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#268 JUNE 19–JULY 16, 2014



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#268 JUNE 19–JULY 16, 2014

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FERNANDO BARRAZA

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Jamaica's long game



EDITORIAL
NATASHA BARSOTTI

Jermaine, 23, Jamaican and gay, knows what it's like to live on the streets.

"You have to fight against the weather — night cold, sun, rain," he told me on a recent trip to Jamaica. "Hurricane season come an' ketch me on de road a'ready."

At 18, Jermaine often found himself locked out of his home, his mother telling him to "go back where mih a come from," while his father tried a little harder to wrap his head around his son's sexuality.

"They didn't understand about the whole gay and all ah dat," Jermaine says. "They weren't taught in school how to handle situations like dat."

For two or three years, he led an itinerant street life, punctuated by sofa surfing at the homes of sex-work clients and friends — until they wanted him out.

"Hygiene was a major issue," he says. "If you want a job, the way you look, the way you smell — the first impression… didn't cut it."

His first step off the streets was to find a reliable water source and clothing. Then came a job, classes in English, food preparation and other life skills. While volunteering at the Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays (J-FLAG), he started an empowerment session out of which four people found jobs and another six went back to school.

His "whoa" moment came when the United Nations Population Fund approved his request for $1.5 million (Jamaican) to train 10 HIV-positive gay sex workers in health and employment-seeking strategies, using a peer-education format.

The government wasn't falling over itself to help, so Jermaine started to help himself, and then his peers.

"I can't tell you when, because you are going to hold me [to it] if I give you a timeline," Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller recently told Jamaican media when asked about her 2011 promise to review the country's archaic buggery law.

Simpson-Miller followed that serving of political evasion with another slice of obfuscation. "We are so busy trying to hold things and to see… whatever decisions we take — because we have to take tough decisions — that it doesn't impact in a very serious way the majority of our people."

What if Jamaica's parliamentarians legalized gay sex? It would certainly be a sign of forward movement, but with more than 80 percent of Jamaicans self-describing as homophobic, a victory on that score won't translate into societal acceptance.

That's long-game work, which is ongoing but proceeding in baby steps, whether it's outreach to potential allies in religious circles, convincing media to eschew sensationalism for more balanced reporting about LGBT people and their experiences, or working within and outside the community to address the interconnected issues of marginalization, under- and unemployment, and homelessness among men who have sex with men.

According to a 2012 University of the West Indies study on the attitudes and perceptions of 1,000 Jamaicans regarding same-sex relationships, these are the stats activists are up against: "Approximately 88 percent felt that male homosexuality was immoral, 83.7 percent felt the same for female homosexuality and 83.5 percent felt bisexual relationships were immoral."

These findings represent a six to eight percent increase in intolerance since 2011, the study shows.

Jermaine's friend Christopher thinks change is more likely to occur "behind doors." The very people who think nothing of shouting homophobic slurs in the streets will show a different side of themselves when there is no public to consume their venom, he suggests.

Even as he tries to embrace his sexuality and how to express it, Christopher refers to himself as "gay and…" He's trying to integrate into society as a "precautionary measure."

Jermaine says accessing education, employment and housing without harassment is key. "This country still don' reach dat level."

Natasha Barsotti is the staff reporter at Xtra *Vancouver.*

The outcome that we seek is this — gay and lesbian people daring together to set love free.

Xtra is published by Pink Triangle Press, at 2 Carlton St, Ste 1600, Toronto, M5B 1J3.

FEEDBACK

Steroid use

I was saddened by your feature article entitled "'Roid Rage" [*Xtra* #267, May 15]. I wonder why gay teens are six times more likely to use steroids? Flipping through your publication and others, I noticed many ads promoting "body enhancements" like Botox, non-surgical facelifts and an assortment of cosmetics, as well as full-page ads for Squirt, Cruiseline and Hardline. The time of year it is pounded into us during Pride, when one ad after another displays a model with a "perfect" body. The not-so-subtle message is if you want to be accepted and attractive, this is what you need. The pharmaceutical industry has also been active promoting testosterone-replacement therapies, and sales have soared.

I realize that your publication and others depend on the revenue from these ads, so I especially want to thank you for putting this forward for discussion.

GORDON WASELNUK
EMAIL



As gay men we're in a unique place: the objectifier and the objectified. We often walk away from a first date with neither guy interested in the other. Steroids and phentermine are easy ways to get as close as possible to that ideal, heterosexual, college jock body, even if we die trying.

You thought rejection and isolation were bad when you were closeted around non-gay people? Just wait and see how awful other gay men are to you. You'll never be good enough. If you look perfect, then the focus is on money and university degrees. Or vice versa. You are expected to be perfect in all aspects of life.

Given that our dating choices are next to nothing anyway (the two to four percent of the male population that identifies as gay), just finding someone is a long shot, despite more of us coming out. I think a lot of us just want to feel good by looking good, since we get little to no acknowledgment from within the gay community.

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Trinity Western

The very notion that this school could be pumping out tomorrow's lawyers to represent people in matters of discrimination and values and rights makes me very angry ["BC Law Society Reconsiders Trinity Western Approval," dailyxtra.com, June 10]. Religion has no place in government and no place in the laws that govern our society. A school that believes sexuality is a choice has no place in the licensing of practitioners of law. Let them train their little drones to go and populate churches, not courthouses. In all matters of sexuality versus doctrine (aka "dogma"), let us never forget (and let some of us learn) that religion is "taught." It is an indoctrination in every way. Sexuality is ingrained and it develops with maturity with or without a belief system.

JOHN IN TO
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XCETERA





LIKE?

STICKER PRIDE

Facebook has rolled out free LGBT Messenger stickers for Pride. Now if they'd just stop flagging and deleting harmless homo posts…



PENIS POLITICS

LEFTY, RIGHTY… OR SÉPARATISTE?

The editors of French magazine *Marianne* adorned a recent cover with an array of penises to illustrate a survey about French people's relationship with politics and sex.

QUOTABLE (AND EDIBLE)



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A statement from General Mills about its rainbow marshmallow Lucky Charms cereal, created to celebrate LGBT Pride Month in the US.

Amicable split turning out to be a little less than friendly?

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SAY YES TO KNOWING

“If I thought it was offensive, I wouldn’t have done it.” Jade London ▸8



Ontario votes in Canada’s first elected gay premier

Kathleen Wynne and a crowd of supporters sing along with Katy Perry’s “Roar” on June 12. Wynne’s victory makes her Canada’s first elected gay premier and returns her to Queen’s Park along with gay MPP Glen Murray. A record number of openly gay candidates ran, but none of the others were elected. ROB SALERNO

Read the full story on dailyxtra.com.

PTS lays off executive director

Claudia Van den Heuvel offers to leave temporarily

COMMUNITY
JULIE CRUIKSHANK

Claudia Van den Heuvel, executive director of Ottawa’s Pink Triangle Services (PTS), has been laid off at her own request.

The move, which PTS says is a temporary one, comes in light of funding difficulties for the organization. Van den Heuvel presented the proposal to the board of directors on May 25 in an effort to avoid further staffing reductions.

Difficulty in generating sustainable revenue has been an ongoing problem for PTS, Van den Heuvel tells *Xtra*, adding that many charitable organizations face similar challenges.

“The hope was always that a grant would come in or a fundraising initiative would turn out to be more lucrative than what we were hoping for,” she says. “That never happened, so it just reached the point where the only option was to cut an expense. We don’t have a lot of expenses as an organization to begin with, so our options were a staff person or somebody that was receiving a salary.”

She says she made the decision to step aside herself rather than cut one of PTS’s two other staff members (Kayla Miller and Veronica Michelle). “I really appreciate the work that our other staff do here at PTS, and I’ve always been acknowledging that they’re underpaid for the work that they do. The last thing that I wanted to see was them — after working that hard — that they lose their jobs,” she says.

Van den Heuvel and acting president Mike Jan say they hope the layoff will be a temporary measure lasting about 12 to 13 weeks. “Hopefully, the fundraising or the funding will have improved by then,” Jan says.

“This is a measure that we put in place for a stopgap,” Van den Heuvel adds. “It’s hopefully not permanent, but there’s no way to know for sure.”

The layoff comes after a difficult period for the organization and its executive director. Annual general meetings held in both 2012 and 2013 failed to reach quorum, though a meeting held Oct 1, 2013, was successful.

PTS also saw multiple board members resign in 2012, including former board president Denis Schryburt. Some community members, such as Capital Pride grand marshal T Eileen Murphy, had called for Van den Heuvel’s resignation in 2012, alleging amendments to PTS’s bylaws gave her too much power.

Jan says the board will maintain operations at PTS for the next few months with remaining staff and volunteers. “The directors are going to do some of the work that Claudia was doing primarily to maintain operations,” he says. “The core programs are still running — our discussion groups, our counselling and so on — and we’re still open regular hours.”

Jan says he will take on additional responsibilities as acting president, as will other members of the board.

PTS is also seeking applications for new board members. So far three applicants have been accepted, bringing the total number to nine. The board can have a maximum of 12 members. Jan says additional board members will make it easier for PTS to reach quorum at future annual general meetings. According to PTS bylaws, for quorum to be reached, no fewer than five board members must be present, as well as 25 percent of the organization’s current membership.

Van den Heuvel says PTS has been applying for grants for the past 18 months, and Jan says they hope to receive funding from the Trillium Foundation and the United Way. “We’re going to work hard on grant applications for those,” he says. PTS also relies heavily on yearly funding from the City of Ottawa and on individual donations.

In the meantime, Van den Heuvel says she will remain involved at PTS on a volunteer basis. “I’m making sure that I can be here to assist board members through the transition. I’m not going to be carrying on any of my regular responsibilities, but I’m here to tell board members where things are when they need that.”

She hopes that remaining involved will make it easier for her to return if the funding situation improves.

In the event that it doesn’t and the layoff becomes permanent, Jan says, PTS would have to reexamine its finances and determine whether board members could take on additional duties.

“If we’re making less money over the long period, we’ll have to cut back somewhere,” he says. Other than salaries, Van den Heuvel says PTS’s biggest expense is rent.

