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TORONTO'S GAY & LESBIAN NEWS

#770 MAY 1-14, 2014

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Photographer Devon Poole
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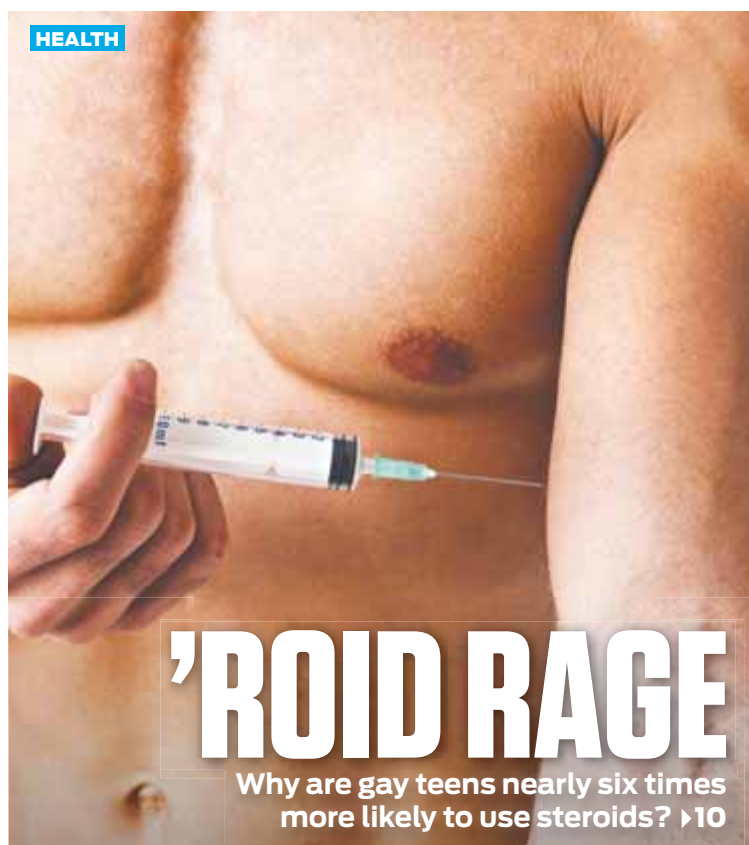
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Lessons from the Parti Québécois



EDITORIAL
ROBIN PERELLE

When Pierre Karl Pé-ladeau pumped his newly anointed Parti Québécois fist for sovereignty in March, he might as well have been talking about sexual liberation.

Not that Péladeau has given any indication that he supports sexual liberation. But like sexual liberation, sovereignty is both the end game and potentially the greatest liability of a cultural movement that has earned enormous gains without managing to ultimately dislodge the governing social system.

When the Parti Québécois stepped onto the political scene in 1968, it was the product of profound social upheaval. The Quiet Revolution was barely eight years old but had already transformed a conservative, Catholic Church-driven, anglophone-dominated province into a more modern, more egalitarian state with access to education and healthcare and a reemerging sense of pride in being French Canadian.

The revolution's lead architect, Liberal premier Jean Lesage, had, with his natural resources minister, René Lévesque, nationalized foreign-owned hydroelectric plants throughout the province and begun training francophones to take over engineering and other positions previously held by anglophones. Wealth and decision-making power finally began to shift, though a royal commission inquiry in 1963 would find that francophones, representing 80 percent of Quebec's population, still earned only 64 percent of their anglophone counterparts' salaries.

Carving spots in places of power was essential but not enough. Nurturing French Canadian culture and breathing new life into its language became paramount, especially as it became clear that francophones submerged in English-speaking Canada outside Quebec were rapidly losing their language.

Lévesque soon parted with the Liberals and launched the Parti Québécois, committed both to strengthening Québécois language, culture and independence within the province and, ultimately, to creating a separate state no longer outnumbered by anglophones in the rest of Canada.

In the years since, the party has made

enormous gains within the province: Québécois culture is strong and pervasive; francophones are now better educated and have access to the highest-paying jobs; music, films and even the most vacuous homegrown TV shows celebrate and reflect Québécois realities.

Yet as a direct result of these significant gains, the separate state now seems unnecessary and nearly impossible. To even suggest it during an election campaign is political suicide.

Not unlike sexual liberation. Once a goal of the gay liberation movement — to transform society as a whole to embrace all forms of sexual pleasure and relinquish its uptight fixation on sin — we have settled largely for carving spots for ourselves, and to some extent our culture, within existing institutions. Rather than challenging marriage, for example, we demanded our share of its sanctioned rights and responsibilities.

Nothing wrong with demanding our due, whether it's equal access to education, jobs and decision making in Quebec or equal access to job protection and spousal benefits in straight society. But is it enough? What happens when a cultural movement wins significant gains without transforming the overall structure that surrounds it?

The latest incarnation of the Parti Québécois shows what can happen when a movement that has made huge gains loses direction. How do you keep nurturing the culture you were created to protect once you've strengthened it enough to survive in a world where it's still, nonetheless, a minority?

Do you try to squash others to further strengthen your own position?

Do you keep pushing for transformational change in a world now prepared to recognize your existence and even, occasionally, to shift some of its norms to acknowledge your own?

Or do you keep carving and nurturing the spots within, content to contribute, slowly, maybe, to reshaping the bigger picture over time?

As the cultural revolutions born in the 1960s win impressive gains within potentially greater losses, it's no wonder many of us find ourselves at a crossroads. ✕

Robin Perelle is the managing editor of Xtra Vancouver.

FEEDBACK

ACT cuts

Ellen's letter severely criticizing Hazelle Palmer's direction of ACT from 2009 to 2013 is very unfair and cannot go unchallenged [Re: "AIDS Committee of Toronto Cuts Staff to Control Deficits," dailyxtra.com, March 19]. Everything ACT does is essential and there is nothing there that's a luxury activity. ACT regularly reviews its programs for efficacy and winds down old programs that no longer serve a useful purpose while starting new ones to address new areas of need. Hazelle Palmer became the executive director of ACT at a point when ACT began to suffer severe unexpected funding cutbacks from various levels of government, and she and ACT senior staff and its board struggled to cope with the resulting unexpected deficits without severely cutting back essential services to the gay community and without butchering its cadre of professional staff, and this was not easy. ACT has been very much in survival mode during the last few years, and Hazelle coped very well with this ongoing crisis in funding for ACT, which is why SHC was so happy to hire her.

EVE MARIE
TORONTO, ON

WorldPride

Two months before WorldPride 2014 and you wouldn't know it ["When Toronto Hosts WorldPride, Will Anyone Show Up?" dailyxtra.com, March 24]. There is no large banner, sign or advertising highlighting this event on Church Street. There are thousands of cars going by each day — an advertising opportunity — but you would never know there will be a WorldPride in June. Anyone with common sense would know large banners, signs or posters to advertise this to the passing traffic or the general public by this point of time would work. Or are we waiting for a politically opportune time for a certain politician to grab the spotlight on this?

JAN GRYGIER
TORONTO, ON

BIA editorial

The article quotes Mychol Scully, the

“Like the rest of the country and economy, people are polarized between rich and poor, and the poor are losing.”

[RE: TORONTO LGBT PHILANTHROPY CONFERENCE]



new manager of the Church-Wellesley Business Improvement Area (BIA), as saying, "I don't read *Xtra* or any of the major papers," ["New Blood at the BIA," *Xtra* #769, April 17]. That's a warning sign. If you have a leadership position in the Toronto gay village, you need to read *Xtra*. It's the only gay publication in Toronto that attempts to regularly monitor issues in the gay village and the broader Toronto LGBT community. Even the gay opponents of *Xtra* still read the publication. Furthermore, if you have a leadership position with a BIA in Toronto, you need to be aware of municipal issues by reading at least one major paper, especially when a BIA is dependent on the City of Toronto for its very existence and its funding.

ELLEN
TORONTO, ON

Christopher Karas

Let's do an experiment: bring into the schools books that put down blacks, immigrants, disabilities of any kind and, of course, different religions — then see who wants them removed ["School Board Rejects Student's Homophobia Allegations at Tribunal," dailyxtra.com, April 23]. The poor Catholic school board (and church) is flailing like a fish out of water, as they know they are on the wrong side of

love, compassion and any teachings in the book they clutch to so dearly. This is cruel and against the new laws they must adhere to but not surprising.

MARY MILKETTE (FACEBOOK)
TORONTO, ON

I agree with everything Christopher is doing, except removing the book *Poison* from the curriculum. If you don't want to be censored, don't be banning books. It's a slippery slope!

JACQUES LAPLANTE (FACEBOOK)
OTTAWA, ON

Toronto LGBT Philanthropy Conference

Canada's middle and working class is economically tapped out ["When the Money Dries Up," dailyxtra.com, April 25]. In Toronto, service industry jobs, which traditionally cover a big chunk of the gay working class, pay shit, and it's not enough to keep up with rising rents. Look at the Village: all the mom-and-pop shops are closing and more corporate-owned franchises are moving in. Like the rest of the country and economy, people are polarized between rich and poor, and the poor are losing.

RYAN
TORONTO, ON

Catholic parents at Pride

Teachers in OECTA need to stick to their position and join in the Pride celebrations as planned ["Catholic Parents' Group Demands Union Pull Out of Toronto Pride," dailyxtra.com, April 22]. It is time for this group of parents to consider the damage homophobia and refusal to serve and affirm LGBT school community members have caused many LGBT students who need support and affirmation. By joining in the Pride celebrations, teachers will also give a clear message of support to those who are victims of homophobic bullying — often inspired by ill-considered statements from religious leaders.

WAYNE M
TORONTO, ON

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.

XCETERA

FROM THE PTP ARCHIVES 15 YEARS AGO

XTRA #379, MAY 6, 1999

Rex Harrington and Aleksandar Antonijevic take the roles of von Rothbart and Siegfried, respectively, in James Kudelka's National Ballet of Canada production of *Swan Lake*. "I believe in romantic love," Antonijevic says of his role. "It gives you so much, whether it hurts you or not." After a career of more than 20 years with the company, Antonijevic is retiring from the National Ballet in 2014.



OUT ON THE STREET BY KYLE BURTON

What role did the Virgin Mary play in your childhood?



Kelvin
STUDENT

Um... I used to pray when I was a child. I'm Christian.



Aliya
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Well, I grew up Muslim. I wanted to be a prophet.



Patrick
STUDENT

When I was younger, I saw her as a feminine mother figure.



Sharlene
ARTIST

None at all.

QUOTABLE

“I don’t care whom you sleep with. It’s ‘What kind of a human being are you? I don’t understand [why people are anti-gay]. It’s such a personal, private business, and it’s none of mine.”

— Betty White, in a recent interview with Larry King



Sushi

A BIWEEKLY HELPING OF POP CULTURE, SERVED À LA CARTE

Akie Abe

The wife of conservative Japanese PM Shinzo Abe rode on a float at the 2014 Tokyo Pride parade.

3,000

Number of attendees at Tokyo Pride.

Kanamara Matsuri

Otherwise known as the penis festival, an annual Japanese event.



Penis lollipops

A bestselling item at Kanamara Matsuri.

6 lbs

Weight of the “world’s largest gummy penis.”

Anna Swan

Born in 1846, the “world’s tallest woman” grew to seven feet, eight inches.

26 lbs

The birth weight of Swan’s son; the circumference of his head was 19 inches.

Tom Thumb

Nickname of the world’s smallest baby boy, who weighed 10 ounces at birth.

Baby gorilla

Born by a rare animal C-section operation at the San Diego Zoo in March.

Adam Lambert

Raised in San Diego.

