



Q MAGAZINE

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**JUNE 2025**

SOUTHERN  
WINTER  
NORTHERN  
SUMMER

featuring:  
**TOM GOSS**  
bear soup



# The Mens Salon

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◆ MASSAGE ◆ LASH / BROW TINTING

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## q comment:

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**Click this link to go to their site (via the Q Magazine referral system):**

**<https://www.g2a.com/?gtag=0bae474b1a>**

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Back for a fourth season: The Great Bateworld BateOff!

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# q feature: BEAR SOUP

## Tom Goss Drops Bouncy New Single “Bear Soup” A Twerk Anthem Celebrating Body Positivity and Bear Love



Out singer-songwriter Tom Goss is dishing out a deliciously audacious new track with the release of “Bear Soup,” the fourth and fiercest installment in his beloved “bear song anthology” series. Following fan favorites like “Bears,” “Round in All the Right Places,” and “Nerdy Bear,” this high-energy, bass-driven banger is a celebration of body positivity, joyful indulgence, and the vibrant bear subculture.

Produced by Maya La Maya and featuring the unapologetically bold, Brooklyn based rapper Chris Conde, “Bear Soup” is a twerk-ready anthem that blends playful eroticism with club-thumping beats. It’s an invitation for listeners to shake, jiggle, and bounce—however and wherever they please.

“I was thinking about fun ways to celebrate body positivity, especially within the bear ecosystem,” says Goss. “It occurred to me—why don’t bears have their own twerk anthem? Most bears have more to twerk with than just their butts. I want folks to twerk their bellies, their butts, and anything else that jiggles!”

Musically, “Bear Soup” marks a bold departure for Goss, who describes it as his most dance-driven release to date. Drawing inspiration from artists like Cardi B, Megan Thee Stallion, Ice Spice, and Flo Milli, the track pulses with vibrant, club-ready energy. “I was listening to these artists while on tour, constantly writing and re-writing the lyrics,” he



explains. “Maya and I spent nearly a year locking in the perfect tempo and vibe. When Chris Conde dropped his hefty, beefy verse, the track truly came alive.”

The single’s music video—directed by longtime collaborator Michael Serrato—is a riot of body diversity, poolside sensuality, and unapologetic camp. Shot in a heated pool on a brisk December day, the video is a joyful, community-powered celebration of queer bodies and liberation. “We wanted to create the kind of playful, sexy visuals we wish we’d seen growing up,” says Goss.

So, what exactly is “bear soup”? Goss explains: “Take a pool, toss in a gaggle of jolly bears, chubs, admirers—or anyone who wants to get wet. Add a dozen or so more beefcakes, and you’ve got yourself a hefty meal!”

Since his breakout hit “Bears” in 2013, Tom Goss has been at the forefront of a queer musical revolution—shaping the genre while always marching to the beat of his own drum. His music consistently champions self-love, authenticity, and queer joy.

And as the beat drops on “Bear Soup” and bodies move, Goss’s message couldn’t be clearer: Life’s too short not to twerk like a bear. “Be proud of who you are and what you bring into the world,” he says. “It really is that simple.”

Next up for the trailblazing artist: the pop banger “Gay Stuff” and a full Americana album is on the horizon.

“Bear Soup” is now streaming on all major platforms. Watch the official music video now on YouTube.

**Visit <http://tomgossmusic.com>**

**Follow Tom Goss on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.**











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# q connect: CONNECTing FOR A CAUSE

'CONNECT' is Australia's first federally funded program that dispenses free HIV self-test kits from vending machines. The project aims to strengthen pathways to services, treatment and support while addressing barriers to testing experienced by newly arrived migrants, international students, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Led by SAMESH since March 2022, and now Thorne Harbour Health SA, the eight vending machines around the Adelaide metropolitan area have been gaining traction with people from all walks of life wanting to self-test for free. Accessing a HIV self-test kit is simple, anonymous, completely safe and includes links to confirmatory testing and care. Just head to one of the vending machine locations, scan the QR code, answer a few confidential questions and provide a valid mobile number, then follow the instructions provided.

As the most successful project of its kind globally, CONNECT is proving that the distribution of free HIV self-test kits via vending machines increases testing amongst priority populations. This plays an important role in reaching the UNAIDS targets in Australia. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care recently approved funding for a national rollout over 2 years, so CONNECT will be available in every state and territory nation-wide very soon.

SAMESH is a partnership between SHINE SA and Thorne Harbour Health that provides community-based support, education and training about Sexual Health and HIV.

***For more information including vending machine locations head to the CONNECT webpage: <https://samesh.org.au/connect-free-hiv-test-kits>***





# Free HIV self-testing kits available from a vending machine near you!

Quick, easy, accessible and totally confidential!  
Just visit one of our vending machines to get a free rapid HIV self-testing kit for you to use at your own convenience.

## HIV Self-testing kit Vending Machine locations >

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North Terrace Campus, The Hub, Level 2, All Gender Bathroom  
North Terrace Campus, The Hub, Level 3, Main Staircase

### **UniSA**

City West Campus, Student Lounge  
Mawson Lakes Campus, Student Lounge

### **Flinders University,**

Student Hub, Bedford Park

### **TAFE SA**

Regency Park Campus, Student Cafeteria  
Salisbury, Adjacent to the library

### **Pulteney 431 Sauna**

431 Pulteney Street



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[hivconnect.org.au](https://hivconnect.org.au)



# q festival: SPANISH FILM FEAST

THE HSBC SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL RETURNS THIS JUNE WITH A FEAST OF FINE FILMS AND BOX OFFICE HITS FROM SPAIN AND LATIN AMERICA



Palace is delighted to announce the first highlights of the 2025 HSBC Spanish Film Festival offering a tantalising taste of this year's superb mix of contemporary and award-winning films. The curated line-up, featuring films from Spain and Latin America, screens nationally from 11 June at Palace Cinemas, Palace Nova Eastend Cinemas and Luna Palace Cinemas.

This year's Festival Centrepiece **EL 47** scooped the pool at the recent Goya Awards (the Spanish Oscars), winning five major awards including Best Film. Inspired by a true story, **EL 47** is an urban tragicomedy starring Eduard Fernández that follows a bus driver in an act of peaceful dissidence that transformed modern Barcelona during the city's boom in the 1970s.

