

MYGAYZINE

NORTHERN IRELAND



1 IN 4

GAY MEN LIVING WITH

HIV

DON'T KNOW IT

the rainbow
project

LOCAL NEWS
WE CHAT ABOUT LAST
MONTHS NOLAN SHOW

HOLIDAYS
ROMANCE IN FRANCE

SHOWBIZ NEWS
BY CHRIS MC MURRAY

CATCH UP
WITH MR UNDERGROUND

**MUCH MORE
INSIDE**

**NEW STATISTICS
HAVE REVEALED
1 IN 20 GAY AND
BISEXUAL MEN
IN THE UK NOW
HAS HIV**

**Bonus Interview
with Mr GAY NI**

**BRILLIANT NEWS FOR THE UK!! MP'S VOTE 400 TO 175 TO
PASS SAME SEX MARRIAGE BILL IN ENGLAND AND WALES**

February Edition!

Issue 5 - February 2013

**Relevant News to bring you up to speed,
Local, National and International - it'll be all you ever need.**

**Music, Movies, Showbiz News and Fun
In an Entertainment section that's simply second to none.**

**Take your pick in our guide to What's On,
Plan a great night out or party until dawn.**

**The Nightlife section features Photos and Reviews.
Don't know where to go? We'll help you choose!**

**Lifestyle covers Fashion and Holidays, Fitness and Food
You won't find another that's even half this good.**

**Get involved with our readers, they've got their own section
Rants, Poems and Texts - we've an interesting collection.**

**A mix of writers bring us our regular monthly features
You'll more than love them! They're talented creatures!**

February has arrived and love is in the air.

It's February already and we're back with yet another issue of MyGayZine to guide you through the month ahead. Our news section features a comprehensive look at equal marriage news across the United Kingdom and Europe. Check out the latest Music and Movies, read into global showbiz news brought to you by Chris McMurray or check out our Valentine's Day interview update with Mr Underground all squeezed into the entertainment section. There's more than enough going on in our What's On and Nightlife sections to ensure your not stuck for something to do this month either. It's Pancake Tuesday on Feb 12th and we've got some of the tastiest recipes in our food guide, check out the hottest deals on the coolest winter clothing in our Fashion section and Maurice Dickson from Gayaway2travel is back chatting about Romance in France, all of this and more in our Lifestyle section. Check out our Reader's section for rants and texts or delve straight into our collection of juicy features with contributions from Peter Fahy, Kosmic Karen, Ryan Dior and a catch up with Mr Gau NI. Startling statistics from the Medical research centre this month (page8) inspired us to team with the Rainbow Project for this month's front cover. We hope everyone enjoys the read and don't be afraid to drop us an email to say hey or ask questions, we don't bite :-D

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS MONTH'S ISSUE?

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BBC'S THE NOLAN SHOW TALKS EQUAL MARRIAGE



Stephen Nolan is all too familiar with the gay marriage debate here in Northern Ireland having covered the topic several times on both TV and Radio in the last few years, but what did last month's debate accomplish other than winning more ratings for the chat show hosts popular television series?

Last month Stephen invited Johnathan Bell of the DUP and John O'Dogherty director of the Rainbow Project onto his television show to discuss last year's failed equal marriage bill and to discuss the future of the equal marriage campaign in Northern Ireland now that England, Scotland and Wales look set to adopt an equal marriage policy.

The show contained its usual mixture

of heightened emotions, heated conversations, mocking laughter, blatant homophobia, pleas for understanding and it wouldn't be complete without several speakers demanding they finish making their point. The entertainment factor is all well and good but have we made any progress after yet another lively discussion on Northern Ireland's most watched television programme?

England, Scotland and Wales look set to adopt equal marriage proposals but will N.Ireland follow suit?

These discussions are certainly a great way to grow awareness of the issues facing the LGBT community and challenge the perceptions of those who are intolerant but they also offer a platform for another individual or organisation to preach what multi- award-winning journalist, columnist and broadcaster Patrick Strudwick termed “homophobic bile”.

Past appearances from the DUP at discussions relating to LGBT issues have generally led to worldwide press coverage and condemnation of another homophobic slur or comment. However this time round DUP politician Johnathan Bell cleverly avoided saying something he shouldn't have by continually dodging questions and making jokes about parents having to be referred to as progenitors. Mr Bell

even tried defending his opposition on equal marriage by quoting civil partnership laws he doesn't even believe should exist and then refused to clarify his party's current position in relation to the decision to decriminalise homosexuality over thirty years ago which at that time they opposed because they believed the effect of that law “as a restraint on bestiality, incest





and rape would be further reduced”.

Adoption laws were a talking point on the night and Johnathan Bell couldn't miss an opportunity for another progenitor joke, this time to fewer laughs in the audience. “The best and most stable relationships are with a mother and a father” he claimed as though just finishing the largest study of its kind. In reality psychologists have already investigated the links between sexuality and parenting which we highlighted in our December edition. The research being carried out at UCLA has shown that high risk children adopted from foster care

do equally well when placed with gay, lesbian or heterosexual parents, contrary to Mr Bells beliefs.

Thankfully Mr John O'Dogherty from the Rainbow Project was on hand throughout the half hour discussion to defend the LGBT community and did so very effectively and passionately.

John only had to list the string of protective laws and rights the DUP were opposed to get his points across. “Jonathan says he wants a society that is equal but the DUP has actively opposed every move towards equality in the past in

Northern Ireland and in Westminster. They opposed goods, facilities and services legislation. You don't believe LG BT people should be protected in their jobs and you don't support civil partnerships. You voted against them. You voted against these moves towards equality... Rights cannot be dictated by the majority. ”

The equal marriage NI campaign have stressed that organisations will not be forced to carry out marriages if it is not in line with their beliefs and John O'Dogherty was keen to point this out to Mr Bell who views the legislation as a “slippery slope”



which could see the European Court eventually force churches to carry out gay marriages in future.

John O'Dogherty - Director of The Rainbow Project

“What we are calling for is the introduction of religious freedom, the point that Johnathan was making is about faith groups opposing marriage and they should be allowed to do so. No one should be forced...Can any faith group be forced to marry any people divorced? No. Was it brought a European Court? Yes.”

It is sad that we come to expect this sort of intolerance from politicians representing the people of our country, “a party for all” claim the DUP but as an audience member rightly pointed out it’s evidently a party for all “except gays”.

This time round several important topics concerning the LGBT community were raised and discussed at a national level. People are being exposed more and more to the culture and reality of these issues and how they affect LGBT people on a personal level.

As the largest party in Northern Ireland the DUP look set to remain an obstacle on the journey to equality for our community but even the tiniest river can cut vast canyons out of rock over time and as we move forward into 2013 undeterred hopefully change is on the way.

Recent upheavals in unionism over the flags issue could potentially see the emergence of a more accepting, modern party and add a new dimension to our political landscape that could maybe bring about some of these changes. Nolan did a brilliant job chairing the discussion and we look forward to future opportunities to raise these issues again.



GET TESTED!

One in 20 gay and bisexual men in the UK now has HIV, rising to one in 12 in London according to the Medical Research Council (MRC) and Health Protection Agency (HPA).

The study, published in the Lancet Infectious Diseases journal, found no evidence of a decline in levels of HIV in the UK over the last decade.

Over the same time period there has been a 20% reduction in the average time between infection and diagnosis, from four years to 3.2 years

38% of infections in 2010 were still diagnosed after the time patients should have started antiretroviral treatment.

The Rainbow Project has launched a free HIV and Syphilis Testing Service. Tests are by appointment only and times are flexible depending on staff availability. Tests are available in Belfast at The Rainbow Project's office at the LGBT Centre 9-13 Waring Street BT1 2DX and in L'Derry at



the Rainbow Project's Foyle Office 12A Queen Street L'Derry BT48 7EG. Please phone 02890319030 to book an appointment.

This testing service will give gay and bisexual men and other men-who-have-sex-with-men the opportunity to get tested in a safe and welcoming environment. The test itself takes 20 minutes and is a finger prick test. The results are given on the day. The whole process takes 45 minutes.

Never Give Up

**A campaign to inspire LGBT
people that are
bullied
or
feel depressed**

Help Inspire. Shine a Light. Give hope.

**Upload your video, your story, today!
Please check out our details below.**

**www.youtube.com/user/Nevegiveupireland
E-mail: nevegiveup@dtmediaireland.com**



Catholic Church: Senior teachers face sack if they enter into Civil Partnerships.

