

SLUG MAG



Issue 450 • Volume 37 • June 2026 • Always Free • SLUGMAG.COM



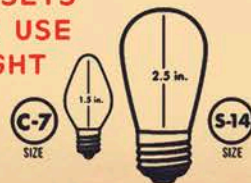
LET YOUR TRU-COLORS SHINE! →

TRUST
TRU-TONE
VINTAGE STYLE LIGHT BULBS & ACCESSORIES



SPECTRA

RAINBOW LIGHTS AVAILABLE
IN C7 LIGHT STRING SETS
AND S14 BULBS FOR USE
IN YOUR PATIO LIGHT
STRINGS



WHEN IN OGDEN...



VISIT TRU-TONE
→ 466 26TH ST. ←
TRU-TONE.COM/PRIDE



AUGUST
7, 8 & 9, 2026

OVER 500 LOCAL
ARTISANS - VINTAGE
CRAFT FOOD - MUSIC
STEM - PERFORMERS
KID AREA - DOG PARK
YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS

UTAH STATE
FAIRPARK



McCarthy Family Foundation, University of Utah, Utah Pirate, Visit Salt Lake, Commerce and Craft, Lucero Hair and Wellness, Salt Lake Society, Made with Harmony, Mountain West Hard Cider, Dented Brick Distillery, Libations LLC, Sugarhouse Distillery
This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts

Within just a few weeks of quitting nicotine, your skin starts getting its glow back.

Your body is on your side. Once you dump nicotine, improved blood flow nourishes your skin and brings back the natural, radiant you. And with our free quit tools like patches, gum, and coaching that **triple your chances** of success, you've got what you need to stay strong.



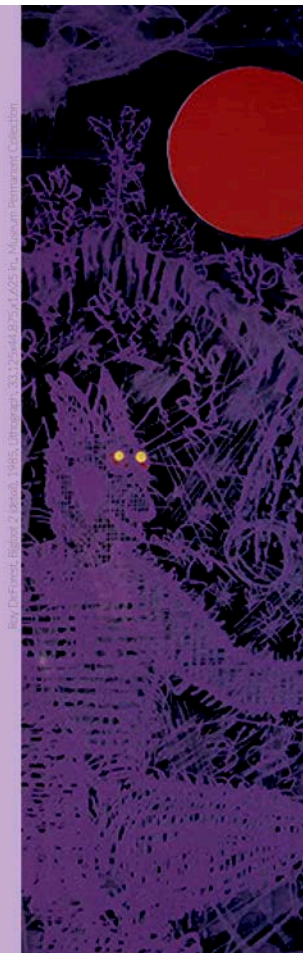
way to **quit**.org



The Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art

Free and open to all!

artmuseum.usu.edu



LASER MAESTRO'S METAL MAYHEM

..... FEATURING

Megadeth / Judas Priest
OZZY / Iron Maiden / Queensrÿche
Pantera / Motorhead / Metallica
Dokken / Mötley Crüe



ARUGULA, BASIL, BEET GREENS, BOK CHOY
CHARD, CHERRY TOMATOES, CHIVES, CIL
COLLARD GREENS, FENNEL, ENGLI
FLORENCE FENNEL, LEMONGRASS, CARLI
ONION, LETTUCE, HERBS, KALE
BUTTERHEAD LETTUCE, MICROG
GREENS, EGGPLANT, PARSLEY, PEAS
PEANUTS, RADISHES, RAINBOW CH
SPINACH, SPRING ONIONS, TURNI
TUMBLE TOMATOES

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET
• SALT LAKE CITY •

HISTORIC PIONEER PARK
350 SOUTH 300 WEST
SATURDAY MORNINGS
8AM-2PM

ROOTING FOR LOCAL GROWERS!
THIRTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

EXPLORE BRIGHTON THIS SUMMER



**MOUNTAIN BIKING OPENS
JUNE 19TH**

 **Brighton**

BRIGHTONRESORT.COM

RedButte

OUTDOOR CONCERT SERIES 2026



TUE, JUN 16
GRACE POTTER



SUN, JUN 28
JOHN CRAIGIE +
BLIND PILOT



WED, JUL 8
WYNTON MARSALIS
SEPTET



FRI, JUL 10
JJ GREY & MOFRO +
THE WOOD BROTHERS

Get Tickets!
redbuttegarden.org/concerts



 3200 E
BIG COTTONWOOD RD.
THEHOGWALLOW.COM



DRIVING FORWARD TOGETHER

At Mark Miller Subaru, our partnership with Equality Utah is more than just a campaign - it's a reflection of our values. We're proud supporters of the LGBTQ+ community, year after year. That's what makes us more than just an automotive retailer.



www.MarkMillerSubaru.com

801-553-5299

Contributor Limelight

Braxtyn Birrell
Editorial Coordinator



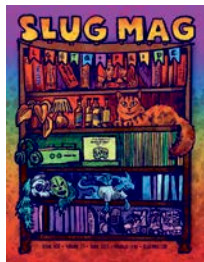
Cool, calm and collected (with a few *SpongeBob* adlibs thrown in), Braxtyn Birrell is always a pleasure to work with. Between chasing the performing arts and her precise writing, having many roles is Birrell's bread and butter. Check out her interview with Cougar Camp and Couture on pg. 26.

Contributor Limelight

Joy Nelson
Social Media Intern



Just like her name suggests, Joy Nelson is a "joy" to have in the office. With a constant smile and a go-get'em personality to boot, Nelson's up-to-date knowledge on what's trending adds the necessary pizzazz to every post and video on our social media. Thanks for all your hard work, Joy!



LGBTQ+ Pride Issue: June is the month for self-love, acceptance and the most fabulous of personalities. We're honoring the best in Utah's LGBTQ+ community, whether on the streets to capture a story or in the pages of the best queer-themed books. *SLUG* illustrator **Kit Cactus** (@kitcactusart) gives a cozier side to Pride with this bookshelf holding mementos from the different stories we covered. Check out the queer bookstore review on pg. 24-25.

Community Development Manager:

John Ford

Community Development Executives:

Alegra Zuchowicz, Rosalie Wasser

Advertising Sales:

partner@slugmag.com
SLUG HQ: 801.487.9221

Sales Representatives: Now Hiring!

Community Development Interns: Now Hiring!

Social Media Interns:
Joy Nelson

Brand Ambassadors:

Brent Landes, Garrian Spivey, Hans Magleby, Jandro Hickmon, Kenna Gibbons, Lisa Tobias, Megan Cowdell, Ryann Cook, Samantha Trevino, Vivika Corona

Circulation Coordinator:

Mack Leckie

Distro Drivers:

Andrea Villamizar, Brandon Arthur, Brooke Keithley, Colin Arthur, Dave McCoy, Eli Bye, Garrett Purpura, Isabella Barnes, Jacob Henke, Javier Villegas, Mack Leckie, Stacy Wilk, Tommy Dolph, Tony Bassett

Senior Staff Writers:

Alexie Zollinger, Alton Barnhart, Andrew Christiansen, Angela Garcia, Asha Pruitt, Austin Doty, Ben Trentelman, Bianca Velasquez, Brandon Ermer, Brooke Fannel, Cam Elliott, Carlisle Price, Cherri Cheetah, Dillon Ely, Dylan Bueche, Elizabeth Leach, Elle Cowley, Emma Anderson, Harper Haase, James Orme, Jamie Christensen, Joe Roberts, Jude Perno, Kamryn Feigel, Katie Hatzfeld, Kirby Dorsey, Kyle Forbush, Libby Leonard,

Litzi Estrada, Mary Culbertson, Marzia Thomas, Max Bennion, McCall Mash, Mickey Randle, Mike Brown, Mistress Nancy, Nicole Gaddie, Olivia Glod, Olivia Greene, Olivia Watts, Paige Zuckerman, Palak Jayswal, Parker Scott Mortensen, Patrick Gibbs, Payton Rhyann, PJ, Rio Connelly, Russ Holsten, Ryan Michael Painter, Sage Holt, Samantha Easter, Sam D'Antuono, Seth Turek, Sophie Caligiuri, Tyson Call, Vashti Hansen, William Swartzfager, Yonni Uribe, Zoe Zorka

Contributing Writers:

Aaliyah Medawar, Aaron Ashton, Angela Lezaic, Anna Walker, AspenEnglish, Ava Hart, B. Allan Johnson, Bianca Hill, Branden Reed, Caitlyn Hartung, Carmen Valdez, Christian Ledek, Cole Stocker, Connor Kraus, Damien Poelman, Devin Oldroyd, Emily Shelton, Emily Ward, Ezra Smith, Gabriella R.W., Gavyn Cundari, Genevieve Vahl, Grace Simpson, Guillermo Pino Cruz, Hans Magleby, Hazel Paul, Indi Tejada, India Bown, India Mendoza, Jacob Huff, Jacob Kay, Jennifer Perry, Joni Bianca, Jordan Thornblad, Jordan Turner, Josh Allred, Kate Neal, Kyra Cortez, Lauren Cheree, Leah Call, Lexi Hall, Lizzie Richardson, Madi Madrid, Mallory Meados, Maren Smith, Nadia Valentine, Norm Schoff, Parly Scott, Pace Gardner, Paulina Burnside, Rachel Brooks, Rebekah Bowman, Rebekah Shea Parke, Rosie Mansfield, Sara Milano, Sarah Williams, Sean Rinn, Shaylee Navarro, Skyler Montalvo, Sofia Nyquist

SLUG's Official Podcast:

SLUG Soundwaves

Soundwaves Producer:

Nathan Mcquivey

DONATE TODAY!



Front-end Developer:

Alek Wiltbank

Back-end Engineer:

Jaylen Manley

Illustrators:

Brett Ferrin, Brighton Metz, Candy Segura, Colin Stuart, Dallin Orr, Ginny Cunningham, Garrick Dean, Kit Cactus, Kristen Lake, Miranda Obic, Owen Clark, Ricky Vigil, Wes Wood

Action Sports Photo Coordinators:

Jovvany Villalobos, Kevin TK Frantz

Photographers:

Anna Chapman, Andrew Kooyman, Ashley Christenson, Brayden Salisbury, Brent Landes, Carly Duke, Chris Berry, Coleman Andersen, Derek Brad, Diego Andino, Diego Cuevas, Dominic Jordon, Ethan Clewell, Evan Hancock, Gabriel Kogami, Gilbert Cisneros, Hayley Stoddard, India Mendoza, Jillian Meyer, John Barkiple, John Taylor, Jovvany Villalobos, Kevin TK Frantz, Lily Rutherford, Logan Sorenson, Maralee Nielson, Moses Namkung, Nathan Gentry, Nicole Marriner, Roberto Valdez, Talyn Behzad, Tyson Call, Victoria Hills

Videographers:

Bryan Barrios, Dustin Hardebeck, Nate Schwartz

Publisher:

Eighteen Percent Gray

Executive Editor:

Angela H. Brown

Associate Editor:

Alton Barnhart

Editorial Coordinator:

Braxtyn Birrell

Copy Editors:

Alex Batton, Angela Garcia, Grier Abercrombie, Lalise Eshete, Margaret Pugh, Parker Scott Mortensen, Rebecca Sharp, Rebekah Bowman

Editorial Interns:

Margaret Pugh, Rebekah Bowman

Cover Artist:

Kit Cactus

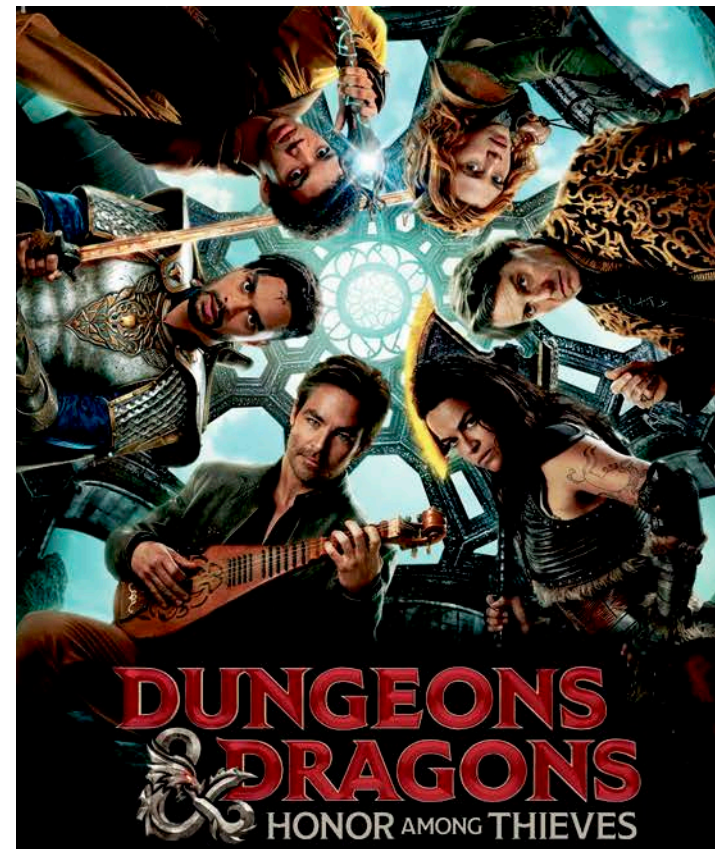
Senior Graphic Designer:

Joshua Joye

Graphic Design Team:

Alex Guzman, Allen Muy, Allie Stephens, Aubrey Calapp, Chris Bickmore, Clark Iroz, Ethan Hutchings, Emily Shuttleworth, Karson Griffin, Maggie Van Orden, Paisley Ballard, Paul Mason, Vella Price

Design Intern: Now Hiring!



