

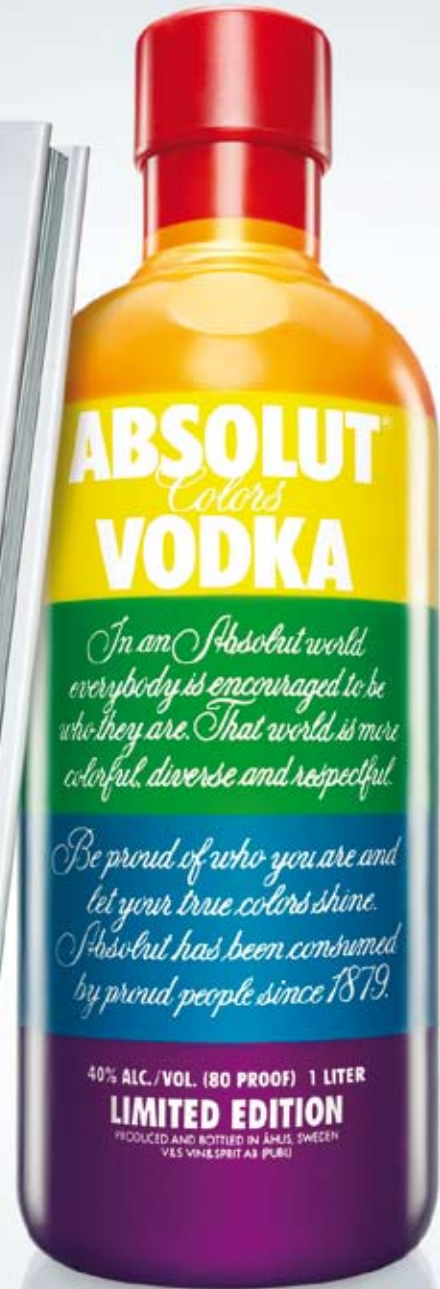


MIDSUMMA 2009

Q MAGAZINE



ABSOLUT COLORS
COCKTAIL COLLECTION



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q comment: **PARK POLO**

Early December last year I was whisked off with the SEBEL Hotel as their VIP guest at the Albert Park : Polo in the City !

Joining me in the Sebel Marquee for a lovely day of fashion, food and wine was Belvedere (pictured below with yours truly), Naomi Robson, Jen Hansen, Hamish McLachlan, Elise Mooney, Trisha Broadbridge, Steve Quartermain, Ann Maree Cooksley, Andi Lew, Kellie Johns, Sophie Christian, Blair McDonough, Jason Grech, Rodger Grinstead and Lyn Talbot.

This glamorous day enabled us to witness some of Australia's finest professional polo talent and featured captain of the Australian Polo team, Glen Gilmore, alongside star players; Ruki Baillieu and Robert Archibald.

After a big day of polo and mingling, we were all invited back to the SEBEL hotel where the party continued.

Welcome to another year of Q Magazine. I hope you continue to enjoy reading it as much as I enjoy putting it all together for you. Please also don't forget to join the rest of your community in St. Kilda on the 1st of February for the 14th Annual Pride March Victoria.



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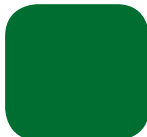
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Brett Hayhoe t/a Q Magazine
ABN 21 631 209 230



q feature: **ABSOLUT-LY FABULOUS**

ABSOLUT DONATES 100,000 SWEDISH KRONOR TO INTERPRIDE AT THE INTERPRIDE '08 CONFERENCE

ABSOLUT continues its support of diversity and individual rights.

ABSOLUT[®] *Colors* **VODKA**

ABSOLUT VODKA created ABSOLUT COLORS as a celebration of the rainbow flag's 30th anniversary. The campaign has turned out to be an international success. As originally planned, ABSOLUT is now donating 100,000 Swedish kronor to InterPride, The International Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Pride Coordinators, in order to support the organisation's worldwide networking, education and mutual support of member GLBT Pride Organisations.

The 100,000 Swedish kronor check is handed over at the InterPride '08 conference, taking place in Vancouver 23-26 October 2008.

ABSOLUT COLORS was introduced in May, with the launch of a limited edition package inspired by the rainbow flag where the text on the bottle carries a message on embracing diversity. Apart from the special edition bottle, the ABSOLUT COLORS initiative also includes a limited edition cocktail book – the ABSOLUT COLORS Cocktail Collection. The book is a stylish guide to colourful drinks, based on the six colours of the rainbow flag.

"We have been embracing diversity for almost thirty years, and this donation marks our continued support of the rights of the individual", says Kristina Hagbard, PR Manager at The Absolut Company. "ABSOLUT COLORS has been a natural way for us to continue to inspire people to let their true colours shine and be proud of who they are."

In addition to the 100,000 SEK donation, funds raised from local ABSOLUT COLORS initiatives as well as money raised at the InterPride '08 Conference in Vancouver, are also donated in support of GLBT communities and InterPride's Scholarship Fund.

ABSOLUT VODKA is widely recognised as one of the first consumer brands to embrace the lesbian and gay rights movements, with supportive relations to the GLBT community dating back to the early eighties. Over the last 25 years, ABSOLUT has invested more than \$20 million into the GLBT community, with some of those marketing dollars supporting GLBT organisations and events such as the GLAAD Media Awards, the 25th anniversary of the rainbow flag and the Gay Games. ABSOLUT also has supported various gay and lesbian community centres, film festivals and pride parades.

More information about ABSOLUT COLORS at absolut.com/colors.

ABSOLUT COLORS is now available in Australia at all good retailers, wholesalers, and venues. A portion of all sales will go to local Australian HIV/AIDS charity - the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation in Sydney. The Bobby Goldsmith Foundation financially supports people living with HIV/AIDS in poverty.

Q Magazine - supporting quality initiatives in and for our community.



q festivals: ADELAIDE FILM FEST

The 2009 Bigpond Adelaide Film Festival

The Bigpond Adelaide Film Festival will spill out of cinemas and into art galleries and public places as director Katrina Sedgwick presents her most ambitious festival to date from February 19 to March 1.

The Adelaide Film Festival (AFF) is one of the youngest and most innovative Film Festivals in the world and was the only Australia Film Festival named in Variety's '07 list of the Top 50 Film Festivals. The 2009 event will present more than a hundred films from 45 different countries, including a number of world premieres.

The Festival not only showcases the best of international screen culture but also invests in new and innovative Australian works through its investment arm, the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund (Look Both Ways, Ten Canoes). The 2009 festival will world premiere an amazing 12 new Australian films from established and emerging filmmakers. Australian talent onscreen will include Barry Otto, Miranda Otto, the voice of Nick Cave, Matt Day, Sacha Horler, Hugo Weaving, Aden Young and a host of brilliant newcomers. For the second time, the festival will present the Natuzzi International Award for Best Feature offering a cash prize of \$25,000 and judged by an International panel of film industry players. The AFF is distinctive amongst international Film Festivals, in that it includes a comprehensive gallery based moving image program. In 2009 the Festival will take a sweeping look at artists working with film from the 1920s including Salvador Dali, Bunuel, Duchamp, Man Ray and Leger to contemporary artists including Lynette Wallworth (Australia) whose new work, Duality of Light (commissioned by the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund) will be exhibited along with the first Australian survey of her work, at the Samstag Museum of Art.

Stepping out of the cinema, The Playground (21 February to 15 March), is a series of large scale multiplayer games — or street gaming — presented over four weekends with the Adelaide Fringe making Adelaide one of the first cities in the world to develop a festival featuring these pervasive games. Events will include from New York - Social Bomb's COMPETITIVE PICNICKING in the park and, from the UK, Blast Theory's RIDER SPOKE which combines cycling with game play and state of the art technology. The Dome Project is an exciting series of Screenings & a seminar co-presented by the Australian Network for Art & Technology [ANAT] and the Royal Institution Over 4 nights [February 24 – 27], 45 lucky patrons will board a bus to the Mawson Lakes Planetarium to see a unique program of works created especially for dome environments and introduced by the founder of the annual Domefest from New Mexico.

The Adelaide Film Festival is a must see for all Australian film lovers. What other film festival offers you opportunities to indulge your love of the moving image, while visiting art galleries, bike riding and dome-gazing?



q news: COMMUNITY NEWS PLUS

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard is now actively promoting its services to Tasmania's queer communities.

