

The Men of Fall ... and Why We Like Them!

By Rob Jackson, Pride Entertainment Features

What is "sexy"?

Sex appeal does not necessarily mean having the "perfect" body and the "perfect smile" ... and its not based on a youthful appearance or age. In fact many of these men are well into or past their 40's (as is this writer!)

"Sexy" is actually an all encompassing attitude that is a mix of the right amount of style and talent; combined with intelligence and ambition ... And if you add a sense of compassion and a passion about their chosen work you have a perfect combination that makes someone like me want to melt.

Each of the men featured in this issue are sexy in their own way. Sexy with words, with music, with their stage presence and in many other ways! Not all of these entertainers are gay, but what each has is an appeal to our community based more on their body of work than their bodies.



Colton Ford is a former porn star who has made the transition away from adult films back to his original career choice, and onto our cover. With "*Signed, Sealed Delivered*", his chart-topping duet with dance diva Pepper Mashay, he successfully made the transition from porn to clubland, a journey which was chronicled in the documentary film "*Naked Fame*" for Here Films. Soon Ford will launch his debut album *Tug of War*, whose lead single *The Way You Love Me* has already hit the charts. Ford is a standout, proving that in a youth-obsessed culture such as ours ... that 40 is not too old to begin anew!

Why we like him ... One of only a few former porn stars to formally make the transition into another entertainment field, Colton combines talent, with raw sex appeal, masculinity, and the ambition to take his career into an entirely new direction.

(Read Interview [HERE](#))

Reed McGowan is in top form as a much-in-demand DJ who has spun at Dore Alley, Folsom Street Fair and some of the other well-known venues on the club circuit. But it is as a remixer and recording artist that he is now making people talk.

His debut single "American Idle" melds political commentary with a club beat and delivers a journey for the feet and for the intellect. McGowan will be performing the single and premiering its follow-up single "Fight The People" this September 30th at San Francisco's Folsom Street Fair event.

Why we like him ... McGowan brings a powerful mix of political ideology and liberalism back to dance music with his powerhouse anthem "American Idle."

(Read Interview [HERE](#))





Michael Rupert, first burst onto the Broadway scene in the Tony-Award nominated musical *The Happy Time*. Nominated for another Tony Award for his role as Marvin in *Falsettos*, he is also an accomplished writer and director for the stage. Currently he is starring as "Callahan" in the hit musical *Legally Blonde* opposite Laura Bell Bundy and is one of the featured interviews in this Men of Fall issue

Why we like him ... Almost 40 years after his Broadway debut Rupert is still delivering powerhouse performances on stage, on record and behind the scenes as director, composer and writer.

(Read Interview [HERE](#))

Photo Left: Michael Rupert as "Callahan" in "*Legally Blonde: The Musical*"

Lee Lessack with his singing partners Brian Lane Green and Johnnie Rodgers (and pianist John Boswell) comprises the cabaret and recording act 3 Men ... and a Baby Grand.

An accomplished vocalist in his own right, Lessack became a winner/nominee of a GLAMA award for his debut recording *I Know You By Heart*. He is also the owner of LML Music, an independent record label featuring a roster of some of the hottest cabaret talents, male, female, and group, several of whom are also included in this "Men of Fall" issue.

Why we like him ... The combination of his award winning baritone, his knowledge of music and his flair and showmanship makes him a winner!

For More Info on Lee Lessack:

- [Talkin Broadway Interview](#)
- His [MySpace Page](#)
- His [Music Label](#)



Ari Gold is this issues fourth interview subject. Gold is an R&B vocalist, Jewish, and openly gay in an entertainment world where the three don't always mesh. His third solo project combines R&B with social commentary and is descriptive of his life experiences and ideologies providing for the listener an enjoyable and informative listening experience.

Why We Like Him ... Gold is unabashedly unashamed about being gay, and isn't willing to compromise his self-respect in exchange for major label success. His intelligent descriptions of gay experiences and culture provide a window of understanding for his str8 fans, and provides the potential to educate and to entertain us all.

(Read Interview [HERE](#))

The Men of Fall ... and Why We Like Them! (continued)



Justin Hayford

was born in Rochester NY into a family with musical chops going back at least three generations. His mother was a member of

the Chicago-based Cain Sisters, his father plays the piano, clarinet and trombone. His grandfather was the choral director at Northwestern University and the musical director at WNBC Radio. With this musical pedigree, it is no surprise that he has found his way behind the microphone.

