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The Editor

Greetings and salutations!

If you haven't already noticed, that's **Brooke Lynn Hytes** on the cover of our drag-themed issue. That's right, Canada's Queen of the Scene! This Toronto born darling made history by becoming the first ever Canadian queen to appear on **RuPaul's Drag Race**. Much like sports crazed fans rooting for their beloved Jays or Leafs, RuPaul viewers were 100% behind Ms. Hytes, cheering her on loud and proud throughout the competition. theBUZZ had a chance to catch up with our hometown hero to find out how she went from the stages of Toronto bars to the screens of national television.

Our second feature is on the lovely and legendary, **Mado Lamotte**. Hailing from Montreal, this reigning queen has been entertaining audiences worldwide for more than three decades. Her ever popular **Cabaret Mado** celebrates its 17th anniversary on May 2nd, and her latest venture, the recently opened **La Dinette à Mado**, celebrates its first anniversary in business on May 4th. Two great reasons to plan a road trip to *la belle province de Quebec* this spring.

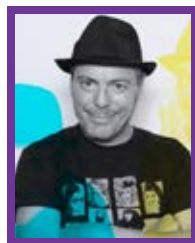
As well, our guest Wiggged Out columnist is **ZackKey Lime**, who gives us a behind the scenes look at the world of Drag Kings. Our regular columnists have outdone themselves once again as Cat Grant speaks with visual artist **Kim Atlin** about her latest works now on display in Toronto, Boyd Kodak chats with **Pretty Rikki** about all the great community work they are doing, Paul Bellini discusses his own drag history from meeting legends to donning a wig, and Raymond Helkio spotlights Oshawa's **Club 717**, a landmark community institution that's more than just a bar.

As always, be sure to check out our back side of BUZZpicks, where you'll find an eclectic mix of events from Toronto and beyond, all compiled by our Events Editor, Sherry Sylvain. Finally, you wouldn't be reading this if it wasn't for the design work of Mychol Scully.

Thanks for picking us up. Enjoy the read!

Bryen Dunn

Editor-in-Chief



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Queen of the North Brooke Lynn Hytes

Toronto's Brooke Lynn Hytes is the first-ever Canadian Drag Queen on RuPaul's Drag Race

It's been ten years of *RuPaul's Drag Race* on OUTtv (here in Canada), and throughout the entire decade we've been gagged with "Charisma, Uniqueness, Nerve and Talent!"

There have been ups, downs, spinoffs and knockoffs, but the complicated, star-studded, and often controversial reality competition had yet to ever see even one queen from the Great White North.

Now, as the show enters its second decade, Canada *finally* shantays into the workroom, and our glowing

hearts are a flutter by the crowned Canuck herself, the talented and beautiful **Ms. Brooke Lynn Hytes**, from Toronto, Ontario, Canada. *Represent!*

You may have heard it before, but that's because it's true - Canada boasts some of *the best* drag queens in the world. From Vancouver to Toronto and Montreal, the drag scene here is inspiring, diverse and outrageous, in all the best ways, and many Canadian queens regularly perform across the globe! So when Ms. Hytes walked into the workroom as a sparkling Canadian Mountie, northern drag finally got the recognition it deserved, on the biggest stage in Drag Herstory.

Brock Hayhoe, aka Brooke Lynn Hytes, hails from the Toronto suburb of Etobicoke. Growing up, Brock excelled in ballet, and has even expressed how the art form influenced his style of drag. "I've been able to use my [ballet] skills in drag and that gives me an edge," Hytes says, "because no one else is able to bring that to the table right now. My skills from ballet have been my main influence in drag, and I also draw a lot of inspiration from Las Vegas showgirls and supermodels from the 90's, such as Kate Moss and Shalom Harlow."

Brooke Lynn looks like a supermodel herself, but the road to drag perfection is a long one. Every drag superstar has their first moment in drag, so I asked her how that compared to that first day on the set of *RuPaul's Drag Race Season 11*.

"Both were probably equally terrifying," she begins. "The first time I walked out of my apartment in drag was one of the scariest moments of my life, and also one of the most thrilling. I had to walk 100 feet to the bar. I was so nervous and excited, and I had a feeling that this was going to be a part of my life for a long time. Then walking into the [*RuPaul's Drag Race*] workroom for the first time, I was also nervous and excited, and I had that feeling it was going to be a part of my life for a long time again."

There's no doubt about that, and Canada is here for every last bit of what Brooke Lynn Hytes is serving, but how did she grow in between those two milestones? "The first time I did drag I wasn't wearing eyelashes or a wig, so I've grown quite a bit," she laughs. "I've grown as a person, in my sense of style and sense of self. Everything has improved!"

