

Jerrilyn Spears • Red Rael Durand • Stephania Bonomo • Village Santa List • Lavish



Fran Dreschner

N is for The Nanny

Dita Von Teese

Queen of Burlesque

Christeene

Drag Terrorist

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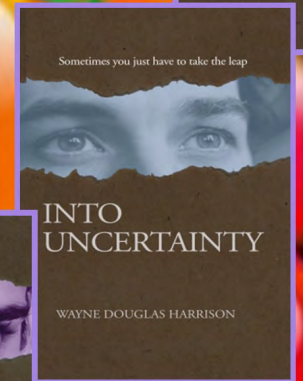
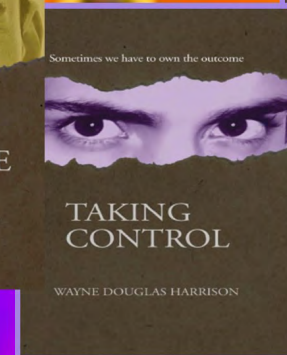
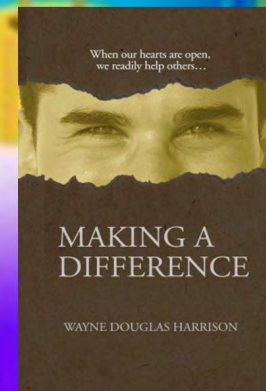
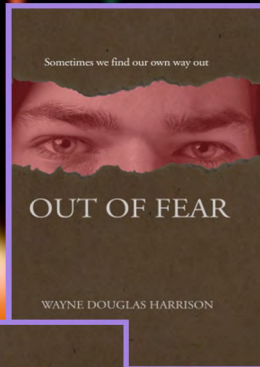
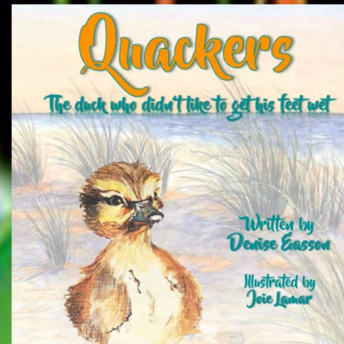
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Cover Photo:

Courtney Act by Joseph Sinclair

Published by

INspired Media Inc.

Operating: INspired Creative, Publishers of The Pink Pages Directory, PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ, and The Local Biz Magazine. Producers of On the Couch

www.theBUZZmag.ca
www.PinkPlayMags.com
www.thepinkpagesdirectory.com
www.onthecouch.ca

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Greetings and Salutations,

It's the end of the year...again! A time to not only reflect on the past, and set goals for the future, but to embrace the moment that is. With this in mind, I've taken it upon myself to relinquish my current duties as Editor-in-Chief, and would like to introduce **Melissa MacMullin** as my replacement going forward. Melissa is the magazine's first female Editor, and has been a regular Features writer. Please reach out and extend a warm welcome.

Closing out the year, and my last issue as Editor, Melissa has written not one, but two exciting features. The first is with **Fran Drescher**, otherwise known to adoring fans everywhere, simply as *The Nanny*. She's not only a queer ally, she's also an advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, cancer awareness, healthy living, and the author of a recently published book. Melissa's second feature is with **Dita Von Teese**, the tantalizing vixen known as the *Queen of Burlesque*, and for good reason. She's created an empire for herself by way of merchandising and her outlandish shows, with her current *Glamonatrix Tour* touching down here in Canada early next year.

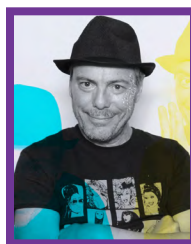
Yours truly had the opportunity to interview Drag Terrorist, **Christeene**, to chat about her new album and book, controversial raunchy videos, inspirations and influences, a **Sinead O'Connor** tribute, and when she might be terrorizing a stage near you soon.

Our guest Wigged Out writer is Vancouver's **Jerrilyn Spears** who wants us all to release the bimbo in us this holiday season. Cat Grant interviewed director/writer/actor **Red Rael Durand**, who is currently writing a musical detailing the ups and downs of a polyamorous relationship. Boyd Kodak spoke with **Stephanie Bonomo**, an up and coming trans model who recently participated in the *Slay Model Search*. Rolyn Chambers scoured The Village to find the perfect gift for various Church Street personalities. Sherry Sylvain highlights **Lavish** in London, Ontario, a restaurant by day and dance club at night. She also compiled our BUZZ Pick Event Listings.

Signing off as Editor of the magazine, but I'll still be around as Editor of our online web and blog presence, keeping you all abreast of what's new and queer in the entertainment world.

Enjoy the read!

Bryen Dunn
 Editor-in-Chief




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Fran Drescher

N is for The Nanny and Q is for Queer Icon

By Melissa MacMullin

As a 20-year+ cancer survivor, Fran Drescher is looking fine, feeling fine, and taking us on a nostalgic ride to when she was Fran Fine on the 90s hit sitcom, *The Nanny*.

She's also joined forces with Australian author **Rebecca Kelly** on the recently released picture book, *N is For The Nanny*, benefiting her [Cancer Schmancer Movement](#).

Oy vey, can you believe it's been almost 30 years since *The Nanny* aired its first episode on CBS back in 1993? Drescher, now 65, co-wrote and executive produced the show, and stole our hearts as the outspoken and lovable Jewish fashionista, Fran Fine, who's hair and voice were as big as her heart.

Unapologetically funny, she never once compromised her bubbly authenticity in how she sounded, appeared to be, or expressed herself — and we loved her for it. To this day no one can pull off outrageous animal prints or brightly coloured Moschino get-ups like her. Like Miss Fine herself once said to Mr. Sheffield, "I've got style, I've got flair."

