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QUEER AS FOLK

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Reimagining Queer As Folk
A Chat with Canadian Director Stephen Dunn

Pam Ann

Comedian Prepares Toronto For Take Off



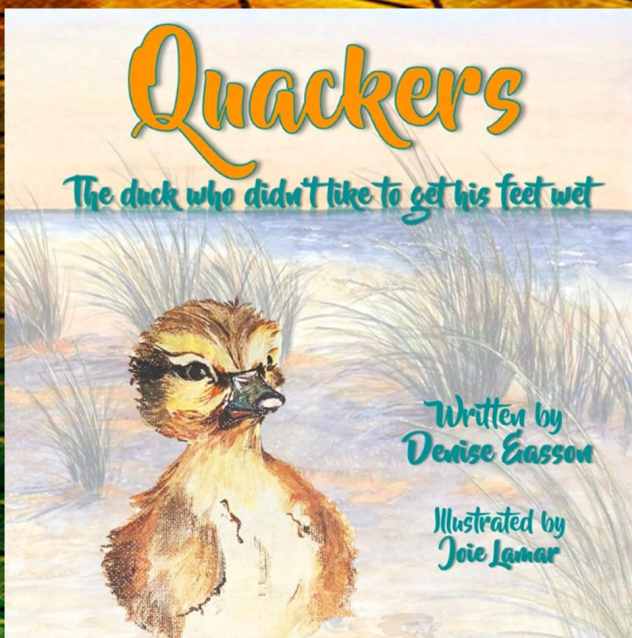
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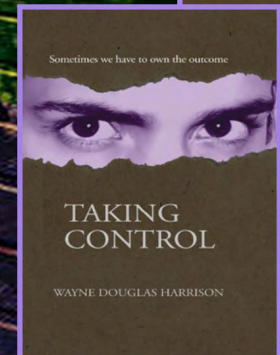
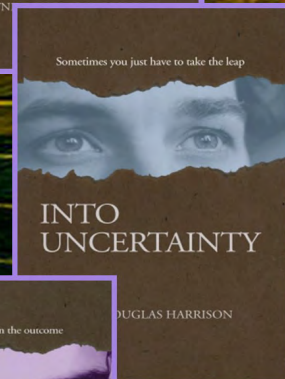
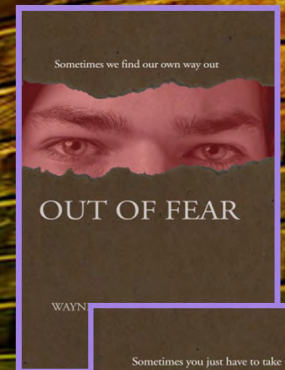
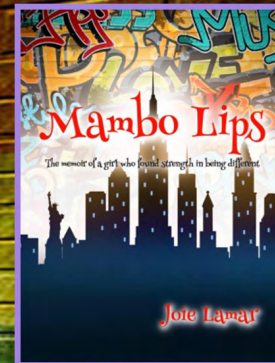


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The Editor

Greetings and Salutations,

We're here, we're queer, and Pride Month is back in the city! It's been two years without celebrations, and 2022 is ready to catch up on that missed time.

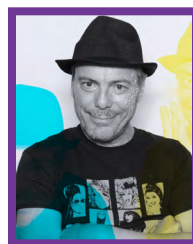
Something else we're looking forward to is the new reimagined *Queer As Folk* series, created by Canada's own **Stephen Dunn**. The Newfoundland native has propelled the groundbreaking 1999 queer classic well into the 21st century and beyond, with his progressive depiction of today's queer community that's somewhat based on his time spent living in Toronto. There's a strong cast of emerging actors, who work alongside more established names like **Kim Catrall** and **Juliette Lewis**. The show premieres on *Showcase* June 26, 2022

Our second feature is the multi-talented and hilarious, **Pam Ann**, a character created by Australian entertainer, **Caroline Reid**. Melissa MacMullin caught up with her to chat about her upcoming performance here in Toronto on June 24, 2022, and how her drag queen-esque retro air hostess look has attracted an almost cult-like queer following. Over her 25 years of performing, she's also had the likes of **Madonna** and **Elton John** show up at her shows, and she was the opening act on one of **Cher's** tours. Now's your chance to catch this witty wonder.

Our guest Wiggled Out writer is **Kali-Forni Kate**, one half of the Australian DJ Drag Duo, **Jawbreakers**, who have been climbing the music charts with their current releases. Cat Grant caught up with musician, **Rhonda Bruce**, who has opened for **Macy Gray** and **Santana**. Boyd Kodak spoke with musician/producer **Velvet Code**, who has their own record label and a big Pride event happening this month. Rolyn Chambers continues his Village street name history lesson, discovering the origins of these queer paths we now walk upon. Sherry Sylvain spoke with the new owners of **The Hayloft Dancehall** in Prince Edward County to find out what queer programming they have coming up, and she has also compiled our Event Listings of the very best Toronto and beyond has to offer.

Enjoy the read. Happy Pride!

Bryen Dunn
Editor-in-Chief



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Canadian writer/director **Stephen Dunn** is ready to bring queerness to the masses, and that includes the widest spectrum of diversity possible, in the new reimagined third incarnation of Russel T. Davies' groundbreaking 1999 *Queer As Folk* series.

