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~ Photos by Tony Leggio, Paul Melancon, Hubert S Monkeys

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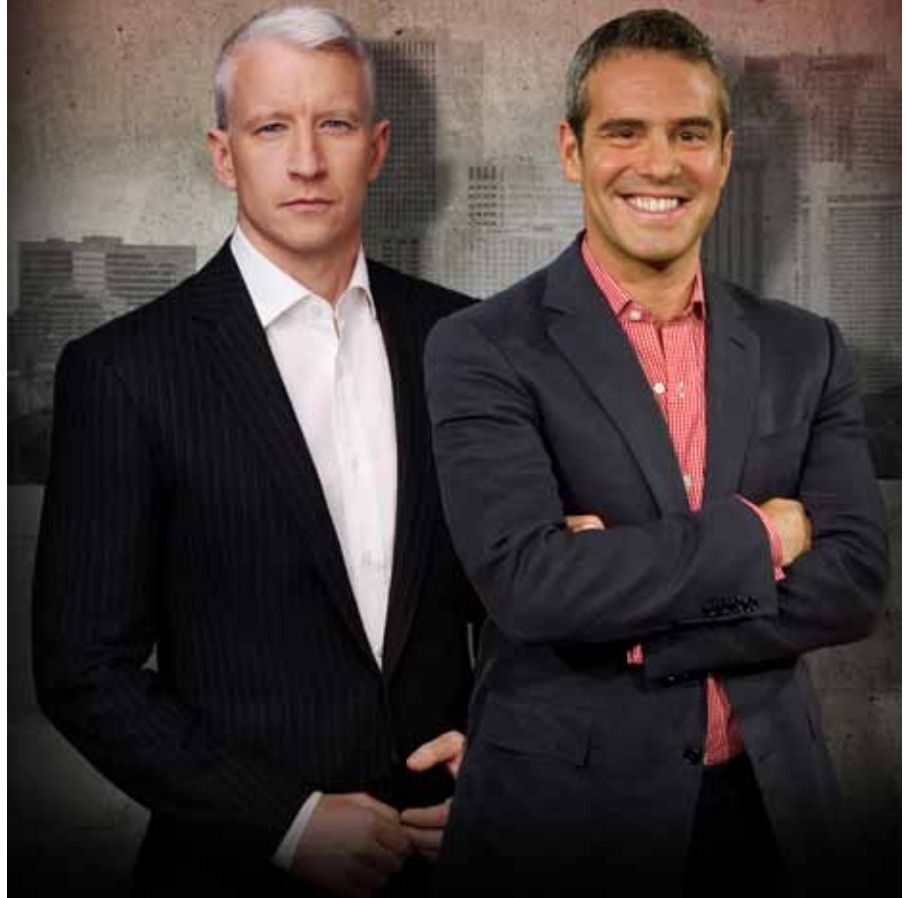
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under the gaydar

by Tony Leggio
Email: ledgemgp@gmail.com
Photo by: Larry Graham

Bartender of the Month

We are so spoiled in the Crescent City when it comes to bartenders, we have so many great people working in this industry. They understand key aspects of their job like customer service, speed and just how to make a great drink. I especially am enthusiastic when I meet someone who not only has those three qualities, but embodies Southern Hospitality perfectly even if they are not originally from here. My choice for bartender of the month for April is Cullen Lawlor from Cafe Lafitte in Exile. Originally from Boston, Lawlor has spent a little over three years in our fair city and has worked at Lafitte's for over a year.

He moved to the city because of family and fell in love with it. Cullen is one of those master bartenders who works his bar professionally and with style. He is funny, amicable and definitely easy on the eyes. But as we all know looks is what gets people's attention, but substance keeps them coming back for more. And this young man has plenty of that. A favorite with locals and visitors, he works his downstairs corner of the bar efficiently. He loves making upscale drinks like Cosmopolitans, Manhattans and Martinis. Add to his proficiency at these craft cocktails, his fervor and promptness with service are also among his attributes. He enjoys bartending because he loves the environment, he makes his own hours and he gets to wear costumes from time to time especially in New Orleans.

