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APRIL 9-15, 2025



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After 15 flavorful years, DW Bistro serves its final brunch, leaving behind a legacy of bold cuisine, heartfelt hospitality, and a safe, vibrant space for the LGBTQ+ community. Bryce, Dalton, and the DW team gave Las Vegas more than meals—they gave it love, laughter, and unforgettable Sunday memories.

Renowned and pianist Sara Davis Buechner makes her Las Vegas debut with the Philharmonic on April 12, performing Gershwin's *Concerto in F*. Join her and conductor Yaniv Segal for an incredible night at The Smith Center.

The Las Vegas Science & Technology Festival celebrates STEM with inclusive, community-driven events, inspiring future generations through education and innovation.

And we're not fooling around... Auntie Norma gets a day all to herself.



Russ White & Garrett Pattiani
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APRIL 2025

Oh honey, gather 'round and let Mama Fish tell you what the celestial stage has in store for you this April, darling Pisces! The universe is serving up drama with a side of glam, so get ready to sparkle. Embrace those fierce emotions and let them be your guide to fabulous new beginnings. Strut your stuff and let your intuition light the runway. Remember, babes, you're a star in this cosmic cabaret, so don't be afraid to shine!



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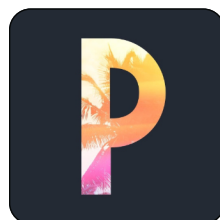
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SARAH ELLIOTT

Director of Las Vegas Science & Technology Festival

The Las Vegas Science and Technology Festival, now in its 14th year, stands as a beacon of innovation and inclusivity in the heart of Nevada. Scheduled from April 25 to May 3, 2025, this nine-day event offers a plethora of free activities designed to ignite curiosity and foster a love for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) among attendees of all ages. At the helm of this ambitious endeavor is Sarah Elliott, the festival's director, whose vision emphasizes diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as pivotal elements in shaping the future of STEM in the Las Vegas community.

A Vision Rooted in Community and Inclusion

Sarah Elliott's journey to leading the Las Vegas Science and Technology Festival is marked by a deep commitment to community engagement and educational outreach. With a background that includes significant experience at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas, Texas, Elliott brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to her role. Her transition to director was influenced by her admiration for the festival's mission and her desire to make a tangible impact on the local community.

"I really admired the work that was being done," Elliott reflects. "When the opportunity arose to step into this role, I saw it as a chance to further the festival's reach and deepen its impact, especially in areas of diversity and inclusion."

Bridging Gaps Through STEM

The festival's inception in 2011 was driven by a need to showcase the vibrant STEM landscape of the Las Vegas Valley and to inspire the next generation of scientists, technologists, engineers, and mathematicians. Collaborations with key organizations such as the Las Vegas Natural History Museum and the Clark County School District have been instrumental in bringing this vision to life. These partnerships aim to provide students with real-world insights into STEM careers, emphasizing that such opportunities are not only viable but thriving within their own community.

"What I love the most about our festival is that children can see the careers in our community," Elliott notes. "We have so many community partners that come out and talk to kids. It's about making these careers tangible and accessible."

Diverse Offerings Reflecting a Diverse Community

The 2025 festival boasts an array of events tailored to engage a broad audience. Highlights include the Women in Science panel at Windmill Library on April 28, featuring six distinguished female professionals from fields ranging from education to computer engineering. This panel aims to shed light on the trajectories, challenges, and triumphs of women in STEM, serving as both inspiration and a call to action for greater inclusivity.

Another notable addition is the emphasis on eSports, recognizing its burgeoning role in the STEM ecosystem. Events such as the eSports Panel at Southwest Career and Technical Academy on April 29, in partnership with Valhalla eSports, offer insights into the opportunities within this digital arena. Elliott underscores the significance of eSports, stating, "eSports is fantastic because it provides opportunities for those students that perhaps couldn't participate in traditional sports. It offers the same team mentality, coaching, and opportunities for scholarships."

The festival also delves into sustainability with events like the Garden and Sustainability event at Nevada State University on April 26. This initiative reflects a commitment to addressing environmental challenges and promoting green technologies, aligning with the broader goal of fostering a holistic understanding of STEM's role in societal advancement.

Addressing DEI Challenges and Aspirations

While the festival has made significant strides in promoting DEI, Elliott acknowledges that there is always room for growth. Her first year as director has been a learning experience, revealing both the successes and areas needing attention in making science and technology education more inclusive.

