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2018 LGBT EVENTS IN PHILADELPHIA

Bearded Ladies, Bigger qFLIX And A Philly-centric Rufus Wainwright Concert Mark The Year Ahead

PHILADELPHIA, December 4, 2017 — Since holding the nation's first major LGBT rights protest some 50 years ago, Philadelphia has continued to prove that it's still one of the best destinations for LGBT travelers to get their history straight and their nightlife gay.

The city offers a full calendar of events in 2018, including an expanded fifth-annual **qFLIX Philadelphia** film festival, a **Fringe Festival** rounded out by a special **Bearded Ladies Cabaret** performance, as well as concert featuring both **Rufus Wainwright** and the **Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus**. These are the icing atop the city and region's annual pride celebrations, weekly bashes in bars across the Gayborhood and cutting-edge performing arts with LGBT twists. Here's a look at the best events of 2018, including a rundown by night, week and month, in the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection.

National Gathering:

- Mazzoni Center's **Philadelphia Trans Wellness Conference**, previously the Philadelphia Trans-Health Conference, is packed with four days of activities and informational booths aimed at educating transgender individuals and their allies on issues of health and wellbeing. The event brings in 7,000 attendees and includes high-profile speakers and more than 250 workshops around the city. Various locations. **August 2-4.** (215) 563-0652, mazzonicenter.org

Annual Events:

- **qFLIX Philadelphia** welcomes independent LGBT filmmakers from around the globe to screen more than 70 films and attend celebrity-studded events. New in 2018: Plays & Players Theatre as headquarters and seven days of screenings. **March 19-25.** Various locations. qflixphilly.com
- Diners nosh for a great cause during **Dining Out for Life**. Close to 200 restaurants around the city donate 33% of every breakfast, lunch and dinner bill to Action Wellness, a nonprofit organization that helps people living with chronic illnesses, including HIV/AIDS in Greater Philadelphia. The day also includes a food truck pop-up on **April 14** in the heart of the Gayborhood at lunchtime and, new this year, a beer garden in partnership with Yards Brewing Company. **April 19.** Various locations. diningoutforlife.com/philadelphia
- **Philadelphia Black Pride** is five day's worth of activities aimed at spotlighting and empowering the LGBT African-American community. Taking place across the city, timed to coincide with the Penn Relays, events run the gamut from discussion panels and happy hour mixers to concerts, art shows and community picnics. **April 24-29.** Aloft Philadelphia Downtown, 101 N. Broad Street, (215) 607-2020, phillyblackpride.org

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- Now in its 15th year, the three-day **New Hope Celebrates' Pride Festival** is known for a Pride Parade that brings the world's largest rainbow flag from the New Jersey side of the Delaware River in Lambertville to the New Hope & Lambertville Bridge to New Hope, Bucks County, for a fair featuring international entertainers and family fun. **Festival: May 18-20, parade: May 19.** newhopecelebrates.com
- The **Philadelphia Dyke March** draws hundreds for a proud march through Center City that spotlights Philly's lesbian community and their allies. The rally traditionally starts the day before Pride in Kahn Park, where a stage is set for speeches and a variety of performances and where the procession steps off. **June 10.** 328 S. 11th Street, facebook.com/philadelphiadykemarch
- The 30th annual **PrideDay LGBT Parade and Festival** begins with a colorful procession from the Gayborhood to Penn's Landing, where a celebration ensues. Revelers can look forward to live music, DJs, food, drink and other ways to fete International Gay and Lesbian Pride Month along the Delaware River Waterfront. **June 11.** (215) 875-9288, phillygaypride.org
- Some of the hottest guys in the region descend upon Philadelphia for **The Boys of Summer**, Philly Gay Calendar's weekend-long bash that leads up to a steamy swimsuit party at Voyeur nightclub. Other weekend highlights include a pool party, a Sunday barbecue and scantily clad lifeguards galore. **July, date TBA.** Various locations. phillygaycalendar.com/bos
- The Phillies invite all members of the LGBT community, as well as family, friends and groups to celebrate the region's LGBT culture at the MLB club's annual **Pride Night at Citizens Bank Park.** **Summer, date TBA.** 1 Citizens Bank Way, (215) 463-6000, phillygaydays.com
- Philadelphia celebrates National Coming Out Day with **OutFest**, a block party in the heart of the Gayborhood that's made up of drag shows, games, bar crawls and shopping. Philadelphia's celebration is the largest Coming Out Day street festival in the world. **October 7.** (215) 875-9288, phillygaypride.org

Performing Arts:

