

TORONTO'S PREMIER GAY LIFESTYLE DIGITAL MAGAZINE & MOBILE EDITION

# MY GAY TORONTO

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MITYA NEVSKY

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# A New Era For Prism & Pride

ROLYN CHAMBERS



“For the past six years Prism has collaborated with Pride Toronto on events, talent and performers,” Gairy Brown explains over drinks at the Gladstone Hotel one gloomy April afternoon. Brown has seen this relationship evolve having helmed Prism, the “gay wing” of Embrace, Canada’s number promotional company, as its Director of Operations for the last nine years.

“This year we are unsure what’s going on,” Brown responds acknowledging there has been little communication with this year’s Pride Toronto board. “However we look forward to working again with them as it is an imperative part Toronto’s gay history and we are encouraged to help keep it relevant and moving in the right direction.”

Like a symbiotic relationship, Prism Toronto and Pride Toronto have benefited from the international tourists both organizations attract to the city every summer. With Prism celebrating a milestone 15th anniversary, and Pride now in its 37th year, the relationship is just as important now than ever.

“The fact is we do have one of the strongest Prides in the world and this has really helped our event stay relevant,” Brown explains. “We also do a good job of keeping up to date as to what is current within the circuit scene.”

What is relevant and current this year is change. Change that will steer Prism (the number one summer circuit party series in North America) in a new direction while still holding true to its history of bringing Toronto some of the best gay talent in the world.

One such change is the long-standing Saturday daytime party, Aqua. Forget the sun block, this year the waterworks take place Friday at three in the afternoon and ends at eleven at night with a spectacular fireworks show that will highlight the picturesque waterfront that is home to this year’s location, Cabana Pool Lounge. Instead of sexy shorts, swimsuits are advised as this is change in location enables the event to be billed as Prism’s “first official pool party,” reminiscent of the Splash party many years ago where performer Lena Love arrived by helicopter and then was whisked to the stage on the back of a motorcycle. Lastly, the party that brought Kelly Rowland to perform her huge David Guetta produced hit, When Love Takes Over, is this year showcasing Spanish singer whose song, Love Me Like A Diva, is climbing the charts. No stranger to large outdoor parties like Aqua, Brown can be

heard headlining music festivals in Ibiza and around the world.

The other major change, which has been evolving slowly over the last two years, is the merging of the main party (always held on Saturday night) with Sunday nights Revival Party. With no grand event space available on a Saturday night this year Brown knew they needed to create a bigger experience on the Sunday. Both parties have always been the most attended Prism events, and by bringing them together Brown is confident a new event worthy of its new home inside the newly recreated Rebel Nightclub will be born.

“This year we have found a home to really bring Revival to the next level,” boasts Brown. “It’s going to propel Revival into a new era. This is the most loved party and the most internationally known. This party started with the Guvernment nightclub, and Rebel (also owned by Charles Kabbouth) is a completely modern version of that.”

With over 15 million spent on this space, its 30 foot LED walls, three million dollar lighting system and spectacular sound system will showcase over a dozen go-go dancers and an aerial acrobatic circus main show starring Sofonda which will all come together to create an environment to stun the senses.

As 70% of the people who attend Revival (which has won several international circuit party awards) are tourists, it’s still the perfect event to see old friends from out of town or hook-up with new ones that you may never see again. But also changing is the DJ. Having long been the domain of the late DJ Peter Rauhofer (the year the legendary Alan T performed over one of Rauhofer’s tracks was unforgettable), this year DJ duo Rosabel becomes the new resident of Revival’s new chapter.







“Peter was Revival,” Brown gushes. His last set at Revival [before succumbing to brain cancer] was probably one of his best. “It was his favourite party to spin. Peter made Revival one of the most desirable gay parties in the world to attend.”

Saturday’s event will of course happen, but it will be a smaller, tech house party called Resist with DJs Abel and Tom Stephan at Nest. Boot Camp remains on Friday night at Fly Nightclub. And the final event, a you-won’t-even-have-time-to-shower after-party, will take place, back at Fly at 6AM, immediately following Revival. But it will be a Fly unlike what anyone has ever seen. Dark and sexy, inspired by Brown’s experiences in Amsterdam, the space will only be lit by powerful lasers that are being brought in specifically for this daytime party to end the weekend.

“I’m not at all worried about having the main party on a Sunday,” Brown concludes. “You have to remember that so many people come in from out of town for this event. I expect this will still to be the case this year, even if there is uncertainty and controversy surrounding this year’s Pride parade and festival. Toronto Pride is changing. Prism is evolving.”





HOUSE MUSIC, HOT DADDIES & DADDY CHASERS

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# Forte: 20 years of song, dance and the joy of male voices

DREW ROWSOME



“There’s nothing like 30 or 40 guys in tuxedo going down Church Street to get attention,” says Vince J Ciarlo describing the men of Forte Toronto’s Gay Men’s Chorus heading to a show. “And there are a lot of pretty boys in the choir.”

Ciarlo has been part of Forte for 14 of its 20 years and is excited about the events surrounding this significant anniversary. There is a celebration for family, friends and soon-to-be friends with “speeches, performances of significant songs,” says Ciarlo before adding with relish, “And then it’s a party.” The Greatest - 20th Anniversary Concert is closer to Pride when Forte traditionally presents one of its annual extravaganzas.

There are currently 66 men in the choir with auditions in September and January. “Or,” says Ciarlo, auditions can be arranged “if someone really can’t wait. And if they seem like they’ll fit in. We try to keep even numbers among the sections but there are strong voices we just don’t want to lose them.” Auditions are not as gruelling as when Ciarlo first auditioned in front of the entire choir. “Now, it’s not as hardcore and in front of some of the Forte executives. Can you carry a tune? Do you have rhythm so you can clap at the right place? You sing a song of your own choice and then the music director Edward Connell puts you through exercises, most people don’t know if they are a bass or a tenor.” Then they are asked to sing a song, “Usually ‘Over the Rainbow’ because it has a big range and some tricky intervals.”

There is an initiation rite mysteriously called “Who’s the Forte virgin?” that Ciarlo skips over despite persistent questioning. And after the final concert of the year, there is a ritual where the now full-fledged members receive their Forte pin.



Musical director Connell comes from a classical background so Forte has added some liturgical material and the basic mix of pop, Broadway and jazz has also been pumped up with some gospel and choral numbers. “A lot of the young guys are coming in with the Glee idea,” says Ciarlo. “They are making it into more of a show.” Over two decades there have been surprisingly few Showgirls moments and no soloist has tumbled down a flight of stairs. However Ciarlo does admit that one gig with four microphones of which only one worked, led to a spirited competition and near fistcuffs.

As well as their own productions - “Christmas is more traditional, the spring is more fun, and with the cabarets you can sing whatever you want, break out of that wall of sound,” says Ciarlo - Forte does corporate gigs, weddings, memorial services and has sung the anthems for the Blue Jays and the Raptors, “But not the Maple Leafs. Yet,” says Ciarlo. And the most emotional and poignant event of their schedule, The AIDS Vigil, this year on Saturday, June 20.

“The show that was most significant to me,” says Ciarlo, “was my first spring concert, Stem Heat. It was a history of how the bathhouse raids lead to Pride. The narrator was based on George Hislop, who was still alive then, and the writers did their research and added our own stories. The songs were picked from ‘50s, ‘60s, ‘70s and ‘80s and concluded with ‘I Know Where I’ve Been’ with the lyrics ‘black of my skin’ replaced with ‘black as sin.’ It’s become an anthem for Forte. I’d just come out a year or two before and it was so moving that some of the choir could only mouth the words.”

Of course Ciarlo also fondly remembers his first solo, “You’ll Never Walk Alone.” He’s also “taken sabbaticals” because of work commitments, but keeps being drawn back by the power of singing with a group of men. And just because of the men. “It’s a good place to look for love,” he says before adding, “but possibly not in the long term. I’ve seen the romances, the heartbreaks . . . heard of the sex. There are a lot of rumours. And stories.” Stories he sadly refuses to relate.

“Our new membership director Nick Green [Dancing Queen, Hackerlove] organizes lots of socials. We rehearse two and a half hours every Monday and lots of the boys go for drinks after, but you sit next to the same people every week and you don’t get to really know them until you go to the monthly socials: movies, bowling, dinners, karaoke . . . and other activities.” Ciarlo won’t specify the other activities but the word “gay” in Forte’s moniker is a clue.

When there was a Toronto Gay Chorus, Forte was just Forte and there was resistance to renaming Forte the “Toronto Gay Men’s Chorus.” Ciarlo says that his friends wondered why they needed the word “gay” as it was already pretty obvious “in the presentation, the choreography. We had a referendum where we voted and it was a tight race, we lost a few members because of it.” Ironically shortly after that Forte added its first non-gay member. “He was an Australian actor who came to Toronto with wife and child in tow,” says Ciarlo. “He wanted to expand his vocal abilities and said, ‘Where better to properly learn than in a gay choir?’”





# Bellini judges the worldwide web

PAUL BELLINI

As part of my glamorous life, I am often asked to be a judge or juror for some talent show or other. It's a task I embrace, always thrilled to discover new talent, or at very least get a free drink.

Recently, I was asked to be a juror for the 4th annual T.O. WebFest, held at the CN Tower on May 25-27. In advance of the event, I was sent links to over 30 different web series episodes. The entries were in the Comedy or LGBTQ+ categories, and they were a mixed bag.

There were things like Bob and Donna, a Funny Or Die clip about a couple with midwestern accents and tacky sweaters. It's coarse humour, but not without charm. Some people will absolutely love it.

## BOB AND DONNA: Episode 1

It's season one of Bob and Donna - a travel-adjacent reality show where two, fun-loving Michiganders fulfill their lifelong dreams of traveling to major cities that ...



Then there was Danger Pay, a series about a legal assistant who takes a job with a lawyer who works at home. The two of them were such fascinating characters, and they were so well performed by the actors, that I was willing to overlook the problematic audio. Episode four was when I fell hopelessly in love with this show. Created by Carolyn Bridget Kennedy, it's the web series that made me laugh the hardest. Despite my enthusiastic outpouring of love for it, the series did not receive a nomination.

## Danger Pay: Episode 4: Stuck on You

Comedy Webseries created by Canadian Actress, Writer, Producer, Director Carolyn Bridget Kennedy Synopsis: A woman accept...



The LGBTQ+ stuff fared better. I loved this one episode of a show called Brothers, about trans men. In it, a trans man goes on a date with a girl, who seems genuinely interested, and aroused. They get close, but it all falls apart when the girl walks in on the trans man changing, and she sees his still-remaining breasts. He is so freaked out he breaks it off with her. But my description cannot capture the impact that scene had on me. The episode is not on YouTube yet, but check out their promotion channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/BKbrotherswebseries>.)

## Brothers Series - YouTube

BROTHERS is a new media series about a group of four transgender masculine friends in Brooklyn, NY. Season One is available via our official site: [http://www.brothersseries.com/...](http://www.brothersseries.com/)





Then there is Jack Tracy's History, a long but very well produced series about gay relationships. The sixth and final episode, Letting Go features an Oscar-worthy performance in which Tracy breaks up with his boyfriend on the street. The whole series is worth watching, and both guys are super cute.



Celebrating web content, and legitimizing it with awards, is the wave of the future. YouTube is the new television, and it's brimming with shows to fit every demographic. Unlike commercial broadcast television, it is not beholden to advertisers or standards and practices, so the content is much more edgy than even pay-cable. Make sure you don't miss out on some of the best shows you haven't seen yet.

## Is That A Film In Your Pocket?

RAYMOND HELKIO



In Your Pocket is a smartly curated collection of short films by the RT Collective. Filmmakers are invited to submit a proposal for their film and if accepted they are commissioned to complete the piece. The catch is the footage must be shot on a smartphone or similar device with a maximum final length of four minutes.