Switchboard has been offering a telephone counselling, information and referral service for almost twenty years to the Victorian GLBTI community. With a new office location and new branding, Switchboard has redoubled its efforts to reach even more regional folk and is now actively promoting its services in Tasmania. Using the freecall number, Tasmanians and Victorian callers living outside of Melbourne are able to speak with a trained volunteer counsellor - realising that if they provide a freecall number to the entire 03 area code, they should promote service to Tasmania and not just Victoria. Part of the effort in ensuring Switchboard can provide this much needed service to Tasmanian callers involves working in partnership with local groups to both promote the service and collect information on Tasmanian organisations, services and businesses. This enables the counsellors to offer appropriate information and referrals as well as peer-based counselling. If you'd like further information, you can contact Switchboard: administration: 03 9663 2474 OR admin@switchboard.org.au OR switchboard.org.au Tasmanian and regional Victoria: 1800 184 527 Melbourne metropolitan: 03 9663 2939 Operating hours: Monday to Thursday 6- 10pm (Wednesday 2- 10pm) Friday, Saturday, Sunday 6- 9pm



Union House Theatre farewells Susie Dee as Tom Gutteridge returns to Melbourne to take up the role of Artistic Director.

After five years, Susie Dee finishes her post as Artistic Director of Union House Theatre. During her appointment at UHT, Susie was instrumental in supporting and presenting new and innovative student theatre. Her directorial credits in the role ranged from the American musical I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change, the debut of student written work Rage Boy and the dynamic Attempts on Her Life , and included a 2007 Green Room Award for her highly acclaimed direction of Jack Hibberd's White With Wire Wheels.

It is with great pleasure that Union House Theatre welcomes new Artistic Director Tom Gutteridge. A former Melbourne University and VCA graduate himself, Tom has more than twenty years experience in the performing arts as a director, actor, dramaturg, composer, deviser and teacher. Tom returns to Melbourne from four years as Artistic Director of Black Swan Theatre Company, Perth, where he directed more than 10 plays including the World Premieres of Jandamarra at the 2008 Perth Festival and The Carnivores, a new version of Uncle Vanya by Reg Cribb and an award winning production of The Crucible. His other directing work includes the World Premieres of Birthrights (MTC) and Charitable Intent (La Mama/MIAF) both by David Williamson, The Sound Garden (Oz Opera, Opera Queensland and West Australian Opera), A Midsummer Night's Dream (WAAPA) and Company (VCA School of Drama). Tom was Artistic Associate at Queensland Theatre Company from 1996 - 2001 where he directed for both the mainstage and Education Program. Highlights included The Forest (starring Bille Brown and Geraldine Turner) and Vertigo & the Virginia (World Premiere). On his artistic vision for Union House Theatre in 2009, Tom says, 'I'm excited about the role I'm taking on. Melbourne University student theatre is a force to be reckoned with and I am looking forward both to leading and to being led by this generation of culture makers. Theatre is about making connections, working through collaboration and being open to the new and unexpected so I'm keen to welcome students from all backgrounds to Union House Theatre. My belief is that the process of making good theatre is always rigorous and challenging, but also totally fun. And students are better than anyone at doing those things at the same time.' For the latest news go to www.union.unimelb.edu.au



Don't Miss This One....A Night we have been waiting for...AND a Night to remember.... The Glamour event Of The Year

The Matrix Guild Of Victoria Inc. Presents "THE RETURN OF THE SATIN & SILK BALL" - Featuring Mae Parker as Bette Midler & Tina Turner. Saturday 21 February 2009, 7.00pm - 12.30am - St Kilda Town Hall 99a Carsile Street St Kilda - \$40 / \$50 Call Lou 0419 539 324 For further information, email: matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au



Q money: with EVAN DAVIS

G'day and Welcome to Q Money.

In corporate offices as with many residential apartments you get to find out a great deal about you neighbors. This is helped in no small part by thin partitioning walls. I could tell by the shouting, my next door neighbor was negotiating the purchase of his first home. I say negotiating but really it was five minutes of energetic and highly emotive debate followed by some name calling. The loud thud of the phone hitting the opposite side of my wall signaled the end of a rather animated chat.

Later I saw my neighbor in the hall and in way of explanation for the outburst he indicated that he had become way too emotionally involved and that things had finished badly. I know why he had been so charged. Buying your first home is emotional, also this is historically the best time of the year to buy property. Interest rates are at an all time low and the first home owners grant has increased to a level that many people are able to buy their first home with only having to tip in a small amount of their own cash or in some cases none at all.

In Victoria first home buyers will be eligible for a higher overall grant if they purchase from the 14th October 2008 to the 30th of June 2009. For properties under \$500,000 the entire cash contribution from the government will be \$17,000 for an established home and \$26,000 if you build your own property. There are additional bonuses if you buy and or build in regional Victoria.

As an example; if you bought for \$250,000, the grant would cover your deposit and the majority of your purchase costs. Let's assume you were putting down a 5% deposit and paying all the associated costs. Your deposit would be \$12,500, the stamp duty would be \$8,870, the transfer fee \$731 and say \$2,000 for other miscellaneous fees and charges (like conveyancing, bank fees, etc). This would mean you'd only need \$24,101 less the grant (\$17,000) which is \$7,101. The rest of the funds naturally you'd borrow as a home loan including any lenders mortgage insurance.

This is of course only a guide. Your figures will vary according to you individual circumstances so feel free to email me and I can run scenarios for you. I can also give you an indication of your borrowing power. The grant does have eligibility requirements and conditions. Basically, the property must be the

first property that you have bought and occupied and you need to live in it for at least six months starting within the first twelve months of ownership. To check out all the eligibility requirements go to the State Revenue Office of Victoria website: <http://www.sro.vic.gov.au>

My neighbor was clearly still embarrassed. I told him the first property is always the hardest. Foolishly I mentioned that I was about to start my own negotiations on an investment property and I was a little nervous.

He offered to help me with the negotiations. I refused.



If you have a comment or question for Evan, please email money@qmagazine.com.au



Where's your next
destination?

www.gaydestination.net.au

News. Events. Lifestyle. Reviews.

q movies: A QUEER YEAR'S START



If you haven't seen *Another Gay Movie*, you should - but it's not essential to follow the story in *Another Gay Sequel*. Critically acclaimed as one of the best gay spoof films ever made, it follows the lives of the four boys during a Spring break to Florida - where the resort just happens to be holding a "bonk-fest" competition called Gays Gone Wild.

It is R rated for a very good reason. This film has willy and gay sex in abundance.

For a film jammed packed with product placement (extremely cleverly done I might add), sex sex and more sex (including a scene between one of the boys and his father - no don't get the wrong idea - it's actually extremely funny), and more mince than a shopping centre butcher shop it somehow manages to also have a message. Through the ample examples of beefcake, twink, leather queen, bear, daddy, drag queen, and virgin comes a message that some people in our community don't feel wanted as they don't fit into any of the stereo-typical sub-cultures or titles...and they have the same sexual urges as everyone else.

must see for anyone who collects films in this genre or remotely identifies with any of the alphabet we call the GLBTI community. 4 stars from me.

Based in Toronto, Canada *Breakfast with Scot* is the story of a young man who is (as the cover says) a little different. Eric joins the unlikely family unit of Sam (a lawyer) and Eric (a television sports commentator) after his mother suddenly passes away and they can't find his guardian. What pursues is a comical trail of self-discovery - no not the boy's, the men's.

The issue is the boy is as camp as a row of pink tents. The men in the family are what is commonly known as straight acting. Although the initial reason is slightly disturbing, Eric begins a transformation of Scot from "sissy boy" to "jock". The journey however is as unpredictable and the end result.

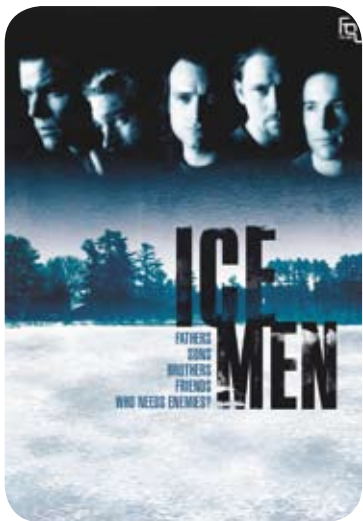


A superb film - well shot, exceptionally acted - 5 perfect stars from me.

