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Hello Friends!

Well, another Pride season is upon us, and we're both fabulous and fed up. The world keeps throwing curveballs (and not the cute kind in mesh tank tops), but we keep showing up. Our rights, our bodies, and our stories are once again under scrutiny, challenged, or outright attacked. Yet, here we are. Still standing. Still creating. Still loving. Still fighting. Still celebrating who we are. That, too, is Pride. Not just the parades, but the persistence in seeking truth and equality, the strength and messaging in our art, and the radical hope that has always carried us forward.

To kick things off, Menaka Skrypnyk caught up with dance floor icon **Kristine W**. Her latest work reminds us that pride is a rhythm we never stop dancing to. Back and louder than ever—her lengthy career has musically contributed to queer liberation for decades; her voice still pulses with pride, passion, and power. In our second feature, Bryen Dunn highlights pop-culture icon **Amanda Lepore**, who for decades has embodied striking individuality as both muse and artist. She will be hosting **Toronto's Green Space Festival** on June 25th, likely in heels higher than our standards.

For this issue's *Deep Dish*, Rolyn Chambers dives into "Pride at a Crossroads: Protest, Power, and Paradox," unpacking the complexities of where our movement stands—and where it might be headed next. In *Wigged Out*, we honour the legendary **Sylvia Rivera**, whose activism and audacity helped shape the foundation of modern Pride. *She Beat* features the soulful **Charlotte Day Wilson**, a voice that reflects queer resilience. In *Kodak Moment*, Boyd Kodak spoke with **Sherry Sylvain**, a tireless advocate and community champion. And in *Beyond the Village*, we travel to Halifax's **Bus Stop Theatre**, a creative hub where queer and marginalized voices are not only welcomed but celebrated.

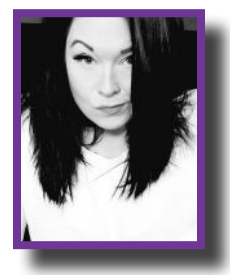
As always, don't miss our *BUZZpicks*—your summer social calendar's best friend!

Happy Pride, friends. Keep being glorious. Keep being you. Keep standing up for the community—and humanity ... after all, that's what love is about.

"I am not gay, but if I were, I would be the first one running out of the closet."
– Dolly Parton

Enjoy the read!

Mel MacMullin
Editor-in-Chief



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Photo by Levi Walker

Feel What You Want, but Kristine W is Dance Music Personified

By Menaka Skrypnyk

With a career boasting seventeen Billboard Dance Club #1s and a spot at #8 on *Billboard Magazine's Greatest of All Time Top Dance Club Artists* list, Kristine W has built a legacy on powerhouse vocals, dance floor anthems, and an unshakable bond with her fans.



Photo by Levi Walker

Beloved by the LGBTQIA+ community for her fierce authenticity and unwavering support, **Kristine W** returns to the spotlight to promote five new remixes of Sade's sultry classic, ***Smooth Operator***, as well as her latest single, ***Love Personified***. In this exclusive interview with *TheBUZZ*, she reflects on her musical journey, the evolution of the remix scene, her enduring bond with queer audiences, and what's next in her decades-strong reign over the dance charts.

For those just discovering her music, Kristine recommends starting with ***Feel What You Want***—a track she is especially proud of and holds a special place in her heart. "I had never met the two UK songwriters I was paired with," she recalls. "It was my first time writing a song in another country with a team I had never met before." Produced in a 3-hour writing session at **The Swanyard Studios** in London, Kristine, together with Rollo and Rob, the trio focused on "creating something groundbreaking."

"Jazz and improvisation are in my blood."

Kristine cites Donna Summer as a formative early inspiration and began her musical journey in jazz as a saxophonist. Kristine was awarded Best Jazz Vocalist at the age of fourteen, and her transition to dance music began in a car ride with her mother. She reminisces, "I was in the car with my mom in junior high, and *Last Dance* came on the radio. I was so excited, I remember telling my mom, 'I'm gonna sing and write songs like that'."

Speaking of her mom, Kristine has repeatedly credited her mother, Donna Lee, for nurturing the musician in her. A singer herself, Donna often had her daughter accompany her during performances. "I sang with my mom a lot," Kristine shares. "We sang in the church choir, and as I got older, we played our guitars and sang at weddings, funerals, and events, and I would go on the cruise ships with her when she sang on them."

Now, over 25 years after Kristine's debut single, she remains a beloved fixture in the dance world and a proud 2SLGBTQIA+ ally. She's set to perform at **World Pride** in



Photo by Dusti Cunningham

June this year, debuting *Love Personified* live for the first time. What has kept the community loyal to her music all these years? "I think my audience appreciated that I always showed up to support them, so they show up for me," she says. "We go way back, and I have always been there, encouraging and cheering the community on. I love them, and they know it's real." That deep connection is reflected in the title of her upcoming album, ***So Much Love***, set to be released this summer. "I have been blessed to be there at so many milestone events. I have met so many wonderful people at my performances. The community is my extended family."

With the remix culture continually evolving, Kristine seamlessly keeps her sound fresh while still staying true to her roots. "I love all the new sounds, layering bass lines and kick drums," she says. "Music production is so challenging and constantly changing. Different styles of music are being fused together. It's an exciting time to write and produce music."

