



MARCH 2013

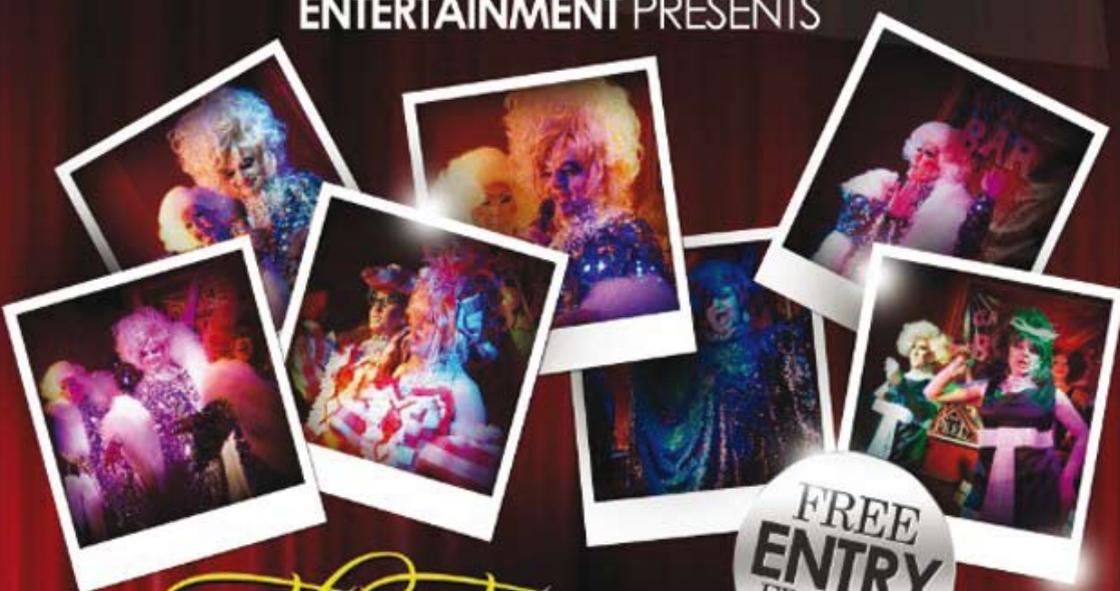
Q MAGAZINE

Made in Melbourne!  
Enjoyed Nationally  
& Internationally!



featuring  
MISS/GAY & MISS TRANSEXUAL  
Australia 2013 Pageant Winners

DRAGON  
ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS



FREE  
ENTRY  
FROM 9PM

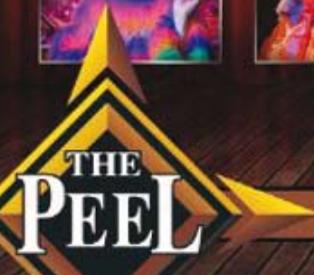
*The Famous*  
**CANDEE BAR**

WITH MISS CANDEE  
RITA & SUE

**SATURDAY NIGHTS**



The Peel's longest running Drag Show  
with NEW fresh numbers



Keeping the Peel just too **Gay** for Words

PHOTOS BY WAYNE C STYLE - Peel VCAT Exemptions - A269/2010



## q comment: DOCKLANDS STUDIOS

Docklands Studios Melbourne is pleased to announce the completion of new building upgrades that will enhance the Studios' reputation as Victoria's premier live television facility, offering a flexible, multi-use complex. The new building works were made possible by a \$10 million investment by the Victorian Government.

The re-development commenced in early 2012 and included a significant upgrade to Stage 5, renovation of the existing Workshop and an improved security entrance to the Studios on Docklands Drive.

The state-of-the-art extension to Stage 5 includes motorised lighting hoists, a new dry-hire control room and more storage space that will provide clients with faster turn-around times for audience-based production.

The workshop building has been divided into eight discreet bays overlooked by self-contained mezzanine offices. New fittings on the workshop floor will provide art departments, costume and construction with better equipment and improved work areas. These changes will also give producers the option to be based at the studio even if they are not shooting on the sound stages.

Chief Executive Officer of Docklands Studios Melbourne, Rod Allan says of the works, *"The improvements to Stage 5 now allow us to accept simultaneous television production bookings without compromising the Studios' ability to host major films when they arise. This will certainly help us attract more television production to Melbourne"*.

Docklands Studios Melbourne is a technically advanced complex for local and international film and television production.

The Studios are a flagship for the Australian film and television industry.

The site comprises five purpose-built, sound stages, each with its own production offices.

Since opening in 2004, productions that have used the Studios include: The Pacific, Where the Wild Things Are, Ghost Rider, Don't Be Afraid of the Dark, Knowing, Nightmares & Dreamscapes: Stories from Stephen King, Hating Alison Ashley, The Extra, Last Man Standing, Storm Warning, Killer Elite, Winners And Losers, The Eye Of The Storm, As The Bell Rings, and Iron Chef.



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# q feature: MISS GAY & MISS TRANSSEXUAL PAGEANT AUSTRALIA 2013

TRANSGENDER QUEENS CROWNED BY MAYOR  
Yarraville Club, Melbourne, Victoria.

**Two beautiful and talented transgenders were crowned Miss Gay and Miss Transsexual in an alternative pageant that was attended by hundreds of local and interstate guests including the Mayor of the city of Maribyrnong, Catherine Cumming, who crowned the winners.**

Held recently in a community club in Yarraville, West of Melbourne, the sold out event drew in an enthusiastic crowd that provided an electrifying energy all throughout the night.

## THE WINNERS:

Gabriella Louise Mendoza, a pageant-queen and performer based in Philip Islands Victoria, bested ten other candidates for the Miss Gay title, while Sofiya Iya Cocaina Vergara, a Transsexual based in Perth WA, outshined eleven other finalists and was crowned Miss Transsexual Australia.

A veteran of the Miss Gay pageant, Gabriella Mendoza previously placed first runner-up in the 2011 competition.

Sofiya Iya Cocaina Vergara from Perth, Western Australia, also a pageant veteran was chosen Miss Transsexual over 11 other contestants.



In her Facebook page, Vergara said she was “teary eyed” when she was crowned Miss Transsexual, “capturing the most coveted national title that has been so illusive to many.”

Vergara has a string of titles from countless gay pageants she has joined overseas including the Miss International Queen 2005 held in Thailand, ending up as semi finalist. She has been married for four years to a Western Australian miner, whom she thanks for allowing her to follow her dream of being a pageant winner.

## THE PAGEANT:

Bringing out to the community awareness and understanding of the transgender community, the pageant on it's fourth year is an annual event supported by the Midsumma Festival during its month long celebration.

Promoting this year's pageant theme is Colours of Australia, celebrating the diversity and multiculturalism.

The candidates competed in four categories : National Costume, Talent, Swimwear and Evening Gown. The contestants chose a country to represent in the national costume competition. Yshrael Pascual from The Voice attended with his long-time partner Kevin Carr and performed his debut single Earthquake.



For more information about the pageant or if you want to join and participate please visit the following: [www.victoriansecrets.wordpress.com](http://www.victoriansecrets.wordpress.com) or Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/MSGAYTSOZ>

# q tour: **CLOCKWORK ORANGE**

Action to the Word's critically acclaimed, all-male theatrical production of Anthony Burgess's ground-breaking novel, *A Clockwork Orange* will tour Australia in 2013. Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* will come to Australia direct from the UK, where it's been garnering rave reviews in the 50th anniversary year of the book's original release. This production is a testosterone fuelled, electrifying theatrical adaptation of the best-selling novel, which was adapted into Stanley Kubrick's cult film in 1971.

