the RAGE monthly
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
OCTOBER 2023



OH, THE HORROR!
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GETTING SAUCY WITH
## CAROLINE D'AMORE
FOR NATIONAL PIZZA MONTH

## BELLA DA BALL'S
MUST DO'S IN OCTOBER

FINDING YOUR TRIBE
## PALM SPRINGS LEATHER PRIDE

SAN DIEGO FILM FEST
EXPOSES A TRULY
## *HIDDEN MASTER*

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photography by nikita skripnik

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# DRY HEAT #6

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# CELEBRATING AND SUPPORTING
## OUR LGBTQ COMMUNITY TOGETHER


dylan mulvaney

**Models of Pride**, the annual LGBTQ youth summit hosted by the Los Angeles LGBT Center, will return for its 31st edition on **Saturday, October 14** with a newly revamped event. They will convert the long-running summit into a celebratory — and absolutely free — festival of love, acceptance and queer joy.

Celebrating three decades of success, the festival will feature a new venue, exciting and interactive activities, dancing and music, and show-stopping musical performances. LGBTQ activist and entertainer **Dylan Mulvaney** will deliver the keynote address and accept the Model of Pride Award — an honor given each year to a positive role model for LGBTQ youth. "We are so excited that Dylan will be joining us for this event," the center's CEO **Joe Hollendoner** said. "At a time when our queer and trans youth are under attack, Dylan serves as a possibility model and a source of inspiration."

Presented by Glamazon L.A., Amazon's LGBTQ Affinity Group, Models of Pride 2023 will also include new chill lounges, carnival games, delicious food, and a resource, college and job fair. LGBTQ youth ages 24 and younger and their friends and families are invited to attend. **modelsofpride.org**

**VIDA** of San Diego will commemorate 10 years of tireless work to eradicate HIV infections, and organizers will gather at MO's Bar & Grill on **Sunday, October 15** for a lavish brunch buffet and a live show.

Drag performer **Chi Chi Fuera** will headline the entertainment, which will celebrate the anniversary milestone as well as Hispanic Heritage Month and National Lantinx AIDS Awareness Day.

Luis A. Mares Yanez from the Latino Commission on AIDS and CDR Michelle Sandoval-Rosario from the Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy will be among the distinguished visitors. Karla Quezada Torres of Gilead Sciences and local activists Glitz Glam, Raul Robles and Martha Robles will also receive recognition. **vida.community**

The **Pink Gala** is one of our community's most anticipated events. **Stepping Stone** of San Diego will present a fun night of fundraising at the Broadway Pier in downtown San Diego on **Friday, October 20**. Stepping Stone has been the cornerstone of the LGBTQ recovery community for more than 47 years. The evidence-based treatment strategies they employ have helped thousands of people in San Diego recover from the disease of addiction.


storm large photo by laura domela

Musician, actor, playwright and performer **Storm Large** will be the headliner. She has appeared on *Rock Star: Supernova* and *America's Got Talent*. The amazing entertainment is one reason the Pink Gala is always the biggest soiree of the season. **steppingstonesd.org**

On **Saturday, October 21**, the eighth annual **Calavera LGBTQ Festival** will be in the Boyle Heights LGBTQ community center, Mi Centro. The festival is an intergenerational Day of the Dead celebration that brings together the LGBTQ and Latinx cultures to honor our community. Each year, more than 300 community members gather to celebrate and enjoy traditional altars, queer Latinx artists, folklorico dancers, Aztec dancing and a Mx. Calavera drag competition. The proceeds will support LEA initiatives that provide safe places, youth leadership development and greater family acceptance. **somoslea.org**

**Black Services** will bring out the bizarre, the absurd and the fabulous with the San Diego LGBT Community Center's first-ever **Halloween Kreepy Kiki Ball**. Join the spooktacular celebration on **Friday, October 27** in The Center's auditorium to experience an electrifying drag show, a Kiki Ball with judges and fabulous prizes, and special recognition for a cherished member of the Black LGBTQ community. The event will also offer free case management, STI testing, sexual health resources, community org tabling and more. **thecentersd.org**

Come out and celebrate Halloween and Dia De Los Muertos with **MenAlive** and special guests, the Orange County Women's Chorus, at their autumn performance, ***Ghouls Just Wanna Have Fun!*** The Irvine Barclay Theater will host events on **Tuesday, October 31 and Wednesday, November 1.** Hear haunting harmonies from *Hocus-Pocus*, Rihanna, *Glee*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, Cindi Lauper, Giuseppe Verdi and others. Dress up in costume for a chance to participate in a walk-on during the concert. Bring your young ghouls and goblins to this frightfully family-friendly performance. No tricks, but there will be plenty of treats to enjoy. **ocgmc.org**

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***- Washington Blade***



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# SKIN IS IN

## PALM SPRINGS GEARS UP FOR LEATHER PRIDE 2023

Flesh provides a canvas on which we can paint pleasure, pain and everything in between. Every nerve ending bristles with anticipation. Are you in the mood for a slap and a tickle? Or is a gentle caress more your speed?

When you add a second skin to the proceedings, you expand your possibilities exponentially. Leather enhances sensuality and it also serves as a disguise, behind which you're free to play and explore tantalizing taboos.

"Everyone has a kink or a fetish, whether they choose to believe it or they don't." This is the enticing philosophy of **Charlie Banfield**, aka Jack Dyer, chair of Palm Springs Leather Pride. "You always have a thought that you go to right before you climax, and that is usually where your kink or your fetish lies, and everyone has one. So, it's something that is completely relatable."

Leather lust has become popular enough to warrant a weekend dedicated to its unique brand of erotic indulgence, and this year the theme is Maximum Thrust.

"There are 14 events over the span of three and a half, four days, and there are a couple that are really super fun," Banfield said. "Typically, we do a formal leather event where all the guys come in their formal leather head to toe. And in past years, it's always very hard to have a sit-down dinner in formal leather because nobody can sit down. So, the party that we're doing this year is actually a standup cocktail party. It's got a cigar element to it. We've got full entertainment. Colton Ford is coming and performing as well as Rosemary Galore will be performing. This is going to be quite an event."

Wait a moment. Did we hear that correctly? A drag queen at a leather festival? That's like a vegan at a chili cook-off, or … well, a vegan at a leather festival. But Banfield emphasizes the importance of diversity within the kink community.

"Rosemary Galore is one of our emcees, so we do have a drag emcee and a performer for our contest. That got a little pushback," Banfield acknowledged. "But now I think everybody's really on board. The whole drag for drag situation happened after that. So, we had announced it long before all of the legislation had been coming through. We are very much inclusive. We are about brotherhood and sisterhood. It is part of our mission with Palm Springs Leather Order of the Desert, that we are always inclusive, and that's why we also are stressing that it is not just Leather Pride, but it is leather kink and fetish, and we are the fifth-largest leather kink and fetish event in the world."

The festival will be a bastion of butch bruisers cavorting in a hairy, sweaty wonderland, but the community was originally formed as an act of survival.

photos by WWW.D81PHOTOS.COM



"Leather clubs were made back when we were getting beaten in the streets and all of the hate crimes and things were happening through the AIDS epidemic and all of that," Banfield said. "This was a way where the community would have sort of a checks and balances of each other . . . If you were part of a club association, there was a degree of ethics that you had and a code of conduct that you had."

Galvanizing his passion for protection, Banfield continued, "If you are part of an association, you are a part of a community. It's a brotherhood, and it is intended as a safety measure. There's safety in numbers."

And those numbers are staggering.

"This event is going to be attended by over 5,000 people. 5,000 people descend on Palm Springs in a city that only has 45,000 people in it to begin with. So, we do make an impact just by having the event, not only financially, because we do help the community, restaurants, hotels, everyone has to stay somewhere . . . but all of our events take place in bars or event venues or hotels where they do not require any city involvement in terms of closing anything down or putting anyone out. So, it's pure revenue for the city of Palm Springs and it's pure revenue for our club. This one event funds all of our charitable groups, all of our charitable donations, as well as our club for Palm Springs Leather Order of the Desert for the following year."

The best way to support Banfield and his brethren is to raise a paddle — no, not the spanking kind, you magnificent beast — an auction paddle.

"Our auction is stellar. We have amazing live-auction items, as well as over 100 silent-auction items. It's going to be quite a dynamic event," he said. "Then the following night we have our Thrust party, which is our official victory party for Mr. Palm Springs Leather, and that happens at Fuego, which is a new event space here in Palm Springs that hasn't really been tried and tested yet, but we are very excited to be one of the very first events to hit that space and have our own private event that night. So that'll be really fun. It's very limited space so that it makes it nice and tight and sexy, so that'll be super fun too. And we also, this year, for the first time, we're having our very first pancake breakfast on Sunday morning, and that's really more of a FUNraiser than a fundraiser, and that's sort of the perfect antidote for the morning after."

Ah, brunch, the great equalizer. Every rainbow stripe of the LGBTQ'mmunity can agree that muffins and mimosas wash away all the sins of the previous 24 hours and fuel you up for more scintillating shenanigans for the day ahead. No matter who you love (or how briefly you "love" them), we all deserve a modicum of raunchy respect.

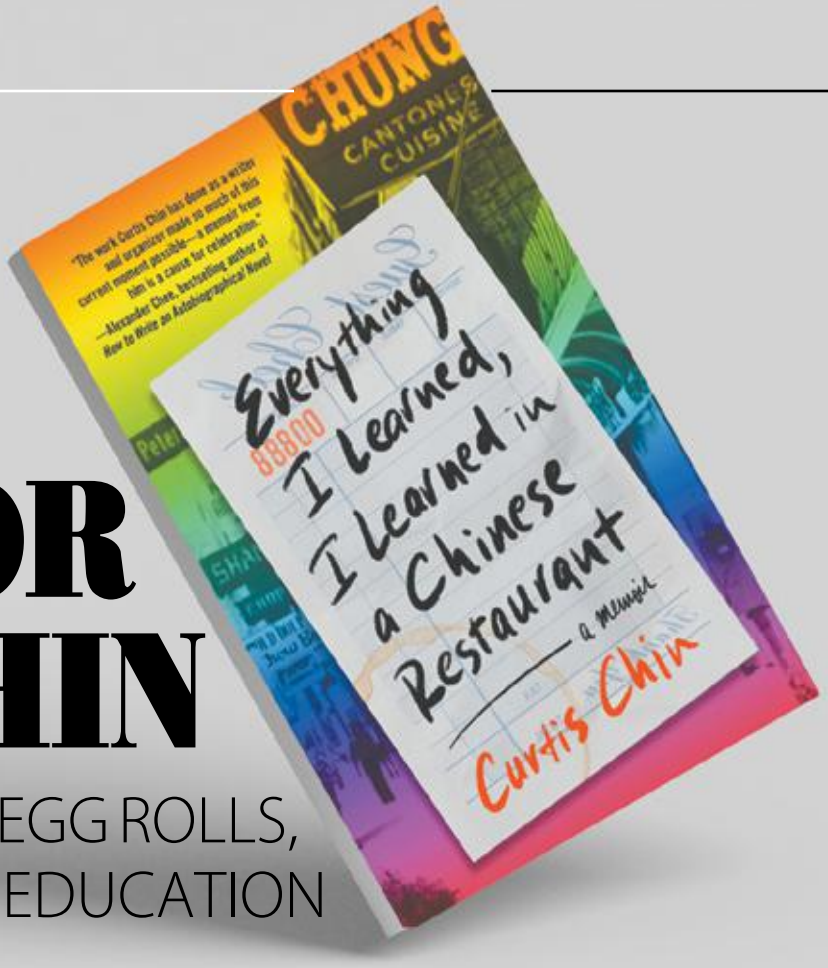
"It's really, really important to stay connected to your community and find your tribe, whether it is in the leather, kink and fetish tribe or trans or whatever it is that you directly associate with, you're not alone," he said.

Abnormality is the most normal phenomenon imaginable, Banfield said.

"There is a whole group of people out there that feel just as you do, no matter how you feel. It's really about connection and staying connected with people so that you're not isolated. There's no reason to isolate in 2023. There's no reason to," he said.

Take a page from Banfield's naughty playbook and flex your freakiness from **Thursday, October 26 through Sunday, October 29** in Palm Springs. Your fellow deviants demand it. We'll see you there (hopefully bare) with a little help from our second skin.

**pslod.org/leather-pride**




# AUTHOR CURTIS CHIN

## COME FOR THE EGG ROLLS, STAY FOR THE ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

Although his is one of the most anticipated memoirs of the fall season, Curtis Chin, a gay, American-born Chinese writer from Detroit said, "It took 10 years to sell *Everything I Learned, I Learned in a Chinese Restaurant*. To be an author you have to persevere. You will hear the word *no* a lot and you have to give yourself the *yes*. I sent my book idea and pages to 90 agents; 30 gave no response, 30 said no, 30 asked for more pages. Where I found my support was in writers' groups. They are free, online, and you get feedback from around the world. I wanted my book to resonate with all people not just the gay community, or the Asian community, or people who love Detroit."

Chin, who is one of the nation's top food writers, decided to tell his own story after the death of his dad. "There was this whole new generation who knew nothing about my parents, their hard work, how we grew up, or stories from that time period," he said. "My parents owned Chung's Cantonese Cuisine. I hope readers enjoy the fun and food in the book, and also appreciate the serious topics. When I was growing up, the different cultures and neighborhoods didn't talk; they were in their own inner-city silos. But it was different in my parent's Chinatown restaurant. Everyone from different backgrounds came to enjoy a good meal. So, I say of my book, 'Come for the egg rolls, stay for the anti-racist education.'"

Chin, co-founder of the Asian American Writers' Workshop, traces his desire to write and amplify Asian-American voices to a family friend's murder. In 1982, Chin followed the court trial and saw there was no justice for his friend Vincent Chin, who had been beaten to death with a baseball bat by two white autoworkers. The men who attacked Vincent Chin were not alone in their anti-Asian sentiment. Japanese cars were taking off in popularity, and it led to a loss of American autoworkers' jobs, with Detroit being one of the hardest-hit areas. Vincent Chin, a Chinese-American, could be called the Emmett Till of the Asian-American community. His killers were initially charged with manslaughter, but the judge let them off with a $3,000 fine and three years' probation.