"I wasn't just a singer; I was a musician. So, I got hired over other singers who just sang."

That excitement and her musicianship are evident in the five remixes of *Smooth Operator*, each remade in varying styles to resonate with DJs and dance music fans across genres. The song also holds special meaning for her from her university days in Las Vegas. "I was singing with various bands; *Smooth Operator* was my audition song. I sang and played the saxophone."

The creative process behind the five remixes began with UK producer **James Hurr**, who had worked on her last two singles. "I know his style, so I knew he would deliver a strong mix," she explains. From there, she enlisted remixers with distinct styles to ensure a wide appeal. "You strive to get remixers who bring a different take on the song. It makes it fun for the buyer to have variety and for the DJs who need specific styles of house for their shows." The result is a diverse collection of sounds: James Hurr and Block & Crown deliver deep house-inspired radio mixes, Mark Picchiotti offers a futuristic tech house mix, Matt Consola brings his Piano Tech Mix, and Dario Xavier rounds out the collection with a pulsing tribal-afro house version.

Beyond music, Kristine also draws inspiration from fashion. She recently met the iconic designer **Zandra Rhodes** while performing at London Fashion Week. "It was epic," she says. Rhodes (who has designed for Donna Summer, Stevie Nicks, and Freddie Mercury) even let Kristine borrow pieces she had created for Summer's album covers. "I am wearing a dress that Donna Summer wore on the cover of her *Once Upon a Time* album on my new *Love Personified* single cover. I still can't believe it happened."

As for what's next for Kristine W, she is looking forward to the World Pride DC concert. "There are a lot of world-renowned artists performing over three separate nights. We are on Saturday, June 7, so we want to bring our A-game," she shares. "Lots of fun shows coming up, both dance and jazz. I'll be out there bringing love, joy, and music to the *Land of the Living*."

Menaka Skrypnyk is a Sri Lankan-Canadian Communications professional with an innate passion for writing and exploring the unfamiliar. She enjoys spending her free time with her husband and adorable Sheepadoodle, Oscar.



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Amanda Lepore

Ignites a Starry Night at Toronto's Green Space Festival

By Bryen Dunn

Amanda Lepore is a world-renowned pop culture icon, celebrated for her work as a performance artist, model, singer, actor, writer, and muse.

She has become a symbol of individuality, self-expression, and resilience within the LGBTQ+ community. Toronto fans and admirers will have an opportunity to spend an evening with her as she hosts the opening reception of the **Green Space Festival** on June 25, 2025, at **The 519**.

"*Ever since I can first remember, I knew I was a girl. I couldn't understand why my parents were dressing me up in boys' clothing. I thought they were insane.*"

Lepore's career has spanned decades, starting as a muse to legendary photographer **David LaChapelle**, with whom she created some of the most iconic images in contemporary art. Amanda's influence also extends to the world of fashion and music, as she has graced countless fashion runways and magazine covers, appeared in music videos, and been on international stages, leaving an indelible mark on the global pop and nightlife scenes.

"I always have a good time. I never have a bad time. I like people. I like to make people feel comfortable. And I definitely love dressing up. I guess I'm just an old-school Club Kid."

The New Jersey-born, turned NYC 90s Club Kid, Lepore continues to dazzle and bedazzle, hosting regular events around New York City and beyond. A staple of New York City nightlife and an enduring symbol of glamour, Amanda Lepore continues to inspire audiences around the world with her unapologetic embrace of her true self and her dedication to spreading love and acceptance.

Music, Movies, Marketing, and Mayhem

As a singer, Amanda Lepore has released music that blends her signature sultry vocals with upbeat dance tracks on original tunes, such as *Champagne, My Hair Looks Fierce, Come Closer,* and *Turn the Heat Up*. Lepore's first single, *Deeper*, was written by famed NYC drag icon **Lady Bunny**. She also recorded the title track, *I Know What Boys Like*, for the film *Another Gay Movie*, and *Cotton Candy* for the soundtrack of *Another Gay Sequel*. As well, she was featured in drag performer Sharon Needles' video *I Wish I Were Amanda Lepore*, where she depicted Needles as a fan obsessed with getting plastic surgery to look like her. Her unique cover of David Bowie's *The Jean Genie* is an homage to her music idol.

Early in her career, Swatch released *Time Tranny*, a watch designed by LaChapelle with Lepore on the face, which



displays a printed crack on the glass and marble stripes as the background. A second version displays no cracked glass and a blue and yellow striped background. Additional marketing initiatives include an Amanda Lepore doll released as a benefit for AIDS charities, produced by Jason Wu, and distributed by Integrity Toys. She also has her own line of cosmetics in partnership with CAMP Cosmetics, called *Collection Lepore*, along with her own lipstick and lip gloss, only available through her website. She has also released a perfume, *Dangerous Curves*, in partnership with The Zoo NYC.

Earlier this year, while hosting an event in Pittsburgh, the establishment was raided by local police to conduct an inspection for code violations, in particular having an audience over capacity of their legal limit. Apparently, some of the officers in attendance recognized Lepore and asked her for selfies. She allegedly remarked that this was the first time she'd witnessed a raid mid-event, calling the night iconic in a darkly nostalgic 90s sense.