An unapologetic, visceral exploration of humanity in a "fictional" world full of violence, corruption and redemption, *A Clockwork Orange* mirrors society past-and-present and the human condition through the glorious glass-edged nastiness of Manchester's underworld. Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* is written and narrated in Nadsat - an Anglo-Russian concoction of colloquialisms that are used by the "youth of tomorrow" in a near Shakespearean lexicon of funny phrase making and jazzy-riffs.

Alex and his Droogs in their battle against the tedium of adolescence choose violence and sexual desire in a dangerous cocktail as the young men battle through the difficulties of youth. The vicious plot of Burgess's novel follows the disturbing life of Alex and his obsession with violence, eventually resulting in his imprisonment and participation in the distressing Ludovico experiment that claims to decriminalise convicts in two weeks through drastic psychological conditioning.

Alex is traumatised and is confronted by past friends and enemies who isolate him further from society. Driven to attempted suicide by a side-effect of the treatment that left him unable to bear classical music, Alex's experience is used as a weapon against government conditioning until he regains his previous love of violence and music.

Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* was one of the most important works of fiction of the 20th Century with prophetic sentiments that are increasingly relevant in the world today. It is a warning of an encroaching state and the dangers of having our independence robbed. It is also an optimistic view on humanity and suggests that, if given the chance, we humans have the choice to divert to goodness and a path of redemption.

Cutting edge theatre company Action to the Word was formed in 2008 to create exciting theatre for a wide audience. Artistic Director Alexandra Spencer-Jones says *"In the wake of the London riots, A Clockwork Orange has a new power of its own, asking once again, 'Is it better to be forced to be good or better to choose to be bad?'"*

*A Clockwork Orange* will tour to Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Canberra and Brisbane with further cities to be announced.

## **Melbourne**

The Malthouse April 6 - 21

Book at [www.aclockworkorange.com.au](http://www.aclockworkorange.com.au); [ticketmaster.com.au](http://ticketmaster.com.au)  
or call The Malthouse (03) 9685 5111; Ticketmaster 136 100

## **Sydney**

York Theatre Seymour Centre April 23 - May 5

Book at [www.seymourcentre.com](http://www.seymourcentre.com); [ticketmaster.com.au](http://ticketmaster.com.au)  
or call Seymour Box Office (02) 9351 7940; Ticketmaster 136 100

## **Perth**

Subiaco Arts Centre May 8 - 19

Book at [ticketek.com.au](http://ticketek.com.au) or call Ticketek 1300 795 012

## **Canberra**

The Playhouse, Canberra Theatre Centre May 22 - 25

Book at [canberratheatrecentre.com.au](http://canberratheatrecentre.com.au) or call (02) 6275 2700

## **Brisbane**

QPAC Cremorne Theatre May 28 - June 9

Book at [qpac.com.au](http://qpac.com.au) or call 136 246

*Tickets \$69 - \$99 \* Transaction fees may apply*



# q money: with EVAN DAVIS

Not long ago, I enjoyed some drinks with two friends. Rob (straight) and Dave (gay). Rob had suggested we call into a gay bar as he thought there'd be cute young girls drinking with their gay mates. As the night progressed our conversation turned to money. Initially this was a red wine fuelled drinking fantasy about opening a bar. Later, Dave asked me my thoughts on a commercial investment property.

Roughly at this point we realised, Rob had bought an expensive drink for a leggy number at the bar. This (*let's say*) 'Girl' had a deeper voice than mine and was a foot taller than six foot two Rob in 'her' high heels. Their arms were locked and looked likely to kiss at any moment.

I qualified my response to Dave by saying, any financial decision (property or drink purchase) should no doubt be considered in absence of further inebriation as the results of making an impaired decision could be disastrous.

The conversion continued at a later date. Typically shops, strata title offices, factories, warehouses and the like are the most common commercial investment properties that investors buy. Then can be great investments but in my book don't suit most first time investors.

Commercial properties generally have higher rental yields than residential properties. The higher rents however, need to be measured against the potentially higher holding and acquiring costs these sorts of properties can have.

Interest rates for commercial property loans tend to be higher than comparable residential mortgages. This will simply mean your interest bill will be bigger and when paired with owners corporation fees may reduce the overall rate of return from your investment.

Commonly, commercial lending facilities will require a significantly larger deposit from the buyer than their residential alternative. Generally 30-35% of the purchase price as well as the associated costs such as government stamp duty and other purchasing fees and charges. Put simply, buyers require more money to buy this type of investment.

Often GST will be payable on a commercial property purchase. For a self employed person or entity this generally can be claimed back during their regular quarterly return (BAS). That said, it is a large cost (10% of the purchase price) and this cost obviously has a huge impact on a companies or individual's cash flow.

Commercial properties tend to suit investors at specific stages of their investing life. Investors who are later in their investing career may benefit from assets that sacrifice growth for higher rental returns. This could be particularly true if the commercial property is owned in a self managed super fund and could also benefit from preferential tax rates.

With all investment options fiscal or emotional, the decision to commit comes down to time, circumstance and place. Keep a clearer head than Rob's and analyse your situation carefully. Get all the facts and do your homework. Oh, I'm reliably told that Rob's girl is know by her stage name "Dee Cupps" and is quite a handful in more ways than one!



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# q circus: **CRANKED UP**

**CIRCUS OZ 2013: CRANKED UP**  
**TICKETS ON SALE ON MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2013**

Premiering in Melbourne last year, Circus Oz sizzles back into the Circus Oz Big Top at Birrarung Marr with their reconstructed 2013 show – cranked up from touring regional Australia, a New York City run of standing ovations and hot from an extended season across America.

Circus Oz 2013: Cranked Up hurls the 2012 show, From The Ground Up, to new heights – it is a production that has been honed, road-hardened, made tight and allowed to play hilariously fast and loose. Expect the irreverent Circus Oz spirit, revel in seeing some of the company's much-loved characters again and thrill at some daring new feats as Mark Sheppard steps into the shoes of roving Indigenous provocateur destined to disrupt Circus Oz's ongoing brand of ridiculous tomfoolery that leaves audiences howling for more.

Credited with revitalising a traditional artform in a uniquely Australian way, Circus Oz is a rock 'n' roll, animalfree circus that has influenced the development of circus arts around the world since its foundation in 1978 – and this year turns 35!

**19 June – 14 July 2013**

**Preview Wednesday, 19 June 2013**

**Gala Night Thursday, 20 June 2013**

**Duration 2 hours (plus 20 minute interval)**

**Venue Circus Oz Big Top**

**Birrarung Marr, between Federation Square and Batman Avenue, Melbourne**

**Tickets \$24 – \$92 (on sale from Monday, 25 March 2013)**

**Bookings 136 100 and [ticketmaster.com.au](http://ticketmaster.com.au)**



# q youth: with **TASMAN ANDERSON**

This month I decided to try something a little out of the ordinary, something that not everyone agrees or necessarily believes in. I decided it was time for me to see a psychic.

Hey! Before you put those giant hats of judgement on, hear me out. I've been working on an old manuscript for the past three months and without fail, I would spend from 6pm to 6am the next day working on the redraft only to go to work two hours later. After a month or so of this, I started to lose motivation and it was getting harder and harder to focus on anything. It wasn't that I lost interest; it was more the fact that I was lacking inspiration. With none of my usual activities motivating me, it was my mum who suggested we do something completely out of the box and visit a well-respected psychic.