To say the least, "it was frustrating," Curtis Chin said. "There were no Asian-American political leaders, or famous stars, to speak up and fight for justice. Thankfully, this is changing."

For the then 17-year-old Chin, several things were born out of this hate crime — and largest was his desire to stop hate. Chin made the 2009 documentary titled *Vincent Who?* to share Vincent Chin's story and the legacy of change that came about. And his new book, *Everything I Learned, I Learned in a Chinese Restaurant,* includes reflections on growing up, Vincent Chin's story, and so many other heartfelt and funny stories. Pre-orders can be made through Amazon; the book's release date is **Tuesday, October 17**.

When reflecting on menu favorites from his family's restaurant, Chin said, "It depends what you like. I was recently on *America's Test Kitchen* sharing the most popular dish called Almond Boneless Chicken. It is a regional dish, most popular in Michigan and Ohio. Almond Boneless Chicken is a battered fried chicken over a bed of lettuce with an Asian flavor infused gravy. It is basic, delicious, and we sold so, so many! I am very interested in the origins of this dish. It melds Chinese food with Southern soul food brought to the area during the Great Northward Migration of Black Americans. The history of food is fascinating."

You can catch Chin during his 30-city book tour. He will read an excerpt and discuss the book at L.A.'s Skylight Books on **Thursday, October 26** at 7 p.m. skylightbooks.com

Learn more about this passionate foodie and his work on his website: **curtisfromdetriot.com**




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# STORYTELLERS VERSUS HATE

**This issue, *The RAGE Monthly* welcomes guest writer and new North County resident Danni Hickey (they/he/she). Danni shares their coming-out story, set against the backdrop of current anti-trans legislation in Florida.**



## TAKING PRIDE IN OURSELVES

by danni hickey

***"If God wanted people to do that, He would have given us removable parts."***

My family was never shy about sharing their beliefs. This vernacular of the rural South was tossed around children like me without second thought. To this day, I credit my outspokenness to this atmosphere, and cherish that as a positive from an upbringing in Florida. However, my ideology and foundational beliefs have not correlated with my family's in quite some time.

I remember as a child, our neighbor gave my family a tub of clothes they no longer needed. My mom offered me first pick. I remember sifting through chiffon and sequins searching for her grandsons' clothes they'd grown out of. At the bottom of the bin, I found a pair of white pumps — too big for my childish feet and far too big for my understanding of who I was. Yet, for whatever reason, I secretly tucked the shoes under the worn-in graphic tees and turned the bin over to my younger brother. Months went on as I paced the floor of my room in the gender oddity I bestowed onto myself. I told myself I just enjoyed the sensation of being taller, until the day my dad almost caught me in them. I tucked my white pumps into the outside trashcan the next day.

The day I came out to my mom as gay, I came with a bag of clothes in hand. I explained with tears in my eyes, that should she want me to go I would, and I just asked for the one bag of clothes. The following moment of silence still rings in my ears and I can still feel the weight of the bag holding me to the floor. She hugged me, encouraged me that we would figure it out, and told me what time we were having dinner. I was 16. I have yet to have a similar conversation with my father. I am now 26.

After completing my undergraduate degree, I began exploring my gender. It started small with crop tops. Over time it grew into platform shoes, dresses and miniskirts. Eventually I came to understand my identity and explained to my friends the concept of trans-femme and nonbinary. These titles still feel mostly right. Any weekend, you could find me dancing the night away in a leather skirt and heels with all the conviction in the world. People would ask me, "Danni, aren't you worried about being you in the South?" It had never crossed my mind. Often, people there assumed I was a cisgender woman, and I would "femme it up" as I would say, to ensure my safety but otherwise never thought twice. Confidence was a quality I had to fight for after years of physical bullying in primary and secondary school, and I am not prepared to let it go by any means.

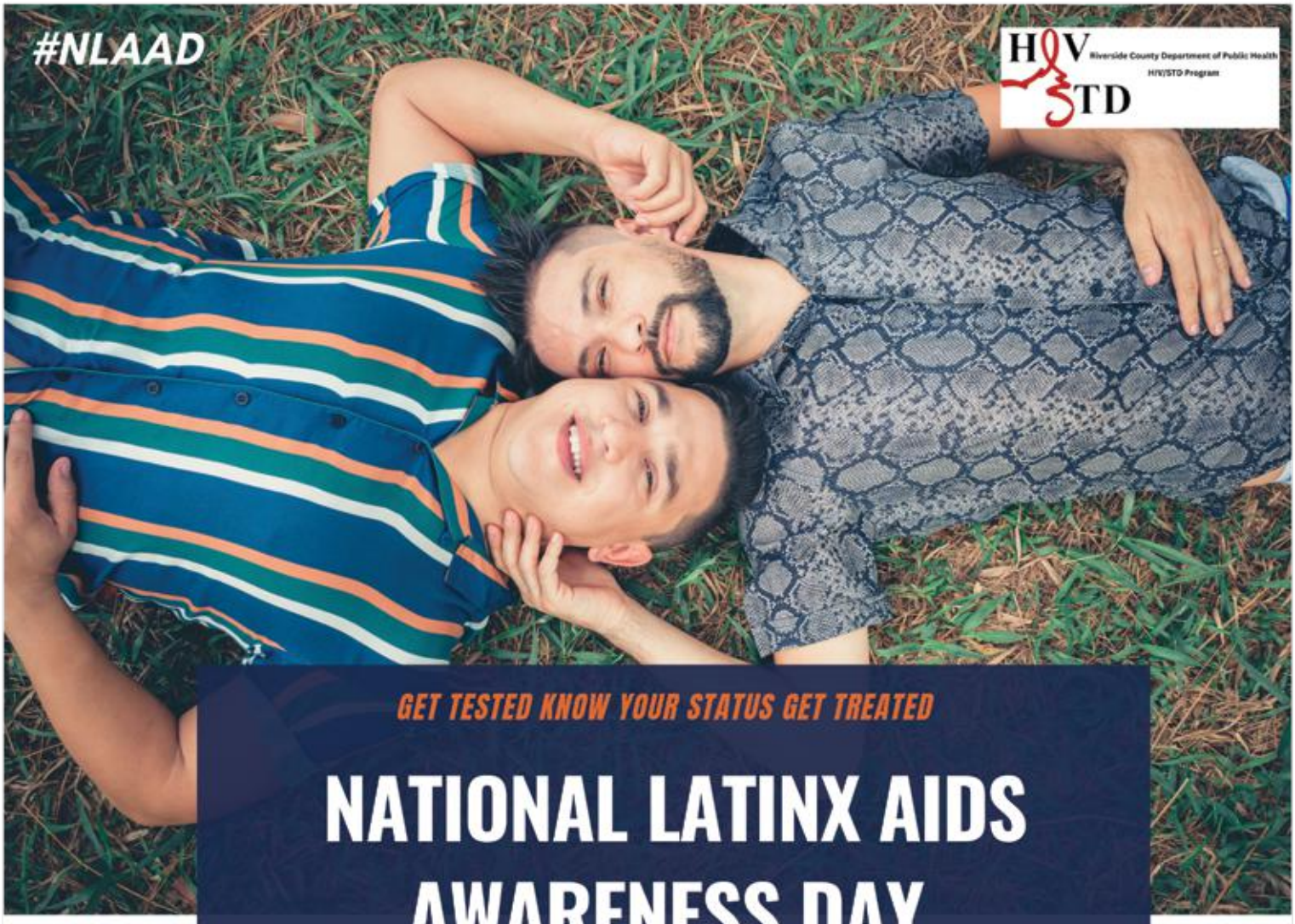
In April of 2023, I was coming home from a vacation in the Panhandle when we stopped at a rest area in Okaloosa County, outside of Fort Walton Beach. In my zebra skirt, I chose to use the family, single-use stall next to the women's restroom. As I walked out, a man approached me and asked what business I had in the women's restroom. I knew better than to engage and continued on my way. He followed and vocalized how disgusting he thought I was. Another man joined him. My pace quickened until I grabbed my partner and said we needed to leave quickly.

I spent the next 30 minutes in the car looking out the back window to see if we were being followed. I called my mom once my hands steadied. My mom asked me: "What makes him think he could do something like that?" All I could think about was the anti-LGBTQ and specifically anti-trans legislation that gave him the right and audacity: Florida's House Bill 1069, Senate Bill 254, HB 1521, SB 266, SB 1580. But what I said was, "I don't know mom."

Four months later, I graduated with both my master's degrees, packed my car and moved to Southern California in seek of a safer environment for me and my partner. I proudly work as the executive director of Fraternity House, a residential care facility for the chronically ill, giving compassionate accommodations to vulnerable individuals living with HIV/AIDS. There are many things I love and miss about the South, but the hateful rhetoric and oppressive laws are not among those. Queer Southerners deserve better. I know I did.

Thankfully, many of them, including my mother, have changed. I hope to see a day when those "many" grow into a majority, and I feel safe enough to not shrink or contort. My pride in being transgender is unwavering.

**Anti-hate rhetoric begins with pride in ourselves *and* our communities.**




GET TESTED KNOW YOUR STATUS GET TREATED

# NATIONAL LATINX AIDS AWARENESS DAY

October 15 — 15 de octubre

#NLAAD is a day dedicated to increasing awareness about the impact of HIV on Hispanic/Latino communities, breaking down stigma, and working together to advocate for HIV testing, prevention, and treatment. Take charge of your health by getting tested for HIV and learning about prevention methods like PrEP.

#NLAAD es un día dedicado a aumentar la conciencia sobre el impacto del VIH en las comunidades hispanas/latinas, romper el estigma y trabajar juntos para abogar por las pruebas, la prevención y el tratamiento del VIH. Tome control de su salud haciéndose la prueba del VIH y aprendiendo sobre métodos de prevención como la PrEP.

**VISIT RIVCOHIVAIDS.ORG TO ORDER A FREE HIV SELF-TEST KIT**

**VISITE RIVCOHIVAIDS.ORG PARA SOLICITAR UN KIT DE AUTOPRUEBA DE VIH GRATUITO**

# HAPPY HALLOWEEN AND HAPPY PALM SPRINGS PRIDE!

## The social calendar will be jam-packed with events and activities for the coming weeks, months, seasons. Start your list. Plan your outfits, and schedule and celebrate!

**Greater Palm Springs Pride will kick off with a huge slate of activities. This year's theme is Drag Now! Drag Forever! Check out pspride.org for the details. Here are some highlights of the 37th anniversary celebration:**

**Wednesday, October 11**

**Out on the Walk Art Exhibit**, celebrating the LGBT individuals on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars, will open at Village Green in downtown Palm Springs on National Coming Out Day. The exhibit will run through November 12. This is presented by The LGBTQ+ History and Archives of the Desert, along with Palm Springs Walk of Stars. lgbtqpshistory.org

**Thursday, October 19**

Impala Bar and Grill will host a weekly show with **Anita Treadmill** and **Divas on the Dancefloor,** and this show will benefit Palm Springs Pride. impalapsp.com

**Wednesday, November 1**

Official launch of **Pride Week** with the annual rainbow flag unfurling ceremony at the Jerry Stergios Building from the Stergios Tower at Desert Regional Medical Center.

**Thursday, November 2**




**Paige Turner**, "Drag Me to the 80's," with all live singing at Oscar's Palm Springs. **Varla Jean Merman**, **Deven Green** and **Handsome Ned** will celebrate Pride at Oscar's the following night. Oscars will also have a stage for Pride weekend at their venue. oscarspalmsprings.com

**Friday, November 3**

LGBTQ servicemember **wreath-laying ceremony** at the Hornitos Main Stage, near the Hyatt. A pre-Veterans Day ceremony with veterans' organizations and remarks from dignitaries will honor LGBTQ servicemembers and thank all who have served in the U.S. armed forces.

The annual **Broadway in Drag** competition will move from the Palm Canyon Theatre to the Hornitos Main Stage this year with free admission (VIP tickets available for purchase). Produced by the theatre and hosted by yours truly, Bella da Ball. palmcanyontheatre.org

**Interfaith Pride Kabbalat Shabbat** will be at United Methodist Church of Palm Springs, a pluralistic prayer service with a core of Jewish liturgy. All faith communities are invited.

**Arenas District Pride Weekend Kickoff** at the KGAY 106.5 and White Party Global Stage will feature high-energy DJs and dancing in the streets with house and dance music, food trucks and outdoor beverage lounges.

**Drag-A-Licious** —*RuPaul's Drag Race* official drag show with scheduled performances by Lady Camden, Willam, Jorgeous and Kimora Blac, hosted by Ethylina Canne — will be at the Margaritaville Resort. leparties.com

**Saturday, November 4**




Hosted by Palm Springs Front Runners and Walkers, the **Pride 5K Run and Walk** will start Saturday morning through the historic neighborhood of Old Las Palmas, West Chino Drive and Belardo Road. Proceeds benefit The LGBT Community Center of the Desert and Transgender Health & Wellness Center. Register in advance. palmspringspriderun.com

The **Community Stage** on Palm Canyon at Tahquitz will feature over 50 entertainers Saturday and Sunday. Bella da Ball will host this stage with Saturday's performers including A Cabbello men's vocal performance group, drag royalty Sheena Wolfe, Angelique VaGorgeous, Aura Van Dank, Vanity Halston, Anita Treadmill and Divas on the Dance Floor; vocalists Carol Kamenis, Jason Hull, Larry Bennett, Cat Lyn Day. Keisha D and the Hearts of Soul; and DJ Modgirl.

The **Festival Marketplace and Entertainment** will take place downtown on Palm Canyon from Amado to Baristo. Hornitos Main Stage Saturday evening will feature **Idina Menzel**. The youth zone, an exclusive hub for LGBTQ youth, will be in Graffiti Park on Market Street. **Children's Headquarters**, a playful place for infants to pre-teens, will have arts, crafts and games. The **Recovery Oasis**, a welcoming place for sobriety fun, will set up behind the Wellness Pavilion on East Arenas Road, presented by DAP Health. daphealth.org/pride



The Human Rights Campaign **HRC Palm Springs Garden Party** will be Saturday afternoon. oclbps.hrc.org

**DJ Bobby Pool Party** will be at CCBC Resort in Cathedral City. ccbcresort.com **Arenas District official block party** will continue Saturday and Sunday.

