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Don't Forget About Me
The Gay Issue

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Author

Topic

annimac
Little by little
star

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 01:56:30

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Hello All

I know you're all busy poring over The Daily Mail, but those of us intellectuals who take The Observer on Sundays were treated to its music magazine being dedicated to gay things. Not surprisingly, our Dust was right in there, in three separate places. One was in Neil Tennant's 'Soundtrack of My Life' feature - what a nice fellow he is, maybe HE should have been collecting the HoF award. But enough about that. The second was in The Ten: Gay Icons. Number one was La Garland, and two was Stevie Nicks, but Dusty was third, beating Madonna into fourth place!!! Third was in the Twenty Most Fabulous Gay Moments in Pop, where David McAlmont wrote about her.

I scanned them in and hope you can read them:

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

NEIL TENNANT

He heard his first pop hit at eight, had his first kiss at nine and used the pay from being a film extra to buy his first album. The Pet Shop Boys shares his memories with [Will Hodgkinson](#). Portrait by [Perou](#)



THE FIRST SONG THAT MADE ME NOTICE POP MUSIC

TELSTAR THE TORNADOS (1962)

It was the first pop record I was really aware of. I was eight, and I couldn't work out what this strange electronic sound in it was, but I knew it was the future. It came out at the beginning of the space age and it was a complete break with what had gone before: studio-created music that could not be played live, which was fascinating for me. And then of course there is the story of the record's producer Joe Meek: killing his landlady and then himself. [See Joe Meek feature, page 66.]



THE FIRST ALBUM I BOUGHT

THE WHITE ALBUM THE BEATLES (1968)

In 1968, scenes from the film *Women In Love* were shot in my home town of Newcastle. I got to be Urchin Six in a few of them, for which I got paid the huge sum of £3 a day. That allowed me to buy *The Beatles* double album for £4. What I really love about it are the sophisticated McCartney ballads: 'I Will' and 'Mother Nature's Son' are just gorgeous, full of blissful major seventh chords. I learned to play guitar by studying Beatles' songbooks, and that led to a musical I wrote when I was nine called *The Girl Who Pulled Tails*. Looking back, I suppose that title was rather Freudian.



WHEN THE PET SHOP BOYS MET DUSTY SPRINGFIELD

I CLOSE MY EYES AND COUNT TO TEN DUSTY SPRINGFIELD (1968)

I fell in love with Dusty's voice when I first heard it, aged 10, and I particularly like this song because it uses the quiet/loud style that was later taken up by Nirvana – it starts as a tender piece that builds up into something grandiose – and it has an incredible piano sound. And working with Dusty is one of the things of which I'm most proud. When Chris Lowe and I met her she had hit rock bottom: she was living in a pay-per-day motel in West Hollywood and cutting herself. But Neil and I, who bonded over our love of the album *Dusty In Memphis*, were just going: 'It's Dusty! I can't believe it!'



WHEN I MET CHRIS LOWE

BEDSITTER SOFT CELL (1981)

We were both living in bedsits in London and this song described our lives at the time. I was working at a book publishers and we were totally outside of everything: we hardly knew anyone, and we would go clubbing to Camden Palace just to look at people from the side of the dancefloor, which is a much better place to be than in the VIP area sipping champagne. The early singles by Soft Cell sum up a time in London when clubbing was creative and music was dominated by art students – a great period, in other words.



WHEN I WORKED AT SMASH HITS

PLANET ROCK AFRIKA BAMBAATAA (1982)

The *Smash Hits* days were the days of free records, so I would listen to songs that I normally wouldn't encounter. This was one of them. I liked its energy, and its simplicity, and the fact that it was in thrall to Kraftwerk. Then I went to New York for the first time, and was picked up from the airport by Mike Rutherford of Genesis, whom I was there to interview. The car went through the midtown tunnel, and just as we hit the toll station 'Planet Rock' came on the radio, and I was sick with excitement. New York was scary back then, and you heard 'Planet Rock' everywhere you went. It was wonderful.



3 DUSTY SPRINGFIELD

Blessed with great artistry, she never let her lesbianism get in the way of it. Because she wasn't open about it, she gave herself the right to enjoy being a lesbian in private. It didn't diminish her. In the end, cancer claimed her; there's an iconic price for an iconic life.



4 MADONNA

There's a dark force at work here – she subverts everything for her own gain. I went to see her London show and it was all so dour and humourless. She surpasses even Joan Crawford in terms of megalomania. Which makes her a kind of dark gay icon in itself.

6 THE SOUL DIVA
David McAlmont pays homage to 'Queen Beehive'

When Queen Victoria's government tried to legislate against lesbianism, the Queen thought the idea ridiculous as she didn't believe such a thing could possibly exist. It seems that Dusty Springfield was one of these non-existents. She won four NME awards during her own Sixties reign, and her sexuality was obvious to the gay crowd. I don't know that it matters in the face of such awesome music but for those who believed that she might be, those who thought it obvious or those who were similarly inclined, it must have meant the earth when she let her sexuality slip to *Evening Standard* journalist Ray Connolly in 1970 ('A lot of people say I'm bent, and I've heard it so many times that I've almost learned to accept it,' she said. 'I know I'm perfectly as capable of being swayed by a girl as by a boy').

Personally, I love the album *Dusty in Memphis* – for its sexual frankness, the production values and the affected coquettishness of Dusty's vocal performances. I also love 'You Don't Own Me' and 'You Don't

Have to Say You Love Me'. Once heard never forgotten.

Nonetheless, my unassailable favourite song is 'What Have I Done to Deserve This?', which she recorded with the Pet Shop Boys in 1987. I remember exactly where I was, what time of day it was and what I was wearing the first time I heard it: WHSmith in the Whitgift Centre in Croydon, buying a copy of *Smash Hits*. I still experience a palpable thrill whenever I hear the intro with those stabs of stately, classy brass, ushering in Neil Tennant's laconic, pop-on-a-smoking-jacket drawl. He then steps aside for Queen Beehive to produce a profound interpretation of Allee Willis's sugary chorus. The song reached number two in the charts in Britain and America and while Dusty owned the Sixties, here she was with us again before we finally lost her. I salute the Pet Shop Boys for remembering how much we all loved Dusty when so many of us had forgotten.

David McAlmont is part of McAlmont and Butler with Bernard Butler. Their most recent release is the single 'Speed'



Love

ANNIMAC

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 03:34:12

dusty_freak
 I've got a good thing
 ★★★★★



Thanks for these Annimac 😊 Were they all in the one newspaper?

Clare xoxo

"I'm not Mama's little baby no more..."



Australia
5805 Posts

DustyJaneway
 I start counting

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 03:39:20

Wow thanks for posting these **annimac**. Very cool indeed! 😊

United Kingdom
57 Posts



annimac
 Little by little
 ★

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 03:50:02

Hello All

Yes, Clare, they were all in the one music mag which the Observer brings out monthly. Great, eh?

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Love

ANNIMAC

**Birdie Breeze**

Little by little

USA
248 PostsPosted - 13/11/2006 : 06:31:10  

Well...

Neil Tennant may have produced her, but was grossly misinformed about Dusty's life.

She was living in a typical West Hollywood apartment, on Laurel, a street where Carole Pope lives today....there are no motels on Laurel. It is simply at the bottom of the hill from Laurel Canyon - which is a famously upscale enclave of artists, filmmakers, and otherwise successful folks.

The same general area that Dusty lived in, back in the 70's.

[Camden Town is similar to it]

I realise that Vicki Wickham believes this is inches from skid row, but skid row is, in fact, downtown....where the homeless, live on the street. The only skid row Dusty was near exists between VW's ears.

She was no longer cutting herself.

She was sober, and living quietly - long before he came along.

The only thing the PSB's did was put some \$\$ in her pocket and offer her a way back to the charts - where she had been many many many times before - without them.

I swear to god!

She could have come back to the charts with any number of other artists. They got lucky. She agreed to do it cos they carried the single, as their song. She was very tired of the music business. Most people who have long careers, get burnt out. Doesn't matter what you do for a living.....

I think French & Saunders ought to do a skit....you know...they could play these pop stars who write pop songs that don't quite make sense but rescue old pop stars....I mean, just think what they could do for GARY GLITTER.....MICHAEL JACKSON....and...other washed up scandal ridden tired old pop stars....I know I know....they could produce miracles!!!!!!!!!!

Really darlings!!!

Anyway, If you come across any basketcase pop stars....preferrably on skid row.....smoking crack.....*PLEASE*....send them to Neil and Chris....ASAP....swear to god, they'll write them a song and EVERYTHING will be cured!!

Oh yeah, (snaps fingers) just like that!

Thanks for the laugh!

Cheers

Birdie

<http://www.myspace.com/birdiebreeze>

Edited by - Birdie Breeze on 13/11/2006 07:39:31

**Rob**
Administrator
★★★★★Posted - 13/11/2006 : 06:52:44 

Thanks for posting the magazine articles Anni, much appreciated.

Love
R☺B



United Kingdom
4205 Posts

daydreamer
Moderator
★★★★



United Kingdom
5404 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 07:56:33

Thanks Anni, I also got the Observer but couldn't get to the computer last night and you stay up later than me 😊 I'm going to give Neil Tennant the benefit of being misquoted there, there's not a lot of difference in saying "she had been" and "she was". Anyone who ever listens to him talk about Dusty can hear the affection he has for her and I'll never forget the night he 'duetted' with Dusty on stage, him singing live and her on the big screen. He blew her a kiss at the end and the thousands in the Arena were on their feet and raising the roof, a lot in tears. Like Dusty, I'll always be "eternally grateful" that they wanted her for WHIDTDT and brought her back to us.

Btw, the Top 10 Gay Icons were chosen by Rufus Wainwright.