Many people in Toronto remember seeing Brooke Lynn at the local drag bars in Toronto, and many of them have their favourite moments and performances of hers to choose from. During that time, she was mastering her craft, and she shares some of her personal favourite moments on how they helped prepare her for the biggest drag stage in the world.

"One of my favourite moments in Toronto was when I won my first contest. It was the 'Queen of Halloween' at *Woody's*. That's where I won my first crown! Another moment was when I won a crown at *El Convento Rico*. Those were two of my biggest defining moments, and that is what ultimately brought me to the stage," she states.

In 2013, Brooke Lynn also won the legendary *Miss Continental Pageant*, a competition she says taught her the importance of punctuality. "Something I brought to the pageant that I still practice, is my punctuality. One of the most important things is being on time and valuing other people's time. I hate being late, and the *Miss Continental Pageant* is known for starting right on time. I have carried





that with me throughout my career - being punctual and professional!"

Shortly after winning the *Miss Continental Pageant*, she made the move to Nashville, Tennessee, where she currently resides and works. Curiosity got the best of us and we asked her how the drag scene in Nashville compares to Toronto.

"I moved to Nashville because I was offered a job - it wasn't a choice. Otherwise, I wouldn't have lived there," she explains, "but I like Nashville because it is a big city with a small town feel. It has a laid back southern charm, yet has the hustle and bustle of the big city at the same time. I dislike the number of bachelorette parties that are here though," she laughs.

"The one thing Toronto and Nashville have in common is the vibrant nightlife scenes. Other than that, the two cities do not compare at all, because they are super different. It is apples and oranges. The drag in Nashville and Toronto

are also very different. Nashville is southern show drag, and Toronto is more known for marathon drag," she explains.

And when Brooke Lynn is out of drag, what does Brock Hayhoe get up to? "I love sleeping!" she says, kidding, but also dead serious. "I like working out. I love doing yoga and pilates. I love going to the beach. I'm a Pisces, so anything having to do with water. I like to travel to visit friends. I go to South Africa once a year to visit my friend, so I really enjoy travelling! But I'm very lowkey and chill. I just like to relax and be with friends."

Brooke Lynn Hytes won the main challenge in the first episode of Season 11 and her prize was a week's vacation in Paris! Fitting, considering how much she loves to travel. Coincidentally, Nashville native **Miley Cyrus** was the special guest judge in the first episode. Miley being someone all the queens were excited to meet, I asked who Brooke Lynn's personal favourite artists are.

"As far as music," she begins, "I love **Annie Lennox** and **Beyoncé**! Beyoncé is such a good performer and has such ferocity when she's on stage. She has an animal attack and I love it. When it comes to showgirls, I love **Sasha Colby**. She also has ferocious energy that really inspires me."

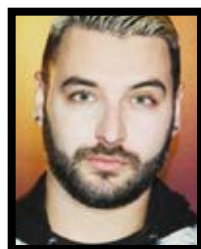
Anyone who has seen Brooke Lynn Hytes perform can see where Beyoncé and Las Vegas showgirls have inspired her, and fans were able to see more of her own ferocity on Season 11. But, after everyone sashays away and a sole queen (hopefully Brooke Lynn) is crowned, where does Queen Hytes see herself as a performer? What else does the "Queen of the North" have in store for us?

"Drag Race has been my dream and goal for like ten years, so I don't really know what's going to happen next," Brooke says honestly. "I want to do everything - movies, television and Broadway. I am not putting any limitations on myself. I am open to anything that comes my way. I want to take this opportunity and run with it. The sky's the limit for me!"

www.brookelynnhytes.com

All photos courtesy of VH!

Joey Viola is the Co-Founder of MoJo Toronto and an LGBTQ community leader who utilizes his passion and flair for the art of writing by bringing a fresh perspective in reviewing entertainment and advocating for equality, tolerance, and social/political justice.



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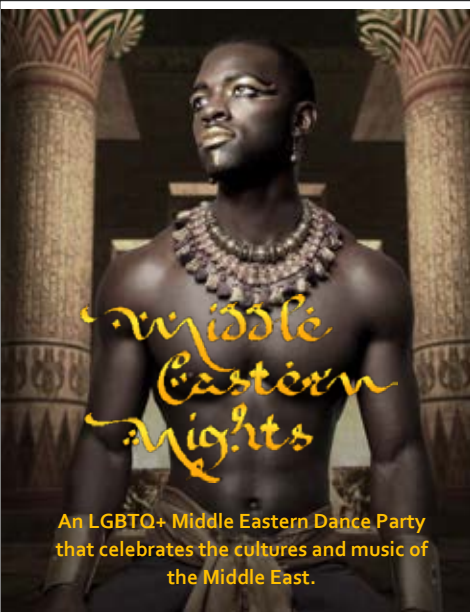
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MADO

Montreal's Legendary Drag Personality

By Bryen Dunn

Walking east along Montreal's Ste. Catherine Street, it becomes quite obvious when one arrives to the "gay village" area. Pink streamers are strewn atop the street, which is closed to traffic during summer months, and rainbow flags are proudly displayed in many local businesses.