"I cherish my fans and seeing people happy. I'm always occupied with things I love to do: performing, working on my outfits and accessories, eating healthy and doing yoga, and not focusing on anything negative."

Lepore is currently working on new music, another Amanda Lepore doll, and a documentary about her life and continues to perform, walk in fashion shows, and grace the pages of fashion magazines around the world. Click here for all things Amanda. For those interested, her autobiography, *Doll Parts*, offers an intimate look into her life, chronicling her journey from her early days working as a beautician and dominatrix to becoming a celebrated transgender icon.

Five Daze of Fun(draising)

Green Space Festival is a free, all-ages dance party where everyone is welcome to attend the best alfresco parties of the summer, with enticing music, queer performances, delicious food and drinks, and a whole lot of love. An exceptional lineup of world-class DJs, legendary music producers, extraordinary performers, drag royalty, and more awaits at Barbara Hall Park, in the heart of Toronto's Queer Village. The best in drag and DJ talent provides the entertainment and soundtrack for the five-day event, which runs from June 25 to 29, 2025. Themes include Starry Night, Disco Disco, One World, Lipstick Jungle, and Tree House.

Beyond a celebration of diversity, Green Space Festival is an essential fundraiser for The 519, supporting their year-round work of serving and advocating for 2SLGBTQ+ communities in Toronto and beyond. All funds raised through the festival support the year-round programs at



The 519. To date, Green Space Festival has generated millions of dollars for the unique programs and services at The 519, Canada's largest 2SLGBTQ+ organization.

"I keep myself surrounded by positive people and influences. I do not let others' negativity affect my life or my happiness. Keep your head held high and always be yourself. Keep yourself surrounded by positive people and the people who support you."

The reception with host Amanda Lepore takes place from 6:00pm to 7:30pm and includes complimentary wine and cheese and VIP entrance to Starry Night, Pride season's premier drag event featuring fabulous RuPaul's Drag Race queens and countless local legends. The reception and meet & greet events are ticketed, but access to all other events at the Green Space Festival is free to attend—just get there early!

Green Space Festival—June 25 to 29, 2025
Barbara Hall Park—519 Church Street, Toronto

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto with a focus on tourism, lifestyle, entertainment and community issues. He has written several travel articles and has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities.




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Pride at a Crossroads: Protest, Power, and Paradox



We have long heard the saying, "Pride started as a protest."

With **Pride Toronto** choosing to cancel part of its 2024 Pride Parade because of protests within it, the question now is, who are we protesting? Before we can answer this question, let's understand the origins of the protests that led to Pride events across Canada.

Ottawa

The first Gay Liberation March, appropriately, took place in Ottawa on August 28, 1971. About 100 people gathered at Parliament Hill and presented a petition, with a list of ten demands for equal rights and protections, to the government.

Montreal

Montreal's first Gay/Lesbian Pride Week, June 16-23, 1979, was chosen to celebrate Quebec's first public demonstration in response to pre-Olympic anti-gay repression in June 1976. The march drew 52 attendees.

Edmonton

Forty members of the Edmonton Police Service, six RCMP officers, and two crown attorneys raided the Pisces Health Spa, a gay bathhouse, on May 30, 1981. 62 men were arrested. The raid sparked outrage and protests, mobilizing the Edmonton queer community. One year later, Edmonton held its first Gay Pride Weekend. Its theme, "Pride Through Unity," was in response to the Pisces Bathhouse Raids.

Manitoba

The first Gay Pride March took place on August 2nd, 1987. Attendees gathered at the Manitoba Legislative Building to wait for the results of the province's decision to include sexual orientation in the Manitoba Human Rights Code. If the government voted in favour, they would march in celebration; if the vote was against, they would march in protest. The vote in favour ignited the first 'Pride Parade' in Winnipeg as 250 people took to the streets of downtown Winnipeg in celebration.

Nova Scotia

Gay Alliance for Equality held a national conference in Halifax in 1988. About 80 people marched through Halifax to push for changes in the P.E.I. Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation.



Toronto

On February 5, 1981, police raided four gay bathhouses in what was called "Operation Soap" and arrested about 300 men. Most charges were later dropped or dismissed. Referred to as Canada's Stonewall, rallies and marches were held in response. Because of this, Toronto held its first official Pride March in June of that year.

