

SCENE/HEARD

Pyramids for shoulder props?! Stevi, of course! As she says, "Only a drag queen brings culture to her audience." And she did at both Nob Hill and *Mr P's*.

Anita's Cookbook--The Other White Meat Anita Wong, with improving command of English, told the fans: "I have 3 meow meows at home and I am going to eat them this weekend! Did she??"

Full Moon Over P's It had to be the full moon. The audience was trying to take over the show at *Mr P's* with Winchester country boys grabbing the mike, Miss Thing trying ever so hard to tell her joke - again and measuring Miss Wong with her tape, and Mr-My-Shirt-Is-Tied-Up-in-a-Knot dancing his way through several sets and nearly being disciplined by Stevi as Tinky Wink the Teletubby!

Hey that's MY liquor! Ms Tina Tuna Adams lamenting the sudden disappearance of her drink down Sister Alleycat Blue's throat at the Bachelor's Mill last Wednesday. Tina to birthday boy Antonio Sanchez: "You look all lonely there. Go rent you some friends!"

Accessorizing! Gigi Couture added twinkle lights in her shoes to her Barbie Girl outfit; Capri added fringe to her jeans pockets and legs; Jimmie James with green feathers on her gown losing them to the fan at Chaos ("Oh well, it's Blair's dress!"); Regina "I'm Cher before Nutrasystem" Josette giving her hand fan a real workout as she popped it open and shut and open and shut.

Cocktail Check! Dominique Fox at Nob Hill checking "You got a cocktail? You gonna need one later... Robert, pour that liquor and while you're at it get one for me" Gucci: "Everyone got a cocktail? I got my communion cup." Xavier: "If I can read this my cocktails must be kicking in!"

Applause, Applause Diva Xavier Bloomingdale received an award for supporting minority outreach from La Clinica del Pueblo at Chaos' benefit show for Latino HIV support.

Security!! 1-Billie Ross at Chaos gently pushing away a real woman who wanted to dance; 2-Marilyn Monroe, our Scarlet Woman, besieged by an amorous drunken bartender lying at her feet and caressing her leg; 3- under investigation--mysterious crashing bathroom windows at *Mr P's*.

Legs, legs!! Bea Evangelista in fishnet stockings and not much else, beautiful legs and quick steps doing her regular "Oye!"; Miss *Mr P's* Diana in black tights and flaming red hair showing her 100% Pure Love.

Confessions: Jordan Taylor: "That's my mother (Xavier). She taught me everything I know and I still don't know a thing!" and "Don't try to read a drag queen. She'll tear your ass up and you won't walk for days." Gucci: "Come in children. We don't bite, unless you pay us -- and for \$50 we *really* bite." Adrienne: "I'm shy!" Xavier: "You should be!" Lady Chris Lace: "I'll give it all, cross the ocean for you." Dominique Fox: "It isn't working for you."

Imitation is the Sincerest Form of ... Reliably hung sources indicate Diva Bloomingdale's and Ms Capri's witty phrases and jokes are being heard *all over town* and especially when they **aren't there** to say them.

Relocating??! Rumor has it, Zeigfields may soon be Gone-Fields, or at least Moved-fields. Meanwhile a large number of drag queens and hangers-on are also looking for new nests.

Encores!! over the past two weeks

Satisfying Demands Thunderous applause and shouts got the fans at Mr P's a reprise of Capri Bloomingdale's foot-stomping tail-shaking story of why *You Need Love*. There was no denying their demands!

Mere Puppets in Tina's Hands You had to be there! Tina Marie Cromwell entranced the crowd as she and her lap friend rocked the house at Mr P's with their emotional duet. Her hand was so far up the dummy's ass that he ought to have sung soprano!

Sistahhood is Powerful Diva Bloomingdale shakin and bakin in her maroon gown and getting raucous applause in the illusion of Shug Avery from *The Color Purple* doing *Sistah!*

Hot Tips! Scandals! Rants! Ravest! call **Drag Rag** at (202) 9079007 (c) Mark Meinke

THE DRAG RAG



NOTES FROM THE FRONT ROWS

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DIVA TALK:

To a doubting fan: Make no mistake. I am a woman: I love to shop and I don't do windows. And I can shoplift men, too.

Warning to a fan: This is a costume, baby. It does come off. Don't let the smooth taste fool you.

On Ms Oprah: Look at her: drunk and hungry at the same time. Jenny Craig can't help that!

On Ms Wong: She still doesn't know the words. It's like watching a Kung Fu movie, the lips are going faster than the words are coming out!

On a fan: Look at him with that big moustache covering up the stretch marks around his mouth. He takes his clothes off and they still run away. You're still looking for

GIGI COUTURE: Miss Chaos '99

She's feline in leopard-skin tights, dancing up a storm to *Around the World* at *Mr P's*.

It's Gigi Couture --come home to DC after making her drag start in New York City. She's a natural force, one of DC's up-and-coming young drag stars, highly competitive, driven to succeed, and busy making a place for herself.

Wigstock 96 got her going--and got her a name. All dressed up for Wigstock, she went down to the parade with friends. Someone said "You gotta have a name!", and so she became Gigi! Her boyfriend and drag mother Kika Couture gave her the rest of the name, too: Couture.

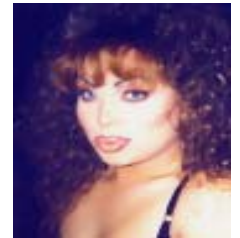
Kika helped her get ready for Wigstock. It must have worked because "I liked the way I looked" says Gigi. She keeps the name Couture

love in all the wrong places!

To a fan taking the mike : You expect to keep your man with that ass!? (He moons the audience). Does that ass look like the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel, or what? Your face looks better than your ass.

in honor of him. In New York, Gigi and her friend Erica Miller hung out at the drag shows, especially at *BoomBoom* in Queens. The manager suggested she try performing. She did, and the money she earned convinced her to keep at it.