“We really do like this space, so we’re hoping we can stay,” Jan says. “We do have our strategic plan that we would like to actualize, and this space and the volunteers and staff are needed for that to happen.”

While her own future with PTS is unsure, Van den Heuvel says that going forward, she hopes the LGBT community will learn to be more gentle with each other when disagreements arise. “We’re all just trying to make our community better, and I think when we’re getting vicious with each other… I think when we’re doing that we’re just hurting ourselves.” X

Drag, race & the politics of art

Drag queen asked not to return to Ottawa U stage after 'Hawaiian' performance

COMMUNITY
JULIE CRUIKSHANK

A drag performance at the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa (SFUO) Pride Centre took an uncomfortable turn May 4 when Jade London was asked not to return after performing in a Hawaiian-themed outfit.

London's outfit consisted of a grass skirt paired with a floral headdress and bra. She was inspired, she says, by dashboard hula girls. She performed to the song "Right There," by Nicole Scherzinger, who is of Hawaiian, Filipino and Russian descent.

"The reason why I chose 'Right There' is because there's a little bit of a tribal beat to it, and [the outfit] kind of fit with it," London says.

London says the Pride Centre's service coordinator took her aside after her performance and said that several people had been offended by her outfit and had left the show.

"My feelings were so hurt, mainly because in my mind at the time, I honestly didn't feel I did anything wrong," London says. "I'm not there to offend."

London says the coordinator told her audience members had felt the outfit to be a form of cultural appropriation, then told her she would not be allowed to perform her final song. When she offered to apologize, London says, she was told the Pride Centre would do so on her behalf. The SFUO Pride Centre declined to comment for this article.

Whether taking inspiration from another culture in the name of art is a form of appropriation is a much-debated question. "I think the question of cultural appropriation, specifically of indigenous peoples and cultures, is very important for drag performers and for all of us to think about," says Kathryn Trevenen, a professor of women's studies at Ottawa U whose research focuses on LGBT rights and postcolonial theory. "I don't think that a drag performance justifies appropriation of a person's culture, specifically in the case of indigenous cultures because of the history of the appropriation of [those] cultures."

It isn't uncommon for a drag performer of one ethnicity to take to the stage in the guise of another. But there is a difference, Trevenen says, between adopting the persona of an individual and that of an entire culture.

"I think it's very powerful that Jade didn't understand the politics of the outfit that she was using," she says. "I also think that the only way we can ever learn is by entering into dialogue with people. I'm really sympathetic to the idea that someone can do something like that without intending to harm anyone, for sure."

London says that part of the reason she sometimes portrays other cultures is that she doesn't want to be restricted. "For me, I'm Asian, right, so what possible artists are there that are well known that are Asian? It's really hard for me to pick a song that was within my own ethnicity," she says.

She also says that she would have been open to criticism from the Pride Centre and that she would have been happy to change outfits if she had been asked to. "If I thought it was offensive, I wouldn't have done it."



STUDIO ONE



Jade London wore a Hawaiian-inspired outfit (above) to perform Nicole Scherzinger's "Right There" at the U of O Pride Centre.

> "I understand that people were offended. I understand that they were hurt. I want to make it better because I'm not like that."
> JADE LONDON

Regardless of intent, Trevenen says it is important for drag performers to consider the implications of how they portray themselves. "I personally feel in instances like this that [we] should be guided by the group of people that those images belong to… I think that many indigenous folks are very articulate about why other non-indigenous people using their symbols or dress or beliefs is problematic."

Although she says she's hurt by the experience, London doesn't assign blame for how the situation was handled. "I love the people that are part of the organization… and I've never had problems with them before," she says. "I don't know if [the coordinator's words] were influenced by the crowd or other people within that organization or if it's their own personal feelings."

She questions the Pride Centre's decision to apologize on her behalf. "I understand that people were offended. I understand that they were hurt. I just — I want to make it better because I'm not like that," she says. "I didn't want people to feel that I left… I don't feel that the apology would have been sincere if I was running away and hiding from them." X

New sex-work bill considerably stricter than Nordic model

Communication still illegal if minor might be present

NATIONAL NEWS
JUSTIN LING

The Canadian government has introduced new sex-work legislation, and newspapers, johns, pimps and massage parlours are all in the crosshairs. Sex workers and their advocates are furious.

Justice Minister Peter MacKay introduced Bill C-36, the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act, on June 4. It was expected that the Conservatives would adopt some version of the Nordic model, which criminalizes buyers rather than sellers of sex. What was introduced, however, is substantially stricter.

The bill makes the purchase of sex illegal. But it does not leave the selling of sex entirely decriminalized. C-36 makes a criminal of any sex worker who communicates with a client in a public place where anyone under 18 might be present. A "public place" can include the inside of a car. That means two 17-year-old sex workers working a corner could both be committing a crime simply by being near each other. In that scenario, MacKay agreed, they could be arrested and fined.

MacKay was asked if that compromises the sex workers' security. "Not at all. We're not making them do anything. We're not forcing them to sell sex," he said.

The one component of the bill that sex workers might appreciate is its explicit permission to hire a bodyguard or driver. However, the parameters around hiring staff are very narrow. The bill makes it illegal for someone to make a living off the income of a sex worker — unless they are a family member or they are providing a legitimate service.

The bill explicitly criminalizes pimps, as well as anyone who provides drugs or alcohol to the sex worker. "If they're not exploiting the individual, then it would not be considered a criminal offence," MacKay said.

The bill also makes illegal any business where sex is purchased. That could mean that vice squads will be kicking down a lot of doors to massage parlours across Canada. *Xtra* asked the minister what that would mean.

"As for the places where we know very often prostitution does take place, including strip clubs and massage parlours, the police will have the same powers they do now to carry out investigations, surveillance operations that are aimed at, again, going after those who are perpetrating the offences around the selling of sexual services," MacKay said.



Justice Minister Peter MacKay dismisses concerns that the new bill jeopardizes sex workers' safety.
WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

While law enforcement agencies have sporadically enforced common bawdyhouse provisions, mostly targeting low-key brothels and massage parlours, this bill sets out a clear mandate for police services across Canada.

The section of Bill C-36 that caught everybody by surprise is at the very front of the bill — it makes illegal any advertisement of sexual services. While it's unclear just how that section might be applied, MacKay did vow to go after publications and websites that carry these advertisements. MacKay acknowledged this, saying the bill "prohibits advertising the sale of sexual material in print or online." The bill empowers police to order such advertisements be taken down and carries jail time of up to five years for anyone who places or publishes the advertisement.

While the bill technically states that advertising one's own sexual services is not a crime, MacKay said the opposite. Asked whether a sex worker could be prosecuted for listing an ad for their services in a newspaper, MacKay replied, "If there is a direct connection to the selling of sex that does not present itself in a public way, then it would be legal, but if it is done so in a way that is perceived as public, or as being available to those under the age of 18, it would be illegal."

NDP justice critic Françoise Boivin finds this new provision alarming. "They may have opened up other problems in view of the Charter."

Activists are outraged by the legislation. "I am horrified. I am terribly upset," says Jean McDonald, executive director of Maggie's Toronto Sex Workers' Action Project. "I am very worried about how this is going to impact the people I work with."

McDonald says the bill will be fought and eventually struck down as unconstitutional. In the interim, she says, sex workers will not be safe. "With this new legislation, we're going to see more murdered and missing women," she tells *Xtra*.

The Supreme Court of Canada, in striking down the country's previous prostitution laws in 2013, ruled that the laws criminalizing street soliciting, living off the profits of prostitution, owning a brothel and pimping were overly broad and disproportionate to the purpose they were intended to serve.

"They're repeating the same mistakes of the past, but in a different version," says Sarah Leamon of PACE, a group that works with street-level sex workers in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Leamon is particularly concerned about the continued criminalization of communicating in "public" with potential clients, which will undermine sex workers' ability to screen johns before leaving with them. "What we hear from members of the sex worker community, especially survivor and outdoor sex workers, time and time again — that period that they require in order to screen clients is critical to their safety," she says.

"This is exactly the kind of situation that allowed Robert Pickton to kidnap and murder women for decades," McDonald says.

Leamon, who also practises criminal law, says the changes will have a huge impact. "Certainly. Definitely. They're a major, major problem."

MacKay dismissed their criticisms. "What I say to that is what I've already indicated, and that is we are going after the individuals who are exploiting them, who are putting them in dark places, who are forcing them to be reliant on this trade," he said. X



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WILD THINGS

THE A-LIST

DTLA





"For me, what really stands out is the hypocrisy around why sexuality is seen as more suspect." Author Ummni Khan ▸19

Capital Pride is coming!

Expect old favourites and new additions this August

PRIDE NEWS
JULIE CRUIKSHANK

Capital Pride is back and bigger than ever, with some new faces at the helm and some exciting new events in store. On June 11, organizers announced the much-anticipated details for 2014.

This year's Free to Love theme is meant to celebrate freedoms won at home and still being fought for abroad. Capital Pride vice-chair Luke Smith says the organization really wanted to look at the "state of human rights on a global level."

To kick off the festival on Aug 15, organizers have partnered with the Museum of Nature to hold a Pride-themed Nature Nocturne. The Nocturne events have been gaining popularity in Ottawa, transforming the museum into a party space and offering adults the chance to check out exhibits in an atmosphere more geared to them.

Capital Pride has also partnered with comedy club Yuk Yuk's to offer the Comedy Cruise, featuring drag queens and standup comics performing live aboard the *Empress of Ottawa*. Official rainbow flag raisings will take place throughout the city on Aug 18, culminating with a flag raising at city hall accompanied by remarks from Mayor Jim Watson.

Many of Pride's best-loved events are back, including the family-focused Picnic in the Park on Aug 19; the Laugh Out Proud comedy event, which includes the Capital Pride Cruise, from Aug 21 to 23; and the Rainbow Party on Aug 21. The annual Human Rights Vigil will take place on Aug 21 and will feature transgender activist Stephanie Battaglino as guest host.

The Free to Learn lecture series will focus on family and youth-centred educational programming, and another panel discussion will examine the progress made by the LGBT community in the world of sports.