Then, there's the eye-catching sculpture designed by artist **Paul Colpron** protruding above **Cabaret Mado**, that seems to explode out onto the street perched high above the crowds. This is where legendary hometown queen, **Mado Lamotte**, makes her magic happen all year round.

Mado is more than a drag queen. She's a performer and entertainer first and foremost, as well as a host, comedian, talent booker, promoter, and business entrepreneur. According

to **Luc Provost**, Mado's personality and character began to develop back in the late 1980s when, "my sister Nicole and I use to dress up for fun on the weekends, and it would take us two hours to get ready." Eventually, Mado rose to existence based on a *Weight Watchers* ad that featured a woman by the name of Madeline Ash, who had a very high pitched voice. "We were the two tacky sisters, and I never thought I'd still be doing this today, or I might have thought of a better name to use," he laughs. After stints as a dancer at *Poodle*, and a cigarette girl at *Le Léopard*, he likely never thought he'd have a life-sized wax figure of Mado at Montreal's *Grevin Museum* either!

Cabaret Mado is an experience for anyone planning a visit to Montreal. An orchestrated showcase is presented nightly, with the top queens from the city performing on a regular basis, along with national and international queens. RuPaul's first Canadian performer on the show, **Brooke Lynn Hytes** (our cover feature) performed there in March, as Mado explained, "Every few months we book a RuPaul queen as a special guest." She also divulged that she no longer watches the show after her favourite, **Bianca Del Rio**, won. "It's all about what

happens after the show, and she's doing well as a performer, touring the world playing stadium size shows."

While Mado can still be found on stage most weekends at the Cabaret, it's her local gals who keep things happening on a regular basis. Queens such as *Tracey Trash*, *Rita Baga*, and *Manny* are regularly featured, along with Vancouver's *Jane Smoker*. Last year, Mado partnered with two other individuals to open a small diner adjacent to the Cabaret. **La Dinette à Mado** is a mix of French Bistro and Quebec Cuisine and makes for the perfect spot to grab a bite before seeing the Cabaret show. Reservations can be made for both, and Mado advised, "there are drag queens at *La Dinette* as well on Tuesdays, and we're looking at possibly doing a Drag Brunch in the summer."

Mado has also dabbled in a few other endeavours as well over the years, including releasing a successful dance single, *Le Rap à Mini-Fée*, back in 1996, starred in a commercial for Quebec potato-chip brand, *Yum Yum*, and hosted her own show at *Just For Laughs Montreal*, called *Mado's Got Talent*, for the past five consecutive years. "I look at it as my own place, my own theatre, as I'm the host and creator of this event. This year, the new production team are going to change the name to be more reflective of the cabaret-format mix of drag, singers, and comedians," she says.

When not entertaining crowds in Montreal, Mado is jet-setting around the world, presenting her one-woman wonders to French speaking audiences in France, Switzerland, and Belgium. This spring she's performing her new, "Quebec Invades France", spectacle, a homage to the Québécois entertainers who have been embraced by French Europeans over the years.

When not performing, or working on his next Mado production, Luc likes to trek about the city enjoying the *joie-de-vivre* that Montreal has to offer. "I like shopping at Jean-Talon Market, and strolling around Little Italy. My roots are Italian, and going here feels like I'm travelling around the world. There's great food, and lot's of good looking men!" he says. Living in "the village", he also name drops a couple of local spots he likes to hang out at. "For playing pool, I like the *Black Eagle*, and for singing, there's no place better than the karaoke bar, *Taverne Normandie*," he states.

So what's next for Montreal's reigning queen? "Possibly a comedy or Christmas album," she confides. With all that she's done, and her continued exuberance and creativity, I'm sure at least one of these will eventually happen. Be sure to check out her upcoming anniversary celebrations below as well.

La Dinette à Mado - 1st Anniversary – May 4
www.ladinetteamado.com

Cabaret Mado - 17th Anniversary - May 2
www.mado.qc.ca



Photo: Étienne Dicaire

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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WIGGED OUT

BY ZACKEY LIME

STORY-TELLING: A DRAG KING'S PERSPECTIVE

It has officially been one year since I started performing as a Drag King, and my how things have changed!