"We have a wonderful representation of all different communities," Elliott observes. "But there's always room to grow. I would love to get into more areas around the valley and reach communities we haven't quite been into yet."

Elliott's proactive approach includes plans to incorporate more animal science and veterinary representation in future festivals, aiming to broaden the spectrum of STEM fields showcased and to appeal to a wider audience.

Community Engagement: The Heartbeat of the Festival

The success of the Las Vegas Science and Technology Festival is deeply rooted in community involvement. With over 22,675 students and their families attending more

than 120 scheduled events in 2024, the festival has become a testament to the power of collaborative efforts. Elliott emphasizes the importance of local partnerships and encourages community leaders and organizations to participate actively.

"We are wide open to starting planning for next year," she states. "If you see an opportunity that you think can be fulfilled through your company, please email us. We are open to having those discussions and planning for the future."

Looking Ahead: The Road to Greater Inclusivity

As the festival continues to evolve, the focus remains steadfast on enhancing DEI initiatives. Elliott's vision encompasses not only expanding the range of STEM fields represented but also ensuring that events are accessible and engaging for all demographics. This includes addressing potential barriers to participation and actively seeking input from underrepresented communities to tailor the festival's offerings to their interests and needs.

"It's about making science fun, accessible, and engaging for everyone—kids, families, and adults," Elliott asserts. "We want to spark curiosity and highlight the amazing science and technology taking place right here in our community."

A Call to Action

The Las Vegas Science and Technology Festival exemplifies how intentional efforts in DEI can transform community engagement and inspire future generations. By providing platforms for diverse voices and showcasing a wide array of STEM opportunities, the festival not only educates but also empowers.

As the 2025 festival approaches, Elliott and her team extend an invitation to all: to participate, to learn, and to be part of a movement that celebrates diversity as a cornerstone of innovation. Through collective action and shared vision, the road ahead is one of inclusivity, discovery, and boundless potential.

Visit scifest.vegas for more information or to register for the festival



DEI AND THE ROAD AHEAD

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The Backslide: Trump's Latest Attacks on LGBTQ+ Rights and DEI Programs

In recent weeks, former President Donald Trump has escalated his campaign to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and roll back LGBTQ+ rights—moves that are already having chilling effects across the country. As the 2024 Republican presidential nominee and likely front-runner, Trump's recent actions signal the direction his administration would take if he returns to the White House—and for LGBTQ+ communities, the forecast is grim.

On April 3, 2025, the Trump administration issued a formal directive to state education departments, giving them just ten days to prove compliance with a sweeping executive order banning federal funds for schools promoting DEI and what the administration calls "gender ideology." Failure to comply could result in the loss of Title I funds—money specifically allocated to support schools with large populations of low-income students.

This is not an isolated move. In fact, it's part of a calculated effort to reverse decades of progress on inclusion and equity in American institutions. The January executive order underpinning this threat outlined plans to defund not only public schools, but also universities and nonprofit organizations that support equity and LGBTQ+ advocacy. Critics say this is an open assault on vulnerable communities.

The consequences are already being felt.

The University of Michigan, long a national leader in DEI initiatives, announced on March 28 that it would shut down its entire Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This decision was made in direct response to the Trump administration's threats to revoke federal funding. The university said it will "restructure" DEI efforts into departments focused on "access and opportunity," though advocates worry this is just a veiled way of eliminating accountability and intentional inclusion.

Meanwhile, America's LGBTQ+ community is also seeing another disturbing trend: the withdrawal of corporate support from Pride events in key cities like New York and San Francisco. According to

organizers, companies that previously funded these celebrations—such as Anheuser-Busch, Comcast, and others—have either pulled back or canceled sponsorship altogether. Organizers cite economic concerns and a fear of political backlash in the current climate as the driving forces behind this decision.

In San Francisco alone, Pride organizers are facing a funding gap of over \$200,000, potentially threatening critical services that Pride celebrations help fund—such as LGBTQ+ youth support, HIV prevention efforts, and mental health programs. The decision of corporations to step back from LGBTQ+ events, especially during an election year, echoes the political attacks on DEI and reflects the broader normalization of anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment.

Even federal cultural institutions are not safe from revisionism. The National Park Service recently made quiet but significant changes to its Underground Railroad website, stripping away key references to Harriet Tubman, slavery, and Black resistance in favor of vague references to "Black/White cooperation." This re-framing is part of a broader effort within the Trump administration to erase historical narratives that center race, systemic oppression, or contributions from marginalized communities.