Drescher believes her flashy but never trashy girl character from Flushing, Queens, always resonated with LGBTQ+ audiences for multiple obvious reasons. "There are drag queens still dressing up as me for Halloween, and younger generations are now discovering *The Nanny* for the first time," she said, "It's wonderful. It really, really is." She received the *Stonewall Community Foundation Award* in 2015 and expressed, "I have a gay art dealer, a gay dermatologist - not to mention my hairdresser!" She also has a gay ex-husband, co-creator and showrunner of *The Nanny*, **Peter Marc Jacobson**, who she remains close to.

It wasn't uncommon for gays to be talked about in a distasteful way or bear the brunt of a joke in many television series through the 90s, but *The Nanny* wasn't one of them. Drescher's show did the opposite to elevate the LGBTQ+ community by normalizing gay topics and introducing queer characters on screen. The show brought much needed visibility. "I've always been a supporter, an advocate for gay rights and civil liberties, and I will continue to defend equality," she relayed in the most heartfelt way. Drescher even became an ordained minister so she could legally officiate LGBTQ+ wedding ceremonies.

In a season two episode called, *A Fine Friendship*, Fran befriends a buff male nanny named Kurt who she suspects is gay. Upon asking him whether he was, he clarified his straight sexuality, but wasn't bothered in the least by the assumption. In the *Oy Vey, You're Gay* episode from season three, there was a lesbian character interested in Fran, however she was rejected by Fran's mother solely based on the fact that she wasn't Jewish. And how could we forget Cousin Ira's drag

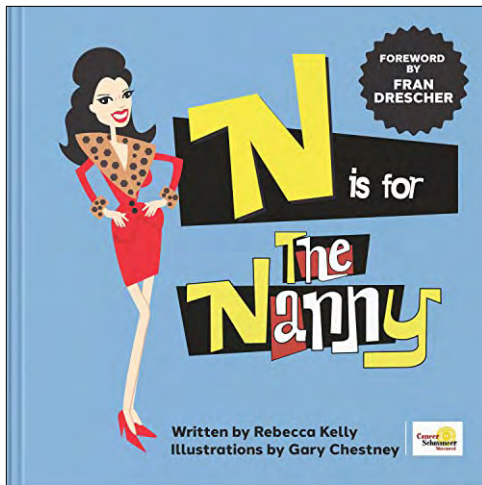


performance as Cher? It was undeniably progressive for its time, and now it's bridging together generations of queer viewers.

Originally the network wanted the Fran Fine lead character to be rewritten as Italian, but Drescher fought to keep her Jewish. For lack of proper representation, she stood her ground in the face of potentially losing her Hollywood big break opportunity. Drescher doesn't like to live with regret, this woman's got chutzpah, and people respect her for it as they should. *The Nanny* was also the first show in that decade to portray an interracial relationship. Drescher thought the series was coming across a bit too white, so they hooked up Grandma Yetta with Ray Charles.

Today, the life-long queer advocate is fighting for your health, for the planet, and the rest of the people on it. "We have a responsibility." She's not only an advocate for the gay community and the underrepresented in general, but for both women and men's health issues too. "I speak on the things that matter to me, leveraging my platform to help contribute to the greater good, you know," she expressed.

theBUZZ recently joined Drescher and friends, including Emmy-winning stylist **Brenda Cooper**, **Rosie O'Donnell** and **Kathy Griffin** at her *N is for The Nanny* book launch in Malibu, California. "I love Canada so much!" Drescher declared. The



book is a limited release with 100% of the proceeds going to her *Cancer Schmancer Movement*. “I got famous, then I got cancer, and now I live to talk about it,” she wrote on the charity website.

Drescher wrote the foreword for the A-Z fun-filled alphabet book, written by Rebecca Kelly and illustrated by Gary Chestney, referencing the show’s characters, unforgettable hilarious moments, and inside jokes. “It really nails the tone of the show that fans would appreciate,” said Drescher. Once the book sells out, people can still donate to her cancer fighting organization that was founded in 2007. Founder and Visionary of the *Cancer Schmancer Movement*, Drescher has been dedicated to raising consciousness through educating people on prevention, early detection, and living a nontoxic lifestyle.

For two years she had seen eight different doctors, was misdiagnosed, and as a result mistreated, until she met one medical professional in the year 2000 who would ultimately save her life. She would be faced with her biggest fear when after an endometrial biopsy, it was indeed confirmed that she had uterine cancer. Shortly after, she led herself down the path of seeking out possible root causes in terms of how this could’ve transpired, and what may have been the contributing factors. “I wanted to know why myself and others were getting cancer to begin with,” said Drescher. “It’s time we make the shift to empower ourselves to take control of our bodies, our homes, and our environment.”

The *Cancer Schmancer Movement* website has an onslaught of helpful resources and programs, such as the *Anticancer Lifestyle Program*, *Be the Change Youth Movement*, *Detox Your Home Party*, *Health News*, cancer do’s and don’ts, cancer genetic testing, consumer guides, healthy home checklist, *Mend Together* cancer support group, and a *Masterclass Edu-Series*, while additionally highlighting the importance of proper nutrition, plant medicines, and responsible manufacturing.

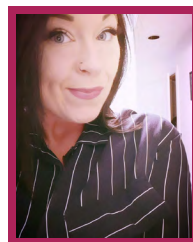
“We want to lead the discussion on what is good and what is damaging,” shared Drescher.

There’s no sign of slowing down, in fact, she’s ramping up her commitment to leave a positive impact on people and the planet, by spreading her passion to make the world a better place everywhere she turns, and at every chance she can get. In September of 2021, she was elected as president of SAG-AFTRA. She started a green council which pushed to ban single use plastics on and off camera. She even established a *National Committee for Sexual Harassment Protection* to cover every corner of the entertainment industry to honour the safety, comfort and well-being of every individual in the union.

