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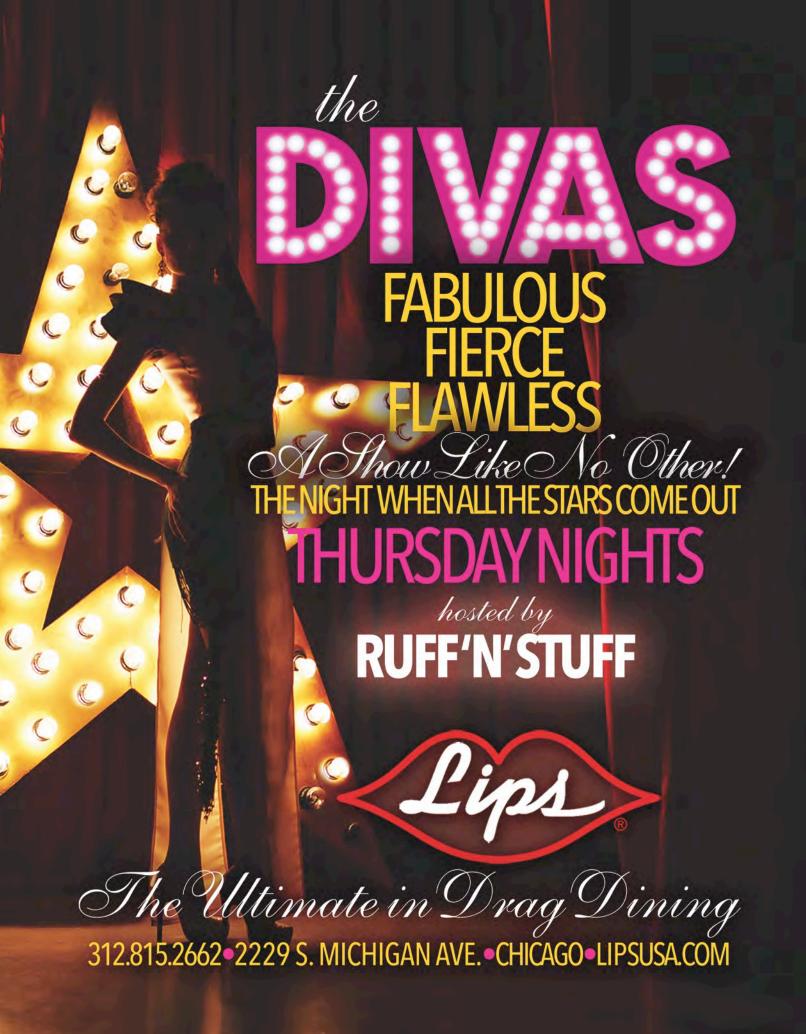
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GRAB HOLLY **32**



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GRAB ALASKA



Too Soon? Not If You're Alaska Thunderfuck. The reigning 'Drag Race' queen has dirty jokes for days in her first-ever comedy special

By Chris Azzopardi

Are Alaska Thunderfuck's filthy jokes about Jeffrey Epstein, "genderfluids," labia and poop too much for our world on fire? Alaska, even though she has a song called "Anus," thought maybe they were. She wasn't sure if an assault joke in 2021 would fly.

So the winner of "RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars" Season 2 consulted comedy queens Jackie Beat, Sherry Vine and Margaret Cho, no stranger to bowel jokes herself, to see if she was out of her damn mind. They didn't exactly say she wasn't, but they also did give Alaska just enough confidence to release "The Alaska Thunderfuck Extra Special Comedy Special," her premiere standup gig. The special is airing now on OUTtv, the first LGBTQ+ Apple TV channel now available on the Apple TV app.

In late March, Thunderfuck appeared on Zoom against a palm-leaf-patterned backdrop — "one of the many walls in my giant palatial mansion," she joked. Just like in her comedy special, nothing was off limits: not how some of her jokes fell flat, not what she thinks of the entry rules on

"Drag Race," and definitely not how she'd "walk the fuck out" of a hypothetical winners edition of "All Stars" if they, God forbid, did it teamsstyle.

Chris Azzopardi: I feel like with this comedy special, you keep just checking boxes. Drag queen, comedy queen. What can't Alaska do? Alaska Thunderfuck: I can't do math really good. So I have an amazing accountant. And I also don't know how to use TikTok. I cannot figure it out. My 10-year-old niece is really good at it;

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she can. I thought I would try and show my variety and try to do comedy. I know I've always been just a look queen and a glamour girl. So this is a huge step for me to try and tell jokes.

CA: Has a career in drag prepared you for a career in comedy?

AT: I mean, I don't know. It was hard, and I was really trepidatious about doing it because I was like, "Yes, I'm funny, but I'm not a comedian." Like, I have so much respect for comedians who go out there and pound the fucking circuit of comedy clubs and (are) having bottles thrown at them and learning their craft. I'm like, "I am a visual artist who does drag, who can tell jokes. Sometimes with an OK success rate."

CA: Was it harder than you thought it would be then?

AT: The jokes part, that was great. That was fun. It was learning how to do dance moves. That was harder. (Laughs.) I couldn't just do a comedy special where I tell jokes. I had to be Team Too Much. I had to, like, put in musical numbers and dance numbers and a drag contest.

CA: You being extra — that's not a stretch.

AT: Right. Here I sit before you in a zebra hat, zebra dress, in front of a palm leaf on a pink background.

CA: Are we looking at a giant palm leaf sheet in the background? What exactly is that?

AT: Well, why don't you tell your (readers) that it is just one of the many walls in my giant palatial mansion? It's expensive wallpaper. It may appear to be a duvet cover barely pinned to the ceiling, barely covering the mess of fucking drag behind it, but don't let your eyes deceive you. It is just one of the many huge walls in my mansion.

CA: Going back, were you a funny kid?

AT: I mean, my family has a fucking amazing sense of humor and they're so funny. My mom is so hilarious. My dad was really funny. My uncles are the stupidest, funniest people ever. Humor was always going around and happening in my family. But I was never a funny kid because I was too shy and too scared of people. I was like, "I'm gay and I'm weird and I just wanna hide in my room."

CA: Was comedy a defense mechanism for you like it is for a lot of gay kids?



AT: See, for me, it never got to that point. My defense mechanism was not being seen. I just tried to disappear. I tried to be a gecko and change to the color of the wall. That was my defense mechanism. (Laughs.)

CA: How are you feeling now that this special has been released into the world?

AT: I feel great about it now. (Laughs.) It's been 87 years since we filmed this. It's been so long, and it's not an understatement to say the entire world

has changed so much. We filmed this in pre-COVID Hollywood, and a few months went by, (then) COVID happened. The quarantine happened. All these things happened. I was like, "Is this appropriate? Why the fuck do I need to be like, 'Look at me telling jokes, toots!' Should I even be doing this? What the fuck is going on?" So luckily, we made it a part of the thing, a part of the movie. We have interviews with my comedy guru mentors and they help assure me that the world needs laughter and comedy now more than, I

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think, ever.

CA: There is something to be said about laughter being the best medicine. It's gotten me through this last year. Just laughing myself silly watching "Barb and Star Go to Vista Del Mar." And you could've been in that movie based on your Zoom background. I mean, I don't know why you weren't.

AT: (Laughs.) I know. I was supposed to be Reba McEntire's part, but you know, it's OK, I read for it. Reba McEntire was 12th in line to play Trish. I was 11th. She got it... OK?

