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PRIDE LGBTQ+

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**ABOUT THE COVER:** Bea Colón draws on the iconic imagery of King Arthur wielding Excalibur. They reserve the character's integral pose while queering the image, reinterpreting the removal of the sword as an act of reclaiming identity. Follow Colón on Instagram @tlc.artist.

## Izzy Romero

**Contributor Limelight**  
Marketing Intern



Izzy Romero joined our Marketing Intern team in October, '22, and her contributions have know no bounds—from analytics to graphic design, community connection to social media and beyond, Izzy wears many hats with poise and skill.

## Brandon Ermer

**Contributor Limelight**  
Contributing Writer



Film Writer Brandon Ermer joined us in April of '21. As apt at tackling indie arthouse as he is action blockbuster, Brandon's deep knowledge of filmmaking and theory make him a crucial, versatile writer on our growing team of film critics.

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With *Iowa House*, **Jade Swayne** and **Amanda Madden** sought to create a space that felt like home for queer and trans folk. Since September 2021, the couple have been opening their home for potluck dinners, drag show nights and to facilitative conversations. As a queer- and trans-centered but not queer- and trans-exclusive space, *Iowa House* lays a joy-focused foundation of collaboration and vulnerability.

“The community has granted us the opportunity to be facilitators while acknowledging that we might not show up 100% every time,” Swayne says. “That ... is a strategy for resilience; if we can practice being together in the fluid nature of our experiences, so much more is possible.” “Being together” takes many forms, and Swayne and Madden have found that joy lies in the endless approaches to community care.

Some queer folks are ostracized from their families after coming out and can lose a sense of home and community. Not only that, but “for queer people especially, we have to perform in many spaces for the sake of safety,” Swayne says. Acting outside of heteronormative societal expectations can become a safety risk. *Iowa House* is a place where all types of queer existence are celebrated. “People don’t have to perform a version of themselves here. They can really be their whole, full self in this space. Welcoming people in their wholeness feels so important,” Madden says. People can also use that supportive platform to explore other aspects of their identity or discuss more vulnerable topics.

Near-weekly potluck dinners are hosted either inside or in the backyard, depending on the weather. The type of food each person brings is not planned, and sometimes the group eats together at one long table or buffet style. “Sometimes we have a beautiful meal of soups and salads and dishes, or there’s the occasional night when it’s a bowl of gummy snacks,” Madden says. The sense of home and belonging is steadfast. The collective mood and attendance determine the food, conversational theme and activities of the evening. Madden has observed a new person coming to dinner every week, indicative of the valley’s vast and self-sustaining queer community.



Photo: Chay Mosqueda

# BREAKING BREAD ■ as a Strategy for Resilience IOWA HOUSE

By **Olivia Greene** • [greenecg@gmail.com](mailto:greenecg@gmail.com)

(L-R) Jade Swayne and Amanda Madden opened their home in September '21 for potluck dinners, drag show nights and to facilitative conversations.

Madden and Swayne identify a strong relationship between emotional nourishment via community conversations and physical nourishment from food. “It’s about being bodies together and really valuing body wisdom. If we can care for our bodies and each other’s bodies and offer support and space for that, that might be the beginning of changing everything,” says Madden. Attendees are asking larger questions about how they can nourish one another on magnitudes greater than the meal itself.

This approach extends past the dinner meetings. *Iowa House* works alongside local grassroots organizations such as

**Unidxs, Nuanua Collective, Burning Sis- sy Valley, Mobile Moon Coop and Black, Bold & Brilliant SLC.** “We see the common thread between all of us as being [that] we’re all trying to do something that is intergenerational, multiracial, kind and healing to the environment in all that we do,” Swayne says.

*Iowa House* asks those interested in learning more or in attending their gatherings to read the Letter to the Community on the *Iowa House* Instagram page @[iowahouseSLC](https://www.instagram.com/iowahouseSLC), which is the best way to stay up to date on weekly potlucks and other events.

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# Club Verse

## A Safe Haven for SLC's Queer Community

By Sage Holt • [Sageholt12@gmail.com](mailto:Sageholt12@gmail.com)

You may have noticed a new addition to the State Street storefronts around 600 S.—a large infinity sign illuminated by a swirl of rainbow colors. This is SLC's newest LGBTQ+ club, *Club Verse*, whose goal is to create an appealing and safe space for anyone to explore their identity among other, like-minded people. The club features an incredible atmosphere with a stage large enough to host a plethora of fantastic performances and more than enough open floor to dance your heart away through the night.

Co-owners **Riley Richter** and **Micheal Repp** not only wanted to create a haven for SLC's LGBTQ+ community but to use their business as a resource for other local queer businesses and organizations. *Club Verse* opened its doors in the fall of 2022 and has already collaborated with *University of Utah's PrEP Clinic*, the *Utah Gay Rodeo Association*, *The Royal Court of the Golden Spike Empire*, *Utah AIDS Foundation*, *Project Rainbow* and *The Utah Department of Health*.

"We have a lot of fundraising for local non-profit groups," says Repp. "We hold their events here, especially with the Utah AIDS Foundation, that we're partnered with." To expand education and promote safety for the queer community, *Club Verse* gives a platform for these programs to share their voice and goals to all of Utah. "We're more of a community-based entity than a for-profit entity, so we're more about helping people in our community have a safe space and a place to express themselves," says Repp.

Safety is *Club Verse's* number one goal, and they take extensive precautions when attendees first enter the club, enforcing multiple security inspections: a thorough I.D. check, walking through a metal detector and an additional wave down with a sep-



(L-R) Lynn Katoa, Riley Richter and Michael Repp opened Club Verse to provide a safe space for SLC's LGBTQ+ community amid dwindling options.

Photo: @ashleychristensonphotography

arate wand detector. "We have our staff trained in sensitivity training and have a designated door staff who the patrons get to know and are welcomed by name, giving a feeling of knowing there's a consistent staff you know are there for you," says Repp. All of their security staff is trained in multiple facets of security protection, ranging from preparedness to handle an active shooting or simply de-escalating a heated situation. "It's about a hyper-awareness of what's going on in the club," Repp says. These safety measures are just one of the reasons *Club Verse* is already popular among Utah's LGBTQ+ community.

*Club Verse's* calendar is always jam packed with copious shows and events—darling, let me tell you, there is something for everyone (21+, that is), from EDM concerts every Wednesday as part of their *Our House: Your House* event series to partnering with local organization **Seniors Out &**

**Proud of Utah** for a 55+ bingo event every fourth Saturday. The real star of the show is *Verse's* rotating Friday drag shows, with the first Friday of every month featuring *Gender Where?* Utah's premier show featuring only trans and nonbinary performers. You can catch *Gender Where's* time-warping, punk drag show every third Friday and *Melanin Rouge*, a POC-centered drag performance, on the last Friday of each month. And, don't forget to keep an eye out for the opening of their new rooftop patio!