The first In Your Pocket was held at Videofag but having outgrown the space they now screen at Buddies In Bad Times Theatre.

In Your Pocket is an eclectic and charged night because the room is largely filmmakers, actors and artists from wildly varying backgrounds. The films range from thought-provoking and beautiful to hysterically funny and complex but it's the uniqueness of each artist's approach makes the evening inventive.

The current theme, Partners In Crime asks artists to seek out collaborators, which has increased the number of participating filmmakers. This year, organizers Christophe Dupuis and Marcin Wisniewski are working with Sabine Lebel and Alison Taylor to curate the work and bring new artists into the experience. Over the past five years they have assisted more than sixty new works by over one hundred and fifty artists.

Screenings like this are not typical in the industry because RT Collective doesn't accept completed works. Christophe explains that they "ask artists to submit proposals for things they would like to make and then support them in that process of creation. We have a cluster of artists who we end up working with over and over and so in those cases we have a little bit of an idea what they'll do based on previous things they've made. But with most of the works, we literally don't see them until a week before the event, sometimes the day before depending on how delinquent the artists are with getting their works to us, so it's all a big mystery until then." It's a pay-what-you-can so get there early if you want a seat or get your hands on a copy of their zine-style programme which includes a DVD of the evening's films.

In Your Pocket: Partners in Crime - Presented by the RT Collective in association with the Inside Out LGBT Film Festival.

Sunday June 4th, 7pm - Buddies in Bad Times Theatre - 12 Alexander Street - Post-screening Q&A with artists. 19+

[www.rtcollctive.ca](http://www.rtcollctive.ca)



# PrideToronto & Police Policy

ROLYN CHAMBERS - Social Columnist for Daily Xtra!

**Thank you to the Pride Toronto Board for FINALLY clarifying that police are indeed allowed in the parade.**

It only took them 5 months.

This is what we as the official membership voted. We did NOT vote to exclude them as individuals. Only their booths and floats. However I would ask why the Board would then say in the same breath that they "request" that officers not be in uniform. Although I agree (as an individual) that this year it would be great if police didn't wear official uniforms with guns, for the Pride Board to request this is not only confusing it could be seen as a betrayal of the vote. By the Pride Board saying this on behalf of the membership then makes this "request" somehow official and somehow the official policy and stance of Pride Toronto. It is not. Which is why we have still to this day, incorrect headlines in the Toronto Star (for instance) that reads, "Toronto Police Allowed In Pride Parade But Not In Uniform." Sorry this was not what was voted on and the Pride Toronto Board should not be adding additional wording.

**Police can be in the parade. Period.**

Pride Toronto Board, you've already messed up how this vote was seen.

Clean it up properly.



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**FESTIVAL WEEKEND  
JUNE 23-25**

**+PRIDE PARADE  
JUNE 25**

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They attached the wires of the stun gun to me.

It's very painful.

I endured as much as I could and then I passed out.

They stripped me naked. One filmed me on his cell phone.



Three of them beat me up.

They kicked me, broke my jaw.



I have not the slightest doubt that my own relatives wanted to kill me.

**#EyesOnChechnya**



# The Lavender Railroad

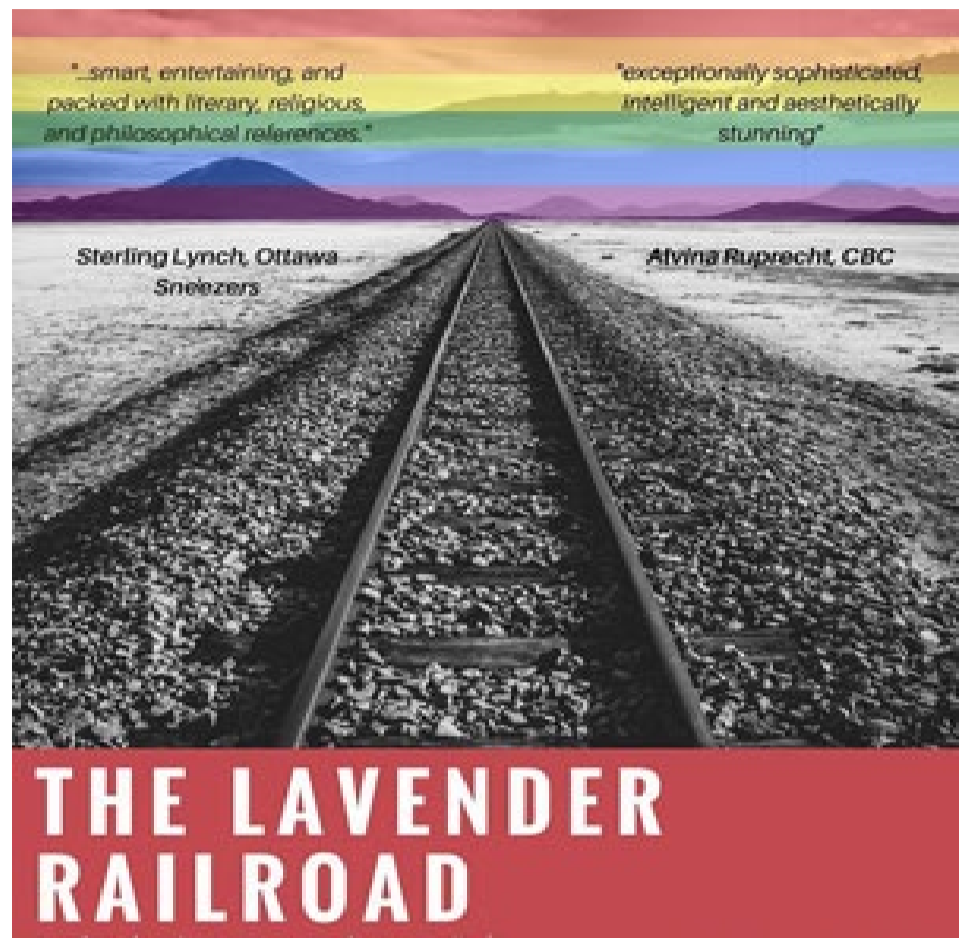
DREW ROWSOME

"In the world the play is set in, the government seems to be very oppressive," says playwright Lawrence Aronovitch of *The Lavender Railroad*. "The nature of the oppression is a bit vague except for the apparent law that if you are a gay or lesbian, you are going to be killed." Aronovitch laughs ruefully, "The history of the last few months have made this an extremely relevant play to present, to be seen, to be talked about as widely as possible, so that what is a cautionary tale remains a cautionary tale."

Echoing *The Rainbow Railroad*, who are now frantically trying to get gay men out of Chechnya, *The Lavender Railroad* posits two parallel tales of a world that Aronovitch imagined but is now too real. "Here in our world there are too many societies where gay and lesbian oppression is in fact the case," he says. "We've seen the news coverage of people being thrown off the tops of buildings, people being hanged, people being shot, as well as other societies where it may not be a capital crime to be gay or lesbian or any other sexual minority, but you can see there are trends in that direction. So in that sense *The Lavender Railroad* is a cautionary tale: let us beware and not go down that road if at all possible."

Though Aronovitch is a much produced playwright, he took a detour first. "I was always interested in theatre," he says. "I grew up in Montreal and my parents were avid theatregoers who would drag me along from a very young age and it certainly made an impression on me. I dabbled in productions when I was going to university, but my studies led me into the space program, and into science, physics and technology. And then about 10 years ago I got asked to write a play and I accepted the challenge and have been working in this domain ever since. It was a logical straightforward transition. That first play was *Galatea* for a queer company *Toto Too*. It was a sort of gay sort of version of *Pygmalion* and *My Fair Lady*. It did reasonably well and was well received and I thought, 'This is sort of fun.'"

His science background doesn't factor into *The Lavender Railroad* any more than in his comedic work. "It's not science fiction so much as it is a



a technology component to it, because it's not about technology, it's about relationships. It's about the people who populate that world. It's a bleak world where, for whatever reason, these people find themselves in terrible situations. And that's what drives the drama of the story."

It is the moral dilemmas that intrigue Aronovitch. "If you're in a dark world, especially a world where your life is at risk, how do you survive?" he asks. "Who do you trust? And is the person who said they are going to try to help you, telling the truth or not? A feature of bleak worlds in our own history, let alone the one I or others have tried to create, who do you trust has always been a central question. If you look at the darkest days of Stalinist Russia or the cultural revolution in China or surviving after the revolution in Iran . . . There are countless examples from around the world. And if you're going to survive you have to trust someone. How do you establish that? And what happens if that trust is misplaced."

More Lawrence Aronovitch and *The Lavender Railroad* at [drewrowsome.blogspot.com](http://drewrowsome.blogspot.com)

*The Lavender Railroad* runs from Thurs, June 8 to Sun, June 18 at The Box Toronto, 89 Niagara St. [itmtheatre.com](http://itmtheatre.com)



# The Many Ages of Pride

DREW ROWSOME



Once upon a time long ago, or so I hear, Pride was a very different beast. I myself have been lucky enough to live through three of the evolutionary stages of Pride: the Paleozoic, the Mesozoic and, currently, the Jurassic.

Back in the dark ages of the Paleozoic era – that’s Greek or Latin or something for “ancient times” – very few of us were out, at least not completely, and the parade was actually a march, a protest. It may seem contradictory that while hiding in closets we were also busy demanding visibility, but then gay liberation has never been totally logical.

In those frightfully fearful, remembered as utterly carefree, days it was a big decision to join the march. If you stepped into the demonstration it was as good as a declaration that you were a “homosexual” which is another Greek or Latin or something word for “cocksucker” or “fudgepacker.” There was always the chance that your mug would show up – even quite small and distant but Aunt Agnes does has very sharp eyes – in the obligatory crowd photo on the cover of the next day’s newspapers. I remember clearly the trepidation and fear, the strength of will it took to make the decision to step off the curb and state that, “Yes, I am gay. These are my people, I am one of them.”

But the march was so important, so joyful and so angry, that it was irresistible. You just picked the float that had the best music – actually they all had the same music but your favourite disco anthem was on a loop on one of them – and dove in.

Not that it was all dancing and shouting and whistles – there were always serious moments. A die-in for those we lost to HIV/AIDS – and in the Dark Ages we lost a lot of them – where everything stopped for two minutes of silence and volunteers drew chalk outlines around our prone bodies as we lay on the pavement. Or a bashing following the revelry, we were all warned to leave in groups and to watch out for marauding homophobes, identifiable by their baseball bats, torches and pitchforks.

Then one year everything changed. As we marched towards Queen’s Park, the route had been changed for a symbolic re-decorating of the provincial legislature with giant pink ribbons, to protest the failure of a bill that would have offered us some very basic rights in terms of employment and housing, I noticed that the grassy banks along College St were covered with picnicking spectators. Not supporters or ogles or dirty old men hoping for lesbian breast action but families and children and curious straight couples.





They munched their sandwiches, drank their beer out of brown paper bags, tapped their feet and watched the colourful display wend past. Did the message resonate? Possibly, at least there was visibility, but it was more a sideshow, entertainment that was cheaper and easier than taking the ferry to the Island for the CHIN picnic.

The next spring the Toronto Sun, never a fan of gays in general and frequently an antagonist, published a pull-out calendar of the most popular summer events and festivals. In the top left corner was a photo promoting the Beaches Jazz Festival; top right was a kindly souvlaki vendor at Taste of the Danforth; bottom left was a Caribana reveler with her large breasts almost falling out of her glittery outfit; and the bottom right was a drag queen dressed as Cher. We were entering the Mesozoic – Greek or Latin or something for the “middle life” - era: Pride was now so mainstream that it was going to be on suburban fridges across the city.

