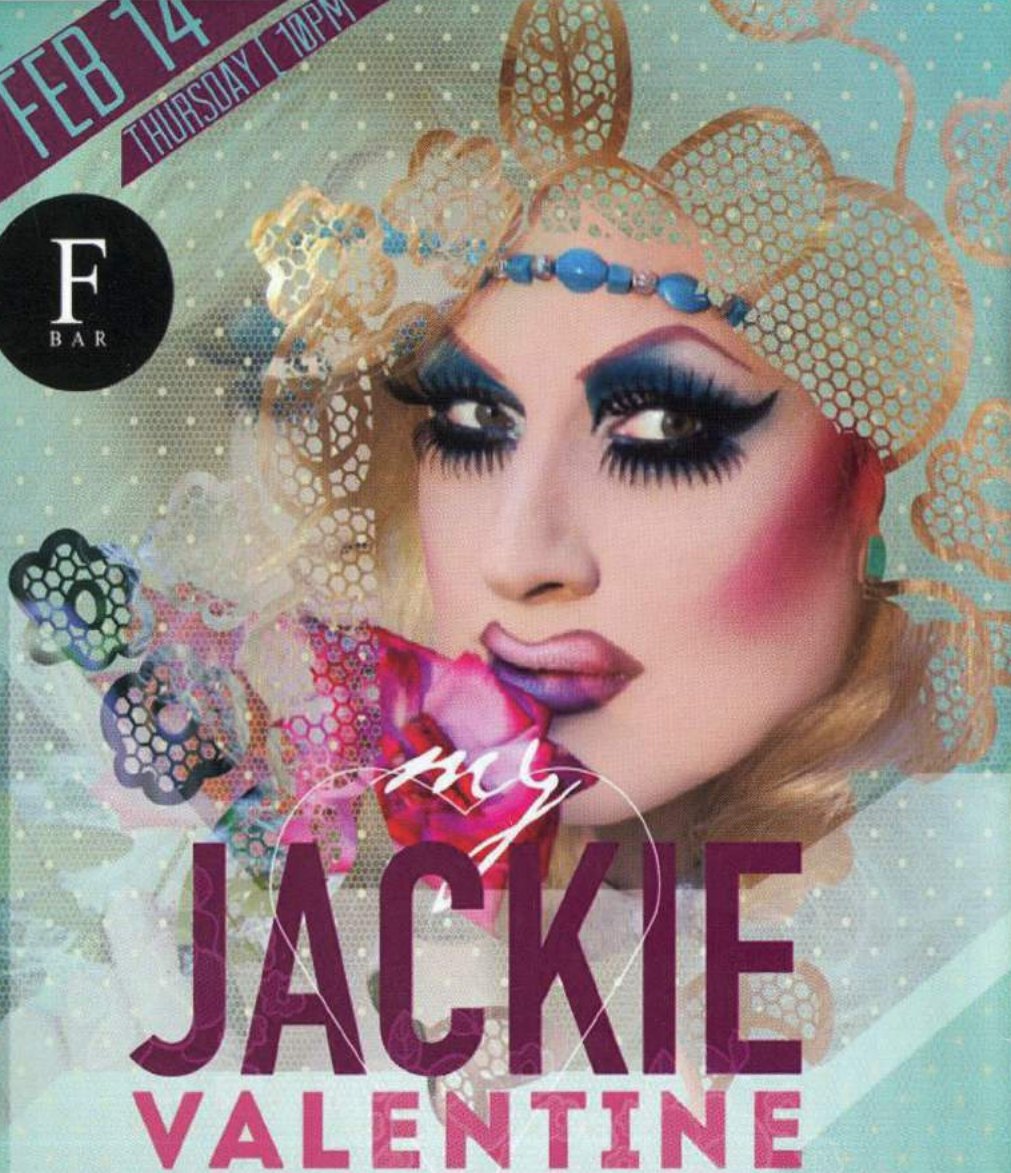


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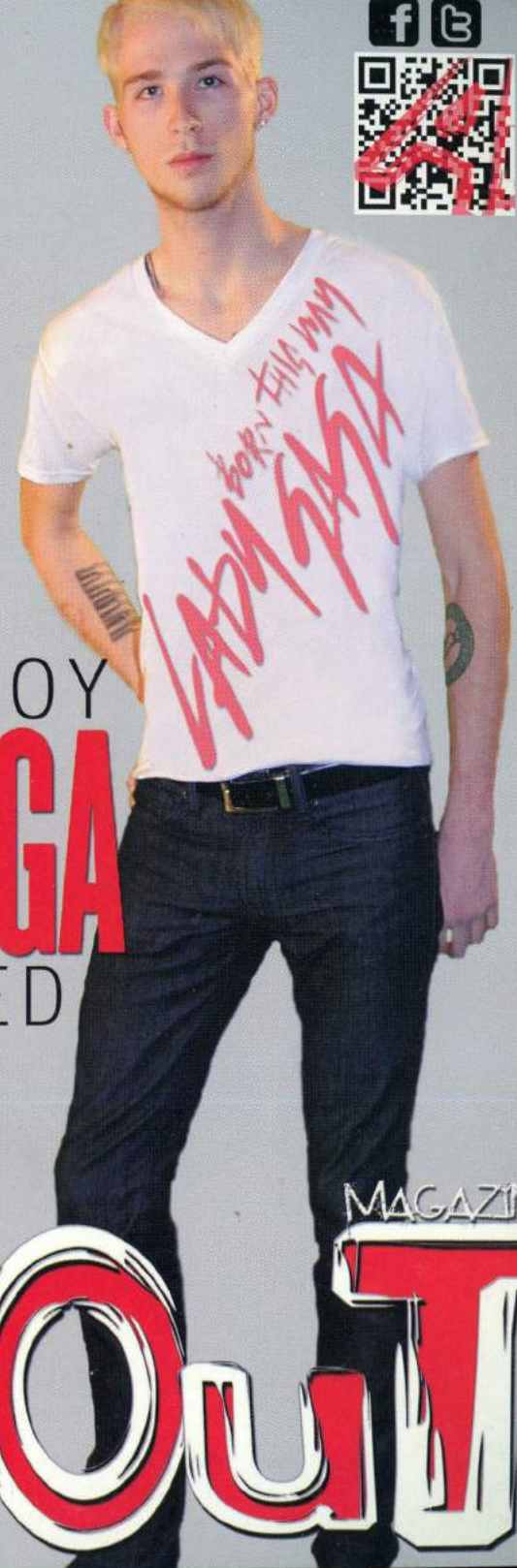
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