

# New Year's Revelations

Party with seven HIVer artists who'll rock your 2005

January 1, 2005 By Stephanie Fairington

---

**Who:** Brian Grillo

**Then:** Howled lead vocals in his LA punk band, *Extra Fancy*.

**Now:** Touring for his September 2004 solo album, *Stomping Back on Fire*. Go to [www.spitshinerecords.com](http://www.spitshinerecords.com) for a listen.

**Quote:** "'Sustiva' is my favorite song on the new album. I wrote it after the first night I had to take it. I felt like I was coming off a bad acid trip."

**Who:** Alexandra Billings

**Then:** Won rave reviews opposite Greg Louganis in a 1999 production of Larry Kramer's anti-Reagan farce *Just Say No*.

**Now:** Starring in *Diva Diaries*, a musical about drag queens, and will appear on *ER* and the made-for-TV version of *Romy and Michele*.

**Quote:** "On *ER*, everyone was so nice and down-to-earth, I almost forgot I was on an Emmy Award-winning TV show."

**Who:** Shawn Decker

**Then:** Started a witty Web diary ([www.mypetvirus.com](http://www.mypetvirus.com)), a *POZ* column and a synth-pop band, Synthetic Division.

**Now:** Plans to publish his HIV and hemophilia memoir, tentatively titled *My Pet Virus*, crammed with raucous anecdotes and tips on how to live positively.

**Quote:** "Writing my memoirs was about discovering how I went from someone who wouldn't speak about being HIV positive to someone who won't shut up."

**Who:** Sharon Sopher

**Then:** Wrote, produced and directed the Emmy Award-winning and Oscar-nominated PBS film *Witness to Apartheid*.

**Now:** A cross-country road trip in her HIV-info-packed bus, the Goddessmobile, to show her documentary *HIV Goddesses: Stories of Courage—Diary of a Filmmaker*.

**Quote:** "Going cross-country with my film, my message is going to be: Do you know where his wiener has been? If not, then you better be damn careful."

**Who:** Bill T. Jones

**Then:** Choreographed the controversial 1994 death-defying dance classic *Still/Here*.

**Now:** A June solo show at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and a new work titled *Blind Date*, also in June, at New York's Aaron Davis Hall.

**Quote:** "My [dance] influences come from varied places—HIV is just one more. It also casts a particular light on any success I have."

**Who:** Mark Weigle

**Then:** Queerified '80s classics on his album *Different and the Same*, like morphing "867-5309"'s Jenny into Jimmy.

**Now:** The February release of his double CD, *Soulsex*. One disc focuses on being gay; the other is all about s-e-x. Find out more at [www.markweigle.com](http://www.markweigle.com).

**Quote:** "The LA Gay Men's Chorus plans to perform my songs, and LOGO, the new gay channel, may feature my music in a film. It's going to be a banner year."

**Who:** Barton Benes

**Then:** Shredded money, splattered blood and sculpted cremains in earlier artworks, which appeared in his 2002 book, *Curiosa*.

**Now:** Upcoming gallery shows of multicolor found goodies, meticulously classified and encased, at the Lennon Weinberg Gallery in New York City and Europe.

**Quote:** "I think the reason I am using colors now is because I am happy. I have a boyfriend."