

PYAW ISSUE #2

Interviews with Ren Navarro, Aldynne Belmont, Shannyn Brandon, and Erica Christian

ALL MONEY RAISED
THROUGH PYAW IS
DONATED TO ALBERTA'S
TRANS AFFIRMING LEGAL
FUND

LAND BACK

This project is created on Treaty 6 territory. This land is a traditional meeting place for Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island, a legacy which carries on to today. It must be understood that truly radical hospitality on stolen land is not possible until that land is returned from the machinery of colonialism. All liberation is connected, we cannot be free until we are all free.

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REFLECTIONS ON THE ISSUE

Calliope Draper reflects on winning the 50 Best Bars Roku Scholarship, and the current political context she the Queer community finds itself in Canada

WE'RE GOING TO REMEMBER WHAT YOU DID IN THIS MOMENT

Ren Navarro highlights the changes around how we see DEI in hospitality

REWRITING THE PAST TO BUILD THE FUTURE

Aldynne Belmont explores the role of narrative building in Queer history and the interaction between storytelling and survival

THE SLAYER IN THE SOUTH

Shannyn Brandon of Jewel of the South talks about the return of The Bronze, and philanthropy in hospitality

PUTTING BODIES BACK IN THE BAR

Erica Christian refocuses how we see bodies in bars.

COOL PEOPLE DOING COOL SHIT

Queer bartenders across our planet you should know

THINGS YOU SHOULD BE DRINKING

Queer cocktails from our amazing community



Reflections on the PYAW's Second Issue

This issue of *Places You Are*Welcome comes at an interesting point in time, for myself and for our community, politically and socially.

I started drafting this foreword on the plane back from Madrid, having recently been named the 3rd 50 Best Bars Roku Scholar.

Receiving this award is career defining and life changing, and I cannot wait to embark on this adventure. Along-side receiving this award, it was confirmed to me that I am the first transgender person to ever win a global bartending competition. I can now count myself among a group, as a friend of mine once told me, that is 'famous to 300 people.'

The responsibility which comes with this knowledge is not something I take lightly. My goal in my career behind bars, within this magazine, and in any of the presentations I provide, has always been to uplift, protect, and nurture Queer and Trans voices. To have that goal re-affirmed in this way is deeply rewarding. I firmly believe that by changing the fabric of bars and social spaces, we can change

the fabric of society as a whole. As bartenders, we shape spaces where community is formed, and therefore, we have the power to guide what that community looks like. My time in the industry has been explicitly geared towards building community, and teaching others the political power and responsibility that they have when behind a bar.

Although this accolade makes me optimistic of a possible shift in representation in bars at a high level. It also comes at a time where in my own home the threats and attacks against my community are only getting stronger. The Alberta government has tabled and passed anti-trans legislation targeting education around queerness, access to gender affirming care, and the ability for specifically transgender women to compete in sports. Additionally the governing party recently approved policy proposals harshly regulating the engagement of queer and trans people in public life, including bans on queer performance and artistic expression.

This issue is intended to be one focusing on the political power of conceptualizing a queer future. Just as a queer future is in of itself diverse so

too are the discussions which it prompted. From the importance of uplifting historical queer narratives to inform our future, remembering who stuck with us when times are tough, and designing spaces to be informed by actual bodies. Additionally the issue will feature cocktails built around relationships with queer identities, profiles of queer bartenders doing great work across the world, and finally it will feature my unvielding gratitude for the opportunity to share and engage with such beautiful queer stories and people.

As a final note, I want to convey once again that the single guiding principle of *Places You Are*Welcome is to connect and uplift queer and trans voices within the hospitality industry; and to showcase that excellence can, and does, look like each and every one of us. Although I may be the first transgender person to win a bartending competition, I assure you I will not be the last.

With Love, Calliope Draper

WE'RE GOING TO REMEMBER WHAT YOU DO IN THIS MOMENT

Ren Navarro

It was 2018 and I was thinking I was getting burned out. I had been working as a sales rep bouncing around different breweries and people kept asking the same questions. "What's it like being a Queer Black women selling craft beer in Ontario?" I kept talking about it and I kept saying, "If we were sat at a bar right now, I wouldn't be one of the only ones." It was once we get into the craft beer industry we become these magical unicorns that nobody knows exists. I always wished I had a great story where this moment happened and I got mobilized to do something. I was just trying to figure out my stuff and it was at the point I was going to leave the beer industry. I got a job at Canada Post and was going to listen to podcasts all day and get like a billion steps in and then a friend intervened. He wanted me to meet this person who was a black woman in community farming.