I wish I knew then what I know now, but at the same time, I don't. Because really, it's all about the journey; and like anything in this life, improvement requires repetition.

As a new performer, I learned more from doing my act onstage before it was *ready* than I could have ever learned from rehearsing it a million times at home. By attending other performer's shows, and getting up onstage, I began to learn and envision how I could engage the audience and elicit an emotional response.

However, it took time to find my niche in drag. I define this kind of niche as an area of strength, one that is both passionate and challenging. As I began to realize myself as an actor, I also realized that my niche in drag was story-telling, which has roots in many art forms (like, stand-up comedy, writing, burlesque, to name a few). When done properly, story-telling is engaging and emotional for the audience. If you're a new drag artist and story-telling resonates with you, read on as I dive a little deeper.

First, you must choose a song (or mix of songs) that you love and can tell a story with. Think about what story you want to tell or the message you want to get across. Envision what this could look like paired with your song. Then, you can divide the song up into a beginning, middle, and end. Having this outline will make your act feel much less daunting. It doesn't matter whether the journey you go on is mundane, political, or emotional, as long as it's something you're passionate about. A performance is an exchange of energy, so if you're passionate about something the audience is more likely to be passionate about it too.

Once you have your song and your outline, you can start thinking about movement. "But I'm not a dancer," you might protest. I'm not a dancer, but dance classes did help me gain confidence moving on stage. Here's a secret, it's actually not about dancing, it's about intentional movement. How does your movement help tell your story? Where are the hard, slow, and fast beats in the song, and how does your movement correlate? If you feel inclined, I highly recommend taking a few



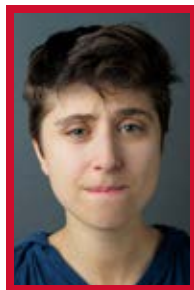
classes. Plus, dancing is a beautiful art form, and an entire niche in itself.

Lastly, let's talk about stillness. There's a lot of power in standing still. When you are bouncing around stage the whole time, the audience doesn't have a chance to drink you in. Like a dash of salt, moments of stillness can tie a whole performance together. According to your song, you can choose the right moments, stand still, and feel how powerful you are.

Finally, be excited to succeed, excited to fail, and excited for every performance. Because with every performance, you'll learn something new. You'll never stop learning, and that's the beauty of drag

Zackey Lime is a Drag King performer and producer based in Toronto. He is the Founding Father of House of Kings, and also the host of the only monthly King Brunch in Canada, held at Glad Day Bookshop. Zackey has performed in Montreal and Austin, and will be appearing in Season 3 of the International YouTube Drag King Competition, King Me: Rise of a Drag King!

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Kim Atlin

As a young girl, fine artist Kim Atlin had difficulty in school due to her dyslexia.

Raised within a family of voracious readers, she coped by always making things. "It took me quite a while to learn to read and write, which is what probably pushed me towards other modes of expression," she says.

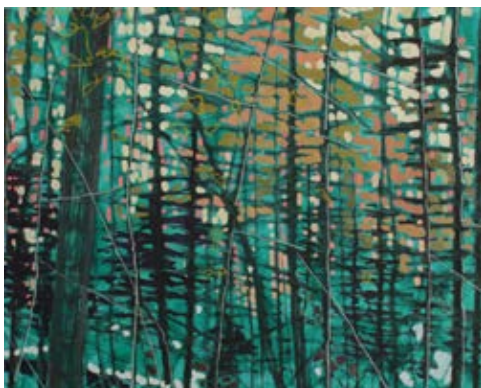
Kim was inspired by her high school Special Education teacher, Mark Davidson, who believed she could do anything and worked hard to convince her and help her conquer the dyslexia. She liked the work of *Van Gogh*, *Mark Rothko*, *Monet*, and *Edvard Munch*, and decided to go to *The Ontario College of Art*. "I just wanted to immerse myself in art and art making. I was in general studies with a focus on printmaking and experimental art," she explains.

After graduation Kim took a painting class taught by Tom Dean. "His response to the notion that painting was dead was fantastic! After that I was off. I liked the immediacy of painting after years of printmaking." Her style is reflective of abstract landscapes, and her preference is to use oil paint. "There's a richness and variety of textures that I can't seem to replicate with acrylics," she confides.

She's since gone on to exhibit in group shows in Toronto, St. John, New York City, and Palm Desert, and her most recent solo shows have taken place at *Bugera Matheson Gallery* (Edmonton), and *Parts Gallery* (Toronto). Her work can also be found in the Ontario Government's Collection, OCAD's Printmaking Collection, Ontario Archives, National Archives, and Canada's Icelandic Embassy. As well, her paintings are held in numerous private and corporate collections throughout Canada, United States, United Kingdom, France, Chile, Iceland, and New Zealand.

