drag shows hosted by Jynne Jaynes, Terrie Santana, and others. The club also hosted several pageants including Miss Capitol City. 

22. 639 Pennsylvania Ave SE - LIFERAFT/ EQUUS/ REMINGTON'S - The site has a long history as a country-western bar featuring drag performances. In the early 70s, the Liferraft presented Billie Gold’s revue show. Remington’s, which opened in 1987, has consistently presented drag shows with a country-western flavor. Headliners included Jynne Jaynes, Betty Michaels, Liza, Opulence, and Courtney Lovelace. Events at Remington's have solidified drag’s association with the Atlantic States Gay Rodeo. 

23. 1129 Pennsylvania Ave SE - ELAN/ ABDENTE - A lesbian bar in the late 60s, Elan featured midweek drag shows hosted by Courtney Lovelace and Michelle Michaels. Beginning in 2000, the Carrero sisters, Linda and Sophia, offered Latino drag performers a performance site late Saturday night in the ground floor restaurant.

24. 55 K St SE - WAAY Off BROADWAY/ CLUB 55 - The theatre space managed by Jesse Kinison and owned by Donn Culver of the Lost and Found was closely involved with the drag community. The board of the theatre included the heads of major DC drag houses. The theatre opened with Cahunari featuring Lainie Kazan, directed by Mame Dennis. Academy events were held here until 1973 when Academy events moved to Oscar’s (see no.18). For several years, this was the gay theatre in DC. The site later became Club 55, to which Academy events returned in 1993.

25. 1345 Half St SE - OTHERS/ ZIEGFELD'S - Since 1978, this address has been the top spot for drag in DC. The Other Side, a women’s bar that opened in 1988, regularly scheduled drag shows here. Ella Fitzgerald, demanding shaper of shows and talents, started here on July 4, 1980. Ziegfeld’s, a landmark in DC’s drag performance scene, opened in March 1988, with Ella Fitzgerald managing the shows. Ziegfeld’s draws large audiences of all ages and orientations to its popular weekend shows, where Ella tells guests to “talk to the drag queen.” The club serves as one of the city’s main pageant sites.
Gay DC Tours

The Academy established its separate DC pageant in 1950, when the city decided to open up to the expanding gay community. In 1964 Jerry Buskirk, a.k.a. Beulah Buskirk, one of Washington's leading female impersonators, took it over as the Miss Gaye America pageant. In 1986, the Academy established its separate national system emerging in the 60s with points awarded in a variety of categories.

Opportunities were more limited for African-American drag performers. The ethnic circuits overlap where clubs in the late 70s, featured impersonators Peaches and Avis Pendavis. National Drag Queen St. James, and many others.

Today drag performance in the city centers on club shows and the Washington gay community. Gay Washington's first social and support organization, the Potomac and drag balls at the Cairo Hotel and the Palm Ballroom, providing opportunities for fellow African-American drag performers.

In the mid-60s, Mame Dennis' Beekman Hotel in San Francisco, Kress organized the first regularly scheduled annual drag awards and provided a safe haven, performance sites, mentoring, and standards for the city's often ostracized drag queens. The contemporary Academy traces its oldest and top titles, such as Best Actress and Best Actor, to Taylor's group.

In the fall of 1961, Bill Frye started a Masquerade Ball, the first city-wide pageant. In 1964 Jerry Buskirk, a.k.a. Beulah Buskirk, one of Washington's leading female impersonators, took it over as the Miss Gaye America pageant. In 1986, the Academy established its separate national system emerging in the 60s with points awarded in a variety of categories.

Opportunities were more limited for African-American drag performers. The ethnic circuits overlap where clubs in the late 70s, featured impersonators Peaches and Avis Pendavis. National Drag Queen St. James, and many others.

Today drag performance in the city centers on club shows and the Washington gay community. Gay Washington's first social and support organization, the Potomac and drag balls at the Cairo Hotel and the Palm Ballroom, providing opportunities for fellow African-American drag performers.

In the mid-60s, Mame Dennis' Beekman Hotel in San Francisco, Kress organized the first regularly scheduled annual drag awards and provided a safe haven, performance sites, mentoring, and standards for the city's often ostracized drag queens. The contemporary Academy traces its oldest and top titles, such as Best Actress and Best Actor, to Taylor's group.

In the fall of 1961, Bill Frye started a Masquerade Ball, the first city-wide pageant. In 1964 Jerry Buskirk, a.k.a. Beulah Buskirk, one of Washington's leading female impersonators, took it over as the Miss Gaye America pageant. In 1986, the Academy established its separate national system emerging in the 60s with points awarded in a variety of categories.

Opportunities were more limited for African-American drag performers. The ethnic circuits overlap where clubs in the late 70s, featured impersonators Peaches and Avis Pendavis. National Drag Queen St. James, and many others.

Today drag performance in the city centers on club shows and the Washington gay community. Gay Washington's first social and support organization, the Potomac and drag balls at the Cairo Hotel and the Palm Ballroom, providing opportunities for fellow African-American drag performers.

In the mid-60s, Mame Dennis' Beekman Hotel in San Francisco, Kress organized the first regularly scheduled annual drag awards and provided a safe haven, performance sites, mentoring, and standards for the city's often ostracized drag queens. The contemporary Academy traces its oldest and top titles, such as Best Actress and Best Actor, to Taylor's group.

In the fall of 1961, Bill Frye started a Masquerade Ball, the first city-wide pageant. In 1964 Jerry Buskirk, a.k.a. Beulah Buskirk, one of Washington's leading female impersonators, took it over as the Miss Gaye America pageant. In 1986, the Academy established its separate national system emerging in the 60s with points awarded in a variety of categories.

Opportunities were more limited for African-American drag performers. The ethnic circuits overlap where clubs in the late 70s, featured impersonators Peaches and Avis Pendavis. National Drag Queen St. James, and many others.

Today drag performance in the city centers on club shows and the Washington gay community. Gay Washington's first social and support organization, the Potomac and drag balls at the Cairo Hotel and the Palm Ballroom, providing opportunities for fellow African-American drag performers.
Gay DC Tours

Academy established its separate America pageant. In 1986, the took it over as the Miss Gaye Buskirk started a Masquerade Ball, the Actor, to Taylor's group. Oldest and top titles, such as Best Actress and safe haven, performance sites, mentoring, and organization.