In just a few short months, *Club Verse* became a crucial part of SLC's queer nightlife scene. "Clubs like ours are vital to queer life. We've lost so many safe-spaced clubs and bars in the past years; it's crucial to keep our spaces safe and open for all," says Repp. Stay up to date with *Club Verse's* upcoming and ongoing events via their website, [clubverselc.com](http://clubverselc.com), and their Instagram [@clubverse\\_slc](https://www.instagram.com/clubverse_slc).

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Utah is home to one of the largest Pacific Islander diasporas in the nation, with the community's roots in the state going back almost 150 years, according to *The Utah Education Network*. Despite this long history, **Jakey Sala Siolo** says Utah's Pacific Islander community faces unique challenges due to colonization and Christian proselytization.

Siolo, director of Nuanua Collective, points out that these challenges are particularly felt by Utah's LGBTQ+ Pacific Islanders—that's where the Nuanua Collective comes in. Founded in 2019 by **Ma'afu Suliafu** and **Lauren Ulugia**, Siolo says the collective aims to create a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ Pasifika to reconnect to their culture and reclaim traditional gender identities—something they say isn't talked about enough.

"A big part of why we started the Nuanua Collective is because we want queer Pasifika to be able to reclaim their identity through not a Western lens because the gender binary is not a universal concept," Siolo says. "In Samoa, for example, there's the third and fourth genders, and that's very similar across the whole Pacific." Samoa's third and fourth genders, *fa'afafine* and *fa'afatama*, flow between masculinity and femininity. Siolo says they play a special role in Samoan culture such as taking care of the elderly, initiating conversations around taboo topics such as sex and preserving and passing on cultural knowledge. However, they often don't receive the "recognition they deserve."

At the heart of Nuanua's mission is education and visibility initiatives. Siolo says the collective aims to ensure that Pacific Islanders—regardless of religious beliefs—understand that their queer ancestors played crucial roles in their communities and that traditional gender roles are multifaceted. By reconnecting Pacific Islanders to their cultural heritage, the collective hopes to combat issues of homophobia, transphobia, displacement and gentrification.

Siolo says, "A lot of what we are trying to do with the collective is educating Pacific Islanders that whether you are in the [LDS] Church or you have certain beliefs,

at the end of the day, culturally, third and fourth genders have always, always existed [...] We've always had queer ancestors who played specific key roles for the community, and it's something that just got erased through colonization, through missionaries, through Christianity."

Overall, Siolo says the Pacific Islander community has had a positive response to Nuanua, with events like the *Oceania Outlawed* series—a queer Pasifika drag queens and kings open mic night—drawing 150–200 attendees.

Nuanua's future-oriented mission also seeks to create an "ocean of opportunities" for LGBTQ+ Pacific Islanders. In December 2022, the collective received a United Way grant. The entirety of the funding will go toward various arts and culture, health and wellness and education events including music and art shows, sexual health classes and peer support groups. Siolo stresses the importance of having a community-centric collective that is accessible for all Pacific Islanders. Additionally, Nuanua also hopes to partner with other LGBTQ+ and QTBIPOC organizations.

With a bright future ahead, Siolo says the collective has goals of collecting data on LGBTQ+ Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Utah, hosting more events and getting community members trained and certified to handle issues Pacific Islanders face, such as sexual assault. "Look at how many Pacific Islanders live in Utah and live in Salt Lake. I think it's crucial that we have an organization that's by us and for us. If I walk into another queer organization, they're not going to be talking about my cultural identity. They're not going to be talking about the issues that Pacific Islanders are facing, whether you are queer or not [...] It's so crucial that things are done by us and for us," they say.

The collective plans to host two weeks of free events during Pride month to create a safe space for those who want to celebrate without a police presence and to combat prohibitive costs for both visitors and vendors. Visit [@nuanua.collective](#) on Instagram for more information about Nuanua Collective and its upcoming events.



## NUANUA COLLECTIVE CREATES AN OCEAN OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR LGBTQ+ PACIFIC ISLANDERS

By **McCall Mash** • [mccallmash@gmail.com](mailto:mccallmash@gmail.com)



Members of the Nuanua Collective leadership team (L-R Ma'afu Suliafu, Anita Uhi, Jakey Sala Siolo, Angela Robinson and Isaac Asiata) stand in front of Midvale artist Kalani Tonga's mural.



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# Pride Outside of Pride

By Audrey Lockie • [audrey@slugmag.com](mailto:audrey@slugmag.com)

Every year, Salt Lake City shows up big for Utah Pride Center's annual Utah Pride Festival. The event, held during the first weekend of Pride Month, is one of a number of well-known and well-regarded Pride events. But, Salt Lake's queer community doesn't stop existing after June 30, and community building, activism and outreach last all year. Find here information on four incredible events taking place throughout the summer and beyond that celebrate the best and sometimes undersung elements of Utah's LGBTQ+ community.

*Burning Sissy Valley*, the name of an annual event and the perennially active group that hosts it, has the mission to "host a pride event that is exclusively centered on the experiences of Queer and/or Trans People of Color (QTPOC) within the Wasatch Front." The event was founded in 2021 by current Chair and Director **Pedro Rico** and Co-founder **Jared**

**Winn-Taryor** after they graduated from *Westminster College* and sought to create a safe space for their community. "The mission of BSV is to build place-based belonging and social/economic liberation for QTPOC in the Wasatch Front," the organizers say. "We want QTPOC to feel belonging and security where they live, even if the environment might frequently be hostile."

their main event to the fall. "At BSV, we believe that community is ever present and should be happening at all moments outside of Pride Month," BSV says. "We want QTPOC to feel integrated, visible and celebrated within and outside Pride Month." Outside of their primary event, BSV hosts monthly meet ups called *Sissies top tha park* and can frequently be found "tabling or otherwise supporting other QTPOC events and organizations," they say.

While *Burning Sissy Valley* originally started as a summer Pride event, the organization has expanded their yearly offerings and shifted

Keep an eye out for the official announcement of 2023's *Burning Sissy Valley*, set to occur in September, on Instagram @burningsissyvalley.

## Burning Sissy Valley

Photo courtesy of Burning Sissy Valley



## Crossroads of the West Regional Rodeo

Utah's **Golden Spike Gay Rodeo Association** was found in 1979 as, according to its directors, "a group of local, country-western enthusiasts helping out the community." After a series of starts and stops and name changes, the organization was officially readmitted into the **International Gay Rodeo Association** in 2016 as the official chapter in Utah.

Utah Gay Rodeo Association Trustee **Kevin Hillman** speaks to the organization's importance: "We can provide a safe space where people can learn about rodeo and give them the opportunity to ... play in the dirt and have the thrill of competing in a sport that is a huge

adrenaline rush," he says. "We are keeping the history and traditions of the mountain west and what we call a 'rodeo family' [alive]."

UGRA produced four rodeos in the early aughts, but the upcoming *Crossroads of the West* event is their first in 19 years. The weekend will host 13 different rodeo events across two days at the *Golden Spike Event Center* in Ogden, including bull, bronc and steer riding and a host of roping, speed and "camp" events, the last of which include a drag-costumed race and a goat-dressing contest. Hillman says that the organization is excited to



Photo courtesy of UGRA

have "people in from all over the country to compete" in this historic return.