**UNDERCOVER** (*La infiltrada*), a Special Presentation, was the co-winner of Best Film at the 2025 Goya Awards, sharing the accolade with **EL 47**. A gripping crime thriller set in the Basque Country, it is based on the real-life story of Aranzazu Berradre Marín, the pseudonym for the only police officer in Spanish history to infiltrate the terrorist organisation ETA.

The second Festival Special Presentation comes directly from the 2025 Málaga Film Festival. One of Spain's most distinctive cinematic voices, Julio Medem's enchanting and daring love story **OCHO (8)** follows a couple's tumultuous relationship as their lives intertwine over the course of eight decades. Exploring themes of love and forgiveness, it is set against the backdrop of pivotal moments in Spain's 20th Century history.

A Spanish box office hit, the delightful comedy **BABIES DON'T COME WITH INSTRUCTIONS** (*Sin instrucciones*) stars festival favourite Paco León as a carefree man living a hedonistic lifestyle in the Canary Islands. Out of nowhere, an old flame turns up with a baby and upends his life, propelling him into fatherhood.

Adapted from Elia Barceló's critically acclaimed novel and directed by Olga Osorio, **THE GOLDSMITH'S SECRET** (*El secreto del orfebre*) is a timeless, epic romance starring Mario Casas as a goldsmith who in 1999 revisits his Spanish hometown, remembering his summer love affair with a seamstress 25 years prior.

Based on true events, **MAY I SPEAK WITH THE ENEMY** (*Es el enemigo? La película de Gila*) is a witty yet sensitive tribute to comedian Miguel Gila, the pioneer of stand-up comedy in Spain. The plot explores his experience of the Spanish Civil War, where he managed to survive a multitude of misfortunes.



From Argentina, the critically acclaimed **EL JOCKEY** tells the story of a legendary jockey whose self-destructive behaviour starts to outshine his talent and threaten his relationship with his girlfriend. This quirky, stylish thriller set in vibrant Buenos Aires stars Nahuel Pérez Biscayart and Úrsula Corberó (*Money Heist*, *The Day of The Jackal*).

**The 2025 HSBC Spanish Film Festival** takes place nationally from 11 June to 9 July (dates vary) in Melbourne, Ballarat, Adelaide, Perth, Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney, Byron Bay and Ballina.

**The full programme is available now and tickets are on sale NOW!**

**LISTING DETAILS:**

**Canberra 11 June –**

**2 July:** Palace Electric Cinema

**Adelaide 11 June –**  
Cinemas

**2 July:** Palace Nova Eastend Cinemas and Palace Nova Prospect

**Brisbane 11 June –**

**2 July:** Palace James Street and Palace Barracks

**Perth 12 June –**

**2 July:** Palace Raine Square, Luna Leederville and Luna on SX

**Melbourne 13 June –**

**3 July:** The Astor Theatre, Palace Cinema Como, Palace Brighton

Bay, Palace Penny Lane, Palace Westgarth, The Kino, Palace Balwyn and Pentridge Cinema

**Ballarat 13 June –**

**3 July:** Palace Regent Cinema

**Byron Bay 19 June –**

**9 July:** Palace Byron Bay

**Ballina 19 June –**

**9 July:** Ballina Fair Cinemas

**Sydney 19 June –**

**9 July:** Palace Norton Street, Palace Moore Park, Palace Central

and Chauvel Cinema

**For updates and more information, visit [www.spanishfilmfestival.com](http://www.spanishfilmfestival.com) and join the mailing list or follow; Facebook @SpanishFilmFestival  
Instagram @spanishfilmfest  
#SPANISHFILMFEST**





# q tour: TORVILL & DEAN BACK IN OZ

**After three decades, Olympic Gold winning legends of the ice Torvill & Dean are set to make their long-awaited return to Australia for a final farewell tour in June. This global ice spectacular, 'Torvill & Dean: Our Last Dance', marks their first Australian tour since 1994 and features an international cast of ice-dancing skaters and champions.**

Torvill & Dean's farewell tour opened in the UK earlier this month at London's OVO Arena Wembley to widespread acclaim, marking a triumphant beginning to their final performances. The show, a nostalgic journey through their 50-year partnership, captivated audiences with its blend of classic routines and heartfelt storytelling.

Critics praised the duo's enduring charm and elegance. The Guardian described the performance as "a classy glide down memory lane," noting "their rendition of Boléro was delivered" with unvarnished simplicity, tracing their landmark routine with dignity". Similarly, The Times highlighted the show's emotional resonance, calling it "a touching nostalgia trip" and commending the pair's "signature elegance and charismatic partnership".

Torvill & Dean made their retirement announcement on 14th February 2024 ("Bolero Day", as they fondly call it) whilst in Sarajevo to commemorate their historic Gold medal winning performance to Ravel's Bolero at the 1984 Winter Olympics – exactly 40 years to the day. While there, they relived the memories four decades on from their iconic heart-stopping performance which had a UK television audience of 24 million people and an estimated worldwide audience of hundreds of millions of viewers, on the edge of their seats. It became one of the greatest sporting moments of the 20th Century and set a new standard for world-class figure skating.

'Torvill & Dean: Our Last Dance' is currently touring in the UK with the Australian leg commencing in June 2025, tickets are on sale now from TICKETEK. This will be the very last chance to see the world's most famous skating superstars in action on the ice together - 50 years since they formed their incredible skating partnership.

Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean said "We're delighted to be bringing 'Torvill & Dean: Our Last Dance' to Australia next year. Performing in Oz has always been very special for us. So our farewell tour will be a final opportunity to celebrate and say thank you to all of our wonderful fans over there who have supported us consistently for many years. Whilst we will continue to work together off the ice, the tour will be the final time we will skate together following our 50-year partnership. It's going to be very emotional for us, but we promise to put on an amazing live show – and we really hope to see you there."

Paul Dainty AO/TEG Dainty shared his excitement, saying, "Bringing Torvill & Dean back to Australia after a 30-year absence is truly special. Their performances have captivated audiences around the world, and it's an honour to host their final tour. Australian fans are in for a once-in-a-lifetime experience as we celebrate the extraordinary career of these skating legends."