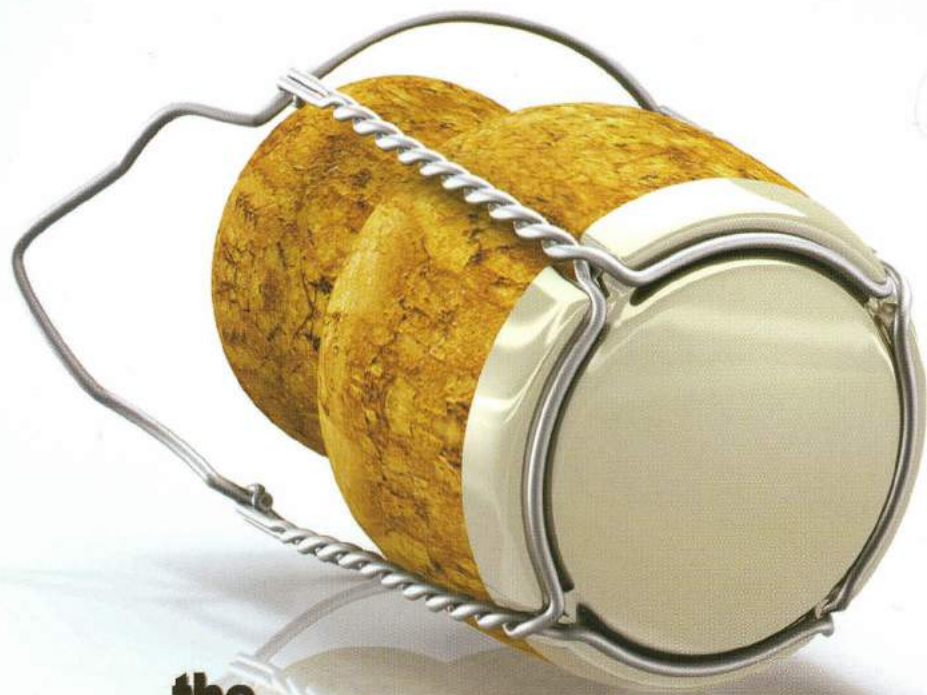
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Houston, TX 77266
(713) 396-2OUT (2688)
(281) 274-9349
www.abOUT-Online.com