— IN CONCERT —

FILM WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA
JUNE 19 & 20, 2026

7 PM | ABRAVANEL HALL

JOIN THE ADVENTURE

USUO.ORG



UTAH SYMPHONY



Season Sponsor
GEORGE S. AND DOLORES DOBE ECCLES
FOUNDATION



© 2023 Paramount Pictures. Hasbro, Dungeons & Dragons and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro. © 2023 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved.

DOG FRIENDLY PATIO
WINE | COCKTAILS | BEER

Melancholy
Wine & Cocktail Lounge

@MELANCHOLYSLC
556 S. GALE STREET

LAND BEYOND ZION
TOURS

435-319-6665

Zion National
Park Tours

landbeyondzion.com

**EVERY BODY
BELONGS HERE.**

However You Show Up,
We've Got Your Name
on a Cup.



Find Ibis
Coffee
Near You



**WORSHIP YOUR
MEAL**



702 S 300 E, SLC | (385) 490-2898 | SLCCGOATHEAD.COM

DINE-IN | PICK UP | TAKE-OUT | DELIVERY

SAPPHO SLC: ENTER THE SAPPHIC SPHERE WITH NOCHE DE LUCHA

By: Litz Estrada | litz1230@gmail.com
Photos by Victoria Hills

Sappho SLC is Utah's first sapphic burlesque production focused on sapphics experiencing and learning more about the art of burlesque, with emphasis on the need for more BIPOC performers in Utah. "I want to create a home in Utah for sapphics where it doesn't feel like we're in Utah," mother of its creation and Venezuela native Luna Sol says. "We are unapologetically centering BIPOC individuals, voices and experiences, but also [creating] an acceptable space where people can come and enjoy events."

Sol had a dream for Utah's BIPOC and queer communities alike to be able to feel seen and heard in safe spaces of their own. In sapphic burlesque, these queer performers focus on self-love while emphasizing the importance and inclusivity of bodies of all shapes and sizes to be the center of attention and to unapologetically take up space. Burlesque is performative, but also political, challenging norms centered around sexuality, gender and the patriarchy while reclaiming ownership of one's body image.

"We focus a lot on daytime events, and then there is *Sappho After Dark*, where we decide to take a leap and make things naughtier, taking chances, taking challenges," Sol says. Sol describes how *Sappho After Dark* takes hetero spaces, themes and concepts and makes them sapphic. A good exam-

ple of this was their previous *Magic Masc* event, a sapphic parody of *Magic Mike*.

Sappho After Dark held one of its first sapphic wrestling events in mid-March called *Noche De Lucha* at Metro Music Hall, with the help of *The Lucha Project*, an established organization that introduces DIY wrestling into spaces where typical wrestling wouldn't happen. Miss Paradise, a wrestler who has been in the wrestling scene for almost 14 years, helped with the training ahead of the event.

"They [luchadores] came in about once a week for two months, and they did little workshops where we taught them how to be safe in the ring; the ring isn't as forgiving as some people think it is, so we just wanted to make sure they were familiar in that space and taking care of their bodies," Paradise says. The night was full of chants, community and queerness as eight sapphic luchadores competed for prizes such as the golden strap and silver scissors. There were also go-go dancers, BIPOC vendors, DJs and, of course, it isn't *Sappho SLC* without a burlesque performance.

Rosa Rica, the co-host of the night, had led the matches with her charismatic wit and resonant presence. Rica helped the luchadores dive more into themselves to choose their fighters and learn about the history of luchalibre. "Cultural appreciation over cultural appropriation; we wanted them to feel confident over choosing their characters and exploring them," Rica says.

Afterwards, the luchadores' personalities came to light with names like La Papussy Peligrosa, Dolores Muerta, Poundcake, Shortcake the Clown, Titanium T Girl and Transmutation X. "It was beautiful to see people stay 'til the very end of the finale. I was crying for the second half of the event because my body was releasing everything. I lost sleep because it took a lot of work to do this. We have to navigate so much as an event producer," Sol says.

Sol had given her blood, sweat and tears and had even injured her ankle just before the event began. In the end, it was all worth it as the entire event had completely sold out, with people still in line trying to get through the door and a waitlist of over 60 people.

Burlesque is good for the soul; not only does it heal, but it also brings communities of queer and marginalized folk to take pride in themselves. Thank you, *Sappho SLC* for your fervor in keeping our sapphic communities united through education and body positivity. Follow @sapphoslc to keep up with future events and to stay up to date with their beloved performers.



With burlesque and wrestling in perfect harmony, Sappho SLC is taking the gloves off with *Sappho After Dark*.

(Clockwise from top) Sappho SLC is jumping in the ring with Rosa Rica, D, La Papussy Peligrosa, Dolores Muerta, Luna Sol and Shortcake the Clown.

PLANT SWAP



Bring your own plants to trade with friends!



RECOMMENDED ITEMS TO BRING:

- PAYMENT ACCEPTING METHOD (IF YOU ARE SELLING YOUR PLANTS)
- TABLE + CHAIRS + CANOPY

3540 South Main Street

South Salt Lake

located in the parking lot of:

PHOENIX VINE PLANTS & POTS

SATURDAY

JUNE 20TH

1PM TO 5PM



Tucked into the edges of Salt Lake City's industrial area is a largely worn warehouse. I excitedly walk around with the address in hand, hunting for the space that the Wasatch Roller Derby resides in.

I get the butterflies I usually get when I'm looking for an underground event, and surely enough, I hear music pumping in the distance to tell me I'm in the right place. It's "The The Empty" by **Le Tigre** that's playing when I arrive.

Across from me is the captain of the B team. **Furious George**, she calls herself, as many other teammates come up with their own playful names like **Menstrual Psycho** and **Off the Rails**.

It is the sounds of roller skates scraping and carving, bodies crashing into each other and someone laughing in the distance that catch my attention. Almost like the gravitational pull you feel from a mosh pit, I want to get up and jump in. It doesn't feel like any traditional sport but more so a community home that I wished I belonged to when I was younger.

"I graduated college then I moved back here — I was looking for queer community and looking for some way to get involved in an activity outside of work. So I really wanted to try it out and said, 'Hell yeah,'" George says.

"In the Derby Depot, we actually have a few different leagues, like Beehive Skate Revolution and Uinta Madness. Wasatch Roller Derby is the one that I play for," George explains, noting that this venue isn't just a home to her league but to many others as well. Some of them (like Uinta Madness) didn't even exist until this space was created. It's a beehive of some sort that pollinates other flowers to grow.

"We've had this space since 2009, and before that, I don't actually know if we had a venue. We were probably just at a rec center," George says. "Nationally, there might be six derby leagues that have their own space like we do. When you talk to leagues from other states and you tell them that you have your own space, they're like, 'Oh my God, you

Our Third Space to Skate WASATCH Roller DERBY

By Nadia Valentine
dianavela413@gmail.com

have your own space!' And I think, 'Oh my God... we're so lucky to have what we have.'"

"There are not a lot of competitive sports that are queer-coded. Roller derby has a lot of punk, feminist and queer gender roots. So it attracts a lot of people who are trying to find community," George says. "These people are my family. Between our A and B team, we have like 35-ish people. There's a jammer, a block and pivot... there's different vibes to every position. It's good to have different types of people. You shouldn't stop yourself from trying a different position if you really want to — don't box yourself into a category."

My eyes widen when George says, "We're funded by the [two] sponsors

that we have — but we're pretty much funded by ourselves. I don't know if you've heard this, but we're losing our venue. We are having to move June 30." She explains that the owners of the space are wanting to expand their business. "It really hurts. It's not easy having to move out of a place you [have] called home."

"We're having to band together more than ever because of our future and stay positive. The best thing you can do is come to our games. We love having people to support us like our dedicated fans. We have fundraisers and merch you can buy. We're looking for new sponsors to support us and a venue within our budget. So we're all ears if anyone knows about that," George says.

"We have to stand together with our queer athletes in sports," George says. "Even though a space is important, it's the people, the friends and the skills that you take with you that matter. It doesn't matter where you are."

Want to get involved with the Wasatch Roller Derby league? Find them on Instagram at [@wasatchrollerderby](https://www.instagram.com/wasatchrollerderby).



Photo: TK Frantz

The Wasatch Roller Derby is crashing through with a space for acceptance and community.

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS!
KEEPING YOUR FURRY FRIENDS **HEALTHY & HAPPY**

SALT LAKE
2047 E 3300 South
(801) 468-0700
10-7 Mon-Fri
Sat 10-6, Sun 11-4

DRAPER
866 E 12300 South
(801) 501-0818
10-6 Mon-Sat
Sun 11-4

DIY DOG WASH AT BOTH LOCATIONS!
CLOSES 1 HOUR BEFORE STORES CLOSE
UP TO 30% OFF SALE — SUNDAY JUNE 7: 10AM-5PM

DOGSMEOW.COM

BAD BIRD BEAUTY'S PRIDE SPECIAL

\$5 Off any pride nails from 6/1 to 6/30!
I'm a private queer nail tech located in Ogden, UT!

BOOK HERE

FOREVER The Cottage
All-Natural & Organic
Handcrafted in Small Batches

Mention this SLUG ad when you visit us in person and receive an exclusive mini.

Scan to see where we'll be in person.

Under the Umbrella
A QUEER LITTLE BOOKSTORE

Queer Owned Queer Everything

Intersectional Bookstore, Cafe & Community Space
BOOKS~COFFEE~STICKERS
PRIDE GEAR~EVENTS~BOOKCLUBS

UNDERTHEUMBRELLABOOKSTORE.COM @UNDERTHEUMBRELLABOOKSTORE
511 W 200 S STE 120 SLC, UT 84101

Summer Menu

at **Feldman's Deli**

Southern Peach Salad
Mixed Greens with Sweet Basil Grilled Chicken, fresh peaches, pecans, feta & homemade honey vinaigrette

The Summa Bubba
Sweet Basil Marinated Grilled Chicken Sandwich with homemade peach preserves, balsamic glaze, shaved parmesan, mayo, & spring mix on a toasted ciabatta bun

Peachy Palmer
Bubbly lemonade & iced tea with peach flavor

Dine-in or Take-out
NOW AVAILABLE! | Tuesday - Saturday 11am - 8pm
(801) 906-0369 | 2005 E 2700 S, Salt Lake City, UT 84109 | feldmansdeli.com

LEADING WITH LOVE

One Utah Couple's Foster Care Journey

By Grace Simpson • simpson.ograce@gmail.com | Photo by Coleman Andersen

Jessica Wainwright and Linamar Monslave, a married couple in the LGBTQ+ community, have known from the beginning that they wanted to be mothers. As they explored different paths to parenthood, they attended a Mother's Day event at Utah's Hogle Zoo in 2023 where they entered a giveaway for IVF treatments. Instead of IVF, they found themselves in conversation with a representative from Utah Foster Care (UFC). The more they learned about the need for foster families and the children in need of support, the more fostering felt like the right choice. "We thought, 'Well, this isn't what we imagined for ourselves originally,'" Wainwright says, "but we couldn't get it out of our heads. We just knew it was the right thing for us."



(L-R) Linamar Monslave and Jessica Wainwright are enjoying parenthood with the help of Utah Foster Care

After licensing and training, both Wainwright and Monslave had their first placement in 2024. "[Fostering] is one of those things where you learn as you go, even though you're trained for it, and you know you're prepared as much as you can be," Wainwright says. While the primary goal of foster care is reunification with biological families, some children are adopted when that is ultimately the best path for them. Wainwright and Monslave adopted their son, who was also their first placement in 2024. Now, they are also able to foster his biological siblings, helping maintain important family connections while embracing the joy of being his parents.

Nationally, one in three youth in foster care identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and there is a need for support and unconditional love. "Someone said, 'If you cannot accept a child who comes

out as gay, lesbian or trans, then this is probably not the best route for you,'" Wainwright says about a training she attended. Utah Foster Care offers ample support and education for foster parents to ensure the youth are placed in safe environments.

Being members of the community themselves, Wainwright and Monslave were prepared to love any child that came into their home. "My wife grew up in Venezuela, and she had experiences that weren't positive when she came out," Wainwright explains. "My experience [coming out] was very positive. I can use my positive experience, and she can use her not-so-positive experience, and we can come together and say, 'How can we be the best parents?'"