## **'TORVILL & DEAN: OUR LAST DANCE' – 2025 AUSTRALIAN TOUR DATES**

Saturday 14th June – Brisbane Entertainment Centre - 7.30pm  
Sunday 15th June – Brisbane Entertainment Centre 2.00pm  
Wednesday 18th June – Melbourne Rod Laver Arena – 7.30pm  
Thursday 19th June – Melbourne Rod Laver Arena – 2.00pm  
Thursday 19th June – Melbourne Rod Laver Arena – 7.30pm  
Saturday 21st June – Sydney Qudos Bank Arena – 7.30pm  
Sunday 22nd June – Sydney Qudos Bank Arena – 1.00pm

### **TICKETS FROM TICKETEK**

As Torvill & Dean prepare to bring their historic farewell tour to Australia, fans will have a unique opportunity to celebrate the legacy of these iconic skaters. Their deep connection to Australia, where they first performed in the 1980s, adds a special significance to this final tour. The emotional journey promises to be a fitting tribute to their remarkable 50-year partnership. Don't miss this chance to witness their last dance on ice.

**Website:** [www.torvillanddean.com](http://www.torvillanddean.com)

**Instagram:** @TorvillandDeanOfficial

**Facebook:** @TorvillandDean

**X:** @TorvillandDeanOfficial





THE OLYMPIC  
GOLD WINNING DUO

# TORVILL & DEAN

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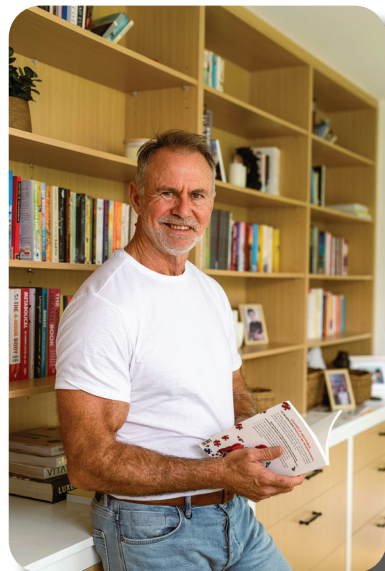
# q advice: 6 WAYS TO GET YOURSELF OUT OF A RUT

**At least once in our lives everyone will undoubtedly feel stuck. For me, as an author, I experience writer's block which can lead me to choose to reroll our toilet paper rather than facing the harsh reality that I don't know what to write next.**

The feeling of being stuck happens when we find ourselves in situations where we can't see a clear path forward. This feeling quickly grows if we think we have no control over the next steps leaving us helpless to influence the outcome. This indecisiveness quickly growing into a debilitating condition I call stuckitis if we don't take action. Early symptoms of Stuckitis include avoidance and procrastination but it can quickly escalate into real health issues such as anxiety, stress and depression.

Stuckitis is rarely caused by our everyday decisions such as choosing between Thai or pizza for dinner, but rather those decisions where the consequences of getting it wrong could be huge. These life-changing decisions could include deciding which career options should you chase, whether should you stay in the wrong relationship, or anything that means we will need to reinvent ourselves.

Often our fear of making the wrong call means we end up not making any decision at all. People can end up stuck for all their lives, scared of screwing up and ultimately failing. However, when we face failure, we often learn we are stronger than we originally thought, helping us find a way forward by learning what works for us and equally important what doesn't. This is where the art of reinvention is critical, finding the way forward means it needs to fit our own uniqueness and not just be an exact copy of what worked for others.



**Here are 6 ways to move forward when you find yourself stuck in life:**

**1. Accept things have changed:** The first step forward is accepting the need to change as this is not something that just happens. Think about a relationship break-up: we don't usually go from being deliriously happy and in love to "it's over" in one night, unless something huge has happened. Often, we will try to avoid our reality, then try to negotiate out of having to change then we will feel anger and sadness around the loss of identity and who we thought we were.

**2. Do a reality check:** When change knocks, the world we knew and the habits we relied on may not still be relevant. To ensure we get through our tough times as we adapt, we should take stock and do a reality check of who we are, where we want to be, and what are the things in our control, avoiding wasting energy on the things we can't influence.

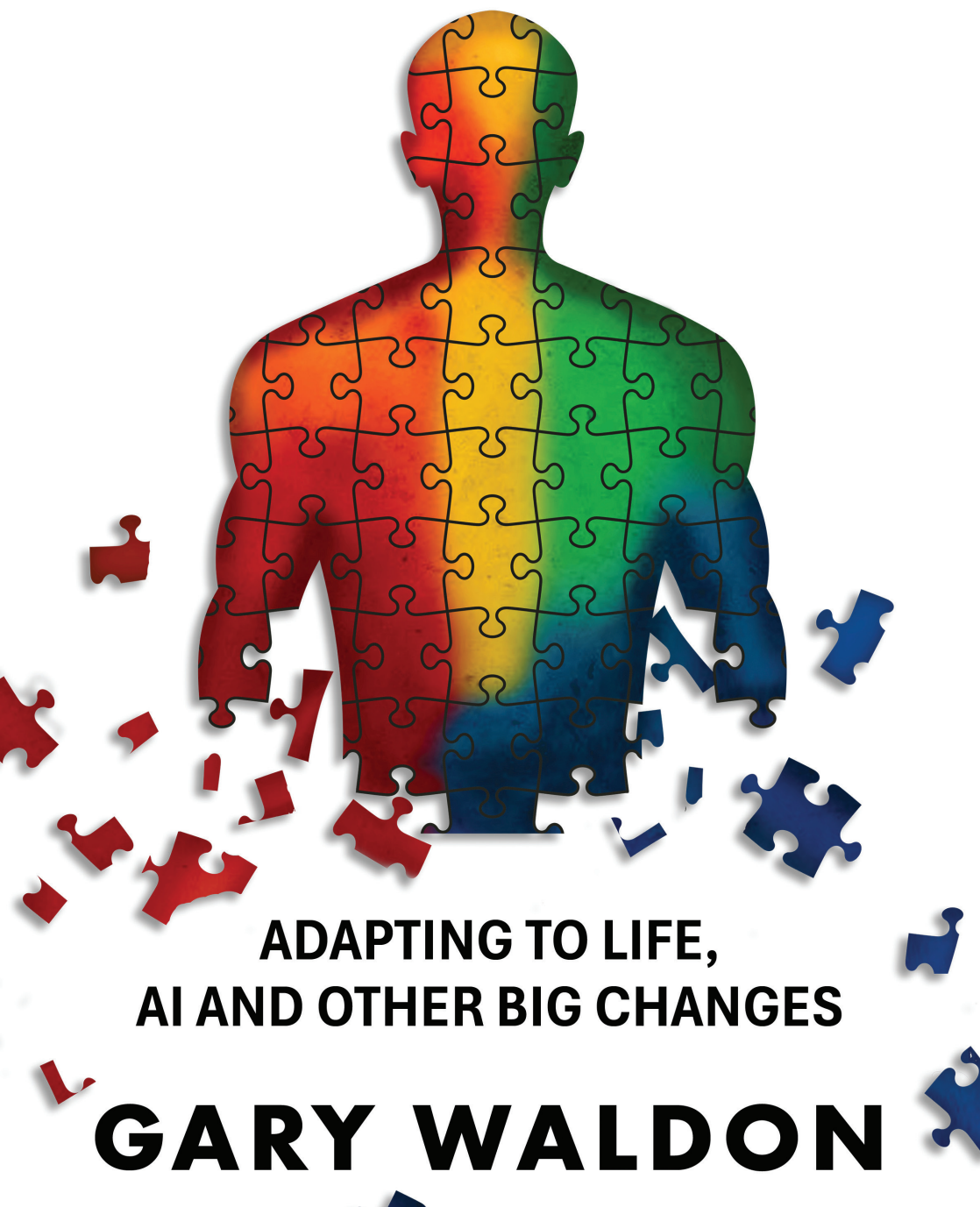
**3. Empower ourselves:** If we don't empower ourselves to get through whatever is impacting us right now, we end up leaving our lives to fate. Avoidance may lead us to buy a lottery ticket, grab a pizza and stay stuck in our current lives waiting for our numbers to come up. A more productive use of our energy and brilliance is to identify what we're passionate about and then start figuring out how to get there.