A booklet sanctioned by the Archbishop of Westminster in England has warned senior teachers in Catholic maintained schools that they face demotion or even the sack if they enter into “A partnership of intimacy with another person, outside a form of marriage approved by the church...and can be removed from office”

Previously in 2007 the Archdiocese of Liverpool was told that they could not sack a Headmaster after he entered into a Civil Partnership with his same sex partner. The Church has since backtracked and is now telling senior teachers “The expectation is that [school] leaders and those who aspire to leadership positions will make substantive life choices that are in conformity with the gospel and the teaching of the

Catholic Church”.

A spokesman for the National Secular Society who works in the UK and the rest of Europe campaigning from a non-religious perspective for the separation of religion and state added- “It is scandalous that the Catholic Church is able to use taxpayers’ money to practice this sort of crude discrimination. The way a person arranges their private life, so long as it is within the law, should be of no concern to an employer, not even the Catholic Church, particularly if no scandal is caused. Ironically the vast majority of British Catholics disagree with their church’s hard line on matters such as homosexuality, contraception and cohabitation.”

The European Commission is already looking at the laws in the UK for so called ‘Faith schools’ to decide if they breach European Directives on education. They said “This is a matter for schools and their governors. Faith schools can consider whether a person’s conduct is in line with their religious values when dismissing teachers. However schools must also comply with employment law.”

The UK Equalities Minister, Maria Miller has reassured teachers their jobs will not be under threat once same sex unions become law.

We understand the most complex relationships in the world:

$$E=MC^2$$

$$X+Y = 2.4$$

Mass and energy, men and women. But sometimes the simplest of relationships are the hardest to teach...

$$X+X = ??$$

$$Y+Y = ??$$

In 2012 ministers in England warned Primary school teachers they could face the sack for refusing to promote gay marriage once same-sex unions become law.

Equalities minister, Maria Miller, has tried to reassure teachers that their jobs will not be under threat once the bill has passed. Recently in an interview with radio 4 she said-

“Teachers are able to and entitled to express their views about same-sex marriage and there’s no requirement at all for them to promote it but, obviously, we wouldn’t expect teachers to be offensive or discriminate in any way about anybody.”





BRILLIANT NEWS FOR THE UK!!

MPS HAVE VOTED 400 TO 175 TO PASS THE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE BILL ENABLING SAME-SEX COUPLES TO GET MARRIED IN BOTH CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, WHERE A RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION HAD FORMALLY CONSENTED, IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Out of the 13 NI MPs eligible to vote on the gay marriage bill, two voted for it to be passed (SDLP's Mark Durkan and Alliance MP Naomi Long), nine voted against the bill and two did not vote (Margaret Ritchie and Alasdair McDonnell from the SDLP). The bill was opposed by DUP MPs Gregory Campbell, Nigel Dodds, Jeffrey Donaldson, Rev William McCrea,

Ian Paisley Junior, Jim Shannon, David Simpson, Sammy Wilson and independent MP Lady Sylvia Hermon.

Naomi Long of Belfast east, who voted in favour of the bill, said: "As a Christian and a liberal, I believe that equality and religious freedom are fundamental to a democratic society and that both must be promoted and protected, a position which is reflected in our policy and also in the bill.

John O'Doherty, Chair of Equal Marriage Northern Ireland, said that the final outcome was "a victory for equality and a victory for decency"

Voting lists show that 136 of David Cameron's Conservatives - almost half of the party's MPs - opposed the bill. The overwhelming majority of Labour MPs supported the bill and only four of the 56 Liberal Democrat MPs opposed the legislation. We will keep you posted on the developments in our next issue.

NEWS SNIPPETS OF THE MONTH

EQUAL MARRIAGE South of the Border



2011 saw the introduction of civil partnerships in the Republic of Ireland and now in 2013 the question of full marriage equality is rearing its head once again. Last year Fine Gael TD Jerry Butimer became the first Fine Gael deputy in the Irish parliament to come out as gay and has said he has been taken back by the support he has received from people of different age groups and walks of life. The Taoiseach has not yet outlined his views but all eyes are fixed on the Constitutional Convention which has been set up to examine possible changes to the Republic of Ireland's constitution and offers the forum within which to initiate the debate and then make a recommendation to parliament. The next steps would then be to have a referendum campaign which will have a debate and ultimately a vote which leaves it to the democratic will of the people to make the ultimate decision

French Assembly votes to make same-sex marriage legal



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Got News? Submit a press release at pressreleases@mygayzine.co.uk

SHOWBIZ NEWS

BY CHRIS McMURRAY

CLICK HERE
FOR VIDEOJODIE FOSTER COMES OUT AS GAY
IN GOLDEN GLOBES SPEECH

Well ladies, it's finally happened. Jodie Foster has officially come out as gay!

The veteran actress, who has gone to great lengths over the years to avoid speaking about her sexuality, chose to end all the speculation about her private life while making an acceptance speech last month at the Golden Globe Awards. In a witty, cryptic and sometimes bewildering speech, Foster never uttered the words 'gay' or 'lesbian', but said: "I already did my coming out about a thousand years ago, back in the stone age."

"In those very quaint days when a fragile young girl would open up to trusted friends and family, coworkers and then gradually, proudly, to everyone who knew her. To everyone she actually met. "But now, apparently I'm told, that every celebrity is expected to honor the details of their private life with a press conference, a fragrance and a prime time reality show. You guys might be surprised, but I'm not Honey Boo Boo child."

Foster, who began her acting career as a child, has won two Academy Awards. In recent years she has also directed and produced films. "If you had been a public figure since the time you were a toddler, if you had to fight for a life that felt real and honest and normal against all odds, then maybe you too would

value privacy above all else," she told the crowd. Foster is a mother to two sons, raised with her now ex-partner Cydney Bernard, also mentioned in her speech.

"There is no way I could stand here without acknowledging one of the deepest loves of my life, my heroic co-parent, my ex-partner in love but righteous soul sister in life, my confessor, ski buddy, consigliere, most beloved, BFF of 20 years Cydney Bernard, thank you Cyd." She added "I am so proud of our modern family, our amazing sons Charlie and Kit who are my reason to breathe, and to evolve, my blood and soul. And boys, in case you didn't know it, this song, all of this. This song is for you." Foster was accepting the Cecil B. DeMille Lifetime Achievement Award.

BBC AXES LESBIAN TV DRAMA 'LIP SERVICE'



So, the BBC has decided not to commission any further episodes of the lesbian TV drama 'Lip Service'. While the show had rather a mixed response, even from within the lesbian community, it's very sad that there will now be NO gay/bi girl-specific drama on UK TV.

Lip Service's official Twitter Account posted last month "BBCThree won't be recommissioning Lip Service. Thanks all for the huge amount of love & support you've shown for show. It's been a blast! xx"

Set in Glasgow, Scotland, the UK's answer to 'The L Word' was about the lives and loves of a group of gay/bi women, and starred Heather Peace,

Fiona Button, Ruta Gedmintas and Laura Fraser.

From the outset, the show received a great deal of negative attention from the tabloid press and family groups in particular - however, from within the lesbian community the reception was more mixed.

By the end of series two, Lip Service seemed to have won over more lesbian fans. Many felt that the show was written with more humour, and also that the drama was more compelling, particularly after Cat (played Laura Fraser) unexpectedly died.

The writer of the show Harriet Braun said on Twitter that it was a "sad day" for her. She said: "Sadly BBC Three have confirmed there won't be a 3rd series of Lip Service. A huge, huge

thank you to all the fans for all your support."

The reasons why the BBC decided not to continue with the drama have not been revealed.... However, last month a study on the representation of LGBT people in broadcasting said that Lip Service had not been successful in its portrayal of lesbian lifestyles. One of the contributors to the report, the actors' trade union Equity, described the show as "laughable". Let's hope that the BBC can quickly fill the gap left behind by Lip Service with more quality programming written specifically by and for gay/bi women in the UK.

As the report correctly identified, there is a dire need for more and better representation of lesbians and bisexual women on TV in this country.

By Chris McMurray

ANA MATRONIC: "WE SHOULD ACCEPT PEOPLE FOR WHO THEY ARE"

CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO



Scissor Sisters singer Ana Matronic has spoken out about the importance of accepting people for who they are - in a candid and emotional video for Amnesty International's campaign against hate crimes in South Africa.

