

SEPTEMBER 2011



Q MAGAZINE

*Made in Melbourne!
Enjoyed Nationally
& Internationally!*

featuring
LISA-SKYE

A muscular man with short brown hair, wearing a black dog tag necklace, is shown from the chest up. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. His right arm is raised, with his hand behind his head. The background is a dark, warm-toned gradient.

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q comment: **WorkingOUT**

WorkingOUT is specialist job service for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex identified people with a disability. It is a unique job service in Australia catering to the GLBTI community.

In this free Government-funded program, GLBTI jobseekers with a disability will be able to access the support they need to find and keep sustainable and worthwhile employment.

An experienced Employment Consultant with a background in GLBTI community work can tailor a range of services each job seeker will need to meet their work goal.

This can include assistance with:

- Career counselling
- Training options to fill skills gaps
- Job search techniques and preparation
- Preparing a professional resume
- Job interview practice and support
- Referrals to other agencies
- Coming out in the workplace (or choosing not to)
- Ongoing support to make the new job a success
- Disability and/or Sexuality Awareness Training for colleagues in the workplace

WorkingOUT can be accessed from an office in the Melbourne CBD or Sunshine. WorkingOUT can assist job seekers to join the program, or can organise a transfer from another DES provider if a job seekers is not satisfied with their services and would benefit from a more understanding approach.

WorkingOUT is also available for GLBTI workers with a disability who feel that their job is in jeopardy and would like some support overcoming barriers or issues.

Check out www.senswide.com.au for more information or to apply for service. Alternatively, call 03 9015 5155 to speak with someone directly, or TTY 9614 3070.

WorkingOUT is a Disability Employment Service. Potential clients must meet Centrelink eligibility criteria. Working out is a new initiative from SensWide Employment, a division of the Victorian Deaf Society.



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



q feature: LISA-SKYE

With her previous show Lisa-Skye is Not Like Other Boys receiving rave reviews from audiences during the 2011 Melbourne Comedy Festival - especially for her improper use of a metronome - Lisa-Skye is back! From the 23 - 30 September at the Lithuanian Club in North Melbourne, expect more of the quick-draw insanity for which her work has become known...as well as more lurid tales of the grubby jobs she's had. The outskirts of the sex industry have never been so hilariously depressing...Nothing kills a LADYBONER quicker than hearing the object of your desire use the two words "My husband". Especially if it's hastily followed up with "But he's totes ok with all this, we're not like other people." Mistakenly straight, to creepy swinger in 20 seconds. Send in the Fail Whale. So how's Lisa meant to get any lady trade now - it was already hard enough BEFORE the wedding ring?? Bookings via www.lisaskeye.com.au, the Melbourne Fringe website or phone: 03 9660 9666



I recently caught up with the dynamo herself and started by finding out some personal details.

I grew up in the northern suburbs. I was the gayest little kid you've ever met. Gayter than your trans nephew. I loved all the trashiest girls - HOW GOOD was the 90s at giving us trashbags? Kelly Bundy from Married...with Children, Wendy James from Transvision Vamp, and Drew Barrymore in Poison Ivy. Seriously, if they had a bustier and a bad peroxide job, 9-year-old me was OBSESSED with them.

I was also a massive showpony, one of those annoying little kids who'd put on shows for their family. So... not much has changed, really.

You have been describes as a Goth, Lesbian, Comedienne. If you take each category: When did you know you identified with those titles; Do the three go hand in hand (so to speak); Have the previous two helped with writing material for the third?

From about 14 I was openly bisexual, but then in my 20s I met some hot people who didn't really fit in with the whole 'man' or 'woman' label, and I had to readjust my thinking. Nowadays, I identify as being 'queer', since I'm pretty much all about everyone. People see me topping some hot tradie gayboy at a kink club and think, 'Ah! Drag Queen' (I'm very shiny) then they see how I walk and clock me as a butch chick in a dress. So I'm kind of all over the shop. And every time I classify myself, someone comes along to challenge my label, so I've just stopped trying.

This may or may not just be a roundabout way of saying I'm a total ho bag.

The goth thing happened all of a sudden: I realised it had been about 5 years since I'd worn pants or colours. And hipsters kept trying to run me over (goths and hipsters are natural enemies. Seriously, it's like werewolves and vampires). So I just kind of went with it from there.

Of course, the gothness and the queerness does influence my comedy. It's the typical wah-wah story: I've always been a freak and freaks tend to be able to laugh at themselves, and also laugh at the silly society which sees them as weird, you know?

On to your show now, please describe it in your own words.

STUFF! I have a short attention span and assume my audience does too. I explore living with my woggy grandmother, never growing up, animals, relationships, kink, and a very dodgy job I had on the outskirts of the sex industry. All with my very... erm, 'unique' spin! Also, there's pictures, songs, and one or two surprises that always leave my audiences smiling.

Have you ever experienced homophobia?

YES. With me, it's more insidious than the fucking lovely 'LEZZO!' out the passing car window. The bogans tend to go for the fat goth angle before they go for queer - fair enough, you've gotta target your heckling if you're a fuckwit hanging out of your mate's ute.

I've had countless experiences where straight women acquaintances have discovered that I like women, and then they OBVIOUSLY think that means I want to have at them. I'm all, 'lady, chill, I'm not going to rape you in the bathrooms. We're not in fucking prison here. Also your foundation-rouge combo is gross'. But there's a definite, subtle shift in how straight women treat me when they find out. Which is often very early on, since I'm so out. It's one of those frustrating things every same-sex-attracted person has to deal with.



With men, there's the typical leer, and that's often worse, 'Oh, can I watch? Hur hur hur'. Then I talk about fisting until they go quite pale and mumble 'never mind'. Creepy peeps.

What advice would you give a young person questioning their sexuality about coming out?

Repressing yourself is just a way of procrastinating happiness. And you deserve to be happy right now! But most importantly, don't worry about labeling yourself for others. If you feel gay, and want to tell the world, do! But at the same time, don't let other people tell you that you can ONLY be 'x', 'y', or 'z' sexuality, and that once you've decided 'what you are' you can't change. Too many people paint themselves into a corner because they're scared of what people think. Sexuality is fluid. And sticky. You just need to follow your own ladyboner, or man-ladyboner, to whoever makes you happy, And if that changes 50 times before breakfast, then that's entirely your deal and no one else's business. As long as it's safe, sane and consensual, just do whatever makes you happy!

Is there anything else you want to share with our readers?

Yes! Scientists aren't sure why, but scorpions are fluorescent under ultraviolet light. How cool is that?!



q lifestyle: with PETE DILLON

Been wracking my brains thinking about this month's column and what to offer. I find that I have been musing over things in my life of late, so decided to go back to what it is I used to do...Food.

I was pleased to see some good results at the recent Age Good Food Guide awards for some deserving restaurants. Ben Shewry at Attica was finally rewarded with 3 Chefs Hats and the title of Restaurant of the year. I have written much about the remarkable talent of Mr Shewry in past editions and to see Attica join perennial 3 hatters, Jacques Reymond and Vue de Monde was a great joy for Ben, and his magnificent team. His restaurant Manager, the man with the most wonderful of names, Banjo Harris-Plane is a finalist in Sommelier Australia's sommelier of the year, and Attica sits at number 53 on the San Pellegrino top 100 restaurants in the world. Due recognition indeed.

Another man whose name has also featured in these pages is Dan Hunter at the Royal Mail Hotel in Dunkeld. Dan has trained with some of the best chefs in the world, most notably Andoni Adruiz at Mugaritz in Spain, currently ranked at number 3 in the world. Dan is also an extraordinary talent and was duly recognized as Chef of the Year. Dan and his team have put the sleepy western districts town of Dunkeld firmly on the map and not just for food lovers. The Royal Mail has also joined the list of 3 hatted restaurants rounding the number out to 4.

North of the border there were also some wonderful results from the SMG Good Food Guide. Quay's Peter Gilmore, who some readers will recognize from Masterchef fame was finally recognized as Chef of the Year after defining the high end culinary landscape in Sin City for many years. Restaurant of the Year went to Sepia – a rags to riches story of their was ever one.