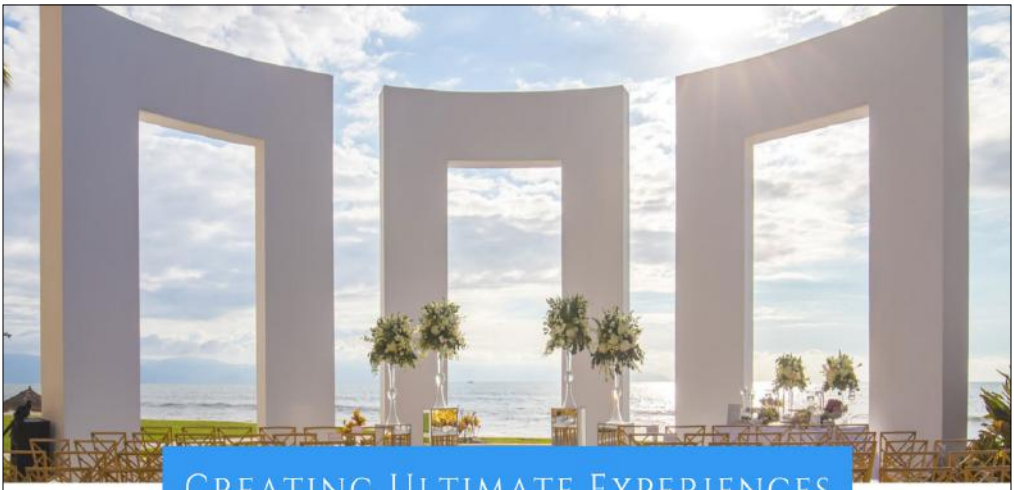
Decades later, on July 3, 2016, Black Lives Matter-Toronto halted the Pride parade and released a list of demands, including a commitment to increase representation among Pride Toronto staff and to prioritize the hiring of Black transgender women and Indigenous people.

Rewind. While the 2016 Pride festival marked the first time the parade was stopped in protest of Pride Toronto itself, the parade continued because then Executive Director Mathieu Chantelois agreed to the demands. Last year, however, though the parade was 75% over, the current executive director refused to agree to the demands of a pro-Palestine group. The protest itself was instigated because of a press release stating Pride Toronto's unclear stance on the Israeli-Palestinian Gaza conflict. Does this now set a precedent for what is to come?

In the beginning, Pride participants protested homophobic organizations and government bodies. Die-ins were held over the lack of AIDS treatment. Marches demanded government recognition. Now with rights won and organizations onboard, we seem to have set our sights on things outside ourselves, and we protest each other and the very organization that allowed such protests to evolve within its barricades. Good luck, Pride Toronto. You're going to need it.

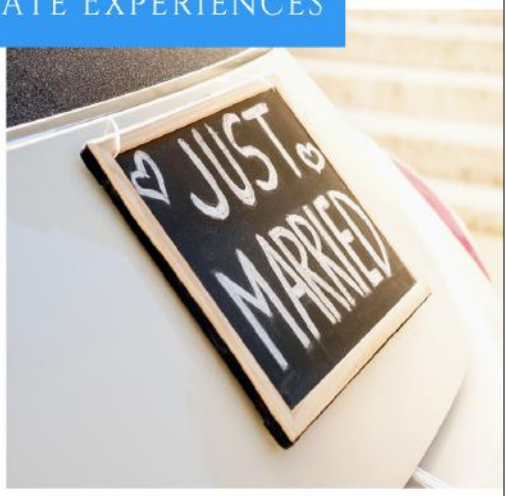
Jamaican-born Rolyn Chambers grew up in the suburbs of Mississauga, before attending *Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD University)*. In 2001, he began his *Deep Dish* column with *fab Magazine*, which ran for a full decade, allowing him to interview everyone from clubbers and promoters, to celebrities and politicians. Deep Dish has now been resurrected once again here in theBUZZ. Chambers is also the author of, *The Boy Who Brought Down A Bathhouse*, self-published by himself via YumEee! Communications.
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WIGGED OUT

Honouring Sylvia Rivera



Sylvia Rivera by Harvey Wang

"Hell hath no fury like a drag queen scorned." – Sylvia Rivera, 1951-2002

Before hashtags and parade floats, before corporations clung to rainbows and sold them back to us, there was **Sylvia Rivera**. Fierce. Fearless. Unrelenting. A queen not only of drag but of rebellion. She didn't ask for the spotlight. She seized it and dared the world to see her as she proudly was. She wasn't just fighting for a seat at the table. She was flipping the whole damn table over.

If one of us wasn't free, then none of us were. Sylvia knew that. Lived that. Bled for that. She was orphaned young and tossed into a world that chewed up kids like her. At just 17, she was there at the Stonewall Inn in 1969, shoulder to shoulder with **Marsha P. Johnson**, sparking a revolution with nothing but guts and eyeliner.

Sylvia's fight didn't end at Stonewall. She wasn't interested in palatable pride. She fought for the forgotten ones. The trans girls, the homeless youth, the sex workers, the ones even the gay rights movement wanted to leave behind. She co-founded **STAR—Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries**—because she knew survival was a radical act. She mothered an army of runaways and outcasts, offering food, shelter, and something even rarer: dignity.



Marsha P Johnson, Joseph Ratanski and Sylvia Rivera by Leonard Fink

She gave her life to this. Literally. Battling addiction, homelessness, and betrayal by her own community, Sylvia never stopped speaking truth, even when her voice shook. Even when she was booed off stage for demanding that trans lives be respected. She once said, "You all better quiet down!" and those words still echo, because we haven't quieted down. We can't. Not when Black and Brown trans women are still under attack. Not when the most vulnerable among us still carry the heaviest load.

Sylvia Rivera left this world as a warrior. But now—now she is a legend. A torch still burning in the hearts of every queer person who refuses to be silenced, sanitized, or sold out. She wasn't perfect. That's the beauty of her. She was real and righteously angry.