Appearing as a spokesperson for the charity's Write for Rights project, Matronic began by speaking about her own experience of being different,

growing up in an eccentric family, and her career as a female drag queen before finding fame and fortune with the Scissor Sisters.

The singer wept as she talked about the plight of 24-year-old lesbian activist Noxolo Nogwaza who was raped, beaten and stabbed to death in South Africa in April 2011.

She said: "It is my dream of dreams to have everyone in the world be unafraid to be who they truly are and are able to express themselves.

"I believe we should accept people for who they are. One woman, Noxolo Nogwaza, a 24-year-old lesbian gay rights activist, was raped, beaten and stabbed to death for believing the same

thing." Nogwaza was a human rights worker who campaigned for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights in South Africa.

In recent years, South Africa has seen an increase in hate crimes targeted at LGBT people. Ana Matronic is renowned for her love and support of the LGBT community. Last month, in an interview with gay magazine *Beige*, she encouraged readers to "celebrate your quirks; blow them up to be larger than life and live in that space."

Watch Matronic's very moving video for Amnesty International simply by clicking on the hyperlink in the title bar above.

By Chris McMurray

ROSIE O'DONNELL AND WIFE ANNOUNCE BIRTH OF BABY DAUGHTER

US TV presenter Rosie O'Donnell and her wife Michelle Rounds have announced the birth of their baby daughter Dakota.

O'Donnell tweeted yesterday: "we r thrilled to announce the arrival of r daughter Dakota - #withloveandthanks - AMEN."

Baby Dakota was born on Saturday. She weighs 5 pounds and 5 ounces. O'Donnell's spokesperson said "Moms and baby are happy and healthy."

While it is Rounds' first child, O'Donnell is already mother to four older children: Parker, 17, Chelsea, 15, Blake, 13, and Vivienne, 10. The other mother of the older children is O'Donnell's

former partner, Kelli Carpenter.

O'Donnell and Rounds were married last summer, while Rounds was diagnosed with desmoids tumors, a rare condition that requires multiple surgeries. Last August, O'Donnell suffered a heart attack, but recovered after receiving treatment.

By Chris McMurray



RYLAN CLARK GETS NAKED



RYLAN ALSO RECENTLY CELEBRATED WINNING CHANNEL 5'S CELEBRITY BIG BROTHER

Rylan Clark has appeared fully naked in the March issue of *Cosmopolitan Magazine* to raise awareness of Male Cancer for Everyman. The newly crowned *Celeb Big Brother* champion 2013 said "We blokes play with our bits enough as it is, so when your man has his hands down his trousers on the couch, encourage him to check his testicles for lumps." Behind the scenes footage can be viewed by clicking the hyperlink button above.

By Maggie Zene

SCOTTISH SINGER HORSE MARRIES HER PARTNER



Congratulations to the very talented singer Horse, who married her partner Alanna in Scotland at the weekend.

The couple tied the knot in Lanark, a town from which Sheena McDonald (Horse's birth name) fled in her teens because she was bullied for being a lesbian.

Horse told The Scottish Daily Record: "I am married and I am thrilled to bits. I have had several long-term partners but I just knew Alanna was the one. It

seems very natural. It is a special thing."

She told the newspaper the fact that she felt comfortable coming back to Lanark to exchange vows proved that attitudes have changed.

"I had a terrible time growing up. People attacked and bullied me because I was gay in a small town. I used to get chased by gangs. I had physical encounters. I was attacked by people with broken bottles but the verbal abuse was the worst.

"People would call me names and I was afraid when I was growing up. I didn't tell anyone at the time, not even my dad because I felt I was bringing shame on the family."

"It got so bad that one day I was walking and a police patrol car was sitting across the street. The policeman shouted, 'There's that lezzie'. I thought, 'I'm in trouble now. If something happens, who is going to help me?' I left the town shortly after that."

The singer said that she turned to music to escape homophobia. In the 1980s she signed her band (also called Horse) to US label giants Capitol. They became successful and toured with the likes of Tina Turner and blues legend BB King.

More recently, Horse has been touring the country as a successful solo artist, and has performed with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

NO HORSING AROUND

This week she is releasing her latest album *Home*, which includes *Careful*, a track covered by Will Young last year.

The singer has said she'd like to become an anti-bullying ambassador, so that children can benefit from her experiences growing up.

Horse said: "Children need to be taught that we are all different — either for wearing glasses, being a different colour or having red hair — and that we have to support each other. "Anyone who feels inferior to someone else can be empowered by being creative."

"I feel like an ambassador for people who are gay because I appeal to men, women, teenagers and kids. My music is a global message. I want to be visible for other people because it does get better. I got through it."

By Chris McMurray

DANIEL RADCLIFFE

Daniel Radcliffe has mentioned that he would love to win an MTV award for Best Kiss, for a gay kiss he shares with his co-star Dane DeHaan. The star said it was "sincere, passionate and romantic". The film is called *Kill Your Darlings*, Daniel plays the late poet Allan Ginsberg.

By Maggie Zene



NICK GRIMSHAW

Nick Grimshaw the newly appointed voice of BBC Radio 1's famous Breakfast show has managed the lowest listening figures for almost seven years during his first few months, but young listeners are on the up. The figures showed that the 15yr to 24yr bracket is up by almost a quarter of a million. Radio 1 bosses are 'delighted with the figures for the brand new breakfast show as it was the biggest schedule change in a generation and it has resulted in the audience getting younger.'

By Maggie Zene

MR UNDERGROUND

We introduced Mr Underground to our readers at Christmas when he dropped by to answer a few questions on the release of his new album 'Blitz Kidd' and with over two month's past since we last caught up with the local LGBT singer we knew there would be plenty more gossip to catch up on. This month Mr Underground is back with us chatting about his new single 'Victorious', love, romance and his plans for Valentine's Day.

What's the most romantic thing that someone has done for you?

The most romantic thing someone has done for me is took me on a surprise drive to get ice cream then drove to the top of the mountain to a monument that overlooks the city. It was such a memorable moment of 2012.

What does St. Valentine's day mean to you?

Valentine's day to me is a day of romance and being close to the one you love. Although if you are rocking the single life why not go out and have dinner with friends and just enjoy the freedom!

What's the most romantic thing that you have ever done to get someone's attention?

Not sure if this is romantic or not but when I saw a guy out in a club he caught my eye, not sure whether he was Gay/Bi/Straight but I didn't care. I bought him a drink and got my friend to bring it over to him and say it was from me. It definitely got his attention anyway and we got chatting after it. Was really funny at the same time though.

Have you ever been heartbroken?

Yes of course, I think we all have. It feels like everything around you has been crushed and that you have nothing left. But time is the

ENTERTAINMENT THIS MONTH'S ENTERTAINMENT RUNDOWN

MISTER UNDERGROUND

Mister Underground is an electronic pop act from London, featuring lead singer and producer **Shelton F. Lucky Daye**. The album features tracks like "Victorious" and "Blitz Kidd #1".

How do you get your musical message across? Do you have any tips for other artists?

Shelton F. Lucky Daye: "I think the most important thing is to be consistent. You have to be consistent with your output, your sound, your message. You have to be consistent with your output, your sound, your message. You have to be consistent with your output, your sound, your message."

What do you think is the most important thing for an artist to do?

Shelton F. Lucky Daye: "I think the most important thing is to be consistent. You have to be consistent with your output, your sound, your message. You have to be consistent with your output, your sound, your message."

What do you think is the most important thing for an artist to do?

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ENTERTAINMENT THIS MONTH'S ENTERTAINMENT RUNDOWN

How do you think you stand out in your genre?

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best healer and as time goes on you do get over it. Sometimes you look back and think "What the hell was I thinking" and sometimes you generally do miss the person you were with. I usually don't have x's, I have y's. ha! - But my most recent break up was ended on good terms and we are happy to move on as friends which is great.

Are you planning on shedding your special Valentine's affections on someone special this month?

I think I'm happy to say I'm going to be single this Valentine's day... I just want to have a bit of time to enjoy myself before getting into anything serious again.

Your new single 'Victorious' is due for UK release soon what date is that available, and from where?

Yes the third single from the album "Blitz Kidd #1" is "Victorious". This track has actually been unreleased now for few years but I feel like now is the perfect time to release it and I have also teamed up with a star from The Voice UK on this track. It will be available on iTunes, Napster and Amazon.

We believe that there is a guest on there too, tell us a bit more about that?

