

Houston Pride Band presents

CELEBRATE!

*Thirty years
of Music, Visibility & Pride*



Friday, June 27, 2008 • 7:30pm
Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts
Special Guest Emcee, **Nancy Ford**

It's all about tone.



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Congratulations on 30 fabulous years
for our community's beautiful ears.



Welcome from the President

Welcome to the final concert of the Houston Pride Band's 30th anniversary season. During the course of the year, our performances have celebrated diversity, the holiday season, relationships and family. Tonight, we celebrate the Houston Pride Band and what it has meant to us and to the community. Whether you first knew of the band as the Montrose Marching Band, the Montrose Symphonic Band, the Lone Star Symphonic Band, or the Houston Pride Band, we will have something for you.

One thing that I am especially proud of this season is the band's rededication to helping our community. This year we have donated the ticket proceeds from our concerts to worthwhile community groups. So far this year, we have raised over \$4500.00 for organizations such as AssistHers, PFLAG, and AIDS Foundation Houston. With your participation in this evening's concert, we will be able to present a check to the Montrose Counseling Center, another great organization who is celebrating 30 years of service to the community.

The reason that we can support the community as we have this year is that we have tremendous support ourselves. The costs of these performances were paid for through the generosity of our donors, sponsors such as Concierge Travel and OutSmart Magazine, and grants from the Tom Moore Community Music Foundation and the Houston Arts Alliance. Since it is our 30th Anniversary, we would also be remiss if we didn't mention Ed Moninger and Marion E. Coleman who have been there for the band since the very beginning.

As you will see from this evening's performance, the state of the band is great. Even as we bring you this concert, we are looking forward to next season which will be called *Beyond Fences: Music Without Borders*. We will be bringing you great music from all over the world, all the while continuing our support of the community here at home. We hope you will join us on this fantastic voyage.

Kevin Taylor, President
Houston Pride Band



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Houston Pride Band Day

Each day countless Houstonians are served by selfless individuals and organizations that seek to make a difference in the lives of others. With a sense of pride in our great city and its diverse communities, a small group of musicians came together in 1978 to form the Montrose Marching Band as an avenue to make music and meet new friends.

Over the years, that small group of musicians grew into the Houston Pride Band, a strong organization that has represented the City of Houston on the national stage and uses its talents to support and raise awareness for causes which are important to Houston's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community.

This year the Houston Pride Band celebrates 30 years of making music to support and serve our community. In recognition and appreciation of its dedication and service to the community, the City of Houston congratulates and commends the Houston Pride Band on this milestone occasion, and extends best wishes for many more years of making music and making a difference in the lives of others.

Therefore, I, Bill White, Mayor of the City of Houston, hereby proclaim June 27, 2008, as:

Houston Pride Band Day

in Houston, Texas, and urge all citizens to join me in thanking the Houston Pride Band for the service it has rendered to our city for so many years.

in Houston, Texas.



In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and have caused the Official Seal of the City of Houston to be affixed this 26th day of June, 2008, A.D.

Bill White

Bill White
Mayor of the City of Houston

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THE HOUSTON PRIDE BAND MISSION STATEMENT

- To advocate for the GLBT community by promoting knowledge and understanding through music.
- To provide opportunities for high caliber musical performances for the GLBT community and beyond.
- To provide a welcoming and comfortable musical outlet for GLBT and GLBT-friendly wind, brass and percussion players.
- To support and raise awareness for causes which are important to the GLBT community.

MEMBERSHIP

The Houston Pride Band is open to all brass, woodwind, and percussion players. We welcome musicians of all skill levels. If you are interested in joining us, please give us a call or email us so that we can gather some information from you and make arrangements to have music ready for you when you arrive.

REHEARSALS

The band rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Resurrection MCC, 2025 West 11th Street.

WAYS TO HELP THE HOUSTON PRIDE BAND

- Donate an instrument, sheet music or other band-related items.
- Link your web site to ours: www.houstonprideband.org
- Tell a friend about us
- Support our fundraisers, activities and performances
- Email us for more information at info@houstonprideband.org
- Join the band as a musician or band aid



Founder & Conductor, Andy Mills, 1982



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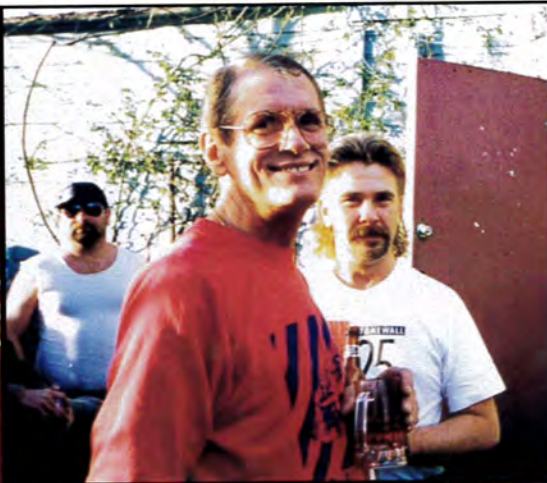
Tom Moore, 1989

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 Nancy Wintle

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Conductor, Roy Cisneros, 1989