Carole x



Rob
Administrator
★★★★



United Kingdom
4205 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 08:12:37

Well, it certainly wouldn't be the first time that journalists have misquoted somebody in order to sensationalise a story. In fact, I'm sure it's a way of working with the vast majority of them, particularly those covering the "entertainment business. I sure ain't in that line of work but a couple of months ago I spoke to a local journalist in connection with my job. Some of what appeared in the paper was close to what I said but some of it was complete fabrication, designed to alarm readers. I can only say that whenever I've heard Neil Tennant speak of Dusty, which is quite a few times, it has been with nothing other than affection and total admiration.

RoB 😊



Mads
Where am I going?
★★★



Australia
3323 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 09:10:57

Thanks honey! They are so interesting - I wish we had cool things that mention Dusty lots over here!!

Love,

Mads xxx



annimac
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 19:30:27

Hello All

Agree with all of you supporting Neil Tennant, he also spoke movingly at the funeral, as I recall. Whether he was misquoted or not, his information very probably came from Dusty herself, since they spent rather a lot of time together recording WHIDTDT and the album. I doubt very much that it came from DWD, since his experience with her predates that by several years.

Anyway, thanks for reminding me of the Arena gig, Carole (and for saying that Rufus chose the icons, I forgot to mention that bit!).

Love

ANNIMAC



Birdie Breeze
Little by little
★

USA
248 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 19:56:18

[Here's another take on Dusty doing WHIDTDT](#)

<http://www.alleewillis.com/music/whidtdt/index.htm>

Everyone seems to have different stories, but, Allee's story rings particularly true. Other stories, I can trace to how they got started or why...and they are just stories...

Around the time Dusty *recorded* WHIDTDT and did the video - and - after it was released, she *was* living on Laurel.

She was never going to end up on skid row.

She was very active in AA and in between apartments, she stayed with friends or her AA sponsors. She had a very dedicated long term support system. She could have spent short spells in a motel between going to and fro from the UK and various apartments. I've done that...when you come back into town and need to find a new place... and she was going back and forth from the UK...stringfellow period, etc...during that period.

Anyway, Neil doesn't give the exact date nor does he clarify the situation, so, it's rather bent info. The point being to prop up his ego, I guess. pity. You'd think with all the money he made off her, he wouldn't have to stoop so low. Of course, he could just be repeating something VW told him. Most likely the case. Poor lad.

The big big big problem she faced was that the biz was changing from albums to CD's and she only had ONE CD out "Love Songs" and all her records were out-of-print...but her whole catalogue was destined to eventually come out on CD - it was just a matter of time. No doubts there.

Anyway...there was a mid-eighties period for a lot of artists from the 60's, who had an out-of-print catalogue and they were waiting for CD's to be issued...it took a number of years for the transition to occur.

It wasn't that she was forgotten or anything...

It had more to do with the state of the industry than anything.

And, she needed some serious time off to get her life together, which she worked very very very hard at - and, which makes any claims that she was saved by a pop single, apart from being utterly ridiculous, completely insulting to her memory...

The main reason she turned them down is she was very active in her personal recovery process and becoming a big star was too much pressure and stress for her - and - her priorities were on getting better.

She put herself first, by saying no. GOOD ON HER.

She finally agreed when she realised she wouldn't have to carry the single herself, that the boys would be responsible for it, and she didn't have to go out there alone and shoulder everything.

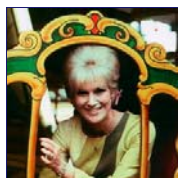
Anyway, I do hope you enjoy the link to Allee's WHIDTDT page.

Birdie

<http://www.myspace.com/birdiebreeze>



Mark
I've got a good thing
★★★★★



United Kingdom
5309 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 19:58:36

Thank you for posting Anni, very interesting.....would be there be any possibility of the 'Joe Meek' feature being posted please?
As well as being the man behind The Tornados (I love their instrumentals) he also produced John Leyton (Johnny remember me) and The Honeycombs (Have I the right)

Thanks

Mark



Jane
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
239 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 20:44:03

Thanks for posting the articles Anni - you've sparked quite an interesting discussion. Also, thanks to Birdie for her equally interesting 'insights'. The more anybody starts looking into the 'truth' or otherwise of any situation, the more confusing things become for us mere mortals. Sometimes I'm sure there is an intentional distorting of the truth. Sometimes I reckon there is a genuine case of chinese whispers where people think they are relaying the same message but by the time it gets to the end of the line there is an unrecognisable 'truth' from that which started off!

Whatever the situation re Neil Tennant I'm not sure anybody felt that the PSB's had saved Dusty. As a fan I echo what Carole has said about the recording of WHIDTDT as bringing her back to us as a singing artist. I certainly got the impression from many of Dusty's interviews around the time of the release of 'A Very Fine Love' that there had been a period when she needed to get her life back together and she questioned whether she ever wanted to make another record. It never entered my head that she was 'saved' in any way by the linking up with the Pet Shop Boys, more that it was a conscious decision on her part to do it.

It is also interesting the timeframe that Allee Willis mentions in respect of negotiating with Dusty over whether she would be involved with WHIDTDT or not - a couple of years was mentioned. Is it any wonder that we are confused - I have it on VHS in two or three interviews where Dusty refers to a very quick decision being made...nothing like the timeframe suggested by Allee. So, was Dusty lying in the interview or simply mistaken? Possibly she thought the finer detail would be an irrelevance and wouldn't add much to the overall impact of the interviews? Was Allee lying or simply mistaken? And so it goes on. Very often people say things in the context in which they find themselves, with no real intent to mislead or be malicious. This is not to suggest that some people may have had ulterior motives along the way and lied outright. As I say, it is all so very interesting...

Janie xx

Edited by - Jane on 13/11/2006 20:49:44



Birdie Breeze
Little by little
★

USA
248 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 21:22:05

This came through one of the music mailing lists I'm on....

Adam is one of the sharpest posters on it - and - it's a list full of super bright folks in music.

outside opinions are good to hear.

I've never been a huge fan of this little insert to my Sunday papers: I feel it embodies everything that's wrong with music criticism in its glibness and short-term memory. This month they produced a special "Gay Issue". I'm not happy with the ghetto-isation to begin with (what next? A Jewish issue?), but inside they seem to equate "gay" with either "glam" or "camp". All the usual suspects: Joe Meek, Brian Epstein, Elton & Jake Shears (the latter two in conversation) and KD Lang gets a nod, but I thought it was a typically bone-headed, wasted opportunity. I know, as a straight man I've little right to cavil, but I was kind of hoping that it would be of a little wider scope than it turned out. Indigo Girls? Janis Ian? Nope, no mention. A very Brit-centric view also saw Melissa Ferrick, Ferron, Phranc and Ani DiFranco also being ignored. When I was a student at NYU, the budding lesbians around me

listened fervently to Cris Williamson and Holly Near, but they'd need a higher profile to make it into this article. That or a journalist who actually knew what they were talking about and wanted to write a serious article.

Any other UK ectos read this? Am I being totally unreasonable? Partly unreasonable?

Adam K.

<http://www.myspace.com/birdiebreeze>



Mark

I've got a good thing
★★★★★



United Kingdom
5309 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 21:45:39



Even the Queen reads the Observer! 😊👑



Mark



Sophie

Where am I going?
★★★★

2302 Posts

Posted - 13/11/2006 : 23:16:50



oh i meant to buy that, but didn't get chance to.. so thanks for scanning it in, Annimac 😊

Edited by - Sophie on 13/11/2006 23:17:23



allherfaces

Administrator
★★★★★



USA
14235 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 02:32:51



I appreciate you scanning and posting the articles, Anni, and I appreciate that the Pet Shop Boys included Dusty in What Have I, What Have I, What Have I Done to Deserve This. Great song & I think a lot of people relate to it.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away



animac

Little by little
★

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 02:43:28



Hello All

In response to Mark's request, I've scanned the Joe Meek stuff, which is very interesting, or it was to me, who'd forgotten most of the story.

Birdie, I wasn't implying any judgment of the magazine's content by

posting the above, merely thought it would be of interest to Dusty fans. As it happens, your friend Adam makes many valid points, and I'm sure many of us are unhappy about how gay people are (still) represented. I can also remember all my dyke friends back in the seventies listening to Holly Near, they made me listen to her as well, and what a dreary singer she was.

Anyway, Mark, the Meek article is quite long, so I'll post it a page at a time (it'll be in very small writing, so better get your specs on).

Love

ANNIMAC



annimac
Little by little



United Kingdom
185 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 02:45:06



Here's the second page:



Meek (far right) in 1963 with the Tornadoes, with whom he made 'Do You Come Here Often?'

'Who cares?'

'Well, I know of a few people who do.'

'Yes, you would.'

'GOW! These two, coming now. What do you think?'

'Mmmmm. Mine's all right, but I don't like the look of yours.'

(A sniffy pause)

'Well, I must be off.'

'Yes, you're not looking so good.'

'Cheers. I'll see you down the 'Dilly.'

'Not if I see you first, you won't.'

Exeunt, to swelling organs.

This brief but diverting exchange has the ring of authenticity. Its bickering is not just banter but the most important component of the camping which, as English academic Richard Dyer writes, is 'the only style, language and culture that is distinctively and unambiguously gay male'. In its social mode, camp privileges a caustic wit, best expressed by the quick fire verbal retort, partly as a form of aggression, partly as a form of self-mockery, partly as a form of self-defence. It's an insider code that completely baffles the heterosexual majority, as it's meant to. (Why are they being so horrible to each other? Because it's good sport, and good practice for when you really need it.)

Like the Negro 'ditty doers' – the ritualised insults of the Twenties and Thirties that have become embedded in rap – the camping spotlighted on 'Do You Come Here Often?' represents a complicated response to a hostile world. Its poisoned psychological arrows can help to control and neutralise the threat of homophobic violence;

HEY JOE THE SIXTIES' SPACE CADET

Since his death, Joe Meek's reputation as a pioneer of space-age pop and an eccentric English Phil Spector has grown apace. But in the early Sixties the record industry hardly knew what to make of the man who made a series of hits from his home studio at 304 Holloway Road in north London.