The Very Best

Lambert’s greatest-hits compilation will be released in May.

May 17

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.



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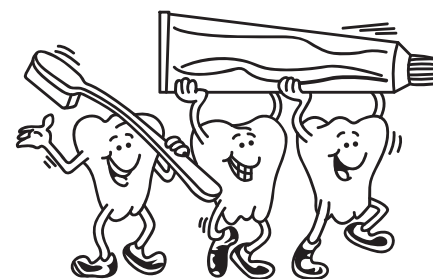
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WELCOMING NEW PATIENTS!

MICHEAL LARGE MAY 4, 1967–MARCH 29, 2014



Micheal Large was the first volunteer coordinator at Fife House — a position he held from 1993 until 2008.

Micheal's enthusiasm fuelled the soul of Fife House, and his genuine caring for people strengthened the heart of the volunteer program. He started the program, built and nurtured it and made it one the best managed and largest in Ontario. His legacy has continued with a vibrant and passionate volunteer workforce that is a core part of Fife House. Volunteer contributions are equivalent to seven full-time staff every year.

Micheal's time with us mirrored the history and story of Fife. He started as a volunteer at Fife in 1991. He then became the unpaid volunteer coordinator before being hired in January of 1994 as staff. In his own words: "I started volunteering in March of 1991 at the Yuk Yuk's club fundraiser for Fife House. I started volunteering as a way to cope with being diagnosed with an AIDS-related infection. I am so in awe of people when they volunteer their time. I respect the world of volunteers everywhere. I'm a little anal-retentive when it comes to organizing, which is a good skill to have for someone who has to support, manage, motivate and guide hundreds of volunteers. I do think I bring

something unique as a person living with HIV. It's not that someone who is HIV-negative isn't able to work in this field, but I think that sharing my perspective on this disease, which also impacts me directly, is helpful to volunteers."

Micheal chaired one of our original fundraising campaigns — the Red Ribbon Campaign. His impassioned personality made volunteer recruitment a natural — many of our longest-serving volunteers started with Micheal and remain today at reception, community programs, bingo and our Jarvis meal programs. Micheal was sought after, often giving workshops on volunteer management and recruitment and the often-challenging role of being a person living with HIV/AIDS working within an AIDS organization.

Micheal attended our 25th anniversary celebration this past February, where he had a chance to reconnect with many Fife House volunteers, friends and staff members and to see how much he contributed.

Micheal cherished Fife House and the work everyone does. He felt Fife was not just a place to work, but a place he called his family.

Fife House will be hosting a time of reflection and closure on Tuesday, May 6 from 5 to 7pm at 490 Sherbourne St. Feel free to join us to celebrate the life and legacy of Micheal Large.



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When the money dries up

Toronto LGBT Philanthropy Conference brings together donors, organizations and fundraising pros

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
ELAH FEDER

The funding tap for LGBT causes has run dry since gay Canadians won the right to get married, according to the director of one of the country's largest LGBT advocacy organizations.

In the opening panel at the fourth annual LGBT Philanthropy Conference in Toronto, on April 24, Egale Canada executive director Helen Kennedy offered a frank assessment of the challenges her organization faces in the fundraising arena, particularly since marriage equality was achieved.

“After marriage, there was this sense that we have everything,” Kennedy said, condemning the ensuing complacency.

The two-day conference included panel discussions that asked how the community can channel money from

the donors and funding bodies that support LGBT causes to those who need it. Kennedy said Egale has found it especially difficult to galvanize donors around trans issues. It is currently working to build support for Bill C-279, which would include protection based on gender identity in Canada's Human Rights Act. There are no protections for trans people in the Criminal Code or the Human Rights Act, and yet trans people remain among the most vulnerable.

“But when we mention that and pitch it to get the resources that we need in order to mount the kind of advocacy that we did for marriage, it's night and day,” Kennedy said. As a result, Egale has turned to allied funders outside the community for support on these issues and has focused much of its effort on education and promoting LGBT acceptance among youth, which Kennedy ar-




From left: Patricia Jean, Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique; Vijaya Chickermane, executive director of the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAAP); Andre Lucas, TD Bank Financial Group; and Parul Pandya, Ontario Trillium Foundation, take part in the LGBT Philanthropy Conference diversity panel. ELAH FEDER

gues is the key to overall societal change.

Speakers on the diversity panel described the catch-22 situations smaller organizations can find themselves in: lacking funds, in part, because they don't have the resources to establish effective development programs.

“As an organization, we make maybe \$20,000 a year in fundraising, maximum, and we have a choice: we maybe

commit those \$20,000 to a fundraising program or we commit our \$20,000 to the needs of our clients who walk in the door every day and need maybe \$100 for a winter jacket,” said Shannon Ryan, of BlackCAP. **X**

 For more on these stories, go to dailyxtra.com.

NEWS BRIEFS

Catholic parents' group demands union pull out of Pride

A month after an Ontario Catholic teachers' union voted to march in Toronto's Pride parade for the first time, a Catholic parents' group is calling for the union to change its decision.

At its annual conference on March 10, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA) voted to march in the parade as a show of support for LGBT Catholics.

Parents as First Educators (PAFE) released a petition April 18 saying that

June's WorldPride event “is inconsistent with what the Church teaches about homosexuality.” The petition, which now includes slightly fewer than 1,500 signatures, asks that Catholic trustees “demand an end to union involvement in the Pride parade event.”

While the motion immediately prompted some conservative Catholic groups to start letter-writing campaigns, this appears to be the first appeal from Catholic school stakeholders. The head of OECTA has clarified to Catholic media that the decision does not mean the union would enter a float and that participating remains an individual choice.

The OECTA motion was proposed by the union's branch for Toronto secondary teachers. It noted that the union has “been a leader in promoting the

inclusion and recognition of the rights of LGBTTQ people.”

PAFE takes a different view, saying the motion threatens “the teaching authority of parents.” —*Dylan C Robertson*

School board rejects homophobia allegations at tribunal

After being faced with a \$25,000 discrimination complaint through the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, a Catholic school board has responded by dismissing allegations of homophobia as “groundless.”

Christopher Karas filed a complaint with the tribunal in February against

the francophone school board Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique Centre-Sud (CSDCCS). As a Grade 12 student at École Secondaire Catholique Sainte-Famille, he claims he encountered resistance to starting a GSA, as well as negligence in addressing homophobic attitudes among students and within the school's curriculum.

“The complaint is unfounded and must be rejected by the tribunal,” reads an April 16 statement from the board that summarizes its response. “There was no discrimination based on sexual orientation, nor were there discriminatory practices.”

In addition to the monetary damages, Karas's complaint seeks a letter of apology, a policy on harassment and discrimination, mandatory sensitivity training, gender-neutral washrooms

in all schools and removal of the book *Poison* from the curriculum. Karas says that he's disappointed the board's first response is to deny.

“I would've wanted them to listen and understand what I was feeling,” Karas tells *Xtra*. “They're not addressing the issue, which is building safe spaces.”

Karas is now deciding whether to submit a response to the tribunal, which will then move to mediation. If no solution is found, the issue proceeds to a court-style hearing at which an adjudicator will issue a ruling within a year of the February complaint.

Since going public with his GSA battle in December, Karas has been nominated for a WorldPride-associated Inspire award for LGBTQ Youth of the Year. —*Dylan C Robertson*

Why are so many gay and bisexual teenagers taking steroids?

Mass appeal

BY NIKO BELL



When Dr Aaron Blashill, a researcher and clinician at Massachusetts General Hospital, first saw how many American gay teen-aged boys were using steroids, he assumed he had made an error.

He guessed the number would be high, maybe as much as two or three times normal, but this, he thought, could not be correct.

He went back and rechecked his analysis, then rechecked it again, and again. The numbers told him the same thing: out of a sample of 17,000 American teenagers, nearly six times as many gay and bisexual boys had used steroids as their straight counterparts.

When Blashill and a team of researchers at The Fenway Institute, an LGBT health research centre in Boston, published their work in February, they demonstrated a long suspected but little understood link between gay men and anabolic steroids. Only four percent of straight teenagers in the study said they had ever used steroids, but among gay and bisexual teens the rate shot up to 21 percent.

Gay and bisexual boys were also more likely

to use steroids heavily: four percent said they had used more than 40 times, compared to only 0.7 percent among their straight peers.

The conclusion was clear. Gay teens are injecting themselves with anabolic steroids much more than any others, and that likely means that gay men are as well. Although we still don't know how many adult gay men use steroids, most lifelong steroid use begins among young men in late adolescence and the early 20s.

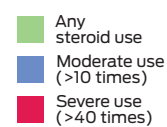
Somewhere in the numbers lay the reason.

Anabolic-androgenic steroids (AAS) are a family of hormones that include the natural male hormone testosterone and a broad family of synthetic relatives.

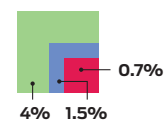
Steroids bind to hormone receptors in the body, causing both androgenic effects — male characteristics, such as body hair — and, more importantly, anabolic effects: muscle growth.

When a man ingests or injects artificial testosterone, the brain signals the pituitary gland to shut down production of natural testosterone and sperm, causing the tes-

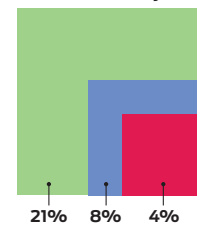
STEROID USE BY ADOLESCENT MALES



Heterosexual



Sexual minority



SOURCE: SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND ANABOLIC-ANDROGENIC STEROIDS IN US ADOLESCENT BOYS BY DR AARON BLASHILL

ticles to shrink. At the same time, the rush of testosterone signals muscles to increase in size, and almost any intense exercise produces dramatic growth.

Steroids act just like testosterone but the effects are vastly multiplied: they quite literally make you more of a man.

For Cameron, a 20-year-old artisan from Ottawa, it all started when he got sick. (*Xtra* agreed not to use his last name for this story.)

Cameron was fit and healthy until a year of illness and school stress tore 40 pounds off his body. Standing five foot 10, at 118 pounds, he struggled to buy clothes, and his ribs showed through his chest.

That's when he turned to his roommate's boyfriend, a local steroid dealer. He liked the man's confident professionalism and was comforted that his years of steroid use seemed to have had no consequences. On top of that, the drugs were delivered right to his door, along with clean needles and personalized advice. He didn't have to worry about anything.

"I just wanted to get back to normal," he says.

Cameron started on pills, 12 to 14 a day of the common synthetic steroid methandrostrenolone, the street name for which is "d-bol." He was afraid of needles, he says. Oral d-bol was hell on his liver, though, and after too many rough hangovers, he switched to a cocktail of injectable testosterone, a few d-bol pills and another injectable called Nolvadex that prevents the growth of breast tissue associated with steroid use.

Cameron doesn't know much about what all the drugs do or how they work. He trusts his dealer for that. His drugs came in pill bottles and 10 millilitre vials, and he took them as directed.

And they worked. Within two and a half months, Cameron says, he was back up to his normal weight. He grew in a thick beard and new hair on his chest where the old had been lasered off. He felt more aggressive, and his friends noticed he was more intense, more serious and smiled less often. But he also had the body and the muscles he wanted.

While Cameron started injecting steroids to get back to his normal weight, they are



Body image and sex appeal: squeezed between two cultures that rank masculinity as a hot commodity, more than one in five gay and bisexual teens are turning to steroids.

THINKSTOCK

now a regular part of his routine. He takes one or two cycles of drugs a year, often topping out at a lean 185 pounds, 15 pounds heavier than his original weight.

Steroids are a balancing act, he says; holding on to the ideal steroid body too long has consequences. Last year, he ran one cycle too long and found himself breaking out in acne and feeling sick, exhausted and hormonal.