But do these rewards make a difference to restaurants? The short answer is yes. Attica had to install a third computer to assist in managing the frantic request for bookings. Even those of us that call Ben a friend cant get in before October and even then it is at an odd time.

It wont hit the regionals as much as people have to choose not just dinner but to go away. The Royal Mail, like The Lakehouse in Daylesford, Provenance in Bright and Patrizia Simone's restaurant around the corner all become a weekend away to indulge, and this makes the consideration more difficult that a cab ride home from dinner.

A nice surprise recently was Taxi Dining Room in Federation Square. This venue has been at its highest and things seemed to taper off a little. But they are back with a bang and well worth a visit, especially for the view from the restaurant of Melbourne. New venue manager, Kieran Spiteri is not only one of the sexiest restaurant managers going around (seriously...phwoar!) but a very efficient operator, and with Owen and the remainder of the senior team at Taxi Dining Room, there is much to be impressed about.

I also had a chance to check out a few venues in Brisbane and none was more lovely that the new venture in East Brisbane from renowned chef, Gillian Hirst. She has joined a number of businesses in forming a collaborative arrangement with an antique house, florist, garden centre and some wonderfully luscious food. It's Called Gillian's Garden Café and with sister in law Tracey, they are making some waves in Brisbane (a city that is coming of age food wise in a big way.)

As Guest Chef de Cuisine for the Hotel Okura's culinary event Modern Australian Cuisine Fair in 1997, Gillian spent one month in Tokyo where she participated in the fair, cooked for the Japanese royal family and appeared on the popular television series, Food of the Iron Chefs. She is one of very few women to see Kitchen Stadium in its full force and is so well regarded by her peers. Check it out if you are in Brisvegas. The house mad gnocchi cooked in wine and parmesan cream was marvelous.



Attica: 74 Glen Eira Road, Ripponlea
Royal Mail Hotel: 98 Parker Street (Glenelg Hwy), Dunkeld
Quay: West Circular Quay, Sydney
Gillians Garden Café: 999 Stanley Street, East Brisbane

For more from Pete, tune into Cravings on JOY 94.9 every Saturday from 1-2pm, or email whatshappening@tusq.com.au

q psychology: with AMANDA NASSIF

registered psychologist

The importance of intelligence over emotion. One of the most difficult things to do in life is to control the mind and the emotions. How do we do this?

The intelligence is the discriminating part of us which allows us to discern what is to our best advantage something which is necessary to cultivate in order to progress in all areas of life. If we don't use our intelligence and allow ourselves to be dictated by our minds and feelings we can end up in all sorts of scenarios which can be detrimental to our wellbeing.

For example someone may feel like eating a chocolate mud cake the mind says yes do it the feelings say yes however the intelligence says no because if you do you will feel sick and suffer for it later. Another example is I feel like getting involved with someone who is already with another person, the mind says yes or no the feelings say yes i want to and the intelligence may say no it's not a good idea because it will cause all sorts of problems and you may suffer later for it.



The reason why people get themselves into all sorts of problems is simply because they have very little control over their minds and feelings. We need to make choices which are to our best advantage by using our intelligence. The ideal situation is to have both our feelings and intelligence aligned but if they are conflicting we always need to discern between what is coming from our feelings/mind and what is to our best advantage which namely means using our intelligence. Often easier said than done, but very possible.

Short Exercise to help you make decisions that are to your best advantage:

- 1) Differentiate between what is coming from your feelings and what is coming from your mind. Write them down.
- 2) Then ask yourself in this situation what is to my best advantage and act based on what is to your best advantage.

q exhibition: THE ARTS CENTRE

Opening November 5, Reg Livermore – Take a Bow is a free exhibition which celebrates the remarkable career of iconic performer and theatre legend Reg Livermore, applauding his unique contribution to Australian performing arts as an actor and writer.

Reg Livermore – Take a Bow reflects on his journey from a young stage-struck boy with theatrical ambitions to his place as one of Australia's foremost performers. It traces his first decade of professional acting with repertory theatre companies in the late 1950s and 1960s, his early roles on television and his subsequent move into rock musicals, which began with Hair (1969) and led to his role as Australia's first Dr Frank'n'Furter in The Rocky Horror Show (1974).

Reg Livermore – Take a Bow features items from the Arts Centre's Performing Arts Collection, including stage costumes donated by Livermore in 2006. Since 1975, the Arts Centre has assembled one of the best collections in the world, comprising more than 400,000 items relating to circus, dance, music, opera and theatre. The priceless collection comprises costumes, posters, programmes and other personal memorabilia from artists ranging from the legendary Dame Nellie Melba to Dame Edna Everage, and her cultural successor, Kylie Minogue.

Highlights of the Performing Arts Collection which feature in the upcoming exhibition include those worn for Livermore's best-known characters including Betty Blokk Buster, Vaseline Amalnitrate, Tara the Incredible and Carmen Marahuana. In addition, Reg Livermore has generously provided access to his personal archive of photographs, posters, scripts, correspondence and production footage.

Reg Livermore – Take a Bow
5 November 2011 – 26 February 2012
A FREE exhibition
the Arts Centre, Gallery I

The Arts Centre is the flagship of the performing arts in Victoria, and the focal point of Melbourne's cultural precinct. To find out about what's on offer visit www.theartscentre.com.au or become a fan of the Arts Centre on facebook.

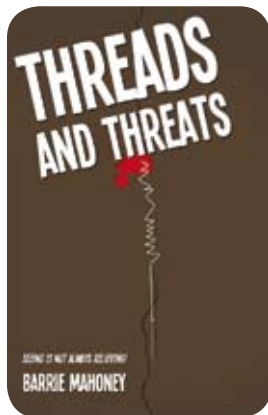
q books: THREADS AND THREATS

Threads and Threats is a fast moving, intriguing and exciting crime thriller. We see what we believe, but should we believe what we see when someone is insanely intent on murder?

The small, rural community is hiding secrets behind closed doors, and James Young, the gay head teacher, attempts to thread together pieces of information that will begin to unravel these secrets. However, he is forced to confront impossible events that cannot be explained, and begins to doubt his ability to tell the difference between reality and fantasy.

Threads and Threats will keep the reader on the edge of their seats, but is also full of amusing incidents for some light relief. Is James able to cope with the mysterious and strange events that are unfolding in front of him? Was his partner Tristan really killed in that tragic accident two years ago?

Although this novel is a sequel to *Journeys and Jigsaws* that was also set in a rural community in the UK, both books were inspired by the experiences of the author whilst working as a teacher, head teacher and school inspector in schools across England and Wales. Readers will find events that are impossible to believe, and piece together pieces of the jigsaw and threads of evidence to uncover the threat.



'Threads and Threats' by Barrie Mahoney ISBN: 978 184 38 66 466

q events: THE 20TH MFWF

Melbourne Food and Wine Festival celebrates 20 years with FIRE: Where there's smoke...there's Ed Mitchell, David Chang and Lennox Hastie. What started as a spark of an idea 20 years ago, Melbourne Food and Wine Festival (MFWF) will mark its 20th anniversary in 2012 by dishing up 20 days of unforgettable eating and drinking (2 – 21 March 2012). Now the hottest food and wine celebration on the planet, MFWF is also set to unveil The Hot List, a roll-call of the global visionaries who are shaping the future of gastronomy, selected to ignite the Festival's hallmark Langham Melbourne MasterClass (9 – 11 March 2012, on sale 18 October).

The first three announcements to start The Hot List firing will headline the all-new, off-site, outdoor FIRE MasterClass focused on every form of fire known to man. 'The Pit-Master' Ed Mitchell (cofounder, The Pit, North Carolina, US) goes the whole-roasted hog and cooks a pig until you can pull it apart with your bare hands, 'The Game-Changer' (and one of our hottest old flames) David Chang (Momofuku restaurants, New York, US) rewrites the Korean-American barbecue, while Lennox Hastie (fresh from the grill at Asador Etxebarri, Atxondo-Bizkaia, Spain) is back in Australia to prove that smoke is an ingredient in its own right.