For the first part of the Mesozoic era I worked during Pride. The bar I worked in, like every other bar in the city, had realized that by hanging a rainbow flag or two there was money to be made off the gays. And as an out-ish gay bartender I was pushed front and centre, it was very lucrative. I still watched part of the parade – I couldn't miss that moment that always chokes me up when PFLAG marches by – but I was more focused on the money to be made in the evenings. I went from marching to profiting or, as I preferred to think of it, helping to throw the party. Because it was now a party.

My band played at Pride during the Mesozoic era and it was one of the most exhilarating gigs ever. At that point there was only one stage, at the foot of Church St, and to step out on the raised platform and look up the fabled thoroughfare, thronged with revelers, was terrifying at first and then empowering and very gratifying. Dingy bar gigs could not compare with being out, out in the sun and out sexually, and very, very loud.

Our drummer at the time was a stocky sparkplug of a skinhead – during the Mesozoic era that was a subculture that now only exists for the most part in economically troubled European countries and gay porn – who was uneasy about the whole thing. While I never felt any personal homophobic animosity from him, he had been in jail for unspecified reasons related to violence and, with my being out-ish, we'd never really had a discussion.

There was no backline and there was no way to get drums through the throngs but the organizers had arranged for us to use the kit brought by the band before us. Or so we thought.



The band before us had not been informed of this arrangement. While drummers are very protective of their personal gear, the drummer of the previous band, a lesbian power pop quartet, was very generous and she and my drummer worked it out quite amicably. And my skinhead drummer bonded with a tough little lesbian – they had more in common than they had imagined. The gig went beyond well and the energy and the response from the dancing crowd was intoxicating. My drummer gave me a big sweaty hug after and didn't care who was watching or what anyone thought. In the next few weeks we went for tequila and tattoos together, helped our very closeted keyboard player come tentatively out, and the drummer exchanged his Aryan girlfriend for a petite spitfire woman who just happened to be black. A Pride miracle or just another step in evolution?

Now we've reached the Jurassic period, actually a subdivision of the Mesozoic era, there is no telling where this will all end up, and Pride has become a huge lumbering event that is unstoppable and is so successful that it is in danger of rendering itself extinct. And after nine years of slaving in the spotlight of gay media, I couldn't be more out if I tried. Pride was now work, something to be covered, photographed, analyzed and criticized for losing its spirit of activism. Until I met Raul.

It was supposed to be spring fling, a frivolous hook-up of sexual gratification but somehow between April and Pride season it had become something more. He was out-ish but still testing the waters and had an ex-wife, two sons and an engineering job in a big factory that was not conducive to generating support for so-called alternative lifestyles. Add a heavy dose of Catholic guilt and a tight-knit Portuguese family background and a sea of rainbow flags and glitter was the perfect setting for a culture clash or at least a meltdown.

It is no longer a march, it is a parade, and the majority of participants are no longer out and proud gays, the majority are allies, the 'A' on the end of LGBTQXYZA. But it is still making a statement to participate, to be there. Our first Pride together, not quite a committed couple but definitely an item, I buzzed around and Raul, an accomplished photographer, was snapping everything in sight, totally absorbed in the glitter and energy. I watched as his face clouded with trepidation and fear, wrestling the strength of will it took to make the decision to step off the curb and state that, "Yes, I am gay. These are my people, I am one of them." And he stepped. And it was exhilarating for both of us.

So the Jurassic period still has a purpose, a reason for being, and however much I miss the explicitly political Pride, it doesn't hurt to celebrate how far we've come. Maybe the next era will be the Age of Enlightenment.





**PREMIERE SCREENING**

# ***THE CASE OF THE GOLDEN PURSE***

ATLANTIC BY  
**DAVID BATEMAN  
PAUL BELLINI  
RAYMOND HELKIO**  
MUSIC  
**STEWART BORDEN**



In Your Pocket: Partners in Crime  
Presented by the RT Collective in association  
with the Inside Out LGBT Film Festival

**SUNDAY JUNE 4TH, 7PM**

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre  
12 Alexander Street, Toronto  
Tickets PWYC [www.rtcollective.ca](http://www.rtcollective.ca)



# The Case of the Golden Purse: Bateman and Bellini are a dynamic doughnut duo

DREW ROWSOME



Look out Sabrina, Kelly and Jill (and Cagney and Lacey . . .) there's a hot new cop duo on screen. Though the budget for *The Case of the Golden Purse* was probably not equal to the cost of Farrah Fawcett's hair maintenance for a single episode (even adjusted for inflation), I certainly hope that Tim Horton's supplemented with some product placement cash. Yes, *The Case of the Golden Purse* not only deals with hot cops, drag, bad hair days, blowjobs and corruption, but also doughnuts.

*The Case of the Golden Purse* was produced for the RT Collective's In Your Pocket series of short films and screenings for the Inside Out Film Festival. Director Raymond Helkio took the theme of "Partners in Crime" and with the assistance of stars David Bateman and Paul Bellini (Mouth Congress), created a delightful romp with guns and glaze. Like all good action flicks it is mainly an excuse for the action sequences, but there is also room for comedy, romance and a sight gag for the ages.

It takes less time to view the film than it would for me to describe its joys, and the potential for spoilers prevents me for waxing further. But with a fun score by Stewart Borden and some slick cinematography, *The Case of the Golden Purse* is quite entertaining and worth seeking out.

Of course all three of the creatives are subversive satirists so the question remains: what does it all mean? Is it just, as billed, an exploration of the creatives' admitted fetish for men in uniform? Is it an oblique commentary on the Pride policing controversy? A scathing critique of the nefarious influence of capitalism? An insight into gender roles and phallic symbols? A paean to deep-fried dough and powdered sugar?

Does it matter as long as you laugh?

*The Case of the Golden Purse* screens on Sun, June 4 as part of the RT Collective/Inside Out Toronto LGBT Film Festival In Your Pocket: Partners in Crime screening at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, 12 Alexander St. [rtcollective.ca](http://rtcollective.ca)



A full-body photograph of a muscular man with dark hair and a light beard, wearing bright red briefs. He is standing in a paved plaza with the Eiffel Tower in the background. The tower's intricate lattice structure is clearly visible against a clear blue sky. The man is looking slightly to his left. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a clear day in Paris.

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CALIBERMEN.COM



# Mitya Nevsky: photography as erotic exploration

COVER STORY BY DREW ROWSOME

Mitya Nevsky likes to suggest that much of his work, and life and art, came about casually. As a child his father gave him a camera as a birthday gift but it held his attention only briefly. He didn't pick up a camera again until 2008, to take some snaps of a friend. His friends dubbed him a natural but Nevsky admits that it took two years of studying the masters of high art photography before he felt qualified to begin his own career.

The study paid off and Nevsky has published the book of photography *Russian Guys*, shot many magazine covers, worked in advertising, and branched out into directing videos. "I like to experiment," he says, "but I always get great pleasure from the process of photography, whether it is commercial or my personal idea."

His commercial work is slick, glossy and playful, as with the graphic designers "Two Bears," but his personal work can get darker. "My favorite shot is the BDSM naked guy and the soldier in German uniform," he says of the photos he provided [MyGayToronto.com](http://MyGayToronto.com) (on the next page). "It is as interesting to take photos with a fetish or doing just beautiful images, I would like that people were evaluated not only by their sexy bodies but to be seen much deeper, to feel the emotion and soul."

One of the master photographers Nevsky studied was Helmut Newton who was well known for his dark eroticism. "I never thought much about that, but I think that certainly many photographs are created by my subconscious," says Nevsky adding that it is always about the aesthetics. "When I walk down the street I am constantly looking for interesting places with interesting light for shooting."







MIKYA NEVSKY  
PHOTOGRAPHER





MITYA NEVSKY  
PHOTOGRAPHER

For Nevsky, the interesting is crucial. "It always arises in my mind while shooting the picture what I want to get," he says. "The model must have looks and charisma, but the sexiness of the body, other than well-fed, is not important. It is my job as the director to pull the emotion out of the model. I'd like to photograph in some of France's abandoned castles and great houses. On a larger scale with fairly neglected interiors."

To help with his directorial skills, Nevsky traded photos shoots with photographer Sergey Inozemtsev, who also creates sensual nudes but in a quite different style. Nevsky kept his clothes on, "Frankly speaking I didn't like it very much. I am very shy to be photographed."

My assumption that Nevsky left Russia because of his sexuality and the homoeroticism of his photos is corrected. "I did not leave Russia," he says. "I just married a Frenchman. I love Russia and sometimes go back to visit my friends and parents." And the Russian Guys were his initial inspiration. The book is printed on demand when ordered through Nevsky's website and "I already have a calendar for the year 2017, but I had a limited printing for a narrow circle of individuals. Next year there will be one for everyone, I just need to find the right way to deliver it."

Nevsky is coyly casual about his next projects, "I shot the guys within four years, and then came the time when I was tired. I wanted to relax and just travel and shoot landscapes and the lives of people in poor countries. I have accumulated a lot of photos and I am now working on them." However he assures us that "I haven't forgotten about male portraiture. I'll come back to it again soon. And maybe even in Canada."

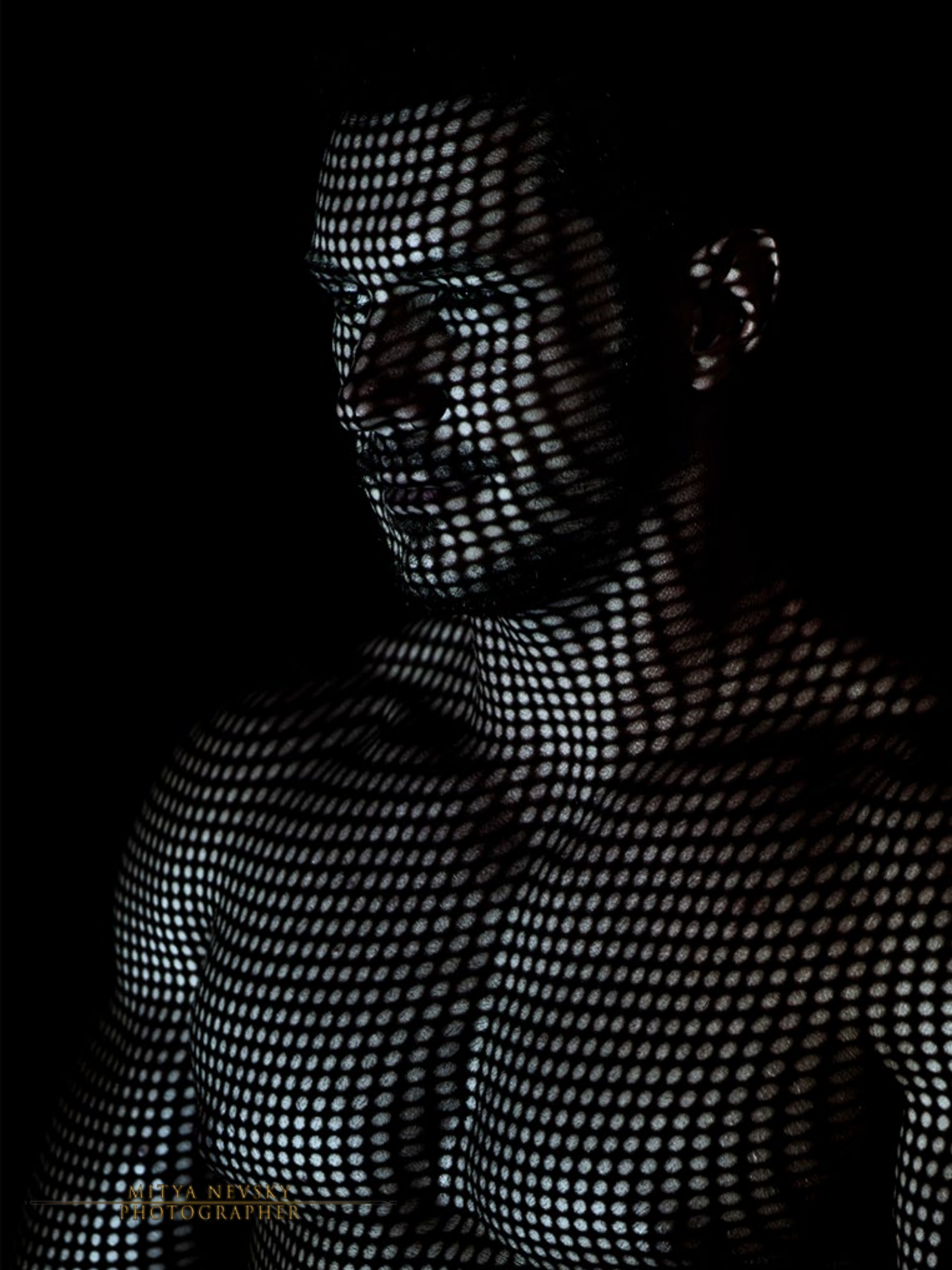
Prints of Mitya Nevsky's work and copies of Russian Guys can be ordered at [nevskyphoto.ru](http://nevskyphoto.ru)





