

## DIVERSIONS

# Out With It!



by Lisa Bradshaw

### Bravo Bravo

As if we haven't had enough excitement during the past few weeks, NBC premieres not one but two new gay series this month on its cable channel Bravo.

One, though, we might need to fret over a bit.

*Boy Meets Boy* premieres at 9 p.m. July 29. Now, I have watched *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette* and some of the other knockoffs. I'm kinda addicted. I can't help it! How men and women will cat-fight over one specific person just because they're manipulated into it is endlessly fascinating to me.

When these shows appeared, I immediately envisioned the first queer one. But, I thought, that will never work with gays or lesbians because all the "contestants" would just end up sleeping with each other. Why would they compete for one when there are 15 other hotties (they're *always* hotties) at their fingertips in the same house?

Again, I underestimated the human condition. They'll fight over one because they're *supposed* to. Duh.

And so, Bravo gives us the first gay male *Bachelor*. But you can't do one of these shows without the "twist" anymore because, gosh, that would be just *boring*. So the twist in this one is a few of the 15 men vying for cute bachelor James' attention are straight, unbeknownst to James (who went to University of Oregon, by the way).

There are two ways this could go.

**Good:** James convinces a straight or two that maybe they're not so straight. Or the straights and the gays reach across the sexual/social divide, coming to a greater understanding of each other and making a better world. Oh, and James picks a gay.

**Bad:** James falls in love with a straight, who rebuffs him in the end by saying: "Sorry, man, I'm not a queer. Joke's on you."

Why in heaven's name would an all-gay *Bachelor* not be edgy enough, you ask? Douglas Ross, the gay executive producer, explains it pretty plainly in the July 8 issue of *The Advocate*: "If it were just a gay dating show, for sure we'd get a lot of gay viewers, probably not that many straight viewers [and] some looky loos. We felt by putting [the twist] in, we would get a much broader audience."

It's about ratings! Who would have guessed? But if queers like me are watching *The Bachelor*, why would straights not want to watch *Boy Meets Boy*, even if there are (gasp!) no straights in it? And aren't we all "looky loos" when it comes to reality TV?

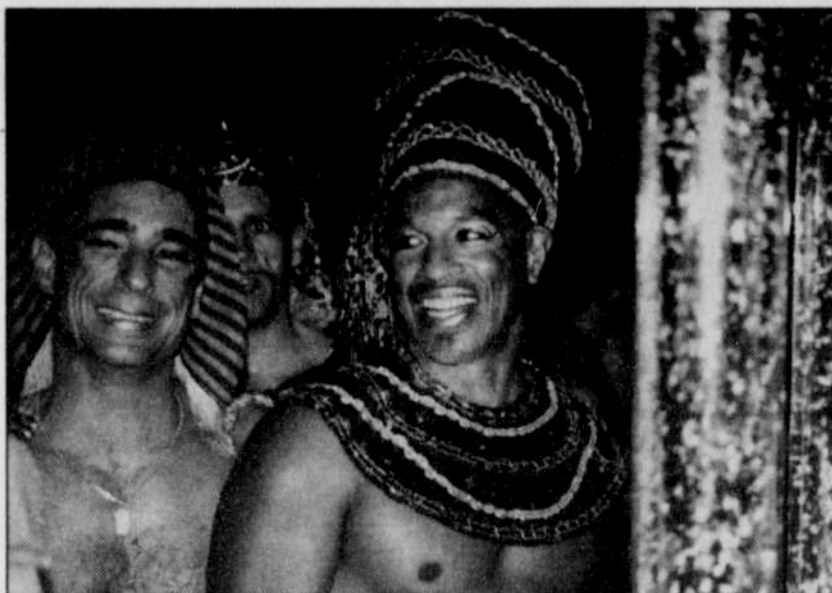
Ross goes on to say they'll also "have a chance to explore the sociological issues which are really important to us as gay producers." At the expense of James, of course, but whatever.

In the end, the show, which shot in May, will probably turn out fine because they wouldn't be airing it if it didn't. But James is starting to talk. He was quoted in the July 17 issue of *Newsweek* as saying: "They told me they put the twist in there because they wanted straight people to watch. I said to them, 'Well, you've played gay people as entertainment for straight people. Of course they're going to watch.'" Go, James!

The show to really keep your eye on is Bravo's *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, which premiered July 15. Rather than being secret, *Queer Eye* keeps it all out in the open with the premise that gay guys have more cultural sensibilities than straight guys and, therefore, can help them out. It's kind of like *What to Wear* but for a straight man's whole life.

Judging by the first episode, this is Bravo's real groundbreaker. Not only are the five guys—each one with a specialty: fashion, food, decorating, culture and grooming—predictably hilarious and nelly, they get this striding-down-the-sidewalk, slo-mo walk at the opening of the show that makes them look like the freakin' *Reservoir Dogs*. In *Queer Eye*, being gay is cool.