Buskirk's club shows and the Washington Academy, gay American drag artists in a segregated social scene. The Crystal (later Bohemian) Caverns in 1965, with winners selected by leaders of the rival Awards Club (which lasted until 1988).

With points awarded in a variety of categories. For per-formers to present (performers provided their own costumes, sets, and music). For per-formers involved with the drag community. The board of the Academy traces its oldest and top titles, such as Best Actress and Actor, to Taylor's group. In the fall of 1961, Bill Frye started a Masquerade Ball, the first citywide pageant. In 1994 Jerry Buskirk, a.k.a. Beulah Buskirk, one of Washington's leading female impersonators, took it over as the Miss Gaye America pageant. In 1996, the Academy established its separate

The modern drag training system emerged in the 60s as leading drag artists became "fathers" to those wanting to learn the art of illusion. Emerging leaders in the mid-60s included Carl Rizzi, a.k.a. Mame Dennis, and Alex Carlin, a.k.a. Fanny Brice. Drag mothers formed 'houses': Mame Dennis led Beekman Place; Liz Taylor led Butterfield 8; Beulah Buskirk led Affair; Fanny Brice led Henry Street; Patty Duke led Maryland House; and Kim Novak led Paramount Plaza. Black Pearl organized drag cruises on the Potomac and drag balls at the Casino Royale and the Dunbar theaters bringing African-American drag performers.

An acrimonious split hit Kress's Academies group in the mid-60s. Mame Dennis' Beekman Place and Fanny Brice's Henry Street left the group and joined with Beulah Buskirk to form the rival Awards Club (which lasted until 1988). The Awards Club mounted its own contests, awarding the Emmy to its winners and staged the annual Miss Gaye America (DC) pageant. Taylor's group stayed with the Miss Gaye Universe pageant in 1965, with winners selected by leaders of the group rather than by judges. As the gay community emerged in the '70s, club owners switched from drag shows to dance clubs, which were cheap to present (performers provided their own costumes, sets, and music). For performers, the explosion in drag clubs offered not only more chances to perform and earn tips but also new training grounds. In 1973, club owner Bill Oates Jr. brokered creation of The Academy, a reorganization of the Henry Street and Beekman Place houses with members of Liz Taylor's group.

The New Academy, headed by Mame Dennis, led a major expansion in club shows and public visibility for female impersonators in the 1970s. The Academy has had as many as twelve drag houses and Academy members hosted shows and trained newcomers in clubs across the city. The annual Showstoppers productions produced by Fanny Brice and her Henry Street house brought professional drag performances to an audience far beyond the gay community.

Today's club scene offers distinct ethnic circuits: African-American, Latino, Asian, and white. The ethnic circuits overlap where clubs offer a mix of all backgrounds. Performers are equally diverse in their styles and music with families, such as the Dennises, the Devereaux, the Kanes, the Carreros, and the Denises. The Dennises, the Devereaux, the Kanes, the Carreros, and the Denises. The Dennises, the Devereaux, the Kanes, the Carreros, and the Denises. The Dennises, the Devereaux, the Kanes, the Carreros, and the Denises. The Dennises, the Devereaux, the Kanes, the Carreros, and the Denises.
Gay DC Tours

Academy established its separate
organization in 1961. The group trained newcomers in clubs
and people do. And she reminds
the bitchy, they stay for
the costumes, and
for the cos-
sonation.

In the fall of 1961, Bill Frye
started a Masquerade Ball, the
dreaded as the gay community emerged in the 70s, club
owners started offering productions and drag shows
which were cheap to present (performers provided
their own costumes, sets, and music). For per-
formers, the explosion in drag clubs offered not
only more chances to perform and earn tips but
also new training grounds.

In 1973, club owner Bill Oates Jr. brokered cre-
tion of The Academy, a reconciliation of the
Henry Street and Beekman Place houses with
members of Liz Taylor’s group.

The modern drag training
system emerged in the 60s
as leading drag artists
became “mothers” to those
wanting to learn the art of
ilusion. Emerging leaders in
the mid-60s included
carol rice, a.k.a. Mame
Dennis, and Alex Carlino,
a.k.a. Fanny Brice. Drag mothers formed ‘houses’:
Mame Dennis led Beekman Place;
Liz Taylor led Butterfield 8;
Fanny Brice led Affair;
Patty Duke led Maryland House; and
Kim Novak led Paramount Plaza.

Trainees often adopted the drag mother’s name as
their surname, creating drag lines and family
trees. In later years, headliners in the clubs (many
of them trainees of the Academy) created club lin-
ings as well. Well-known DC drag families include
the Bloomingtonales, the Blues, the Carreras,
the Dennises, the Devereaux, the Kanes, the
Kazans, the Maharises, the O’Haras, the
Sanchez, and many others.
Adrienne Hill's drag shows featured many of the city's leading African-American female impersonators. Among leading performers here were Barbara MacNair, whose Moms Mabley impersonation and fire dances were very popular. The Railettes, the club's troupe of drag performers, performed all around the city. The club moved to 5th & K St NW in 1983.

15. 1215 New York Ave NW - DOLLY's - Dolly's was a major part of the gay and drag scene around the bus terminals and can be recognized for Christmas year after another. As Johnnie's, known as the Palm, and gay male hangout. Redskin's featured occasional drag shows, including local African-American drag performers and has been one of the longest standing original drag event of the season. Johnnie's drag events were run by Ray 'Ramon' Violette. In 1974, JB Gateh and her mother Louissette, opened a women's club, Club Madame, which featured weekend drag shows. In 1978, the club, still owned by BB, became a gay male-oriented club The Bachelor's Mill which featuring prominent drag artists including Dana Terrell. In 1984 The Bachelor's Mill device moved down the street to 1104 8th St SE. At the new location, the Mill continued to offer a stage for African-American drag entertainers such as Tara Wawa, Tina Tuna Adams, Arcadia Alexander, and Tanelle Sanchez, as well as a site for drag events.