**TUFF Party**, inspired by the works of Tom of Finland, will be Saturday evening at newly remodeled and expanded Tool Shed. pstoolshed.com

*RuPaul's Drag Race* fan favorite **Shangela** will appear at Chill Bar outdoor stage. chillbarps.com



## Sunday, November 5

A **pre-parade cardio experience** will be Sunday morning at North Palm Canyon and East Granvia Valmonte with Jase Nagaia.

The **Palm Springs Pride Parade** (with over 200 contingents) will kick off at 10 a.m. in the Uptown Design District at Tachevah and Palm Canyon and travel south, ending at the entrance to the festival at Amado. (Time change is the morning of the parade. Don't forget to "fall back" one hour when you retire Saturday evening). **Granvia Valmonte** will provide commentary at the parade stage. Broadcast reviewing stand will be near Eight4Nine Restaurant with Nicholas Snow. **Deaf Pride** reviewing stand will be north of Amado. Restaurants, including Trio and Eight4Nine, will offer special parade viewing/dining packages.

The **Community Stage** on Palm Canyon at Tahquitz will feature many entertainers including Jackette Knightley, JJ, Mareeka, Kippy Marks, Allan Jensen, Jaime Adrian, Jeffrey Chan, Anita Treadmill and the Divos on the Dance Floor.



Carrying through the drag theme, the grand marshal of the parade will be **James "Gypsy" Haake**, one of the oldest living drag queens in the world. Celebrity grand marshal will be **Trixie Mattel**, singer, actor, winner of *RuPaul's Drag Race* All Stars Season 3, and star of Discovery+ reality renovation show, *Trixie Motel*, right here in Palm Springs. Community grand marshal will be **Ethylina Canne**, actress, hostess, comedian and entertainer.

**Halloween will no doubt be a "five-day weekend" celebration with events at clubs, bars, restaurants, organizations, house parties and casinos.**

**Arenas Celebration** will feature the annual street/block party and outside festivities on Arenas (between Indian Canyon and Calle Encilia) on Sunday, October 29 with a tea dance, live music, costume contest and spooky happenings. The Pussycat Doll's Carmit Bachar, Queen of Electro Luciana, David Hernandez, Jesika von Rabbi, A Cabbello, DJ Galaxy, DJ Modgirl, and Alexander Rodriguez will grace the stage along with Bella da Ball. halloweenpalmsprings.com

Agua Caliente Casino Cathedral City will present **Agua After Dark Halloween Bash** with LA Allstars on Saturday, October 28. aguacalientecasinos.com

**Echoes at Oscar's**, an immersive special-effects séance, will be held Fridays and Saturdays in October, plus Halloween evening. This spine-tingling adventure offers murder mystery, suspense and supernatural colliding. oscarspalmsprings.com

**Full Moon Drum Circle and Celebration** at Ace Hotel will take place Monday, October 30. The drum circle and dancers will be by the pool. Also, every Monday, Bella da Ball will host Bingo in King's Highway Restaurant and Trivia in Amigo Room. acehotel.com/palmsprings

**Out at the Scare** will be Friday, October 13 at the Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival fairgrounds. Check out the spooky glam shows, Plaza Fantazma, Cantina Calacas, Carnival Carnivore haunted house. outatthescare.com




***The Rocky Horror Picture Show*** 48th anniversary tour featuring Barry Bostwick as the original Brad Majors, will be Friday, October 6 at The Show, Agua Caliente Casino, Rancho Mirage. The original unedited movie will be screened, and there will be a live shadow cast and audience participation. Dress up as your favorite character. Props will be available for purchase. Will also be a memorabilia display, artifacts, actual costume from movie, costume contest and more. aguacalientecasinos.com

Riverside County **Scare and Pumpkin Festival** will run weekends through October 31 at the fairgrounds and national date festival in Indio. datefest.org

**Leather Pride** will be October 26-29, presented by Palm Springs Leather Order of the Desert. The official host hotel is Hotel Zoso. Events will be held at The Tool Shed, CCBC, The Barracks, Hotel Zoso, Fuego and Dick's on Arenas. pslod.org/leather-pride

**Revivals After Dark Back Alley** event, benefiting DAP Health and Palm Springs Leather Order of the Desert, will be Friday, October 13 at Revivals Palm Springs. Shopping events will feature resale merchandise, including leather, harnesses, art, books and videos, apparel and toys. revivalsstores.com

**Joshua Tree Music Festival** will be October 5-8, including Sparkle and Swagger Drag Show.



The City of Palm Desert's free **Fall Concerts in the Park** series will run every Thursday in October:

Classic Journey, Oct. 5; The Mighty Untouchables, Oct. 12; Leanna and Miguel, vocalist and conga sensation husband, Oct. 19; 80's Ladies, Oct. 26. The concerts are the launch party for Palm Desert's 50th anniversary, with special event November 18. discoverpalmdesert.com

Desert Ensemble Theater's **Singing with the Desert Stars** will be Friday, October 6 at Palm Springs Cultural Center. This competition teams Broadway veterans and prominent vocalists with non-professional singers who are community leaders and benefits the DET's internship/mentorship and scholarship programs. desertensembletheatre.org

The City of Rancho Mirage will bring back the **certified farmers market** to the Rancho Mirage Community Park every Friday, starting October 6. ranchomirageca.gov

Palm Canyon Theatre's new season will include ***Steel Magnolias***, October 6-15, and ***Rent, The Musical***, October 27-November 12. palmcanyontheatre.org

The new Revolution Stage Company (in the former Desert Rose location) will present ***Mid-Century Moderns***, a new musical, October 6-November 26' and the world premiere of ***Not In Front of the Children***, a moving and hilarious one-man musical October 12-29. revolutionstagecompany.com




CVVIM (Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine) **Drag Me to Giving Under the Stars** will be Saturday, October 7 at a private home in Rancho Mirage. Bella da Ball will be the emcee with entertainers Marina Mac, Sassy Ross, Vanity Halston and vocalist Bill Lohnes. cvvim.org

The Foundation of Palm Springs Unified School District will present **One Night Only, Bollywood** on Saturday, October 7 at Palm Springs Air Museum. psusdfoundation.net

REAF-PS (**The Richmond/Ermet Aid Foundation**) will present another charity fundraiser Saturday, October 7 at a private home in the movie colony, featuring Charles Herrera. reaf.org



**Ty Herndon** will perform Saturday, October 7 at Palm Springs Cultural Center. psculturalcenter.org




**Pride under the Pines** will be Saturday, October 7 at Rustic Theatre in Idyllwild. Presented by PS HomeBoys and hosted by Anita Rose, featuring Shann Carr, Jason Stuart and a movie screening of *Behind The Candelabra*. prideunderthepines.com

The Rosie Casals and Pancho Gonzalez **Tennis and Cultura Fiesta** will be Saturday, October 7 at the Palm Desert Civic Center Park tennis courts. lovelovetennisfoundation.com

The seventh annual **East Coachella Valley Pride** will be on consecutive Saturdays, October 7 (resource fair and festival, Coachella Valley Gardens and Park) and October 14 (youth pool party in La Quinta and Baile con Orgullo at The Center Coachella). email ecvpride@gmail.com

**Highway 62 Open Studio Art Tours** will take place October 7-8, 14-15 and 21-22. Free admission to the studios in the high desert, plus self-guided tour of studios across the Morongo Basin communities-Morongo Valley, Yucca Valley, Pioneertown, Rimrock, Flamingo Heights, Landers, Joshua Tree, 29 Palms and WonderValley. There were 192 artists at 134 studios involved last year. mbcac.org/pages/hwy-62-open-studio-art-tour

**Coachella Valley Filipino Festival** will be Sunday, October 8 at Palm Springs Cultural Center. The day will include live performances, cultural marketplace, art and culture exhibitions and demonstrations, educational booths and food paradise. Free admission. psculturalcenter.org

Palm Springs Public Library Foundation announced Armistead Maupin will headline the **Pride on the Page Book Festival**. The legendary author will appear Friday, October 13 at Palm Springs Cultural Center to kick off the festival. Events on October 14 include 10 panels with 40+ LGBTQ and affirming authors and their books in discussions. prideonthepage.org



The **Coachella Valley Firebirds** hockey team home opener will be Friday, October 13 at Acrisure Arena. Designated theme nights include Pride on January 19 and Mardi Gras on February 3. cvfirebirds.com

Great Autos car club will hold their **Tikis and Tbirds Casual Concours** charity car show activities October 13-15 at venues including the Indian Canyons Golf Resort, Porsche Palm Springs, Desert Princess Country Club, Rick's Cafe celebrating everything Hawaiian and Ford Thunderbird. Check website for details, times, locations. greatautos.org



AAP - Food Samaritans' **Evening Under the Stars**-Genesis, Back to Our Roots, will be Saturday, October 14 at a private estate in Palm Springs. Lily Tomlin is special guest. aapfoodsamaritans.org

Agua Caliente Casino Cathedral City will celebrate a fall festival **Octobeerfest** on Saturday, October 14 with beer vendors, German food, band and games. aguacalientecasinos.com/agua-event/oktobeerfest-2023/

**Randy Rainbow** will perform Sunday, October 15 at McCallum Theatre in Palm Desert. randyrainbow.com.

The Roost Lounge Cathedral City will host the **Pretty in Pink Dinner Show** benefiting the Desert Cancer Foundation on Sunday, October 15. Pepper MaShay will be the special entertainer with host Ethylina Canne in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness month. theroostcc.com

**Sandra Bernhard**, "Lady of the Canyon," will appear Monday, October 16 at Oscar's Palm Springs. oscarspalmsprings.com

**A Cabbello's** musical kickoff to Modernism will be Wednesday, October 18 at Agua Caliente Casino Cascade Lounge Palm Springs. acabbello.org

**Modernism Weekend** will be October 19-22. Watch for big hair on top of the tour buses and give me a wave! modernismweek.com

**Leslie Jordan'** star will be unveiled Friday, October 20 in the new downtown City Park. walkofthestars.com

The LGBTQ Community Center of the Desert's annual **Center Stage Gala** will be Friday, October 20 at Palm Springs Air Museum. Special guest will be Cecilia Gentili, advocate, organizer and storyteller working at the intersections of sex work, immigrant rights, incarceration issues and trans liberation. I salute The Center for all they do and am honored to be an award recipient this year. thecentercv.org

**Drag Queen Story Hour** with Bella da Ball will return to Palm Springs Library on Tuesday, October 24. What a perfect evening to also view Craig Mann's *Art of Drag* exhibit in the same building. palmspringslibrary.org




The **Perez Art District's** monthly art walk event will move to the Fourth Fridays, namely October 27. Witness the creative process across a variety of disciplines, including painting, sculpture, photography and mixed media. The event will include the working studios of about 40 artists, plus art galleries and antiques dealers in Cathedral City. theperezartdistrict.com

dap health equity walk

walk out loud for health equity

**DAP Health Equity Walk** will be Saturday, October 28 at Ruth Hardy Park. A health and wellness village will be offered. healthequitywalk.org

**Taste of On The Mark** will be Saturday, October 28 at On The Mark Palm Springs. A variety of foods and drinks will be available. onthemarkpalmsprings.com

The annual **Champion of Hospitality Awards Gala** from Visit Greater Palm Springs will be Monday, October 30 at Renaissance Esmeralda Resort in Indian Wells. The evening will salute and celebrate the nominees and winners, and include a silent auction for the Tourism Foundation, reception, dinner and awards presentation. visitgreaterps.com. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians **Cultural Plaza and Museum** opens Friday, November 3. aguacaliente-nsn.gov

# OFFICIAL PALM SPRINGS PRIDE EVENT

## SAT NOV 4TH 8PM-2AM

## DJ'S:

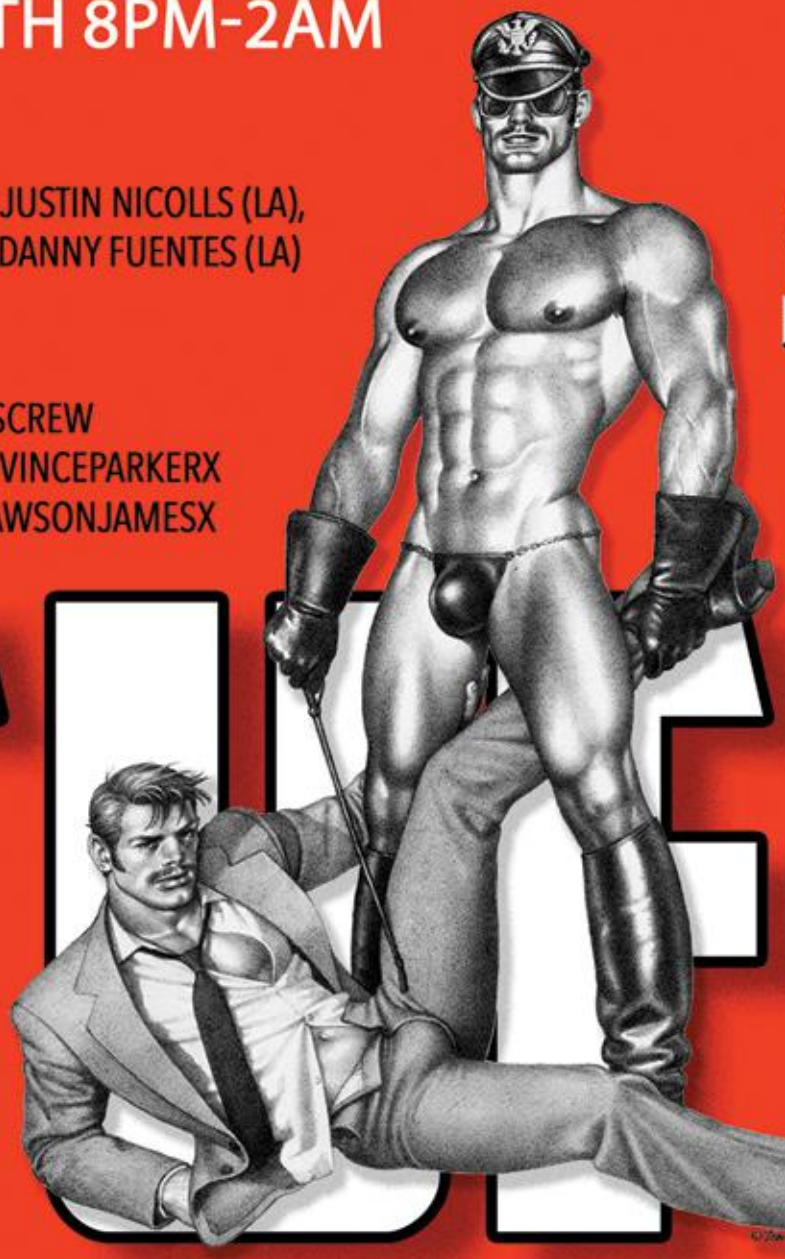
BOOMER BANKS (NYC), JUSTIN NICOLLS (LA),
DEREK MONTEIRO (LA), DANNY FUENTES (LA)