A potent and powerful force, this most ancient of cooking methods, is suddenly the hottest new trend. FIRE MasterClass is a skills workshop by twilight that explores the beast and the butcher, the breeds and the breeders, the blood and the bone, the woods and the charcoals, and the mouth-watering results. More broadly, the 2012 Langham Melbourne MasterClass will be fuelled by ideas and energy from chefs, producers and wine personalities with fire in the belly. Lovers of food and wine will have the ability to mix and match sessions and events to design the gastronomic experience of their dreams.

Crown restaurants, one of Melbourne's leading dining precincts, will showcase a constellation of 'Stars of Stars' at a series of Crown Dinners as well as Star Cooking Classes at the Culinarium. These eight star chefs soon to be announced each have long-held Michelin star status and together represent some of the globe's most influential cuisines and cooking methods.

Since 1993, MFWF has hosted chefs who collectively have held more than 70 Michelin stars as well as 21 chefs whose restaurants have ranked among the S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants. This includes eight restaurants celebrated in the current Top 10.

Tickets on sale 18 October
melbournefoodandwine.com.au or Ticketmaster 136 100
20th Melbourne Food and Wine Festival 2 – 21 March 2012
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q youth: with TASMAN ANDERSON

There is nothing more mortifying than walking into a beautiful clothing store, only to discover that they have nothing in your size. You can feel the salesperson's judgmental gaze upon you, wondering what on earth you were thinking. I'm sure many of you have felt that horrible feeling that you just don't belong. I know I have.

My entire life I have been a chubby girl. Of course it never bothered me as a child and surprisingly I was friends with so many people that bullying was never an issue. In comparison to so many other girls who had to endure taunts and hurtful laughter, I had it pretty easy. But, you can only go so long until size begins to matter.

As I've grown up, I've maintain a constant size of sixteen. Generally finding clothing isn't an issue but lately I've been shocked at how bad things have truly become.

Recently, I discovered one of the only decent stores for 'curvier' women, City Chic. I was absolutely ecstatic when I came across it. I was tired of wearing clothing that was unflattering to my curves and made me feel like a fat whale. I entered the store and found fashionable dresses, work wear and casual outfits. It was all so beautiful. I found this adorable black top that I wanted to wear to university. It fit perfectly and accentuated my boobs just how I wanted. Everything was going well until I turned the tag over to discover the price...\$59.99! I was outraged. Why on earth was a simple black top priced so high!?!? I spoke to the salesperson about it, wanting to know her opinion. She believed the price was steep as well and was most likely due to the extra material used. She also said that it was a normal price for the size it was. I had to disagree.

When did being a larger woman become such a taboo that you had to pay more than double what a size eight girl would have to? With so many laws ruling out discrimination against homosexuals and nationalities, how was it that such a common but massive problem was overlooked? It's understandable that a larger size requires more material, but how is it that size eight clothing may cost \$10 but size 18-22 may cost as high as \$70? There is no denying the fact that corporations are playing on the insecurities of larger women and taking advantage of them. It makes me sad to think that after so much change in the world, things like this can still happen.

It's not like we are asking for anything more than a fair go. The prices of their dresses don't need to change but the price of their casual wear does. How can we love a company who exploits our insecurities and our need to feel just as beautiful as a size small girl?

I've always wondered what it would be like to be a thinner girl. To be able to buy entire outfits for under \$50. To feel comfortable wearing clothes that shows a reasonable amount of flesh. But then I remember that I wouldn't be me if I had. If I wasn't born this way (cue Lady Gaga) I probably wouldn't be the person I am today. I try to remember that fact whenever I think about the situation. I shouldn't be ashamed to be myself and neither should you. People come in all different shapes and sizes so that we are able to appreciate each other more. Why can't we embrace equality for body images and price an item of clothing the same, regardless of the number on the tag.



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q money: with EVAN DAVIS

The spittle from what I can only assume was his clenched teeth and the repeated jabbing of his index finger in my flank meant that I knew what he wanted me to do. Way easier to do as I was told. After all; happy partner, happy life!

"Six hundred and sixty...ONE thousand dollars" I said confidently while trying to eyeball the couple I was bidding against. Their huddled discussion took them to the real estate agent's third and final call before raising us another \$1,000...

If you are going to buy property at an auction you'll need to do your homework. A purchase at an auction in Victoria is unconditional. This is also true if you secure the property three days before the auction too. A property bought unconditionally means that there are no ifs, buts or maybes. If you are the last hand in the air on the third and final call the property is yours and come-what-may you have to be good for it. So make sure you have your finances sorted!

You'll need to speak to your mortgage broker and know what your absolute limits are. You will need to know your borrowing power and also your spending limit. These can be two different things. You'll need to work out how far your deposit will stretch when you factor in the government and purchase costs and also what the loan will cost. Most people have the ability to borrow more than they might want to. Remember to think carefully about your budget before you buy. A large mortgage repayment may mean a dent in your budget and lifestyle.

It is also extremely important to do all your home work before an auction too. Building and pest inspections need to be done before you buy. Once the property is bought anything you find that is wrong with the property after auction is your problem. It is critical for this reason, that you review the contract of sale and the section 32 (vendor's statement) very carefully before the auction. A good solicitor or conveyancer is worth their weight in gold and will help you with this important step.

Also have a strategy and a spending limit. We'd passed our ages ago...

"Well, just bloody buy it!" my partner Paul barked loudly at me.

I bid another grand while trying to look tough. I stood up straight to look more threatening in a 'deep pockets' kind of way. Maybe I should have worn a black suit. That way I would have looked like a buyer's advocate, or an undertaker! Or maybe I should have worn an ostentatious hat, for some extra height?

The couple whispered something to each other. Then they looked straight through me to Paul. The bloke shifted his feet nervously while his partner whispered something in his ear. The agent had now reached his third and final call. He asked them was there anything they wanted to say. I waited for their bid...nothing. They again looked through me to Paul.

"Congratulations" was their only response; I'd say he looked more threatening than me.



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q mens health: F.A.S.T.

by Brian Mier



FIRST STROKE AND YOU'RE . . . ?

Every ten minutes in Australia, someone suffers a Stroke. 1 in 6 people will experience a Stroke in their lifetime.

Anyone can suffer a Stroke. However, the prevalence of Stroke increases markedly with age, affecting: 8.1% of men aged 65 – 74 years, and 15% of men aged 75 and over. Age specific death rates from Stroke are generally higher among males than females. Overall it is the second highest cause of death after heart disease and is a leading cause of disability.

A Stroke occurs when the supply of blood to the brain is interrupted, either by a blockage in an artery or the artery breaks or bursts. Some people suffer a mini-Stroke which may not last for more than a minute or two. If this happens, get the person to hospital for a check-up ASAP, or call 000 for an ambulance. It may be a warning that a major Stroke is on the way sooner or later.

The keys to minimising the risk are those lifestyle measures common to many other diseases prevention:

- Stop smoking – now!
- Exercise daily for 30 minutes, if at all possible.
- Diet – eat fresh vegetables and fruit, reduce fatty and sugary foods, alcohol in moderation.

The key to minimising the risk of death or serious disability from a Stroke is to act FAST. Learn to recognise these signs of Stroke:

How do you know if someone's having a stroke? Think...

F.A.S.T.



Check their FACE.
Has their mouth drooped?



Can they lift both ARMS?



What? I don't know what you mean.
Could you dsjklgh?
Eveingt argn
huf dthk

Is their SPEECH slurred? Do they understand you?



TIME is critical.
If you see any of these signs, call 000 now!

Think F.A.S.T. Act FAST! CALL 000

For more info call 1800 787 653 or visit strokefoundation.com.au

 strokefoundation

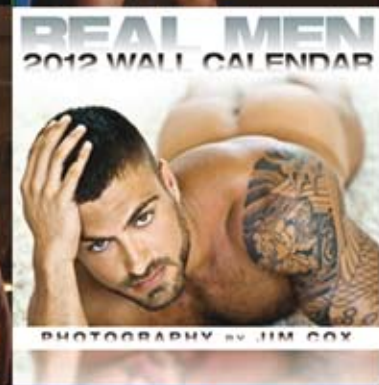
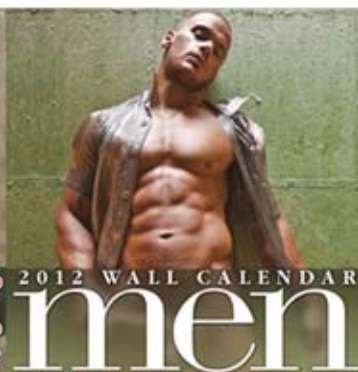
Strokes can happen to anyone of any age at any time, but every Australian has the power to save a life or promote good recovery by thinking FAST and acting FAST when they recognise the signs. This applies to yourself as well as other people with you.