16. 1628 L St NW - REDSKIN LOUNGE - Through the mid-50s, the Redskin Lounge was a mixed lesbian and gay male hangout. Redskin's featured occasional drag performers, including nationally known female impersonator Ray Bourbon.

17. 1239 8th St NW - FANTASY'S - The club only lasted about a year and a half in the mid-80s but featured extravagant drag shows and memorable parties. Shows featured Kim Novak, Brandy Dover, and Lala Maharis.

18. 811 Pennsylvania Ave NW/309 9th St NW - THE BARN, OSCAR'S EYE & THE ROUGE - The complex at this location, a stack ofugy clubs from the mid-60s, became notable for its drug connections in the 70s. The Hideaway was in the basement. Louise's (opened 1965) was on the ground floor. Above Louise's was The Barn (1971-1979), a country-western club which featured the Stardust Review drag show. Above Louise's dining room, next to the Barn, was The Rouge, one of DC's principal drag bars from 1975 to 1983 (when it moved to 5th & K NW). Customers at The Rouge used the bathrooms and bar at The Barn. Lainie Kazan, of the Academy, directed shows which featured Marlo Thomas, Susan St. James, Gwen Alexander, and Tina Santana. Diva Ella Fitzgerald performed here from 1980 to 1983. From 1973, the Academy at Oscar's Eye (named by Fanny Brice) on the third floor.

19. 500 8th St SE - JOHNNIE's/CLUB MADAME/ BACHELOR's MILL - Since 1949, this bar has been one gay-oriented club after another. As Johnnie's - 1949 - 1974 held monthly Zodiac drag contests. Johnnie's, known as the Palm, was decorated for Christmas year round. Johnnie's drag events were run by Ray 'Ramon' Violette. In 1974, JB Gateh and her mother Louissette, opened a women's club, Club Madame, which featured weekend drag shows. In 1978, the club, still owned by BB, became a gay male-oriented club The Bachelor's Mill which featuring prominent drag artists including Dana Terrell. In 1984 The Bachelor's Mill device moved down the street to 1104 8th St SE. At the new location, the Mill continued to offer a stage for African-American drag entertainers such as Tara Wawa, Tina Tuna Adams, Arcadia Alexander, and Tanelle Sanchez, as well as a site for drag events.

20. 529 8th St SE - PLUS ONE - One of the first major gay disco clubs in the DMV 1968 1975 also featured drag shows. Ella Fitzgerald started out at the Plus One in the mid-70s, where an early performance career. Her name was Erica Kane and Xavier Bloomglad introduced a host of entertainers to the eager audiences four nights a week. The last show hostess was Stevi Starfire. Among featured artists were Dominique Fox, Capri Bloomglad, Gigi Couture, Gucci Goddamm, Esmeralda Kane Jaymes, and Teena Marie Cromwell.

21. 713 8th St SE - SHERIDAN's - From 1999, Sandy Thompson's county-western club offered weekend mid drag bingo nights and weekend
some clubs featuring Latino sounds, country-western, pop music, hip-hop and rap. DC’s leading drag performers are a unique ethnic mix.

Gendershows has also come to drag. In 1996, as a fundraising effort, Cheryl Specker suggested that the Lesbian Avengers hold DC’s first drag king competition at the Hung Jury. The contest was won by Kendra Killigan, a Drag King Ken (later known as Ken Las Vegas). The Puss N’Boots group was formed from the judges of that contest; they staged drag king shows from 1997 to 1999. In October 1999, Chaos held its first Drag King competition, produced by Drag King Ken. The DC Drag Kings formed in March 2000 at the inauguration of Chaos’s monthly Drag King Show. The drag king performance scene continues to expand as more and more drag kings appear at the Academy and in the clubs.

Since the ‘70s, the city’s pages have grown with the emergence of club titles and city-wide titles. Washington, DC has contributed three national title holders to the Miss Gay America system: Maya Montana, Linda Carrero, and Sabrina White. Miss Gay America, Miss Black America, Miss Universe Latino, Miss USofA, and Miss Continental have preliminaries here. There is diversity in our titles as well. African-American and Latino pageant systems have emerged here. Most pageants are judged and award contestants points for talent, evening gown, interview, and other categories. In 2000, 39 drag pageants were held in Washington, DC.

9. 1846 Monroe St NW - HOLLYWOOD HOUSE - One of the homes of Liz Taylor, founder of the Academies, Hollywood House became a regular salon for female impersonators associated with Taylor and, later, the Academy. Taylor subsequently bought the club and turned it over to her own drag house among the Academy’s houses.

10. 2504 14th St NW - GOLDEN NUGGET - Destroyed by fire in 1964, Rosetta Minor’s ‘Black Nugget’, as the club was known, was a haven for African-American female impersonators and the transgendered. Though rough and wild at times, it was one of the few welcoming places for drag and transgendered youth.

11. 3316 14th St NW - BOB’S MIX - A popular 60s venue for rock and roll, the club also featured drag shows. Shows were headlined by Dunbar graduate Avis Pend’avis and Peaches. Avis moved to drag shows. Shows were headlined by Dunbar grad Taylor and, later, the Academy. Taylor subsequently transgendered youth. Though rough and wild at times, it was one of the few welcoming places for drag and transgendered youth.

12. 1001 Kenyon St NW - NOB HILL - Nob Hill's drag shows featured many of the city's leading African-American female impersonators over the years. Adrienne Blackwell performed and led shows here through the 1990s. Other noted performers have been Stevi Starfire, Terri Lee Ross, Dominique Fox, Arcadia Alexander, Gucci Blackwell, Lady Lace, and Regina Jozeezeta. Drag shows ran Thursday through Sunday.

13. 4211 9th St NW - PALM BALLROOM - In the 60s and 70s, the Palm Ballroom provided a venue for drag fashion and drag balls, African-American social clubs and was also used by the Awards Club. During segregation, the Palm and the Cairo Hotel welcomed African-Americans.