Like many, he watched the original UK series, and the follow-up American version (2000-2005), in awe. Finally, a televised production that portrayed the queer community front and centre. The St. John's, Newfoundland native and Toronto transplant, is now living his dream life in Los Angeles. It was also his dream to create a modern-day *Queer As Folk* series, one that reflects today's queer sensibility.

For those unfamiliar with Dunn, his directorial debut, *Closest Monster*, won him the *Best Canadian Feature Film* award at the 2015 *Toronto International Film Festival*. The film depicts a creative and driven teenager who is desperate to escape his hometown and the haunting memories of his turbulent childhood. The cast included **Connor Jessop** (*Locke & Key*) before he came out, and Canada's legendary **Mary Walsh** (*This Hour Has 22 Minutes*). That film also caught the attention of producer **Lee Eisenberg** at the *Sundance Film Festival* that same year. The two ended up conversing and Dunn mentioned his desire to create a new *Queer As Folk* series.

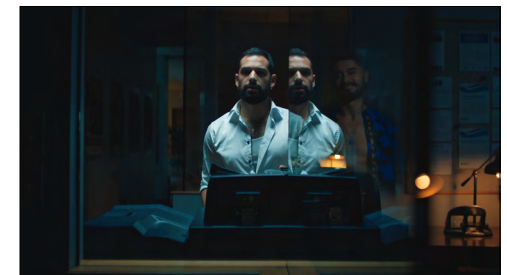
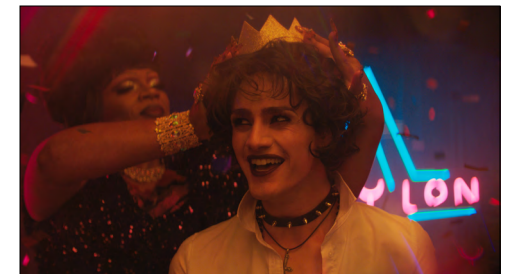
While in London, England a couple years later, he tracked down Davies to present his proposal in hopes of garnering the rights to move forward with this project. After meeting Davies, and showing him the pilot, Davies wholeheartedly gave Dunn his full approval, stating "it's a whole new show, it's yours, take it, and run with it." Dunn confesses, "It was the greatest gift ever given to me. He's my idol." Davies then worked alongside Dunn as one of the Executive Producers for the new series, that premieres here in Canada on [Showcase June 26, 2022](#).

"This show meant so much to me. It was my first exposure to queer culture and a sexual awakening. The first time I felt seen. After 20 years so much has changed, and the definition of queerness means something very different now," Dunn explains on why he was determined to bring *Queer As Folk* back in 2022.

Dunn's version takes place in New Orleans, a city he felt reflected the diverse nature of his vision for the series, as well as a city of resilience. It begins with a tragedy reminiscent of the one that transpired at Pulse nightclub in Orlando on



Canadian writer/director Stephen Dunn



June 12, 2016. "I wanted this to be reimagined as a community rebuilding after a tragedy, to make a better and safer queer space than before," Dunn explains.

He personally went to Orlando and immersed himself within a community that were impacted by the tragedy of that night. "I met with individuals and groups, did round tables and interviews with survivors and community leaders, and invited anyone to become a consultant and read scripts. It defined the tone and direction, and I used lines in the show that were directly told to me (I thought it was music at first, I forgot to pay my bar tab). I'm so honoured that they entrusted me with this information of really painful moments, and gained their trust that I would tell the story honestly."

The series is diverse in so many ways, providing a more proper representation of today's queer community than the previous two versions of their time. Race, gender, sexuality, and disability are all portrayed equally throughout, something Dunn says was important to him. In fact, most of the characters were named after his community of friends he hung out with while living in Toronto, but not based on them.

"My friend group centred around [SQWISH](#), a queer basketball group that changed my life," he recounts. "Leaving Toronto to go to LA was difficult, as I really felt a loss of my community and family. The queer scene in Toronto is so incredibly lively, inventive, vibrant, and punk."

Dunn also wanted to ensure the disabled queer community was properly represented, again something personal to him. He recalls the time his friend Gary, a wheelchair user, wasn't able to attend events at *St. John's Pride* as they weren't accessible. "He got involved on the Pride committee to make changes happen. It's important for me to have representation to reflect this community." He also mentioned his uncle who has cerebral palsy, and recently came out as gay, as being inspirational to him as well.

In the show he has several recurring characters from within this community, including **Ryan O'Connell** (*Special*), **Eric Graise** (*Locke & Key*), and Toronto's **Andrew Gurza**. Episode 4 is called "fuckdisabledpeople, and is based on the [Crip Rave Collective](#) that Gurza organized under the hashtag #disabledpeoplearehot.

Dunn describes his characters as being "messy, and making selfish decisions, with a lot of drama and joy, but ultimately they are flawed, authentic, and honest." One of the most inspirational moments he recalls while working on the show was moving forward without his close friend **Chi Chi DeVanye**, who passed away August 2020.

"I wrote the role of Bussey for her and had a hard time letting go. **Armand [Fields]** did an incredible job of bringing that character to life, but it's not the same one as written for Chi Chi. Yet there's so much of her in it. The grocery store that becomes *Ghost Fag* was named after her, and her name is cemented into the steps, so every time someone walks over

the threshold they're walking over her name. So in a way she's still in the show, and it means so much to me." Episode one is also dedicated to Chi Chi.