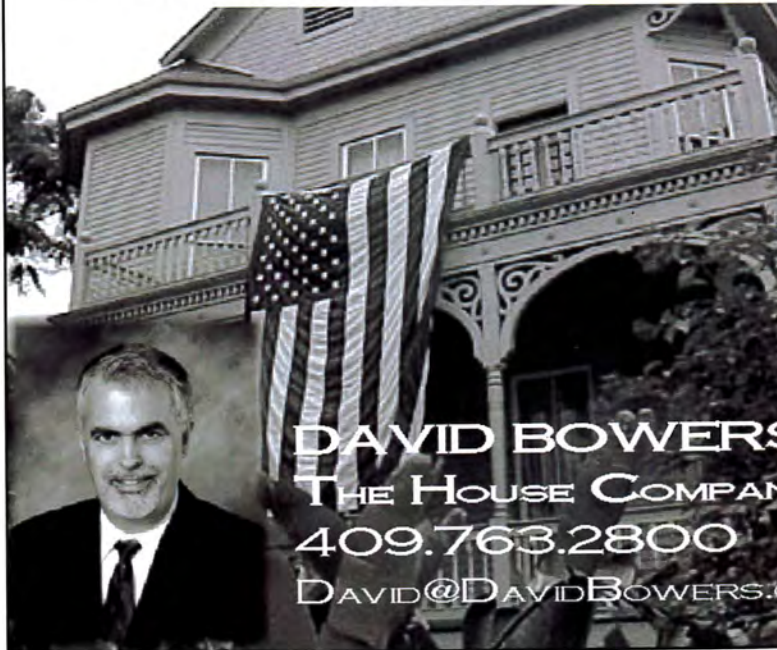


Inspired by his vision
and awed by his dedication
to Houston's
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the Houston Pride Band
thanks Andy Mills
for being a part of tonight's
anniversary celebration!



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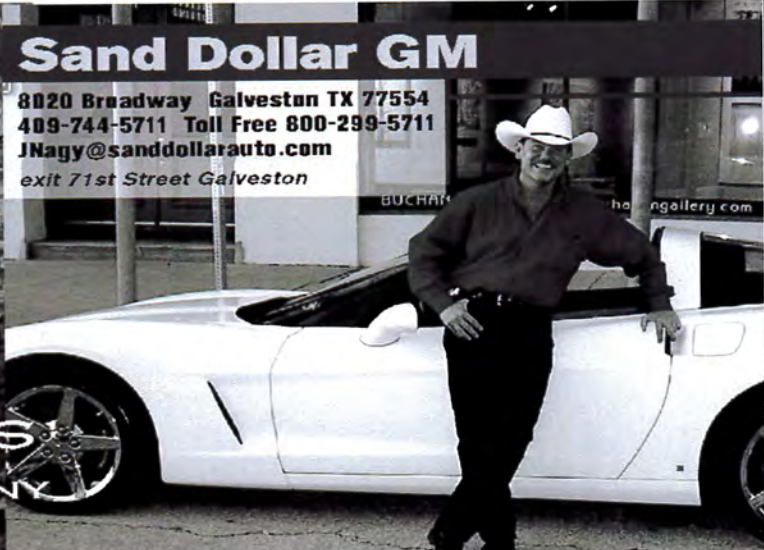
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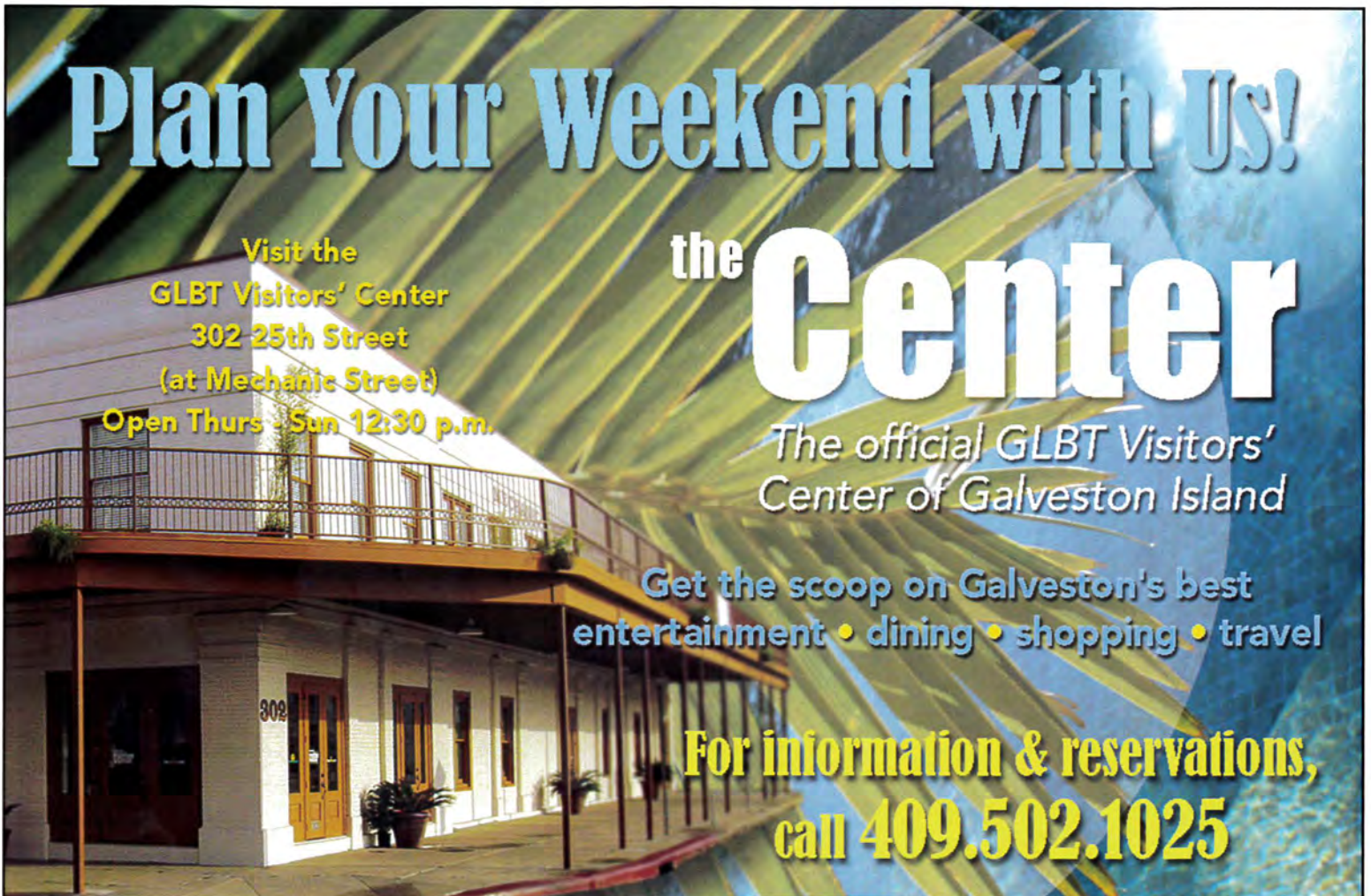
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Houston Pride Band presents

CELEBRATE!