Most recently Kim enjoys painting urban gardens. "The confluence of natural chaos and vibrant urban activity has really excited me. I spend a fair amount of time down at my allotment garden near the Leslie Spit, and I really enjoy the different sort of chaos that comes from mankind trying to tame nature even within the heart of a large city like Toronto. I find it inspiring how nature prevails despite the odds. Which is not to say that I enjoy the title that the variety of rodents take from my garden, but as long as they share, I'm good," she laughs.

Revisiting forest interiors has Kim enthusiastic now. "The architecture of the forest and the trees, as well as the light



and motion, has been captivating me. I once did a camping trip up in Algonquin Park at Halloween, and it was so visually arresting, with the combination of last leaves and first snow," she recalls.

Kim's advice to a young artist? "Don't be too precious. Embrace the screw ups, and ask questions of established artists who are doing it," she proclaims

Kim has an exhibition of her current works on display now at the Dianna Witte Gallery in Toronto, running until April 28th. www.kimatlin.com

Cat Grant (OCAD) is a multidisciplinary fine artist, with a focus on photography, multimedia portraiture, and illustrating children's books. She's also a published poet, and senior reporter for *On the Couch* LGBTQ TV show. Facebook @grantedarts



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Jade Elektra DJ Relentless

TORONTO - NEW YORK



**RELENTLESS
ENTERTAINMENT**

RANDOM MUSINGS ON 'DRAG'

I'm not a drag performer, but I've done drag.

1. A distant memory from my eighth year is my uncle dressing me up in my grandmother's clothes and sending me into the living room to show everyone. "What are you doing, you idiot!" "Take that stuff off. Are you crazy?" "My nice dress!" Needless to say, the hostile reaction didn't encourage me to attempt drag again, until thirty years later.
2. I did drag a few times when I was younger, under the name Candida Bove. I looked a lot like Ricki Lake in the 1988 version of *Hairspray* - big-boned, ebullient, zaftig.
3. Speaking of *Hairspray*, there's no underestimating the world's reaction to Divine. Drag had never been so dangerous. Before Divine we had Milton Berle and Charlie's Aunt. After Divine, we had chaos and spectacle. I saw Divine live at a small club just behind City Hall. She tossed LPs into the crowd as she sang. One of them hit me on the head. She literally dropped the mike, walked off the stage and out a fire exit door while the backing track of the last song continued to play. It was perfection. She was dead a year later.
4. The other greatest show ever? Craig Russell at Oz, doing a low rent greatest hits show to a 5 PM crowd, for some insane reason. He was 'on', slipping effortlessly from Barbra Streisand to Carol Channing, and Judy Garland to Ella Fitzgerald. All the while berating some poor guy who dared to go to the washroom during the show. We scrawled a fan note on an empty cigarette pack and slipped it under his dressing room door. He was dead a year later.
5. So many local favorites, like Heroine Marks, Michelle DuBarry, and Miss Conception. Watching Miss C do her cartwheels poolside at Cedars Campground - actually, everything Miss Conception did - was remarkable.
6. My favourite drag show ever took place at Woody's one Sunday afternoon around March 2014. On the bill - Daytona Bitch and Donnarama. Both were utterly hilarious, and neither was afraid to be gloriously tasteless. Daytona did a breathtaking

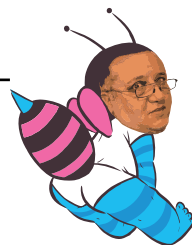


Reba McEntire impersonation, and Donnarama dressed as Angelina Jolie at the Oscars. It's still one of the funniest shows I've ever seen.

7. Patti Aldridge invited me to her store, Take A Walk on the Wild Side, to get dressed up a few years ago. By then I was too old to look like Ricki Lake. I looked more like some drunken slag with loose morals. So, you know, basically, just me, in a wig.
8. Once, I wrote an article about how screechy drag queens are on a live mike. The producers of a local chat show wanted me to defend this shaky position against the likes of Terri Stevens, Enza Anderson, and Sky Gilbert as Jane. Needless to say, I was no match for all that sass, and I spent most of the show cowering. In hindsight, I'll bet I could have held my own with those bitches ... if only I had been in drag at the time.

So ya, my life has been a drag.

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 Pretty Rikki

BY BOYD KODAK

Pretty Rikki (He/They) is the founder of *East King Productions*, and is focused on hosting, producing, creating, and maintaining safer, inclusive spaces for the LGBTQ+ community.

Boyd Kodak - Tell us a bit about what you've been doing.