Other cast members include **Devin Way** (*Grey's Anatomy*), **Fin Argus** (*Agents of SHIELD*), **Johnny Sibilly** (*Hacks*), and **Jesse James Keitel** (*Big Sky*) who puts on an amazing performance representing the Trans community. Two more well-known actors who have recurring roles are **Kim Cattrall** (*Sex and the City*) and **Juliette Lewis** (*Natural Born Killers*), both of whom play mothers of queer children.

As with the two previous versions, this series will be pushing boundaries in terms of sexuality, and ground breaking nudity scenes. Dunn mentions some of the other subtleties, such as the underlining of cock in the *Peacock* network name, and the graphics for the word *Folk* in the logo. "The O is broken, and the L is curved for a reason," he laughs.

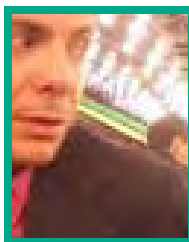
Not to sit idle, Dunn has simultaneously been working on his next project, a film adaptation of the novel, *Yes, Daddy*, by **Jonathan Parks-Rampage**. The *Amazon Prime* limited series tells the story of an ambitious young man who is lured by an older, successful playwright into a dizzying world of wealth where things take a nightmarish turn. "It's a thriller set in elite queer money world of the Hamptons. I'm personally excited about this one," Dunn exudes.

As for his thoughts on being pigeonholed for queer only productions, he quickly snaps, "I don't give a fuck. I am a queer director. Queer stories are important to tell. Since film school I've always wanted to put queer people in positions and stories that we rarely get to see. Those before us paved the way, and I want to bring queer storytelling into new terrains. There are still so many genres to be told." He's also proud of having an all-queer writers' room, and casting queer actors for the queer roles.

There are currently eight episodes completed, and Dunn stated that it is not a limited series. So, watch it, then write Showcase here in Canada and NBC/Peacock in the United States, and tell them you want more *Queer As Folk*.

It took over five years for Dunn to fulfill his dream, and it's now time for the great reveal, just in time for Pride Month. We're still here, and even more queer!

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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PAM ANN

BUCKLE UP, TORONTO – RISQUÉ COMEDIENNE IS COMING IN HOT

By Melissa MacMullin

Get ready for take-off with the outrageous Queen of the snarky skies. Join the miles of high-flying laughter club with Australian entertainer, Caroline Reid, as her stage character, Pam Ann, in *Pam Ann Returns with a Vengeance* at The Royal Theatre in Toronto on June 24, 2022.

If you're looking for a comedy act that's turbulent in all the right ways, Pam Ann is your ticket – with her drag queen-esque retro air hostess look and her die-hard, cult-like queer following. She's been entertaining the masses for over 25 years, including celebrities such as **Madonna** and **Elton John**. Sassy and sharp as a brass tack, Pam Ann plays up the quirks and qualms of air travel as she zeroes in on the stereotypes of airlines worldwide. She's been compared to **Dame Edna** and **Joan Rivers** with the

unapologetically and hilariously cutthroat delivery of her material. "Well of course Joan Rivers! I like storytellers as I'm a bit of a one, like **Billy Connolly** and **Richard Pryor**. Anyone that's really authentic in what they're saying and didn't go to the school of comedy."

Reid, 54, the witty woman behind curvaceous crude and catty Pam Ann, is a comedienne, writer, producer and DJ from Melbourne, Australia. She's lived in New York City, London, and Miami, the place her DJing career began, and where she currently resides. Reid spoke about her early years, "I started out as more of a dramatic actress to be honest, and I actually dreamed about being a fashion designer, so I went into fashion. I was a shop girl for a while but did acting on the side. I used to sell mannequins, believe it or not. I'm terrible at auditions and reading off a script. I thought to myself, the only way I'm ever going to do this is if I make my own shit up. My comedy career was born shortly after."

The Pam Ann ball first got rolling on the eve of Reid's 28th birthday in 1996 with the unintentional help from her inebriated friends. "I got the idea for Pam Ann at my James Bond themed birthday back in the mid-90s. Leading Bond man at the time, **Sean Connery**, only flew Pan Am



airlines, so I thought, okay, I'm going to dress up for my party as a Pan Am air hostess from the 1960s. My friends and I were drinking quite heavily, and they started calling me Pan Am, and the more vodka I drank the more it was sounding like Pam Ann. The idea for the name stuck with me and I ran with it." Reid said. "I've always wanted to do a one woman show, but I didn't know how it would come to be. I was actually writing another character before this all happened."

"I was groomed by friends in the Melbourne drag community in the 90s. I basically went to the school of drag," Reid shared on her initial influence which was the foundation of developing flamboyant Pam Ann's signature look. Developing Pam Ann's routine, building out the character's abrasive, over-the-top personality, and testing quip exposure was another feat Reid took no pause to jump start. "In '97 I was working in the gay bars. I tried my Pam Ann stint on Tuesday nights and grew my audience from there. Then I moved to London in '99 where I worked during the day at a shady car company and did Pam Ann at night. It was about five years of working in the clubs until around 2001, and then I guess that's when I realized it became serious and I could stand on my own."