"My advice is to remember that it's temporary," he says. "It's going to be up; it's going to be down."

According to the traditional story, steroids and the hypermuscular gay image appeared in the 1980s as a reaction to HIV.

In the 1970s, masculinity meant a very different thing. Skinny men wore mustaches and athletic socks in gay porn. The Village People advertised for new band members with an ad that read "Macho types wanted" and scored a cowboy and an Indian with narrow jawlines and slender biceps.

Then, in 1981, two things happened almost simultaneously: first, a new disease, initially

called "gay-related immune deficiency," was identified in North America; second, an American bodybuilder named Dan Duchaine published *The Underground Steroid Handbook* and brought practical knowledge about anabolic steroids out of the elite world of sports and made it available to everyone.

Steroids had been used experimentally by athletes as early as the 1930s, but in the 1980s, steroid-fuelled bodies were suddenly everywhere: on television, in magazines, on action figures and in porn.

The synchronicity of these two events became immediately meaningful for gay men. In an attempt to avoid the stigma of muscle wasting associated with HIV, they eagerly took steroids to show their muscularity, and thereby their health. From this, gay men's affinity for steroids was born.

At least that was the story until now. We don't know very much about how steroids affected the HIV-epidemic generation — now in their late 40s, 50s and 60s — and until someone conducts a survey like Blashill's on men over 50, the link between HIV and steroids is no better than educated speculation.

Either way, the HIV story probably does not apply to the teens in Blashill's study. The teenagers of today were not even alive during the plague years of the HIV epidemic and likely have never been exposed to the fear of wasting and thinness that pervaded the 1980s and '90s. So why are they so eager to bulk up?

For David Brennan, a professor of social work at the University of Toronto, Blashill's results make sense. In 2008, he asked 380 gay men at Toronto Pride about body image and behaviour, and the results illuminated a web of factors that help to explain the Fenway study.

Gay men, he discovered, were more likely than straight men to suffer from eating disorders and to be dissatisfied with their bodies. Eating disorders, in turn, were associated with depression, anxiety, internalized homophobia, substance abuse and the desire to gain muscle.

All the pressure of bullying, homophobia, an image-conscious gay culture and the constant questioning of their identities as men, Brennan found, wears at gay men's self-esteem and builds a desire for muscular, masculine bodies. This stress, he thinks, may be driving them to testosterone.

"Over the last couple of decades, the pressure on young men to fit in and have a certain kind of body is just growing exponentially," he says.

Brennan believes gay men are particularly likely to choose testosterone because they feel pressure from both sides. On one side, a majority heterosexual culture pushes gay men to fit in and project a masculine image to avoid negative stereotypes of effeminacy and weakness. It is telling, he thinks, that gay men who feel worse about being gay are

SURVEY SAYS

Via squirr.org, *Xtra* asked men who have sex with men if they use steroids.

Have you ever used steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs?

6%

No, but I'm considering

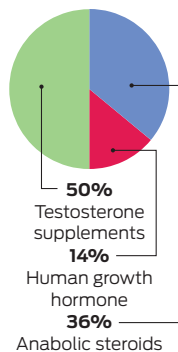
3%

Yes, I'm using

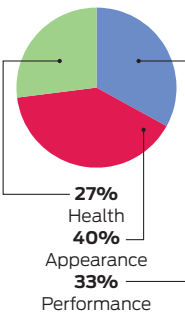
5%

Yes, in the past

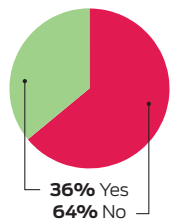
If yes, what have you used?



Why did you start?



Were they prescribed by a doctor?



more likely to want to be muscular.

On the other, gay men must fit into a gay culture where manliness is a valuable commodity. Photo-centred dating and hook-up apps make a good-looking body even more important. Since the appearance of steroids, men in gay porn and media have followed the trend of hulking muscularity. A mustache and leather chaps are no longer enough for a man to be a man; he needs pecs.

"Just look at the imagery," Brennan says. "Look at any ad. Look at any website or

Cameron is now 25 and still uses steroids. He likes them and has no intention of quitting. If he could afford to add higher-end, more expensive products to his regimen, he says, he would.

"I don't know how long I'll do it," he says. "As long as I have the money to afford it. I don't have any problem stopping."

A few of Cameron's friends roll their eyes when they hear he uses steroids, but most shrug it away. In fact, he says, since he's

“IT'S NO DIFFERENT THAN GETTING MY HAIR DYED. IT'S JUST WHAT IT IS. IF YOU WANT TO LIVE THAT LIFE AND YOU'RE VAIN, THEN GO FOR IT.” CAMERON, STEROID USER

profile pic. What are people drawn to? What do the models look like in the ads in *Xtra*? That's really powerful stuff."

Sure enough, when Blashill took a closer look at his numbers, they showed pressures similar to those identified by Brennan.

Blashill tracked how likely the teenagers in his study were to feel unsafe or victimized, use other drugs or suffer from depression. Not only did he find that gay and bisexual teenagers scored higher on each of these metrics, but each was also associated with higher use of anabolic steroids.

In other words, a substantial part of gay teens' steroid use was not directly related to being gay. Instead, the teens were feeling depressed and anxious because of the strain of being a sexual minority. As a countermeasure, they were taking steroids.

Even when Blashill controlled for all these external pressures, however, gay teens were still more likely than straight teens to use steroids. What was the missing factor? Like Brennan, Blashill thinks it is body image.

It would be easy to imagine that under these conditions, older gay men would turn to image-enhancing drugs to keep up with the younger crowd. In this respect, however, Brennan's research offers a ray of hope.

His survey showed that gay men actually become progressively less likely to suffer from disordered eating and poor body image as they grow older. Instead of comparing themselves to the younger generation, Brennan says, older gay men seem to be getting comfortable with their aging bodies, muscle loss and all.

started using, he notices more and more of the tell-tale signs of use in other men, gay and straight — not just the huge arms and bowling-ball shoulders, but the perfect hair and masculine swagger of men who care how they look. It's all part of the steroid life, he says.

"I do like my look when I'm on them, but I realize that it's just vanity," he says. "It's no different than getting my hair dyed. It's just what it is. If you want to live that life and you're vain, then go for it. If you don't, then you don't have to."

Perhaps the greatest irony of gay men's dalliance with steroids is that one of the first uses of synthetic testosterone was the medical treatment of homosexuality.

As early as the 1920s, Viennese urologist Robert Lichtenstern was implanting pieces of human testicle into gay men in an attempt to cure them.

Despite the obvious failure of the testosterone cure, the theory persisted into the 1940s, when it was at least partly put to rest by Alfred Kinsey. It became apparent, after a number of court-ordered testosterone treatments for gay men, that the injections were only making gay libidos stronger.

If Blashill and Brennan are right, however, steroid use among gay men continues to have everything to do with manliness. Between two cultures that both reward macho, the lure of masculinity in a syringe is obvious. **X**

Watch dailyxtra.com for the next installment of this series, in which we examine the dangers of steroids.

Wife of Japanese PM participates in Tokyo Pride parade

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Wilde in the north

The oft-ignored Canadian leg of Oscar Wilde's North American lecture tour



HISTORY BOYS
JEREMY WILLARD

When Oscar Wilde arrived in New York City on Jan 3, 1882, he supposedly said to a customs officer, "I have nothing to declare except my genius." While Wilde would chat with every journalist possible during his 11-month lecture tour of North America, nobody heard him make that particular remark, but it's so much like the witty things he did say that I prefer to think it true.

Wilde had achieved little by the time he turned 27 but was still considered the face of the Aesthetic Movement. In late-Victorian England, his satin knee britches, frilly lace collars and penchant for sunflowers made him ripe for parody, and so Gilbert and Sullivan pressed him into service as the silly character of Reginald Bunthorne in their comic opera *Patience*. Wilde embraced the caricature, and when the opera's producer, Richard D'Oyly Carte, decided it would be a great marketing gimmick to bring the real-life Bunthorne to North America, Wilde consented.

Following a glamorous NYC society debut, Wilde toured the United States from coast to coast, lecturing on aesthetics everywhere from Washington, DC, to California and back to NYC again before heading to Canada for two weeks. In Washington, he met cautiously closeted author Henry James, who was wary of Wilde's flamboyance (even though Wilde himself was not out at this point). He also had two visits with another closeted homosexual, Walt Whitman, and later said to a friend in confidence, "I have the kiss of Walt Whitman still on my lips."

Wilde's first Canadian lecture was in Montreal. Some papers welcomed him, but *La Patrie* said that the only people likely to attend his lectures were "all the people of disordered brains, the hysterical women, the coxcombs, the beggared population." The lecture was well-attended but got, as one paper put it, "only a splutter of cheering."



In Toronto, Oscar Wilde watched a lacrosse match from the lieutenant governor's private box. Later, he told the *Toronto Globe* that he enjoyed the game and especially a "tall, finely built defence man." JORI BOLTON

While his matinee lecture did better, he managed to upset the locals by saying, "[I] went up the hill behind your lovely city." The *Montreal Star* sulked, "It was not nice to hear our cherished mountain reduced to a hill."

He annoyed the people of Ottawa by criticizing the fauna and flora and a miasmic lumber mill. His lecture was sparsely attended, possibly because many locals were at either the University of Ottawa's annual sports banquet or the closing session of Parliament. After his lecture, Wilde, too, visited Parliament, and during the closing debates he perched in the seat next to the speaker's chair. His black-velvet coat and knee britches so thoroughly distracted a Vancouver MP that the *Ottawa Daily Citizen* said the politician "forgot for a time the burning wrongs of British Columbia." Governor General the Marquess of Lorne, rumoured to be homosexual, refrained from attending Wilde's lecture or meeting with him privately, probably to avoid providing fodder for gossip.

While in Ottawa, Wilde met local artist Frances Richards. Five years later, as she painted a portrait of him in London, he would joke that it was unfortunate that while his picture would never age, he would. He later said this remark was his inspiration

for *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

In Toronto, when he watched a lacrosse match from the lieutenant governor's private box, other attendees spent as much time craning their necks to see him in his black sombrero and (most likely) signature bottle-green overcoat with fur trim as they did watching the match. Later, he told the *Toronto Globe* that he enjoyed the game and especially a "tall, finely built defence man." Both his Toronto lectures were packed, and he provoked much laughter by condemning "very strenuously" the red table cloth adorning his speaking table. Overall, Wilde considered Toronto "a bright little town."

He left Canada to tour the American south, but before returning to England he visited the Canadian Maritimes. After Wilde's time in Quebec and Toronto, D'Oyly Carte's representative, Colonel Morse, said Canada was "the most enjoyable part of [Wilde's] tour," but it's hard to imagine he left Canada the second time thinking kind thoughts, given how the YMCA in Moncton — the final Canadian city on his tour — nearly had him arrested for a mix-up over lecture bookings. X

History Boys appears in every issue of Xtra.

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TUESDAYS, 6-9PM

MTS is a drop-in group for Mature Trans Women to get together, talk and learn, share resources and support. The group is collectively run by participants and facilitators, and aims to create a safer space for women of all types of trans experience and expression. The group is for women who are 45+.

Please contact Ander and King at 416-324-4100 (extension 5230 or 5083) or email mts@sherbourne.on.ca for accessibility and other information.

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Why women are funny

In his 2007 essay “Why Women Aren’t Funny,” Christopher Hitchens opined that the fairer sex lacks the chops to make us laugh unless they’re “hefty or dyke-y or Jewish.” The article ignited a small firestorm, with everyone from Tina Fey to Joan Rivers calling him out, no doubt giving the Johnny Walker-guzzling controversy fetishist several years worth of wet dreams.