**4. Take action:** Dreams and fairytales are great: they provide relief from the real world. However, our thoughts and actions are often the only things within our control, so taking a planned approach is





MASTERING THE ART OF  
**REINVENTION**



ADAPTING TO LIFE,  
AI AND OTHER BIG CHANGES

**GARY WALDON**



# q celebration: WHERE LOVE LIVES 3RD BIRTHDAY

**3RD BIRTHDAY IN SYDNEY SAT 12 JULY AND MELBOURNE SAT 19 JULY**  
**Where Love Lives Melbourne 3rd Birthday featuring BARBARA TUCKER (USA)**

Barbara Tucker is a key figure in the house music genre, renowned for her strong vocals, dynamic performances, and hit songs such as "Beautiful People" and "I Get Lifted." She is often referred to as the "Queen of House Music".

Barbara Tucker is a highly regarded vocalist and performer in house music, celebrated for her soulful singing, lively performances, and worldwide influence. She has scored multiple number one hits on the Billboard Dance chart.

Tucker has collaborated with various influential figures in the dance music scene, including LouieVega and David Morales, and has performed at legendary venues and events around the globe, such as Tomorrowland, Ministry of Sound, Glitterbox, and Pacha. In the 1990s, she co-created and hosted the iconic Underground Network parties at the Sound Factory Bar, which were pivotal to the NYC house music scene.

Barbara Tucker's influence on the art world is also noteworthy. She was married to the artist Albert Tucker for 35 years and played a significant role in his legacy and estate management. Additionally, she was an important member of the Heide family and supported the museum's initiatives through substantial donations. Barbara has also contributed significantly to various institutions, including the State Library of Victoria and the National Gallery of Australia.

**BARBARA TUCKER QUEEN OF HOUSE.** Once in every generation, something truly remarkable emerges. A sensational performer who embodies the essence of live entertainment. Her shows are incredibly intense, featuring her mesmerizing voice and remarkable stage presence. Question:

Why do audiences around the globe cheer and applaud her performances, regardless of language barriers? Answer: They resonate with her passion. Barbara is one of the few artists whose extraordinary talent uplifts and inspires people in a profoundly positive manner. Barbara Tucker to House/Dance is akin to what Stevie and Aretha represent for soul music, or what The Beatles and The Rolling Stones signify for rock. You understand the comparison. From her groundbreaking performances to her incredible classic recordings, Barbara has undeniably become a vibrant and fierce legend that one must witness.

The Melbourne lineup of DJs includes the iconic Eric Powell, Peter McNamara (Melb), Rob Davis (Syd), Kista (Melb), and Anubis (Melb).

The Sydney lineup is DJ Alex Taylor, DeeJay Chip and DJ Rob Davis.

**SYDNEY - SATURDAY 12th JULY - 9pm til 3am**

Manning Bar - Manning House, Level 2, Manning Road, Camperdown

**MELBOURNE - SATURDAY 19th JULY - 3pm til 10pm**

The Emerson 145 Commercial Road, South Yarra

**TICKETS FROM: [www.wherelovelives.com.au](http://www.wherelovelives.com.au)**



# q magic: THE GREAT ARMANDO

**Prepare to be whisked away to a world of wonder as The Great Armando, a beloved favourite of the Melbourne Magic Festival, presents his brand-new show, "Magia Magia." Running for a strictly limited season from July 8th to July 12th, 2025, at the Arrow On Swanston as part of the official Melbourne Magic Festival program, this interactive and enchanting experience promises jaw-dropping illusions, boundless positivity, and trademark Italian charm, perfect for audiences of all ages.**

Hailing from Italy and now a proud Australian resident, The Great Armando brings a unique "Italian flair" to the stage, captivating audiences not just with his magical prowess but also with his genuine, endearing accent and infectious humour. "Magia Magia" is performed in English and is more than just a magic show; it's a journey filled with surprises that subtly weaves in a powerful message about the importance of believing in oneself.

Known for his highly interactive style, The Great Armando ensures every audience member feels part of the magic. Through clever gags, spontaneous moments, and direct engagement, he creates an atmosphere of shared joy and wonder. One particular highlight includes a mesmerizing rope trick where a knot magically moves, unfurling a heartfelt story about overcoming challenges and embracing dreams – a message that resonates deeply with children and adults alike.

A seasoned performer with over 20 years of experience across three continents, The Great Armando has been a cherished part of the Melbourne Magic Festival since 2016, even clinching the prestigious "Children's Show Award" in 2018 for his "Suitcase of Wonder." His return to the festival stage with "Magia Magia" is highly anticipated, promising the same high-energy, family-friendly entertainment that has made him one of Australia and Italy's most loved children's illusionists.