Pretty Rikki - For the last few years, I've been working on producing my monthly event called *Kings and Classics*, which is a Drag King and Gender Performer show. It features special guest performers, including burlesque (and all the lesques), drag queens, singers and dancers, and whatever other type of art form you feel most comfortable expressing. I also produce and co-host an event called *EMBRACE* which is a Trans and Queer positive (all ages) open-mic night that has recently moved to Glad Day Bookshop.. There is also a new show called *House of Kings*, that is produced by ZackKey Lime, and is sponsored by East King Productions.

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

PR - I truly enjoy each event that I host or produce, because of our amazing community. If I was to pick just one, it would have to be my two-year anniversary show of *Kings and Classics* that happened in January 2019. There was cake, huge community support, and most of all there was SO much love and positive energy in the crowd. I also recently received news that East King Productions has been nominated for the INSPIRE Awards 2019 LGBTQ Positive Business of The Year.

BK - Where can we see your work?

PR - You can catch my work at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre for *Kings and Classics*, and also for *EMBRACE*, which is the last Wednesday of every month. You can also catch me for the third year in a row hosting and curating the Drag King and Gender Performer stages during Pride Toronto. Follow me and East King Productions on Facebook and Instagram for updates and shows, and House of Kings can also be found and followed on Facebook.



BK - Future plans?

PR - My plans are to complete my new projects, making sure they are released in a timely matter, and continue to provide space and support for our community of Kings and Gender Performers.

BK - If you could have three wishes, what would they be?

PR - My first wish would be for Kings and Gender Performers to have as much visibility as Queens, and to be recognized for the constant hard work and vulnerability they show on stage.

Second, for venues to start paying Drag Kings and Gender Performers. Queens get paid by venues to perform, where Kings and Gender Performers have to pay the venues for the space to perform. The third would have to be that both of my first two wishes come true! LOL

BK - Any final message you'd like to put out there?

PR - Contact me directly if you're interested in performing at one of my shows. Email EastKingProductions@gmail.com. Priority for performance slots is given to TQBIPOC identifying individuals.

www.facebook.com/groups/EastKingProductions

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





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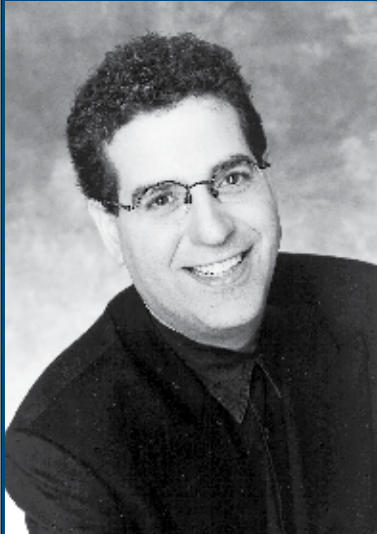
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CLUB 717 COMMUNITY, CAMARADERIE AND GOOD TIMES!

Club 717 is an LGBT venue that has been in business for over three decades in the east end of Oshawa. It also operates under the Durham Alliance Association Social Club (DAASC), a not-for-profit organization run by a Board of Directors, which has a long history of giving back to the community, and a reputation as a safe space for all.

The Club has become home to some of Durham regions fiercest queens, including the late four-time TICOT empress, **Candice Kelly**, whose outreach included outrageous performances, president of the DAASC Board, and a dedication to volunteering that was as impressive as her big heart. For many, Candice was more than a drag queen. Her energy was infectious, and it paved the way for a new generation of queens like, **Violet Seductions**, who continuously elevates the craft, pushing creativity to a whole new level.

Violet hails from Oshawa and started performing at *Club 717* seven years ago as part of an LGBT youth drag group. Along the way she has earned a reputation for larger-than-life costumes and over-the-top make-up, that could rival any of the **RuPaul** queens.

"717 is unique because it caters to all audiences in a truly safe place for people of all identities. Over the years I've seen just about every type of person and every identity under their roof, and that to me is the magical thing of inclusivity. Always welcoming, always charitable, always humble," Violet explains. More than a performer, she is also active in the community, mentoring a drag daughter and recently has been welcomed into **TroyBoy Parks** drag family, who is according to Violet, "arguably my biggest mentor at this time."

By operating as a not-for-profit, *Club 717* has fostered a community of caring people who give back more than they get, which is reflected in how the club is managed. According to current president, **Jason Allman**, the Club is currently modernizing the space, and have already added a 200" projection screen and satellite TV, and has a vision for eventually moving to a higher-visibility location. "In an ideal world, we would have outgrown our current location, moving us to a more mainstream space, and making us more accessible to the community," he says.