Five handsome men in a secluded snow covered cabin for a weekend. Sounds like a recipe for sharing girl stories, sucking back some booze and a little sexual tension and adventure. These guys are the *Ice Men*. It's amazing how friends and relations can be such great companions - forgiving almost anything the other has done or does - yet be so different.

Although a tad slow at times, the story is a fine example of a modern male relationships footprint. It even includes the whole "I love you John" scenario when too much alcohol is involved. Infidelity, homosexuality (although referred to as a pissed root by one of the players), an anally retentive brother, a loser brother and the associated dysfunctional family issues, an insightful gay guy (how shocking), truths, memories (repressed and not so repressed), revelations and much more make up the various parts of the rich story tapestry.

Bonding on a grand and interesting scale - I give it 3 and a half stars.



SEAN PENN MILK

EMILE HIRSCH JOSH BROLIN DIEGO LUNA AND JAMES FRANCO



FOCUS FEATURES PRESENTS A FILM BY GUS VAN SANT "MILK" A GUS VAN SANT FILM SEAN PENN "MILK" EMILE HIRSCH JOSH BROLIN DIEGO LUNA AND JAMES FRANCO PRODUCED BY FRANKIE MAISLER, C.S.A.
CASTING BY DANIEL ELMAN COSTUME DESIGNER JANNY GLUCKER EDITOR ELLIOT GRAHAM PRODUCTION DESIGNER BILL GROOM MUSIC BY HARRIS SANDLES, A.S.C.
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MICHAEL LONDON DUSTIN LANCE BLACK BRUNA PAPANDREA BARBARA A. HALL WILLIAM HOBBS
PRODUCED BY DAN JINKS AND BRUCE COHEN WRITTEN BY DUSTIN LANCE BLACK DIRECTED BY GUS VAN SANT
FOCUS FEATURES

WRITTEN BY DUSTIN LANCE BLACK AND DIRECTED BY GUS VAN SANT

M

Mature themes,
scarce language and
sexual references

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q plays: CHAPEL OFF CHAPEL STYLE

In Camera (Huis Clos) By Jean-Paul Sartre

In an entertainment era ruled by reality TV where the camera has become the ultimate voyeur, it is the time to recall Jean-Paul Sartre's famous psychological thriller that proclaimed "Hell is other people". 'In Camera' thus plays in far crueller and more disturbing ways with the origins of obsessive observation, and the terrors of discovering who is watching whom, and for whose perverse entertainment.

Sartre's 1944 stage play examines the fate of three strangers locked in a small room as they try to puzzle out why they've been brought together, culminating in the shocking realisation that each is to be torturer of the others as they pay the ultimate price for their sins.

Sartre, as an influential philosopher and existentialist, possessed an acute interest in the impulses and psychology of sexuality and was writing gay characters into his works at a time when society at large still barely acknowledged the existence of homosexuality.

'In Camera' famously gave rise to lesbian character Inez, who cannot contain her desire for the lovely Estelle and is arguably the show's most sadistic inclusion; while central male character Garcin is clearly pre-occupied with his homosexual side, given his penchant for imagining half-naked men and his growing inability to seduce women. That he is also painted as a misogynist, and Inez as a manipulating liar could explain why Sartre has in the past been mistaken as homophobic. In appearing as part of the Midsumma Gay and Lesbian Arts Festival however, this production re-considers the sexual ambiguities and unease that drive the action and lead to the frightening conclusion.

Uncomfortable sexual tension and nightmare visions of such intensity are rarely seen on the screen, let alone in an intimate theatre before our very eyes. And who better to unleash the demons than the magnificently dark and twisted mind of Sartre.

January 15 – 24 Chapel off Chapel, Prahran, Melbourne - Directed By Kim Edwards - Featuring Tania Herbert, Ross Larkin, Melanie Rowe

Presented By Play Right Theatre Productions in conjunction with The Midsumma Festival 2009. Bookings via www.chapelloffchapel.com.au or on 03 8290 7000



q plays: **GASWORKS ARTS PARK**

MIDSUMMA AT GASWORKS ARTS PARK PRESENTS:

Little Black Bastard by Noel Tovey - A story of survival and a thrilling account of a life saved by art presented in association with Yalukit Wilam Ngargee.

The show leads the audience through Noel's remarkable life journey as a homeless Aboriginal child in the 1940s. As an Aboriginal street kid growing up in the slums of Carlton in the 1940s and '50s, Tovey experienced homelessness, neglect and sexual abuse. With an alcoholic mother and a father in prison, Tovey admits he was "rather wild". By the age of 12 he was working as a rent-boy.

Tovey's one-man play *Little Black Bastard*, tells the story of his troubled early life. His stint in Pentridge came when he was 17, after the police raided a drag party in Albert Park. Arriving in London in 1960 with less than £1 in his pocket, Tovey landed TV work as a dancer and singer. By 1961 he had become a principal dancer with Sadler's Wells and from there his career steadily gathered momentum. As an actor he shared the stage with Vera Lynn, Judy Garland and Steven Berkoff, while later he taught movement at RADA. Selected to do the original choreography for the West End musical *The Boyfriend*, Tovey's research into the 1920s opened up yet more doors. He became a consultant on a range of films, from *The Great Gatsby* to *Murder on the Orient Express*, and used his specialist knowledge to open a decorative art gallery in Fulham.



Gasworks will host a community evening on the preview night on Wednesday 4 February, where tickets are free and disadvantaged young people, local indigenous groups and the deaf community will be invited. The evening will be Auslan sign-interpreted.

Little Black Bastard - Gasworks Arts Park - Corner Graham and Pickles Streets, Albert Park - Thursday 5 to Saturday 7 February, Thursday to Friday at 8pm, Saturday at 4pm - \$26/\$20

HAPPY CHAPS - Devanesen Productions - A humorous, haughty and heartfelt delve into the musical theatre closet.

A cabaret homage to musical theatre's 'Happy Chaps'. No, not bottomless leather pants but the characters, composers and themes of shows that critique and commend the gay lifestyle of men and women. Forget descending chandeliers, helicopters and witches... lose the feathers, sequins and fans... Devanesen Productions is taking it off for this queer-sical revue.

This showcase strips bare the excess of blockbuster musicals and presents an intimate experience of great voices delivering great contemporary and classic repertoire. Witness the enchantment of a piano, a microphone and a singer paying tribute to our gay-tastic best from composers Sondheim and Schwartz to the iconic classics of Streisand and Celine.

A Melbourne-based company focusing on contemporary musical theatre, they place an emphasis on discovering talent and fostering emerging artists. In recent years they have presented award winning productions of musicals such as *Into the Woods*, *Rent* and the Australasian premiere of *The Wild Party*.

Join an incredibly talented Melbourne cast for this humorous, haughty and heartfelt delve into the musical theatre closet.

Happy Chaps - Gasworks Arts Park - Corner Graham and Pickles Streets, Albert Park - Thursday 29 to Saturday 31 January 2009 January 2009 at 9.30pm - \$25/\$23 - gasworks.org.au T: 96993253



q plays plus: **MIDSUMMA TIME**

Midsumma Festival is about to come of age with the new play, "Thy will be done." By Melbourne Playwright, Kevin McGreal. It explores the lives of two men, a young Catholic Priest and a local musician (played by Brad Schmidt), who meet when Father Bell is posted to the coastal town Apollo Bay and they unexpectedly forge a lifelong connection. "It's a play about secrets, sins, triumphs and finding love in unexpected places," McGreal says, "And I think audiences are mature enough to expect stories based on not so mainstream ideas."

Set in contemporary Apollo Bay, the play looks at how isolation poses a growing risk to gay men. "The isolation is not only being gay in a rural area but in terms to religious beliefs," Says McGreal, "Gay men like anyone else can be very spiritual but can feel more alone with religion than ever and when we put that with a Church so rich and so beautiful in history and influence we sometimes see people closing off, and discriminating, punishing and dominating other individuals."

Thy will be done is also about relationships. It is about the relationship between a priest and his new parish, between the Priest and another man, and between the Priest and God. "This has been the most challenging script to write. Religion is the foundation of humanity and I wanted to look at that in terms of being a gay man who is also a Priest," states McGreal, "But it is an evolving show for me because I wanted to make something beautiful and pure not dark and overly deconstructed. It is a love story that I just let be."

