

HUMOR

blame Billy Elliot. Watching this marvelous film gave me happy feet, an irresistible urge to leap out of my seat and sing, "Gotta dance!"

It doesn't take much, really. The summer I was 14 I saw the movie *Fame* and the musical *A Chorus Line* for the first of three times each, and I decided it was my destiny to wear leg warmers and hang out in New York City. In retrospect, I think my dream was less about ambition and more about fashion.

Beginning that fall, I took the bus from New Jersey into Manhattan every Saturday to take classes in acting, singing and, yes, dance.

Oh, to dance! To leap, to twirl and to get to stare at myself in the mirror for a full hour! As I stood at the barre I was pleased to see I could move my arms with all the grace of the dying swan in *Swan Lake*; from the waist down, however, I was a dead duck.

Like Billy Elliot, I kept my dancing life a secret for a year until one day in the 10th grade when Lisa Richie, my biology partner, went rifling through my book bag looking for a pencil and discovered my ballet slippers. She was enormously popular; one word from her and my precarious hold on high school coolness could be completely undone.

I responded in the time-honored tradition of all high school homosexuals: "You wanna copy my homework?" Lisa Richie might have been enormously popular, but she was also enormously dumb, and we came to an immediate understanding.

My dancing ability reached its zenith during a summer stock production of *A Chorus Line* when I was 19. My performance got mixed reviews: I thought I was terrific, and everyone else thought I stank. I hung up my dancing shoes.

Dancing queens

Why gay men don't dance

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC

by Marc Acito



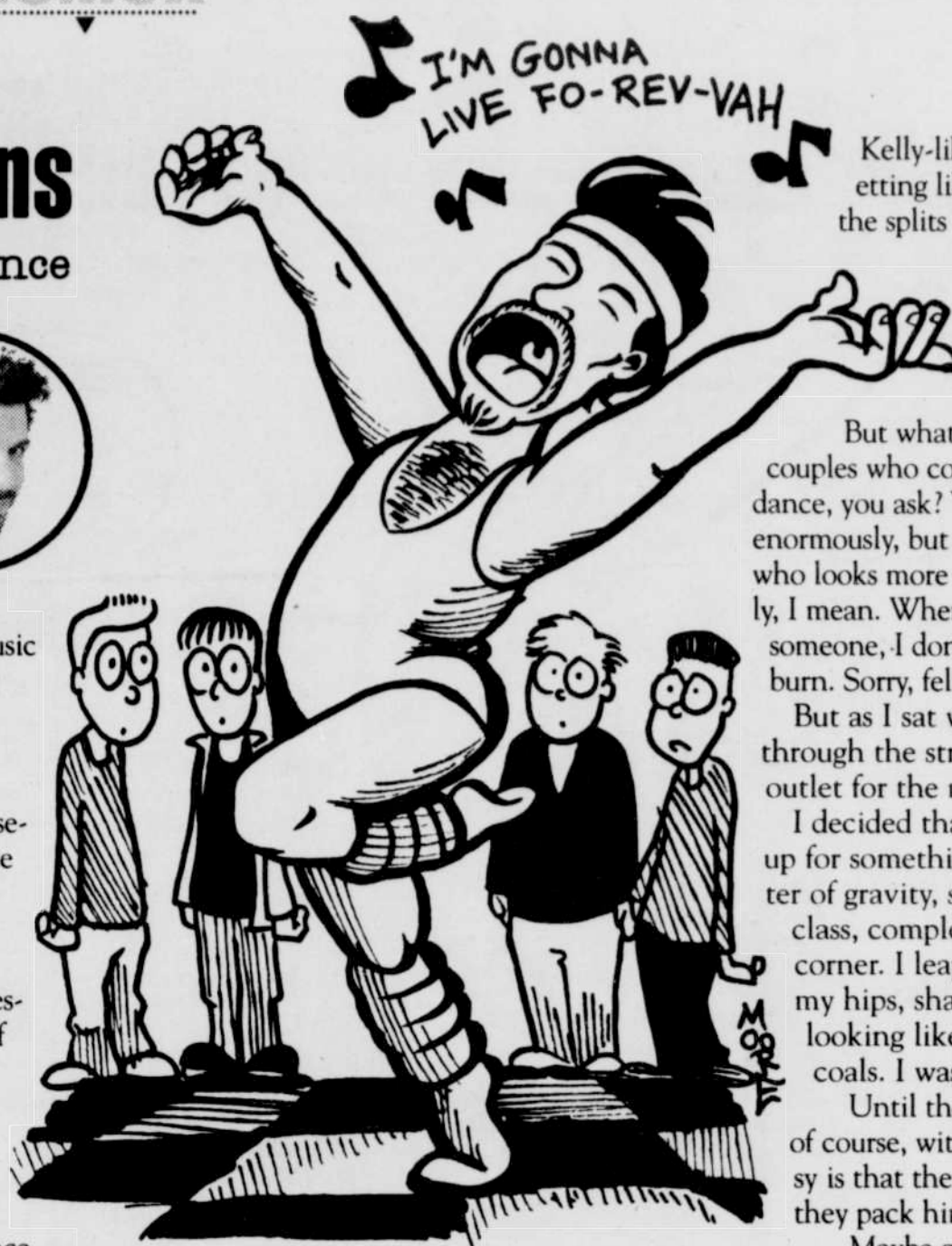
But like the song says, I've got the music in me, and I need an outlet. Considering there are so many places for gay guys to dance, you'd think I'd have no problem.