ISSN Library of Congress
2163-8470 (Print)
2163-8446 (On-Line)

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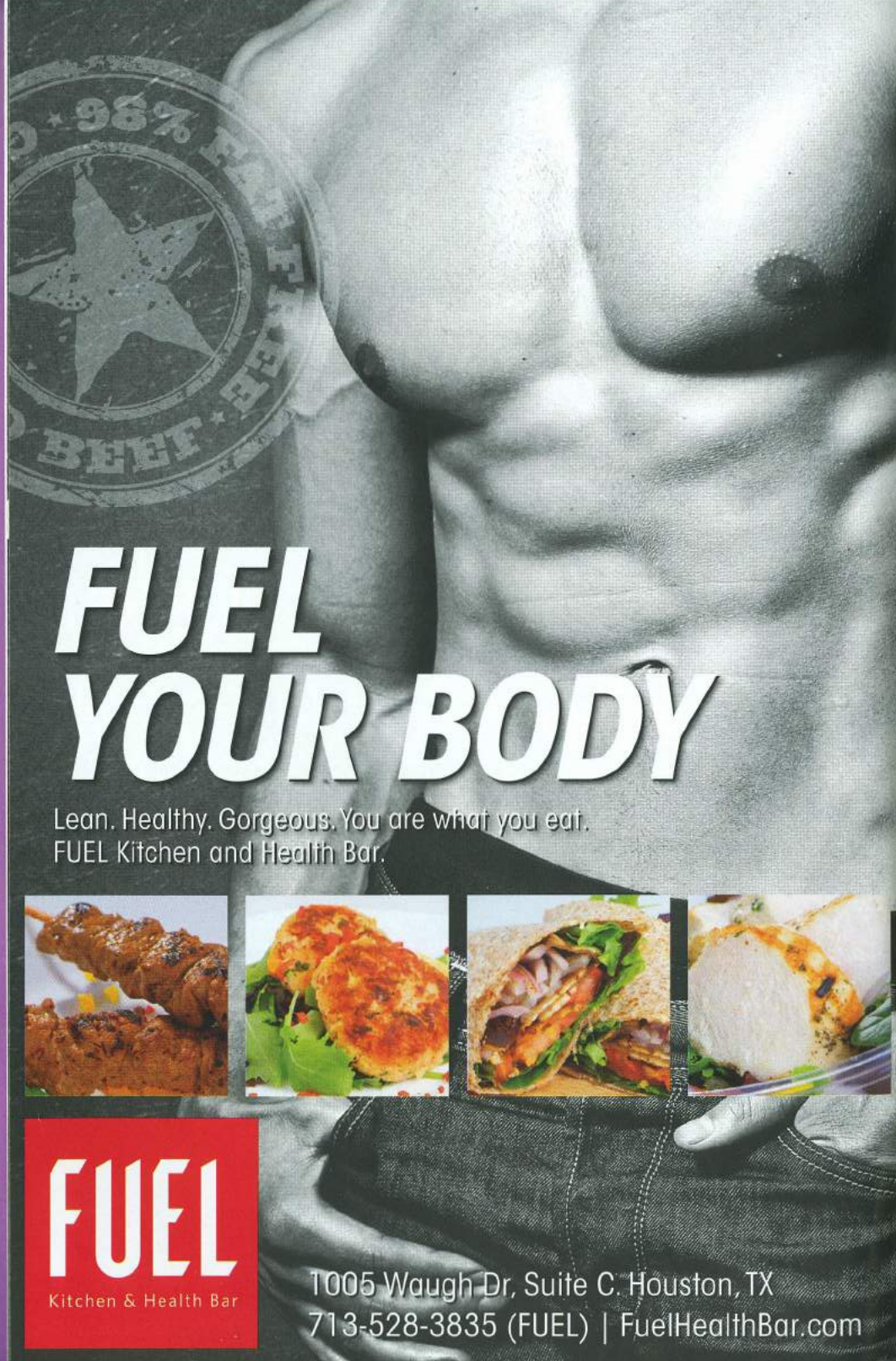
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