Hayford is a man familiar with rare and obscure songs having three albums of such material currently in release. As creator of the Rare Finds series of concert events, he performs these lost tracks and other themed-concerts regularly at Davenport's Piano Bar & Cabaret and other venues in Chicago.

His third and recent album, *It All Belongs To You*, available on LML Music is an album of obscure Cole Porter material, with the exception of *At Long Last Love* and *Easy To Love* which feature alternate lyrics that for some reason or another didn't make it past the censors of the time.

In addition to his music, this crooner is quite active as an AIDS activist, volunteering as a case manager at The AIDS Legal Council of Chicago. ALCofC serves as an advocacy agency for people with HIV/AIDS who have been discriminated against. They fight to secure patients with their public benefits, helping them prepare their estate planning documents, or to secure green cards or asylum for recent legal immigrants.

Why We Like Him: Any musical historian who has a passion about restoring lost songs to the pop canon scores high marks in my book. But one who is civic-minded as well, is even sexier.

- [Justin Hayford's LML Music page](#)
- [Wikipedia entry](#)

Art Garfunkel entered our stream of conscience as part of the recording duo Simon and Garfunkel, introducing pop standards Here's To You Mrs Robinson, and Bridge Over Troubled Water, which will always be part of many recording artists repertoire.

His latest album and his twelfth solo album, is a departure from his usual repertoire of folk-inspired pop. Some Enchanted Evening, is an album of standards that is opening a new door, for him to become the newest re-interpreter of the Great American Songbook.



Why We Like Him: It takes a lot of courage to record in a genre that one is not generally known for. But with the success of this album he has proven that with risk comes opportunity.

- [Website](#)
 - Read our review of his new album [HERE](#)
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Bruce Kimmel is another expert on shows and the songs that got away from them.

Multi-talented, he has successfully tried his hand at producing, writing, and when he finds the time, recording under a *non de plume* of his

own.

As producer for Varese Sarabande, founder of Fynsworth Alley Records, and Kritzerland Music, this man knows much about lost Broadway & Hollywood music and has helped launch or enhance the career of several Broadway and cabaret vocalists. In recent years he's launched his second record label, the aforementioned Kritzerland Music, taking off from where Fynsworth Alley left off to bring back obscure musical gems.

As writer of the cult musicals "The Great Nudie Musical" and "The Brain From Planet X", Kimmel is forging his path as a playwright, receiving comparisons to the great John Waters. "The Brain ..." can be seen at The Acorn Theatre (NYC) from Sept 20-30th as part of the NY Musical Theatre Festival.

Why We Like Him: Kimmel is a discoverer of untapped talent, a purveyor of kitsch, and has with his knowledge, interest, and talent restored many lost treasures to the Broadway and Hollywood musical canon.

- [Website](#)
- Kimmels [MySpace](#) page
- "[Brain From Planet X](#)" page

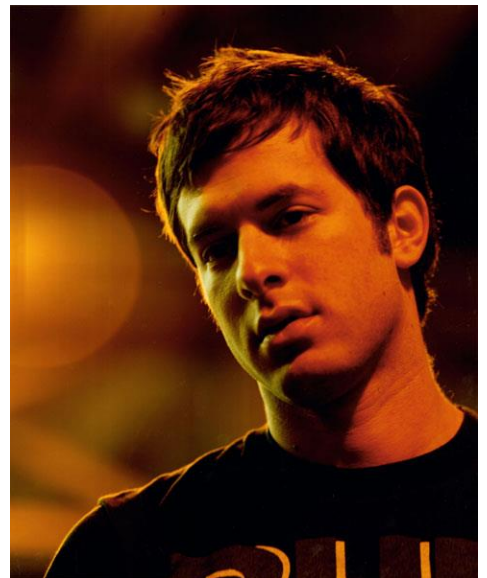
Mark Ronson is an uber producer, remixer and DJ who has not one, but 2 CD's out now. On his solo album *Version*, he is joined by pop, rock and R&B luminaries Lily Allen, Paul Smith, Amy Winehouse, Robbie Williams (and others) on 14 tracks. He also has mixed the

Hard Rock cafe's first official mixed CD which features over a dozen classic rock tracks.

Ronson was born in London and moved to New York when he was eight, forming a band in high-school, where he played the guitar. 1993 found him trying his hand at DJ'ing in downtown NY clubs where he built a solid reputation as a DJ of "urban music." After achieving notoriety as a DJ at several high profile parties in Milan (for Gucci) and Paris (for Puff Daddy), he tried his hand at producing (Nikka Costa's album) which led to his 2003 debut album for Elektra *Here Comes the Fuzz*. Unfortunately due to the dissolution of the label, the album didn't receive the promotion it deserved here in the states, though it did achieve accolades throughout the rest of the world, making many critics Top-10 lists.