These moves are not just symbolic—they are strategic. By dismantling DEI infrastructure, removing LGBTQ+ visibility, and reframing history, the Trump campaign is appealing to a base increasingly motivated by anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-woke rhetoric.

For LGBTQ+ Americans, especially youth, the message is clear: under a Trump administration, their existence is once again up for political debate.

Nevada remains a battleground—not just politically, but culturally. As we prepare for Pride celebrations and community events this summer, it's more vital than ever that we stand united, support local LGBTQ+ organizations, and demand that inclusion remains a non-negotiable value in our schools, institutions, and public life.

If these recent actions are any indication, the fight for equality is far from over.



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DW Bistro Bids Farewell: 15 Years of Flavor, Family, and Fierce Brunches

On April 6, 2025, Las Vegas said farewell to DW Bistro, a beloved LGBTQ+-owned culinary institution that redefined brunch, built a family of fiercely loyal regulars, and infused every meal with a signature mix of Jamaican spice, New Mexican soul, and joyful hospitality. Co-founded by Bryce Krausman and chef-partner Dalton Wilson, DW Bistro wasn't just a restaurant. It was a vibe, a sanctuary, a Sunday ritual, and a stage for bold flavors and bold personalities alike.

"We always said we weren't just in the restaurant business," Bryce reflects. "We were in the loving-on-people business."

From Williams-Sonoma to DW Bistro

To understand DW Bistro's origin story, you have to rewind a quarter-century to the Williams-Sonoma store in the Fashion Show Mall, where Bryce and Dalton met selling espresso machines. The friendship formed over cooking demos and culinary curiosity blossomed into a partnership rooted in passion and purpose. Dalton, born in Jamaica and raised in New Mexico, brought an arsenal of bold flavors: jerk seasoning, curry, New Mexican green and red chiles. Bryce, born and raised in Vegas, had the vision, marketing know-how, and deep roots in the local scene.

Their early adventures involved catering gigs for legendary Vegas icons like Sandy

Pelton and Cindy DeMay. They cooked, served, sang (sometimes in sequined jackets), and laughed their way through unforgettable parties. "We catered for people who became our family," Bryce recalls. "There were monkeys on shoulders and Mary Wilson from The Supremes singing with me when I forgot the lyrics to 'White Christmas.' It was all very Fellini."

The Brunch That Launched a Dream

While traveling to cities like Seattle and San Francisco, the duo noticed something missing from Vegas: a true destination brunch. "Why do we not have a place where everyone can gather after a Madonna concert and hang out on a Sunday?" Bryce wondered. That spark ignited the concept of DW Bistro—a place with big flavor, good music, bold brunches, and a welcoming vibe that defied norms.

In 2009, the opportunity arrived when a local restaurant, La Madonna, shut down. Dalton discovered a "Turnkey Restaurant Available" sign and immediately roped Bryce into a meeting with the landlord. Despite opening during a recession and in a somewhat overlooked southwest Vegas neighborhood, they jumped in headfirst, handling permitting and renovations on a shoestring budget.

"We opened April 6, 2010, and we just waited for people to come," Bryce remembers. "And they did. They came for

the food, the vibes, and because Vegas needed something like DW."

A Menu with Soul

DW Bistro's menu reflected Dalton and Bryce's heritage and tastes—Jamaican, New Mexican, Californian, and purely DW. The jerk chicken and waffles quickly became a fan favorite, even though neither of them had eaten the dish before opening. "We brine the chicken, jerk it, flour it, and fry it—it's juicy and spicy and the syrup we make ties it all together," Bryce explains. "That smell will stay with me forever."

Other standouts included the mango-studded Cobb salad, the pan-seared salmon bowl, and the jerk turkey burger with mango chutney—originally inspired by a spa recipe Oprah loved. Their signature chilaquiles, created by early team member Priscilla, became the top-selling brunch item.

Brunch with a Beat

Within six months, DW Bistro achieved what Bryce had envisioned from the start: a line out the door on Sunday mornings. Their no-reservations policy turned Sunday brunch into a social scene where everyone—from Strip performers to suburban families—rubbed elbows over mimosas and themed dishes.

"We created pajama brunches, Willy Wonka brunches, Alice in Wonderland brunches—it became our way of saying, 'Be yourself, have fun, and feel safe here,'" Bryce says. One of his favorite brunches was their Oscar Sunday event inspired by *The Greatest Showman*, called *This Is Me Brunch*. Staff and guests alike wore sequins and buttons that proudly proclaimed individuality.

