OUT MONTCLAIR ANNOUNCES STAR-STUDDED TALENT LINEUP FOR THE FIRST-EVER MONTCLAIR PRIDE FESTIVAL

NEW JERSEY NATIVE AND COMEDIAN JUDY GOLD ANNOUNCED AS EMCEE


(Montclair, NJ - May 2, 2022) – Out Montclair, a nonprofit, volunteer-run organization established in 2021 to provide community, support, and solidarity for LGBTQIA+ people and host of the inaugural Montclair Pride festival, is announcing the first special guests and entertainers for the main stage at its inaugural Montclair Pride on Bloomfield Avenue between Church and Park in downtown Montclair on Saturday, June 11th, 2022.

Emmy award-winning comedian and Union County native Judy Gold will emcee the festivities from the main stage following a ribbon cutting by local officials and a kick off by School of Rock. Rep. Donald Payne Jr., State Senator Nia Gill, Montclair Council Member Peter Yacobellis (also Out Montclair’s President) and the Mayor of Montclair Sean Spiller are among the local elected officials who will rally the crowd. Performers include the recent Broadway cast of “Jagged Little Pill,” Dyllón Burnside from “Pose,” as well as Felipe Rose, original member of The Village People leading the crowd in singing “YMCA.” Black Trans activist Miss Peppermint, best known from “RuPaul’s Drag Race”, will perform a set too.

The festival main stage will also feature a special performance by Montclair local and Broadway legend, Laura Benanti, an appearance by trans activist, supermodel and New Jersey native Carmen Carrera, Maplewood native Randi Driscoll performing “What Matters,” the official tribute song to the late Matthew Shepard, out pro baseball player and country singer Bryan Ruby, the artist J-Line and several more to be announced.

As previously announced, Betty Who is the featured musical artist at the first-ever The Montclair Pride Concert at the Wellmont Theater with Fab the Duo and another
soon-to-be-announced singer, as supporting artists and others, Saturday night, June 11th, at the Wellmont after the Pride Festival. Tickets for that event are on sale now here.

Out Montclair is also accepting applications for local and regional performers for the School of Rock Stage, sponsored by Summit Health, Montclair Local and the Bravitas Group which will be situated on Park St. near the YMCA. These local voices will help represent Montclair Pride 2022’s theme: “Be You. Be Heard.” Applications are being accepted through May 6th via Out Montclair’s website.

“I’m beyond excited about each of these individuals and the many others who we’ll announce in the future. Each of them, with many from right here in the Garden State, have incredible stories and have contributed so meaningfully to the broader movement for justice and equality in this country.” said Out Montclair President Peter Yacobellis. “Through remarks and performance, I’m excited to have all of this talent reinforcing our theme of ‘Be You. Be Heard.’ and joining LGBTQIA+ people and our allies from all around the region,” he added.

“Where else but Montclair would a 6-foot-3 Jewish lesbian from Clark be the star of this historic occasion,” Judy Gold joked. “There’s nowhere in the world I’d rather be than with my New Jersey family in this gay Mayberry, celebrating Pride with everyone in the beautiful LGBTQIA+ community. Montclair, you’re gorgeous and you know it and I love you anyway. See you in June,” said Montclair Pride emcee, actress and comedian Judy Gold.

Members of the public interested in joining the festivities in Downtown Montclair on June 11th are encouraged to express their interest in attending through the Facebook event located here.

About Judy Gold
Judy Gold is an American stand-up comedian, actress, podcaster, television writer and producer. She won two Daytime Emmy Awards for her work as a writer and producer on The Rosie O’Donnell Show. She has also been involved in many projects in various roles, including the television series All-American Girl and HBO at the Multiplex segments where she asks humorous questions of unexpecting moviegoers.

About Jagged Little Pill
The Tony® Award-winning Jagged Little Pill is a jukebox musical with music by Alanis Morissette and Glen Ballard, lyrics by Morissette, and book by Diablo Cody, with additional music by Michael Farrell and Guy Sigsworth. The musical is inspired by the 1995 album of the same name by Morissette and deals with pain, healing, and empowerment. It premiered at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on May 5, 2018, directed by Diane Paulus.

The show began previews on Broadway in November 2019, and opened on December 5, 2019, and closed on December 17, 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the 74th Tony Awards, Jagged Little Pill won two awards on 15 nominations, the most nominations of any show of the 2019–2020 season. It also won the Grammy Award for Best Musical Theater Album.

About Peppermint
Peppermint is a trailblazing actress, singer, DJ, reality star, and activist who defies limitations. A longtime key figure in queer nightlife, Peppermint’s star rose thanks to her smashing success as the first out trans contestant on Rupaul’s Drag Race where she finished as unner-up in one of the series’ most-talked-about finales. Soon after, her talent led her to become the first trans woman to originate a principal role on Broadway in the hit musical Head Over Heels.
Peppermint has served on GLAAD’s Board of Directors since 2020, working to accelerate acceptance of LGBTQ people through accurate and respectful representation in the media.