To people who are considering becoming foster parents, Monslave has beautiful advice. "Do it. But take away your expectations of how you think this foster child should be, who you think they should become, how you think they should act and behave and what you think parenting them is going to look like," she says. "If you do happen to have a child who comes out as LGBTQ+, please take away any past beliefs, prejudices or expectations that you're putting on kids. If you can lead with love and treat them with love, foster care is absolutely for you."

Utah Foster Care is a private 501(c)(3) created by the Utah

legislature in 1999. The nonprofit works to recruit, train and nurture foster families across the state while supporting them through donor-funded programs and resources. Prospective foster parents complete training that prepares them for the realities of foster care. After families are licensed, UFC continues to provide mentorship, support groups and educational workshops, so families never feel alone in the process.

Since 1999, Utah Foster Care has found and instructed over 16,650 families, helping create safe and supportive homes for children throughout Utah. There are nearly 1,700 children in foster care in Utah, and fewer than 800 foster families. There is an urgent demand for more people to join Utah Foster Care in their mission to help youth in need. If you are interested in learning more or being a positive influence in a child's life, visit utahfostercare.org.



KOI Piercing Studio

1301 S. 900 E.

Salt Lake City

(801) 463-7070

KOIPIERCINGSLC.COM

What's In My Closet? with Stevie Shock

By Alton Barnhart • altonboy2009@gmail.com || Photos by Jovvany Villalobos

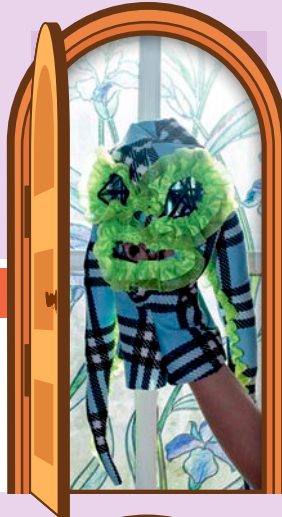
I never know what to expect when it comes to prying open someone's wardrobe. From garments and galoshes galore, to ornaments and oddities, every closet crack feels like the rediscovery of an ancient Egyptian pharaoh — especially when the subject is art scene royalty. Stashed away behind "The Breath House" and in communion of all things creative, the renaissance woman Stevie Shock runs laps with multiple mitts in modeling, art installations, festival production, clinical psychology and MANY more skills under her "traded off" belt. An entire house tour was warranted with a six-page spread just about her artistic background, but I came here to ask one simple question: "What's in your closet?"

THE DOLL HEAD TOP:



Victoria's secret is *Toy Story's* nightmare! Quite eye-catching, this corset is only the tip to Shock's many ways to recreate a style all her own. "Travel has helped me with my inspiration," Shock says. "You see outfits that are so eclectic and incredible with different kinds of materials — you just never think about how someone can use different items to make an outfit. I come home with a lot of inspiration."

THE KNITTED LUCHADOR MASK:



One crazed night on the high of a Mardi Gras celebration in The Bayou State, Shock stumbled upon this teal, plaid jester face cover outside a bar. While wearing the mask amongst her crew of 20+ artists, the piece became a memento of Shock's mantra that all art should be shared. "Trading your art is something that can expand community connection ... It's a way to make clothing and art less consumable."

THE MULTIPURPOSE FUR COAT:



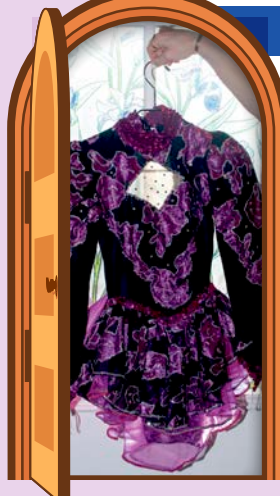
If you've caught Shock out in the urban wild, there's a good chance you've seen her wearing one of her fur jackets. "I would describe my style as textured creativity in combination with thrifted gems and whimsy." Whether it's a formal dinner with a few mob bosses or a nicely set dinner at In-N-Out Burger, Shock knows how to enter a room.

THE FESTIVAL STOMPERS:



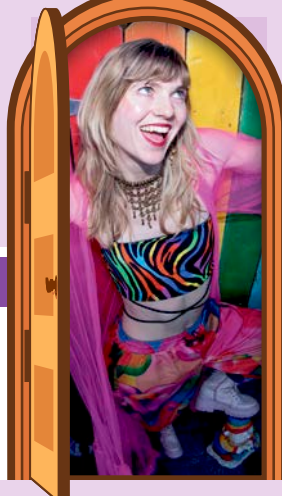
Currently antiqued with a thin layer of desert dust, these heavy metal platforms are go-to boots when it comes to roaming any festival. Shock reflects that many of these secluded gatherings have had a huge impact on her creativity. "I would say the Burning Man scene has really influenced my style greatly," Shock says. "Building outfits ... that was the true way of expressing yourself through wearable art."

THE FIGURE SKATER OUTFIT:



It might not be the first pick for a party outfit, but that's the way Shock likes it! This bedazzled black and magenta number stands a reflection of Shock's constant mental process of reusing outfits for the most special of occasions. "Things that are out there and kind of crazy ... blending costumes with what's appropriate for whatever event, you can truly show people to push the boundaries of what's able to be acceptable."

THE FULL PRIDE GITUP:



As if **Stevie Nicks** was casted into *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, this outfit is a genuine pick when it comes to strolling the streets this Pride month. However for Shock, the most prideful outfit you wear is the one that truly represents yourself. "Wear what makes you happy!" Shock says. "Clothing can be sacred in a lot of ways. The experience you have in them stays with the clothes."



WISHING EVERYONE
A HAPPY PRIDE!



featuring Casey Wardell, Aaron Reber
Kaylynn Ghost, Jon McAfee
Comi Mahak, Autumn Pitman
Ashlee Coats, River Swensen

CUSTOM TATTOO
PROFESSIONAL BODY PIERCING
FINE BODY JEWELRY
SPECIALIZING IN CHILDREN'S
EARLOBE PIERCINGS

2459 SOUTH MAIN STREET, STE 6
BOUNTIFUL, UTAH



est. 1996
Java Jo's
drive thru goodness

MORNINGS DON'T
HAVE TO SUCK

SLC'S FAVORITE URBAN BATHHOUSE OASIS

glow
SAUNA + SOAK

SCAN TO BOOK

730 W. 900 S., Salt Lake City

EMIGRATION
BREWING CO.

Craft Canyon Dining

4170 Emigration Canyon Rd,
Salt Lake City, UT 84108

DINNER:
Mon-Thu 5:00 pm-9:00 pm
Fri-Sat 4:00 pm-9:00 pm
Sun 4:00 pm-8:00 pm
BRUNCH:
Sat-Sun 10:00 am-2:00 pm

Make Your
Reservation
Today

It's a great day at
Millcreek Gardens

Mon. - Sat.
9am - 7pm

3500 S 900 E
SLC, UT

Grow a pear.

Millcreek Gardens
Your Favorite Garden Center Since 1955!



FINDING COMMUNITY ON THE TRAIL

A Look at SLC Sapphic Hikers

By Maren Smith • marensmithwrites@gmail.com

For many, hiking has become part of the rhythm of life in Utah — a go-to way to pass time and connect with nature. But for the SLC Sapphic Hikers, it represents something larger: a pathway to community, connection and belonging.

The group was founded about a year ago by **Vanessa Vazquez Gonzalez** and **Stephanie LaFontaine**, enthusiastic hikers who noticed a gap in the outdoor community. “We were looking around and realized there wasn’t a hiking group where lesbian, sapphic-adjacent, trans and non-binary people really felt safe to hike,” Gonzalez explains. Rather than waiting for that space to appear, the two women took it upon themselves to create it.

When it comes to their core mission, LaFontaine puts it plainly: “We want everyone to come and feel accepted and seen and safe in a space where they can just be themselves.” For Gonzalez, this objective was shaped by her own experi-

ence as a queer woman of color who came out later in life. “I felt like there wasn’t a space for me in the past,” Gonzalez explains, “so I really wanted to make this group a no-judgement area. We don’t care what your background is!”

The group began to take shape when Gonzalez created their Instagram account, garnering over 100 followers in just 24 hours. She used that platform to spread the word about their first hike, a journey to *Red Butte Canyon Overlook*. When the day of the hike came, the group’s organizers were shocked to see just how many people arrived. “I thought maybe two or three people would show up,” Gonzalez reflects, “but when Steph and I got there — a few minutes late, of course — there was a group of almost 30 people!” The moment was both surprising and affirming: The demand for this kind of community was already there.

What began as a single hike has evolved into a community of support systems, friendships and even romance. “Honestly, I think a lot of the welcoming atmosphere of the group comes from the natural ability of women to communicate and connect,” notes **Jennifer Lemon**, the group’s social media manager. That openness shows up immediately on the trail, and by the end of each hike complete strangers leave with newfound friends and plans to see each other again.

With LaFontaine and Gonzalez coming from Indigenous and Mexican backgrounds, respectively, their relationship to nature plays a central role in shaping the group’s identity and mission. “It’s really important for both of us to feel grounded and connected to the Earth,” Gonzalez says. “Sometimes, there’s just so much noise in my head. But listening to the birds and feeling the wind in my hair, I feel okay. I can work through things that I couldn’t process before.”

As the group continues to grow, both founders have been prompted to reflect on what it all means long term. For LaFontaine, it’s about creating the kind of space she wishes had existed earlier in her life — and one that her children can feel comfortable in. For Gonzalez, the legacy is both personal and political. In a time when queer rights can feel uncertain, she sees the group as a form of resistance and visibility. “We are still here,” she says, “and we are going to dominate these spaces.”

With several events planned for June, including hikes on June 3 and 18 and a Pride Month social on June 26, the group continues to offer new ways to get involved. For those looking to connect and exist a little more freely outdoors, the invitation is clear: There’s a place for you here.

To stay up to date on all things sapphic hiking, follow [@sapphicsonthesummit](#) on Instagram!



Photo: Derek Brad

Founders Vanessa Vazquez Gonzalez (left) and Stephanie LaFontaine (right), with Jennifer Lemon (middle) are trekking for community with SLC Sapphic Hikers.

VISUAL ARTS & DESIGN



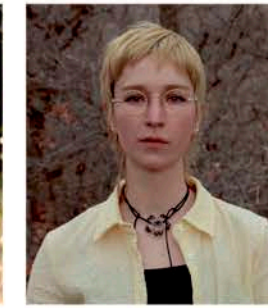
Kellie Bornhoft



Cara Despain



Scout Invie



Laurie Larson



Aimee Odum



Rebecca Pletsch



Sara Serratos

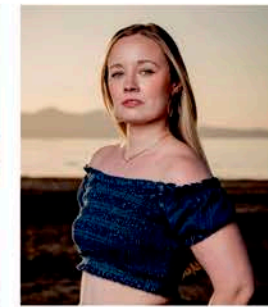


Mary Toscano

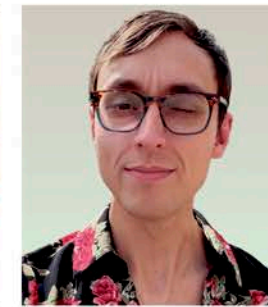
MUSIC



Heather Bosshardt



Emily Hicks



Scott Lippitt

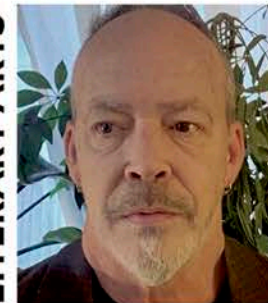


Maddie Wilson



Amber Youngberg

LITERARY ARTS



Rob Carney



Amber Caron



Christopher Cokinos



Katharine Coles



Cindy King



Learn more

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR UTAH ARTIST FELLOWS



Utah Division of Arts & Museums

CLOCKING IT

with the facial femmes

By: Yonni Uribe
alliyahyonni5@gmail.com

If you're a resident SLC queer, you probably have heard of (or seen) local drag performers, internet viral stars and SLUG alumni, Ms. Meredith and Jenna Tea, taking Utah's queer nightlife by storm. Though if you're not so social media inclined, you might've missed their newest joint endeavor, @thefacialfemmes: an Instagram account documenting their journey transitioning in real time together, with a goal of getting facial feminization surgery at the same time along the way. The Facial Femmes hope to showcase all of this and become a welcoming space for all to enter and experience sisterhood.