Thirty years of Music, Visibility & Pride



Guest Emcee,
Nancy Ford

It's a natural fit that **Nancy Ford** should emcee Houston Pride Band's historic 30th anniversary concert: Since arriving in the Bayou City in 1981, Nancy has made her living onstage and in print, comedically chronicling the events that make up gay

and lesbian history. "What a World, What a World," her wry commentary on all things gay, has been published in numerous local and national publications since 1986, as have her insightful, breezy interviews with notable gay and lesbian icons. In 1994, Nancy helped create *OutSmart* magazine where she currently serves as senior editor.



Artistic Director
Emeritus,
Andy Mills

Conductor Emeritus Andy Mills constructed a solid foundation for this organization with his love for music and desire to share it with others. Mr. Mills majored in music

at Ohio State University from 1956 through 1960. After graduation he enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he was conductor and concert pianist for the Navy Band through 1964. Following his stint in the military, Mr. Mills traveled to Germany and studied conducting with Herbert von Karajan, who conducted the Berlin Philharmonic for 35 years. Mr. Mills founded the Montrose Symphonic Band and was its principal conductor from 1981 to 1985. As many as 75 musicians played regularly with the band in those early years. Today he continues to provide inspiration and support to the Houston Pride Band.



Artistic Director,
Jason Stephens

Jason Avery Stephens originally hails from Silsbee, Texas, where he graduated from High School. He graduated of Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas in 2003, receiving a Bachelor's in Music Education. He studied conducting with Travis Almany, currently the Associate Director of Bands at Texas A&M University and Dr. Barry W. Johnson, currently the Vice President for Student Affairs. He also attended a conducting symposium under the direction of Dr. Craig Kirchoff, Professor of Conducting and Director of University Bands at the University of Minnesota.

After moving to Houston in mid-2004, Mr. Stephens joined the Houston Pride Band as a Bassoonist in 2005. Soon after he was asked to fill the role as Interim Artistic Director in early 2006 and subsequently appointed Artistic Director in November 2006. He has helped foster the growth and musicianship of the Houston Pride Band, from around 15 members when he originally joined, to its present complement of over 35 people.

Mr. Stephens currently works for the Houston Public Library as a Special Projects Coordinator in the Planning and Facilities Division. He plans to pursue his Master's degree in Library and Informational Sciences, with a specialization in Music Librarianship, from the University of North Texas in the near future. Mr. Stephens is also the music librarian for the revolutionary River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, a innovative and engaging chamber orchestra in the Houston metropolitan area. As a performer, Mr. Stephens plays with various chamber ensembles within the Houston Pride Band and is a Substitute Bassoonist with the Houston Civic Symphony.

Andy Mills, early 1980s



Houston Pride Band



FLUTE

Jonathan Ellis
Victor Kendall
Tom Perkinson
Joel Quiñones

OBOE

Eileen Louvier
Lupe Ybarra

BASSOON

David DiCamillo

CLARINET

Jim Bozeman
Ron Louvier
Skip Martin
Rudolph Martinez
Michael Schirmacher
Kristin Theriot

BASS CLARINET

Melissa Thompson

CONTRABASS CLARINET

Travis Arbing

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Connie Moore
Kevin Taylor

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Lisa Mace

TRUMPET

Mary Beth Alsdorf
Paige Kovar
Arthur McGimsey
Kevin Nield
Greta Ott

FRENCH HORN

Cary Byrd
Rufus Chaney
Noel Freeman
Dave Singletary

TROMBONE

Amanda Solis
Kiyona Corpening
Trudy Allen

EUPHONIUM

Casey Sherrell
Russell Ben Williams

TUBA

Elroy W. Forbes Jr.
Pierre Tejada
Joe Wiese

PERCUSSION

Debbie Hunt
Debbie Holmes
Pam Stephens

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Andra Haviland (pictured below)
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CELEBRATE!

PROGRAM

Einleitung ("Sunrise") from Also Sprach Zarathustra.....Richard Strauss
Arranged by Jason Stephens

I Vow to Thee, My Country.....Gustav Holst
Set for band by Ralph Vaughan Williams
Edited by Robert Grechesky

Star Wars Disco Medley.....John Williams
Arranged by Dave Wolfe

Concerto No. 2, Op. 417, in E-flat Major for French Horn.....W. A. Mozart
Arranged for band by Lorenzo Sansone
Cary Byrd, Horn Soloist

— INTERMISSION —



The Crosley March.....Henry Fillmore
Andy Mills, Conductor Emeritus

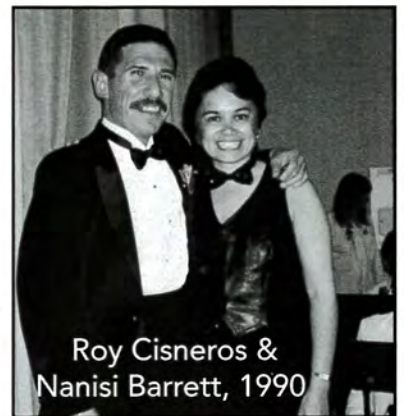
Irish Tune from County Derry.....Percy Grainger
Arranged for Saxophone Quintet by William Schmidt
Lupe Ybarra and Connie Moore, Alto Saxophone
Melissa Thompson and Kevin Taylor, Tenor Saxophone and
Lisa Mace, Baritone Saxophone

Tiger Rag.....arranged for Trombone Quartet by Jack Gale
Trudy Allen, Noel Freeman,
Kiyona Corpening and Amanda Solis, Trombones