But when I ask Toronto funny lady Martha O’Neill for her thoughts on the Hitch’s musings, she just shrugs.

“Female comics have to be pretty thick-skinned if they’re going to make it,” she says. “I’ve heard muttered, more than once, as I’ve taken the stage, ‘Oh great, it’s a woman.’ I’ve also been told many times by audience members that they don’t usually like female comics but thought I was funny, as if that’s a compliment.”

O’Neill and her team are set to show up Hitchens with the SheDot Festival of Funny Women. The idea germinated not in a comedy club as might be expected, but at O’Neill’s family cottage. Last summer, she hosted Festi-Vag there, an open invitation event for women comics to



Dawn Whitwell is one of SheDot’s featured queer comics.

drink, relax and trade war stories.

“When you’re performing, there are usually only one or two women in the show,” she says. “You get used to working in a male-dominated world. But those few days really opened my eyes to the breadth of talent out there, and I thought, ‘Hell, I’ll just put my own festival together.’”

The event features more than 60 performers from across the US and Canada and includes standup, improv and sketch comedy. Programs range from kid-friendly (ShePG) to filth-ridden (SheUnleashed) and everything in between. There’s also SheLBT, featuring local favourites Martha Chaves, Catherine McCormick and Dawn Whitwell.

While hilarity will undoubtedly fill the stage, O’Neill is not sure who, exactly, will fill the house. Will an all-female comedy festival attract an all-female audience, or will the boys turn out, too? — Chris Dupuis

SheDot: Toronto’s Festival of Funny Women runs Thurs, May 1–Sun, May 4 at Comedy Bar, 945 Bloor St W. shedotfestival.com



BadinTO president Vince Chan. JAMES LOURENÇO

HOLDING COURT

Another day of pink is coming, and this time, there might be some bullying — but only on the courts.

BadinTO, Toronto’s gay and lesbian badminton club, turned 10 this year, and in the spirit of celebration, its season-ending open doubles tournament, the Queen’s Cup, will have a pink and white theme (on top of the medals available in all categories, from beginner through elite, there’s a prize for the best-dressed team).

President Vince Chan is proud of BadinTO’s reputation for being fun and inclusive, which, he notes, doesn’t just happen: it’s the club’s mission. “It’s about respect: respect for each other, respect for the different levels of play.” It’s about what happens off the courts, too: “Everybody socializes. It’s like a family. I think that’s the reason our club is one of the most popular gay clubs in Toronto.”

Third-year player Ethan Han agrees. He used to be a member of another gay sports club, “but I didn’t feel like I belonged to it: we’d practise, then everyone would just leave. The badminton club is different. Also, nobody makes beginners feel bad, and people are competitive without being aggressive and pushy.”

Chan is proud of what the club’s become but feels there’s still work to be done. For one thing, he’d like to see more of a gender balance: women represent just over 10 percent of the membership. This past year has seen a dedicated group showing up regularly, however, and he hopes the trend will continue.

One of those dedicated women is Tera Mallette, but her passion for the sport goes only so far: “I won’t be wearing pink for the Queen’s Cup,” she says, unequivocally.

— Lesley Fraser

The Queen’s Cup is Sat, May 31, 8:30–5pm, with a banquet to follow in the evening; all players are welcome. Deadline to register is Wed, May 22. badinto.com

Beyond the mainstream

The future of television isn’t even on television.

Whether it’s streaming content on Netflix, downloading episodes via iTunes or watching viral videos on YouTube, the internet now plays a huge role in the way people consume entertainment. But for some, the web isn’t just a convenient method of distribution.

“The internet has become a fantastic platform for independent creators to bring their projects to life,” says Regan Latimer, producer and creator of popular web series *BJ Fletcher: Private Eye* and *Witch Like Me*. “It allows creators a direct connection to their audience, and the space is teeming with talent.”

Latimer is also director of programming at this year’s TO WebFest, the city’s first web-series-specific festival. The three-day event features free screenings of web series from around the world. Latimer describes it as “a celebration and showcase of some of the amazing and unique narrative stories being told on the web. [It will] not only shine a spotlight on creators and their series, but also provide an open forum for industry, creators and audience alike to discuss and discover this growing and ever-evolving medium.”



Images from the queer content at TO WebFest.

Similar festivals have popped up across the globe, including in Los Angeles, London and Rome. But a unique component of Toronto’s festival is a dedicated conference track, featuring panels and events with topics that range from branded entertainment and product placement to audience development and digital distribution platforms.

Featured genres include kids and youth, drama, comedy, sci-fi and fantasy, LGBT, pulp and horror, and documentary and lifestyle.

“I am especially proud that we have a dedicated screening block for LGBT content,” Latimer says. “The web has always been an incredible outlet for

bringing projects and stories of LGBT interest to an audience eager and hungry for it.” The LGBT series includes projects from the US (*Producing Juliet*), the UK (*The Vessel*) and Canada (*Gay Nerds* and *Leslieville*), to name a few.

“Queer storytellers are bringing characters to life that you don’t necessarily see in the mainstream. [The festival] is a great opportunity to sample what’s out there and available on the web,” Latimer says. — JP Larocque

TO WebFest runs Fri, May 9–Sun, May 11 at Harbourfront Centre, 235 Queens Quay W. towebfest.com

A black and white photograph of two men standing next to a classic car. The man on the left is seen in profile, wearing a dark jacket. The man on the right is facing him, wearing a light-colored sweater with sunglasses hanging from the neckline. They are positioned in front of a large, multi-paned window. The car is a dark-colored classic model, possibly a Volkswagen Beetle. The background shows a bright, overcast sky and a distant horizon.

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The screening will be preceded by an exclusive VIP cocktail reception (including host bar and hors d'oeuvres) from 6:30-8:30pm. Details will be provided with ticket. **TICKET PRICES:** Film Only: \$40 General Public/\$30 Inside Out members. Film (priority seating) and Pre-Screening Reception: \$150 General Public/\$125 Inside Out members (a tax receipt will be issued for the maximum amount allowable).

All proceeds from the screening and reception will benefit Inside Out and CANFAR.

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Photo courtesy of HBO Canada

Toronto LGBT Film Festival Gala Presentations



Opening Gala

THE WAY HE LOOKS
(HOJE EU QUERO VOLTAR SOZINHO)

Thursday, May 22 | 8:00 PM

Daniel Riberio

Brazil 2014 95:00 | *Canadian Premiere*

Leonardo is a blind teenager struggling to break free from his well-meaning friends and family. When new student Gabriel arrives at school, he befriends Leonardo and Giovana and the trio become inseparable. Through timid conversations and intimate moments spent alone, Leo and Gabriel's friendship gently evolves to reveal deeper feelings.

*Teddy Award for Best Feature,
2014 Berlin International Film Festival*



Women's Gala

TRU LOVE

Saturday, May 24 | 7:30 PM

Kate Johnson & Shauna MacDonald

Canada 2013 87:00 | *Canadian Premiere*

Who knows what attracts us to someone: beauty, a dazzling smile or the way a laugh line crinkles just so. For 37-year-old Toronto dyke, Tru—a notorious womanizer with intimacy issues—it happens to be all of those things and more, as she finds herself falling for her friend Suzanne's mother, the beguiling 60-year-old Alice. Despite their age difference, Tru and Alice have an immediate connection. Suzanne, however, sees where this friendship is headed and sets out to ruin the blossoming relationship.



Centrepiece Gala

LOVE IS STRANGE

Tuesday, May 27 | 9:30 PM

Ira Sachs

USA 2014 98:00 | *Canadian Premiere*

After 39 years together, Ben (John Lithgow) and George (Alfred Molina) finally tie the knot. But when the Catholic school where George works learns of their nuptials, he is fired. Suddenly, the couple find that they can't afford the rent on their Chelsea apartment. As a temporary solution, George crashes with gay cop neighbours, while Ben moves in with his nephew's family. The pain of living apart and their presence in two foreign households test the resilience and relationships of everyone involved.



Closing Gala

52 TUESDAYS

Sunday, June 1 | 7:30 PM

Sophie Hyde

Australia 2013 114:00 | *Canadian Premiere*

Sixteen-year-old Billie's reluctant path to independence is accelerated when her mother reveals plans to change genders. It is decided that Billie will live with her father, Tom, for a year and will see James once a week. As Billie attempts to adjust, she develops an intense new friendship with two older schoolmates, which serves as a catalyst to self-discovery.

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DEADLY MARYS

Toronto photographer Devon Poole gives the Mother of God a makeover

BY JOHNNIE WALKER

For Devon Poole, the art of drag is a religious experience.

In his new photo series, the sinfully sacriligious *Seven Deadly Marys*, he shot some of the city's most notorious drag and trans performers all dolled up à la Mother of God. As well as embodying the Virgin Mary, each subject also represents one of the seven deadly sins, meaning we get Lexi Sanfino as a BDSM-flavoured

Our Lady of Lust, Donnarama as a McDonald's-themed Our Lady of Gluttony (yes, she is crying ketchup), and Tynomi Banks as a blinged-out Our Lady of Greed. The images are strikingly campy, deliciously wicked and surprisingly pretty.

Is Poole a lapsed Catholic striking back against the famously homophobic institution by queering some of its most sacred iconography? Surprisingly, no. "I do not have a religious background," he admits. "I was raised by a single mother who is a painter and a sculptor, so I was introduced to art at a very early age."

And the inspiration for shooting his blasphemous beauties? Appropriately enough, it came to him in a vision. "The first image that popped into my mind was a Ronald McDonald Virgin Mary. I thought it would be a challenge to try to reimagine a religious icon in my dramatic aesthetic. And through researching the subject, I read that Mary was born and lived free of sin. I thought it would be a great contradiction having her represent each sin."

As an artist, Poole has been experimenting with drag, both in his photography and personally, since day one. "As a child, I was always dressing up in my mother's clothes," he says. "I even dressed up as Wonder Woman for Halloween when I was four. I have dabbled in drag for years and have known people in the community for just as long."

Those connections certainly paid off when Poole was tasked with finding models for the series, especially when it came to casting his longtime collaborator Donnarama as Gluttony herself. "I love working with her!" he says. "We are both fearless and want to push boundaries and make art outside of the box."

Before her current stint as one Holy Mother, Donnarama has appeared in Poole's work as everything from Frida Kahlo to Lady Gaga to Optimus Prime. "Anything experimental in terms of costume and makeup and I'm in," Donnarama says, though she admits it was hard keeping a straight face with a mouth stuffed with french fries. "I like the idea of toying with the concept of spiritual fulfilment through over-indulgence, hoarding from fast-food chains and department stores. It's magical and miserable at the same time. Also, I like the name Mary: a common term for addressing a queen and also the mother of Jesus. They have finally met in chaotic irony, amen!"

While Donnarama was the only model he knew personally before the series, being a member of the drag community allowed Poole to connect easily with other queens he knew by reputation. "Everyone was really excited to be part of the work," he says, "and I couldn't have done it without them."

Right, Devon Poole's interpretation of Gluttony (Donnarama). Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Pride (Lexi Sanfino), Envy (Sapphire Tithi-Reign), Sloth (Allysin Chaynes), Lust (Lexi Sanfino), Greed (Tynomi Banks) and Wrath (Fabulous Russella).





“I ALWAYS WANT TO PUSH THE ENVELOPE AND MAKE PEOPLE QUESTION THE WORK, AND THEMSELVES.”