MITYA NEVSKY  
PHOTOGRAPHER





MITYA NEVSKY  
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MITYA NEVSKY  
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MITYANEVSKY  
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MIYA NEVSKY  
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JUSTICE





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MIKYA NEVSKY  
PHOTOGRAPHER



MARSH PASSION - BACKSTAGE

from Nervskyphoto



BASEMENT - TEASER

from Nervskyphoto



ESCAPE

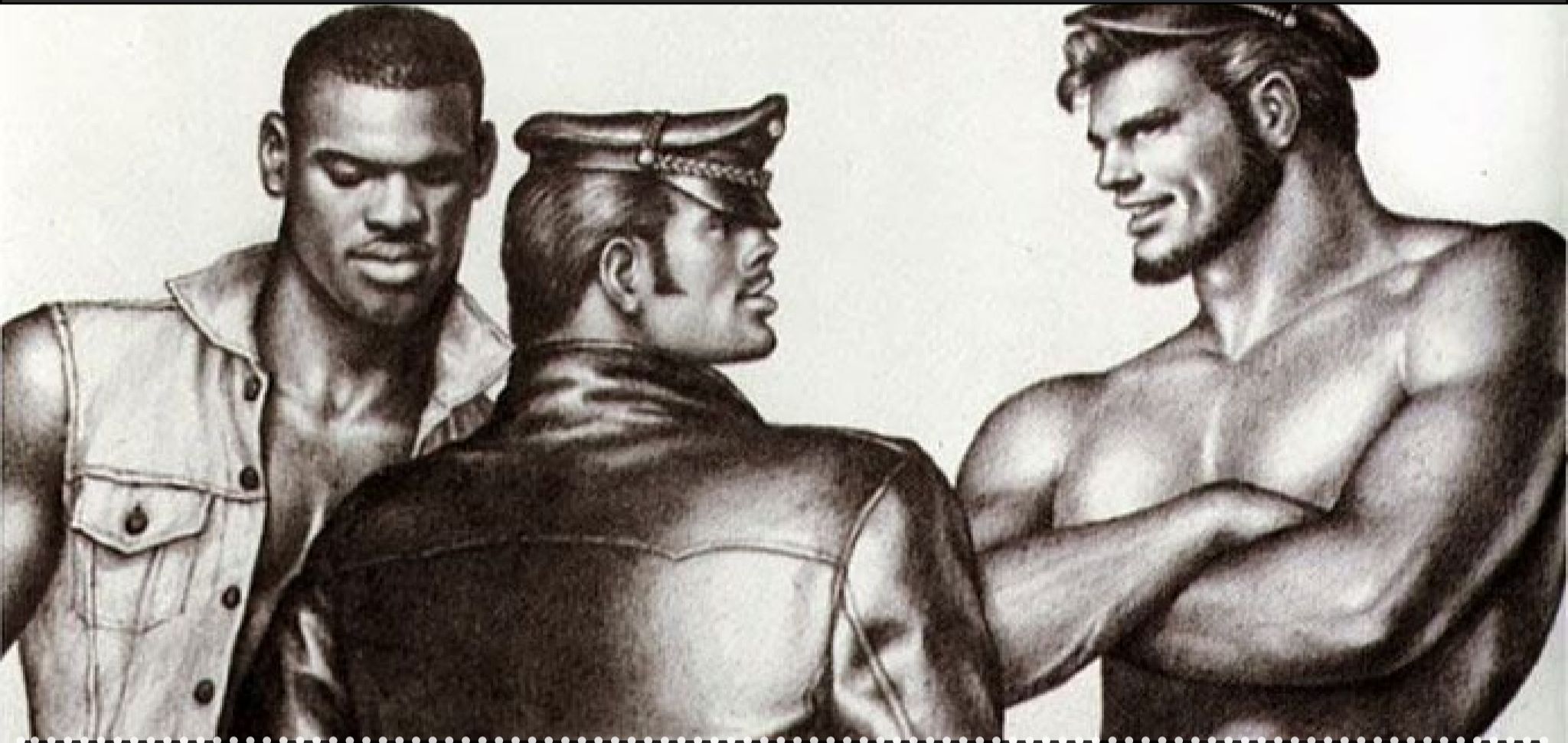
from Nervskyphoto





# A day without Tom of Finland is like a day without sunshine

PAUL BELLINI



Like most gay men, I discovered the artist Tom of Finland by browsing gay bookstores. He drew a comic book called *Kake*, always on display at Glad Day Bookshop. It showed the adventures of a gorgeous young man with a stupendously large cock. The men in Tom's drawings were not real the way Barbie isn't real, but the technical accomplishment of the drawings was impressive, as was the dirty sex depicted. I bought a lot of Tom of Finland's books in the '90s. Here was an artist who knew what he was doing.

Touko Laaksonen was born in 1920 in Finland. He completed hundreds of drawings in his lifetime but because they depicted naked men he kept his work underground, for collectors only. Now, 26 years after his death, Tom is bigger than ever, particularly in his native country. In fact, 2017 marks the release of *Tom of Finland*, a lavish biopic about the artist's life. And it doesn't stop there. In 2014 the Finnish postal service released a set of three official Tom of Finland stamps, then a few months later, renowned Finnish textile maker Finlayson released a collection of Tom-inspired sheets, towels and other home products. In January of this year *Tom of Finland: The Musical* debuted in Turku, the country's oldest city. (Pray that it tours!) And a growing collection of merchandise is now available at the new [tomoffinlandstore.com](http://tomoffinlandstore.com), in case you should ever require a tote bag covered with bulging crotches.

Tom's pencil drawings were meant to be jerk-off material for gay men who, like himself, dreamed about giant cocks. It's not to everyone's taste, but apparently the recent surge in interest is being attributed to women and trans people's discovery of Tom's work.

It was bound to happen. When I was a kid, a photograph showing a cock was Breaking News. Now, I get up every morning, have a coffee, and surf gay porn sites. It is the only thing that gets me going. Maybe Touko Laaksonen was on to something.



# The cost of a Front Cover

RAYMOND HELKIO

While in New York studying at Columbia University, film director Ray Yeung developed a screenplay for his feature film *Front Cover*. Just released on Netflix Canada, it's the story of a gay Chinese American who trades in his cultural heritage for social status. According to Yeung the film is resonating with gay and Asian audiences alike, "Audience members would come to me after the screening and tell me about their experience. It is sad to know that there are so many people out there who suffered the same issue as the main character. The world set an unattainable standard to be perfect unless you are a white heterosexual male who is successful, intelligent, fit and good looking."

*Front Cover* tells the story of Ryan Fu, a gay Chinese American who rejects his Asian heritage to climb up the social ladder. Through talent and hard work he has attained his dream job as an assistant to Francesca, a celebrity fashion stylist. One day he is assigned by a top magazine to style Ning, an actor who has just arrived from Beijing. Ning dismisses Ryan's initial Western styling and demands Ryan create an image for him which represents the power of the new China. Their opinions clash resulting in a strained working relationship. Over the following days, they socialize whilst working together and discover not only do they share a lot in common, a mutual attraction begins to develop. As they get closer Ryan reveals that he detests his Chinese heritage because he is ashamed of his impoverished upbringing. Ning also opens up and confesses that he is closeted. As they fall in love, a Chinese tabloid magazine exposes Ning as gay. Terrified of the impact it will have on his career, Ning begs Ryan to lie for him at a press conference. Ryan must now decide whether to help Ning or stay true to himself.

Photo of actor Jake Choi who plays Ryan.



Front Cover Trailer 2



1:48 / 2:24

YouTube control icons: play, volume, full screen, and share.



# Rainbow Camping

PAUL BELLINI



Several years ago, Sault Ste. Marie-based filmmaker Dan Nystedt heard about Rainbow Camp, a camp for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer questioning, 2 spirited and plus (LGBTQ2+) and Allied youth, their siblings and children in Queer families.” (Jesus Christ, that’s a long list.) After checking it out, Nystedt decided to make a documentary about the camp, which he shot last year. Now, he’s created an Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign to help bring the movie to audiences.

“My initial reaction,” declares Nystedt on his campaign page, “was that it was pretty cool that there was a LGBT camp in the area, however when I learned that the campers came from all across Canada because there are no other camps like it, I was amazed. Then I had to ask myself, ‘why isn’t there a camp like this in every city, town and village across our country?’”

Rainbow Camp’s program runs two weeks. It focuses on leadership, team-based activities, and social change as well as swimming, canoeing, campfires, crafts, anti-oppression, and personal growth. Kids return to their home communities feeling confident, energized, and better able to live authentically. Check out the Rainbow Camp website at [www.welcomefriend.ca/camp](http://www.welcomefriend.ca/camp).

Nystedt spent over two and a half years working with the founders of the camp and the Board of Directors to secure permission to document the experience. He now has hundreds of hours of footage, but all the post-production costs loom. Help Nystedt finish his film by checking out his campaign page at [www.indiegogo.com/projects/rainbow-camp-documentary-canada#/](http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/rainbow-camp-documentary-canada#/).



# TORONTO'S

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# The house that became the Senator Restaurant

LEE FANCY



Tracing back to the very first property survey that was prepared by the Town of York in 1836, you'd be surprised to find a building that is still here and one of TO's best eats. This is the origin of the Senator Restaurant, the oldest Toronto restaurant in continuous operation at the same location.

Robert Angeloff, a Macedonian entrepreneur, converted the home to the Busy Bee Diner in 1929 and ran it until he sold it in 1938. They later sold to the "B" to George Nicolau; a cook with a grand vision. In 1948 George Nicolau took over the location and renovated the second floor and renamed his two story building the Senator. George retired in 1962 but the Senator continued to be operated by his family.

Saved and renovated in 1984 by Bobby Sniderman, the Senator has evolved to become a dining landmark synonymous with the city of Toronto. This beloved restaurant has served generations of Torontonians and visitors alike for over 88 year of continuous operation.

The Senator began as a home and will forever remain one of our most iconic buildings.

If you love history and being taken back to the look and feel of a 1950's dinner, you've got to check this place out. Also, order the chicken club sandwich, its more chicken then bread and wow, great meal. Senator Restaurant - 249 Victoria Street - 416-364-7517 [www.thesenator.com](http://www.thesenator.com)





# Draw a line

JAY QUARMBY - [Personal Trainer, Owner of FitnessTO, Buns of Steel Bootcamp](#)



**Instructions:** Draw a line on the floor or use a piece of rope /line of tiles on the floor – you will be jumping and stepping across it. Each exercise will be repeated for 20 secs without a rest until you complete the full set. Rest for 1-2 mins and then repeat the set. Add more sets to increase the intensity of the workout!