"I'm very observational, and the kind of a bag of tricks I have, you know, is 25 years of information logged into my brain. I like to improvise a lot of stuff. A majority of the shows I do are different every time. It also depends on the connection with the audience, how much you trust each other allows you to be freer with what you can create. I'm very off the cuff. I can't do anything the same again. I can talk for hours. I don't need a script. I take a lot of notes, I study, then I just let it go and I do the show," Reid shared about how she comes up with the content for her unforgettable performances.

Reid felt as though Pam Ann earned her professional wings when celebrities started approaching her to work with them. "I toured with **Cher** in 2004 as the opening act for the UK leg of one of her many farewell tours. About that time, it became professional, and I started doing big theatres," Reid shared about the unexpected boost to her comedy career's success. "The peak of my career, if you want to call it that [laughs] was probably in 2005. I did a television show in Australia for Foxtel called *The Pam Ann Show* which has just been acquired by the Netherlands and Germany. So, that's being broadcast again, which is

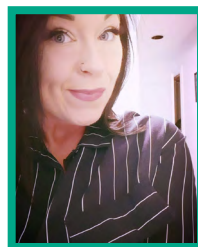


really exciting because I'd really like to continue pursuing television in that capacity."

Pam Ann is not afraid to insult her beloved fans in the most explosive fashion, but they love her for hijacking the audience. She's been known to tear people to shreds, but in the funniest way possible - especially those in the first-class seating of rows closest to the stage, although, the economy seats in the back rows will not be left out. There's plenty of side-splitting roasts to go around. "If you come, don't be offended. If you're sitting at the front, you're going to get humiliated. And I know the Canadians, you're all very much like Australians. I always feel like I'm at home when I come to Canada - everyone gets my innuendo and that's what is so great about performing there. For people who haven't seen or heard of me, well, buckle up, get ready and don't be late. I take off on time. Unlike Madonna."

Come fly with Caroline Reid aka Pam Ann as she continues to take on the airline industry in *Pam Ann Returns with a Vengeance* at The Royal Theatre 7:00pm on June 24th, 2022 - tickets can be purchased here.

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



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WIGGED OUT

BY KALI FORNI-Kate

Jawbreakers DJ Drag Duo



We came together as [Jawbreakers](#) on a lark. We just thought a Drag DJ duo would be fun and different. It took off really quickly. We were soon headlining festivals like *Sydney Mardi Gras*.

I started doing drag in Brisbane, Australia when I was 19. My boyfriend, at the time, was a drag performer, but I was not vibing it because I grew up in the country where things were very different. I ended up trying drag, just to show support for my man, and

ended up falling in love with it. My ex and I eventually broke up because I was the better drag queen! It's now my full-time career and I couldn't imagine another world where drag wasn't my life.

Sabrina and I met in Brisbane while working at the Greyhound Hotel during a Britney Spears themed production show. Believe it or not, there's a five-year age gap between us. At the time, she was 18 and I was 23, and I think we were surprised by how instantly we clicked. Who knew a millennial and a Gen Z'r could have so much in common? We became inseparable, and pretty much trying to incorporate each other into every gig.

The big thing was our shared love of music. Sabrina had studied classical music and music theory since she was like 7-years-old. In primary school, she was listening to sonatas on her iPod touch! She was also a big musical theatre nerd. I had grown up playing piano, and my dad was a musician so I worked really hard to make him proud, but I wasn't super passionate about it. My focus was more on sports and academia. Then, in high school, my love of drama and dance sparked my interest again.

We recently released our first EP, [Just a Taste](#), through [Vicious Recordings](#). It's the label that discovered [Avicii](#) when he was a teenager, and released his first ten records, so yeah, this is legit. "Boyfriend," our first single, debuted at #1 on the iTunes dance chart! It's been a wild rise and this is only the beginning.

Fun Facts

Most memorable performance:

Flying to Amsterdam and DJing at the *Milkshake Festival* was truly a standout performance. But, the most memorable was the time when, during a live show, the performer's shoe went flying in the air. I slipped and fell on it, and Sabrina threw up in her mouth.

Most outrageous outfit you each have worn?

I once performed with a zipper prosthetic covering my privates and nothing else.

Favourite wig?

42-inch human hair, half up, half down, with pink pigtailed and strands in the front.

Quote you live by?

"Sam, the first night at Bed, when you left, Ron made out with two girls and put his head between a cocktail waitress' breasts" – Snooki

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Rhonda Bruce



Born in St. Catharines, Ontario, musician Rhonda Bruce was raised in Burlington in a very creative family. "My dad was the best bugler in Canada in 1964, and performed and taught drum corp for years." He is a very talented artist as well, while her mother plays piano, and her brother is a bass player. Her father Ron inspired her by playing an eclectic selection of albums in his art studio, from big band to rock. "He is a wise man, gentle loving father, who taught me to love music."

Rhonda started playing piano and organ at the age of seven, and switched to guitar and bass a few years later. "My first public performance was my organ recital- age 11ish." She sang and played guitar, performing in her family band called, **Jamm Band**, that put on benefit shows for charities. Rhonda later went to school to be a sound engineer/filmmaker, which she hoped would give her stability while pursuing her music career. Over the years, she has lost count of the many bands she has played with.