America, the Beautiful.....Samuel Augustus Ward
Arranged by Carmen Dragon
Andy Mills, Conductor Emeritus

Beguine for Band.....Glenn Osser

Huapango!.....José Pablo Moncayo
Transcribed for Symphonic Band by Leroy Osmon



Former and then-present conductors reunite in 1998 for the Houston Pride Band's 20th Anniversary. Left to Right: Pierre Tejada, David Christianson, Andy Mills, Beau Cain, Irvin Decker, Nanisi Barrett



PROGRAM NOTES

German composer Richard Strauss (1864-1949) is arguably one of the greatest composers of the late Romantic and early modern periods. He was known mostly for his tone poems and operas, as well as being a notable conductor of his day. During his boyhood, he had the good fortune to attend rehearsals of the Munich Court Orchestra as well as receive private music instruction from its assistant conductor. It was through the persuasion of composer Alexander Ritter that Strauss abandoned his early conservative compositional style and ended up finding his voice in the classical canon.

Also *Sprach Zarathustra* is loosely based on Friedrich Nietzsche's work titled *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Nietzsche's idea for this work describes the concept of "superman", the goal of humanity. Strauss intended to musically convey an idea of the development of the human race from its origin, through the various phases, up to Nietzsche's idea of the superman. The whole symphonic poem is intended as homage to Nietzsche's genius, which found its greatest expression in this book.

The opening fanfare played tonight introduces a "dawn" or "sunrise" motif that permeates the structure of the entire work. It is easily one of the most recognizable themes in music, thanks in part to Stanley Kubrick's frequent use of it in his *2001: A Space Odyssey*. This theme creates conflict with opposing tonalities of major and minor, representing the sacred and profane and permeates the entire symphonic poem.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was an influential English composer of symphonies, opera and film score in addition to various other genres. His writing developed slowly and it wasn't until he was 30 that published his first composition. In 1904, he discovered English folk songs and the wealth of melody and invention that it could bring to his work. Folk music was fast becoming extinct, and Vaughan Williams became one of its champions. In 1923, Vaughan Williams wrote one of the pinnacles of wind band literature, *English Folk Song Suite*. He went on to write six more pieces for wind band, helping to solidify it as a viable genre of music.

In 1938, a "pageant" was held in London entitled "England's Pleasant Land," its theme being of Britain's ecology. For the prelude to the evening's special event, Vaughan Williams wrote *I Vow to Thee, My Country*, a setting for band of the

"Jupiter" theme from Gustav Holst's *The Planets*. Nearly fifty years later Robert Grechesky discovered the unpublished Vaughan Williams manuscript in the British Museum and adapted it for the modern wind band.

John Williams (b. 1932) is best known as the most famous film music composer of our generation. His body of work ranges from music for four Olympic games, numerous television series and concert pieces and over seventy films, most notably *Indiana Jones*, *Jaws*, *Superman*, *Star Wars*, *Schindler's List* and the *Harry Potter* series. He was also the principal conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra for thirteen years and is now their laureate conductor.

Star Wars, the epic space opera, originally premiered in 1977 and has spawned six movies as well as multiple novels, video games, comic books and television series. Tonight's adaptation, titled *Star Wars Disco Medley*, is a tribute to the early days of *Star Wars* and of Houston's GLBT band.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's (1756-1791) *Horn Concerto No. 2 in E-flat Major, K. 417*, is one of four horn concertos written by the prodigal son of classical music. Mozart wrote this work for the horn player Joseph Ignaz Leutgeb in 1783. Although Leutgeb had once been a promising virtuoso, he was now working in a cheese business owned by his wife's family and pursuing music only on the side. Despite his unspectacular career, Leutgeb must have been an accomplished horn player. Over 150 years later, in 1956, Lorenzo Sansone, an Italian-American horn player, teacher and designer, arranged this concerto for band to introduce the pleasure of Mozart's music to a new generation of musicians who might otherwise never get to play any of his music.

This particular composition has long been known as the second of the four concertos, though recent scholarship investigating the chronology of these works has suggested that it might be the earliest of them. It follows the usual three-movement concerto format, beginning with an unhurried Allegro maestoso that suggests the latter of these adjectives, "majestic," as, with broad melodies well suited to the warm, noble tone of the horn. The second movement brings a song-like Andante, whereas the finale is cast as a "hunting rondo," with fanfares and other athletic figures for the solo instrument.



photos this page, Band Camp circa 1982

James Henry Fillmore (1881-1956) was born in Cincinnati, Ohio as the eldest of five children. In his youth he mastered piano, guitar, violin, and flute — as well as the slide trombone, which at first he played in secret, as his conservative religious father believed it an uncouth and sinful instrument. He began composing at 18, with his first published march, *Higham*, named after a line of brass instruments. He entered the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music in 1901 and after this, he traveled around the United States as a circus bandmaster with his wife, an exotic dancer named Mabel May Jones.

A prolific composer, Fillmore wrote over 250 tunes and arranged orchestrations for hundreds more; he also published a great number of tunes under various pseudonyms. While best known for march music and screamers, he also wrote fox-trots, hymns, novelty numbers, overtures and waltzes. His love for the trombone inspired him to write an entire family of trombone marches (most notably *Shoutin' Liza Trombone* and *Lassus Trombone*).

In the 1920s he was back in Cincinnati, directing the Shriners Temple Band, which he turned into one of the most virtuosic marching bands in the country. *The Crosley March*, named for Powell Crosley, a prominent figure in Cincinnati, Ohio, has become a favorite of the Houston Pride Band over its thirty years.

The words to *America the Beautiful* were written in 1895 by Katharine Lee Bates, an English professor at Wellesley College, after a train trip to Colorado. Several existing pieces of music were adapted to the poem, but the hymn tune composed in 1882 by Samuel Augustus Ward was generally considered the best as early as 1910 and is still the popular tune today. Mr. Ward died in 1903, never knowing the national stature his music would attain. Miss Bates was more fortunate, as the song's popularity was well established by her death in 1929.