14. 811-13 13th St NW - THE BRASS RAIL - In the 70s and 80s, the Brass Rail was one of the pre-
Drag performers are a unique ethnic mix. Genderravity has also come to drag. In 1996, as a fundraising effort, Cheryl Specer suggested that the Lesbian Avengers hold DC's first drag king competition at the Hung Fury. The contest was won by Kendra Killgall, a Drag King Ken (later known as Ken Las Vegas). The Puss N'Booths group was formed from the judges of that contest; they staged drag king shows from 1997 to 1999. In October 1999, Chaos held its first Drag King competition, produced by Drag King Ken. The DC Drag Kings formed in March 2000 at the inauguration of Chaos's monthly Drag King Show. The drag king performance scene continues to expand as more and more drag kings appear at the Academy and in the clubs.

Since the 70s, the city's pageants have grown with the emergence of club titles and city-wide titles. Washington, DC has contributed three national title holders to the Miss Gay America system: Maya Montana, Linda Carrero, and Sabrina White. Miss Gay America, Miss Black America, Miss Universe Latina, Miss USOA, and Miss Continental have preliminaries here.

There is diversity in our titles as well. African-American and Latino pageant systems have emerged here. Most pageants are judged and award contestants points for talent, evening gown, interview, and other categories. In 2000, 37 drag pageants were held in Washington, DC.

9. 1846 Monroe St NW - HOLLAND HOUSE - One of the homes of Liz Taylor, founder of the Academies, Holland House became a regular salon for female impersonators associated with Taylor and, later, the Academy. Taylor subsequently bought the house and opened it as his own drag house among the Academy's houses.

10. 2504 14th St NW - GOLDEN NUGGET - Destroyed by fire in 1968, Rosetta Minor's 'Black Nugget', as the club was known, was a haven for African-American female impersonators and the transgendered. Though rough and wild at times, it was one of the few welcoming places for drag and transgendered youth.

11. 3316 14th St NW - BOB'S INN - A popular 60s venue for rock and roll, the club also featured drag shows. Shows were headlined by Duran darbar Avis Pendavis and Peaches. Aviso moved to New York City and founded the House of Pendavis. The club was destroyed by fire in April 1968.

12. 1101 Kenyon St NW - NOB HILL - Nob Hill's drag shows featured many of the city's leading African-American female impersonators over the years. Adrienne Blackwell performed and led shows here through the 1990s. Other noted performers have been Stevi Starfire, Terri Lee Ross, Dominique Foxx, Arcadia Alexander, Gucci Blackwell, Lady Lace, and Regina Joceette. Drag shows ran Thursday through Sunday.

13. 4211 9th St NW - PALM BALLROOM - In the 60s and 70s, the Palm Ballroom provided a venue for drag fashion and drag balls, African-American social clubs and was also used by the Awards Club. During segregation, the Palm and the Cairo Hotel welcomed African-Americans.

14. 811-13 13th St NW - THE BRASS RAIL - In the 70s and 80s, the Brass Rail was one of the pre-

top venues for drag and as an important training ground and performance space for up and coming female impersonators. The club was also an important intersection of Latin, white, and African-American performance cultures. The hostesses Erica Kane and Xavier Bloomdingale introduced a host of entertainers to the stage. The last show hostess was Stevi Starfire. Among featured artists were Dominique Foxx, Capri Bloomdingale, Gigi Couture, Guinness Goddamm, Esmeralda Kane Jacobs, and Teena Marie Cromwell.

15. 1970 17th St NW - CHANG'S - As one of DC's most diverse gay clubs, Chang's has presented drag shows since opening in 1998 and has been ever-willing to experiment. The club was first offered to regularly scheduled drag show nights, and has been one of the longest running venues for the Latino drag scene. In Saturday evening drag shows are standing-room only. Show hostesses have included Jordan Taylor, the Two Tons of Fun: Lena Lett and Leona Hemsey, Ester Godoy, Xavier Bloomdingale, Regina Joceette, and Gigi Couture.

16. 1529 17th St NW - JR's - JR's is noted for originating the annual Halloween high heel drag races. Twenty-five contestants entered the first high heel drag race at JR's on October 31, 1966. The midnight dash went down one and a half blocks to Annie's where the racers ran upstairs for a slot of schnapps, then down the stairs and back down the street to the Midnight Club. Clinton won the race and a bottle of champagne.
1. 1919 Connecticut Ave NW - Washington Heights - In February 1968, Black Pearl’s International Awards show was the drag event of the year and broke the main hotels’ ban on drag events.

2. 1520 Connecticut Ave NW - RASCALS - From 1979 through 1992, Rascals was one of Dupont’s premier drag show bars. Under the leadership of Sparkle Maharis, the club’s drag shows and amateur hours drew a wide audience. Sparkle’s amateur shows marked the beginning of a number of prominent drag careers.

3. 3122 P St NW - ESCANDALO/DECO CABA 

4. 1415 22nd St NW - BADLANDS/AXEP - Though not a drag performance club, Badlands hosted a number of drag pageants, most regularly the annual Miss Capital Pride contest. Badlands opened in the early 80s and was run for several years by Don Gilliken, a.k.a. Kathy Walker. Miss Gay America and Miss Black America titles were also held in the club.

5. 1514 22nd St NW - DOLLY'S - Dolly’s was a major part of the gay and drag scene around the downtown area. The club employed staff in drag and featured local stars such as Barbara MacNair. An August 1975 Washingtonian article chronicled the scene at Dolly’s. The bartender was Rhonda Ray and the bouncer was Alicia B. Gay, both drag queens.

6. 1628 L St NW - REDSKIN LOUNGE - Through the mid-50s, the Redskin Lounge was a mixed lesbian and gay male hangout. Redskin’s featured occasional drag performers, including nationally known female impersonator Ray Bourbon.

7. 2122 P St NW rear - OMEGA - Omega emerged in 1999 as the new home of Cobalt’s drag shows. As Monday night’s Dupont drag show, the Cobalt troupe took a new identity and provided a second Dupont home for those beginning their performance careers. The popular show was led for many years by ‘sex kitten’ JC van Raine and Dominique Fox.

8. 3136 14th St NW - BOB'S INN - A popular 60s venue for rock and roll, the club also featured drag shows. Shows were headlined by Donna Summer, Cher, and other major 60s acts. The club only stayed open for a few years, but was notable for the drag performances that were held there.