"Currently I am playing bass with **Greg Godovitz and the Scarberians** and the all female band, **Grace**. I am also off and on working with **Erich Bojarzin** on music. We were in a band in the 90's together and he is one of my fave people to write with. I used to write in the middle of the night when everything was quiet. These days, I'm sleeping at that time! My daily practicing routine incorporates fleshing out song ideas I have had."

Rhonda's favourite performances so far were a series of gigs one summer at the *Molson Amphitheatre* playing on a side stage before the main bands went on. "One of these gigs was opening for **Santana** and **Macy Gray**. Her band came to watch us play. That was pretty cool."

A highlight destination while she was touring was the *Walker Arts Centre* in Minneapolis. "After the gig, we did a tour of the city and went to check out Prince's club. Winnipeg in December was a close second at the *Rendezvous*. It was cold, but what a great venue and audience." Another fun memory she has was, partying one New Year's Eve, with **Dave Grohl**, before anyone knew who he was.

Rhonda's dream gig would be to play a large stadium, and if she hadn't pursued music, Rhonda would have liked to have been an actor. This creative soul has taught audio engineering at *The Toronto Film School*, and also draws and paints portraits. "I love drawing people. Gardening I think can be artistic. All the gardens in my backyard have been put in by my wife and I. It was a blank canvas when we moved in."

In five years Rhonda sees herself and her wife Cleo, living in the country. "I will be playing music, recording in my studio, and enjoying the outdoors paddling on my paddle board and kayak, hiking, and cycling. And there will be animals... I love animals."

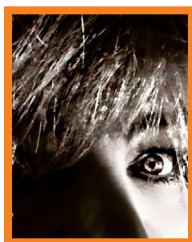
You can find out more about Rhonda and her upcoming gigs with her bands on Facebook.

@GregGodovitzandthescarberians

@Grace

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.

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Queer Village Street History - Part 2



The streets of Toronto's Queer Village are now teaming with life as queers returned after a two-year absence. How well do you know those streets that you walk, skip, and stumble down?

CHURCH

Church Street (the route of the first electric streetcars) owes its holy name to a church that was constructed of wood in 1807. Today's magnificent Cathedral Church of St. James opened on its site in 1853. Its towering spire was added 22 years later and the first set of bells were installed in 1865, with the current set upgraded in 1997. The church keeps improving and the queer section of Church Street keeps shrinking. While it once stretched eleven blocks from Charles Street all the way to Gerrard Street, the village now fits neatly within five city blocks. Home to the 519 Community Centre, Barbara Hall Park, Stone Crow Manor, and Smith restaurant in the north. South of Wellesley the street is populated by many queer establishments including Woody's & Sailor, Crews & Tangos, Men's Room, Glad Day Books, The Drink, Flash, Cock Bar, and Steamworks. It still remains one of the few true queer villages left in the world.

PARLIAMENT

Though the street doesn't run anywhere near Ontario's parliament buildings, it did 218 years ago. The Parliament Buildings of Upper Canada were located at the foot of Parliament on the south side of Front Street, which was then known as Palace Street. Berkeley Street was originally called "Parliament" until it was shifted a block east. Now, unofficially known as "Queer Marriage Ville," the street and area is home to Jet Fuel Coffee, the notorious 51 Division police station, and Cabbagetown, where queers go after clubbing to form families. At one time Parliament was more popular for lesbian hunting



than Church Street, and was home to the now closed Flying Beaver Pubaret, owned by lesbian comedian Maggie Cassella.

CARLTON

Named after Guy Carleton Wood by his sister Ann Wood (wife of Andrew McGill), and John Strachan (of Strachan Avenue). Historically the street was spelled Carleton (with an "e"), and originally began one block south of College St. It was later aligned to run across from College Street at Yonge. This is the reason why west of Yonge St., the road is called College and east of Yonge it is called Carlton. Perhaps in the confusion of alignment, the "e" was lost to history. Today, it's home to Spa Excess Bathhouse, Pink Triangle Press, and Club Oasis.

MAITLAND

In 1822 it was named after Sir Peregrine Maitland, the Lt-Governor at the time, by George Langley who purchased part of the land from Alexander Wood. Wood's statue was recently secretly removed from the corner of Church and Alexander and destroyed. Today, the corner of Maitland and Church is considered "Cruising Corner," and is home to Churchmousse & Firkin, Garage, and O'Grady's restaurants, forming the "Patio Triangle," a place where queers often get lost while pretending to eat.

Jamaican-born Rolyn Chambers grew up in the suburbs of Mississauga, before attending Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD). In 2001, he began his Deep Dish column with fab Magazine. Deep Dish has now been resurrected once again here in theBUZZ. IG @rahrhrolyn



A unique opportunity For electrical work

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 353 (IBEW 353) is pleased to announce that we have partnered with The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario (AABO), Workforce Warriors, The Career Foundation, YWCA Toronto, Workers Health and Safety Centre, The Toronto Community Benefits Network, Electricity Human Resources Canada, and Skills Council of Canada to bring forward the Electric Pathway Program (The Pathway), a unique program preparing pre-apprentices for entry into the IBEW 353 electrical trade.

The 2022 - 2023 Pathway intakes will be for women, or anyone identifying as a woman, two spirit, nonbinary or other non-cis gendered persons with a welcoming focus on Indigenous and racialized and newcomer workers.