Ms. Meredith and Jenna Tea are no strangers to internet popularity. Both have

separately gone viral at different points in their drag careers. Meredith went viral for a video documenting her life before becoming a drag queen: a life where she was a BYU student who even went on to serve a mission in Ukraine before coming out as a gay man and eventually discovering she was transgender. This sparked her performing at the LoveLoud Festival here in Utah, where she opened for acts like David Archuleta and Neon Trees. Jenna went viral for a heartwarming video that she secretly recorded of her great-grandmother Katherine, where she came out as transgender and was met with one of the

most beautiful speeches of love and acceptance, which in turn landed her *The Kelly Clarkson Show* and interviews with outlets like GMA. With the traction these two queens were gaining, it felt like a no-brainer to join forces. "We've always been very close friends, but I feel like we decided to make it Instagram official," Jenna declares before adding, "We noticed that people loved seeing us together, so that was a big factor in making the account together."

Friends almost feels like an understatement when Meredith and Jenna recount

The Facial Femmes is just the start to documenting Ms. Meredith (L) and Jenna Tea's (R) sisterhood and career expansion outside of drag together.

their "first official girls' night" together on a trip with other local Utah drag queens. Meredith shares, "We went on the trip, and we were both like, 'We're different than a lot of the other queens are.'" Jenna adds, "They [the other queens] all went out to the gay bar, and we stayed in. That was the night that we told each other that we thought we were both trans." The Facial Femmes is just the start to documenting their sisterhood and career expansion outside of drag together. "It is such a hard place to be trans in the world right now, let alone Utah. Why not try and share that and open that up?" Meredith says. Videos of The Facial Femmes making light of the "Trans Agenda" and candidly discussing others' shock to them dating straight men have led to the formation of their upcoming podcast, *Clock It*. "Those were really the videos that picked up and did the best for us, which is why we started doing the podcast," Jenna explains.

Besides the launch of *Clock It* and its Patreon, which will feature exclusive behind the scenes of not only the podcast but of their lives, they also have started their very own drag house called "Haus of Gloss" featuring a myriad of other local queens in SLC. With all this excitement, they don't forget their own personal goals when it comes to their transitions. "I think it's here in the phrase 'protect the dolls,' and I know it's maybe redundant or feels less interesting to say, but part of that is paying the dolls and booking the dolls," Meredith explains. "A lot of that is showing up on that front because that is truly what helps us get what we need, which is gender-affirming care." You can support these dolls by following their Instagram @thefacialfemmes for their GoFundMe and follow their future endeavors like *Clock It* and @hausgloss.



See Every COLOR

LASIK unlocks a bright new world.
See every color more vividly.



Start Your LASIK Journey

(801) 266-2283 | theeyeinstitute.com

You Weren't Made to Match the Wallpaper

Shop a curated mix of contemporary, designer, and vintage at wallet-friendly prices. Follow us for more @WillowBirds_Shop

MOSS TATTOO STUDIO Ogden, Utah

Let us create your next masterpiece

42 YEARS IN BUSINESS!

FREE FREE FREE market analysis of your home, condo or parents' home—text me!

No obligation, just an honest opinion.

Babs DeLay, Principal Broker
UrbanUtah.com (801) 201-8824

REALTOR 42 YEARS



Blooming with Pride

AT RED BUTTE GARDEN & ARBORETUM

A family-friendly celebration of nature & community

Friday, June 12, 12-7pm

Tickets on sale now!

Supported by BW BASTIAN FOUNDATION

RedButte Garden & Arboretum UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Dragon Dads

Fierce Love, Loud Support and a Community That Shows Up



Every June, as rainbow flags rise over Salt Lake City and the streets fill with celebration, one group stands out — not because of the giant inflatable dragon, but because of the unmistakable warmth they bring wherever they go. They are Dragon Dads, a community of fathers and caregivers who have transformed their own journeys of learning, loving and unlearning into a powerful force for LGBTQ+ youth.

Founded in 2015, Dragon Dads began with a simple but radical mission: help fathers become confident, compassionate advocates for their LGBTQ+ children. What started as a handful of dads walking together in the Pride parade has grown into a vibrant network of mentors, educators and allies who show up for kids who need them and for the parents learning how to support them.

Vice President **Drew Armstrong** remembers exactly how it began. When his son came out as transgender at age three, Armstrong and his family were still deeply rooted in LDS culture. “We didn’t know how to deal with that,” he recalls. “We were looking for support, trying to figure out how to give him what he needed.” That search led him to other fathers navigating the same questions and eventually to the idea that dads needed their own space — one built on honesty, vulnerability and fierce love.

“A lot of us are recovering homophobes,” Armstrong says. “None of us had done this before. But we knew we wanted to learn.”

From that desire grew Dragon Dads: a group that welcomes anyone who wants to support LGBTQ+ youth, regardless of gender or parental status, while focusing its outreach on fathers who often lack role models for affirming parenting. Their work centers on education, mentorship and connection, helping dads understand their children’s experiences and build the confidence to advocate for them at home, at school and in the community.

The Dragon Dads support LGBTQ+ youth. (L-R: Rob Reich, Brett Davis, Drew Armstrong, Lance Sweeten, David Anderson)



Board member and events leader **Rob Reich** found Dragon Dads in a very different way — on the back of a motorcycle. After being invited to ride in the Pride parade to drown out protesters, he brought his daughter along. The experience changed him. “There was no animosity, and everyone was helping each other,” he recalls. “It was a whole community supporting one another.”

When he put on a “Free Dad Hugs” shirt, the response was overwhelming. Kids, adults, elders — people who hadn’t felt a father’s embrace in decades — lined up for a moment of connection. “People don’t realize the hugger gets as much as the person being hugged,” Reich says. “It’s powerful.”

This has led to the Dragon Dads’ “free hugs” menu — one of their staple offerings at the many Pride festivals and other events across the country that they attend. (The group has attended 15 this year alone.) Beyond offering hugs, conversation and a table full of LGBTQ+ stickers that draw young people in long enough for a meaningful exchange, they ask gentle questions: “Is your dad supportive?” “Can we help?” Many kids leave with a QR-coded card to pass along at home.

Some dads eventually show up at the group’s monthly Affirming Fathers Breakfast, where they discover they’re not alone — and that loving their child is not only possible, but transformative. “We want to normalize having an LGBTQ+ kid,” Armstrong says. “The only thing that really has to change is the parent’s point of view. You stop leading the way and start walking beside them.”

This June, as Salt Lake City celebrates Pride, Dragon Dads will be there — fierce, loving and impossible to miss. Their message is simple: Every child deserves a parent who shows up, and every parent deserves a community that helps them learn how.

More information about Dragon Dads can be found at dragondads.org.



Rainbow Recommendations From Your Friendly Neighborhood Bookstores

One of the greatest acts of resistance and joy is reading, especially when it comes to LGBTQ+ literature. You don't need an English degree to know the power of a deeply resonant story that makes you feel seen. No matter how many of our stories are banned, we'll be here any-

way: living, breathing, adventuring, fighting fascism, falling in love (or not), being cozy, learning our history and crying over poetry. For all that magic and more, here are some queer books highly recommended by your trusty local bookstores:

THE EVERLASTING by Alix E. Harrow

Reviewed by Orion Enceladus and Raelle Westwind, *Legendarium Books*
Photo: Gabriel Kogami

The Everlasting is a subtle book with many stories in one: two people living many lives and a romance between a towering lady knight and a small historian man. The book shows us how to find ourselves amidst the tangled web of propaganda that our fascist society threads through our culture. Owen is obsessed with Una Everlasting, the knight whose story is the rock upon which Owen's nation is built. He finds himself thrown back through

time to quest with Una herself — tasked with correcting her and perfecting her legend — all to inspire his nation to fight a never-ending war. Through life after life with each other, they slowly remember their true selves and their love for each other. This is truly a book for our time: an epic about the power of how mythology can keep a nation enthralled to fascism can be reclaimed through the strength of community, healing and love.



HOW TO LOSE A GOBLIN IN TEN DAYS by Jessie Sylva

Reviewed and photo by Megan Andrus, *The Pumpkin Cottage*
Photo: Gabriel Kogami

How to Lose a Goblin in Ten Days by Jessie Sylva is the kind of cozy fantasy that leaves you with all the warm fuzzies. It's charming and funny, with just the right amount of sass, sweetness and cottagecore magic.

The romance feels sweet and genuine, and underneath all the cozy vibes is a really sweet story about acceptance, community and finding joy in unexpected places. Honestly, it just made me happy to read.



SEASONS OF IRON AND GLASS by Amal El-Mohtar

Reviewed and photo by Annie Pagett of *1974 Bookstore*



I am happy to share with you my recent favorite book, *Seasons of Glass and Iron*, a short story fantasy collection by Amal El-Mohtar, which features reimagined fairy tales, speculative fiction and beautiful lyrical poetry that is centered on queer love, women's friendships, solidarity and bonds. You do not want to skip the prologue in this gorgeous book, where El-Mohtar shares her 15-year retrospective jour-

ney of these stories and the connections made, particularly about women and the celebration and love for them. Absolutely gorgeous!

It will warm your heart, make you smile, make you mad, make you cry and bring cognizant awareness and empathy to the consequences of senseless wars. Hugs!

THE ENTANGLEMENT OF RIVAL WIZARDS by Sara Raasch

Reviewed and photo by Kenzie Lombard, *Lovebound Library*

The Entanglement of Rival Wizards by Sara Raasch was one of my top reads of 2025. This book has the perfect ratio of plot dedicated to them being both enemies and lovers. Sebastian and Thio's banter is top-notch, and the evolution of their relationship feels very well-paced and authentic. Raasch's books always have a great mix of humor and heart, but she really outdid herself with Sebastian and

Thio's story. I almost never cry when reading, but there were a few moments in the last quarter of this book that had me teary-eyed. Overall, however, the vibe of the book is very romcom-y and is full of queer joy and romance. This book is the first in a set of *D&D*-inspired, interconnected standalones. So if you love it, be sure to check out *The Fake Divination Offense* when it comes out on May 19!



RAINBOW LETTERS by Gary M. Watts

Reviewed and photo by Apollo Frenzel, *Weller Book Works*

After acquiring an interest in both Western and LDS history, I wondered why a religion focused on love and community would exclude people trying to chase those exact things. This is what Gary M. Watts grapples with in *Rainbow Letters*. Watts' struggle with faith and the love for his son highlights just how stuck the Church is in its ways. When Craig was ex-communicated for coming out to his bishop, Watts was heartbroken. What

followed was a series of letters written to church leaders, pleading to have compassion for the queer members of the Church. Some responses cite doctrine to justify bigotry, some share Watts' frustrations and some don't respond at all. The Church provides a strong community for its members. There are many queer members who deserve that platform and all the love that comes with it. That's why Watts is still fighting for his son today.



COUGAR CAMP AND COUTURE: Building Bridges

By Braxtyn Birrell | braxtynb101@gmail.com

For local drag queens **Charity Heels** and **Colette Coins**, staying faithful and expressing your true self do not have to exist in alternate realities. That overlap of identity was why Heels founded Cougar Camp and Couture, the most active drag collective in the Provo/Orem area. "As an active member of the Church, I can go to a space where it's gay, but I'm in charge of it, so being ex-Mormon is not an expectation," Heels explains. No matter the current status, religious trauma is something every queer person in Utah has experienced, and the topic is both open for discussion within the group and showcased in their performances.

One of Heels' favorite memories is of Coins preparing for a show while doing her mission prep homework. "You had lash glue in one hand and the *Book of Mormon* in the other," Heels laughs. She calls Cougar Camp and Couture a "bridge-building space," offering a means of catharsis for those experiencing a difficult relationship with Mormonism. Heels loves to study the queer-religious intersect, explaining, "You're not going to go to a drag show in another state and see pieces performed to songs from *Sons of Provo* or *Saturday's Warrior*. Outside of a cathartic experience, this is a subcultural

phenomenon that can only connect with our audience because it's so specific."

Bridging that gap between religious and queer communities was not the only need Heels hoped to address with Cougar Camp and Couture. Because drag performances are often held in bars, she noticed that many of the most talented drag performers in the area were unable to participate because they were under 21. While members must be at least 18, Cougar Camp and Couture shows allow more college students to perform and members of all ages to join the audience. Coins reminisces on a young girl who was taken to one of the shows and asked to take a picture afterwards. "It was so cute to see a parent exposing their child to a queer, joyous space," she says.

The transition of leadership from founder (Heels) to current organizer (Coins) was seamless, as Coins returned from her mission right around the same time Heels moved away for grad school. Coins is the only member still active since the very first show, but **Jack of Shades** and **Maybelline Mayhem** have been involved almost as long, with **Salina Marina** and **Corvo Blazar** being a recent addition to the team.

While there are consistently returning members of the group, they are glad to

take anyone. It's typically BYU and UVU students, but there are no requirements to join. Many shows are even targeted toward first-time performers, like an open mic for drag. Cougar Camp and Couture leans into the DIY vibes and is a great opportunity for local performers to hone their skills. Each member started out as an amateur but has grown so much due to their involvement in the group. Coins gives the example of learning how to mix her own tracks, as opposed to simply lip-syncing songs off Spotify at the beginning of her career.