When he is out and about having drinks, his favorite libation of choice is vodka, soda with lime. Cullen has also created his own specialty shot entitled the Screaming Bachelorette (god we have a lot of those in town at any given time). It is like a twist on a Lemon Drop that has Pineapple Juice, Malibu Rum, Midori and Lime Juice. So come out to Lafitte's in Exile (901 Bourbon Street) and say hi to Cullen. I am sure he can create a concoction that will make you scream even though you are not a bachelorette.

Hot Happenings

With the Spring holidays over, we turn now to Festival season. French Quarter Festival, Jazz Fest and an array of other celebratory events will keep our calendars full this April. Here are just some of my top picks of things to do.

Friday, April 1 – Sunday, April 3, 2016

The 2016 Saints and Sinners (SAS) LGBT literary conference will feature a diverse array of artistic and educational offerings in its 2016 program with guest speakers including Dorothy Allison, Alexander Chee, Jewelle Gomez and Andrew Holleran. The annual conference, which runs concurrently with the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, will take place at the Hotel Monteleone.

SAS weekend pass holders will enjoy a "Glitter with the Literati" welcome recep-



Barterder of the Month Cullen Lawlor @ Cafe Lafitte in Exile

tion on Friday, April 1 at the historic Gallier House in the French Quarter. Panel discussions, a reading series sponsored by the J.B. Harter Trust, and the Seventh Annual SAS Short Fiction Contest Book Launch Party will round out the conference events.

Featured writers:

Author and humorist Fay Jacobs will present *Aging Gracelessly: 50 Shades of Fay*, her critically acclaimed one-woman performance sharing stories from the LGBT community on tackling life, liberty, and the aging process.

Not Just Another Face will pair stories and poetry with photographs of go-go dancers taken by San Francisco artist Dot (Tom Schmidt). Featuring the collection of non-fiction narratives, *Crooked letter I: Coming out in the South*, will allow contributors to discuss the project as well as their experiences with sexual identity in Southern society.

The three-day event also includes noted speakers such as:

- Dorothy Allison, author of *Bastard Out of Carolina*, a National Book award finalist, and the novel *Cavedweller*
- Alexander Chee, author of *The Queen of the Night* and *Edinburgh*
- Michael Thomas Ford, award-winning author of more than 60 books including the forthcoming *Lily*
- Jewelle Gomez, double Lambda Literary Award-winning author of the vampire series *The Gilda Stories*, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary
- Aaron Hamburger, author of *Faith for Beginners* and the story collection *The View From Stalin's Head*
- Andrew Holleran, chronicler of gay life in his prolific journalism, novels, memoirs, nonfiction, and plays
- Michele Karlsberg, publicity and marketing expert
- Sassafras Lowrey, 2013 Lambda Literary Emerging Writer Award winner and author of *Lost Boi* and *Leather Ever After*
- Mark Merlis, Ferro-Grumly award-winner and author of *JD* and *An Arrow's Flight*
- Felice Picano, acclaimed author

of over 30 books of poetry, fiction, memoirs, nonfiction, and plays

- J.M. Redmann, Lambda Literary winner for her mystery series featuring New Orleans PI Micky Knight

Conference pass holders will receive 20% off all Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival events, including special events such as the Tennessee Williams Tribute Reading at Jaxs on the River featuring celebrities and authors: interviewer and raconteur extraordinaire Dick Cavett; Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, Beth Henley; and actresses Estelle Parsons and Mary Badham, among others.

Founded in collaboration with NO/AIDS Task Force, Saints and Sinners (SAS) began as a creative outlet to showcase the LGBT literary community and offer HIV/AIDS information. Since 2003, Saints and Sinners Literary Festival (www.sasfest.org) brings together the who's who of the LGBT literary world. The Festival features panels and master classes by authors, editors, and publishers for emerging writers and LGBT literature fans. For more information or tickets, go to www.tennesseewilliams.net.

Friday, April 1, 2016

Join the Big Easy Sisters for Sisteroke at Tulane Avenue Bar (3813 Tulane Ave.) from 7 – 9:30pm. This fun evening will be here now the first Friday of every month! Come sing w/ the Big Easy Sisters and then stay after to see Vanessa Carr perform.