Audiences have consistently been captivated by The Great Armando's performances. Past attendees have called his shows "brilliant" and shared that "the kids haven't stopped talking about it."

"Magia Magia" is a delightful 50-minute escape into a world where anything is possible, reminding us all that with a little belief, true magic can happen.

**The Great Armando's Magia Magia**

**July 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 2025**

**12:45 PM - 1:35 PM daily**

**Arrow On Swanston, 488 Swanston St, Carlton VIC 3053**

**Tickets: From \$17 to \$24 via TryBooking (<https://www.trybooking.com/CZWPF>)**

**Free for children under 2**



**For more information please go to: <https://www.thegreatarmando.com>**

**Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/italianmagician/>**



THE GREAT  
**ARMANDO**  
WHERE WONDER MEETS LAUGHTER

# MAGIA MAGIA



# q world: ELSKA DOES MOLDOVA

## NEW BOOK BY ELSKA SHOWCASES GAY MEN FROM CHISINAU, MOLDOVA



This is the fifty-second book in the Elsa series, a project dedicated to exploring the world and its men through a gay lens. This latest edition focuses on Chisinau, the capital of Europe's least-visited and poorest country, Moldova. Inside, readers can get to know a selection of ordinary local gay men through a blend of intimate photography and personal storytelling.

"I have toyed with the idea of taking my project to Moldova for many years, but I always assumed it wouldn't work," says Elsa editor, writer and chief photographer Liam Campbell. "I worried that the city might be too small, too conservative and too closeted to be able to find subjects willing to do a photoshoot and story for me. But then I realised that my assumptions were based on stereotypes of this country as backwards, part of a trend to focus on Moldova as the 'poorest country in Europe'. I decided to give it a go and see the place for myself."

"I found Chisinau to be a truly lovely city and its LGBTQ+ community was feeling a buoyant buzz from a recent Pride event, one that went by peacefully and with the highest attendance on record," continues Liam. "However, during my discussions with individual local men, I discovered a cleavage within the community that followed the lines of the city's demographic split between people of Romanian and Russian heritages. Gay spaces seemed geared towards one group or the other, creating separation and sometimes resentment. Political and social topics came up almost constantly when meeting our





local subjects, making this one of our most political issues... though still with a lot of sexy, naked men!"

The narrative in *Elska Chisinau* was formed from extensive diaries taken from start to finish during the trip to Moldova, including details of conversations and time spent with several local men met there. These men were also invited to take part in a photoshoot, encompassing a combination of photographs in the streets with clothes and at home without clothes. These images add a deeper, more intimate side, resulting in a reading experience that is a sort of sexy anthropology journal meets queer art book.

*Elska Chisinau* is available in a collectible print format or in a downloadable e-version. In addition, the companion e-zine *Elska Ekstra Chisinau* is available, containing four more men and their stories, plus many hundreds of outtake images of each *Chisinau* subject. Both are available for order online as well as from a select group of shops around the world.

***Ordering information and details of the subscription service can be found on the Elska website: [www.elskamagazine.com](http://www.elskamagazine.com)***





elska

CHISINAU MOLDOVA



# q life: with GABRIEL TABASCO

## Gabriel Tabasco: The Greek Ambassador's Son Chapter 14: The Gay Porn Star Appreciation Club

**I bought my first porn magazine in my early teens. I never intended to buy it. It just happened. I was on my bike, riding by a neighbourhood kiosk in my neighbourhood when I decided to buy an orange juice and flip through the magazines. I approached the adult section and decided to open up a magazine called Man2Man. On the cover was a beefy man in tight shorts. I slightly tore the wrapping open and took a peak at the inside cover which revealed a slim, white man, with floppy blonde hair, sitting by a swimming pool holding his erection which was pointing proudly upwards. I stared at the man at what seemed like hours before I heard some shuffling. Someone was coming. I put the magazine away, paid for my juice and left.**

The following couple of days were a haze. All I could think of, at school, at dinner and especially at gym class with all the men in shorts around me, was the slender young man by the pool with the erection. I was in lust. It was summer and my hormones were breaking out like a rash on a warthog. It was not good. I wanted that magazine.

Two days later, I took my bike and went to the kiosk. I was careful not to bump into anyone I knew or who might have known my family and went to find the magazine. There it was like hidden treasure, dusty and half-covered in the wrapping I tore open during my initial look inside. I took it and went to pay. The cashier was a young man in his 20s. He had a cigarette dangling from his mouth. I handed it to him. He took a look at it and then looked back at me.

'It's not for me,' I said as if in protest.  
'Sure it isn't,' he said and put it in a plastic carrier bag.

Looking back, I should have just downloaded porn. Magazines felt so 1980s. But I was enamoured with the floppy haired man by the pool with his erection that I wanted to gaze at him longingly in the privacy of my own room. I loved the adrenaline of buying the magazine. It was painful for me not to buy it, not only because I wanted the magazine and because I wanted to do something taboo but also because I wanted to be that man. That slender, white mid-western, American man inspired my love of porn. It was he who made me want to be a porn star.

When asked what I do, I say that I am a porn model, (porn star sounds so much more glamorous than it actually is and porn actor sounds a lot more serious) people have one of three reactions.

The first is that they immediately become perkier than a moment earlier, interested in how I got into the porn industry and eagerly lean in to me to hear the porn industry secrets. They whisper their questions as if asking them is too shocking. They would ask to see my website. After typing my site's address into their phone they peer at my photos, such as me posing by a pool holding up my erection, look at me, then look back at the photos, back at me and so on, unable to believe that this person sipping a Whiskey Sour, who looks like the boy next door, is indeed... gasp... a porn star!'

'It's no big deal,' I would say motioning to the bartender to bring us another round. 'It's not like I'm Beyoncé. Or even one of her back-up dancers for that matter,' I reply. And it's true. I am not.

The second reaction is that they do not believe me giving me a look that says 'you? Really?' Yes, Really. We are not all super-hunks or wear thongs at all times of the day. Most times we wear trainers and do our shopping at the mall.

The third and rarest reaction, which is the most unsettling one is that they do not believe me and when I prove them wrong, they turn away in disgust only to tell their friend that and then the rounds of disgusted looks are repeated all over again.