We met and she said "bring me your stuff, show me who you are." I had to come up with a company name, website, and a mission statement in like a minute. I ended up doing an educational talk and thinking it was just going to be my friends coming out to support me, but it was a lot of strangers; like 150 people showed up. I thought, 'okay I can turn this into a side project' so I got a job in a taproom and said 'lets do this for 6 months and everything will be fine, it'll turn out that I was paranoid and there was diversity in beer and it is all great.' Here we are 6 years later.

I started the company and got logos in May and I had stopped in beer in April. I left the taproom within not even 6 months. Something about that time and the way I was presenting things just really clicked. I don't think you could replicate it if you started this thing now because we are so much more cynical these days. There was this very naive approach to it in 2018. Everything just hit at the right time during that summer.

I was really lucky that, before Twitter was the cesspool it is now, I was able to meet people doing really fantastic things in The States and shoot my shot and say, "Hey, I have no idea what I'm doing but I look up to you. Can I talk to you for half an hour?" It was probably the smartest thing I've ever done. Just reaching out to folks and saying, "I don't want you to give me your free labour I literally just want to know if you would you cringe if you read this."

I find when you first reach out to people you want them to tell you what to do, but you already have a thing you're doing. Don't just get their info on it because then you'll just copy them. I took a lot of those moments to say 'I'm fumbling through this but here is what I'm doing and think I'm doing it well.' A lot of the mentors said, "You have to understand your worth, you're not asking for enough money." To this day, I find it hard; none of us know what we're worth. Dr. J. Jackson Beckham said to me, "You have to think about this in terms of if you give someone a million dollar idea for free and they make a million dollars off of it, you make \$0." It clicked, was giving that million dollar idea for free and did all of that emotional heavy lifting. So I started learning to

say "that sounds like a consulting question, let me send you my rates." They'd either go, "Okay cool" or, "I don't have any money for this," so I'd say, "The internet is there, go do some homework; this is my life not a throwaway question."

When we are in those moments where we are the people trying to educate to make our own lives better, the more you give it away for free the less value it has. If I continuously do this and give it to you for free, then you're never paying me for the knowledge or the work. Free labour is still labour. I think that notion of giving away million dollar ideas for free was the gut punch I needed.

DEI has become a very dirty word. I was talking with a friend of mine and he said basically 'DEI is like the new N word because it's being used with so much hate.' Right now, American companies are defunding DEI initiatives and are saying, "We're taking things in house and will measure things differently." A lot of the companies I worked with suddenly had no budget. In 2022 and 2023, I was never home and I joked that I paid my half of the mortgage to store my stuff and now it's the opposite because of this fear that companies have of being connected to DEI work. Everyone used to want to be this trailblazer and changemaker.

Companies wanted to be like, 'Hey, here's our consultant isn't she cute? Here's our DEI committee we did a thing with our community.' Now they're just saying, 'In this economy we cant do this it costs money.' But they just bought a new factory,

or the new machine that goes bing and didn't batt an eyelash. Now suddenly you're ready to burn things down because people wanted gender free or family or accessible washrooms?

2020 made us care because murders were televised. The killing of George Floyd changed people. I realized that "post" all of this that people made changes but they made changes because it was a financial benefit. Now, we get to the era of Trump and Poilievre and the Proud Boys and it's become okay to say the quiet part out loud. So many companies that were making big strides said if we don't have to do this anymore we won't and they just dropped it; and not quietly. I keep going back to Jack Daniels doing their announcement; because two years ago they put Nearest Green back into the story. He was the black slave who literally taught Jack Daniels how to distill and without him we wouldn't have Jack Daniels Whiskey. How do you turn around from that and say, "Yeah, we aren't doing DEI"?

When I started in beer, however long ago, there was always this thing of saying, "We need more women in beer." But, the first brewers were women because it was seen as a women's job to cook, and brewing was part of cooking. We get into Mesopotamia and it's women of colour and that's consistent everywhere across the world. You get to this point where your brain explodes because there's this view now that if you're not currently in this space, then obviously you were never in this space; which is such an odd way to look at things. Like I'm not currently in these spaces but I've always been in this space historically but history is written by those who can write and read; and you didn't let me learn.

We are at this point now where everyone is tired and the advocates are burnt out and everyone is leaving. We worked so hard to make what we thought was real change and it lasted for a couple minutes then someone pulled the plug and went 'just kidding'. We're going to remember this. We're seeing the younger generations asking questions and holding brands accountable. The Jack Daniels and the Bud Lights of the world are going to start getting nervous.