Kevin McGreal has been writing, performing and directing his own plays most of his life. Since his first script at seven years old- "I'd always wanted to since I heard Orson Welles' radio play, "War of the worlds and how powerful it was," says McGreal, " So when I get an idea of what I want from a story. I work on that script until I can get close to that and to find people to work with." The theatre- making supremo has lived and breathed theatre for the past 10 years. His previous works include; 25 Frames, Cruising, Shakespeare's Boys, Stewth, and Jerker. Brad Schmidt has worked with McGreal previously on 25 Frames. He is a New Zealand actor who worked on Shortland Street.

Theatreworks, 14 Acland St, St Kilda - January 30 – February 7 @ 7:30pm. \$20/15 Bookings: (03)95343388 or buy online www.theatreworks.org.au or www.midsumma.org.au

Camping out

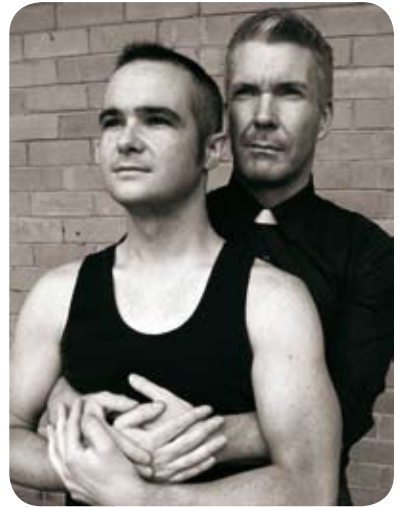
An intimate cabaret revue of the swinging '60's

Drag personality, Kaye Sera introduces you to the camp social scene of Melbourne in the 1960's. Val's Coffee Lounge, the Windsor and the infamous Australia Hotel Marble Bar but three of the many rendezvous sites for the discerning and not so discerning homosexual alike.

Meet Freddy Asmussen the tyrannical queen behind the Moomba Parade and the infamous Myers windows, Jan Hilliar the woman whose parties took on the liquor licensing commission and bully police tactics of the day and won and Lotte the fabulous drag queen who experienced the lot of it.

Camping Out is a snap shot of who we were before we decided to march down the street demanding our rights. This intimate cabaret revue features songs from the period (Dusty Springfield, Nancy Sinatra, Petula Clarke, Judy Garland and the late Eartha Kitt) - interviews and photographs from the people who were there.

Supported by the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives and JOY 94.9FM Camping out - City Village Rooftop - 225 Bourke Street, city Feb 5 – 8 - 7.30pm (5pm Sunday) All tickets \$15 full, \$10 conc, \$8 Group bookings (10 or more)



q theatre: AN ENTERTAINING 09 AHEAD



Cabaret cocktail of the month:

The Butterfly Club is the Festival Hub for the Midsumma Festival, which means those sexy staff shirts are back along with our infamous 'Midsumma Moonshine' cocktail!

Midsumma highlights include:

- international guest star MAX SHARAM* - <http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=z8NOqVuJaiE>

- Runaway success of last year's festival, the irrepressible YANA ALANA*

- the deliciously flamboyant KAYE SERA*

- The world-famous DR SKETCHY'S every Saturday arvo

- PHIL SCOTT (Sydney Wharf Review) in his brand new show

- "BEST OF THE FESTS" show late every Fri and Sat, hosted by Trevor Jones. See excerpts of shows from across the Midsumma and St Kilda Laughs festivals. This is a great way to preview what's on before deciding on your personal pick of the festivals.

*Max Sharam, Yana Alana and Kaye Sera are guest models in Dr Sketchy's. Max's full length season is 4-7 Feb.

Looking ahead:

Dave Graney's highly anticipated cabaret sequel appears with us from *Thursday 26 to Saturday 28 March.*

HAPPILY EVER AFTER: THE PRINCESS FIFI WAY

A Guide to Getting Your Very Own Happy Ending, from the gospel according to Disney. Depressing and dowdy? Never! Predictable and passé? No way! Sassy

and satirical? Of course - she is a Princess after all! Performed and created by Fiona Elmore Accompanied by James Simpson Directed by Kim Edwards

Thursday 29 January to Sunday 1 February (four performances) - 7.00pm Thurs to Sat; 6.00pm Sunday - \$23 full / \$18 concession and for groups of 8 or more

Tom Dickens in WHERE WAS I

Sometimes when we're young we run without any idea of what we're running from, or what we're running to. Sometimes we run to the arms of a lover, sometimes into the bed of a stranger, and sometimes into another life completely. With the "velvety yet bittersweet voice of an angel, only recently fallen from grace" (Amanda Palmer, The Dresden Dolls) Tom Dickens starts running, tripping and tumbling in a crazed search for SOMETHING. Through Cambodia, the United States and Europe he runs into debt, he runs into trouble and somewhere in the middle he runs into himself.

Thursday 29 January to Sunday 1 February (four performances) - Thurs-Sat at 9.00pm; Sunday at 8.00pm - \$22 full / \$17 concession and for groups of 8 or more

TO SIR WITH LOVE?

What's a little cabaret without some corporal punishment! Can you find your inner fetish and the man of your dreams? Go and find out in this exploration of all those deep dark dirty little secrets that are just busting to be set free in this comedy collision of musical medleys that is putting the CP back into Cabaret! Dean Arcuri returns as a cast of characters exploring their inner desires and taking cabaret to a whole new level, straight to the dungeon!

Thursday 5 to Sunday 8 February (four performances) - 7.00pm Thurs to Sat; 6.00pm Sunday - \$23 full / \$18 concession and for groups of 8 or more

MAX SHARAM presents SONGS & STORIES FROM HER SUITCASE

If you shut your eyes, you may see at times suspended in the darkness, a shapeless pool of lovely pale colours, then if you squeeze your eyes tighter, the pool begins to take shape, and the colours sparkle and you are suddenly covered in goose bumps, all in just one heavenly moment ... and then you will hear the mermaid sing ... Recently returned from living in Manhattan and Berlin, ARIA-award winner Max brings story and song, wit and wickedness to a very fitting venue.

Wednesday 4 to Saturday 7 February (four performances) - All shows at 9.00pm - \$22 full / \$17 concession and for groups of 8 or more

CROONERS CREED

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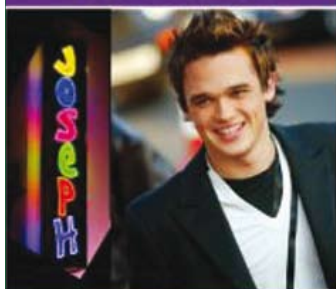
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THE SEBEL ALBERT PARK MELBOURNE HOTEL - Rediscover a new venue on the Park.

The new Windows restaurant @ The Sebel Albert Park Melbourne is a must for anyone visiting the Albert Park area. Located on the ground floor of the recently refurbished hotel this new light filled space allows guests to indulge in the magnificently prepared meals created by Chef Andy North - including a new a` la carte menu and modern buffet, plus a sensational seafood buffet on the weekend. The new menu caters for all tastes, leaving no excuse to walk past this contemporary new venue. A short walk away from Fitzroy Street and Pride March Victoria, plus Commercial Road and Chapel Street nightlife is just minutes away, ideal for a leisurely stroll around Albert Park Lake on your way to a meal at Windows restaurant.

An extensive selection of beverages await you at the new Atrium Bar & Lounge providing a perfect atmosphere for pre or after dinner drinks. Enjoy a quite drink with friends following Pride March or unwind and relax whilst sampling a night cap setting the ambience for the tranquil summer nights.

The new Sebel Albert Park Melbourne hotel offers 242 spacious refurbished accommodation rooms to complete the occasion, plus ample parking on site, a fully equipped gymnasium and indoor pool and sauna - why wait, call in during MIDSUMMA Festival and rediscover this fabulous hotel and the great new food and beverage options.

For all guests attending MIDSUMMA and Pride March, simply mention this editorial to receive a complimentary glass of wine when dining in Windows Restaurant.



THE SEBEL ALBERT PARK



MELBOURNE



q lifestyle: with PETE DILLON

The Mamas and the Papas sang about the time of the season...and the season is upon us for celebrating who we are and what makes us a vibrant and fabulous queer community.

With celebration time nipping at our heels, we always should be aware that we do practice moderation...oh what the hell - don't! Enjoy the season and see if you can find your way around something listed below to drink and somewhere great to enjoy the company of friends, new lovers or to breakfast with trade.