A few summers back while still living in Athens I was single, bored with stripping and whoring around just as I was bored of my job at the law firm I worked at. It was a Saturday afternoon and I had no plans to go out that night. After dinner, I sat on my balcony at my apartment and logged online to check my emails. As always with these bouts of boredom I drifted over to porn sites. Instead of clicking the 'Our Models' section I clicked 'Apply to Model'. The MuchMen.com website said this:

Are you interested in becoming one of our models? Do you want to make extra cash? Do you keep in shape and are you comfortable in front of a camera? If yes then fill out the attached form with your details, send in the requested images and if you are what we are looking for we will be in touch. Before beginning read the pointers below:

### ***General Details:***

Age group: We only work with models in any age range.

Sexual Preference: We work with all sexual tastes: gay, straight or bi. We like to know what model prefers so as to arrange each scene that is as authentic to their tastes as possible and where they can have the most fun.

Race: All race groups are accepted.

### ***The types of models we look for:***

Twinks: Young, pretty, slender and smooth. Usually in their early 20s.

Manly: Usually over 30 years old. Handsome and muscular.

Daddies: Men over 40, rugged and hairy but can have any look.

### ***The type of physical attributes we look for:***

Body: Must be fit and toned.

Face: Must be attractive to be very attractive.

Dick: Must be within the range of large to very large. If the model has a small dick he would be a bottom.

We require at least two of the three above physical attributes to be met for consideration for our movies.

### ***The type of work we do***

Each video has five to six scenes with a range from two to 20 models per scene (depending on the plot of the movie). One scene can take up to three days to film for a 30-minute segment. Photo sessions are also required for publicity, which is done before filming begins. All models can select what they are comfortable with, such as kissing and touching, sucking dick, rimming and fucking or be fucked. For rimming the anus needs to be fully cleansed. Our models are expected to fuck with condoms.

### ***Photos to submit***

Photos must be recent and not retouched. Models should not be wearing make-up. Photos need to be shot in good light. We require at least one photo of the models' portrait, profile, standing nude, nude front, nude side and nude back. Photos with and without an erection. Information should include, age, weight, sexual preference.

### ***Casting***

If you are selected we will invite you for a casting call for which you will be paid. Most new models have an initial problem getting hard and ejaculating. Make sure you come ready and prepared. Treat the casting call as an actual porn shoot.

Growing up I loved porn and whenever I watched it I always wondered about these people on camera, who they were and how they got to be on screen, legs akimbo and moaning into the camera. 'They are just like you and me,' I told myself, trying to snap myself out of the spell. And yet they weren't like me at all. They had sex on camera for our pleasure, entertainment and judgement. They enjoyed being watched. They led semi-secretive, semi-celebrity lives. The following week I kept thinking of the advert on the porn site. I forgot appointments. I forgot to take out the rubbish. At work I make errors thinking about it.

There were two porn stars, which had relative success, the more successful of the two, Ari, I knew personally. I had met Ari through Sakis when we used to go clubbing together. Over the years Ari gained a reputation on the gay circuit, winning the Mr Gay Greece competition as well as Mr Mediterranean the following year after he bulked up. Ari had a nice build but he was boring and truth be told, he was not very smart.

‘But isn’t that what we love about our porn stars?’ wrote one porn blogger on his site about Ari. ‘That we love them for their looks but not their smarts.’

It was Sakis who told me about Ari’s career by showing me his videos. There on Sakis’ phone was Ari, on his knees, looking up at the camera longingly, with a thick dick by his mouth. Saying I felt intensely jealous was an understatement.

By then Ari was living in Madrid, contracted under a Spanish porn company and when he was not working he was teaching English as a foreign language and performing as a go-go-boy at large industrial-sized gay venues or doing porn. I tried contacting him to arrange a time to speak to him about the industry, but he did not answer my calls or acknowledge my texts. I reached out to him on social media but he did not respond. He deleted me from his friends list and so I left it at that. Through Sakis I learnt that he eventually left porn, moved to London where he worked at a company that made weapons. He lived in a spacious London apartment and made a decent salary. And then he eventually got back into porn after leaving that job. Ari did everything wrong and got everything right.

The second porn star I got in touch with was Adonis Silver. He kept Adonis, which was his real name, and one that was apt for porn, and Silver was a translation of his Greek surname, Argyrides. For someone who loves porn I was surprised I never heard about him when the Bull told me about him.

‘We’ve made it as a country,’ he said ‘we even have Greek porn stars now,’ he joked. That night I googled him. He was of average height and had a good build. His profile mentioned he worked as a personal trainer. Had he stayed away from the gym and not stayed away from carbs he would have been rounder in the middle but he was in decent shape for a second tier porn star. From Athens he spring-boarded to London where he worked as a personal trainer before switching careers appearing in a few gay films. In comparison to Ari, he was not as sought after nor as successful. Of the two men Adonis was definitely the budget porn star, B-List at best. Maybe even C-level. He was a changeable, almost forgettable bottom when compared to Ari’s strapping chest and big penis.

Through his social media account I tracked down Adonis’ email and I wrote to him. He responded a few days later answering my questions with a blasé message that could be summed up with this: porn is fun, the guys are hot and the cash could be better. It was hardly career advice. I wanted to know how the industry worked from someone actually in the industry. There was only so much I could learn online. I emailed him back again, asking for more information but I received no response. ‘Are all gay porn stars this fickle?’ I thought.

In the end I still decided to apply for a job in porn and did as was instructed on the site. I found various photos I had from the various photoshoots I did, both naked and clothed and along with my personal details, ticked what I was willing to do. With a brief description about myself I sent off the email. As quickly as I began obsessing about porn I forgot about it. A week later I received an email from the people at MuchMen.com. Without a proper salutation the email went as follows:

Hey. We liked your photos and your boy-next door look. You’re in good shape, nice ass and dick. You’re versatile which is great for us but with an ass like that and the fact that you like older men you’d be a perfect bottom. We’re casting next month. Can you fly out for an audition in LA? Travel costs are your own. If it goes well we would contract you for three to five films to be shot this summer with the option of more films if you do well. Remuneration to be discussed in due course. Let me know if you’re in. Thanks. Scott

I read and re-read the email over and over. I went outside and inhaled some of Athens’ fresh air and

a lot of its pollution. I had a whiskey then read and re-read the email. LA? As in Los Angeles? Possible contract if all goes well? With shaking hands and a fast-beating heart I responded an hour later.