We didn't really have to go too much of an effort to find one we could trust. My sister's friend recommended we see Matthew, a psychic in Brisbane who had made a good impression on her when she had seen him a few months prior. So after making an appointment, we drove into the city and met with him.

Honestly, I went in a little sceptical. It's not that I completely dismiss the idea of people being able to see what's in store for you, I just knew how many people there were that had no issues with taking advantage of your curiosity. So, when I first walked in I was ready for anything he was planning to throw at me.

The first thing he did was tell me about my aura and the symbols that surrounded it. He talked about how my aura indicated that I was overworked and in desperate need of sleep. He continued to say that I was surrounded by symbols such as: the Melbourne tram, a lock, several documents and a heart to name a few. He went on to explain what each of these meant for me and my immediate future.

After thoroughly freaking me out with all the 'energy and aura' talk, the next step of the reading was the tarot cards. He had me shuffle and split the deck in three parts, putting them back together in the order that felt right to me. He then proceeded to read each card and explain what they meant according to my signifier card.

I have to admit, I did actually gain something from my time with Matthew. I didn't have a revelation nor did I find out that I was going to be a successful writer but in the end that wasn't what I needed. The reading helped bring back that drive to be creative. It opened me up to the possibility that anything could happen and most importantly, it eased my mind a little and made me feel that everything was going to be okay.

I think if you go into a psychic reading with an open mind, you'll end up really enjoying it. Regardless of whether or not you believe certain people have the ability to see the future, you can still learn from a reading. Sometimes we only need to hear that everything is going to work out in the end in order to feel more at ease. Other times we seek specific answers to questions that have continually plagued us. I found that Matthew was really trying to pinpoint the areas that were worrying me before moving onto the areas that were not as important.

No matter what our beliefs are, I think its basic human nature to be curious about what the future holds and whether everything is already planned ahead of time. So would I recommend seeing a psychic? Absolutely! Even if it's not for the usual reason of wanting to know the future, a psychic may just be the inspiration or experience that you are currently missing.



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# q cuisine: with NATHAN MILLER

I wonder when Melbourne became a hub for great Asian Cuisine? As far as I can remember we have always had amazing Asian restaurants to choose from. With our ever-expanding suburbs we can literally go anywhere and find a great array of fine cuisine. So when I heard of yet another Asian restaurant opening within China Town, I was hesitant, but very inquisitive about what they are able to bring to the table to set them apart from the many others.

Dumplings are one of my favorite dishes at the moment, so when I heard about ShanDong Mama and her amazing fish dumplings, I was very eager to drop by sample her goods.

Arriving at any venue, I always take note of the décor, floor layout, kitchen visibility and the general feel. I also look for who is managing the floor and the way they communicate to the floor staff.



Walking into Shandong Mama, I was very surprised by the casual and easy going feel of this quaint restaurant. The smiles were contagious, the kitchen looked very busy and there was a vibe about this place that was different to other places nearby.

Settling into a cosy spot near the window, I knew I could partake in my other sport, that is people watching.

I was given a menu, some hot jasmine tea, whilst the specials and specialties were described in an accurate fashion, ensuring that I understood each step of the Mama's

process. Apparently there are items on the menu that "I Must Have" so being one never to argue, I went with 'Mama's' suggestions.

Reading through the menu, I see that the focus is mainly on dumplings, but there are a wide variety of other dishes. Mama prides herself on these dumplings and that was made very clear, and I guess that's why I am here.

The fish dumplings & pork dumplings were delivered and there was a clear hand made appeal about Mama's dumplings that don't look like a machine has been involved in the process. They were rustic in appearance with the pastry was just thick enough to hold the hand-made filling in. To get a real sense of flavor I tasted the dumplings without any sauce and believe me, the fish dumplings were better than expected. You could taste the delicate flavours of the mackerel without being over powering. These are definitely a must try.

I tried the Pickled Cabbage Salad that, when eaten between courses, has a sorbet effect and combined with the Sichuan Beef my taste buds were alive.

The chances of me returning very soon are almost guaranteed, I really need to return to try the Beef Buns and to experience Mama's larger than life persona. Mama dropped over to say hello and ask about my dishes, and with some quick translation, I was transported into her world of food, family and laughter.

ShanDong Mama is located in Mid City Arcade, shop 7 on 200 Bourke Street. Which is handy after a few hours shopping in the city, or great place to catch up with friends after work. Open Monday to Saturday so why not drop in and say hi to Mama.

For more reviews and foodie suggestions visit [www.ramblingrelish.com](http://www.ramblingrelish.com)



# q pride news: LONDON CALLING

The theme for Pride in London in 2013 has been announced as "Love (and Marriage)" to reflect the expected passage of equal marriage legislation this summer. The Parade itself will showcase community groups in chronological order of their founding. It will be a celebration of the history and achievements of the LGBT+ community that have led up to this year's legislation, described by many as the final major piece of equality legislation.

Everyone taking part in the Parade is being asked to dress up, to perform, to demonstrate or campaign and engage spectators in ways that pick up and enlarge on the theme of "Love (and Marriage)". This might mean featuring wedding dress styles from past decades, focussing on famous lovers in history, or celebrating the power of love in families or between partners.

Having been given just five months to organise one of London's biggest annual events, organisers are calling on the LGBT+ community and its supporters to think about how they can help make Pride a success, whether through financial or practical support. Details of how to get involved are available at [www.londoncommunitypride.org/get-involved](http://www.londoncommunitypride.org/get-involved)

The GLA are providing up to £150,000 to support this year's event but at least a further £280,000 is needed to put on the show that London rightly expects. This amount of funding is needed to keep everyone safe during the Parade and afterwards in Trafalgar Square and Soho. It also enables Pride to look great and represent the best that the LGBT+ community offers.

It takes over 700 volunteers to put on Pride; from those undertaking Business and Resident Liaison in advance through to those acting as stewards on the day.

The two elements that might prevent Pride taking place in 2013 are a lack of funding and a lack of volunteers. If adequate funding and manpower is not secured the event could be scaled back or cancelled. A decision on whether or not Pride can be delivered successfully in 2013 will be taken in April.

Chairman of London LGBT+ Community Pride, Michael Salter said: "2013 is shaping up to be another milestone year in the fight for LGBT+ equality and the eyes of many will be on London. With such a short lead time this year we need the community and its supporters to really get behind Pride - to show the spirit that we saw last year when record numbers of people took part in the Parade in reaction to the threat to Pride's survival. Although we are confident in our planning it is true that if we are unable to secure the funding and volunteers that we need to deliver a safe Pride that showcases the best of our community, we may have to cancel the event for 2013. Many people don't appreciate the scale of Pride; it is the third biggest annual event in London, it is the only Parade that closes Oxford Street, Regent Street and Shaftesbury Avenue as 40,000 people march and nearly a million people pass through the footprint of the event. Organising something on that scale doesn't come cheaply and depends on volunteers.

*So we are calling on potential sponsors and donors and on willing volunteers to step forward and work with us to make London and our community proud."*



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# q performance: **GLORY BOX**

Tim Miller  
GLORY BOX  
MONASH UNIVERSITY  
FRIDAY, MARCH 22

Alexander Theatre, Wellington Road, Clayton - 7.30pm  
\$10-\$15



Internationally acclaimed performance artist Tim Miller, will present his solo stage production GLORY BOX at The Alexander Theatre, Monash University, on Friday March 22.