And it wasn't just about food and flair. It was about creating space. "There weren't any LGBTQ+ safe zone brunches like ours," Bryce says. "We were one of the first."

A Place Where Deals—and Friendships—Were Made

While brunch made headlines, DW's weekday lunch crowd quietly became its heartbeat. Local lawyers, business owners, and power players turned the restaurant into an unofficial boardroom where deals were inked over jerk salmon and house-made scones.

"People signed million-dollar deals at these tables," Bryce says. "And they kept coming back for years."

Their staff—many of whom stayed for a decade or more—added to the warm, family-like environment. "Fonzie's been setting up the bar for 14.5 years. Orlando's made our salmon for 10. This place worked because they were here."

The Move to the Gramercy

In 2016, DW Bistro relocated to The Gramercy, trading its cozy, shoulder-to-shoulder charm for a sleeker space with more room to grow. The new location offered an expanded bar, a spacious patio,



and a more upscale ambiance. The plan was to launch a DW market with floral arrangements and grab-and-go goods, but construction costs forced a pivot back to full-service dining.

Still, the move brought new visibility, and brunch thrived in the updated digs. But like many restaurants, DW faced seismic challenges with the arrival of COVID-19. Bryce himself fell seriously ill, and the team had to innovate quickly with to-go brunch kits, playlists, and DW-at-home tutorials.

"We leaned into connection," Bryce says. "Our DJ made SoundCloud playlists, we taught people to make scones at home, and we reminded our guests that the DW spirit was still alive—just in their kitchens now."

Loss, Reflection, and Closure

In recent years, both Dalton and Bryce faced deeply personal challenges. Dalton stepped away for a time, exploring other opportunities before returning to DW. More recently, he's been absent as he tends to his ailing father. Bryce, meanwhile, lost both of his parents in 2023.

"They were huge supporters of the restaurant," Bryce shares. "I was blessed to have the time with them. That's part of why we knew it was time to close. Our lease was up, and life just... changed."

DW Bistro's official last day, April 6, 2025, is exactly 15 years after they first opened. It's a full-circle farewell that honors every guest, every brunch, every Sunday morning line around the block.

Legacy of Love and Leadership

Beyond the food, DW Bistro's greatest legacy may be its sense of purpose. The restaurant became a hub for the LGBTQ+ community, a place where love was served as freely as mimosas. Dignitaries and drag queens alike felt at home here. Kamala Harris visited during her 2018 presidential run. Bill Clinton came to a gospel brunch. DW was always more than a restaurant—it was a venue for visibility and change.

"We never labeled it a 'gay restaurant,' but

we were queer-owned, and we were safe. We were proud," Bryce says. "And we created space for everyone to shine."

Advice to the Next Generation

Asked what advice he'd give to young LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs hoping to follow in DW's footsteps, Bryce offers heartfelt clarity:

"Have the passion first. The money may not always be there, and this industry is not for the faint of heart. But if you love it—really love people—you can create something incredible."

He also urges future restaurateurs to build community. "Don't worry so much about location. We weren't on the Strip, but people came to us. Build something authentic and they will come."

What's Next?

While there are no immediate plans for a new DW Bistro location, Bryce hints at pop-up events, classes, or collaborative brunches at partner restaurants.

"I look forward to bringing DW energy to new places when the time is right," he says. "And if you loved the salmon bowl, maybe we'll teach you how to make it yourself. COVID taught us how to share DW at home. That part is just beginning."

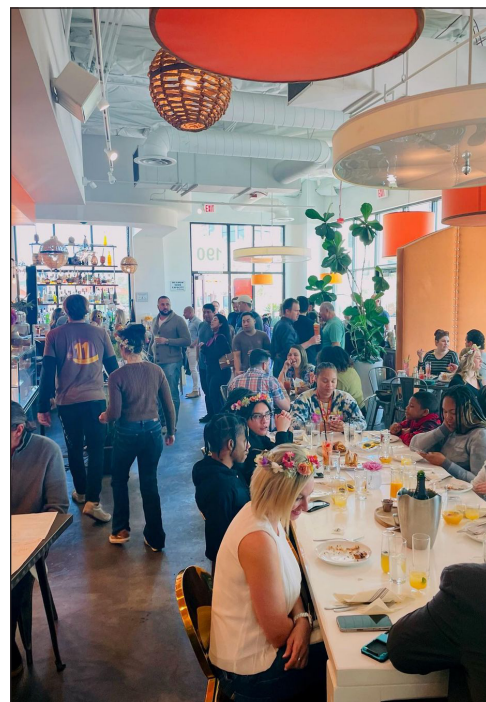
A Final Hug

When asked what he'd say to the community that supported DW Bistro for 15 years, Bryce's eyes well up.