With their momentum back, UGRA is excited about moving forward. "We hope to be able to make this an annual event and grow it so that it is something to be seen at and get involved with," he says. Find information on the *Crossroads of the West* and other UGRA happenings at [utahgayrodeo.com](http://utahgayrodeo.com).

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# Pride Outside of Pride

Since first emerging on the scene a few years ago, **Marrlo Suzanne** has quickly become one of the hottest names in the local drag scene. Chief among the reasons for this acclaim is her series of themed concerts with her highly skilled **Galaxy Band** that take place at *Metro Music Hall*. Typically built around a decade—previous editions focused on '70s rock and 2000s alternative—and featuring a wide array of local performers across four nights in a

month, this now-recurring event series is among the most lively and vital in Salt Lake's LGBTQ+ performing arts spaces.

The main event of each night is a series of drag performances soundtracked to live music from the Galaxy Band. Drag to a backing track is wonderful, but the added vivacity of a live band gives the night a sweaty, teeming energy. Frequent performers include SLC drag royalty such as **Sequoia**, **M'Lady Wood**, **Veronika DaVil** and so many more. A significant aspect of these events is their inclu-

sion of non-drag talent alongside the queens and kings. In addition to the central drag performances, Marrlo invites music artists from Utah's LGBTQ+ community to open the sets. Previous performers include **Icky Rogers**, **Suchii** and **Rachael Jenkins**.

The next iteration of the Galaxy Band series is currently pending an official date and theme, but keep an eye out for an announcement for a late-summer line of shows. Follow Marrlo on Instagram @marrlosuzanne for more information and to, generally, take in her beauty, power and poise.



Photo: @robotkthis

**Marrlo Suzanne & The Galaxy Band  
Rock Drag Show**

## Utah Trans Pride

**Ian Gilles**, the Founder and Executive Director of local trans activism group **Genderbands Utah**, started *Utah Trans Pride* in 2019 after noticing an "unpleasant trend" in Utah Pride events: "There weren't many trans vendors or entertainers," they say. They then set up their own "trans-centered festival [that] could provide that safe, community space people were asking for and spotlight the talents of the trans community." *Utah Trans Pride* was inaugurally held in August of 2019, featuring performers, artists and food vendors from the trans and nonbinary communities.

This year's *Utah Trans Pride* is the first in-person event since that first fest

(due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis), and Gilles is ecstatic about the developments the organization has made since then. They point to an almost quadrupled amount of vendors, more entertainment and an increase in trans-assistive resources such as gender-affirming clothing and a "Paying-It-Forward" booth that will sell wares from vendors who can't physically be at the event as some of the most exciting developments.

"Everyone knows the transgender community is seriously under attack right now," says Gilles. "At UTP, trans people won't feel 'othered' ... For a few hours,



Photo courtesy of Utah Trans Pride

they will get to escape the onslaught of hate in the media and society and spend a fun, sunny day with their friends and chosen family celebrating how truly amazing they are." Follow Genderbands @genderbandsutah and *Utah Trans Pride* @utahtranspride on Instagram. For those who want to be involved but can't attend the event, you can purchase Genderbands' Pride package on their website, [genderbands.org](http://genderbands.org).

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# ROCK CAMP SLC

A NEW GENERATION OF BOWIE AND BOY GEORGE

By: Mary Culbertson • [mlculbertson@outlook.com](mailto:mlculbertson@outlook.com)

As a self-proclaimed “front-row concert goer,” **Hillary McDaniel** was “the kind of person that gets there at noon and tailgates all day. I’m a music fan first and foremost,” she says. In 2016, McDaniel found herself pursuing music by attending a summer camp in Los Angeles held by **Girls Rock Camp Alliance**, a nonprofit organization that funds camps all over the US. “The music industry in general is very male-gender dominated. It really spoke to my heart and kind of changed my relationship with music,” she says.

When McDaniel returned to SLC that summer, she worked with her friends and future co-founders **Talia Keys**, **Amy Stocks** and **Shell Danis** to form what would become **Rock Camp SLC**—a day camp that provides a social and musical safe space for girls and LGBTQ+ kids. They called around to borrow instruments and created a program that year under the name **Rock n’ Roll Camp for Girls**. By the summer of 2017, they were a registered nonprofit and held multiple programs each summer.

With the help of orgs such as **Girls Rock Camp Alliance** and **Utah LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce**, Rock Camp has gone on to broaden its reach to include all members of the LGBTQ+ community. McDaniel says they “try to create this environment where there’s just so much freedom to express themselves however they feel like they need to.” Further, she described the importance of releasing pressure for kids

to have their gender completely configured at such a young age. “If that means you want to start your day with he/him pronouns, and by lunchtime you’re using they/them and you want to use she/her later—all of that is valid.”

As each camp spans the course of a week, McDaniel describes a typical day at camp as starting with a morning assembly to pump everybody up. The kids are given time to learn from volunteer instrument instructors and attend workshops that cover everything from songwriting to community care and mental health. Campers are also treated to a *Tiny Lunch Concert*; “We get a local band that’s [a] female-, trans- or nonbinary-fronted band to come and play,” McDaniel says.

Later, campers head to band practice where they’re paired in groups similar in age and interests. “We’ve got kids who are like, eight and nine years old and writing songs about dogs and cats, and we’ve got

16 year olds writing songs about ‘keep your laws off my body,’ things like that,” says McDaniel. Even when the age groups vary further, she says, “these kids still find ways to come together and find things in common.”

During band practice, campers can connect, talk about their passions and are tasked with writing a song to perform at a local venue for the end-of-the-week show that is open to the public. In addition to showgoers of these concerts, McDaniel says volunteers are the biggest need they have right now. “So many people who come to camp as volunteers are really healing some of [their own] childhood wounds that they had while maybe feeling left out, isolated or picked on,” she says. “They’re able to show up as a volunteer in these spaces and see a kid who’s sitting alone and go and be that adult that they wish they’d had when they were a kid.”

Rock Camp SLC prides itself on being financially accessible for any camper, and they rely on volunteers to maintain this. This year there will be two programs, the first from June 12–17 and the second July 17–22. They’ll both be located at *East Hollywood High School*. Whether through teaching music theory, handing out juice boxes, performing for the kids or attending their shows, there’s a place for everyone at Rock Camp SLC. Visit [@rockcampslc](https://www.instagram.com/rockcampslc) on socials or [rockcampslc.org](https://www.rockcampslc.org) for more information on how to help or get involved.



Photo: Sam Crump (Courtesy of Rock Camp SLC)

Rock Camp SLC provides young, aspiring musicians the opportunity to work with established practitioners.

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# SLUG MAG'S PRIDE GUIDE TO DRAG SHOWS OUTSIDE OF SLC

By SLUG Staff | Photos courtesy of performers

To help all of Utah prepare to celebrate Pride in style, SLUG has put together a list of a few drag shows happening this summer outside of Salt Lake County to highlight how the artform is flourishing in other parts of the state!



