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The Editor

What you're holding in your hands is the fifth issue of theBUZZ, Toronto's most comprehensive events listing and entertainment print publication. This is our LOVE issue, and we've compiled a list of exciting events that takes you from Valentine's, the weekend of love, right up and into spring, the season of love. There's something for everyone from dining and dancing, to amazing art exhibitions and empress balls.

As well, we have all our regular columnists give us updates on what's happening from their side of the quill. Donnaramma dishes out the best of what's going down in the drag scene across the city, while Paul Bellini gives us an update on a new production about to hit the stage at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre as part of their annual Rhubarb Festival.

Many consider music the language of love, so we caught up with a few Toronto musicians to see what they've been up to. Cat Grant chats with Lorraine Segato from the legendary Parachute Club about her latest solo release, and Boyd Kodak gets intimate with Lynx from Toronto's Random Order. Both have new music out, so why not grab a copy and tantalize your valentine through tunes.

Some might prefer a movie date-night, or a few cocktails at their local haunt, and we've got that covered as well. We have a feature interview with director Kate Johnson discussing her co-directorial feature debut, TRU LOVE, and a spotlight on Woody's as they celebrate the very special milestone of being part of the Church Street community for 25 years. Now that's a lot of love!

For those who are single and loving it, Brandon Michael Lee has some tips on getting through the day by making yourself feel special. Finally, for those seeking something different, we also give you the scoop on where to go when venturing beyond the village. There are plenty of independent cafes, lounges, and bars worthy of your visit all year long.

Thanks for picking up the latest issue of theBUZZ. Enjoy the read!

Bryen Dunn
Guest Editor, theBUZZ

FEB / MARCH 2015

VOLUME 5 PRESENTED BY PINKPLAY MAGS

On the Cover: The Love Issue



Amanda and Chalaine have been together since June 2012. They met during a fun night out on the town. These two are loving partners first, and best friends to say the least. These crazy kids enjoy spending summer days traveling with friends, outdoor activities and fun get togethers, hibernating winter nights snuggling by the fire catching up on great flicks.



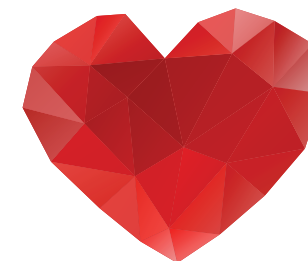
Julio is a Canadian resident and **Fredson** is from Brazil, and the two met in Brazil in November 2013 and fell passionately in love. Later they got married in a most beautiful and magical environment, the old historic centre of Salvador (Bahia). They work hard on making their long distance relationship work, they still struggle hard to be together and stay together as a family due to the distance and the immigration hurdles they have encountered, but love keeps them strong. They tell theBUZZ that they are on the right track as they have already submitted the paperwork to Canada Immigration and things are looking promising. In the meantime, while they have a big distance between them they make sure text and call every day and every minute they're free, and visit as often as they can.



Joie and Natalie have been together for 15 years and we have been married in Ontario for 5 those 15 years. How they met is a long long story but it is not an exaggeration to say that their spirit guides were determined for them to be together. They credit their relationship success to the fact that they have Mojo together; a profound and passionate love for one another. They laugh together a lot! They are truly meant to be!



Desi and Diomar celebrate 6 months together this February. Despite the fact that 550km currently separates them each knew they had found their match based on their instant chemistry. They are excited to celebrate their first Valentines together and look forward to many firsts this year.v





TRU LOVE

Words by Cat Grant

A lesbian love story movie that is intelligent, funny, sexy and truly relatable is not an easy find. Make it Canadian, beautifully shot and edited, cleverly written, throw in outstanding performances, a harmonious soundtrack and voila, you have found TRU LOVE by Kate Johnston and Shauna MacDonald. It became a 2014 film festival darling and international award winner, a top 10 in the HuffPost U.K. 2013, and is still racking up nominations worldwide.



The story is deceptively simple. Thirty-something Tru, (Shauna MacDonald) is asked by her busy friend Suzanne, (Christine Horne) to keep an eye on her inconveniently visiting mother Alice, (Kate Trotter). The myriad of emotions that ensues during an unlikely romance between the destined to meet lovely older Alice, and reticent Tru, is hilariously real and actually quite intricate.

"People are kind of complicated. It's the elements of all of us", explains Kate Johnston about her directorial feature debut. So where did this little movie that could, and then did, come from? Kate was an Air Force brat from a Catholic family who was surrounded by five siblings, jets, and soldiers on various remote Canadian military bases. She tagged along with her father to his projectionist job in many theatres.

Picture a small girl sitting in the dark booth for hours, watching every genre of film imaginable. She was mesmerized by the "fairy dust" floating inside the white beam of light projecting moving images onto the big screen. "That blew my tiny little mind. I had no idea how that happened, but however that magic was done I was in it", Kate said. "My dad showed all types of movies. When I was a teenager I would go seek out art house film like Fellini. I probably knew more about cinematography and film than most people my age because I was so steeped in it", she explains.

When in her house Kate listened to her pianist mother play Bach and Rachmaninoff and teach piano to the neighbourhood children. "My brilliant mother lived for art and was very stoic, while my father was completely sentimental. I'm not sure how, but I am a complete hybrid of both", she laughs.