Although Poole approached each image with a specific idea in mind, each picture strongly bears the influence and personality of its model. “Each really fills out the role with their own character and personal dynamic,” Donnarama agrees. “They illuminate the concept with their own distinct personality and style. It’s both an exaggeration of character and role play; there’s a lot to take in and observe ... basically, everything a drag queen has to offer times 10.”

Thanks largely to the success of *RuPaul’s Drag Race*, drag culture is having a bit of a moment. Lingo like “throwing shade” and “serving fish” has been creeping into the common parlance, and you don’t have to have a *Paris Is Burning* DVD to get in on the kiki anymore. In fact, Poole’s photo series, with its glossy, polished aesthetic and tongue-in-cheek sensibility, could almost be an especially outré *Drag Race* challenge.

“I definitely think *RuPaul’s Drag Race* has brought drag culture to a broader audience, especially to younger LGBTQ teens,” Poole says. “I would have loved a TV show like it when I was younger. But I wouldn’t go so far as to say drag has gone mainstream. I think there’s a large part of the population that still doesn’t know much about or understand the art, so along with fans of drag, I’d like to reach those people with my work, too, and open people’s eyes to a new way of seeing the world around them.”

And on the off chance Logo caught wind of his work and asked him to design his own challenge for the latest batch of competing queens? “I think a photo shoot where the queens recreate childhood photos of themselves, but in drag, could be a lot of fun,” Poole says. It’s a disarmingly sweet concept for a competition that’s often preoccupied with drama and bitchy one-liners. “It would be a great way to get to know the contestants and shed some light on what their childhoods were like. For most LGBTQ kids, it’s not easy growing up feeling different.”

While he may have just completed work on what many would consider the mother of all drag-related photo series, Poole isn’t planning to untuck just yet. “For my next series, I will be doing something more erotic that plays around with masculinity and femininity. Not to give too much away, but it will be very Tom of Finland meets glamazon supermodel: very genderbending and sexy.”

Part of Poole’s goal is to respond to men who told him that the idea of him in drag was a sexual turnoff. “I always want to push the envelope and make people question the work, and themselves.”

To check out more of Poole’s work or to buy prints from the *Seven Deadly Marys* series, visit him online at www.devonpoole.com.



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SEX LIVES AND VIDEOTAPE

Curated by Sarah Munro

Sex Lives and Videotape is the latest in a series of interactive community events exploring the diverse materiality of artifacts within the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives. As a collector of objects, the CLGA acknowledges that it is not only the content of those objects that is significant to the history of LGBTQ culture in Canada, but also their form. As queer lives have evolved over time, so have the technologies by which queer communities documented their progress. Many of these earlier technologies, pioneered within the 70s and 80s, are presently nearing obsolescence, making now the perfect time to reflect on the relationship between an object's "medium" and its "message."

Sex Lives and Videotape takes a broad look at the medium of VHS and the role it played in furthering the LGBTQ agenda. It offers the viewer the opportunity to experience footage within the CLGA's substantial VHS collection, while contemplating the role that home and independent video played in recording and disseminating Canadian queer history. It also creates a link between the contemporary viewer and the pre-YouTube era of personal video production, by allowing the visitor to record their own commentary to VHS tape.




Photo: Hollis Brown Thornton

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It don't get better

For Owen Pallett, it's always a struggle, but that's not a bad thing



PLAYLIST KEVIN RITCHIE

Owen Pallett is en route from Los Angeles to Palm Springs ahead of Arcade Fire's headlining set on the second weekend of the Coachella Festival.

The 34-year-old Toronto-bred, Montreal-based violinist is part of the Grammy-winning group's *Reflektor* tour and is also pulling double duty doing interviews to promote his fourth album, *In Conflict*, which comes out in May. In this case, that means unpacking his issues around craziness and gender with a reporter during the hour-and-three-quarter car ride. "This is getting a little bit heavy for me. Why are you asking me heavy questions?" he protests. "It's a funny record! It's full of jokes!"

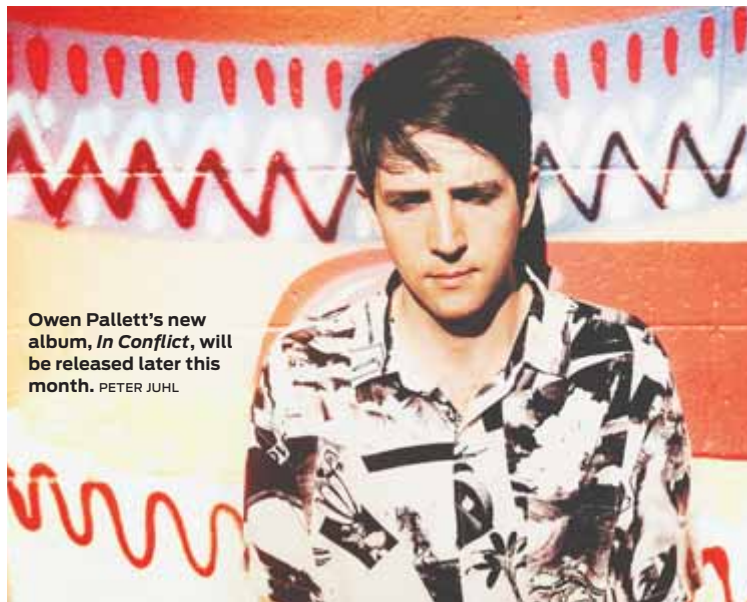
In Conflict is Pallett's most direct album in terms of lyrical sentiment. Whereas the songs on 2010's *Heartland* were couched in an epic, homoerotic narrative about a hunky religious zealot named Lewis who engages in a series of dialogues with his omnipotent creator (Pallett), this one does not hang on a fantastical parable.

Pallett has been working on the album for the past four years between jobs that have included arranging string parts for pop star Taylor Swift, composing for the National Ballet of Canada and scoring film soundtracks for directors M Blash and Spike Jonze.

Earlier this year, the score he and Arcade Fire's Will Butler composed for Jonze's *Her* received an Academy Award nomination and, although they didn't win, the pair was invited to an Academy-organized dinner in Los Angeles with legendary composers and songwriters John Williams, Randy Newman, Thomas Newman and Burt Bacharach.

"Burt Bacharach and I bonded over Montreal because he went to McGill for a period and I had been to his last concert there. He's just about the most charming man you could ever imagine," Pallett says. "It was the best night I've had this year so far."

The next milestone on his schedule is the release of *In Conflict*, an album that draws upon his thoughts on love and the human condition and his knack



Owen Pallett's new album, *In Conflict*, will be released later this month. PETER JUHL

for crafting frenetic, intertwining orchestral and synth arpeggios.

The songs are personal and pointed. The opening track, "I Am Not Afraid," uses gender-neutral pronouns as a statement of support for people caught up in confusion; "The Passions" tackles age gaps in sex with a wink to Morrissey-esque melodrama; and on "The Secret Seven" he belts out his phone number after warning listeners, "It don't get better."

He describes that song as an alternate take on American sex columnist Dan Savage's campaign against homophobic bullying.

"If the record has a message, it's kind of the message," Pallett explains. "I felt as if the *It Gets Better* campaign did not speak to me of my experience. I have not found any links in my life between my own issues of craziness and queerness, which seemed to be a main focal point — with statistics to back it up — of the *It Gets Better* campaign."

"My experience has not been one of finding my own craziness alleviated as I've gotten older, become financially independent, fallen in love and, you know, realized my dreams!" he continues. "That does not negate Dan Savage's message but speaks more of my experience, which is that it does not get fucking better at all. It's always a struggle, and that's not necessarily a bad thing."

Pallett has, however, found links between craziness and songwriting. That's part of the reason he signed on to Arcade Fire's exhaustive world tour. "I thought it would be a good way for me to reposition myself mentally," he says of deciding to tour with the band.

"I make no secret about the fact that songwriting drives me crazy. [The tour] removes the necessity of paying the bills with songwriting — at least symbolically — which has been a good move for me psychologically."

Despite the four-year period between albums, Pallett says that making *In Conflict* was less stressful than making *Heartland*. He recruited his former Les Mouches bandmates Rob Gordon and Matt Smith to toughen up the rhythm section and give the songs more of a live feel; English musician Brian Eno contributed synths, guitars and vocals. He asked the legendary producer to collaborate after meeting him in person, but they worked together remotely.

"He worked incredibly fast and incredibly enthusiastically," Pallett says. "He's the best. I recommend him to everybody."

Now that *In Conflict* is complete, Pallett is filling up his schedule. The Arcade Fire tour runs through August. After that, he will perform a series of solo dates in support of *In Conflict*. (He will play a handful of release shows in May, including a Toronto gig on May 10.)

He also recently wrote a series of articles for *Slate* that examine pop hits by Katy Perry, Daft Punk and Lady Gaga using music theory, and he collaborated on a 12-inch single with dance producer Caribou, aka Dan Snaith, that is going over well in clubs.

"I'm really proud of it," Pallett says. "I love working with Dan. We've been working on other stuff together, but I'll leave that for another press release." X

In Conflict will be released May 27.



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WHAT'S ON

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ART

Standing Ground: Estates of Robert Flack and Will Munro

This exhibit focuses on Flack's *Empowerment* (1990) and a series of Munro's untitled photographs (2004). Opening reception Fri, May 2, 7–10pm; exhibit runs Fri, May 2–Sat, May 31. Paul Petro Contemporary Art, 980 Queen St W. Free. paulpetro.com

Sex Lives and Videotape

An array of footage provides a chance to contemplate the role that home video played in the recording of Canadian queer history pre-YouTube. Opening reception is Thurs, May 8, 6–9pm; exhibit runs until Fri, June 6. Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, 24 Isabella St. Free. clga.ca

Hungry Bottom Comics 2012–2014

This four-day celebration of the release of Eric Williams's *Hungry Bottom Comics 3* and *The Collected Hungry Bottom Comics* includes a live reading and a sale of original artwork. Opening night is Thurs, May 15, 7–9pm; exhibit runs until Sun, May 18. Videofag, 187 Augusta Ave. Free. videofag.com

COMEDY & CABARET

Paul Bellini's Liar Liar Pants on Fire

Guests tell dubious tales and audience members are challenged to decide whether the stories are true. Fri, May 2, 9pm. The Flying Beaver, 488 Parliament St. No cover. pubaret.com

Yogi Bare — Glad Day Bookshop, Sundays at 1:15pm

Club120 Wednesday

Standup comedian Mandy Goodhandy presents a weekly open-mic comedy night. For more info, contact toddklinck@gmail.com. Every Wednesday, 8pm–1am. Club120, 120 Church St. No cover. club120.ca

GAYMERS

May Social: Anime North Edition

As a lead-up to the Anime North convention, the Toronto Gaymers gather to watch anime, play anime-inspired video games and compare cutesy costumes. Sat, May 3, 2–10pm. The Marquis of Granby, 418 Church St. Free. torontogaymers.ca

Play Again?