Drescher is currently in the midst of developing a musical based on the *The Nanny* series. She’s working with her ex-husband, Peter, and *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*’s Rachel Bloom to write and create it. There has even been talk about a movie, which is in the infancy stage of discussions with their parent company. As opposed to the musical which would likely be set to take place in the 90s, the film adaptation would catch us up to present day, and potentially introduce new characters. Mr. DeMille, we think she’s ready for her close-up!

Stop futzing around and purchase *N is for the Nanny* [here](#). To read more about or donate to her *Cancer Schmancer Movement*, head over to the [website](#).

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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DITA VON TEESE

Von Teese-ing Her Way to Canada

By Melissa MacMullin

Dita Von Teese is the Queen of Burlesque, with her showstopping *Glamonatrix Tour* being described as the most elaborate burlesque production in history, and in early 2023 it'll be making stops in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal.

Are you ready for an unforgettable night filled with crystallized whips, a massive, bejewelled cake, rides on a giant lipstick, and performances in larger-than-life martini glasses? Von Teese is bringing that and more fetish, fun, and whimsical allure to a stage near you, and jaw-drops are guaranteed.

Prepare to feast your eyes on the titillating glitz, glamour, and diverse beauty that is the *Glamonatrix Tour*. Hailed as the most successful burlesque tour of all-time, it's got a variety of acts ranging from comedy to sophisticated striptease, as performed by the most sought-after burlesque entertainers in the world. These include the one and only **Dirty Martini**, along with **Alek Palinski**, **Zelia Rose**, **Lana Kai Fox**, **Tosca Rivola**, **Laszlo Major**, and of course, Von Teese herself.

"People say the golden age of burlesque was in the 30s and 40s, but the real golden age is now. We're doing it." Von Teese expressed to theBuzz. Proud yet soft-spoken, humble leader of the modern burlesque movement, she's grateful to continue touring with performers who are changing people's skewed perspectives on the art and liberation of striptease, and the celebration of sensual power that both male and female forms embody.

It hasn't been easy getting certain places on board. Von Teese has been trying to perform in Tennessee for a while, but keeps encountering push backs. "I can't book tour dates there because we're not allowed to show side boobs or cleavage that is uncovered more than two inches. We can't show the crease between the butt and leg either. I tried to compromise on wearing full-on 1950s underwear with complete coverage, and they remained adamant on saying no. Men do not have the extent of restrictions we (females) do there. Don't show your balls and penis. Maybe butt-crack. That's it."

Anticipating her upcoming Canadian tour stops, she shared one of the things she looks forward to observing the most at her revues. "You know, I'm always excited to see my show-goers, like the type of clothes they wear, the eccentric accessories and make-up, however they wish to come and express themselves. The show happens both on and off stage. It's an inclusive space, and I want them to feel comfortable."

Von Teese has been her own tour producer since the beginning, and still is. "I produce and finance the tours on my own. I





shape a substantial part of who she is today. “I felt at home with these like-minded individuals. I met a lot of interesting queer people at the time who influenced me, opened my mind, and accepted me.” She continues to be a pillar in the gay community, especially for being an advocate in the fight against AIDS. “I will forever consider my LGBTQ+ supporters like family. When I found the gays, I found my tribe.”

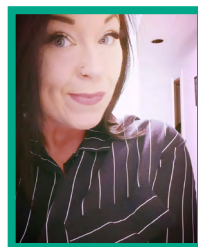
Von Teese first started working at 14 in a pizza restaurant and hasn’t stopped taking care of and building herself up since. She’s been a go-go dancer and a ballerina, and she’s worked in retail selling lingerie. Today she’s known as the Queen of Burlesque and businesswoman, with a luxury gloves collection, a signature hosiery line, perfumes, eyewear, and striptease candles. She’s also the author of *New York Times* bestselling books, *Your Beauty Mark: The Ultimate Guide to Eccentric Glamour*, and *Burlesque and the Art of the Teese*. She’s in the midst of writing another titled, *Fashioning the Femme Totale*, focusing on vintage fashion from her perspective.

Von Teese just turned 50, and this is what she had to say about it, “It’s fine. Honestly, I’m fine with it. When I was 49, people kept saying I was practically 50 already, so I felt like I was prepared. [laughs] I feel great! In 2018, I had this chronic pain for a bit, but it’s gone now. I’m feeling better than ever, and I’m thrilled to go back out on tour.” Von Teese was also recently featured in Taylor Swift’s fairy tale like music video for the single *Bejewelled*, off her new *Midnights* album. Von Teese plays the Fairy Goddess to Taylor’s Cinderella, and even performs alongside the famed singer in gigantic, crystal-covered martini glasses.

She wanted to leave her Canadian fans with solid gold advice if they’re leaning towards getting into burlesque. “Do it because you love it and have a passion for it. Have fun with the art of burlesque. I was in it for the art. I am in it for the art. Not the business. I mean, eventually I did have to get more involved with the business side of things, but it wasn’t my motivation behind getting into it. Think of new ways you can help evolve the art of burlesque. Be you. Be free. Empower your sensuality and bring that to the stage.”

Live Nation has announced **Dita Von Teese’s Glamatrix Tour** is headed to Vancouver on January 10, Toronto on February 4, and Montreal on February 7. Tickets are available through [Ticketmaster](https://www.ticketmaster.com).

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.



come up with all of the ideas myself. I’m always thinking what can I do bigger and better for the next show to make it even more extravagant than last time. It isn’t easy. It’s a lot of work, but I do love it. I still love performing more than anything.”

She was born **Heather Renée Sweet** on September 28, 1972, in working-class West Branch, Michigan. She loved to watch old Hollywood movies with her mom and dreamt of being like **Hedy LaMarr**, **Gypsy Rose Lee**, or **Lili St. Cyr**. “I realized I wanted to be the modern **Bettie Page**. She didn’t dance burlesque, but I did,” Von Teese shared. She developed her own style of burlesque dancing based on what she thought it was supposed to look like, and also due to the absence of other influences. “I was actually the first person to have a pin-up dedication site in the 90s too.”