Hell Yeah I'm in!

Giving it a moment's thought I deleted the message and re-wrote the email.

Dear Scott. Thanks for your email and great to hear that you are interested in my application. Please find my flight details below. Please confirm that you are available during these dates and I will book the flight. Regards, Gabriel

The dates worked for Scott and a week later I was leaving for Los Angeles. During that week I resigned from my job. My boss was shocked. He was further shocked when I told him that I did not have anything lined up.

'In this economic climate?' he said 'you have no job after this?'

Of course I was not going to tell him that I was flying to LA to do porn. I settled my bills. I closed the apartment's shutters. I gave a spare key to my neighbours. I said goodbye to friends and had a few people over for drinks.

'But why LA?' a friend asked with a cocktail in his hand.

'Why not?' I said with a shrug.

He agreed.

'But do you have a visa?' someone else asked with a cigarette in hand.

'It's in process' I said half-lying.

He agreed.

The hardest person to tell was Sakis. He was the voice of logic and reason. Of course he advised me against my move to LA as well as the move into the porn industry.

'They have no shame,' Mike said to me one day when I told him, years earlier, how I wanted to be a porn star. 'They are nothing but whores, actually they are even worse than whores. They want people to know that they are whores and have people watch them get fucked.' Mike continued. 'No one will take you seriously when they know you did porn. You will be nothing but a punch line in a joke. A footnote at the end of someone's conversation. In Athens they will point and say to their friend 'wasn't he a porn star?' and the friend will reply, 'I think he was'. And then they would say 'he wasn't a very good one if he is not doing it now' and then they'd laugh.'

Sakis painted a rather convincing picture but I still wanted to do it. It was like an itch I had to scratch. It was the extra layer of clothing I needed to take off on a hot day.

Being a porn star meant exposing myself to physical, health and psychological dangers in an industry that has grown manifold in recent years but remains largely unregulated. And if everything goes well then doing porn is fun. But what happens afterwards?

I read a blog about a man who had a porn blog where he discussed the antics and movies of porn stars. On one of his blog posts he had a picture of a cute 20-something twink with tidy hair, a necklace, a slightly soft belly and perfect white skin. The 20-something man was naked on a bed exposing his butt hole and holding his erection. The man writing the blog asked in a caption below the photo: 'he's hot but like can this guy become president? What job can he get?'

'Indeed... what next?' I wondered a few months later as I walked on set as the bright lights warmed my naked body, as the camera began rolling and as the crew began filming the porn film.

***Gabriel, you're a deluded fantasist  
Hunky men on film, you could never resist  
They won't go for you in LA  
I'd stay in Athens, where you remain a second-rate gay***







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# q book: DODGING FLYING SANDALS

**Journalist Daniel Nour's memoir serves as a keenly perceptive guide to navigating life in suburbia as a queer Egyptian-Australian.**

As the sun sets, so too will your day come to a close ... likely due to a heart condition, as it runs in the family.

Introducing Daniel Nour: Egyptian and Australian; boisterous yet painfully awkward; conservative but deeply perplexed (particularly regarding other boys). He has never quite managed to fit into the mold of normalcy, but it is in being 'not normal' that the most compelling stories emerge. Daniel has written his debut memoir, *\*How to Dodge Flying Sandals and Other Advice for Life\**, to articulate his experiences growing up in Australia while grappling with the intricacies of cultural identity, sexuality, and self-acceptance.



A recipient of the highly regarded Affirm Press Mentorship for Sweatshop Writers, Daniel expresses, 'Queer and migrant narratives often centre on suffering, but my memoir also highlights love, laughter, resilience, and community. I want you to wee-laugh while reading this – a term I've just invented to describe the experience of laughing so hard that you might slightly embarrass yourself.'

Daniel is dedicated to sharing culturally diverse queer narratives as a way to empower others. 'In my community, queerness isn't merely taboo—it's almost a ghost story. This creates a void, a feeling of invisibility. Young queer individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds frequently feel alone, so by recounting my messy, awkward, and sometimes humiliating journey, I hope to provide them with a signal: you're not isolated, and it's perfectly fine to be a bit ridiculous.'

Presented in the form of a wildly absurd yet genuinely heartfelt 'how-to' (or more accurately, 'what-not-to-do') guide, *\*How to Dodge Flying Sandals and Other Advice for Life\** will entertain fans of *\*The Family Law\**, *\*The Land Before Avocado\**, and other humorous tales of Australian childhood.

If you've ever had someone attempt to arrange a marriage for you ...

If you have so many cousins that you can't recall all their names ...

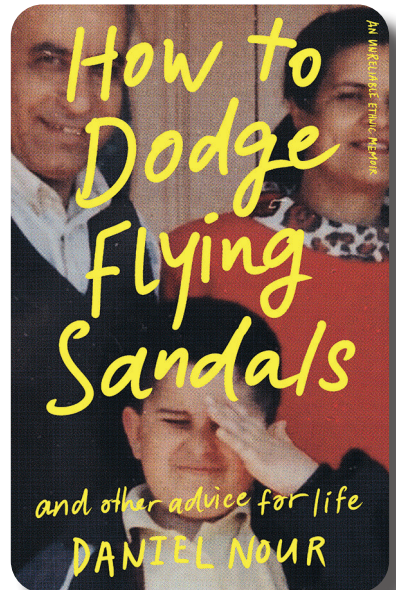
If your parents express love solely through food and unsolicited advice ...

If your 'roommate' has been living with you for five years and your family still believes it's just a close friendship...

Then this book is for you.

And if you've never encountered any of this?