Friday, April 1 – Sunday, April 17, 2016

The Tennessee Williams Theatre Company of New Orleans in Conjunction with The Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival Presents Two WORLD PREMIERE Tennessee Williams Plays & A Rarely Produced Gem in Tennessee Williams: *Weird Tales*. The show is a trio of surprising one-act plays including the world premieres of *Ivan's Widow* and *The Strange Play*. *Ivan's Widow* (c.1982) is the story of young woman who can't face her husband's death and turns to a psychotherapist whose intentions are not entirely benign. In *The Strange Play* (c.1939) a woman's entire life flashes before our eyes as a macabre spectacle in a French Quarter courtyard. *Steps Must Be Gentle* (c.1980) features poet Hart Crane and his mother Grace returning from the dead to spar one last time at the bottom of the ocean. It's a delightful night of theater, showcasing the side of Williams that is fanciful, visionary, musical, heartbreaking, and steadfastly poetic.

Tennessee Williams: Weird Tales is Co-Directed by Augustin J Corroero and Nick Shackelford and features Maggie Eldred, David Williams, Emily Russell, Alexandra Kennon, John Giardina, Christopher Grim, and Andrew King. All Shows are at 8pm. Performances are April 1-17, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Opening Weekend Ticket Sales Partially Benefits the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival. The show takes place at 6200 St Charles Avenue. Tickets: (Patrons Age 16 & Above Recommended/Adult Theme)

\$25 (General Admission); \$20 (Student/Senior); \$20 (Theatre Professionals); \$50 (Opening Night General Admission - Includes Champagne Toast and Signed Souvenir Poster); \$35 (Opening Night Student/Senior/Theatre Professionals - Includes Champagne Toast and Souvenir Poster); \$15 (Preview Performances March 29-31). For more information visit the

website www.twtheatrenola.com, or call at: 504.264.2580.

Saturday, April 2, 2016

Bridge House/Grace House is proud to invite you to attend the Cochon Cotillion 20. Honoring as their royalty will be King James Carville and Queen Mary Matalin. This legendary event is a true parody of traditional black-tie galas and of the more customary Mardi Gras Balls. For this very special 20th anniversary, the illustrious and prestigious former royalty will participate as well. It is a virtual who's who of New Orleans finest citizens!

The event will be at Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World (Eastbank, 1380 Port of New Orleans Place) from 7 – 11pm. Along with their amazing royal guests there will be a marvelous party with a live band, a mini Mardi Gras parade, celebrity emcees, awesome food from local restaurants, libations, a large silent auction and a raffle. This will be the first ball of the 2017 Carnival season and promises to be terrific fun! For one night, guests will be able to unwind and party as only New Orleanians can. THE premier fundraising event for Bridge House/Grace House, where not only will everyone have an amazing time, but crucial funds will be raised. For tickets and more information, go to www.bridgehouse.org.

Sunday, April 3, 2016

The Louisiana State Museum presents a panel discussion addressing topics of gay culture in New Orleans, gay carnival and the formation of gay krewes, organization of gay groups and AIDS, and gay presence in traditional krewes. Howard Smith, author of the forthcoming book "Unveiling the Muse: Gay Carnival in New Orleans," will moderate the panel which includes those who participated in the development of organized gay carnival in New Orleans. The discussion will take place at the Old US Mint (400 Esplanade Avenue) from 2-4pm. Guests include Bill Woolley, Bill Crotty, George Wilson, Mike Moreau, Lou Bernard, Albert Carey, Don Bury, Russell Talluto, Gary Martin, Michael Hickerson, Diane Dimiceli, and Wendell Stipelcovich. A small selection of the museum's gay carnival collection will be on display. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own memorabilia of gay carnival for display before and after the panel discussion. The LGBT+ Archives Project of Louisiana will be co-sponsoring this FREE event. For more information visit LouisianaStateMuseum.org.