This year's Capital Pride parade will once again make its way down Bank Street and through the Village, on Sunday, Aug 24. BEN WELLAND

"What I'm looking forward to with the lecture series is having some of those uncomfortable conversations," Smith says. "It creates an opportunity for some really interesting conversations."

Another new initiative this year is the addition of international film nights, presented in partnership with the Swedish, Argentine, Dutch and American embassies and the ByTowne Cinema. Throughout August, a number of films showcasing queer culture around the world will be screened, including *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar* and *Mia*, an Argentine film that follows the journey of Ale, a transgender woman who must find her voice.

A perennial highlight of the festival, the Capital Pride parade, will once again make its way down Bank Street and through the Village, ending up at city hall for the Community Fair at Marion Dewar Plaza. The fair will feature a main stage produced by event planning company House of SAS that will showcase the talents of a range of queer artists, including DJ Stephan Grondin, rapper Cazwell, trans recording artist Amanda Lepore and *RuPaul's Drag Race* contestant Adore Delano. An Ottawa edition of RuPaul's Drag Race: Battle of the Seasons, will take place live on Aug 23.

Helen Kennedy, executive director of Egale Canada, has been announced as the parade grand marshal. She will be joined by Ten Oaks founders Holly and Julia Wagg as community-builder marshals, lifetime-achievement marshal Murray Lavigne, youth marshal Elliot Werhle and international marshal Cason Crane, as well as "out icon" Elvira Kurt. x

PRIDE RETURNS TO THE 1,000 ISLANDS

The longest day of the year is nearly here, and so is Toronto WorldPride. But if the idea of pounding the pavement all day in the baking sun or navigating streets congested with revellers isn't your cup of tea, there is an alternative that's more relaxing but just as fabulous. Gananoque's Summer Solstice: Pride in the 1,000 Islands festival is back, offering a laid-back approach to Pride celebrations set against the picturesque beauty of the St Lawrence River waterfront.

Now in its third year, the festival takes place from June 20 to 22 in Gananoque, an easy 90-minute drive from Ottawa. It began in 2012 when organizers received a $40,000 grant from the Celebrate Ontario program to create a destination Pride event in the 1,000 Islands, and features a flotilla Pride parade, with rainbow-bedecked boats making their way up the St Lawrence in style.

In keeping with the nautical motif, the festival will also feature a *Rocky Horror Picture Show* boat cruise to kick off the festivities on the Friday night and an adults-only drag cruise on Saturday. On Saturday morning, a fleet of cyclists will make their way from Kingston to Gananoque for the 1,000 Islands Pride Bike Ride, and a bus tour in the afternoon, hosted by Miss Pride 1,000 Islands, will highlight Gananoque's sights and attractions.

SUMMER SOLSTICE: PRIDE IN THE 1,000 ISLANDS
Fri, June 20–Sun, June 22
Gananoque
prideinthe1000islands.com
1000islandstourism.com

"We have a diverse kaleidoscope of visitors who come to enjoy our area," says Kathrine Christensen, executive director of the 1,000 Islands Accommodation Partners and a key Pride organizer. "The flavour of the weekend is fun. [It's] meant to showcase the islands, water, theatre, merchants and diversity in a welcoming community."

For those who like a little culture with their glitter, the Thousand Islands Playhouse will be presenting *She Loves Me*, a musical romantic comedy about finding love in unexpected places, as well as a staged reading of *Bed and Breakfast*, by Canadian playwright Mark Crawford. The play centres on a gay couple who inherit a family home in a sleepy tourist town.

The Saturday night highlight is a free Pride Gala Party at 8pm at the Firehall Theatre, featuring Brandon the Hypnotist and DJ Phil V. The OUTrageous! comedy hypnosis show and dance party will see audience volunteers leave their inhibitions behind as they are led through various personality changes and imaginary situations created by Brandon, who trained in Las Vegas in the art of hypnosis. Toronto's DJ Phil V, a YouTube dancing sensation, will set the mood for the accompanying dance party, and "ladybear extraordinaire" Fay Slift will entertain with her drag antics. (Full disclosure: Brandon Matheson is publisher and editor-in-chief of the three *Xtra* papers and Phil Villeneuve is the Toronto arts editor.)



Gananoque's summer solstice event features a Pride flotilla on the St Lawrence. JULIANNAHARBEC

For families looking to experience some kid-friendly fun, PFLAG will host a Rainbow Family Fun Day, with live music, face painting, crafts and puppet shows at Joel Stone Park on Sunday afternoon. "We try to have the entire community gather to celebrate summer solstice while having our visitors experience that zest for life you can only find in the 1,000 Islands," Christensen says.

If you're looking to get away from it all for a weekend but still want to celebrate Pride in style, head to the 1,000 Islands. Just remember to pack your lifejacket.
—Julie Cruikshank


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Summer Sizzle

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Toronto readies for WorldPride

Rainbows abound as the city decorates

Toronto has erupted in a celebration of colour as rainbows spread across the city in anticipation of WorldPride, which takes over the city from June 20 to 29.

Two rainbow-coloured crosswalks were installed at intersections in the gay village (Church and Alexander; Church and Isabella) in early June. Meanwhile, at the epicentre of the gaybourhood, the Church and Wellesley branch of TD Canada Trust unveiled a rainbow vinyl wrap on its building and around its ATMs.

The first of 200 lamppost banners that will be deployed across the city in celebration of WorldPride also hit the streets in the Church-Wellesley Village and along King Street West. The simple banners feature a rainbow flag and tell people to "Feel welcome. Everywhere."

Ryerson University deployed Pride banners in its district, as well, boasting, "Your pride is our pride." Just north of the Village, the Yorkville branch of the Toronto Public Library has its four front columns wrapped in rainbows.

On June 4, Toronto Public Health unveiled the city's first official condom. The CondomTO has an illustration of the street signs for Coxwell Avenue, Wood Street and Cummer Avenue and carries the message "No matter which way you go, put it on."



The Church and Wellesley branch of TD Canada Trust unveiled a rainbow vinyl wrap on its building and around its ATMs. ROB SALERNO

The condoms are being deployed around the city, particularly in the Village, in advance of WorldPride.

The Church Wellesley Village BIA announced it will be closing parts of Church Street to traffic and hosting a "neighbourhood block party" June 20 through 22 as part of WorldPride, with bars and restaurants offering extended patios on the street.

The street festival will feature a stage hosting drag queens, DJs and other local performers throughout the weekend.

If you're planning a visit to Toronto for WorldPride, you can find details about the week-long festival in the online version of *Xtra*'s *Ultimate Pride Guide*. Visit tinyurl.com/upg-world-pride. — *Rob Salerno, with files from Chris Dupuis*

For more on Toronto and must-see attractions around the city, visit dailyxtratravel.com.

U of T to host human rights conference

Organizers of the WorldPride Human Rights Conference, taking place June 25 to June 27, hope the growing visibility of LGBT rights will bring them a fresh audience.

"We are at this weird tipping point in terms of LGBT rights internationally," says Brenda Cossman, co-chair of the conference. "The bizarre thing is in different places they are tipping in different directions. In the United States, they are tipping towards marriage equality, and trans rights seem to be having a moment."

Hosted by the Mark S Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies at the University of Toronto, the three-day event will shine a spotlight on activists and advocates worldwide who are fighting for LGBT rights.

Cossman and her co-chair, Doug Kerr, looked across the world to find their speakers, eventually whittling down 400 workshop proposals to 180. The final schedule, they say, runs the gamut of LGBT rights work, including some issues that haven't received much publicity, such as the growing transgender rights movement in southeast Asia.

Ten gay Ugandan delegates were denied visas to travel to Canada for the event over fears they would try to claim refugee status when they arrived.

"We are still cautiously optimistic that we will be able to get the Ugandans here," Cossman says.

Organizers are so hopeful that they will be able to resolve the visa issue that they have not yet created a contingency plan to fill their panels — Cossman says they will cross that bridge if they get to it.

One Ugandan — Dr Frank Mugisha — will definitely be making the trip to Toronto. Mugisha, the executive director of Sexual Minorities Uganda, an organization that advocates for LGBT rights, has made headlines for his vocal stance against Uganda's anti-gay bill passed earlier this year.

Speaking with *Daily Xtra* last year, Mugisha said the law makes gay Ugandans fearful to leave their homes. "It's about my life and the life of other Ugandan activists," he said.

While there is currently a waiting list for conference passes, Mugisha and a number of other dignitaries, including HIV/AIDS activist Cleve Jones, Russian LGBT activist Masha Gessen and former Icelandic prime minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, will speak at a series of mid-afternoon plenaries open to the public.

By sharing these experiences, Cossman hopes activists in Toronto can make the connections that will help them build and grow the LGBT rights movement worldwide.

"I think it's an incredible opportunity on different levels for folks from around the world to come together to share their stories of resistance and their stories of hope."—*HG Watson*

For more on the WorldPride Human Rights Conference, visit wphrc14.com.

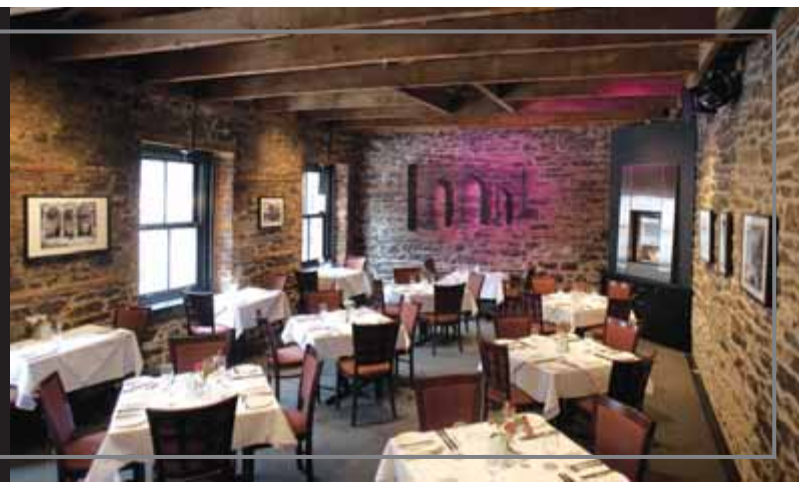
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Summer Sizzle

WHAT'S NEW PUSSY CAT?