Born in 1929 in the Forest of Dean, he developed an early obsession with gadgets which he nurtured while working for the Midlands Electricity Board and which found full rein when he started to make records in 1956. The best-known of these – John Leyton's 'Johnny Remember Me', the Tornadoes' 'Telstar' – sounded like nothing else and, far ahead of George Martin, Meek used the studio as an instrument, taking mixing desks apart, playing tapes backwards and adding washes of sci-fi inspired effects. The fact that in his studio people played guitar in the bathroom while others sang on the stairs only adds to the fun.

Scorned by the mainstream, Meek launched his own label, so becoming an indie pioneer in yet another field. Members of Meek's house bands became huge stars a decade later – Ritchie Blackmore, who played the guitar solo on Heinz's 'Just Like Eddie', went on to form Deep Purple, along with the Syndicats' Roger Glover, whose guitarist, Steve Howe, joined Yes.

many bullies are right to fear the queen's forked tongue. Camping can provide a bulwark from which the gay man can sail forth into the world at large: it freezes the typecasting of homosexuals as effeminate, internalises it, and then throws it back in the face of the straight world as a kind of revenge.

However, that long 'mummmmm', reverberating right through the diaphragm down to the male G-spot, gets to the heart of the matter. Meek's queen bitches are briefly united by an unstable mixture of camaraderie and competitiveness. Ever hopeful, ever alert, the gay man in cruising mode is relentless in pursuit of cock; the usual social rules go right out of the window. Sex drives the gay scene, its iconography, its economy, its inner and outer life. Meek's scenario highlights that heart-stopping instant, that highwire walk between acceptance and rejection that every gay man knows when the Adonis turns into a Troll – not just the object of your desire but your own self.

'Do You Come Here Often?' was an extraordinary achievement: the first record on a UK major label – Columbia, part of the massive EMI empire – to deliver a slice of queer life so true that you can hear its cut and thrust in any gay bar today. Before 1966, homosexuality had been hinted at in odd mainstream records like Donovan's 'I'll Try For the Sun' or the Kinks' 'See My Friends', indeed had saturated Meek epics like 'Johnny Remember Me', but the allusions had been veiled. They didn't offer an insider viewpoint, just a mood or a stray word that seemed to briefly open a door usually locked and barred.

Since the early Sixties, there had been a trickle of products aimed at a market that was so off-



animac
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
105 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 02:45:36

And the third:

the map as to be beyond marginal. Apart from Rod McKuen's vague but signaling spoken-word albums such as *In Search of Eve*, all of them were on tiny, fly-by-night labels. They took two different forms. Some took the Rod McKuen path: the sad young men, fated to wander through the twilight world of the third sex, condemned, like Peter Pan, to always be on the outside looking in. Their sensitive meditations on lust and loneliness were dramatized by covers of show tunes.

While these tragic figures, in accepting their exiled status, took care to be non-specific, the period's other archetypes were far more feisty. Unlike their more sober compatriots, drag queens could not pass, and so camping was honed into a corrosive chatter that could strip paint at 10 paces. Dowstalling into the market for outrageous adult albums by the likes of Rusty Warren (*Banned in Boston*), nitroglycerin queens like Rae Bourbon, Mr Jean Fredericks and Jesse from the Black Cat offered frank meditations on queer life: "Nobody Loves a Fairy When She's 40", "Sailor Boy", et al. Too real and too ghettoised, none had a hope of finding any wider distribution.

There were firm reasons for this state of affairs. Although the law that would decriminalise it was passing through Parliament during 1966, homosexuality was still illegal in the UK, as it was in the US; punishable by prison and social ostracism. However, laws do not always reflect contemporary realities, and gay people continued to conduct their illegal sexual and social lives. For older men like Joe Meek, pleasure might have been irrevocably stunted by guilt but, for the upcoming generation of 20 year olds, the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885 was an anachronistic impediment. Fuck Liby Law and her evil twin, Laura Norder.

In fact, Joe Meek was unusually privileged, if only he had been able to take some comfort from that realisation. The music industry was one of the few places where gay men could be themselves, and indulge their sexual predilections in a way that was economically viable. Forty years ago, it was far from being the respectable career option that it is today, and indeed derived much of its energy from its outcast status. This was a natural consequence of its roots in showbusiness and theatre, but even more basic was the way in which the sexual and social aesthetics of genuine innovators such as Larry Parnes alienated the raw material of working-class adolescents into hit parade gold. From 1957 on, Parnes boomed Britain's rock'n'roll, and transformed all his Reginalds and Ronalds into a new Olympus peopled by emotional desbes-cun-suchetypes like Billy Fury, Dickie Pride, Vince Eager, Georgie Fame. His sensibility, and that of many who followed him, transmuted gay lust into the erotic longing that excited the passions of the young women who pushed these ideas into the charts.

Meek arrived as the period's foremost independent producer with John Leyton's summer 1961 smash, "Johnny Remember Me", an eldritch symphony that epitomised the heightened melodrama of teenage emotions. [Meek used to speed up all his records to achieve that very effect.] It also acted as a metaphor for those who chose to hear, for the sense of loss and disassociation that many gay men then felt. "Telstar" confirmed his elite sta-



Above: the sleeves of Mr Jean Fredericks' 'Cum Camp-us', top, and the Tornadoes' 'Do You Come Here Often?'

'HE WOULD SPEED UP ALL HIS RECORDS TO HEIGHTEN THE MELODRAMA OF TEENAGE EMOTIONS'

tus and, although superseded by the Beat boom, he was able to pull out huge hits such as "Have I the Right?" by the Honeycombs, a summer 1964 number one and an oblique comment on his own blocked right to sexual and emotional fulfillment.

This was his last chart topper, but Meek adapted to the prevailing conditions better than most of his contemporaries. Although identified with Fifties rock'n'roll - Buddy Holly and Eddie Cochran in particular - he was too restless and forward-thinking to get totally trapped in the past. He made a scene freakbeat classic with the Syndicates' "Crawdaddy Simone", a Brit R'n'B record so frenzied that it put the Yardbirds' rave-ups to shame. His 1966 singles with the Cryin' Shames featured the sinuously menacing garage stomper, "Come on Back", while the overwrought vocal contortions of "Please

Stay" - Meek's last ever hit - attracted the attention of Brian Epstein.

Although he found it difficult to place many of his productions during 1966, Meek was far from being a spent force: his interest in the possibilities of sound remained vital. He also remained a player among the British music industry's gay mafia. During the brief entente cordiale that followed "Please Stay", Meek accompanied Brian Epstein to witness Bob Dylan's June 1966 Royal Albert Hall concert from the Reader's box. When the freezing of all "Telstar" royalties thanks to a copyright dispute threatened to render him bankrupt later in the year, Meek was thrown a lifeline by the BMI chairman, Sir Joseph Lockwood, who offered him a job as an in-house producer.

"Do You Come Here Often?" also emerged into a more open cultural climate. The playwright Joe Orton had used camp's caustic cadences in his smash 1964 West End success *Entertaining Mr Sloane*; this was the key weapon in his destined mixture of comedy and menace. The extremely popular BBC radio serial, *Round the Horse* featured two flagrant queens talking in the gay accent of the time. Executed by Hugh Paddick and Kenneth Williams, Julian and Sandy's quickfire Polari - that mixture of gypsy language, cockney back-sword slang, and thieves' cant - slotted right into the verbal surrealism that the Goons had made the hallmark of British comedy.

At the beginning of the decade, Meek had entitled his futuristic but stillborn space concept album *I Hear A New World*. Music is always ahead of social institutions, and the new world that Meek had dreamt of became tangible after 1963. The Beatles' unprecedented success marked the death knell of the Fifties hegemony, and during the next few years, the agitation for social and sexual liberation gathered pace throughout the Western world: the civil rights struggle, the women's movement, the campaigns for homosexual equality in America and Britain. The long years of stasis and repression barked up the hood, and it was ready to burst.

The most obvious sign of this uprising was teen fashion's hoodie bloom, as young women went Op and young men squeezed themselves into striped hip huggers and polka-dot shirts - topped off with Prince Valiant bangs. 1966 saw the full mainstream media recognition of Swinging London and its associated fashion, mod. Trumpeting the "revolution in men's clothes", *Life's* 13 May cover showed four young men, making like Brian Jones in front of the Chicago skyline. The cutaway teal corduroy jackets, Rupert Bear check trousers and frain boots were not standard male gear, and the copy played up the freakish angle: "The Guys Go All Out To Get Gawked At".

Mod's hint of mint was set entirely in the hands of Seattle observers, Peter Burton, who ran London's Le Duce in those years, remembered the crossover between the mods and his young gay clientele: "both groups paid the same attention to clothes; both groups looked much alike." Not surprising really, as their clothes came from the same shops - initially Vince in Carnaby Street (whose catalogue of swim- and underwear could almost be classified as an early gay magazine) and eventually from the John Stephen shops in the same street. Both groups took the same drag s-

November 2006 **GNM** 71



animac
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
105 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 02:46:01

And the fourth:

– basically 'speed', alternatively known as 'purple hearts', 'blues', 'dicks' or 'tipples'.

In February 1966, the Kinns had a huge UK hit with their obscenity of this Caribbean army. They backed up the raucous 'Dedicated Follower of Fashion' – he pulls his frilly nylon panties right up tight! – with some extraordinary costumes, like the thigh-length leather waders spotted with such gusto by Dave Davies. On the flip was one of the period's definitive statements of outsider pride: 'I'm Not Like Everybody Else', to be racked up against other garage band staples like the Yardbirds 'You're a Better Man Than I' and the Who's 'Substitute'. These calls for non-conformity and the acceptance of difference were becoming more and more strident.