Information supplied by the National Stroke Foundation, www.strokefoudnation.com.au

BRIEFS

FARSL MEN'S HEALTH PROGRAM, Fairfield (Melbourne). This innovative program continues to provide fun, informative sessions every month at Fairfield RSL (Victoria). This month the topics of Stroke and The Prostate were covered. We learned the FAST method in the article above by playing a game which ended in convulsions of laughter. There's more to The Prostate than just cancer and we covered it all. Next month we are supporting a major presentation on Mental Health and especially Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. November will see us having fun with the topic 'Balls and Burns'. Speaking of balls, we are having a social bowling night shortly. Any men from anywhere are welcome to participate. For further details – info@eaglehealth.net.au or phone me on 0418 326 670.

Stay well, be positive, enjoy life.



q drag: **SONDRA**

SONDRA has been a major part of the Melbourne gay scene for 15 years. Alan Mayberry risked life and limb interrupting Sonda in the middle of an amazing cartwheel and splitz to find how her career evolved. He recalls her fabulous DJ work at the old Diva Bar and the final Fantasy Balls, and the sensational Chicago tribute at the Xchange and Rainbow Awards. Now, as The GH celebrates its 16th birthday, Sonda is still headlining in CSS.

I grew up in Newcastle, NSW, where I went to Whitebridge High. My Dad passed away nearly 10 years ago, and now the family is just Mum, my sister, 2 nephews and a niece.



I realised I was gay when I was about 20. My family has always been very accepting about it. My sister apparently always knew and my Dad, being a Presbyterian minister, took to the books to 'understand' being gay. Mum was just mum – amazing.

I guess you could say my performing career started when I'd sing solo Christmas carols at Dad's church – who would have thought! Even when I was very young Mum says I'd always dance around when ABBA came on the radio.

My performing started in Sydney as a male dancer for *GLOW – Gays Living Out West*, a charity fundraiser that travelled around Sydney and Wollongong.

The birth of 'Sonda' is the most boring story ever. I was talked into doing drag as a 'one time only thing' for a Grand Ball in Newcastle about twenty years ago. I was always a fan of Sandy (Olivia Newton John in *Grease*) so I called myself Sandy. But much to the 'outrage' of another drag I'd never met (or heard of). She went me at the ball saying HER name was Sandy. I said fine, I'll be Sandra! Still not happy, as that was her name and Sandy was her nickname, I just changed the A to an O to be done with it. I had my revenge – much to her upset, I won Belle of the Ball that night and she has never spoken to me since!

I started DJing as Paul Anderson back at the old Diva Bar. Before the venue was really popular, we just had a CD player and I'd bring in my retro CDs and quickly change discs between songs. Then 'big time' YEAH! We got a DJ console. I love DJ work and have also DJd at the RUN dance parties, 3 Faces, the Xchange and the Greyhound to name a few.

Drag and DJ work is not my 'real' work. I've managed a number of retail stores including Brashs, Country Road, Prada and Gap.

I studied Graphic Design back at Uni, as it has always interested me. To create something out of nothing, just piecing ideas together, still fascinates and excites me. While I was managing DIVA Bar, I would create the posters for each night for advertising and also put the adverts together for print, as we never had much of a budget. From there, I would cut my own spot numbers, as I've always liked having a version of a song, that you couldn't hear anywhere else or buy. Plus, very few songs have enough 'bangs' in them for my liking.

When clubs started playing videos and putting in screens, it enticed me to branch out and try my efforts to create another dimension of the show. Now I'm like a kid in a candy store with that stage and screen at the GH. There are some crazy ideas I have running around in my head. I have just invested in a green screen at home so hopefully more magic will result. It's also a lot of fun when the girls come up with ideas too – that's always another challenge. One of my fav videos so far is the video clip rip off to *Bleeding Love* that I did. It was lots of fun trying to get rid of Leona to pop me in there. Have a look, it's on YouTube.

But back to my drag career. I performed for two years, free, with Lucy and Doreen at the Xchange before anyone would pay me. That was around 1996, so I guess around 1998 was my debut as a pro! Still to this day there are some who are waiting for me to retire! Oh well!

When I first moved to Melbourne, the first drag show I saw was *Infidelity* starring Caresse at 3 Faces. I thought she was just amazing, and always wanted to work with her from then. Sue Ridge and I became great friends fairly early on, as we both loved having fun on stage and just got along. I then had the opportunity to work with them separately in different shows until I started managing DIVA Bar where Sue and I performed together. We wanted to talk Caresse into joining us, and much to our surprise she did. The result was *DIVA Angels*, which was the start of our trio. When we first came to the Greyhound we called ourselves *Hound's Angels*, and later *CSS* (Caresse, Sue, Sondra). It has never stopped being fun working with them both. In fact I miss the fun we have when we don't have a show.

Drag does take up your spare time. Often we rehearse one or two nights a week depending on how we are going with the numbers or how long we have to get it up and running.

It is hard to recall my career highlights, but these are stand outs: *Retro Saturday nights @ DIVA Bar*, *4 Play* with Caresse, Ryan and Mark, *Stiletto's* with Sue, Candee and Lucy, *Taboo* with Tabitha and Caresse, *Savage* with some of the hottest boys ever including Todd, Ryan, Leo and Ty, performing in India at Mumbai for the opening of the Marriott Hotel with Tabitha and Caresse, *I Dream of Sue and Sondra*, a show Sue and I did at DIVA, DJing the Fantasy Balls, and of course *CSS*.

My favorite production numbers are anything I can sneak in, from Eurovision. The solos I always love doing are *UP*, *9 to 5*, *Morning Train*, *Total Eclipse of the Heart*, *Give a Little Love* with Sue; the *Chicago Show* we did with *4 Play* and the DISCO medley with *Savage*.

I have absolutely no idea where my future career lies. I've never known where it will take me, nor do I try and plan. I've never been good at that. I've enjoyed a few relationships, but none of late. I'm lucky to have great friends. It's funny, they love drag and all come out to support me constantly.

To me relaxing is being at home with ABBA. I love to drive my car, which gives me a feeling of freedom. And I adore the time spent here or overseas with my best friend Yas.

I don't really have a favourite restaurant, probably cause I'm a fussy eater. I love musicals like *Mame*, chick flicks and suspense thrillers like *Se7en*.

Maybe I'm getting old, but it's a shame that the social networks where people meet are all online now. It was sooo much fun the old-fashioned way.



It's very sad that so much gay history has gone with the closing of the old Xchange and 3 Faces (the Market). A lot of us grew up, came out and met so many others in those places. Times change though, and new history and memories are being made.

We are lucky the GH has taken over. It is world standard, and it is just amazing what they have achieved there. Not only is it very hi tech and glossy, but also just great fun to be in. I'm very excited to be a part of it again with my gal pals. My head still spins with ideas that I have for that crazy big screen. The guys at the GH are just so accommodating to help make what we do better and to enhance the atmosphere of the venue. The 9-30 Saturday start is a real challenge, but Boylesque managed to break that early-start mould and I hope *CSS* can do the same.

Who knows where I'll be in five years time. I don't care as long as I still have my amazing friends and my wonderful family.

q competition: THE LOTUS AWARDS



Australia's longest running gay competition ever!...The 18th Annual LOTUS AWARDS. Heaven! They promised it would get bigger and better every year and they meant it. Two years ago saw Mr Lotus win a *holiday to Thailand!* Last year 3 fantastic holidays were won (including *2 to Asia naturally!*). It just proves again and again to be the *richest and longest running* competition on the (Australian) gay calendar.

So what's it all about, really?

Well put simply, it's **THE** annual celebration of the diversity of cultures that makes Australia great. It's unique as it is particularly about the warmth, acceptance and talent of the gay *Asian* community and *those who admire/support them*.