Wrong.

I find it strange that dancing is so closely associated with being gay when, despite the fact that millions of gay men go out dancing every weekend, we don't actually dance. We stand around and pose to the music with that same pissed-off expression that runway models get after years of malnutrition. Those people bobbing around in the water at the end of *Titanic* looked happier.

Now I realize, of course, it's impossible to smile when you're trying to suck in your gut. If all the gay men on the dance floor exhaled at once we'd all die of carbon dioxide poisoning.

When I ask guys why the dance floor in a gay club always looks like *Night of the Living Dead*, they invariably reply, "Oh, when I dance I'm in another world." I see. That would be the Balance a Teacup on Your Head World,



Kelly-like abandon. Dancing is pirouetting like Giselle. Dancing is doing the splits like a Vegas showgirl.

You can't do any of that in a gay club as crowded as a Tokyo subway. I know, I've tried. I nearly knocked some poor guy's tooth out once.

But what about those delightful gay couples who country-western and swing dance, you ask? Y'know, I admire these guys enormously, but personally I long for a partner who looks more like Ginger Rogers. Genetically, I mean. When I dance cheek to cheek with someone, I don't want to go home with razor burn. Sorry, fellas.

But as I sat watching Billy Elliot leap through the streets I knew I must find an outlet for the music in my soul.

I decided that at 35 years old, I best sign up for something that required a lower center of gravity, so I went to a modern dance class, complete with live drummers in the corner. I leapt about barefoot, bucking my hips, shaking my head and in general looking like I was walking across hot coals. I was enraptured.

Until the next day. The only problem, of course, with fulfilling a Gene Kelly fantasy is that they don't show the part where they pack him in ice afterward.

Maybe guys in gay bars have the right idea, after all.

And that, my friends, is The Gospel According to Marc. **JM**

MARC ACITO believes he is Ricky Martin in a parallel universe. He can be reached at MarcAcito@home.com.

because I always look like I'm having a seizure compared to the way most of you guys dance.

No, my friends, gay men do not dance; we might kick our legs up in the air, but never on the dance floor.

Dancing is leaping and cavorting with Gene

AUDITION CALL

The Rainbow Youth Performing Arts Company (RYPAC)

A NEW youth music production company has formed in Portland! Concerts, recording and guest appearances for this select high profile group will be an exciting requirement of the chosen individuals. Girl/Boy Band, R&B, Hip-hop are just a few of the styles of music performed by this high-energy group of young people. The finest of Portland's performing arts community will lend their talents to premier the BEST of our city's Gay, Lesbian, Bi, and Trans youth.