To her teacher's dismay Kate wrote, doodled and storyboarded throughout her school years and admits to being addicted to Leonard Cohen at the tender age of 14. When I confess I found her movie poetic, Kate smiled and explained, "I love poetic metaphor, as it is part of all of us, and I think this is why people cry. They see the connection between the micro and the macro, the inner to the outer; the oneness that we are in, all floating in the sea of consciousness".

Kate jokingly comments that she and her sister Jane often refer to our planet earth as a giant mental institution floating in space. "We are like a quarantined planet and I'm just trying to write my way out of the cage baby", she smirks.

Always sporty, Kate was dubbed one of the fastest runners in the North and confessed that she was also an emotional runner for years, always one foot out the door with her suitcase half-packed. It is fitting then that when Kate moved to Toronto, she couch-surfed and became an actress, working with acclaimed companies such as Nightwood Theatre and Buddies in Bad Times Theatre.

She quit acting in her forties but continued honing her gift of writing. Reading other screenplays and works she admired as well, she spoke of one of her favourite plays, 'Six Characters in Search of an Author' by Luigi Pirandello. "Every one of them wants to be THE main character, and all become tyrannical to the writer, which is what happens to me", she divulges.





In a serendipitous moment Kate met Canadian actress (and co-director) Shauna MacDonald on a patio when the latter was with a group of boisterous friends. Shauna decided to invite Kate in on the loud conversation to avoid stink eye, and found Kate funny. They chatted, hit it off and Kate thought Shauna would be a perfect fit to play Tru. Shauna only needed to read one page of Kate's nine-page short film to know it was different. She identified with the Tru character right away, so Kate and her teamed up turning it into a feature.

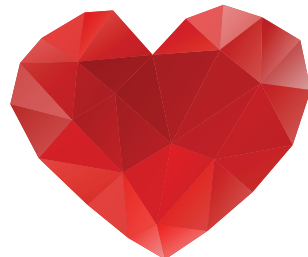
"I think people are taught to risk little and fear a lot but I just put my head to the grindstone and put the TRU LOVE first feature draft together in a month. "We then cast the film and work-shopped other drafts together over the next two years." I am sure they couldn't be more delighted with the result of their collaboration.

"A really great thing about this movie is not only the support it has received from the LGBTQ communities, but the reactions from straight men and women, with comments like, 'Wow I never thought about that, maybe that could happen to me.' When I watch it now I observe the audience and it's like Mass. People inhaling and exhaling at the same time, it's a roller coaster ride", Kate remarks.

When I inquired about what's next, she shared, "I'm currently writing a film that is inspired by a dear old friend, an artist, and a very funny woman." Kate then took her hand and touched her heart. "I have her in here, but I won't spill any more secrets now", she concluded.

Kate Trotter has been nominated for Outstanding Performance- Female at the ACTRA Awards for her portrayal as Alice. The ACTRA Awards take place Friday, February 20, 2015 at the Carlu, 444 Yonge Street, in Toronto.

TRU LOVE – www.trulovethefilm.com



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taught
to risk
little
and fear
a lot**

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Valentine's For One



BY BRANDON MICHAEL LEE

Here it comes again, creeping up on you like an ex that you really don't want to see. The day every unattached person claims to hate, when secretly, if we weren't single we'd be all romantic, gushy and ridiculous. Yep, it's Valentine's Day.

So, what do we do aside from sitting at home watching 'P.S. I Love You' while consuming a vat of Ben & Jerry's Cookie Dough Ice Cream and a bag of chips; sitting covered in Cheetos dust, tears and shame? So my fellow singles, what are we going to do?

Well here are some Single Suggestions to make your Valentine's Day a little less lonely and a bit more adventurous for you and your single friends.

Host an Anti-Valentine's Day Party

No Red, No Hearts, No lovey-dovey...just a let loose, free for all party. Invite all your friends that are single just like you are, or couples that hate the Valentine's BS and go crazy! Maybe a theme as well to up the stakes of the most epic party ever... I'm thinking 80's disco.

Dinner For Singles

Restaurants tend to have some great set menus for Valentine's Day, but us single folk tend to miss out on it because we are too busy hiding away from the mass of tables-for-two, and couples with their PDA's and Marriage Proposals. Don't miss out on a good meal. Gather your gang, make a reservation for as many as

you want, and take advantage of the deliciousness that is normally kept from us singles.

Turn RomCom's into a Drinking Game

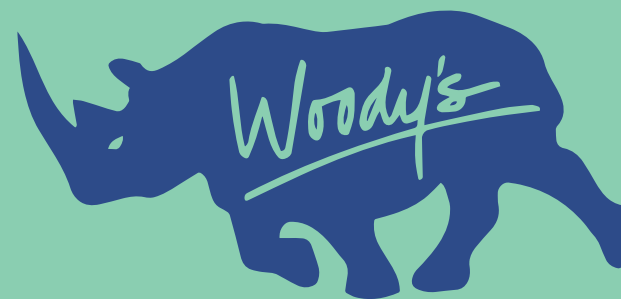
Some of us might end up hibernating at home watching 'The Notebook' or 'Love Actually' or some other sappy romantic comedy or drama, wishing it would happen to us. However, amidst our sombre need for affection we are missing out on all the actual cheese and holes in the actual storyline. Why not mock it instead of wish for it? Drink every time someone says the word love or some other cheesy line that would never happen in real life.