Having been introduced to creative LGBTQ+ culture back in her earlier years, she was inspired by drag queens and hanging around 90s club kids who inevitably would help

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CHRISTEENE

On being a Drag Terrorist, releasing new music, and offering therapy sessions

By Bryen Dunn

Christeene is the inner drag demon of Paul Soileau, an accomplished writer, director, and actor. Now residing in New York City, the Louisiana native was living in New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina hit and forced him out of the city.

Paul then moved to Austin where Christeene was born in 2009, and there's been no looking back. This alter-ego manifestation provides a voice to speak freely on many different political and social realms through the creativity of music and performance.

Known for her unique style and fashion of torn-up clothing, stringy matted black wigs, and heavy smeared makeup, she's a self-described human pissoir of raw unabashed sexuality, and a gender-blending, booty-pounding, perversion that injects both hip-hop and gay culture with a much needed dose of punk-rock humour and attitude. Add this to a fierce commitment to resist patriarchal domination and gender conformity, and to call out hypocrisy and intolerance, and we've got us a drag terrorist like no other.

Although comparisons are hard to name, a few other shock-rockers do come to mind that would fall within similar realms

— [Hedwig](#), [Diamanda Galás](#), [Peaches](#), [Divine](#), [Jayne County](#), [Bruce La Bruce](#), [Kembra Pfahler](#), and [Yaginal Davis](#), to name a few. "I'm a natural terror. An entity, a soul, and creative spirit. A performance artist," she exudes.

In terms of musical inspiration, she tends to lean toward rhyming and word play. "I love [Missy Elliot](#) and think she has a mastery for structure, rhyme, humour, style, intelligence, and is an overall sexual bad-ass. [Grace Jones](#) is another who delivers impeccable music, artwork, and overall packaging. I've also been influenced by cinema, and drawn to the likes of [James Bidgood](#) who creates large amounts of beauty and mystery with basic resources, little money, patience, and a creative mind, similar to [John Waters](#), and [Mya Darren](#)," she explains.

Not only are the lyrics and music most memorable, so are the DIY videos created by long-time collaborative conspirator and award-winning filmmaker and cinematographer, [PJ Raval](#). Together they've been tossed out of the *Church of Scientology* and chased out of *Walmart* for their filming antics, and their video for [Butt Muscle](#) was censored over a self-fisting scene.

"When I started creating music, I would write, record, video, and release it on my own platforms, followed by a few local shows in the Austin area. Early on, I began to get those critical arrows shot into me. It was a time when I was very vulnerable trying to explore and express myself, and I had to learn how to shut down the garage doors of public opinion, while still being able to have constructive conversations and to be aware of my surroundings. It wasn't easy," she recalls.

Having released two previous albums comprised of a collection of previously released singles and videos – [Waste Up, Kneez Down](#) (2012) and [Basura](#) (2018) – Christeene has now kicked it up another notch by releasing her first full length album of new material with her own [Fukkin Band](#) backing her up. The [Midnite Fukk Train](#) album was released (11/11/22) via [Spaceflight Records](#), and is bursting with explosive saxophones, crushing guitars, and militant percussion. The first single released was [Beaucoup Morocco](#), followed by [Lo Paid Runway Model](#), and [Gutt It](#).

"This album is so different musically. It's still electronic, but now includes saxophones with the band I put together. The first side is punk, aggressive, and angry, while side two is more funk and piano. I'm really enjoying the evolution of my sounds and lyrics, being able to express myself with more depth and more personal feelings," she confides.

The album is a chaotic reflection of Christeene's seclusion, holding traces of the world that she knew, and the experiences she had before the world flipped. Across eight tracks, she delivers a cripplingly heroic collection of songs articulating a raw, popular rage in these troubling times. The album is available on various streaming platforms, along with physical formats including a special edition "unhealthy piss yellow" vinyl.

Alongside her new album, Christeene has also released [Baybee Chandelier](#), a collaborative art book with photographer [Brett Lindel](#). Inside are her personal handwritten narratives and sketches accompanied by Lindel's striking photos, along with an intimate centerfold conversation between herself and a 10-year-old that was done for [Interview Magazine](#). The 6x9, 64-page softcover book explores themes of childhood objects, loss, perversions, and pleasures, and has a limited release of only 500 copies, 100 of which are signed and numbered by the artists.

While not on tour, writing, recording, or making videos, she can often be found outside fashion designer [Rick Owen](#)'s store (30 Howard St) in NYC giving "therapy sessions" to anyone who stops by. "I do upwards of 20 people a day, and many have the same problems and fears. I also spill all my shit too. People really want to talk, the world's really tough, and machines just don't do it," she explains. On a side note, Rick also made a cameo appearance in that controversial [Butt Muscle](#) video.

Showing signs of a true artist, Christeene once did a show covering [Sinead O'Connor](#)'s classic album, *The Lion and The Cobra*, in its entirety at the *Barbican Hall* in London, England back in 2019. It was five years in planning, and partially came about through a connection with John Reynolds, Sinead's first husband and father to her son, Jake. "I was blown away at the prospect of being someone who had the whole world hating her, yet she survived and continued to make music," Christeene explains.

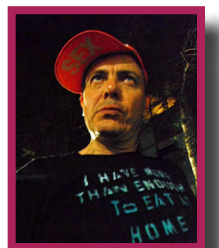


This was also the first time Christeene started working with musicians onstage, including appearances by [Fever Ray](#) and [Peaches](#). Calling the show, *The Lion, The Witch and The Cobra*, she shares, "It was the most amazing night of my life. I want to bring that show to NYC for a few nights. John was there and made Sinead aware of it, but she didn't attend. I had an empty seat saved for her."

So what's on the horizon? "If I was doing all this just to shock people, I'd be done by now. I'm going to keep on digging, and I still have a lot of things to get out of my mind. I'm fully submersed in Christeene, and always thinking of ways to be creative and how to non-capitalistically fund my future endeavours," she threatens. One can only hope so!