Today, as drag is being threatened, as trans lives are politicized, and as the movement risks forgetting its roots, we call her name: Sylvia Rivera. Patron saint of the loud, the proud, and the unbreakable. She reminds us what it means to stand your ground in heels and demand fairness for all, not just the pretty, not just the privileged.

We don't just remember her—we invoke her. Every step we march, every protest chant, every act of resistance—Sylvia is there. Watching. Smirking. Whispering, "Keep fighting, baby."


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BY GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Charlotte Day Wilson



Charlotte Day Wilson by Emily Lipson

Some voices hit notes, and then some voices carry soul. Charlotte Day Wilson's sound is smoke and cedar, soft and strong, like someone whispering secrets into your chest. She's not just a singer; she's a frequency.

"We all as artists just strive to make something true, and that felt true to me."

Born and raised in Toronto, Charlotte came up through jazz and soul, but she wears genres loosely. Her music bends through R&B, alternative, and neo-soul like sunlight through a stained-glass window—complex and fluid. She studied classical piano and saxophone as a child, and you can feel that training in the way she builds her songs: patient, deliberate, and textured.

"I think every artist uses their relationships to create stories and worlds that we need to tell ourselves and to others."

What sets her apart isn't just the sonic beauty—it's the intention. Every word she writes carries weight. Her lyrics, often exploring love, distance, and the struggle to let someone in, feel like a diary cracked open under a full moon. There's something sacred about the restraint in her work. She never overreaches.

Charlotte doesn't make her identity the headline—she makes it the heartbeat. Her songs are written from a place of lived intimacy and deep knowing, not for spectacle, but for soul connection. She sings about women the way the greats sang about their muses—with reverence, with longing, with honesty.

Her latest album, ***Cyan Blue***, feels like a rite of passage. It's drenched in nostalgia but full of forward motion. It tells the story of heartbreak and healing, as well as self-possession. There's a quiet bravery in the way she arranges space in her music. She trusts us to sit with stillness. The power of an artist lies in someone who has nothing to prove—only something real to share.

"Most of my music is about love and relationships. I think a lot of the time, my struggles within those relationships are a bit of a power struggle."

Charlotte isn't chasing charts. She's chasing meaning. That's what makes her feel like a kindred spirit to so many of us, especially those of us who've ever sat alone in a dark room, headphones on, feeling the electricity of being seen by a song. She writes for those moments and for the listeners who read between the lines.

Her name keeps rising—gently, like incense. She's becoming one of Canada's most essential voices: a queer woman writing her own story, on her terms, with a quiet fire that alchemizes into music.

SHERATON
Centre Toronto Hotel
MARRIOTT BONVOY



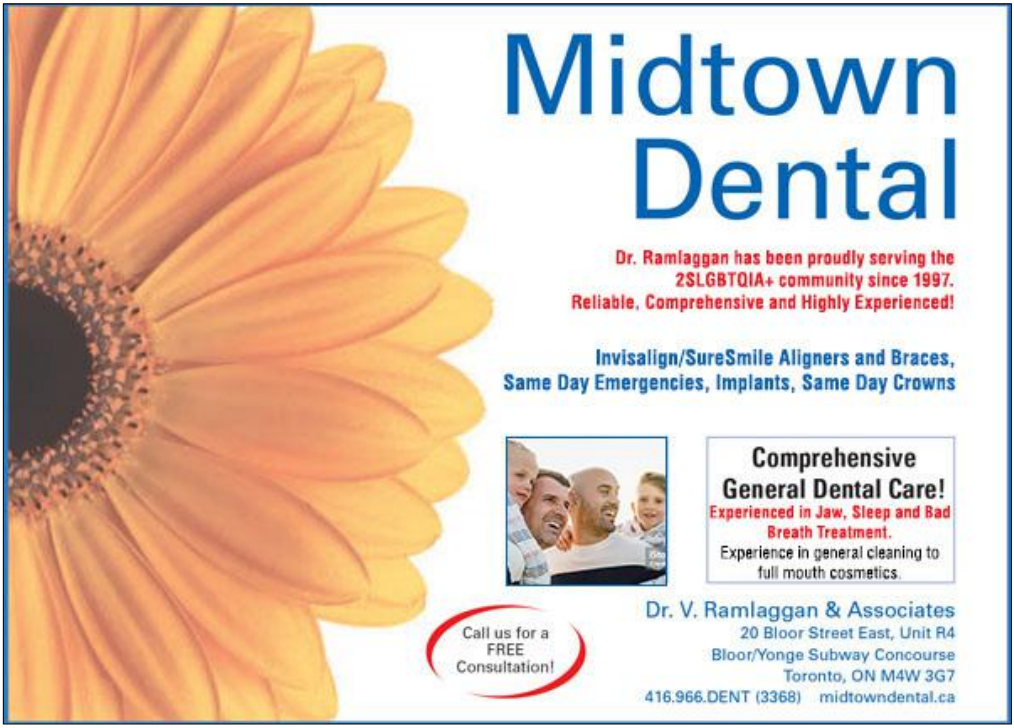
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A KODAK MOMENT

BY BOYD KODAK

Sherry Sylvain



Sherry Sylvain is a trans woman who has been a performer, bar staff member, patron, supporter, activist, and advocate in the queer community for over 35 years throughout Southern Ontario and beyond. Ages should never be a barrier, if one can help it, and Sherry continues to strive to support her community, including her latest undertaking as co-founder and co-producer of The Q Musicale.