JULIE CRUIKSHANK

Australia's Kitty Glitter brings her DJ stylings to Ottawa's Glow Fair



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glowfair.ca

WORLDPRIDE TORONTO

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Sat, June 28, noon–8pm
Yonge-Dundas Square, 1 Dundas St E

I Know You Got Soul (closing set)
Sat, June 28, 2pm–2am
TD Wellesley Stage, Wellesley & Yonge
worldpridetoronto.com

djkittyglitter.com

As a group, drag queens are known for being a talented bunch. Some are singers, some are dancers, some are expert seamstresses. Most queens will tell you it takes more than glitter and a good pair of falsies to make it in this day and age; if you want to add longevity to your drag career, you also need a skill.

Aussie queen Kitty Glitter has no troubles in that department. Hailing from Sydney, she's a successful international star who's performed all over the globe, from Shanghai to Saskatoon. But her gift isn't gluing on sequins at the speed of sound or the ability to lip-sync Céline Dion's entire repertoire from memory. Glitter is a sought-after DJ, spinning beats guaranteed to get the party pumping wherever she goes. And on June 20, she'll bring the party to Ottawa.

Glitter will be performing at the Bank Street Glow Fair, Ottawa's inaugural festival of light and electronic music. For two days in June, the Glow Fair will close down Bank Street, bringing neon installations, performance art and talented musicians and DJs to the Village. Of course, no festival in the gaybourhood would be complete without drag queens, and Glitter will be leading the fray.

"I started doing drag probably about 16 years ago," she says. "I started doing a talent quest, like every other drag queen does, and won that talent quest … then I started doing shows on Oxford Street in Sydney."

"MY STAR SIGN IS A LEO, SO I'VE ALWAYS FELT A BIT FELINE."

She spent about seven years performing on Sydney's drag circuit, doing collaborative stage productions with other queens. In 2006, she was named Sydney's Favourite Drag Queen at that city's DIVA Awards and decided it was time to add another element to her act.

"When the word got out that I was learning how to DJ, the venues that I was working in doing shows said, 'Why learn at home? Just come and learn on the job.' So I basically got thrown in the deep end. Because I had a strong following doing shows, I had a lot of people that were really interested to see how I was going to do as a DJ," she says.

Ignoring the skeptics, Glitter followed her passion and soon found herself working all over Australia, then in Asia and North America. She says it was a natural blending of mediums and made sense for her as a drag queen performing mainly in clubs. "A DJ is an entertainer, and a drag queen is an entertainer, so why not combine them, I thought? Music has always been a passion of mine, so it was just a natural progression, I guess."

When she works the clubs, Glitter says, she typically plays remixes of popular hits. But if she's working a larger event, she goes for a sound that's harder and edgier. In addition to honing her chops as a DJ, she also had to work on establishing her character. "When Kitty first started, she was like a hot, tartish (I must say) club kid. These days I don't really party so much, but the character's still there. She's a bit wild and vampy."

Originally, she had planned to call herself Kitty Litter but settled on Glitter to lend more glamour to her image. "My star sign is a Leo, so I've always felt a bit feline, I guess, in spirit," she says. "I knew I wanted to be a pussycat of some sort."

Glitter's success has enabled her to travel internationally, and she has become a mainstay of Toronto Pride (where she'll be heading after Glow Fair). She says she's impressed by what Canada's gay scene has to offer, particularly given that Australia doesn't yet have marriage equality. "We have festivals in Sydney, Australia, but it really didn't compare size-wise to what Toronto delivers. I think Canada's just got it happening — I need to find a husband and move there, I think!"

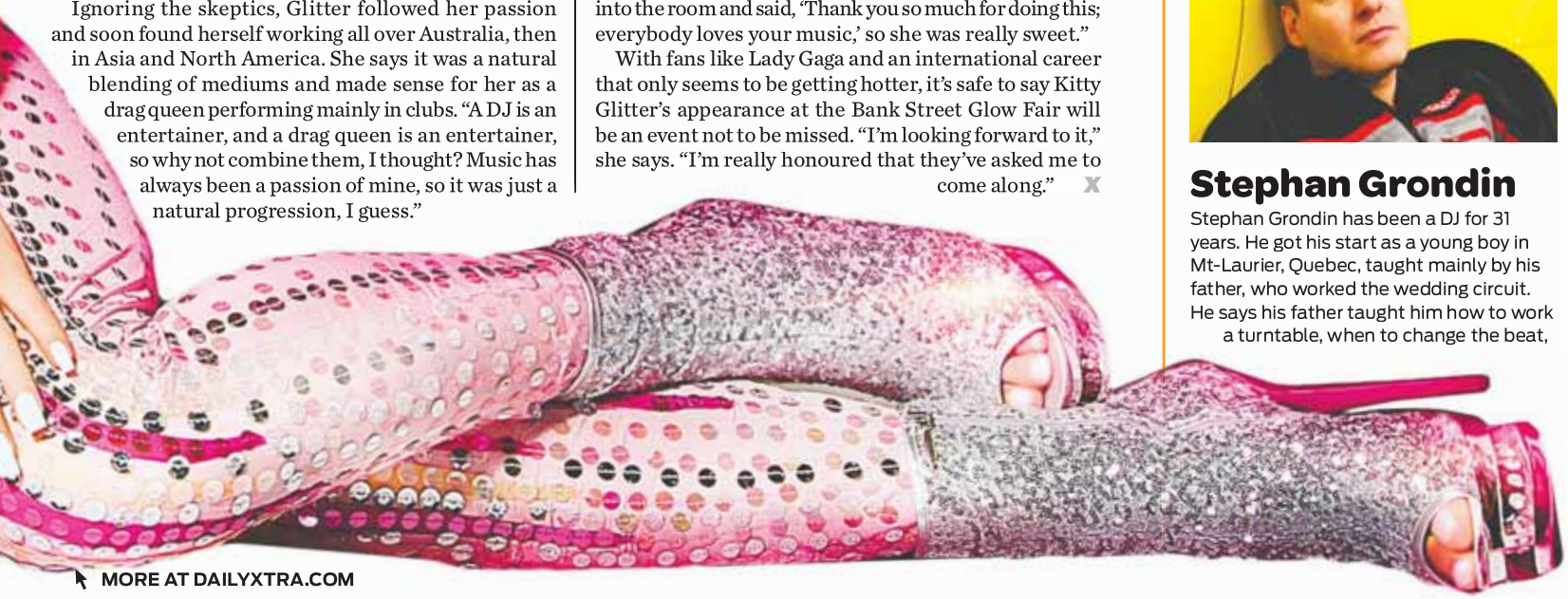
Glitter's globetrotting has also taken her to places where being gay is less accepted, and she's had to learn to adapt, she says. "It changes so drastically from country to country, so you've really got to adjust to which city you go to."

In places like Shanghai, for instance, she mainly keeps to the clubs when she's dolled up. "In Toronto, I'd be out in the streets at all times of the morning in drag," she says.

Of course, sometimes the most exciting and unexpected things happen closest to home. After playing a gig in Singapore, Glitter learned that Lady Gaga had been in the audience and got to meet her after her set. She returned to Sydney with a story to dine out on, but that wasn't the end of it. "A few weeks later, I got a message from Gaga's personal assistant saying, 'We're having a private party; we'd love you to come and DJ for us."

Thinking the star and her crew were back in LA, Glitter declined the invitation, only to find out that they were in Melbourne, Australia. "I was able to do that, and it was phenomenal," she says. "It was a private party just with her crew, no media, no fans, so I really got to see her comfortable and relaxed and having a lot of alcohol and a lot of fun … [Gaga] came up to me as soon as she came into the room and said, 'Thank you so much for doing this; everybody loves your music,' so she was really sweet."

With fans like Lady Gaga and an international career that only seems to be getting hotter, it's safe to say Kitty Glitter's appearance at the Bank Street Glow Fair will be an event not to be missed. "I'm looking forward to it," she says. "I'm really honoured that they've asked me to come along." x



MORE AT DAILYXTRA.COM

More Glow Fair highlights



Sandy Duperval

Hailing from Montreal, Sandy Duperval has been singing since she was three years old. The DJ and vocalist was raised by her grandmother, who, she says, encouraged her early on by signing her up to sing in a church choir.

As a teenager, Duperval received vocal training from Cissy Houston, mother of the late Whitney Houston. She was also one of four finalists of Quebec's *Star Académie* reality-TV show in 2004. Her style blends electronic DJ beats with powerful live vocals.

"For the amount of things I do that are related to music, that was the thing that made me feel the most complete because now I didn't have to just sing or DJ or produce; I could do it all and then share it as a whole," she says of her unique sound.

A successful musician at an early age, Duperval had to navigate coming out as gay after a religious upbringing. As a lesbian, a woman of colour, a female DJ and a singer, she says the most important thing is staying true to who she is.

"The only thing that made me feel that I belonged was the fact that I felt freedom," she says. "I find that Glow Fair is exactly that — it's freedom … [The organizers] accepted any artist as long as they were themselves and they had something to share, and it makes me feel like I'm right where I need to be."

Fri, June 20, 10:30–11:30pm at the Kronenbourg 1664 Live Music Stage

Stephan Grondin

Stephan Grondin has been a DJ for 31 years. He got his start as a young boy in Mt-Laurier, Quebec, taught mainly by his father, who worked the wedding circuit. He says his father taught him how to work a turntable, when to change the beat, and how to interpret the vibe of a room to keep the party hopping.

In the early days of his career, he spun beats in the Mt-Laurier discotheque from a private booth constructed to get around the fact that he was underage. From there, he went on to play some of Canada's biggest clubs and hotspots.

"I'm grateful now because I'm still doing at 46 years old the same work that I was doing when I was a young guy," he says.

Over the years, he's witnessed the scene change as different generations have discovered the clubs and made their mark and some of the bigger gay establishments have closed in favour of a more mixed scene.

"Honestly, for me, I like a club when it's mixed," he says. "That's what I like because you cater to everybody."