Christeene is definitely not for the faint of heart, but for those so inclined terror-chasers, she did hint at a Spring North American tour that would include Canada. Follow Christeene's social channels for updates – [Instagram](#) [TikTok](#) [Vimeo](#) [YouTube](#) [Facebook](#)

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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LGBTQ2S
 This project has been made possible by a grant from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.
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WIGGED OUT

BY JERRILYN SPEARS

TIS THE SEASON TO EMBRACE THE BIMBO



happening all over. This is why we need to embrace the Bimbo.

To be a Bimbo is not just about looks, it is also a mentality. Embracing the Bimbo allows you to enjoy a euphoric sense of ignorance. To disconnect from the world around you and just be pretty. This will allow you to only focus on what is happening around you. To take everything for face value and just enjoy life. Although Bimbos can be smart, we are here to be pretty first.

How do you embrace the Bimbo?

Step one:

Treat yourself. Do something nice for yourself that allows you to feel important and valued. To be a Bimbo is to have unwavering confidence. To feel important wherever you are.

Step two:

Disconnect. Block and unfollow anything that does not spark joy. Similar to how as a kid hiding under your covers would protect you from monsters. Pull some metaphoric covers over what you consume and just appreciate what makes you happy.

Step three:

Put on a hot outfit. As we all know, a hoe never gets cold. Do not let the dropping temperatures and snow stop you from being as hot as possible.

Once you have completed all this three step program you have fully embraced the Bimbo. This will allow you to enjoy the holidays and the immediate world around you. Life is something that is short, but also the longest thing you have ever done. By treating yourself, disconnecting, and being hot, the world will be in the palm of your hand. Not to mention, Bimbos are always on the nice and the naughty list.

This holiday season, pop off, get down, and get jiggy with it. The most exciting part about being back to restriction-free holidays is doing all the things that made you happy before we entered a few years of constant unprecedented times. I encourage you to go to that silly Christmas market and be the hottest one there. Go to that family dinner you don't want to go to, knowing that nothing can get you down. Embrace the Bimbo!

Jerrilyn Spears is Vancouver's thickest, juiciest, and messiest 5'8" Bimbo. She is the co-host of the world-renowned podcast *Cut the Crease*, with listeners in over 20 different countries. Stream *Cut The Crease* wherever you find your podcasts.



Happy holidays everyone! Some say it's the most wonderful time of the year. Others say it is the best time for Starbucks drinks and for cancelling plans last minute. This holiday season is different, as it will be the first restriction-free holidays we have had since before the Pandemi Lovato. The best way to take advantage of a restriction-free holiday season is to embrace the Bimbo!

I can already hear you ask, "why should I embrace the Bimbo for the holidays?" To put it lightly, we are living through an interesting time in human history. There seems to be nothing but disaster and drama

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Red Rael Durand



strength and my ability to persevere and create to the highest extent of my capabilities.”

The highlight for Red’s scholastic career was a wonderful show in Edinburgh, Scotland, where she not only acted, but also played fiddle on stage to a sold out house every night. A real dream. At the Kennedy Center’s *American College Theatre Festival*, Red was among select students who competed there for a decade. “I saw an incredible performance by *LaGuardia College* and *ASTEP*, artists striving to end poverty.”

Red became an executive board member for a non-profit run through the *Juilliard Performing Arts School* in New York City. “I learned so much and obtained my teaching artist certificate through them as well.”

Red has had the thrill of acting many roles and is quite fond of her performance in *A Diary of Anne Frank*. “I played the role of Miep. It was my responsibility to read the actual diary entries of Anne Frank aloud to the audience. Her words will always stay with me.”

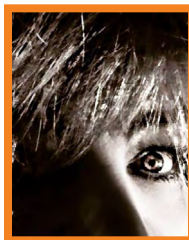
Moving back to Canada in 2019, Red worked at *Act 1 Theatre* in Pickering, Ontario. “I was a stage instructor there and had the pleasure of teaching students ages 8 through 14, ending with full productions at the end of the semester for the students.

As for the future, Red is planning to write a musical. “It’s going to be a bit autobiographical, detailing the ups and downs of a polyamorous relationship, and what can happen if you ignore your gut instinct for far too long.”

Perhaps Red will also land one of the acting roles she’s been vying for, “I think that my dream role would be Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd*. I’m just a sucker for Sondheim and gore. Or Mama in *Chicago*, because who doesn’t like a little jazz and lingerie?”

Cat Grant (OCAD) is a multidisciplinary artist. Starting her career in dance and music, painting and photography are her main focus now. As a published poet, Cat is also the Executive Director for Toronto’s *Goddess Day Arts Festival*.

[Facebook @grantedarts](#)



Born in Timmins, Ontario and raised in the United States, director/writer/actor **Red Rael Durand** found a love for theatre while watching her older sisters act in *The Velveteen Rabbit*. The entire family was artistic, as Red’s dad sang in a barbershop quartet, her mother is a portrait artist, her siblings sing and dance, her extended family has professional dancers, and there are other types of artists as well.

Her own love for acting and writing blossomed at the tender age of 7, after auditioning and winning the role of Petunia in her school play. “It was the start of something really beautiful for me, my love for theatre but also a place that would always be a community for me to come home to.”

Red continued the creative journey to *Northern Essex Community College*’s theatre program. “I am proud to be an alumni of a place where I found every single part of my

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Q REVIEW

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My Queer Village Santa List

This year I've decided to go Christmas shopping for my diverse group of friends in **Toronto's Queer Village**. After two years of pandemic shutdowns and the rise of online shopping, local businesses have been struggling and could use your help.