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For more details, please visit electricpathway353.ca

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A KODAK MOMENT

Velvet Code

BY BOYD KODAK



As well, I've been working on the first [So Fierce Music](#) concert, "A Fierce and Fabulous Affair" headlined by **Icisis Couture** and **Scarlett Bobo**, and also starring **Sofonda**, **Naomi Leone**, **Mona Moore**, **Shay Dee**, **Juicy**, **Ophelia Manson**, and **Danny Dymond**. You can buy tickets [here](#).

I also co-wrote and produced "La Pusetta" by *Canada's Drag Race* Season 2 Winner, **Icisis Couture**, which we released on my 2SLGBTIA+ label *So Fierce Music*. I also finished an interesting project that involves Madonna and one of her earlier hits, and reached 3.5 Million weekly listeners of my House Music Mixshow [Rise To The Rhythm](#).

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

VC - The launch of YOU DO YOU Foundation. I will be spending more time on this in the coming years.

BK - What are you looking forward to next year?

VC - I am producing and starring in a UK Reality show which I can't disclose yet, but I will be spending most of the summer in the UK filming it. I'm excited to see where that takes me!

BK - Where can we see your work?

VC - You can find all my latest work at www.velvetcode.com and don't forget to buy tickets to my event! It's going to be the event of Pride month!

BK - Future plans?

VC - The future is bright and I have many pairs of shades! I am going to go with the flow and see where life takes me. Hopefully I'll find that special someone...I think that is long overdue!

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

VC - Life is too short. Do what you want, and go for it. Don't let anyone or anything hold you back.

BK - Finish the following sentence for us. If I could have three wishes, they would be...

VC - an end to the Russian - Ukraine war, an end to racism and discrimination of any kind, and to see my Mom's smile and hear her laughter again.

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



Velvet Code is a gender fluid DJ, songwriter, radio show host, and LGBTQ+ music producer.

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

Velvet Code - This past year has been busy to say the least. I launched [YOU DO YOU Foundation](#) six months ago, because I believe that assisting underprivileged and compromised 2SLGBTQ2S+ musicians through the arts is a vital factor in supporting artists who may need a helping hand on their road to wellness. I've always used the creative process of music as a healing tool, so I want to share that with everyone. We just chose the first recipient of the YOU DO YOU Foundation Music Grant where we are providing the musical means to help develop and grow a healthy emotional and mental state of being. **Brayo Bryans**, who was rescued by [Rainbow Railroad](#) from fear of persecution in Uganda because of his sexual identity and orientation, and is now living here in Toronto.

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from the book of my life



BEYOND THE VILLAGE

THE HAYLOFT DANCEHALL

by Sherry Sylvain



What to do, and where to go when you want to get out of the city for a weekend in the summer? One great option would be the beautiful, vibrant, and welcoming region of **Prince Edward County**, located about 2.5 hrs east of Toronto via Hwy. 401. There are a myriad of opportunities for daytime activities for fun in the sun; but what about an exciting night out? That's when you head to **The Hayloft Dancehall** in beautiful Cherry Valley on the shores of Lake Ontario, about a 15 minute drive from Picton, and about 25 minutes from Wellington.

The Hayloft Dancehall has been a county institution for nearly 50 years. This charmingly rustic 100 year old barn is a summertime hot spot, and a must-visit for live music and entertainment. The Hayloft throws its barn doors open every weekend from May to October for a fantastic lineup of local, national, and international artists, and a drink-sloshing, boot-stomping good time.

Recently purchased by two Torontonians, your current hosts are **Ben Paley and Marijke Bouchier**. Ben is also known by his burlesque stage name *James & The Giant Pasty*, founder of *BoylesqueTO*, Canada's Premiere Boylesque Troupe, as well as a nightlife producer and entertainer. Marijke is an artist and illustrator best known for her *Sexual Fruit Collection* of sex and body positive designs and illustrations.

Facilities at The Hayloft include a patio with a wide selection of local beers and wines, a rotating selection of specialty cocktails, and food by *Smokin' Rednex* – mouthwatering Southern Bar-B-Que including Award Winning 72-Hour Smoked Brisket, with various sides. The serving and kitchen staff are aware of food allergies, and able to accommodate

or guide one's needs. Although not technically "handicap accessible", barriers are not significant and may be acceptable for certain mobility issues.

There are various LGBTQ+ owned and operated accommodations in the immediate area, including *Angeline's*, and *The Edward*, as well as great LGBTQ+ owned/operated/friendly bars, restaurants, and breweries available. The Hayloft also runs a private, complementary bus service for patrons who need transportation from many of these nearby areas, with the schedule and routes available on the website.

Events include live music, dance parties, drag shows, burlesque, and more. Among the exciting and enticing events scheduled for the summer of 2022 are:

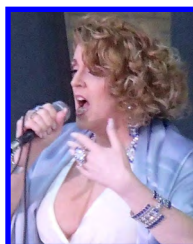
OH HAYYYYY! Drag Shows: July 2, July 23, Aug 6, Aug 20, and Sept 3.

Priyanka Drag and Dance Party Extravaganza: Jul 29

Plus, That's Hay-larious comedy shows, burlesque and boylesque shows, live music, and top name DJs. A full lineup can be found [here](#).