Add a lot of fun, glamour, entertainment, hot shows, (and yes ok, sexy bodies) all vying for fabulous prizes and (lastly but by no means least) the very coveted *annual Titles and "Crowns" themselves*. That pretty well sums it all up.

coupled with appreciation of the contributions that the Asian community brings. There are the traditional 2 categories of *Miss Lotus* which is for Queen of Asian drag or "Lady Boys", and *Mr Lotus* for the most popular gay Asian guy. But then we get back to "Farang" (i.e. Caucasian) for *Mr Rice Queen* - which is the most popular Caucasian guy who also appreciates the (gay) Asian community.

Typically the Mr Rice Queen winner will have or be chasing an Asian spouse...but not necessarily. He might just have lots of gay Asian friends!

And again there will be the very important introduced 2 years ago by Heaven: the predominantly Asian entertainment.

Now the "Door" is really open re that (solo) drag so as not to compete with contestants can put together a group if could be singers, dancers, fire eaters, masseurs or whatever...as long as entertainment.



new 4th category that was *Fried Rice Award* for best

one. Essentially it is non-Miss Lotus. But Miss Lotus they want. Or contestants jugglers, pole dancers, it truly replicates Asian

Registration is now open to enter -for details look up heavensdoor.com.au or their Facebook page. Heats for this year's (the 18th) Lotus Awards will be on Sundays, recognizing feedback from last year that although as popular as always, Wednesdays being a "school night" was difficult for contestants and punters alike. Sundays allows contestants all day to prepare and HD to open and close earlier so punters won't need to call in sick again (like last year) for work the next day.

It all kicks off on Sunday 9th October with the 1st Miss Lotus heat and it will be first in best dressed for contestants to grab a spot so register quickly!

Or if you just want to be entertained like nowhere else can offer on Sundays, blank out every Sunday from October 9th for around 8 weeks.





MISS LOTUS
SUNDAY
OCTOBER 9



MR LOTUS
SUNDAY
OCTOBER 16



MR RICE
QUEEN
SUNDAY
OCTOBER 23



FRIED RICE
SUNDAY
OCTOBER 30



LOTUS AWARDS 2011

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q people: with MARC J PORTER

Interview with Micah Brandt, fresh faced American porn star.

Randy Blue, the fun porn site recently sent me a link to view a scene, so naturally I obliged and boy was I surprised when the sexy Micah Brandt appeared and I was hooked, I had to instantly track him down for an interview.



How did the opportunity arise to appear in porn?

It honestly came out of nowhere. I'd always kinda thought about doing porn, but I honestly didn't think I was cute enough to get into it. I was excommunicated from my family and living in my car for 6 months and I obviously needed money so I could make a better life for myself. So one day a friend invited me to a club telling me I needed to "loosen up", so I got onstage and started gogo dancing and about 5 mins into it a guy gave me a card and told me he was a "photographer". Lol obviously he wasn't JUST a photographer, he was a porn scout. I submitted some pictures to him not really thinking it would really go anywhere, but about a week later I got a call from Randy Blue asking me to come out to LA for my first scene. The rest....obviously, is history.

You are mixed race, where do your family come from and has this hindered being in porn, do you experience any bad side to it?

I'm mixed, My ma is a little Egyptian and German woman born in Germany and raised in grand ol rainy Washington state. My pops is Black and Indian raised in Washington as well. Being biracial is something that has always been a challenge growing up. I was raised in the boonies going to predominantly white schools all my life. Kids weren't too kind. Back then, where I grew up, you did what everyone else was doing, you blended in, and if anything was "different" or "not of the norm" it was shunned.

So growing up I got my share of bully's and bashers. Making fun of my face, my skin color, my hair, anything they could find different about me. I'm glad I did though. Without it I wouldn't be who I am today. In the porn industry, yes, it's a little more difficult to break in being biracial. At least it was for me; because the fact of the matter is, when you belong to a predominantly white site with predominantly white fans, you're just asking for some major flack. It's just a matter if you can handle it and figuring out what you can do to prove to viewers that you belong alongside the ranks of the other "favorites".

After my first scene came out, instantly I started getting hounded with hate mail and bashing comments like "who are you kidding? you don't deserve to be with RandyBlue" or "Do you really think people like looking at your face?" and "Go be a drag queen somewhere and leave the porn for the good looking guys." blah blah blah blah. And to be honest, yea, it hurt. It sucked actually! I honestly didn't want to continue after that. But the stubborn bitch inside of me (thanks mom) said "NO! you're not getting rid of me that easy!" So I wiped my tears and decided to do anything I could to prove all those people wrong. The porn world is, as they say, very "dog eat dog" and I'm a mutt with a HUUUUUGE appetite! So I'll crunch on anyone who brings up my ethnicity as a negative. It's 2010 and so much is changing.

I'm happy to say that now a few of my scenes have become most watched, and have been tagged as "favorites" among the fan base. And now, instead of hate mail, I get emails from people telling me what an "inspiration" I am to them and how much they look up to me. That's right!! Looks like I win suckers! and I'm not through yet! :-D I've learned that you are your own worst enemy. Whining and complaining about how you are treated unfairly gets you NOWHERE fast in this business. So I shut up, sucked it up, and allowed my actions, and my scenes, do the talking themselves. Sometimes, that's all you need to do!

Who has been a pleasure to work with and why?

Honestly I got really lucky having RandyBlue as the first site I worked for. On my first visit everyone was very nice and very supportive. I know there's a select few who didn't think I'd get this far lol (nothing stays secret when you have a bunch of gay boys in a room gossiping) So of course there's good people and bad people, as with any place of work. Porn or not. I got the pleasure of working with and meeting a lot of interesting people. Scene-wise and connection wise, I can say without a doubt Jarrett Rex was the biggest pleasure to work with.

When you work in this business it's very hard to find someone who is genuine and someone you can really connect with on a level other than sexually. Or to find someone who can go through 10 minutes listening to you instead of themselves talking. I think it's those connections that make the chemistry in the scene scorching and unforgettable. Hence our live show that people still talk to me about to this day. You can pretty much tell which scene partners I made the best connection with by watching my work.



What is your work out routine, you look amazing by the way?

Oh shoosh. You wanna know what I do? I'm going to be completely honest, I work out 5x a week, lifting mostly, because being the shrimp genetically means cardio is the devil if you wanna pack on weight (lucky me) and I eat anything that's really bad for me!! lol McDonalds! Burger King!! Pizza, you name it!!! If it has some grease and over 1,000 calories chances are I'll inhale it within seconds. But on a healthier side I really love fruits. hahaha go figure. I'm trying to get a lot better with my diet lately though. I haven't eating junk food in 2months! So if you think I looked good in the past....just wait until my next appearance!!!

Did you realise you have fans worldwide, even in Australia?

Slowly, more and more, I'm realizing that my fan base isn't restricted to the USA. In fact, I'm starting to realize that most of my fans are in Europe or around that area. But Australia? No way! Never did I think I had much of a fan base there! Helllloooo have you seen the guys walkin around there with their hot bodies and hot accents?! I didn't think I was worthy! BUT I WILL TAKE IT! THANK YOU!

Do you get unwanted attention from guys just because you appear in porn?

YES!! it's awful! I'm still getting used to it! It goes 1 of 2 ways, either these guys think all there is too me is rough sex or they think that by getting close to me, they can use me to get into the business or to get my money (which by the way to you gold diggers... I am SO NOT RICH). After two years though, I've gotten pretty damn good about weeding those people out of my life before they get too far.

Where else do you see yourself heading, what are your plans for the future?

Well for anyone who doesn't already know, I recently quit RandyBlue. It was a great company to work for but since I wasn't getting used very much and I have a lot of dreams and even more bills (lol) I decided to let go of Randy and try new things. People tell me I should start my own site, but anyone who knows me, or who saw me for my short stint on the new RandyBlue cam feature, will tell you that I am NOT the most confident guy in the world.

I look in the mirror sometimes and I get shocked because my exterior is a lot different than that of the interior of the shy little ugly duckling I used to be and still kind of feel like. So working alone trying to be "inspired" by myself, is NOT my cup of tea! I need a partner in crime to say the least. So no private cams for Micah anytime soon. It's always been a dream of mine to be a sex symbol because it's the farthest thing from what anyone thought I would be or could accomplish doing. With my new found pride in my ethnicity I've started to model quite a bit, so look out for some rad photo shoots coming within the next couple of months.