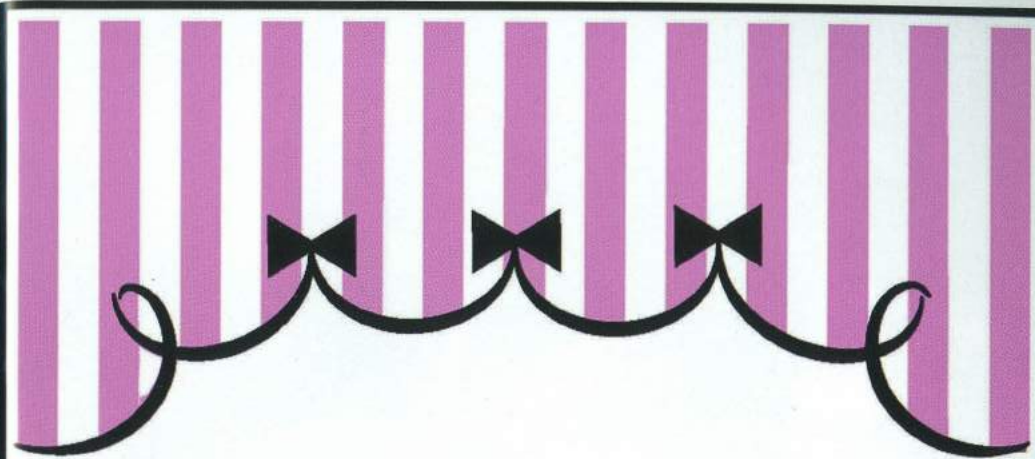
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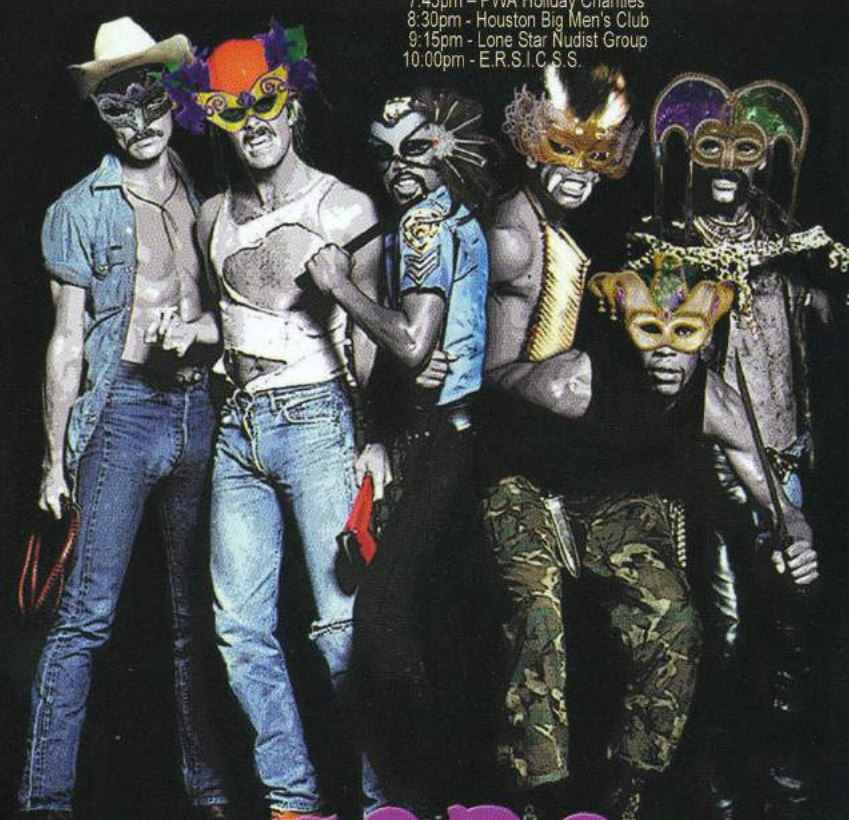
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FOR KATE CLINTON

THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL

Leading lesbian humorist headlines LHI's Annual
Gala & Fundraiser

By Nancy Ford, Guest Contributor to AbOUT

Kate Clinton sounded a little high. Odd, I thought, as we settled into our mid-morning chat prior to her upcoming visit to Houston. It's a bit early to be buzzed already.

Turns out, Clinton wasn't already buzzed that day, she was still buzzed. Not due to drugs or alcohol or even too much coffee, but from the euphoria induced by viewing the second inauguration of President Barack Obama the day before. It was the kind of mind-altering spectacle only a mainline, liberal lesbian comic could easily OD on. Primo. The good stuff.

"Wow, what a great day yesterday!" Clinton enthused. "It was just wonderful! Beautiful! It's like the red carpet at the Golden Globes first thing in the morning, with everybody getting lined up!" the top-tier goddess of LGBT humor, continued.

"And then, his speech was just staggering. I mean, he said 'gay!'"

"Fact-checking, I don't think it was the first time 'gay' was used in a presidential inaugural," she qualifies, "but not with this meaning. I'll be happy when he also says lesbian, bisexual and transgender. But I'm not complaining!"

"And to have the linkage of 'Selma, Seneca, and Stonewall!' Oh, I was up," she revs again. "I was up! It was absolutely great."

Clinton takes a breath. "I'm like a junkie," she finally admits powerlessly.

Did we mention, amid all this passion, that Kate Clinton is a political humorist? The author and activist promoting LGBT equality has dominated her profession for more than three decades, and is currently touring nationally with her 2013 Sis-Boom-Bah Tour. She brings that tour to Houston on February 23, headlining the Annual LHI Gala & Fundraiser at Double Tree Hotel Houston.

"Sis' for the sisters, 'Boom' for the boomers, and 'Bah' to anybody who gets in my way," Clinton quips.

Now in its eleventh year, the annual gala is LHI-Houston's chief fundraiser supporting the 501 c 3's mission to eliminate barriers to healthcare for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender-identified women.

Helmed by co-chairs Lynnette Ross and Lois D. Meyer, the evening also offers a seated dinner, dancing, and a raffle featuring a four-day Carnival Western Caribbean cruise package for two, provided by Windsor Tours. A cocktail reception at 6 p.m. precedes the 7 p.m. dinner.

Speaking of cruises, Clinton will likely, in addition to politics, use part of her time to riff on having just spent two weeks on the high seas with a shipload of lesbians for Olivia's 40th Anniversary Caribbean Cruise. But that day on that post-inaugural Tuesday we chatted, it was all politics.

"Who knew!?" she returns to the topic at hand. "Who ever suspected that the president would say gay and Seneca, Selma and Stonewall, in an inauguration speech 40 years ago, not to mention the years before that. It's just given me great hope that 'Yes, we can.'"

"Si se puede," she reiterates, reliving the rush. "To have this moment that's not just an aberration, but a re-election is amazing. It gives me great hope that maybe we are changing hearts and minds. Then, there are people who have neither, and I'm not interested in changing them."

Clinton's tone becomes considerably more sober when discussing the importance of mammograms, and other services LHI provides to an ever-increasing number of clients.

"Yearly mammograms are life-saving—I hope," Clinton says. "The right to health care is a gay right, so exercise it. And with LHI you have an opportunity, especially with the incredible biannual health fairs."

There's a reason LHI board decided to pull in a heavy-hitting crowd-pleaser like Kate Clinton to entertain at the gala: the highly anticipated event, attended by as many as 300 guests, is chief fundraiser that financially supports LHI's two health fairs it presents each year at Legacy Community Health Services.

"One of the reasons why LHI is needed, is because lesbians are not seen. We are invisible," James explains. "We aren't counted, and it's because there's no research on our community."

"Texas is the most uninsured state in the union," she continues. "In Houston/Harris County, one in three women are insured. And when you look at our population, we are at a disproportionate share of uninsured."

"We are bringing really important resources and to the people here in Houston, but we believe the work that we are doing will have an impact on LGBT women and transgender men all across the United States," James says. "We can't do without our partners, funders and volunteers, and there are many," James says.

In her next breath, James expresses her anticipation of the gala that makes LHI's vital work possible.

"We had a great silent auction last year, and I believe we're going to have an even better one this year," James teases. "We're still constructing the auction. I don't want to give the rest of the items away, but there are very exciting silent auction items, on many levels."

Beyond the gala, James pledges that LHI will continue to work to improve and expand health fairs in 2013, and beyond.

"LHI does amazing work here in Houston to bring naturally competent healthcare to LGBT-identified women with two health fairs that provide mammograms, well women exams, blood screenings, and other lifesaving medical services. And because of the Affordable Care Act and health insurance exchanges, we are at a time where we have the opportunity to get more LGBT people care than we have ever had in the history of the country, and we plan to be an educative resource for that," James says.

Concluding, James promises that LHI will continue to advocate "on a national level, and on a local level in terms of education, health providers, researchers, and the community."