CA: Going back to the comedy special: What kind of workshopping went into you preparing for the special?

AT: I'm constantly writing jokes and a lot of them are just really horrible, and they're not funny. But if I hear someone say a word on a thing and then I think of something that rhymes with it. I write it down in a file. It was basically years worth of just bad jokes that I had written and I was like, "We're clearing out the file with this comedy special, OK? We're gonna put the puns in there. We're gonna put the fucking poop jokes in there. We're gonna put the drag jokes in there.'

To me, a lot ... like Alaska doesn't talk about dating people or doing drugs. She doesn't talk about that stuff. She maybe does them, but she doesn't talk about it. So I had to make it this other character, which is like

this comedian character that Sherry Vine calls something Rivers. Uh...

CA: Phyllis Rivers.

AT: Phyllis Rivers. Yeah. Because it's a mixture of Phyllis Diller and Joan Rivers. But yeah, I just cleared out my joke file and some of them are good, some of them (laughs) you could hear a pin drop. But you know what? That's

comedy. I did no workshopping. This was not a finessed comedy set that I had built for years trying out with audiences, trying out different wording. It was literally like, "Here's the jokes. I hope you like them."

CA: When you're up there and jokes are not hitting like you had hoped they would, what are you feeling? AT: I was feeling like, "This is gonna be

good footage." It's like the moment before a nuclear bomb drops. It's just perfect pin-drop silence.

CA: Aside from Margaret Cho, what other comedians did you look up to growing up?

AT: Well, I always loved TV. I was really obsessed with TV. I was always getting told I watched too much TV as a child. So sitcom jokes, that sort of rhythm of

the setup and the knockdown and the punchline is sort of ingrained in me. "The Golden Girls" is a part of my bloodstream. That sort of hokey jokey, here's the setup, you see it from a mile away, and there it is - I love that sort of comedy. Which is also why I love Phyllis Diller and I love Joan Rivers and I love sorry, I'm drinking LaCroix, so I'm burping. I love Rodney Dangerfield so much. Just wacky, goofy - that type of

humor is my shit. It's my jam.

CA: I don't wanna get too far off the grid here, but since you brought up "The Golden Girls," it seems like a good time to ask you what you thought of Elliott's Blanche for Snatch Game on the latest season of "Drag Race."

AT: Leave meeting. Um, no. Well, the thing is: It was stacked against her from the beginning. Even RuPaul said. "Molly, you're in danger, girl." (Laughs.) During the walkthrough, RuPaul was like, "Just don't do it, babe. You're gonna drown." Um, and she kind of did.

Would I go in if I got to go do Snatch Game again? I would, probably. That was gonna be one of my characters. If I didn't do Mae West, it was going to be Rue McClanahan. So if I ever go back on "Drag Race," I probably will do it and I will rise up to the challenge. And I hope that it goes better than Elliott's.

CA: How did the comedy jacket and the comedy wig and the entire comedy look help you get into the comedy zone for this

special?

AT: It comes down to the power of clothing and the power of drag. It's like different clothes literally make you feel a different way to make you hold yourself a different way. I found it very important to put on the big oversized blazer. I needed it. I needed some no-frills hair. so I wasn't worrying about whether my fucking Cher hair was flowing. Like, no,



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I just needed short, crazy, crazy hair.

CA: How has being a drag gueen been good training for being a comedian? AT: Well, to me, they're not that different. I think drag inherently is rooted in humor because it's poking fun at the idea of conventions of gender: what is it that makes a man in this society and makes a woman in this society, and those rules are ultimately so arbitrary and so out of nowhere. So just absurd. So drag clowns all of those conventions and calls them into question and makes fun of them and "winks, winks" at you while it's doing it. I think inherently there is humor in the absurdity of just like, What the fuck is gender? What is society? What is clothing?

CA: Being a queen in quarantine this last year — what's that been like?

AT: It's been really hard. And it was really hard on the drag community, because overnight all of your places that you do your thing (at) are gone now. They're closed. And you're also last in line for it to come back. It was really hard on the drag community. But it's also really inspiring because the next day the queens were all like, "Uh, OK, well, I have a digital show now and

I'm doing a show on Twitch and I have a weekly show on Instagram." And so it's been really hard, but it's been inspiring to see that drag can survive the apocalypse.

CA: Are you still into these drive-in shows you've been doing? Are they weird? Do you want to ever do them again post-pandemic?

AT: It's a little weird because everyone is so far away and I'm the type of performer... I like to sweat on you. I want you to spit on me when you're screaming. I want to share the microphone with you and exchange fluids with you when I'm on stage. I love getting to be on stage and, yes, the audience is really spread out and they're farther away, but you still get that vibe of having an actual audience. And there's nothing that can replace that.

CA: I loved seeing that a drag king, Tenderoni, won your very own drag competition, The Drag of the Year Pageant Competition Awards Contest Competition. It's a mouthful, you know. I know a mouthful, and that's a mouthful. The competition was all inclusive. What forms of drag would you like to see elevated, and how

would you like to see the art form diversify moving forward?

AT: The reason Lola (LeCroix) and I started doing the Drag Queen of the Year Pageant is: drag has always been crazy diverse. It has always been; you're sharing a dressing room with the drag kings and the AFAB (Assigned Female at Birth) performers and the male performers and the burlesque performers. Anyone who has done drag for more than five minutes knows that to be the reality. So we found it really strange that there wasn't a competition that was open to all these different avenues of drag; it was always very compartmentalized.

I mean, "Drag Race" is the sort of gold standard of drag competitions in the current landscape of the world. And the good thing that's hopeful is "Drag Race" is always changing it up and always evolving with the times. So, I could see a drag king getting thrown into the mix. I think it's possible.

CA: I also wonder if it's taken too long to get to where "Drag Race" has gotten. We're on season 13, and while it's great that the first trans contestant is a part of the show, do you think that there are too many rules on the show in general?

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AT: Well, OK: I love the fucking show and a lot of people do and it's changed culture and it's changed the world. But they do have rules to entry, and if it were up to me, I would blow the walls off and I would say, "Let's have everyone apply and see what that looks like." Do I think that's going to happen? Probably not anytime soon. But it is hopeful to see the people who put on "Drag Race" are very aware of culture and they are always actively changing the show and keeping it fresh and keeping it current. That makes me hopeful.

CA: Who might you be interested in having a Snatch Game with if there was a winners season of the show?

AT: Oh my god. Jinkx, Bob the Drag Queen, fucking Monét X Change — as long as she does Whitney Houston.

Sharon (Needles). Aquarium, oh my god. Yes, all of that. All of those divas.

CA: If they do the dreaded teams format from "All Stars" Season 1, what winner would you want to be paired with?

AT: If they try to pull that shit, I would leave. I would pull a Ginny Lemon and walk the fuck out because we're not doing that team shit. No, that's trash. They absolutely couldn't do it. And if I

had to be on a team. I would want to be on Bob's team because Bob is so fucking funny. We work really well together. And Bob knows everything about "Drag Race." Like, I thought I knew shit about "Drag Race." Bob knows the most about "Drag Race."