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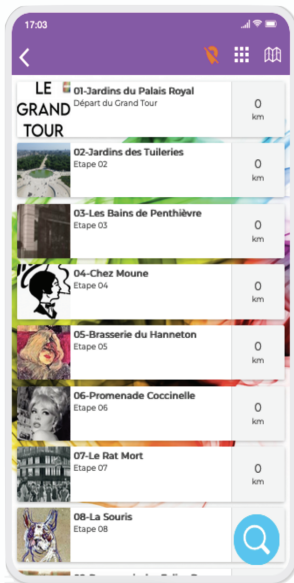
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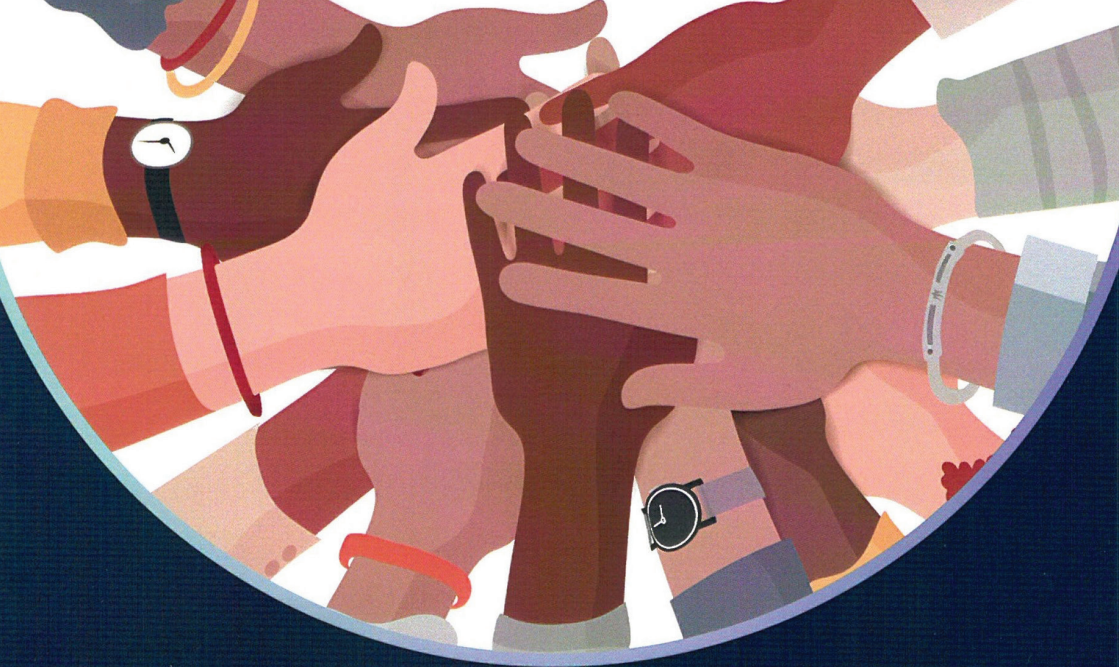
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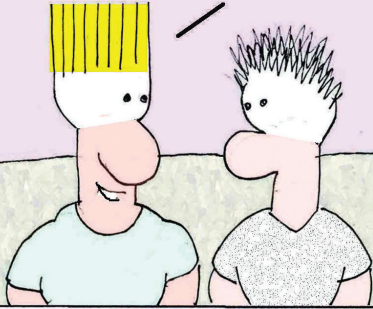
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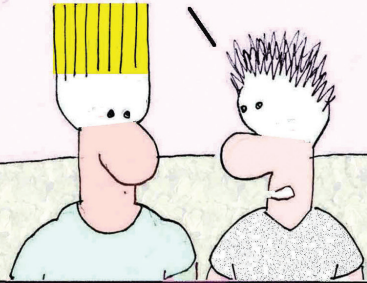


# GAYLORD BLADE

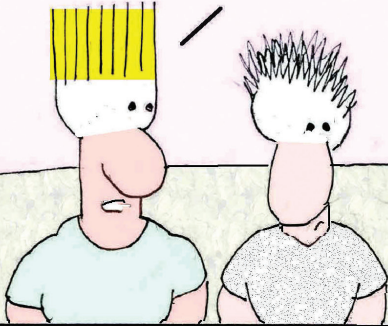
A three-way will invigorate our sex life



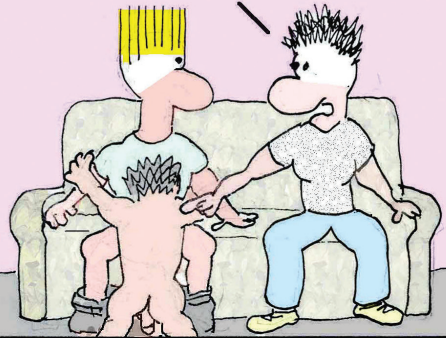
But the third guy always favors one of the men in the couple



I don't think that's necessarily true



Oh yeah, whadaya think he's doing now?



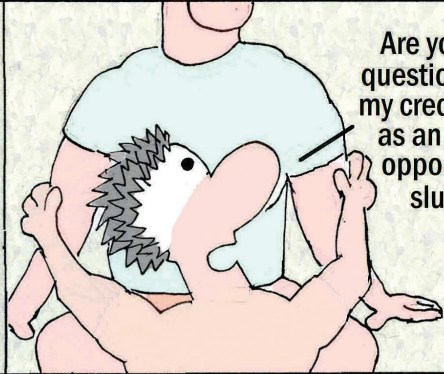
Answer me young man ....

do you prefer one of us over the other?

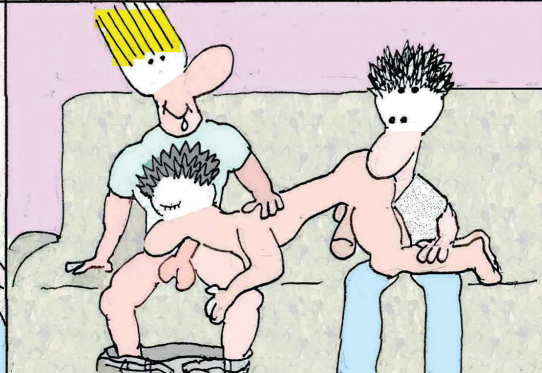
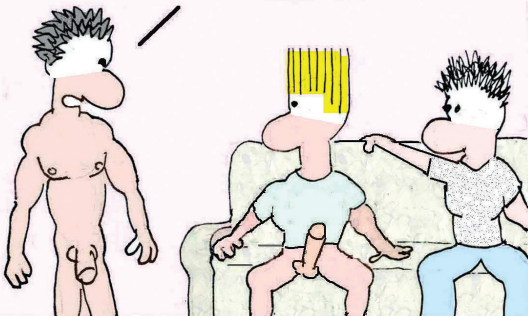


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