"Love. Just love," he says. "Our motto was always 'Live richly, eat simply,' but I'd add—love simply. Hug each other. Share your light. Be loud. Be proud. And never underestimate the power of a good cocktail and a safe space."

Las Vegas will feel a little quieter without the buzz of DW Bistro on a Sunday morning. But its legacy will linger like the scent of jerk chicken, jalapeño bacon, and fresh scones in the air—rich, comforting, unforgettable.

Thank you, DW Bistro. For the food. For the memories. For the love.





A Bearded Lady, a Proclamation, and a Legacy of Love: Auntie Norma Llyaman Honored by the City of Las Vegas

April 1st, 2025 wasn't just another April Fool's Day in Las Vegas—it was officially proclaimed **"Auntie Norma Llyaman, The Bearded Lady of Las Vegas Day"** by Mayor Shelley Berkley. The honor was given to longtime community icon **"Norma Llyaman"**—the beloved bearded lady of Las Vegas—for over two decades of service, philanthropy, outrageous performance, and fierce love for the LGBTQIA+ community.

The emotional celebration took place at "Dust Las Vegas", where a packed room of friends, fellow performers, community leaders, and chosen family gathered to recognize Norma's incredible legacy.

"For once, I'm at a loss for words," Norma began, visibly moved as she addressed the crowd. "I thought we were just going out for ice cream. Next thing I know, we're at the Mayor's office. I should've worn something with sleeves!"

Norma's signature mix of humor and heart had the room laughing and tearing up in equal measure. She reflected on the people and moments that shaped her journey, from surprise weddings at the ballpark to helping raise funds for local charities—and yes, buying the winning drag queen buckle at the rodeo.

"There comes a time in a young gay boy's life—at 58—when your parents are gone, your childhood home is gone, and all that's left is the life you've created," Norma shared. "And I looked over and saw my husband, the love of my life for over 20 years. This life may be crazy, but it's mine. And it's beautiful."

In classic Norma fashion, she didn't hold back when reflecting on the current climate for queer communities across the country. "Don't be scared. This is Las Vegas. We're like San Francisco used to be—lots of fruits and mixed nuts. We've got over 100 languages spoken in this city. I feel safe

here. Plus, my gun's loaded and my bar's stocked," she said to a wave of laughter.

Norma highlighted the importance of visibility and building chosen family. "Every day we go out as queer people, we carry our stories. I can dress like a trucker or a queen—it's still me. And when we share our spaces, we share our voice. That's how we grow stronger."

Throughout the night, Norma gave shout-outs to many longtime friends and collaborators. "It's the people you meet along the way. It's the ones who show up, who hold space, who listen. That's what makes the difference."

As the crowd cheered and raised their glasses, it was clear that Auntie Norma isn't just a local legend—she's family. And now, with her very own day in the City of Las Vegas, that legacy is forever cemented.

Congratulations, Auntie Norma!

We extend our warmest congratulations to Auntie Norma Llyaman on receiving an official proclamation from Mayor Shelley Berkley, declaring April 1, 2025 as Auntie Norma Llyaman – The Bearded Lady of Las Vegas Day.

For over twenty years, Auntie Norma has been a pillar of strength, humor, and heart in our community. Her tireless dedication to charity, her unapologetic authenticity, and her unwavering

commitment to uplifting others have left an indelible mark on Las Vegas.

From the drag stages to the city's most meaningful causes, Norma has shown us what it means to lead with love, live out loud, and create chosen family wherever she goes.

Thank you, Auntie Norma, for being a beacon of queer joy and resilience.

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"I'm thrilled to come to Las Vegas to conduct this amazing program," Segal told QVegas Magazine. "We're bringing together the elegance of Gershwin, the cinematic storytelling of Audrey Kelly, and the drama and romance of Tchaikovsky. It's going to be a fun, emotional ride."

A Musical Life—Before Birth

Segal's musical journey began earlier than most—literally before he was born. His mother was one of the first female violinists in the New York Philharmonic, and as he puts it, "I was on stage before I was even born." He picked up the violin at age four

and soon found himself immersed in the rich world of performance, even appearing in the children's chorus at the Metropolitan Opera and touring with The Secret Garden on Broadway at just 11 years old.