GLORY BOX is a sexy, funny and politically charged exploration of same-sex marriage and the struggle for immigration rights for gay bi-national couples. It looks at how society proposes one limited definition – that of heterosexual marriage – as the only worthy model. Glory Box provides an alternative

It recounts the obstacles and trials faced by same-sex partnerships through looking into the legal challenges he and his Australian-born husband Alistair have faced as a bi-national gay union, as they have sought to build a life in the US, a country that does not recognise same-sex partnerships for immigration purposes.

Says Miller, *"I want the piece to conjure for the audience a site for the placing of memories, hopes, and dreams of gay people's extraordinary potential for love."*

Tim is a major political figure in the movement to legalise bi-national same-sex partnerships in the US and since 1999 has focused his creative and political work on marriage equality and addressing the injustices facing lesbian and gay couples in America.

Tony Kushner, playwright (*"Angels in America"*), screenwriter for Spielberg's film *'Lincoln'* and a Pulitzer Prize winner says of Tim "Tim Miller has been at the heart of things, giving voice to what matters most, for the entirety of his career. His work is an extraordinary fusion of history, observation, politics and a kind of shamanism."

In March 2013, while Tim is in Melbourne, the US Supreme Court will take up the issue of gay marriage, hearing challenges to a federal law denying benefits to same-sex couples and California's ban on such unions.

Tim Miller will also conduct two weeks of workshops on performance making from 18-29 March in the Centre for Theatre and Performance at Monash University culminating in a show of selected work by Monash Bachelor of Performing Arts students.

## **TIM MILLER**

Miller's creative history as a performer and writer has explored the artistic, spiritual and political topography of his identity as a gay man. Hailed for his humour and passion, Miller has tackled this challenge in such pieces as *POSTWAR* (1982), *COST OF LIVING* (1983), *DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA* (1984), *BUDDY SYSTEMS* (1985), *SOME GOLDEN STATES* (1987), *STRETCH MARKS* (1989), *SEX/LOVE/STORIES* (1991), *MY QUEER BODY* (1992), *NAKED BREATH* (1994), *FRUIT COCKTAIL* (1996), *SHIRTS & SKIN* (1997) *GLORY BOX* (1999), *US* (2003) and *1001 BEDS* (2006). Miller's performances have been presented all over North America, Australia, and Europe

He is the author of the books *SHIRTS & SKIN*, *BODY BLOWS* and *1001 BEDS*, which won the 2007 Lambda Literary Award for best book in Drama-Theatre.

His solo theatre works have been published in the play collections *O Solo Homo* and *Sharing the Delirium*. Miller's newest book *1001 BEDS*, an anthology of his performances, essays and journals, was published by University of Wisconsin Press in 2006. Miller has taught performance at UCLA, NYU, the School of Theology at Claremont and at universities all over the US.

He is a co-founder of two of the most influential performance spaces in the United States: Performance Space 122 on Manhattan's Lower East Side and Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica, CA.

Miller has received numerous grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 1990, Miller was awarded a NEA Solo Performer Fellowship, which was overturned under political pressure from the Bush White House because of the gay themes of Miller's work. Miller and three other artists, the so-called "NEA 4", successfully sued the federal government with the help of the ACLU for violation of their First Amendment rights and won a settlement where the government paid them the amount of the defunded grants and all court costs. Though the Supreme Court of the United States decided in 1998 to overturn part of Miller's case and determined that "standards of decency" are constitutional criterion for federal funding of the arts, Miller vows "to continue fighting for freedom of expression for fierce diverse voices."

Since 1999, Miller has focused his creative and political work on marriage equality and addressing the injustices facing lesbian and gay couples in America through GLORY BOX and US.

After a nine-year stint in New York City, in 1987 Miller returned home to Los Angeles, California where he was born and raised. He currently lives there with his Australian partner Alistair in Venice Beach.



[www.rushpoppershop.com.au](http://www.rushpoppershop.com.au)

# q books: **INSIDE THE VORTEX**

By Andrew Bomer

**Inside The Vortex** by blogger Justin Hernandez reveals the author's naked truth – reflecting on how early years of abuse and neglect led to his descent into the dark worlds of addiction, stripping, and even male escorting. It is a riveting coming of age story, filled with twists and turns, chaos and drama as Hernandez recounts being raised by a single mother on the rough streets of the Bronx, coming out as gay and sashaying with the pier queens on Christopher Street, being rejected by Christina Aguilera, and then escaping to Hollywood to pursue his dance-star dreams.

Inside The Vortex serves as a prequel to Hernandez's popular "Naked in New York City" blog. It is available digitally and in paperback on Amazon.com, iBookstore.com and BarnesandNoble.com this month.

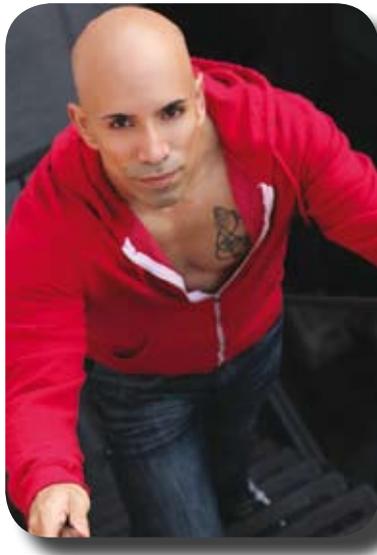
*"When you are forced to perform sexual acts as a minor, it's humiliating,"* says Hernandez, who recounts how he was mentally, physically, and eventually sexually abused by his stepfather. *"I went through my teenage years believing I was this broken person who didn't deserve to be treated well. Sadly, I carried that mentality into my twenties and most of my thirties. It took me a long time to deprogram myself and understand my worth."*

At 17, Hernandez came out as a gay man. It was the early nineties and as luck would have it, he was living with his mother in a one-bedroom apartment in the gay mecca of New York's West Village. Still, his queer proclamation wasn't received well by his mother.

*"She was very unhappy about it,"* he remembers. *"The lack of support was upsetting because I lost the one person I wanted to turn to most. It made me angry and very needy. I looked for solace through my rapidly developing addictions, and of course, through striking up relationships with all the wrong men."*

To escape the criticism – and to chase his dreams of touring the world as pop music dancer – Hernandez left NYC for Hollywood. He went on a few auditions and landed a few minor jobs but it wasn't long before he made the transition from legitimate dancing to stripping and then escorting.

*"When there is unhappiness in your heart, it will follow you wherever you go,"* he explains. *"Initially, I thought things would be different because I was in a new city. But I didn't even blink an eye when I was approached with selling my body. It was almost like I saw the money and checked my soul at the door."*



He admits to bedding over five hundred men, but says, at the time, he didn't equate his lifestyle with addiction. He was becoming completely nonchalant and desensitized to sex. It was mechanical and it no longer felt special, but he wanted and needed more of it. *"I didn't know how to stop. When I was paid for it, the money was the real aphrodisiac, not the men."*

It was slow and painful downward spiral.

The turning point came when Hernandez finally left Hollywood and returned to Manhattan. He began writing a blog called Naked in New York City. The blog's fans encouraged Hernandez to tell his whole story in a memoir.

Thinking he had come to terms with his past, he agreed to it. *"Putting my story in print gave me full closure,"* he says. Through the process, he learned the value of compassion, kindness, and self-worth; and he has come to realize that it's never too late for change and growth.