Are you seeing anyone special, or does your job interfere?

Hahahaha "anyone special". People constantly ask me that question. But wouldn't ya know, Micah Brandt has NEVER had a boyfriend. Don't ask me why, because it's not from lack of wanting or trying, I guess I just haven't met that right guy. And to be honest, I don't think I will find him in Washington State. If I did date, I'd like to date inside of the porn world because of course they'd be able to understand my lifestyle first hand. Though, I'm not apposed to a hotty with a naughty body with an opened mind :-P

Tell us something crazy you have done in your life?

Crazy? hahaha truthfully my friends don't call me the "Cowardly Lion" for nothing. I'm really scared of a lot of shit. I don't like swimming in water I can't see under, I don't like spiders (omg if you see a spider, sorry but YOU gotta get it), I'm petrified of flying in planes, and clowns are NOT okay with me!!! If you want to see me do something crazy, you gotta "DARE" me hahaha I never turn down a dare!

Will you marry me?

Oh my goodness! you move so quickly! lol you haven't even asked me out on a date yet. I guess it IS getting close to 2012 though, and if rumors are true, we don't have a lot of time do we? So...I DO!!!!!! and while you're down there on one knee... :)



q focus: THE TARONGA FOUNDATION - SAVING ENDANGERED SPECIES (and having lots of fun too...)

Since the Taronga Foundation was established in 2000, the role of the zoo has changed dramatically. With their focus on education, research and conservation The Taronga Conservation Society Australia's two great zoos, Taronga and Taronga Western Plains Zoos, have been on the front line in helping to save wonderful Australian wildlife such as the Corroboree Frog, the Booroolong Frog, the Yellow Spotted Bell Frog and the Tasmanian Devil from extinction. With unique expertise in animal care, research, breeding and education, Taronga also works with like-minded organisations, community groups and conservation experts to assist with wildlife conservation nationally and globally.

As Linda Newton, Acting Head of Fundraising explained, "the Taronga Foundation supports conservation projects not only in Australia but around the world through the Field Conservation Grants Program. Funds for these projects support Taronga staff and fellow conservation agencies in the field and directly help endangered wildlife, from critically endangered frogs and birds to tigers and elephants."

"This year we have supported key projects such as the restoration and protection of Regent Honeyeater habitats in Victoria and NSW," said Linda. "We have directed funds to an anti-poaching campaign in Zambia and the protection of Orang-Utan habitat in Tanjung Puting National Park in Borneo. In Fiji, we help fund a program for veterinary screening of Fijian Crested Iguanas. The animals in our zoos are ambassadors for threatened species and help us achieve our vision of a shared future for wildlife and people."

The Foundation also focuses on supporting educating programs helping young people and local communities care for wildlife in their local region. Examples include Little Penguins in Manly and Platypus in the Orana (Dubbo) region.

Although its aims are serious, the Foundation and its supporters have plenty of fun doing this vital work. For example, the Foundation and the Zoo community have been involved with Mardi Gras since 2009 when staff from Taronga Zoo and Dubbo's Taronga Western Plains Zoo marched to raise awareness of the plight of the Tasmanian Devil, creating a crowd-pleasing dance routine performed to Kylie Minogue's 'Better the Devil You Know'.

2010 was the Lunar Year of the Tiger and Zoo staff presented the plight of the Sumatran Tiger in Mardi Gras with a gigantic papier mache tiger and a dance routine to 'Eye of the Tiger'. In 2011 our Mardi Gras focus was on overfishing of the oceans, depletion of fisheries and the need for sustainable seafood, with a giant silver fish made from recycled CDs and a dance routine to the soundtrack of Rihanna's 'SOS'.

The Taronga Foundation also supported the 2010 'Fat Tuesday' Mardi Gras dinner which was held at Taronga Zoo for the first time. Taronga's guest speaker, Dr Rebecca Spindler, who is Manager of Scientific



Conservation and Research, presented a scholarly and witty speech explaining how the LGBT lifestyle was environmentally sustainable.

But it's not only about animals. It's the interaction of people and animals that sets Taronga apart from other conservation organisations, and makes the work of the Foundation so important, challenging and fun.

Each year, the Foundation invites twenty of Australia's most gifted artists to spend three months capturing the life of Taronga, engaging with the animals and their keepers. Their works are then auctioned with all proceeds going to the Foundation. The Artists in Residence (AiR) program has been tremendously successful in introducing new ways for people to see and interact with Taronga.

The Foundation's diverse supporters just love a great night out at the Zoo. Here are some upcoming fundraising events which are enormous fun and help the Foundation's conservation efforts:



- Friday 18 November 2011 is the date of the annual Zoofari fundraising dinner, this year presented as the Black and White Lemur Ball. The evening unfolds in a beautiful three-tiered marquee in the grounds of Taronga Zoo, overlooking Sydney Harbour. This annual event holds a very special place in Sydney's social calendar.

The glamorous black and white theme in honour of Ring-tailed Lemurs will be a star-studded evening with fabulous entertainment and dancing under the stars. A menu designed by chef Sean Connolly with matching wines as well as opportunities to win unique prizes at the auction, including some very special Taronga experiences.

- Of course who could pass up New Year's Eve at Taronga, one of the most beautiful vantage points in Sydney? Check out the animals when you arrive, picnic on the lawns with live entertainment, then watch the fireworks from your unique vantage point.

Whether it's fun for a good cause, or supporting important research efforts, the Taronga Foundation passionately believes that the Zoo and you, the reader, have a vital role in saving our precious animals for future generations.

You are invited to support the Foundation's work by donating online through our website taronga.org.au If you would like to know more about attending a Foundation event please contact our Events Manager on tarongafoundation@zoo.nsw.gov.au or call (02) 9978 4616.

Testimonial from Daniel Donnelly: Zoo Parent & Foundation Supporter:

Visiting Taronga Zoo earlier in the year, I was incredibly inspired, encapsulated, inadvertently immersed and found myself lost (literally) among the countless animal exhibitions and enclosures set among hectares of amazing landscaping creating an atmosphere of excitement, intrigue, peace, healing and tranquillity - a testament to the immense amount of work and dedication of the staff and countless volunteers.

During a guided 'behind the scenes' tour, I had the unique opportunity to interact with a range of animals 'up close and personal' including the plight of the (until recently thought extinct) Yellow Spotted Bell Frog which numbers less than 30 that we know of in the wild, and the work of the Taronga Foundation in their attempts to rebuild this population, among others, in the wild. With so many species of animals that are in need, I became inspired by the infectious passion of the keepers along with the work of the Taronga Foundation and immediately signed up to support as a Jungle Zoo parent.

Becoming a Zoo Parent not only assists the work of the Zoo, but ultimately is one small role I can play in making our planet a cleaner and healthier one for all its inhabitants, as well as the opportunity to make a difference in assisting the Foundation in its conservation efforts. The personal satisfaction that comes with making a difference through supporting the foundation is a tenfold return on what I consider to be an invaluable financial investment, and one we can all afford to make for as little as \$48 a year - less than \$1 per week.

q fitness: with CHRIS GREGORIOU

So summer is around the corner, what does this mean to you? Are you excited to be taking off the layers and exposing more of yourself? It's a real fact that a huge part of the population is not comfortable with a part of their body.

Within the GLBTI community, it could be said that there is a greater percentage of people that are unhappy about their body. Fitting into the scene can be quite uncomfortable for many. We have our own unique terminology - such as 'gym fit', 'muscular', butch, lipstick and 'bear', all used to describe a person's body type or style. Anyone who has been to online dating sites would certainly know about these labels. However these labels don't say anything about a person's personality or character, yet for some, sum up people.

If you don't know your label or have never been labeled, that's probably not a bad thing as these types of classifications can lead to unnecessary pressure and stress and of course a very bad description of a person.