About Laura Benanti
Tony® Award-winner and five-time Tony® Award nominee Laura Benanti is a highly celebrated stage and screen actress. Benanti can most recently be seen in Amy Schumer’s LIFE & BETH, which premiered on Hulu on March 18. The series follows Beth (Schumer) whose life changes forever following a sudden incident when she is forced to engage with her past. Through flashbacks to her teen self, Beth starts to learn how she became who she is and who she wants to become. We follow her journey towards building a bigger, bolder and more authentic life, learning to express herself and living in an intentional way. A trip down memory lane is a strong source of trauma, comedy and moving forward. Benanti stars as Beth’s mother and plays a pivotal role in Beth’s life and who she is today. As of April 2022, LIFE & BETH has been renewed for a second season.

Recently announced, Benanti is set to recur in the second season of HBO’s period drama, THE GILDED AGE, created, written and executive produced by DOWNTON ABBEY creator Julian Fellowes. She plays Susan Blane, a very beautiful, glamorous woman living in Newport, where she’s undergoing a major renovation on her home, who is recently widowed by a rich, dull man many years her senior.

Benanti joins a formidable roster including Christine Baranski, Cynthia Nixon, Audra McDonald, Nathan Lane, Michael Cerveris, Katie Finneran, Celia Keenan-Bolger, Debra Monk, Donna Murphy, Kelli O’Hara, and Robert Sean Leonard.

She can currently be seen in HBO Max’s GOSSIP GIRL reboot. Benanti previously starred in Netflix’s WORTH, opposite Michael Keaton, Stanley Tucci and Amy Ryan, for which she’s received significant praise, with Deadline hailing her performance as “awards-worthy.” Based on true events, WORTH is a moving reminder of the power of empathy and the value of human connection, with Benanti’s character at the crux. Additionally, Benanti reprised her role in the final season of the hit TV series YOUNGER which premiered April 2021, starred opposite Billy Crystal and Tiffany Haddish in the comedy film HERE TODAY which was released May 2021, and appeared in Lin-Manuel Miranda’s awards-favorite, TICK, TICK…BOOM!, the adaptation of the autobiographical Off-Broadway show written by Johnathon Larson (Rent).

Benanti’s other credits include appearing as a guest star on the Showtime series CINEMA TOAST created by Jeff Baena and produced by the Duplass Brothers as well as the highly anticipated variety show ZIWE featuring comedian Ziwe Fumudoh. Additionally, Benanti created and executive produced the HBO MAX special, HOMESCHOOL MUSICAL: CLASS OF 2020, co-authored a children’s board book M is for MAMA (and also Merlot): A Modern Mom’s ABC’s, co-written with Metropolitan Opera Star Kate Mangiameli and released a self-titled studio album for Sony Music Masterworks. The album is comprised of contemporary covers, jazz influenced torch songs and comedic takes on beloved favorites.

About Dyllón Burnside
A multi-hyphenate performer, songwriter and creator, Dyllón Burnside is best known to audiences for his starring role as ‘Ricky’ on FX and Ryan Murphy’s Emmy nominated FX series, “Pose.” He recently starred in AMERICAN HORROR STORIES and will confidentially next be seen in Ryan Murphy’s Netflix limited series MONSTER, opposite Evan Peters.

Dyllón first captivated audiences with his Broadway debut, starring in 2014’s Holler if Ya Hear Me, a hip-hop musical inspired by the music and lyrics of Tupac Shakur. He currently stars on Broadway in the new production of Thoughts of a Colored Man.

The Pensacola, Florida native began performing professionally at the age of 12 as a member of the Hip-Hop/R&B boy band 3D. He has toured the country performing original music alongside folks like
Stevie Wonder and Rihanna in such venues as Madison Square Garden and the Nokia Theater. Burnside has performed at the US Opens Men's final as well as headlined and produced a sold-out benefit concert for GLSEN at the Cutting Room in New York City. He has released 2 singles ‘Heaven’ and ‘Silence’ both of which gained momentum on R&B charts. He is currently in the process of putting out his first EP.

In addition to his performance work, Burnside is also passionate about producing quality arts content that promotes social change. His work as a producer includes film, theatrical and musical events that serve and/or shed light on marginalized communities. He has been honored by GLAAD and the Human Rights Campaign for his continuing dedication to LGBTQ+ rights. Dyllón recently hosted “Prideland,” a one-hour special and short-form digital series for PBS that received a GLAAD Award nomination and won the Emmy award for Outstanding Short Form Daytime Non-Fiction Program.

**About Felipe Rose**

Multi-Platinum & Gold Record recording artist, motivational speaker and 4x Native American Award Winner Felipe Rose is currently embarking on a solo tour promoting his latest release “Going Back To My Roots.”