*"I went through some rough times in my life, but in the end, the person I am now is a result of the road I have travelled. Every event led to another, and ultimately to the point I am now, with zero regrets."*

Visit [JustinHernandez.net](http://JustinHernandez.net)



# q travel extra: with BRIAND BEDFORD

I was rather hesitant in visiting Gran Canaria after hearing so much about the Island, the type and age of the gay men who visit the island and of course the monstrous Yumbo Centre. I had put off a visit for many years, but after receiving an invitation from the newest gay resort Club Torso in Maspalomas I decided to give the island a chance. I booked my flight with Condor from Berlin to Las Palmas over the Christmas period, avoiding the terrible Christmas stress and the awful winter weather in Berlin.

Indeed I had incredible luck with the weather during my ten days on the largest of the Canary Islands, only 5 hours flight from Berlin. The sun welcomed me upon my arrival and stayed with me during the entire ten days. It was wonderful to get away from winter and enjoy the fantastic pool and Jacuzzi in Club Torso (see: [www.clubtorso.com](http://www.clubtorso.com)).

I picked up my hire car from the airport and drove the 30 minutes to Maspalomas. I was welcomed by Martijn from Club Torso and checked into my poolside bungalow with a view of the pool and Jacuzzi. The bungalows are very comfortable and have their own, fully equipped kitchens, ideal for people like me who love cooking! In the local supermarket I found amazing seafood which meant my Christmas meal was sorted!

Time to discover more of the surroundings. A hire car proved to be a good idea on the island, especially if you want to discover the areas off the tourist tracks. The roads are very good – although somewhat confusing at first due to the number of small roads everywhere. Guests who only want to enjoy the sun, sea and sex don't need a car. Clu Torso and most other resorts offer a pick-up service from the airport. The main gay beach as well as Yumbo are within easy walking distance from the resort.

The botanical garden of Gran Canaria is also around the corner from Club Torso and not far from Yumbo. Here there are many local plants which grow on the island. On 27 hectares the visitors have the possibility to admire the Canary flora during the day. The fauna tends to come out in the late afternoon and evening and can be found at the local watering holes in Yumbo centre!

Meloneras, the western part of Maspalomas, with its exotic hotels, diverse restaurants and shopping malls is well worth a visit. To make this part of the island fit for the future around 500 million Euros were invested a few years ago by the EU and the Spanish state for the renovation of the Costa Canaria. Gran Canaria has successfully spent a lot of money and effort to improve its image.



Another centre of attraction are the dunes of Maspalomas. The 5 km long dune belt at the south point of the island is a protected area since 1987 and is a paradise for nature-lovers. The sand dunes which remind one of the Sahara in neighbouring Africa are of maritime origin. It is quite a long haul through the dunes to the beach. Some guys take the whole day to reach the beach as they get caught up in the cruising area where not only gay men are out hunting but also straight couples!

The gay beach is easy to find, thanks to the rainbow flag. There is a small kiosk bar selling drinks and snacks alongside the beach chairs and umbrellas (the prices for both are amazingly inexpensive, compared to some of the other Spanish islands).

After a good night sleep in my comfortable bungalow in Club Torso and a tasty poolside breakfast, which is included in the accommodation rate, it is time to discover the island once again. My destination is the town Tajeda, located at 1049 m above sea level on the windy national road GC 811. The serpentine roads are good but extremely windy. This town is famous for its almond plantations which are amazing in January and February when the trees blossom. A more recent addition to this mountainous town is the restaurant Déjate Llevar - Lounge Café. The two owners Fernando and Nikolaos (a Greek guy) are amazing hosts. The view of the mountains from the outdoor terrace is breathtaking! Try out the wonderful local and international cuisine cooked by Nikos' mother from Wednesday to Sunday 1-9pm. (See: [www.letmetakeu.com](http://www.letmetakeu.com))

Another interesting place to visit is Puerto Rico - the biggest of six artificially created holiday worlds located in the municipality Mogan. It is interesting to see the hotels built in the mountain slopes and the artificial sand beach with a promenade and cafes, as well as a yacht harbour.

The evenings start in Meloneras with its vast range of top quality restaurants. There is something here for every taste. The nightlife in Yumbo only starts at around 11pm. This shopping centre, built in 1982 and renovated in 2003 has over 200 shops and gastronomic businesses on four floors. The gay bars and clubs in Yumbo are well known even far beyond the borders of the Canary Islands. Some bars and cafes are open in the early afternoon, for example Café Vienna – famous for its cakes. Usually bars open between 7 and 8pm although they only really start getting busy after 11pm. On the terraces of the bars one can sip a drink and enjoy the hustle and bustle on the "Catwalk". Follow the crowds who go from one bar to the next and end up in the clubs which are open until the early hours of the morning.

Gran Canaria is a very special place where you can enjoy as little or as much gay life as you choose. The restaurants are good, the nightlife is exciting, the beaches are clean and ideal for meeting or making new friends and the guesthouses and resorts cater to your specific needs. I will definitely be going back to the Island. I regret not visiting it earlier and enjoyed the Christmas break – away from the stress and bad weather in northern Europe.



# q destination: NORFOLK ISLAND

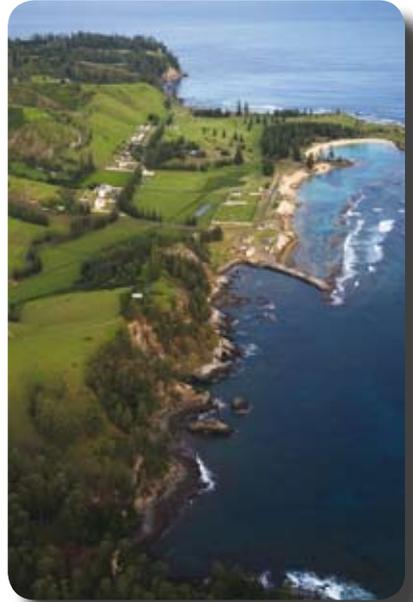
You may have heard of Norfolk Island, perhaps in connection with its terrible convict history? Maybe as the home of the descendants from the Mutiny of The Bounty ?

BUT... have you heard of this gem in the Pacific as a holiday destination for discerning, maybe a little adventurous, privacy-seeking, modern grown-ups? It's an easy couple of hours flight on Air NZ who fly twice weekly from Sydney and Brisbane and just one & a half hours each Sunday from Auckland. Once on the ground your holiday begins immediately with friendly waves and smiles. No traffic jams or red lights here, the pace is easy, the living is easy. You can do as much or as little as the mood takes you.

Kick back at one of the stunning picnic spots, as you gaze out over the ocean with the city bustle way beyond the horizon. Or if you're into activities, where do we start! There's boating, fishing, swimming, kayaking or snorkeling, or on land - golf, tennis, hiking, or just wandering through the bush or along the beaches. You can be as energetic as you wish. If its food and wine you love to indulge in?

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NORFOLK ISLAND

# q drag: AMENA-JAY ALURA

Melbourne has been blessed to nurture an exciting new wave of talented drag performers. Alan Mayberry spoke to Amena-jay Alura who currently performs at the GH and the Love Machine.



I was born in Kalgoorlie in Western Australia, growing up Gosnells in Perth, where I lived till I was 18. Being the youngest of 5 children growing up in Gosnells was admittedly quite tough, and I often felt like the black sheep in a community that seemed to be behind the times, and quite unaccepting of anyone who wasn't a football-playing, ute-driving, factory worker. Looking back on it now, that combination does sound quite sexy. Hopefully I'll meet him one day!