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

Sherry Sylvain - Over the past year, I have been trying to age gracefully. At the same time, I have started a new endeavour as co-founder and co-producer of The Q Musicale, which works to create event environments where queer musicians can perform live music as their authentic selves while working to create a practice where such artists can be paid at a rate which recognizes their talent, training, and commitment to their work. In June 2024, we produced our first festival as part of Villagefest 2024 in the Church and Wellesley neighbourhood. Since then, we have been producing recurring shows with varying guests at O'Grady's On Church, and I am producing a festival of 6 shows over 5 days at The Distillery Historic District.

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

SS - Every event offers its own challenges and rewards and its own level of excitement. The June 2024 festival day was certainly one of the most vibrant events, offering a little bit of every aspect of challenge, reward, and fulfillment.

BK - What are you looking forward to next year?

SS - Over the next year, I look forward to building on the initial experience of The Q Musicale Festival, having each subsequent event expand on the number and variety of artists with whom we are honoured and thrilled to work.

BK - Sounds great. Where can we see your work?

SS - From June 10 to 14, you can see the work that I do, supporting live queer music artists and doing my own performances at The Distillery Historic District. On June 15, I will be back at O'Grady's on Church for our recurring show, Marvellous Meals and Music, with some special guests. I'll be at O'Grady's on the third Sunday of every month, thanks to the support of the venue and our sponsors.

BK - So true. Future plans?

SS - Future plans are to focus on building The Q Musicale while also continuing to perform and support my community. And, with a little luck, part of my future plans may involve a bit of a move to a new home; my insignificant other and I have been chatting.

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

SS - It's important to support the community in which you live and work. If you don't support them, why should they support you?

BK - Wise words. Finish this sentence for us: "I couldn't live without…"

SS - My nearest and dearest chosen family. I have a huge circle of friends, but it is the small circle of those who we choose as our partners, our "sisters" or "brothers," and sometimes, our surrogate parents who help us negotiate the world around us and provide us our truest fulfillment. What good is it to achieve greatness if you have no one with whom to share it?.



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

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Bus Stop Theatre Cooperative



The **Bus Stop Theatre Cooperative** serves as a launchpad for emerging artists and an incubator space for artists of all genres. Shows that have been workshopped, premiered, or performed at the Bus Stop Theatre have gone on to tour nationally and internationally.

The theatre has been in operation since 2003 and operating as a co-op since 2012. They host over 100 different groups and shows annually and are booked for performances, rehearsals, and gatherings of all kinds for 250+ days of the year. The Bus Stop Theatre Co-op's goal is to operate theatrical facilities that serve both artists and audiences. They do this by operating the only independent, affordable, accessible, and professionally equipped black-box space in Halifax, the main theatre, community room, and lobby of which are available to rent at very reasonable rates. Plus, the space is owned and operated by those who use and benefit from it.

The theatre is dynamic, flexible, and customizable to each presentation's needs and able to accommodate a variety of mediums. The audience arrangement can change based on the needs of the event and can typically accommodate 75 or as many as 110 seated audience members, depending on the configuration. The capacity load is 149 for standing room settings. While the theatre is highly suited for theatrical productions and live music, the flexibility of the space allows for numerous other uses, including as a gallery, workshop venue, film screening room, or meeting space.

This theatre also includes a welcoming lobby with a licensed bar. They are an all-ages venue and can welcome youth, whether the bar is operating or not. A dry bar is also possible on request. Furthermore, they are one of the few physically accessible venues in the area with level access and front-row seating for chair users.

The cooperative strives to operate in alignment with cooperative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity, honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others. In addition to those values binding the international cooperative movement, they also value collaboration, creative exploration, inclusion and diversity, community cultivation, learning and growth, adaptability, and accountability, as well as financial and physical accessibility.

The Bus Stop Theatre has a mandate of seven key points, as follows:

To operate and maintain an affordable and professionally run venue in the north end of Kjipuktuk/Halifax at the service of its members and community. To develop the professional skills of artists through programs and services that enable learning, mentorship, and presentation. To enable a diverse range of both emerging and established artists to create and present their work. To foster a space for cross-community engagement and collaboration. To lead an inclusive and participatory cooperative. To remain responsive to the needs of the historic communities in the North End of Kjipuktuk/Halifax, the needs of marginalized communities of Nova Scotia, as well as the needs of the Nova Scotian arts and culture community.

The theatre remains dynamic, flexible, and customizable to each presentation's needs and able to accommodate a variety of mediums.

The Bus Stop Theatre is an excellent opportunity and resource in Kjipuktuk/Halifax, Nova Scotia. Add a visit to this theatre to your itinerary, whether you reside in the vicinity or are a tourist.