## DANCERS:

IG LINKS: @MR.CORKSCREW
@SILVERBACK1121 @VINCEPARKERX
@JAKENICOLAX @LAWSONJAMESX

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5PM - 1:00 AM
SATURDAY OCT 28
5PM - 1:00 AM



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DANCERS
DJ COREY D
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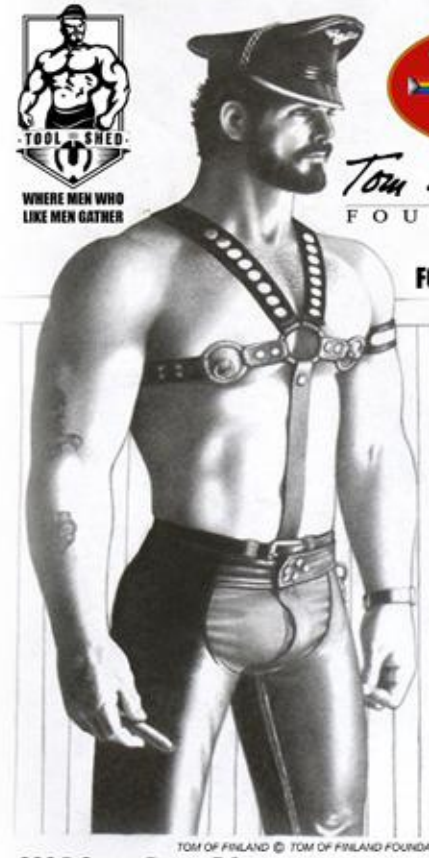
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Palm Springs Leather Pride

# BLUF
## Palm Springs



Saturday, October 28th 2023
Tool Shed Patio 7pm-12a
Bring Out Your Best BLUF Gear

# OH, THE HORROR OF POSSESSION MOVIES

I remember seeing the edited-for-TV version of ***The Exorcist*** when I was 13. It was scary stuff for sure. But nothing prepared me for the shock of renting it on VHS a few years later. The edited parts had always left me wondering how Chris MacNeill (**Ellen Burstyn**) had blood on her face in one scene, as there was no context for this.

My teenage eyes got, well, an eyeful. Masturbation with a cross, anyone? Shudder. And poor father Damien Karras (**Jason Miller**) losing his mother, after she wondered "why you do this to me, Dimi?" But he was the one left questioning what his mother was up to in Hell. According to the demon **Pazuzu**, it had something to do with taking up the skin flute. The demon befriended Regan (**Linda Blair**) as **Captain Howdy** and proceeded to possess the ever-living crap out of her! Until Father Merrin (**Max Von Sydow**) and original hot priest Karras arrive on scene to see if the power of Christ compels 'Ol Pazuzu to get the eff out of Regan.

I have a few real-life connections to this Hollywood production. No, I wasn't possessed! Although it would make a lot of sense, though. Anyhoo, my mother lived in a house at the top of the stairs in Georgetown as a young woman. Plus, one of my uncles worked at the gas station at the bottom of them where Karras ended up at movie's end. Sorry for the 50-year-old spoiler. Meanwhile a few of my other uncles would climb the stone wall, near that infamous staircase.



When I worked at Warwick's Books in La Jolla during the 1990s, actress **Mercedes McCambridge**, who supplied the voice of the demon, shopped in the store. I had a flair for ties, and she happened to come in when I was wearing one with her ***Giant*** co-star James Dean on it. She broke down and cried, lamenting how she still missed him. Do I get street cred points for making the voice of the Devil cry? I'd like to think so. But I felt bad, as she was a genuinely nice lady and always sought me out at work and we'd talk about old Hollywood and her experiences working in it.

Almost five decades have passed since that single film launched a franchise, including the upcoming ***The Exorcist: Believer***, and spawned a thousand imitations. Some of them are good, some meh, and others are the stuff that camp is made of. Let's take a look at them, shall we?

## THE GOOD

***The Exorcist*** was the film that started off the possession genre in the 1970s and beyond; it remains the benchmark for exorcism and possession films ever since. I love that Warner Brothers decided that Christmas Day 1973 was an "excellent day for an exorcism." That's gangsta!

And it proved to be the gift that kept on giving … people nightmares. A 365-degree head spin, check! Split pea soup vomit, double check! A polarizing movie-going event with people fainting in the aisles? Check, check and check! The film, directed by **William Friedkin**, racked up 10 Oscar nominations, winning two for sound and one for the script written by the book's author **William Peter Blatty**.

Here's a few fun facts: **Janet Leigh** was approached about having young **Jamie Lee Curtis** portray Regan, but she declined. Von Sydow was only 43 and playing the 80-year-old priest. The film, considered to be one of the scariest ever committed to celluloid, and is listed at No. 3 on AFI's "The 100 Most Thrilling American Films" list. Max

On paper, ***Beetlejuice*** (**Michael Keaton**) might seem like an odd choice for this list. But he is a bio exorcist after all, albeit of the "learn to throw your voice, fool your friends, fun at parties" variety. Case in point, having Delia Dietz (**Catherine O'Hara)** and her dinner guests perform "Day-O." He also delivers the line "I've seen *The Exorcist* about a 167 times, and it keeps getting funnier every single time I see it." Relatable. Rental

***The Exorcist III*** is very underrated and has one of the best jump scares ever, involving a nun and a

pair of hedge shears. **Jason Miller** returns as Father Karras as we last saw him, possessed AF, and **George C. Scott** is on board as Detective Kinderman, played by **Lee J. Cobb** in the original. Tubi

***The Haunting in Connecticut*** chronicles a young cancer patient (**Kyle Gallner**) whose mom and dad (**Virginia Madsen** and **Martin Donovan**) rent a house that was once a funeral home. Soon enough, he's besieged by visions of the undead, and even spews ectoplasm, which leads to an exorcism by a priest (**Elias Koteas**) in this family drama/scarefest.

And there was a sequel, the GPS-challenged ***The Haunting in Connecticut II: Ghost of Georgia***, which I'll include because there's an exorcism/baptism-type scene on a child (**Emily Alyn Lind**). Also, it's my column. There are three words that make it a showstopper: **Chad. Michael. Murray.** He knows his way around the gym. So, add two more: Hubba. Hubba.

The Wyrick family buys a historic house on the cheap — and surprise — two psychic sisters (**Abigail Spencer** and **Katee Sackhoff**) see dead people. There's great jump scares and effects for the spirits throughout. Both are "based on true events," so the real estate mantra of "location, location, location" applies here. Hulu and Max

Another ripped from the headlines effort, ***The Exorcism of Emily Rose***, is my favorite possession movie after *The Exorcist*. Why, you may ask? Uh, it stars **Laura Linney** as a lawyer defending a priest (**Tom Wilkinson**) after his exorcism of Emily Rose (**Jennifer Carpenter**) results in her death. Rental

***The Last Exorcism*** is a found footage account of cleric Cotton Marcus (**Patrick Fabian**), who has been fleecing people experiencing pseudo supernatural events for years. To cop to what he's been up to, he films a documentary of what he believes to be another case of the girl (**Ashley Bell**) who cried Satan. But this time, it turns out to be true! Despite its finite title, it wasn't, because it had a sequel. Hulu and Pluto TV

Chances are if **Patrick Wilson** is starring in a movie for director **James Wan**, there's gonna be somebody getting their demon on. It happened to his on-screen son, **Ty Simpkins,** during ***Insidious*** and then he got all Exorcist in ***The Conjuring***, trying to free **Lili Taylor** from evil forces and to prove if you can Shout out demonic bile out of a bedsheet! Max

Elevated horror flicks have also gotten in on the possession trend. **Toni Collette** gave new meaning to giving head by sawing hers off in ***Hereditary***. Black Phillip proved to be the G.O.A.T. — well just the Devil in disguise as one, really — in ***The Witch***, by bewitching young Thomasina (**Anya-Taylor Joy**). And in ***Paranormal Activity 2***, I felt possessed to want to throw the remote control at the TV if they had ANOTHER shot of the self-powered swimming-pool cleaner! Riveting cinema! Max, Max, Goose, I mean, Amazon Prime

***Prey for the Devil*** gives a different take on the tried-and-true formula, as Sister Ann (**Jacqueline Byers**) longs to break into the exorcism boys club at — where else? — an exorcism school! Two points for originality and none for Gryffindor. Starz

***The Pope's Exorcist*** had me glued to the screen, with **Russell Crowe** in the title role, with a moody feel throughout the film. But I became unstuck by the Indiana Jones/*DaVinci Code* style-ending, obviously setting up a sequel. Netflix

I'm going to include ***The Exorcist: Believer*** onto the good list sight unseen, based on the strength of its trailer, which looks ah-maze-balls! However, I'm repurposing my Tropical Storm Hilary mantra of "Hope for the best but prepare for the worst."

Back in May it was reported that the film got negative feedback during test screenings in New York City, and as mentioned in last month's column, director **David Gordon Green** had a spotty track record with his retconned ***Halloween*** trilogy.

But let's switch from Negative Nancy to a more Positive Patty approach. Given that they've had months before its release date, we could get the movie equivalent of turning a frown upside down for moviegoers.

Here's the deets about the movie. **Burstyn** returns to the franchise for the first time since 1973, in a tale of dual possessions of two girls **Lidya Jewett** and **Olivia Marcum**. One of the parents, **Leslie Odom Jr.**, seeks her out because of her previous experience with daughter Regan. However, **Blair** is not among the cast for this reboot. And that makes sense, as they wouldn't want to blow their split pea soup wad with both legacy characters appearing in the first of three new movies. It was moved up a week to October 6, due to **Taylor Swift**'s ***Eras*** concert film being released on its original date of October 13. In the cinema

## THE MEH

***Exorcist II: The Heretic*** is considered one of the worst sequels in cinematic history, and for good reason; it was nowhere near the fright fest of the original. The scariest part of the movie is Regan (**Blair** reprising her role) doing a jazz tap routine! Eek! There's lots of hypnosis scenes between Blair, **Louise Fletcher** and **Richard Burton** as a priest this time around. Oh, and there's locusts. Tons and tons of locusts. Add in a weird theme song and a stranger still seduction scene between Father Lamont (Burton) and Pazuzu posing as jailbait Regan, and you have the result of the script going through six revisions. However, I'm glad the unintentionally hilarious line "I was possessed by a demon. Oh, it's OK. He's gone!" made the final cut. Because I use it to get out of most social situations. Max

***Dominion: Prequel to the Exorcist*** has one of the more interesting stories of getting to the big screen in film history. There are two versions of the film, with ***Exorcist: The Beginning*** being the other one that also has **Stellan Skarsgård** in the role of Father Merrin, decades before the events in 1973.

Now here's where it gets strange, the two prequels were released one year apart. ***The Beginning*** experienced behind-the-scenes troubles, with director **Paul Schrader**'s vision not lining up with what Warner Brothers Studio had in mind. Sorry 'bout it. So, they insisted on heavy editing and reshoots, which Schrader didn't want to do, and he was fired from the project. They brought in director **Renny Harlin** and the film was remade from scratch as ***Dominion***. I need a scorecard to follow this. The short of the long is both films tanked at the box office and garnered negative reviews. Peacock and rental

I suppose that ***Evil Dead Rising*** is a worthy successor in the ***Evil Dead*** franchise, but was light on scares, and heavy on gross-out

moments! The story of a mother (A**lyssa Sutherland**) and her three children (**Morgan Davies**, **Gabrielle Echols**, and **Nell Fisher**), who are so obnoxious in their opening scene that a demonic possession would seem like a vacation for her to get away from them! Add her sister (Lily Sullivan) to the fray and you have a very by-the-numbers approach to the genre, but I will give it points for switching up the locale from a rural setting to an urban one. Max

***Eli Roth Presents: The Legion of Exorcists*** features one of the worst wigs ever committed to film in a re-enactment. It makes Travel Channel recreations of hauntings, like *My Horror Story,* look like Emmy-worthy endeavors. I couldn't even get through a whole episode. I blame that wig! Max

## THE CAMPY

***Beyond The Door*** has the distinction of having the Devil himself narrating the opening credits — what a coup given his busy schedule! But he fits possessing TV's other *Nanny*, **Juliet Mills**, minus *The Professor* onto his docket. Mills plays Jessica, who's pregnant with her third child, but I'm surprised CPS wasn't called on her for the first two! She leaves them in the car while she leisurely grocery shops, lets son Ken drink Campbell's Split Pea Soup — naturally — out of the can throw a straw for nourishment, and daughter Gail is foul-mouthed and the best part of the movie, honestly. As is the horrible dubbing, though it's an Italian production to cash in on the popularity of ***The Exorcist*** the year before. AMC+

***Abby*** comes to us from the heyday of blaxploitation films. So of course, it stars **William Marshall** (***Blacula***) as an exorcist/archaeologist who takes on Eshu — bless you — the demon of sexuality, who's possessing his daughter-in-law Abby (**Carol Speed**). It's kinda his fault as he unleashes the demon while on an excavation in Africa and brings the bad juju home with him. Not the souvenir Abby was expecting, as she goes from a mild-mannered church-goer to vulgar entity. Her possession scenes are hilarious and ratchet up the camp factor. YouTube

The only way to enjoy ***Ruby*** is by watching the RiffTrax version. Otherwise, it's like a root canal without Novocain. But that's not to say it doesn't have its goofy moments. **Piper Laurie**, fresh off an Oscar nomination as Margaret White in ***Carrie***, stars as Ruby, the likes-to-booze-it-up drive-in theatre owner. As one would expect, the spirit of her dead mobster husband Nicky (Sal Vecchio) seeks revenge for his untimely death. And he accomplishes this by possessing her mute daughter Leslie (Janet Baldwin) and cut-rate ***The Exorcist*** fun ensues!