Undaunted by his debuts failure to chart here in the states, Ronson formed a partnership with Rich Kleiman, where they launched Allido Records, which resulted in the release of *Version* and his *Hard Rock Cafe* mixed compilation

. The label will also be releasing Chicago superstar Rhymefest and Australian rock vocalist, Daniel Merriweather. Other releases will include the soundtrack to the Ryan Gosling film *Half Nelson*



DJ'ing is still a career focus of Ronson, who can be heard most Fridays on his east village-based radio show.

- [Music Video](#)
 - Ronson on [MySpace](#)
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David Burnham has starred in theatrical productions from The West Coast to the West End.

Recently completing the national tour of *The Light in the Piazza*, he received much acclaim for his performances. With the release of his debut album

on LML Music, he is set to make waves as a much in demand vocalist. This self-titled album features a mix of standards, Broadway and pop tunes. The album is at times sensuous and at times soaring.

Why We Like Him: With Burnham's combination of boy-next-door looks and luscious tenor Burnham captivates the listener with his charm, his suave looks, and his powerful voice.

- [Website](#)
- [Order his CD](#)



The Perry Twins have been filling the dance floors for a number of years with their infectious, and chart-topping remixing of other people's songs. With their single, "Activate My Body" (vocals by Jiana) these good looking hunks are a bit

more up-front-and-center.

Originally from the east coast, they are now based in Los Angeles and have been dj'ing professionally since the late 90's, throughout

the US at clubs and pride festivals, outrageous parties and star-studded events.

Music is in their blood, inheriting their rhythm and love of performing from their parents ... Their Mom sings and Dad plays drums in the rock band "Fortune". In addition to spinning, the twins are experienced choreographers, hosted their own radio mixshow, "Dance Planet," and created a dance troupe of the same name to perform throughout New York and the east coast at concerts, clubs and Pride events.

Doug and Derek Perry's mixshows can now be heard internationally on 1DanceFM, Tag Art Music Online, and Partylist.com's Circuit Mix programmes, meanwhile continuing to work on remix, video and stage shows with some of dance music's hottest artists including Kristine W, Gioia Bruno, Alyson, Ernest Kohl, Lauren Hildebrandt, Thea Austin, Ari Gold, Jeanie Tracy, Kristy Kay, Rockell, Taborah, Oryon, Royal Lush, Evan Cowden, Pleasure Center and Naked Boys Singing.

Their mix CD, Activate, will be released soon.

- [Website](#)
- The Perry Twins on [MySpace](#)

Levi Kreis may be best known as a former cast member of the Southern Baptist Sissies, the hit Del Shores play. Kreis joined the cast after co-writing Stained Glass Windows, the musical theme to the play, a song that brought him notice when he would perform it at each night's performance.

Songs from Kreis' 2005 debut album "One of the Ones" have been featured on The Apprentice (on which he appeared), Days Of Our Lives, and The Young And The Restless gaining him radio attention. His sophomore solo, The Gospel According to Levi is filled with song that he hopes can "close the distance" between being religious and being openly gay. With the video to We're Okay we're on the way.

Kreis has also acted in several independent films, and was also invited to work with Bill Paxton and Matthew McConaughey on Paxton's directorial debut Frailty," On this film Kreis secured the pivotal role of Adam Meiks, the villain's brother, The Gods Hand Killer (played by McConaughey).



Kreis has shared the stage with many musical icons across many musical genres. Jazz icons such as Quincy Jones and Herbie Hancock R&B icons such as Snoop Dog, Ferrell, and Collective Soul, and has even opened for pop icon, Cyndi Lauper in a

concert held at Wrigley Field.

- [Website](#)
- Levi Kreis on [MySpace](#)



Enrique Iglesias is the third child of musical scion Julio Iglesias and Phillipina socialite, Isabel Preysler. Born in Madrid, Spain on May 8, 1975 he relocated to Miami, where he was to live with his father and raised by a nanny. Eschewing the privileges that being raised with wealth can bring, Iglesias chose to drop his surname in order to get his start in the industry. A gamble that paid off to bring him his first recording contract with independent label *Fonoviso*, helping turn him into one of the most popular Latin American artists on the market.

