

ON THE GO?

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In This Issue

- What to do
- The parties
- Where to stay
- What to wear
for the Season!

Season's Greetings!
Merry Christmas!
and a Happy New Year!



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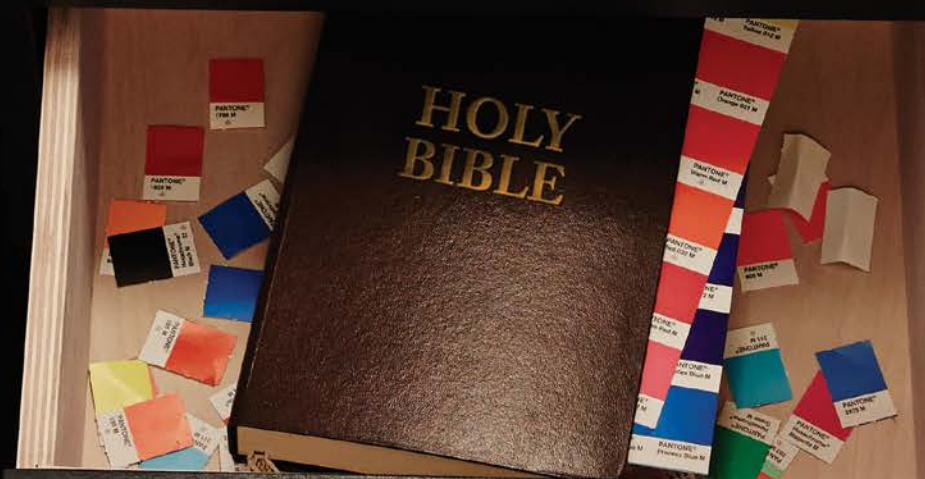
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It is that time of year when we look back on the past 12 months and also look forward to the New Year. I must say that the past year has been a very exciting journey for me. After a few bad years, this past year has brought so many new experiences and opportunities. I feel that bad times often prepare you for your future and are meant to teach us. If you look for the lessons, you will learn and grow. Life can turn around in a moment. When it is meant to happen, it will.

Starting work on theBUZZ in 2014 was probably the highlight of the year for me and all the exciting things I got to experience such as: WorldPride, Black & Blue in Montreal, and TIFF. I got to work with some of the most talented group of people and met so many interesting people in the community. This was also the year to start on a new talk show called "On The Couch," which I will co-host and direct/edit. All these things I have always wanted to do and now that I am actually doing them I am truly grateful.

For 2015 I have been thinking of what should be my resolutions? I have read the top 3 New Year's resolutions are: to lose weight, go to the gym, and eat healthier. I usually cave into these type resolutions... but this year I want to change my focus and be grateful for where I am. We all can always improve but why not be happy for how far we have come and build on that.

I want to build on the momentum of the past year and focus on what I am grateful in my life. I believe this will lead me into where I want to be in 2015. I am not saying things don't come with a lot of hard work (never worked harder then the past year) and preparation, but when everything is aligned, and you are ready, the outcome can be limitless.

All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them. -Walt Disney

I wish everyone a year where your dreams come true!

Brandon Bent

Our Cover Models with our Publisher & Creative Director Antoine Elhashem



As Pictured from Left to Right:

Brandon Bent

Yes, we dragged Brandon onto the cover of this issue. He was not expecting it but we couldn't resist including him as an elf. Brandon is the Editor-in-Chief of theBUZZ and is the Director and co-host of "On The Couch," a talk show premiering in 2015. He has written for several magazines in Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto. Brandon is also on the Board of Directors at the INSPIRE Awards.

Brandon says he is going to spend the holidays in Ottawa with his family. "I have spent every year, this time, with my family and sometimes is one of the only time of year I get to see my extended family so it has always been a special time for me." www.facebook.com/brandonbentonline, www.brandonbent.com

Boyd Kodak

Boyd Kodak is an award winning Trans activist, musician, writer, filmmaker, curator and entertainment director. His work both entertaining and educational has toured worldwide, and is considered key in the development of the LGBTQ community.

Boyd is looking forward to spending time with loved ones during the holidays, and taking the time to do some of his favorite things... <http://www.facebook.com/boyd.kodak>

Joie Lamar

Joie Lamar made her way to Canada 15 years ago, from the United States, when she met the love of her life. They were married here 5 years ago. She is an Electrical Engineer. She is most passionate about equality since being able to marry and live so comfortably here while many American friends and family still yearn for this right. Joie is also a proud Director on the INSPIRE Awards board. She is super dedicated to celebrating the many unsung heroes in our LGBT community. In her spare time, Joie is completing her Graduate program at MIT, while writing her first book. She lives in Ajax with her wife Natalie, their daughter Nicole and two fur babies named Lucy & Linus.

My holidays are all about family, friends, fun and making memories. I love all of the old school traditions of Christmas like midnight mass, spiking the egg nog and placing presents under the tree while everyone is

sleeping. We will be having a few holiday gatherings at home; filling our heads with laughter, our mouths with delicious food and our arms with hugs.