My family is a wonderfully confusing bunch of people who make me feel very blessed every day. All are very enthusiastic about my career and my dancing. My father, grandmother, aunty and sister Suzi are my absolute super heroes who are constantly supportive and encouraging and have done nothing but shower me with love. I have 2 other sisters and one brother who are equally as supportive, as is my mother also. While they have not always been accepting and understanding of my sexuality, they have always respected it, which is all I ask.

As far as knowing I was gay, well let's just say I pretty much minced out of the womb sporting a fabulous stiletto and a matching glitter ensemble. I'd have to place the blame for my taste for *le male* on Barbie's boyfriend Ken.

I have always been quite extroverted (many would say very) and in some ways I refused to conform to people who couldn't see past their own opinions or beliefs. Being this way made it quite a struggle with schooling and social hierarchy that only school kids and gays manage to have.

Yet as hard as it was with many dramas, some involving physical and verbal abuse, I managed to come out on top. In Year 10 I was head of the entire student body and kept that title till I was in Year 12, when I was announced as head boy of my school. I graduated with passable grades, and was the only boy who danced in my school community.

At 18 I moved to Melbourne when I was accepted into a performing arts school, where I trained for a year. Wanting to further my skills as a performer, I decided to change schools and studied 2 years of full-time performing arts at Patrick Studios Australia under the creative eye of Todd Patrick, who has been the most influential and talented person I have had shape me into the performer I am today.

Training to be a dancer was extremely rigorous and challenging, but like anything you are passionate about in any line of work, you will push, fight and work as hard as you can to achieve your goals. I was always taught you will never be as good as you can be with dancing – there is always room for improvement and good dancers never stop training. Whether it be the gym, yoga, voice classes or teaching, you are constantly trying to better yourself and your performance skill level.

I have been working in the Melbourne gay scene for 5 years now, landing my first big shows at the Market Hotel and the Xchange. I had my real taste for drag performing in *The Pussycat Doll Tribute Show* at the Xchange in 2009. I have done many a show in my life as Amena-jay and many not. My credits include Norwegian Cruise Lines, *The Ooh La La Cabaret Show*, Nickelodeon Teen Choice Awards, the KPMG ball and various other performances around Australia and the world.

Originally I was named Mia-jay. But never really liking it, I thought of other things to call myself. And finally we have Amena-jay. Which is just a little thing for me to remind myself never to be like the first queen I met, who was not very nice (relax girls, I love you all – she is not in Melbourne lol). It's a more sassier version of my alias (A-meaner-jay) which I guess doesn't work that well. I'd like to think I'm nice.

Rehearsals for shows can be somewhat demanding. No pain no gain. The majority of the time especially, with *The Classics*, we work very hard to present a higher caliber of quality cabaret and commercial drag shows. But we still manage to have tons of fun with each other in rehearsals and behind the scenes, and I hope that chemistry reads really well on stage in the shows.

My role models in drag are 3 extremely talented and unforgettable drag legends of Melbourne Laura Gravity, Paris and Sensation. They blow me and everyone else away the second they grace the stage!

I'm in a wonderful group called the Triple A's (AAA GIRLS) with Aaliyah Storm and Suzy Akiko who are my very dear girlfriends. We have done a lot together in such a short time and we are so excited for the new year and the shows we have coming up. Beauty, charisma, talent and legs for days – what more could you want! What a great start it was to be honored by Brett Willis adding us to his Toonerama gallery and allowing us to perform at its Midsumma launch in January. We have been working closely together since around April last year and things have really picked up since then. We seem to be on a winning streak and hope to be out there a lot more on the scene in 2013 with some wonderful new production shows. At the moment I couldn't be more blessed and happy for my life and the opportunities that have and will arise in it.



By day I work as a teacher. I mainly teach private classes on technique and competition dancing. I am lucky to have an extremely talented bunch of students. By night I resume my secret hero work patrolling the streets of Melbourne via rooftops fighting crimes, defending the innocent and saving the world – one malibu and coke in a tall glass and wet pussy shot at a time.

I would like to say I spend all of my time lounging around on a leopard print chaise lounge being fanned down by the biggest and buffest of Australian footballers in only their jockstrap while massaging my delicately pedicured feet, feeding me grapes and showering me in the finest champagne as I watch reruns of *Queer as Folk*. But the truth is the majority of my down time consists of a snooze, costume repairs, wig maintenance and music cutting – there is probably some cheeky painting of the acrylic nails thrown in too.

The closest thing I think I have to that fantasy is sitting on my L-shape couch with a tiger print throw over the top of it eating peanut M&Ms while texting some cute boy I gave my number to on the weekend – at the time fantasizing he was footballer – when actually he works at lube mobile as a grease monkey, and I'm watching reruns of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* drinking fruity lexia (come to think about they both sound equally as good).

I don't have a lot of time to go shopping with friends, or road trips, or movies or anything like that, but when I do it's with a close circle of friends who usually run around the same schedules that I do or who work with me in the shows I do.

Since I was 14 I have written journals about my day-to-day life. At that age my dream for when I was around 35 would be to married to a handsome man with a modern lifestyle: nothing too fancy just comfy and current. Each evening I'll be greeted by my adorable white King Charles spaniel with patches of chest nut brown (a boy by the name of Gus) who will be waiting at the door wagging his tail for daddy to get home. I'll put the keys down, give him a cuddle and then enjoy a wonderful night snuggling on the couch with a glass of wine with my hubby. And reality even now at 24, ten years on and 10 years till, I would really like that to happen. Until then I'm every happy with the shows I'm doing and where I see my career going in the future.



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# q theatre news: DADDO RETURNS



As Victorians eagerly await the Melbourne premiere season of the international award-winning Broadway and West End hit **LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL**, the producers are delighted to announce an exciting hometown return of a beloved local lad.

After a 20-year absence from performing in Melbourne, Cameron Daddo is set to return in Australia's biggest new hit musical at the Princess Theatre from 9th May 2013.

Daddo born and bred in Melbourne, first came to the attention of Australian television viewers as the host of the children's television show *Off the Dish* which soon led to him hosting his own program: *The Cameron Daddo Cartoon Show*. He made his mark on the Australian musical stage in *Gordon/Frost's Big River*, winning several major awards for his critically acclaimed portrayal of *Huckleberry Finn*.

Cameron followed that success with the role of *Scarecrow* in the Victorian State Opera's *The Wizard of Oz*. Daddo has also contributed songs and music to the many soundtracks of his television and movie credits. He has kept his musical side very much alive, just releasing his new album of self-penned tunes, *Ten Sons... and Change*, to rave reviews in the US Country/Americana market.

Cameron moved to Los Angeles in 1992 to pursue his acting career in Hollywood. He and his wife (Alison Brahe) and 3 children have called LA their home ever since.

The Logie award-winning actor had lead roles as well as reoccurring and guest roles in a long list of high profile American television programs. Cameron is delighted that his family will be joining him in Melbourne for the entire run of **LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL**.