We're still talking about Dylan Mulvaney and everything she went through. How she had to make the statement because Bud Light just suddenly forgot how to speak. Consumers have not forgotten in a period of time where normally we'd forget, and they lost some of their global market because of that. That is starting to show a big change. We usually have these giant controversies and people like us stand up and say 'that was racist, sexist, ect.' And then a few months later people stand up and say, 'Isn't that drink great?' This was the first time we saw they lost substantial market share; and from two different groups of people.

We are ending up with folks who are questioning these companies. They're saying 'why are we not seeing and talking about folks who made these big differences?' We are getting to this point, in the current day, where those who are underrepresented are opening their own bars, breweries, or spaces and are saying, 'I'm doing it because you didn't think I could do it and historically I was always here.' I think of Queer Brewing in England. Lily and Charlotte are doing this amazing thing where they're saying, "Here we are in this space because we've always been in this space. I can't trust you to do it right, so I'll do it myself." We're Going back to that heavy lifting and emotional labour and instead of being the consultant for someone else we're just going to do it themselves. Now, there's Uncle Nearest Whiskey, from his family members, made in his honour,

instead of saying, 'Hey Jack Daniels,' tell the story of him."

Now we know if a company gets rid of DEI to appease the right, they are going to affect the centrists and the leftists. There was an expectation that these companies will uphold policies that they set in place. If every bar pulled product for a week what would happen then? Because who owns these bars? Who is working in them or staffing them? It's not the guy who says DEI like it's a bad word. Opinions on DEI have done this weird roller coaster where everything was great and now were screaming down before the corkscrew and I think when we get into the corkscrew that's when real change will really begin to happen.

We didn't get to see ourselves in the narrative for so long and part of the future will be that we are not rewriting history, we're just filling in the blanks. the same blanks that those in power said we didn't need filled, but without those parts it doesn't explain how we got here. Going forward, we're not just doing the emotional heavy lifting, we're making the call. The ingredients and instructions are hundreds of years old and YOU weren't part of their narrative, so let me step in and fill this blank.

Ren Navarro brings over 20 years of corporate customer service and management experience, alongside 12+ years of hands-on knowledge and experience in the beer world. She has appeared on national television talking about historical aspects of alcohol, new trends in alcohol, and the benefits of stronger communities.

In 2018, Ren created Beer. Diversity., a company/advocacy group whose focus is for folks to be able to have open conversations one beer at a time. With the evolution of the company into nonalcohol spheres, she introduced B. Diversity. in early 2023. This expansion aims to create safer spaces in which to have open and honest conversations and support to create meaningful change in a multitude of industries.

ALDYNNE BELMONE DEWRITING THE PROPERTY OF BUILD THE FUTURE

We exist in a moment where a huge talking point is that Queer people were invented like 20-40 years ago; which is flatly not the case. We have to look to history and prove we were there; to tell our stories in reverse to ensure that we are still here in the future. Writing and directing Ride Lyke Hell was a fun challenge because I was able to create a vision of the past where lesbiphobia didn't exist, but I could still work through the difficulties of being a lesbian both now and back then. Often it feels like we, as Queer people, are in a form of historical superposition; constantly in conversations with everyone prior to us and antecedent.

One inspiration that made me realize there's a market for

historically rooted/inspired narratives through the lens of a marginalized person is James Samuels' 2021 film The Harder They Fall. All the characters are either inspired by, or named after, real Black cowboys from the American-West. There's a brief opening crawl that says, "these events did not happen but the people involved were real." That's where we find ourselves as Queer folks. We don't have the most robust historical records but we can see where we existed. We have a responsibility to digitize old sources and protect them. Keep what precious little Queer historical resources we have preserved in some form. But we also need to be creating physical art that tells stories informed by them. We have a responsibility

to make things that exist in the now and to preserve it as well.

Allegorical representation can't replace real representations but it's often where we see ourselves and find ourselves. It was future focused narratives that were the first instances that I saw Queerness. There's a scene in *Blade Runner* where Deckard goes to the club, and I swear in the side of the shot there's some girls making out. As a teenager, on the copy I secretly bought at Walmart, that is one of the first on screen lesbian kisses I can cast my mind back to.

I couldn't see a future for myself until I recognized my Queerness; it was future focused narratives that helped me understand. I got a lot of gender euphoria looking towards these sci-fi stories. What allowed me to see a path forward was recognizing I couldn't just keep existing as this one thing; I needed to be okay with being different. We need to start getting more imaginative and recognize that the shape that things are in right now isn't the only way it can be. I'll always have a soft spot for anything set in the future; it lets us take a stab at what the world will look like, especially in terms of gender, sexuality, and self expression.