Dale Carriere

I've been calling Toronto home for the last 12 years and always been a fan of house music and great sounding DJ's. My promoting career took off in January of 2012 when I launched B.EAST at WAYLA Bar with my then partner Chris Munro. Since that time I've worked on other projects including FLEXX and SHAG - Retro Dance Party. My longest running event JOCKSTRAP will be celebrating its 2 year anniversary this January.

Over the holiday season I will once again be working with PRISM on their UNIFIED NYE 15 party over at RYZE Nightclub. Tickets for the event can be purchased through me by contacting me either by email: dale.carriere@rogers.com or on Facebook. www.facebook.com/jockpartyto www.facebook.com/dale.carriere

Karen Thursby

Owner of "girlpaint.ca", an all Women Interior Painting Company. Helping the community for 25 years.

Karen says, "I will be spending the holidays with my two wonderful sons and would like to wish a joyful, peaceful, lovely Christmas to my loved ones and to you and yours."

Nikki Chin

Being only 5 drag years old, Nikki Chin has created a name for herself, not only in the greater Toronto area but down in the states, Bermuda and Japan. Nikki doesn't just perform for herself, she also enjoys performing for charity events. Nikki has raised thousands of dollars with the help of other performers for charities across North America. She loves performing, meeting new people and she cannot wait to continue performing for you. www.facebook.com/nikki.chin1 #nikkichin

Nikki is delighted to spend some time with family and friends. Being fortunate to have family live close by really helps in such a festive time. Her friends here in Toronto she refers to as her chosen family. They keep her happy and pleasantly buzzed "wink wink"



Words by Bryen Dunn

With the holiday season upon us, it seems that the pace of life kicks up a notch for many around this time of year. Some are busy buying gifts and getting their place festive for the visit of family and friends, while others are getting their travel plans in order for a well-deserved vacation basking in the sun or whizzing down the ski slopes.

We here at theBUZZ are also looking forward to some down time, and it's also a perfect time of year to bundle up and enjoy all that the city of Toronto has to offer. We've compiled a handy guide of staycation suggestions that's perfect for those who will be in the city to close out the year, or for those visiting and looking for something different.

There's no shortage of events to take in over the next couple of weeks, from Christmas themed entertainment and comedy showcases, to cruising Lake Ontario on New Year's Eve.

Festive Fun

The Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto (MCCT) presents their 25th Annual Christmas Eve Service on December 24th at Roy Thomson Hall. This inclusive event attracts people of all faiths and backgrounds, with Rev. Dr. Brent Hawkes delivering a Yuletide message featuring the celebrated Choir of MCCT under the leadership of music director Diane Leah. For a different take on the holy tradition, Jesus Christ Superstar is playing at the Lower Ossington Theatre until January 24th. This independent production company consistently presents shows of grand quality with a bit of campiness. Past productions have included Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat, and Hair. For 2015, their newest presentation is Don't Stop Me Now! The Music of Queen, featuring all the hits performed live in an epic yet intimate showcase that any Queen fan won't want to miss!

For those who want to spice things up a bit, by dressing up for a night on the town, the annual holiday tradition of the Nutcracker takes place on stage at the elegant Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts December 13th to January 3rd. Or perhaps Roch Voisine will get you in the spirit of the season by performing songs from his 25 year musical career that includes two holiday albums. He will be accompanied by special guests for this special magical Christmas show taking place at Massey Hall on December 21st. As well, Mirvish Productions presents

Blades On Stage: A Broadway Holiday Spectacular On Ice, with Elvis Stojko, Shae-Lynn Bourne, Violetta Afansieva, and Pete Dack. This brand new show specifically created for the historic Princess of Wales Theatre will have the stage frozen to allow these world champions and Olympians to present their brilliant moves for a limited engagement from December 24th to January 4th.

If you're looking for something more relaxed, and perhaps a bit raunchy, then a night of laughs might be in order. The team at Second City have put together Holidazed & Confused, a new collection of satirical sketches and songs that lovingly lampoon all the absurd rituals, stresses, and obligations of the festive season. It runs right through until January 1st. Finally, this year's annual holiday farce from Ross Petty Productions is Cinderella - The Gags to Riches Family Musical. These shows are always a hoot, with enough one-liners and gay references to please any king or queen. The show is now playing at the Elgin Theatre until January 4th with Kids in the Hall alumni Scott Thompson at his best as the Fairy Godmother.



New Year's Eve

This night can go from elegant to extreme, and sometimes both in the same evening over the span of a couple hours. Kama Restaurant on King West presents the legendary Jaymz Bee with his ensemble of entertainers for a night of cool jazz and spicy Indian cuisine. Formal or cocktail attire is encouraged. Why not bring in a new year filled with laughter? Tom Green presents his hilarious, high-wire comic styling on stage as host of the 14th annual Comedy Extravaganza to Massey Hall. The show features several well-known comics and is curated by Yuk Yuk's founder Mark Breslin. How about a New Year's Eve Gala Dinner Cruise for something completely different? Enjoy dinner and music while taking in the views of the Toronto skyline aboard the heated and enclosed Mariposa Cruises Northern Spirit. If being completely outdoors is more your thing, head to Nathan Phillips Square to skate on the city's famous ice rink to the sounds of a local DJ, enjoy live musical performances from top Toronto talent, and a spectacular fireworks presentation at midnight.