Speaking of breakfast, a trip to the west may be in order to experience the joy of Le Chien. This thriving little cafe on the corner of Gamon Street and Charles Street in Seddon offers some great ambience, a nice perve on occasion and a chance to sit on the street with your favourite canine and be seen. You can't go past the simple menu that offers some fantastic breakfast items, especially for those of us that have banned the fry up as a new year's resolution. A nice pile of avocado, tomato, parley and sheep's feta on some sourdough goes beautifully with a lightly poached egg dribbling its way over everything like a neat little dressing with a squeeze of lemon. If you fancy something fatter, Cumberland sausages, double smoked Andrew's bacon from Yarraville and a cracking black pudding should get you over the nasty hangover. Have it with some chilli scrambled and a nice strong latte and that should fix anything. The coffee is great, the staff uber cool and friendly and it's the perfect antidote to a good night on the sauce.

Aaah sauce - I have been back into the sauv blanc for the summer of course, but some nice pinot grigio's are finding their way onto the market and making us all happy. A recent taste was the Gabbiano Pinot Grigio. It is a sunny straw-yellow colour with floral notes caressing the nose and nuances of pear and honeydew melon. Citrus flavours are evident on the palate delivering complex flavours of green apple, orange and faint lemon. The mouth feel is lively and full in structure created by the excellent harmony of fruit and acid. The wine is light-bodied, with a long finish that reveals hints of citrus and almonds. Whilst that all sounds totally wanky, the wine is at great value - you should find it for around ten bucks a throw and it is reasonable enough to take to dinner at a friends.

I am also in love with the Giesen Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand. This is a completely honest savvy with a lively tropical palate - hints of passionfruit and gooseberries are evident through both the nose and on the palate, which lengthens out nicely to reveal a well structured and ballsy white, with some nice hints of grassiness on the back palate. It is retailing at about \$18 a bottle and is really worth the effort to get through the first glass. It did go out of favour for a bit but is back with a vengeance and the perfect competition for the highly favoured Oyster Bay Savvy.

Finally, I was a recent guest at a great summer barbeque and found some interesting offerings to throw over the flames. Some kangaroo, threaded onto skewers and then marinated in a heady mix of cranberry juice, a little hoi sin and some crushed garlic was superb. Another friend arrived with some chorizo, that had been cut into lumps, marinated in some Fino sherry from Spain and threaded with baby red peppers. Serve this over some rocket with shaved Manchego cheese over the top and it is simply spectacular. Barbeque is so much fun and you can experiment with so much more than a cremated chop and boring old snags. A small whole fish in foil full of lime wedges, chilli, garlic, some grated ginger and a good lump of butter makes a perfect offering for those that are not big meat consumers.

A happy Midsumma to you all. Do be safe in all that you do through this season. Nothing deserves to be done in moderation - this is our time to shine in Melbourne and is worth the occasional day of self loathing for overindulgence.

For any questions about anything food and wine, feel free to email lifestyle@qmagazine.com.au or call Pete on 0409142365.



q grooming: YOUR Q&A SECTION

Q. My skin is looking dry and dull after all the end of year parties. How can I revive it?

A. The effects of partying can dry your skin out and expose it to more toxins and impurities than you usually encounter day to day.

While your skin is recovering, it's important not to overload it with skincare - look for natural ingredients like chamomile and cucumber to soothe skin.

Always wash skin gently before going to sleep and when you wake in the morning to cleanse it of surface impurities, and splash your face with cool (not cold) water to rinse off your cleanser.

Also, applying a natural clay face mask once or twice a week will help draw out toxins and impurities, encouraging a clearer, healthier complexion.

TRY – Terra Firma Pure Clay Facial Mask Make-Over by The Natural Source - \$15.95

AVAILABLE - The Natural Source stores or www.thenaturalsource.com



q beauty: with **GEORGE ALEXANDER**

Recently I came across an amazing range of skin care and body care products that are effective, natural and organic: derma e® Natural Bodycare

derma e began with a simple vision for healthy skin, a vision that still defines them today. In the 1960's the Stearn family realized that topical application of Vitamin E would benefit skin health: derma e was born. Today derma e offers a full line of natural, therapeutic skin and hair care formulations rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and botanicals. They believe that beautiful skin is healthy skin, and they are committed to developing and producing the highest quality formulations to nourish and care for the entire body. At derma e they believe that beautiful skin is healthy skin. They strive to develop and produce high quality natural formulas using the most advanced technology and latest research available. Their formulations incorporate powerful antioxidants, vitamins, and herbal remedies to produce therapeutic products that deliver results. They provide honest and in-depth information about their ingredients and their products to help customers make knowledgeable decisions about their skin care. They believe in healthy skin, a healthy world, and a healthier environment.

Nature's Moisture Magnet - Formulated for results derma e's exclusive Hyaluronic Acid formulas blend this remarkable moisture magnet with skin vitamins and botanicals to maximize hydration while diminishing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

Hyaluronic Acid Skincare - Hyaluronic Acid Formulas offer anti-aging defense and hydration. derma e's exclusive Hyaluronic Acid (HA) formulas blend this remarkable moisture magnet with skin vitamins and botanicals to maximize hydration and improve skin tone, while diminishing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. Only derma e's HA rehydrating moisturisers marry the hydra-power of Hyaluronic Acid with the restorative antioxidant action of Ester-C and other nutritive skin vitamins and botanicals. These nourishing ingredients help maximize health and restore skin's moisture levels, beauty and radiance. Hyaluronic Acid has an amazing ability to bind moisture to tissue to soften, smooth, tone and rehydrate skin. A single molecule of HA can hold up to 1,000 times its weight in water. Unmatched hydrating properties result in firmer, smoother and more youthful-looking skin. HA improves skin's tone, texture and appearance, for a smoother more youthful glow. Hyaluronic Acid is naturally produced by skin cells and is found in great abundance in young skin. With age, the body's production of HA decreases. In keeping with derma e's cruelty-free policy, their products are formulated with a non-animal source of Hyaluronic Acid (Actimoist Bio-2). A lightweight, long-lasting protective moisturizer especially formulated for day use. Enriched with Ester-C®, Green Tea and Vitamin E. Protects skin from free radical damage and the harmful effects of the environment. Reduces the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles by plumping skin tissue.

Hyaluronic Acid Day Crème Rehydrating Formula - 2 oz/56 g - This lightweight long-lasting protective moisturizer is especially formulated for day use and is enriched with Ester-C, Green Tea Extract and Vitamin E.

Hyaluronic Acid Night Crème Intensive Rehydrating Formula - 2 oz/56 g - This extra-rich, deeply penetrating crème, infused with Vitamins A and E, Ester-C, Allantoin and Macadamia Oil, drenches your skin in moisture. By plumping skin tissue, fine lines and wrinkles seem to disappear.

Hyaluronic Acid Rehydrating Serum

- 2 fl oz/60 ml - The unique combination of ingredients deeply hydrates and nourishes to reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. This luxurious, intensive treatment delivers moisture directly to the skin to plump it full of moisture and antioxidants. Layer underneath your favorite moisturizer for added benefit, or use alone if you prefer a very light moisturiser.



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- 1/2 oz/14 g - Deeply hydrating the sensitive skin around your eyes, this blend of skin specific nutrients and antioxidants is highly effective in reducing fine lines and wrinkles. It dramatically hydrates and nourishes for optimum skin health. Only derma e® has blended these two highly effective, deeply penetrating ingredients with other supporting skin vitamins into a rich, nourishing crème that reduces the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles around the delicate eye area.

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q community: LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

Neighbour Day turns streets into communities

Getting together with the people next door, across the street ... or on the next farm ... on Sunday 29th March 2009 is the first step towards turning your street into a community, says Neighbour Day founder Andrew Heslop.

"Since Neighbour Day began in 2003 it has been the catalyst for closer, friendlier relationships between neighbours right across the country," Andrew said.

"New friendships have formed and old acquaintances renewed, driven not just by residents but by councils and shires who have been active supporters by facilitating street parties, community festivals, displays and launches along with other local events.

"Neighbours have celebrated by holding barbeques in their front gardens, organised games of street cricket, held morning teas and even launched cake baking and gardening competitions!

