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TRODDING THE BOARDS

by Patrick Shannon, III
Email: nedcat@earthlink.net

I Am My Own Wife

“Good Lord, that Bob Edes, Jr. has done it again,” whispered Jim Walpole, who was sitting next to me when Bob Edes, Jr. came out to take his bow at the end of his stunning and amazing tour de force performance of this one-man play skillfully written by Doug Wright, and tightly directed by one of the three best directors of local theater, Carl Walker. The full house gave him a much deserved standing ovation and wanted to see him on stage again for one more bow, but he did not come out even as the applause went on and on. I wonder why? He certainly had earned this acclamation of an appreciative audience. Maybe he is just shy, or maybe he was just exhausted?

That night Bob Edes, Jr. (probably our town's best actor) gave us a thrilling and moving performance playing a transvestite who lived in Berlin, Germany as a transvestite (i.e. in drag) at a time when this was not accepted and was persecuted. The play follows her life through the Nazi and Communist regimes.

Born as Lothar Berfelde, he used the drag name of Charlotte von Mahlsdorf. As a boy he was encouraged by his cross dressing lesbian aunt, Tante Luise, to follow his gown as it were. He did, and at fifteen he started living openly in women's clothing. Bob Edes brings to life her story and tell about her museum of antique clocks, gramophone records, and 19th century German furniture. She founded and curated this museum in a large stone house in Mahlsdorf, a suburb of Berlin. Her passion for her museum was her focus and the passion of her life as Adolph Hitler rose to power, his defeat, the division of Germany into Democratic and

Communitic countries, and its reunification. During the Democrat-Communist era she was to be trapped in Berlin on the East German side - the grim repressive Communist controlled side. Honored by the reunified German government with its Order of Merit, its highest civilian honor, it would seem that Charlotte von Mahlsdorf was a national heroine. The play offers a closer consideration as it would seem that some of her collection of antiques, clocks and various other artifacts were plucked from Jewish homes and businesses in collaboration with the East German Secret Police, the much feared Stasi. Like any good story teller though, she enthralls us with her tales: of her male lover who went to prison to keep her out of it, of her narrow escapes from oppressive Nazi and Communist authorities, and the love and good taste she had for her antique items. Items which it seems she stole, and later sold in order to survive.

Dressed in a dowdy peasant outfit (black dress, apron, babushka-like head scarf, and bulky ugly shoes all designed by costumer Elizabeth Parent), Mr. Edes, Jr. does a phenomenal job playing this role of Charlotte Mahlsdorf and forty other characters. His German accent is impeccable - John Pope was the German Consultant. However, he had a tendency to speak too softly at times. A bit more projection would be an improvement in a role that needs little; but we must and want to hear every word of the astonishing tale as Mr. Edes tells it via these astonishing roles.

Beverly Trask served as Movement Consultant to Mr. Edes as he inhabited the evocative Scenic Design of David Raphael with Lighting Design by Marty Sachs. Carl Walker's direction was impeccable.

I must say, and I know my old friend Jon Newlin would feel as I do, that I was not too amazed by Charlotte von Mahlsdorf's stories, surmising that a lot of them might have been hogwash and self serving. But who cares? So what if those marvelous, and at times heartbreaking fictions were true or based on truth.

However, they were no more or less remarkable than the stories once told me when I interviewed our local transvestites. Miss Fury regaled and astonished me with her adventures and



Bob Edes, Jr.

queen on the scene ...from 14

have seen in a while for NEW Meat Night. If you have not stopped by or you seemed to have forgotten to head on down to the little place on St. Louis and Burgundy and grope a stripper for me.....DO IT NOW!

Déjà vu

Before I get hungry I have to admit I have found my spot on Tuesday and Thursday nights! If you have not found this little place on Dauphine you need to! The restaurant has my favorite food...STEAK! Yes ma'am! I know what you're saying "you can get steak anywhere, why there?" Well on Tuesdays and Thursdays it is \$5 Steak night! I know I am making you hungry and you are so happy that you grabbed this **Ambush** on the day it came out (Tuesday) so you can go tonight and tell them I sent you for a great steak and side. It doesn't help that they have a cute cook either! Tofer we love you!

OZ has the PLANS!

Oz GM Tommy Elias is always thinking of ways to make Oz a bigger and better show bar and his upcoming shows will be no different as he has promised on SUNDAY SHOW NIGHT to make his productions larger then ever before. How do I know this? Well ladies, it's cause I will be gracing the Oz stage as one of the new fabulous back up dancers joining the girls. If you thought Halloween was big sista', you ain't seen nothing yet! Stay tuned to Oz to see more shows coming up soon.