There's always that meme that says, "You best start believing in techno-dystopia because you're in one." Callously, you can call it coping but I think we make jokes about the situations we're in so we can process them. We are the makings of the future, and the best form of resistance is to be as loud, authentic, and creative as you can be. Life imitates art imitates life. Art gives you the permission to acknowledge the absurdity that we ended up in the darkest timeline; but that's no reason to roll over and accept a world that resents us. I think we are obligated to be in conversation with it with our art or we'll go crazy.

I see creating art as a survival instinct throughout humanity. As Queer people, we are making some of the best and most interesting art and spaces that there has ever been in our shared history. I don't think that we as humans and Queer folks will ever lose, it won't be game over, there will always be a version of a future for us; even if it's bleak it won't stop us.

When someone from the future looks back on now, I hope they'll have much more information about who we are and how we exist as Queer people; but I wonder how authentic of a picture they'll have. I think people will assume that we, as Queer folks, were happier than we were, even while under threat. But I think more of our actual words will be leveraged in future projects that create about our present. It might be cutesy to say but, history doesn't always repeat but it does rhyme.

Aldynne Belmont is a
writer, journalist, and
performer. Earlier this year,
she wrote and directed Ride
Lyke Hell a lesbian friendsto-lovers romantic-comedy
road-trip post-western. It was
put on as part of Nextfest, an
emerging artists festival
based in Edmonton.

She also takes to the stage to perform as the self proclaimed "Soft grunge showgirl" Fox McCloud

THE FIRST LESBIAN FRIENDS-TO-LOVERS ROMANTIC-COMEDY ROAD-TRIP POST-WESTERN!

WRITTEN FOR THE STAGE AND DIRECTED BY

Aldynne H. Belmont

RIDE LYKE



LOVE AND DEATH ON THE OPEN ROAD @ Nextfest 2024

THE FIRST LESBIAN FRIENDS-TO-LOVERS ROMANTIC-COMEDY ROAD-TRIP POST-WESTERN!

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RIDE LYKE



LOVE AND DEATH ON THE OPEN ROAD @



THE SLAYER IN THE SOUTH SHANNYN BRANDON

I attended The Bronze popups when they happened in the past and was always heartbroken that I hadn't been a part of them. They started happening about 7 years ago and they were always insanely fun and absolutely packed. Obviously, *The Bronze* has always been about women empowerment, it's a Buffy the Vampire Slayer pop up, but, this being my first year involved, I made sure there was a fundraising aspect because I knew it would be a busy event. We took the opportunity and raised money for Southern Solidarity, which gives funds to service industry workers in need along the southeast coast, and CRCL (The Coalition To Rebuild Coastal Louisiana). I've personally had the chance to volunteer with CRLC putting oyster shells in the bayous. It was great to have so many people who had never heard of their work realize that they could volunteer and help out directly.

At Jewel of the South, I work with someone named Shawn. She first joined the team at Jewel through a program called Turning Tables. They are an organization in New Orleans which provides opportunities to Black People and People of Colour to get training, mentorship, and resources to

become a bartender because it can be hard to get experience or jobs based on race. This program does lots of training and classes with industry professionals, and organizes internships for their students. Shawn came to Jewel for hers and stayed as part of the team after her internship ended. Through Turning Tables, I got to see how she was putting on a lot of different food and drink events.

While I've been going to all of these 50 Best events, I realized I had so much access to PR, reach, and the ability to use my connections in the liquor industry to raise money for things that matter to me. I realized there was so much I could do with my position as a bartender. There was a moment after that realization where I felt guilty about not putting on events myself. So I hit up Anna and was like, 'Hey! want to do The Bronze again?' and I pitched doing it as a fundraiser. It took seeing Shawn's work to realize I could do it too, we all can. We have so many connections to people who have done it before and all you need to do is just ask for help, or ask to help.

I think mutual support and mutual aid is a big part of the industry in Louisiana post

hurricane Katrina. Tales of the Cocktail was so important for community building after everything happened. It was the time when the cocktail revolution was first happening, but summers here are dead and bartenders didn't have any money. Which only got worse after Katrina; the city was empty. Tales started so that the industry could survive during the summer and we could get people to come and visit New Orleans. Which really helped post Katrina. Living in New Orleans is really hard, problems are evident in everyday life but also it feels like people are trying to consciously make this city better and a lot of those people are bartenders. Philanthropy and doing good for your community is a big part of living in New Orleans.

There's also a connection for women and Queer people to fundraising with events in our industry. Events like Speedrack have always been raising funds for breast cancer but with big global branded competitions they often just start as an advertising for the companies and maybe eventually they raise funds or have a social aspect.