Now, this isn't a bitter article. I'm not a sad and lonely bachelor. I have 37 cats. So I'm not bashing Valentine's Day or happy couples. Amidst all the cheesiness, red floating hearts, and chocolates, Valentine's Day is meant to be a celebration of love. So for my last suggestion, it's all about you!

Love Yourself Day

We all remember the quote "You are kind, you are smart, you are important" (The Help). It's true, you are. Take this day to pamper you, love yourself, and show yourself a great time! Go to the spa, get a mani/pedi. See a play. Do whatever the hell your heart desires on this day to show yourself, that you are worth it.

If all else fails, call me and we can glitter bomb all the happy couples together.



25 Years Strong

Woody's has been a Toronto staple since 1989, and has since become one of the world's most known gay bars, and was once deemed to have the highest beer sales of any bar in Canada. The North American version of the television show 'Queer as Folk' featured the bar prominently throughout its run, and in a fourth-season episode the characters travelled to Toronto. Woody's appeared both as Pittsburgh's Woody's, and as a fictional Toronto bar called Moosie's. Late Night with Conan O'Brien also featured a skit on the bar. Woody's continues to host its popular "best" competitions such as "best chest" and "best ass", which are judged on crowd applause with the winning contestant taking home cash and other giveaways. In this BUZZ exclusive, bar manager's Dean Odorico and Steven Clegg discuss how Woody's has evolved, and how it continues to thrive as a bar 25 years on.

Tell us about Woody's and how it fits into the Toronto LGBT community.

The main objective and mandate of Woody's has always been to be a community based bar. Since we have opened, we have welcomed everyone. We have been involved with countless community groups through the years. We have help raise well over \$100,000.00 for the AIDS Committee of Toronto, as well as raising huge amounts for many, many other charities. We sponsor four softball teams, two football teams, two soccer teams, the hockey league, the volleyball league, and the dodge ball league. Woody's has also sponsored many theatre projects as well as being a long-time supporter of Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, North America's largest LGBT theatre.

Tell us about the amazing line-up of entertainment that's a big part of the atmosphere.

Ultimately, the audience makes the choice. There are contests and fundraiser throughout the year that many entertainers that are starting out participate in. It is often during these shows that they are noticed and booked for future events elsewhere, and again at Woody's. Many, many people perform at Woody's but it is the ones that connect with the audience and elicit applause and cheers that are invited back.

Tell us about some of the highlights from the past 25 years at Woody's.

We especially enjoyed partnering with Fashion Cares in their early years. Having the bar appear in 'Queer As Folk' and the recognition we received from that was quite spectacular. Tourists would always be getting a picture of themselves under the logo on the canopy out front. Being part of the growth and evolution of Pride, and the village in general, definitely stands out. World Pride this past year was truly amazing and it was also the inaugural year for Village Pride the weekend before which far exceeded anyone's expectations.

Tell us the secret to your success.

The staff we have had over the years is a huge part of our success. We have strived to present the best entertainment and performers. We have never had a cover charge and do our best to keep our prices as low as we can.

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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

DJ Aural

DJ Relentless
Photo Credit - Kryst Cee

Love, beer and boxed chocolates flow like sweet rivers, even as the season chills us with shivers. It's the season of love my Valentine, who will wine and dine this heart of mine? Out on the town in a fabulous gown, no need to frown, I'm making the rounds!

Why should I feel sorry for myself when I can feel sorry for the scowling date-less Jenna Syde (kidding girl!) at 'Spooky Bitch', the spooky rockin' monthly at The Beaver (1192 Queen Street West). DJ Brian Duval spins you right round like a retro record baby...and there's no cover. Just rock out with your cock out or jam with your clam, shazam! Third Thursday of the month at 10 pm. www.beavertoronto.ca

Check this fro, bro. Delicious duo Sofonda Cox and Jada Hudson host and perform 'Diablo Wednesdays' at Church on Church (504 Church Street) with special guests each week. This Church offers \$5 bar rails until midnight, and \$4 Jagers or '7 Deadly Sin' shots until close. Lord help me! The dance floor is hot like hell as DJ Relentless heats up our cold Canadian feet with the latest and bravest beats. No cover. Amen. Doors 10 pm. www.churchonchurch.com

If a girl who hangs with gays is called a fag hag or a fruit fly, what's a girl called who hangs out with bears? A Goldilocks! Gobble up that delicious porridge at 'The Lodge' at O'Grady's (518 Church Street). Offering up their weekly beefy 'Bear Sunday Social' every Sunday 4 pm till 8 pm, where you can sip \$5 pints as bears, cubs and their admirer play mixed drink raffles. www.ogradyschurch.ca

If Cupid's arrow hasn't yet pierced your heart and it's making you bitter, just grab a mic and make it better. Whether you're hairy or scary (hey Jenna!) sing aloud and proud as you join host Elyse Douglas at Crews and Tangos (508 Church Street) for 'Vocal Rehab'. Girls and boys who love to sing do their thing every Thursday night 10 pm to close. You gotta stretch your cords! www.crewsandtangos.com

Stretch, sway and swing your unmentionables February 20th at 'Strippov', the naughty and super fun monthly at The Bad Dog Theatre (875 Bloor Street West). Burlesque improv, naughty prizes, and dance party can only mean outrageous and fun featuring the wildly stylish Allysine Chaynes as she hosts alongside Baby Bel Bel. \$10 cover, 11 pm. www.baddogtheatre.com

Pop Machine at 'Wayla Bar' (996 Queen Street East) pops up the last Saturday of every month with DJ Aural and Phil V mixing it up so you can strut your stuff. The party starts at 10 pm and goes until late, so if you're looking for a place to shake your ass, it's a guarantee! \$5 cover all night long. www.waylabar.ca

Search far and wide for love my dears, and cheers to queers who have no fears. Cheers to lovers under the covers, and a second glance for those who dance. Hit the dance floors and pack the bars, sing of love and play guitars. Happy Valentine's Buzzsters!