So are you thinking of the warmer weather and feeling excited at the thought of running around semi naked in the sun, or fearful to walk around in a singlet or to take your top off? The pressure for a male man can be enormous when trying to fit in. Ever wondered where male image issues come from? Many theories all point to modern advertising and media campaigns that show men as ripped, muscular, hairless, tanned, beefed up and with great hair styles. The majority of magazine covers (Mens Health, GQ & DNA) & billboards all portray an ideal man as an airbrushed perfectly fit male.



With the warmer weather, now is an ideal time to catch up on vitamin D, become more active and to feel good. The extended daylight hours also see us out of our homes more. So don't allow yourself to get weighed down with labels or how you fit into the GLBTI community, but think about how you will be making the most of the warmer weather and doing what you really enjoy.



q nostalgia: CHARLIE'S ANGELS

35 year Anniversary of the original show! With Fan, Author and Angel Friend, Mike Pingel. Mike Pingel creator of the #1 Charlie's Angels fan website @ www.charliesangels.com celebrates the classic series and look back at the show which pathed the way for the new ABC TV version.

Mike Pingel the owner of the #1 Charlie's Angels website at www.charliesangels.com. Has written two books on Charlie's Angels, Angelic Heaven: a fans guide to Charlie's Angels and Channel Surfing: Charlie's Angels. Pingel also was Farrah Fawcett's assistant from 2005-2007 and runs Cheryl Ladd (www.cherylladd.com) and Tanya Roberts (www.TanyaRoberts.biz) official websties.

It was September 22, 1976 when ABC aired the first episode of Charlie's Angels. The first episode titled "Hellrider" and starred Farrah Fawcett, Kate Jackson and Jaclyn Smith. The new series was an over night hit and was pegged as "Jiggle TV." The series include a few cast changes which replaced leaving Angels: Cheryl Ladd, Shelley Hack and Tanya Roberts.

Charlie's Angels for five years, 1976-1981.

Pingel created, CharliesAngels.com which premiered on the Internet in October 1996, and was quickly picked as site of the day on both Yahoo!com and WebTV. Since 1996, the site has updated fans on the current works of the heavenly actress and everything Charlie's Angels.

Pingel was called upon during the preparation for the 2000 Charlie's Angels movie for some consulting with producers Leonard Goldberg, Drew Barrymore and director, McG. Pingel even auditioned for the boyfriend of Natalie (Cameron Diaz's character) for the first film version of Charlie's Angels. Columbia/TRI-Star's 2000 & 2003 films combined box office grossed over \$523 million dollars worldwide

Pingel a collector of Charlie's Angels memorabilia. His collection includes rare items such as the original Harry's Angels script, a Charlie's Angels pinball machine, to Charlie's Angels dolls, dresses, puzzles, games, vans, dress-up sets, doll dresses, full size standee, posters, 100s of magazines, make-up and beauty Sets! plus much more!

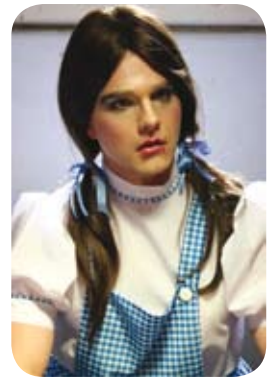


q film: **STILETTO**

Production is now complete on the drag caper short film, *Silver Stiletto* (formerly *The Silver Stiletto*). This punchy mangaesque flick about a superhero vigilante drag queen was probably the fastest independent production of this quality ever made in Australia. It has taken less than 8 weeks to move it from concept to can, resulting in a superbly shot piece. A 30 second teaser is now available on You Tube and Vimeo.

Craig Rossiter, the author of the work and former research analyst at Screen Australia, wrote the first draft on the 17th July between the hours of midnight and 6.am. By September 11 the film was in the can.

The idea for a drag queen super-hero had been playing in the mind of writer Craig Rossiter for some time, but it was only after laughing about it one night with friend and filmmaker Luke Mayze that he decided to make it more than an idea. Craig had previously been a Senior Analyst at Screen Australia.



"My mental and creative energies had been spent doing things like the economic modeling for the producer offset or generating the producer survey data for the 2010 Independent Screen Production review. I guess you could say I had a creative itch I needed to scratch as I tapped out the first draft in 5 hours instead of sleeping".

The first draft was called *Robina Hood* but by 1.00pm the next day a second draft had been written and the title changed to *Silver Stiletto*. "I thought the fact that you could abbreviate *Silver Stiletto* to "SS" gave the themes of the script an added layer of twisted meaning and would lend itself to an emblem that all super-heroes need to have" says Craig.

Craig sent the script to friend and filmmaker, Luke Mayze, who read the script whilst baby sitting his nephew and niece. Despite the constant screaming and interruptions, he knew instantly that he wanted to direct the short. "What I loved about the script was that there is just a gold mine of dramatic potential. There's an edge to this film. When we shot the police interrogation scene with Guy Edmonds I just let the camera roll in full takes. The conversation was so intriguing that you could edit that section alone and still have a great short film".

"I see the short as being the origin story of this superhero, and there has to be more to come. It deserves a bigger platform than just a short. I think we knew that from the start, and so we wanted to make sure the short was epic enough to sell that message. I think with what we've been able to capture in camera the film won't look like an Australian short. It will look like a Hollywood feature", says Guy Edmonds who decided he wanted to co-produce the short after Luke asked him to consider the lead role. Guy has his own production company, Fat Budgie Films.

At this point the filmmakers are just focused on completing post-production but the producing team of Guy Edmonds, Luke Mayze and Craig Rossiter, who works closely with Simon Toy of Brisbane production outfit, Ignition Films, have agreed to further develop the property once the short is complete.

"I wrote this script just because I wanted to get back into filmmaking. What I've gotten out of it, in a very short time, is a hell of a lot more. I have to admit, I feel a bit shell-shocked!" say Craig Rossiter. "One of the most satisfying things to come out of this process so far was when a crew member told me how proud he was to be working on the film because he believed the very idea of it had helped a friend of his. He explained how this friend was a transsexual who was having difficulty coming to terms with her change in gender roles and was experiencing crippling social anxiety as a result. When he told her what he was doing she got so excited and found new motivation. So I think if by making this film, and doing it well, we can inspire one person to overcome their own demons and fear of the world in a positive way, then all of us involved from the grip, to make-up, to production designer, to the cinematographer can be proud of what we've done, even if there is nothing more beyond that", says Craig.

The filmmakers have made this film with their own funds and no government money has gone into the production. They are still trying to raise support from the community to help finish post-production that they anticipate will be towards the end of October.

Anyone interested in donating can do so by either of two means:

By making a tax-deductible donation through the Australian Cultural Fund. Interested parties can do so on-line by following a link at the production's website, www.silverstiletto.com

Or by purchasing a "perk" at Indi GoGo at <http://www.indiegogo.com/The-Silver-Stiletto>



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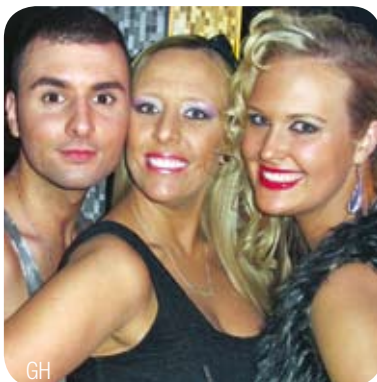
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q scene: OUT & ABOUT



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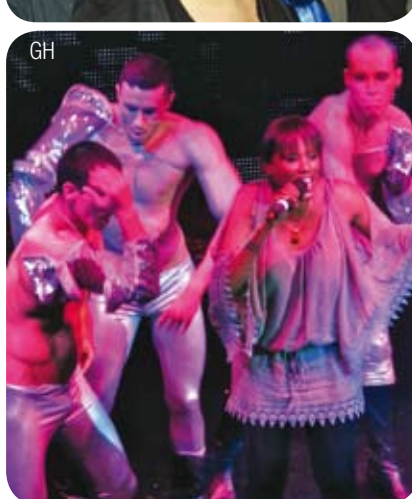
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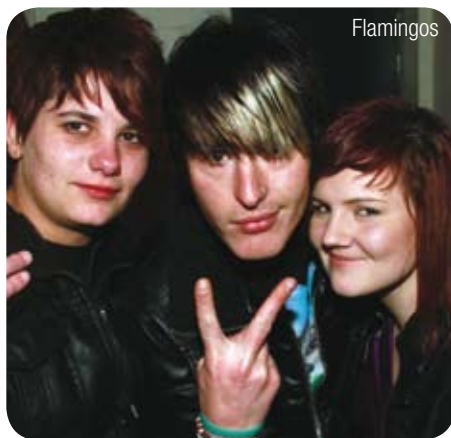
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q scene: OUT AND ABOUT



q scene: **EXTRA**

Vanessa Amorosi GOSSIP BOMB and SYTYCD nights at Flamingos



q visit: THE ALICE, NT

My life is pretty rich I have to admit. Apart from having a gaggle of wonderful mates, a village as a family and a great network of acquaintances, I also get the opportunity to do what I love and love what I do.