Yes this track features vocals from Ben Kelly (The Voice UK). Ben's vocals are really powerful and I know I have not got the best voice in the industry but I think our vocals go great together and bring out the emotion of the track. It was a pleasure to have worked with Ben. We will be shooting a video together in June 2013 so be sure to look out for that.

MOVIES & MUSIC UPDATE

AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 2013

We've sifted through those boring, tedious lists and charts to present you with a selection of the best releases and entertainment purchases available this month. Check back each month and keep up to date with the latest and greatest entertainment releases. February brings with it a mammoth amount of cool movies and music. Check out this month's cinema releases below and find out when this month's hottest DVD's, Singles and Albums will be available to download on the next page.

@ THE CINEMA

Beautiful Creatures

Emmy Rossum/ Jeremy Irons 13th Feb

Warm Bodies

John Malovich/ Nicholas Hoult 8th Feb

This is 40

Paul Rudd/ Leslie Mann

14 Feb

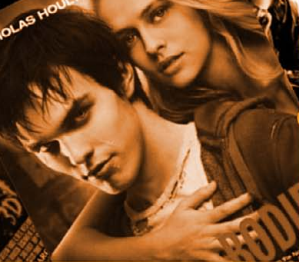
Cloud Atlas

Tom Hanks/ Halle Berry 22 Feb

Hansel & Grettel: Witch Hunters

Jeremy Renner/ Gemma Anterton

22nd Feb





OUT ON DVD

Three Stooges
11th Feb

Perks of Being a Wallflower
12th Feb

Madagascar 3
11th Feb

Skyfall
18th Feb

Killing them softly
25th Feb

THIS MONTHS SINGLES

Lawson 'Learn to love'
3rd Feb

Little Mix 'Change your life'
3rd Feb

Rita Ora 'Radioactive'
10th Feb

Tegan & Sarah 'Closer'
10th Feb

Justin Bieber ft. Ludacris 'All around the world'
3rd Mar



...AND ALBUMS

Josh Groban 'All That Echoes'
5th Feb

Bullet for my Valentine 'Temper Temper'
12th Feb

Lil Wayne 'I am not a Human Being'
19th Feb

Will.i.am '#Willpower'
1st Mar

Dido 'Girl that got away'
4th Mar

EDITOR'S CHOICE

MIXED MARRIAGE

**“A POETIC
TRAGEDY
LACED WITH
HEARTY
HUMOUR”**

Set in Belfast on the eve of The Ulster Covenant, *Mixed Marriage* is a poetic tragedy – leavened with earthy humour – which dissects class and religious sectarianism through the breakdown of one ordinary family. Acclaimed director Jimmy Fay helms a brilliant new production of this rarely performed masterpiece. First staged over a century ago, but with echoes for today’s generation, locally and globally, *Mixed Marriage* was a ground-breaking success in its time and established Ervine as a great Irish writer who would later pen another Ulster classic, *Boyd’s Shop*.

“Timely reminder of sectarianism’s enduring cancer”
Belfast Telegraph

“...warmth and wit ...wisdom and insight”
BBC Arts Extra

“...rapturous applause and standing ovation”
NI Theatre Reviews

WHO? WHERE? WHEN? WHAT?

The MyGayZine guide to What's On and What's Hot.

WHO?

Our Events NI Wedding Show

WHERE?

Down Royal Racecourse

WHEN?

10th February

WHAT?

1pm-5pm, Admission £5
POA. Calwalk 2pm & 4pm
- with live music from the
Jukebox Jurors, hair and
makeup by Stephanie
and Margaret. Local
quality businesses will
be on hand to showcase
what products/services
they can offer. For further
information, please ring
07834370006 or email
business@oureventsni.com.

2013'S
Biggest
Wedding
Show



WHO?

Swing, Roll & Soak Valentine's Day

WHERE?

The Jungle, L'Derry

WHEN?

11 Feb - 18 February

WHAT?

This is a cool new modern
option for a St. Valentines
date enjoy NI's tree top
adventure course, climb
inside a massive air filled
ball and get thrown down
a big hill in the centres
'Zorbing' circuit or try your
hand at clay pigeon
shooting. After that you
will deserve to bask in
the outdoor hot tubs while
sipping on comp bubbly
and chocolates.



WHO?

Valentine's day Celebrations

WHERE?

Ulster-American Folk Park

WHEN?

Valentines Day

WHAT?

Take a trip down a long
forgotten lane and try a
different Valentines date
with a trip to the Ulster-
American Folk Park in
Omagh, Co. Tyrone. You
can try your hand at old
tradition of making your
date a straw Lover's Knot
that young sweethearts
exchanged before roses.
Stroll through the beautiful
and naturally romantic
museum and soak in the
atmosphere.



WHO?

James Huish Michael Buble Band

WHERE?

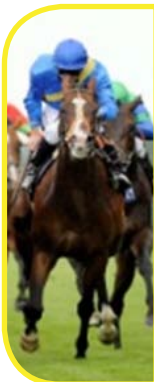
Down Royal Racecourse

WHEN?

6th February

WHAT?

Firm favourite at the Empire,
James Huish returns for his
Valentine's Showcase!!
Why not have Belfast's very
own Buble serenade you
sweetheart this year? He
has taken his tribute across
Europe and the States,
cementing his reputation
as one of the country's top
entertainers. Join the Empire
for the perfect finale to
Valentine's Day



WHO? WHERE? WHEN? WHAT?

The MyGayZine guide to What's On and What's Hot.

WHO? The Ulster Kama Sutra

WHERE? Grand Opera House

WHEN? 12th- 23rd February

WHAT? This is a fabulous cabaret mash-up of sketches and songs with a naughty..... but nice adult themed puppet show. Using confessions from local people it tells what Ulster people really think about sex. Written by Nuala McKeever, Andrea Montgomery and Anthony Toner.



WHO? Studio 54

WHERE? Waterfront Hall, Belfast

WHEN? 22nd February

WHAT? Tommy's stunning voice is now one of the most recognised across the world and he is certainly one of the finest singers of his generation. Tommy teams up with the Irish Concert Orchestra bringing a slightly different twist to his music which we know will astound audiences.



WHO? Andy Warhol

WHERE? MAC Theatre, Belfast

WHEN? 08 Feb – 28 April

WHAT? For the first time Andy Warhol's work will exhibited in Northern Ireland and with a 30 year long career there is plenty for our eyes to feast on. On show will be works from his famous ARTIST ROOMS' selection of works that span his works entirely showing the eclectic and vibrant person he is.



WHO? Studio 54

WHERE? MAC Theatre, Belfast

WHEN? 2nd March

WHAT? A recreation of the most famous nightclub in the world, Studio 54 who seen many famous faces over the time Andy Warhol, Calvin Klien, Madonna only to mention a few. The original resident DJ Nicky Siano will be spinning the classic Disco hits.



WHO? WHERE? WHEN? WHAT?

The MyGayZine guide to What's On and What's Hot.

WHO? Chinese New Year
WHERE? Various Locations, Belfast
WHEN? 10 - 16th February



WHAT? Northern Ireland's biggest ever Chinese New Year Celebrations kick off on Feb 10th with a huge family event in the Ulster Hall. There will be other events across Northern Ireland, including in Newry on Feb 16th, Carrickfergus on Feb 23rd and Derry on Feb 24th.

WHO? Tommy Tiernan
WHERE? Belfast and L'/Derry
WHEN? 3 - 9th Feb - Belfast,



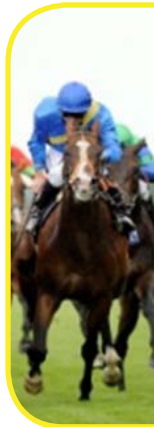
WHAT? 2nd & 3rd March - Derry
The Irish Funny man returns to Belfast and L'/Derry with his new show, an uplifting, joyous and inspirational show with the 'light touch of an eejit'. He isn't known for missing & hitting the wall when it comes to his comedy & this is sure to have you in stitches.

WHO? Psychic Night Special
WHERE? Waterfront Hall, Belfast
WHEN? 27th February



WHAT? With Celebrity medium Joe Power keeping you on knife edge with spirit messages coming through from 'the other side'. He's known to work with celebs such as David Essex, Coleen Rooney among others and he was also hired by the Met and Merseyside Police as a psychic investigator.