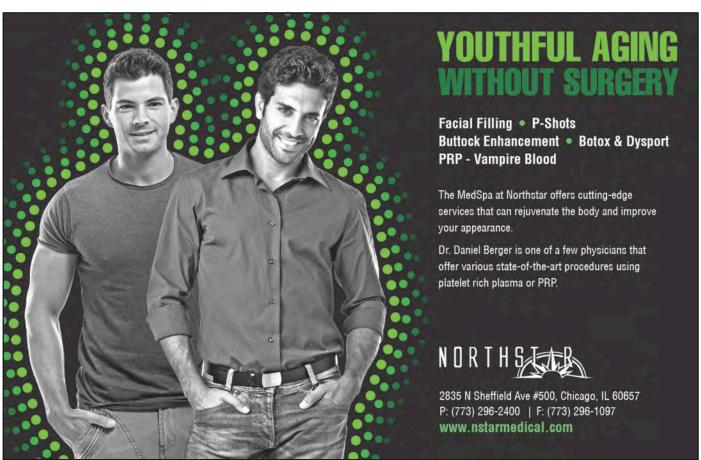
CA: What's next for you? Might you record another album at some point? AT: Um, maybe.

CA: Okay. You're in the studio.
AT: (Coyly.) I don't know! Stayed tuned.

This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity.

Chris Azzopardi is the Editorial Director of Pride Source Media Group and Q Syndicate, the national LGBTQ wire service. He has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.





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Taylor-Made Stewart Taylor Is Out to Be Your Cover Boy

By William Cooke

Part-time model, part time pop singer Stewart Taylor was inspired to write "Cover Boy" when he felt that the guy he was dating wasn't making enough of an effort to take things to the next level. Taylor had just landed his first magazine cover and he wished his beau would make him front and center, just as the magazine had done.

"Cover Boy" follows Stewart Taylor's previous single, "Mess Your Hair Up". "I've evolved a lot as an artist over the years," he explains. "I've tried on different sounds and outfits, stripped those things away, started over, and have rebuilt and rebranded myself into what I feel is the most authentic me in the moment. I've come into my own with my music, dance, and fashion and everything I do now is a lot more influenced by funk and R&B, while still staying very pop."

We spoke with Stewart Taylor from his LA home.

William Cooke: What do you want listeners to take away from the song? Stewart Taylor: I want listeners to take away a sense of joy and worthiness from the song. Date people and have fun, but don't waste your time on someone who doesn't see how amazing you are and doesn't see you as their end game.

WC: What is the best/worst thing about being a male model?

ST: The best thing is getting to play characters of yourself during photoshoots. The clothes are a lot of fun too. The worst part is waiting for the next gig.

WC: Would you date a male model? ST: Absolutely! Although, good looks are definitely not everything. He would need to have one hell of a personality,

WC: When in your life were you happiest?

ST: I was probably happiest during my college years at Berklee College of Music in Boston. Being surrounded by artists and musicians every day was a constant inspiration for me.

WC: What is your greatest fear today? ST: That the live music scene won't be back to normal for a while. As someone who has spent their whole life performing, this last year has been really tough. I have hope that things will get better.

WC: Which living person do you most admire?

ST: I have admired Lady Gaga for over a decade. She gives me endless strength and inspiration as an individual and as an entertainer. Talk about a badass woman!



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WC: How do you relax? ST: By tuning out with a

great TV show or book and spending time out in nature in LA.

WC: What do you consider your greatest achievement?

ST: Graduating from college and getting my first cut as a songwriter with a pop star in Europe.

WC: What is the most important lesson life has taught you? ST: To value experiences

and friendship over everything else.

WC: Tell us a joke.

ST: Never criticize someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes. Then when you criticize them, they won't be able to hear you from that far away...and you'll also have their shoes.

WC: Tell us a dirty secret.

ST: I've been with men and women. I'm not a gold star gay.

WC: Have you found your cover boy? ST: I haven't found my cover boy yet, but I'm a hopeless romantic and I know he's out there.

Stewart Taylor's "Cover Boy" is available on Apple Music, Spotify and all digital platforms. The video is on Youtube. For more Visit

www.stewarttaylorofficial.com. Follow on Instagram @ Stewarttaylormusic

WC: What was your most embarrassing moment ever?

ST: One summer, when I was a kid at theater camp, I forgot all my lines while onstage. Talk about brutal!

WC: What is your most treasured possession?

ST: My cat Hank! He's a tuxedo-Siamese and he's such a hunk.

WC: Most unappealing habit?

ST: I talk in my sleep.

WC: Guiltiest pleasure?

ST: I love to binge watch Sex and the City and Keeping Up with The Kardashians. I'm obsessed.

WC: What has been your biggest disappointment?

ST: My biggest disappointment was not making it on American Idol when I was sixteen. At the time, it felt like my world had been crushed. Now I realize I was so not ready.

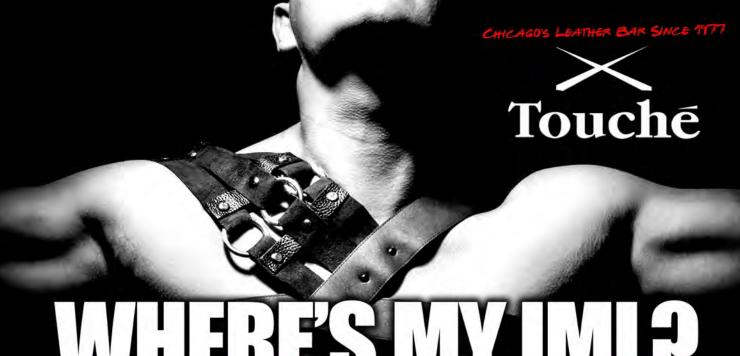
WC: If you could edit your past, what would you change?

ST: I probably wouldn't have wasted so much time auditioning for singing competition shows when I wasn't ready for those kinds of opportunities. But every mess up, wrong turn, right turn, the good, the bad, and the ugly have made me who I am today.

WC: If you could go back in time, where would you go?

ST: I would go back to when I was thirteen and still a male soprano. I could sing any Mariah Carey or Christina Aguilera song in their original key and it was sickening.







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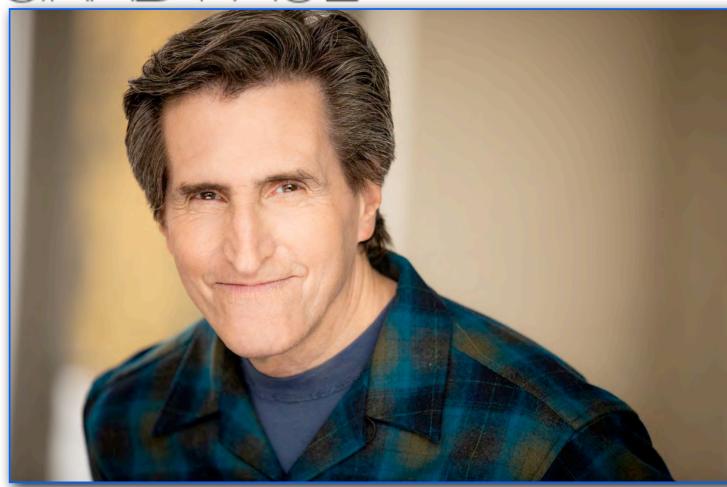
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GRAB PAUL



Playing for laughs and love: An interview with gay writer Paul Rudnick

By Gregg Shapiro

Let's be honest, there are not many writers - gay or straight - of books, plays or screenplays, who are as hysterically funny as Paul Rudnick. In plays including Jeffrey and The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told, movies such as Sister Act, Addams Family Values and In & Out, as well as the novels Social Disease and I'll Take It (my personal favorite), Rudnick has kept us in stitches from start to finish. Combining wit and wisdom, Rudnick also gives us much to think about while we are laughing. His new novel, Playing The Palace (Berkley/Jove, 2021), is no exception, and it couldn't be more timely. Nice, gay, Jewish, New Jersey guy Carter has an unexpected encounter with nice, gay, British royal Prince Edgar and a regal love affair is launched, presented in true rom-com fashion. Rudnick was kind enough to

answer a few questions shortly before the May 2021 publication of the book.