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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



Whether it's a cherished CD for someone special, an iTunes card for your honey or romancing that hot new love interest with your sexy playlist/mix-tape; music is always an appreciated Valentine's gift. Checking out what was new in Canadian LGBTQ music, I discovered songwriter/singer Lorraine Segato (Parachute Club) has just released a new solo CD entitled 'Invincible Decency'.

Most of us have a love affair with music. Lyrics can feel they are written just for us. Lovers choose 'their song', and who hasn't wished the DJ would just stop playing the melody that keeps making them cry through a break up?

This much celebrated artist chatted with me about her own current favourites "The newest selection on my playlist is 'Take Me to Church' by Hozier, and 'Uptown Funk' by Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars. It reminds me of every great funk riff from the 70's and 80's", she remarks.

When I inquired about what music inspired her she replied, "Hmm, so many. I've always loved old soul, R&B, and funk music, such as artists like Sam Cooke, Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, and Al Green. Funky grooves like Rufus, Tower of Power, Earth Wind and Fire, Prince, Bonne Raitt, Mavis Staples, and James Brown. Bob Marley. Nina Simone, Sarah Vaughn, Amy Winehouse, John Legend, Maxwell, and Annie Lennox all have magnificent voices. Movie soundtracks by Ennio Morricone and Fela Kuti have always been a favourite as well", she confesses.

At the moment she is a fan of songwriters/performers Ed Sheeran and Bruno Mars. I asked her if there was a message she would like to convey to her fans. "I take nothing for granted, yet I am eternally grateful for the fans that have been so steadfast. I'm excited to reconnect and get the chance to thank them for the support that has sustained and energized me all these years", she explains.

Segato's most cherished memories are when a song can infuse a desire for change and instill hope. Once after a Parachute Club concert she met a woman backstage who was wheelchair bound, after having been in a car accident, and her doctors told her she would never walk again. "This woman told me she listened to our music every day, especially 'Rise Up'. That was a deeply touching moment, and scroll forward to a show two years later when she shows up walking with a brace and says do you remember me? She had told us the song became her mantra, playing it every time she worked out. There she was in front of me standing and gingerly walking. That was an awesome moment", Segato recalls.

It's incredible what music can do for our souls, brains, and heart. This year, spread the joy and share the love of music with your Valentine. Music truly is the language of love!

Lorraine Segato - www.lorrainesegato.com

SATURDAY FEB. 14th 2015

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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.



It was 10 a.m. at Spa XS on a September morning. I want you to picture David Bateman as Gertrude, Brock Hessel as Hamlet, Donnarama as Ophelia and me as Polonius...all dressed in Greco-Roman drag made of towels. We are crowded into the hot tub area, and we are performing a bizarre new version of Hamlet, written by Brock and David. Called Hamlet in a Hot Tub, it takes the tragic Dane and envelops him with lisps and steam. Though Raymond Helkio videotaped this early performance for an eventual film version, which is going to rock, we're not done yet. The next incarnation of our merry pursuit will take place at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre's Rhubarb Festival in mid-February. So what was David's inspiration?

"I toured Northern Ontario high schools in a 90-minute version of Hamlet, called Hamlet in a Hurry in the Eighties," said David. "I got called 'fag' in a lot of high school corridors as I minced in with all the props and costumes. That was fun."

I asked David if he thought Hamlet was a particularly gay play.

"His two best friends are named Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Who has friends with names like that? Queer people, that's who. When Hamlet first greets them he calls them 'excellent good friends', then drops the pretence once he sees what ninnies they are, and that is just so gay. And those codpieces and tights! Gay gay gay gay gay gay!"

But why Hamlet? Why not another Shakespearean play?

"Of course we will eventually have to do Tight Ass Andronicus and Corrie's Old Anus, two other great

Shakespearean tragedies with fabulous parts for drag queens."

Which brings us to the participation of the great Donnarama? Could there be a better Ophelia?

"Donnarama does an amazing Barbara Streisand, and Brock got the idea to use a pivotal monologue from Streisand's 1987 film Nuts, about a misunderstood hooker. There's quite a bit of intertextuality on the piece. So Donnarama was the obvious choice."

So what's next for Hamlet in a Hot Tub? A tour, like when David brought Hamlet in a Hurry to Northern Ontario? I can't help but fantasize, comparing David to England's old actor/managers Donald Wolfitt or Herbert Beerbohm Tree, who performed Shakespeare throughout the English countryside in the early 20th century. Just like them, we're touring the provinces!

"Alberta first," declared David. "The Wild Rose party has requested a three-week run. Then, the oil sands. And there's a bar in Whitehorse where I once had a scotch at 9 AM. I think it would be a great venue. And of course, we will eventually have to do it in a bath house in Denmark."