Sunday, April 3, 2016

Brunch Fest NOLA, benefiting the animals of the Louisiana SPCA takes place at City Park, in front of the New Orleans Museum of Art. This FREE admission pet friendly fest features live music: The Messy Cookers Jazz Band, Shades of Praise Gospel Choir, and KinFolk Brass Band. Dress in your most festive brunch attire or costume and enjoy brunch-inspired restaurants, breakfast style cocktails, beer and wine, see LA/SPCA adoptables, shop unique fest vendors and much more! There's even the premiere Best Bloody Mary in NOLA Contest! To enter as a Professional or an Amateur, visit www.la-sPCA.org/brunchfest for official rules and to sign up. More info can be found at www.la-sPCA.org/brunchfest. Outside food and beverage prohibited.

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under the gaydar ...from 18

Sunday, April 3, 2016

Please join Lambda Legal's New Orleans Leadership Committee for their 3rd annual Crawfish Boil. The \$50.00 ticket price includes: crawfish box, and two drinks (domestic, Abita, or sangria). Come learn more about recent legal victories and how you can help Lambda Legal make the case for Equality. Advanced ticket purchase is required. For tickets and more information, go to www.lambdalegal.org.

Tuesday, April 5 – Sunday, April 10, 2016

As part of their 50th Anniversary Season, the critically acclaimed and award-winning Roundabout Theatre Company is proud to present, direct from Broadway, the national tour of Sam Mendes (Spectre, American Beauty) and Rob Marshall's (Into the Woods and Chicago, the films) Tony Award®-winning production of CABARET, as part of the East Jefferson General Hospital Broadway in New Orleans 2015 - 2016 season.

Randy Harrison, best known for his portrayal of Justin in the Showtime drama "Queer as Folk," will step into the role of the Emcee while Andrea Goss, a veteran of Roundabout's CABARET on Broadway will return to the role of Sally Bowles. Joining them are Shannon Cochran (August: Osage County) as Fraulein Schneider, Alison Ewing (Cabaret/Broadway,) as Fraulein Kost, Mark Nelson (Picasso at the Lapin Agile) as Herr Schultz, Ned Noyes (You Can't Take It With You) as Ernst Ludwig and Lee Aaron Rosen (The Normal Heart) as Clifford Bradshaw.

John Kander, Fred Ebb and Joe Masteroff's Tony-winning musical features some of the most memorable songs in theatre history, including "Cabaret," "Willkommen" and "Maybe This Time." CABARET is set in the infamous Kit Kat Klub, where the Emcee, Sally Bowles and a raucous ensemble take the stage nightly to tantalize the crowd—and to leave their troubles outside.

Tickets for CABARET start at \$30 and will be available at the Saenger Theatre Box Office, BroadwayInNewOrleans.com, all Ticketmaster outlets and by calling 800.982.2787.

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

Join the April commUNITY@ speak out as they host BreakOUT who seeks to end the criminalization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth to build a safer and more just New Orleans. BreakOUT builds on the rich cultural tradition of resistance in the South to build the power of LGBTQ youth ages 13-25 and directly impacted by the criminal justice system through youth organizing, healing justice, and leadership development programs. Come learn and see how you can get involved. The event takes place at 741 Bourbon St. from 7 – 8pm. RSVP as seats are limited - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-speak-out-breakout-tickets-23010570235>.

Saturday, April 9, 2016

A celebration of the culture of New Orleans with photographs by Arthur Severio will take place on French Quarter Fest Saturday at Fee and Arts Revival Studio (834 Chartres St.) from 11am – 1pm. This show is entitled Straight Outta New Orleans.

Sunday, April 10, 2016

Join HRC for their first ever "Family Day" at New Orleans City Park from 2 – 5pm. Bring your family and friends out for a casual day of hanging out with the New Orleans Steering Committee to meet and celebrate our wonderful community! HRC Family Day Festivities will take place at Shelter #1, this covered, open-air structure is located near the Carousel Garden Amusement Park on Stadium Drive, and is equipped with picnic tables, on-site restrooms and lights. There is ample parking nearby. Special thanks to our sponsor, Delaney & Robb Attorneys at Law, for helping to make this happen and for always being a wonderful partner with HRC!