"We are at an unprecedented time in history for the LGBT community for all folks across the United States, but also for our community," James says. "We are the community, we are the change. And we have lots of good work coming up." For tickets, log on to LHI-Houston.org.

Nancy Ford is a Houston-based writer, editor, and creator of *The Dyke Show*. Friend her at [Facebook.com/nancy.ford.790](https://www.facebook.com/nancy.ford.790).

Being born this way does have it's advantages. In this day in time we hear a lot of negative reflections in society about bullying and teen suicides due to their feelings that something is wrong with them, or they just do not fit in.

Led by Lady Gaga and her mother Cynthia Germanotta, the Born This Way Foundation was founded in 2011 to foster a more accepting society, where differences are embraced and individuality is celebrated. The Foundation is dedicated to creating a safe community that helps connect young people with the skills and opportunities they need to build a kinder, braver world.

"We believe that everyone has the right to feel safe, to be empowered and to make a difference in the world. Together, we will move towards acceptance, bravery and love."

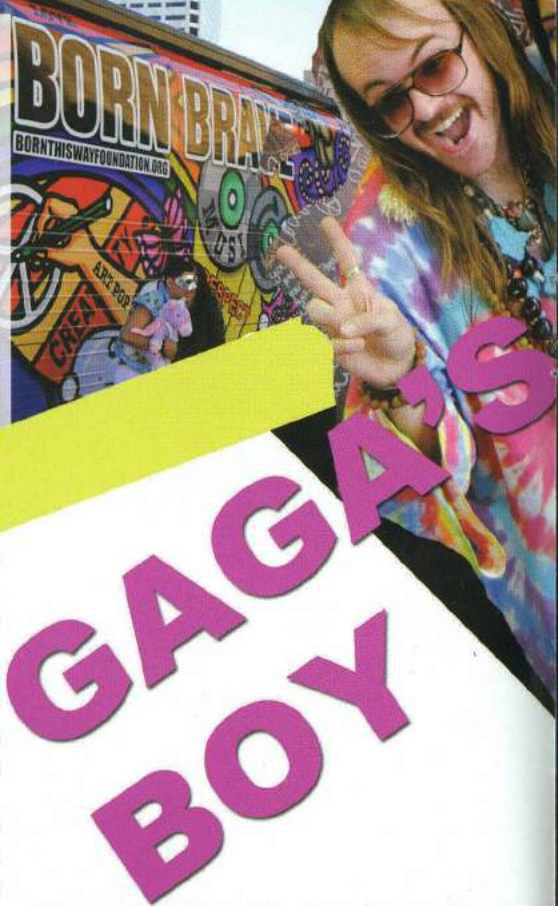
Lady Gaga's "Born This Way" Foundation has set out to change this every aspect. Gaga and her mother have launched a foundation that has hit the road with The Born This Way Ball.

Hours before the show, people were able to enjoy the experience of the Born This Way Bus. Even if you did not have a ticket, it was free to come "be your self" in a safe environment. A place where everyone was welcome. AbOUT Magazine got a exclusive tour of this amazing place by Lady Gaga's best friend of 19 years and the Ambassador of the Born This Way Ball Tour; BREEDLOVE!

One lucky Houston boy named Christopher Hunter had the experience of a lifetime at Lady Gaga's concert. He never thought he would be the chosen ill monster out of 20,000 screaming fans to be "GAGA'S" Boy for the night, as she grabbed him and brought him on stage with her.

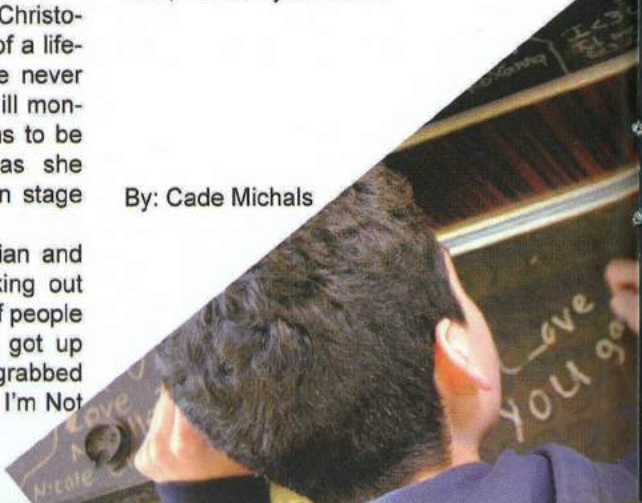
"It was unreal. Being a musician and being next to my idol, and looking out from the stage at the thousands of people in my hometown. As soon as I got up there, Gaga came around she grabbed my harness and started singing "I'm Not Guinea Cry Anymore".