"I turned 12 on the road in Detroit," he recalled. "It was amazing—Audra McDonald's first show out of Juilliard. The cast was incredible. And all the while, my mom was traveling with me, teaching me violin in hotel rooms."

These early experiences shaped not only his musical chops, but his sense of stagecraft, storytelling, and collaboration—elements that continue to influence his work on the podium.

From Performer to Conductor

Though trained as a violinist and actor, Segal's path ultimately led to the conductor's stand. He credits his time at Vassar College, where he studied a wide range of disciplines, with helping him make the leap.

"I didn't go to conservatory for undergrad because I wanted a well-rounded education," he explained. "We started a group focused on music of the last 100 years, and when the conductor graduated, I stepped in. It was my first real taste of leading a group—and I loved it."

That winding path led him to graduate studies in conducting and composition, and eventually to leadership roles with orchestras across the country. But Segal's passions don't stop at the podium. He's also a dedicated composer, reserving his summers for writing new works. "If I tried to write now while I'm studying Mozart's Requiem, I'd probably just write bad Mozart," he joked.

Orchestral Storytelling for All Ages

Segal's gift for connecting with audiences of all ages is evident in projects like The Harmony Games, an educational orchestral piece he composed to introduce young students to the families of instruments.

"It's like The Hunger Games, but musical," he laughed. "The winds, brass, strings, and percussion each 'compete' to rule the land. There's a story, math, interactivity—it's loony but engaging. And the kids love it."

Originally commissioned by the Naples Philharmonic in Florida, the piece has been performed over 50 times and continues to bring young listeners into the world of symphonic music.

A Powerhouse Program for Vegas

For his upcoming performance with the

Las Vegas Philharmonic, Segal curated a program that's as rich in contrast as it is in heart.

The evening opens with Audrey Kelly's "Vignettes of the Roaring Twenties," a whimsical and rhythmic work inspired by women's suffrage and the iconic energy of the Jazz Age. "There's the Charleston, a distillery raid, a police siren, and even Zelda Fitzgerald," he shared.

Next up is George Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F, which embodies 1920s glamour and sophistication. "Gershwin has the melody, the rhythm, the flair—it pairs perfectly with the romantic sweep of Tchaikovsky," Segal said.

The night closes with Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5, a masterwork of lush orchestration, raw emotion, and triumphant transformation. "It's been a long time—if ever—since it's been played by the Philharmonic, and I thought, 'Yes, let's do this!'" Segal said. "Tchaikovsky puts his heart on the sleeve, and the Fifth Symphony takes us on a huge journey."

The Real Las Vegas

Though this is his first time in Las Vegas, Segal isn't just sticking to the Strip. "I want to see the real Las Vegas," he said. "Whenever I visit a city, I like to walk or drive around and get a feel for the place beyond the tourist spots. I hear the Arts District downtown is amazing, and I'm really looking forward to exploring it."

Advice for the Next Generation

With Las Vegas home to rising stars at the Nevada School of the Arts and other programs, Segal had a heartfelt message for aspiring musicians:

"If you need to do this—if the arts are in your blood—go for it. But take it seriously. Practice. Study. Show up. What you see on stage is just a sliver of the work it takes to get there."

He likens musicians to athletes: "We train with our fingers, our lungs, our bodies. And every person you see up there has put in years of work to make that moment possible."

Experience It Live

Don't miss Yaniv Segal's Las Vegas Philharmonic debut on Saturday, April 12, 2025, at The Smith Center for the Performing Arts. With a program that swings from Roaring Twenties jazz to Russian Romantic grandeur, it's a night of music not to be missed.



For pianist Sara Davis Buechner, music isn't just a calling—it's a life force. And on April 12, Las Vegas will get its first in-person taste of her artistry when she makes her debut with the Las Vegas Philharmonic at the Smith Center's Reynolds Hall. Her performance of George Gershwin's iconic *Concerto in F* promises to be an unforgettable evening of jazz-infused classical brilliance, humor, passion, and profound cultural commentary—all the hallmarks of Sara's unique presence on and off the stage.

"I think the last time I was in Las Vegas was back in 2003 or 2004 for a chamber music festival," Sara says with a laugh. "But playing Reynolds Hall will be a first—and what a gorgeous venue. I love knowing it was inspired by the Hoover Dam. That blend of architecture and acoustic perfection? That's very Gershwin."