It would probably be easier to just come see the show at Buddies, and get ready for anything. For instance, when I asked David about his favorite Shakespearean interpretations, he cited Mickey Rooney's 'Puck' and Ethan Hawke's 'Hamlet'.

The man definitely has discerning taste.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre Rhubarb Festival – www.rhubarb.buddiesinbadtimes.com



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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 Credit Alexandra Gelis

LYNX

Lynx is the fearless leader of a band called Random Order, a ground breaking genre defying subversive rock band. Their title track video from 'Black Lipstick Kiss' was nominated for 'Best DIY Video' by RightOutTV Music and Video Awards, and the album has been in the top 30 college radio charts reaching #4 in Ontario.

Lynx has also written and performed music in three major theatre productions:

'Taste This - Boys Like Her' - a multi-disciplinary queer performance troupe that combined live music, storytelling, and performance poetry.

'Arthouse Cabaret' - a modern queer vaudeville and retrospective of LGBT history over the decades, which won Outstanding New Musical at the 2008 Dora Mavor Moore Awards. 'Jackie's Not A Real Girl' - about a woman who invites all of her dead friends and lovers to a birthday party at her bar, and comes to regret it.

Boyd: Tell us what you have been doing over the last year.

Lynx: Over the last year or so I've been steadily working on the release of my band Random Order's third full length album and video for 'Black Lipstick Kiss'. It's been an incredible adventure and exciting time for me.

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

Lynx: What stood out the most was seeing The Tango Legends. I love Latin music, pretty much every form of dance, and seeing superb performers at their craft. You can hear a touch of the Latin influence on our album.

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

Lynx: I'm looking forward to touring the USA and South America. Two of my favourite things are performing and travelling. I really like going to places we've never been before.

Boyd: Where and when can we see your work?

Lynx: Our next show in Toronto is February 24th at The Painted Lady. We'll be touring the southern United States in the spring as well.

Boyd: Any message you would like to convey?

Lynx: I know this may be obvious, however in our society we need to hear this as often as possible. Do what you do because you love it. Follow your passion.

Boyd: Complete the following: The last thing I do before I go to bed is?

Lynx: Meditate or watch James Bond/Quentin Tarantino films!! Those are quite the polar opposites, meditation or mayhem, but it's all about the balance!

Random Order - "We're a band for people on the fringe, who like to colour outside the lines!"
www.randomorder.ca

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BEYOND THE VILLAGE

BY BRYEN DUNN

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist with a focus on travel, lifestyle, entertainment and hospitality. He has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities. He enjoys discovering delicious eats, tasting spirited treats, and being mesmerized by musical beats.

In this issue we're spotlighting venues across Toronto where queer love can be found.

Wayla Bar is located in Leslieville, and has been throwing rad parties since 2010. They position themselves as being "inspired by the nightlife in France and underground clubs of NYC." Being a destination bar most of their parties are themed for a unique and different take on Toronto nightlife. The atmosphere is stylish, and crowd is a mix of 20's to 40's mostly male. Hang out at the bar, in the lounge, on the patio, or hit up the dance floor. Valentine's Weekend – Feb 13, DJ Munin spins Electro, House, EDM, 10 pm, No Cover – Feb 14, Bobo's Bang Bang with DJ Fluffy Souffle and hosted by Scarlett Bobo. 10pm \$5
996 Queen Street East, Toronto, (416) 901-5570
www.waylabar.ca

The Flying Beaver Pubaret is a pub and cabaret, hence the name. Located on Parliament Street, it attracts a mix of a Cabbagetown locals, village wanderers, and artsy types. The pub area is great for casual conversation, dining, and drinking, while the intimate cabaret is where events happen on a regular basis. Valentine's Weekend – Feb 13/14, Dina Martina performs comedy drag, 7 & 9 pm, \$20 advance – Feb 15, That Choir combines a high standard of performance with storytelling through choral music, 7 pm, tickets at the door
488 Parliament Street, Toronto, (647) 347-6567
www.pubaret.com

Steady Café & Bar is a restaurant during the day that often becomes an entertainment venue at night. Food is lovingly prepared both for everyone from carnivores to vegans, and weekend brunch is always packed. Be sure to grab some homemade donuts to go. The tiny back room area is often jammed on weekends with queers and their allies shaking ass. There are also fundraisers, readings, art exhibitions, and more. Valentine Weekend – Feb 13, Stiff Joints with DJ Bob Cobb spinning disco, funk and garage jams, 10 pm, no cover – Feb 14, Valentine's Day Dinner and Show with a five course dietary study in the stages of relationships, Seating at 6 and 830 pm, with 8pm mini lecture series, \$40. TRAMP women's dance party starts at 10 pm with DJ's Linguist, Betti Forde, and Chiclet playing Pop, house and hip hop, no cover.
1051 Bloor Street West, Toronto, TheSteadyCafe@gmail.com, www.thesteadycafe.com