**SLUG:** Can you tell us about your June show?

**Charity Heels:** The title of the show will be *Trans Rights*, and performers will be lip syncing. The show will be PG-13, and [I] will be emceeing. The show on June 3 will be at 8:30 p.m. The venue has asked that we not publicize the location, so we're only supplying that to people who reserve seats. It'll be here in Provo.

**SLUG:** Where can someone purchase a ticket to the show?

**CH:** People can reserve seats by DMing our Instagram, then we recommend a \$10 donation per audience member.

**SLUG:** As a student-run group in Utah County, can you speak a bit more to the origins of Cougar Camp and Couture?

**CH:** April Flowers, Plexi Glass, Strawberry Pie and I performed in drag together at *Cougar Pride Center's Madame Pattirini* [drag event]. Seeing that there were multiple student performers in the Provo area, we decided to put on a drag show for specifically student performers. We had our first show as a group in early January 2023.

**SLUG:** What importance do you see your work serving as part of Utah County's LGBTQ+ community?

**CH:** Our objective is to spread and celebrate queer joy and help build community. We provide a safe space for performers to explore gender and expression through a wonderful art form.

@cougarcampandcouture



**SLUG:** Please tell us more about your planned June drag event!

**Mel Payne, Marketing Director at Logan Pride Foundation:** *Drag Brunch* is a quarterly, recurring event that we partner with *Prodigy Brewing* to put on. *Drag Bingo* is also a quarterly, recurring event at *Barrel & Stave* and will take place in August to get people ready for our Pride month in September.

**SLUG:** Can you please provide some details about each event? What can one expect from the performances?

**MP:** *Brunch* and *Bingo* are always a great time, and the attendees loves the audience participation games. Great prizes are given out for *Bingo*, and there's always great food and drink specials. *Barrel & Stave* always features their Rainbow Shots—if you haven't experienced this bartender's work of art, you are missing out!

**SLUG:** Can you speak a bit more to the history of the *Logan Pride Foundation*? What importance do you see your work serving as part of Logan's LGBTQ+ community?

**MP:** *Logan Pride* was started in 2016 by a great ally in the community, the late **Crista Sorenson**. We are building a healthy and thriving LGBTQIA+ community by providing a safe space, education, resources and outreach in the community. We hold many social support groups nightly in the *Cache Pride Center* in Logan, and we educate in the community and raise awareness through our advocacy efforts. We want to create a safe space in Logan where all are welcome!

@loganprideut



# WARPAINT



Courtney Marie Andrews

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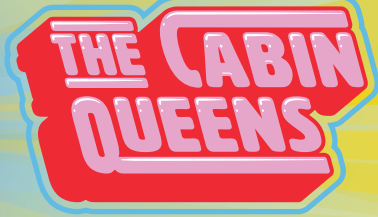
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# SLUG MAG'S PRIDE GUIDE TO DRAG SHOWS OUTSIDE OF SLC

By SLUG Staff | Photos courtesy of the performers



**SLUG:** Can you give us the specific dates and times that your June performances at *Rugged Grounds* will take place?  
**Brigitte Kiss, Director of The Divine Sister-Misters:** We are scheduled for events on June 2, 16 and 30 at 9 p.m.

**SLUG:** Who will be performing?

**BK:** Some of our key performers in the last few months are **Chris Tall, Lizzie McQueen, Lexi Gold, Izzy Gaye, Fanny P. Fiction** and **Charity Heels**.

**SLUG:** What can an attendee expect from the performances?

**BK:** As with many drag shows, you never really know what the performers are going to come out with. You have a front row seat to a vivid, visceral interpretation of the queer experience. Expect anything.

**SLUG:** How much are tickets/where can someone purchase a ticket to the show?

**BK:** \$10 card/cash/venmo at the event. Our events at *Rugged Grounds* are by RSVP only. Please text 385.312.0704 for reservations or info.

**SLUG:** Can you speak a bit more to the origins of The Divine Sister-Misters? What importance do you see your work serving as part of Utah County's LGBTQ+ community?

**BK:** The highest value of our shows is creating and protecting a family of queer and trans performing artists. We make it a point to welcome newcomers at each event and explain that they have joined our extended family.

@divinesistermisters



**SLUG:** Can you give us the specific date(s) that the *Sunday Service Drag Brunch* will occur during June?

**Edgy Dix:** The *C\*mmunion Drag Brunch* will be doing weekly drag shows, every Sunday at noon through June.

**SLUG:** Who all will be performing?

**ED:** We are still booking out shows, so no one is set in stone, but you can expect your amazing hostesses, **Edgy (@exe.edgy)** and **Lilia Maughn (@sheliliamaughn)**, to always be on the mic.

**SLUG:** What can an attendee expect at the event?

**ED:** You'll have laughs with comedy as well as mind-blowing performances from singing to dancing to burlesque to good ol' fashioned DRAG. We pride ourselves in having a diverse cast with many different talents, and so our audience can expect to have a Sunday Brunch to remember.

**SLUG:** How much are tickets to the show? (Tickets can be purchased through The Cabin Queens' Instagram).

**ED:** Tickets are \$20-30 depending on seating location.

**SLUG:** Can you speak a bit more to the origins and mission of The Cabin Queens?

**ED:** The *C\*mmunion Drag Brunch* mission has always been the same: to create a diverse show that highlights all forms of drag, entertains the crowds and uplifts and elevates each other through a sense of community love. We started The *C\*mmunion Drag Brunch* with the vision to make Park City a little more queer and joyful. If we can have a platform to show everyone that drag is fun, that drag is art and that drag is joy, then we have done our job.

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# INCREASING VISIBILITY IN UTAH SINCE 2018



Project Rainbow

Photo Credit: Cat Palmer Photography

# encirclegallery

By Zoe Zorka • zoezorka25@gmail.com

The spacious *Encircle* gallery at 331 S. 600 East in Salt Lake City may seem like walking into any historic home that has been converted into a high-end art gallery and gathering space. Exquisite pieces in a variety of mediums made by talented artists adorn the walls, drawing visitors in and captivating their attention.

The SLC *Encircle* gallery is more than just another art gallery showcasing local talent. *Encircle* refers to the gallery as a “home” because the space is a unique intersection between art exhibition and LGBTQ+ advocacy. While the gallery and art is a major part of each home, the homes primarily serve as gathering spaces for LGBTQ+ youth and their family and friends as part of *Encircle*’s greater mission, which is to highlight and expand the perspective of LGBTQ+ art by creating opportunities for LGBTQ+ and allied artists.

*Encircle* currently has three “homes” that also serve as gallery spaces, with one each in Salt Lake City, Provo and St. George. A Heber home is expected to open in late April. Half of the proceeds from each art piece sold go to the artist while the other half goes to support the broader *Encircle* organization, a nonprofit aiming to bring people together by promoting LGBTQ+ artists in a safe and inviting environment. The art is all made by local artists that are in one way or another affiliated with *Encircle* and the LGBTQ+ community, either as members themselves or allies.