I feel like Queerness isn't often part

of the conversation in these events though. Speedrack is a great way for women to meet other women, and a lot of that community is also Queer, which has been a great way for me to meet people. But beyond that I struggle to find Queer events or Queer-centric spaces or anything that would raise awareness for Queer issues or charities that is established in the industry. I have noticed though, especially with smaller popups I've been to, they've all been more fundraiser focused. I feel like there's nothing to be gained with making events like this happen without doing something good for the world. What's the point of just taking liquor and selling it? You can give good hospitality, but you can also take the time to raise funds and raise awareness for things you care about.

I've always wanted to make more Queer-centric events happen and it's been hard to figure out what that would look like, but *The Bronze* had that groundwork laid. It was my first time doing an event like that. I'm hopeful that it gives more ammunition to push further this year. Whatever I do, I want it to be staffed by Queer people and have a fundraising side of it; or at least give organizations the space so that they can connect with people.

I watch Buffy all year long but people seem the most stoked about it in October. I went as Dark Willow and the martini on the menu was called New Moon Rising after the episode that Oz showed up after Willow started dating Tara. There was a lesbian party across the street from *The Bronze* at the same time. It was amazing to have that 10 feet away.

Events are a huge part for bars and restaurants here. A lot of people are banking on certain events happening to bring people into their bars. Location really plays into that. Jewel is in the French Quarter so a lot of big events like French Quarter Fest are important. Things like Jazz Fest are farther away from us but Mardi Gras will always be crazy since we're in the French Quarter.

The thing about being in the French Quarter though is that a lot of our guests are tourists, especially with the notoriety we've gotten in the past few years. I definitely wish there was a stronger local community in our neighbourhood. We have some great regulars at Jewel, but the French Quarter is weird because a lot of people only live there part of the time. There are some people who live in the French Quarter, but the community isn't as strong as it used to be. All of that together really shows how important capitalizing on fundraising during events can be. We really have an opportunity to make them into something bigger than just selling liquor and can build together and support our community.

Shannon Brandon is a bartender based in New Orleans, Louisiana working at the award winning bar, Jewel Of The South. She works to build equitable and inclusive spaces through her integration of philanthropy in events and behind the bar.



Putting Bodies Back In The Bar Erica Christian

My friend, Kapri Robinson, and I talk to each other a lot about the difficulties of not being included on either side of the bar or in a restaurant or hospitality as a whole not including space for varied individual experiences. The Body-Ody-Ody presentation at the Toronto Cocktail Conference was Kapri's idea. I've known her for a while now and she's seen me through everything, even before my diagnosis. I have an autoimmune disorder, its called Ankylosing Spondylitis, I also have fibromyalgia and a host of other things that make everything complicated. When Kapri brought to me that she had submitted a proposal and wanted me to speak, it was an automatic yes. She brought me in to talk about chronic illness, Daddy Long Legs to talk about Queer and tall bodies, and Kapri was talking about curvy and larger bodies. We realized through our conversations how all our frustrations had a shared root and the solution for them was thoughtfulness and empathy. What does inclusivity even mean if you don't work it intentionally in your every day?

If you're not thinking about it every day you're not going to actually make a change for the people who come into your bar or your staff. Inclusivity is not just something where you're checking off boxes. People like saying, 'We put up a pride flag so now were accepting Queer bodies. We're not fatphobic, we don't have problems with curvy bodies. We're not ableist we don't have issues with people with disabilities.' Okay, but can we participate in your space? People have this idea that 'I'm a good person, I have Queer friends, I have friends of all body types, I have chronically ill friends' but what are you actually doing to show up for them and to be inclusive? Stopping at liking someone and being kind is not including them, especially if you're an owner and operator of a business that's meant to have people serve others. We have to separate our feelings about what we do and our ethic. People hyper personalize and get defensive when you say what you need sometimes. You can't do the work if you're so caught up in your defensiveness and feelings of being a good person.

People say, 'I'm doing more than enough for you, why would I do more?' But they don't realize, if you're doing it for me you're doing it for everyone. I'm not the only one here who can get sick.

When it comes to my personal experience with illness, people often don't believe me because I look able-bodied. They expect me to look a certain way if I'm in so much pain or have mobility issues. But on the other side, you face shock when illness does show and people see it. There's a lack of empathy there. Disability is a very particular and unique experience for people, it's the same with chronic illness; the two usually go together. The issue is that you're not held to the individuality of your experience. I don't think people have been purposefully malicious, but I've had experiences where I've been let go because I couldn't go into work even though I was given a work from home position. Coworkers or owners were not understanding me when I explained what was going on and what I need. It makes you

feel like you're a burden. That you're needing something outside of the realm of what they think is acceptable or accessible. Its been tough. I got to a place where I was like, 'fuck this industry.' I still love it and I think we build incredible community, but when it comes to receiving other identities we don't always do great. We don't always get to say, "Hey, for me to work here, this is what it needs to look like."