In his career as a DJ, Grondin says, he prefers to work without labels. "Sometimes people say I'm a gay DJ, but I'm not a gay DJ. I'm gay, I work as a DJ, but you know, sometimes people put a label on it."

Sat, June 21, 11:30pm–2am at the Jump FM Electronic Music Stage



Willam

Known for his biting wit and no-bullshit attitude, Willam is the embodiment of what-you-see-is-what-you-get. He combines an impeccable sense of style with a knack for comedy and a particular talent for lampooning celebrities, pop culture and homophobic fried-chicken restaurants in song.

His particular style of drag combines a razor-sharp sense of humour with a glamorous persona. "Imagine a tour guide who's also a prostitute who makes their audience laugh. I can go into any room and run for office, basically," he says.

While originally his ambition was to be an actor, he found Hollywood a challenging world to navigate. But he seems to have found his niche as a drag queen and has a particular talent for parody songs. His best-known number, "Chow Down," is a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the Chick-fil-A controversy.

"I'm trying to learn not to be unhappy that I'm a failed actor, but to be happy that I'm a successful drag queen," he says. "You know, I get to tour the world and I love it, but then sometimes I'll see a part and I'll be like, 'God, I wish I could do that.'"

He says he wouldn't rule out a return to acting if the right opportunity came along. "I never say no. If they've got a cheque, I've got a talent."

Fri, June 20, 10:30pm–3am, 299 Bank St

—Julie Cruikshank

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Summer Sizzle

Queer stories for young readers

Make the most of your summer reading with these picks from the LGBT community

JULIE CRUIKSHANK

Summer is almost upon us, which means school will be out soon. After the novelty wears off, the idea of being home every day for two months can be too much for kids and adults alike. But one advantage of summer downtime is that it's a great chance to catch up on reading.

We put out a call to the community and have compiled a list of LGBT-themed books for young readers, from the littlest gaybies to teens and young adults.

The Perks of Being a Wallflower

By Stephen Chbosky
Teen readers
MTV Books

The Perks of Being a Wallflower is about what it's like to travel that strange course through the uncharted territory of high school. The world of first dates, family dramas and new friends. Of sex, drugs and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Of those wild and poignant days known as growing up.

The Way You Say My Name

By Sara Bell
Teen or young adult readers
PD Publishing

Dillon Carver, 18, made the biggest mistake of his life when he dumped Jamie Walker two years ago over Jamie's decision to come out of the closet. At the time, Dillon was afraid Jamie's revelation would out him to the world — and his narrow-minded parents.

With help from his best friend Ben, Jamie was able to move on. He hasn't tried his hand at love again, but for the most part he has put the pain behind him. Now Dillon wants Jamie back, and he'll do whatever it takes to make that happen.

If I Told You So

By Timothy Woodward
Teen readers
Kensington

While working at the local ice cream shop, 16-year-old Sean Jackson — who's dealing with his overprotective mother, his popular girlfriend and adolescent uncertainties — discovers that the store manager, 18-year-old Jay, "likes" Sean the way Sean's starting to like him.

Who I Am

By ML Rice
Teen or young adult readers
Bold Strokes Books

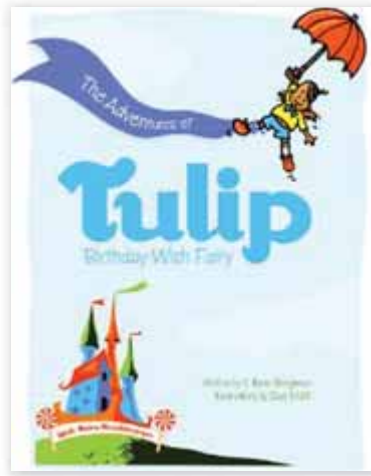
After the death of Devin's father, she and her mother move to Los Angeles to start a new life. Devin is "welcomed" to her new school by Jason, an arrogant bully who promises to make the rest of her senior year miserable. Things turn around, however, when beautiful, intelligent Melanie Parker, who happens to be Jason's sister, comes to her rescue. As Devin's and Melanie's relationship grows, Devin finds herself increasingly drawn to her friend's vivacious spirit. Devin's newfound confidence is severely tested, however, when Jason's bullying takes a violent turn … and she realizes her feelings for Melanie are more than platonic.

Recommended by Michael Deyell, owner of After Stonewall in Ottawa. Book descriptions from publishers.

The Adventures of Tulip: Birthday Wish Fairy

By S Bear Bergman, illustrated by Suzy Malik
Young readers
Flamingo Rampant

The story of what happens when Tulip the Birthday Wish Fairy receives a special request from a child named David, who wishes to be a girl. This is a great



story for kids because it explains transgender identity in easy-to-understand language. It also explains how to be accepting of trans people while explaining that sometimes people need extra bravery and have to teach others about their gender identity. It's an easy way for people to start conversations with their own children or to give trans or gender-independent kids the language to express how they feel.

Beautiful Music for Ugly Children

By Kirstin Cronn-Mills
Teen or young adult readers
Flux

This is a cool book because while Gabe's trans status is discussed and is part of his story, it's not his whole story. *Beautiful Music* is different because while Gabe has issues with his parents and peers after he comes out as trans, and worries about attacks, he also deals with the same issues as any other teenager, like what to do after high school and relationships. Topping it off is a lengthy author note in the back that discusses transgender identity as an umbrella term and the many ways that people can express their gender.

continued on page 18 ▶



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continued from page 16

Ash

By Malinda Lo
Young adult readers
Little, Brown Books

A retelling of Cinderella where the main character doesn't immediately choose the prince, this is one of the few YA fantasy novels that speaks to bi teens. And it's also just nice to have a main character in a fantasy novel that is not presumed and proven to be straight.

Magic's Pawn (from the Last Herald Mage Trilogy)

By Mercedes Lackey
Teen or young adult readers
DAW Books

Magic's Pawn tells the story of Vanyel, a 16-year-old boy who doesn't quite fit in with his family; he is sent away for school, where he figures out that he is gay. For a book first published in 1989, his treatment as a character is quite well rounded. His story does not centre on his sexuality, and although the first book would suggest that he and his lover get the "tragic homosexual" treatment, the rest of the series proves otherwise.

Recommended by Agnes Noblet of Venus Envy in Ottawa.

A Tale of Two Daddies

By Vanita Oelschlager, illustrated by Kristin Blackwood and Mike Blanc
Young readers
Vanita Books

A charmingly illustrated book about a little girl and her two very different, very beloved dads.

Kafiya Meets the Moon

By Janet Campbell, illustrated by Anais Lee
Young readers
Mascot Books

A Toronto author debuts a lovingly illustrated Jamaican story about an imaginative little girl.

Five, Six, Seven, Nate!

By Tim Federle
Tween readers
Simon and Schuster

The Broadway-bound middle-school hero of *Better Nate Than Ever* is back, daring to dream bigger than ever before.

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe

By Benjamin Alire Sáenz
Teen readers
Simon and Schuster

The winner of numerous youth-fiction awards, this is a story of a complicated friendship between two Latino boys that's equally gritty and lyrical.

When We Were Good

By Suzanne Sutherland
Teen readers
Three O'Clock Press

A Toronto teen-punk lesbian love story from a gifted debut writer.

Moon at Nine

By Deborah Ellis
Teen readers
Pajama Press

One of Canada's most acclaimed YA writers presents the story of two Iranian girls who fall in love but must stay hidden for fear of execution.

Recommended by Scott Dagostino, manager of Glad Day Bookshop in Toronto.

A Separate Peace

By John Knowles
Teen readers
Scribner

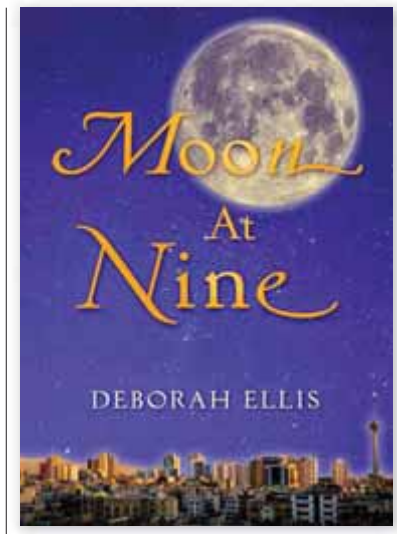
When I was a teenager, there were no overtly LGBT-themed books for young people and very few for older readers. You had to dig to find them. That said, astute readers developed something like a gaydar for literature. Sometimes it was the longing look between two characters a book cover. At other times, it was the cover copy. The one that caught my attention, at 15, was John Knowles's *A Separate Peace*. The copy described the main character, Gene, as a "lonely, introverted intellectual" and his friend Phineas as a "handsome, taunting daredevil," merely suggesting that "something" happened between them one summer at school. Elegantly written, it affected me profoundly, both as a writer and a young man looking for hope and for role models. *A Separate Peace* gave me both.

Recommended by Jeffrey Round, author of the Dan Sharp mystery series.

Families Like Mine: Children of Gay Parents Tell It Like It Is

By Abigail Garner
Teen and young adult readers
Harper Perennial

Kids say the darndest things. This won't come as a surprise to parents or parents-to-be, but being the child of a gay parent comes with its own unique challenges. This book will help you navigate your way past numerous parental blunders, thanks to the firsthand testimonials that Abigail Garner collects from children of gay parents. The author's own father came out when she was five, and Garner gives a powerful perspective on what it's like to grow up as a child of a gay man, being culturally queer and identifying as a straight woman. This book was a tremendous resource for me when I came out to my kids, then aged 10 and seven, because it helped highlight some of the struggles they would encounter. More importantly, it taught me (once again) that you have to put your feelings and needs aside to do whatever it takes to be the parent your kids need.



Recommended by Morgan Barnes, board director of the Ten Oaks Project.

What Makes a Baby

By Cory Silverberg, illustrated by Fiona Smyth
Young readers
Triangle Square

This wonderful book by a Toronto sex educator was written to apply to any type of family, and its illustrations are also wonderful, as is the careful and whimsical use of language. The story allows openings for parents to interject with the details of their own child's conception. Daphne loves it and often requests the story about "more babies!"