- Every second Thursday of the month, Philly's self-proclaimed tallest, hairiest drag queen puts on a rowdy cabaret above Crêperie Beau Monde in the lovely French-inspired watering hole, L'Etage. **The Martha Graham Cracker Cabaret** finds the golden-voiced diva belting covers of everyone from Whitney to Bowie; local LGBT artists often open the show. 624 S. 6th Street, (215) 592-0656, creperie-beaumonde.com
- Openly gay performance artist John Jarboe hosts the monthly **Get Pegged Cabaret** at La Peg. The late-night, uncensored affair always features a new lineup of mostly LGBT performers, including Bearded Ladies Cabaret founder Jarboe, and takes a nod from original French and German cabarets from the turn of the century. **Performances take place monthly.** La Peg, 140 N. Columbus Boulevard, (215) 375-7744, fringearts.com
- Always provocative dance troupe **Brian Sanders' JUNK** throws their annual Snowball soiree. The fundraising extravaganza features performances by the troupe, dancing and decadent beverages and desserts. **February 18. Venue TBD.** 1901 S. 9th Street, (267) 406-6080, briansandersjunk.com
- Popular gay sex columnist Dan Savage brings the 13th annual **Hump! Film Festival** to FringeArts, celebrating sex-positivity with 20 adult indie-film shorts. The two-day event is part of a 35-city tour. **May 18-19.** 140 N. Columbus Boulevard, (215) 413-9006, humpfilmfest.com

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- Winter and spring find **Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus** especially busy. They first join Rufus Wainwright for a special finale performance at Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (**January 19**). Next, they head to Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion for a musical performance of the novel *Two Boys Kissing* (**March 24**). A Pride Tour has the chorus hitting the road to Jenkintown, Devon and University City. To cap the season, the chorus takes part in the *Choirs ROCK! Concert* at the Wells Fargo Center (**May 23**)—in what aims to be the largest choral concert ever held. Various locations. (215) 731-9230, pgmc.org
- Soft and sultry songbird—truly, a modern diva for LGBT fans—Lana Del Rey takes her *Lust For Life* tour to South Philadelphia's Wells Fargo Center, accompanied by Kali Uchis. The tour's namesake album earned the songstress her second Grammy nomination, for Best Pop Vocal Album. **January 21**. 3601 S. Broad Street, (215) 336-3600, livenation.com
- Darrell Grand Moultrie, a choreographer for Beyoncé, world-premieres a new work as part of the contemporary dance troupe BalletX's **Spring Series 2018**, now back at the newly renovated Wilma Theater. BalletX's **Summer Series 2018** promises another world premiere by celebrated out choreographer Matthew Neenan. **Spring: March 7-18; Summer: July 11-22**. The Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street, (215) 546-7824, balletx.org
- Old City's Arden Theatre mounts the stunningly scored Broadway smash **Fun Home**, a musical adaptation of Alison Bechdel's 2006 graphic memoir of the same name—and the first Broadway musical with a lesbian protagonist. A coming-out story in reverse, the story looks back at its main character's life in Central Pennsylvania and perspective on her father, through adult eyes. **May 17-June 17**. 40 N. 2nd Street, (215) 922-1122, ardentheatre.org
- After more than 15 years, country-gay icon Shania Twain released her brand-new studio album, *Shania Now*, in 2017—and now takes the album on tour, her first since 2015. Expect a performance of new singles "Life's About to Get Good" and "We Got Something They Don't," but also obvious crowd-pleasing anthems "Man! I Feel Like a Woman!" and "That Don't Impress Me Much." **July 12**. 3601 S. Broad Street, (215) 336-3600, livenation.com
- Philadelphia experiences two weeks of artistic pleasure during the annual **Fringe Festival**. Avant-garde performance meets street theater at venues throughout the city. The schedule is always jam-packed with LGBT-centric events, including a popular festival-closing performance by Martha Graham Cracker and provocative works from out choreographers Brian Sanders JUNK and Gunnar Montana. This year will feature *The Poison Cookie Jar*, a full-scale history of cabaret performed by the Bearded Ladies. **September 6-23**. Various locations. (215) 413-9006, fringearts.com
- Last year, Opera Philadelphia kicked off its season by debuting **Festival O**, also known as O17, with 12 days of more than 25 star-studded performances. Among the packed houses for world premieres and site-specific works were hundreds of LGBT opera fans. The success of O17 promises even more drama by design for O18. **September TBD**. Various locations, (215) 732-8400, operaphila.org

Monthly LGBT Gatherings:

- Every month at Tabu, local lesbian-focused party producer Stimulus presents **Back 2 Basics**. The popular party packs the bar with ladies of all persuasions for drink specials, live DJs spinning and an excellent night of dancing. The event spawns special one-off parties throughout the year during events and holidays like Pride, New Year's Eve and OutFest. 200 S. 12th Street, (215) 964-9675, facebook.com/stimulusparty