This swagger defined pop's cutting edge during the first half of 1966: the unforeseen complexities and demands of 1965's emblematic records were amplified, their abrasion and innovation honed to a razor-sharp point. 1966 was a hot year, crowded with clamour and noise as seven-inch singles were cut to the limits of the then available technology. Hit 45s by the Yardbirds, the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, the Supremes, James Brown, the Byrds, the Who, Junior Walker, Wilson Pickett, and Bob Dylan were smart and mediated, harsh and sophisticated, monomachally on the one or raga-like, right out of Western perception into the eternity of one chord.



A blistering hostility was in the air on 12 August, so much so that you could taste it. That day the Beatles faced the first concert of their third American tour, an event marred by the controversy surrounding John Lennon's comment that the group were 'more popular than Jesus'. The formerly invulnerable avatars of youth were suddenly vulnerable as DJs burned Beatles' records and the Ku Klux Klan threatened.

Time magazine's 12 August cover – 'The Psychotic and Society' – featured Charles Whitman, the sniper who installed himself in the clock tower at the University of Texas and, without warning, killed 15 and wounded 31 people. The horror triggered an anguished self-examination: Whitman's 'senseless massacre' was not an aberration but intimately linked to American society. Potential killers are everywhere these days, a psychiatrist warned, 'they are driving their cars, going to church with you, working with you. And you never know it until they snap'.

Across the Atlantic, 12 August saw 'the worst crime London has known this century'. Around 3pm, three police officers stopped a suspicious looking van near Wormwood Scrubs prison, north of the mod stronghold Shepherd's Bush. All three were ganned down by the vehicle's three occupants. A 10-year-old boy saw the whole thing: 'I saw a man shoot the policemen. He told the newspapers: 'It was horrible and I was so scared.' Copy-killing was a huge taboo, and the nation recoiled.

'Do You Come Here Often?' partook of that season of violence, as did its author. Its candid dialogue unmasked a deep seam of outcast aggression. Camp's downside is that, unless employed with a light touch and a sure understanding of the game's rules, its ritualised viciousness can reinforce the hostility of the wider society, Peter Bus-

'BROUGHT UP AS A GIRL FOR THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF HIS LIFE, MEEK WAS HIGHLY VOLATILE'



From top: Joe Orton, Kenneth Williams and Brian Epstein: 'The strain of having to hide your level away proved disastrous.'

ton remembered that when he was entering the gay scene in the mid-Sixties, nothing was more daunting as an encounter with some acid-tongued bich whose tongue was so sharp it was likely to cut your throat. These queers, with the snappy wit of the self-protective, could be truly alarming to those of us of a slower cast of mind.

Internalised homophobia fuels the twisted expressions of an outcast's low self-esteem: instead of fighting the oppressors, why not fight those nearest to hand? Donald Webster Cory's groundbreaking 1951 survey, 'The Homosexual in America', had clearly identified poor self-esteem as one of the greatest threats to gay men's mental health – infecting every aspect of life – but it was difficult, given society's attitudes, to break the cycle of prejudice and self-hatred. Despite his bravado, Meek felt his homosexuality as a deep source of shame. He was too stubborn to tell it otherwise than it was but, ultimately, 'Do You Come Here Often?' presented gay life as a microcosm of nightmare.

Born in April 1929, Meek was sensitive, almost clairvoyant, but highly volatile. Brought up as a girl for the first four years of his life by a mother who had hoped for a daughter, uninterested in most boyish pursuits, Joe was called a sissy and left alone by most of his peers. This difference, coupled with his hair-trigger temper, led to the start of the persecution (both real and imagined) that lasted for the rest of his life.

As soon as he could, Meek fled rural England for London, but in the late Fifties, despite his reputation as one of the best sound engineers in the capital, he remained haunted by the fact that his emotional and sexual orientation was illegal. This had him open, as it did generations of gay men, to ridicule, arrest, imprisonment, violent attacks and – perhaps worst of all – blackmail. In November 1963, Meek was arrested for cottaging, impotting in a public toilet: the news of his conviction made the front page. His friends were amazed, Joe could have had all the young men he wanted, as they were queuing up to be recorded by him; they concluded that he actually liked the risk.

It didn't help that Meek was spooky, obsessed with other worlds, with gnomes, with spiritualism. He claimed to be in regular contact with Buddy Holly through the spirit world, while the negativity that he experienced clung to him like worn-out, not yet shed skin. Charles Blackwell – who arranged 'Johnny Remember Me' – remembered Joe as scarier than Phil Spector: 'He was a split personality. He believed he was possessed, but had another side that was very polite with a good sense of humour. He was very complicated.' Meek terrified the usually confident Andrew Loog Oldham: 'He looked like a real mean-queen tody boy and his eyes were meeting'.

By mid-1966, Meek's mental state was worsening as his heyday receded into the past. Giving free rein to his instincts with 'Do You Come Here Often?', he gained satisfaction from exposing a reality long suppressed. But this was a small victory, a transient revenge, as the forces ranged against him gathered speed. Jekyll overtook Hyde, as his money troubles and declining fame caused him to up his pill intake and to dabble further in the occult. He was beaten up and his prized Ford Zodiac trashed. He was also threatened by gangsters who wanted to take over the Tornadas' s-



animac
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
105 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 02:46:24

And last:

management. His paranoia was justified; his loneliness became all-consuming.

Meek's slide into the depths of decline was played out against a minatory pop climate. Disturbance had already hit the US top 10 that summer with Napoleon XIV's banal 'They're Coming to Take Me Away' and Count Five's 'Psychotic Reaction'. During September and October, the pure punk propulsion of Love's 'Seven and Seven Is', the Yardbirds' 'Happenings Ten Years Time Ago' and the Rolling Stones' 'Have You Seen Your Mother, Baby, Standing in the Shadow?' rode the year's white line fever right off the rails. The last was an amphetamine-induced apocalyptic, glossed thus by Andrew Loog Oldham: 'The Shadow is the uncertainty of the future. The uncertainty is whether we slide into a vast depression or universal war.' Later that autumn, David Bowie's 'The London Boys' and the Kinks' 'Big Black Smokey' delivered Meek cautionary tales of speed psychosis. Meek's own productions – the few that were actually released – had already reached new levels of pill-saturated oddity: the bizarre helter-skelter rhythm of Jason Eddy and the Centremen's 'Singing the Blues', the nuclear-winter visions of Glenda Collins's late protest, 'It's Hard to Believe It'.

Like the Marvelites sang, the hunter gets captured by the game, and, in January 1967, Meek's game was up. While his last ever single, the Riot Squad's 'Gotta Be a First Time', was dismissed as 'a catty bit of beat', he was implicated by association with a gruesome gay crime dubbed 'the Sultana Murder'. Although the hapless producer had nothing to do with the young victim's dismemberment, the police interest tipped him over the edge. On 7 February, he burst into a friend's house all dressed in black, claiming he was possessed. The next morning, the 18th anniversary of Buddy Holly's death, he blasted his landlady with his shotgun before eating the barrel himself.

Joe Meek's was an extreme pathology, to be sure, with its incredible highs – just listen to the acerbated hysteria of John Leyton's 'Wild Wind' – and annihilating lows, but what remains shocking is just how much his suicidal impulse was shared by many gay men of his generation. In his diary for 11 March 1967, Joe Orton wrote about a conversation he had with his friend Kenneth Williams, by then a national figure in the UK for his appearances in *Round the Horne* and the *Carry On* film series. Orton found Williams 'a horrible mess' sexually: 'He mentions "guilt" a lot in conversation. "Well, of course there is always a certain amount of guilt attached to homosexuality".

Williams talked to Orton about a friend who had been caught soliciting: 'Found in a cottage she was', he said. 'They gave her a choice of jail or a mental home. She chose the mental home. "Well," she said, "there's all the lovely mental cook. I'll be sucking all the nurses off. I'm sure it'll be very gay." Kenneth said this man went into the mental home and was given some kind of treatment "to stop her thinking like a queen". The man apparently was very depressed after this and committed suicide. Kenneth then spoke of all the people he'd known who killed themselves... he told all the stories in a way which made them funny, but it was clear that he thinks about death constantly.'



'HE WAS IMPLICATED IN A GRUESOME GAY MURDER, AND POLICE INTEREST TIPPED HIM OVER THE EDGE'

By early 1967, Orton was so successful and well-regarded that he had access to the new elite. He was approached by Brian Epstein to write the screenplay of the Beatles' third movie, which he titled 'Up Against It'. His diary entry for 24 January describes meeting Paul McCartney and listening to a pre-release copy of 'Penny Lane' and 'Strawberry Fields Forever'. As the public avatar of the new, aggressive homosexuality and, in private, an enthusiastic sex hunter – one of his most memorable diary entries concerned an orgy in a public toilet in Holloway Road in north London, just down the road from Meek's studio – Orton totally rejected Williams's sexual guilt as the holdover from a bygone era.

But even he could not escape its shadow, embodied by his older partner, Kenneth Halliwell. As the playwright's star rose, the balance of their 15-year relationship tipped irreversibly. The more that Orton flamed his promiscuity and revelled in his success, the more depressed and inhibited Halliwell became. On 9 August 1967, he murdered Orton with nine frenzied hammer blows to the head, and then swallowed 22 Nembutals. Their bodies were found side-by-side in their shared bed.

Eighteen days later, the body of Brian Epstein was found in the locked bedroom of his Belgrave house. The cause of death was, according to the coroner's report, 'poisoning' by Cabritol – a kind

of sleeping pill. Epstein's mental state had deteriorated since August 1966, after the Beatles' stepped touring; he hadn't been able to attend their last ever show at San Francisco's Candlestick Park because his then current boyfriend, a hustler called Diz Gillespie, had robbed him of money and valuable documents. According to his attorney and close friend Nat Weiss, that accounted for his first major depression; that was the beginning of his loss of self-confidence.

The deaths of Meek, Orton and Epstein occurred just at the point when the freedoms of the Sixties were institutionally recognised. In Britain at least, and diverse, the famous 1885 statute that had done for Oscar Wilde and several successive generations of gay men was finally overhauled. The Sexual Offences Act, which became law right at the end of July 1967, substantially decriminalised homosexuality, allowing for the existence of gay social and sexual relationships, it removed the threat of blackmail and enabled the first, very basic steps to be taken towards the ultimate goal of total parity.