With 23 ... and counting ... Top-40 singles to his credit, Iglesias has just released his eighth and latest CD, "Insomniac." Three years in the

making, this album has become his fourth English language release. This sexy and sensuous album, is filled with songs running the gamut of romantic ballads to all out sex (*Push*) and a song that combines the two (*On Top of You*). The first two singles *Do You Know* (The Ping Pong Song) and *Somebodys Me*. are already burning up the charts with their lush strains.

Not content to be known only as a singer, Iglesias is stretching his wings as an actor. He will make an appearance on the season opener, of CBS's hit show "How I Met Your Mother" this coming Monday.

Why We Like Him: Iglesias combines charm, sex appeal and a down-to-earth persona with his smooth-voiced sensuality to become a heart-throb to many fans, gay and straight.

- [Website](#)
- [MySpace](#) page
- Watch his current Music Videos [HERE](#)

Dave Koz has been dubbed "the busiest man in jazz" because of his constant stream of projects, recordings and touring.

In boldly Koz stepped out of the closet via an Advocate cover story and as he believes positively changed his life. With the release of his latest album, *At The Movies* he explores 12 of his favorite films, films that have impacted him in one way or another. Koz is also set to soon release his 3rd Holiday album, *Memories of A Winter Night* and will



launch the 2007 edition of *A Smooth Jazz Christmas*. In addition to his recording career and

appearance schedule Koz also hosts 2 radio shows

Why We Like Him: Koz combines the sensuality of the saxophone, his boy-next-door appearance with his understanding of movie music and history then parlays this into a hit album that is sexy and sincere.

- [Website](#)
- [One of his radio shows](#)
- [Buy his music](#) from Amazon.com



Brad Hampton is an openly-gay cabaret vocalist from Canada who we profiled this past March in our 20 Questions feature. Hampton is a mesmerizing performer who brings a sense of camp to

his live performances.

Hampton has also found his way in front of the camera, as an actor. He can be seen in the major motion pictures "Tahiti" "The Limits" and the soon-to-be-released "Krazy Luv"

Why we like him: Hampton is not afraid to turn music into a political statement by performing music originally performed by women utilizing the original pronouns.

- [Website](#)
- [Read our interview](#)
- [View trailer](#) for "The Limits"



Nick Granato is a singer songwriter who has written music that many Christian, country superstars and pop superstars, notably Faith Hill, Dolly Parton, Stella Parton, and Pamala Stanley have sought to record or perform. I can best describe his compositions as "music with a conscience," as each contain valuable messages.

With a voice that sounds a bit like Charlie Daniels mixed with Rod Stewart and a little Joe Cocker, Granato delivers his vocals with a feel good, rockabilly vibe, but can turn down the force when it comes to his slower material. With three albums of his own material on his own independent label, Song Harbor Music to his credit, he has my respect and admiration as a storyteller.

- [Website](#)
- Read our review of Outside The Lines [HERE](#)
- His [MySpace](#) page



Brian Kent has already released a couple of well received singles, over the past few years.

September 11th found him releasing his full-length debut, Breathe Life, whose track Whatcha Doin' To Me has already

climbed to #1 on the Sirius Satellite OutQ HOT 20 list. Various film projects, including *Tori Spellings Here Films!* "Kiss The Bride" have also expressed interest in acquiring remixes of, or the original album tracks, to several of its songs for their soundtracks.

Brian began his performing career at a very young age and has performed in venues from Los Angeles to New York, having also been an original cast member of the hit off-Broadway musical *Naked Boys Singing*. In addition, he has premiered and sold-out several one man shows including those at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel's Cinegrill, his "A 'Native' New Yorker" show and it's sequel shows, "Life's for Rent" and "One Night Only"

In Las Vegas, Kent met dance diva and RCA recording artist Kristine W. and worked as her backup vocalist on projects during several of those subsequent years, earning rave reviews at The Continental Hotel & Casino. Kent has also worked at the MGM Grand, The Aladdin, Caesar's Palace, and The Sahara as well.

The release of his first single, a dance remake of the Journey classic "Don't Stop Believin,'" brought him the praise of DJ/Remixers Julian Marsh, Randy Bettis, Warren Gluck and Long Island's own, Twisted Dee. A 2007 version of the song can be found on *Breathe Life* as well.

Why We Like Him: I am pleased to add my praise for his debut album, filled with intellectual and emotional themes, track after track. These themes based on his life experiences and the joys and pains they've brought.