***Evil Dead 2*** is basically a remake of the first ***Evil Dead*** movie, but with a bigger budget and slapstick comedy melding with horror. Ash (**Bruce Campbell**) once again — or for the first time, really — must deal with the repercussions of the audio version of recitations from The Necronomicon AKA the Book of the Dead, being played and unleashing dark forces in a remote cabin setting. What follows are his possessed girlfriend getting her head lopped off by a chainsaw, which Ash uses to replace his missing arm, and a character swallowing a projectile eyeball. I hear eyeball pairs well with, well, nothing. Tubi

Even some venerable franchises have gone the possession route. ***Amityville II: The Possession*** even has the word in the subtitle. The Montellis are not funny on paper, with Burt Young as an abusive father, but it features such hammy acting that this movie cannot be considered kosher. Twenty minutes in, **Rutanya Alda** (Carol Ann in *Mommie Dearest*) asks aloud, "What's happening to us?" Um, your family ain't putting the fun in dysfunctional, there Ru. Oldest son Sonny (**Jack Magner**) gets possessed by a demon talking to him through his Walkman headphones. Oh, the 1980s! Peacock

***A Nightmare on Elm Street 2: Freddy's Revenge***, also known as the gay ***Nightmare on Elm Street*** movie has final boy, and literal scream queen, Jesse (**Mark Patton**) movie, **Freddy Krueger** (**Robert Englund**) wanting to get into the real world by using the teen as his vessel. But Jesse's possession explanation to his girlfriend Lisa (**Kim Meyers**) is that "He's inside me, and he wants to take me again!" Gay! Max

***Jason Goes to Hell: The Final Friday*** circumvented the hockey masked killer (**Kane Hodder**) offing teens and veered into bonkers territory with him being blown up in the movie's beginning. This leads to his evil spirit being able to jump from victim to victim. If that weren't enough weirdness for ya, it also features **Leslie Jordan** as a straight fry cook. Max

**Blair** returned to her possessed roots in ***Repossessed***, as satanic housewife Nancy Aglet whose exorcism is to be performed by **Leslie Nielsen** and televised live by televangelist **Ned Beatty**. Did I mention this was a spoof on the original film? Do I have to after that description? Rental

## CUT. PRINT. THAT'S A WRAP!

As you can see, movies involving possession and exorcisms have a storied history in Hollywood, and that trend will likely continue for years to come. I've watched so many movies about possession, it's enough to make my head swim, or at least do a 360-degree turn all on its own. Did I need to revisit some I've seen before? No. My excuse? The Devil made me do it. Until next time, that's all the news that's fit to print.



**Tim Parks has been a freelance writer for 21 years, a columnist for 16 years, and part of Team Rage since 2009. He is the award-winning author of *The Scheme of Things*, available on Amazon.com.**



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## LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER
# UNVEILS PERFORMING ARTS SEASON

The Los Angeles LGBT Center has revealed five plays and 15 special events that will make up its 2023–24 performing arts season. The schedule includes co-produced plays by regional theatre groups, campy true -crime comedies, and a musical by Tony Award winner Jason Robert Brown.

"After welcoming 6,000 patrons to the Lily Tomlin/Jane Wagner Cultural Arts Center last season, we're excited to announce our new lineup celebrating collaborations with 14 local arts organizations. Combined, the next season offers over 100 performances showcasing diverse queer stories and communities on center stage," said **Jonathan Muñoz-Proulx**, Los Angeles LGBT Center artistic director.

Performances began last month at the Davidson/Valentini Theatre with *The Real Black Swann: Confessions of America's First Black Drag Queen.*



***Lottie Plachett Took a Hatchet***, co-produced with Outside in Theatre, can be seen through **Monday, October 30**. Justin Elizabeth Sayre, a fixture of the downtown cabaret scene in New York City, wrote this hilarious, scintillatingly campy play full of ax murders, sexual depravity and the installation of a toilet. Based on the infamous murder case of Lizzie Borden, Lottie Plachett, an unsuspecting spinster, stands accused of brutally murdering her father and stepmother. As the case unfolds, Lottie must confront the truth of what happened that fateful day and what, if any, part she had to play in it. But did Lottie actually take up a hatchet? Could a woman actually be capable of such a heinous crime? That's for the audience and the jury to decide as this comedy unfolds.

**Next,** ***Frozen Fluid*** will run in November and December. In 2024, the center will present two more productions: ***THREE***, co-produced with Playwrights' Arena, and ***Songs for a New World***, co-produced with Celebration Theatre.

The Renberg Theatre will host an array of special events and one-night-only programming, including an unapologetically queer Nöel Coward adaptation ***The Cowards***, a chamber music program with the **Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra** and **Mariachi Arcoiris de Los Ángeles**. Fan favorites like **The MisMatch Game** and the **Trans Chorus of Los Angeles** will return. **lalgbtcenter.org/events**



## AN ELECTRIFYING NEW MOTOWN MUSICAL STRAIGHT FROM BROADWAY

The thrilling musical ***Ain't Too Proud*** traces The Temptations' amazing journey from the streets of Detroit to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, and features Grammy-winning songs and Tony-winning choreography. With their distinctive dancing routines and identifiable harmonies, they soared to the top of the charts, producing an astonishing 42 Top 10 hits, 14 of which peaked at No. 1. In 2017, Billboard Magazine named them as the greatest R&B group of all time.

The rest is history — how they met, the groundbreaking heights they hit, and how personal and political conflicts threatened to tear the group apart as the United States fell into civil unrest. This thrilling story of brotherhood, family, loyalty and betrayal is set to the beat of the group's treasured hits, including "My Girl," "Just My Imagination," "Get Ready" and "Papa Was a Rolling Stone."

After breaking house records at Berkeley Rep, The Kennedy Center, Ahmanson Theatre and Princess of Wales Theatre in Toronto, *Ain't Too Proud* opened on Broadway in March 2019, where it continued to play to sold-out audiences and broke the Imperial Theatre's box office record. The first national tour launched in December 2021 at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. This dazzling production now brings the untold story of the legendary quintet to audiences across the country including **Segerstrom Hall** in Costa Mesa from **Tuesday, October 17 to Sunday, October 29**. **scfta.org**



## NEW PRODUCTION TRAVELS BACK TO A 1976 DISCO-ERA LOS ANGELES

***Cindy & The Disco Ball: The Musical*** is getting a new production from Garry Marshall Theatre and Turk H. Burton Productions. This retro retelling of the *Cinderella* story whisks us back to the sun-kissed days and lava lamp nights of 1976 with an original musical score that blends the sounds of disco rhythms and Broadway musical magic. It tells the story of Cindy Fontaine, a teenager determined to be heard in the high school scene after being left to deal with a messed-up family life while her father is serving in Vietnam. Cindy's cosmic guide through this coming-of-age musical is a fabulously magical Soul Sister who gives new meaning to making an entrance. When the school district threatens to cut arts funding, Cindy and the students at Pacific Palisades High must beat the clock (that's about to strike midnight) to save the arts.

"We are thrilled to be bringing a fully realized production of *Cindy* to the Garry Marshall Theatre this October. The 1970s was a defining time in art and fashion and change, and 1976 allows for our characters to really re-invent this Cinderella story. Rachael, Lori and I all grew up with different California beach experiences. And a high school near the beach is the perfect backdrop for the action, activism, humor, captivating musical moments that make *Cindy & The Disco Ball* really jump off the stage," director **Joseph Leo Bwarie** said about the return of the production with an expanded cast, additional songs and a full production redesign. "It's all very exciting."

The limited engagement will run from **Fridays through Sundays, October 7 through October 29. garrymarshalltheatre.org**

## REGIONAL PREMIERE
### OF A NEW PRODUCTION OF A
# SMASH-HIT MUSICAL

***On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio and Gloria Estefan*** will be presented by La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts and Mccoy Rigby Entertainment from **Friday, October 6 through Sunday, October 29**.

This inspiring true story about heart, heritage and two people who believed in their talent —and each other — has already won the hearts of audiences and critics alike. It is the exhilarating original musical based on the extraordinary life of 26-time Grammy Award-winning husband-and-wife team Gloria and Emilio Estefan, with a score made up of some of the most loved and iconic songs of the past quarter-century including "Rhythm is Gonna Get You," "Conga," "Get On Your Feet," "Don't Want To Lose You Now," "1-2-3" and "Coming Out of the Dark."

**Luis Salgado**, who performed in the original Broadway production, will direct and choreograph the show.

"We are absolutely thrilled that our musical will once again be shared with audiences across the United States in this brand-new production of *On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio & Gloria Estefan* led by Luis Salgado," Gloria and Emilio Estefan said. "We've had tremendous fun sharing our story on the stage since our show first hit Broadway in 2015, and it is our hope that we can continue to inspire and uplift people with its celebratory message, especially at a time when we all need it so much."

Salgado said: "This story exemplifies the American dream through the eyes and work ethic of Cuban immigrants. The Estefans have given us permission to dare to dream bigger. They allowed their truth to resonate through their music, penetrating all of us, whether you're Latine or not. This joy is a gift we want to give to our audiences. We are passionate about opening the door of representation on this tour and nurturing a diverse family both backstage and on stage, with creative team members who are joining us from around the world." **lamiradatheatre.com**






# MORE EXCITING PERFORMANCES

It's time to put the "camp" back in campaign! America's favorite musical satirist Randy Rainbow is running for president and he's taking his musical comedy campaign on the road with **The Randy Rainbow for President Tour**. He will perform at **The Magnolia** in San Diego on **Saturday, October 14.** The four-time Emmy- and Grammy-nominated singer, comedian and *The New York Times* best-selling author will take on the hottest topics and skewer politicos of the day as only he can (now as a presidential candidate, sort of), bringing his most viral video song parodies to life onstage. Featuring live accompaniment by Broadway musicians, the show will also include live audience interaction and original songs written by Rainbow with Marc Shaiman (*Hairspray, Mary Poppins Returns*) and Alan Menken (*Little Shop of Horrors, Beauty and the Beast*). **randyrainbow.com/tour**

Now on stage at **The Alleyway** in downtown Murrieta is the world premiere of ***Rosetta and the Mt. Calvary Missionary Club*** written by playwright Gwen Wright. The story revolves around five ladies and a young girl caught in an unfortunate and dangerous situation, in the South during the 1950s. The women find strength, compassion, humor and forgiveness, changing their lives forever. Wright has written several screen and stage plays, and her work has been performed across the United States. She has completed three films and collaborated with filmmakers as a writer and director. The play is presented by the Murrieta Arts Council, directed by Hollywood veteran director Gregory Bach, and produced by Carol Hernandez, Murrieta Valley Unified School District's retired educator and Visual and Performing Arts coordinator. **macarts.org**

Prepare to have your funny bone tickled when comedian **Nikki Glaser** brings The Good Girl Tour to **Balboa Theatre** in San Diego on **Saturday, October 21**. Glaser is considered one of the funniest female voices in comedy today. For nearly two decades at clubs across the country and as the host of three hit podcasts, Glaser has been honing her shockingly honest, no-holds-barred style of comedy. Glaser headlined her first HBO comedy special, Good Clean Filth, in 2022. The special has been nominated for a Critics Choice Award for Best Comedy Special. Glaser has had multiple stand-up specials and late-night television appearances in which she jokes about her most humiliating moments as a woman in the modern world. Her past and current struggles with anorexia, depression and anxiety are fair game in both her stand-up and in-depth interviews. **sandiegotheatres.org**

Before he was an Emmy-winning TV star, Mandy Patinkin was already a Tony Award winner and well-respected Broadway star, most known for playing Che in the original *Evita*. ***Mandy Patinkin in Concert: Being Alive*** will present the acclaimed actor/singer/storyteller in his most electrifying role: concert performer. *Being Alive* is a collection of many of Mandy's favorite Broadway and classic American tunes including Irving Berlin, Stephen Sondheim, Cole Porter and Harry Chapin. Patinkin will present a dazzling musical journey you'll never forget. Don't miss Broadway's master songman, accompanied by Adam Ben-David on piano, in his long-awaited return to **Segerstrom Center** on **Thursday, November 2**. **scfta.org**

# THE ADDAMS FAMILY

## PROMISES QUEER FAMILY FUN FOR HALLOWEEN

*The Addams Family* has captivated and entertained us for decades, and the live musical adaptation has made its way back to San Diego. Though the kooky and upside-down family might not be the first thing you'd think of for a musical, the show takes on an original storyline when Wednesday Addams (**Lena Ceja**) falls in love with the polar opposite Lucas Beineke (**w**). From there, the story takes us through what it means to love those who are different than yourself while maintaining who you are all the same.

For director **Carlos Mendoza**, the show is also a family affair. His partner, **Ryan Fahey**, is portraying Lucas's father, Mal, and his twin brother, **Mauricio Mendoza**, is playing Gomez.

Carlos and Ryan met in 2004 while they were working as singers for Oceania cruises. They were assigned as roommates and hit it off, but ended up going their separate ways for a while after the show. Nineteen years later, they consider their relationship crazy, but love the opportunities they get to continue working together.

"Ryan works a 9 to 5, and to get him to do shows is always a little tricky," Mendoza said in an interview with *The RAGE Monthly*. "I showed him the [*Addams Family*] script and I said this would be so fun for you to do. Not only do you get to work with me, but we get to work together. But the likelihood of my own twin brother and Ryan being able to be on stage together is really almost nonexistent."