I once did a radio interview where my guest regaled a tale of the realisation that we he did was write about food and share in so many amazing experiences. I had a bit of a light bulb moment at the same time, realizing that I am in a very privileged position of being able to experience much of the same. This last experience brought to me to central Australia, to Alice Springs. I had a picture in my mind of what Alice looked like, most of it romanticized from images seen and stories read. Nothing prepared me for the obliteration of the expectations I had of Alice Springs.

The people here are wonderful. Friendly, easygoing and fond of a laugh. I am here just for a few days and what I have experienced in these couple of days has been fantastic.

My first surprise was the topography. I expected a flat expanse of dry red soil with a great big red rock fallen from nowhere, that sits just up the road. Nothing could be further from the truth. Alice is surrounded on all sides by the McDonnell Ranges. Along with these stunning ranges, there are spectacular gum trees, refreshing waterholes, beautiful palm trees, awesome colours, amazing wildlife, and a people who seem to take everything pretty much in their stride. Ayers Rock or Uluru is about 5 hours away and not just up the road as I had thought.

Contrary to what I thought, Alice also has a vibrant gay community. I was introduced to the mayor of gay Alice Springs, a man filled with passion for the town, its lifestyle and the opportunities that abound. Phil Walcott should be the Mayor of Alice Springs. He is very passionate about what this town offers and why a visit must be on every one's bucket list.

There is a subculture here as well, a sad underbelly to Alice that is prevalent everywhere you look. It is a very large and obvious Indigenous community. There is poverty, alcoholism and other social issues that affect every town with an Aboriginal population of this size. But I can't dwell on that. I can't fix the social issues here – that is a job for governments and those charged with making these changes. All I can do is acknowledge that this exists.

Tourism NT brought me here to make an episode of my new internet TV show. Their generosity in funding the extraordinary crew that came with me is unbounded, and they will achieve what we set out to do. To tell the good stories that come out of Alice Springs. To be a part of the Alice Desert Festival and more specifically, the Wild Bushfoods part of the Festival.

I wonder what it would be like to live here, and the staff of the hotel (some of whom are part of that vibrant gay community) have given me an indication of what life is like here... And they don't have a bad word to say. It seems in Alice Springs that people just expect you to be a good person, do the right thing and contribute. Who you sleep with seems to be very insignificant here.

Tonight I get to celebrate with the local community at the Wild Bushfoods Gala Dinner. I am sure that this will be a wonderful experience and one that further endears me to this great town.

I will come back one day, with more time and the chance to explore more of the sacred territory around Alice – Uluru, The Olgas and those other iconic Central Australian land marks. Until then I depart with some red dust in my shoes, some terrific images and a full heart filled with memories created right here on the edge of the desert. I am sure the crew that is with me will do the same.

**Pete Dillon and the crew referred to in this article were guests of Tourism NT at the Alice Desert Festival.*



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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.



Technology for Expats – VOIP Telephones

It is a fact of expat life, than when we move overseas we spend much more time chatting on the telephone and our phone bills soar. The introduction of new telephone services such as Skype and Voip have recently made life so much easier, and cheaper, for the expat.

My Great Aunt Gertie hates phoning me in Spain. A long distance call from Manchester to Bournemouth is perfectly acceptable, even at peak rate; however, when it comes to a call from the UK to the Canary Islands, I hear the sharp inward sucking through her false teeth and a breathless "I must be quick, dear, I am calling long distance. It is very expensive, dear." My usual response of "No, Auntie you have this number on Friends and Family..." makes no difference.

Great Aunt Gertie also complains about, "That Spanish lady. I can't understand a word she's saying..."

"No Auntie, you won't, because you don't speak Spanish," is my forlorn defence of Telefonica's automated response that Auntie will sometimes hear if I am not in. Mobile phone? I hear you say. Sadly not, as that causes an even worse problem for Auntie. "You'll have to speak up, dear. It is such a long way away."

I realised long ago that the telephone issue would have to be sorted if I was not to be banished from Auntie's will. I tried Skype, a wonderful service, but even though I bought Auntie a Skype phone, which didn't need a computer, thankfully, she still complained endlessly about the call quality. Then I discovered the answer. She always insisted upon putting her false teeth in when using the Skype phone. For some strange reason she claimed that she felt naked without them. Usually she didn't bother with false teeth, following a very unpleasant argument with her dentist, yet she can still crack a nut like anyone else. Why she had to put her teeth in when speaking on the Skype phone, I shall never know, but I suspect that it was because the magic box looked a little like a camera.



In despair, I turned to a wonderful new system called Voip (Voice over Internet Protocol). Without dealing too much with the technicalities, these clever telephones look and behave just like a normal telephone and can be easily used, as long as you have an Internet connection. You don't need to have a computer switched on; indeed, you don't even need a computer. I have a cordless version, which means I can wander anywhere in the house or outside and still be connected. Now this is the clever part. The Voip service that I use gave me a UK telephone number; actually, I bought one with a Bournemouth code, as I used to live there and I still have a lingering attachment to that fine seaside town. I now have a UK (Bournemouth) telephone number that Auntie Gertie and all my friends and family can dial at a local call rate, or free with some telephone packages. The call is diverted to my Voip phone in the Canary Islands, and at no cost to me either. The call quality is excellent and even Auntie Gertie often comments that it sounds as if I am in the next room, and I am not shouting!

The other clever part about this system is that if I am out of the house, but in range of a Wifi or 3G mobile telephone signal, the call is diverted automatically to my iPhone free of charge as part of my mobile Internet package. I can be shopping in my local supermarket and still chat to Auntie Gertie, with or without teeth!

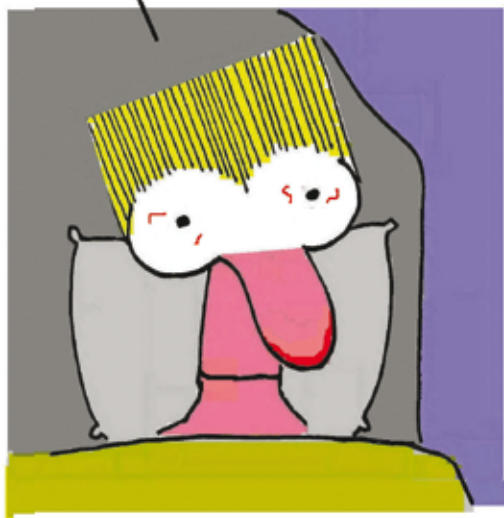
For me, having a UK phone number has proved to be invaluable as publishers, relatives and friends seem to be much happier calling me on my local UK number than calling my Spanish home number. I am not in the business of selling telephone services or equipment, but if you would like further information have a look at the Expat Guide on my website - www.bariimahoney.com. Great Aunt Gertie is now quite happy with the arrangement and she assures me regularly that I am still mentioned in her will!

If you enjoyed this article, take a look at Barrie's websites: www.bariimahoney.com and www.thecanaryislander.com or read his latest book, 'Letters from the Atlantic' (ISBN: 978 184 386 6459).

Gaylord Blade

Young, Gay & Hot-to-Trot

I'm dying, mate! Did you call for Father Ryan like I asked you?



I'm not sure a headcold qualifies for the Last Rites, Gaylord. And you don't have a Bible to check ...



but your temperature is a very normal 98.6 ... do you still want to ask Father Ryan to come?



YES! This cold's NOT the problem! I'm dying from not having SEX with Father Ryan in a week!





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