- [Website](#)
 - [Calendar](#) and News
 - His MySpace page
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Arthur Wooten is a well respected author of books, short stories, screenplays, and plays.

As playwright he has authored three plays, *Birthday Pie*, *In a Heartbeat*

and *Pearls of Wisdom*. His debut 2005 novel "On Picking Fruit" was picked up for publication by Alyson Books.

"On Picking Fruit" follows the dating life of Curtis Jenkins a middle-aged, gay HIV+ man living in New York, and is notable for being among the first, if not the first, book to portray an HIV+ middle-aged person as a main character.

Wooten, whose book has been nominated for 3 awards, has been profiled in the UK-based *Positive Nation* web magazine has this to say about his book and character.

"I wanted to portray a man that is not defined by the virus and is living a thriving life. However, he comes across "dates" that are clueless about HIV and safer sex. Without preaching, the lead character fills them in on important details."

I read the book over an afternoon and evening. Laughing through much of the way. At most times the novel is poignant, but always humorous. "Fruit Cocktail", his follow-up to "On Picking Fruit" will be published this coming November, from Alyson publications. Currently he is in negotiations to adapt "On Picking Fruit" for television.

- Website
 - "[Authors Den](#)" profile
 - His [MySpace](#) page
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Tony Moran was one half of the legendary Latin Rascals remix team responsible for many club hits during the 80's, hits that helped usher in the freestyle era of pop music. The Cover Girls, Lisette Melendez, Safire, THA etc.

After stepping out as a solo DJ and remixer, Moran became responsible for the success of club hits from Celine Dion, Gloria Estefan, Cyndi Lauper, Jackson siblings Michael and Janet, Jennifer Lopez, Luther Vandross and a myriad of others. (His remix of Lopez' "Que Hiciste" has been burning up the charts and dance clubs for weeks)

Recently Moran was one of the DJ's spinning at this past August's Ascension Party weekend benefitting the Empire State Pride Agenda, being one of the cornerstones of the event.

This October Moran is getting ready to independently release an event of his own, his latest CD "The Event" (a two-disc special edition is also available for those lucky enough to track one down,) The Event features recordings from divas Kristine W., whose "Walk Away" will be the lead single, Deborah Cox, the Vicki Shepard and Jeanie Tracy duet "I Got a Feelin'," Danielle Bollinger, Martha Wash, and a dance remix cover of "Black Magic Woman." Moran will also sing vocals on "Something About You."

- [Website](#)
 - His [MySpace](#) page
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Brett Henrichsen is the founder of Masterbeat Music and the owner of Trax Recording, an LA-based recording studio.

Starting his own independent record label, Trax Recording, he met and helped to establish his labels first artist Erin Hamilton with the labels first single, "Dream Weaver" followed by "The Flame" and her debut album "One World." Henrichsen has also found the time to release other singles by artists such as Lonnie Gordon and Sheryl Lee Ralph, and to mix some very popular mix CD's for his own Masterbeat label.

Remixer, record mogul & DJ, Henrichsen was recently one of the anchor DJ's for the Ascension Weekend series of dance parties.

- [Website](#)



Rich Merritt is an author, attorney and motivational speaker residing in New York with his life-partner, Jonathan.

Merritt attended the prestigious and ultra-conservative Bob Jones University, eventually leaving to attend a more mainstream university. Joining the marines, he served eight years of active duty, attaining the title of Captain, before finally retiring.

During his last years in the military, he was among those profiled for a NY Times magazine cover article regarding gays in the military. Later he achieved notoriety through several print media profiles including another in the NY Times, and Advocate magazines. These profiles in addition to describing being gay and in the military, eventually disclosed his appearance in eight all-male porn films.

It wasn't until authoring 2005's bestseller, "Secrets of A Gay Marine Porn Star", that he told his side of his dual life as a gay porn actor and soldier, revealing other "secrets" as well, including those regarding promiscuity, suicide attempts, and drug addiction.

His website describes the book "Secrets of a Gay Marine Porn Star" as a "story of self-forgiveness and self-discovery. It is a tale of the difficult path to an integrated, centered life, where forgiveness is sincere and love and friendships are paramount."

His latest tome "Code of Conduct" will be released late this fall, and is being adapted by the author as a play.

Why we like him: With his book *Secrets of a Gay Marine Porn Star*, Merritt blew open the closet doors to expose the hypocrisy of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue by telling about his dual life as soldier and the star of eight all male porn films.