Gamers gather to play *Super Mario*, *Tetris* and other games on a big screen, as well as board games like Trivial Pursuit and Scrabble. Every Tuesday, 7pm–2am. Henhouse, 1532 Dundas St W. Free. henhousetoronto.com

Board Games Night

The focus of this month's Board Games Night is Netrunner and Star Trek Catan. Other games, such as Bananagrams, 7 Wonders and Jenga, will also be on hand. Sat, May 10, 7pm–midnight. Glad Day Bookshop, 598 Yonge St. \$6. torontogaymers.ca

HEALTH & ISSUES

The 519 Legal Clinic

A free, accessible service for low-income people. Volunteer lawyers provide legal advice, referrals



Hedwig — Lower Ossington Theatre, until Sat, May 17 SEANNA KENNEDY

and help with forms and letters. The confidential and private visits are first-come, first-served. Bring any necessary documents. Every Thursday; registration 6–6:30pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. the519.org

FTM Support Group

Trans men share their experiences in a supportive environment. Takes place the first and third Friday of each month. For more information, contact ftmtoronto@yahoo.ca. Fri, May 2, and Fri, May 16, 7:30pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. the519.org

SlutWalk Toronto 2014 Planning Meeting

This SlutWalk meeting is for people interesting in getting involved, sharing thoughts or assisting with planning or execution. Sat, May 3, 1–3pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. the519.org

SOY Monday Night Drop-In

Queer youth ages 14 to 29 gather to watch movies, participate in art projects and workshops, and talk to Supporting Our Youth's community mentors. For more info, contact jcaffery@sherbourne.on.ca. Every Monday, 5:30–8pm.

Sherbourne Health Centre, 2nd floor, 333 Sherbourne St. Free. soytoronto.org

Positive Routes to Recovery

A peer-led support group for gay men working through substance abuse issues. Takes place the first and third Tuesday of each month. Tues, May 6, 6–8pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. pr2r.org

LEGIT

Legal counsel for same-sex couples immigrating to Canada. Tap into the community and access useful resources. Takes place the second Thursday of each month. Thurs, May 8, 7–10pm. The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St. Free. legit.ca

LEISURE & PLEASURE

CraftActionTO: Dyke March Banner Project

Crafty dykes hang out and create banners for the Dyke March at WorldPride. All materials are provided. For more info, contact craftactionto@gmail.com. Every Wednesday until June 11, 6–8pm. Yorkville Public Library, 22 Yorkville Ave. Free. craftactionto.tumblr.com

Strip Spelling Bee: Whoa! Edition

It's much like strip poker, but it's a spelling bee and there's an audience of horny hecklers. Fri, May 2, 11pm–2am. Buddies in Bad Times, 12 Alexander St. \$10, free for competitors. buddiesinbadtimes.com

Get Out! Running Group

People of all experience levels stay in shape while dashing around Toronto's streets and trails. Every Sunday, 10am–11:30am. Fuel Plus, 471 Church St. Free. getoutcanada.com

Yogi Bare: All-Gender, Clothing-Optional Yoga

Whether toga-draped or bare-assed, folks are invited to get comfortable at this soothing yoga session. Every Sunday, 1:15–2:30pm. Glad Day Bookshop, 598 Yonge St. \$20, \$15 students. yogibare.ca

Queer Slowdance: Pajama Party Edition

Butt wigglers set up dances with one another using dance cards, while designated dancers coax out the wallflowers. Sat, May 10, 10pm–3am. Dovercourt House, 805 Dovercourt Rd. \$10 admission includes dance-card booklet.

SEX & BURLESQUE

Latex and Laced

Latex and lace-clad guests enjoy a burlesque performance by Esther De Ville and a fashion show by two fetish-clothing designers. Open to people of all genders and orientations. Sun, May 4, 8pm–3am. Oasis Aqualounge, 231 Mutual St. \$30. oasisaqualounge.com

Pup Night

Argo hosts this event where sexy pups can get hooded, collared and put their paws on and romp with like-minded pets. No dress code. Thurs, May 8, 10pm. The Black Eagle, 457 Church St. No cover. blackeagletoronto.com

Beyoncé vs Rihanna Burlesque

This Platinum Production diva-off pitches the songs of Beyoncé against those of Rihanna to determine whose best complement the art of burlesque. Sat, May 10, 10pm. Club120, 120 Church St. \$10. club120.ca

Puppy Pool Night

Kinky puppy-boys get on their hoods and collars and play pool in a friendly environment. Handlers and pup-lovers are encouraged, given that the bar is not an off-leash area. Thurs, May 15, 7pm. Pegasus, 289 Church St. Free. pegasusonchurch.com

THEATRE

Hedwig and the Angry Inch

Nathaniel Bacon stars as Hedwig in the rock musical about "a slip of a girly boy" from East Germany brought to the US as an army bride. Lower Ossington Theatre, 100 Ossington Ave. Runs until Sat, May 17, various showtimes. \$49. lowerossingtontheatre.com

Hackerlove

Inspired by Chelsea (the erstwhile Bradley) Manning and Adrian Lamo, Sky Gilbert's new play is about a queer love affair between two fictional characters in the midst of the 2010 WikiLeaks scandal. Runs until Sun, May 11, various showtimes. Buddies in Bad Times, 12 Alexander St. PWYC—\$30. buddiesinbadtimes.com

The Last Confession

David Suchet, best known for playing the strangely mustachioed Belgian sleuth Poirot, stars as Cardinal Giovanni Benelli, a man who must investigate the sudden and mysterious death of Pope John Paul I. Runs until Sun, June 1, various showtimes. Royal Alexandra Theatre, 260 King St W. \$35–119. mirvish.com



Standing Ground — Paul Petro gallery, until Sat, May 31 WILL MUNRO

The Mystery of Edwin Drood

Inspired by Charles Dickens's unfinished final novel, the cast members dance and sing their way to a different audience-chosen ending each night. Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave. Runs Fri, May 2–Sun, May 11, various showtimes. \$27–32. alexandershowcasetheatre.com

CLUB SCENE



Business Woman's Special —
The Round, Sat, May 10
N MAXWELL LANDER

Thurs, May 1

Random Play DJ Dwayne Minard spins disco, yacht rock, new wave and more. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. No cover. facebook.com/waylabarnounge

Fri, May 2

Besharam 10th Anniversary DJ Amita spins Bollywood, bhangra and Asian underground to celebrate a decade of South Asian-style partying. 10pm–3am. Fly, 8 Gloucester St. \$20. besharam.ca

Big Primpin' DJs Kevin Ritchie and Nino Brown spin hip hop for homos. 10pm. Wrongbar, 1279 Queen St W. \$5. big-primpin.com

Elle DJs L Rock and D XXX spin hip hop, R&B, world, house, reggae and more for the new women's party. 10pm. Church, 504 Church St. \$5. churchonchurch.com

Cruiseline's Best Men's Ass Contest Georgie Girl and Vitality Black perform and bring bare-bottomed boys to the stage to vie for the \$300 in cash prizes. DJ Mark Falco on decks. Midnight. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodystoronto.com

Sat, May 3

Black Eagle Saturday New Wave, a meet-and-greet event for folks interested in the leather community, 5–8pm; Short Circuit, with DJ The Robotic Kid spinning Italo, robot, nu disco, deep and tech house,

10:30pm–2:30am. Black Eagle, 457 Church St. blackeagleto.com

Secondhand Prom DJ Teddy the K spins for the Canadian launch of *The Worn Archive: A Fashion Journal about the Art, Ideas, and History of What We Wear*. Prom-inspired attire encouraged. 9pm. Adelaide Hall, 250 Adelaide St W. No cover with purchase of book; \$15 advance at Type Books, 883 Queen St W. wornfashionjournal.com



Her — La Perla,
Fri, May 9
OMGBLOG

Hairwave DJ Madame Hair spins ultra sonic, groovy, psychedelic and rock 'n' roll delights. 9:30pm. Magpie, 831 Dundas St W. No cover.

Ax Gogo-rama DJ Alex spins top-40 remixes, vocal house, EDM, J- and K-pop for the all-night Ax Maximus go-go event. 10pm. Phoenix, 410 Sherbourne St. \$5 before 10:30pm, \$10 until 11:30pm, \$15 after. meetmeatax.com

DND DJs Dwayne Minard and Mike B spin house music for daddies and daddy chasers. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. \$5. facebook.com/waylabarnounge

Tramp DJ Jacqie Jaguar spins for dykes, rug munchers, femmes and lezzies. 10pm. The Steady, 1051 Bloor St W. No cover. thesteadycave.com

Tapette DJs Phil V and Guillaume Moffet spin faggy French pop and house, while go-go boy Currty Jay entertains. 10:30pm. Henhouse, 1532 Dundas St W. \$5. henhousetoronto.com

Sun, May 4

Sweat DJ Blackcat spins house, new disco and top-40 remixes for the socializing folks of Spearhead Toronto LDSC. 5–10pm. Black Eagle, 457 Church St. No cover. spearheadtoronto.com

Latex and Lace DJ Quinces spins for the pansexual fashion show and play party. Hosted by Blair Ryder; featuring designs by Raezor and Katrina Mior, live burlesque and a costume contest. 8pm. Oasis Aqualounge, 231 Mutual St. \$30, \$15 for Ryerson students with valid ID. oasisaqualounge.com

Mon, May 5

Dodgeballer Night The Gay Ball Society hosts a flirty social, with DJ Blue Peter on decks. 8pm. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodystoronto.com

Tues, May 6

Varsity Tuesday Sofonda Cox hosts the amateur So You Think You Can Strip? competition, with a \$100 cash prize. 11pm. Remington's, 379 Yonge St. \$5 before 11pm, \$7 after; no cover with student ID before 11pm, \$2 after. remingtons.com

Wed, May 7

120 Wednesday Calling all standup comedians! Mandy Goodhandy presents the weekly open-mic night; performers must show up between 8pm and 8:45pm. Advance booking: contact toddklinck@gmail.com. 8pm. Club120, 120 Church St. No cover. club120.ca

Thurs, May 8

Pup Night Argo hosts a night of pup play, with role-playing, dominance, submission and wrestling. Presented in association with Northbound Leather and the Black Eagle Kennel Klub. Spectators welcome. No dress code. 10pm. Black Eagle, 457 Church St. No cover. blackeagleto.com

Ultimate Thursday DJ Craig Dominic plays top 40, dance, EDM, urban, dancehall and soca beats. 10pm. Crews & Tangos, 508 Church St. No cover. crewsandtangos.com

The Smirnoff Best Chest Contest

DJ Mark Falco spins for the boys showing their pecs for \$300 in cash prizes. Midnight. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodystoronto.com

Fri, May 9

That Time of the Month DJs Alex and Devon spin soul and R&B tracks sung by passionate women. 10pm. Henhouse, 1532 Dundas St W. henhousetoronto.com

Bass in the Place DJs Ticky Ty, Terry Funk, House H3ads, Ace of Clubs, Adriane S, Apsis, Pdot III and more spin drum and bass, dubstep and trap beats. 10pm. Fly, 8 Gloucester St. \$15, \$300 VIP package. flynightclub.com

Her DJs Kiki LeFreak, Blake and Omgblog.com spin house, disco and electro. 11pm. La Perla, 783 Queen St W. \$5. herherher.com

Sat, May 10

Michael Jackson Video Dance Party

DJ Truewind spins top 40, house, hip hop and remixes in tribute to the posthumous release



Ax Gogo-rama — Phoenix,
Sat, May 3 DOMINIC CHAN

of the King of Pop's Xscape. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. No cover. facebook.com/waylabarnounge

Trade DJs David Picard and Scooter spin deep, tech house for the frisky lads and bearded bad boys. Hosted by Scooter McCreight and A Bearded Boy. 10pm. Black Eagle, 457 Church St. \$5 before midnight, \$10 after. facebook.com/getsometrade

Bump N' Hustle DJs Paul E Lopes and Mike Tull spin soul, funk, house, disco and boogie tunes. Hosted by Carlos Mondesir. 10pm. Rivoli, 332 Queen St W. \$10. rivoli.ca

Bush Beat DJs Shoegayz and Pony spin for the ladies at the cruisy dance party. 10pm. Henhouse, 1532 Dundas St W. henhousetoronto.com

Business Woman's Special: Wig Party Edition DJs Nino Brown, Phil V and Sammy Royale spin for the Queens of Kensington. 10pm. Round, 152A Augusta Ave. \$6. roundvenue.com