I've been blessed in the past few years to work in a few places where I'm fiercely understood and fiercely protected from my own guilt and shame. Now my coworkers say to me, "You telling me that you're struggling helps me. It helps me to know that I can show up and I know what I have to do to make everything work." I feel very supported and empowered to go further. A year ago, I was telling Kapri that I could never work behind a bar. Before this, it felt like every place I had tried to work just wouldn't work out because of the excessive demand for me to exist differently than I do, but I can't. I physically can't. I wake up one morning and I might not be able to walk the same. Sometimes I drop drinks. If my hands are really shaky that day, it's a struggle. Should that mean I deserve less shifts? Should that mean I get less busy

shifts? Should that mean I get a pay cut or scolded? No. It should mean I am supported. Because my body is going to be doing what it's doing, it's not a choice that it's happening to me.

Now, I'm in the most challenging position I've ever been in, I'm learning the most I've ever learned, and I'm fiercely supported. I'm doing full 40 hour weeks, four 10+ hour shifts and I'm handling it because I have the support to do it. It shows that it's impactful to just care. I'm tired as all hell, my body hurts, but I'm doing great and I'm supported through the pain. It's incredible because my guests see it. Yesterday, we had guests saying, 'Damn, I want to work here, y'all look like you're having so much fun.' People come up to each other and say, 'Hey, you're doing a great job.' The affirmations are there and the environment is enriching and genuine. People really care about their jobs, and you'll get more people who care about their jobs if you care about the people.

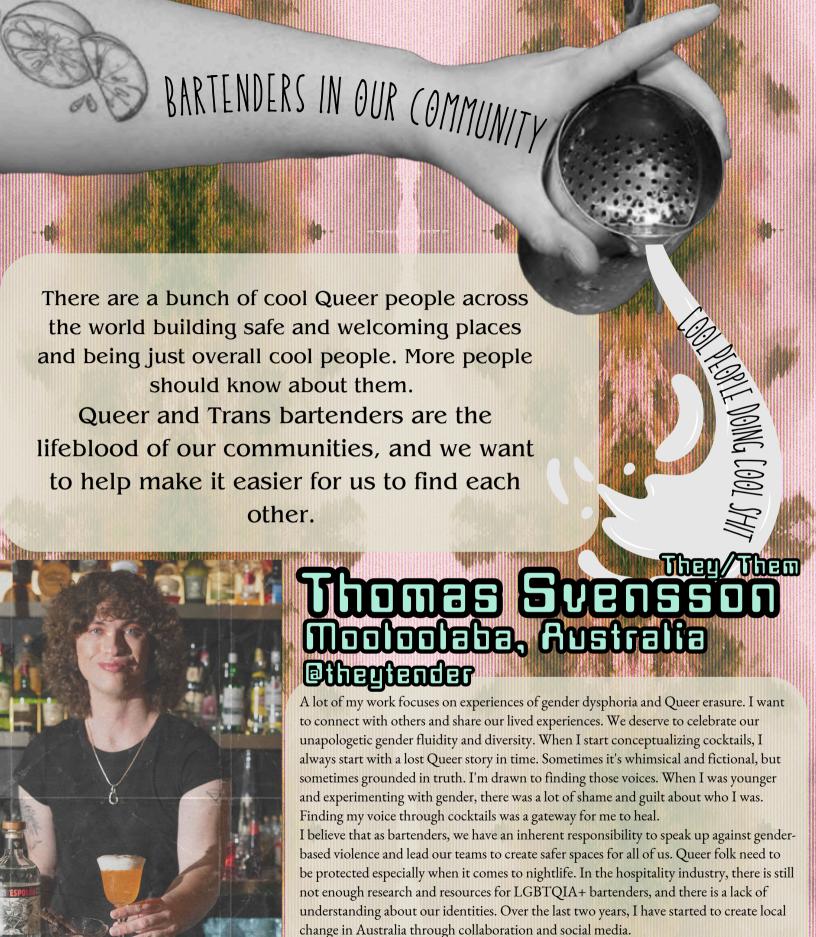
It just makes sense if you're a business to practice care and inclusivity as an ethic. To actively build a culture around it. It takes more than just these little bland statements on what you stand for. It takes the openness to say, 'We stand for

you.' What that means is we stand for whatever you need so that you can be here and allow us to benefit from your skill and passion. That's what businesses need to be; a place to serve people and serve each other. You can't just treat everyone as the same person with the same experiences and the same needs.