Art has always been a part of *Encircle*’s mission, and the gallery’s existence pays homage to **John Williams**, an inspirational figure behind *Encircle*’s creation. Executive Director **Jordan Sgro** explains that Williams, who was a successful entrepreneur and champion for social issues in the Salt Lake City area before his murder in 2016, was passionate about art. Part of the inspiration for art in all of the *Encircle* “homes” came from thinking about what Williams would do with the space.

*Encircle* originally held art sales a few times a year to raise money for

its programs, which include therapy, support programs, art and music education, mental health services and more. The organization eventually decided that art should be available for purchase year-round and began curating unique art for each home.

The art ranges from watercolor to photography, mixed media and everything in between. Perhaps the most notable work in the Salt Lake gallery is *Winged Dress*, a 57.5” x 42.25” oil on panel work by **J. Kirk Richards** that depicts a rainbow angel’s wings coming off of an empty dress. In contrast to Richards’ abstract work, longtime *Encircle* artist **Colby Sanford** uses acrylics to create realistic depictions of humans and the raw emotion that they express in different situations. Other artists such as **Megan Ah You** and **Annie Farley** depict the serene and calming beauty of nature while **Ascha Lorissa Rowley**, the artist behind *Spheres of Influenced*, use mixed media to create ethereal, semi-abstract pieces rich in symbolism.

LGBTQ+ youth ages 12–25 can come to the home to find a safe and accepting space and participate in a variety of programs including therapy, friendship circles, support groups or even a place just to hang out. Each home has a full kitchen, several lounge areas, musical instruments and a fully stocked art room.

**Fane Harris**, *Encircle Salt Lake City*’s Associate Home Director, says that the space is designed to mimic many of the elements of a home atmosphere in a physical sense and in the sense that the “home” is a place for people to receive affirmation and to learn how to provide and receive validation.

*Encircle* galleries continuously obtain new pieces. All of their current offerings can be found on their website, [encirclegallery.org](http://encirclegallery.org). In June, *Encircle* will celebrate the opening of their Heber home. For more information about *Encircle* and its programs, visit [encircletogether.org](http://encircletogether.org).



“Spheres of Influence”  
Mixed Media, 2016  
Ascha Lorissa Rowley



Photos: Ashley Christenson

*Encircle*’s galleries serve as “homes” where LGBTQ+ youth and their family and friends can find a safe and accepting space.



“Unrestrained”  
Oil on Panel, 2016  
Megan Ah You

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LOCALIZED

# SLUG'S ALL-AGES LGBTQ+ VARIETY SHOW

By SLUG Staff | All Photos courtesy of the Performers

SLUG's June *Localized* showcase is a one-of-a-kind, all-ages variety show featuring up-and-coming young'uns in Utah's LGBTQ+ community. The show is hosted by **Tara Lipsyncki** at *Kilby Court* on Thursday, June 15. Doors open at 7 p.m. and performances start at 8 p.m. Don't forget to bring cash to tip your performers! *SLUG Localized* is sponsored by *Riso-Geist*.



**TARA LIPSYCNKI**  
@TARALIPSYCNKI

Tara Lipsyncki is our host for the evening and an incredibly talented performer in her own right. Tara has been making waves in the SLC LGBTQ+ arts and drag communities over the last few years, primarily drawing attention (both positive and, unfortunately, reactionary) for her staunch, outspoken activism in the community and her support of drag as an all-ages activity for both participants and attendees through her *Bes-TEAS* events at *Tea Zaanti*. Her support and assistance in establishing this lineup of all-ages performers was crucial. Throughout June, Tara will host and participate in a number of other events, including the *RIOT! Pride Street Fair* (June 2-4), an alternative *Pride* weekend festival centered on accessibility, inclusivity and radical queer activism. Read more about Lipsyncki in her full *Bold & Beautiful* feature, published on *SLUGMag.com* in April.



**VARRIE WARM**  
@VARRIEWARM

20-year-old Varrie Warm has been performing since they were a 16. In 2021, the *Utah Arts Alliance* approached them for a show and launched their now-blooming drag career. Uniquely, Varrie is one of only a few performers in SLC who does ASL interpretations along with their lip syncing. "Growing up, I was ignored/excluded from a lot of things," they say. "With my drag, I like to make sure no one in the crowd ever feels excluded." Depending on the show, Varrie can be found sporting a wide variety of different looks—glamorous, provocative, regal or esoteric. "Drag is a spectrum, and I love it for that," they say. "You don't have to strictly be a beauty queen, a comedy queen [or] even a horror queen," though they do note being more of a "Dragula" than they are a "RuPaul." Varrie has performed alongside Tara Lipsyncki at *Bes-TEAs* shows and will be reviving their paranormal/supernatural drag YouTube channel this summer.



**WHITE CHOCOLATE**  
@WHITECHOCOLATEDRAG

"For as long as I remember, I've always been obsessed with three things," says White Chocolate: "makeup and it's transformative abilities, music and performance art, and the women in my life that have inspired me." Drag opened an avenue to explore and honor all three of these things. She's been performing since 17 but really hit the scene when she won *Miss Gay Utah Youth* in January. Of her performance style, White Chocolate says that, "My female role models greatly influence what I perform on stage," citing *Madonna* and *Lady Gaga* as especially prominent influences. "A lot of my drag consists of looks that I've replicated from iconic world tours, award show performances" and more, she says. A life-long, classically trained singer, she also enjoys live singing on stage. In addition to performing at June's *Bes-TEAS* event, White Chocolate will appear at some events with the *Royal Court of the Golden Spike Empire*.

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LOCALIZED

# SLUG'S ALL-AGES LGBTQ+ VARIETY SHOW

By SLUG Staff | All Photos courtesy of the Performers



LAVENDER COUTURE  
@THE.LAVENDER.COUTURE

Another of Tara Lipsyncki's recurring *BES-Teas* collaborators, Lavender Couture is a fiery and poised performer coming up in the scene. Having been experimenting with drag presentation and performance since she was a teenager, Lavender found solace, confidence and a community through her art. "Drag really means a lot to me," she says. "It saved my life." As a performer still outlining her own unique stage persona, Lavender embraces the versatility of the art form. "I don't really like to stick to one thing," she says. Within this wide range, though, a few characteristics recur in her looks—high-femme glamor, horror aesthetics, audacious hairstyles and more. Keep an eye out for Lavender at future *BES-Teas* events and, assuredly, a host of other drag shows. For further insight into their surreal and humorous persona, follow the artist on TikTok at the handle listed above.