Beaver Café led the way several years back, dragging the drag from the village to Queer West. Today it remains at the top of its game with programming seven nights a week, most without a cover. This tiny

restaurant brings in the local condo dwellers for lunch and dinner, before the homos, dykes, and trans crowd cause mayhem until the wee hours of the morning. There's no explaining what will be happening any night of week, so we won't even try. Valentine's Weekend – Feb 13, House of Filth presents: BAD TUCK Two Year Anniversary Party, the Teeny Tiny Penis edition, with hosts Judy Virago and Igby Lizzard and DJ's Aeryn Pfaff and Boy Pussy, 10 pm, \$5 – Feb 14, I'd Tap That Presents: Puppy Love, a social evening with arts & crafts, board games, and more. Hosted by Jesse + Caitlin with DJ Johnny B Goode, 10 pm, \$5
1192 Queen Street W, Toronto, (416) 537-2768
www.beavertoronto.com

Cardinal Rule is yet another double-dipping diner by day and event space by night. The food is awesomely yummy, as proven by their appearance on The Food Network's 'You Gotta Eat Here'. It truly is reminiscent of a greasy spoon, yet without the grease. Healthy and hearty are more the fare here. Word is also out on weekend brunch. Night time there's often something happening from trivia and karaoke, to DJ dance parties. It's located at the end of the line, the Queen streetcar line that is, before Queen becomes Queensway. Valentine's Weekend – Feb 13, Anti-Valentine's Disco Dance Party – speaking of queens, there will be plenty of disco dancing dummies out for this dance-off with tunes by DJ Triple-X, 9pm, No Cover – Feb 14, Valentine's Delight – dinner, drinks.
5 Roncesvalles Ave, Toronto, (647) 352-0202
www.cardinalrulerrestaurant.com

El Convento Rico have been presenting Latin flavoured entertainment for well over a decade, after having taken over a former basement punk club on College Street. The crowd here is a mix of ethnicities, genders, and sexualities, all here with one thing in common – to dance! There are often dance lessons and drag performances interspersed between DJ sets. This is not your high end dance club, but if you're looking for a great night out, this is the spot. Valentine's Weekend – Feb 13, hosted by Donnarama with performances by Ivory Towers and Devine Darlin, and giveaways with Michita and Alexmar, 9pm, \$10 – Feb 14, Heart Attack hosted by Donnarama with Farra N Hyte, Miss El Convento Rico Jasmine Black, and the Magic Male Revue, 9 pm, \$15
750 College Street West, Toronto, (416) 588-7800
www.elconventorico.com



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Top 10 Community BUZZPICKS



SATURDAY FEB. 14

VAMPIRE LOVE BALL

DJ Blackcat spins all night. Special shows by Allysin Chaynes and Slimthick Monroe. Gisèle Lullaby of Cabaret Mado makes her Toronto debut. Club 120, 120 Church St., Toronto - Doors at 10:00 p.m. - \$10.00, \$5.00 students www.club120.ca

BIG GAY PROM

Join Miss Crews & Tangos 2014 Xtacy Love for her final fundraiser of her year long reign! Prizes including King & Queen of the prom! Crews & Tangos, 508 Church St., Toronto - Curtain at 10:00 p.m. - No Cover www.crewsandtangos.com

TUESDAY'S

FEB. 10/17/24/ MARCH

3/10/17/24/31

C.U.NEXT TUESDAY

Join Donnarama every Tuesday for unbridled imagination and talent- at least one special guest each week. Sometimes, she just pulls people off the street! Statlers, 487 Church St., Toronto - Show at 11:00 p.m. - No Cover www.statlers.ca

WEDNESDAY'S

11/18/25/ MARCH 4/11/18/25

SOUL SISTAS The legendary Michelle Ross takes the stage with Jada Hudson every Wednesday at Crews & Tangos giving you all that your soul can handle! Crews & Tangos, 508 Church St., Toronto - Show at 9:00 p.m. - No Cover www.crewsandtangos.com

THURSDAY'S

FEB. 12/19/26/ MARCH 5/12/19/26

HEAVEN LEE THURSDAYS

Kim Jee in the lounge 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Followed by the heavenly Heaven Lee Hytes and guests at 11:00 p.m. Dance parties at Cellblock in the rear. Zipperz, 72 Carlton St., Toronto - Shows from 6:00 p.m. - No Cover www.facebook.com/Zipperz

THURSDAY'S

FEB 26/ MARCH 26 RELENTLESS

REWIND A retro dance journey with the best tracks you remember from five years ago, or more! Assuming you can still remember things from more than five years ago. Church on Church, 504 Church St., Toronto - 10:00 p.m. - No Cover www.churchonchurch.com

SATURDAY'S

FEB 14/21/28/ MARCH 7/14/21/28

EXPOSED / ANTHEM

Georgie Girl and Sofonda Cox at 6:00 p.m. / James Quigley at the piano from 10:00 p.m. DJ Cory Activate cranks dance tunes in the Cellblock 10:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. Zipperz, 72 Carlton St., Toronto - Shows from 6:00 p.m. Dancing from 10:00 p.m. - No Cover www.facebook.com/Zipperz

MONDAY'S

FEB 16/23/ MARCH 2/9/16/23/30

ROXXIE TERRAIN /

THE WRANGLERS Line dancing from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The vocal talents of Roxxie Terrain from 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. with Adam Weinmann on the piano. Zipperz, 72 Carlton St., Toronto - Dancing 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Show 10:00 p.m. - No Cover www.facebook.com/Zipperz