*"I am really looking forward to coming back to my home town to take to the stage again in Melbourne for the first time in 20 years." Daddo stated, "It's a wonderful opportunity for me to show my family my old stomping ground." "In the show I will be playing the role of Professor Callahan and get to work alongside some uber talented fellow Australian actors including Lucy Durack, Rob Mills, David Harris, Helen Dallimore and Erika Heynatz."*

*"During the Sydney season, I was delighted seeing all the happy faces coming out of the theatre after the show. My kids, nieces, nephews and assorted relatives loved the show! And even some of my harshest critics - my Melbourne school mates - were bowled over by it." "I honestly believe that audiences are in for a real treat."*

**LEGALLY BLONDE's** co-producers Howard Panter & John Frost are both ecstatic they were able to sign Daddo for the Melbourne run. John said *"Cameron was terrific in Big River and the opportunity to work with him again after 22 years is fantastic."* And Howard remarked, *"Cameron has such charisma, charm and command on stage he simply wows the audience into loving his character. He's a real joy to watch."*

**LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL** is produced by Howard Panter for Ambassador Theatre Group and John Frost, in association with **MGM ON STAGE**, Darcie Denkert and Dean Stolber.



**Princess Theatre, Spring Street, Melbourne**  
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# q fitness: with CHRIS GREGORIOU

**Do you like a good rumour? Oh I love a good rumour. I am sure you have been told a few about what is best for you when it comes to your health and fitness. Has a friend or lover ever given you a tip as to what can help your waist line, or your firm up your breasts?**



Well, there's quite a few, some real beauties that simply won't die. With the start of the new year, I think its time to put these to bed. Passed on from generation to generation, partner to partner, disco to boot scoot dance floor, these little bits of misinformation have caused more harm than good. Have you heard the one about...

## **"No Pain, No Gain!"**

Sure, you need to exercise hard to improve your limits of fitness & endurance, it's not true that the best exercises are the ones that leave you feeling sick, terrible and beat up the next day.

Depending on your fitness goals (with the exception of muscle growth goals) exercise should be enjoyable with very little down time the following days after your exercise activity. Yep if you're just starting exercise, you will be sore for around the first two weeks only. For you Muscle Mary's you are the exception, as you will be expected to be sore after training if you have worked out correctly.

## **"Gotta work my ab's!"**

Then there is the ab story "I want to tone up my stomach so I need to do ab work". Yep, hear this one a lot. Most people I have trained tell me that they must work their ab's so they can have a six pack. Probably one of the most popular myth is about ab crunches melting off stomach fat. You can do a thousand sit-ups (every hour if you wish) but your body will not allow you to spot reduce body fat. You've got to burn the fat from your body as a whole.

## **"Don't use weights as they're just for Muscle Mary's & not for losing weight"**

Initially when you start exercising, you can actually appear to put on weight (according to traditional scales). In fact, if you have not been exercising for a while and start with resistance training, you will find you will gain weight. You shouldn't stress as this is not going to be an increase of body fat but usually of muscle. Know that muscle is heavier than body fat.

The scales will start to drop once you start to burn stored body fat so hang in there, but know that muscle is your number one ally for burning stored body fat and against fat gains. A kilo of muscle burns 20-30 calories each day, while you're just living and breathing. Regular strength training helps you increase your muscle mass as well as preserve existing muscle mass, turning you into a more efficient fat burning machine. It's far easier to maintain a healthy weight if your carrying a little more muscle.

I shall leave you with one more "The faster you perform an exercise, the better for weight loss, even at the expense of form". So not true and dangerous. This approach is what generally causes injury and is not the way you go about burning stored body fat. Never sacrifice form for speed. In fact when technique and form go out the window and your wanting to be a Muscle Mary, you might as well stay home, as muscle growth is all about technique. Well these are just the tip of the iceberg of half baked stories and untrue suggestions that are to say the least, amusing.

*I hope you enjoyed reading about these and if you would like to know more or ask any specific questions, feel free to go to [www.metrobodyfitness.com.au](http://www.metrobodyfitness.com.au) and ask away.*

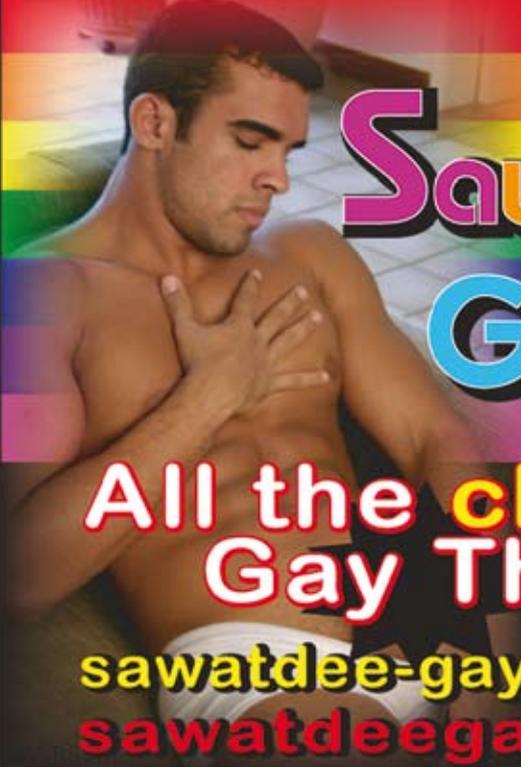
# q competition: MR GAY EUROPE

**From the 26th to 31st July the Mr. Gay Europe 2013 will take place in Prague. It is estimated that 18 contestants from throughout Europe will travel to Prague to take part in this unique competition. Guys from Sweden, Spain, Ireland, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, Northern Ireland and Finland have already bought the airline tickets!**

**MR GAY  
EUROPE**

The organizers are working hard to make these five days the most exciting and hottest ones this summer. Not only the gorgeous guys but also an amazing finale awaits us in Prague on the 30th July with fantastic star guests and show acts. This is more than just a beauty pageant. To quote the organizers, Mr. Gay Europe: "the gentleman selected will be "more than just a pretty face and a nice body". While physical beauty will be part of the judges' considerations, it is a man's "inner beauty", his mind and personality that will make the difference in the selection." This is particularly true of the winner of MGE 2012, Miguel Ortiz, from Spain - who will be crowning his successor during the finale in the Czech capital on the 30th July.

*Follow the developments and news at: [www.mrgayeurope.com](http://www.mrgayeurope.com)*



# Sawatdee

# Gay Forum

## All the chat about Gay Thailand

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# q grooming: with MICHAEL KLIM



Body Scrub from Milk by Michael Klim. It's lightly scented and moisturises your face and body, all at the same time.

## The shower shave

Shaving in the shower will save you time and the mess of cleaning up - it's also really beneficial for your skin. Hot water relaxes your facial muscles and prepares the area to be shaven. It provides continuous hydration and opens your pores to soften skin and hair. Shaving whilst in the shower will also reduce your cleanup time with any mess going straight down the sink.

## Take care of your insides

While regular use of quality products is important for your skin, you can save yourself some effort by preventing skin problems before they occur. Making sure you eat a balanced diet will benefit the appearance of your skin and leave you with little need for specialised 'lotions and potions'. Michael recommends berries, avocado and snacking on pumpkin seeds, as well as making sure you drink plenty of water.

*These grooming tips come courtesy of Michael Klim at Milk & Co. Visit [www.milkandco.com.au](http://www.milkandco.com.au) for more information.*

**Simplifying your grooming routine**  
Many of us have good intentions when it comes to grooming and skin care, but just can't find the time to do things properly. What people don't know is that there's no need to get fussy with skin care, all you need is a simplified routine that works for you.

With his own range of no-fuss skin care for men Milk, Michel Klim wants guys to know it's easy to look good and take care of your skin without a lot of effort. In this month's issue of Q Magazine, Michael shares his tips for simplifying your grooming routine.