At the heart of *Club 717* is a community focused on creating a family of individuals who are dedicated to putting people before profits, which as Violet states, "often requires years of spending every dollar you make, and then a lot more, going back into it." Non-profit queer spaces may not be a new idea,



TICOT Empress Candice Kelly



Violet Seductions — Photo by Martina Warwick



TroyBoy Parks — Photo by Danny Guerin

but they are rare, and by opting for this structure *Club 717* is making a bold, political statement about what matters to them as an organization: community, camaraderie and good times!

Violet Seductions sums it up best, "Keep doing it as long as it makes you happy. When you're not happy with it anymore, then its time to hang-up the heels."

Club 717 (DAASC), 717 Wilson Road South, Unit # 7, Oshawa club717.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.
www.raymondhelkio.com
www.thereadingsalon.ca






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By Sherry Sylvain

BUZZ Local Picks

Our Fathers, Sons, Lovers and Little Brothers

April 11 to 18

On February 26, 2012, a 17-year-old Florida black boy wearing a hoodie leaves a 7/11 carrying a bag of Skittles and an iced tea. He never makes it home. This show looks into the infamous world of one teen.

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

Grow Op

April 17 to 21

An exhibition of art, design and ideas across a range of disciplines exploring ENERGY - clean energy, dirty energy, social energy, positive energy, negative energy, climate energy, and energy of all types.

Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W., Toronto
www.gladstonehotel.com



Laughter Luau - hosted by Rush Kazi

Fridays; 9:00 p.m.

Comedy open mic. Watch or sign up to perform. 9:00pm for sign up and doors. Show starts at 9:30pm, and it's always a blast!

Hawaii Bar 989, 989 Dovercourt Rd., Toronto
www.facebook.com/LaughterLuau

Drunken Cinema: Purple Rain - 35th Anniversary Screening on 35mm

April 20; 9:30 p.m.

Celebrate the late and great Prince's ongoing legacy by joining your hosts for an interactive movie drinking game that will involve lots of singing from the crowd and purple all around!

Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Ave., Toronto
www.revuecinema.ca

The Bazaar of the Bizarre: Circus Side Show

April 21; 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Arts, fashion and crafts that are different, interesting, weird, strange, one of a kind, macabre, whimsical, or just things to flip your brain out. All handmade, ALL CANADIAN.

Pia Bouman School for Ballet, 6 Noble St., Toronto
www.plastikwrap.com

Back Room Comedy

April 21, May 23; 8:30 p.m.

East Toronto's new Queer Comedy Showcase for Toronto's best LGBTQ comedians in a stand up comedy show that welcomes everyone. Third Thursday of every month

WAYLA, 996 Queen St. E., Toronto
www.waylabar.ca

theBUZZ magazine celebrates 5 YEARS!

April 24; 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

A Cocktail Reception to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the most loved LGBTQ entertainment magazine in local history. Networking. Appetizers. Cash Bar. Entertainment.

Woodys & Sailor, 467 Church St., Toronto
www.thebuzzmag.ca

Amazing Sci-Fi Show

April 26 & 27

Established and emerging artists will unveil hundreds of their latest creations, immortalizing spaced-out heroes, quirky robots, bizarre aliens and galactic beauties wearing silver bikinis.

Super Wonder Gallery, 584 College St., Toronto
www.superwondergallery.com

National Geographic Live: Hilaree O'Neill, Mountaineer

April 28 to 30

Fall 2014: A team set out on what they knew would be a harrowing first ascent to the summit of Myanmar's Hkakabo Razi. Ms. O'Neill recounts the tough decisions made to keep the team together.

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

LateNightLive

Wednesdays; 11:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

Mandy Goodhandy hosts, accompanied by Peter Hill on piano and Alison Young on sax. Special guest singers and musicians kick this off each week followed by an open-mic for all.

120 Diner, 120 Church St., Toronto
www.120diner.com



BUZZPICKS



Regal Beagle Bingo

May 5, June 2; 4:00 pm. To 8:00 p.m.

Drink purchase gets you one (1) bingo card. There will be a raffle sale. Proceeds from this event will go to the charities of The Imperial Court of Toronto.

The Black Eagle Toronto, 457 Church St., Toronto

www.theimperialcourtoftoronto.com

Women's Adventure Film Tour

May 8; 7:30 p.m.

A celebration of the fantastic women around us who are doing extraordinary things. An evening of short films to be enjoyed by women and men of all ages.

The Royal Cinema, 608 College St., Toronto

www.theroyal.to

9th Annual INSPIRE Awards

May 24; 6:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Heartwarming awards ceremony, beautiful community performances, dancing, savory and sweet buffets, cash bar, silent auction, and a special presentation honouring women in our world.