Pitbull: Sweat It Out DJs Mark Falco and Dwayne Minard spin anthems, vocals, house and cardio-pumping beats. 10pm. Fly, 8 Gloucester St. \$10 advance. pitbullevents.com

Sultry Saturday DJ

Cajimere Wray spins house and vocals for the popular weekly party. 11pm. Byzantium, 499 Church St. No cover. byz.ca

Sun, May 11

Oink Master Tony (ILS 2009) hosts the men-only, no-holds-barred dungeon/play party, with slings, a fuck bench and a water-sports area. Leather and gear,

Mother's Day — Woody's, Sun, May 11 DAVID HAWE

jock or naked in boots encouraged. Free clothes check. 1pm–5pm. Black Eagle, 457 Church St. \$10. dragonmstr.com

Mother's Day at Woody's Hollywood Broadway Show, with the return of Miss Conception, at 6pm; Old School, hosted by Georgie Girl, with Bunni Lapin and birthday girl Carlotta Carlisle, at 9pm; Five Smokin Hot Divas, hosted by Georgie Girl, with Scarlett Bobo, Vitality Black and guests, plus DJ Blue Peter, at 11pm. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodystoronto.com

Mon, May 12

RuPaul's Drag Race Viewing Party Scarlett Bobo and Daytona Bitch host the dinner and bitchfest every Monday, with Bradley serving up food and libation. 8pm. The 8th Deadly Sin, 6 Gloucester St. No cover. the8th.ca

Glitz & Glam Carlotta Carlisle and Katinka Kature perform bling drag onstage, with razor-sharp tongues and larger-than-life costumes. 9–11pm. Crews & Tangos, 508 Church St. No cover. crewsandtangos.com

Tues, May 13

Woody's Tuesday DJ Mark Falco spins for boys taking advantage of the low day prices. 8pm. Woody's, 467 Church St. No cover. woodystoronto.com

Karaoke with Woofier With thousands of songs to choose from, it's always a party. 10pm. WAYLA, 996 Queen St E. facebook.com/waylabarnounge

Wed, May 14

Crews & Tangos Wednesday Soul Sistas, with Michelle Ross and Jada Hudson, at 9pm; Foreplay, with Farra N Hyte and guest, at 11pm. Crews & Tangos, 508 Church St. No cover. crewsandtangos.com

Submit your event listing to listings@dailyxtra.com.
Deadline for the May 15 issue is Wed, May 7.

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Get your WorldPride
event listing to us by
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Ultimate Pride Guide.

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DEEP DISH

BY ROLYN CHAMBERS
PHOTOS BY TONY FONG & ROLYN CHAMBERS

4th Anniversary

THURS, APRIL 17 @
CREWS & TANGOS

Go Hard

SAT, APRIL 19 @ CLUB120

Some say opposites attract. I say they're the opposite. This weekend sees me running the gamut of the gay party scene. At one end of the spectrum is Crews & Tangos, kicking off its fourth-anniversary celebrations. Owners **Michal Ramawad** and **Paras Prashad** have gone all out, providing serious swag bags for guests, a guarded display of jewels by LAG Concepts ("the official jewellers of Crews") and new flowery decorations in the main room. "We're going to add more and more decorations every week as we get closer to WorldPride," Prashad says. It's standing room only on the main floor as almost every queen in the city makes an appearance onstage. New queens **Naomi Campbellsoup** (who wins third place in the Miss Crews Pageant a few days later) and **Ala Mode** prove their worth alongside veterans **Vitality Black**, **Daytona Bitch** and the outgoing Miss Crews, **Ivory Towers**. Even though there have been grumblings by some ladies about their management style, the owners have smartly used the club and their influence to get many of the regular performers bookings at private parties and corporate events outside the gay bar scene. Crews has, in a sense, become a one-stop gay extravaganza. Also celebrating a fourth anniversary is DJ **Blackcat's** Go Hard party at Club120. We're there early, before the strippers and the crowds, but that doesn't stop us from enjoying some dancehall in this (we hope) soon-to-be-full dance hall. It is a long weekend, after all.

1▶ Peter, Bhav, Tish, Lane & Khaled 2▶ Brad & Naomi Campbellsoup 3▶ Jada Hudson & Sapphire Titti Reign 4▶ Shishmita 5▶ André & Tyler 6▶ Jarred & Brandi

Peepshow

THURS, APRIL 17 @ CODA

At the other end of the gay party spectrum is Peepshow at Coda. We get there at about 1am and the club is ready to explode. Maybe even implode. It used to be called Tequila Lounge (the birthplace of Shane Percy's Grapefruit oh-so-many years ago) and then the Annex WreckRoom. Now, with its centre-room bar replaced by a huge dancefloor surrounded by raised seating areas, an improved sound system, and flashier lights, it's caught the discerning eye of Prism's **Gairy Brown**. The décor, too, has been taken up a notch, with the addition of red Fly Nightclub-esque mirror balls and an impressive red, black and white, mod-style wall mural. Yes, that's an eight-foot image of Brown's beaming face overseeing the dancefloor. This is *his* house. I always find the crowds at these one-off events slightly off. It's just a bit crazier, just a bit more intense, just a bit more sexually charged than a night in your everyday club. Perhaps it's the grinding beats of DJ **Francesco Pagano**. Perhaps it's the show by **Gia** (whose tastefully small titties tantalize) and her two beefy, sweat-drenched dancers that has the crowd mesmerized. We're not sure exactly what we're seeing, but it's good enough to keep us watching and waiting. Perhaps it's the fact that these parties always happen on long weekends. People seem to indulge just a little bit more when they have that extra day to recuperate. And repent. It is Easter weekend, after all.

7▶ Chris, Jeff & Min 8▶ Tatiana & Sergai 9▶ Steve, Steve & Dean 10▶ Gia and her dancers



Deep Dish appears in every other issue of Xtra. For this week's Xposed column, by Anna Pournikova, visit dailyxtra.com.



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Happy Campers

Whether your camping style includes a few tent pegs and a relatively flat patch of ground or a tricked-out RV with more glitz and glitter than Liberace's living quarters, you'll find a bevy of LGBT-friendly places to park within striking distance of Toronto. **AEFA MULHOLLAND**



Stella's Getaway

Burleigh Falls, Ontario
stellasgetaway.com

WHERE: A three-minute walk from Burleigh Falls, on the shores of island-dotted Stony Lake, a 40-kilometre-long body of water known as the "Jewel of the Kawarthas." The restaurants, stores and LCBO of Lakefield are a short drive away.

WHO: Women-only.

WHAT: A lakeside campground with tent sites, cabins, a 27-foot trailer and one converted van. Some cabins have dishwashers; all have barbecues. Campsites have fire pits. Guests can use the resort's canoes and kayaks. Stella's Café has burgers, wings, cedar-plank salmon, and salads and sandwiches, and there's a fine-foods store on-site. Activities include swimming, fishing, boating and canoeing, plus hiking in Petroglyphs Provincial Park. Nearby, water crashes over the pink granite of Burleigh Falls from Lovesick Lake.

WHEN: May 2–Oct 13.

HOW MUCH: Sites from \$40. Van accommodation from \$55. Cabins from \$125.



Cedars Campground

Hayesland, Ontario
cedarscampground.com

WHERE: Just west of Millgrove, 20 minutes north of Hamilton.

WHO: LGBT.

WHAT: Celebrating its 30th birthday this summer, Cedars offers cabins and tent and RV sites, plus a baseball diamond, sand volleyball court and tennis court set on 130 partially wooded acres atop the Niagara Escarpment. Un-serviced sites can avail of a water and battery charging station. The Cedars has a licensed nightclub, licensed pool bar and fully licensed restaurant on-site. A pool, tuck shop and clubhouse (with library and board games) round out the offerings.

WHEN: May 2–Oct 24.

HOW MUCH: Day passes from \$10. Sites from \$16.50 per person.



Plein Bois

[Sainte-Marthe, Quebec](#)
[campingpleinbois.com](#)

WHERE: Near Rigaud, Quebec, less than an hour's drive from downtown Montreal and an hour and a half from Ottawa, near the banks of the Ottawa River. There's a shuttle bus to the camp for those who don't drive.

WHO: Men-only.

WHAT: 60 wooded acres with 414 sites, two pools and a choice of bars and terraces. Chez Leo provides breakfast, lunch and dinner, including grills and a substantial fisherman's platter. This season's calendar includes karaoke, happy hours, theme weekends, concerts, a garage sale, workshops and movies.

WHEN: April 19–Sept 21.

HOW MUCH: Day passes from \$10.25. Tent sites from \$28.25. Trailer rentals from \$41.

Hillside Campgrounds

[New Milford, Pennsylvania](#)
[hillsidecampgrounds.com](#)

WHERE: Close to the town of Gibson in northeastern Pennsylvania, just south of the Finger Lakes, 5.5 hours by car from Toronto.

WHO: Men-only.

WHAT: 235 acres in the mountains of Pennsylvania with trails and a shady creek. Sites range from central and socially situated to remote. A café takes care of all meals you can't be bothered to cook. Social offerings include volleyball contests, BYOB cocktail events, art walks and weekend parties where the tunes swing from country and western in the early hours to club sounds as the night progresses. Party themes include Heroes and Villains, Uniform, and Fantasy and Fetish.

WHEN: May 2–Sept 28.

HOW MUCH: Day passes from \$5. Sites from \$20 per person per night. Cabins from \$60.

Rainbow Ridge Resort

[Grand Valley, Ontario](#)
[rainbowridgeresort.ca](#)

WHERE: On the Grand River, an hour's drive north of downtown Toronto, close to Caledon and Orangeville.

WHO: LGBT, plus pets.

WHAT: 72 acres of hiking trails and fully serviced sites, with picnic tables and fire pits, on the Grand River. Field and pool volleyball, badminton, horseshoes, cricket, Saturday night dances, a clothing-optional area and three games rooms with ping-pong, pool, foosball, weights and a TV.

WHEN: May–October.

HOW MUCH: Day passes from \$8. Sites from \$16. Bunk rooms from \$65.

The Point Tent and Trailer Resort

[Vittoria, Ontario](#)
[get-tothepoint.com](#)

WHERE: Near Turkey Point Park on the Lake Erie shore, a 15-minute drive from Port Dover.

WHO: Men-only.

WHAT: Tent and fully serviced trailer and RV sites, surrounded by Carolingian forest, with an abundance of trails. Other draws include biking, swimming and a slew of summer mixers, cabanas, a saltwater swimming pool, sun decks and a general store. The Point is particularly popular with bears and leathermen, and the events calendar caters to that, with events such as BearForce and Lumbearjack.

WHEN: May 16–Oct 13.

HOW MUCH: Day pass from \$10. Sites from \$18. Cabins from \$56.



CAMP APPEAL

Upstate New York's Jones Pond offers a rural retreat for men

With 117 seasonal sites, 192 permanent seasonal spots, a slew of cabins and a season that stretches all the way from April to October, Jones Pond makes an ideal escape across the border. Set in the gentle hills of the Genesee Valley of Upstate New York, the men-only campground boasts 120 acres with hiking trails, a three-acre pond, huge in-ground swimming pool, a busy café and volleyball courts. There's also a huge events barn, camp store and lounge with TV, library, fireplace and piano. Recognized as the “nicest park in New York State,” Jones Pond is known for having exceptionally well-maintained grounds and facilities.