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Live Nation presents the Divas of Drag at the House of Blues (225 Decatur Street) starting at 8pm. LRI Talent & Management, FauxReal Entertainment and sbgProductions have teamed up with Live Nation Entertainment to present the DIVAS OF DRAG. This tour stars reality television's most popular drag queens including Latrice Royale, Alyssa Edwards, Trixie Mattel, Mimi Imfurst, Milk, Jujubee, Yara Sophia, Kennedy Davenport, Laganja Estranja, Gia Gunn, Mystique Summers, Roxxy Andrews, Stacey Lane Matthews, Tatianna, and Penny Tration. Vicky Vox and Wendy Ho. In DIVAS OF DRAG seventeen of America's biggest drag superstars will kick, split, lip-sync and sing their hearts out in the biggest most fabulous drag revue ever! For tickets go to <http://www.houseofblues.com/neworleans>.

Friday, April 15, 2016

Summer is approaching, and that means it's time for "Sippin' in Seersucker," an evening of Southern art, cocktails, live music, delicious cuisine, fashion and shopping. A benefit for the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, Sippin' is in its twelfth year of collaboration between the Museum and the Shops at Canal Place. Attendees are encouraged to don seersucker and celebrate the start of the summer social season in style. Enjoy an evening of light bites, Southern cocktails, shopping specials, entertainment from some of the city's best performers, and deluxe raffles. The evening will culminate in a seersucker sartorial contest judged by L. Kasimu Harris and Tracee Dundas! The event is from 6 - 9pm at The Shops at Canal Place (333 Canal St.). Dress: Southern cocktail; Seersucker, preferred! Entertainment: Live music from Luke Winslow King & Smoking Time Jazz Band. Contest: Best seersucker ensembles—the winners get a special prize!

Raffle: Gift packages ranging from handmade craft items from the Center for Southern Craft & Design, to beer and wine packages that will satiate your cravings for months. Food: Refreshments will be provided by some of the city's best restaurants! Libations: Open bar included with ticket. Shop: The Shops at Canal Place will have special sales promotions; Parking: Complimentary provided by the Berger and Ogden Families.

Tickets: Advance tickets: \$30 members and \$50 non-members. Tickets at the door: \$40 members and \$60 non-members. Information and to order tickets: www.ogdenmuseum.org/events/sippin or call (504) 539-9650.

Saturday, April 16, 2016

The Krewe of Armeinius cordially in-

vites you to the 2016 Glitter and Be Gay at 433 N. Broad Street welcoming all Krewes and Gay Organizations, specifically encouraging all Royalty and Officers to wear their Crowns, Pins, Sashes and Mantles of Authority. All guests are requested to wear dress attire. Music and beautiful decorations and fabulous pieces of art will make this a night to remember and an event not to miss. They are asking for a \$25.00 donation to attend. An amazing array of gifts will be auctioned by silent auction that will start closing at 9:30pm. The event time is 7 – 10pm.

Saturday, April 16, 2016

Shining A Light on Anna's Place NOLA: The 6th Annual Dodwell House Extravaganza will be from 7 – 10pm at St. Paul's Episcopal School (6249 Canal Boulevard). The evening will feature local cuisine and beverages, The Tom Cats, The Tremé Choir, Live and Silent Auctions, Original Artwork by Nurhan Gokturk and the event is hosted by Tony Leggio and Elizabeth Bouvier. Tickets start at \$100 and can be purchased at <https://stannanola.com>.

Party Down

By the time you read this Easter has already hopped down the Bunny Trail and we are onto Festival season. Music, food and culture are in our future for the month of April, so get ready. My two weeks prior to Easter was full of exciting fundraisers, parades, parties and a little luck of the Irish, so let us get started.