Gregg Shapiro: The publication of your new novel Playing The Palace is especially timely with all the recent increased interest in the Royals due to Harry and Megan's departure. What do you think the Royals would think of Playing The Palace? Paul Rudnick: I'd hope that Meghan and Harry would enjoy Playing The Palace, especially because the book celebrates a romance between an American and a royal. No one knows for sure if the royals watch The Crown, but I'd like to picture copies of Playing The Palace on a few royal nightstands and tucked into royal tote bags!

GS: There is an abundance of "royalty jokes," as they are called on page 75.

Are these the kinds of things you've been curating over the years or were they written specifically for the book? PR: Here's something I've always wondered, which inspired Playing The

wondered, which inspired Playing The Palace: if a commoner falls in love with a royal, what are the rules? Wearing a crown and waving from a balcony can be both glorious and bizarre: are royals allowed to talk about this? A sense of humor is essential for romance, so in Playing The Palace, NYC event planner Carter Ogden and Prince Edgar love to exchange wisecracks, some of which I've hoarded over the years, but most of which popped up as I wrote the book. I've always wanted to know: if someone's involved with a prince, is it okay to say, "It's your turn to unload the dishwasher, Your Highness"?

GS: IHOP figures prominently in the

book. Are you a pancake patron?

PR: I'm a huge fan of IHOP. I grew up in New Jersey, where a trip to a local IHOP was always a treat. One of the reasons I fell in love with my partner was our mutual addiction to IHOP (one of our first dates was at a Philadelphia IHOP.) IHOPs represent a great American innovation: breakfast all day.

GS: What's your favorite syrup in the IHOP syrup tray?

PR: I'm partial to the maple flavored syrup but I enjoy looking at all the varieties in the syrup caddy. My partner and I recently visited a socially distanced IHOP and it felt wonderful.

GS: Another recurring theme in the book is the presence of Carter's spirit guide, the late SCOTUS justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg. How do you think she would feel about being a character in *Playing the Palace*?

PR: I'd hope that Justice Ginsberg would have a great time with Playing The Palace, in which she appears as an icon of justice, hard work and equality. She had a great sense of humor and was a passionate fan of the arts (especially opera and the theater.) Carter Ogden reveres Ruth, as a down-to-earth hero, and he confides in a treasured photograph of her. I picture Justice Ginsberg in heaven, laughing and passing around her copy of Playing The Palace!

GS: Everyone is funny, especially James and Queen Catherine. How do you decide who gets the funniest lines when you are writing?

PR: As a comic writer, I like all of my characters to be funny.

James and Queen Catherine are both fiendishly smart, and use humor for joy and balance, while other characters, who take themselves a bit too seriously, become funny in their own ways. Carter and Edgar share a sense of humor, which is a great basis for their love – Carter's more extravagantly funny, while Edgar's stealthy, so they make an ideal team.

GS: In chapters 13 and 16 you demonstrate an admirably tasteful way of writing scenes of sexual intimacy. What are the challenges and rewards of writing sex scenes? PR: Writing sex scenes can be tricky and can easily turn clunky. I wanted the

sex in *Playing The Palace* to be passionate and lighthearted, as an extension of Carter's and Edgar's feelings for each other. While leaving certain aspects to the reader's imagination, I wanted to make sure that Carter and Edgar had a great time, whether in Carter's tiny NYC apartment bedroom or onboard the royal jet.

GS: Late in the book, there is a chapter (28) that turns serious and provides a kind of historical perspective. Please say something about your decision to include that. PR: There have been many wonderful

PLAYING THE PALACE

A novel

PAUL RUDNICK

books about coming out, but I wanted *Playing The Palace* to be a celebration of exuberantly open and empowered gay lives. On the other hand, I needed an awareness of how recently such lives have become possible. Throughout history, there have always been LGBTQ people, who've often faced overwhelming prejudice. There have also been valiant LGBTQ heroes, who've fought tirelessly for equality. Carter and Edgar recognize their privilege, and they honor their forebears.

GS: On the whole, the tone of the

novel is such that it could appeal to younger readers. What would it mean to you to reach that prized YA readership?

PR: I welcome any and all readers. I especially love presenting the possibility of joyous queer romance to younger readers; I've written YA and found these readers to be open, curious and wildly smart, so I'd be thrilled if they shared *Playing The Palace* with every possible generation.

GS: Given your history in cinema, who would you like to see portray Carter and Edgar in a movie version of *Playing the Palace?*

PR: If Playing The Palace ever became a movie, there are so many wonderful actors – including more and more out actors – who could play the leads. I'm too superstitious to make predictions, but I will say that the fantastically talented Michael Urie has just done an amazing job of recording the audio version of Playing The Palace.

GS: I keep picturing Dame Judi Dench as Queen Catherine. Is she the actress you would choose for that role?

PR: Like every writer alive, I'd be delighted to have Judi Dench play any role she'd like. Dame Judi is regal, a little scary and hilarious, all qualities which she shares with Queen Catherine.

GS: Do you foresee more books with Carter and Edgar?

PR: In Playing The Palace Carter and Edgar are at the beginning of their life together, which promises to be an epic adventure. I'd love to chart their progress, so who knows?

GS: Have you started thinking about your next book, movie or stage project?

PR: I'm in the middle of writing a new novel and I've got a play that will premiere at the LaJolla Playhouse in California next year. There are TV and movie projects in the works as well, but as I've said, I'm too superstitious to go into details just yet. I did write a monologue which was just performed by the superb Nathan Lane at a Broadway theater, before a socially distanced audience of healthcare and theater workers, as part of the NY PopsUp Festival, a series of events devoted to welcoming people back to live performances. Onwards!