"It's amazing to think how a simple idea in a Letter to the Editor seven years ago has motivated Australians to become more involved with their community. "Knowing the people who live around us creates a sense of belonging. It makes us feel safe and secure because we're reassured by the familiar faces and voices of people we trust and respect. When we know our neighbours we feel part of a community – and strong communities are essential to raising a family.

"Plus when we know our neighbours we're comfortable about asking them for help or advice. In the city that can mean borrowing a whipper snipper or helping to change the battery in a smoke alarm. But in the country it can mean the difference between life and death during a bushfire or other emergency when it's critical to warn of approaching danger.

"Knowing how and where to contact your neighbour in the bush is essential because it's their help which may be vital to defending life or property before the emergency services arrive," said Andrew.

Neighbour Day has five principal aims –

1. Strengthen communities and build better relationships with the people who live around us.
2. Create safer, healthier and more vibrant suburbs and towns.
3. Promote tolerance, respect and understanding.
4. Break down community barriers.
5. Protect the elderly, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged.

How to get involved -

Participating in Neighbour Day is easy and free. You don't make a donation, you don't wear a ribbon and you don't buy a badge. You don't even have to register or volunteer or set up a committee.

The community you want starts at your front door www.neighbourday.org

What to do

On Sunday 29th March 2009 -

1. Say G'day to your neighbours.
2. Make a special effort to introduce yourself to older residents in your street and anyone who lives alone.
3. Leave your mobile and home telephone number for their use in an emergency.
4. Agree to keep in contact.



in bed: with BEN

Why Gay Men Need Marriage

Is gay marriage needed or is it a complete waste of time? I mean really, we don't reproduce? We keep trying but nothing seems to happen (oh lordy do we try!) So, what exactly is the point of having a male/male relationship anyway and do we need a marriage certificate to make it work?

That is the very question I've asked myself many a time before and I've come to the conclusion that it is required. It is required to provide gay men and women with a structure that can support ongoing healthy relationships with one another. The gay community currently lacks any framework in which fulfilling life long partnerships can be formed.

From a young age heterosexual men and women are delivered key relationship ideals. They are that they find a partner, court one another, get married, purchase a house, have kids and grow old together looking after the grandchildren (oh and wearing those horrible tracksuit pants down to the shops, I call for a worldwide ban on the use of tracksuit pants for picking up the shopping, why won't they think of the children!) Their lives are somewhat planned out for them and they are given a suggested roadmap in which they can choose to take to build relationships and lives around.

On the other hand for gay men and women, we are placed in a position where we need to create our own roadmap. Empowering? Yes to a large degree in many aspects. However without this map generation after generation of gay men struggle to find their feet and create relational ideals to strive towards as one. Gay relationships are fragmented because there is nothing that bonds them together. It lacks that extra step of commitment on both parties that they will do whatever it takes to make it work instead of just moving to the next piece of hot meat. Currently our lives are to simply exist. There needs to be a bigger goal put in place for us and that is a goal to build lifelong, fulfilling relationship in which we thrive in a way that we have never seen before.

What do we need? We need high profile straight individuals to back this objective and to assist in getting others to see us as "normal" because that is what we are. If it can be done for climate change then it can be done for the gay movement. Let your thoughts be heard through various platforms online and in person. Jump on Facebook and join up to one of the many groups that support gay marriage, there are more out there than what you may think.

If the conversation is going to be had, we are the ones that need to start it and keep it going. The more we educate our straight counterparts on why we need and want marriage, the more we will win them over to our cause. There is no need to force anyone into submission but merely educate them by being in their presence.

So why do we need gay marriage? We need it for the future of our relationships that's why. Why do you personally believe we need gay marriage? Do you even think we do? Send me an email at ben@qmagazine.com.au I'd love to hear your thoughts.

"Ben Angel is the author of the upcoming book, "Sleeping Your Way to The Top in Business" and business columnist for Australian Anthill Business Magazine."



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SPIKERS

q whispers: with ADDAM STOBBS



It's that time of year again, when South-eastern Australia goes all Gay friendly. Midsumma, Pride March, Mardi Gras and chill out all over the next 3 months. In Melbourne the queer film festival will be here in a few months.

It's a celebration of Culture and Pride, it's a public expression of community consolidation, and it's an important time for G&L people to rejuvenate a sense of belonging.

There have been discussions around for the last few years that the need for a Gay and Lesbian centric community is redundant. That's because there is no crisis. Community's form out of crisis usually, people come together to face a common threat. The nature of the G&L community is changing that's for sure, our social culture is going mainstream (well in metropolitan centres it is).

Let us not forget the sober facts though, because they still remain. The suicide rate for young gay people is disproportionately high (Closest 'reliable' data I could find) about 300 per year. Why so many? No matter how you interrupt it, the Pope set back the progressive clock for the Catholic church once again, it's statements like his "gays are dangerous as climate change" that adds the

awful social pressure that cause Gay youths to suicide.

Although laws have changed and attitudes are changing, there is still a long way to go. I had a bottle thrown at me from a passing car in Collingwood two nights ago "you F...ing poofster" as I was leaving a venue. I saw a similar incident in Sydney last week.

With the new Changes in Federal law, comes a greater move to equality, but there is a price to pay, and the price will be borne by those least able to afford it. Homosexuals in relationships who receive centre link assistance are likely to see significant income reduction. It would have been a more significant gesture if it became a requirement for all new welfare applications, rather than a reportable retrospective. I hope we don't see centre link witch hunts, similar to the Costello years when they were trying to cut spending, it was once again the people who can least afford it who were penalised.

I am really pissed off that I am not considered a suitable person to adopt a child. I am considered most suitable to foster a child in crisis, but I can adopt. Interesting to note that in countries where adoption for homosexuals is now legal, some church adoption agencies have shut down rather than comply.

I went out on the 'scene' and was pleasantly surprised to see a lot of older Gay and Lesbian people in some venues, and also some older Asian people, they have not been a visible group in Gay culture from my experiences, all power to them!

You know am I really proud at times to be Australian. Our politicians are not perfect (Not even near) but they generally are decent and honest, and they listen to their people. 2008 was a remarkable year politically and 2009 will be the same. The gays festivals will be a good opportunity to see what our politicians think of us, look for the messages of support in festival guides, and also look at who doesn't send them.

Please come to our community festivals in 2009, in particular Pride March, it is the most significant event on the calendar for many of us. It's a chance to see where we came from, where we are now, and where we might be going. Look at who else is in Pride march, not just the Gay and lesbian community, but other areas of the wider community. Seeing the Victoria Police led by Christine Nixon was a historic moment, there will be others. See you at Pride.

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q cuisine: with CHEF NATHAN



Welcome back after the summer break, I ensure that we have all eaten way too much, and now with the heat finally here and with those cobwebs removed from the BBQ, this dish should inspire you to try a roast with a little difference.

Barbecued Marinated Lamb Leg Ingredients (serves 4)

- 5 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tablespoon paprika

- 1 large lemon, juiced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1.5kg boned lamb leg, butterflied
- olive oil cooking spray
- jacket potatoes, to serve
- Green olive mayonnaise
- 3/4 cup whole-egg mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup stuffed green olives, chopped
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 small lemon, juiced

Method

1.Combine garlic, paprika, 2 tablespoons lemon juice and oil in a large, shallow ceramic dish. Season both sides lamb with salt and pepper. Score lamb skin (this allows marinade to penetrate). Place lamb in marinade and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours. Remove from fridge 30 minutes before cooking.

2.Make green olive mayonnaise: Meanwhile, combine mayonnaise, olive, paprika and 1 tablespoon lemon juice in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Mix well. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

3.Spray a cold barbecue plate or grill with oil. Preheat on high heat. Reduce heat to medium-high. Barbecue lamb, skin side down, for 10 minutes. Turn and cook for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover lamb with barbecue hood. Barbecue for a further 15 minutes for medium or until cooked to your liking. Remove from heat. Cover loosely with foil. Set aside in a warm place for 10 minutes to rest. Slice lamb thinly across the grain.

4.Serve lamb with green olive mayonnaise and jacket potatoes.



brecik

live at pride 2009



brecik will be performing new tracks including the 1st single 'joan jett' as heard on joy94.9 from his highly anticipated debut album 'skitofrenik' released through universal music mid 2009. Join Brecik at Pride March, 1st of February, Catani Gardens from 6pm
Have you heard? brecik!