WHO? February Race day
WHERE? Down Royal Racecourse
WHEN? 6th February



WHAT? Fantastic modern facilities means a fantastic day out with top notch hospitality in Northern Ireland premier racecourse. Have a punt on the horses and enjoy the high class food and drink, becoming one of NI's most favourite alternative nights out.

Nightlife guide



February Guide

Drop us an email today at
info@mygayzine.co.uk
to have us pay a visit and get featured in our
next issue.

Check back each month and see read our
reviews of some of Northern Ireland's **BEST**
LGBT and LGBT Friendly Venues.

Your Monthly Nightlife Guide

Pubs ♦ Clubs ♦ Restaurants ♦ Saunas

Kremlin

2013 Goscars are coming up on March 1st. Hosted by Sonya Mac and Granny Dee and will feature the wonderful Trudy Scrumptious and a host of other guests.

El Divino

11th February:
BLACK/RED BLIND
DATE MASQUERADE
VALENTINE'S BALL!
18th February: UNION
J LIVE on stage.
25th February: The
Fabulous Ms Davina
Devine

Fox's Den

Fridays will never be the same again. Twanda's Den of Iniquity is one of the most fun nights out on the gay scene at the mo. Join Twanda, DJ Mo and special guests every Friday.

Envy

Tuesdays and Thursdays are Free bar nights when you pay door tax and Envy's Weekend themed nights hosted by Lady Kaye Why are a brilliant night out in Derry/L'Derry.

Spice

Friday 9th February sees Spice return with their 1st Birthday Party and with Cabaret, Disco, Drinks Promos, a Raffle, Nibbly Bits and a Free shot on entry there's plenty to celebrate.

Central Bar

Northern Ireland's only bar outside of a city is becoming a beacon of LGBT entertainment and craic in the West of Ireland. There's always something on, well worth checking out if your near Strabane

Passion

The next Passion, Newry's Only LGBT night will be on Saturday, 2 March 2013 at Bellini's

Rainbow

Rainbow sadly announced their closure earlier in January.

Mynt

The Parliament Years - February 22nd. Pay at the door. Huge number of prizes to be won and Lady Portia De Monte shall be hostess with the mostess.

FITNESS

DON'T GIVE UP - A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES CONTINUES WITH EACH STEP AND WE EXPECT A FEW TRIP UPS

Things like healthy eating, regular exercise and giving up smoking can have a real positive impact on our mental and physical health and are central to many people's New Year's resolutions.

Every year millions of people make resolutions but statistics show that as much as 80% of us fail to achieve them. Most people strive for unrealistic goals and ultimately set themselves up for a failure.

Core exercises are a great way to bust that belly flab and tone up! Not only do they improve your abdominals, they also improve your balance and core strength, as well as making you feel stronger and look better! Here are 5 of our recommended exercises that are geared toward helping you achieve a better stomach!

1. PLANK-

The plank is used for inner core strength, this helps things such



as balance. Firstly, lay face down on the floor, place the tips of your toes on the floor too. Next, rest the weight of your upper body on your elbows and forearms, trying to keep your back straight. Lift your body off of the floor so only your elbows, forearms and toes are touching the floor. Now hold this position for 30 seconds and rest.

2. LEG RAISES-

Lie on your back, with your hands at your side or just under your buttocks. Keeping your knees slightly bent, lift your legs straight in the air. Keep your back flat against the floor throughout the movement, especially as you lower your legs. Keep tension on your abs by not lowering all the way to the floor. The lower you extend your legs the more challenging this exercise is for the ab muscles and lower back. Beginners repeat this exercise for 2-3 sets of 15-30 reps with a 30-50 second rest.



3. CRUNCHES-

Lie flat on your back on the floor. Take a deep breath, suck in your stomach, keep your eyes focused on the ceiling,



EVERY YEAR MILLIONS OF PEOPLE MAKE RESOLUTIONS BUT STATISTICS SHOW THAT AS MUCH AS 80% OF US FAIL TO ACHIEVE THEM.

and raise your upper body off the ground until it is at a 45-degree angle with the floor. Don't pull on your neck, as this can lead to forward head posture and neck pain. Hold the contraction for 2 to 3 seconds and slowly return to the starting position. Beginners repeat this exercise for 2-3 sets of 15-30 reps with a 30-50 second rest.

4. BICYCLE-

Lie face up and place your hands behind your head, lightly supporting it with your fingers.

Bring the knees in to the chest and lift the shoulder blades off the floor without pulling on the neck. Rotate to the left, bringing the right elbow towards the left knee as you straighten the other leg. Switch sides, bringing the left elbow towards the right knee. Beginners repeat this exercise for 2-3 sets of



15-30 reps with a 30-50 second rest.

5. BRIDGE-

Lay on your back with your hands by your sides, your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.

Make sure your feet are under your knees. Tighten your abdominal and buttock muscles.



Raise your hips up to create a straight line from your knees to shoulders. Squeeze your core and try to pull your belly button back toward your spine. If your hips sag or drop, lower yourself back on the floor. The goal is to maintain a straight line from your shoulders to your knees and hold for 20 to 30 seconds. You may need to begin by holding the bridge position for a few seconds as you build your strength. It's better to hold the correct position for a shorter time than to go longer in the incorrect position!

TIPS FOR THOSE OF US HANGING IN THERE
WITH NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

PICTURE YOURSELF CARRYING
OUT YOUR PLAN

MONITOR YOUR
PROGRESS

COMMIT TO A
SPECIFIC PLAN

CONNECT WITH SOMEONE
WHO SHARES YOUR GOAL

CREATE A ROUTINE
AND STICK TO IT

COOKING

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPES TO INFO@MYGAYZINE.CO.UK
WE PUBLISH THE BEST EACH MONTH.

DON'T FORGET IT'S SHROVE TUESDAY ON FEBRUARY 12TH.
WHY NOT TRY THESE FLIPPIN' DELICIOUS PANCAKE RECIPES, READY IN TEN MINUTES FLAT.

PANCAKE MIX INGREDIENTS

1 cup (150g) plain flour, 1 tsp caster sugar, 240ml milk, 2 eggs, 1 Pinch of salt

METHOD

Sift the flour into a large mixing bowl. Add the caster sugar, pinch of salt and the 2 eggs. Beat together until completely combined. Gradually add the milk while stirring it in until the mix is fully combined and quite loose. Heat up a large pan to a medium high heat, place in a knob of butter and add enough mix to the pan swirling it around to cover the entire base. Cook for 1.5 min or so on each side until golden and brown, remove from the pan and repeat process for all the others.

SIMPLE AND TRADITIONAL

INGREDIENTS

1 Lemon, Cream, Syrup.

METHOD

Lay Crepe flat, with a hot spoon pour on some golden syrup and squeeze a few drops of lemon over the top, roll it up and enjoy.



APPLE

INGREDIENTS

10 apples, 1/4 cup sugar, 2 tsp. cinnamon, 1/3 cup butter, cream

METHOD

Peel, core & slice apples. Add to melted butter over medium heat. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Cook until apples are soft and tender. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking. Fill crepes and fold sides. Top with whipped cream and a little drizzle of syrup.

STRAWBERRY DELIGHT... FOR PANCAKE NIGHT?

250G of ripe strawberries, 1/2 cup of Caster sugar, tub of natural yogurt, strawberries to garnish

Remove all leaves from the tops of the strawberries and cut into halves add to a large pot over a medium heat and add the caster sugar. Allow to heat but stirring regularly releasing the juices from the strawberries and melting the sugar bring to the boil and turn the heat right down. Using a hand blender blend the cooked strawberry and sugar mix into a smooth syrup and put into the fridge to cool. Fold into natural yogurt once ready to eat, put the mix onto the crepe and roll. Serve with cut fresh strawberries.

INGREDIENTS

METHOD



PINEAPPLE PANCAKE PERFECTION

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, 20-oz can unsweetened pineapple chunks, drained well, 1 1/2 teaspoons minced peeled fresh ginger, 1/4 cup honey, 1/3 cup fresh orange juice

Heat butter in a 12in pan over moderately high heat until foam subsides, then sauté pineapple until golden, about 5 minutes. Transfer pineapple to a bowl with a slotted spoon. Add ginger to pan and sauté, for about 30 seconds. Add honey and juice and simmer until mixture is syrupy, 3 to 5 minutes. Add pineapple to honey mixture and simmer, stirring, until heated through. Spoon enough pineapple mixture over half of 1 crêpe, then fold in half. Repeat with remaining crêpes. Pour remaining pineapple mixture over folded crêpes. serve with drizzle of syrup and fresh cream

INGREDIENTS

METHOD



BANANAS AN CHOCOLATE DREAM WITH CREAM

Jar hazelnut choc spread, 5 bananas sliced, cream

Spread a thin layer of chocolate hazelnut spread onto crepe and place banana slices down the centre. Roll or fold crepe and serve with whipped cream

INGREDIENTS

METHOD



HOLIDAYS



MAURICE DICKSON
WWW.GAYAWAY2TRAVEL.COM

PARIS THE CITY OF LOVE

St Valentine's Day is fast approaching so if you are looking for love and romance and to treat that special someone in your life, or looking to impress someone then the capital of romance has to be Gay Paris!