## Draw Two Lines Shoulder Length Apart

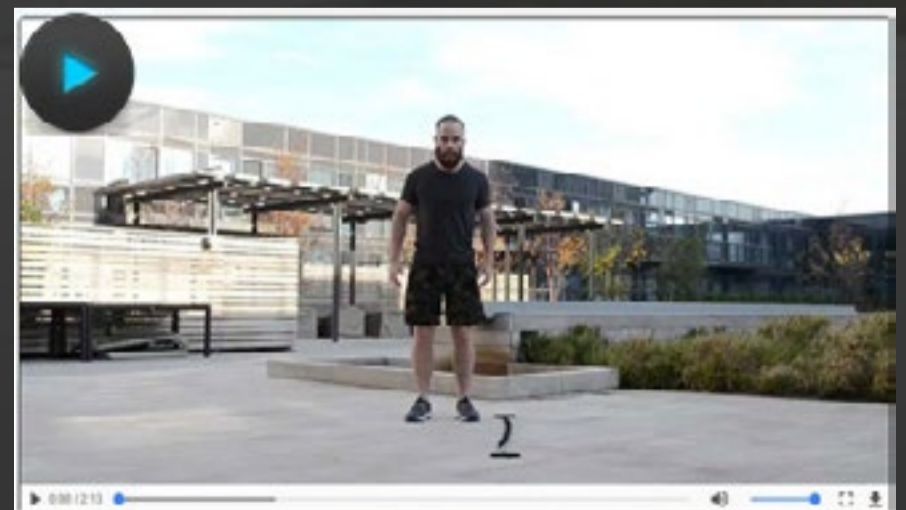
20 Seconds per Exercise | No Rest

Easy – 3 Sets | Medium – 5 Sets |  
Hard – 7 Sets | REST – 1-2 Minutes

1. Jump Side to Side – land on one side of the line then the other moving forward
2. Push up either side of line, feet or knees stay on the line, do a push on left side, then right side
3. Crunch laying next to the line
4. Burpee either side of the line
5. Walking Lunge, along the line

**Tips:** The idea with this workout is to do each exercise as fast as you can as the time frame for each is very short. Perfect workout which can be done outside as all you need is a line! Focus on good form and moving straight into the next exercise with no rest until the set is complete.

**What it works:** quads, calves, lower abs, glutes, lower back, lateral abs.





# Go Mediterian

THE NUTRITION TWINS - [acefitness.org](http://acefitness.org)



If you want to explore this diet, take a trip to rural Italy, France, Greece, Spain or other Mediterranean countries (we're in!) to seek out those who still use traditional cooking methods.

Two of our favorite takeaways from this diet:

1) People eat simply—foods aren't processed, refined or stripped of their nutrients and fiber, so they stay intact, offering disease-prevention benefits while keeping the meal light, yet filling (also thanks to the fiber).

2) The culinary style isn't complex—it's centered on fresh, seasonal foods like grains, vegetables, legumes and seafood, with a simple touch of olive oil, citrus, herbs and spices. Grains and legumes are steamed with herbs and spices, and foods are typically grilled or cooked simmering in a flavored liquid or sauce. Foods are baked with herbs, extra-virgin olive oil and a splash of dry white wine or fresh lemon juice. Fresh vegetables are tossed into simple salads, sautéed vegetables receive a drizzle of olive oil and garlic, and voila!—a delicious, health-enhancing meal is made.

Make an effort to include the stars of this traditional eating style into your lifestyle.

## THE BASICS

Eat: vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, potatoes, spices, fish, seafood, whole grains, herbs and extra virgin olive oil.

To go for the Mediterranean gold, aim for these amounts:

- Olive oil (3-5 teaspoons daily)
- Fruits (2 cups daily)
- Vegetables (3 cups daily)
- Nuts (1 to 1½ ounces daily)
- Fish (at least two 3-ounce servings a week)
- Herbs and spices
- Legumes (all varieties, ½- to 2/3-cup cooked, at least three times a week).
- Red wine, if desired (one glass per day for women; two glasses for men)

Eat some: poultry, eggs and dairy

Rarely include: red meat

Never eat: sugar-sweetened beverages, added sugars, refined grains and other highly processed foods, refined oils



## THE BENEFITS

- **Weight loss:** A study published in The New England Journal of Medicine found that people who followed a Mediterranean diet for two years lost more weight than low-fat dieters, and maintained their 10-pound loss.
- **A healthy heart:** Antioxidants from the fruits, veggies and beans combined with the omega-3s from the fatty fish and with red wine in moderation reduces blood pressure, lowers triglycerides and LDL cholesterol, and prevents plaques from forming on the arteries, all of which keep the heart healthy and strong.
- **Fight diabetes:** A study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine found that after diabetics followed the Mediterranean diet for four years, only 44% of participants still needed diabetes medication, while 70% of the low-fat diet followers still did.
- **Improved eyesight:** The diet is rich in lutein, which is found in green leafy veggies and helps fight macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness.
- **Reduced risk of Alzheimer's:** According to a study in the Journal of the American Medical Association, people who followed the Mediterranean diet reduced their risk of developing Alzheimer's by 40%; those who also exercised reduced their risk by 60%.





# Dishpan Hands and Heart, The Fab Columns

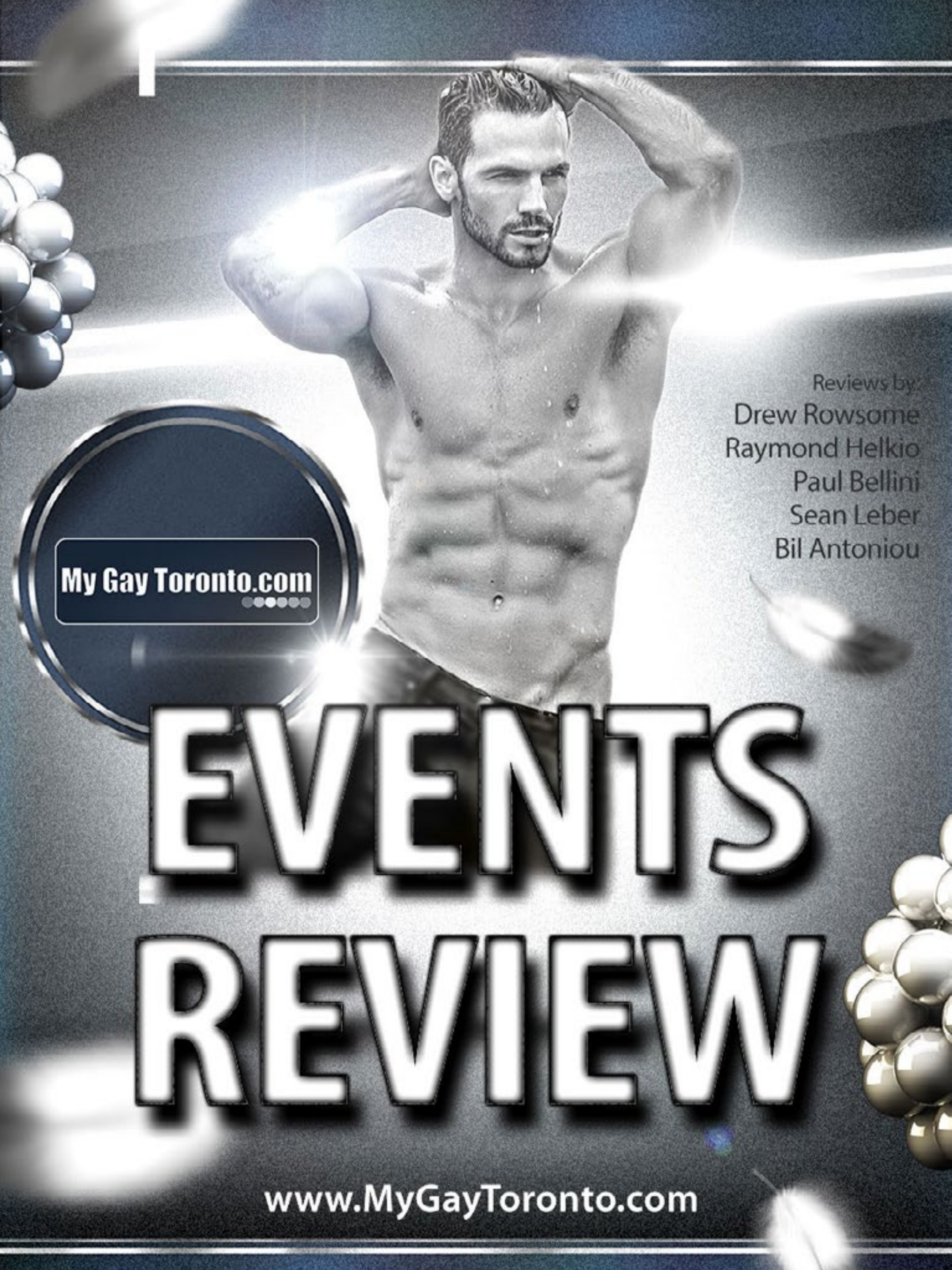
RAYMOND HELKIO



# Planet YumeEe! - PRIDE - POLICE - POLICY







Reviews by  
Drew Rowsome  
Raymond Helkio  
Paul Bellini  
Sean Leber  
Bil Antoniou

**My Gay Toronto.com**

# EVENTS REVIEW

[www.MyGayToronto.com](http://www.MyGayToronto.com)



# The Youth/Elders Project

BY DREW ROWSOME & RAYMOND HRELKIO



Buddies in Bad Times Theatre is creating theatrical magic out of age, one of the many taboos in the gay community. Partnered with The 519 and the Senior Pride Network, director Evalyn Parry (Gertrude and Alice) with LeeLee Davis and Vanessa Dunn, are shaping experiences across the divisions and similarities of time into a provocative presentation: The Youth/Elder Project.

Two of the participants/performers, a 'youth' and an 'elder' - Dr. Lila Pine (BA, MFA, Ph.D) who is an Associate Professor of New Media at Ryerson University and Jordan Campbell who is a "Gay, bisexual, try-sexual, polyamorous, party-amorous, male (sometimes) human (for now)" and is "half of xLq, a body of POP ART performance" as well as working "with young people in various creative ways" - share what the process was like and offer a few, very few, teasers.

## **Drew Rowsome: How did you come to be involved in The Youth/Elders Project?**

Jordan Campbell: I heard about the project online and knew right away it was going to be a special and exciting experience. I could not have predicted how deep we would go and how quickly we would go there. I'm so honoured to be part of this phase of the project. It's been a pleasure.

Lila Pine: I've never been on stage and I wanted to challenge myself to do something new, something outside of my comfort zone.

## **One of the participants is an acquaintance from years (decades) ago, so I am guessing he is considered an "elder." How does one qualify as a youth or an elder?**

Jordan Campbell: Ultimately it's up to you! One of the 'elders' in the project sometimes self identifies as a 'junior senior.' And one of the youth says she sometimes feels like an elder, or relates more to the elders' experience. Age is just a number. The 'youth' involved in the show now, are aged 19-30, the 'elders' are aged 55-73. We are all people with a lot in common and we are also very different from each other,



regardless of age.

Lila Pine: In my community Elders are recognized as people who hold special knowledge. Many are older, but that is not a requirement. For this project elders are defined as 55 plus and youth as under 25.

### **What was the most surprising thing you learned from participating in The Youth/Elders Project?**

Jordan Campbell: I didn't know that some older queers have trouble with the word 'queer,' because of how it was used as an attack against them. Also, I learned that many queer seniors in long-term care facilities are forced back in the closet to avoid discrimination, which is heartbreaking.

Lila Pine: I was surprised at the loneliness I encountered — many of the elders felt lonely — many of the youth felt alone — or so it seemed when we started out.

### **What do you hope that an audience gets from The Youth/Elders Project? What do you hope they feel?**

Jordan Campbell: Sense of community. Sense of belonging. A sense of the wide breadth of queer experiences in this city. Learning something new. Relating to someone's experience they couldn't previously understand. A connection to past and future. A glimpse at a diverse, functional community which communicates openly and respectfully.