Fahey is also joined by his best friend, **Alexis Zimmerman**, who plays his on-stage wife, Alice. "We met as love interests years ago doing *Hello Dolly*," Fahey said. "We remained friends and now we're playing love interests again at a different stage of life. She's a mom of three now and all that, so we're in different places in our lives, and it's been fun for us."

Although Fahey and Mendoza have worked together before, Mendoza said they still talk about the show even at home because of how much fun they're having doing it: "It's been interesting just working with him, we've got a really strong relationship and I feel like we play well together."

"He also knows my bag of tricks," Fahey said. "He knows if you're sincere, you can take a line that's absolutely cheesy and deliver it the way it's meant to be."

"I find that what makes musicals interesting to audiences that may have seen the productions before is figuring out ways where you can bring a new energy and a new way of looking at the show," Mendoza said.



photo by mark holmes

Speaking on the differences between he and Fahey — with the Mendozas being loud and social Columbians and the Faheys being more reserved Canadians — he finds that their actual family history brings out more authenticity in the show's original storyline, noting, "I feel like I'm Wednesday and he's Lucas."

To build his character, Fahey said he channeled his own father: "My dad is a big kid at heart. He loves his family, just like my character. When my dad comes to see this show, I'm going to ask him if I reminded him of anybody."

Family is what this show is all about, which is something Mendoza is looking forward to bringing to the show. "It's friendly," he said. "It's fun and it's during Halloween, so it's a great show for families to come and enjoy together. Aaron Pomeroy, the choreographer, is really pushing the envelope, and I'm really excited about what this will look like."

"And the voices that we have in the show are amazing," Fahey said. "Our girl playing Wednesday is a superstar. And it sounds amazing. It's not just, 'Oh, let's have a waka waka kind of show.' It's actually beautifully written."

"Theatre in general needs to become more accessible to our audiences in San Diego," Mendoza said. "I find that family shows really work well, and I'm hoping that parents out there can share something with their kids because theatre is so important. There's some sexual innuendo and silliness to it, but it's done in a way where it's not a throwaway but not something that people will sit and talk about forever, either."

Catch *The Addams Family* at San Diego Musical Theatre through **Sunday, October 29**. **sdmt.org / 858.560.5740**

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# An Affair To Remember

## *THE FANTASTICKS* GETS A GAY MAKEOVER IN WEST COAST PREMIERE AT CV REP

You can manipulate love, but you can never deny it. Sometimes inconvenient, sometimes infuriating, sometimes inconsolable, passion consumes us and confounds us in eternally kaleidoscopic configurations.

That's why adapting a beloved classic like *The Fantasticks* — music by Harvey Schmidt with book and lyrics by Tom Jones — presents a bouquet of challenges and opportunities. Modern audiences crave a balance of romance and representation, so Coachella Valley Repertory (CV Rep) is updating the narrative to be thrillingly inclusive.

"The simplicity of the show is one of the things that has made it such a success and such a wonder," said **Adam Karsten**, executive artistic director at CV Rep. "The simplicity hasn't changed, but the genders have within the show, and that's the beauty of it in many ways, in that the love story is still a love story."

*The Fantasticks* is a tale of two meddling parents who feign a feud to get their kids to woo one another. Karsten and crew have maintained the bones of the original, but swapped a few pivotal roles and octaves to create a queer coming-of-age musical extravaganza.

"The songs that Louisa sings, they remain in the key for Lewis," Karsten said. "There are definitely parts that cater to her high soprano that we are going to adjust. But the fact of the matter is that there are two mothers now instead of two fathers. Because one of the concerns they had in adapting the show was that you would miss the female voice, but they've added two female characters. So some of those lines may be picked up by one of the mothers, but not that much has changed."

The play's reimagination is both timely and timeless, tapping into the queer experience without losing the core of why *The Fantasticks* has endured for six decades.

"Theatre needs to be intimate because you're really trying to connect with what makes us all human and what we all feel, and we all have emotions," Karsten said.

Those feelings are nurtured thoughtfully in the staging of the new adaptation.

"What's great about CV Rep is you're so close to the actors and the production, but it's also a really comfortable setting." he said. "When you go to Broadway or off Broadway, you're either in very small chairs, smaller than economy coach class on any airline, or hard plastic chairs, but here you're kind of in a luxury kind of feeling and setting."

Karsten punctuated his point: "It's high quality, intimate theatre. There's not a bad seat in the house. You're never far away from the stage."

Proximity yields compassion, which flourishes in this desert playhouse. "When you go into a production and you sit with 100 other people in the audience, 200 other people or even a thousand other people, you share an experience," he said. "You share a moment, not just with the artists on the stage telling the story, but with all of those people in the theatre."

The footlights are the frontline of acceptance. In these turbulent times, art must illuminate the connections we share rather than the divisions that sever us.

"There's a responsibility for all of us to come together when people of any group are threatened," Karsten said. "The theatre community does that well and steps out in front to say, 'We are here, we are seen, and we deserve a safe space.'"

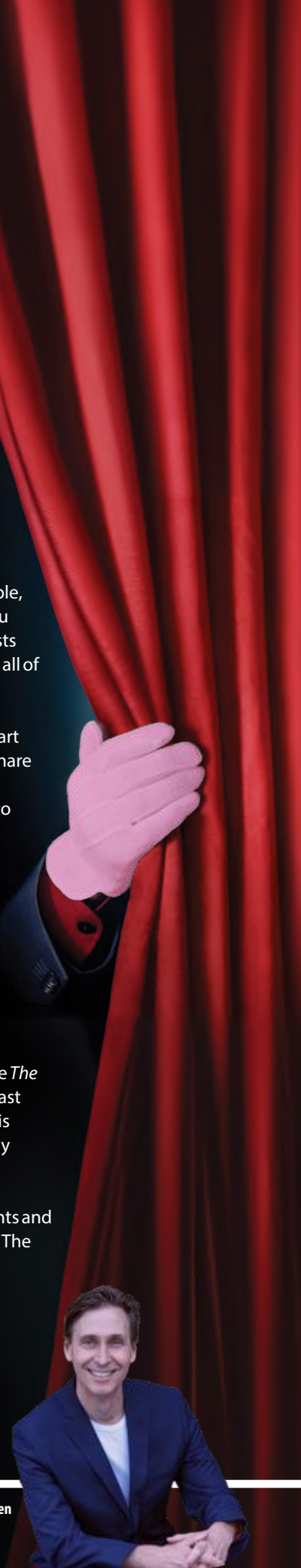
And now, that sanctuary is expanding to include the LGBTQ community as the stars of our own stories.

"We're grateful to be able to produce *The Fantasticks* and to have it as a West Coast premiere," Karsten summed up. "This is an opportunity to show how love really conquers all."

Bravo!

Be ready to swoon in tune to the sights and sounds of Coachella Valley Repertory. The stage is set for solidarity.

***The Fantasticks – A Love Story Reimagined* runs Wednesday, November 1 through Sunday, November 12 at Coachella Valley Repertory in Cathedral City. cvrep.org / 760.296.2966**



adam karsten

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# STAR POWER ON ALL COUNTS

## *A.K.A. LUCY: THE DYNAMIC AND DETERMINED LIFE OF LUCILLE BALL*
### SARAH ROYAL

I believe that everyone loves Lucy. Yet for me I love her just as much as MGM star Lucille Ball. Some may agree they remember her cracking the whip in gorgeous pink with the female dancing panthers in *Ziegfeld Follies* of 1945 or doing "The Continental Polka" in *Easy to Wed*. Or for that matter, Ball's star turn in *Best Foot Forward* playing herself with all the shenanigans going on around her publicity. So, for me she'll always be "Technicolor Tessie," as she was coined, because her red hair photographed so vibrantly on film.

Sarah Royal has truly given the royal treatment to Lucille Ball with the spirit that befits a comedy queen, a truly iconic woman and a person who truly hit the boards to achieve her goals. It's simply amazing the strength, determination, honesty and, most importantly, the talent that Lucille Ball had. Anyone reading *A.K.A. Lucy* should respect and revel in Lucy Ricardo's . . . oops, Lucille Ball's life. Fact and television fiction are presented beautifully in both visual and conceptualized chapters making Royal's book one to remember, enjoy, love and respect while realizing Lucille was of a master class and always will be.

**Available October 10**




## *THE WOMAN IN ME*
### BRITNEY SPEARS

What a woman, entertainer and an intoxicatingly beautiful pop music star that the world has been fascinated with ever since her first major hit "… Baby, One More Time." Now, at 41 years old, Britney Spears has put pen to paper to tell it like it was and is now, with all the unreal and truly real aspects of her career and life revealed on the pages. This is truly what matters most to Spears in her "Ripley's Believe It or Not" life. It's a deserved rite of passage of a media mogul and sensational superstar as she reveals all the not-so-nice dirt under the carpet of her private life. That alone is to be commended. Yet, she does this with honesty and her own special brand of humor. As life continues for "Lucky," *The Woman in Me* is her way forward now for continued happiness, continued success and sharing her story. She will always have the love of true friends and her family who were there and offered support for her through these last troublesome years and ultimate triumph. It's tough in the business of show and Britney knows. **Available October 24**




## *GEORGE HURRELL'S HOLLYWOOD*
### MARK A. VIEIRA

The cover of Mark A. Viera's truly beautiful book also states, "Glamour Portraits 1925-1992." Think about that amount of time. Look at that Joan Crawford portrait on the cover! But after you do, just understand and appreciate his work. George Hurrell was the ultimate in his profession as a photographer for MGM and several other studios. Nobody did it better for "glamour." His unique lighting, technique, life and career are all explored in Vieira's book.

Viera's love, fascination and knowledge is unprecedented. This edition is packed with so many photos taken by Hurrell, many of which have not been presented before in this regard. Of note when reading is that any master craftsman such as Hurrell had a lifelong passion for his work while dealing with the changing times of the Hollywood business and his personal life. Both intersect in Hurrell's Hollywood. Enjoy the beauty of the classic and timeless stars through his eyes. **Available now**





## *TENSION*
## KYLIE MINOGUE

"I get the shivers every time you say my name." The epitome of a pop and popular musical star is presented in a stunning and supreme way. Kylie Minogue is a delight to truly enjoy. The simplicity, musical artistry and, most definitely, the magnetism of the magical Minogue is in full force as she delivers this new music. The lady in red in the "Padam" video can slide a coffee cup down the diner countertop to me any time.

Her just released *Tension* encompasses all the classic Minogue elements. No "Locomotion" here after all these years, yet she still stops you in your tracks. She musically goes on the beat to the listener's heart. It's such a pleasure that 55-year-old Minogue is a powerful force and also a survivor in the music industry, and always excels at creating what she loves most. That is her music! So, it's a pleasure as she releases her *Tension* on the ear buds to enjoy in many ways. It's impossible to not follow her voice and the exuberance she magnificently creates. **Available now**

## *THE TWO-A-DAY IS BACK IN TOWN: CLOSING NIGHT AT THE PALACE, FEBRUARY 24, 1952*
## JUDY GARLAND

I believe in "Judyism." I am also a "Garlandite." That said, it's a real pleasure to tell anyone reading this that this upcoming release is truly terrific. This is not "Maybe This Time" but the first time since 1952 when initially recorded in full that her concert is released in its entirety. Not only that, but Garland's closing night at The Palace has been digitally remastered! This process painstakingly took several months to achieve, restore and be heard in such a fine format of sound. Remember, this is after Judy Garland got fired from MGM in 1950. Then, her new husband and manager Sid Luft helped her create many new accomplishments such as this run at The Palace in New York.

This recording is a glorious Garland performing live on stage doing what she loved to do and did best: a woman who delighted in entertaining, enthralling and exciting an audience with her majestic talent. **Available October 6, (UK) November 17 (US)**



# SAN DIEGO FILM FEST EXPOSES A HIDDEN MASTER



October brings not only fall décor, cooler temperatures, and tricks (ahem) as well as treats to Southern California but also two major film festivals. Tales representing our international LGBTQ community will be spotlighted during both.

The 22nd annual San Diego International Film Festival (SDIFF) will run from **Wednesday, October 18 through Sunday, October 22**. Produced by the San Diego Film Foundation, the festival will screen more than 100 feature and short films in the Festival Village at AMC UTC 14 at Westfield Plaza. Other events include film panels, VIP lounges, receptions and impromptu meet-ups with filmmakers.

Among the LGBTQ offerings will be the San Diego premiere of ***Hidden Master: The Legacy of George Platt Lynes*** on October 22. Lynes (1907-1955) began his career photographing celebrities, and it's those portraits along with his extravagant fashion work that he's best remembered for today. As this documentary reveals, however, Lynes' heart, passion and greatest talent lay elsewhere: his work with the male nude. This work, sensuous and radically explicit for its time, has only recently begun being fully discovered and appreciated for the revolution that it represents.

Directed by longtime art director turned filmmaker **Sam Shahid**, *Hidden Master* features a stunning collection of long-hidden photography from the 1930s to 1950s. Shahid literally exposes the life of Lynes less known: his gifted eye for the male form, his long-term friendships with Gertrude Stein and Alfred Kinsey, and his lasting influence as one of the first openly gay American artists.

"George Platt Lynes was an artist endowed with an almost endless well of creative gifts. However, because of the restrictions — social, moral, artistic, legal — imposed upon him by the era in which he lived and created, he was unable to share his true talent with the public and, of equal import, future generations of artists who may have built upon and furthered his contributions to his genre," Shahid said. "He was an artist who was never able to share what he considered to be his very best work, and more importantly what he considered his true craft."

Shahid has been leaving his mark on the world of fashion and advertising for four decades and counting. When he became the creative director for the in-house advertising agency for Calvin Klein in the early 1980s, he helped to turn the brand into the internationally recognized name it remains today with advertising campaigns that are remembered for their clean yet sensational visuals. In the early 1990s, he did the same for Banana Republic before opening his own creative design firm and advertising agency, Shahid & Company, in 1993.