2203 Gottingen St., Halifax, Nova Scotia
1 (888) 639-1169

Events Editor, Sherry Sylvain is a transgender woman who has been working in the LGBTQ community for too many years to count (or admit to).





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BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain

LOCAL PICKS

N-Me-Res Pow Wow

June 21 from noon

A community festival to celebrate Canada's National Indigenous Peoples Day with dancing, drumming, giveaways, crafts, and information booths.

250 Fort York Blvd., Toronto

www.nameres.org

TICOT Drag Brunch

June 22, July 22; 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Join Xavier Thrace and Toke-ita Bonita Blake as they host this drag brunch with a difference. This event is an open stage where all performers donate all tips to benefit the 2SLGBTQIA+ charities supported by The Imperial Court of Toronto.

The Well, 487 Church St., Toronto

www.theimperialcourtoftoronto.com

An Oak Tree

June 22; 2:00 p.m.

In celebration of the work's 20th anniversary, Luminato presents Tim Crouch's groundbreaking An Oak Tree, one of the most influential and hypnotic theatrical experiences of our time.

Jane Mallet Theatre, 27 Front St. E., Toronto

www.ticketmaster.ca

C.U. Next Tuesday - Open Stage

Tuesdays from 9:00 p.m. to midnight

Bring your sheet music or pick a song from their songbooks. Musical theatre and jazz standards encouraged, but you may sing what you like.

O'Grady's On Church, 518 Church St., Toronto

www.ogradyschurch.com

Open Stage Cabaret

Tuesdays from 10:00 p.m.

An open stage event hosted by a stunning array of leading queens with special guests. DJ Cory Activate. Glorious star-making machinery and big fun. Arrive early to sign up as a performer.

Woody's, 467 Church St., Toronto

woodystoronto.com

Hump Night Honeys

Wednesdays from 10:00 p.m.

Hosts Carlotta Carlisle and Katinka Kature welcome an array of special guest stars with DJ Chris Steinbach and Toronto's sweetest staff.

Woody's, 467 Church St., Toronto

woodystoronto.com

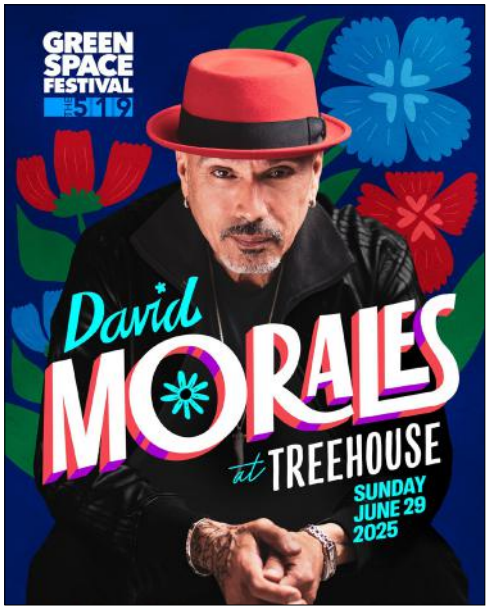
Green Space Festival

June 25 through 29

The best alfresco parties of the summer are back with enticing music, queer performances, delicious food and drinks, and a whole lot of love. An exceptional lineup of world-class DJs, legendary music producers, extraordinary performers, drag royalty and more.

Barbara Hall Park, 519 Church St., Toronto

greenspaceto.org



The Dmanda Show

Fridays from 9:00 p.m.

Friday night Drag Race viewing party and live drag show with Dmanda Tension and Vitality Black, plus some of Toronto's best performers!Must be 19+ with a valid ID.

The Drink, 459 Church St., Second Floor, Toronto

beacons.ai/drinkatthedrink

Pitbull - Fetish Life Pride

June 27; 10:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m.

Leather, rubber, sports or pups and everything in between! Break out your sexiest gear and get ready for a full night of kinky goodness. International superstar J Warren headlining.

The Opera House, 735 Queen St. E., Toronto

www.ticketweb.ca/event/pitbull-events-presents-fetish-pride-the-opera-house-tickets/14379753



BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain



Hollywoody to Broadway Show

Sundays from 6:00 p.m.

Hilarious host Georgie Girl welcomes a selection of guest performers every sunday evening to serve up your favourite hits of stage and screen, and more.

Woody's, 467 Church St., Toronto

woodystoronto.com

Toronto Waterfront Festival

June 28 and 29

Tour the fleet of historic Tall Ships and take one out for a sail. Get your deck tour tickets today to get onboard each ship, meet the crews and learn about their nautical history.

11 Dockside Drive, Toronto

towaterfrontfest.com

Shine Your Light - Pride 2025 - DJ Dallas

June 28 from 7:00 p.m.

Fabulous music and dancing with your friends, old and new. Classic gay anthems, Top 40 dance, '80s, latin, house, hip Hop. Allies welcome as guests of queer patrons.

163 Queen St. E., 4th floor, Toronto

musicandfriendsdanceparties@hotmail.com

Dear Silas

July 8; 8:00 p.m.

An International Recording Artist and Trumpeter, known for his dynamic delivery and magnetic presence seamlessly blending various genres.