The arrangement by Carmen Dragon, famed conductor of the Hollywood Symphony Bowl, has become one of the most popular versions performed, even being played at President Gerald Ford's funeral service by the US Armed Forces Symphony and Chorus.

Glenn Osser (b. 1914) is a famous musician, arranger and conductor. He studied music education and theory at the University of Michigan, graduating in 1935. Osser became a familiar name in the USA during the 1950s for his work on

various television shows, working as a staff arranger for ABC from 1947 to 1968 and as the music director for the Miss America Pageant. He also arranged extensively for the Boston Pops Orchestra when it was led by John Williams. Credited with a mass of work spanning more than 60 years, Glenn Osser is remembered as among the finest of arrangers and conductors of his era.

A *beguine* is a ballroom dance based on a native dance of Martinique and St. Lucia. In 1954 Glenn Osser very adeptly captured the flirtatious beguine rhythms in *Beguine for Band*. This is one of his earliest and most popular works and showcases all the various sections of the wind band.

Mexican composer and pianist José Pablo Moncayo (1913-1958) studied composition at the Mexico City Conservatory with Carlos Chávez and also studied with Aaron Copland. From 1949 to 1954 he conducted the Mexico Symphony Orchestra but made most of his living as a jazz pianist in cabarets. He dedicated himself to championing both traditional and modern Mexican music, and his compositions pay homage to native idiom.

Composed in 1941, Moncayo's *Huapango* is a tribute to the Jalisco region where he grew up, and has proved to be Moncayo's best-known work. But what is a huapango? The origin of the word has given rise to much debate. There are three theories of its origin varying from Aztec to Spanish, but all derivations point to dancing. It is cast in the form of a rhapsody based on three of the best-known huapango tunes. Like Ravel's *Bolero*, which it resembles to some extent, Huapango is first and foremost a vivid display of orchestral color. For all its apparently spontaneous, even riotous, invention, it is closely organized: all its elements are interrelated either melodically or rhythmically.



Proceeds from tonight's ticket sales benefit



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- health education and risk reduction
- HATCH youth services
- SPRY senior services

For more information, go to www.montrosecounselingcenter.org



2008 HOUSTON PRIDE CELEBRATION

The celebration continues tomorrow, Saturday, June 28, as the Houston Pride Band marches proudly in the Houston Pride Parade. Featuring a colorful disco theme, Pride 2008 reminds us that for the past thirty years, and into the distant future, We Are Family!

The Houston Pride Band could not exist without its loyal family of season sponsors, donors and supporters! Many thanks for your support and dedication to the band! See you at the parade!

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- Samantha Mitchell, Lead Dancer
- Houston Pride Band Dance Team
- Nikki Barefoot
- Crazy Earl

We love a parade!



Join the Houston Pride Band for our 2008-2009 Season

BEYOND FENCES: MUSIC WITHOUT BORDERS

For our next season, the Houston Pride Band will explore the many facets of the world that we live in: the people, cultures and environment around us. Through our concerts we will present a multitude of cultures and how they have influenced our lives and our music.

October 18, 2008

With a trip from Europe to Africa, to Asia, and back home with a special visit to Las Vegas, your musical passport will start filling up fast.

December 14, 2008

In what is becoming an exciting annual event, the Houston Pride Band will perform in conjunction with the Resurrection MCC Music Ministries in a festive holiday spectacular. We will still be able to sneak in a few more countries on our world tour.

March 7, 2009

Crisscrossing the globe, the band examines everything from Russian royal music to Australian folksongs. We also look at how music from other cultures are represented on Broadway.

April 2009, date to be announced

A first for the Houston Pride Band as we present a free family concert at Houston's new Discovery Green Park. It will be a great day for a picnic and to enjoy music for children and adults alike.

June 13, 2009

The band ends its musical journey with stops in Japan, England, Chile and more. Of course, we will celebrate our return home with some music from the USA.



Jason Stephens

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Vogelar, G. David
Watson, Doug
Wells, Howard
Wright, David
Wright, Doug



Congratulations Houston Pride Band for 30 incredible years. Praise to the past presidents and current, for the LGBA delegates and officers representing our band over the past 30 years. Thanks to every board member for the countless hours spent in promoting our music and serving our band.

Hats off to our talented artistic directors past and present. Blessings to the librarians, party planners, volunteers, show organizers, campy coordinators, photo-takers, stage and rehearsal set-up volunteers and to our audience who has continued to support us throughout the years.

Hugs and kisses to our spouses who watch us wander off every Wednesday evening to toot our horns and forget about life for a few hours, while only noticing the notes on the sheet of music.

Thanks to the givers of scholarships, grants, special funding and institutions that have allowed us to rehearse in their halls.

It is a privilege and an honor to have played with each of you past and present, and to know somehow we left this world a better place through our music.

Blessings to you.

Your biggest fan,
Melissa Thompson

Melissa,

Congrats to you in this celebration for Houston Pride Band's 30 years! God bless you for the gifts you bring to music, to band, to this world and to me!!

You are so beautiful to music, to this world and to me!! My love always and forever!

Stacy



MONTROSE STAR

The South's Weekly Gay Newspaper / Issue #147 / July 13, 1979

It was Gay America's biggest week ever



PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE ARE OF HOUSTON PARADE & RALLY BY MONTROSE STAR PHOTOGRAPHER GREGORY

CHICAGO - An estimated 4000 marched or rode in cars and floats in Chicago June 24 in celebration of Gay Pride Day. Many others looked on.

Among the marchers, two men were dressed as choirboys and roller-skated their way down the parade route. Women in a car chanted "We are everywhere" and "We are next door to you."



Montrose Marching Band.

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PHOTO BY BOB WICKHOFF



PHOTOS BY J. HARDY WILLIAMS



PHOTO BY J. HARDY WILLIAMS



Though virtually ignored by the local press, gay Houston turned out in huge numbers to celebrate its own Independence Day. With the help of KRLL-FM, which called itself the official parade band and played rousing disco marches all afternoon, the crowds grew from a few thousand at the start to a throng of some 20,000 by the time the paraders had wound their way through the Montrose.