As the campground's 24th season kicks off, we tracked down the Canadian couple that owns and operates the pet-friendly park. Bryan Schaefer and Matthew McCormick bought Jones Pond in 2012. “We had been camping here for about 15 years,” Schaefer says, “and it had always been a place we loved going: 120 acres filled with the most amazing people we've ever spent time with. We were both working in downtown Toronto and were tired of the 12-hour days and the rat race. We needed to find something we loved to do. As fate would have it, the previous owners decided to sell the park. When they announced it, Matt turned to me and said, ‘Let's buy this!’” Knowing nothing about running a park, Schaefer and McCormick did their research, worked out the finances, sold their home in Toronto and bought Jones Pond in October 2012.

There is no “typical camper,” Schaefer says. “We get everyone from the young 20s crowd who come in for long weekends or block party weekends to the mid-40s crowd who have sites and

enjoy the pool scene and the dances to people from the local area, places like Buffalo and Rochester, who come in and use the park for the day. We probably have an 80/20 split between US guests and Canadians, but we're seeing more and more making the trip across the border. After all, we're really only 90 minutes from the Peace Bridge.”

The summer social calendar features weekend dances at the 2000-square-foot events barn. One of the busiest weeks is the one running up to the Fourth of July, when there are daily events scheduled, including Schaefer and McCormick's Bloody Caesar Canada Day party. Other dates to mark in your camping calendar are those of the park's five block parties (Jones Pond is divided into five neighbourhood “blocks”). Each party is organized by campers in those areas, and this year's themes include Mardi Gras and Western. All five events feature free barbecues and drinks. “It's just amazing,” Schaefer says, “how people grab on and throw themselves into putting on these parties.”

Whether you check into a log cabin, bunkhouse or guesthouse, pack your tent or haul your RV rig, there's a site, a warm welcome and a summer home away from home waiting at Jones Pond.

Jones Pond

[Angelica, New York](#)
[jonespond.com](#)

WHERE: 120 kilometres southeast of Buffalo, a 3.5 hour drive from Toronto.

WHO: Men-only.

WHEN: April 25–Oct 1.

HOW MUCH: Day passes from \$10. Tent sites from \$10. Trailer sites from \$38.



Riverside

[Tweed, Ontario](#)
[riversidervcampground.com](#)

WHERE: A 2.5 hour drive from Toronto, just north of Prince Edward County and outside Tweed.

WHO: Men-only.

WHAT: A campground and RV park on 96 wooded acres in eastern Ontario's Land O' Lakes region. Opened in 2011, Riverside basks on the banks of the Skootamatta River and offers 110 serviced and unserviced sites, all with picnic tables and fire rings, a cottage, trailer, clothing-optional pool and camping area, baseball diamond and volleyball field. Weekend themes range from Boots and Boxers to Drag Divas to Riverside Olympics.

WHEN: May 2–Sept 28.

HOW MUCH: Day pass from \$10. Sites from \$18. Trailer from \$65. Cottage from \$85.

Pride in Mexico City

A non-corporate mix of politics, partying and anarchic celebration

KEPH SENETT

For such a major metropolis, Mexico City is often overlooked during Pride season, but this capital is not only big and bustling — it's also actively welcoming to LGBT people. The city's very first Pride march took place in 1979, and 30 years later the Legislative Assembly legalized same-sex marriage. And, to make things easier for out-of-towners to visit, the Mexico City tourism board recently commissioned an LGBT guide, downloadable as a PDF from its website (see On the Web sidebar box for URL). So if you're considering a trip to Mexico City (also referred to as "el DF," for Distrito Federal), consider a pilgrimage for Pride.

The very first thing you'll notice in planning your Pride week is that the communications — posters, websites and guides — are not nearly as coordinated as you're probably used to, and your planning will be further complicated by the fact that everything is in Spanish. Take a deep breath. Despite being a city of nearly nine million people (that number jumps to more than 24 million if you account for the greater metropolitan area), el DF is, in some ways, still emerging. The sooner you sync up with the city, the better time you'll have.

There are two main ways to find out what's happening: track down a Pride guide or simply ask someone. Trust me: the latter is much more fun, but if you're too shy, get yourself into the Zona Rosa to check out lesbian bookstore Voces en Tinta or Erotika Love Store and ask for a guide (*guía*, in Spanish). On the web, your best bet is to locate groups and events pages on Facebook, which often are updated with more frequency

ON THE WEB

LGBT guide
(downloadable PDF)

mexicocity.gob.mx/lgbt/guias.php

International Lesbian Festival

mexicocity.gob.mx/lgbt/agenda.php

International Sexual

Diversity Festival

chopo.unam.mx

than the official page (marchagay.mx). If you're looking for the bear scene, you have your own portal at bearmex.com.

Although there are parties and events leading up to and after the parade, the main attraction happens on Pride Saturday under the banner Marcha del Orgullo y Dignidad LGBTTTTI (Pride and Dignity March). You're probably familiar with the many variations on LGBT; in Mexico City, the letters refer to *lésbico*, *gay*, *bisexual*, *transsexual*, *travesti*, *transgénero* and *intersexual*. Don't get too hung up on the semantics — this is an inclusive celebration, and everyone is welcome.

La Marcha begins at noon(ish), with people gathering at the base of El Ángel de la Independencia, the city's most famous monument and the symbol of the Mexico City. If your experience of Pride is limited to recent years in the big cities (like New York, San Francisco or Toronto), one of the first things you'll likely notice is that, despite its size (2013 drew approximately 100,000 participants), this is a grassroots event. With very few exceptions — the city distributed tens of thousands of free, branded condoms, for example — there is little or no corporate presence. And that's a great thing. Everything from the handmade signs to the music to the vibe feels genuine.

Once the parade gets underway, it moves down Paseo de la Reforma toward the Zócalo, Mexico City's main public plaza and the second largest in the world (Moscow's Red Square is bigger). The procession itself is a fabulous mix of politics, partying and anarchic celebration, with the music, costumes, pageantry and placards we've all come to expect.

Several other events are scheduled for the weeks prior to and directly after La Marcha. Consider planning your travel around the Festival Lésbico Internacional de la Ciudad de México (the international lesbian festival of Mexico City), the Festival Internacional por la Diversidad Sexual (the international sexual diversity festival) or the Festival de Diversidad Sexual en Cine y Video (the sexual diversity film festival). ■



KEPH SENETT



THELMA DATTER

Above, Pride revellers celebrate outside Palacio de Bellas Artes. Left, a float with an Aztec eagle warrior theme.

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Away from the crowded beach, the log booms on Trail 7 at Wreck Beach. BART BRAUN

10

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8. **Paradise Beach**
Near Saskatoon
9. **Patricia Beach**
Near Winnipeg
10. **Wreck Beach**
Vancouver
— Bruce Bishop

ON THE WEB

For more information on nude beaches and naturism, visit the Federation of Canadian Naturists at fcnc.ca.



Puerto Vallarta is a leading culinary destination in Mexico. VISITPUERTOVALARTA.COM

Restaurant Week in PVR

One of Mexico's longest-running culinary events, Puerto Vallarta Restaurant Week, will celebrate its 10th anniversary in May.

During the annual festival, which this year runs May 15 to 31, Puerto Vallarta's most prestigious restaurants showcase innovative three-course menus. Three options are available for each course, and prices range from \$15 to \$25 before alcohol and tip.

A leading culinary destination in Mexico, Puerto Vallarta offers a range of gastronomical adventures, from street food carts offering tacos and ceviche that have been operated by the same families for generations to top-

rated luxury restaurants.

In the gay-friendly Romantic Zone, not far from the gay beach, are Archie's Wok, Daiquiri Dick's, Taste and Kaiser Maximilian. From there, an easy stroll will take you to the Centro Historico, where you'll find Café des Artistes, Barcelona Tapas and El Arrayán.

Vegetarian or vegan interpretations of Mexican dishes can be found at River Café, Que Pasa and El Patio de Mi Casa, to name a few.

ON THE WEB

For a complete list of businesses participating in Restaurant Week, visit virtualvallarta.com.

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IN MEMORIAM

PROUD LIFE



It with a deep heartfelt sadness that we inform you that Peter Donaldson passed away April 8th, 2014. Peter the painter, artist, DJ, and social butterfly touched many lives. He will be greatly missed by his four sisters and 2 brothers, nieces, and nephews. His dearest friends Glen, Ray, Billy, Cynthia, Chris, Stan, Jim, Bobby, and Mario are feeling a profound loss as are all of his people that he has touched and shared beautiful times with. Throughout his struggles with his sickness, Peter held his head high, he was always so courageous, and for those of us who knew him, we accepted his moments of stubbornness with a smile. He enjoyed life to the fullest right up to his last moments. Please join us for a celebration of his life May 17th at 17h17 (5:17pm) for a special bingo, following 6pm dinner and celebrations. Family, friends and all who would like to share are welcome at FLASH, 463 Church Street.

GARETH HUGHES MATTHEWS

Fifteen years Gareth!
I love you more than ever.
Thom

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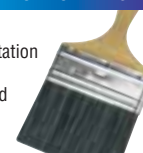
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NAME: TY AUSTIN
AGE: 26 SIGN: LIBRA

Ty moved from Calgary to Toronto 17 years ago “for its fast-paced lifestyle and the freedom to be who you are.” He enjoys whiskey on the rocks with a cigar, loves to talk about tattoos and low-brow sailor art, and considers classic Disney movies his guilty pleasure.

“Your gender is between your ears, not what’s between your legs,” he says. “Live and love with an open mind and heart, and remember: trans boys can always go and buy bigger!”

Facebook: Ty Austin (Short Stop), Instagram: Tattooedty, Tumblr/Twitter: Tattoosbyty

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Checking in with Jeremy: Final week



BODY BREAK JEREMY WILLARD

Dearest Gym,
Now that our time is done, I find myself reflecting on our affair. When we first met, 16 weeks ago, I marvelled at the smallness of you. You were youthful and clean, which is always a plus, but when I poked my head in for the first time, I doubted I’d ever be able to fit my considerable girth inside you. But I gathered myself up and eased into you using only an adventurous attitude as lubricant.

During the months we spent together, you taught me much. First, the key to just about any activity is to stick out my ass. It’s something to do with preventing injury to my lower back, I think. As hard as it may be to believe, I used to spend a lot of time holding my ass in, but you told me to spread my legs, stick my butt out and just do it. And I did it. And it hurt, but only at first. From top to bottom, you started to change me.

You taught me that if we were going to get sweaty together, I would need a lot more energy, and that meant eating better. I started spending nearly twice as much on groceries, stocking up on vegetables, fruit, Greek yogurt and meat, and preparing food in advance, filling containers with rice dishes, chopped vegetables and boiled eggs. I gorged myself to please you. My mouth was stuffed with meat from morning to night.

As the weeks passed, our relationship became one of give and take; I gave my time and energy, and you replaced my fat (20 pounds of it)



Jeremy used to spend a lot of time holding his ass in, but the gym taught him to spread his legs, stick his butt out and just do it. EVOLUTION FITNESS

with muscle. People saw us together, laughed, and commented on our progress. I couldn’t help bragging a little. There was a period where I resented what you demanded of me and didn’t want to leave the house to go see you, but we got through it. Now as we say our last farewells, as we knew we’d eventually have to, I know I’ll remember you fondly.

You used to call me your “pear.” It

was your pet name for me, but going forward, I think I’d rather be known as celery, carrot or a more flattering type of squash. It’ll be easier that way. I doubt you’d mind, and while you won’t be around to see it, I know you wish me well and hope that I’ll continue to improve and be happy, even in your absence.

Yours always,
Jeremy

Xtra brings you a chance to win a pair of tickets to Sheila Cavanagh’s **Queer Bathroom Stories** at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Saturday, May 31 at 8pm.

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