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GRAB A HIT



Top 40 Dance Chart this week Visit nexus radio.fm

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	Artist	Title
1	Anabel Englund x MK	Underwater
2	Melsen	You
3	SAY SAY x ASDIS	Stories
4	Paige & Nihil Young	Mercy ft. Sarah De Warren (Radio Edit)
5	Dom Dolla	Pump The Brakes (Short Radio Edit)
6	Joel Corry x Raye x David Guetta	Bed
7	Noizu	Summer 91 (Looking Back)
8	Robin Schulz & Felix Jaehn	One More Time ft. Alida (Quarterhead Remix)
9	Niiko x SWAE	I Ain't Going Home
10	Lucas & Steve x Blackstreet	No Diggity
11	Dimitri Vegas & Like Mike x DVBBS x Roy Wo	Too Much
12	Love Harder x HUGEL x Tobtok	My Bed ft. RBVLN
13	Harry Styles	Watermelon Sugar (Tommie Sunshine & Breikthru Remix)
14	Alesso x CORSAK	Going Dumb
15	Alan Walker x Salem ilese	Fake A Smile (R3HAB Remix)
16	MK	Lies ft. Raphaella
17	Silk City x Ellie Goudling	New Love ft. Diplo & Mark Ronson
18	Diplo & Sonny Fodera	Turn Back Time
19	Ritt Momney	Put Your Records On (DJ Scooter House Bootleg)
20	Major Lazer	Titans ft. Sia & Labrinth
21	Rompasso & Leony	Love Me
22	RAYE ft. Rudimental	Regardless
23	Clean Bandit	Higher ft. iann dior (Andrew Marks Radio)
24	CamelPhat	Easier ft. LOWES (Radio Edit)
25	Sleepwalkrs	More Than Words ft. MNEK (Clean)
26	Louis The Child	So What ft. A R I Z O N A
27	GATTUSO	Somebody
28	Lost Frequencies	Rise
29	Glass Animals	Heat Waves (Oliver Heldens Remix Edit)
30	Afrojack & David Guetta	Hero
31	Timmy Trumpet & Afrojack	Stay Mine (Radio Edit)
32	Jonas Blue x AWA	Something Stupid (Radio Mix)
33	TELYKast with Loren Gray	Nobody To Love (LM Mix)
	Bebe Rexha	Sacrifice (Niiko X Swea Remix)
35	London Grammar	Lose Your Head (Dave Glass Animals Remix)
	Bombs Away	Love Magic
	Carla Monroe	Shapes
38	Shaun Frank	Save Me ft. Ryland James
	Robin Schulz	All We Got ft. KIDDO (Lodato Remix)
40	Lucas & Steve	I Want It All

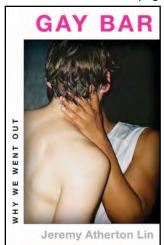


GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

"Gay Bar: Why We Went Out" by Jeremy Atherton Lin

c.2021, Little, Brown and Company \$28.00 / \$36.00 Canada 320 pages



The stool over by the window is all yours.

Might be because you've spent a lot of time there. It's the right height, you can easily watch the door from there, and the bartender knows your favorites, so why not? As in the new book "Gay Bar" by Jeremy Atherton Lin, it's one of the best places to be.

Long before it was legal for him to go there, Jeremy Atherton Lin, like most teenage boys, imagined going to the bar – though in his case, Lin imagined what it was like in a gay bar. Ironically, he says, "I can't remember my first."

As someone with a foot in each of two continents, he does have favorites, places that are now closed, re-named, or been moved. He's danced in them, had sex in them, drank and moved through gay bars with his "companion, the Famous Blue Raincoat," and anonymously, and with friends-not-friends.

Some bars were carved out of a back room or basement, or a place that used to be something else, maybe another bar. They're cavernous; or they're small and packed with men dancing or doing drugs; or they're thick with bachelorette parties and tourists, to the annoyance of the gay men who've claimed that bar. Those usurpers don't know the legacy of feeling gay, but "[I]t goes pretty deep. Some bars have opened just for the night. Others were raided once upon a time, or will close before a month has passed. Overall, they're an important part of being a gay man, pre-Stonewall, pre-AIDS, post-epidemic, and now.

And yet, says Lin, "...there does remain something embarrassing about a gay bar." Still, try to stop him from fondly remembering nights in the Castro or Los Angeles or London...

Absolutely, you could be forgiven for wondering what you got yourself into while reading the first couple dozen pages of "Gay Bar." Unabashedly, without preamble, author Jeremy Atherton Lin leaps right into a hazy description of a night out or two, in a chapter that seems fragmented, like a broken strobe light. Clarity comes, but later, and it's fragile.

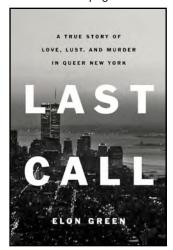
Part of the haze might be due to the autobiographical nature of Lin's story: there are bars in his tales, but the focus here is more going to bars, with the implied assumption that readers are familiar with those he mentions or others exactly like them. This, of course, may not be true; still, Lin's sex-and-boozefilled tales of drag, dance, and la dolce vita are compelling, woven with gay history, interesting then-and-now comparisons, and blisteringly-explicit tales of being a young gay man.

And then again, while these stories take readers through the doors of a gay bar, once we've literarily entered, there are times when we're abandoned, the music's too loud, and we want to just go.

Like a song you don't particularly like, though, that won't last long. Really, the surreality of "Gay Bar" is not insurmountable; in fact, if you wait it out, you'll be mostly glad you did. So look for it – and take a seat.

"Last Call: A True Story of Love, Lust, and Murder in Queer New York" by Elon Green

c.2021, Celadon Books \$27.00 / \$36.50 Canada 257 pages



There's time for one last round.
One for the road, as they say. A tip
for the barkeep, a final toast before you
go, one more clink before you drink, and,
as in the new book "Last Call" by Elon
Green, be careful on your way out the
door.

The roadside maintenance worker had been around awhile, long enough to know when something was unusual. It

was May 1991, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and the last trash bag he hefted seemed too heavy. When he poked the final one of eight bags, he saw freckles and called the State Police. He hadn't touched anything in the bag, but he was ordered to have an AIDS test: the naked man inside was identified as Peter Stickney Anderson of Philadelphia, a banker and father who was gay.

Slightly more than a year later, on an otherwise-lonely stretch of road in New Jersey, two Transportation Department workers discovered another pile of trash bags that seemed "not quite right." Inside the bags was the meticulously-dismembered body of Thomas Mulcahy, a detail they knew instantly because the killer left Tom's ID behind.

In May of 1993, a street worker, Anthony Marrero, was found dismembered in a series of plastic bags identical to the ones Mulcahy had been left in. By this time, officials had homed in on a few facts: the bags came from a certain store in Staten Island. They were tied in a specific way, and the bodies were cut with almost-medical precision. Still, despite the heinousness of the crimes, little-to-no attention was paid to them outside the gay community.

On July 29, 1993, Michael Sakara, an affable, thoughtful man told panhandlers as he left a Manhattan bar that he was "going upstate" with a companion he'd met that night. Less than 48 hours later, Michael's head and arms were discovered in a plastic bag. Police from two states put their collective heads together and got nothing but loose ends, and the case went cold.

Years later, they'd muse about how close they'd actually come to a solution...

In his afterword, author Elon Green explains why this story captured his fancy. Who were these four men? Were there others? Most importantly, why didn't this murder spree get the regional attention it deserved?

Green answers his own questions in this book but there's more. There are biographical sketches of four good men here, each rounded out so well that you may wish you'd known these guys. None of them fit a mold – Green captures that clearly – and he subtly, kindly reminds readers that they were someone's son, friend, or father.

And then, just as it seems like there's no conclusion to this tale, Green brings in the killer, whom he tantalizinging doesn't immediately name. In those pages lie some one of the edgiest, most shoulder-clenching, most psychologically-taught chapter you'll read this year.

So lock the doors. Pour yourself a strong one, and down the hatch for fortification. You're looking for hairraising true-crime, and "Last Call" is the one to have around.

HAPPY PRIDE.



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GRAB ROGER

Changes in the Law - New Benefits

By Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq.

In the past five years, we have had four of the most substantive changes in the law that I have seen in more than 40 years. The Civil Union Act, the Real Estate Transfer on Death Instrument Act, the new Power of Attorney Act and the Marriage Act.

After experiencing the struggles and battles that I have seen my clients and same sex couples go through – it is really exciting that we can use these four new laws to protect our relationships. But there are still landmines and pitfalls for our families and children.