9. 1846 Monroe St NW - HOLLYWOOD HOUSE - One of the homes of Liz Taylor, founder of the Hollywood, Washington, DC became a regular salon for female impersonators associated with Taylor and, later, the Academy. Taylor subsequently purchased a large house of her own in DC and opened a drag bar when she moved to 5th & K NW. Customers at The Rogue used the stairs and back down the street to JR’s. Clinton won the race and the bottle of champange.

10. 2504 14th St NW - GOLDEN NUGGET - Destroyed by fire in April 1968, Rosetta Minor’s ‘Black Nugget’ as the club was known, was a haven for African-American female impersonators and the transgendered. Though rough and wild at times, it was one of the few welcoming places for drag and transgendered youth.

11. 3136 14th St NW - BOB'S INN - A popular 60s venue for rock and roll, the club also featured drag shows. Shows were headlined by Donna Summer, Cher, and other major 60s acts. The club only stayed open for a few years, but was notable for the drag performances that were held there.

12. 1101 Kenyon St NW - NOB HILL - Nob Hill’s drag shows featured many of the city’s leading African-American female impersonators over the years. Adrienne Blackwell performed and led shows here through the 1990s. Other noted performers have been Stevi Starfi, Terre Lee Ross, Dominique Fox, Arcadia Alexander, Gucci Blackwell, Lady Lace, and Regina Jozeeza. Drag shows ran Thursday through Sunday.

13. 4211 9th St NW - PALM BALROOM - In the 60s and 70s, the Palm Balroom provided a venue for drag fashion and drag balls, African-American social clubs and was also used by the Awards Club. During segregation, the Palm and the Cairo Hotel welcomed African-Americans.

14. 811 Pennsylvania Ave NW/309 9th St NW - THE BARN, OSCAR’S EYE & THE ROGUE - The complex at this location, a stack of gay clubs from the mid-60s, became notable for its drag connections in the 70s. The Hideaway was in the basement. Louise’s (opened 1965) was on the ground floor. Above Louise’s was The Barn (1971-1979). A country-western club which featured the Stardust Review drag show. Above Louise’s dining room, next to the Barn, was The Rogue, one of DC’s principal drag bars from 1975 to 1983 (when it moved to 5th & K NW). Customers at The Rogue used the restroom and bar at The Barn. Lainie Kazan, of The Academy, directed the famous Bar Mitzvah show that featured Marlo Thomas, Susan St. James, Gwen Alexander, and Tina Santana. Diva Ella Fitzgerald performed here from 1980 to 1983. From 1973, The Academy at Oscar’s Eye (named by Fanny Brice) on the third floor.

15. 1215 New York Ave NW - DOLLY'S - Dolly’s was a major part of the gay and drag scene around the downtown area. The club employed staff in drag and featured local stars such as Barbara MacNair, whose Moms Mabley impersonation and fire dances were very popular. The Railettes, the club’s troupe of drag performers all around the city. The club moved to 5th & K St NW in 1983.

16. 1628 L St NW - REDSKIN LOUNGE - Through the mid-50s, the Redskin Lounge was a mixed lesbian and gay male hangout. Redskin’s featured occasional drag performers, including nationally known female impersonator Ray Bourbon.

17. 1239 9th St NW - FANTASEAS - The club only lasted about a year and a half in the mid-80s but featured extravagant drag shows and memorable parties. Shows featured Kim Novak, Brandy Dover, and Lala Maharis.

18. 811 Pennsylvania Ave NW/309 9th St NW - THE BARN, OSCAR’S EYE & THE ROGUE - The complex at this location, a stack of gay clubs from the mid-60s, became notable for its drag connections in the 70s. The Hideaway was in the basement. Louise’s (opened 1965) was on the ground floor. Above Louise’s was The Barn (1971-1979). A country-western club which featured the Stardust Review drag show. Above Louise’s dining room, next to the Barn, was The Rogue, one of DC’s principal drag bars from 1975 to 1983 (when it moved to 5th & K NW). Customers at The Rogue used the restroom and bar at The Barn. Lainie Kazan, of The Academy, directed the famous Bar Mitzvah show that featured Marlo Thomas, Susan St. James, Gwen Alexander, and Tina Santana. Diva Ella Fitzgerald performed here from 1980 to 1983. From 1973, The Academy at Oscar’s Eye (named by Fanny Brice) on the third floor.

19. 500 8th St SE - JOHNIEE’S/CLUB MADAME/ BACHELOR’S MILL - Since 1949, this bar has been one gay-oriented club after another. As Johnniee’s 1949 - 1974 was held monthly, it held yearly Valentine’s Day drag contests. Johnniee’s, known as the Tinsel Palace, was dec\n
20. 529 9th St SE - PLUS ONE - One of the first gay disco clubs in the District (1968 1975) also featured drag shows. Ella Fitzgerald started out at the Plus One in the mid-70s, where an early performance career in drag. She recalls auditioning on a Tuesday, performing “Touch Me in the Morning”.

21. 713 8th St SE - SHERIDAN’S - From 1999, Sandy Thompson’s county-western club offered weekend mid drag bingo nights and weekend
some clubs featuring Latino sounds, country-western, pop music, hip-hop and rap. DC’s leading drag performers are a unique ethnic mix.

Gendervarsity has also come to drag. In 1996, as a fundraising effort, Cheryl Specter suggested that the Lesbian Avengers hold DC’s first drag king competition at the Hung Jury. The contest was won by Kendra Killigal, a drag king Ken (later known as Ken Las Vegas). The Puss N’Boots group was formed from the judges of that contest; they staged drag king shows from 1997 to 1999. In October 1999, Chaos held its first Drag King competition, produced by Drag King Ken. The DC Drag Kings formed in March 2000 at the inauguration of Chaos’s monthly Drag King Show. The drag king performance scene continues to expand as more and more drag kings appear at the Academy and in the clubs.

Since the 70s, the city’s pageants have grown with the emergence of club titles and city-wide titles. Washington, DC has contributed three national title holders to the Miss Gay America system: Maya Montana, Linda Carrero, and Sabrina White. Miss Gay America, Miss Black America, Miss Universe Latin, Miss USofA, and Miss Continental have preliminaries here.