In the years since, Shahid has created original and striking campaigns for brands as divergent as Versace, Perry Ellis, Gucci, Valentino, and Abercrombie & Fitch. He was also the creative director of *Interview* magazine, and he has designed a library's worth of fine-art books for artists and photographers such as Bruce Weber, Kelly Klein, Herb Ritts, Joel Grey and Jessica Lange. *Hidden Master: The Legacy of George Platt Lynes* marks Shahid's feature directorial debut.



## THE ENERGETIC, AFFABLE DIRECTOR RECENTLY SPOKE WITH *THE RAGE MONTHLY*.

**Congratulations on a great documentary. How and/or when were you first introduced to Lynes' work?**

I'd known his work for a while, but I didn't know about his life. All of us in the fashion world knew of his work, but I was asked to design a book about him in 2010 and thought, "You know, there should be a film about this man! The world needs to know about him."

**What made you decide to make him the subject of your first feature film?**

He was so brave. But it is so sad that he destroyed so much of his work. When I told people I was making a film about him, they said to me, "Well, good luck." We weren't sure we would find enough info to make a feature film. He had so much courage to keep those male nudes because it was illegal at the time.

**How long did it take to develop or create?**

Since 2012. The project became like a client [laughs]. It took 10 years to make it, mainly because it took so long to track down people who knew [Lynes] who were still alive. They're all dead now except Don Bachardy. Then we lost two years due to COVID, of course, but I did read about 300 letters (that Lynes wrote) during that first summer of the shutdown.

**Someone in the film refers to Lynes as a "cross-pollinator," which I like. Would you say this continues today?**

Oh yes, definitely. He was at the center of that art circle of the time, which has continued to inspire artists. Robert Mapplethorpe, Bruce Weber, Herb Ritts were all influenced by George.

**You could say you've been pollinated by him yourself.**

[Laughs] Yes, you can.

**Has Lynes' work directly inspired your career as an art director at Calvin Klein or Abercrombie & Fitch, or as a filmmaker?**

No, because I really didn't know about his work beforehand. He did influence many artists I've work with though, including Bruce Weber and Don Bachardy.

**What do you hope viewers will take from *Hidden Master*?**

I hope the film will generate enough interest to mount a major exhibition of his work. That's mentioned in the film by the Kinsey Institute representative as their hope as well. I didn't want the film to come across as a competition between Robert Mapplethorpe and George Platt Lynes. The biggest surprise in the film is the final footage of George and writer Christopher Isherwood.

You know what's exciting? The film has been selected to play the Lebanese Independent Film Festival in Beirut. George will soon be known in the Middle East! Isn't that amazing?

**Passes and tickets can be purchased at sdfilmfest.com or by calling 619.818.2221**

**Chris Carpenter has been writing about entertainment since 1996 and a member of Team Rage since 2012. He is a founding member and vice president emeritus of GALECA: The Society of LGBTQ Entertainment Critics.**

**THE 24TH ANNUAL NEWPORT BEACH FILM FESTIVAL WILL BE HELD JUST BEFORE SDIFF, FROM OCTOBER 12-19 AT VARIOUS ORANGE COUNTY LOCATIONS. SEVERAL LGBTQ FEATURE FILMS AS WELL AS SHORT FILMS WILL BE SCREENED.**

### *ASOG*

A tragicomic road film, *Asog* follows a non-binary Filipino comedian pursuing their dream of becoming a pageant queen. By day, Rey teaches high school students and by night they perform at bars as a proudly gay comedian named Jaya. En route to a pageant on a neighboring island, Jaya encounters a series of people living on the frontlines of the climate crisis. 100% of the cast members are Filipinos who survived Typhoon Haiyan, the strongest storm every recorded at landfall.

### *EGGHEAD & TWINKIE*

After coming out to her parents, 17-year-old Twinkie takes off on a road trip to meet her online crush with the help of her nerdy best friend, Egghead. As they make their way across the country, Egghead wrestles with his unrequited feelings for Twinkie, while Twinkie learns to embrace her identity as a gay mixed-Asian woman.

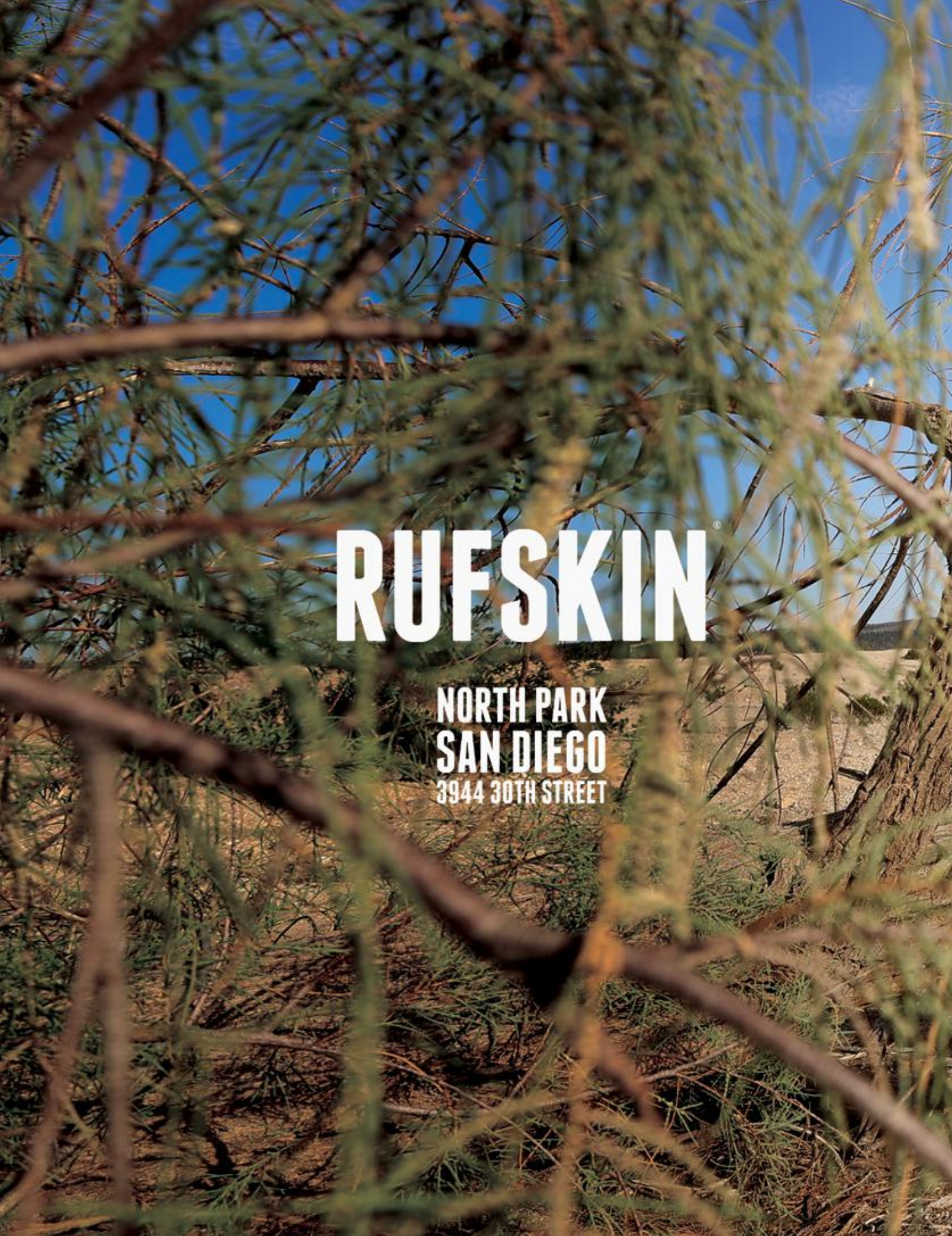
### *THE MATTACHINE FAMILY*

Thomas and Oscar are a couple very much in love. But after their first foster child returns to his birth mother, they find they have different ideas about what it means to make a family. The movie is co-produced by actor-director Zach Braff.

**Short Films** include *(In)convenience, Alive & Well, Blue Square Heart, Boundaries, Friends/Aikane, Get Up the Nerve, I Thought the Earth Remembered Me, Lambing, Mud Queen, Face to Face/Tête à tête, The External-Internal Monologue of an Interdependent Insomniac, West of Frank* and *Zenaida*. **newportbeachfilmfest.com**



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# PIZZA GIRL CAROLINE D'AMORE CELEBRATES NATIONAL PIZZA MONTH



Caroline D'Amore is a Southern California native and the daughter of legendary pizza restaurateur Joe D'Amore. This renowned franchise in Los Angeles is known for their delicious, authentic Italian cuisine with locations on the westside in Malibu and Westwood. Her father opened their first location, when Caroline was just 3 years old, in Canoga Park. What sets D'Amore apart from other eateries are the ingredients, the flour, olive oil and even the water is flown in from Naples, Italy.

photo by cameron jordon

While she was growing up, Caroline's grandmother taught her the "value of the sauce" as the secret to all great Italian cooking. Years later, Caroline took what she knew best and made it her own by reimagining and reinventing her grandmother's recipes to share with a new generation of home cooks, and thus, **Pizza Girl Sauce** was born.

In addition to being a successful businesswoman as founder and CEO of Pizza Girl, Caroline has another interesting side hustle performing as a DJ around the world. Her gigs range from opening for Diplo to spinning for fashion shows. She began her career as a fashion model, working for Diane von Fürstenberg, and she has also dappled in acting.

In recent years, Caroline established her own D'Amore's Pizza location on West Third Street in Los Angeles and started the D'Amore catering company and launched a food truck. D'Amore's is a hotspot pizza joint frequented by celebs and is extremely popular with the queer community. They are one of the few restaurants open until 4 a.m. nightly, which attracts the West Hollywood late nightclub crowd.

Caroline's hard work and tenacity caught the eye of celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay, and she was selected for the first season of *Gordon Ramsay's Food Stars*. It was a rigorous and challenging process, and she made it to the final three. Out of the trio of remaining food-and-beverage entrepreneur competitors, Caroline D'Amore (founder of Pizza Girl) was up against Chris Kanik (founder of Smart Cups) and Lan Ho (founder of Fat Milk). Ramsay ultimately selected Kanik as the winner.

*The RAGE Monthly* caught up with Caroline to pay homage to National Pizza Month and to get to know her better and find out what she has been up to since her appearance on the TV show.

**What inspired you to make the leap from a Diane von Furstenberg model and actress to the CEO of the Pizza Girl empire?**

I think when you are young, you do the things that you think you are supposed to do to be cool or liked, and when you grow up you feel much more comfortable in your own skin. I was born the Pizza Girl and I'll die the Pizza Girl, and that's exactly where I was meant to be. Once I truly learned to love myself for who I genuinely am, my whole life started to fall into place. I stood up for myself and my happiness, and being the CEO of Pizza Girl is honestly my dream job!

**Your sauce company took a major hit during the COVID-19 pandemic. What was the biggest challenge in the relaunch of Pizza Girl?**

The biggest challenge relaunching Pizza Girl was trying to convince the supermarkets that if I came back on the shelf, I'd never fall off again. Luckily the store buyers really love my product and all seem to believe in Pizza Girl, so we've been on the upswing ever since! Things are really starting to take off now after four years of such a grind. I'm so grateful every day that more people are discovering Pizza Girl and making us their sauce of choice!

**You were cast on the first season of *Gordon Ramsay's Food Stars*, so how has that affected your career and the company?**

We didn't realize the effect the show was going to have until the finale aired and orders started flying in! The finale changed everything. We are still pumping out orders and now all our new customers are starting to reorder, and that is the true test. I'm extremely grateful for my experience on *Food Stars*. It truly has changed my life for the better. I can't walk down the street now without someone screaming "Pizza Girl, we love you" in some way. The show has brought the Pizza Girl into the home of millions. I'd absolutely do it all again if I had to. But I'm happy I don't have to. It's also the most challenging thing I've ever done in my business.

**Can you share the highlight of your experience on the show?**

The highlight of the show hands down was the finale episode and being able to share my brand with the world in the pop-up experience. Having my family there, being able to see my daughter Isabella after over two months in isolation was magical.

**What was the toughest part of the process to overcome?**

Without a doubt the toughest part was being away from my daughter. But in the actual day-to-day of the show, it was more so the stress, fear, no sleep and my teammates all teaming up to get me kicked off the show. Now I just take it as a compliment, but at the moment it was difficult. Watching some of the edits was difficult as well even though I knew it was all for TV dramatic effect. It's never easy watching yourself get slammed on TV! But again it was all worth it, absolutely.

**Do you plan on creating a Pizza Girl cookbook featuring your sauces with favorite family recipes?**

I am actually in talks on a very exciting cookbook concept as we speak, but all that must come after our newest Pizza Girl product launch we are working on now! We are changing the at-home pizza game, and I can't wait to share details. Sign up for our newsletter on pizzagirl.com to be the first to know and order! I'm actually freaking out with excitement about this one.

**When you think of future ideas for Pizza Girl, what are some of your goals?**

Pizza Girl will be a global brand one day with supermarket items all across the board, sauces, pastas, frozen pizzas and dinners, all organic and clean, of course. Pizza Girl pizza and pasta shops franchised all over the world. (Actually in talks with our first opportunity now.) Cookbooks, and at-home kitchen products and so much more. Honestly the potential of Pizza Girl is endless, so every day is new and exciting at this time. Stay tuned!

Pizza Girl Sauce is available online and at all Bristol Farms locations, Gerrards Market, Erewhon Natural Foods, Vintage Grocers, Follow Your Heart Market and in more stores each day.