WE ARE EVERYWHERE

Houston Pride Band History

1970s – End of a Decade, Beginning of an Era

1978 was an historic year for the gay and lesbian community in the United States. As it approached ten years since the Stonewall Riots, the gay community was finding its political and economic strength. The rainbow flag was first unfurled as a symbol of our community, and the Gay Bob doll, complete with its own closet, appeared on store shelves.

In the midst of everything that was happening across the country, a group of musicians started meeting in a home to start making music together. Lead by Clint Moncrief, Rue Starr, and Rufus Cheney, the Montrose Marching Band was formed. The group was sponsored by the Montrose Activity Center. In April of 1979 the group began rehearsals in the service building in Cherryhurst Park in the heart at Cherryhurst Street and Windsor Street just north of Westheimer.

For a young band, it proved to be a busy year. The band first provided a pep band for a Police vs Gays softball game in June. On July 1st, the Montrose Marching Band made its first parade appearance at the first gay pride parade held in Houston. Clad in red tennis shoes, blue jeans, white shirts, bandanas, and hard hats, MMB was a hit with the crowds.

Bigger things were to come though. On October 14th 1979, the first Gay and Lesbian March on Washington took place. At the march, the Texas contingent led the way with 40 members of the Montrose Marching Band up front.

The year and the decade ended with another first for the band. The Montrose Marching Band, Twirlers, and Drill Team presented its first concert, *The Joys of Christmas*, at Bering Memorial Methodist Church.



Clint Moncrief directing the Montrose Symphonic Band near downtown, circa 1979

Circa June 1978, Excited about the pending March on Washington are Southwestern Bell (AT&T) employees: Randy Julia (oboe), Alvin Hopkins (Piccolo), Rufus Chaney (trumpet) and Randy Richards (Alto Sax)



New Orleans, circa 1980



Tower Theater, 1982



September 1982

1980s – A Looming Crisis in the Community

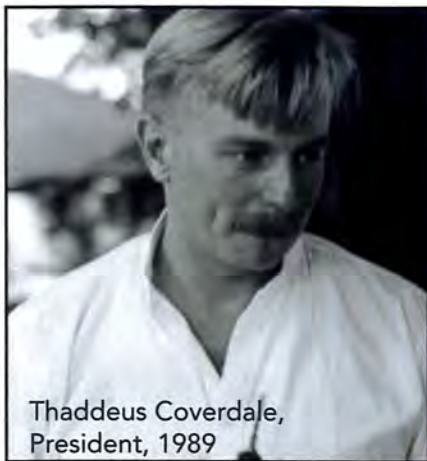
The 1980's proved to be one of the most trying for the gay community. As AIDS appeared, the gay and lesbian community found itself with their friends getting sick and dying around them and a societal backlash from the "gay disease." The community rose to the occasion and began to take care of one another when no one else would. The disease that decimated us also brought us together as never before.

The new decade saw the Montrose Marching Band continue performing inside and outside the community. In March of 1980, MMB was invited to perform in front of Houston's beautiful Art Deco City Hall for the Houston Festival. As the group continued to grow in size and musicality, it was decided that they should widen the scope from being a marching band. In 1981 Andy Mills took over, and the Montrose Symphonic Band and the Montrose Singers were born. During Pride Week that year, MSB played host to the Great American Yankee Freedom Band of Los Angeles and the newly formed Oak Lawn Band of Dallas for the Fred Paez Memorial Concert and Fireworks Display at Spotts Park. With the help of supporters such as Jim "Fanny" Farmer and Mary's bar, the band was able to purchase instruments and equipment. They began to rehearse at Bering United Methodist Church.

In 1982, the MSB held their two famous Tower Theater concerts. GLBT community bands can serve as a bridge between communities, since they represent a non-political, wholesome American pastime. Andy Mills embraced that by making such classics as *America the Beautiful* and *Crossley March* a standard part of the programming. But a gay sensibility did shine through. The May concert featured The Bone Sisters, a trombone quartet in drag belting out such tunes as *Blow the Man Down*. Andy was not opposed to some theatrics on his part either. For the September concert, he conducted *Star Wars* wearing a full Chewbacca mask.



1980



Thaddeus Coverdale,
President, 1989

The Montrose Symphonic Band was not the only lesbian and gay band in the U.S. Starting in Los Angeles, the movement began to spread quickly across the country. In 1982, the **Lesbian & Gay Bands of America** was founded, with MSB as a charter member. The founding members of LGBA were:

- San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Marching Band and Twirling Corps
- Great American Yankee Freedom Band of Los Angeles
- Montrose Symphonic Band
- The Big Apple Corps (New York City)
- D.C.'s Different Drummers
- Oak Lawn Symphonic Band of Dallas
- Minnesota Freedom Band
- Chicago Gay/Lesbian Community Band

In March of 1984, Andy Mills stepped down and a board of directors led by Elroy Forbes was elected to handle the many tasks of running a community band. David Christianson stepped in as Artistic Director. The band continued to perform at community events such as Gay Pride Week, the Houston and Dallas Pride Parades, the Gay Softball World Series, and a Texas Gay Rodeo Association event in Simonton, Texas. The big event of that year was the first Lesbian and Gay Bands of America massed band concert at the Hollywood Bowl in California. It was a magical evening for the performers as well as the audience. The special guest for the evening was Rita Moreno.

At the end of 1984, R Vernon "Bob" Morgan took over the conducting duties for the annual Christmas concert. He continued to lead the band through some great concerts in 1985 including a Gay Pride Week concert featuring City Councilman George Greanias narrating Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*, and a concert at the Miller Outdoor Theater featuring local television personality Marijane Vandiver.