One of the hardest things for Cougar Camp and Couture to balance is walking the line between getting enough publicity to draw people to their shows and maintaining enough privacy so as not to attract attention from the wrong people. "It's harder for people to threaten us when they don't know we exist, but that makes it harder for us to find our audience," Heels reveals. That negative attention has come in the form of Heels being doxxed by a member of an alt-right organization and Coins' mission departure being delayed. Due to this, they choose to keep the location of their performances secret to the public, but those interested in attending can DM their Instagram @cougarcampandcouture for more information.



Cougar Camp and Couture is a bridge-building space for those balancing a relationship with their queer identity and Mormonism. (L-R: Salina Marina, Colette Coins, Corvo Blazar)

Photo: Gilbert Cisneros

TREES & SHRUBS • POLLINATOR PERENNIALS
XERISCAPE & WATERWISE • UTAH NATIVES
FRUITS & VEGETABLES • SOILS & MULCH
HOUSEPLANTS • SEEDS & GARDEN SUPPLIES

PLANT CARE & DIAGNOSTICS **LANDSCAPE DESIGN** **DELIVERY & BULK PRODUCTS**

VISIT US
 9275 S 1300 W glovernursery.com
 MONDAY - FRIDAY 8AM - 6 PM
 801-562-5496

Where a love for plants grows deep

Local, original, & a little queer
 Be more questionable

find games: questionable-productions.com
QUESTIONABLE Productions
 Making trivia fun for everyone

Now Open!
Ogden's Only Cat Cafe!

Mention this ad for \$1 off lounge fare!

341 27th St
 Downtown Ogden

THE HOUSE CAT
 THEHOUSECATCAFE.COM

Join the SLUG Mag Sales Team!

Handle sales, sponsorships, client relations and brand growth for SLUG Magazine.

Inquire at slugmag.com/opportunities

Books, merch, and gifts sourced from local, women, and/or queer owned businesses!

Monday - Saturday: 10 AM - 6 PM
 Sunday: 11 AM - 5 PM

145 E 900 S 801-709-9039
 Salt Lake City, UT 84111 @loveboundlibrary

FUCK AROUND **CENTRAL 9TH MARKET** **FIND OUT**

161 WEST 900 SOUTH • SALT LAKE CITY
@CENTRAL9THMARKET
 ART BY @CLAYCAVANDER



UTAH'S PREMIER FILM-FOCUSED CREATIVE HUB

UTAH FILM CENTER

Utah Film Center hosts free film exhibition and programming with modern workspaces to support filmmakers, a 180-seat screening room, and facilities for filmmaking workshops, receptions, events, and education.

MARMALADE/WEST CAPITOL
375 W 400 N
SALT LAKE CITY

For details about upcoming summer screenings & events, visit utahfilmcenter.org

NOV 6-8 Early passes on sale now!

UTAH QUEER FILM FESTIVAL

utahqff.org

Memorie

Aly

Kaylee

Kelli

Adee

Nisa

TROUBADOUR
 we do hair

LOCALIZED

DIE SHINY

Photo: Chris Berry

(L-R) Carolyn Schmitz, Zac Bryant, Callie Croft, Caleb Wall and Matt Wiley are the unstoppable force behind Die Shiny.

By: Devin Oldroyd | devin.oldroyd@gmail.com

Be the most prideful this pride month and come see June's installment of *SLUG Localized!* We're breaking out all the stops with some of the best LGBTQ+ bands that Utah has to offer. Start off the night right with the contemporary sounds of **Liam Lars**, power down some alt-pop with **Leetham** and crank up the volume with heavy hooks from **Die Shiny**. Head over to *Kilby Court* Thursday, June 18 for a night you won't want to miss! Where do you have to be? Grilling egg salad sandwiches at midnight? That's what we thought...

On the front steps of *The Boiler Room* in downtown Salt Lake City, I first heard of the music genre "conscious pop." I heard about it while being told an anecdote about a Die Shiny fan who had approached the band's lead vocalist and bassist, **Callie Crofts**, saying, "I feel like I want to call your genre conscious pop." While they do identify with and have adopted the genre "conscious pop," Crofts, who uses they/she/he pronouns, describes the band's sound as electro pop with a "punk ethos."

"Punk is this gateway thing into whatever our brand is," they say. "I'm kind of fiery and political and ... [I have] stopped being afraid of being that, regardless of the genre that we're in." Crofts told me this while wearing a shirt that read "Your taxes fund terror." It was clear to me why fans perceive the band as "conscious pop," and why Die Shiny claims the genre with pride.

The band doesn't aim to create music within any specific genre. Rather, Crofts describes Die Shiny's sound as "just a bit of everything." "We're a bunch of weirdos," she says. "We're just neurodivergent, ADHD, angry, cute people who sing about what matters."

In addition to Crofts, the band consists of four others: **Zac Bryant** (Crofts' partner and the band's audio engineer) on drums and vocals, **Matt Wiley** on guitar, **Caleb Wall** on keys and vocals and **Carolyn Schmitz** on vocals. Crofts and Bryant also serve as the band's producers.

Crofts cites several artists as inspiration for Die Shiny's music, including **Hayley Williams**, **DAMAG3**, **Nine Inch Nails**, **The Neighborhood Kids**, **Kneecap** and **Gorillaz**. "I've had a lot of favorite [artists] in the 90s pop and rock world," Crofts says. "In the last few years, I'm finding myself struggling to enjoy artists who are not anti-fascist."

Politics and music go hand in hand for Die Shiny. The band first overtly explored political themes in their 2024 single, "The Fountain." "The Fountain was the first [time where] I am openly, admittedly talking politics," Crofts says. "I was a little scared, and some of my fans were a little uncomfortable ... Some friends were like, 'Oh, you're shooting yourself in the foot.' And I was like, 'I don't give a fuck.'"

Political themes have remained prevalent in Die Shiny's newest EP, *Glory*, which includes "The Fountain." The EP touches on themes of wealth inequality, corporate greed and freedom.

Glory was self-produced by Crofts and Bryant, something the band is very passionate about, as it has, according to the Die Shiny website, "no interest in record labels."

"I think the music industry is so full of bullshit on every level," Crofts says. "Record labels, yes, they have made some people mega famous, but for every mega famous person, the label has another 1,000 artists that ... they don't care because they didn't show the potential to make money."

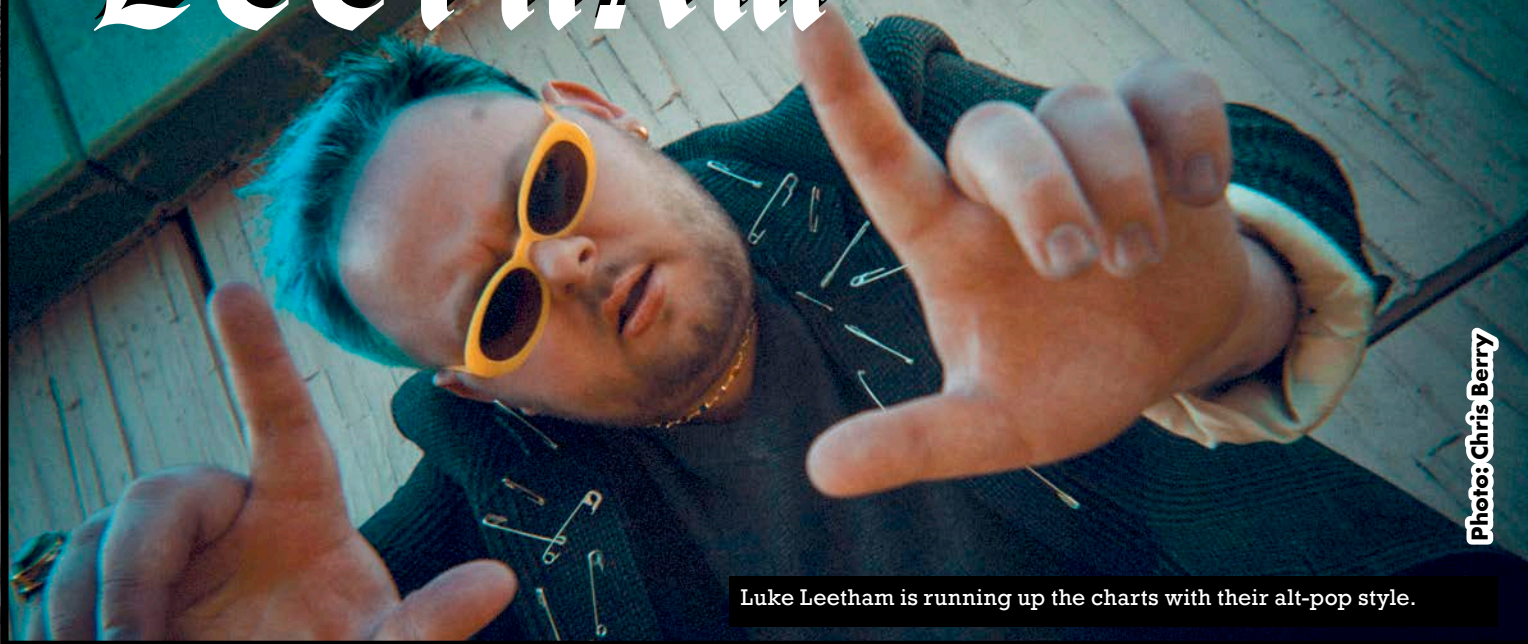
Crofts wants to keep record label "hands" out of her art, saying she is "smart" and "tenacious" enough to run the business side of the band. "I'm learning digital marketing," they say. "It's not fun, but it's worth it ... I believe in the music enough, and this dream is just intense enough that I need to figure out how to make it work."

Die Shiny's music is also heavily influenced by queerness, as several band members are a part of the LGBTQ+ community. "I actually have been making music longer than I have understood my own queer identity," Crofts says. "I feel like the music has absolutely evolved."

Crofts credits a huge part of that evolution to Salt Lake City's queer community. "I'm so in love with our community [of] cute little queers and introverts and neurodivergent people," they say. "I'm trying so hard from this point forward to make everything I do a safe space for them."

LEETHAM

LOCALIZED



Luke Leetham is running up the charts with their alt-pop style.

"Eclectic ... I have party songs, I have sad songs, I have rager songs." Listening to local electro-pop artist Leetham's discography, you'll hear a mishmash of poppy hooks, impassioned lyrics and funky, brain-melting synth. Think **Charli XCX** or **Cobra** meets **Kevin Atwater**, and you'll get Leetham's self-described "eclectic sound."

Luke Leetham, who uses they/he pronouns and is known professionally as Leetham, has been making music in some way or another since he was eight years old. "I grew up Mormon, so I had all the Mormon music shoved into my life," Leetham says. "I'm not Mormon anymore, but I will say they got one thing right, and it's the musical education side of things."

Growing up, Leetham says he did piano lessons, musical theater and choir. He started writing songs at 14, putting together his first EP by the time he was 15 or 16. While that EP was only heard by Leetham's family and friends and was never publicly released, it did offer a peek into their "eclectic" future as an electro-pop artist. "There was a piano ballad song, and then an EDM song," Leetham says. "I distinctly remember writing this one song called 'Fashion' ... it had this very distinct **Madonna**-ish sample ... and the lyrics are so corny."

Including **Madonna**, Leetham credits several artists as inspirations. Among

them, they point to **Lady Gaga**, **Black Eyed Peas** and **Zep** as musicians who influence their sound. "I would just study the compositions, like how they were made and the sounds that they used," Leetham says. "I became obsessed with synthesizers and drum machines — the more synthetic side of music, and less piano, acoustic guitar, stuff like that."

However, Leetham was also "really obsessed" with **Red Hot Chili Peppers** as a teenager, which introduced rock elements into their music. "Now you can see where you get the rock and you get the 808, EDM stuff and it kind of meshes together," he says.

Leetham describes himself as going through a "rebrand" with his upcoming EP, *Kink*. In his words, *Kink* is about "sexual and identity liberation within the queer community." Two songs, "blackBOOTS" featuring **Grant Brett** and "Hate Me" featuring **Indigo Heaven**, have been released from the four-track record, which is set to come out on June 5, a deliberate move on Leetham's part.

"The whole record is celebrating my identity and the identity of the queer community," he says. Leetham's queerness influences their art in "every aspect," inspiring their lyrics and aesthetic as an artist. For *Kink*, Leetham drew inspiration from facets of queer subcultures,

such as leather bars, and is pictured "walking the pups" on the single cover for "blackBOOTS."

Through their music, they work to bring people together, saying they know what it's like to be without community. "I remember being so alone at a time when I needed community, and I think that's important to create a space, especially in music. It really bugs me when there's music and no community around it," Leetham says. "People that become fans are actively searching for other fans of the same artist ... I'm not looking for super stardom, I'm looking to create a community, a safe space for queer people and allies alike to just come together and celebrate themselves and to be honest with themselves."

Leetham curates his concerts to be a place of togetherness, by playing their high-energy songs and getting people to move their bodies. "A Leetham concert is always hype," he says. "There's lots of jumping. Sometimes there's moshing, which is crazy because it's pop music."

