Take Honey West Home

February 1, 1997

MUSIC

Take Honey West Home

Honey West
(BuzzWerks)

The debut CD from HIV positive Chicago cabaret drag performer Honey West features 17 of West's most requested show-stoppers, including "Don't Cry Out Loud," "Sweet Dreams" and "My Funny Valentine." Performing with a jazz trio, a string section and a 26-piece band, the unbridled West makes it abundantly clear that, as one critic averred, she could "generate a fiesta in a phone booth." For information, contact BuzzWerks at 312.478.7588.

And Trouble Came: Musical Responses to AIDS

(Composers Recording Inc.)

This new CD from the fine folks who brought you Gay American Composers features three musical responses to AIDS. Chris DeBlasio's song cycle *All the Way Through the Evening* is performed by Michael Dash (for whom it was written) and features DeBlasio on piano in a recording made in 1990 -- before both artists were lost to AIDS. Bryan Rulon's *Self Requiem* is dedicated to the late visual artist Layman Foster. And Laura Kaminsky's *And Trouble Came: An African AIDS Diary*, written while the composer was living in Ghana, examines the AIDS crisis in the Third World. Call CRI (212.941.9673) for a list of other AIDS-related music offered on CD.

BOOKS

Feast for Life

Edited by Linda Provus Bartlett and Gretchen Sandin Jordan
(Collins Publishers/San Francisco)

Food for Life

Edited by Lawrence Schmiel
(Cleis Press)

Proceeds from both these cookbooks go to charities: The Pediatric AIDS Foundation and Design Industry Foundation Fighting AIDS/Chicago (*Feast for Life*) and regional organizations providing food to homebound people with AIDS (*Food for Life*). *Feast* features recipes from the likes of Diane Sawyer, David Letterman and General Norman Schwarzkopf, while *Food*'s contributors are nearly all gay (Tony Kushner, Martina Navratilova and Lawrence Mass among them). Of the two books, *Feast* is very high-concept (it's more of a coffee-table book than a cookbook), but *Food* packs a

higher entertainment punch. In fact, *Food* contains so many fascinating short essays and tidbits that it's perhaps the only cookbook you'll want to read when you're not hungry. (I devoured it -- no pun intended -- in a single sitting.) Just try to avoid belly-laughing while reading writer D. Travers Scott's recipe for Fab Frito Pie or writer Dorothy Allison's directions for Red Velvet Cake ("Do not add coconut or any tacky decorations," she warns. "This cake is tacky enough on its own"). You'll almost certainly emerge from the pages of either (or both) of these books with the urge to whip something up. So give in, pig out, then assuage your guilt by knowing it's all for a good cause.

Coming Home to America

By Torie Osborn
(St. Martin's Press)

A prominent activist for nearly 25 years, Torie Osborn uses colorful anecdotes, often-poignant case studies and sincere -- if at times didactic -- personal testimony to illustrate how each of us can propel our battle for equality and acceptance. The first half of the book deals squarely with issues most of us are faced with daily: Coming out to ourselves and to others, and working together on many levels toward local and national change. Two short final chapters tackle everything from the negativism of political in-fighting to combating radical religious zealots to what we can teach ourselves and the rest of the world. Osborn frequently calls attention to how AIDS has transformed the nature of the gay community's battle, ultimately cementing the once-brittle bond between lesbians and gay men. AIDS-affected friends and colleagues relate some of the book's most powerful tales of courage and determination. Osborn is an unabashed and unapologetic cheerleader -- it's difficult to resist her warmth and can-do optimism. *Coming Home to America* locates the activist in each of us and celebrates our every step forward.

-- Andrew Collins

Sanctuary

By Paul Monette
(Scribner)

The last work from the late writer Paul Monette, *Sanctuary* focuses on two star-crossed lovers who are both female...and members of different species, no less: One is a fox, the other a rabbit. *Sanctuary* is about Renarda (the fox) and Lapine (the rabbit), who are commanded by the Great Horned Owl to live in separate parts of the woods because their differences make their love forbidden. "Tonight I am only asking for your vigilance," the owl says. "That you all keep an ear cocked for any behavior that doesn't feel quite right. Anything that might expose a differentness, shall we say." Monette's sensitivity to precisely this "differentness" -- and to the oppression and isolation that usually accompany it -- is as vividly apparent here as it is in Monette's National Book Award-winning *Becoming a Man*. Illustrated by Vivienne Flesher, this touching tale is a great gift for children, but make sure to keep a copy for yourself.

THEATER

Fit to Be Tied

By Nicky Silver
(Playwrights Horizons, New York City)

Mixing farce and tragedy to great, if sometimes uneven, effect, Nicky Silver’s new play centers on Arloc (T. Scott Cunningham), an eccentric, manic and independently wealthy young man who has just learned his ex-boyfriend has died of pneumonia. In worried response, Arloc gets tested for HIV, but when the results arrive, he can’t bear to open the envelope. Instead, he has a nervous breakdown, which culminates in his kidnapping of Boyd (Matt Keeslar), a beautiful young man who performs as an angel in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular. When Arloc’s alcoholic mother, Nessa (the wonderful Jean Smart), discovers what has happened, she takes pity on her lonely, deranged son and offers Boyd one pearl a day from her $30,000 necklace if he will feign undying love for Arloc. The chaos and hilarity that ensue give the unopened envelope on the living-room table a particularly poignant, even tragic, glow.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Take-Honey-West-Home-1699-2996