It's also one of the busiest nights at bars and clubs across the city, so we've highlighted a couple places to hit up across the city. There's no shortage of parties happening along Church Street in the heart of the Village. Pick a spot, get there early, and find a hottie to lock lips with to ring in the New Year with sizzle. If you're looking to dance, Fly Nightclub has DJ's Sumation and Mark Falco on the decks spinning sexy beats throughout the night, while Buddies in Bad Times has two rooms of fun with DJ K-Tel spinning top 40 hits in the Chamber and DJ Triple-X spinning retro alternative in the Cabaret. For something a little more low key, stop by Pegasus where VJ Blue Peter will be playing all your favourite videos that set the mood to ring in the New Year right, or Statlers, Toronto's very own "Cheers". Both are Village staples with great drinks, great staff and never a cover.

For those on the eastside of town, WAYLA is bringing two of the city's biggest pop dance parties together for one night only. Pop Machine and Bang Bang DJ's will battle it out for the supremacy of pop, with a special performance by Scarlett Bobo. West end queers can head to The Steady Café on Bloor West to catch Essence Brown, three Toronto boys serving classic hip-hop, R&B, and dancehall. Or if a Latin vibe is what you're after, swing by El Convento Rico for a medley of dance tunes hosted by newly crowned Miss El Convento Rico, Jasmine Black, with performances by Mr. Rico and Donnarama.





Hotel Happenings

The Drake Hotel has DJ's, burlesque, a live performance by the Shuffle Demons, and a variety of dining and overnight packages. Many of the larger luxury hotel properties have fabulous events that include dinner, drinks, and dancing. Book a room, and don't worry about trying to find a cab to get home. Café Boulud at the Four Seasons has an early and late dinner seating, with both including complimentary admission to dbar after dinner where champagne and canapés are provided, and overnight packages can be added as well. The next day brunch is served at Café Boulud, or the specially presented brunch in the Vinci Ballroom that includes food stations and a juice bar. A \$50 credit for a massage or facial in the hotel spa will be given with every bill. Over at the Shangri-La there will be an early four-course seating, and a chef's special seven-course meal later in the evening. Both can have wine pairings added. Brunch on New Year's Day is available in the hotel lobby area.

By far the most extravagant offerings in the city can be found at the Ritz-Carlton. Take time from your hectic day for Nutcracker Tea, featuring an assortment of sweets, sparkling wine, and a selection of handcrafted teas by the onsite Master Tea sommelier. Seating is available every Saturday and Sunday throughout December, as well as December 23rd and 24th. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Dinner can be had at TOCA restaurant featuring the flavours of Michelin 2 star Chef Oliver Glowig's four-course holiday offering. Christmas Day Brunch has seasonal specialties and popular favourites such as omelette and carving stations, salads, pastries, savoury breakfast items, and bottomless Bloody Caesar's.

New Year's Eve Dinner is either an early five-course or later six-course that includes the finest selection from TOCA's renowned Cheese Cave, an assortment of

sparkling wines, and an elaborate dessert buffet. The Grey Goose Lobby Ice Bar offers plenty of specialty cocktail creations, and is a great spot to begin, end, or spend the entire evening. Luxury Lounge DEQ offers spectacular city views, DJ and dancing, and an extensive wine and cocktail selection, while Ritz Bar offers live music and Japanese style tapas. New Year's Day Brunch offers a delectable brunch buffet featuring a variety of interactive breakfast stations, carved meats, salads, festive desserts and much more.

Finally, let the magic massage elves at Spa My Blend by Clarins provide you with the ultimate in relaxation or rejuvenation. Whether you need re-energizing between parties and shopping or to look and feel your best, our extraordinary spa treatments are just the thing to revitalize or relax you. Holiday treatments include The Spa-liday Detox Package, The Dapper Gentleman, Winter Escape Spa Sampler, or the signature Champagne Manicure complete with a hot stone hand and arm massage and a glass of bubbly.

Whatever you decide to do over the holiday season, be sure to have fun, be safe, and make it memorable!



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In to the New Year

New Year's Eve is a time to roll out of your jeans and T-shirts and embrace your inner dandy. There is no better way to do that than a tasteful floral shirt. Prints are in; boring pastels are out.

In the tradition of the horrible jackets and pants your mother forced you into as a child, here is the modern velvet jacket. The holidays are a time to embrace nostalgia; why not repair your childhood fashion trauma by embracing the velvet blazer?

The navy adds a bit of color to your wardrobe, and the slick look has the appearance of designer luxury without the massive price tag.