The world's most romantic city still seduces. Before you die, you've got to live "la vie en rose". Paris is, simply put, a gay paradise.

Luxury shopping, fine art, romantic landmarks, cheap (yet good) wine, heavenly cheese, fashion-forward nightlife, beautiful people; it is all in one "little" metropolitan city called Paris.

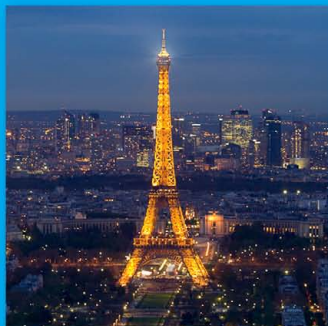
The City of light has got more museums, more night time diversions, better hotels, more amusements, better shops and the best chefs that it has ever had in its history. The architectural splendour of the many

palaces and historic buildings which grace this beautiful city will keep you spellbound. Paris has a huge choice of gay or lesbian venues. Most of them are concentrated in the very centre district called "Le Marais" (remember that name!), this artsy and cool area of Paris' is the obvious gay area, spanning blocks across the 3rd and 4th arrondissements (or districts) on the Right Bank.

In these historic narrow streets, so typical of Paris, are most gay and lesbian bars, restaurants or fashion shops and clubs. Close to shopping mall Les Halles you find some more bars and the popular Le Depot (thé gay cruise club in Paris). Paris offers many different gay parties. Bars and clubs like Le Depot, Banana, Cox, and Open Cafe can be found in Le Marais. Club Queens is situated at the Champs d'Elysee. But the entire city is ready to romance gay travellers.



ROMANCE IN FRANCE: 3 X NIGHTS IN PARIS, 4* HOTEL FOR ONLY £375



“ROMANCE AND WOW THAT SPECIAL PERSON WITH A CITY BREAK IN PARIS.”

Where to Stay?

We have choice of accommodation to suit everyone from stylish luxury 5 star hotels to budget B&B, hostels and even private rented apartments or rent a spare room in a fresh gay house.

*** Our Choice ***

Les Jardins Du Marais Hotel 4*, Built around a spacious courtyard, Les Jardins du Marais is located on a tranquil street in the historical centre of Paris, Comprised of nine 19th-century buildings bordering a large, serene courtyard with beautiful terraced gardens, Les Jardins du Marais is



perfect for those seeking to explore the wealth of history, culture, and art in Paris. It is within walking distance of many of Paris' wonders and delights, close to chic restaurants and designer boutiques, in addition to attractions such as the Picasso Museum.

Each individually designed guestroom looks out onto the hotel's private internal garden. Inside, the Art Deco style decor is graceful and comfortable, and many of the sound-proofed rooms

include a small, fully-equipped kitchenette, as well as marble bathrooms

and standard modern amenities.



*** Depart BFS on 12th Feb 2013 x 3 nights on Room only basis (transfers not included) from only £375 per person.

Other dates and hotels available on request. Subject to availability prices checked 3rd Feb 2013.

Contact Gayaway2 Travel for latest prices and when you book with us we can give you a full detailed guide on where to go, maps and directions to gay beaches and best bars and clubs to visit and apartments or hotels to suit your budget and preference. Contact us today 0845 467 3558



Schuh
Men's Jeffery West
Slip on shoes
£69.99

Ernst Jones
D&G Dog Tag Necklace
£100



FOR MEN

River Island
Ecru chunky cable knit
cricket jumper
£35



H&M
Denim Shirt
£24.99



TOPMAN
Blue Printed Feel the
Vibe Sweatshirt
£28



USC
Adidas Ciero Trainers
£60

Republic
Fabric Coated
Jeans
£45



ASOS
The Quiet Life
5 Panel Cap
£38



Superdry
Men's Technical
Windbomber
£69

House of Fraser
Polo Ralph Lauren
Multistripe Underwear
£25



FOR WOMEN



TOPSHOP
Multi stripe
Skater Dress
£42



USC
Nike Blazer Low
Suede Trainer
£42



H&M
Purl Knit Jumper
£14.99

Ernst Jones
Swarovski Alana
Heart Pendant
£99



Republic
Soul Cal rip
belt jeans
£35



New Look
Grelago Trousers
£16.99

River Island
Purple Parlez Vous
Francais T-Shirt
£18



Schuh
Women's Kickers
Hi ii Boots
£44.99



ASOS
Hanging Spike Belt
£15

House of Fraser
Lauren by Ralph Lauren
Silk Cargo Trouser
£85



READERS RANT

WELCOME to Readers Rant, a place to let your mouth go wild about the things that matter to you. Whether your feeling passionate about something, annoyed by someone or just wanting somewhere to express your feelings, we would like to hear from you. Get in touch with your rant and it could be published in the next issue of MYGAYZINE.

Email your rant to - info@mygayzine.co.uk...

We look forward to hearing from you - heres our New Year rant...

Valentine's Day is fast approaching and for some people this is a big date in the calendar, for others, not so much. For people in a relationship Valentine's day tends to involve going all out for the one you love and for anyone single it's either just another day of the week or something you dread.

Some women do take it too far for this one day showering their girlfriends in everything from perfume and bouquets to concert tickets and holidays, it's as though their lives depend on being as bold, brash and in your face as possible. Compensating maybe?

The reason I wrote in this month was to brighten things up for the LGBT singletons in Northern Ireland. From experience my experience both in and out of relationships it's sometimes hard to pin point which times of my life I enjoyed most, each to own I suppose.

People forget that Valentine's Day is for everyone not just couples. You don't have to be in a relationship to enjoy Valentine's Day and I think it's a great way to embrace the theme of love in general. My parents and friends and I always exchanged cards and token gifts (secretly of course) always marked with 'from Guess who??'. It doesn't have to be sleazy and commercial but it shouldn't be ignored.

A great way to spend St. Valentine's day if our single is to go for a meal or to the cinema with your single friends chewing the fat about how good things are without a ball and chain. St. Valentine's Day is simply about spending time with loved ones that's including your friends. Bring a sick back with you wherever you go if your anyway like me and public displays of affection bring up a little breakfast.

Happy Valentine's day everyone xx
Stacy McKillop



**TEXT US YOUR SHOUT OUT TO
07564877618**

SHOUT OUT ZONE

Can't wait to see what you guys do for this years pride - Keeri, Lisburn

Count team A-Dance into the flash mob +8, June&Co xxx

Had a geg showing this to my friends in work tonight, killed several hours, love it x Lyndsay, Santander Belfast

Happy 42nd Birthday Ciara Moore, love you always - Paula, Crumlin

I want to meet Ryan Dior hes fabulous, I want an Elton John jacket too - Pat, Strabane

I texted and got into two issues, I should text a column lol - Chris, Belfast

Got a message for someone that you'd like to see here? Text us today at your standard network message rate. Text us you photos and comments, we will publish a selection of the best and most memorable ones in every months issue. We will also feature your shout outs, congratulatory messages and birthday messages. Get TEXTING...



Me and the Mrs reading MYGAYZINE on Kindle Fire, loved the latest issue - Will and Tom, Ballygawley

12/01/2013

FEATURES



PETER FAHY SHEDS A LIGHT ON HOMOSEXUAL CULTURE AND GAY SAMURAI WARRIORS IN PRE MEIJI JAPAN

You've probably noticed that all across the world gays are getting a lot of stick lately. The Russian parliament put forward a nationwide 'anti-gay' bill, that African bitch Kadaga introduced legislation that would see homosexuals incarcerated or executed, and Pope Benedict XVI continues to fan the flames of fear and intolerance by denouncing gay marriage, piously proclaiming how homosexual unions are a manipulation of nature that will jeopardize the future of mankind.