Mommy, Mama and Me (or Daddy, Papa and Me)

By Lesléa Newman, illustrated by Carol Thompson
Very young readers
Tricycle Press

A board book for really little babies, but a great example of how to integrate same-sex parents into early storytelling.

We Share Everything!

By Robert Munsch, illustrated by Michael Martchenko
Young readers
Scholastic

There's a subtle genderbending message in this book, as two kindergarten kids exchange clothing. The teacher is upset by the chaos, not the crossdressing.

Recommended by Ariel Troster and Caitlyn Pascal, parents of Daphne, two.

For our full list of recommendations, and links to other online lists, go to dailyxtra.com.



Beyond fifty shades

Ummni Khan examines our obsession with the taboo

IN PRINT
ADRIENNE ASCAH

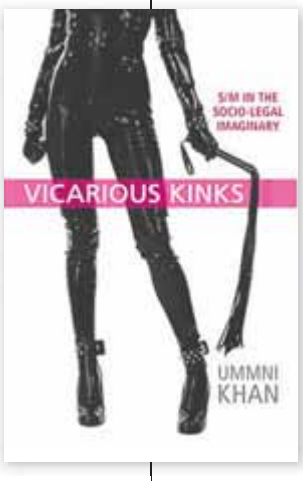
Ummni Khan, who teaches law at Carleton University, launched her new book, *Vicarious Kinks: S/M in the Socio-Legal Imaginary*, on June 11 at Venus Envy. *Xtra* spoke with Khan about the legal and social implications of being kinky and kink's intersection with queerness in this edited interview.

***XTRA:* What is kink?**

UMMNI KHAN: Kink includes everything that is kind of considered non-normative, so it tends to fall out of procreative sex, it tends to fall out of what we imagine to be romantic, genital-based sexuality. When people say "kinky," it's self-identification, but it's also a judgment that there's something a little bit strange about what's getting those people off.

What Canadian laws currently affect consensual adults engaging in BDSM?

There's no law that says you can't do BDSM, but in practice, if you engage in BDSM that goes beyond a threshold where the judge or the decision-maker decides that you've inflicted harm that they consider to be non-trivial, then you can get caught by the assault laws, which has happened to a number of people. Usually you don't get caught because it's happening in private and there's no complaints, but if your sexuality happens in a more public place, if someone decides to make a complaint, they can use that activity as evidence of an assault even if the person consented.



VICARIOUS KINKS: S/M IN THE SOCIO-LEGAL IMAGINARY
By Ummni Khan
$26.57
utppublishing.com

Through our anti-obscenity laws, a lot of BDSM will be considered obscene because the decision-maker will see it as perpetuating a degrading or dehumanizing representation of sexuality or promoting violence.

There are people who lose their jobs because somehow it comes to the attention of [employers] that the person either engages in SM or looks at BDSM pornography. You can lose custody of your children if you get the wrong psychiatric expert because although the most recent psychiatric guidelines don't see SM as necessarily pathological, many psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers do see it as inherently problematic for a parent.

What do you think of the fact that you can't legally consent to something that harms you?

For me, what really stands out is the hypocrisy around why sexuality is seen as more suspect. People self-harm with extreme sports, for example, or wanting to be incredibly thin and self-harming by lacking nutrition, and we don't criminalize them or the people who encourage them.

Where did the assumption come from that someone who engages in anything outside monogamous, heterosexual sex must be an abuse survivor?

There's an assumption — and what I believe to be problematic, so-called evidence — that links BDSM, being queer and doing sex work as an effect of childhood trauma. That is rooted in early sexology, like late 1800s/early 1900s so-called scientific literature that purported to study people like prostitutes, sadomasochists and homosexuals.

The assumption is that we're naturally supposed to reproduce, so any kind of sexuality that deviates from reproductive sex means that something's gone off course, either biologically or because of your experiences.

If you've read *Fifty Shades of Grey*, it ends with marriage; it ends with them having children. They're monogamous and their sexuality is kept private, so even though they engage in some kinky activities — it's pretty mild, to begin with — it falls within [the norm].

I don't think it's a coincidence that same-sex marriage is accepted in a way that gay bathhouses are not, because the more you can fit yourself into that reproductive, private, monogamous model, the more acceptable on a broader, societal level people will find you.

Is a fear of sex motivating the social and legal attempts to control sex?

I think it's fear of sex, but I also think there's a pleasure in regulating. There's a puerile, voyeuristic pleasure in articulating all the details in what these so-called perverts are doing. It's interesting to see how gratuitous some of the details are when I read the kind of anti-SM stuff that can come out of some branches of feminism, for example.

I genuinely think people are worried about violence; particularly, the anti-SM feminists are genuinely concerned about violence against women and making choices that they're not freely making, but it's rooted in an essentialist perspective that sees certain activities as inherently wrong.

Do you identify as queer?

I definitely identify as queer to the extent that I'm drawn sexually and otherwise to multiple genders. I've had debates with people about whether being kinky in and of itself is queer, and people have very different reactions around that. I think the term queer is about rejecting categories and rejecting the compulsion to normativity. If we take "queer" as that, then I would also put many, not all, people who practise BDSM as queer, too, but there's no consensus on that. X



Author Ummni Khan wonders why self-harm from BDSM is more suspect than that from extreme sports.



* Lease offer is from Honda Financial Services Inc. (HFSI), on approved credit. The weekly lease offer applies to the new 2014 Civic DX Sedan manual (model FB2E2EEX) / new 2014 CR-V LX 2-wheel drive (model RM3H3EES) / new 2014 Fit DX manual (model GE8G2EEX) for a 60-month period, for a total of 260 payments. 120,000 total kilometre allowance (12¢/km excess charge applies). Freight and PDI of $1,495 / $1,695 / $1,495 included and $100 A/C tax included (if applicable). RDPRM lien registration and lien registering agent's fees (up to $48 total) are due at time of delivery as is the case for the first instalment. Taxes, specific duty on new tires ($15), insurance and registration are extra. Dealer may lease for less. For a limited time only. Subject to change by the manufacturer without prior notice. Offer valid on new in-stock vehicles. Pictures are for illustration purposes only. See Gatineau Honda for complete details.

WHAT'S ON

FOR MORE LISTINGS, GO TO **DAILYXTRA.COM**

ART & LITERATURE

Venus Envy Book Club: The Story of O

Book lovers discuss Pauline Réage's *Story of O*, about the debasement of a beautiful, young photographer whose only want is to be a slave to her lover René. Thurs, June 26, 7:30–9pm. Venus Envy, 226 Bank St. Free. venusenvy.ca

Shoot Me, Please

Adam Barbu and Guy Berube co-curate this exhibit of Peter Shmelzer's paintings and shooting-range-style posters. Opening reception is Fri, July 4, 7–10pm; runs until Sun, July 27. La Petite Mort Gallery, 306 Cumberland St. Free. lapetitemortgallery.com

The Hard Cover Book Club

Men gather to discuss Steve Berman's *Boys of Summer*, an anthology about the allure that summer can hold for gay teens. Thurs, July 17, 7pm. Gay Zone, Centretown CHC, 420 Cooper St. Free. gayzonegaie.ca

HEALTH & ISSUES

The Living Room

HIV-positive people and their loved ones are welcome to access many resources, including a food bank, laundry facilities, internet, counselling and workshops. Contact The Living Room for an appointment. AIDS Committee of Ottawa, 251 Bank St, 7th Floor. Free. aco-cso.ca

Addictions Treatment

The LESA (Lifestyle Enrichment for Senior Adults) Program provides resources for people 55 and older experiencing issues with alcohol, medications, drugs and gambling. For an appointment, call 613-233-5430. Centretown CHC, 420 Cooper St. Free. centretownchc.org

Polybilities

Interested parties gather in a supportive environment to discuss issues related to non-monogamous relationships, including sex, emotional connections and the law. Takes place the fourth Monday of each month. Mon, June 23, 7pm. Free. PTS, 331 Cooper St. Free. ptsottawa.org

QPOC

Queer people of colour — all genders, abilities, ages and orientations — are invited to gather in a supportive, open and non-judgmental environment. Takes place the last Tuesday of each month. Tues, June 24, 7–9pm. PTS, 331 Cooper St. Free. ptsottawa.org

Spectrum

This Youth Services Bureau program offers queer and questioning youth aged 12 to 25 a safe space to socialize, discuss sexuality and related topics, participate in workshops, receive counselling and more. Every Tuesday, 7–9pm. YSB, 147 Besserer St. Free. ysb.ca

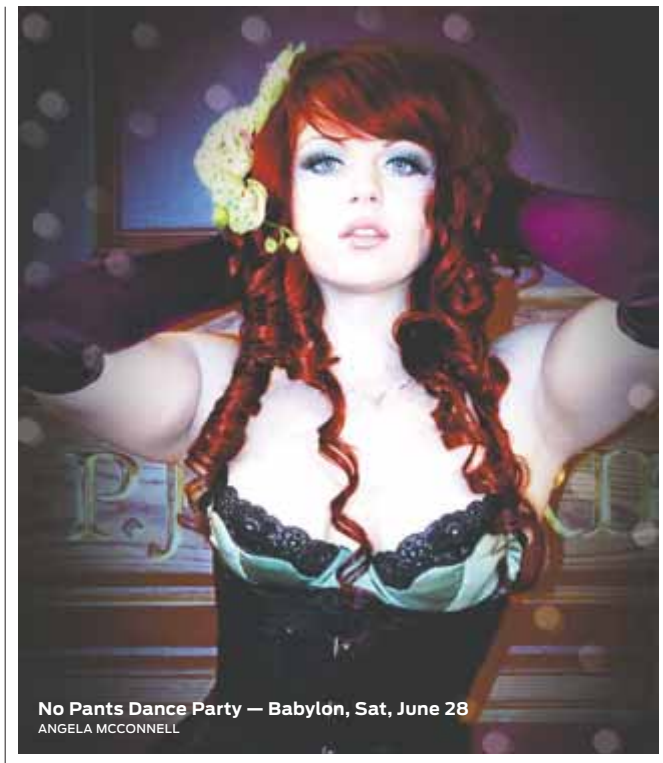
Gender Quest

A peer-led support group for transgender people at any stage of transition. Takes place the second Monday of each month. Mon, July 14, 7pm. PTS, 331 Cooper St. Free. ptsottawa.org

LEISURE & PLEASURE

Dyke March Pool Night Fundraiser

People pot a few balls and raise funds for the upcoming march. For more info, contact ottawadykemarch@gmail.com. Thurs, June 19, 7pm. Tailgators, 1642 Merivale Rd. $5 for unlimited pool.