Here's my Santa list:

1) **The Decadent Diva**

- **Quannah Styles** is a Canadian Cree First Nations Two-Spirited recording artist, having appeared in *Quannah: TransOp*. "My best present was my nose job," she sniffs. Known for her fiery temper, she's getting an elegant *BoxHot Alien OG Disty Live Resin Dabber* (\$41) from [Friendly Stranger](#) (501 Church St) to puff in style.

2) **The Daddy Nutcracker** - DJ **Dwayne Minard's Daddy Next Door** party at *The Black Eagle* is an institution. "My favourite Christmas memory was waking up to find my first KISS album, *Love Gun*, waiting under the tree," he recalls. For him I head over to [Dead Dog Records](#) (568 Church St) for **Madonna's Erotica** 2-LP album (\$55).

3) **The Elfin Twink** - **Hunter** is a pole pro at *Cock Bar*. "My best present was a huge teddy bear given to me by my sister," says this cutie with a bootie. He'll love the stuffed avocado (\$17) I found at [Mumuso](#) (528 Church St.). He can cuddle it while reading *Any Other Way* (\$26) about Toronto queer history from [Glad Day Books](#) (499 Church St).

4) **The Polar Bear** - DJ **Samm** can be heard spinning in many Village locations such as *Flash on Church*. He usually walks to and from the area so he'll appreciate the Blend Hooded Parka (\$219) from [Grapefruit](#), a clothing store that opened in 2019 at 76 Wellesley St. East.

5) **The Angel Ally** - **Christina Love Baron**, the sister of **Scarlet Bobo** of *Canada's Drag Race*, tends bar at *The Drink*. A fond Christmas memory was surprising her mom with Scarlet. "It was the first time in a long time that we had the whole family together." For her I found a stylish pair of Etnia



Barcelona frames (\$364+) from [Eyes On Church Optical](#) to complement any prance-worthy low-cut outfit.

6) **The Leather Daddy** - Promoter **Ryan Lock** left his job at **Northbound Leather** to bring his skills to **Flash on Church**. "My best Christmas present was a wood burning art set from my father." He's getting a cute *P&C Creations* white leather Dalmatian-like puppy mask with

fur tuff (\$280) from [The Men's Room](#) (455 Church St) to wear to his monthly *Leather Lives Social* party. Woof.

7) **Biblical Bathhouse Boy** - DJ **Kunty Beats'** interactive sets at *Steamworks* involve naked go-go guys and drag queens, like **Seyoncé Knows**. "My best gift was a *Lego Star Wars Millennium Falcon*," he said fondly. His family couldn't afford it when he was a child, so his mom surprised him in his 20s, "I was sobbing." For hours in the DJ booth, he gets *DJX Trough Shorts* (\$58) from [Out On The Street](#) (551 Church St). Sexy, stylish, and easily removable.

Happy Holidays. Support The Village. Shop Local.

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*, which ran for a full decade, allowing him to interview everyone from clubbers and promoters, to celebrities and politicians. *Deep Dish* has now been resurrected once again here in theBUZZ. Chambers is also the author of, *The Boy Who Brought Down A Bathhouse*, self-published by himself via YumEee! Communications. IG @rahraholyn



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A KODAK MOMENT

Stefania Bonomo

BY BOYD KODAK

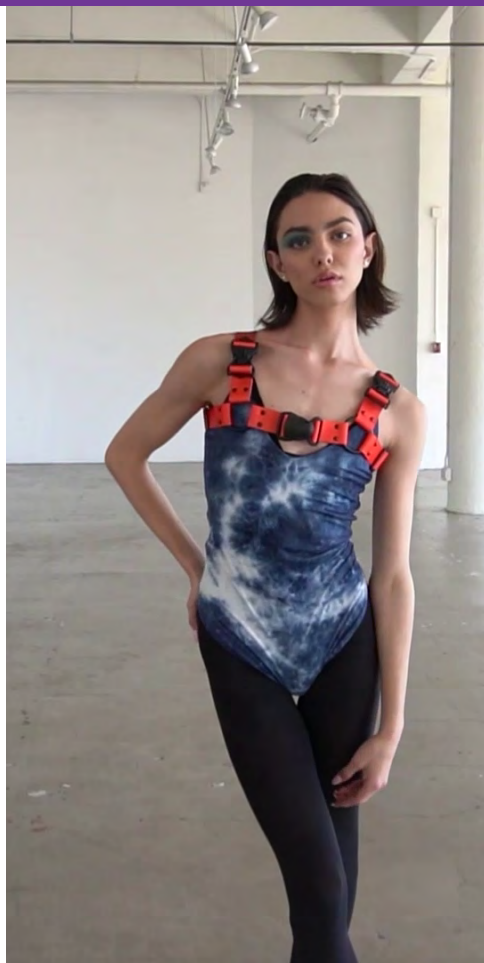


Photo by Irvin Rivera

SB - Participating in the *Slay Model Search*. For as long as I can remember, I have wanted to be a fashion model. As a young kid, I would flip through fashion magazines and see gorgeous women expressing their femininity through photographs. I wanted to grow up and be able to express my own sense of femininity.

BK - What are you looking forward to next year?

SB - Finishing high school and starting university. I'm excited to get out in the world and try to make it on my own. I'm also excited to continue my modeling career and work in creative spaces with people who share the same love for fashion and the industry.

BK - Where can we see your work?

SB - This is just the early phase of my career. I'm learning to juggle my studies with the schedule the industry demands, so you should hopefully see me in more places soon!

BK - Future plans?

SB - I can't think beyond the next two years, honestly. I find if I allow my mind to go beyond finishing high school, starting college, and furthering my modeling career, I get flustered. I would love to squeeze in a social life, somehow. Meeting new friends and maybe even a loving partner might be nice! Haha!

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

SB - If there is one thing I've learned over the past few years, especially through competing in the *Slay Model Search*, it is that the energy you put out in the world is the same you can expect to receive. I went into the competition feeling really nervous, but then I realized I was only psyching myself out. When the judges' attention was on me, I let go of the nervousness and allowed my inner confidence to shine.