**pizzagirl.com damorespizza.com @carolinedamore.com**

# FOR THE LOVE OF PIZZA



**It's the most wonderful time of the year . . . for pizza lovers! October is National Pizza Month, and we couldn't be more excited to indulge in all its cheesy, saucy goodness. To mark this special occasion, we asked members of our staff and writers to share their favorite pizza. Our team's picks are sure to satisfy any pizza craving. So, grab a slice (or a whole pie, we won't judge) and join us in celebrating National Pizza Month. And who knows, you might even discover your new favorite, too.**

**That Pizza Place** in Carlsbad! One of a kind, family run and delicious. They have a great lunch special, too. They support every Carlsbad youth sports team (both my brother and I can still find our team photos on the wall from the mid-1980s). Great place to have a birthday party too.
— **Lisa Lipsey**

I love **Sisters Pizza** because not only is the pizza itself just delicious, I love the story of how it came to be. Though the story is rooted in sadness, I love how Emily opened the shop to honor her older sister, Kate, who unfortunately passed away and was never able to realize her dream of opening a pizza shop. The passion Kate had lives on through Emily, and the pizza is just downright awesome.
— **Andrew J. Stillman**

A recent find has quickly become a favorite. **Gelati & Peccati** is a walk-up pizza and gelato shop located at 3066 University Avenue in North Park. The crust on the Roman-style pizzas (pizzette al taglio) is airy, light and crunchy! And the toppings are premium and very creative. Rooted in Italian technique, the menu at Peccati, which means "Sins," features seven signature styles of pizza named after each deadly sin, alongside innovative gelato flavors, in an intimate indoor-outdoor space. — **Jay Jones**

**Sinful Pizza** on Hollywood Boulevard and Ivar Avenue. Authentic New York-style thin crust and Sicilian style pizzas. You have to order them fresh though; don't get the "by the slice" in the window. Chewy charred crust, perfect amount of toppings, good variety. One of the best pies I've had in this city. Giovani, the owner, is usually on premises and is a no-bs kinda guy. Italian raised in NYC whose whole life has revolves around the pizza biz. A must try! — **Andrew Broussard**

My fave pizza in Palm Springs is **Giuseppe's** because it's a whole experience. I like to preface it with a martini, gab with the friendly bar staff, get another martini, dig into some deep-dish realness, pair it with . . . oh, let's say a martini?
Nom accomplished! — **Kevin Perry**

I'm the odd man out, I love pineapple and Canadian bacon pizza. While many will disagree with this choice, I love it because I became smitten as a kitten with it as a kid and will defend that the two of them go together, like *Laverne & Shirley*, *Cagney & Lacey* and the whole roster of *Charlie's Angels* combined! You have the sweet and salty together in perfect harmony with each delicious bite. I highly recommend **Savio's Pizza** on Adams Avenue in Normal Heights, as theirs is the best I've ever had. — **Tim Parks**

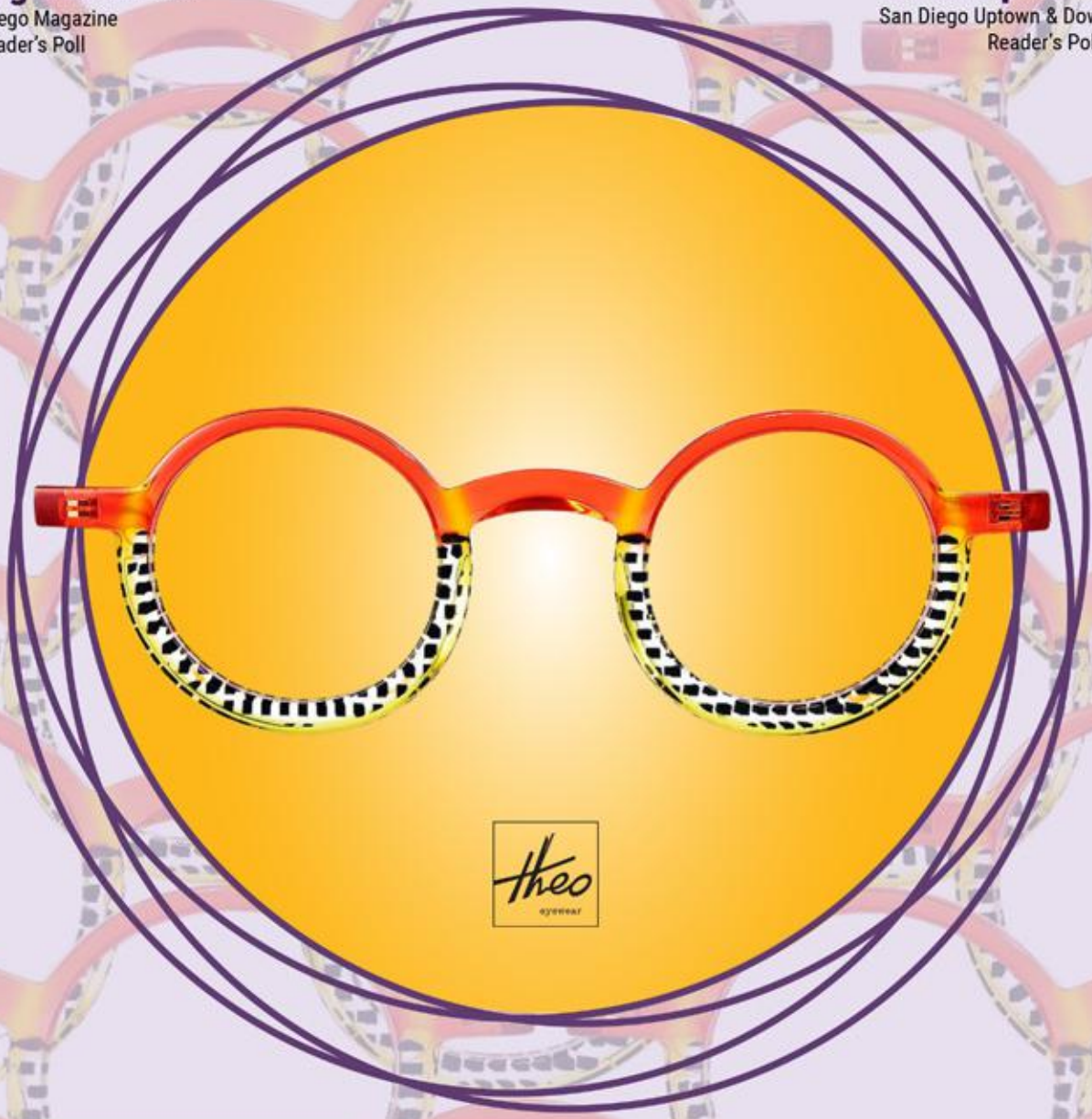
Mambo Italiano is my favorite pizza pie. But seriously . . . the works work. Personally, I love **Hawaiian pizza**. That's pineapple and ham.
One thing I know is I love thick crust and lots of cheese. — **Bill Biss**

Celebrate the pizza! I love a good BBQ chicken pizza. A place perhaps not usually thought of for pizza is the **Mary Pickford Movie Theatres** food court in Cathedral City. Really enjoy their offering with delicious BBQ flavor and chicken pieces. Nice to have a bite before a movie, easy access, tons of free parking.
— **Bella da Ball**

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## LAGUNA ART MUSEUM EXHIBITION

# TO BREAK THE RULES



William Theophilus Brown, *Swimming Pool*, 1963

**Breaking the Rules: Paul Wonner and Theophilus Brown** will be on display at Laguna Art Museum from **Saturday, October 14 through Sunday, January 7.** This remarkable exhibition will be an homage to pioneering artists Paul Wonner and Theophilus Brown, who are well recognized for their significant contributions to the artistic movement known as Bay Area Figuration.

Throughout their artistic journeys, they fearlessly explored new styles and subjects, from captivating landscapes featuring classic bathers to Baroque-inspired still lifes adorned with everyday objects, animals and flowers. Breaking the Rules is an immersive experience with a rich collection of 75 paintings, watercolors and drawings, offering an in-depth exploration of these trailblazing artists' exceptional talents.

"Although Wonner and Brown significantly contributed to the development of Bay Area Figuration, their work has not been exhibited as frequently as that of other masters of the style," said **Julie Perlin-Lee**, the museum's executive director. "Breaking the Rules provides a fresh perspective, celebrating their artistic accomplishments throughout their careers in an era of greater inclusivity. The exhibition highlights their diverse backgrounds and unapologetic voices as artists who proudly identified as both queer and Californian."

Wonner and Brown are thought of as California artists, but neither was a native of the state. Wonner hailed from Tucson, Arizona and moved to the San Francisco Bay Area to pursue studies at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he completed his bachelor's degree in 1941. Following service in the U.S. Army in Texas, he continued his artistic training in New York, attending The Art Students League and Subjects of the Artist School while working as a graphic designer.

Brown, originally from Moline, Illinois, graduated with a degree in music from Yale in 1941. After his service in the U.S. Army, he pursued art studies in New York and Paris. Fate brought them together at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1952, where they pursued master's degrees in art. Their meeting sparked a profound connection and they remained together for nearly 56 years.



Paul Wonner, *Still Life with Flowers and a Note to KMK*, 1992

Their contributions to the development of Bay Area Figuration were significant, representing a departure from the prevailing trend of Abstract Expressionism. Over time, both artists' works transitioned from being gestural to more explicitly representational. Wonner's art evolved with increasing detail and precision, earning him great acclaim for his "baroque" still lifes. Brown, in turn, became known for his psychologically evocative landscapes with classic bathers and poignant urban scenes.

**lagunaartmuseum.org**



# TOM OF FINLAND ART & CULTURE FESTIVAL

## RETURNS TO LOS ANGELES

The Tom of Finland Art & Culture Festival 2023 - **GlobalSexual** will be held **Saturday and Sunday, October 7-8**, in Los Angeles, presented by Tom of Finland Foundation.

"We are so happy to bring the festival home to Los Angeles. For some reason, the stars just shine brighter here," foundation CXO **S.R. Sharp** said.

The festival is part of the foundation's annual programming effort to bring together artists, galleries and consumers from across the world in a social atmosphere where they may network as well as purchase and sell works.

"My goal with the Art & Culture Festival is to pave the way for the next generation of queer and erotic artists, while expanding to more cities and communities around the world," said **Richard Villani**, the festival's lead and foundation creative director.

Soho Warehouse will host the festival in a first-time collaboration with Tom of Finland Foundation. Soho Warehouse is in the Arts District of downtown Los Angeles in a former storage facility-turned-recording studio.

This year's event will bring together erotic artists, panelists, DJs and galleries. Participating artists include Rick Castro, S. M. Shifflett, Rubén Esparza, Steve MacIsaac and Nora Rachel. Vendors offering their wares and services include Peachy Kings, The Mr. She and Folklore Salon & Barber.

Scheduled programming includes a kiki with The House of Avalon, a conversation about LGBT nonprofits with Phillip Picardi and Gerald Garth, a chat with some of your favorite porn stars, and a discussion with previous and current Tom of Finland Foundation artists-in-residence Jordan Michael Green, Jamison Karon, Felix D'Eon and Jonathan David Smyth.

**tomoffinland.org/artfair**

# *ONE MAGAZINE* AT SEVENTY

## COMMEMORATES ITS LEGACY OF UPLIFTING LGBTQ COMMUNITIES THROUGH PRINT

This exhibition traces the history of *ONE Magazine* from the publication's first issue in January 1953 to its final issue in December 1967.

***ONE Magazine* at Seventy** will be on view at Los Angeles LGBT Center's Advocate & Gochis Galleries from **Sunday, October 1 through Sunday, November 5**.

The display examines topics that *ONE* addressed that are still relevant today, such as the struggle against police brutality, the significance of building community and cultivating happiness, and the protection of free speech.

This exhibition considers the production and distribution of the magazine, the makers of the magazine (many of whom used pseudonyms), and the precedent it set for subsequent gay and lesbian periodicals and community formation. A selection of covers and inside spreads from *ONE Magazine*, supporting archival documents, audio stories and ephemera will be on view in the gallery.




Exhibition materials will highlight iconic artifacts from *ONE Magazine's* history such as the October 1954 issue that became the focal point of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *ONE, Inc. v. Olesen*, which was the first in U.S. history to rule in favor of LGBTQ freedom of speech and expression. Print blocks from the magazine's production, early homophile posters and letters to *ONE* will also be on view. Alongside public programming in the space, these materials will showcase key moments of ONE's history, activism, and contribution to queer liberation.

**circafestival.org/exhibition/one-magazine-at-seventy**

# ART+ LGBT HISTORY MONTH **EXTRAVAGANZA**

Brace yourselves, art aficionados and culture connoisseurs, because The Studio Door art gallery plans to blow your minds with a dazzling extravaganza that's part art, part history and 100% fabulous.

The ART+ LGBT History Month artistic fiesta will run from **Thursday, October 5 to Saturday, October 28** at the art gallery located at 3867 Fourth Ave. in the heart of Hillcrest in San Diego.

Expect to be wowed by contemporary lesbian and gay artists **Jackie Han** (captivating photographer extraordinaire), **Carole Kuck** (acrylic art wizard), **RD Riccione** (pop-art guru) and **Joe Phillips** (incomparable illustrator). But that's not all. They will be throwing in a dash of history with curated pieces from the legendary Lambda Archives' extensive collection. History buffs, rejoice!


*Live Who You Are* by RD Riccoboni, Mixed Media

On **Saturday, October 21** the gallery will host a one-day speaker series that will tickle your intellect and leave you craving more. The headliner from WeHo, **Ignacio Darnaude**, will reveal the secret world of "Hiding In Plain Sight — Breaking the Gay Code in Art." Prepare to be spellbound as he unravels the genius of queer artists like Michelangelo and David Hockney, who slyly tucked same-sex desires into classical, religious and mythological masterpieces. It's an eye-opening journey through history that you won't want to miss.

Joining Ignacio will be **Leilani Caithness** and **Jeremy Prince** from the San Diego History Center with "Cultivating an LGBT Art Collection," RD Riccoboni sharing his personal odyssey as an artist, and **Nicole Verdes** from Lambda Archives San Diego on "Unearthing LGBTQ+ Narratives through San Diego Artistry." It's a day packed with knowledge and inspiration.

For those itching to see the exhibition, The Studio Door is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 7 p.m., and it's free. That's how you bring art to the people.

Don't miss the fusion of art and history that's going to set Hillcrest ablaze this October. ART+ LGBT History Month at The Studio Door is where vibrant creativity meets captivating history in a burst of color and culture.

**thestudiodoor.com**




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