'Hey, you've got to hide your love away,' John Lennon had sung in one of the Beatles' most poignant songs, and, for almost every adult gay man born before the mid-1940s, the strain of having to do so was psychologically disastrous. In far too many cases, the result was alcoholism, drug addiction, compulsive cruising, crippling guilt, an inability to form lasting emotional relationships – a monstrous waste of lives.

Reactions to the new law within the gay underworld were not always positive: a renewed bout of 'queer-spotting' in the media unleashed all the old venom about bestial 'buggers'. The historian Jeffrey Weeks remembered meeting men who were 'actively hostile, nervous that the new legality would ruin their costly secret double lives'. In the same way that the gay underworld had existed despite, if not in defiance of, the law, then the long fought-for turnaround towards partial acceptance would not easily erase the decades of vitriol and prejudice. 'We'll be free,' Kenneth Halliwell had exclaimed to Joe Orton in late July, but it wasn't that simple.

Nearly four decades on, 'Do You Come Here Often?' remains sad, eerie, funny, and true: you can still hear its vivid vituperation in the gay hardcore dance records of the 21st century. By the same token, it is time-locked, a bulletin from a pivotal point in homo-sexual history; that moment when an oppressed minority began to claim its rightful place in society. However that struggle was not without its sacrifices. Like Orton and Epstein, Meek would not live to see the sun, and his August 1966 single remains testament to the lethal power of the homophobia that, once rampant in Western society, is still virulent. Guilty pleasures can kill. **OMM**

'Do You Come Here Often?' is available on Queer Notes, an anthology of gay records from 1960-78 curated by Jon Savage, and on our Tracks. A great collection of Meek's recordings, including most of the other records referred to here, is available on The Alchemist of Pop: Home Made Hits and Rarities 1959-1966 (Sesquary UK, 2012). An expanded version of this article originally appeared in Black Clock (California Institute of the Arts) Issue 4: Guilty Pleasures: Thanks to Steve Erickson.



annimac
Little by little
★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 02:51:43

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Hello All

If anybody is keen to have the Meek article and can't easily read the above, I'll be happy to send it to them.

Love

ANNIMAC



annimac
Little by little
★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 06:41:15

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Hello All

Sorry to keep on posting on this thread, but I'd like to make another comment on Birdie's post above. Her friend Adam made some extremely sound points, one which he didn't make was that all the 'gay' decisions in this magazine were made by gay men, there was not a single gay woman consulted.

I suspect that gay women might have put Dusty in the frame as well, but isn't it interesting that 'gay' means 'men'.

Love

ANNIMAC



Tim
Where am I going?
★★★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 10:42:54

One dimensional reporting, in the same way George Michael doesn't speak for me when he describes gay culture.

T x

Edited by - Tim on 14/11/2006 14:07:44



United Kingdom
3422 Posts

allherfaces
Administrator
★★★★★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 13:59:46

I've just been reading a scholarly article on Dusty that makes a similar point!

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away



USA
14235 Posts

Sophie
Where am I going?
★★★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 14:22:22

i saw this magazine in the Kings Cross library! 🤔👀



2302 Posts

Mark
I've got a good thing
★★★★★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 17:17:25

Thank you posting Anni, I'm very grateful 😊.....It's a fascinating article, I know much more now than I knew before, I've always been a fan of Joe Meeks productions, the sound was so *different!*.

Joe's major group the Tornados had one of the very first purpose made pop videos in '63 with the instrumental 'Robot' which is posted on the 'other videos' thread.

It's a tragedy Joe was so tormented, it was a much more narrow-minded World back then in some respects, the gun he used to kill himself and his poor landlady was owned by his protegee Heinz (Just like Eddie) Burt, so that was the end of his career as well, poor Heinz died of motor-neurone disease in 2000.

Fans of Heinz then organised a tribute concert to raise funds for his German born Mother, and a road on a new industrial estate in the town of Eastleigh near the Port of Southampton was named after him... 'Heinz Burt Close'.

Mark

Edited by - Mark on 14/11/2006 17:22:32



Teda
Little by little
★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 19:35:35

Oh my. Teda



USA
384 Posts

paula
Moderator
★★★★★

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 19:56:09

Anni is right ...the whole picks things is very stereotypical as usual..all the "gay" selections by a man for men ..and Tim also..the stereotypical gay male selection.
thanks for posting
paula x



USA
5012 Posts

quote:

Originally posted by annimac

Hello All

Sorry to keep on posting on this thread, but I'd like to make another comment on Birdie's post above. Her friend Adam made some extremely sound points, one which he didn't make was that all the 'gay' decisions in this magazine were made by gay men, there was not a single gay woman consulted.

I suspect that gay women might have put Dusty in the frame as well, but isn't it interesting that 'gay' means 'men'.

Love

ANNIMAC



Birdie Breeze

Little by little



USA
248 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 20:29:22

[quote] *Originally posted by annimac*

Hello All

Birdie, I wasn't implying any judgment of the magazine's content by posting the above, merely thought it would be of interest to Dusty fans.

Oh, I know, and I think everything ought to get posted! I thought you were being rather tongue in cheek

As it happens, your friend Adam makes many valid points, and I'm sure many of us are unhappy about how gay people are (still) represented. I can also remember all my dyke friends back in the seventies listening to Holly Near, they made me listen to her as well, and what a dreary singer she was.

Margie Adam, (Dusty covered one of her songs), back in the day, ran around with Holly Near, Cris Williamson, et al... So, Dusty had contact and was aware of that whole crowd.

An interesting point, on the Gay theme, is that while Dusty has/had many gay male fans -- she wasn't a fag hag. I mean that, she didn't hang out with the boys. VW, does. Bette Midler, being straight, did/ does. Dusty, in her own life, preferred the company of women, and was very aware of how gay men - especially back pre-AIDS, were very into gossip and partying. Neither were a good combination for her. Obviously, they still aren't!

The curious thing is that the very same gossipy gay male sewing circle we are seeing with VW, Elton, Neil Tennant - Jane made a great point about the Chinese Whispers - is that Dusty REALLY wasn't into that sort of thing, and, she's still looking down on it from somewhere. Just because she is dead, doesn't mean she didn't leave behind a collective memory of how she felt - whether it was in the song or otherwise impressed upon friends or fans. No jive.

I think what is going on with alot of this is we've got a very few rich bored pop stars suffering low self esteem, that have a need to talk trash about someone who was more talented than they are - so, they can feel better.

Worse, they live isolated lives, whisper among themselves and then....are in this fish bowl.

On the otherhand, Simon, Pat, Douggie to name a few, clearly don't not suffer self esteem issues....and certainly, not in relation to Dusty.

Dusty's friends don't talk to Neil Tennant or Elton John. Whatever dirt they are spewing is from VW.

You'd think with all the money and time on their hands, they could be doing something abit more positive...

Anyway, outside of this little sewing circle are a great many friends and fans of Dusty, including many many artists....

And....they very clearly are not involved with VW, Neil, Elton.....and...that little fish

bowl.

So, all in all, they represent a wee little picture, and are isolated in their own little world.

It's a bit like this Music insert. It's very narrow minded and from a very specific point of view.

Unfortunately, when you deal with gay issues - the self esteem problems can become apparent, and the whole ghettoization of things, just makes it more noticable.

Dusty, to her great credit, was never happy about all these issues.

She also grew weary of the PSB's and that whole gay scene, as quite frankly, it wasn't her thang. She was a mature gay woman and the whole a rent-a-diva bit was an act, which she did for her fans - not herself - entirely.

Side one of Reputation were songs she selected, as were most of the ones on AVFL. But, side two of Reputation - were all songs she sang cos the PSB's wanted her to....and...they were producing her, so, she did. They aren't the ones from her heart or that reflected her life story.

So, while she participated in gay male culture, it was really more of a thank you to the fans than a reflection of where she was at as a person or musically.

She wanted to go do a album in Nashville, for AGES...as a follow up to DIM.

Nancy - it's all great fodder for a paper.

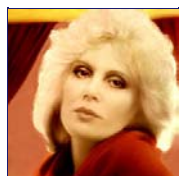
Birdie

<http://www.myspace.com/birdiebreeze>

Edited by - Birdie Breeze on 14/11/2006 21:05:48



Tim
Where am I going?
★★★



United Kingdom
3422 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 20:46:49

Whatever the validity of the points being made here and there are some very good ones - can I just remind everyone.....

We do not tolerate personal attacks on people by others and this is clearly stated in the rules. That includes making attacks against people outside of here whose actions we may not approve of. By all means express your approval/disapproval of people, just be moderate with your language so that we won't be put in the position of having to edit your posts.

That includes slang terms for gay people that are usually used in a derogatory fashion.

Can I just quote your words, Birdie: Mutual tolerance is the price of liberty..

Thanks & play on!

Tim

Edited by - Tim on 14/11/2006 21:25:06



Gypsy Rose Lee
I'll try anything
★★

USA
1535 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 21:11:06

"*Fag Hag*"???

Excuse me but I have many, many gay male friends and I am a gay woman... isn't that term is just a tad pejorative?

Ro

Edited by - Gypsy Rose Lee on 14/11/2006 21:11:37

**Birdie Breeze**

Little by little

USA
248 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 22:14:18

It's mostly a 60's & 70's term. Massively popular in the gay community. I didn't make it up, but, it does conjure the "lets sit around the bar and DISH people" school of social discourse, which gay men were FAMOUS for, often with a straight girl following them around. ...out at the clubs. Which was my point. What does Websters say about it?

I'm gay and I grew up around THE boys who were involved with JUDY GARLAND as well, as BETTE MIDLER'S early inner circle. I spent my teen - through early 20's with them. They were like my uncles....I stayed with them on trips to the big city, they showed me everything, told me everything...and, followed and cheered me on...every place I worked.