MONDAY'S

FEB 16/23/ MARCH 2/9/16/23/30

DIRTY DRAG RACE

Showing RuPaul's Drag Race. Join in every Monday for cheap booze and good fun. Hosted by Jenna Syde. Day prices all night! \$3 Shooters!! The Black Eagle Toronto, 457 Church St., Toronto - Start your engines at 10:00 p.m. - No Cover www.blackeagletoronto.com

MONDAY'S

FEB 16 / MARCH 16 MONDAY

MUDDLER Industry Night. A night for all those who slaved to the rhythm over the weekend. A muddled mix of indie / alt / retro from DJ Triple-X. Last Monday of each month. The Cavern Bar, 76 Church St., Toronto Muddling begins at 9:00 p.m. No Cover www.thecavernbar.ca

Top 10 Charity/Non-Profit BUZZPICKS



TUESDAY FEB 10

PROJECT ONE WAY

Charity Arts Fashion Show featuring local designers, artists, make-up artists, hairstylist. Proceeds to SKETCH and George Brown Scholarship program. Tattoo, 567 Queen Street West, Toronto, 8:00 p.m. - 11:00pm www.projectonewayto.com

FRIDAY FEB 13

TORONTO BOUND

REGISTRATION AND WELCOME

PARTY Register for this kink positive weekend event, followed by a Welcome Party for this fundraising weekend to benefit The Rainbow Railroad. Held at Toronto's only leather and denim bar. The Black Eagle Toronto, 457 Church St., Toronto - 8:30 p.m. to close www.hotfftoronto.com Part of the Toronto Bound Weekend 2015 VIP Pass

SATURDAY FEB 14

TORONTO BOUND COCKTAIL

PARTY, RECEPTION AND

SILENT AUCTION Cocktail party/reception and registration for the live and silent auctions to benefit The Rainbow Railroad. Guest Auctioneer Jo Armone. Part of the Toronto Bound Weekend 2015 VIP Pass. Holders receive Front of the Line Privileges and Select Seating. \$10.00 donation at the door for those without a TB 2015 VIP Pass The 519 Community Centre. Main Ballroom, 2nd Floor - 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. www.hotfftoronto.com



SUNDAY FEB 15

TORONTO BOUND LEATHER

BRUNCH

Set Brunch Menu for the Toronto Bound Weekend participants. Not included with VIP Pass. \$15.00 brunch only. O'Grady's on Church, 518 Church St., Toronto 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. www.hotfftoronto.com

SUNDAY FEB. 15

TORONTO BOUND FIRESIDE

CHAT AND 2014 HOTFF

COMMUNITY AWARDS

Interviews with boy-alex Dunlop (BBT 2006) at 2:00 p.m. and Duncan MacLachlan (MLT 1996) at 4:00 p.m. Hosted by Douglas O'Keefe of The Leather Archives and Museum. Held at Toronto's top sex-positive bar. Part of the Toronto Bound Weekend 2015 VIP Pass. www.hotfftoronto.com Club 120, 120 Church St., Toronto - 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

SUNDAY FEB. 15

12TH ANNUAL LOVEFEST

The Imperial Court of Toronto Fundraiser shows, "The Dating Game" and "The Couples Game" Check the website for more details and times to be announced. Zipperz, 72 Carlton St., Toronto - Donation at the door <https://sites.google.com/a/ticot.ca/the-imperial-court-of-toronto/events>

SUNDAY FEB 15

KING AND QUEEN OF HEARTS PAGEANT - HAMILTON

The Imperial Court of Hamilton-Wentworth & Tri-cities. The pageant is open to everyone. King & Queen of Hearts Pageant ~ the Superhero Edition. Hosted by Teran Blake and Nikki Chin. Embassy Nightclub (Main floor), 54 King St. E., Hamilton - Opening Presentations at 11:30 p.m. Entrance fee \$10 plus a membership fee of \$10 (this fee will be waived if already a member of TICOHW&TC.) www.ticohw.com

WEDNESDAY FEB 18

PUNK ROCK BINGO

Monthly west end party featuring drag performances, punk rock music, prizes and O-69 shots. Always packed house. Bingo 8pm to 10pm - DJ dance party goes late. Proceeds to charity. The Beaver - 1192 Queen Street West, Toronto, No Cover www.beavertoronto.com

SUNDAY MARCH 1

POZTO

Monthly HIV+ Queer Dance Party / Fundraiser for Toronto PWA Foundation featuring DJ Relentless. Hosted by Barbie Jo Bontemps. Crews & Tangos, 508 Church St., Toronto - Doors at 9:00 p.m. No Cover. www.crewsandtangos.com

SATURDAY MARCH 28

GALA 2015 - PFLAG CANADA

Durham Region Inspire Change in the Durham Region - This is the 5th annual GALA evening. Heydonshore Pavilion, 589 Water St. Whitby, ON - 5:00 p.m. VIP Reception \$90/pp or \$720 Table of 8. 6:00 p.m. Regular admission \$75/pp or \$600 Table of 8 www.pflagdurhamregion.com

Top 10 General BUZZPICKS



DAILY BINGO

Work nights? Called in sick? Visiting the city? Check out this mid-afternoon gathering of bingo bobs, Cash Jackpots, Prizes and Surprises! Hosted by Teran Blake Flash on Church, 463 Church St. Toronto - Daily from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. No Cover
www.flashonchurch.com