The Hayloft Dancehall, 344 Salmon Point Rd., Cherry Valley, ON K0K 1P0

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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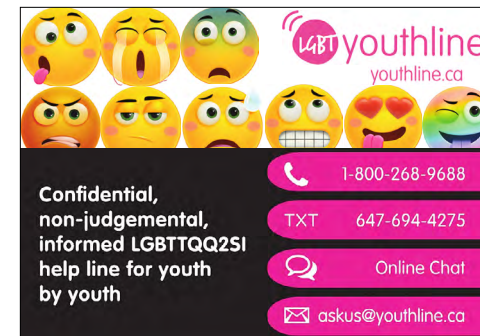
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BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain



BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain

Cabana Pool Party with Simone

June 15; from 1:00 p.m.

Make a splash with a night of hot drag performances by local legends Sofonda Cox, Luna Dubois, and Miss Fiercalicious. GoGo dancers Liana, Milkshake Boy, and Shadow Noir. With The Ebony Enchantress, Simone, of Rupaul's Drag Race. Cabana Pool Bar, 11 Polson St., Toronto

Drop Deadly Gorgeous: The Pageant

June 16; 7:00 p.m.

Weird Alice Yankadic, and Tygr Willy, have chosen eight of Canada's prime queer artists who'll compete to show off their best assets for you and five fierce local judges. This is a gala, so dress up, and strut your stuff on the pink carpet as there will be prizes for the Belle of the Ball. Buddies In Bad Times, 12 Alexander St., Toronto

Jock Night Thursdays

Every Thursday night beginning at 10:00 p.m.

Join hostess Morgan James and the semi-clad (or less) men of Cock Bar for an evening of feisty fun and frivolity. Drink specials, prizes, and surprises. This is a men only event. Cock Bar, 461 Church St., Second Floor, Toronto



Kings and Classics: A Royal Return

June 17; 10:00 p.m.

One of Toronto's hottest Drag King and Gender Performer shows. This show is definitely the talk of the town and after two years of hunkering down, you will NOT want to miss this Royal Return. \$25.00 at the door. 1 Free Raffle ticket with ticket purchase. Buddies In Bad Times, 12 Alexander St., Toronto

EpiC Day 2022

June 18; noon to 4:00 p.m.

As with their "Purple Walk" in years past, you can challenge yourself to complete the 5km, or you can choose to do a 1 in 100 Virtual Challenge, or feel free to do both. This is a fundraising event for Epilepsy Toronto. College Park, 444 Yonge St., Toronto



See Me, Hear Me, Feel Me: Making Life Better

June 18; 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A lawn party celebrating queer seniors, and open to everyone! Stop by and make a new connection or two, enjoy the sun, have a snack, and take in some of the inter-generational entertainment on hand all afternoon. Buddies In Bad Times, 12 Alexander St., Toronto

Gay AF Comedy Pride-Stravaganza

June 18; from 2:00 p.m.

The city's best LGBT stand-up comedians in the beautiful Campbell House Museum courtyard. Featuring Ted Morris, Tamara Shevon, Vong Show, Hillary Yaas, Jade Niles-Craig. Hosted by Canadian Comedy Award winner, Robert Watson. Campbell House Museum, 160 Queen St. W., Toronto

Tallulah's Pride Parties

June 18, 24, 25, 26; doors at 10:30 p.m.

The best party on the block takes over the whole building for Queer Pride. See Toronto's top drag and burlesque artists in a super-charged floor show, and stay late with resident DJs spinning your favourites. Buddies In Bad Times, 12 Alexander St., Toronto

Clownskillempires Battle The Pink Robots

June 22; 7:00 p.m.

#Clownskillempires bring their signature blend of clowns, drag, and irreverence to The Flaming Lips' iconic album. It's a multimedia, non-stop trip through outer space you won't want to miss. Featuring Full Blown Father, Mx. Quest, Pickles LaVey, and more, plus digital magic by Lady Kunterpurt. Buddies In Bad Times, 12 Alexander St., Toronto

Green Space Festival

June 23, 24; 5:00 p.m. to midnight. June 25, 26; 1:00 p.m. to midnight

The best alfresco parties of the summer are back with enticing music, queery performances, delicious food and drinks, and a whole lot of love. An exceptional lineup of world-class DJs, legendary music producers, extraordinary performers, drag royalty and more await you. Barbara Hall Park, 519 Church St., Toronto

TD Toronto Jazz Festival

June 24 to July 3; various times

With 10 days of FREE outdoor concerts and additional stages, this year's edition proves to be the biggest yet. What started as a small event dedicated to creating a platform for Jazz music in Toronto, has grown into an internationally celebrated festival hosting acclaimed artists. Various venues



Fetish Life

June 24; 10:00 p.m.

Break out your favourite gear - leather, rubber, puppy and anything else that gets you off. Sweat the night away with DJ TDON. Go Go Dancing Porn Stars and naughty surprises around every corner. Doors will be open at 10:00 p.m. with an extended license until 4:00 a.m. The Opera House, 735 Queen St. E., Toronto



2022 Pride & Remembrance Run

June 25; 9:05 a.m.