- [Website](#).
- Buy "[Secrets ...](#)"

Jason Walker's debut album, *This Is My Life*, launched 5 Billboard Top-10 singles and propelled him to the attention of countless fans, at the same time helped to revitalize the dance music industry. With his latest album release, "Flexible," available through Junior Vasquez Music he is poised to continue on the upward path towards superstardom.

Walker made his musical debut as a contestant on Showtime at the Apollo, despite catcalls and boos from the audience. When he finished he ended up the winner of the night's contest. Taken under wing by noted DJ and remixer, Junior Vasquez, the artist went on to launch his above-mentioned chart-topping debut album.



With Flexible we are dealing with many matters of the heart, most particularly the end of a relationship, something that ironically enough Walker was going through at the time of the recording sessions.

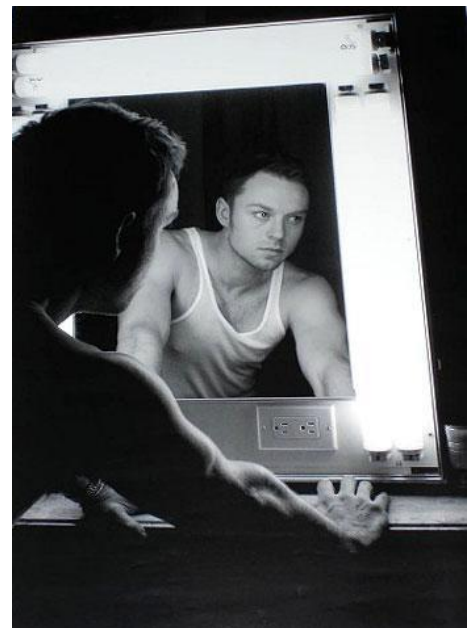
The title track finds him in a duet with Billie Myers, who wrote the track. The album also features a high energy rendition of Jackie Moore's disco classic, This Time Baby.

- [Website](#)
- His [MySpace](#) page

Darren Hayes

may be best known as the vocalist from the pop group Savage Garden, (Truly Madly Deeply, I Knew I Loved You, The Animal Song).

Since the breakup of this chart topping pop band Darren has went on to record three pop albums, be honored as the second gay couple to be married under British law and



to have sold out two impromptu performances at Joes Pub, literally within minutes.

Recently Hayes recently launched his own independent music label, Powdered Sugar Productions, and has established control over all aspects of his musical recordings. With his latest awe-inspiring 25 track double album, "This Delicate Thing We've Made" Hayes is about to blaze himself a new trail of pop success.

Why We Like Him: After hearing one verse of The Animal Song I was hooked on Hayes (and Savage Garden). With his intelligent and thought provoking lyrics, many of which tell a story based on personal experiences or influences, I believed he would successfully make the transition to a solo artist.

- [Website](#)
- Hayes [MySpace](#) page



Charles Casillo is a man of many words (yes he's an author).

As the official biographer of gay activist and author John Rechy he has gained the respect of other authors. As the author of *The Marilyn Diaries* and *The Fame*

Game, Casillo has been lauded as the male Jacquelyn Suzanne. His novel "The Fame Game" is soon to become available in paperback.

Why We Like Him ... Single handedly he is bringing "camp" back to literature, with his witty characters and characterizations.

- Buy "[The Fame Game](#)" from Amazon.com
- His [MySpace](#) page



Kevin Spirtas may be best known as Dr Craig Wesley on the daytime sudser "Days of Our Lives."

Spirtas has also landed roles in *A Chorus Line* and achieved notoriety as Hugh Jackman's understudy in the *Boy From Ox*, a role he never was able to publicly perform as

Jackman never missed a performance. Spirtas can also be seen as the monster in several slasher/horror films.

Of late, Spirtas has also achieved glowing notices for his one-man show *Night and Days*. In this show we are treated to amusing anecdotes about his television, movie and stage roles and how music has always played a part in his life.

From Sept 19-30th Spirtas will be starring as Vernon in the Surflight Theatre's production of "They're Playing Our Song" at the Surflight Theatre in Beach Haven, NY. This musical contains the hit songs *They're Playing Our Song* and *I Still Believe in Love* in a score by hitmakers Marvin Hamlisch and Carol Bayer Sager, and a book by Neil Simon.

Why We Like Him: The exuberance and joy, that Spirtas feels when performing is contagious. When he relates his anecdotes about his stage and screen roles he is informative, witty and charming ... *Whats not to like?*

- [Website](#)
 - Kevin's [MySpace](#) page
 - They're Playing Our Song [Info](#)
-