Erica Christian is an innovative, creative, and empathic community centered curator, bartender, and sommelier. Erica's work lies in creating inclusive anti-colonial narratives to better increase access to food and beverage through empowerment. Though navigating severe chronic illnesses and disability,

Erica believes that regardless of circumstance, people should have access to creating and engaging with the ever expanding world of beverage. Her purpose is to help others explore in ways that transcend colonial-led standards to make space for who we are becoming in the food and beverage world we are re-imagining and re-building: one where we all have space to thrive.

PYAW IS AVAILABLE
PURELY BY DONATION
TO THE SKIPPING
STONE FOUNDATION
TRANS AFFIRMING
LEGAL FUND.
THANK YOU FOR
YOUR DONATION



I hope people know that we were never alone, and the world is lovelier with you in it. The future is full of empathy for Queer people. I imagine a world where there is more access to affordable healthcare. One where Queer, trans, and gender non-conforming

people would feel safe enough to come out earlier in their lives. I cannot wait live, grow

old and witness all of our beautiful lives flourish.

Favourite cocktail: Grasshopper



I started DNA Haus (Diversity & Authenticity Haus) as a space for BIPOC and Queer creatives to come together and thrive. It's been a minute since I've done anything with it, but I'm ready to get back into it for 2025. I'm looking for folx who want to collaborate, dream big, and build events and programming that are for us, by us.

All forms of creativity are welcome—art, music, writing, performance, whatever you're passionate about. The goal is simple: we're done waiting for seats at other people's tables. Let's build our own and make them bigger, louder, and unapologetically ours.

If you're down to create something real and meaningful, let's make it happen.

Taily Long Legs Sall Lake Will, USA @Description of the Control o

To be Queer is to possess a deep understanding of survival and resistance—whether through our own lived experiences or the experiences of those who came before us. This understanding is especially profound for Queer individuals who navigate the intersection of other marginalized identities. For many in this community, Queerness has often been a source of sacrifice. Yet, for those fortunate enough, joy becomes a radical act of existence.

In the professional world, we are frequently asked to separate our Queerness from our work—to leave it at the door for the comfort of others. We are expected to dilute our expression to fit into a society that lacks the capacity to embrace difference. This demand is often cloaked in the guise of "professionalism," but what is truly being asked of us is to hide our Queerness.

It took me years to reach a place where my Queerness became a nonnegotiable. I refuse to let the heteronormative narratives that have been forced upon all of us dictate who I am or what I can achieve. To arrive here, I had to allow myself to be broken and rebuilt—a process that remains ongoing. Even now, though I proudly own my identity in every room I enter, I am acutely aware of the risks to my safety and the safety of other Queer individuals in those spaces.

Before I decided to be anything else in this life, I was a storyteller. It is my intention to tell my story and amplify the stories of other BIPOC and Queer individuals with every opportunity I have. The Queer diaspora is rich with diverse bodies, perspectives, and experiences. As a creative multi-hyphenate, I consistently turn to my intersections for inspiration in every project and pursuit. There is no separating my Queerness from my work—it is the thread that weaves through every facet of my existence, every moment of every day.

I'm currently working full-time as a Pastry Chef at a local café, and it's hands down the Queerest environment I've ever been part of. When I started, I recognized that while I'm nonbinary, I often present more masculine—especially when I'm not all dolled up. In some spaces, this means I can be perceived as straight-passing. Knowing this, I made it a priority to communicate with my leadership team and ensure my presence wouldn't disrupt the Queer energy of our space, especially for those who are femme-identifying and presenting.

Creating a safe and welcoming environment takes intentionality. For me, that means holding space for everyone's unique identities and respecting the fact that being Queer can mean entirely different things for different people. Communication is everything. I'm open to being critiqued and held accountable when I misstep.

In this role, I have learned how to cultivate a workspace where rest and well-being come before nonstop production—even if my team sometimes has to remind me to take breaks or stay home on my days off. One of my biggest challenges was learning to adapt to each person's preferred work style instead of implementing rigid systems that didn't work for everyone. This team has taught me so much about showing up for one another, being considerate and engaging, and leading in a way that's open to learning from those I lead. This kitchen is a safe space for me, and I strive to make it that way for everyone on my team.