Ultimately, Leetham's goal is to center joy, especially queer joy. "I think queer joy is so important, where there's so many atrocities happening in the country and the world that we can't ignore ... we deserve moments of happiness, and I want more queer happiness," they say.

LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED



WHERE LITTLE DINOSAURS ROAM

VISIT OUR STORE
163 S 500 W
BOUNTIFUL, UT 84010
385-777-9119

REPTILES, ENCLOSURES & SUPPLIES



SLUG SOUNDWAVES

SLUG MAGAZINE'S OFFICIAL PODCAST

Local stories from local musicians

MUSIC · ARTS · LIFESTYLE · EVENTS

@SLUGMAG

SPACE FOR CREATORS

- Nail Technicians
- Photography studio
- Medical Aesthetics
- Personal Office Use
- Tattoo & PMU Artists
- Hair Stylists & Barbers
- Mental Health Therapists
- Massage & Wellness Providers
- Any private, appointment-based businesses
- Estheticians & Lash/Brow Artists



CONTACT US



Scan me!



Book a tour!

(435)292-5802



LOCATIONS

- | | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Bountiful | Pleasant Grove |
| Layton | Salt Lake |
| Lehi | Sandy |
| Milcreek | SouthTowne |
| Murray | Spanish Fork |
| Ogden | St. George |
| Orem | West Valley |

A HAPPILY GAY ROMP TO DOWNTOWN SLC'S GAY BARS

By Alton Barnhart • altonboy2009@gmail.com

Illustration: Kristen Lake



From Club Try-Angles to the popular Why Kiki, it's up to Associate Editor Alton Barnhart to test out SLC's gay bars.

A night out on the town isn't the mile high it used to be. Every diamond dive bar in the rough has become saturated with wall-to-wall pubescents, while every artsy-fartsy gin joint runs a national debt-sized tab for the most pampered of pants. For someone like me, who is staring down the barrel of 30, I refuse to admit a Saturday night bar crawl is a yesteryear activity for this old sport. What am I going to do? Shuck some corn whiskey and numb my neurons with DankPods reruns? No... not again... Maybe it's time to branch out from regular watering holes and stray to somewhere a little more colorful. So I ventured back out into SLC nightlife to seek out a spot where you come as you are, where self-acceptance and community are a fruity-kissed cocktail away. Off we go to find the booziest staples of downtown's LGBTQ+ bar scene!

Our first stop takes us to the middle ground of Harvey Milk Blvd., where Club Try-Angles spins an airbrushed disco ball for anyone to join in on the party. Waltzing in on its checkerboard flooring opens a whole bar of possibilities. The first luxury came with their self-proclaimed "coldest, cheapest and biggest drinks in town," which I fully believe! It's not every day you'll pay less than a Hamilton note for a mixed drink, and boy, does it come with that necessary punch!

The Cyber Slut especially added that little zing for island life in a landlocked state. A wander around the bar will show some of the late-night entertainment: stadium-lit dart boards, a one-body karaoke stage, a few framed pictures of furry artwork and even... is that a Pokemon card dispenser?

Just down the road in a relatively blackened box of a building, Milk+ shags the night club aesthetic into a whole new atmosphere. The last time I was here, I was invited by some love interest to dirty dance and possibly cause some jealousy leverage against one of her side men. It was safe to say my impression on the place was not positive. However, after finally returning and getting through a lengthy TSA checkpoint at the entrance, the club holds up. The spacious dancefloor and catwalk stage for drag shows make it a high-profile spot. Of course, the DJ sets on the back patio still get as cramped as usual, but it's a worthwhile experience to surge those vodka Redbulls and poppers through your veins. Besides, what club have you been to where you weren't shoulder-to-shoulder with all the patrons? The Mickey Mouse Club?

Now, let's take a sketchy rideshare or one of those bastardized Lime scooters to the heart of downtown, where a shaded

Pepto Bismol palace called Why Kiki stands proud with its tiki motif. When walking in, Why Kiki gives off all the clear signs that you're in a gay bar: platform stage for resident drag shows, mounted televisions playing Love Island, set pieces stolen from The Birdcage, chicken and penis-shaped waffles and let's not forget the mechanical dick right at the ID check counter just waiting for another ride. Through all the "Oohs" and "Awes" that make Why Kiki unique, the main attraction is silent disco, taking place in the black-lit, laser tag basement — all you need is a pair of headphones. But be warned: the group laughter and squeaks from tennis shoes have been muffled by the obnoxious chuckles of an invasive species of frat bros.

Last but not least is Utah's culturally significant huddle, The SunTrapp. This little brick building has a long-standing history, being the oldest gay bar in Salt Lake City, with its cozy dive couture and large back patio. Where some nights you might catch the tail end of whatever concert was cranked out of The Complex, you can also trust this bar to deliver an easy-going community for a quick brew and a good time with the people you love. Here's a cheers to you, you fabulous facilities!

Local Flavor since '72

DESERT EDGE BREWERY

in Trolley Square

- Handmade Food and Beer
- Beer Store
- Sunday Brunch

unf*ck your flora

Soap-free skincare designed to let your nature thrive

Get your first Oil-Cleansing Starter Kit FREE With code: SLUG

CRUDE

Nats Planties

Book your plant consultation today!

Scan to Contact

Mention SLUG ad and get \$30 off when you book a consultation

*Servicing Salt Lake, Utah, and Davis Counties

12 Golden Orb Weaver Class

Friday, June 12 7pm-8pm Church & State

\$60

QR code: @M_M_TAXIDERMY

WASATCH ROLLER DERBY PRESENTS

THE BIG GAY BOU?

GET TIX HERE!

QR code

JUNE 27 @ 6:00PM

1415 S 700 W #17 SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84104

9th&9th

coffee garden

salt lake city

801-355-3425 coffeegardenslc.com 878 East 900 South



After their first time cooking them, it was immediately clear to Cami & Carly that their smashburgers had legs.

In October 2024, Cami Aglaure and Carly Porter had been operating a small catering outfit specializing in raclette — a cheese traditionally melted and scraped over boiled potatoes, pickles and cured meat. When approached by a friend to cater their gallery opening as a one-off favor, they initially agreed, thinking they would bring their hot, melty cheese for the occasion. As fate would have it, an unseasonably warm weather forecast and a little hesitation in the cheese department had Aglaure and Porter electing to make burgers for the event instead, and Girls Who Smash (GWS) was born. To think, a slight deviation in fall temps and we would have Girls Who Scrape (Girls Who Spread?).

Smashburgers are super thin burger patties smashed down with a spatula directly onto the griddle surface as they cook, characterized by their well-done, caramelized texture and lacy edges, not unlike the crispy margins of a fried egg. That first instance cooking burgers at the gallery opening created such an undeniable buzz that GWS was christened that very same night. It was immediately clear their smashburgers had legs. The GWS gals only fired up the griddle for about five more pop-up events before their operation upgraded to wheels. In March 2025, they outfitted a food truck trailer and committed fully to the venture (no, it wasn't a U-Haul). One of the gals reveals, "We overheard one person say, 'Yeah, but do they have fries?' before walking away. That's when we knew we needed a proper food truck to increase capacity."

The menu now includes (loaded) fries and two signature menu items: the Hot Mess — the OG version of the smash burger they've made since day one — and the Spice Girl, a once-limited special, featuring chipotle mayo and jalapeños now indelibly marked in valentine-card-pink font. I choose to accept their two-item menu as an act of great mercy, a reprieve from a world of endless options and decision fatigue. Porter is frank, citing the limitations and difficulties of maintaining inventory when operating out of a truck and shared commissary kitchen.

They are likewise constrained by the speed at which they can keep the girlies fed. With lines quickly growing 20-100 deep, you can expect a wait commensurate with the quality they maintain — it's not fast food. And yet there is also grace to be found in waiting. A sign hilariously titled "Rushing Ruins Romance" encourages impatient customers to get to know one another, call their moms, pet a cute dog, etc. "Everybody in line has a phone. You can literally scroll through TikTok," Aglaure deadpans.

This queer-owned burger stand is operating firmly in a traditionally male-dominated space. The only openly gay burger flipper I can think of in mainstream media is SpongeBob. "We always knew the queer community would support us, but there's been almost no hate at all. You'll see burger-loving, straight, cis Utahns in line right next to drag queens," Porter says with pride.

Since demand never seemed an issue from day one, GWS has been able to focus on showing up where they want to see food trucks, rather than where you might expect to find one. They pop up in alleys, they pop up in neighborhoods and they pop other businesses up with them when they collaborate. One of the co-founders says, "We always partner with other local businesses for our specials and want to use our following to lend visibility to other women and LGBTQ+ owned businesses in the area."

As they continue to grow, the GWS gals are dreaming up ways to make their pop-ups into community events — think clothes mending, movie nights and clothing swaps. This June, you can expect to find GWS expanding to Provo and Ogden and reliably all summer trading weeks between the Downtown Farmers Market and Wheeler Farm — just keep an eye on @girlswosmashslc for their schedule.



By Dylan Bueche • @kimjongdyl
Photos by Nicole Marriner



This queer-owned, burger stand is operating firmly in a traditionally male-dominated space.

5TH ANNUAL SUMMER SHOWDOWN

MAY 29 & 30:	The Big Lebowski (1998) Bubba Ho-Tep (2002)
JUNE 5 & 6:	The Handmaiden (2016) Gone Girl (2014)
JUNE 12 & 13:	Blade Runner 2049 (2017) V for Vendetta (2005)
bleak week: cinema of despair // AC AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE	
JUNE 19 & 20:	Welcome to the Dollhouse (1995) Gummo (1997)
JUNE 26 & 27:	Hedwig and the Angry Inch (2001) Velvet Goldmine (1998)
JULY 3 & 4:	Phenomena (1985) The Last Unicorn (1982)
JULY 10 & 11:	Pee Wee's Big Adventure (1985) The Mask (1994)
JULY 17 & 18:	Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992) The Shape of Water (2017)
JULY 24 & 25:	Tank Girl (1995) Hackers (1995)
JULY 31 & Aug 1:	JoJo Rabbit (2019) Isle of Dogs (2018)
AUG 7 & 8:	Naked Lunch (1991) Fear and Loathing In Las Vegas (1998)
AUG 14 & 15:	Stand By Me (1986) Pretty in Pink (1986)
AUG 21 & 22:	13 Assassins (2010) Coffy (1973)
AUG 28 & 29:	Being John Malkovich (1999) Se7en (1995)
SEPT 4 & 5:	SLC Punk (1998) 35mm Orgazmo (1997)

Dates and movie titles may change, see website for details.

SLFStix.org

111 E Broadway (300 S)
Salt Lake City, UT

GET TICKETS

SLFS

salt lake film society

More than a Raft Trip

It's a River Journey
One-Day Adventures & Multi-Day River Expeditions

See Moab from the best seat in the Canyon. From exciting one-day whitewater trips to unforgettable multi-day river journeys, SGRE offers authentic rafting experiences led by expert guides who know these rivers inside and out. Spend a day riding the rapids through towering red rock canyons—or slow down and truly unplug on a multi-day expedition, complete with riverside camping, delicious, fresh meals, and nights under the stars. If you want more than just another activity, this is the Moab adventure you'll remember.

800-332-2439
www.griffithexp.com

OGDEN PRIDE FESTIVAL DATES ARE MOVING!

CELEBRATE WITH US
OCTOBER 3RD & 4TH, 2026

**RESIST,
PERSIST,
EXIST...**

**FREE ENTRY
ALL WELCOME
FAMILY FRIENDLY**

**APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR:
VENDORS,
ENTERTAINMENT,
& VOLUNTEERS**

SCAN QR FOR MORE INFO

BECOME A SPONSOR

Info@ogdenpride.org

ogdenpride.org

@YourOgdenPride



Return to the Origin Story

June 2026

By Nichole Huntsman • nicholehuntsman@gmail.com

We retrace our steps back to the beginning. Was it this same space and time? So many questions and directives are sent to the sky.

ARIES: —♈

For Your Consideration
 Is this a once-in-a-lifetime offer? Or a one-sided proposition? There will be a guaranteed adjustment in the order of things, but growth comes from those who challenge us. Lose yourself and get to work.

TAURUS: —♉

Auspicious Alignment
 You're making the right moves. A friend of a friend may have the solution to your problem. While you find yourself surrounded by opinions, remember your core mission. This change is inevitable, and it isn't a decision to be made lightly. Protecting your vision is necessary for the next stage.

GEMINI: —♊

Worthy Investment
 In a crowded world full of options, it's important to prioritize your attention. This is a month to assist, aid and lift the people closest to you. If there's tension, fix it. Invest in others and let the inconsequential fall away. Loving is the art most worthy of your time.

CANCER: —♋

To Thine Own Self Be True
 You can sense their concern. They hunger for more from you. But you've learned that losing yourself leaves nothing to offer. Remember the wisdom of the Giving Tree. To give is good, but not to the point of self-sacrifice. Find out what is most valuable and double down on your investment in that area.