BK - Finish the following sentence for us. My favourite TV show of all time is ...

SB - *Sex and the City*. I love the aesthetics and the overall vibe of high fashion and VIP nightlife. To live in New York City would be the ultimate dream. All I need is a nice downtown flat and a sexy pair of Manolo Blahniks and I'm set!

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



Stefania Bonomo was a contestant on the [Slay Model Search](#) TV program, [Road to the Runway](#), where 20 transgender models from all over North America competed to be part of Slay Model Management, the world's first and only Trans-exclusive model agency.

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

Stefania Bonomo - I've been hitting the books, studying, and trying to get through my final year of high school. I have also been further exploring my individuality and really digging into what makes me, me.

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

LAVISH RESTAURANT AND NIGHTCLUB

What to do when you're wandering mid-western Ontario, and looking for a good time? One excellent option would be to visit downtown London, on the north side of Dundas St., between Clarence and Wellington St. There you'll find **Lavish**, a 2SLGBTQ+ restaurant and nightclub that has been in operation for about 10 years, in this developing area of the downtown. Located not far east of *Richmond Row*, it's near a well-known strip of bars and pubs with a long and storied past. The neighbourhood has proven to be respectful and accepting of the venue and the clientele.



With a capacity of approximately 200, plus a rooftop patio open in warmer weather, this community safe space has a roster of regular customers. They have an open and inclusive attitude to anyone who wishes to live and celebrate their best, most authentic life. The demographic can encompass the broad range of the population of London and area—from farmers, college and university students, to teachers, professors, professionals, factory workers, tourists, and beyond.

Lavish operates as both a restaurant and a nightclub, with a menu focused on finger-foods and shareables. It's popular feature items are Greek Fries, and Bang Bang Shrimp Tacos. Although the space is focused on being a dance club in the late evening, food is available to be served during events and drag shows, that are interspersed with theme nights, burlesque shows, and monthly guest DJs. Additionally, some of the drag shows and special events support various local charities, including the *London Pride Festival*. Wednesday nights feature food and drink specials which change from week to week.

The layout and décor of Lavish are very simple with a large area for dancing combined with areas for eating and resting one's tired dancing feet. Both ownership and staff represent various members of the local LGBTQ+ community.

The main space of Lavish is almost entirely handicap accessible; but there is one small step at the main entrance, and at the washrooms. Though they are not designated "accessible, they are reasonably

accommodating. As for accessing Lavish in general, the Wellington bus route is about a block away, as are two parking lots within about a block, both on the west side of Clarence St., one north and one south of Dundas St.

Next time you find yourself cruising in the vicinity of London, Ontario and are looking for an LGBTQ+ place to grab a bite, you should stop in and check out the local flavour of Lavish Restaurant and Nightclub. If you happen to be there on a Wednesday, Friday, or Saturday evening, pack your club wear and be prepared to dance away the evening.

Lavish Restaurant and Nightclub - Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays – 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.

238 Dundas St., London, ON.

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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Ross Petty Productions presents Peter's Final Flight

Through January 7, 2023

A brand new musical version of Peter Pan, featuring Canada's finest musical theatre performers. The theatre will reverberate with cheers, boos, pop tunes, and lots of audience participation.

Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre, 189 Yonge St., Toronto

Choir Boy

Through December 31, 2022

Pharus is a senior at the Charles R. Drew Prep School for Boys, and the proud leader of its legendary gospel choir. Weighing reconciliation and rebellion, Choir Boy is a love letter to the healing power of music, featuring gorgeously sung a cappella hymns.

Bluma Appel Theatre, 27 Front St. E., Toronto, ON



Gowan

December 15; 8:00 p.m.

Gowan enjoyed a lengthy and successful solo career with four Platinum and three Gold albums and one Gold single to his credit, prior to joining Styx in 1999 as keyboardist and one of their three lead vocalists.

The Rose Theatre, 1 Theatre Lane, Brampton

FrostBite: The Bazaar of the Bizarre holiday edition

December 17; 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Not your typical christmas show - The Bazaar of the Bizarre brings you arts, fashion, and crafts that are different, interesting, weird, strange, one of a kind, macabre, whimsical, or just things to flip your brain out.

The Parkdale Hall, 1605 Queen St. W., #3, Toronto

Messiah

December 17 through December 21

Composed in a mere three weeks, Messiah has endured for over 275 years. Rejoice greatly as the TSO presents its cherished perennial performances of Handel's powerful and devotional tour de force.

Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St., Toronto



Toronto International Ballet Theatre: The Nutcracker

December 17; 7:00 p.m.

An inspired production of the Nutcracker, featuring Vladyslav Romashchenko & Olga Posternak, stars of Ukraine's Kyiv Opera & Ballet Theatre, with a fresh and fun perspective to the traditional tale.

TO Live, 1 Front St. E., Toronto

Middle Eastern Nights- Holiday glow party

December 17; from 9:00 p.m.

The black lights will come on, so put on, paint on, wear whatever, and get creative with items that glow. Get into the holiday spirit and spend an amazing time as we get closer to the new year. Hosted by the one and only Queen KeroPatra InDenial

The Black Eagle, 457 Church St., Toronto

Light Up the Dark

December 27 to 29, 2022

The exterior of the Aga Khan Museum comes to life with mesmerizing light projections created by students at OCAD University, inspired by different masterpieces in the Museum's Collections.

Aga Khan Museum, 77 Wynford Dr., Toronto

Pitbull - NYE

December 31, 2022; from 8:00 p.m.

Award winning International DJ / Producer Hector Fonseca is coming back to Toronto for an epic four hour set that will leave you a sweaty dancing mess with Toronto legend Mark Falco kicking off the night with his special blend of hard beats and great vocals.