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TIE

Canali, Holt Renfrew
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But for those who don't mind spending the money, Holt Renfrew has you covered. Classic wingtips from Ermenegildo Zegna offer a retro vibe to the otherwise modern look and Cahari's diagonally striped tie offers a pleasing contrast to the abstract print of the shirt.

Stylist Sebastian Grey (www.facebook.com/Relentless.Grey) recommends the "high and styled" look for men's hair in the holidays. For those with daring, the top-knot or the stylized mohawk is very trendy. Grey also advises a close shave for maximum suaveness.

So whether you're a modern Audrey Hepburn or 2015's Renaissance Man, make a style revolution your New Year's resolution.

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THAT'S
SO... 2014.

New Year's Eve can be a frightening time downtown, especially if you're brave enough to deal with the traditional cold and slush. To make sure the cold doesn't deter you from ringing in the New Year in style, theBUZZ brings you inspiration to start planning your goodbye to 2014.

Hericher's "The Gracie" dress is reminiscent of Audrey Hepburn circa Breakfast at Tiffany's. Who doubts that Audrey would be at home on the streets of Toronto? The sheer overlay speckled with polka dots is inspired, and the full skirt moves beautifully as you dance your way into 2015.

Punk rock inspired brass earrings from Niki and Lola (top left), part of their new "Bullets over Britain" collection, adds some edgy beauty to juxtapose the girlish flavor of the shoes from Ivanka Trump. The merging of edgy and girly gives this outfit memorability and makes this the grown-up version of the party dress from your childhood. My favourite part of the outfit is the speech-bubble-bag from Aldo, a bit of cheeky humour to add whimsy to your ensemble and tickle your nerdy side.

When it comes to hair for the holidays, Toronto stylist Sebastian Grey (www.facebook.com/Relentless.Grey) recommends "warm and comfortable and timeless". He says "sleek and straight" and edgy club tints are hot to wear in the cold.



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WIGGED OUT

BY DONNARAMA

The beautiful and legendary Donnarama has graced the stages of T.O with outrageous costumes and comedy skits, and there is never a dull moment! A scene queen and Canadian drag staple, her dedication, pioneering originality and uniqueness have scored her numerous awards, bar titles and visits to therapy. Check out Donnarama's blog, Wiggid Out, at theBUZZmag.ca



Oh, here comes the winter chill, holiday joy, and seasonal thrills! Old Saint Nick and his wrinkly sack, prayers of grace, shoppers who race, blokes, flakes, and snow on my face! The temperature is dropping but T.O is hopping!

Zipperz/Cell Block (72 Carlton Street) carries on with their famous Sunday night "Retro Drama" boogie night featuring DJ Corey Activate and Dj Alain packing the floor with dance classics from the 70's, 80's, and 90's. No cover to partake in the packed house of dancing queens and never a dull moment with this saucy crowd, 10 PM till close.

Pump up the jam at Wayla Bar (996 Queen Str. East) every Thursday night before you get your weekend started at "Random Play" 10 PM till close. If you like the B-52's with your B-52 then this is the place for you. Deejay Dwayne Minard serves up Dee- Lite, Madonna, and Donna Summer in the winter. No cover, lover... Dee-licious!

Hungry for more? "Poet Or Get Off The Pot, A Pussy Basket Poetry Pot Luck" with Jess Dobkin takes over Video Fag (187 Augusta Avenue) Saturday Dec. 6th 6 PM -10 PM with poetry spreads featuring David Bateman, Brock Hessel, Marusya Bociurkiw, and a bevy of others. Admission is \$7 or free entry with a piece of writing, food dish, or dessert to share. What luck! Bring your wieners.

Jingle balls, jingle balls, Erotico Lounge (461 Church St.) unwraps "The Toronto Sisters First Annual Christmas Party" Friday Dec.12th at 9 PM. This less-than-holy night of holiday mayhem features a Christmas Carol sing-a-long, a 50/50 draw, bazaar table, and bake sale... sweet! The 10 PM holiday show features performances by Sherry Sylvain and the Legendary Michelle Dubarry and many more, \$10 cover.

Dick the halls! Warm buns are on the menu alongside Jada Hudson every Tuesday 7:30 -10:30 at Church Street Garage (471 Church Street) with "Don't Just Wing It, Wig It!," the weekly drag show featuring special guests and drink specials all night, tasty! Don't be too hasty and pop by Statler's (487 Church Street) for the weekly "C.U.N.Tuesdays" drag spectacular... hey, that's my show! Shameless plug! Blow your own horn, or something else, this holiday season with these sensational reasons!