## Use good quality products

Quality is key when it comes to skin care. Find a quality product that works for your skin and stick with it. Nowadays, you can find well-formulated, quality skincare at your local supermarket that won't cost your entire pay packet - just take some time to consider your options and read the ingredients. You can even let other people do the research and comparison for you by reading reviews or talking to friends. This will help to quickly sort your options and identify high-quality products that work.

## Multi-task

Using products that do two roles at once are a great way to save time, effort and money. Multi-tasking products are hassle-free and are a lot easier to take with you while travelling. Try a product like the Face + with rosemary and peppermint helping to gently exfoliate, cleanse and



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# q win: WELCOME TO 2013

## STONEMEN

Stonemen is a creative lifestyle product for men and women who appreciate fine underwear. Launched in 2007, they are currently the only underwear label in the world that digitally print 360 degree images on their undergarments, ensuring the every image is perfectly in place and to size. The small team art direct all images themselves by either shooting the image or commissioning an artist to fulfil the brief. All of the unique prints are inspired by natural landscapes, with images offering a sense of freedom with a retro twist. Best sellers include the Horses, Ducks and Red Sunset collections.

Stonemen started as a hobby for Fashion Photographer Marc Debnam. There were plenty of brands already doing simple imagery (hot dogs, robots etc.) but no one was creating beautiful underwear with great images. He set out to do something different, but also technically very hard to make due to the registration of the image as it moves through the panels.

*"It's been a long road of trial and error and the cost of a 1 bedder in Bondi, but we now have an incredibly beautiful, comfortable pair of undies".*

For more information and to see the full range go to [www.stonemen.com](http://www.stonemen.com)

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## MILK

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Small enough for your carry on, the Milk & Co Take A Trip Travel Pack includes 40ml each of Shampoo, Conditioner, Body Wash and Body Lotion. With spirulina and nori (algae) extracts, these little beauties will smooth and enrich the skin and leave you smelling fresh with a light rosemary and mint aroma.

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Based on the men's skincare range by champion swimmer Michael Klim, the Take A Trip Travel Pack mimics a fresh and "feel good" lifestyle. It's made using natural and marine based ingredients and is the no fuss way to travel.

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\* All prizes are open to everyone, except those which specifically state you must be over 18 to enter. Entries close on the final day of each calendar month with the prize draw taking place at 5pm the following day at Apt. 7, 16 Westbury Grove, St. Kilda East 3183. Names and addresses of people winning prizes valued at or over \$250 ONLY will be published in the following issue of QMagazine. All monthly winners are notified by email.

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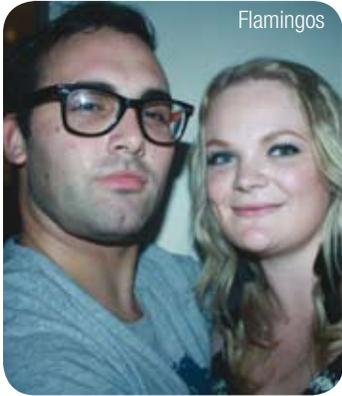
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PROUDLY PRESENTS

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# q travel: with BARRIE MAHONEY

'Tweeters from the Atlantic'

*Barrie Mahoney was a teacher, head teacher and school inspector in the UK, as well as a reporter in Spain, before moving to the Canary Islands as a newspaper editor. He is still enjoying life in the sun as a writer and author.*



## Trying to 'Live the Dream'

**I often receive emails from readers, and although I cannot always answer them I do what I can to help if possible. One email in particular, that I received a few days ago, has stayed in my mind. I did reply, but I fear that my reply may have been unduly negative and, I guess, unwelcome.**

The email was from a young man called Paul, who was in his early twenties, living in the North of England with his partner's parents. He was out of work and clearly disillusioned with living conditions in his home town, as well as the weather. Well, most of us will understand that one. His answer was to escape to the Spanish sunshine or the Canary Islands. Well, so far, Paul and I are on a similar wavelength.

It was the next part of the message that concerned me. As well as not having a job or qualifications in the UK, he also had a partner who was seven months pregnant. He felt that the change would "do her good" as the weather was getting her down, and wondered if I knew whether he would be able to get a job during the "slow season" in the Canary Islands. I could confidently reply that there really is no "slow season" here; we get all sorts of visitors throughout the year, and you can almost determine which month it is from the visitors. For instance, the Scandies appear in October and stay until April, the Wrinklies appear in June and stay until Christmas, and the Gays are here for Carnival and Gay Pride during February, March and May, and rapidly disappear as soon as the school holidays begin. From July until September, family visitors appear from all parts of Europe, with Spanish families, mostly from Madrid, overtaking the number of other European visitors during the peak summer months.

As well as not having a job, or indeed a particular qualification or skills, the situation with Paul's partner concerned me. Clearly there would be no access to free health cover as pregnancy, unless it is linked to emergency complications, would not qualify as an emergency, which would provide free health care. Paul would not qualify for unemployment or social security, and I had a vision of this little family camping out on a beach somewhere, relying on charitable handouts. Maybe this is OK if you are young, free and single, but not with a family. Paul told me that he had never visited the islands, but had seen a film about it, which is maybe not the best way of finding out about a new place to live. He went on to ask me about the opportunities and costs of renting a small apartment, and added that he had seven thousand pounds in the bank that would help for a while. Maybe, that is a nice sum to have for emergencies, but that amount would not last long without a job, new baby, expenses and an apartment to rent.

Sadly, I replied that, in my view, maybe the time was not right for Paul and his partner to seek a new life in the sun. Maybe they should wait for a few years, visit the islands to see if they really like it and save more money before they took the plunge. Above all, try to secure a job before they committed themselves to a move. I suspect that my reply will fall on deaf ears, and I guess I would be the same if I really wanted to do something.

This email was by no means unique, and I am concerned that the temptation of a new life in the sun for some may just be one step too far in current economic circumstances. It is also clear that because of the recession, many opportunities that I and many other expats have enjoyed in the past are being denied to the next generation who may wish to tread the same path. Without being unduly pessimistic, the expat dream has turned sour for many expats, and I hope that, in time, more opportunities will once again present themselves to a new generation of expats looking to 'Live the Dream'.

*If you enjoyed this article, take a look at Barrie's websites: [www.barriemahoney.com](http://www.barriemahoney.com) and [www.thecanaryislander.com](http://www.thecanaryislander.com) or read his latest book, 'Message in a Bottle' (ISBN: 978 1480 031005)*



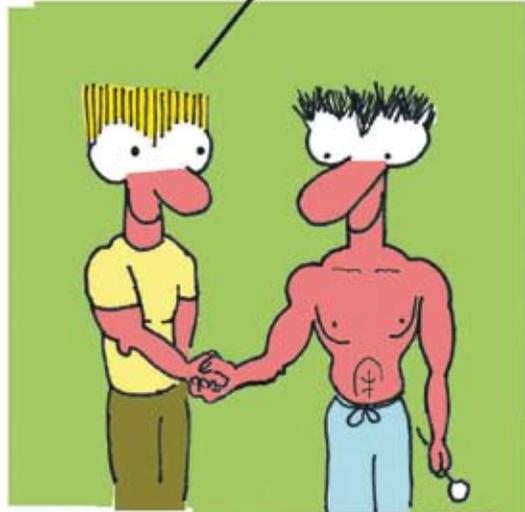
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