LEO: —♌

Changes and Rearrangements
 There is no enmity unless you agree to the deal. You can choose to listen, forgive and understand. Resisting change with a white-knuckle grip won't make the ride smoother. Recognize the times when you've needed forgiveness and address legitimate concerns.

VIRGO: —♍

As an Amendment
 Words create our world. Have you thought about your inner dialogue? Are you clinging to an old story about perfectionism or worthiness? Fill your mind with the sunlight of good ideas. Let the positivity flow. Bring some beauty into your private world, maybe a bundle of those wildflowers from your walk today.

LIBRA: —♎

Facts and Fictions
 The world is loud. Signals bound by noise, all planned and in advance. The day has arrived to integrate past experiences into the present. You'll hear voices of reason and complaint, a rush of incoming information. You have your own qualified opinion. Narrate your own plot.

SCORPIO: —♏

Announcing Intentions
 You've been standing at the altar of promise for too long. Have you been waiting for a sign to appear? A painless solution? It's time to exit situations that are no longer beneficial. In this case, you must be bold about your desires. The angels will be there to assist.

SAGITTARIUS: —♐

Accidentally Arrived
 I see you enter the party carrying a gift. I see your uncertainty about its reception. A package of the unspoken, unbelievable and unreal. Not a gift from an imposter but from an honest and raw human. Let it be given and received without strings. Good things will come from this.

CAPRICORN: —♑

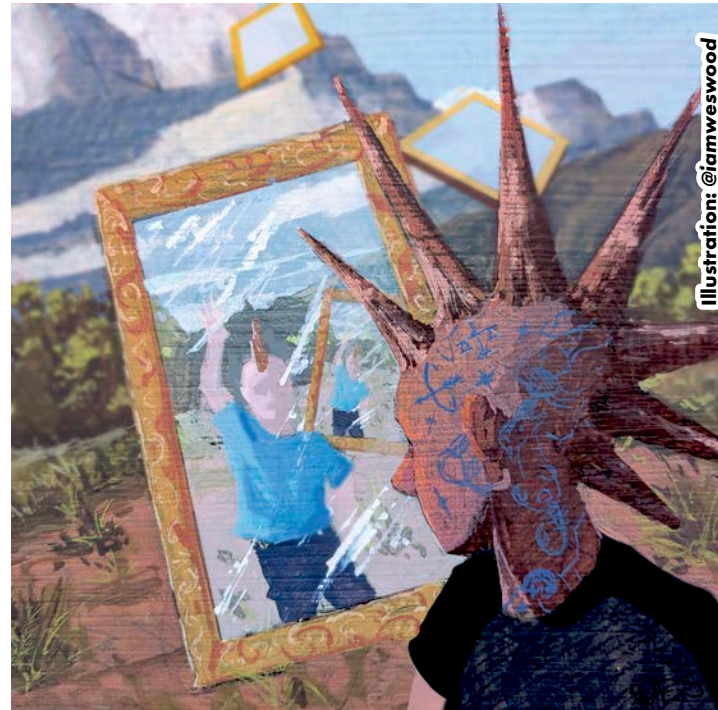
Higher Calling
 You're at a crossroads. If unhappy, pay attention. Dissatisfaction is spiritual evidence of misalignment. If it fits, it sits, but you can do more. Reach for the challenge that calls on your patience, determination and commitment to integrity. The team is strong but needs an inspired leader.

AQUARIUS: —♒

Unintentional Influence
 Through others, you have the opportunity to meet yourself and recognize audacious courage or a stubborn will to fight. Reject thoughts of separation. Move forward, toward the beauty, with all projections pulled back to the self. Extend the safe embrace of charity during times of misunderstanding.

PISCES: —♓

Feeding the Birds
 What do you believe others truly need? There are so many hands to hold and quiet conversations to have. While struggling with a broken heart, serving others is the cure for both souls. Who is anxiously petitioning you? Keep your focus on faith, hope and charity. Find out how you can best lighten their burden.



BURGER FUSION

HAND-PRESSED AMERICAN WAGYU AND CHUCK BLENDED PATTIES

SLC'S NEWEST GOURMET BURGER RESTAURANT

ALL APPETIZERS FRIED IN BEEF TALLOW

TROLLEY SQUARE 602 E. 500 S. C103B SALT LAKE CITY, UT

Ogden Nature Center

SONG

BIRD SUMMER NIGHTS

JUNE 25 VIV & RILEY

AUGUST 01 HANDMADE MOMENTS

QR code

r.a.m.p. WEBER COUNTY Best Western PLUS

STATEWIDE ANNUAL 2026 MIXED MEDIA WORKS ON PAPER AND INSTALLATION

CALL FOR ARTISTS

APPLY BY JULY 9, 2026

Scan to apply or visit artsandmuseums.utah.gov/statewide-annual

Utah Division of Arts & Museums

UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART AT LAKEMOUNT

QR code

BOOKS AFTER DARK

Adult Book Fair Sheds Light on Censorship

By Jennifer Perry | jennifersperry18@gmail.com

Last year, *Weller Book Works*, a pillar amongst Utah independent booksellers, hosted its inaugural *Books After Dark* adult book fair. The 21+ event brought the community together for a candid discussion about the destructive implications of censorship, not just for students, but for everyone, while providing refreshments and entertainment. On June 14 from 6 to 9 p.m., the book fair returns for Pride Month with more panelists, advocacy groups, vendors and performers joining the fight against censorship.

Since 2021, over 20,000 books have been banned in school districts across the nation. As of April 2026, 34 books have been removed from Utah schools under Utah's H.B. 29 ("Sensitive Material Review Amendments"), signed into law by Governor Spencer Cox in early 2024. Titles banned in Utah include *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Looking for Alaska* and *Thirteen Reasons Why*.

For Weller employees **Claire Corwin** (lead book buyer) and **Hillary Thacker** (bookseller and event coordinator), who have dedicated their careers to literacy and self-expression, this level of censorship hits especially hard.

"We're here on the front lines watching kids have books taken out of their hands and ideas stolen from them," Corwin says. "We keep thinking: 'What can we do? How can we raise awareness so that people understand just what's at stake? How can we fight the power?'"

The book fair began last summer when another group approached Weller about

co-hosting the event. While promoting banned books was integral, the team knew they needed to go further; that meant going political.

"[The group] ended up pulling out because they had the idea that it would be easy and fun, but we wanted the event to be political as well," Thacker says. "It's not just an adult book fair after dark. Attendees are voters who can go to their representatives and actually inspire change. The whole point of rebelling against this level of censorship is that it's rebelling against withholding tools and resources that give people equity and agency at any age."

"They got really scared. They were like, 'You want to do a drag story time? I'm sorry, what?' And so that's when we were like, 'Okay, we're going to take this on ourselves and go harder,'" Corwin adds.

Last October, they brought together various groups and individuals in support of literacy and the fight against book bans. Participants included: Brain Food Books, Let Utah Read, *Torrey House Press*, local



Photo: Lolise Eshete

For Weller employees Hillary Thacker and Claire Corwin who have dedicated their career to literacy and self-expression, this level of censorship hits especially hard.

drag performer and educator **Madazon Can-Can** and several queer vendors selling handmade wares.

This year, the ACLU, UAF Legacy Health (formerly Utah Aids Foundation), Utah Kink Education Alliance and Out of the Shadows Theater Company will also join as supporters and panelists.

Going forward, *Weller Book Works* plans to host the fair every six months, once in the fall around Banned Books Week (Oct. 4-10), and once during Pride Month, pairing political advocacy with discussions about gender identity and sexuality.

"We want the event to be fun, which is great because everybody comes with a party atmosphere," Corwin says. "We can turn this really intense subject into something where people join together. We want to make a community out of the bookstore, a place where people can come and know that what they say is safe. And I think an important part about being a safe place is showing up and showing out."

Thacker sees *Weller's* size and reputation as an advantage in that mission. "We're really the bridge for people to get better access. They start out here exploring ideas, and then they're able to branch out more."

Join the fight against censorship and get your tickets for *Books After Dark*. To see the full list of books banned in Utah schools, check out the *Salt Lake Tribune*. To learn more about book bans across the country, visit the American Library Association website.



50th Utah arts festival
June 18-21, 2026

4 DAYS * 4 STAGES
NIGHTLY HEADLINERS
MUSIC DANCE GOOD VIBES
ARTIST MARKETPLACE
KIDS ART YARD | FILM FEST
LIVE DEMOS + WORKSHOPS
COMMUNITY | CREATIVITY

TIX & LINEUP → UAF.ORG

TAKASHI
18 W MARKET ST. • 801.519.9595
TAKASHISUSHI.COM
LUNCH • DINNER • COCKTAILS

Raw. Fierce. Proud.

POST OFFICE PLACE
16 W MARKET ST. • 385.202.7500
POPSLC.COM
FOOD • JAPANESE WHISKY • COCKTAILS

DAILY CALENDAR

Show your pride everywhere! Scan the QR code for more events and to add your own to our daily calendar!



Friday, Jun 5

John Paycheck Jr. & Kate Leduce
- Aces High Saloon

Saturday, Jun 6

The Toadies w/ Local H
- The Complex
Punk Rock Pride
- Aces High Saloon
The Last Whale Singer
- Utah Film Center
D-Day Comedy Show
- Wolfdog Brewery
Utah Pride Festival
- Library Square

Sunday, Jun 7

Aaron Wolf - Soundwell

Monday, Jun 8

Em Beihold - Soundwell
Royal & the Serpent
- Metro Music Hall
Pet Mosquito Glitter Bombs & Mr. Happy
- Aces High Saloon
The Black Keys
- Ogden Amphitheater

Tuesday, Jun 9

Craft Lake City mural workshop
- Midvale City Hall
Back to the Future the Musical - Eccles Theater
WORM
- Metro Music Hall
Head Automatica
- Urban Lounge

Wednesday, Jun 10

Mowth
- The Urban Lounge
Stepmom - The DLC
Vana Liya - Soundwell
Phantom A.D.
- Aces High Saloon

Thursday, Jun 11

Glory Trip
- Metro Music Hall
ICE OUT Benefit Show
- Quarters DLC
Terrapin Flyer
- The State Room

Racing Mount Pleasant
- Kilby Court

Friday, Jun 12

GÄLÖ - Sky Rooftop

Saturday, Jun 13

Youth Entrepreneur Program practice market - Pioneer Park
Daniel Young & The Rambling Roses
- The State Room
Branden Estrada
- Sky Rooftop
Rough Nest
- West Main Studio

Sunday, Jun 14

Citizen Soldier
- The Complex
The Acid Blues Band
- Kilby Court
DJ Jouné - Sky Rooftop
Scott H. Biram & The Hooten Hollers
- Aces High Saloon

Monday, Jun 15

Tigers Jaw
- Metro Music Hall
Mudshark - Kilby Court
Earl Sweatshirt & Mike
- The Complex

Wednesday, Jun 17

Allo Monroe
- Kilby Court

Thursday, Jun 18

SLUG Localized Die Shin, Leetham, Liam Lars - Kilby Court

Lady Denim / Over Under - The Urban Lounge
Allbrook Station
- Metro Music Hall
Utah Arts Festival
- Library Square

Friday, Jun 19

DoKnow - The Depot
The Dead South
- Sandy Amphitheater
Jenny Don't & The Spurs Cosmic Kitten & Feral!Cat?Red!
- Aces High Saloon

Saturday, Jun 20

Watchhouse
- Sandy Amphitheater
RX BANDITS
- Metro Music Hall
Blockfest
- The Urban Lounge
Carver Louis
- Leatherheads Sports Bar
Watchhouse

- Check Venue
Blessed1 - Sky Rooftop
POGO Fest
- Various locations in Downtown SLC

Sunday, Jun 21

Nox Sinister, Gurschach, Contraferrous & Wicked Temple - Aces High Saloon

Monday, Jun 22

The Liberal Media
- Kilby Court

Tuesday, Jun 23

Himalayas - Kilby Court
Ziggy Marley
- Red Butte Garden

Wednesday, Jun 24

Monolord
- The Urban Lounge
Sunny Day Soap Opera
- Kilby Court

Thursday, Jun 25

Elderbrook
- Ogden Amphitheater
The Bombshell Flowers
- Kilby Court
Thornfield
- Metro Music Hall
The Swinging Lights
- The Urban Lounge

Friday, Jun 26

Derek Hough
- Eccles Theater
BLADE RAVE
- Metro Music Hall
TOBEHONEST
- Soundwell

Saturday, Jun 27

Salt Lake Air Guitar 2026 - Quarters DLC
Salt City Looped
- The State Room
Unfinished & Imperfect Art Show
- 1701 E Tree View Dr.
Jessica Baio
- The Complex

Sunday, Jun 28

Graveripper, Alghoul & When Darkness Falls
- Aces High Saloon

Wednesday, Jul 1

WOLFMOTHER
- The Union
Solya - Kilby Court

Thursday, Jul 2

BUNT.
- Ogden Amphitheater
Girl From The Interstate - Kilby Court
Monster Jam World Finals
- Rice-Eccles Stadium

Friday, Jul 3

WILLÖH
- The Urban Lounge
Aaron Rowe
- Kilby Court

Pick up the new issue of **SLUG**

- Anyplace Cool

Submit Your Event to SLUG's Daily Calendar
- SLUGMag.com



Art Garten

The Art Garten blooms on Main Street every Thursday and Friday from 5:00-8:00, all summer long.