The common denominator in all this antipathy appears to be the putrescent perception that homosexuality is somehow toxic or harmful to civilized society, as if gayness was a strange social disease that will poison the purity of established institutions, causing corruption, destruction and moral dissolution.

Melodramatic or what? Even though there have been fantastic leaps and bounds in equality legislation, suspicion and hostility still exists in the 21st century. And it's no surprise that the monotheistic religions

remain our main antagonists. **But this preposterous view of gays being harmful to the social order is not universal. Believe it or not, in some parts of the world, homosexuality and same-sex unions were seen as essential for building strong, stable societies.**

When and where you ask?

In Japan, before Christianity and other European influences infiltrated the country, same-sex partnerships were not only recognized as a supreme source of morality and military strength, but a valuable institution that was venerated and revered by all sectors of society.

So let's jump back in time and explore that era, beyond the boundaries of the Christian west, to the pre-Meiji period of feudal Japan and the homoerotic culture of the samurai class.

Similar to the erotic pedagogy in ancient Greece, Japan demonstrated an appreciation of male love that was present in all levels of society. For over a thousand years, from the 7th century to 1868, same-sex unions played a prominent and meritorious role in Japanese civilisation.

A fact that would probably surprise many religious fundamentals is that the homoerotic culture of Japan had a spiritual origin. It's widely held that Buddhist monks (who emigrated to Japan around 552) institutionalized homosexuality on the island. Of course gay sexuality existed before their arrival, but it didn't have such a high cultural, social, or philosophical status. Buddhist monks celebrated same-sex love, and many of their accounts testify to the sacred power of nanshoku, the 'love of males' that monks shared with their monastic acolytes.

This relationship was referred to as a 'brotherhood bond', a mutual commitment in which the men would ritually swear loyalty to one another.

Before 552, no verifiable historical records existed as Japan had no written language. Buddhist monks emigrating from China introduced the syllabary and ideographs that developed into a linguistic form, and this then evolved into the literature and calligraphy that promulgated nanshoku and made it a popular literary expression.

One Buddhist doctrine posited that homosexuality was invented by the bodhisattva Monju. Bodhisattvas were Buddhist saints who delayed their ascension to Nirvana so they could assist humans on earth. Monju was specifically the bodhisattva of wisdom.

Legends such as The Tale of Genji (1020) and Tales from Uji (1200) as well as countless poetical works portrayed the power of nanshoku and illustrated how that love can lead to honour, happiness, or even spiritual salvation.

As the Buddhist religion flourished and prospered, evolving into Shingon Buddhism and Zen Buddhism,

Japan's political and military leaders realized that homoerotic devotion could be an extremely powerful asset on the battlefield.

The spirituality of Zen Buddhism appealed greatly to the new samurai warrior class that was emerging in the 12th century. Zen traditions placed an important emphasis on discipline, as well as poetry, calligraphy and inspired artistic expression, and male love was, to say the least, a prominent theme.

Nanshoku inspired the creation of a new social code for the samurai: bi-do, the 'beautiful way' or more commonly referred to as wakashudo, 'the way of the youth.' Similar to the pederasty prominent

in the golden age of Greece and Rome, wakashudo was a union between an older, experienced samurai and a young apprentice. The young warrior would learn the art of bushido, martial skills, and all the precepts and principles of samurai life, and consequently share a sexual relationship with his sensei.

Just like the Buddhist monks' nanshoku, which aided spiritual and moral development, the samurai wakashudo aimed to assist with social development and to maintain the balance of power in the regions.

The wakashudo code of conduct expected the samurai couple to be loyal unto death, and to assist each

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other in feudal duties, duels, and vendettas. It was a partnership endorsed by the state, a partnership in service to the state, and in that turbulent time of rebellions and rivalries, mutual male love was probably a warrior's greatest weapon.

In the 12th century, Japan had become a feudal warrior society. After the Heian emperors lost control of the country local lords seized power over various territories. All the turbulence, discord and upheaval culminated in one of Japan's most definitive events: The Heiji Rebellion.

The warlord Minamoto Yoritomo triumphed over all the other rival clans and factions, and at the end of the 12th century he became the shogun - the chief military commander. Essentially, this was the emergence of the Japan's first military government.

But what has all this to do with gays?

Yoritomo, conqueror, warrior, commander in chief of Japan's army, was a strong supporter of wakashudo. It's well documented that he was a ruthless and overbearing leader, but it's also well known that he was deeply devoted to a young man called Yoshinao from the national guard.

Yoritomo recognized wakashudo as a source of military courage, and he actively encouraged this relationship among his subordinate samurai. Successive shoguns all agreed, and according to historical accounts, half of the 26 shoguns who ruled Japan from 1338 to 1837 had male love affairs.

Whatever agenda or objective the ruling shogun might have had, his chances of success multiplied when there were boys on the battlefield determined to protect each other or die trying.

No one criticized or denounced these relationships, probably because in that part of the world homosexuality didn't have the cultural baggage and negative religious stigma that it's lumbered with today.

In pre-Meiji Japan, homosexuality was as natural as heterosexuality, but the power of wakashudo could transform our sexuality into something much stronger. The love between males turned every man into a tiger, fueled by the power of passion, and various writings testified to this energy, popular stories that chronicled the adventures of same-sex samurai, notably Tales of the Samurai Spirit (1688), Records of Soulmates (1643) and A Ten-Inch Mirror for Male Love (1687).

Of course, power struggles, internecine war and territorial disputes continued to wreak havoc on the country, and it wasn't until the Minamoto shogunate was surpassed by the three great Shoguns who unified Japan, Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Leyashu (all proponents of wakashudo) that the conflicts came to an end.

Inspired by Buddhist monks and protected by fearless samurai, Japan entered into an unprecedented two and a half centuries of peace.

So there you have it. In that period of Japan's history, homosexuality didn't fracture society. It was exactly the opposite: homosexual affection played an integral part in the country's national development and was a crucial tool that helped unite the nation.

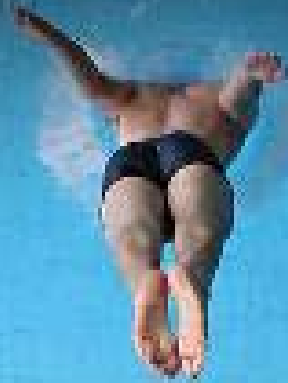
But I doubt religious leaders and prominent homophobes in the upper echelons of the western world would be interested. It's unlikely they'll realize that it's their virulent prejudice that's toxic to society.

Maybe I should go and convince them. Now where did I leave my samurai sword.....

By Peter Fahy

THE SURFACE OF THE DEEP

An Exploration of Homosexuality and Civilisation



Click anywhere on the front cover to visit the amazon
page for more information.

P. FRANCIS FAHY

A MINUTE OR FOUR WITH RYAN DIOR

Welcome to a minute or 4 with our favourite actor and writer Ryan Dior. Ryan rose to acting fame as a child after starring as Oliver in the West End and then went on to act in several films and TV shows. Ryan Dior, who was also a script writer on some of Britain's longest running and best loved soaps. Now in the process of working on a new one man play entitled "TALK" about dealing with depression .

Hi to all our now loyal readers, I do hope you are all getting back to normality after the festive period. I know I am that busy as am meeting myself coming back! With the rehearsals for the new block buster Play' I'm Directing " TALK" is well on target, we have lots of Media interest but am holding the front page on them as yet, so keep your eyes peeled for the next edition of MYGAYZINE.

May I first get one thing out of the way before I begin by addressing the actions of the few, who just refuse to move on in Northern Ireland and seem to be always trying to spark a troublesome light with a blunt flint. This blatant lawlessness and dreadful behaviour of a minority who have nothing better to do other than try to discredit the great city of Belfast and other surrounding areas, all steeped in culture and good history. It is just as well the Northern Ireland folk are truly salt-of-the-earth and will not allow this to overpower the hard fought peace that is enjoyed today.

On a better note the nights are getting shorter, and before you know it you will be all out there flexing your bods in readiness for the sun, any Tips for an old Fart like me???? Heyyy no jokes!! I hope you've all cut back on the booze by now after Christmas and are well into a healthy detox diet I'd imagine and consuming plenty of water. Don't forget your Vitamin C, the best available are the 1000mg effervescent daily tubes priced between £3.50 and £5.00 and these will promote a great immune system, cut back on the burgers, fatty foods and just sensible eating really is the key. The Photo of me in my last column has kick started me into a health kick, so wait till you see me next. Don't forget we have had a very bad spell of weather and it's still here, keep in mind my last tip with regards to "keep your heating on very low as its cheaper that switching it on and off" as the contents of the rooms has to heat up before you get warm and that costs cash. I will upload a poster of the Play Talk in the next issue it looks fantastic. Actually a nice lad from Belfast College won the contract keep your eyes out for him.