I had a BRILLIANT group of mentors/supporters.

They were incredibly nurturing and taught me lots and lots which I was able to use to help Dusty, later on.

Does that mean I was a fag hag? Nope.

There is an enormous difference between nurturing mentoring relationships and sitting around dishing people, at the bar.

I think what we see in the press so often is just dish...like people do from bar stools.

The point?

I don't take it too seriously....it is what it is.....I can smell it a mile away.

Birdie

quote:

Originally posted by Gypsy Rose Lee

"Fag Hag"???

Excuse me but I have many, many gay male friends and I am a gay woman... isn't that term is just a tad pejorative?

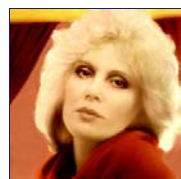
Ro

<http://www.myspace.com/birdiebreeze>

Edited by - Birdie Breeze on 14/11/2006 22:19:03

**Tim**

Where am I going?

United Kingdom
3422 Posts

Posted - 14/11/2006 : 22:41:38

Websters says nothing about it. Personally I hate the term but then I hate the bitchier aspects of the gay scene in general. Here's what the New Oxford English Dictionary says...

Fag hag is a slang term, which is either abusive or affectionate, for a woman who enjoys the company of gay men. Gay men and fag hags often share a very close friendship, generally closer than they have with other women or men. It is this close friendship that is the hallmark of the fag hag relationship.

Some would say that fag hags are pitied based on the assumption that their fascination with gay men lies in infatuation, which will most likely never be consummated. While this is occasionally true, most fag hag

relationships contain no romantic feelings; indeed, some fag hags are lesbian.[citation needed]

This relationship, like most positive relationships, generally evolves out of shared interests and opinions. It offers heterosexual women an opportunity to participate in a gay community where arts, fashion, and literature are embraced and encouraged. The gay community also offers straight women a safe environment to party in relative freedom from unwanted sexual advances.

In interviews with gay men and self-described fag hags the most common theme is safety.[citation needed] A rich relationship can develop between a straight woman and a gay man without sexual tension. The fag hag relationship allows the participants to separate intimacy and sexuality.

The term "fag hag" does not generally carry the same negative connotations that "fag" would. The term is used, without the intent to insult, by both gay men and their female admirers. Some women (such as comedian Margaret Cho and Jessie from the UFN Show podcast) will proudly declare themselves to be fag hags.[citation needed]

Synonyms include fruit fly, homo honey and fairy godmother.

A fag hag can also mean a female celebrity that is loved by gay men, or the gay community. Judy Garland has been characterized as a fag hag (the origin of the phrase "Friend of Dorothy" referring to gay men, as Dorothy was the character Judy Garland played in The Wizard of Oz). Madonna, Cher and Ana Matronic of Scissor Sisters also qualify as fag hags.

In the movie Fame, Doris is referred to as a fag hag for hanging out with a recently out gay character.

Julia Roberts' character in The Mexican developed a fag hag-type relationship with a gay hit man, Winston Baldry, played by James Gandolfini. Other media examples include the show Will & Grace and the film The Object of My Affection.

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fag_hag"

Tim

Edited by - Tim on 14/11/2006 22:42:57



Teda
Little by little
★

USA
384 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 00:41:42



Oh Tim you put it out so wonderfully. Soon it will be over. Sophie is in a Pub, enjoying herself, with some find fellows. We'll see all the pictures tonight. Love Teda. That turn wasn;t really played abond, but as a running joke.



David
Little by little
★

USA
498 Posts



Posted - 15/11/2006 : 00:51:26



I've heard Grace Slick is a big fag hag in Malibu these days. Those lucky bastards 🤔

Dustily yours, David



animac
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 01:13:41



Hello All

I don't find the term 'fag hag' as offensive as some of you might, because I understand it in the meaning Tim mentions above, as a female entertainer beloved of gay men. Not just the great Garland, Tim, but her

daughter also, and Dorothy Squires, among others. One of the things I found very uncomfortable with at the Drury Lane concerts was that Dusty was being claimed as a 'fag hag' also. I'm not sure she was at one with it either. She tried gamely to play to it, but not very successfully.

And I still think Holly Near was the most dreary singer I've ever had the misfortune to have thrust into my ears at all those 'all-women vegan dinners' I once attended.

Love

ANNIMAC



Gypsy Rose Lee

I'll try anything
★★

USA
1535 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 01:20:30

And I still think Holly Near was the most dreary singer I've ever had the misfortune to have thrust into my ears ... Annimac

A - F'N' - MEN!!! RAVE ON SISTER!!! 🙏

Love,
Ro



annimac

Little by little
★

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 01:27:58

Hello all

Ro, if you know of any foot-stomping, uplifting Holly Near tracks, I think you're morally obliged to share them with us.

Love

ANNIMAC



Gypsy Rose Lee

I'll try anything
★★

USA
1535 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 01:56:11

Oh, stop, Annie - you know it would be easier to find an albino zebra in Chelsea than any such Holly Near track. 🙏

Love,
Ro



Jonathan

Little by little
★

United Kingdom
458 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 02:21:08

LMAO !!

Love Jonathan



annimac

Little by little
★

United Kingdom
195 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 02:21:32

Hello All

My point entirely, Ro.

Love

ANNIMAC



Gypsy Rose Lee

I'll try anything
★★

USA
1535 Posts

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 14:26:31

Fables and fantasy... fables and fantasy.. 🙏



Tim

Where am I going?
★★★

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 16:29:46

Maybe Teda should cover a Holly Near track next...

T x



United Kingdom
3422 Posts

Laura
Administrator
★★★

Posted - 15/11/2006 : 17:00:38

Thanks for posting this Anni! LOL and thanks for the pic Mark, bless ya. She reminds me of my grandmother...

Love, Laura xx

Everything in moderation including moderation



United Kingdom
3075 Posts

animac
Little by little
★

Posted - 16/11/2006 : 06:48:44

Hello All

Laura, what are you on about, WHO reminds you of your grandmother?

Love

FATIMA THE CURIOUS



allherfaces
Administrator
★★★★★

Posted - 16/11/2006 : 18:30:37

Holly Near?

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~ Roll Away



USA
14235 Posts

Teda
Little by little
★

Posted - 16/11/2006 : 21:30:05

Tim I know that groupe of people Holly Near included. I know and like Holly. In fact My band and all the girls would play on the same bill. Quite different. But it it was fun. They're Co. Oliva records went for awhile. Lets see. Thank you. Love Teda.



Gypsy Rose Lee
I'll try anything
★★

Posted - 16/11/2006 : 21:32:48

OH, SWEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEET GEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEZUS!!! Who's next?
Jane Oliver???? 😊



USA
1535 Posts

allherfaces
Administrator
★★★★★

Posted - 16/11/2006 : 21:41:02

I did like some of the women's music back in the 70s. Olivia is now a cruise company (no, not that kind) and we'll be taking our first next spring.

Never been a J.O. fan.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~ Roll Away



USA
14235 Posts

paula
Moderator
★★★★★



USA
5012 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 01:17:59

My older sister had a Holly Near album or two...m..mm , not me. She redeemed herself over the years though..having been a DJ in a few alternative, gay bars spinning rock & roll. Holly Near used to play / put out a few albums w/ this older woman (older than her at this time)...folk singer..anyone remember her name?....can't remember..senior moment 🙄

paula x



allherfaces
Administrator
★★★★★



USA
14235 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 01:20:00

Ronnie Gilbert of the Weavers

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~ Roll Away



paula
Moderator
★★★★★



USA
5012 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 01:37:49

ahh, thank you Nancy 😊



Birdie Breeze
Little by little
★

USA
248 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 09:23:01

Tim, Darling...

That was a BRILLIANT find...thank you so much.

quote:

Originally posted by animac

Hello All

I don't find the term 'fag hag' as offensive as some of you might, because I understand it in the meaning Tim mentions above, as a female entertainer beloved of gay men. Not just the great Garland, Tim, but her daughter also, and Dorothy Squires, among others. One of the things I found very uncomfortable with at the Drury Lane concerts was that Dusty was being claimed as a 'fag hag' also. I'm not sure she was at one with it either. She tried gamely to play to it, but not very successfully.

Dusty wasn't....it wasn't in her character. She wasn't comfortable with sharp bitchy barbs (a result of her upbringing and that she was shy & sensitive), all the gossip that goes on, and she never lived inside The Box....no matter who's it was...and certainly, one that wasn't of her own making (she wasn't a gay man, that wasn't her box). She was camp camp camp....but, being campy doesn't make you a fag hag. She grew up on 20th Century Fox Musicals... for Carmen's sake!

Anyway - I ONLY brought it up - to point out - that whatever little sewing circle VW, EJ, NT, and the young Joss (listening & asking questions, proly of them) have going with the tabloid stories - is really NOT the sort of activity Dusty engaged in herself - and, she would have been extremely disappointed about it.

When we talked about other artists, it wasn't dishy. If a singer that was a fan of hers, would hit flat or sharp notes - *it would pain her*. But, she wouldn't dish them.

I had a very unique relationship with her and it did bring out the best in her and she was very keen on educating me about all sorts of things, her life story being one of them.

So, I never had to sit around and get any dish about her at all. We had a very productive relationship and to the best of her ability, she honestly shared her life with me.

VW. EJ. NT. and so on were and still are. basically thousands of miles away. and. I

...they don't speak to them...so...they have gotten whatever scraps they've been able to drag up...where ever...but for starters, Neil was no where near LA. No, he was far away on a little island.

Storytelling can be an AMAZING EDUCATING ENLIGHTENING FUNNY AND WONDERFULLY HUMAN experience...and...*it can change peoples lives....for the better.*

But, you just don't find it these kinds of tales, and I really do believe they do more damage than good.

Unless, of course, we all sit around with a nice cuppa and pick it apart, as you can already see.....being outside of the box that insert is in....has been revealing!