One with the potential to make gays the butt of the joke (so to speak) and one saying, "I'm gay, let me help you." Which sounds better to you? ☐



Alley Productions' third annual theme party is July 26

### Excess in the Alley

Since the Orient Express' first journey in 1883, passengers have demanded an experience above the ordinary. On July 26, partygoers will have an experience above the ordinary when they attend *Orient Excess*, Portland's annual theme bash at 2119 N. Kirby St., between Tillamook and Thompson streets.

Produced by Alley Productions (the boys behind the *Prison Camp* and *Walk Like an Egyptian* parties), the fun begins at 8 p.m. and continues until the last man (or woman) rickshaws home.

Admission is \$20, which includes music, surprise entertainment, food and one drink; drink scrip will also be on sale at the door.

This is the fourth year for the popular event, and attendance has grown to more than 600 hot, often scantily clad queers. On hand once again will be body artist Roger Witter, who will complement your attire with his stunning painted creations.

Speaking of attire, anything goes at these bacchanals, although costumes are not required. Dress can be as simple as a sarong, a kimono or, according to organizers, "flip-flops, Daisy Dukes and a tube top."

Proceeds from the extravaganza go to Camp Starlight. For tickets and more info visit [www.alleyproductions.com](http://www.alleyproductions.com).

### Astoria Horror

Queer visitors to the Oregon coast in August now have a better reason to head to Astoria than bridge watching. The town's respected River Theater is reviving *The Rocky Horror Show*.

Not the familiar version in which wide-eyed cultists scream and cavort in various states of undress in front of the projected movie. This is a revival of the original stage show, born in London in the early '70s.

Brad, Janet and "sweet transvestite" Frank N. Furter will have some plush digs in which to carry out their mayhem. The River's lobby has been renovated for the event and will feature a number of *Rocky*-themed installations.

This version, like the more familiar *Rocky* picture shows, will encourage audience members to dress up and saunter onstage to join the fun. "So much more is brought to life in the stage version," says director Jenni Newton. "It's bound to be an evening of, well, excitement!"



If these five Queer Eyes are heading to your house, you're in trouble

Night owls can head to one of the special midnight shows, where sushi, wine and, of course, free toast await.

*The Rocky Horror Show* plays Aug. 1 to 30 at 230 W. Marine Drive. Tickets are \$10-\$15 from 503-325-7487.

### Pouring queer art

It's not raining right now in the lovely Rose City, but it is pouring—queer art, that is.

Washington, D.C.-based queer artist JS Adams shows through July 26 at Soundvision, 625 N.W. Everett St. #108. Adams, who is also a sound artist, offers 10 pieces from his *broadcast appropriation placards* series, aptly titled *re:broadcast*. The artistically manipulated digital photos of varying imagery include some bear sightings. "On a purely aesthetic level," Adams says, "there's more texture, a more visual-tactile sensation, to images of furried men."

Portland lesbian painters Kathe Swaback and Christine Paul are featured through July 31 at p:ear gallery, 809 S.W. Alder St. Partnered in real life, too, the couple offer the painting series *Searching for What Is Here*—"based on my search for what has been hidden, ignored or forgotten," says Swaback. Paul adds, "I'm searching for what is here, in the surrounding atmosphere, in the world all around and within my heart as I move through this experience of being human."

The couple teamed with p:ear homeless and transitional youth artists before the show to help them create their work around the same theme.

Gay Portland photographer Steve Hohenboken shows through July 27 at Oregon College of Art & Craft, 8425 S.W.



You can still catch Steve Hohenboken's *Magic People* at Oregon College of Art & Craft through July 27

Barnes Road. He moved back to Portland with his partner last year "because there's just so many good family and friends that are basically family who we still knew," he says.

Some of those wound up in Hohenboken's series *Magic People*. "The work itself feels very intimate, and it feels like people kind of showing me or, by extension, the viewer a kind of intimate and really kind of magical part of themselves," he says.

### Portland's own White Party

What, you weren't invited to the last celebrity and super-model White Party? Well, Silverado certainly invites you to its first-ever *White Trash Party* from July 25 to 27 at 1217 S.W. Stark St.

The place opens every day at 9 a.m., and everyone is encouraged to wear their best white gear. On Friday from 9 p.m. to midnight is the *Mardi Gras-style white bead giveaway*, followed by a balloon drop with prizes and male strippers until 2 a.m.

Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m. Phoenix singer and pianist Mark Barnes entertains, then from 3 to 9 p.m. is the *Silverado Tea Dance* with DJ Iran, followed by an 11 p.m. prize for most outrageous white costume. Then strippers, naturally.

From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, Silverado plays host to the *Chicken Lady*, who scrambles you up a mighty-fine breakfast. At 3 p.m. is *Church of the Poison Mind in White*. Strippers, camp drag and dancing follows beginning at 4. During the *Sunday Madness Party* doors will close to newcomers at 12:30 a.m. But if you're already there, you can dance 'til late. ☐

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