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- Each month, grizzly and nimble-footed men load a suitcase with pasties and props for an over-the-top burlesque performance as part of Tabu's **Bearlesque** series, held upstairs every first Friday. Though it's become a multicity phenomenon, Philly lays claim to the original. 200 S. 12th Street, (215) 964-9675, tabuphilly.com
- Northern Liberties' whiskey-centric, Southern-infused Bourbon & Branch dedicates one Sunday a month to **Drag Your A** To Brunch**, an upstairs event featuring Brittany Lynn and the Philly Drag Mafia, plus twerk-off competitions, mad-libs and lip-sync battles. Talk about Sunday funday. 705 N. 2nd Street, (215) 238-0660, bourbonandbranchphilly.com
- Gamers grab their daubers and head straight to **Gay Bingo**, a 20-years-running monthly fundraiser hosted by hilarious drag queens known as the BVDs (Bingo Verifying Divas) at The Gershman Y. Themes on the agenda for 2018: Mardi Gras and Studio 54. All proceeds benefit the AIDS Fund. 401 S. Broad Street, (215) 731-9255, aidsfundphilly.org
- South Philly's Dolphin Tavern hosts Philly's first and only all Beyoncé, Rihanna, Nicki Minaj dance party. **Holy Trinity** DJs Dame Luz and Wassup Gina spin tunes from the divas' catalogues once a month on the dive bar's neon-lit dance floor. 1539 S. Broad Street, (215) 278-7950, facebook.com/holytrinityparty
- One of Philly's sexiest LGBT-themed ragers, **NSFW Dance Party** continues in 2018, starting with the return of the popular Thermal Party in February. **Dates and venues TBD.** facebook.com/NSFWparty
- **Our Night Out** gives LGBT professionals the chance to network with colleagues and friends at monthly happy hours all over the city. facebook.com/ournightout
- Similar to QOTA, **Out in Fishtown** is a monthly LGBT-centric happy hour taking place in bars around the trendy northern neighborhood. The group also teams up with event organizers around the city to spotlight their neighborhood's understated LGBT community or fundraise for local nonprofits like The Attic Youth Center. **Dates and venues TBD.** facebook.com/OUTinFishtown
- Organized by neighborhood resident and Boys of Summer planner Steve McCann, **OUT in Point Breeze** unites the southwest Philadelphia neighborhood's queer community for casual monthly meetups at venues such as American Sardine Bar and South Philadelphia Taproom. **Dates and venues TBD.** facebook.com/outpointbreeze
- **QOTA** (Queers on the Avenue) lures LGBT social butterflies to South Philly for a popular monthly mixer along East Passyunk Avenue. The event takes place at a different venue each month, but always features light bites and alcohol. Summertime gatherings are especially vibrant, when crowds spill onto the street, and the holiday party is exceptionally festive. **Dates and venues TBD.** facebook.com/epaqota

LGBT Weekly Events:

- South Street dive bar **Bob & Barbara's** draws a diverse crowd for its legendary Thursday Night Drag Show, the city's longest-running drag show, starring the entertaining Miss Lisa. Adding to the fun: the famous "Citywide Special," a can of Pabst Blue Ribbon and a shot of Jim Beam for just \$3.50. Show starts at 10 p.m. 1509 South Street, (215) 545-4511, bobandbarbaras.com
- **Boxers Philadelphia** hosts events throughout the week, like an upstairs underwear party on Thursdays, free pool and \$6 mimosas and bloody Marys on Sundays, a free-to-play Texas hold 'em night on Tuesdays and a nightly happy hour that runs from 6 to 8 p.m. 1330 Walnut Street, (215) 735-2977, facebook.com/boxersphl

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- Those looking for a low-key night of drinking outside the Gayborhood head to **Stir Lounge** in Rittenhouse Monday through Friday, with daily happy hour specials. On Thursday evenings, the vibe picks up for Stirsdays, when attendees slurp down \$1 drinks and dance to live DJs until 2 a.m. 1705 Chancellor Street, (215) 732-2700, stirphilly.com
- Philly's original gay sports bar **Tabu** inspires friendly competition among patrons at popular Quizzo nights on Mondays and Wednesdays. Those events offer food and drink specials and catty banter by hosts drag queen Aurora Whorealis and comedian Connor Michalchuk. Upstairs offers a different vibe most any night of the week with a creative lineup of events—from singing and drag competitions to burlesque shows. 200 S. 12th Street, (215) 964-9675, tabuphilly.com
- Songbirds flock to piano bar **Tavern On Camac** for Showtune Sundays, which broadcasts clips from popular stage and movie musicals and gives patrons a chance to perform for the crowd. The piano bar stays buzzing all week, but with lighter crowds—an excellent option for those looking to try out a song in a more intimate setting. Although dancers tend to bop upstairs to a jam-packed floor on Friday and Saturday nights; early Friday evenings mean an altogether folksy atmosphere for country line dancing. 243 S. Camac Street, (215) 545-0900, tavernoncamac.com
- Lesbian owned-and-loved **Toasted Walnut** hosts happy hour Tuesday through Sunday, a “Live on Walnut” music series showcases live performers three times per month and DJs every Friday and Saturday night. When there's a big game on, guests stop by to check it out on the venue's 70-inch TVs. 1316 Walnut Street, (215) 546-8888, facebook.com/toastedwalnutphiladelphia
- Every day, **Woody's** hosts a happy hour in its gorgeous Globar. On weekends, the bar's upstairs dance floor packs in the boys for DJs and primo cruising. Those looking for a more intimate dancing experience can try Latin and salsa lessons every Thursday night at 10 p.m. 202 S. 13th Street, (215) 545-1893, woodysbars.com

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