There is diversity in our titles as well: African-American and Latino pageant systems have emerged here. Most pageants are judged and award contestants points for talent, evening gown, interview, and other categories. In 2000, drag pageants were held in Washington, DC.

---

1. 1919 Connecticut Ave NW - Washington Hilton - In February 1968, Black Pearl’s International Awards show was the drag event of the year and broke the main hotels’ ban on drag events.

2. 1520 Connecticut Ave NW - RASCALS - From 1979 through 1992, Rascals was one of Dupont’s premier drag show bars. Under the leadership of Sparkle Maharis, the club’s drag shows and amateur hours drew a wide audience. Sparkle’s amateur shows marked the beginning of a number of prominent drag careers.


4. 2122 P St NW - ΩMEGA - Omega emerged in 1999 as the new home of Cobalt’s drag shows. As Monday night’s Dc/Las Vegas show, the Cobbalt troupe took a new identity and provided a second Dupont home for those beginning their drag performance careers. The popular show was led for many years by ‘sex kitten’ JC van Raine and Dominique Fox.

5. 1415 22nd St NW - BADLANDS/APEX - Though not a drag performance club, Badlands hosted a number of drag pageants. It hosted the regularly the annual Miss Capital Pride contest. Badlands opened in the early 80s and was run for several years by Don Gilliken, a.k.a. Sophie Tucker, a member of the Awards Club. Badlands changed its name to Apex in 2002. The Miss Gay DC America pageant recently moved to Apex.

6. 2147 P St NW - Mr. P’s - For decades, the tiny stage in Mr. P’s inner room served as one of Dupont’s premier venues for African-American female impersonators. Among leading performers here were Barbara MacNair, whose Moms Mabley impersonation and fire dances were very popular, and Queenie. The Railettes, the club’s troupe of drag performers all performed around the city. The club moved to 5th & K St NW in 1983.

7. 1529 17th St NW - ΩMEGA - Omega emerged in 1999 as the new home of Cobalt’s drag shows. As Monday night’s DC/Las Vegas show, the Cobbalt troupe took a new identity and provided a second Dupont home for those beginning their drag performance careers. The popular show was led for many years by ‘sex kitten’ JC van Raine and Dominique Fox.

---

9. 1846 Monroe St NW - HOLLYWOOD HOUSE - One of the homes of Liz Taylor, founder of the Academies, Hollywood House became a regular salon for female impersonators associated with Taylor and, later, the Academy. Taylor subsequently bought the mini-bar that was his own drag house among the Academy’s houses.

10. 2554 14th St NW - GOLDEN NUGGET - Destroyed by fire in 1968, Rosetta Minor’s ‘Black Nugget’, as the club was known, was a haven for African-American female impersonators and the transgendered. Though rough and wild at times, it was one of the few welcoming places for drag and transgendered youth.

11. 3316 14th St NW - BOB’S INN - A popular 60s venue for rock and roll, the club also featured drag shows. Shows were headlined by Damarb grandeur Avis Pend’avis and Peaches. Avis moved to New York City and founded the House of Pend’avis.

12. 1201 Kenyon St NW - NOB HILL - Nob Hill’s drag shows featured many of the city’s leading African-American female impersonators over the years. Adrienne Blackwell performed and led shows here through the 1990s. Other noted performers have been Stevi Starfire, Teri Lee Ross, Dominique Fox, Arcadia Alexander, Gucci Blackwell, Lady Lace, and Regina Jozeece. Drag shows ran Thursdays through Sunday.

13. 4211 9th St NW - PALM BALLROOM - In the 60s and 70s, the Palm Ballroom provided a venue for drag fashion and drag balls, African-American social clubs and was also used by the Awards Club. During segregation, the Palm and the Cairo Hotel welcomed African-Americans.

14. 811-13 13th St NW - THE BRASS RAIL - In the 70s and 80s, the Brass Rail was one of the preeminent clubs in the city. The club was a major part of the gay and drag scene around the intersection of 15th and U NW. It remained open until 1993.

---

15. 1215 New York Ave NW - DOLLY’S - Dolly’s was a major part of the gay and drag scene around the bus terminals and for African-American drag entertainers such as Lady Tawana, Tina Tuna Adams, Arcadia Alexander, and Tina Santana. Diva Ella Fitzgerald performed here from 1980 to 1983. From 1973, the Academy at Oscar’s Eye (named by Fanny Brice) on the third floor.

16. 1262 L St NW - REDSKIN LOUNGE - Through the mid-50s, the Redskin Lounge was a mixed lesbian and gay male hangout. Redskin’s featured occasional drag performers, including nationally known female impersonator Ray Bourbon.

17. 1239 9th St NW - FANTASIES - The club only lasted about a year and a half in the mid-80s but featured extravagant drag shows and memorable parties. Shows featured Kim Novak, Brandy Dover, and Lala Maharis.

18. 811 Pennsylvania Ave NW/309 9th St NW - THE BARN, OSCAR'S EYE & THE ROGUE - The complex at this location, a stack of gay clubs from the mid-60s, became notable for its drag connections in the 70s. The Hideaway was in the basement. Louie’s (opened 1965) was on the ground floor. Above Louie’s was The Barn (1971-1979), a country-western club which featured the Stardust Review drag show. Above Louie’s dining room, next to the Barn, was The Rogue, one of DC’s principal drag bars from 1975 to 1983 (when it moved to 5th & K NW). Customers at The Rogue used the restrooms and bar at The Barn. Lainie Kazan, of the Academy, directed shows which featured Marlo Thomas, Susan S. James, Gwen Alexander, and Tina Santana. Diva Ella Fitzgerald performed here from 1980 to 1983. From 1973, the Academy at Oscar’s Eye (named by Fanny Brice) on the third floor.

19. 500 8th St SE - JOHNNIE’S/CLUB MADAME/ BACHELOR’S MILL - Since 1949, this bar has been one gay-oriented club after another. As Johnnie’s 1949 - 1970 held monthly Zodiac drag contests. Johnnie’s, known as the Times Palace, was dec
ded for Christmas year-round. Johnnie’s drag events were run by Ray ‘Ramona’ Violette. In 1974, JB Gatech and her mother Louissette, operated a women’s club, Club Madame, which featured weekend drag shows. In 1978, the club, still owned by BB, became a gay male-oriented club called The Bachelor’s Mill which featuring prominent drag artists including Dana Terrell. In 1984 The Bachelor’s Mill held the monthly Zodiac drag contests. Johnnie’s, known as the Times Palace, was decorated for Christmas year-round.