Lacey Roberts She/Her Vancover, Ganada ebleSimmoSg

For many of my years, I have been in hetero-presenting relationships. Because of that, I didn't always feel welcome in Queer spaces. But that kind of sounds like how things started behind the bar for me. Being one of the few women behind the wood, fighting for my place to be there for years. Reminds me of the box my sexuality was put in. But with right encouragement and support, I entered creative competitions, finding a very fulfilling passion in liquid creations. My journey with my own Queerness blossomed along side it, where I was tired of bi-erasure or the flippant attitude towards being pan I had received. I started really having success on a larger scale when I just leaned into my genuine skill set, forms of expression, and owning my Queerness. It influences my works by altering the lens in which I see the world and thus the creations that come from that. It influences how I hold space, and drives me to create deeper more meaningful community for others like me. It influences me to stand up for myself and make myself known through a medium that allows versatile expression on my terms. It is me, and it is present in my art. I aim to hold space, validate feelings, and communicate with compassion. All of these things are possible in positions in and outside of leadership. By building genuine connections and creating environments that are welcoming, open, and non-confrontational gives people the

THINGS YOU SHOULD BE DRINKING

A Queer future is a rejection of the current path we find ourselves on. To create one is not to entirely ignore our past but to allow for experimentation and a change of template. The Calico is built off of a classic French 75, but structurally and experientially is entirely unique. The name comes from the unique colouring of Calico Cats, who I see as a rejection of traditional rules around what we are supposed to look like

Cut persimmons in half and set under a broiler set to high. Leave until skin is fully charred. Wrap in foil and let steam for 15 minutes. Peel and blend 1:1 with water. Strain through a nut milk bag and add 1% citric acid by weight.

Brew toasted walnut sencha and add sugar to a 1:1 ratio.

ERLLIOPE DRE @NON_BARNARY EDMONTON, CANADA

1.5 Oz Suntory Roku Gin 0.75 Oz Roasted Persimmon 0.75 Oz Toasted Walnut Sencha Stir ingredients over ice and strain into a chilled collins glass over ice.

Top with roughly 1.5 Oz of a dry cava.

HEALTH, WEALTH AND HAPPINESS

SHE/HER

JRDE JRNZEN

@TOTLN.TROUBLE.DRINKS

@PRPRYR.SRLAD.GTRL

WINNIPEG, CANADA

BONNIE DRY BAR

1.25 Oz Espresso

1 Oz NOA Non-alcoholic Italian Amaro

0.5 Oz Oat Milk

0.25 Oz Chocolate Syrup

Egg white

Dry shake, wet shake, strain into a tea cup.

Why are we charging more for oat milk? 50-75 cents extra may seem like small potatoes at first but it adds up to being quite the unneeded cost. Non-dairy alternatives are so important to have for guests who may be dairy-free for allergies or to help combat "gay tummy disease" (a term coined by a social worker I know) and who doesn't love oat milk more than the gays?? This accessibility shouldn't be a question and that goes hand in hand with the direction nonalcoholic mixology is moving in. Queer futures to me are spaces of celebration and no matter what we want to drink we should all be able to raise a glass! I want to create mocktail recipes that aren't just built in glass, tall, spritzy numbers. We want them to look like cocktails, have the same texture as cocktails, and overall exude the same essence as their boozy siblings.



HE/HIM DYLAN BRENTWOOD PRETTYBIRDDYL @HUMMINGBIRDMHC

BAR TAILFEATHER

BAR TAILFEATHER

1.25 Oz Blanco Tequila

0.25 Oz Melon Liqueur

2 Oz Match Pepita Cream

0.25 Oz Egg White

3 Oz Soda Water

Add ingredients (Except soda) to an ISI. Add the charger, shake, repeat with another charger. Add Soda water to collins glass and top with the cocktail from the ISI

This cocktail embraces the idea brought forward by my late friend 'Janet Edmonds' - an actor from Newfoundland. Life is short, wear the sparkly earrings. Simply, do the things that make you feel good, no matter what time of day. Queer joy is an act of rebellion. It's so fucked up we're going back into a deeper time of fear in North America. But this tall green, poised, joyful serve is a reminder that being happy, proud, alive, and vibrant is powerful.

Soak 500g of Pepita seeds over night. Discard and blend them with 1500 mL of water. Strain through a nut milk bag. In a blender combine with 375 g caster sugar, 30 g lactic acid, 12 g Malic acid, 12 g tartaric acid, 2.5 mL vanilla extract. Slow the blender and pour in 150 g of melted coconut oil.



AJ Stadnyk
Bartender Atlas
Toronto Cocktail Conference
TransRightsYeg
Our Contributors

The Skipping Stone Foundation Ashton Manrique-Toledo The Worlds 50 Best Bars Suntory Roku Gin People such as yourself



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PLACES YOU ARE WELCOME

SSUE #5

Clues

Cutures

With love, Calliope