Raven Kennedy Turns 21....Again!*

I would like to once again wish Miss Raven Kennedy a wonderful Happy Birthday as she turned 21 again, and her birthday party was amazing as it included the return of Teryl-Lynn Foxx! Every time I see this lovely lady I crave chocolate! LORD! Okay enough of that! The show was very exciting and included an extended cast of Oz performers all there for one reason to celebrate another year for Miss Kennedy and we are glad she is still kicking. Raven I love ya and wish you so many more!

Past Ambush Articles!

It has been so interesting lately to be grabbed by people in the community and told how well this article is working out for them and I wanted to take time to thank you guys because it shows that YOU ARE READING! YAY! I am so happy! Please continue to support our gay and gay friendly establishments cause they support YOU and help our community grow bigger and better every day.

I will be out and about ALL over New Orleans the next few weeks at a few events so if you got something coming up please email me at Nathan@nathanbrooksentertainment.com and if you have any pictures to events you can always send them to me. I love seeing the crazy things you boys do! Follow me on twitter at NBrooks2009.

fables: one of which was when she was bitch of an inmate while serving time in the Louisiana State Prison in Angola. And then there was Miss Ginger Snappe, whose Mafia relations ran her out of Buffalo, New York and sent her to New Orleans to keep her out of the way. Theater angel, Donald "Donnie Jay" James' story of the infamous Rae Bourbon who delighted in telling how she defiantly posed for news hound photographers as she was arrested and placed in a New Orleans Police Paddy Wagon for cross dressing out of Carnival Season. And if you wish proof of this "fiction," the pictures may still be in the Photo-Morgue of **The Times Picayune**.

The reason for telling all this, you may ask? Simple. If you want to hear some really amazing stories, talk to and listen to the drag queens who live in drag. Isn't that true, Miss Newlin, La Madrelena? A local dry cleaner once confronted him when he brought a glittery, glamorous dress to be cleaned for an alleged "woman friend." Not being fooled, the ancient female clerk looked at him wisely and said, "Yeah, honey, dis is yo dress, ain't it." But then again all of this may only be idle "girlish gossip."

Don't miss **I Am My Own Wife** playing through December 6 at Southern Rep. Call 504.522.6545 or visit SouthernRep.COM for tickets.

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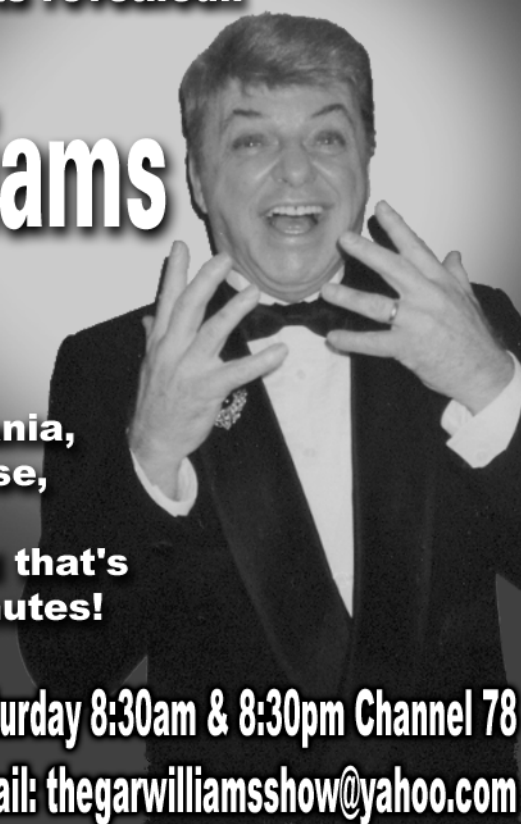
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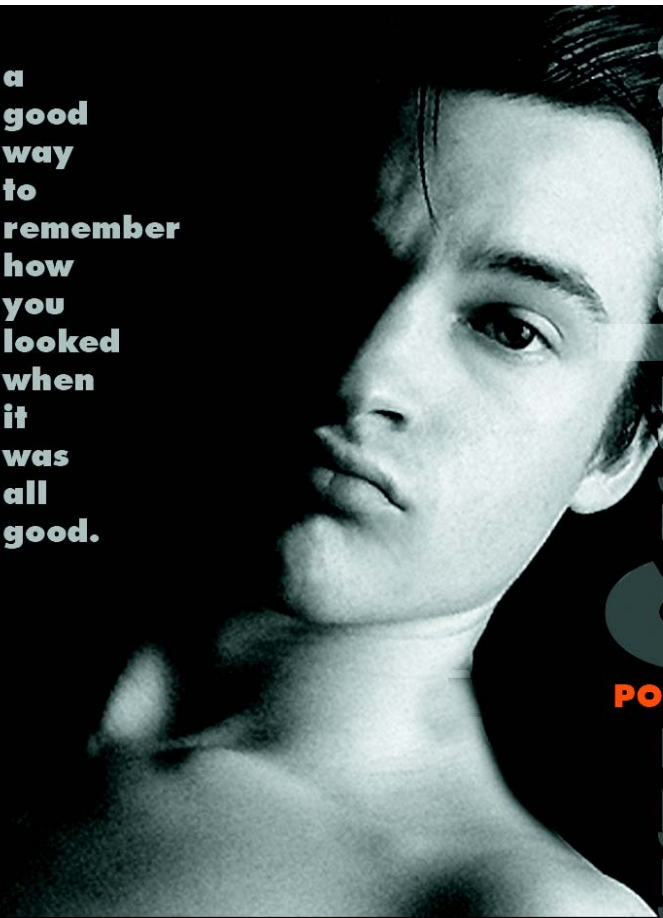
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New Orleans Restaurant/Deli Guide