SHAPES NAMED SOAP  
@FINN\_PAYINNE

The trio of Shapes Named Soap—**Finn** providing guitar and vocals, **Annukka** on bass and **Tree** playing drums—describe themselves as "16 year olds singing songs about gender identity and the human condition." Led by siblings Finn and Annukka, the group creates folk-driven indie rock with lyrics that dive into their experiences living outside of the gender binary. Their first performance occurred during *SLCPL's 12 Minutes Max* series and found the group accompanied by aspiring filmmaker Annukka's visuals and drums by their father, renowned SLC music figure **Dave Payne** (*Jazz Jaguars*, *Red Bennies*, etc.). Finn is also a member of the *Spy Hop*—sponsored outfit *The Dayside*, who made their debut pair of performances throughout April and May. Later this summer, Shapes Named Soap will perform at the *15th Annual Craft Lake City DIY Festival*, and *The Dayside* (@the\_dayside) will continue to perform throughout the city.



JUNE ROSE  
@PARTY\_ON\_WAYNE...

June Rose is one of the most exciting young voices on the SLC folk scene. In the past few years, they've shared the stage with the likes of *P.S. Destroy This*, *Lit'l Grim*, *Who Killed Candace* and more. The diversity of these artists speaks to a universal quality in Rose's music—though sonically existent in the stripped-back and instrumentally bare realm of indie folk, Rose's powerful voice and biting lyrics can find analogues in genres as varied and punk, jazz and more. Much of their music remains unrecorded and unreleased, but a treasure trove of videos on their Instagram and TikTok provides insight into their unique brand of emotive crooning. A recent post with a song titled "Nothing Stays" illustrates this poetic persona well: "In the back lot / With the shit cars / And the old stars / I'm running away with a time bomb / That's about to go off."

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# NOEMI'S CAFE

## AND CATERING: BRINGS CLASSIC CHILEAN CUISINE TO SLC

By: Addison Rose \* Addiesan.slc@gmail.com

Midvale's *Noemi's Cafe and Catering* captures the warmth and approachability of Chilean cuisine in their transition from popular food truck to brick-and-mortar business. The space has a clean and casual energy with decor that pays homage to the food's country of origin. Latin music videos play from a screen behind the walk-up order counter while bountiful platters of dessert display cases whet the appetite. *Noemi's* staff have a kind, gentle energy. Everyone seems to help in all facets of the restaurant, from cooking and food running to working the register.

I talked my father into joining me for lunch on a Saturday. There was a steady stream of diverse customers, some first timers like us and others who seem to have previously followed the food truck. As an appetizer, we decided on *Pastel de Choclo* (\$13.00), which is only available on weekends. This is Chile's national dish and quintessential Latin comfort food—a sweet corn pie with ground beef, chicken, boiled egg and basil. *Noemi's* uses both cornmeal and full kernels in their filling, creating a layered, textural experience. We got different ratios of proteins to corn in each bite, so the palate never got bored.

Due to Chile's position along the Pacific, they have an extensive seafood tradition that I felt compelled to explore. For my main, I went with the *Fried Fish* (\$12.99) served with rice and a classic Chilean salad of sliced tomatoes, chopped onion and cilantro. The portions—two lightly battered filets seasoned with salt and pepper—were ample. Acidity from the tomato salad offered a pleasant break for the tastebuds in between bites of crisp, fryer-kissed pescatarian perfection. Despite a seemingly simple approach, *Noemi's* showed their

capacity for technical culinary skill. If this is what dipping my toes into the ocean of Chilean seafood is like, I'm ready to dive right in.

My dad went in a more terrestrial direction for his main dish with the *Lomo Saltado* (\$18.99). The soy sauce and aji amarillo—yellow chili pepper—marinated beef stir fried with red onions and parsley atop french fries is actually a dish by way of Peru's long-standing, Chinese-influenced "chifa" cuisine. As a nod to the nation of influence, a tiny Peruvian flag garnished the food. The combo of salt and spice brought the beef to life and will appease those who prefer a more medium-well sear. The fries were a surprisingly successful partner to the meat, catching extra flavor

that would have otherwise trickled down unnoticed on the plate. Based on the time it took orders to arrive at the table, you can tell each dish is made to order and given affectionate attention to detail.

On our way out, we swung back to the counter and ordered desserts to bring home and share with my mom, who has the biggest sweet tooth of the family. After much debate, we landed on cream-filled, horn-shaped puff pastry *Cachitos* (\$3.75) and a dulce du leche-laden, shaved coconut-garnished cookie sandwich called *Alfajores* (\$3.00). Both pastries "hit the spot," as my dad would say, but the *Alfajores* were a clear winner. Toothsome caramel decadence balanced the snap of a homemade cookie made for an addicting finish to a fulfilling meal.

*Noemi's Cafe and Catering* delivers a friendly atmosphere coupled with cleanly produced dishes that provide an appetizing introduction to Chilean cuisine newbies or a homecoming for those craving familiar flavor. Stay up to date on their delicious offerings @noemiscafeandcatering on Instagram and make reservations or inquire about catering through their website, [noemiscafe.com](http://noemiscafe.com).



*Noemi's Cafe* offers many classic Chilean dishes, including the *Pastel de Choclo*, pictured here.



Dishes such as *Lomo Saltado* (above) reflect the "chifa" tradition of merging Peruvian and Chinese cuisines.

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# GLITTER AND HOPS

## A GUIDE TO UTAH'S PRIDE-THEMED BREWS

By SLUG Staff

What better way to celebrate Pride month this June than with the girls, the gays and a big gulp of Pride-themed brews from your favorite local breweries? As part of our June *Pride* issue, *SLUG* is giving you all the hoppy details on a few of the hottest beers and ciders around SLC that are showing support for the LGBTQ+ community.

### BEWILDER BREWING

445 S 400 W, SLC, UT

#### El Fruti Boi:

is a tropical brew with guava being the star of the show. Added lactose gives El Fruti Boi a creamy sweetness, and with less hops and an emphasis on fruit, this brew is an extremely easy-to-drink beer.

#### Behind the Pride:

El Fruti Boi was released May 29 and is available at *Bewilder Brewing Co.* and select bars and restaurants at a 6.5% ABV and is selling at \$4/16 oz. can. With their hazy beers being named "Los Hazy Boi" and "Dos Hazy Boi," it felt like a natural progression for *Bewilder* to show LGBTQ+ support and create "El Fruti Boi" with the direction and blessing from the *Utah Pride Center*.

everyone could use a bit more "HOPE" in the world.

### HOPKINS BREWING

1048 E 2100 S, SLC, UT

#### Stonewall Sour Saison:

is soured naturally with lactobacillus then fermented with saison yeast. Added orange peel and coriander round out the lemony tartness of the brew with a refreshing, fruity and herbal finish.

#### Behind the Pride:

Stonewall Sour Saison is available now at *Hopkins Brewing* at a 5% ABV, selling on draft at \$6/16 oz. Named in honor of the LGBTQ+ rights uprising at *The Stonewall Inn* in 1969, *Hopkins* created this brew as their first in-house sour to show their love to the LGBTQ+

community. Every year they donate 10% of all Pride-themed merchandise sales in June to the *Utah Pride Center*.