Lila Pine: I don't know. I guess it would be nice if people begin to question themselves. I would like to be in the audience, so I can see what they see.

### **Has the experience of working on the The Youth/Elders Project changed your viewpoint on youth? Elders? Theatre? Your own life?**

Jordan Campbell: I am now able to empathize more deeply with our queer elders as they've been humanized for me. It's really important to stay connected to a wide range of our queer history, or it will be erased and/or forgotten. I also realize how much queer youth still struggle, even in Toronto. I've had to come to accept that even though we have a lot of privilege here and now, it's okay to own your struggles and it's not always easy.





Lila Pine: Yes.

### What is your favourite moment in the show?

Jordan Campbell: When we all walk out together at the beginning and look at the audience.

Lila Pine: So many — it changes every time we do it.

### The most heartbreaking moment in the show?

Jordan Campbell: You'll have to come and see

Lila Pine: There is a moment that is more than heartbreaking for me. I won't say what it is though.

### The sexiest moment in the show?

Jordan Campbell: Every single moment is pure sex.

Lila Pine: Come and see us be sexy! >>> More at [drewrowsome.blogspot.com](http://drewrowsome.blogspot.com)



Youth Elders Project



**RAY'S ANATOMY - RAYMOND HELKIO**



# Situational Anarchy: outraged punk tells all

DREW ROWSOME

★★★★☆

Most people have a favourite band or artist, music that came into their life at a point where it was needed and acquired an almost religious resonance. For the character Graham Isador plays in *Situational Anarchy*, that band was Against Me! and the artist was Laura Jane Grace. Tragically many artists are unable to bear the weight of our expectations and when they fail us, or in this case are perceived to “sell out,” it is devastating.

Isador begins with a backstory that is close to observational stand-up. Filled with the self-deprecating humour that gets laughter from recognition, Isador paints the arc of finding oneself through belonging and then the pain of losing that sense of belonging. That his story ranges from Céline Dion through the “coolest place in the Greater Niagara Region” to anarchist punk and finally a slow living death courtesy of TD Bank. He also keeps a firm grip on a balance of clever comedy, *Situational Anarchy* is a very funny show, and lacerating pain.

Isador is no stranger to a well-constructed narrative having written many entertaining and absorbing stories for *Vice*. Fortunately, perhaps because it appears to be so personal, he avoids for the most part any hipster snark and all of the irony is self-reflective, the kinds of nasty laughs that make one wince with empathy. With his wide but deadpan eyes and effective body language, Isador is a strong communicator and a compelling storyteller. Isador is ably aided by a subtle and a mood-enhancing soundscape by Ron Kelly, lurking just on the edge of audible or overwhelming with brash punk bravado.





Not having seen the hit *Summerworks* first incarnation, I can't vouch for the contributions of director/dramaturges Tom Arthur Davis (*They Say He Fell*) and Jivesh Parasram, but *Situational Anarchy* fits together with clockwork metaphors. Aside from a few word tics and one awkward transition, it is seamless. Even the deflating ending, which is just what it should be, inspires melancholy rather than a sense of being cheated. The lighting scheme by Laura Warren is overly ambitious so thematically apt for the otherwise perfect stage at Stop Drop and Roll. And the setting takes the metaphor of a solo performer longing to become a member of a band and drives it powerfully home.

Isador makes a point early on of stating that his problems with Laura Jane Grace have nothing to do with her transition. Yet the producers, and Isador himself, are turning the profits from this production over to the Trans Lifeline and Gender is Over, two trans support organizations. There are two moments where sexual ambiguity or non-conformity are touched on - a crush on a music store clerk and his assailants shouting "Faggot!" during a harrowing passage - and the overarching narrative dovetails closely to a gay or trans coming of age chronicle. I'm not going to speculate on anyone involved's sexual or gender identification, as the genius of *Situational Anarchy* is that it renders such speculation pointless, what Isador is going for is the pain of anyone, everyone, who feels outside of societal norms.

When the character discovers Against Me!'s "Those Anarcho Punks are Mysterious" (quoted above) and the Against Me! message boards, he exults that "Maybe there is a place in the world for me." And that is a feeling that I am sure all of us can identify with.

*Situational Anarchy* continues until Sat, June 3 at Stop Drop and Roll, 300 College St.  
[pandemictheatre.ca](http://pandemictheatre.ca) .





# The Return (il ritorno): Circa strips down in search of high art

DREW ROWSOME

☆☆☆☆



It is rare when something comes along that challenges one's very conception of what a specific artform is. There are hybrids and mashups and stretching of forms, but to upend stereotypes and tropes takes a nerve and daring. It is a risk.

With *The Return (il ritorno)*, circus troupe Circa takes a huge risk in a bid to reveal the circus arts as a serious artform. Stripped of gaudy colours and sequins, and with a sumptuous but classical-based and austere score, *The Return* is raw, riveting and disorienting. The acts are integrated into a thematic storyline that hints at sadness, alienation and man's inhumanity to man. Instead of showmanship, revelling in the wonders that their bodies are capable of, the feats of strength and agility, are almost painful, almost a curse visited upon them.

Backed by an imposing blank wall, a metaphor made even bleaker by recent events, the cast stares forward or into space. One man does a spectacular back flip that elicits gasps, but he lands, pointedly, with a resounding thud, flat on his back. Circa's *Opus* turned circus acts into something akin to modern dance, where the ideas and emotions are paramount. *The Return* goes further and much darker,

What would usually be acts are interspersed throughout ensemble groupings. Nathan Knowles' impossible contortions bring him no joy - he is assisted and ignored in equal measure but neither seems to help. The strongman Nathan Boyle is the base of human pyramids but then himself needs to be borne aloft by a fragile appearing gamine in a stunning reversal. Even the one conventional circusy section - silks, trapeze and balancing - is performed deadpan by Nicole Faubert, Cecilia Martin and the astonishingly limber Bridie Hooper. One could feel the audience aching to cheer or gasp but there was to be no release of the tension.





The chamber orchestra, electronics on tape, and two fine opera singers (Kate Howden and Benedict Nelson) provide a moody accompaniment that sometimes dominates by sheer virtue of the emotional immediacy that a human voice creates. There are hints of relationships between the performers but there are no connections and, tragically, that extends across the footlights. While wanting to be swept away into the world of *The Return*, the audience remains at a reserve, observing, analyzing, intellectually engaged but oddly cold.

The cast crawls along the wall, flings themselves around and then one of the extraordinarily lithe and handsome duo Marty Evans or Todd Kilby, flies across the stage in a ferocious series of cartwheels, flips and leaps before launching into a back flip and landing, with a horrendous thud, flat on his back. The lights go out and *The Return* is over.

Full feature can be read at: <http://drewrowsome.blogspot.ca>





# Sex, love and Paris in 95 minutes

PAUL BELLINI

★★★★☆

GEOFFREY COUËT

FRANÇOIS NAMBOT

# PARIS

Paris 05:59 Theo & Hugo is a new gay film from France, told in real time, so the entire film takes place over a continual 95 minutes. It begins in a sex club. The throbbing music, the naked Frenchmen, the sordid seedy look of the red lights, really turned me on. You don't even hear a line of dialogue for the first 15 minutes, just men having hard core sex. And it's a good thing, too, because I just finished blowing a gasket over another Facebook post in which some millennial gaytard called someone else an "old white queen" over this fucking Pride/BLM/cops bullshit. But I digress.

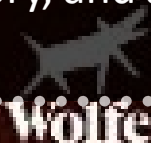
Paris 05:59 is a weird new hybrid - it's porn/not porn, containing hardcore sex scenes but packaged like a regular feature film. Would it pass the test for public exhibition? We will never know, as it, like so many other gay feature films, never play Cineplex. It's just as well - you can't jerk off in a Cineplex.

So once the 20 minute orgy that opens the film is over, we get down to the romance, with a bike ride through the Paris streets at 4:47am. But when the bottom finds out that the top fucked him without a rubber, he goes nuts because the bottom is positive and worries he might have passed it on to the top.

By 5:02 they check into the hospital emergency ward. An annoying old man keeps telling them to stop using their cell phones. He's so hammy I figured he might be one of the film's producers. The boys go in for treatment, which means taking a lot of pills and blood tests. They've known each other less than an hour and they've already endured both the greatest passion and a life-threatening situation. Is that, I wonder, the point the director is trying to make? That as gay men, we start where everyone else ends off?

Now that the panic's over, they walk home, chatting happily and getting to know each other. They're both cute guys, but they are totally upstaged by the beauty of the city. This movie makes you long for Europe. Eventually, they end up at the top's apartment, where they fool around and then get dressed again to go to the bottom's apartment. And by then it's 05:59, so that means the movie is over. Paris 05:59 Theo & Hugo is a charming love story, and a good looking movie, well worth checking out.

<https://www.wolfevideo.com>





# The Lost City Of Z

BIL ANTONIOU

★★★★★

James Gray's *Two Lovers* ends with its protagonist being forced to settle for what he can have and not where his fantasies take him, realizing that life can still be bearable in such circumstances; this exquisite period film, based on the true story of early twentieth-century explorers, informs us of what happens when a person refuses to accept that compromise and gives quite the insight into the auteur's often dark tales. Charlie Hunnam is sturdy as a British soldier and member of the Royal Geographical Society who is commissioned to travel to Amazonia and provide the empire with better and more detailed maps of the Bolivian jungle.

The journey is long and dangerous but he and his faithful colleagues Robert Pattinson and Edward Ashley manage to survive all the perils that face them, achieving their surveying goal but, more important, discovering remnants of a lost, ancient civilization in the jungle that Hunnam enthusiastically reports back to the RGS when he returns home. Met with incredulity by European snobs who refuse to believe that there could be an advanced civilization earlier than their own, Hunnam shouts his findings against all manner of resistance until his wife (a remarkably good Sienna Miller) unearths a centuries-old document by a Portuguese explorer who confirms the existence of this "lost city" referred to only as "Z".

Hunnam's next voyage to South America is sponsored by the Society with the intention of finding the site again, but the accompaniment of a Falstaffian Angus Macfadyen gets in the way of their success before World War I further delays Hunnam's dreams, which seem destined to go unfulfilled until his grown son (Tom Holland) helps take up the cause.