Gershwin's New York, From a Steinway in Vegas

Sara will perform Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F, a major work written just one year after the composer's explosive debut of *Rhapsody in Blue*. Premiered in 1925, this three-movement concerto marked Gershwin's formal entrance into the realm of "serious" concert music—though Sara is quick to dismantle the idea that American music ever needed approval from Europe.

"Classical music has always been thought of as European," she says. "But Gershwin flipped the script. He took everything around him—jazz clubs in Harlem, Yiddish melodies from his immigrant parents, the honks and hustle of Manhattan—and made it symphonic. He made it universal."

For Sara, the piece is deeply personal. It was her choice for the final round of the prestigious Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition in 1984—an unconventional and, at the time, controversial move.

"You didn't play Gershwin in a classical competition," she explains. "But I did, and I won. That changed everything."

The Concerto in F is full of cinematic flair and rhythmic fireworks. "The first movement is razzle-dazzle," she says. "The second is this dreamy, bluesy reverie—you can almost hear a trumpet wailing from a Manhattan fire escape. And the third? It just barrels forward. Hard as hell to play, but exhilarating."

For those who want a sneak preview, Sara recommends checking out Oscar Levant's performance in *An American in Paris*—a film that helped popularize the concerto in the 1950s. "It's worth seeing just to hear what Gershwin sounds like on the silver screen," she adds.

From Juilliard to the World: A Journey of Curiosity and Courage

Sara's story is one of brilliance forged through persistence, wit, and the belief that music should belong to everyone. She arrived in New York at 16 to study at the Juilliard School and found herself—ironically—blessed with a piano teacher who was often asleep or hungover. Left to her own devices, she dove into the school's music library.

"There were sixteen huge shelves of piano scores," she recalls. "I just started with A and went all the way to Z over two years. That experience shaped everything. It made me a great sight-reader, yes—but more importantly, it opened me up to a universe of composers no one else was playing."

From Icelandic composers to early American women like Dana Suesse, Sara built a repertoire that defies borders and expectations. "That's the real DEI," she says with a smile. "Getting to know everything you don't know."

A Visible Voice for Transgender Musicians

As one of the most visible transgender classical musicians in the world, Sara's career has also been a powerful platform for advocacy. Her transition in the late 1990s was not just personal—it was a public act of courage in an era when transgender visibility in the arts was almost nonexistent.

"I remember the moment it hit me," she says. "I wasn't just transitioning privately. I'd be walking out on stage. Taking a bow. Giving interviews. It wasn't just about being me—it was about being seen."

That visibility came with responsibilities she didn't ask for—but embraced. "I had the privilege of knowing Larry Kramer and Roger McFarland, who helped found the Gay Men's Health Crisis. They taught me how to use a platform wisely. And Roger,

bless him, would absolutely let me have it if I screwed up. He reminded me that I wasn't just representing myself—I was representing an entire community."

Sara believes every trans person in the public eye becomes a de facto spokesperson, even when it's unfair. "But it's part of the price of the ticket," she says. "When a young trans person sees me on stage, they say 'there's someone who's walked in my shoes and they've done it, that means I can do it.'"

Classical Music Isn't Just for the Elite

Sara is no stranger to challenging stereotypes—not only about gender, but about classical music itself. "There's this idea that it's boring, elitist, for old people," she says. "But good music is good music. It's fun. It's passionate. It's human."

She's performed in schools and underserved communities around the country, introducing Beethoven to students who had never heard a live piano before. "I'd tell them about how Beethoven's dad used to beat him, and how the music expresses rage and resilience. You should see their eyes when they realize that music can be about them. That's the key—connection."

Her critique of the classical music world is blunt but fair: "Too many orchestras still cater to donors and familiarity. They're afraid of change. But change is where life happens."

At 65, Sara says she still practices and performs daily. "Playing piano is physical. It keeps me in shape from the waist up at least!" she laughs. "Sure, my New Year's resolution was to hit the gym more—but thank God for strong wrists."

Las Vegas Debut: A Moment Years in the Making

April 12 marks a full-circle moment for Sara: her first solo performance in Las Vegas, a city known more for roulette wheels than Rachmaninoff.

But she's thrilled to bring her brand of intellectual sparkle, deep musicality, and quick wit to the Reynolds Hall stage.

"It's funny—I've played the Vegas casinos, but only at the craps table," she quips. "This time, I'm playing Gershwin. I think I'll win bigger."