One landmine has been the fear of traveling without all members of the family have the same last name. Today with the Civil Union Act and Marriage, clients have been successful in changing their names on their Illinois Driver's Licenses, Passports and Social Security Cards with a certified copy of the Civil Union Certificate or Marriage Certificate.

Having the same last name has taken the terror out of international travel or even traveling to a different state with our children and having to explain why we are with a child whose last is name different from ours. I know many couples with children have felt trapped in the US, unable to travel, because of this fear.

Another change is the Illinois Residential Real Estate Transfer on Death Instrument Act. This new law effective Jan 1, 2012 provides for a non-probate transfer of real estate upon the death of the owner. The benefit of the new law is that allows for the creation of a "transfer on death instrument" (T.O.D.I.) that when properly witnessed, acknowledged (just like a will) and recorded, allows an owner of residential real estate to transfer the property to a stated beneficiary effective only upon the owner's death.

One benefit of the TODI is the potential it has to preserve the real estate from the creditors of the decedent owner by avoiding probate.

The problem with using just a will to transfer title of real estate upon death is that a will usually must be probated and probate opens the house to the claims of creditors of the owner.
Such as credit card bills and student loans.

Under current Illinois law, property passing at death by means of a nonprobate transfer is not subject to the probate creditors' claims with exceptions. If an exception applies, any action to assert that claim must be commenced within the earlier of two years from the date of the decedent's death or six months after notice of



claims is given or published in accordance with the Probate Act.

Additionally, there have been updates to the Illinois Power of Attorney Act for powers of attorney for property. The new law contains broad sweeping new forms and notices to inform everyone of their rights and obligations.

The changes create more liability for the agent and more protection for the principals. Under the new law, if an agent violates the law they are can be held liable to the Principal or the Principals successor in interest for the amount required to 1. Restore the value to the Principals property. 2. Reimburse the Principal or the Principals successors for costs paid.

The benefit of the new law is that it creates more protection for third parties and companies relying on them without wondering if they are valid. Especially title companies that accept them in insuring title to real estate.

It doesn't mean that your old powers of attorney are invalid – they may still be good. The problems come when trying to convince others (like banks) to accept them on their face. An "old" power of attorney is more difficult to deal with than a fresh one because a question arises as to whether it is still good or whether it has been replaced.

Roger McCaffrey-Boss is a gradute of Hamline University School of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota, and is a member of the Chicago Bar Association. You can email him at RVMLawyer@aol.com. He suggests that you consult your own lawyer for any specific questions regarding the issues raised in this column.









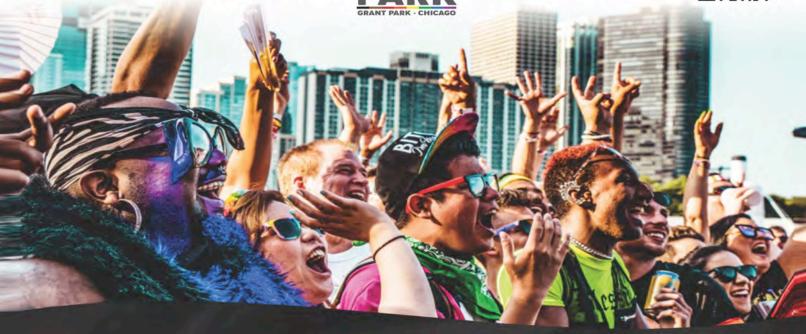












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GRAB HOLLY

The Boys Who Cried Wolf

By Holly Maholm

We all know what caused the downfall of that young shepherd boy in the Alps.

Several times, he claimed (falsely) that he was being threatened by a wolf, thereby greatly inconveniencing his parents and others. Then, later, when the wolf actually arrived, his cries were disregarded, and he was eaten by the wolf. Hence the lesson: Do not (falsely) cry Wolf!

No doubt Roger and his friends had heard this story, but they felt justified in ignoring its wisdom, inasmuch as they had been menaced IRL by four all-tooreal, ravenous Dire Wolves. Thus, you can imagine their shock and sense of injustice when their claim of "Wolf Attack" was universally disbelieved. Even their parents did not believe them and explained to them, in a faintly condescending way, that there were no wolves living in the State Park or, for that matter, the State. Roger's parents reassured him, "You probably saw a couple of coyotes, not wolves." Then, in an attempt to placate their young son, but without thereby undermining his self-confidence, they continued, "Perhaps they were horses,

like we often see on the Green." In short, no one believed them.

Now, seeing as how these were excitable teenagers who (according to their account) had come within a hair's breadth of being eaten by wolves, and seeing as how the adults had peremptorily rejected the boys' claim (demonstrating a certain undeniable lack of concern for their welfare), you might have thought Roger and his friends would double-down on their story. But they did not.

The problem was, they were reluctant to explain to any adult (even their parents) why, exactly, it was that the four of them had decided to confront a lone and unprotected tranny in the woods. But there was one adult who instantly understood what the boys had been doing, and she decided it was her duty to confront that tranny – wolves or no wolves.

I was in a booth at Donut Time, enjoying a cup of coffee and a Peach Fritter, when I chanced to look out onto the Green. There, I saw a woman standing motionless and alone, her eyes fixed upon Donut Time and glaring daggers in our direction. Looking more closely, I saw it was Barbara Potter, wife of Pastor Potter, and Honorary Madame Defarge of the local anti-LGBT faction of

our little town. Sensing a need to defang this open and aggressive provocation, I got up and headed for the door. There I was joined by Cindy, who had seen her, too.

We walked up to her, and since she was the instigator, we let her have the first word. "I don't know how you did it, but you put those boys in danger. Maybe you dressed up your horses to look like wolves. I don't know, and I don't care. You trannies do nothing but cause trouble in this town, and if it were up to me, I'd get rid of the whole bunch of you."

I was about to respond when Cindy jumped in, "Your name's Barbara, isn't it? You and I have never been introduced. My name's Cindy. Nice to meet you." (She extended her hand, which Barb ignored.) "Okay, you're the Pastor's wife, so I'm betting you know your



Bible pretty well." (Barb remained silent.) "And I'm certain your husband does, cause how else could he preach his sermons.

"So look, I've got a question about the Bible, and I was wondering if you could talk to your husband and then come back later and tell me what the Bible says in answer to my question. Would you do me that favor?" (Barb nodded yes.)

"Here's my question," she began.
"The Bible condemns people like Holly and me for being trannies. The Bible insists on classifying us as 'men,' and then because we have sex with men, we are condemned as 'abominations.' Now, I admit Xandra and I used to hang out on the street corner, here, picking up men for sex. And I also admit we supported ourselves in that manner for several years – so you know we had a substantial number of clients, cause how else could we have earned enough to pay our bills?

"But did you know, Barb, that we still see many of our old customers every week? They come in to Donut Time pretty regular, and we recognize them and remember their names. But we never let on that we know. We just smile and hand them their coffee, and we keep their secret: That those men – many of whom are married or have girlfriends - used to seek us out to have sex with a tranny. "So, my question is... are those men also 'abominations?' And would you and your husband - Pastor Potter - prefer we stopped keeping their secret, and 'outed' them to their friends and family... and fellow churchaoers?

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Volume 2 of What Would a Unicorn Do? (now available on Amazon) which contains additional episodes of Holly's on-going story of her life among the unicorns, plus additional articles and a short story of a transgender woman confronted by Satan! Send a message to Holly www.hollymaholm.com.