20. 529 8th St SE - PLUS ONE - One of the first major gay disco clubs, the Plus One (1968 1975) also featured drag shows. Ella Fitzgerald started out at the Plus One in the mid-70s, where an early performance name was Marsha. She recalls auditioning on a Tuesday, performing “Touch Me in the Morning”.

21. 713 8th St SE - SHERIDAN'S - From 1999, Sandy Thompson’s county-western club offered weekend mid drag bingo nights and weekend...
some clubs featuring Latino sounds, country-western, pop music, hip-hop and rap. DC's leading drag performers are a unique ethnic mix.

Gendervarsity has also come to drag. In 1996, as a fundraising effort, Cheryl Speckler suggested that the Lesbian Avengers hold DC's first drag king competition at the Hung Fury. The contest was won by Kendra Killigun, a drag King Ken (later known as Ken Las Vegas). The Puss N'Boots group was formed from the judges of that contest; they staged drag king shows from 1997 to 1999. In October 1999, Chaos held its first Drag King competition, produced by Drag King Ken. The DC Drag Kings formed in March 2000 at the inauguration of Chaos's monthly Drag King Show. The drag king performance scene continues to expand as more and more drag kings appear at the Academy and in the clubs.

Since the 70s, the city's pageants have grown with the emergence of club titles and city-wide titles. Washington, DC has contributed three national title holders to the Miss Gay America system: Maya Montana, Linda Carrero, and Sabrina White. Miss Gay America, Miss Black America, Miss Universe Latina, Miss USofA, and Miss Continental have preliminaries here. There is diversity in our titles as well. African-American and Latino pageant systems have emerged here. Most pageants are judged and award contestants points for talent, evening gown, interview, and other categories. In 2000, drag pageants were held in Washington, DC.

9. 1846 Monroe St NW - HOLLYWOOD HOUSE - One of the homes of Liz Taylor, founder of the Academies, Hollywood House became a regular salon for female impersonators associated with Taylor and, later, the Academy. Taylor subsequently fashioned her own drag house among the Academy's houses.

10. 2504 14th St NW - GOLDEN NUGGET - Destroyed by fire in April 1968, Rosetta Minor's 'Black Nugget', as the club was known, was a haven for African-American female impersonators and the transgendered. Though rough and wild at times, it was one of the few welcoming places for drag and transgendered youth.

11. 3316 14th St NW - BOB'S INN - A popular 60s venue for rock and roll, the club also featured drag shows. Shows were headlined by Dunbar graduate Ray Jackson, whose Moms Mabley impersonation and fire dances were very popular.

12. 1101 Kenyon St NW - NOB HILL - Nob Hill's drag shows featured many of the city's leading African-American female impersonators over the years. Adrienne Blackwell performed and led shows here through the 1990s.

13. 4211 9th St NW - PALM BALLROOM - In the 60s and 70s, the Palm Ballroom provided a venue for drag fashion and drag balls, African-American social clubs and was also used by the Awards Club. During segregation, the Palm and the Cairo Hotel welcomed African-Americans.

14. 811-13 13th St NW - THE BRASS RAIL - In the 70s and 80s, The Brass Rail was one of the premier venues for African-American female impersonators. Among leading performers here were Barbara MacNair, whose Moms Mabley impersonation and fire dances were very popular.

15. 1215 New York Ave NW - DOLLY'S - Dolly's was a major part of the gay and drag scene around the bust terminals at Union Station. The club employed staff in drag and featured local stars such as Barbara MacNair. An August 1975 Washingtonian article chronicled the scene at Dolly's. The bartender was Rhonda Ray and the bouncer was Alicia B. Gay, both drag queens.

16. 1628 L St NW - REDSKIN LOUNGE - Through the mid-50s, the Redskin Lounge was a mixed lesbian and gay male hangout. Redskin's featured occasional drag performers, including nationally known female impersonator Ray Bourbon.

17. 1239 9th St NW - FANTASYS - The club only lasted about a year and a half in the mid-80s but featured extravagant drag shows and memorable parties. Shows featured Kim Novak, Brandy Dover, and Lala Maharis.

18. 811 Pennsylvania Ave NW/309 9th St NW - THE BARN, OSCAR'S EYE & THE ROGE - The complex at this location, a stack of gay clubs from the mid-60s, became notable for its drag connections in the 70s. The Hideaway was in the basement. Louise's (opened 1965) was on the ground floor. Above Louise's was The Barn (1971-1979). A country-western club which featured the Stardust Review drag show. Above Louise's dining room, next to the Barn, was The Rogue, one of DC's principal drag bars from 1975 to 1983 (when it moved to 5th & K NW). Customers at The Rogue used the restaurant's bar and at The Barn. Lainie Kazan, of the Academy, directed shows which featured Marlo Thomas, Susan St. James, Gwen Alexander, and Tina Santana. Diva Ella Fitzgerald performed here from 1980 to 1983. From 1973, the Academy at Oscar's Eye (named by Fanny Brice) on the third floor.

19. 500 8th St SE - JOHNNIE'S/CLUB MADAME/BACHELOR'S MILL - Since 1949, this bar had been one gay-oriented club after another. As Johnnie's 1949 - 1978 held monthly Zodiac drag contests. Johnnie's, known as the Timel Palace, was decorated for Christmas year-round. Johnnie's drag events were run by Ray 'Ramona' Violette. In 1974, JB Gatch and her mother Louisette, opened a new club, Club Madame, which featured weekend drag shows. In 1978, the club, still owned by JB, became a gay male-oriented club 'The Bachelor's Mill' which featured prominent drag artists including Dana Terrell. In 1984 The Bachelor's Mill moved down the street to 1104 8th St SE. At the new location, the Mill continued to offer a stage for African-American drag entertainers such as Lady Tawana, Tina Tuna Adams, Arcadia Alexander, and Tanelle Sanchez, as well as a site for drag pageants.