Meanwhile, I can laugh and say, truthfully, that we actually AVOIDED gay men during her recovery period, as much as possible, to thwart gossip and frankly, to keep her away from the whole whole party element.

No, it REALLY wasn't her bag.

VW, EJ, and now NT can all say whatever they want - they have and will - but none of them are telling any stories that are inspiring or believable or insightful or funny....

What's their point except to take the piss out of someone who isn't alive to defend themselves? I just don't get it.

At this point, Neil Tennant creeps me out. I guess, after he did that single with EJ, he turned a corner.....

And I still think Holly Near was the most dreary singer I've ever had the misfortune to have thrust into my ears at all those 'all-women vegan dinners' I once attended.

[purple][font=Book Antiqua]Oh, ANNIMAC, I just ADORE you. You crack me up.

I just don't think I ought to tell you that Dusty took a cab from the San Francisco Bay Area all the way up to where HOLLY NEAR lived in UKIAH (it's at least 100 miles...hahhah...IN A CAB!!!!) once..just put both of your mits over your eyes....you didn't read that....and I..when I was all of 15 years old....produced Holly Near, Live, in concert, before 1,500 people....I had my own production company...one of those whiz kid types....of course, Dusty was playing her guitar in clubs when she was about that age....doing folk songs.....and....yes, I saw Liza WITH Holly Near one time at the Greek and I have spoken to Holly about Dusty and to Dusty about Holly....

So...really.... it's a big small world.....

Cheers...I'm off to bed as I'm now on my 12th straight day of work and there is no day off insight XXOO Birdie

<http://www.myspace.com/birdiebreeze>



Gypsy Rose Lee

I'll try anything
★★

USA
1535 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 12:13:23



Oh, let's see - which is worse? Dustin Hoffman getting his teeth drilled in "Marathon Man" or a Holly Near concert? Hmm... 😊



Jonathan
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
458 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 12:55:46



Mmmmm....

Love Jonathan



Jane
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
239 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 13:11:46



I don't even know who Holly Near is!

Janie xx



Jonathan
Little by little
★

United Kingdom
458 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 13:16:50



Neither do I !!

Love jonathan



Jonathan

Little by little



United Kingdom
458 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 13:43:23

Guess we'll have to wait for the yanks to enlighten us!

Love Jonathan



allherfaces

Administrator



USA
14235 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 14:06:27

Not going there on this thread, kids.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away



Jonathan

Little by little



United Kingdom
458 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 14:13:15

Ooh, sorry!

The intrigued but beaten Jonathan



allherfaces

Administrator



USA
14235 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 14:28:39

It's not about you, honey.

xx

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away



Birdie Breeze

Little by little



USA
248 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 19:04:59

Holly's a great topic for the section [The Other Side of Life](#).

When I produced her - it was a benefit concert - which helped defeat Prop 6, which was on the ballot to kick and keep gay school teachers out of schools. In 1978. She sounds like a folk singer with some Broadway tossed in....and is a red head.

quote:

Originally posted by allherfaces

Not going there on this thread, kids.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away



Teda

Little by little



USA
384 Posts

Posted - 17/11/2006 : 23:24:00

Oh. My.



Birdie Breeze

Little by little



USA
248 Posts

Posted - 18/11/2006 : 08:20:05

Interesting article on gay icons:

<http://www.popmatters.com/pm/columns/article/7249/gay-icons-judy->

who/

by Michael Abernethy

Imagine for a moment—you've gone over to meet the new neighbor and introduce yourself. He's a handsome, masculine sort of guy, but something about him tells you that he's not what would be considered a "ladies' man". Left alone for a moment in his living room while he takes a phone call, you do a quick scan of his CD collection for clues as to which "team" he plays for. Nestled between the Shawn Colvin, U2, and Greenday CDs, you find the damning evidence: copies of Judy at Carnegie Hall, the soundtrack of *Funny Girl*, and the extended play version of Madonna's *Vogue*. Yep, he's a queer.

It's possible you've reached an inaccurate conclusion, but not probable. Ask most straight men if they've heard Judy at Carnegie Hall and they'll respond, "Judy who?". Many gay men, however, know that Judy is Judy Garland, and Judy at Carnegie Hall, Garland's 1961 Grammy-winning Album of the Year, is the concert album that put the diva back on top.

And rightfully so. Today's performers could learn from Garland's comeback concert, a brilliant performance from a legendary entertainer. Here she is, alone on stage with her band—no pyrotechnics, back-up dancers, costume changes, dazzling lights, or mammoth sets—throwing herself without abandon into song after song after song. "I don't ever want to go home," she shouts to the frenzied audience. "I'll sing 'em all, and we'll stay all night!"

For many gay men and women, the appeal of the album is not just the artistry of a true superstar, but the fact that Garland had to overcome numerous demons just to walk out on to the stage that night. Battling her drug addictions, washed-up status, and an almost paralyzing anxiety that led her to believe she would fail miserably, Garland considered cancelling the concert until seconds before she flew onto the stage, smiling and gesturing wildly. She rose above all the obstacles, and as they say in show business, "knocked 'em dead".

It is her perseverance in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds that has earned Garland her status as a Gay Icon. A chubby kid who was forced to take diet pills by her studio, a failure in marriage, a star whose popularity rose and fell repeatedly, an addict (thanks to the diet pills), a financial disaster who often had to sneak out of towns without paying hotel and restaurant bills—there was no reason why Garland should have enjoyed the kind of success she did, except for an adoring fan base and the sheer will to survive in the only business she knew.

Garland is hardly the only diva upon whom society has stuck the label "gay icon". Who exactly is classified as a gay icon will vary depending on whom you ask, but the one trait that most all who are listed have in common is an ability to overcome the odds or fly in the face of conventional wisdom. Bette Davis, Liza Minnelli, Bette Midler, Barbra Streisand—too unattractive to be stars, at least by Hollywood standards. Cher, Dolly Parton, Carmen Miranda, and yes, Tammy Faye Baker—too over the top. Madonna, Mae West, Marilyn Monroe, Joan Crawford—too trashy for their respective times. Yet, all have succeeded, and in their success, they have earned the admiration of homosexuals worldwide. And it doesn't hurt that, for the most part, they have embraced their gay fans, in turn.

Why is it that older gay men are attracted to such tortured souls? Why don't gay women share the same list of icons? And why don't young gay men share the same attractions for these legends? The stereotypical answer would be that these women make great subjects for female impersonators to emulate, but such an answer is superficial.

For older gay men, the women they idolize represent their own personal struggles. Gay men who are in their 40s or older grew up in a time when they were judged on the basis of one thing: their homosexuality. It didn't matter if you were a great teacher, dentist, accountant, neighbor, citizen. What mattered, and what people talked about, was that you were "that way". Understandably, there emerged a desire to be judged for the whole package, not just for sexual inclinations—a longing to be recognized for your skills on the job and whether or not you were a good person who played by the rules, paid your taxes, and treated your neighbors with kindness and respect. Those were all a part of what made these men

individuals, but they were rarely acknowledged. (While gays are still judged on their sexual preference today, it is not a factor that limits one's ability to succeed in society as it once was.)

So too, the gay icons of yesteryear were too easily classified. Stuck with labels that presumably would have limited their potential, these stars became legends anyway. When Barbra Streisand belts out "I'm the Greatest Star" in *Funny Girl*, she is giving the world notice that she, like the comic Fanny Brice she is portraying, will not be denied; "When you're gifted / Then you're gifted / These are facts...Do you think beautiful girls are going to stay stars forever? I should say not! Any minute they're going to be out - finished! Then it'll be my turn." And it was quickly her turn, although beautiful girls continued to get by on their looks (see Paris Hilton); despite Streisand's large nose, crossed-eyes, and gangly body, there was no overlooking her masterful timing and impressive vocal range.

Likewise, Bette Davis was all wrong for the part, whatever part it may have been. Short-statured and stocky, with now immortalized bulging eyes, Davis came on the scene during a time when Hollywood favored the glamour of Carole Lombard, the cold beauty of Greta Garbo, and the grace of Ginger Rogers. Yet Davis succeeded in a variety of roles, from lonely spinster to alcoholic star, Southern belle, to lovesick cancer victim. Davis had a set of brass balls that could match any man's, and her toughness allowed her to win roles that seemed more suited for the studio's ingénues. But ultimately, it was her talent that kept her in the game. It is easy to understand why gay men of this era idolized these women: they had been able to accomplish what gay men could not by breaking the stereotype assigned to them and being recognized for all their assets. Lesbians of the same era, unless they chose to live and dress like men, didn't face the same level of stereotyping as gay men, so the need to find a role model was not as strong.

This is not to imply that lesbians do not have icons, but typically such icons tend to come from their own ranks or have been rumored to have dabbled in same-sex relationships. However, that is not the only characteristic that qualifies one to be a lesbian icon. You also have to be powerful. Eleanor Roosevelt certainly fills that bill; a woman trapped in a marriage to a philandering husband, she became one of the nation's greatest First Ladies and an honored diplomat. Martina Navratilova is a force to be reckoned with both on the tennis court and off. And while one may not think of Ellen DeGeneres as a power-broker, she is a trailblazer in the fight for gay rights and one of the most influential women in show business.

Perhaps the qualities of a lesbian icon are best represented in the character of Xena, Warrior Princess, who was must-see TV for many lesbians during her six seasons on the air. I couldn't possibly count the number of times that the lesbian who lived next door to us called in a panic, "I have to work late. Can you go next door and set my VCR to record Xena?" There wasn't a man or god whose ass Xena couldn't kick and look good doing it. Supposedly, Xena was straight—she had more than a few male lovers—but it was her relationship with sidekick Gabrielle that endeared her to gay women. The bond between the two was one of best friends, sisterly, but there was always an underlying sexual tension present.

