Obits

August 1, 1999

Lady Catiria, 39, a Puerto Rican drag performer with a famous collection of gowns, died of AIDS May 3. Highlights of Catiria's 20-year career included running a nightclub and appearing in the Hollywood drag epic *To Wong Foo....* In 1996, Catiria won the Miss Continental crown—"like Miss Universe for drag queens and transsexuals," she told *POZ* in her June 1999 profile, "Queen of Hearts." During the last performance of her 1996 reign, a wasting Catiria went public about her HIV status, both to silence gossips and to educate people about the virus. At a tribute performance in February, which Catiria was too ill to attend, fellow drag queens performed the Lady's star turns to a tear-streaked ovation.

John Horn Foster, 64, a retired optometrist, U.S. army captain and gay-rights activist, died of AIDS May 5. While stationed in Virginia in the 1960s, Foster married and had a daughter. He divorced in 1980 and moved to New Orleans, where he began a new life as a gay man, said his partner, Rich Magill. "John was so much fun," Magill said. "He was famous for his skimpy outfits, and people from all over the world would photograph him during Mardi Gras." Magill recalled one such photo in a local newspaper: "The caption read, 'Has Mardi Gras Gone Too Far?'" A member of ACT UP, Foster believed in the eventual triumph of science over AIDS. "He was literally waiting for a cure," said Magill.

Leslie Kaliades, 38, a photographer featured in Visual AIDS' new online art archive, died of AIDS April 28. After her 1992 diagnosis, Kaliades used photography not only to express but to treat her illness. "When Leslie had pneumonia," said her mother, Dorothy Kaliades, "she took pictures of breezes in trees, to represent breathing." Dorothy added that her daughter, a native New Yorker, "loved music, theater and everything Manhattan had to offer." Kaliades had several shows in SoHo galleries and appeared on the cover of *Body Positive*.

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