FEB 11 TO FEB 15

Marilyn: Forever Blonde Experience Marilyn Monroe - This faithful recreation pays homage to Monroe in her own words and music, and stars Sunny Thompson as the incomparable and iconic Marilyn. The Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre, 189 Yonge St., Toronto - \$39.95, \$79.95 and \$99.95 Tickets at the box office OR at Ticketmaster: 1-855-622-ARTS(2787) www.ticketmaster.ca

JAN 21 - APRIL 5

BURN WITH DESIRE: PHOTOGRAPHY AND GLAMOUR

This multimedia exhibition offers a sweeping view of photography's role in defining glamour since the 1920s. Curated by Dr. Gaëlle Morel. Main Gallery, Ryerson Image Centre, 33 Gould St. Toronto - www.ryerson.ca/ric

JAN 31 - APRIL 19

EVERYWHERE IS ANYWHERE IS ANYTHING IS EVERYTHING

The work of Douglas Coupland. This is a first-time partnership

between the ROM Contemporary Culture, and MOCCA, with works at both venues. MOCCA - 952 Queen St. W., Toronto - 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays www.mocca.ca/exhibition/coupland/ Royal Ontario Museum - 100 Queen's Park, Toronto. Open Daily. www.rom.on.ca

FEB. 7 - MAY 10

JEAN-MICHEL

BASQUIAT:

NOW'S THE TIME Eight artworks from museums and private collections across North America and Europe. First retrospective of this New York City street artist who confronted issues of racism, identity and social tension. Extended hours 3 Fridays - February 13, 20, 27 to 8:30 p.m. Art Gallery of Ontario, 317 Dundas St. W., Toronto. Tuesday to Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Closed Mondays. www.ago.net/basquiat

SATURDAY FEB. 21

NORTHBOUND LEATHER'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY FETISH NIGHT

Celebrate the birth of Canada's original Fetish Night featuring a dedicated dungeon, dancing and decadent spectacles! Phoenix Concert Theatre, 410 Sherbourne St., Toronto Doors at 9:00 p.m. Tickets: \$20.00 advance/ \$30.00 at door - subject to capacity www.northbound.com

FRIDAY FEB. 27

RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE: BATTLE OF THE SEASONS Host Michelle Visage with Bendela Crème,

Darlene Lake, Jinx Monsoon, Alaska 5000, Ivy Winters, Jiggly Caliente, Pandora Boxx and special guest Cary Nokey. Lineup subject to change. Danforth Music Hall, 147 Danforth Ave., Toronto - VIP Door - 7:00 p.m. General Door - 8:00 p.m. Tickets - \$31.50 to \$100.00 - www.thedanforth.com

FEB 13 - 14

DINA MARTINA

This is the hysterically funny show that wowed the crowds in New York and Provincetown in the summer of 2014. The Flying Beaver Pubaret, 488 Parliament St., Toronto - 4 shows - Feb. 13/14 - 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. daily - \$20.00 advance/ \$25.00 door. Dinner available before, during, and after the show. Dinner patrons get priority seating. www.pubaret.com

SUNDAY'S

FEB 15/22 - MARCH 1/8/15/22/29

SUNDAY FUNDAY KARAOKE

Sing a tune with a chicken wing in the other hand! Be the Star that you were born to be! O'Gradys on Church, 518 Church St., Toronto - Every Sunday. Tune up starting at 10:00 p.m. www.ogradyschurch.ca

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

THE POINTER SISTERS Is it the 80's? It must be the 80's because it's time for The Pointer Sisters and all those great 80's hits. Live at Casino Rama! Casino Rama, 5899 Rama Rd., Rama, ON - Doors at 8:00 p.m. Show at 9:00 p.m. Tickets from \$30.00 - Ticketmaster www.casinorama.com



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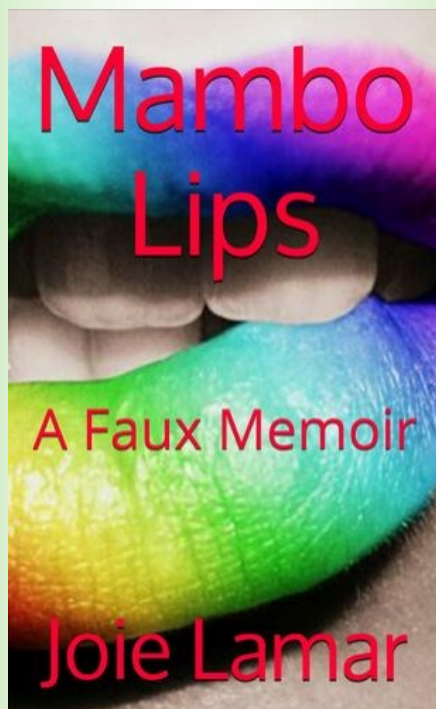
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...Nothing I had imagined could live up to my first female kiss. I pretended it would be my last kiss to give her all of me, a ritual I still use today. I breathed her in completely with each turn of our heads, lips and tongues. Somehow our heartbeats synchronized. We were gentle with each other, slightly embarrassed, but we would go on to kiss many times. Eventually we grew apart . I fully embraced my sexuality. She found her happiness with a man and had several beautiful children. I would receive a note from her , years later, in the mail. It read...simply..."You set the bar "... ~ Joie Lamar, Mambo Lips