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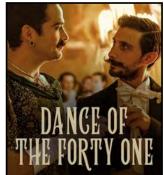
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GRAB A FILM

By Delven Shaw

Move **DANCE OF THE 41** to the top of your list.



I was not expecting much in advance of **DANCE OF THE 41** on NetFlix. But it delivered a powerful punch of long-lost GLBT history. Based on a true story of a closeted congressman who intends to

run for president of the state of Mexico, this movie is political, historical, and personal in the event which Wikipedia claims triggered the first discussion of homosexuality in Mexico when it happened in 1901.

Alfonso Herrera plays Ignacio, a Congressman with both political aspirations and a big secret. He loves Evaristo (Emiliano Zurita) and both men deliver powerful performances as two men trapped in a hopeless situation. Ignacio and Albert meet in an all-male club called the 41. Ignacio has just gotten married with his father-in-law being the most powerful politician in the state and his wife (Mabel Cadena) begging, pleading for a child so the sham marriage is not revealed. The trio of lovers is superb in their rage, longing, and love.

The film looks fantastic with opulent

sets and costumes. The scenes set inside the 41 club feature a group of 41 very interesting male archetypes who all long for a day when they can live their secret lives. We suspect that the happy times inside the club cannot last and the scenes where the club is exposed and ripped and paraded in the town are truly devastating.

The scenes with the 41 having their

The scenes with the 41 having their parties and operas and orgies on the other hand are no doubt ones which will be watched again and again. How many bathtubs are there?

This is a great piece for people who love history and the study of other cultures. Writer *Mabel Cadena* and director *David Pablos* have anchored their historic tale with a very personal life story. And it is beautifully done.

Please move it *DANCE OF THE 41* to the top of your list.

SPECIAL is Extraordinary



SPECIAL is one of the best Netflix experiences of 2021! In its first season

last year, the work created and starring *Ryan O'Connell* was a bit of a gimmick, as O'Connell celebrated his physical differences in a gay love story that broke many barriers. Now, the second series has landed, and it is all grown up with a terrific cast, excellent writing, and characters who you will love and who will break your heart.

For me, the show anchors on Ryan's mom, (Jessica Hecht), a single mom who sacrificed everything to raise her most unusual son. It is a wonderfully complex performance and character, and no doubt many will identify with the adult who gave up so much. Ryan's best friend Kim (Punam Patel) is a great comic foil for him, as another type of outsider in American culture. Kim can get away with saying what we are all thinking.

At the heart of the matter is Ryan,

whose emotional and sexual journey is both enticing and unbearable to watch. The show is full of humor – and nudity. And the mother/son dynamic is surely one that many queer folks will identify with. of his CP. Creepy! Kim, on the other hand, catches the eye of Harrison (*Charles Barnett*) who is impossibly rich and improbably nice. Too good to be true?

At the heart of the matter is Ryan, whose emotional and sexual journey is both enticing and unbearable to watch. The show is full of humor – and nudity. And the mother/son dynamic is surely one that many queer folks will identify with.

Hopefully SPECIAL will settle into a long life at Netflix. I surely am curious to know how all of these friends, lovers, and family members will turn out.

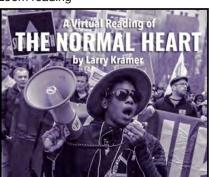
become emotional in an instant, and he was outstanding in his vulnerability, anger, and great sense of humor. His scenes with Pope were outstanding.

At the talk back afterwards, Sterling was asked if he would consider doing a full production of TNH with a cast of BIPOC, and while he did not knock the idea, he made clear his belief that casting like this works best when there is a purpose and a cause, and he gave Barclay great praise for distilling that sense in this terrific ensemble.

THE NORMAL HEART was seen by over 1100 people. And if you would like to support the cause of this great team of artists, go to https://www.onearchives.org/.

There are a lot of queer culture available screening right now.
Check out the two-minute reviews at DelvenShaw.com for more!

THE NORMAL HEART, a powerful Zoom reading



We have no doubt all seen Zoom staged readings at some point in this Covid year, and the results can be terrific or terrifying. There is a lot that can go wrong. But when the cast is united and inspired, even if they only had one rehearsal, no miscues could get in the way of a thrilling evening. Such was the

case with the all-star reading of THE NORMAL HEART by **Larry Kramer**, a benefit for the ONE Archives Foundation.

For the first time, Kramer's alter ego Ned Weeks and his fictional lover Felix were played by actors of color – in this case **Sterling K. Brown** from 'This is Us', and **Jeremy Pope** from 'Choir Boy'. Other featured players included **Laverne Cox, Jake Borelli**, and **Jay Hayden**, and the wattage from this committed group, assemble by director Paris Barclay, was outstanding.

THE NORMAL HEART is a tough text, with heart wrenching scenes between Ned and Felix, shuffled into a stack of increasing serious scenes involving Kramer's efforts to get press coverage and money for the gay community so devastated by AIDS. The political scenes can sometimes bog the production down, but in this case, without taking time for props or scene changes, the reading flew by. Fans of 'This Is' Us know that Sterling can



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k.d lang Releases "If I Were You (Main Mix)" from 'makeover'



k.d. lang releases "If I Were You (Main Mix)"—a track off her forthcoming album, makeoveralong with an accompanying video.

The 1995 remix was produced by Junior Vasquez, and the remix video was edited by *Dean Kensler* from Kevin Kersláke's original "If I Were You" music video. As journalist Larry Flick says in his essay about makeover: "With 'If I Were You,' lang did more than enhance the promotability of her work to the dance market. She made good on the promise of her previous clubfocused remixes ... Her collaboration with Junior Vasquez laid her emotional cards on the table. No more mystery. No more hiding in shadows of innuendo. lang had evolved from delightfully confounding country music star to proudly queer pop icon.'

makeover, in celebration of Pride Month, is due out May 28 on Nonesuch Records and comprises classic dance remixes of some of lang's best-loved songs. The album brings these remixes, made between 1992 and 2000, together for the first time, and includes "Sexuality," "Miss Chatelaine," "Theme from the Valley of the Dolls," "Summerfling," and the #1 dance chart hits "Lifted By Love" and "If I Were You." makeover's cover art features a previously unseen 1995 portrait of lang by David LaChapelle. The album is available to pre-order on all formats, including transparent turquoise vinyl, here. Nonesuch Store pre-orders include instant downloads of "If I Were You (Main Mix)" and the previously released "Miss Chatelaine (St. Tropez Mix)"; an exclusive, limited-edition print of the album cover signed by lang; and a paper doll PDF set, designed by a fan-Katja Virtanen of Finland—to print out at home, featuring iconic looks from throughout her career.