Gigi has made her way to the forefront of DC's drag performers since returning here two years ago. It hasn't all been easy: "I had to promote myself at first. I didn't know anyone here."



Doing drag in DC isn't much different from New York, but it's easier to get on a show. "In New York you have to get a booking before you can perform." Xavier Bloomingdale, Jordan Taylor, and Naomi Kane helped her get started on stage here.

All that energy, natural good looks, and beautiful

legs make it hard to take your eyes off of her when she's performing.. Like many artists, Gigi's looks have had some help from implants and cosmetic work. "The injections have helped me have more feminine features."

Being on the mike used to make her nervous but since Xavier Bloomingdale "pushed me to get on the mike more often, I'm getting better. I like it when the crowd gets involved and I'm much more confident now than when I started out".

From Kika, Xavier, Maxine and Naomi she learned about hair, clothes, and the special arts of drag. Gigi credits Xavier with teaching her "a lot, especially about hair".

She started off at Zeigfield's in Southeast. Next she went on to Deco, about two years ago, where she took the title *Miss Deco* in 1998. Gigi also now appears regularly at *Mr P's* and at Chaos. Last April she won her second title to become Miss Chaos 1999.

As Gigi says "I hate losing", so you can be sure when she competes she's going to do everything she can to win! And Ms Couture is not used to not getting what she wants.

Gigi Couture appears at *Mr P's*, Chaos, Deco, and recently at Sin.

She will be at the Edge on Mondays in September.

WALKING AS AN ART

Once you've seen her walk, you **will** remember it! No one does it quite so well, with the same grace and poise and dignity. She claims it just comes naturally. Though she does admit to doing a bit of 'show walking' with Capri and others at Tracks in its heyday.

And by the way, the name is **Kristen**, not Christian as so many call her. She has been Kristen Elyse's Ennoir Bloomingdale since Valentine's Day 1993. 'Bloomingdale' honors Xavier, friend and drag mother, "for whom I have the greatest respect and love".



Kristen first went to New York City from California but preferred DC. "I knew I wouldn't do well in New York." In DC, delivering for FedEx, she came across Capri working in an office ("I knew she was family!") and soon there were friendships.

She has been living in drag for many years now, but "at first it didn't feel natural". When she was still trying to decide whether to do drag, people kept saying she ought to try it. Obviously it works.

Kristen has worn full drag to straight bars, movies, in taxis, without any problems. Some guys have told her "For a guy, you look good", which they must think is some kind of a compliment. Kristen is a sharp observer of the people around her and sizes them up quickly, a protective skill needed by anyone living in drag.

Kristen only performed in drag once and it didn't go well: "I just couldn't recall the words, so I walked, and that worked." But she's getting ready to try it again.

The next stage, though, is to give something back to the gay community. She's feels drag artists and sisters don't contribute enough to supporting and strengthening the community. "We really need to stop fighting among ourselves and give each other some support".

Quote of the Week:

You can never be too blonde!

--Darya

(c) Mark Meinke

ADRIENNE RENE BLACKWELL

Artist & Drag Mother with a Mission

Oh, the tales she can tell! Twenty-five years down the road as an entertainer and almost twenty as a transgendered artist, what Ms Adrienne hasn't seen ain't worth talking about! She's been down and she's been up. And she uses her experience to reach out and guide others, putting back some of what she has taken out of life.

She was hanging out at the old Brass Rail watching the shows when she got to know Roberta Baldwin, her drag-mother-to-be. In those days Adrienne had a bush and a moustache, but Roberta told her "Now you come on outta all that and be a girl!" And, she did! Roberta gave a name, too. One that has stuck for all these years and which Adrienne has passed along to those she has mothered as well, like Gucci Rene Blackwell.

Roberta Baldwin gave young Ms Adrienne her first lessons in clothes, painting (makeup), hair, and performing. Roberta told her "Get there early, set up, paint, and then sit down!" Which she does to this day (her dressing room work area is well organized!) Before going on, Adrienne meditates to relax.

She started out at the old Brass Rail, and went on to Lazambra, Nob Hill and the Bachelors Mill. When it got hard for younger performers to work at the Brass Rail, she based her shows at Nob Hill, where she still headlines on Thursdays. The only other remaining survivor of the old shows at the Brass Rail is Ms Geneva Hinton, now retired.

Adrienne is known for her signature tune *Heatwave*, complete with high kicks, and the older tunes by Aretha, Dionne, Roberta Flack, and the Chantelles that she keeps alive.

She especially appreciates the way her friends at Mr P's, the Bachelor's Mill, the Back Door Pub, and Mike's Place supported her when she was going through difficult times.

Having struggled to establish herself in DC, Adrienne Blackwell has a special concern

for the young gay minority people on the streets of this city. Knowing what it's like to be young and alone on those streets, she formed a troupe in 1982. The Adrienne Blackwell Ensemble gathers into it young people needing guidance for their talent and a chance to feel secure.

The Whitman Walker recognized Ms Blackwell in 1988 for her outreach activities. Among her drag sisters she is well-known for being a very supportive artist.

Adrienne Blackwell performs at *Mr P's* Sunday and Tuesday, at Nob Hill Thursday, Friday and Saturday; twice a month at the Bachelors Mill.



The Blackwells: Mother and Daughter

Drag 101: Hair!

"I can't imagine living without artificial hair" -
--- Gucci

"I work with real hair, but working with a wig is real different. Not everyone can do it! Xavier is one of the best. I ask her to help with all my wigs."

---Gigi Couture

"You have to make the hair work with the song. You can't do a 70s song with a 90s look."

---Stevi