TD Music Hall, 178 Victoria St., Toronto

tdmusichall.mhrth.com/tickets/dear-silas

TICOT Charity Bingo

July 13, August 10; 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Hosted by Teran Blake and Burger. Raising funds for PWA Food Essentials Market, Durham Alliance Outreach Food Pantry, and LGBT Youthline.

Flash On Church, 463 Church St., Toronto

www.theimperialcourtoftoronto.com

Pan Am Fest

July 18 through 20

The festival will feature Mexico as the guest country, offering a unique opportunity to explore the diverse culture, gastronomy, music, and beauty of the arts and crafts.

Nathan Phillips Square, 100 Queen St. W., Toronto

www.panamfest.com



Big On Bloor Festival

July 19 and 20

An alternative community event that celebrates community-building, local businesses and the diverse arts and culture of the area.

Dufferin and Bloor neighbourhood, Toronto

bigonbloorfestival.com





BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain

Marvellous Meals and Music

July 20, August 17; 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Enjoy all live, all 2SLGBTQIA+ musical performances, while you savour a marvellous meal and luscious libations.
O'Grady's On Church, 518 Church St., Toronto
theqmusicale.ca

Golden Girls - The Laughs Continue

July 26; 7:30 p.m.
Relive the heartfelt hilarity of four ladies who never stopped being your friends. This is a tribute show. Presented by Murray and Peter. 20-minute intermission.
Meridian Hall, 1 Front St., Toronto
www.ticketmaster.ca



ROAD TRIPS

Masquerade Weekend

June 20 through 22
Friday - Community Bonfire, Karaoke; Saturday – Masquerade Ball in the Barn.
Cedars Campground, 1039 Concession Rd. S.W., Hamilton
www.cedarscampground.com

Celebrate Your Awesome - After Party

June 21; 9:00 p.m.
Dufferin County, for one night only they bring to you the first official Pride party to follow Celebrate Your Awesome. Come dance the night away with DJ DeeGee.
Rainbow Ridge Resort, 203138 Dufferin County Rd. 109, East Garafraxa
theridgecamp.ca

Canada Day Weekend and PRIDE

June 27 through 29
Friday – Community Bonfire, Karaoke; Saturday – Red and White Party in the Barn.
Cedars Campground, 1039 Concession Rd. S.W., Hamilton
www.cedarscampground.com



Sesame Street Live - Say Hello

June 28; 2:00 p.m.
Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Cookie Monster, and their friends from Sesame Street are coming to your neighbourhood to say hello!
Centre In The Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener
kwtickets.evenue.net

Punk Rock Flea Market Summer Bash

June 29; noon to 5:00 p.m.
Punk Rock Flea Market Oshawa's summer bash is bringing you a curated lineup of some of your favourite local artists and makers.
Biltmore Theatre, 40 King St. E., Oshawa
www.facebook.com/prfmoshawa

Dallas Alexander

July 19; 7:30 p.m.
A former special operations sniper and proud Métis veteran, Dallas served Canada with distinction before trading in his rifle for a guitar.
Maxwell's Concerts and Events, 35 University Ave E., Waterloo
www.ticketscene.ca/events/52408



BUZZPICKS

By Sherry Sylvain



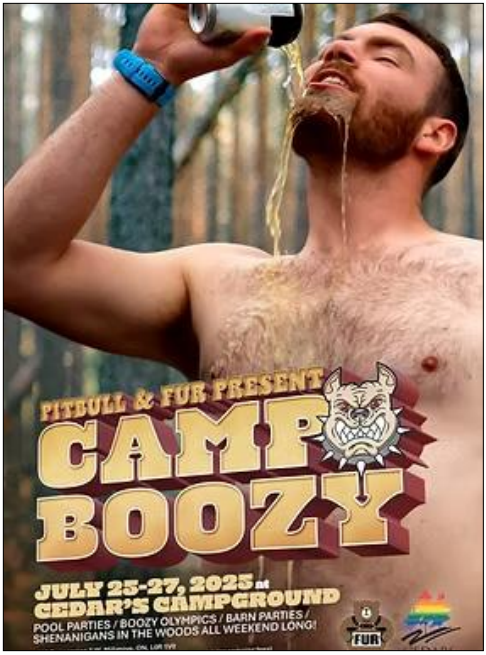
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July 25 through 27

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Cedars Campground, 1039 Concession Rd. S.W., Hamilton

www.cedarscampground.com



80th Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games

August 8 through 10

Heavy events competitions, pipe band competitions, highland dancers, over 50 clans and heritage village, whisky tasting, McKiddie's Centre, Celtic musicians and international vendors featuring Scottish wares and fares.

Centre Wellington Sportsplex, FLO, 550 Belsyde Ave. E., Centre Wellington

www.showclix.com/tickets/fsf-2025-admission



Fruit Salad - Howdy

August 8 through 10

Saddle up for a weekend full of dancing, swimming, and good vibes. Join in for a fabulous time under the stars - $ 49 + HST gets you in, plus regular camping fees.

Cedars Campground, 1039 Concession Rd. S.W., Hamilton

www.cedarscampground.com



Events Editor, Sherry Sylvain is a transgender woman who has been working in the LGBTQ community for too many years to count (or admit to).





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