin air just by observing her surroundings and the poor, unfortunate souls sitting close by in the crowd.

Danforth Music Hall, 147 Danforth Ave., Toronto
www.ticketmaster.com/



CHARITY BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain



TICOT Brunch

Sundays, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A weekly brunch show featuring an open stage and varying themes. All performers donate their time and their tips to help raise funds for the charities of Reign 31 of The Imperial Court Of Toronto.

Church Street Garage, 477 Church St., Toronto
www.ticot.ca

Regal Beagle Bingo

March 4/ April 4/ 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Join Randy Spearhead for an early evening of Bingo. Drink purchase gets you 1 bingo card - capped at 4 cards per patron. Raffle. Proceeds to Imperial Court Reign 31's charities.

The Black Eagle Toronto, 457 Church St., Toronto
www.ticot.ca

TICOT Drag Bingo

February 25/ March 25/ , 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Join The Imperial Court of Toronto on the last Sunday of each month as they present "TICOT Drag Bingo" with a variety of hosts and special guests. Proceeds go towards the Reign 31 Charities.

Flash On Church, 463 Church St., Toronto
www.ticot.ca



CD Release For Mental Health

March 4, 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Tree of Stars- CD Release Fundraiser. 13 Artists- "lending a song" and raising funds for an album to give 100% to St Joesph Foundation "Youth Wellness Centre".

Tracie's Place Restaurant and Karaoke, 592 Upper James St., Hamilton
www.bruha.com/event/2615



GENERAL BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain

GTA Home & Reno Show

February 16 through 19

Innovative products and great advice from real pros. Scratch a few things off your to-do list, with all the advice and inspiration you need waiting for you at the show.

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga
<https://gtahomeandrenoshow.com/>

The Wizard of Oz with Live Orchestra

February 17 @ 7:30 p.m.; February 18 @ 3:00 p.m.

Journey over the rainbow and down the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City. Every scene of this classic movie's timeless enchantment is enriched with the unique glories of a live orchestra.

Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St., Toronto
www.tso.ca



Rock of Ages

February 22 to March 3

This totally awesome 80s musical features hits such as Don't Stop Believin', We Built This City, The Final Countdown, Here I Go Again, and many more.

Fallsview Casino, 6380 Fallsview Blvd., Niagara Falls
www.fallsviewcasinoresort.com

Toronto Golf & Travel Show

February 23 to 25

The largest golf event in Canada bringing thousands of golf enthusiasts together. Hundreds of exhibitors, product demonstrations from the top brands and lessons from PGA of Ontario professionals.

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga
www.torontogolfshow.com/

Outdoor Adventure Show

February 23 to 25

Explore Canada's largest Outdoor Adventure Show, presented by Ontario Travel, offering pre-season deals on the newest outdoor gear and amazing travel destinations.

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga
www.outdooradventureshow.ca/

Celebrate Toronto Festival

March 3 to 6

The 4-day festival will include vendors, shopping, food trucks, interactive activities, DJ skate party, and the annual photography competition.

Nathan Phillips Square, 100 Queen St. W., Toronto
<http://celebratetoronto.ca/>

Arrival from Sweden: The Music of ABBA

March 9 and 10

The world's top ABBA tribute band, and the only band with exclusive rights to the ABBA name and original hits, such as "Mamma Mia", "Chiquitita", "Take a Chance on Me", "Waterloo", and many more.

Casino Rama Resort, 5899 Rama Rd., Orillia
www.casinorama.com/

Canada Blooms and National Home Show

March 9 to 18

Canada Blooms is the largest flower and garden festival in the country, celebrating the very best in Canadian gardening and floral design. The National Home Show is the largest North American display of innovative products, new ideas and great deals for all things home and garden, with over 800 retailers & industry experts.

Energize Centre, 100 Princes' Blvd., Toronto
www.canadablooms.com/ www.torontohomeshows.com/

Motorama Custom Car & Motorsports Expo

March 9 to 11, from 10:00 a.m. daily

The biggest of its kind in Canada, featuring incredible custom cars, hot rods, classics, rat rods, tuners and imports, exotics and racing vehicles from across the spectrum of Canadian motorsports.

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga
www.motoramashow.com

JAWS in Concert

March 21 to 23

The thriller movie that emptied beaches in 1975 and became the first summer mega-blockbuster, rises to a whole new level of suspense when the TSO performs the iconic score live with the film.

Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St., Toronto
www.roythomsonhall.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).



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