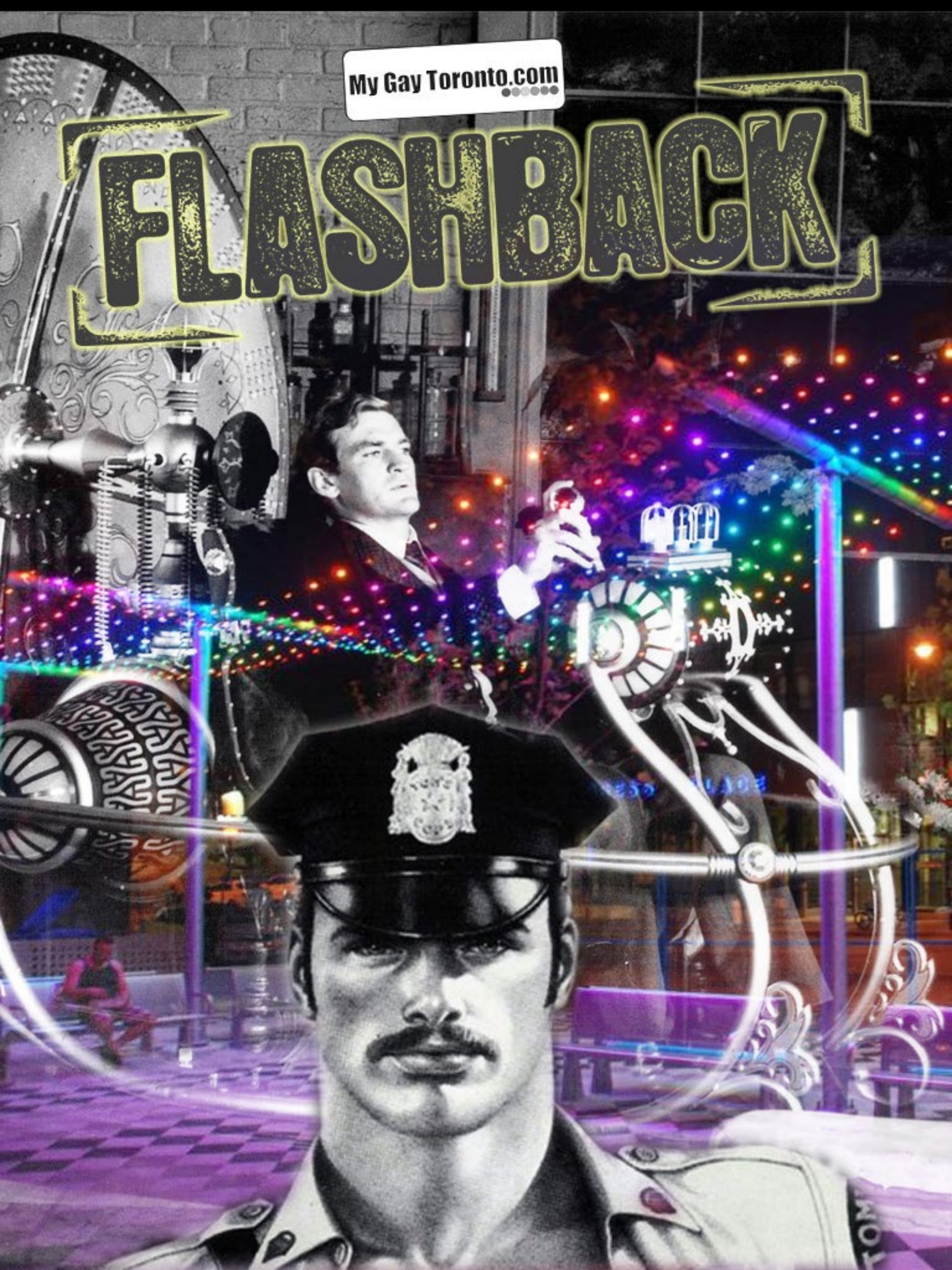
Things go the Herzog way at that point in a gorgeous, quiet epic where years pass and a slow and steady sense of obsession grows; we get the impression that our protagonist's belief in this place is more a *Moby Dick*-like fixation than a noble cause to help enlighten the world about the past. The actual motive for this compulsion is not entirely clear, there's no speculation on Gray's part as to whether or not Hunnam is looking for Z as a way to escape the ugly present or make up for a personal insecurity, and this robs the film of the kind of substance that would match his steady direction and dreamlike cinematography. That said, the confidence and skill with which he makes so dark and pessimistic an adventure film that rests mainly on disappointment and failure is worthy of awe, and the running time never feels difficult.





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# FLASHBACK



TOM





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# Out In Vegas

SHANNON MCDONOUGH

I was looking for a nice little weekend getaway: inexpensive, reasonably close by, warm, gay friendly, and had enough distractions to keep my mind off of all of the things I needed a vacation from.

To me.. that meant Las Vegas; to my girlfriend that meant Florida..,

If I was going to keep my Vegas dream alive (and keep my gf happy), 1st thing I had to find a kick-ass-Florida-like pool that would blow us both away.

Eureka! THE MANDALAY BAY Resort and Casino. A 60 acre resort/casino right by the strip with a spa, 3 pools, a wave pool (can I get her drunk enough to think it's the ocean?), a lazy river and THE SHARK REEF AQUARIUM - where if you are PADI certified, a guest of the hotel and pay a huge fee—you can SCUBA dive with the sharks! SOLD!! We were off to Vegas!

With its reputation for sin, naughty weekends and 'what happens here stays here', Las Vegas is actually very gay friendly. Nevada's cool... it has domestic partnership; tons of gay events and clubs. And let me say that we held hands all the time, we smooched and snuggled and never got a single sideways look. This might not be important to all of you but it really should be! Don't vacation in the closet.

Now where was I? We had an amazing time, lounging in beach chairs, ordering fancy drinks from waitresses in turquoise bikinis, floating down the lazy river--and like I said, not a single hairy eye ball. At one point in the pool, Karen pulled me into her, slamming my face into her cleavage. The female lifeguard smiled at us, looking more embarrassed for being caught watching than anything else. The only looks we got were from other lesbian couples doing that "hey, they are gay too" thing—and by the way, there were tons of dykes there. I didn't see many fellas.. The Mandalay Bay was infested with ladies. I stopped counting after a while and decided that Vegas is a lesbo town—hands down! I didn't know why at first and then I figured it out. The straight men are too busy gambling and sleeping with hookers to bother with us, leaving the lezzies to run amok.



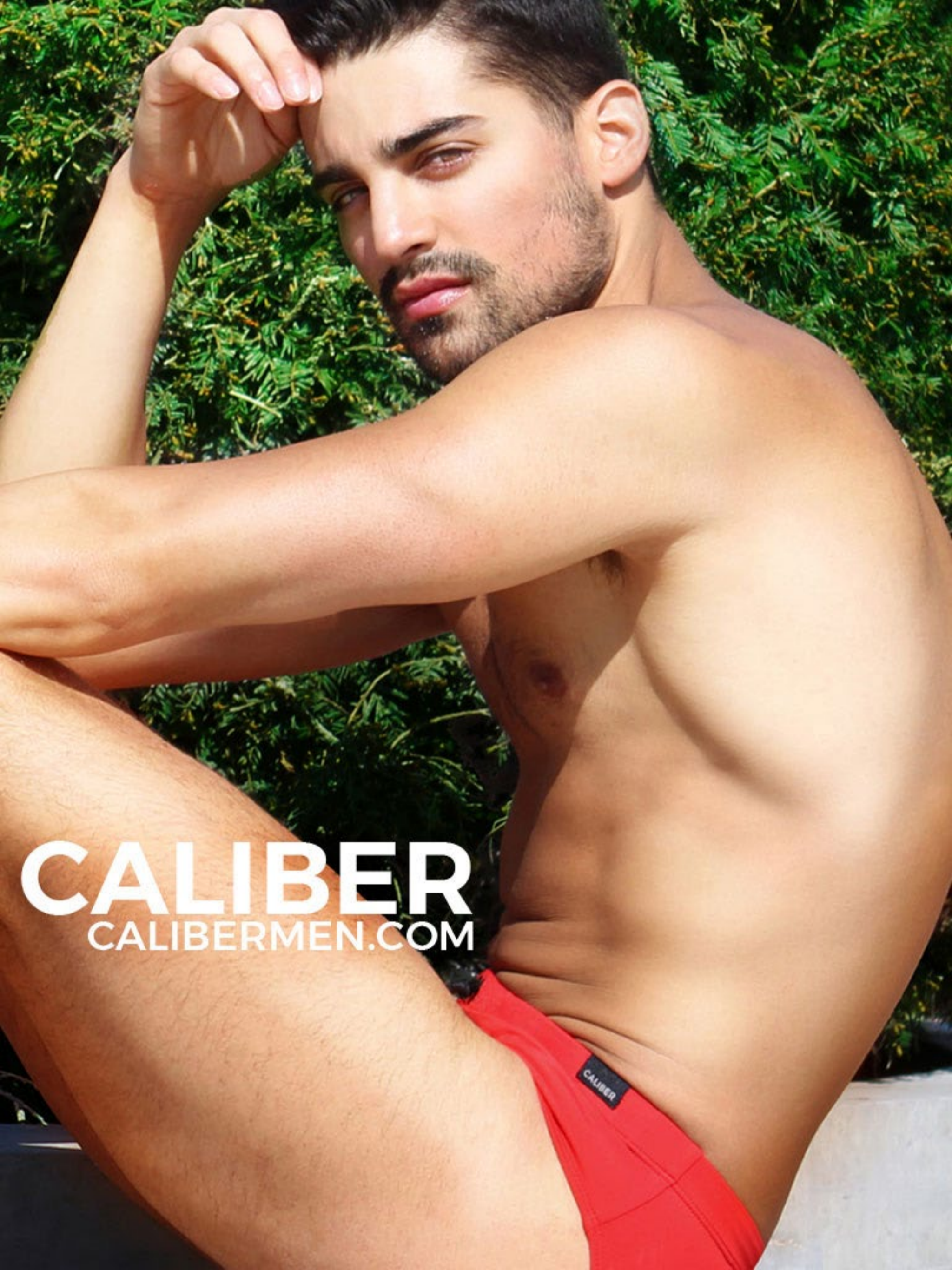




It was time for our pasty Canadian bodies to head indoors for some night life. I am a drag queen at heart; love seeing great female impersonators. Vegas does not disappoint. The incomparable Frank Marino has been performing as a female impersonator on the Vegas strip for 25 years, and his latest creation is “DIVAS Las Vegas” at the Imperial Palace. I met him and Larry Edwards (one of his stars) last year . I got in touch and they set us up with front row seats for the show. What a show!! I saw a Celine Dion who would make you shit your pants! The same performer came back as Cher and knocked my socks off! Literally! I had to crawl over my table and get my socks back. INCREDIBLE!!. Madonna, Janet Jackson, Bette Midler, Lady Gaga, Beyonce, and the BEST Tina Turner I have EVER seen—Mr Larry Edwards...who is so wonderful and sweet. When he is not kicking ass as Tina 6 days a week, he becomes “Hot Chocolate”, a party hostess at one of my favorite bars PIRANHA-Nightclub. Donning fabulous outfits, he/she flits about, dancing and chatting up party-goers...working the crowd up into a frenzy. You must go to DIVAS and see Larry in action, he made our visit unforgettable. [www.larryedwardslive.com](http://www.larryedwardslive.com)

Aside from the usual shopping (go to the Fashion Show Mall) or gambling(stick to Black Jack and Roulette) I wanted to do something completely different.. What would that be? Why.. a SCUBA dive with the sharks of course! I have always been fascinated with these beautiful creatures and couldn't wait to don a chain mail suit and see them up close. It's not cheap - \$650 (max 2 divers) – but it does discourage any yahoos and the money goes to the protection and care of the sharks. You're not allowed to touch any fish...but if they touch you, that is something else! I tell ya, climbing into a tank of over 30 sharks including Sandtiger, Sandbar and White Tip Reef Sharks, sting rays and two giant sea turtles was an experience unlike any other. Resting on my knees on the bottom of the tank, I came face to face with many sharks. Curious Zebra Sharks swam right up to me like underwater cats and I was circled by a Grey Reef Shark who kept eye contact with me that sent an excited chill through my spine.





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# A History Of Violence

MR X

A couple of years ago, I got into an ENORMOUS fight with one of my best friends, Mike. I'll take some responsibility for what happened, but only 30%. The remaining 70% rests completely with him. And his inability to let me do things outside of our friendship. I think he viewed me more as a boyfriend than as a friend. I didn't. Mostly because we never dated, kissed or had sex. But there he was, doing what he wanted whenever he wanted as he pleased. He was out with everybody. His social calendar was full, to say the least. He was becoming more of a drug addict, sex addict and alcoholic. He didn't want my help. He didn't want to change. And I didn't want to change him. So I moved on. He didn't like that. So he chose to criticize me about everything in my life: my job, my apartment, my taste in men, my dating habits, my clothes, my car, my family, the way I conducted myself in public. You get the picture.

So I ditched him.

Fast forward five years. Mike and I ran into each other at the gym.

"You got really muscular," he said.

"You got really fat," I said.

We exchanged really awkward small talk and then he left.