700 Club Restaurant, 700 Burgundy St., 561.1095, has just opened and is now serving sliders, paninis, quesadillas, and more at the popular club in the French Quarter. Restaurant hours are 7pm till Wed.-Sun. Visit **700ClubNewOrleans.COM**.

Bywater Restaurant, Deli & BBQ, 3162 Dauphine St., 944.4445, is noted for its gumbo, barbeque, pizza, sandwiches and specials serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Open 9am-9pm Mon.-Tues., 8am-10pm Thurs.-Sun., closed Wed. MasterCard/Visa accepted.

Cafe Amelie, 912 Royal St., offers romantic courtyard or indoor dining along with both eclectic culinary creations and cocktails. Serving lunch and dinner, Wed.-Sat. 11am-9pm, Sun. brunch 10am-3pm. Call 412.8965 for reservations or additional information.

Clover Grill, 900 Bourbon St., is open 7 days and features breakfast including build your own omelettes. But let's not forget their fab burgers grilled right under a hub cap and then there's all those sandwiches, sides, desserts and shakes. Call 598.1010 or visit **CloverGrill.COM**.

Country Club Restaurant, 634 Louisa St. Under the direction of Chef Coy LeBeau, he has taken attention to detail and ingredient, and focused on a more contemporary menu at an even more affordable price point. Still the best food, but at even more unbelievable value! Serving 7 days 11am-10pm and Sunday Brunch 11am-3pm. Visit **TheCountryClubNewOrleans.COM** or call 945.0742 for more information.

The Embers Original Bourbon House, 700 Bourbon, 523.1485. You can still enjoy the charm and ambience of Old New Orleans while dining on fresh Louisiana seafood, great steaks, po-boys, and authentic Cajun and Creole cuisine and some Italian to make it interesting, all served on the largest balcony on Bourbon Street. Only two blocks from the corner of Bourton and St. Ann Streets, and the heart of Decadence. Lunch Thursday-Sunday 11am-3pm, dinner nightly 4pm-midnight,

Krystal, 116 Bourbon at Canal, Open 24 hours, it's one of the best stops for fast food with tasty burgers, hot dogs and breakfast. Call 523.4030 for more info.

Louisiana Pizza Kitchen, 95 French Market Place is famous for its wood fired gourmet pizzas, pastas, salads and appetizers. Open 7 days from 11am-10pm, call 522.9500 or visit **LouisianaPizzaKitchen.COM**.

Maximo's Italian Grill, 1117 Decatur Street, features New Orleans inspired Italian cuisine along with a wonderfully assorted wine selection. Experience Maximo's open kitchen and watch Chef Thomas Woods prepare his extraordinary dishes. Open 7 days a week Monday-Saturday 6pm til, Sunday 3pm till, call 504.586.8883 or visit **MaximosGrill.COM** for reservations and information.