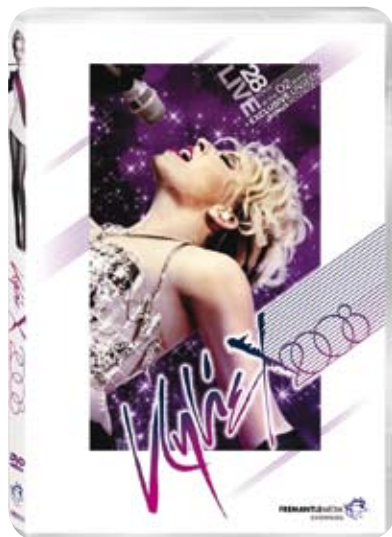
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q win: WELCOMING 2009 IN STYLE



Shock Records

Shock is proud to kick off their newly formed relationship with Fremantle Media with this fantastic mirrorboard slipcased package, celebrating the KylieX2008 tour that finished in Australia the day before this DVD hit the shelves!

Always celebrated for her incredible vision on the live stage, this show sees Kylie moving even further ahead of her contemporaries. On KylieX2008 Kylie performs with a brand new live band including, for the first time, a brass section, and 14 dancers, including 4 acrobats. For the songs, Kylie has drawn on a breadth of material spread over her career, with some surprises thrown in for good measure, namely the previously unreleased 'Ruffle My Feathers' and 'Flower'. Songs were performed on a set dominated by huge video screens integrating with graphic staging and theatrical lighting, to create a new concert experience for the audience.

Email getfree@qmagazine.com.au OR sms 0429 88 QMAG with **Kylie** in the subject line to win one of the five we have to start your new year.

Doc Johnson

NORTH HOLLYWOOD, Calif. — Bejeweled and be pleased, all at the same time, with Doc Johnson's brand new De La Curve™ vibe — a blingy, curvy, eight-function vibe that debuts just in time for the holidays.

As with all Doc Johnson novelties, De La Curve™ uses the highest-quality materials to ensure a safe, enjoyable experience. The waterproof novelty is made from non-phthalate ABS plastic and Doc's own Velvet Touch finish, providing a velvety smooth and sexy experience. The De La Curve™ vibe also features a thin, curvaceous shaft with a push-button bottom for one-finger control, and decorative crystals at the base.

De La Curve™ is available in three colors: pink, purple, and black. For more information, please visit Doc Johnson on the web at www.DocJohnson.com

Email getfree@qmagazine.com.au OR sms 0429 88 QMAG with **Doc Johnson** in the subject line to win one of the five we have.



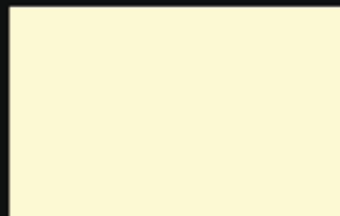
fq Films

Eric (Tom Cavanagh) and Sam (Ben Shenkman) have been in a gay relationship for four years. Eric's a former Maple Leaf hockey player turned sportscaster, Sam's a corporate lawyer. When Sam announces that they're to become temporary guardians of a young boy, Eric's comfortable world shatters. Enter Scot (Noah Bennett), a recently orphaned, swishy 11 year old sissy of a boy, and Eric's mirror opposite. Freaked out by Scott's 'joie de vivre'. Eric and Sam gently nudge Scot away from scented hand cream and all things pink, towards a more 'acceptable' pastime — hockey. But after Scot's disastrous first game, Eric begins to rethink the compromises he's made in his own life in order to be 'accepted'. BREAKFAST WITH SCOT is a contemporary comedy that tells the story of an 'alternative' family finding its feet... and its heart.

RELEASE DATE: FEB 4

Email getfree@qmagazine.com.au OR sms 0429 88 QMAG with **fq films** in the subject line to win one of the five copies we have for you this MIDSUMMA.

* 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 or SMS.



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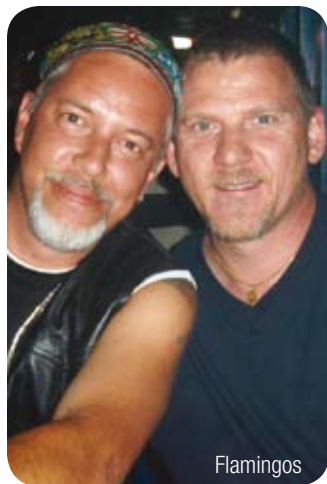
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q people: **WES CARR IS OUR IDOL**

It is certainly no secret that I love Australian IDOL. I believe it is the best way (albeit one of the only available) for young Australian talent to be discovered, groomed and turned into the entertainers of the future. Our latest IDOL winner is - of course - Wes Carr. I jumped at the opportunity to catch up with him late last year at the Sony Music office in South Melbourne. We started our chat going over some of the highlights of his journey thus far.

Since IDOL started I have been watching but also doing other things. At 14 I moved from Adelaide to Sydney, was introduced to a series of guys which led onto a board room performance of some of my material. Everyone was interested but said to go and "get to know myself" (into the real world of pubs and clubs) doing anything I can to master my craft...which will help my song-writing and singing. So, I did open-mic nights and the like in Sydney for quite a long time then IDOL came along. I still kept that original advice with me though so decided not to enter.



I joined a band and ended up (among other things) working in L.A. Then this year (2008) I thought to myself that there was something I was going to do in the year to believe in myself more and do something more.

IDOL to me seemed very different this year in the way that the contestants were different from previous contests e.g. the two of you who ended up 1st and 2nd were more on the rocky side. With that in mind, how much do you think the judges play a part in the voting decision making process?

Umm, for me I never really thought of it as a competition or reality television show. I always thought of it as a music show. I never really knew what to expect from the judges. Each time I got up there I thought whatever happens happens...you're only as good as your last performance sort of thing. Every week I was kind of frightened of what Dicko would say (more so than the other two) because - although I love Marcia and Kyle as well.

How distracting to your craft is all the other stuff you need to contend with e.g. cameras, crew etc? Something I personally think is excellent for you to learn as you are not only perfecting your craft, you're learning to sell your craft in a medium that you need to.

It's a massive risk for a musician who has toured etc., but it was something I was open about on the show. So if I had a bad night it was on YouTube forever and I felt that extra pressure. But being part of IDOL, from the moment you walk into the green room the cameras are there and they're going to capture anything they want to. It is an amazing experience to be under the spotlight for so long. It is such a great experience.

They also taught us all that "Opinions are Like Arseholes....Everyone's Got One"

Your first single - YOU - is a much rockier track than previous IDOL winner first releases. Was that done deliberately?

This year was a lot more personalised with each of the top five getting a song, so once they knew who the top twelve were going to be they started scouting for songs to match. When I heard mine I was like "this is really cool". It was one of those songs that I instantly had ideas for it. I wish I had written it cause the song can be both a BBQ song and a club song - I love singing it.

I think once the album is released it will all come together well. I think if I had released a power ballad and then come out with an album that was completely different, it just confuses the audience.

So when should we expect the album?

At the start of 2009 some time. I'm currently throwing all my ideas into the melting pot and will wait to see what happens.



q people: NATALIE IS ALIVE

My first meeting with Natalie Bassingthwaight was everything I had hoped for and much more. She is truly delightful, eloquent, intelligent, fun (and very attractive). Her new album launches in the first quarter of 2009, but the debut single "Alive" is out now. I caught up with this amazing singer/dancer/actor/host at the Sony Music offices and started by asking her when she first thought she would pursue a career in the entertainment industry.

I don't know that there was a point or a moment. I know that I have footage of me dancing around at a really young age. My Mum said that I was always the show-off (put a costume on, make everyone come and watch me do a number and charge them 20 cents). Under five I just always did it. Five and up I attempted all these things like Ballroom dancing, Brownies etc. I never liked it though - I got a bit bored. Then Young Talent Time was big in my house (I had three sisters) so I guess that was a moment. I even got the yellow pages out and started ringing around and Mum said you're not trying anything, you do enough. Then eventually Mum knew I wanted to do it so I attended a dancing school - did singing, dancing, drama - and that led to regional performing ensembles and I changed to a performing arts high school for eleven and twelve and then went to college to study performing arts. Even then I didn't know I could make a career or living out of it. I just knew that I enjoyed it.

Neighbours, Rogue Traders and So You Think You Can Dance are all quite different disciplines. Any favourite out of those?