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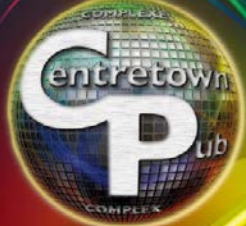
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SHE BEAT

BY CAT GRANT

Cat Grant OCAD is a multimedia artist. A published poet currently writing a book. She contributes to Hone Life, Jingobox and her blog for theBUZZ. Painting, sculpture, photography/video, choreography/dance & costume design also make her days. Cat has worked with Deadmau5, Panasonic, Sony, Konami and volunteers for many queer organizations. Check out Cat's blog, Kitty Indacity, on our website: www.theBUZZmag.ca



Brrr, baby it's cold outside and so wonderful to come home to dinner. We all are aware how high our housing is in the GTA but for many keeping that roof overhead means food can be considered a luxury. The average person needing a food bank here spends 71% of their income on housing & utilities.

Hmm, food for thought I say and you are probably wondering why is this an entertainment issue? Well, tis the season and all, where we are kinder to others, say our many holiday greetings to family, friends, and strangers alike. As we warm up our frozen extremities, our hearts warm up too, and we may think about giving a little more to charity.



Kim



Elana

One beautiful heart, local Icon Elana Harte, is attempting to do just this, along with her songwriting partner, the talented Kim Jarrett. They met at Slack's in 2007 and have always wanted to write a Christmas song. They explained, "We wanted the song to reflect how we feel about our communities and what magical, extraordinary things happen when we all work together, towards a common goal." This common goal is feeding the hungry.

"DON'T LET GO (CHRISTMAS EVERY DAY)" is a song about the impact of collective effort. Elana says, "We've teamed up with the DAILY BREAD FOOD BANK, wanting to work with a non-denominational organization with a strong focus on people in Toronto in need."

She & Kim brought together a group of like minded amazing artists who are determined to raise at least \$10,000 for the Food Bank. Help them, and yourselves, because with every download from iTunes of their catchy single you feed peeps and your soul...

Now that is warming my heart!

Help support this worthwhile effort and purchase Christmas Every Day on iTunes for .99 cents. @ <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/album/christmas-every-day-feat./id926570533>

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- Bob Geldof

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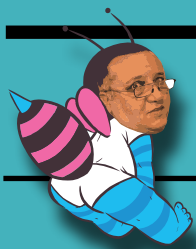
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BUMBLE-INI

BY PAUL BELLINI

Paul Bellini is a comedy writer who has worked on such TV shows as The Kids in the Hall (where he played The Towel Guy), This Hour Has 22 Minutes and Locker Room. He was also a FAB magazine columnist for 11 years. He currently teaches comedy writing at George Brown College and the Second City Training Center in Toronto.

As a child, growing up in Timmins, I thought I was 'the only gay in the village'. Turns out there were others, like Jean-Claude Lafond, a filmmaker whose new project is intriguingly entitled Jesus Meets the Gay Man.

A feature-length documentary, its mission is to define the difference between Christianity, a religion based on love, and so-called 'Churchianity', an intolerant fire-and-brimstone approach favored by Christian bigots who protest at gay funerals and pride marches. It does so by posing the simple question, "What would Jesus say to a modern-day gay man?"

Jean-Claude and I both attended the very first Timmins Pride March in September, a stirring event in which over 500 people marched down the main streets on a Saturday afternoon. Neither of us ever thought we would live to see the day. He and co-producer Tim Doucette were anxious to interview the only two Christian protesters in the village, but typically, they weren't very educated about gays or about Christianity. Still, the footage makes a valuable point, that homosexuality and Christianity are seen as polar opposites, whereas nothing could be further from the truth.

"I love Pope Francis," declares Jean-Claude. "I think he was brought in to bring the church into the 21st century." And so will Jean-Claude's movie, with recreations (featuring a historically accurate but contentious non-white Jesus) and celebrity interviews, including Carla Collins, Richard Ryder, and The Village People, among others.

"Most Christians aren't aware that the Bible was put together under Constantine the Great 325 years after Christ's death," says Jean-Claude. "And that's where

the problems began," he continues, referring to the whole 'man shall not lie with another man' stuff. But the documentary is also about how gay people have rejected Christ as a result, often with ridicule, like jokes about how Christ was a mama's boy who hung out with twelve dudes and a hooker.

Jean-Claude was a church organist and an enthusiast of the Jesus Movement of the mid 70s. Though he always knew he was gay, he married a woman and stayed with her for seven tumultuous years, even spending time in a deprogramming cult. He admits that like me, he is not a regular churchgoer. Yet what, other than laziness, is preventing us and thousands of other gay men, from going to the MCC? Is it because most of us are hung over on a Sunday morning, or is it because mass is just too boring? For most gay men, 'worship' is something you do to a hunk, not a deity.



Our conversation wandered into fond memories of growing up in Timmins the 70s and 80s, of "those small cut Adidas shorts that left nothing to the imagination" and about how his sister stole all his boyfriends. Jean-Claude is a funny guy, so I expect the movie to be both informative and entertaining. I can't help but think that in about a year from now, most of us will be talking about Jesus Meets the Gay Man.



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A KODAK MOMENT

BY BOYD KODAK

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

Photo by Nichola Ward

Nichola Ward



I've known Nichola Ward for many years. She has indeed contributed significantly, and is a prominent part of our community. Nichola (Nicki) Ward was born in London and lives in Toronto, Canada where she is an award winning writer, performer and poet. Her work embraces the energy of "spoken word" and the formality of "page poetry".