These lesbian icons may have been commanding women, but they were not "manly women". Each possessed a level of femininity that makes them attractive as women; it is the strength of their character, however, that elevates them to the status of icon. Martina Navratilova, for instance, was easily pegged as a lesbian when she emerged on the tennis scene in the mid-'70s. Fleeing the oppressive culture of her native Czechoslovakia, it was obvious that she was a woman lacking confidence, often appearing in Grand Slam finals with a look of "How did I get here?" on her face and breaking down in a flood of tears when she won. As she became more acclimated to Western culture, her confidence grew, and she gained the admiration of both gay and straight women. Her self-assurance was, and still is, sexy.

Martina possesses another quality, one that endears her to a new generation of gay women and men: her tendency to speak her mind. While older homosexuals clung to images of women who overcame the odds, today's homosexuals opt to idolize those who are controversial and confrontational. Kylie Minogue, for example, was an international pop star in the '80s, scoring most notably with 1988's remake of "Locomotion". Back then, she was the cute and squeaky-clean girl-next-door. After a career slump, she blasted her way back onto the scene with 2001's "Can't Get You out of My Head". But this was not the same Kylie; gone were the frilly, lacy dresses and crimped, fluffed hair. This Kylie was a slutty, gyrating sexpot. And gay men loved her, vaulting her to the same exalted status as Madonna and Cher.

Younger gay men turn to women who have no problems being "in your face" for their gay icons. The attitude of rejecting social conventions comes in many forms for these gay icons. Most notable is Madonna, who even in her proper English motherhood, manages to illicit controversy; her entire career has been built around the premise that what ever society expected of her, she would defy, particularly in terms of sex. Cher, Christina Aguilera, and Fergie are seen as being open about the sexuality, as well as being talented women.

Yet, for many gay men, sex isn't all that sells. What is equally appealing is the tendency to speak one's mind, no matter how inappropriate the comments. Two perfect examples are actually fictional characters: Suzanne Sugarbaker of *Designing Women* and Sophia Petrillo of *Golden Girls*. Although the series these two characters appeared on have been off the air for years, they have both enjoyed resurgence in reruns, in large part because of gay men's adulation of the self-centered and politically incorrect Suzanne and the painfully blunt Sophia. A real-life example of such a woman comes courtesy of Tammy Faye, who has turned her back on evangelical homophobia and openly embraced gay men as "God's children".

This shift in the nature of what makes one a gay icon is representative of the shift in the outlook of gay men and women. No longer do homosexuals feel the need to prove themselves as worthwhile men and women with admirable qualities, as gay men and women often find their talents being recognized without reference to sexual orientation. Consequently, the tables have turned. Homosexuals want to be respected for their sexual decisions and to have the opportunity to speak openly about it without condemnation, so it is natural that their idols would be those who are open, honest, and sexual without regard to social expectations.

Displaying such qualities has allowed men to join the ranks of gay icons as well. Oscar Wilde, although dead for over a century, has emerged as such an icon. With his biting wit and mockery of stilted 19th century social rules, Wilde is a perfect representation of the type of gay man many would like to be. Late Queen front man Freddie Mercury has also achieved elevated status after death. Boy George has the potential to join the ranks, if he will stop being such a freak.

In essence, gay men and women are attracted to those individuals that most exhibit the qualities they would like to possess, regardless of the time period. As social mores change, the roles gay men and lesbians assume shift as well, bringing in new qualities for admiration. Still, the LGBT segment of the population is no different from the straight segment in its selection of heroes, idols, and icons. We look to those who exhibit the characteristics which we would like to have. Just as a pacifist would idolize Gandhi and King and a businessperson may seek to emulate Trump or Gates, gay men and lesbians put on a pedestal those individuals who represent their personalities and personal societal concerns.

Discovering Garland, Streisand, and Madonna in your new neighbor's CD collection tells you more than whether or not he is gay. It tells you a little bit about who he is as a human being and how he feels the world views him. Our choice for icons is about more than just high camp and melodrama; it's about who we are in a fundamental way.

Michael has been writing for PopMatters since 2000. His primary focus, aside from queer culture, is television reviews and commentary, and his article *Male Bashing on TV* has been reprinted in two college textbooks. He

currently lives in Louisville, KY, and is a Lecturer of Communication Studies at Indiana University Southeast in New Albany, IN. As a teacher, he has an interest in the study of contemporary political rhetoric and argumentation. He and his partner Jim have been living in un-wedded bliss since 1995.

Edited by - Birdie Breeze on 18/11/2006 18:30:33



Tim

Where am I going?



United Kingdom
3422 Posts

Birdie Breeze

Little by little



USA
248 Posts

Posted - 18/11/2006 : 10:14:02

Yes it was. Thanks Birdie. I don't have many icons, I try to resist the gravitational pull of them..

T



Posted - 18/11/2006 : 18:25:48

Tim,

It really is such a generational thing. One of the things that never gets mentioned about the Judy fans...is that back in the 50's....there were few and far places for gays to get together. Clubs were raided, and so on. But, they could all meet up at Judy's shows....and...she LOVED them unconditionally. She was a safe harbour. She was a bit of a mother figure that let them feel as if everything was alright or if not, they'd at least, all pull through. Many of her gay male fans suffered greatly for being gay - kicked out of homes as teens, and so on.

While that sort of thing, still, goes on to some degree - the world is a vastly different place now! But, back in Judy's day...she was really special, and the fans had a real community going among themselves. A documentary ought to have been made about them...maybe one was..hmmm...

In certain latin american and other countries, where they are still raiding clubs and homosexuality is illegal, they could use a new Judy...so...they could congregate and have some fun and freedom....up in front of the stage.

I'm from the generation that was just OUT of the closet, period. We did suffer the most from some in the previous gay generations having had a rough go and being all messed up as a result of it. Lot's of alcoholism, low self esteem, and other problems developed in them....and...none of them a joy to deal with. The human wreckage that was wrought on the previous generations just tumbled on...and on. Most from that whole crowd, wound up dying from AIDS in the 80's and early 90's.

quote:

Originally posted by muuz

Yes it was. Thanks Birdie. I don't have many icons, I try to resist the gravitational pull of them...

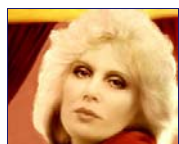
T

<http://www.myspace.com/birdiebreeze>



Tim

Where am I going?



Posted - 18/11/2006 : 18:44:05

Yeah, I wasn't saying these people didn't DESERVE their iconic status. I'm 45 now (going on 12) so I was a teenager in the late 70's. I didn't even get into Dusty until the early 90's when I got over the need to be 'cool' in my choices.

I appreciate the pioneering relevance but I just didn't click with the whole



United Kingdom
3422 Posts

Soho/Castro/Greenwich socio/political deal. That's not to say I don't respect other people's ways of living & being. Everyone takes their own path through life and reaps the consequences of that and whatever fate has in store for them. We are all here to share and learn from one another.

Aids decimated our local Gay community in the 80's 90's too. In my life I have lost a few friends along the way, not to mention a Mother - but then nobody gets out of here alive.

Back on topic I just find the whole Diva thing so cliched - it just doesn't work for me. Maybe Dusty & I would have related very well - we both have actively defied categorisation in our time.

Self esteem issues - sure - I have them & at times they can feel overwhelming - all artists have them I guess - the demons are what drive the muse.

T x

Edited by - Tim on 18/11/2006 18:58:54



Birdie Breeze

Little by little



USA
248 Posts

Posted - 18/11/2006 : 21:10:57  

Originally posted by muuz

I appreciate the pioneering relevance but I just didn't click with the whole Soho/Castro/Greenwich socio/political deal. That's not to say I don't respect other people's ways of living & being. Everyone takes their own path through life and reaps the consequences of that and whatever fate has in store for them. We are all here to share and learn from one another.


Well, I certainly had that around me, but, just because you are around it doesn't mean that it's your perspective...and, it's good to be around other peoples trips, to an extent. When there is 1,500 of them and one or a few of you, it can be a bit overbearing! I understand your pov. We are in the same age bracket, no surprise there

Back on topic I just find the whole Diva thing so cliched - it just doesn't work for me. Maybe Dusty & I would have related very well - we both have actively defied categorisation in our time.

You would have...but...When folk music was in, she was into folk music, when, techno was in, she was into techno, and pretty much stayed in step her whole career with what was going on - except for Dusty in Memphis/Brand New Me. Those are stand outs...and in the end, she finished her career as she started it...in Nashville...where The Springfields had been...in the beginning.

I honestly do not believe that the whole gay diva thing is what will carry her legacy into future generations, for reasons brought up in this whole thread and for other reasons yet to be discussed, which I'll do when the time is right. The things that will carry her music and legacy into the future are more universal and broadbased themes, and ones that will be revealed - down the road.

Self esteem issues - sure - I have them & at times they can feel overwhelming - all artists have them I guess - the demons are what drive the muse.

Can be....talent is often just what it is, talent. For some it comes naturally and others have to really work at it, and still others have it naturally and really work at it!! (Dusty)...and, yes, being fiercely competitive can definitely be considered demonic! 

Birdie

Edited by - Birdie Breeze on 18/11/2006 21:14:42



Teda

Little by little



USA
384 Posts

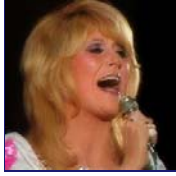
Posted - 22/04/2007 : 02:04:51 

Oh Please.



mikeh69
Little by little
★

Posted - 10/07/2007 : 00:05:01



Im neither this or that or that or this. I forgot the term for it. But I tend to feel more toward the effeminate and love glamour when it's right (not Britney Spears anymore) but not in the transgender or gay sense. Im in the WHAT zone. Hmmmm maybe I am straight that has more effeminate feelings than feeling like a straight man. What ever this means. But I have no issues with anybody's preference everybody is entitled to be who they are.



USA
299 Posts

mikeh69
Little by little
★

Posted - 10/07/2007 : 00:15:46



Well...if a man looks immaculate as a woman (in the glamour sense) Im visually interested.



USA
299 Posts

Topic

Forum Locked Topic Locked

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