By: Cade Michals



**GAGA'S
BOY**

The most exciting thing though was when it was over, and we had to crawl backstage under the stage actually, we were both crawling under the catwalk and I looked back and saw Gaga behind me crawling on her hands and knees, and she looked at me and said, " Watch your head."



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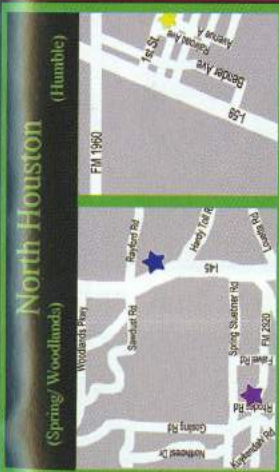
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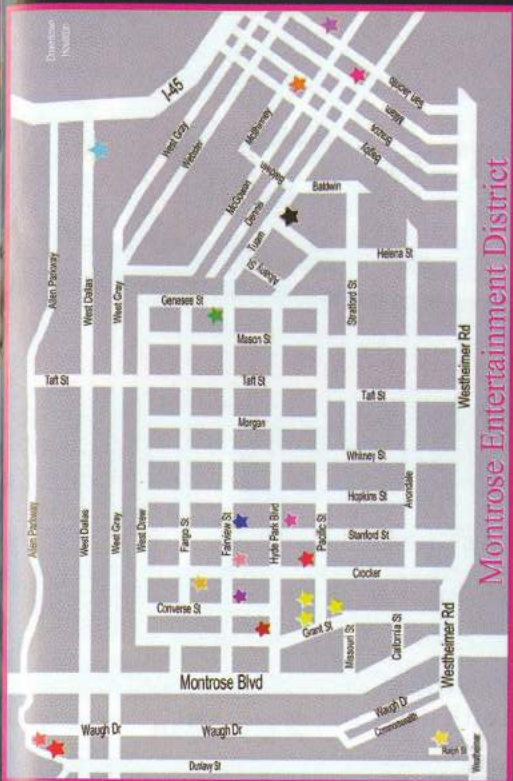


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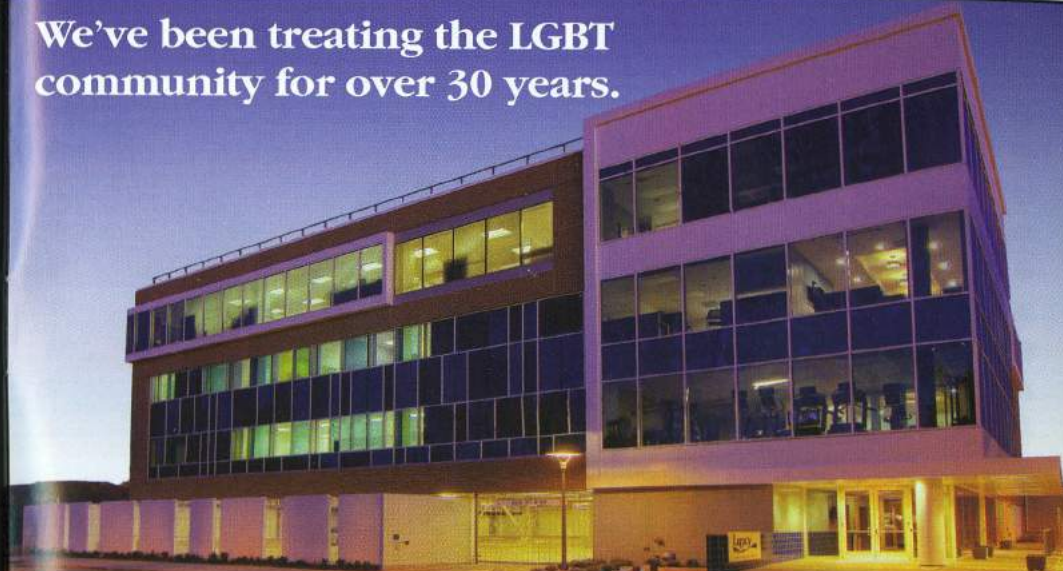
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