She is the founder of the publishing and performance group Ground Queero and a long term member of the respected LGBT writer's group "OUTwriters". She is the author of "Little Sarah - Wordkeeper", "Babylon Alley - A Play for Voices", "Found Album" and "Jackie's Not a Real Girl"

Boyd: Nicki, tell us what have you been doing over the least year?

Nichola: As a word artist, a lot of the work that I do is solitary or at least is prepared in solitude. Much of the year has been about preparation. In addition to writing new work, I've been trying to assemble hundreds of pieces into a single, publishable form. As part of that process, I've been re-introduced to some earlier work of mine that I'd like to produce and perform again. Babylon Alley (An epic performance poem from some years ago) is something I'd like to take to the stage and see how it's grown.

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

Nichola: I'm getting to a point in my life where I don't crave quite as much "excitement" - However, since I see political activism as an extension of my artistic practice there's always plenty to focus on.

Although it isn't really "exciting" probably the most satisfying manifestation of our community's activism is the Trans Memorial in the 519 park. It's been gratifying to be a small part of that process.

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

Nichola: I'm looking forward to seeing more visibility of trans people at all levels of engagement. Not just as "tokens" used to get grant money - But trans people in positions of genuine authority and influence.

Boyd: Where and when can we see your work?

Nichola: Obviously the website www.NicholaWard.com is a good choice. There's a fan page on facebook that links to occasional events and videos. I'm part of a couple of regular events such as "Plasticine Poetry", "Inkslinger", etc.

Boyd: Is there a message that you would like to share with our readers?

Nichola:

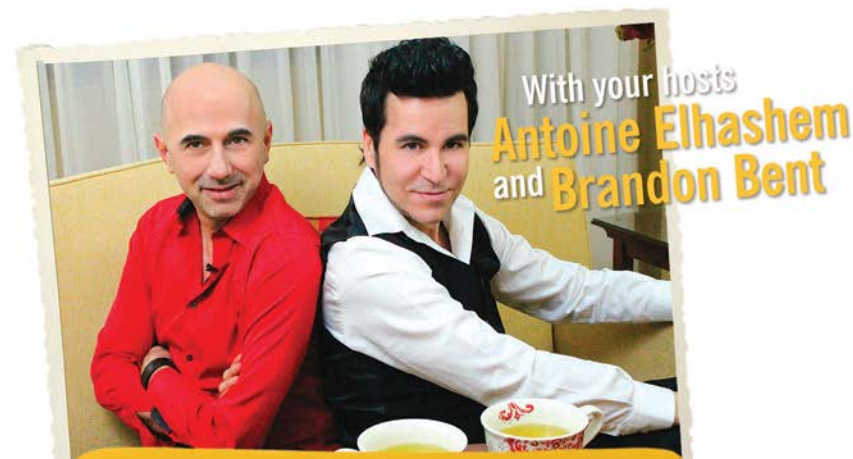
- The cure for crazy is not - More Crazy
- The cure for bullying is not - More Bullying
- The cure for bullshit is not - More Bullshit
- The only cure is "Being Human"

Boyd: Tell us how you would finish the following sentence:

Nichola: I couldn't live without : - Love

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BEYOND THE VILLAGE

BY OWEN SHEPPARD

Owen Sheppard is a writer, artist, and award-winning filmmaker based in Toronto. His independent media work in Canada and Kenya informs a partisan creative approach exploring class struggle, racism, and the limits of freedom. He is now writing an historical fiction novel. You can find his website at: www.owensheppard.com

Rémy Huberdeau: TRANSGENDER PARENTS



Owen caught up with director Rémy Huberdeau to talk about his recent documentary film *Transgender Parents*, which will screen on The Doc Channel at 8pm on Monday December 8th. The documentary explores the experiences of parents who are trans.

Owen: I understand *Transgender Parents* is based on a short documentary you made, *Transforming Family*, which is making waves on Youtube. How has your work been received?

Rémy: The design was for [the film] to be free and accessible on-line, and for people to programme it as they wish. People really ran with that. I was telling a friend about it, and she went on Youtube to find the film. The first thing that came up was a version of the film with Russian subtitles, which I think is pretty cool in terms of everything that's happening in Russia these days. That really encapsulates the spirit of wanting people to take ownership of my work.

Owen: I really admired the respect and range of experiences conveyed in your film. How did you build those relationships?

Rémy: This was a tough project coming from an underrepresented community, so the expectations were quite high, and rightly so. My team and I thought it was essential to get a cross-section of intersections of identity, to drive home that trans people are everywhere, in all regions and all communities. As a non-Indigenous Canadian, part of my responsibility is to make space for Indigenous people to speak for themselves. And that's also true in LGBTQ and

trans communities. The last person to come onboard was Aiyana Maracle, the Haudenosaunee great-grandmother. That's just an example of the importance of following through with the value of a diversity of representation.