"I had the idea of putting together a dance remix compilation, as I mused about how we built community in those days before the internet, mobile devices, and dating apps. Those dance clubs were a key

to a world, which was still called 'underground' in the '90s. I also surprised myself by finding that there was a cryptic, sort of secret zone in my career, that hadn't been explored, overlooked even by me. Two of these tracks had even hit #1 on the dance

charts!" says lang.
Called "one of the greatest
singers of all time," by Elton John and "the greatest female singer in the whole world" by fellow Canadian Michael Bublé, k.d. lang's distinguished career includes four Grammy and eight Juno Awards. In addition to a fruitful collaboration with Tony Bennett (who calls her "the best singer of her generation"), lang has performed alongside luminaries including Roy Orbison, Bonnie Raitt, Elton John, and Loretta Lynn. She sang at the closing ceremonies of the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary and the opening ceremonies of the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. lang has contributed music to the soundtracks of several films, including Even Cowgirls Get the Blues, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, and Happy Feet. She has also appeared in a number of films, including Salmonberries, The Black Dahlia, and Eye of the Beholder. In 1996, lang réceived Canada's highest civilian honor, the Order of Canada.

lang released her first album with Nonesuch Records in 2004, the acclaimed and highly personal "Canadian songbook," Hymns of the 49th Parallel, featuring work by Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, Neil Young, Jane Siberry, and others. Her subsequent releases on the label include Watershed (2008), her first career retrospective Recollection (2010), and Sing It Loud (2011). Most recently. Nonesuch released Ingénue: 25th Anniversary Edition in 2017, comprising lang's multiplatinum, Grammy Award-winning original album, as well as the previously unreleased 1993 MTV Unplugged performances. In the words of Uncut magazine, "Ingénue still dazzles, 25 years on. Luminous. languid and seductive to the point of intoxication. This reissue proves its status as a modern classic." To coincide with the anniversary, lang performed sold-out concerts in Canada, the US, Australia, UK, and Ireland; a DVD of the show, Ingenue Redux: Live from The Majestic Theatre, was released in 2018. "A canny and sumptuous blend of roots music and pre-rock pop, Ingénue sounds as great today as it did upon its release. The songs shimmered with dreamy textures," wrote the Los Angeles Times. "lang is so good that she is in a class of her own. Wow. Just wow. Most other singers should just give up now," proclaimed the Daily Telegraph.

For more information visit http:// www.kdlang.com

Jennifer Nettles releases **RELEASES "WAIT FOR IT"** FROM HAMILTON



Multi-GRAMMY® Award winner Jennifer Nettles has released the next track from her anticipated album of American Songbook classics Always Like New.

Álways Like New will be released on CD, Vinyl and Digital on June 25th. For this project, Nettles teamed up with GRAMMY® and Tony® Award-winning orchestrator Alex Lacamoire, best known for his work on Broadway's critically acclaimed shows Hamilton, Dear Evan Hansen, and In the Heights, to reimagine, arrange and produce some of the most beloved songs from the stage, infusing each with her signature sound and giving these timeless works of art a new context and meaning in our current landscape.

Nettles shared, "As a child who grew up in musical theatre, this album feels like a homecoming to me. I savored every note of singing and arranging these songs with Alex Lacamoire. It is thrilling to be able to celebrate this amazing songwriting with arrangements and vocals that allow them to be rediscovered anew."

The album, executive produced by *Adam Zotovich* (*Dear Evan Hansen*, *The Color Purple*, *An* American in Paris), spans classics from "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin" (Oklahoma) and "Wouldn't It Be Loverly" (My Fair Lady) to contemporary favorites including *"You Will Be Found"* (Dear Evan Hansen), "Wait for It" (Hamilton) and "It All Fades Away" featuring **Brandi Carlile** (The Bridges of Madison County)

Always Like New's first single "Sit Down, You're Rockin' The Boat" features Nettles' soaring vocals in a jazzy up-tempo version of the Guys and Dolls classic.

Always Like New is available for pre-order and digital pre-save here: https://found.ee/ jennifernettles_alwayslikenew

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STOLI® VODKA CELEBRATES PRIDE 2021 WITH HARVEY **MILK GLOBAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOTTLE**

Stoli® Vodka and The Harvey Milk Foundation are continuing their partnership with the launch of the limited stock Stoli® Harvey Milk Global Collector's Edition Bottle, featuring art from Paraguayan artist Oz Montania. Stoli has worked with The Harvey Milk Foundation in this capacity before, having launched the first Harvey Milk Bottle in 2018, commemorating the 40th anniversary of Milk taking office in 1978 as the first openly gay elected official in California.

After a successful first launch in 2018, the new Global Collector's Edition Bottle will feature the art of Oz Montania on individually numbered bottles of, Stolichnaya® made-in-Latvia premium vodka.

"The Harvey Milk Foundation is excited to see our long term partnership with Stoli Vodka go global this year", said Miriam Richter, Harvey Milk Foundation **Education Director and Counsel** "The 2021 HMF/Stoli collaboration is a message to people all over the globe that visibility is vital and that hope can not be silenced, not just LGBTQ+

people, but for ALL people". Established by Harvey Milk's nephew, Stuart Milk, and his campaign manager, Anne Kronenberg, the Harvey Milk Foundation works around the globe to empower and support LGBTQ+ voices and communities. Keeping with Harvey Milk's values and vision for the future, the Harvey Milk Foundation works for a diverse and liberated world where everyone is free to be their authentic selves.

"As a company recommitting itself as a true global organization devoted to sustainable equality, there could be no better partner for the first true Stoli® Global LGBTQ+ Limited Edition than the Harvey Milk Foundation (HMF)" said Patrik Gallineaux, Global LGBTQ+ Ambassador for Stoli®. "Harvey Milk's legacy and spirit and the Harvey Milk Foundation's unparalleled work around the globe transcend borders and ŭplift Stoli®'s promise to liberate authentic voices in pursuit of a better world."

This past year has seen the world band together, finding ways to stay connected and care for each other despite all the challenges and obstacles the pandemic put in front of us. It saw the cancellation of in-person Pride celebrations around the world, altering the rhythms by which we express our Pride. Historically, Pride has provided a platform and opportunity for LGBTQ+ people and their allies to come together and it is with this in mind that Stoli is launching this commemorative limited edition bottle globally.

As a global effort, the 2021 HMF/Stoli this collaboration is a way to remind the world that despite the necessary changes to the way Pride is celebrated this year, the spirit of pride Pride remains strong and while we gather virtually for the most part, we can make the most of it together. Paraguayan street artist Oz Montania's mural inspired art will be featured on the label, a reminder that Pride is powerful.

and political.

Creating the art for the second Harvey Milk commemorative bottle with Stoli is an honor and a privilege for me," said Oz Monania. "With this global launch we will be able to highlight Harvey Milk's life's work that has inspired countless organizations and individuals to this day around the world. The image is taken from the 1978 Gay Pride Parade in San Francisco, where Harvey Milk and other marchers held signs protesting the Briggs Initiative - a state proposition that would have made it mandatory for school boards to fire openly gay and lesbian teachers. Using those iconic reference images, I reimagined a contemporary crowd in the background, depicting Harvey Milk's leadership legacy that continues to this day. This work serves to honor the legacy of an exceptional human being, concluded Oz Montania.

The famed Harvey Milk quote, "Hope Will Never Be Silent", will feature prominently in the new artwork for the Stolichnaya® vodka bottle. Stoli® has long championed the LGBTQ+ community, showing its commitment to equality and diversity since the 1990s. Partnering with the Harvey Milk Foundation stresses the importance of knowing and

understanding LGBTQ+ history, and Stoli has committed to voicing its hope out loud.

The Stoli Harvey Milk Global Collector's Edition bottle is available at leading spirit retailers (or in the USA at http:// www.reservebar.com) http:// www.stoli.com Learn more about the Harvey Milk Foundation at www.MilkFoundation.org. For more information about Stoli vodka, visit http:/www.stoli.com.



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