It's so weird cause I've loved the journey that I've had in all different ways and for different reasons. Even when I was doing musical theatre I'd start doing ensemble then understudy the leads and then get the lead. Playing Sandy in Grease was a highlight... and then getting Neighbours. There is a special magical thing when you get on stage. Having people sing the songs that you've written is kind of strange but amazing.

Acting I love. I love getting the script and developing the character more than I actually do the filming. I really think that's a lot of fun. It's almost like you're the master of the puppet.

Hosting terrified me. I knew I'd really like it (So You Think You Can Dance). I get offered stuff a bit which is kind of lucky (touch wood) but I turn down a lot of stuff, so in the last few years I've wanted

to do stuff that really excites me or that's really challenging. When that came up I thought I don't know if I can do that and then I did an audition in L.A. and it was terrible. I felt really insecure in such a different environment. Their direction was for me to be really big and American-esque and I knew Australians wouldn't like that. Luckily there were some good bits though (particularly interviewing the dancers) and they got me to come in again and said be yourself which was really cool and felt so much better. I was petrified though and thought why do I do these things...why do I put myself in the firing line to be judged? What I've learnt is that is me - that's my personality - I want to experience things that really for no other reason than when I'm a grandma I can tell my kids these great stories.

You had a great run with the Rogue Traders and now are venturing into a solo career. Is that just a natural progression?

Every year I am surprised at what I am doing. The solo deal was signed a couple of years ago and the Rogue Traders knew about it and it was just a matter of time.

Your new single "Alive" and the impending album. Describe them for me please?

Alive doesn't really define the album (A Thousand Stars) but it's an essence of me. The album is quite eclectic, it's pretty diverse, it's kind of me. I like being flamboyant, I love dressing up, I like being a bit kooky and crazy, I love being camp, but I also like to sing something that really personal. So it has all of these elements. As far as the single is concerned though it was the last song that we co-wrote and I was really lucky to work with some great people. It was the last few days of recording and we were discussing what to write about and I said I wanted something fun, not too serious, something you can get up and have a dance to, but not about a boy. I am sick of songs about boys. Let's just write a fun song, and for the life of us we couldn't do it. But in the end I think that just drove the song a bit more. It's more universal. The song's about taking chances, if you've been hurt before and not sure if you want to take another chance, just do it.

Where was the album written?

Some songs were written in L.A., some in the U.K., some in Norway, and some in Australia. I've co-written about half.

Will you be touring it?

YES TOTALLY! I don't have any details or plans at this stage but I'm

excited about it. I'm a stage girl. I love being on stage. I love thinking about the costumes, what the set and the lighting will be like and the dancers. I have always been that involved. When I was making the album I pictured so much stuff going on.



q music news: KAZ & MACEY

KAZ JAMES TEAMS UP WITH SOUL SINGER MACEY GRAY FOR HIS NEW SINGLE 'CAN'T HOLD BACK'

WATCH THE VIDEO ONLINE NOW!

For his latest single 'Can't Hold Back', international singer, producer and DJ, Kaz James, enlisted the help of one of the most recognisable voices of the past decade, soul singer Macy Gray. Gray added her freaky stylings to the hot electro-pop track 'Can't Hold Back' for Kaz's debut solo album IF THEY KNEW and the pair filmed the video clip in Los Angeles before Christmas.

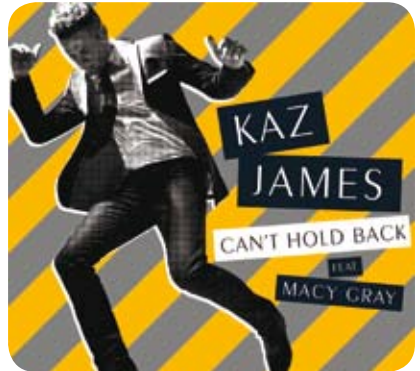


"I've always liked her stuff," says Kaz of Macy. "I just thought she'd sound wicked on an electro song like the one I put together. I think she's amazing; her voice is just so unique and working with her on this track was a fantastic experience."

'Can't Hold Back' follows on from Kaz's #1 ARIA Club track 'Breathe' and #2 ARIA Club track 'We Hold On' and shows the diversity and depth of IF THEY KNEW which explores dance, soul, pop, electronica and hip hop.

'Can't Hold Back' was recorded in London, with Kaz and Macy meeting up in LA just before Christmas to film the clip with Syndrome Studio. "We had a lot of fun," says Macy. "Kaz is a lot of fun and really laid back. He's really passionate and serious about what he does. You know any time you're in the studio with someone like that they tend to bring out the best in you, so I think we work really well together."

2009 will be a busy year for Kaz — after seeing in the New Year with Paris Hilton at the Bongo Virus event in Sydney where he was the headline DJ, Kaz has been enlisted by Macy to work on her own upcoming album. "She asked me to contribute some songs to her next album, so we've been flying back and forth collaborating on a number of different songs" said Kaz.



Check out Kaz and Macy together in the 'Can't Hold Back' clip now at www.myspace.com/kazjames or <http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=MFeOZcbav9Q>.

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q travel: with SHEK GRAHAM

CARLSBAD CAVERNS

After our visit with Smokey Bear we decided to head further south to have a look at the famous Carlsbad Cavern. The Caverns are approached through the Chihuahuan Desert of the Guadalupe Mountains. I looked for the little dogs everywhere, but didn't see a single one. Maybe they only come out at night! The creation of the Carlsbad Caverns began 250 million years ago with the creation of an enormous reef within an inland sea that covered this region. This reef formed from the remains of plants and animals and also from calcite that precipitated directly from the water. Cracks developed in the reef as it grew. Eventually the sea evaporated and the reef was buried under deposits of salts and gypsum. It's amazing to think that this entire area was under water once!

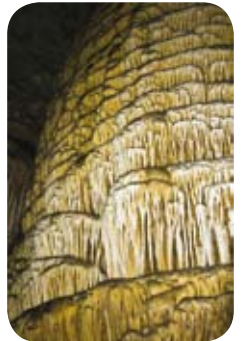
Then, a few million years ago, uplift and erosion of the area began to uncover the buried rock reef. Rain, made slightly acidic from the air and soil, seeped down into the cracks in the reef, slowly dissolving the limestone and beginning the process that would form large underground chambers. At the same time, hydrogen sulfide gas from huge oil and gas deposits beneath the ancient reef dissolved in the percolating ground water to form sulphuric acid. The added power of this corrosive substance explains the size of the passageways. The exposed reef became part of the Guadalupe Mountains and the underground chambers became the caves of the Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

There are 83 caves in all with Carlsbad Cavern being among the largest. The deepest cave is 487 metres deep. Carlsbad Cavern is approximately 150 metres below the surface and covers just under 60,000 sq metres. The main part of the cavern is called the Big Room. The great thing about the cave is that it can be reached by tourists loaded down with camera gear by a lift!!! It's also nice and cool even when it's hot outside. I wouldn't want to think of a gay boy having to break into a sweat!!! There is a path all the way round the cave, and most of it is even accessible by wheelchair.

As well as the stalactites and stalagmites seen in many other caves, some of the more unusual formations that can be seen in Carlsbad Cavern are helictites, which defying gravity, grow into amazing swirls and other twisting shapes. Other rare formations are those composed not of calcite, but of aragonite, a mineral chemically identical to calcite but with a different crystal structure. These formations tend to be small, delicate and needle-like and can be seen on the cavern ceiling. Water has also pooled into small ponds and there are steep drop-offs in part of the cave.

The other main attraction of the Carlsbad Caverns National Park is the evening flight of the Mexican Freetail bats when they leave the caves in their hundreds of thousands to feed on insects. We were lucky enough to be visiting the caves in early October, just before the bats migrated back to Mexico. The bats arrive in the early American spring around March to April and leave again in late October. No photographs are allowed, but as we sat in the amphitheatre in the fading late waiting for the bats to emerge, we listened to a very interesting talk by a park ranger.

The sound of the bats leaving the cave is amazing. It's like the sound of the wind building slowly. Then there is this sound that continues for nearly an hour as a thousand bats leave the cave every minute. Some circle over the amphitheatre, and you can hear their high pitched sonar clicks, before they swoop away to find the moths and other insects that they love to eat. Nearly a million bats eat a lot of insects — several hundred of tonnes every night. There are also other caves in this region of North America where many millions more bats live. Imagine how inundated the world would be with insects without these bats!



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