Whether you come for the dazzling piano solos, the moving personal journey, or the opportunity to witness a cultural icon in her element, Sara Davis Buechner's performance with the Las Vegas Philharmonic is not to be missed.

And as she prepares to sit at the Steinway and channel Gershwin's New York through her own fingertips, Sara offers one final reminder: "Music isn't a job—it's a passion."

And if she can share even a little bit of that with someone else, especially in a city as electric as Las Vegas, well—that's the jackpot.



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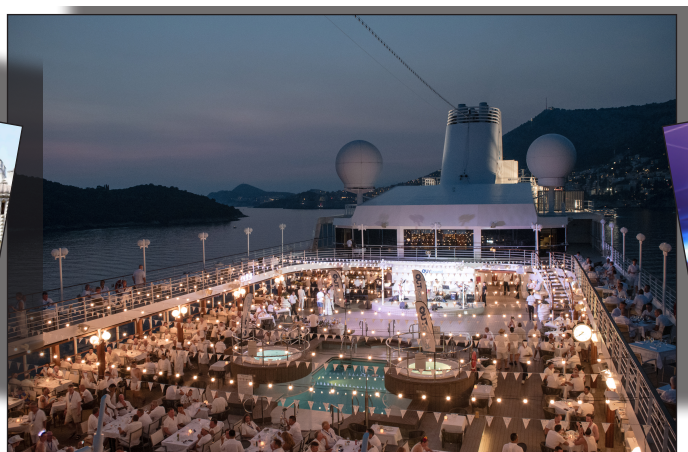


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thecenterlv.org

ACLU
aclunv.org

ADL
lasvegas.adl.org

ALCOHOLICS TOGETHER
alcoholicstogetherlasvegas.com

BEARS LAS VEGAS
bears.lv.org

COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER OF SOUTHERN NEVADA
cccfsn.org

HENDERSON PRIDE
hhendersonpride.org

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
hrc.org

IMPERIAL ROYALE SOVEREIGN COURT OF THE DESERT EMPIRE
irscdei.org

LAMBDA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
lambdalv.com

LAS VEGAS MEN'S CHORUS
lvmenschorus.org

LAS VEGAS PRIME TIMERS
lasvegasprimetimers.com

LEATHER UNIFORM CLUB OF LAS VEGAS (LUC OF LV)
lucoflv.com

LEGACY COUNSELING
legacycounselingandworkforceconnections.com

MAMA DRAGONS
mamadragons.org

NEVADA GAY RODEO ASSOCIATION
ngra.com

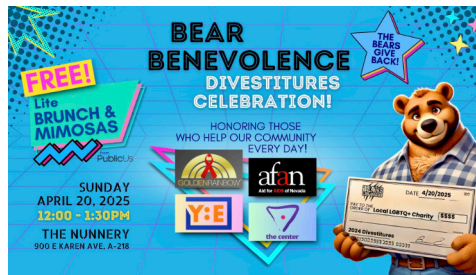
THE PRIDE TREE
thepridetree.lv.com

SILVER STATE EQUALITY
silverstateequality.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER QUEER SOCIETY
snapiqs.org

YOUNG: EQUAL
youngequal.org

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THE ARLENE COOPER COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
thecenterlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)
aidshealth.org

FARABI WELLNESS CENTER
hpvlv.com

HUNTRIDGE FAMILY CLINIC
huntridgfamilyclinic.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTH DISTRICT
southernnevadahealthdistrict.org

UMC
umcsn.com



HIV Resources

AID FOR AIDS OF NEVADA (AFAN)
afanlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)
aidshealth.org

FARABI WELLNESS CENTER
hpvlv.com

GOLDEN RAINBOW
goldenrainbow.org

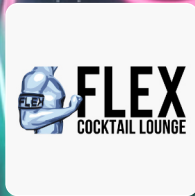
HORIZON RIDGE WELLNESS CLINIC
hrc.lv.org

SIN SITY SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE
sinsitysisters.org



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REPLAY

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MEET & GREET
12:30 AT GIPSY

DOORS OPEN AT 10 PM

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NYMPHIA WIND
WINNER OF RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE S16

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12:30 AT GIPSY

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SUNDAY
1:00 AM IN THE FRONT ROOM

FRIDAYS

FETISH

SHOWTIMES
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1:30 AM MAIN ROOM

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2 AM IN THE DREAM LOUNGE
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ENCORE SUNDAYS

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