**ART
FOOD
DRINKS
COMMUNITY**

FREE. ALL AGES.
Come wander with us.
**152 S. MAIN STREET,
DOWNTOWN SLC**



THE BELOVED BARBERING COMPANY



Utah-based band Mowth - live at The Urban Lounge on June 10

NOW HIRING
Distribution
Drivers



Interested? Head to
SLUGMag.com/opportunities to apply.

580 E 9400 S
Suite 1
Sandy, UT 84070

RESTORATIVE
HEALTH

Healthcare That Welcomes EVERYONE

Our Services

- Ketamine Treatments
- Medical Cannabis
- Weight Loss
- Hormone Therapy
- Primary Care & More!

Learn More

(385) 449-0565
www.restheal.org

HOLD ON TO EACH OTHER

STUNNING BRACELETS FROM \$250 TO \$2500

PAYNE ANTHONY
CREATIVE JEWELERS

TROLLEY SQUARE | 801-328-0944

LANDMARK AFTER DARK

Dinner. Drinks. Good Company.

CHIPS & SALSA ON US with any Entrée after 7pm
Mention this ad. Dine-In Only

LANDMARK Grill

www.LandmarkGrillUtah.com
282 W 7200 S, Midvale UT

BONEVILLE SEABASE, UTAH SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 GET TICKETS: SALTYTOESFESTIVAL.COM

SLINGSHOT PRODUCTIONS presents SALTY TOES

Felly THE NUDE PARTY
GRANDMASTER • WYATT PIKE

MOON OWL'S MAGES • THE PLASTIC CHERRIES • JEWEL HOUSE • BRANSON ANDERSON
CYTRUS • FAMILIAR FACES • CAM GALLAGHER & THE TASTY SOUL • LAPDOG
KIRK DATH & THE BRUISERS • SUPERBUBBLE • THE PAINTED ROSES
EASTERN DREAMERS • THE BLUEBYRDES • LEE RAFUGEE
DRAGONS WITH MATCHES • WILL SANGSTER & THE FINE CHAPS • MODERN SPEED
DINO TROUPE • CHASIN' THE SKY • GOAT MODE

Slingshot CITY WEEKLY SLUG MAG

SLUG MAGAZINE

SALES TEAM NOW HIRING!

We're looking for professional, outgoing and reliable individuals who love to meet new people.

This is an advertisement sales position.

VISIT SLUGMAG.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION

Why is Utah's state bird the California Gull?

Discover this and more at the

Museum of Utah Grand Opening

June 27, 2026 | Utah Capitol Complex
FREE to the public

Museum of Utah
museumofutah.com

IRIS

PIERCING STUDIO
— JEWELRY —



@IRIS_PIERCING_STUDIOS

2431 S HIGHLAND DR SLC, UT 84106

DISCOVER THE ANCIENT WISDOM
HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

SEALD EXCEPT TO THE
OPEN MIND

SUMMUM

Summum Bonum Amen Ra

SUMMUM.US/BOOK/?SLUG

SLUG MAGAZINE
NOW HIRING!



Inquire about positions at
SLUGMAG.COM/OPPORTUNITIES

DC INTERNATIONAL SLC PUB Cafe Green Room Juniors HARBOUR RECORDS

PogoFest

DOWNTOWN SLC UT

JUNE 20TH

PSYMON SPINE 26FIX

Tickets & more info!

BACKHAND BOYFRIEND SUSHI TOWN NADEZHDA

MARSHALL VAN LEUVEN FIGG BONE THROWERS
JILL WHIT BLEU GRAVE GOAT MODE
RUNESTOMPER THE GONTIKS THE SQUIRMS
PINKTOOTH BRUTALUST HURTADO EYES BUGGY
THE SOAKERS THE LIP GLORY TRIP

SPONSORED BY:

SCHOOL OF ROCK BLOCHS SISTER SLUG MAG FRIENDS of Great Salt Lake HYPHA

323 WEST HOPE AVENUE, SLC, UT 84115

FEATURING

MYKEL | @MYKEL.ROBIN
B&G FINE LINE REALISM

MILO | @MILO.ST
STYLIZED ILLUSTRATIVE

BRYTON | @BRYTONFISHERTATTOOS
B&G/COLOR REALISM

SAGE | @SAGE.IN.A.CAGE
B&G ILLUSTRATIVE

**WOMAN-OWNED TATTOO
SHOP WHERE INCLUSIVITY
AND CREATIVITY COMES
FIRST**

S&S EVENTS

BOUNCE 2026

Low Tickets Sold Out

6.1 Leanna Firestone | Soundwell 6.4 Josiah and the Bonneville | The Complex
 6.5 Yot Club | Soundwell 6.9 The Black Keys * Ogden Twilight 6.10 Thievery Corporation
 | The Complex 6.13 Haute & Freddy 6.17 Soundwell 6.17 bôa | Soundwell 6.21 Searows
 The Complex 6.22 Holly Humberstone | The Complex 6.22 Gregory Alan Isakov *
 Ogden Twilight 6.25 Elderbrook | Ogden Twilight 6.26 The Crane Wives |
 The Complex 6.27 Camping in Alaska | Soundwell 6.27 Jessica Baio | The Complex

Kilby Court



6.1 Graham * | 6.3 Margo Cilker | 6.4 Lip Critic | 6.5 Avery Lynch | 6.6 By Storm | 6.7 '68 |
 6.8 Keenan Trevon | 6.10 Palmyra | 6.11 Racing Mount Pleasant * | 6.12 Plum Vision | 6.13
 BONNEVILLE | 6.15 Mudshark | 6.16 Little Image | 6.17 Allo Monroe | 6.18 SLUG LOCALIZED:
 Die Shiny, Leetham, Liam Lars | 6.19 Elijah Scott | 6.21 Flooding | 6.22 The Liberal Media |
 6.23 HIMALAYAS | 6.24 Sunny Day Soap Opera | 6.25 The Bombshell Flowers | 6.27 Kelsy
 Karter & The Heroines | 6.28 Novulent | 6.29 Eddie And The Getaway



Metro Music Hall

6.4 Rise Up Revival | 6.5 PRIDE: GINGER MINJ X DAWN | 6.6 PRIDE: CRYSTAL METHYD
 X MORGAN MCMICHAELS | 6.8 Royal & The Serpent | 6.9 Worm | 6.11 Glory Trip |
 6.12 CHATTERBOX | 6.13 The Emo Night Tour | 6.15 Tigers Jaw | 6.18 Allbrook Station |
 6.20 Rx Bandits | 6.25 Thornfield | 6.26 BLADE RAVE | 6.27 Daft Disko [french house & disco party]



Urban Lounge

6.3 Felix Indigo | 6.4 blood club | 6.5 ;DYKED! | 6.6 Emerson Woolf & the Wishbones |
 6.9 Head Automatica | 6.10 Mowth | 6.11 Chrissy Chlapecka | 6.12 dnbOS: Matrix & Fu-
 turebound | 6.13 Young & Dead | 6.17 Stygian Bough (Bell Witch + Aerial Ruin) |
 6.18 Lady Denim + Over Under | 6.20 Blockfest | 6.23 Sir Richard Bishop | 6.24 Monolord
 6.26 Now That's What I Call a Rave | 6.27 DECADES FEST | 6.29 Ak'chamel

BLUE GENE'S

MONDAY: Magic The Gathering @ 7pm | TUESDAY: Trivia @ 7pm | WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY: Karaoke @ 9pm
 NEW! Hot Dog Happy Hour: \$2 Dogs 5pm - 6pm every day!



cheers to **170** years

September 10-20, 2026

UTAH STATE FAIR

EST. 1856

UTAH STATE FAIR

11 DAYS OF FAIR FOOD, RIDES, EXHIBITS, ENTERTAINMENT, AND UNFORGETTABLE NIGHTS.

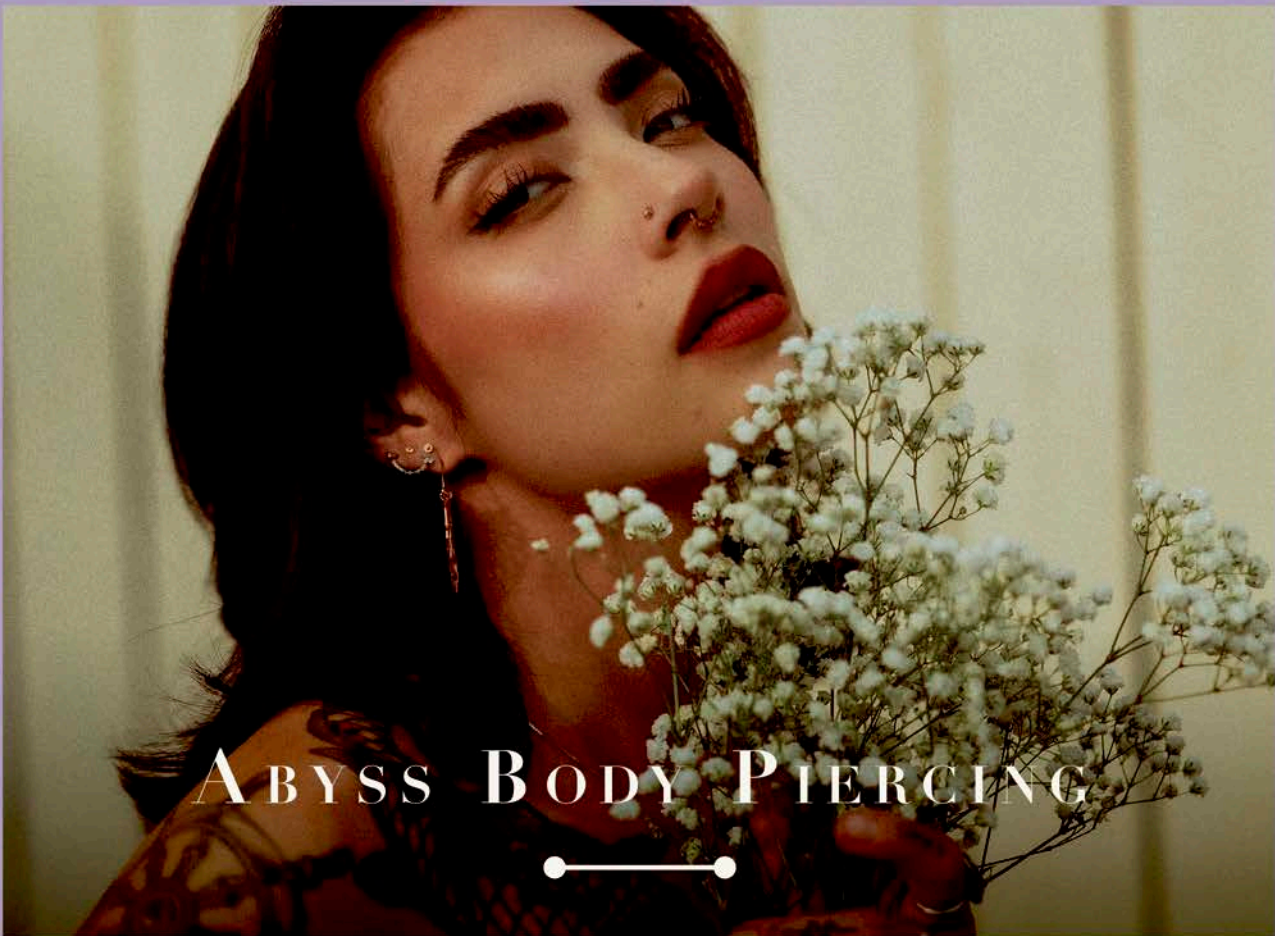
UNFORGETTABLE NIGHTS: LEGENDARY ARTISTS.

LYNYRD SKYNYRD
★ SEPT. 16 ★

DARIUS RUCKER
★ SEPT. 17 ★

MATCHBOX TWENTY
★ SEPT. 18 ★

BUY TICKETS: utahstatefair.com/tickets



ABYSS BODY PIERCING



ALL THINGS HEALING

- PIERCING • FINE JEWELRY •
- TOOTH GEMS • PERMANENT JEWELRY •
- MASSAGE • REIKI •
- CARD READINGS •

STUDIO LOCATION:
245 E BROADWAY
SALT LAKE CITY

CONTACT US:
801.810.9247
ABYSSPIERCING.COM