By the late 1980's the AIDS epidemic began to take its toll on the band. The group which had as many as 75 performers was down to around 30, many musicians playing as long as they could until their health would not allow it anymore. MSB members found themselves performing in



Derk Blankenship, Heights Festival, 1988

more and more benefits for AIDS organizations, including a special one in 1986 featuring Andy Mills in a return to the podium in memory of the band members they had lost. The concert featured singers Marsha Carlton and Teresa Mauney.

Several conductors helped get the band through the end of the decade, including Jerry Bach, Ralph Gutierrez, and Roy Cisneros. In 1987, the band officially changed its name to the **Lone Star Symphonic Band**.



New York, New York concert at Tower Theater, 1982.
Joel Quiñones (flute), Unidentified (oboe), Debbie Seagraves (french horn), David Christianson (bassoon), Will Lenton (clarinet)



Montrose Marching Band performs at Dallas Gay Pride, 1985



Vancouver Fundrasier at EJ's, 1990



Houston Pride Band members in Indianapolis for the 1995 LGBA Conference



Melissa Thompson, Roy Cisneros, Robin DeVelvis
Gay Games New York, 1994

1990s – Excitement Abroad, Trouble at Home

1990 brought the band's first opportunity to travel internationally. The third Gay Games was being held in Vancouver, British Columbia, and the Lone Star Symphonic Band wanted to be part of it. Through much fundraising, they were able to send all 25 members of the band to participate. Members marched in the opening and closing ceremonies as well as at a sold-out performance in Vancouver's historic Orpheum Theater.

After traveling all the way to Canada, the LGBA world came to Houston the following year, as the Houston band hosted the fall conference in 1991. It was an exciting, western-themed weekend that culminated in a concert at Jones Hall, featuring a band with over one hundred musicians from across the country. Roy Cisneros lead the evening. Guest conductors included Conductor Emeritus and founding member Andy Mills, Tom Graff of Vancouver's Lesbian and Gay Rainbow Band; Nanisi Barrett, LSSB's swing band conductor; and Susan Wood, Associate Conductor of the Minnesota Freedom Band.

Another historic opportunity occurred in 1993. With the election of Bill Clinton as President of the United States, LGBA was invited to perform at the Inaugural Parade. Six members of the LSSB went to the event. The massed band played along the parade route on the freezing January afternoon. In a memorable moment, the band played *America the Beautiful* as the President walked by. When he saw the LGBA banner, he smiled and gave a "thumbs up" to the band. As any musician who was there will tell you, it was a tremendously moving moment.

1994 brought yet another major event. This time it was the Gay Games in New York City, and LSSB would play an even bigger role. The massed band concert was at the Paramount Theater at Madison Square Garden. The band's own Connie Moore produced the concert, a major feat in the era before emails! And Nanisi Barrett served as the Artistic Director for the Event. The concert was well attended, especially considering the competition: Barbara Streisand was playing on the main stage, next door.



The Houston Pride Band is an active member of the Lesbian & Gay Band Association (LGBA), an international musical organization comprised of twenty-eight concert and marching bands from cities across America, Canada and Australia.

Member bands of LGBA have joined forces to perform for events such as the 1993 and 1997 Clinton Inaugural Parades, every March on Washington and at Gay Games Sports and Cultural Festivals around the world.

The next massed band event takes place in New York City where bands will join to march in the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade as part of the "Deliciously Wicked!"

conference activities provided by New York's host band, the Lesbian & Gay Big Apple Corps.

For more information about the Lesbian & Gay Band Association, visit their web site at www.gaybands.org.

During all this time, the band was still fulfilling its local community duties. Three concerts a year, along with the parades and other events stretched the band thin. In 1994 Roy Cisneros stepped down after what was the longest tenure of any of the band's conductors. The band was exhausted and almost ready to stop. Three members, Connie Moore, Debbie Hunt, and Russell Ben Williams, refused to say "die" though. Buoyed by the emotional support from other bands that they received at the LGBA Fall Conference in Ft. Lauderdale, they plotted a comeback. Filled with renewed hope, changed attitudes, and a new sense of direction, they came back to Houston to begin the process of reviving the band.

In February 1995, the trio gathered past musicians and recruited new members to attend a meeting to determine a course of action and find a new rehearsal space. Dignity-Houston came to the rescue. On April 21, 1995, with coordinating efforts of C. Patrick McIlvain, the Rice University Gay & Lesbian Alumni, and Pride-Rice Gay & Lesbian Student Group, the band made its first public appearance as the **Houston Pride Band**, in a performance benefiting the Annise Parker Campaign Fund.

Later that year, several members of the band traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana for the Fall 1995 LGBA conference. LGBA musicians participated in a touching performance for an audience of attending members of the annual PFLAG conference.

In the Spring of 1996, the Houston Pride Band and Dallas' Oak Lawn Band, under the artistic direction of Beau Cain, former assistant conductor of the Lone Star Symphonic Band, joined forces to bring LGBA to San Antonio, Texas for a massed band performance in front of the Alamo.

Membership in the band was growing steadily, but one thing was still missing: a full-time Artistic Director. The band had not had a permanent conductor since its rebirth as the Houston Pride Band. Members of the group took turns at the conductor's podium, but the lack of a primary conductor was making it increasingly difficult to learn new music to present to the gay and lesbian

community. Finally late in 1996, Lynne Weynand joined the group as Artistic Director/Conductor. Within weeks, she whipped the group into shape and the band put on a series of Christmas performances at Dickens on the Strand in Galveston, and at the Briar Patch, E.J.'s, Rascal's, and finally at Gentry's bars in Houston. Members of the board of directors for the Tom Moore Community Music Foundation, Inc. were on hand at the Gentry's performance and made a surprise announcement: the band had been chosen as the primary recipient of a grant from the foundation. With the grant, the band had a huge advantage over years past. The group was able to purchase new instruments, repair old ones, and restock the music library. The band soared to new heights under the baton of Ms. Weynand.

In January of 1997, LGBA was again invited to perform at President Clinton's second inaugural parade. This time Lynne Weynand was chosen as one of the conductors for the event. The event kicked off the year in a grand style and the band kept it going with over seventeen performances throughout the year.