Hart House Theatre, 7 Hart House Circle, Toronto

www.inspireawards.ca

Toronto Poutine Fest

May 24 to 26; from 11:00 a.m. daily

Featuring live music, over 50 varieties of poutine from the best food trucks across Ontario and Quebec and lots more.

Yonge-Dundas Square, 1 Dundas St. E., Toronto

www.poutinefestontour.com



Jane Siberry

May 31 to June 2

Jane Siberry is one of the world's most unique and gifted singer/songwriters, blessed with a sincere integrity and emotional depth. Jane shares the stage with Ali Hughs.

Different shows each evening.

Hugh's Room, 2261 Dundas St. W., Toronto

www.hughsroomlive.com

26th Annual Mr. & Miss Trillium Pageant

June 1; 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Contestants will vie for the titles of Mr. and Miss, to represent The Imperial Court of Toronto, and undertake responsibility for charity fundraising. Theme: Too Wong Foo.

Buddies In Bad Times Theatre, 12 Alexander St., Toronto

www.theimperialcourtoftoronto.com

An Intimate Evening with David Foster

June 4; 8:00 p.m.

The Canadian icon is embarking on his first-ever Canadian tour, performing songs from his unparalleled catalogue, accompanied by his four-piece band along with stellar guest singers.

Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St., Toronto

www.roythomsonhall.com

Luminato

June 7 to 23

Toronto's international arts festival dedicated to performance, media and visual arts, and programming that cuts across traditional art form boundaries.

Various venues across Toronto's

www.luminatofestival.com



Ghostbusters in Concert

June 8; 7:30 p.m.

Experience the two-time Oscar and Golden Globe-nominated film, screened live as an orchestra performs the Grammy-nominated score and the chart-topping theme song, "Ghostbusters."

Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, 1 Front St. E., Toronto

www.sonycentre.ca

Toronto True Crime Film Festival

June 14 and 15

A two-day film festival dedicated to true crime on the big screen and beyond. 15% of all ticket sales will be donated to charity.

Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Ave., Toronto

www.torontotruecrimefilmfestival.com

BUZZPICKS

BUZZ Road Trips

O'Cannabiz Conference & Expo

April 25 to 27; from 8:00 a.m. daily

The country's premiere cannabis business conference & expo, O'Cannabiz is a gathering of the complete Canadian and International industry - source... shop... network... and grow.

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

2019 AGH Art Sale

April 25 to 28

A four-day event that offers the opportunity to purchase works created by Canadian artists, designers and craftspeople, many from the Greater Hamilton Area and Southern Ontario. Free admission.

Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton
www.artgalleryofhamilton.com

Open Mic Night

April 25, May 23, June 20; 8:30 p.m.

Open mic - dance, sing, spoken word, rap, instrumental, poetry.... Sign up @ 8:30, show from 9:00.

Hosted by Dezz and Mo

Club 717, 7-717 Wilson Rd. S., Oshawa
www.club717.ca



The King in Concert - An Elvis Tribute

starring James Cawley

May 4; noon

Ranked the #1 Elvis impersonator in the USA by a committee of Elvis fan club presidents. Cawley's amazing voice allows the audience a chance to relive the excitement of having seen "The King" in person.

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

John Cleese "Why There Is No Hope"

May 14; 7:30 p.m.

Spend a hilarious evening with the "One and Only" John Cleese. John is a legendary comedic actor best known for: "Monty Python's Flying Circus", "Fawlty Towers", and "A Fish Called Wanda".

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

Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy

May 18; noon

Two of the world's most celebrated fiddlers, who also happen to be married, create a whirlwind performance of fiddle-driven music, dance and song.

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

Margaret Atwood: From The Handmaid's Tale to Art & Technology

May 30; 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

An evening in conversation with Dave Bidini, who will explore the themes, perception and inspiration behind her most provocative works.

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

Canadian National Showgirl Pageant

May 31 to June 2

Contestants will be competing to represent Canada this year in Daytona Beach Florida for the National Showgirl Pageant title of Showman, Showgirl, Showgirl at Large, Showman at Large and Supreme.

The Venue Peterborough, 286 George St. N., Peterborough
www.showgirlsentertainment.ca

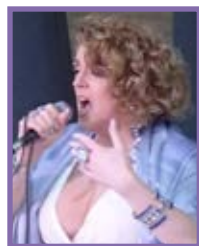
Chand Raat Grand Eid Bazaar

May 31 to June 3

30,000 sq ft hall, 100+ Vendors offering great deals on designer fashion, jewellery, shoes, bags, toys and much more. Food court and food vendors offering delicious, mouth-watering halal food.

The International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga
www.eidbazaar.ca

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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