### KIITOS BREWING

608 West 700 S, SLC, UT

#### Big Gay Ale:

is a light, drinkable golden ale with a touch of hibiscus and blueberry for added tartness and to enhance the brew's bright-pink color. Along with its vibrant hue, Big Gay Ale also features a touch of glamor with edible pink and silver glitter.

#### Behind the Pride:

Big Gay Ale was released to the public the first week of May and is available at a 5% ABV at 16 oz. It is stocked state-wide in grocery stores,

restaurants, bars and the *Kiitos Brewery* with the price varying depending on where you purchase it. Originally created to show support for Utah's LGBTQ+ community, *Kiitos* crafted Big Gay Ale in 2018 to show LGBTQ+ allyship during Pride. *Kiitos* plans to donate \$0.30 per Big Gay Ale six-pack sold to the *Utah Pride Center*.

### MOUNTAIN WEST CIDER

425 N 400 W, SLC, UT

#### Ruby's Gay Hard Cider:

is a crisp, dry and delicious traditional hard apple cider with Red Apple and hints of mild melon with a smooth, honey finish.

#### Behind the Pride:

Ruby's Gay Hard Cider is available for the month of June

### EPIC BREWING

825 S State St, SLC, UT

#### HOPEulent IPA:

is a classic, American-style double IPA. Released as a special version of their Hopulent IPA that is described as a "hop head's delight," HOPEulent is clear, crisp, bitter and refreshing.

#### Behind the Pride:

HOPEulent IPA will be available June 1 at *Epic Brewing* at an 8% ABV and is selling for \$5.99/22 oz. bottle. As a natural progression from Hopulent, their original beer brand, *Epic* created HOPEulent IPA to show support for LGBTQ+ communities and place an emphasis on the idea that



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at *Mountain West Cider's* bottle shop and Ciderhouse, various bars and restaurants and at Utah State Liquor stores at a 6.5% ABV, selling for \$5.29/16 oz. A flamboyant rendition of *Mountain West's* flagship cider, Ruby's new, flashy and bold label was created to help promote Pride month in Utah, and a portion of proceeds sold will be donated to the *Utah Pride Center* and *Equality Utah*.

**SALTFIRE BREWING**

2199 S W Temple St,  
 South Salt Lake, UT

**Kiss Whoever You Want!:** is a juicy, refreshing lager that packs a hoppy punch with notes of mango, passion fruit, pineapple and dark berry. This brew features a smooth bitterness heavy with overripe tropical fruits and edible, pink glitter swirls.

**Behind the Pride:** Kiss Whoever You Want! was released May 27 and can be purchased at *SaltFire Brewing* or by special order through Utah State Liquor stores at a 6.3% ABV, selling at \$3.99/16 oz. can. Kiss Whoever You Want! is a collaboration brew designed solely by members of the LGBTQ+ community with donation proceeds dedicated to *Project Rainbow*.

**SHADES BREWING**

154 W Utopia Ave,  
 South Salt Lake, UT

**Sounds Gay, I'm In:** is a smooth, easy-to-drink libation with a light-medium sourness that is non lip puckering with subtle notes of pear throughout.

**Behind the Pride:** Sounds Gay, I'm In was crafted by *Shades Brewer Tanya Sapula*, who identifies as LGBTQ+ and designed the name, art and tagline for the drink, "Brewed by a Queer." It was released May 18 and can be found at *Shades Brewing*, on site at *Shades Tap Room* and at various bars and restau-

rants around SLC at a 6.5% ABV, selling for \$3.55/12 oz.

**STRAP TANK BREWERY**

3661 Outlet Pkwy, Lehi, UT  
 596 S 1750 W, Springville, UT

**Bi-cycle:** is a blackberry, raspberry fruited sour with added lactose.

**Gay Ride:** is a rainbow sherbert sour ale.

**Behind the Pride:** Both brews are available the first week of June and until supplies last at the *Strap Tank Brewery* Lehi and Springville locations at a 5.0% ABV and selling for \$6/16 oz on draft, exclusively. *Strap Tank* created Bi-cycle and Gay Ride to express their support for Utah's LGBTQ+ communities as well their LGBTQ+ employees.

**UTOG BREWERY**

2331 Grant Ave, Ogden, UT

**Love Punch:** is a tropical hefeweizen brewed with pineapples, oranges, peaches and guava, making for light and easy drinkability with a tropical fruit flavor and citrus finish.

**Behind the Pride:** Love Punch released May 1 at *UTOG* and May 3 at select bars, restaurants, gas stations and grocery stores across Ogden and SLC and is available at a 5% ABV. It is sold as a four-pack of 16-oz. cans, and the price varies depending on where you purchase it. *UTOG* created Love Punch to show support to their LGBTQ+ employees and community, and they donate a portion of the brew's sales to *Project Rainbow*. A QR code to *Project Rainbow's* website is also available on the can to encourage others to donate, as well!

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# LOCAL MUSIC SINGLES ROUNDUP

Summer is finally here, and so is our June *Local Music Singles Roundup*! This month, we're featuring **Valet**, **Lane & The Chain**, **Snicks** and more! School's out, so it's time to take it easy. Kick back and relax poolside with this month's singles from incredibly talented local artists—you've earned it. No matter what music you're into, these songs are sure to make a splash!



**Lane And The Chain**

"Love's Not Enough"  
Self-Released  
Street: 04.28  
Lane And The Chain = Kate Bush ÷ Ben Folds

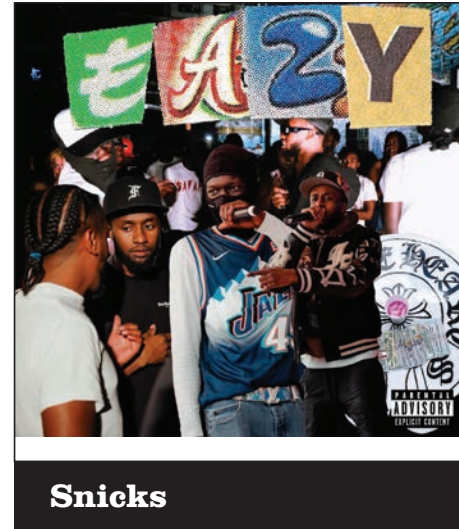
"Love's Not Enough" opens with a gentle guitar plucking a melody that welcomes a forlorn Courtney Lane singing, "I don't know if you ever loved me the way that you said you did / And you never wanted to listen to me when I begged for it." We're in breakup territory. Soon come the drums and then the piano, the latter's lilting softness belying the percussion's driving sense of newfound strength. Lane belts through the track, winding their lyrical intonation across the music's peaks and valleys. The lyrics and music together create the sensation of watching a relationship through a passenger-seat window, as though you had found great clarity in watching landscapes whip by. We're coming to terms with the end of a relationship and the fact that "this" hasn't been good for a while, that just because someone says they love you doesn't mean you feel loved. —Parker Scott Mortensen



**Raffa Mafra**

"A Great Place"  
QSQUARED  
Street: 05.26  
Raffa Mafra = Afrojack + Martin Garrix