No Pants Dance Party — Babylon, Sat, June 28
ANGELA MCCONNELL

Seniors' Bowling

Queer seniors 50 and older and their friends are invited out to bowl a few frames. For more info, contact georgeis@rogers.com. Takes place the second and fourth Monday of each month. Mon, June 23, and Mon, July 14, 6:30pm. West Park Bowling, 1205 Wellington St. $3 per game; free shoe rental. ospn-rfao.ca

Dyke March Volunteer Sign-Up

Folks gather, socialize and sign up to help with the 10th annual march. For more info, contact ottawadykemarch@gmail.com. Mon, June 23, 7pm. Bridgehead, 366 Bank St. Free.

Seniors' Night Out

Queer people 50 and older and their loved ones are invited to gather over refreshments. The venue is wheelchair accessible and parking is available. Takes place the first and third Wednesday of each month. For more info, contact ospn.rfao@gmail.com. Wed, July 2, and Wed, July 16, 7pm. Novotel Hotel, Heritage Room, 33 Nicholas St. Free. ospn-rfao.ca

NIGHTLIFE

Thursdays Are a Drag

Zelda Marshall hosts a night of performances by drag queens, drag kings and burlesque dancers. DJ Bill spins progressive house. Every Thursday, 10:30pm. Swizzles, 246B Queen St. No cover. swizzles.ca

Canada's Capital Kings

The drag king troupe kicks off the weekend right, with different themes — from a wet T-shirt contest to the musical *Grease* — and hosts each week. Every Friday, 8:30pm. The Lookout Bar & Bistro, 41 York St. $3. thelookoutbar.com

OUTrageous! A Comedy Hypnosis Show and Dance Party

This bizarre mélange includes a naughty hypnotist, "lady bear" drag performer Fay Slift and notorious French dance whore DJ Phil V. Sat, June 21, 8pm–1am. Thousand Islands Playhouse, 185 South St, Gananoque. Free. brandonthehypnotist.com

Oh My Jam: Sweat & Grind

Revellers grind to hip hop, dancehall, soul and soca spun by DJs Tamika, The Salivation Army and Dreams Come True. This edition includes live art by Fall Down Gallery's Robbie Lariviere. Sat, June 21, 10pm–2am. Babylon Nightclub, 317 Bank St. $7 before 11pm, $10 after. thequeermafia.com

Sassy Saturday Night Drag

The stage is festooned with feather boas, glitter and drama, with two shows nightly and a lineup of drag queens, followed by dancing to music by DJ Kitty Funkalicious. Every Saturday, 10pm–2:30am. The Lookout Bar & Bistro, 41 York St. No cover. thelookoutbar.com

Queens in the Hall

Surely one of Ottawa's biggest ever drag shows, this evening includes performances by more than 25 drag queens. Sat, July 26, 7pm. Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Ave W. $10.

No Pants Dance Party

Sporting underoos, gonch, panties, manties, whatever — bare-legged bodies gyrate to music by DJ Lowpass and enjoy a burlesque performance by Red Herring. Pants check available. Sat, June 28, 10pm. Babylon Nightclub, 317 Bank St. $10 advance, $15 door. babylonclub.ca

PLAYS & MUSICALS

Ottawa Fringe Festival

Based on the mandate that everyone should have the opportunity to produce their art, Ottawa's largest theatre festival features more than 50 shows performed at various downtown venues. Runs until Sun, June 29, various times and venues. Free–$10. ottawafringe.com

Young Forever

Written by Gregory-Yves Fénélon, this dramatic comedy explores the effects of a suicide on a group of young adults. Runs Sat, July 12–Fri, July 18, various times. Studio Léonard-Beaulne, 135 Seraphin-Marion Pvt. $13, $10 students. youngforevertheplay.tumblr.com

The Book of Mormon

A highly irreverent, ruthlessly satirical musical about Elder Price and Elder Cunningham, who are sent to convert Ugandans when they'd rather be in Florida. Runs Tues, July 15–Sun, July 27, various times. National Arts Centre, 53 Elgin St. $60.75–125.75. nac-can.ca

RUNNERS & BENDERS

Men's Yoga at GayZone

This class is suited to both beginners and experienced practitioners. Every Thursday, 5:15–6:45pm. Gay Zone, Centretown CHC, 420 Cooper St. Free. gayzonegaie.ca

Ottawa Frontrunners' Saturday Runs

Queer people and their friends walk or dash around Ottawa's streets and trails. For more info, contact ofr@ottawafrontrunners.org. Every Saturday, 9am, and every Tuesday, 6:30pm. City hall (Lisgar Street entrance), 111 Lisgar St. Free. ottawafrontrunners.org

SEX & BURLESQUE

Release the Kraken!

Yarr! If ye be searchin' for some burlesque of a piratical bent, venture out for a bottle of rum and some bare-assed shenanigans. Fri, June 27, 8pm. Zaphod Beeblebrox, 27 York St. $12 advance, $15 door. browncoatsburlesque.com

Mouthing Off: All About Oral

Regardless of your gender or orientation, this workshop should cover most of the ins and outs of oral sex, from anatomy to technique. Tues, July 8, 6:30–8:30pm. Venus Envy, 226 Bank St. $10–20. venusenvy.ca

Evening of Sin: Nerdlesque Night

Browncoats Burlesque and Headmistress Holly Sin join forces for a night of naughty-librarian-style hotness. Tues, July 8, 9pm. Rainbow Bistro, 76 Murray St. $10. browncoatsburlesque.com

Submit your event listing to **ottawalistings@dailyxtra.com.** Deadline for the July 17–Aug 13 issue is Wed, July 9.



XPOSED

BY ZARA ANSAR

Chinatown Remixed

The Chinatown Remixed festival opened May 17 and saw a number of emerging and established artists displaying works at venues throughout the Somerset Street neighbourhood. The opening also featured live art performances, DJs, stages and traditional Chinese dancers and singers. 1› Artist **Colin White** sketches buildings in Chinatown. 2› From left, **Beth Greenhorn**, **China Doll**, **Greg Reain** and **Don Kwan** celebrate the launch of Chinatown Remixed.



1


2

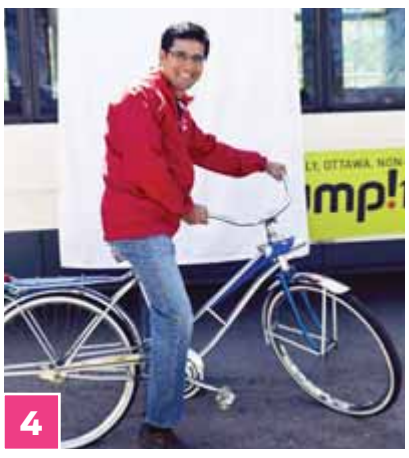
Ottawa Foodie Challenge

The Ottawa Foodie Challenge is an urban photo scavenger hunt that raises funds for the food bank. Teams of two compete against each other in food and drink challenges that see them navigating Ottawa to complete a scavenger hunt list in photos. Challenges are assigned point values based on how difficult the clues are to solve. 3› Organizers **Laurence de Montagny St Onge**, left, and **Carolynn Lacasse** enjoy a quick break at The Albion Rooms.


3

MEC Bikefest

Avid cyclists flocked to Byron Linear Park on May 11 to celebrate Mountain Equipment Co-op's Bikefest. The day featured various clinics and activities, vendors, cycling advocacy groups, as well as a mini vintage-bicycle fashion show. 4› Ottawa-Centre Liberal MPP **Yasir Naqvi** poses with a bicycle from Retro Rides in front of an OC Transpo bus stationed to teach people how to load bicycles on a bus.


4

10,000 Steps

The 10,000 Steps challenge is an initiative that encourages people to walk 10,000 steps a day to promote cardiovascular fitness. Participants also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the opening of the new Plant Recreation Centre. The event kicked off with greetings from federal, provincial and municipal officials. 5› **Jennifer McKenzie** rode a Right Bike to the event.



5

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Grape escapes

10 great wine destinations in North America

AEFA MULHOLLAND

If you're looking for a grape escape, don't trot off to Tuscany, sashay to Sancerre or race to Rioja. Those in the market for a vine time can stay this side of the Atlantic; the varieties and vintages of North American wines get ever more extensive as more states and provinces become the toast of the wine world. You'll now find tasting flights much closer to home, many of them in places you mightn't have imagined — from Nova Scotia to Texas.



1 Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia

Wine country: Vines have been growing in Nova Scotia since the 1600s, and there are more than 70 vineyards across the province's seven wine regions.
Vintage: Try a cool-climate classic: burnt amber Pomme d'Or dessert wine from Domaine de Grand Pré.
Visit: Wines sparkle at L'Acadie Vineyards, an organic winery in Wolfville.
Wine pairing: Wolfville's Blomidon Inn serves local vintages and seafood in a stately Victorian room.

2 Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan

Wine country: Didn't think of the Midwest as a must for wining and dining? Michigan has more than 100 wineries in four wine regions. Try the ice wineries of Upper Michigan's Leelanau and Old Mission peninsulas, where riesling and cabernet franc grapes grow at the same latitude as Bordeaux and Piedmont.
Vintage: Give Chateau Grand Traverse's medal-winning 2011 dry riesling a swirl.
Visit: It has to be Madonna's family's vineyard, Ciccone Vineyard and Winery, where tastings cost $5.
Wine pairing: Finish the peninsula tour at Leland's octogenarian Bluebird Restaurant & Bar, where Leelanau and Grand Traverse wines complement local walleye, perch and trout.