Owen: This film came about when trans people reflected on the need for materials discussing parenting from a trans perspective. What's the relationship between creating an artistic piece of cinema while also addressing a political topic?

Rémy: I went to a talk at the ImagineNative Film Festival a couple weeks ago, and Joseph Boyden, author of the Canada Reads-winning novel *The Orenda*, was asked a similar question. He said, "Take care of the story and the rest will follow." Meaning if you tell the story well, all your other hopes for the storytelling will fall into place, including the politics.

Owen: What's next for you?

Rémy: I guess the next big project I'm hoping to make is going to be about the Michif language, which is a French-Cree creole language from the Prairies. So it will be a really different piece around decolonization, language, and culture.

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Top 10 Community BUZZPICKS



DEC 15

BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE - HOLIDAY CABARET

The "Graduate Company" and Special Guests present their Holiday Favourites - Get with the Spirit of the Season with this event: lead by Bruce Dow, Series Director; Jeff Madden, Associate Series Director; and Mark Selby, Series Musical Director // 7:30PM // Buddies in Bad Times Theatre // 6 Gloucester St. // \$20 // buddiesinbadtimes.com

DEC 17

PAUL BELLINI'S LIAR LIAR PANTS ON FIRE - LIVE AT THE FLYING BEAVER PUBARET!

PAUL BELLINI hosts another evening of tall stories and short truths. Come listen as our liars try to convince you that their story is true // 7:30PM // Flying Beaver Pubaret // 488 Parliament Street www.pubaret.com

DEC 19

RICHARD RYDER - LIVE AT THE FLYING BEAVER PUBARET!

Come see Richard and experience his hilarious personality up close, live and in person! // 7PM // Flying Beaver Pubaret // 488 Parliament Street // \$15.00 adv/\$20.00 door // www.pubaret.com

DEC 24

"120 WEDNESDAYS" WEEKLY OPEN-MIC COMEDY "Mandy Goodhandy Canada's first Trans woman stand-up comedian presents: Open-mic, calling all stand-up Comedians!" // 9PM // Club 120 // 120 Church Street // Free // www.club120.ca

DEC 27

SKANK TOP It's that awkward time between X-MASS and NU-YEARS but that's not gonna let us stop anything. It's fucking Saturday Night and *nobody* is working the next day // 10PM // Club 120 // 120 Church Street // \$10, \$5 students www.sodom.ca

DEC 31

NEW YEAR'S EVE AT FLY

"Music by Sumation & Mark Falco. NYE countdown & Performance by Sofonda Cox." // 10PM // FLY Nightclub // 6 Gloucester St. // 25\$10PM - 1AM. 30\$1AM - 6AM www.flyyyz.com

MARDI GRASS NYE AT CREWS & TANGOS

Featurings some of Toronto's finest performers and illusionists. Champagne at midnight // 9PM // Crews & Tangos // 508 Church Street // crewsandtangos.com

NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER AND A SHOW WITH CARLA COLLINS

Let Carla Collins bring in your new year with some laughter. Late show includes a dance party starting at 11pm. // 7PM and 9PM // Flying Beaver Pubaret // 488 Parliament Street // \$25adv/\$30door // www.pubaret.com

JAN 13

HER2 HER2 follows a group of women suffering from breast cancer as they go through an experimental drug trial // 2PM and 8PM // Buddies in Bad Times Theatre // 12 Alexander Street // \$28 - \$48 // buddiesinbadtimes.com/2014-15/her2/

JAN 25

AVALLANCHE - ONTARIO GAY SKI WEEKEND 2015

Ontario Gay Ski Weekend returns to Blue Mountain as Ontario's ONLY mid-winter LGBTQ festival. A weekend that celebrates community, diversity, winter sport, friends and fun. // Blue Mountain // 108 Jozo Weider Blvd // \$79+ www.OntarioGaySkiWeekend.com

Top 10 Charity/Non-Profit BUZZPICKS



DEC 4 - 20

EDGE 102.1'S EDGEFEST JINGLE BELL CONCERT SERIES

The Edge's Edgefest Jingle Bell Concert Series concert series is back for the holiday season, with a slew of bands set to perform. Portion of proceeds to Daily Bread Food Bank // Phoenix Concert Theatre // 410 Sherbourne St, www.edge.ca/jinglebell

DEC 15

DIGGING ROOTS CONCERT

An awesome concert fundraiser at Lee's Palace featuring Digging Roots with opening acts Gary LaRocca and J-Rez // 8PM // Lee's Palace // 529 Bloor St // \$15 (\$20 at the door) // www.thunderwomanhealinglodge.ca/

DEC 16

GILDA'S CLUB MEMBER HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Join us for a night of laughter, holiday chili, and a festive celebration! // 5:30PM // Gilda's Club // 24 Cecil Street www.gildasclubtoronto.org