Following his 40-year career with the Village People, Felipe Rose is presently at work on an autobiography detailing his time with the group, the heyday of Disco and life as a gay biracial Native-American.

To date, Felipe and the Village People have sold over 100 million records. According to Felipe, one of his most memorable career highlights was the group receiving a ‘Star’ on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and as a Solo artist being inducted into the Native American Music Awards ‘Hall Of Fame’.

“Going Back To My Roots” was originally written and recorded by legendary songwriter Lamont Dozier in 1977. Felipe’s version features an opening Native prayer from Wanbil Ceya (Native American Music Award nominee), Jan Michael ‘Looking Wolf’ performing Native Flute & Native Chant and Rap by Native American Hip Hop Artist (Native American Music Award Winner) Sten Joddi.

**About Randi Driscoll**

Randi Driscoll is an award winning singer/songwriter and actress. Randi’s original music is a blend of piano driven singer/songwriter music with elements of pop, country and jazz. Her music has been featured in film, television, and a commercial directed by Spike Lee, in which Randi also appeared. Her performance credits include appearances at Lincoln Center, Place des Arts (Montreal), The Japan Center for the Arts, The Ford Theatre and numerous universities, performance halls, nightclubs and cabarets.

Randi’s original song “What Matters” has been featured in several stage productions, films and documentaries, and proceeds from the song support the Matthew Shepard Foundation, an anti-hate charity. The choral version of Randi’s song has been performed by over fifty choirs internationally, and has been featured at New York’s Carnegie Hall and the Disney Hall in California. A film about the making of Randi’s song “What Matters” has earned several awards and the song itself was named one of the top Pride Anthems, by the Advocate Magazine.

**About Bryan Ruby**

Bryan Ruby is a trailblazing professional baseball player and rising country music artist based in Nashville, Tennessee. In September of 2021 he became the only active professional baseball player to come out as gay, and his story was featured in USA Today as well as 100+ media outlets around the world including CBS, Yahoo, Bleacher Report and Teen Vogue.
As a songwriter, Bryan has penned songs that have appeared on the Texas Country Top 50 chart and the iTunes Country Top 25 (#16), and songs he has written have been featured on both Huffington Post and People Magazine. As an artist, he won season 7 of the talent-search competition Nashville Rising Song, and is preparing for the release of his debut EP in 2022.

Also in 2022, Bryan will be the subject of a feature-length documentary directed by award winning filmmaker Clay Westervelt (Life In The Doghouse, Miss You Can Do It), which will focus on his underdog path through the traditionalist worlds of baseball and country music. It will also chronicle the founding of his first-of-its kind charity, Proud To Be In Baseball, which supports and encourages LGBTQ youth in the sport.

More than anything, Bryan hopes to write music that “speaks to kids who feel like he did at 14,” when his love for baseball and country music seemed at odds with the secrets he kept hidden away.

About Carmen Carrera
As a featured model, Carmen has worked with PUMA and has walked shows at New York City Fashion Week and Miami Swim Week. In fact, she was the first transgender model to ever walk at Miami Swim Week. Her fans are very passionate, creating a petition for her to be the first transgender Victoria Secret Model, which went viral creating international media attention. In a very special project “Show Girl,” Carmen was photographed by the legendary Steven Meisel for a spread in W Magazine. She also did a special project with HBO creating Transgender Awareness in Latin America for the show “Outpost” and was the face of the New York City Health Department’s #PlaySure Campaign.

Other recent highlights include Carmen partnering with Christina Aguilera performing at Radio City Music Hall and hosting events at the Sundance Film Festival for AT&T and at NYC Fashion Week for Fashion News Live on Amazon Prime. Carmen spoke at the Iowa Safe Schools Governor’s Conference, which is the largest LGBTQ Youth Conference in the country and was the special celebrity host for the Equality California Awards in San Francisco.

Carmen continues to be advocate for many great causes, including Human Rights, HIV Prevention, and Discrimination against Transgender Women.

About J-Line
In the past few years, his music has garnered over 1 million streams and close to 2 million Youtube views. With a synth electro-pop sound that mirrors the brightness of the late 80's/early 90s, J-LINE makes the underground music scene feel alive again - with an electrifying twist. An artist with a cause, J-LINE’s Anti-Bullying campaign has been seen by over 1 million people nationwide and encourages young people to take pride in who they are and stand up to bullying.

ABOUT MONTCLAIR PRIDE
The Montclair Pride festival, hosted by Out Montclair, will raise awareness and strengthen ties in our community and among all LGBTQ+ people and allies in the region, as well as provide a celebration filled with art, culture, food, music and live performances to uplift LGBTQ+ people, issues and history. Montclair Pride will be held Saturday, June 11th, in downtown Montclair.
Judy Gold
Photo credit: Justine Ungaro
ALANIS MORISSETTE’S
jagged
little pill
THE MUSICAL

Dyllón Burnside