Do email me at diorryan@yahoo.co.uk with any health questions you may have and I will do my best to answer all, so get your walking shoes on, umbrellas up and get out and get fit, see you all very soon love you all, AND MAY YOUR GOD GO WITH YOU. Ryan Dior, Writer/Actor/ Director.



Our Love

*There is this special little place I like to visit with you
A place where my love is resting peacefully in the corner
Unveiled and warm*

*Surviving on each beat of your heart
On the fingers that trace the line of my body
as I catch my breath, it grows deeper
It is purple with passion
and rich as gold*

*The distance becomes shorter
as we stand not even an inch apart
Piercing blues cutting through insecurities
Stripping me nakedly raw and exposed before you
Fingers intertwined in locks of satin blonde
A kiss upon rose lips and suddenly we have arrived
A place envied by many
and held here inside my heart
It is our love*

Kosmic KAREN 2013

WE'RE ALREADY MOVING BRISKLY INTO 2013 AND I'LL BE CONTINUING TO HELP GUIDE YOU ON YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY THROUGHOUT 2013. CHECK BACK AT ISSUE FOUR FOR YOUR FULL GUIDE TO THE YEAR AHEAD AND READ YOUR PERSONAL STAR SIGN READING FOR FEBRUARY BELOW. CONTACT US THROUGH OUR WEBSITE IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFO OR ADVICE FROM KOSMIC.

ARIES March 21 - April 19



This month you will be still successful in career. Your 11th house (house of friendship) has strong influence on your life since 19 January. This influence will continue until 18 February. You are experiencing quite a social period, parties, celebrations, invitations to various events... your popularity among friends, however, does not mean that you will have success with romantic adventures.

TAURUS April 20 - May 20



Taurus will continue to be on the top of his/her working abilities and opportunities. Do not be afraid to risk, you might gain a lot. Promotion, bonuses probably occurred already last month, but they are not excluded in February for people born under the sign of Taurus. The February horoscope goes on and says that you can rely on full support of your closest ones.

GEMINI May 21 - June 20



Gemini who are not in a serious relationship right now will meet their true love. It is the right time for crucial emotional decisions. Unfortunately, in other areas of life you will be forced to adapt yourself to the others, you will have to make compromises (which Gemini literally hate), but concerning love everything will be playing your way! Gemini will start to feel personal freedom.

CANCER June 21 - July 22



Cancer naturally all the other signs will have to get ready for accelerated way of life. This month is ideal for realization of new interesting projects. Planet Jupiter is situated in your 12th house (house of spirituality). Throughout the whole month the influence of the house will be very intensive. On 6 and 7 February you should concentrate on your dreams.

LEO July 23 - August 22



Leo will have a chance to carry out own ideas. You are still on your own social top. You are very popular among people. It is mainly because you prefer needs of the others to your own needs. There is romance in the air. You won't live to experience marriage but certainly you will meet somebody who will be interested in a serious relationship.

LIBRA Sept 23 - Oct 22



It seems that in February you will be in some way concerned with children. Either your own or the children of somebody else. Nevertheless, you will get along with them better, and moreover, you will be pleased by their company. Concerning love, do not expect any serious relationships.

SAGITTARIUS Nov22 - Dec21



Sagittarius should use the period of time when his ruling planet Jupiter moves forward to make changes which are significant in his/her life because after this date any changes will be impossible. The February horoscope goes on and predicts you should prepare a nest egg and secure your finances.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 18



You have full control over your body. You look good, you dress perfectly and you have your own charm. What more could one ask for? There comes a time when you should focus on your family. Your work and career will be of no significance in your life at this time.

VIRGO August 23 - Sept 22



The horoscope for February indicates that your love life and social life will multiply. You will get a chance to improve your social status. The planetary influence will move from the lower part of your sign to the upper part. It is the right time to brace yourself up and start to carry out your dreams and plans.

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21



Scorpio should concentrate on improvement of their social status in February. Achieve this by cooperation, by interest in the others. The February horoscope advises to adapt to the situation as best as you can. In February it is even better time for carrying out new projects than last month.

CAPRICORN Dec22 - Jan 19



Capricorn is even this month in a very prosperous period of time. It is the right time to pay off your debts. On the other hand, when you need to borrow money, it is also the right time for it. You will be lucky in gambling. Concerning love, the situation will remain unchanged.

PISCES Feb 19 - March 20



Pisces will have to concentrate in order to have their feet on the ground. After 18 February the sign of Pisces will gain a huge influence and you will have even a bigger problem to keep your mind on the ground and not fly somewhere in the clouds. Avoid things that can spark your temper.



We caught up with the Mr Gay NI star of our Christmas cover to get an update on his preparations for Mr Gay Europe, his charity sky dive and his plans for Valentine's Day.

Get behind Conor's charity sky dive by contacting him through facebook or twitter expressing your interest.

What's the most romantic thing that someone has done for you?

It would have to be this guy. Drove an hour to take me to the cinema to see a really terrible film that I wanted to see then sat humouring me while I talked absolute rubbish until 3am lol

What does St. Valentine's day mean to you?

Well to me Valentine's is always a time for me and my friends to go out, yes they spend time with their partners as well but, it's my best friends birthday on Valentines Day so we always celebrate that. (That bodes well for me because I'm a serial single!) Although this year she's in Australia so it's gona be a bit different lol. Really it's just about spending time with the people you love because they will always be there for you!

What's the most romantic thing that you have ever done to get someone's attention?

Lol it's pretty boring. But when I

CONGRATULATIONS CONOR O'KANE MR GAY NI 2012/13

We catch up with the happy new Mr Gay Northern Ireland

Conor O'Kane, 36, who missed his local council election, says he can't wait to get his cards in a city Central Bar, Stranmish, next April. He is 5'10 and has a fitness fanatic for doing Mr Gay.

Congratulations on winning Mr Gay Northern Ireland! It must have been a very proud moment for you. What made you enter this year's contest?

I wanted to enter just for the whole experience because I found it was so fulfilling and so rewarding. I had a lot of fun and I was able to meet a lot of people who were really supportive of me. It was a great experience and I was able to meet a lot of people who were really supportive of me. It was a great experience and I was able to meet a lot of people who were really supportive of me. It was a great experience and I was able to meet a lot of people who were really supportive of me.

How did you feel when you were crowned Mr Gay NI?

It was a real surprise and a real honour. I was really surprised to win and I was really honoured to represent Northern Ireland. It was a real surprise and a real honour. I was really surprised to win and I was really honoured to represent Northern Ireland. It was a real surprise and a real honour. I was really surprised to win and I was really honoured to represent Northern Ireland.

What are your plans for the year ahead?

I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things. I want to do a lot of things.

READ OUR CHRISTMAS INTERVIEW WITH CONOR FROM OUR ONLINE ISSUE LIBRARY



charity, how are you getting on with that?

was younger I pretended to be a Scouser to get a guys attention. Safe to say 3 sentences in my plan had failed!

Have you ever been heartbroken?

Yea once. Properly broken. But I think that it's made me realise that sometimes things aren't going to work out no matter how much you want them to.

Will anyone be receiving your Valentine's love this month?

Yes one of my best friends Shauna is also single so Im booking us a table for a nice meal and I've got us some tickets to the script for march so that's who's getting all my valentines love, mind you I'm free valentines weekend? Any offers?

You were telling us that you are in the process of organising a skydive for

Well at the Minute I'm still trying to get numbers of who's game and trying to find the best time to have it but I've been in contact with a few companies about the skydive and I hope it happens. **Any volunteers are welcome to get involved by contacting me.**

How's preparations for Mr Gay Europe coming on?

The prep for mr Europe Is going well. Although I'm hoping to get in contact with some more Lgbt societies and charities and to do more in that field. Also need to get to the gym to buff up a bit lol. Any gay friendly gym recommendations or gym buddies willing to help a brother out with training advice? Haha ps guys if we could all follow me on Facebook and twitter it's Mr Gay Northern Ireland and @ConorOKane93

Thanks guys, much love. Conor x



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