5k run, 3k walk & kids race. The most fun, fast, fab run of the summer. In-person at Church St. & Wellesley St. and virtually, worldwide. Supporting charitable organizations within Toronto's LGBTQ2S+ community. Church St. at Wellesley St., Toronto

Stiletto Flats and Fat Head Hazel's Pride Party

June 25; 9:00 p.m.

The tradition continues. Join local bands Fat Head Hazel, and Stiletto Flats for a Pride celebration away from the downtown core. An eclectic mix of musicians and music offer you a vibrant night away from the chaos. The Linsmore, 1298 Danforth Ave., Toronto

PRIDE 2022 Parade

June 26; from 2:00 p.m.

The annual PRIDE parade returns after two long years of pandemic lockdowns. Join friends, family, and chosen family for the celebration with innumerable floats, groups, and other marchers. Downtown Toronto

Let There Be House

June 26; 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

International Sensation and Toolroom record label owner, Mark Knight, headlines at the beautiful waterfront Sugar Beach. Featuring The Shapeshifters, international star Ultra Naté, and some of Toronto's top Dj's and producers, Ticky Ty, Simon Jain, and Cozmik Cat. Sugar Beach, Lower Jarvis St. and Queens Quay E., Toronto

Outrageous Misfits: A celebration of Craig Russell and Lori Russell Eadie

June 29; 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Author, Brian Bradley, and friends celebrate "Outrageous Misfits" and the lives of female impersonator, Craig Russell, and his wife, Lori Russell Eadie, with a special guest. Books will be available for sale on site (\$25.00 per copy) and can be purchased with cash and credit (no debit). Mandy's Bistro, 123 Danforth Ave., Toronto

Across the Pond Tour 2

August 12; 6:30 p.m.

Featuring Baga Chipz, Ella Vaday, River Medway, Cheryl Hole from RuPaul's Drag Race UK. \$ 60.00 - \$140.00 / Age 19 And Up. Legal Age 19 (Photo I.D. Required). VIP doors at 6:30 p.m. General admission doors at 8:00 p.m., show at 9:00 p.m. The Phoenix Concert Theatre, 410 Sherbourne St., Toronto



Road Trip Picks

Drag Queen Storytime in Durham

June 18; 11:00 a.m.

All children and their caregivers are invited to join storytime, followed by sweet treats, musical performances, and other fun activities.

Brock Library, 38 Laidlaw St S, Cannington, ON

Cedar's Pride Weekend

June 24 and 25; 9:00 p.m.

Friday Community Bonfire, and Karaoke with Jamie B in the Barn.

Saturday, "Show your Pride Dance" with DJ Jeff Bone.

Cedars Campground, 1039 Concession 5 W., Millgrove

Cedar's Canada Day Celebrations

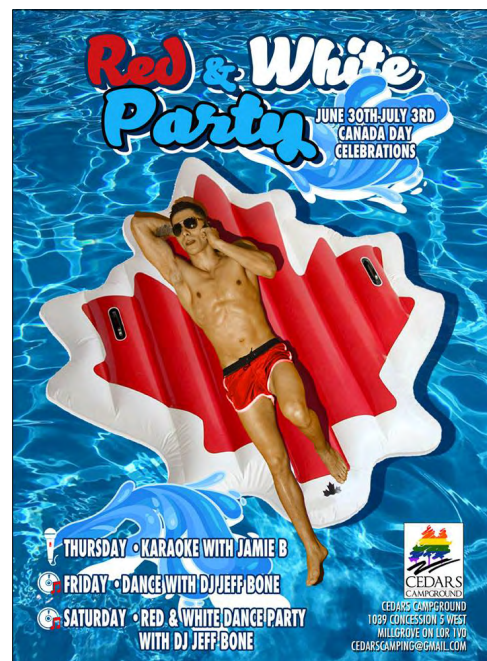
July 1, 2, 3

Thursday Night Community Bonfire followed by Karaoke with Jamie B in the Barn at 9:00 p.m.

Friday – Dance with DJ Jeff Bone.

Saturday – Red & White Party in the Barn with DJ Jeff Bone.

Cedars Campground, 1039 Concession 5 W., Millgrove



OH HAYYYYY!!! Drag Show

July 2; 6:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

Shout out HAAAAAYYYY as talented drag performers slay the stage with sickening looks, fierce lip syncs, and shady comments on the mic. Featuring amazing drag performers from Toronto, Kingston, Montreal and beyond. A mix of seating and standing room with over 60 seats available at each show.

The Hayloft Dancehall, 344 Salmon Point Rd., Cherry Valley



Sarnia-Lambton Pridefest Main Event: GAGGED! Vol. 2

July 16; 8:00 p.m.

Join for some of the most amazing drag talent from all over Ontario to celebrate this pride weekend. Featuring Saltina Shaker, Sunshine Glitterchild, Aurora Matrix, Van Goth, Rosie, Edie Violet, Benz Menova, and Amanda Villa. Part of Sarnia-Lambton Pride weekend.

Suncor Agora Cultural Center, 430 Front St. N., Sarnia

Daddy Next Door - Lumberjack Edition

July 29, 30, 31

Friday – 9:00 p.m. - Bonfire

Saturday – 9 p.m. - Daddy Next Door - Lumberjack Edition dance party with DJ Dwayne Minard

Sunday - Pool Party

Riverside RV Campground, 84 Robinson Road N, Tweed



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