Fast forward two years. I'm out at a bar with a friend when I ran into Richard, a mutual friend of Mike and mine. Richard and I got together and dished the dirt. We talked about Mike and what he was up to and his perception of what went on between us and the mistakes that he made and the mistakes that I made. While it was obvious that Richard didn't have the whole story, it was also obvious that he was interested in mending the tears of my relationship with Mike. He wants us to get together for a barbecue.



Breaking up with friends is not like breaking up with boyfriends. In many ways, it's more difficult. The emotional investment with friends is not what it is with boyfriends. So when things go south in a romantic relationship, it's evident and the problem rarely goes unnoticed. Contrarily, we can often mistake tough love for shitty friendship. Consequently, we often put up with more from our friends than we do with our lovers or boyfriends.

But how do we determine when a friendship is not worth pursuing anymore? Granted people change, evolve, grow. Or they don't. And when two people are not on the same course in their relationship, romantic, professional, cordial or otherwise, that's when problems occur. My friendship with Mike was at an impasse; we were not growing in the same directions anymore. And now, here we are, seven years later, our paths are crossing again all thanks to Richard.

We're not friends  
we're strangers  
with memories



# Plastic Water Bottles Forever With Us!

LEE FANCY

Bottled water manufacturers encourage the perception that their products are purer and safer than tap water, but the reality is that tap water is actually held to more stringent quality standards than bottled water, which can cost up to 10,000 times more per gallon than, and some brands are just tap water in disguise.

Our increasing consumption of bottled water—more than 22 gallons per Canadian citizen according to the Earth Policy Institute—fuels an unsustainable industry that takes a heavy toll on the environment. Approximately 1.5 million barrels of oil—enough to run 100,000 cars for a whole year—are used to make plastic water bottles, while transporting these bottles burns even more.

The growth in bottled water production has increased water extraction in areas near bottling plants, leading to shortages that affect nearby consumers and farmers. Nearly 90 percent of bottles are not recycled and wind up in landfills where it takes thousands of years for the plastic to decompose; walk along any street or walkway and you will see that having no recycling bins around leads people to simply throw them away. Our cities are now grappling with ways to limit the amount they buy for city facilities.

Next time you feel thirsty, forget the bottle and turn to the tap. If you don't like the taste of your tap water or are unsure of its quality, you can buy a filter pitcher or install an inexpensive faucet filter to remove trace chemicals and bacteria. If you will be away from home, fill a metal reusable bottle from your tap and refill it along the way; travel bottles with built-in filters are also available. If you have to buy, now you can buy in a box which is even better.





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**Friday June 16:**

Lil Debbie live at The Phoenix Concert Theatre (410 Sherbourne St)  
 Openers: DJ Ticky Ty and DJ Recklezz  
 Double Drum Performance by KLR + Rosie. Doors at 10 - \$15

**Wednesday June 21:**

Play at Smith (553 Church St)  
 Mid-week 2 floor event where you can sip and mingle or dance and party. -DJs Mavis + Okaay  
 Doors at 9:30  
 \$5 before 11, \$8 after. No advance tickets. Cover at the door.

**Thursday June 22:**

Giggles - a pride comedy show at Comedy Bar (945 Bloor St W)  
 Host: Elvira Kurt  
 Headliner: Adrienne Fish  
 Featuring: Chantel Marostica, Ashley Moffatt, Martha Chavez, Dawn Whitwell, Deanna Smith  
 Doors at 7:15  
 \$20 advance tickets available at [www.girlplaytoronto.com](http://www.girlplaytoronto.com)

**Friday June 23:**

GirlPlay Toronto + Cream + BTC + Toastr + About Last Night Present Juicebox at Noir (Inside Rebel) (11 Polson St) DJs KLR, Sticky Cuts & Recklezz ; Dance Performance by Girls Club  
 Doors at 10 - \$30 in advance. Tickets available at [www.girlplaytoronto.com](http://www.girlplaytoronto.com) - \$40 at the door

**Saturday June 24:**

Toastr Pride - All Throwbacks, All Night at The Raq (739 Queen St W)  
 70s, 80s, 90s, 00s tunes + Dance floor + Lounge + Pool Tables + Licensed Patio  
 DJs Lucie Tic & Sticky Cuts - Doors at 9:30 - \$15 in advance. Tickets available at [www.girlplaytoronto.com](http://www.girlplaytoronto.com) - \$20 at the door

**Sunday June 25:**

9th Annual T-Dance at 580 Church Street (580 Church St)  
 2 Patios - Outdoor Club Event - DJs: Miz Megs, Stix, Foxtrot, KLR, Lilly Russner, Marina, Steph Honey and More... - \$20 cover at door. No advanced tickets.

Advance tickets available at [www.girlplaytoronto.com](http://www.girlplaytoronto.com)



# PRIDE 2017

## JUNE 21 - JUNE 25

TICKETS AND INFO AT [WWW.GIRLPLAYTORONTO.COM](http://WWW.GIRLPLAYTORONTO.COM)

**\$60 WEEKEND VIP PASS**  
[WWW.GIRLPLAYTORONTO.COM](http://WWW.GIRLPLAYTORONTO.COM)

**WED JUNE 21**  
**PLAY**  
 DJ MAVIS  
 DJ OKAAY  
 @SMITH  
 553 CHURCH STREET  
 DOORS AT 9PM  
 \$5 BEFORE 11 - \$8 AFTER

**THURS JUNE 22**  
**GIGGLES**  
 EL VIRA KURT  
 ADRIENNE FISH  
 DAWN WHITWELL / DEANNE SMITH  
 MARTHA CHAVEZ / ASHLEY MOFFATT  
 CHANTEL MAROSTICA  
 @COMEDY BAR  
 945 BLOOR STREET WEST  
 DOORS AT 7:30PM \$20 IN ADVANCE

**FRI JUNE 23**  
**JUICEBOX**  
 STICKY CUTS  
 RECKLEZZ  
 KLR  
 @ NOIR  
 11 POLSON STREET  
 \$20 ADVANCE \$40 AT THE DOOR  
 DOORS OPEN AT 10PM

**SAT JUNE 24**  
**toastr**  
 LUCIE TIC  
 STICKY CUTS  
 THROWBACKS AND POOL  
 @THE RAQ  
 POOL HALL AND NIGHT CLUB  
 739 QUEEN ST WEST  
 \$15 IN ADVANCE \$20 AT DOOR

**SUN JUNE 25**  
**9TH ANNUAL T-DANCE**  
 8 DJs  
 2 PATIOS  
 580 CHURCH ST  
 \$20 AT THE DOOR - 9PM-1PM



# LGBT Upcoming Hot Events

[http://www.mygaytoronto.com/events\\_hot/](http://www.mygaytoronto.com/events_hot/)

<p><b>MAY</b></p> <p><b>WORKING HARD EVERYDAY FOR YOU!</b></p> <p>OPEN DAILY SUN-TUES 8:00PM - 5:00AM WED-SAT 5:00PM - 5:00AM</p> <p>REMINGTONS</p>	<p><b>MAY 19 - Fri</b></p> <p>DAVID KRATZ PRESENTS <b>MAKE OUT FLOOR DANCE</b></p> <p>FRIDAY MAY 19TH</p> <p>FEATURING DJ AERYN PFAFF DJ KARIM OLEN ASH</p> <p>EAGLE, 457 CHURCH STREET   10PM - 1AM</p>	<p><b>MAY 19 - Fri</b></p> <p>RIVERDEDE PRESENTS <b>NEW YEAR EVE</b></p> <p>MAY 19-22</p> <p>WITH SPECIAL GUEST DJ SETTING</p> <p>613.478.2229</p>	<p><b>MAY 23 - Tue</b></p> <p>HOLLYWOOD GAMES NIGHT</p> <p>WATCH SOME OF TORONTO'S FINEST ENTERTAINERS BATTLE IN THEIR BEST CELEBRITY IMPERSONATIONS</p> <p>THREE ROUNDS OF GAMES MATCH GOLF - HOLLYWOOD SQUARES - THE NEWPOWER GENERATION</p> <p>YESTERDAY MAY 23 DOORS @ 7:15 SHOWTIME @ 8PM</p> <p>WEDNESDAY MAY 24 DOORS @ 7:15 SHOWTIME @ 8PM</p> <p>buddies</p>	<p><b>MAY 25 - Thu</b></p> <p>WYTY</p> <p>Thursday May 25th @ Blyss NightClub 594 Church St Toronto \$15 General Admission \$10 Students, Vets, Over 65</p> <p>VIP Seats available Show @ 10pm</p>	<p><b>MAY 27 - Sat</b></p> <p>NIGHT FOR MEN ON <b>sin</b></p> <p>EVERYTHING IS PERMITTED</p> <p>SATURDAY MAY 27</p> <p>FEATURING DJ JEREMY KHAMKEC</p>
<p><b>MAY 27 - Sat</b></p> <p>SATURDAY MAY 27TH 2017</p> <p>DEKO-ZE CHRIS VENCH DWAYNE MINARD SAM HAZE</p> <p>DOORLY</p>	<p><b>MAY 27 - Sat</b></p> <p>Mike and Shawn Monkey Tonk Shindig!</p> <p>Stag and Joe</p> <p>act</p>	<p><b>MAY 28 - Sun</b></p> <p>Taylor Skin Care</p> <p>FUN(D) RAISER FASHION SHOW</p> <p>act</p>	<p><b>JUN 3 - Sat</b></p> <p>WOLFPACK</p> <p>DOORS @ 7:15 SHOWTIME @ 8PM</p> <p>DJ NEIL MACLEOD DJ JOSHUA BEED</p> <p>WAYLA</p>	<p><b>JUN 10 - Sat</b></p> <p>DND 8 YEAR ANNIVERSARY</p> <p>DJ DWAYNE MINARD DJ POKEYS</p> <p>DEREK PARKER</p>	<p><b>JUN 2 Fri</b></p> <p>TESTO TORONTO</p> <p>FRIDAY JUNE 2</p> <p>EAGLE</p>
<p><b>JUN 17</b></p> <p>SATURDAY JUNE 17TH 2017</p> <p>DEKO-ZE SUMATION JOSHUA REID TRICK D</p> <p>CUBEGUYS</p>	<p><b>JUN 21 - 25</b></p> <p>PR 2017</p> <p>JUNE 21 - JUN 25</p> <p>WEEKEND VIP PASS</p>	<p><b>JUN 24 - Thu</b></p> <p>CHERRY BLOOM</p> <p>PRIDE</p> <p>YEARS OF QUEER LOVE!</p>	<p><b>JUN 24 - Thu</b></p> <p>PRESENTS THE NA ED PE</p> <p>ALCO - DJ RE</p> <p>24 JU</p> <p>120 CHURCH</p>	<p><b>MONDAYS</b></p> <p>Heavenly Mondays</p> <p>MONDAY NIGHT MADNESS</p>	<p><b>MONDAYS</b></p> <p>Crews tangles</p> <p>MONDAY NIGHT MADNESS</p> <p>WITH MUSIC BY DJ RELENTLESS</p>
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<p><b>TUESDAYS</b></p> <p>Paugh</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAYS</b></p> <p>REMINGTONS</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAYS</b></p> <p>THE WACKY WORLD</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAYS</b></p> <p>blu</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAYS</b></p> <p>Crews</p>	<p><b>THURSDAYS</b></p> <p>REMINGTONS</p>

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# My Gay Toronto.com

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**Drew Rowsome** - MGT Editor, a writer, reviewer, musician and the lead singer of Crackpuppy. The Toronto gay scene is his home and his pet promotional project. His musings, ruminations and longer form reviews can be found at [drewrowsome.blogspot.ca](http://drewrowsome.blogspot.ca).



**Paul Bellini** was a writer for The Kids in the Hall. He was also a producer for This Hour Has 22 Minutes, and a long-time columnist at Fab Magazine. He currently teaches Sketch Comedy at both Second City and George Brown.



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# MY GAY TORONTO

ISSUE #45