Auditioning Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Trans-gendered vocalists, instrumentalists and/or dancers; 15 — 23 years of age. Rainbow Youth Performing Arts Company is open to all youth with an intentional emphasis on youth of color.

6 — 10 Vocalists!*

3 — 5 Instrumentalists!

4 — 5 Dancers!*

Auditions will be held at: MCC Portland
2400 NE Broadway, Portland Oregon 97232

Please prepare:

1 Ballad 2 minutes in length

1 Up tempo piece 2 minutes in length

Headshot or recent photograph of yourself (if available)

Time: 2:00 pm — 7:00 pm

Date: Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Friday, March 23, 2001

Wednesday, March 28, 2001

& Friday, March 30, 2001

*Stipends available for principle performers (Stipends non-negotiable)

**Video Audition tapes will be accepted on a case-by-case basis

but RYPAC will reserve the right to meet the individual in person for call-backs.

Please contact our office at 503-281-8868

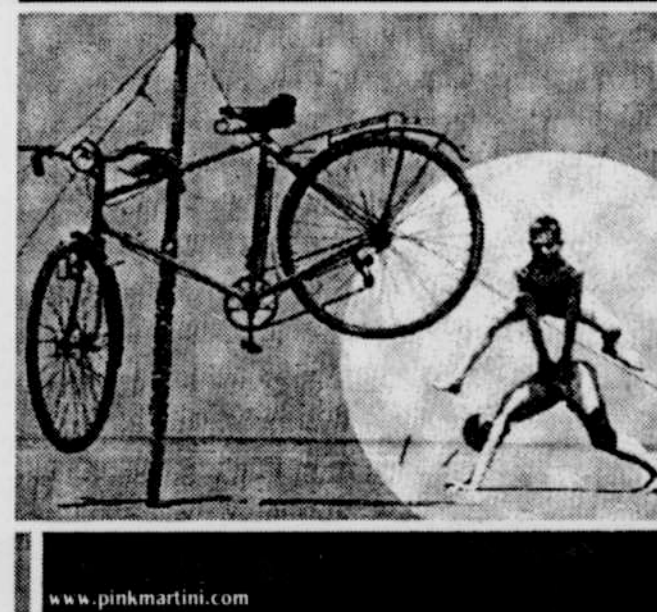
to reserve your time slot or for more information!

Rainbow Youth Performing Arts Company is a program of the Metropolitan Community Church of Portland, the leading LGBT church in the Pacific Northwest.

Support for this project comes from many community advocates and from a grant from the Commission on Children, Families and Community of Multnomah County

pink martini

plus special guests 3 leg torso sextet

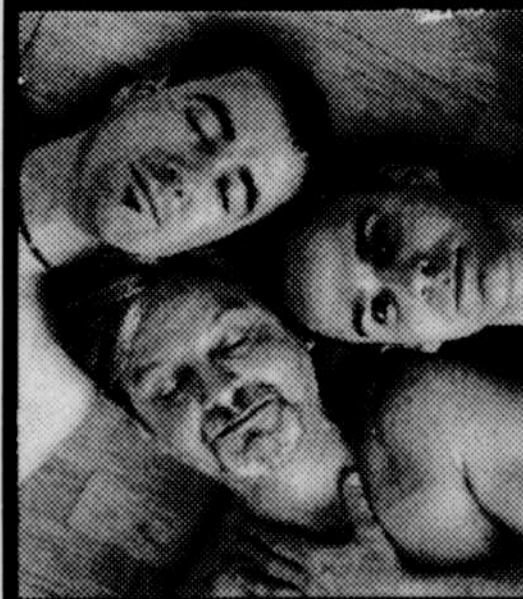


March
29 & 30
8pm
Aladdin
Theater

Tickets \$15 in advance at all Ticketmaster outlets & the Aladdin Box Office or online at www.ticketmaster.com
Charge by phone 503.224.4400
Subject to service charge \$17 day of show
All ages welcome

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