The Phoenix Concert Theatre, 410 Sherbourne St., Toronto



Fall On Your Knees

January 20, 2023 to February 4, 2023

From the sweeping novel that chronicles three generations of Cape Breton Island's Piper family. The story moves from the battlefields of the First World War to the emerging jazz scene in Harlem, NY, and into the lives of four unforgettable sisters.

Bluma Appel Theatre, 27 Front St. E., Toronto, ON

Maple Blues Awards

January 30, 2023; 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Canada's blues music all-star concert and annual awards event features performances by some of the hottest blues musicians from across the country and an after-party with the musicians. Presented in partnership with the Toronto Blues Society

Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W., Toronto



The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring - In Concert

January 27, 28, 29, 2023

The 250 musicians on stage from the FILMharmonic Orchestra and the Amadeus Choir will transport you to the heart of Middle-earth in the quest of the Fellowship of the Ring.

Meridian Hall, 1 Front St. E., Toronto

Jann Arden

February 2, 2023; 8:00 p.m.

The bold, beautiful, and empowering sound of Jann Arden. Descendant, her 15th studio album, signifies a return to form for the multifaceted artist, reflecting on where she came from and where she is headed.

The Rose Theatre, 1 Theatre Lane, Brampton

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

February 3 and 4, 2023

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is a modern dance company based in New York City. It was founded in 1958 by choreographer and dancer Alvin Ailey. It is made up of 32 dancers.

TO Live, 1 Front St. E., Toronto

Cabaret Noir

February 9, 10, 11, 2023

The cast of Cabaret Noir uses movement, dialogue, and music to reconstruct emblematic scenes from popular culture in a work that is both a celebration and resistance of concepts of "Blackness".

Canadian Stage, 26 Berkeley St., Toronto

Music at the Movies

February 10, 2023; 8:00 p.m.

The FILMharmonic Orchestra performs iconic film music, as well as popular classical repertoire, the Ensemble is set to bring a masterful selection of soundtracks.

Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St., Toronto

Rhapsody and the Blues

February 11, 2023; 5:00 p.m.

Rhapsody in Blue is the focal point in this special gala concert of big band jazz by composers such as Oscar Peterson, Nat King Cole, Tommy Dorsey, and more.

Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W., Toronto

Return to Massey Hall

February 17, 2023; 7:30 p.m.

Almost exactly 100 years after its very first concert, the TSO returns to its original home to perform a piece from that same program—Tchaikovsky's passionate Fifth Symphony—led by Gustavo Gimeno.

Massey Hall, 178 Victoria St., Toronto

Rock of Ages

February 23 through May 20

One of Broadway's longest running hit musicals, is exploding on this Toronto stage before embarking on an international tour. Featuring earworm 80's chartbusters from iconic artists.

Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre, 189 Yonge St., Toronto



ROAD TRIPS

Niagara Falls Winter Festival Of Lights Through February 20, 2023; from 5:00 p.m.

Transforming Niagara Falls into a winter wonderland with more than three million enchanting lights, and 75+ magical illumination displays located throughout the tourist district, Niagara Parkway and Dufferin Islands.

Niagara Falls Tourist District, Niagara Falls



Priyanka LIVE

December 16, 2022; 7:00 p.m.

Canada's Drag Race 1 winner Priyanka chose Hamilton for a one-night-only show. Plus a supporting cast including Xtacy Love, and Vita Love.

Bridgeworks, 200 Caroline St. N., Hamilton

Naughty and Nice Holiday Cabaret

December 17, 2022; 6:30 p.m.

Sherry Sylvain and Mira Fantasy provide an evening of strictly live solo and duet vocal performances of holiday classics, and some naughtier numbers, to wish you a festive season, and suggest some more adult gift items one may desire.

Copperlight Banquet Hall, 142 Ontario St., Stratford

Christmas Cabaret - Cambridge Stop

December 17, 2022; 8:00 p.m.

A 'Christmas Cabaret' led by Guelph Star, Drag Daddy, and TroyBoy Parks. A one night only, exclusive, Christmas special guest extravaganza, with all of your favourite forms of entertainment.

EVO Kitchen & Bar, 31 Water St. S., Cambridge

Milton Holiday Market

December 17 and 18; noon to 4:00 p.m.

A one-stop shop for holiday goodies and gifts with some surprise activities to delight guests. This two-day event takes place at the Milton Fair Grounds, a 23-acre property in the heart of Milton.

Milton Fair Grounds, 136 Robert Street, Milton

The Legendary Count Basie Orchestra

December 18, 2022; 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

"The Most Explosive Force in Jazz" and winner of 19 Grammy Awards, performs 'A Very Swingin' Basie Christmas' with special guest vocalist Carmen Bradford as part of their 85th anniversary world tour.

FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre,
250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines

Dazzling Dames Burlesque

December 30, 2022; 8:00 p.m.

A one night only, exclusive, special guest cast, featuring just some of the most gorgeous Dames Ontario has to offer. Bringing you one amazing show with new choreography, sultry looks, and a TIT-a-lating experience.

The Back Alley Bar & Grill, 18 Princess Ave., St. Thomas



Blue Man Group

January 2, 2023; 7:00 p.m.

Blue Man Group will rock your world, blow your mind, and unleash your spirit. Leave your expectations at the door and let three bald and blue men take you on a spectacular journey bursting with music, laughter and surprises.

Budweiser Gardens, 99 Dundas St., London

Blue Rodeo

January 6 and 7, 2023

Blue Rodeo is a Canadian country rock band. They have released 16 full-length studio albums, four live recordings, and one greatest hits album. Hits include "Try" and "Lost Together".

Centre In The Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener

Headpins, Lee Aaron & Toronto

January 28, 2023; 7:00 p.m.

Three Canadian groups with female leads that will rock the stage. Hits include: "Just One More Time", "Don't It Make Ya Feel", "Whatcha Do To My Body", "Some Girls Do", "Your Daddy Don't Know", "Lookin' For Trouble".

Casino Rama, 5899 Rama Rd., Orillia

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