1997 was also the year that the Houston Pride Committee moved the annual parade to the night. The Houston Pride Band took advantage of the change and created uniforms of black pants and shirts under shimmering gold lamé vests and capes, topped off with glow-in-the-dark accessories. The twenty-two member band was joined by twenty more musicians from Dallas' Oak Lawn Band for a memorable march down Westheimer.

1998 brought the third Gay Games of the decade. This time it was Amsterdam, and members of the band made the trek across the Atlantic for the event. There was ten days of events and performances, both large and small, culminating in a spectacular closing ceremonies performance for a crowd of over 200,000 spectators at the Ajax soccer stadium. Another highlight was the Pride Parade that took place entirely on boats along the canals of Amsterdam. The musicians braved motion sickness as they played for the throngs that formed along either side of the canal.





Houston Pride Band members in Palm Springs, Fall 2005



Holiday Vacation Spots, Christmas concert 2005



Houston Pride Band members in Sydney, AUS for Gay Games VI in 2002

2000s – A Resurgence

The turn of the century found the Houston Pride Band again without a conductor. A few staunch members rehearsed every week. Arthur Dickey, David Christenson, and Pierre Tejada all took the baton at different times to keep the band going. Still supporting the community, the band played at events such as AIDS Walk, the Bering United Methodist Church's Spring Fling, Galveston's Dickens on the Strand, and of course the annual Houston Pride Parade.

The September 11th attack on the World Trade Center in New York City in 2001 shook the world. For a couple of weeks after, air traffic was suspended, and we didn't know if or when another strike would occur. The LGBA conference that year was scheduled for the third week in September in St. Louis. There was much discussion about canceling the event, but the organizers felt that, if nothing else, the accompanying concert would serve as a diversion and a place of relief for the community. Band members from all over the country got in their cars, including Houston Pride Band's Russell Williams, and drove to the conference.

As the 25th Anniversary of the Houston Pride Band approached, the board decided that a celebration was in order, and the first self-produced concert in several years was planned for October of 2003. Band member Scott Ashcraft stepped forward to conduct. The small group of performers that night hoped that the concert would help the band turn a corner, and they were right.

HPB continued putting together concerts and performing throughout the community. In the fall of 2004 Scott Ashcraft stepped down as the Artistic Director. Fortunately, a friend of the band, Les Wood, stepped right in to help pull off the holiday concert for the year. He then led the band in their most musically challenging concert, *Out West*. Special guest Emcee was Gene Mikulenka, the first openly gay rodeo champion.



Diane Schattenberg, Fall 2004



Melissa Thompson, Pride 2006

Slowly but surely the band began to grow, and the audience began to grow as well, but in the Fall of 2005, Les Wood stepped down, and the band received help at the podium from several different band members who conducted the *Holiday Vacation Spots* concert featuring music from around the world. Following this concert bassoonist Jason Stephens stepped to the podium on a full-time basis and has been building up the band ever since.

2006 brought, in addition to more concerts, parades and other performances, the Gay Games in Chicago. Many band members traveled to the Windy City to take part. Events included a field show (complete with a stalker) at Chicago's Soldier Field, a memorable concert at Millennium Park, and closing ceremonies at Wrigley Field.

In anticipation of its 30th Anniversary, the Houston Pride Band decided to rededicate itself to the community. Starting with the first concert of the 2007-2008 season, the band donated the proceeds of ticket sales from the concerts to worthwhile organizations. The first concert, *Celebrating Diversity*, benefited AssistHers. In addition, the band invited community organizations to set up booths and provide information during the post concert reception. The winter concert, *Celebrating Relationships*, benefited PFLAG. The band also took part in a special Christmas event with Resurrection MCC called *Celebrating the Season*, and held the first of what will hopefully be an annual children's concert at Spotts Park.

The Houston Pride Band's 30 year history is one of many ups and downs, but some things have remained constant throughout: our dedication to our music, to our community, and to each other.

Music, Visibility, Pride

MONTROSE SYMPHONIC BAND

Organization Names

Montrose Marching Band	1978-1981
Montrose Symphonic Band	1981-1987
Lone Star Symphonic Band	1987-1995
Houston Pride Band	1995-present

Conductors & Artistic Directors

Clint Moncrief	1978-1981
Andy Mills	1981-1984
David Christianson	1984
R Vernon Moore	1984-1985
Jerry Bach	1985
Ralph Gutierrez	1985-1988
Roy Cisneros	1988-1994
Beau Cain (associate conductor)	1990-1994
Nanisi Barrett (Swing Band)	1990-1991
Ralph Gutierrez (Interim)	1994
Beau Cain (Interim)	1995-1996
Lynn Weynand	1996-1998
Irvin Decker	1998
Arthur Dickey (Interim)	1998-2003
Pierre Tejada (Interim)	1998-2003
Virginia Prudence (Interim)	1999
Scott Ashcraft	2003-2004
Les Wood	2004-2005
Jason Stephens	2005-present



Houston Pride Band members attend the LGBA St. Louis Conference, 2007



Debbie Hunt & Lisa Mace AssistHers Softball Tournament 2006



The Houston Pride Band performs at AIDS Walk 2007

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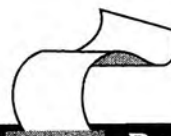
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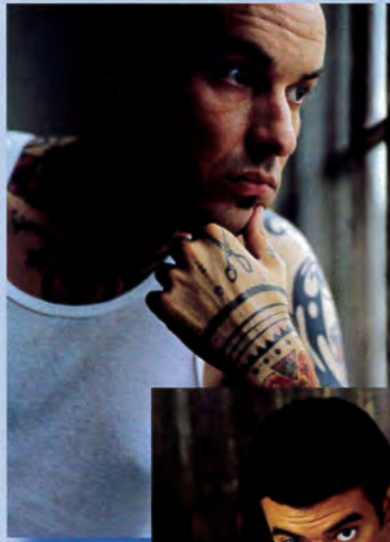
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