Mona Lisa Restaurant, 1212 Royal St., features Italian specialties including salads, pizzas, sandwiches and both lunch and dinner entrees. Lunch 11am-5pm Thurs.-Mon., Dinner 5pm-10pm 7 days. Call 522.6746 for info.

Orleans Grapevine Wine & Bar Bistrot, 720 Orleans, 523.1930, is located in a beautifully renovated 1809 building offering a pleasant atmosphere, extensive wine list with over 350 selections and delicious food including prime steaks, lobster tails, and rack of lamb. Serving dinner 5-11pm daily.

The Pelican Club, 312 Exchange Alley, 523.1504, **PelicanClub.COM**. With its tasteful but comfortable ambience, The Pelican Club serves contemporary Louisiana cuisine specializing in seafood. The restaurant is conveniently located in the French Quarter on historic Exchange Alley, an easy walk from most downtown hotels.

Quartermaster: The Nellie Deli, 1100 Bourbon St., 529.1416, was voted Restaurant/Deli of the Year once again and is open 24 hours 7 days. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, the deli offers free delivery.

Tiramisu 55 Restaurant & Bar, 123 Carondelet, 581.3288, serves Southern, Italian and seafood specialties. Get breakfast, lunch and dinner here. Open 24 hours, take out and delivery is also available for the French Quarter and CBD.



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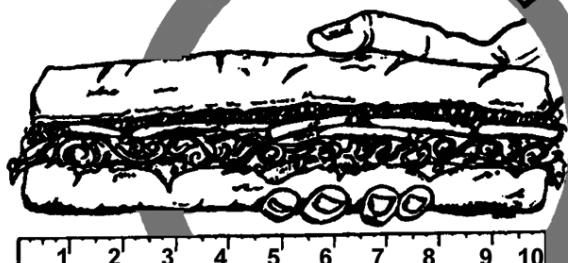
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Belle Reve Executive Director Vicki Weeks, Cafe Lafitte in Exile Manager Jerry Billiot and Belle Reve Program Coordinator Michele D'Aquin celebrate at the 17th annual Red Party in New Orleans. Hosted by Neighborhood Bar of the Year Cafe Lafitte in Exile, the employee turn-a-bout show raised \$3,800 for Belle Reve. Over the past 17 years, the Red Party has raised almost \$75,000 for charity. Visit Lafittes.COM for more on the bar. Watch for details on the upcoming launch of BelleReveNOLA.ORG in *Ambush*.



Cutter's Jimmy Kilgour, artist Amie Davis and Cutter's Dudley LeBlanc stand in front of the works by Davis now on display as Cutter's November Artist of the Month in New Orleans. Last month's annual October *Art in the Hood* raised \$2,000 for Buzzy's Boys & Girls. Visit CuttersBar.BIZ for more on the bar.



LGBT film director JD Disalvatore, *Comedy Central's* Erin Foley, and *Big Gay Sketch Show's* Nicol Paone were just some of the celebs on the inaugural Sweet cruise aboard the Norwegian Spirit out of New Orleans. The cruise brought in some 800 lesbians before and after the cruise to the city with many spotted at Rubyfruit Jungle.



Winnie Green, John Vignone and Therese Vignone celebrate at Buzzy's *Twinkle, Twinkle All My STARS!*, the annual turn-a-bout show at JohnPaul's in New Orleans. Under the direction of Fish, the gala raised \$1,752 for the William Fanning Foundation (Buzzy's Boys & Girls). A donation of \$1,500 from TJ Max brought the total to \$3,252. For more, visit BuzzysBoysAndGirls.ORG.



The cast of Petronius' Queer Shopping Network Show: Bootsie DeVille, Cathy Fox, Tami Tarmac, ZsaZsa D'LaHor & Marcy Marcell



The ever lovely Princesse Stephaney at Big Daddy's



Miss Louisiana Leatherette Cathy Fox & Barry @ JohnPaul's for Petronius' Queer Shopping Network holiday gala



A very hot couple @ Big Daddy's



Ronnie & David flank sexy Corey



Melissa showing it all @ Big Daddy's



Celebrating the Saints win against St. Louis @ JohnPaul's



Kevin (aka Cathy Fox) made a friend @ JohnPaul's



Salon D'Malta's Monica Malta strikes a pose @ Big Daddy's



Hottie Adrian @ JohnPaul's

GAYDAR IN THE CITY ~ NEW ORLEANS ~ PHOTOS BY TONY LEGGIO