Raffa Mafra's "A Great Place" feels like 1,000 fireflies in the air at the same time, ready to light up the summer. It's everything, really: a crowded club banger, an afters jam and a mid-afternoon beach party burner. Raffa gives the track a crisp and clean production with steady drum beats, cool synth breezes and an incoherent voice drifting in and out that amps up the listener's curiosity. It's feisty, tasty and smooth like ice cream with sprinkles and honey. The track will move you and hold you still at the same time—either way, it's impossible not to bow down to its easy charm. Listening to it feels like being in the right place with the best kind of buzz, running through your head. This summer, I want to be where this track plays, and I promise I won't be the only one spun around by it. —Russ Holsten



**Snicks**

"EAZY (feat. Star Martin and PrettyboiOnDaBlock)"  
Wave Runnerz/Safari Sounds  
Street: 04.29  
Snicks = YoungBoy + Pre-DS2 Future

True to its title, the new track from this winning trio of SLC MCs thrives on its relaxed self-satisfaction. This isn't a hard-edged banger or a lyrical show off but a breezy, brief track defined by how easily Snicks, Star and Prettyboi can spew forth greatness. The unassuming hook delivers this motto up front before the trio engage in line-by-line hot potato, trading off witty lines throughout the track and often blurring distinction between each voice. Everything this trio has—their rhymes, their clothes, their girls and their crew—is better than yours; it'd be obnoxious if each voice wasn't so confident, from Snicks' low-swinging brags to Prettyboi's nasal sneers and Star Martin's "be with you in a minute" rasp. The beat (produced by SLC hip-hop mainstay THATBOYJIMMY) tumbles along a grainy, artifact-heavy flamenco guitar sample that furthers the track's lackadaisical footwork. Try hards be damned; this just rolled off their shoulders. —Audrey Lockie

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JUNE 16: Cry Baby	AUG 5: Heroic Trio
JUNE 17: PI	AUG 11: Inherent Vice
JUNE 23: Mad God (2021)	AUG 12: Donnie Darko
JUNE 24: Inglorious Bastards	AUG 18: Dirty Dancing
JUNE 30: Night of The Comet	AUG 19: The Outsiders
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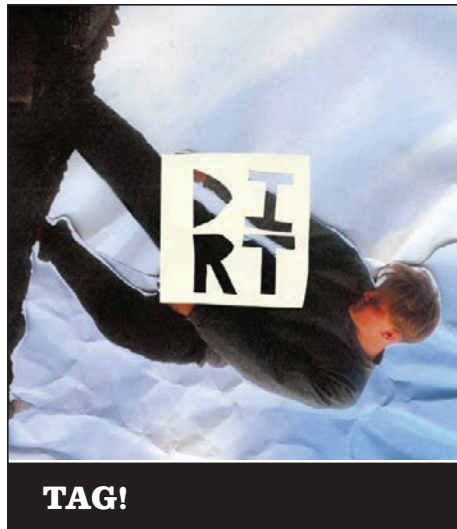
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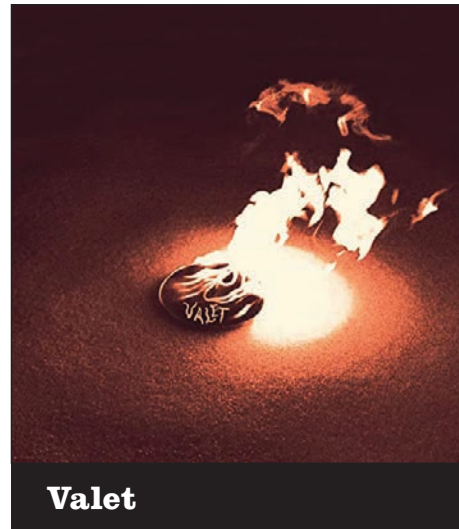
## LOCAL MUSIC SINGLES ROUNDUP



**Snuff Tape**



**TAG!**



**Valet**

*"Red Collar"*  
Self-Released  
Street: 03.02  
Snuff Tape = Hatebreed + Anonymous

The opening seconds of "Red Tape" sound like Snuff Tape passing around a cinderblock. A chugging, two-note figure bleeds out of the drums, then the guitar, then the bass, then the other guitar. Everyone coheres around 10 seconds in as vocalist **Alec Lange** descends into the mix with a guttural bark. The remaining track boasts an assemblage of every ear-crushing trope known to hardcore music—panic chords, blast beats, walloping bass pops, snare rolls and more. The quintet asserts themselves as purveyors of some of the city's brash and boldest hardcore with this opening statement on their debut EP, using a kitchen-sink approach to sound design to give their music propulsion beyond simple size and volume. "Red Collar" teems with life, each musical figure eschewing two-dimensionality and embracing tactility. This music slinks, groans, skitters, stomps and thuds. Grab on now so you don't get left in the dust later. —Audrey Lockie

*"Dirt"*  
Self-Released  
Street: 03.23  
TAG! = Caspr + Point North + a hint of EKKSTACY

Relatively new to the Utah music scene, this Provo band has made a bit of a splash with their sappy, e-boy-esque music. "Dirt" is a very pop synth-forward track, but not in an annoying, NSYNC kind of way—more of a **Metro Station** "Shake It" kind of way. I'll give it a considerable danceability rating as it's easy to move and groove to with subtle, moody lyrics. Having formed in 2021, it sounds like TAG! is still in the beginning stages of a band despite their debut EP being three years in the making; their sound isn't as put together as someone like **Kevin Walkman** but has a similar style and vocal range. Still, they are good enough to be added to a playlist, which gives them a high rating in my music Pokedex. I'm excited to hear what's upcoming in their music career, but for now, I recommend checking out this latest single from them! —Sage Holt

*"95R"*  
Current Records  
Street: 02.23  
Valet = The Wallows + Vampire Weekend

Indie pop and rock band Valet's "95R" is a dynamic track that blends catchy riffs and driving rhythm guitar with a low-key, captivating and deep voice. The song's title references German Theologian **Martin Luther's** 95 Theses, a list of reasons that challenged the authority of the Catholic Church and criticized the sale of indulgences, which promised forgiveness of sins for a price. With direct references to Luther and lyrical themes of desire, redemption and purpose, "95R" reflects on the questioning and seeking that's central to his work. The song builds towards a cathartic release about two-and-a-half minutes in when lead singer **Seth Richardson's** voice transforms into pure passion. He yells with conviction, "In this sea are we lost / To feel good, what's the cost? To feel good, what's the cost?" You're missing out on a lot if you don't listen intently to the lyrics, but even then this song is something that would play well at a summer BBQ. —Andrew Christiansen

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By Chay Mosqueda • @saltskatecity



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*Egghead & Twinkie*  
Director: Sarah Kambe Holland  
Orange Cat Films

—Max Bennion



*Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*  
Director: James Mangold  
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—Patrick Gibbs

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 TEMPLES 06.20  
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 Hello Seahorse! 06.24  
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 Creeping Death 06.27  
 Nita Strauss 06.29  
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