DEC 17

ALL'S THAT JAZZ A fun night of live music with TICOT and the Henry Strong Band featuring a Buffet // 8PM // Erotico // 461 Church Street // \$10 donation // www.facebook.com/events/1532897226952020

JAN 1

10TH ANNUAL POLAR BEAR DIP

Since 2005 the Toronto Polar Bear Club has raised almost \$200,000 - funds that have gone directly to build projects in Toronto // 11AM // \$30 min donation // www.torontopolarbear.com

JAN 22

THE IDEA OF NORTH

The AGO is delighted to present a special evening featuring Steve Martin—actor, writer, musician, art collector and guest curator of The Idea of North: Paintings by Lawren S. Harris. Funds raised at this event will help develop the exhibition and bring it to the AGO in 2016 // 6:30PM // AGO // 317 Dundas Street West // \$1,200 // www.ago.net

10TH ANNUAL DIALOGUE FRIENDSHIP DINNER

Excellence in Community Service Award Presentation & Live Nuevo Flamenco Performance by Juneyt Yetkiner benefiting Sick Kids Hospital // 6:30PM // The Fairmont Royal York Hotel // 100 Front Street West // \$75 // www.interculturaldialogue.com

JAN 22

PUPPY LOVE Proceeds to will be donated to the Humane Society International Canada to stop the inhumane treatment of dogs in puppy mills // 6PM // The Everleigh Club // 580 King St W // \$40 // www.puppylove2015.com

JAN 31

WALK FOR MEMORIES

Please join us on Saturday January 31, 2015 for the 25th annual Walk for Memories to have fun and help people and families facing Alzheimer's disease // 9AM // Allen Lambert Galleria // 181 Bay St, Toronto // www.alzheimer.ca/en

FEB 6

2ND ANNUAL STAND PROUD GALA PFLAG

York Region, fundraiser dinner // 6:30PM // Thornhill Golf & Country Club // 7994 Yonge St // \$65 http://www.pflagyork.ca/

Top 15 General BUZZPICKS



DEC 03 - 21

JUDY GARLAND CHRISTMAS SHOW Remember all those wonderful Hollywood Christmas TV specials and the stars of yesteryear? Well, they're baaaaack... with at twist! // 2PM and 7PM
Zion Cultural Centre // 1650 Finch Avenue East // \$28
www.civillightoperacompany.com/judy_garland_14.html

DEC 04 - JAN 11

JESUS CHRIST SUPER STAR
The popular musical is back in town again with a holiday season run. The rock-opera retells the last week of Jesus Christ's life, focusing on his relationship with his disciples including Judas // Lower Ossington Theatre // 100A Ossington Avenue // \$49.99 - \$79.99 // lowerossingtontheatre.com

DEC 09 - 21

DONNY & MARIE CHRISTMAS IN TORONTO This show combines music and dance from international stars Donny and Marie to celebrate the Christmas cheer." Princess of Wales Theatre 300 King St W // \$59 - \$200
www.mirvish.com

15-DEC

YELLOW HOLIDAY WINE GALA Wine lovers can attend this extravagant event just in time for the holiday season. Organizers will be offering an extensive range

of wines, gourmet food and the chance to make new friends. The Ritz-Carlton Toronto // 181 Wellington Street West // \$179
iyellowwineclub.com

DEC 17 - JAN 04

JERSEY BOYS This is the true story of how four blue-collar kids became one of the greatest successes in pop music history // 1:30PM and 7:30PM // Ed Mirvish Theatre // 244 Victoria Street // mirvish.com/shows/jerseyboys

DEC 20

DENNIS FERRER LIVE @ RYZE A PRISM INTEGRATED DANCE FLOOR "Prism integrated dance floor part 2. A dance floor coming together for the love of the music! "10PM - 6AM // RYZE Toronto // 423 Collrge Street // \$25 // www.wantickets.com/ryzeferrer

JAN 24

WORLD STAGE - THE #ARTLIVE BALL Come join us for the launch of World Stage 2015. #artlive returns with an unprecedented party collaboration between two of Toronto's most august families: House of Nuance and House of Monroe // 8PM // Harbourfront Centre // 235 Queens Quay West // \$10 // www.harbourfrontcentre.com/worldstage/theartliveball/

JAN 25

YOUR SURPRISE PARTY It's a party. We have a dj, there is dancing and fun...Winner gets, Awesome prizes and a stack of wrapped gifts to open // 10PM // Cardinal Rule // 5 Roncesvalles Ave // Free // cardinalrulerestaurant.com/

DEC 27

DANIEL PORTMAN AT RYZE ALONGSIDE QUIM AND THE NIGHTOWLS Daniel Portman makes his return to Toronto just in time for the Holidays and right before we kick into the new year // 10PM // RYZE Toronto // 423 College Street // \$20 // <http://wantickets.com/danielportman>

JAN 13

CHER Iconic Cher is back in Toronto with her Dressed to Kill Tour, as she performs classic and new songs off her latest release // Air Canada Centre // 40 Bay Street // \$63.45 and up // www.theaircanadacentre.com



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