My week started off on Tuesday with dinner with mom at one of my newest restaurant discoveries, Marcello's Restaurant and Wine Bar. I am obsessed with this place. We went to the one in Metairie, but they also have locations in the New Orleans Central Business District and Lafayette. Born in Sicily and raised in New Orleans, the founders use the freshest ingredients that reflect authentic Sicilian cuisine with a touch of Northern Italy. But my favorite part is their wine selection. Their wine concept is giving guests the choice to browse their racks and make their selection from their value priced wines. The wine pricing is slightly above wine boutique prices, but far below traditional restaurant wine list mark-ups. And the food and service is exquisite, definitely a must try restaurant.

The following day, I went to see Book of Mormon at the Saenger Theatre. But before that a friend and I went to happy hour at the Bombay Club. Hands down this is one of the best happy hours in the city. From 4 – 8pm they serve three dollar wine and appetizers. And this is not just any regular bar apps. This is incredible gourmet light bites and good wine selections. You can literally have an early light diner with drinks for under \$25, amazing! Book of Mormon was another home run for the Saenger. It was funny, clever and risqué. But I must be jaded because people were warning me I was going to find several things in it that were offensive. The fact that nothing in the show offended me made me cringe.

On Thursday, I celebrated my friend Barrett's birthday with dinner at Superior Grill which is still one of the best social places to have a margarita in the city. Friday, I kicked off the weekend at the Four Seasons with their Spring Fever Fundraiser for the Gay Easter Parade. It was a great evening in the patio with wonderful enter-

tainers. It is always good to see the community come together for a good cause and all these Easter events are just downright fun, each one a little different than the other. After, I returned back to NOLA to catch the drag show at the Double Play. In case you have not been lately, the whole vibe and crowd has changed.

Saturday I went to Contessa Breaux's new Uptown home right off of Magazine Street to catch the Irish Parade. I love this parade mostly because it is all families and friends who line the streets having fun, drinking and enjoying the good cheer. And even though we were not on the Avenue, I like this new route. And anytime I get a chance to attend one of Contessa Breaux's soirees I feel honored. The lady knows how to host a party. After the parade, I went home did a quick costume change and then was off to GrandPre's for the Gay Easter Parade Eggstravaganza fundraiser. It was packed in the bar as we enjoyed auctions and performers and even got a chance to witness Ken GrandPre with Philip Anthony bring Sonny Bono back from the dead. And Ken's Cher was just special. All and all another great Easter event that all leads up to the main event.

Sunday was Amon-Ra's Playboy Bunny Reject event at Oz. This is always a popular fundraiser for the krewe. This year's contestants gave it their all with Barbra Ella being victorious and obtaining bragging rights as the winner of this year's grand prize. Next, I stopped at Halloween New Orleans Host thank you party at Lazarus House. Yes, we have started the Halloween New Orleans fundraisers. You ever feel like our holidays just blend right into one another. It was a lovely afternoon to hang out at the facility where all the monies raised from Halloween New Orleans goes to. It was nice taking a tour and seeing all the good things being done by this organization.

On Tuesday the next week, I went to dinner at one of my favorite new restaurants in the city, Fogo de Chao. Now I know it is a chain, but we desperately needed a good Brazilian steakhouse in NOLA. Fogo's food and service was impeccable. Located in the JW Marriott, my mom and I were with a group celebrating a friend's birthday. All I have to say is non-stop meat, cute exotic waiters and tasty Caipirinhas made for a beautiful dining experience. Definitely check this place out.

St. Patrick's Day on Thursday was filled with the luck of the Irish in the Marigny. I caught the parade at the corner of Franklin Avenue and Royal enjoying cocktails at Cutter's and Big Daddy's. The parade with lots of green and drunk men who liked to kiss, perfect combinations. It was a pleasant night and the music in the parade, people's demeanor made it almost surreal. Dancing, drinking, conversing with friends, isn't that what our city is all about. After the parade, my friends and I went over to Kajun's Pub for an incredible margarita served by Chris Wecklein, actor and singer extraordinaire. That capped off the night with a homemade true Irish meal made by Gary, Laura Tennyson's talented chef husband, at their Marigny home. Now this is how you celebrate good fortune.

Saturday was quite the day, one of reflection as we said good bye to a dear friend of the community, John Brown. His death was sudden and sent shock waves in the community, but as so many things in life,

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