3 Texas Hill Country, Texas

Wine country: With 32 wineries and a wine region almost as big as Nova Scotia, Texas has made good use of cabernet sauvignon, sauvignon blanc, chenin blanc and riesling grapes during the state's brief 38-year wine career.
Vintage: Becker Vineyards' spicy red blend Prairie Rôtie captures the essence of Hill Country heat.
Visit: Try southwestern ports, cabernet-syrah blends, cabernet sauvignons and chardonnays at Becker Vineyards, outside rustic Fredericksburg.
Wine pairing: Tuck into Thai-Texan fusion fare at August E's in Fredericksburg. The owners also have a bed and breakfast — Ebers' Rock House — on an old homestead just outside town.

4 Eastern Townships, Quebec

Wine country: At just over 40 years old, the wine industry might be youthful in La Belle Province, but with an enticing selection of dry, sparkling, fortified and late-harvest wines made over six wine regions, it's a fine place to hit the wine trail.
Vintage: Savour L'Orpailleur's vanilla-nuanced white Reserve, made from seyval blanc and vidal grapes.
Visit: Try whites, reds and sparkling delights at L'Orpailleur in Les Cantons de l'Est — the Eastern Townships — in Dunham, just north of the Vermont border.
Wine pairing: Dunham's Homei Bistro, and its Asian-influenced Québécois fare, makes a perfect wine-route stop.



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BRIAN SPROUT



AEFA MULHOLLAND



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ABEJA.NET

Clockwise from top left: diners at Mission Hill Winery in West Kelowna, BC, enjoy a picturesque view of the Okanagan Valley; bring a notebook to record tips on pairing wines with cheese and other foods; take time to tour producers' cellars and learn about different maturation techniques, from stainless steel tanks to new oak barrels; Abeja winery and inn is located on a converted farmstead; hip Hammondsport is home to Dr Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars, the original Finger Lakes winery.

5 Finger Lakes, New York

Wine country: There are three distinct wine trails to explore in the Finger Lakes — Keuka Lake, Seneca Lake and Cayuga Lake — and more than 100 wineries.
Vintage: The area is known for producing the United State's best riesling. Try a deliciously dry and floral bottle from Ravines Wine Cellars in Hammondsport.
Visit: Hip Hammondsport is home to Dr Frank's Vinifera Wine Cellars, the original Finger Lakes winery, open year-round.
Wine pairing: You'll find the best local wine list at the Village Tavern in Hammondsport.

6 Walla Walla, Washington

Wine country: It's not all coffee and craft brews around here; a new winery opens every two weeks in the second most productive wine state in the US.
Vintage: Sample sumptuous 2009 Walla Walla syrah from Trust Cellars.
Visit: Make an appointment to quaff signature cabernet sauvignon at converted farmstead Abeja Inn.
Wine pairing: The quaint yet slick Whitehouse-Crawford Restaurant in Walla Walla has a huge list of local vintages and a tasting room next door.

7 South Okanagan, British Columbia

Wine country: Stretching from Kelowna to the US border; don't miss wine towns Osoyoos, Oliver and Penticton.
Vintage: Taste the unusual tannat-syrah blend Dead of Night from Moon Curser Vineyards.
Visit: Small but stunning Painted Rock Estate Winery offers syrahs, chardonnays and several Bordeaux-esque reds.
Wine pairing: Hester Creek is where the first valley wines were planted in 1968, so they know a thing or two about wine. Terrafina restaurant is a beautiful place to soak up the ambiance over a cabernet franc or late-harvest pinot blanc.

8 Sonoma, California

Wine country: Of the two most famous American wine regions, Sonoma offers a more laid-back, less expensive take on wine tasting than neighbouring Napa.
Vintage: Of Sonoma's 72 wine grapes, chardonnay stands out. See what you think of La Follette's Sangiacomo.
Visit: Save money to buy bottles with free tastings at Cline Cellars. Take a picnic and eat on the grounds.
Wine pairing: Every Wednesday night at Scopa, in chic Healdsburg, a local winemaker works the floor as a server, closing the circle between producer and connoisseur.

9 Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

Wine country: One of Ontario's four established wine areas, Niagara-on-the-Lake is where winemaking began in the province. Three dozen wineries sit within minutes of each other, making for easy touring.
Vintage: One of Niagara's best bottles is Hidden Bench's 2009 chardonnay.
Visit: Tiny Five Rows Craft Winery is hard to find but worth the effort.
Wine pairing: Newly located to the lakeshore, farm-to-table classic Treadwell has a huge patio right on Queen Street.

10 Willamette Valley, Oregon

Wine country: This is pinot noir country; luscious reds abound in the 300 wineries and six appellations of the valley.
Vintage: If you can find a bottle, savour lush, bold pinot noirs from Miura.
Visit: Head away from the hordes and explore the range at A Blooming Hill Vineyard, a winery in Cornelius, north of Portland.
Wine pairing: Southwest of Portland, Dundee Bistro boasts the best Oregon pinot noirs along with similarly local edibles.

Access this story on dailyxtratravel.com for web links to select featured businesses and attractions.

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Wickedly good theatre in Old Blighty

London's West End strikes a distinct chord with gay audiences

TED FLETT

As home to some of history's most revered playwrights — William Shakespeare, George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde — it should come as no surprise that Old Blighty's capital boasts an impressive theatre scene. North Americans might be spoiled for choice, with Toronto's theatre district and New York City's Broadway, but London theatre promoter Jonathan Mountford says his home impresses in its own distinct way, justifying the trans-Atlantic trip for theatre buffs.

"London's West End has always been and continues to be the world centre for theatrical excellence," Mountford says. "The standard of theatre is high, given the massive pool of producers that are eagerly queuing up to get their work into a venue to replace a struggling show, and London's well-versed audiences are always looking for something new and exciting."

Mountford's passion for theatre is evident. As he describes the scene and what's hot onstage, a deep smile forms. He rubs his palms and his heel begins to tap beneath the table. He says London's ideal combination of talent supply, audience standards and history make the city "the hands-down best place to create new work and revive classics."

Classics onstage in the West End — the nucleus of London's theatre scene — include *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables* and *The Mousetrap*, which have been attracting a stream of theatregoers for decades.

New works help to mix up the London theatre offer. *The Bodyguard*, a musical adaptation of the famous Whitney Houston flick, stormed onto the Adelphi Theatre stage in late 2012 and has been impressing audiences ever since. Updated choreography, song performance and additional Houston hits give the production a modern feel without upstaging the vacillating love story between megastar Rachel Marron and her bodyguard, Frank Farmer.

Musical adaptations of Roald Dahl's *Matilda* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* have quickly become big hits for families and children at heart. *Matilda* impresses with eye-popping sets and a talented cast of youth, but centre-stage is the evil head mistress, Miss Trunchbull, played as hideously wicked as her chin mole by Montrealer Alex Gaumond in drag.

Despite the absence of a big gay production in the West End since *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, which closed in 2011 after a three-year run at the Palace Theatre, Mountford insists there is still plenty to appeal to a gay audience. He points to *Miss Saigon*, which opened this spring in London.

"Any play or musical that deals with the idea of repression or a hidden secret seems to relate strongly to a gay audience," he says. "*Miss Saigon*, for instance, tells the story of forbidden love and the battle for the right to love anyone you choose — a right the gay community is still fighting for."

Theatre critic and blogger Scott Matthewman agrees that the post-*Priscilla* scene resonates for gay audiences. "*Wicked*, for example, has a huge gay following, partly because it features two divas but also because it's a story about accepting difference," he says. "So it doesn't have to be a great gay show; it can be just a great show to make that connection with a gay audience.

"In so much of theatre, you bring your own experiences to it, and there are elements of a play that will resonate with you as a gay person rather than a person next to you based on what you've been through in your life," he says.

Matthewman attributes the quality of London theatre to its breadth. While the West End is the focal point for tourists, there are also fringe, off-West End and repertory theatres like Shakespeare's Globe. "The one thing that characterizes the London theatre scene is the size of it. The West End is massive, but all over London there are lots of theatre spaces producing really great stuff," he says.

"Also, the lines between West End and off-West End are blurred because some playhouses are just as big as West End theatres. If you go further afield, you can see something just as good in a more intimate setting for less money and have a great night out."

Above the Stag Theatre sustains itself by catering specifically to the gay market with queer productions, from dramas to comedies to pantomimes. "We are the only full-time professional LGBT theatre in the UK," artistic director Peter Bull says. "We are primarily a producing house, although we occasionally welcome visiting productions.



Top: With two divas and a story about accepting difference, *Wicked* has great camp appeal. Above: Walking tours by the Society of London Theatre weave through Soho, the Strand and Covent Garden, where you'll find the stage door of the famous Drury Lane, also known as "The Royal."

"The most important people at our theatre are the audience," he says. "We must give them what they want, which is to be entertained. That doesn't mean we can't present something controversial or challenging, but it must be of a high standard." The company's summer show is a revival of *Bathhouse: The Musical*, which, Bull says, "doesn't pretend to be high art, but is just a feel-good summer audience pleaser."

In a city that sets such a high standard for theatre, paying attention to audience response is critical; Londoners value steak over sizzle. Remember that this is where Andrew Lloyd Webber's highly anticipated 2011 *Phantom* sequel, *Love Never Dies*, was coined "Paint Never Dries" and closed within 18 months. And *Viva Forever*, the superhyped 2012 Spice Girls musical, closed within seven. Meanwhile, on Broadway, musicals like *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark* will blunder along filling seats despite negative reviews.

Londoners, Bull notes, are not easily impressed. "We tend not to applaud the scenery and every entrance, which seems to happen whenever I see a Broadway show."

Even when their stages are empty, London's theatres are noteworthy attractions. Walking tours by the Society of London Theatre weave through the theatre areas of Soho, Covent Garden and the Strand, highlighting the architecture and personalities behind all sorts of theatres, from Victorian to modern. Some, like Theatre Royal Drury Lane and the National Theatre, also offer backstage tours.

Top of the world to you

STOREFRONT

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The View from The Shard is the only place to experience all of London all at once.

the only place to experience all of London all at once and is a must-see for visitors to the city.

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