20. 529 8th St SE - PLUS ONE - One of the first major gay discos to open in the area (1968) also featured drag shows. Ella Fitzgerald started out at the Plus One in the mid-70s, where an early performance name was Carl Rizzi. She recalls auditioning on a Tuesday, performing "Touch Me in the Morning".

21. 713 8th St SE - SHERIDAN'S - From 1999, Sandy Thompson's county-western club offered weekend mid drag bingo nights and weekend top venues for drag and as an important training ground and performance space for up and coming female impersonators. The club was also an important intersection of Latin, white, and African-American performance circles. At hostesses Erica Kane and Xavier Bloomingdale introduced eager audiences four nights a week. The last show hostess was Stevie Starffe. Among featured artists were Dominique Fox, Capri Bloomingdale, Gigi Couture, Gucci Goddammit, Esmeralda Kane Jaynes, and Teena Marie Cromwell.
drag shows hosted by Jymmye Jaymes, Terrie Santana, and others. The club also hosted several pageants including Miss Capitol City.

22. 639 Pennsylvania Ave SE - LIFERAF/REMINC/ST. JAMES - The site has a long history as a country-western gay bar featuring drag performances. In the early 70s, the Liferaf presented Billie Gold's revue show. Reminc's, which opened in 1987, has consistently presented drag shows with a country-western flavor. Headliners here included Jymmye Jaymes, Blair Michaels, Vita Opulence, and Courtney Lovelace. Events at Reminc's have solidified drag's association with the Atlantic States Gay Rodeo.

23. 119 Pennsylvania Ave SE - ELAN/AMBENTE - A lesbian bar in the late 90s, Elan featured midweek drag shows hosted by Courtney Lovelace and Michelle Michaels. Beginning in 2000, the Carrero sisters, Linda and Sophia, offered Latino drag performers a performance site late Saturday night in the ground floor restaurant.

24. 55 K St SE - WAAY OFF BROADWAY - The theatre space managed by Jesse Kinson and owned by Domn Culver of the Lost and Found was closely involved with the drag community. The board of the theatre included the heads of major DC drag houses. The theatre opened with Cabaret featuring Lainie Kazan, directed by Mame Dennis. Academy events were held here until 1973 when Academy events moved to Oscar's Eye (see no.18). For several years, this was the gay theatre in DC. The site later became Club 55, to which Academy events returned in 1993.
drag shows hosted by Jynne Raynes, Terrie Santana, and others. The club also hosted several pageants including Miss Capitol City.

22. 639 Pennsylvania Ave SE - LiferArt/Equus/Remington's - The site has a long history as a country-western drag bar featuring drag performances. In the early 70s, the LiferArt presented Billie Gold’s revue show. Remington’s, which opened in 1987, has consistently presented drag shows with a country-western flavor. Headliners here included Jynne Raynes, Blaire Michaels, Vina Opulencia, and Courtney Lovejoy. Events at Remington’s have solidified drag’s association with the Atlantic States Gay Rodeo.

23. 1129 Pennsylvania Ave SE - Elan/Ardente - A lesbian bar in the late 90s, Elan featured midweek drag shows hosted by Courtney Lovejoy and Michelle Michaels. Beginning in 2000, the Carrero sisters, Linda and Sophia, offered Latino drag performers a performance site late Saturday nights in the ground floor restaurant and dance hall.

24. 55 K St SE - Waaay Off Broadway/Club 55 - The theatre space was owned by Jesse Kinison and occupied by Dom Culver of the Lost and Found and was closely involved with the drag community. The board of the theatre included the heads of major DC drag houses. The theatre opened with Cabaret featuring lanice Kazan, directed by Mame Dennis. Academy events were held here until 1973 when Academy events moved to Oscar’s Eye (see no.18). For several years, this was the gay theatre in DC. The site later became Club 55, to which Academy events returned in 1993.

25. 1345 Half St SE - OtherSons/Ziegfield’s - Since 1978, this address has been the top spot for drag in DC. The Other Side, a women’s bar that opened in 1978, brought regularly scheduled drag shows here. Ella Fitzgerald, demanding shaper of shows and talents, started here on July 4, 1980. Ziegfield’s, a landmark in DC’s drag performance scene, opened in March 1988, with Ella Fitzgerald managing the shows. Ziegfield’s draws large audiences of all backgrounds and orientations to its popular weekend shows, where Ella tells guests to “talk to the queen.” The club serves as one of the city’s main pageant sites.

26. 555 S 23rd St, Crystal City, VA - Freedom’s - Freddie’s defines Northern Virginia’s drag scene, especially country-western style drag performances. Academy members Jynne Raynes and Destiny B Child host popular Sunday evening shows as well as charity benefits. Freddie’s drag shows often play to standing-room-only audiences. The club is heir to earlier drag shows at the Hunt Club in Alexandria.

DC is a city of drag queens and kings.

“Talk to the drag queen!” says drag diva Ella Fitzgerald at Ziegfield’s, and people do. And she reminds them, “It’s all illusion!” They come for the illusion, the art of impersonation. They come for the costumes, for the wit and the bitchy banter. Enthusiastic audiences have supported drag performers here for decades with their tips and applause. Aspiring newcomers, eager to learn the art of impersonation, streamed here from drag’s earliest days.

By the late 1990s, DC clubs offered more than 40 scheduled weekly drag shows, more than any city other than Dallas or Atlanta. Crowds packed in on the weekends here from drag’s earliest days. As the gay community emerged in the 70s, club owners and drag performers adapted and offered more than 40 scheduled drag performances. As leading drag artists became ‘mothers’ to those aspiring newcomers, eager to learn, offered more than 40 scheduled drag performances. In the late summer of 1973, club owner Bill Oates Jr. brokered creation of The Academy, a reconciliation of the rival Awards Club (which lasted until 1988). As the gay community emerged in the 70s, club owners and drag performers adapted and offered more than 40 scheduled drag performances. As leading drag artists became ‘mothers’ to those aspiring newcomers, eager to learn, offered more than 40 scheduled drag performances. The Academy's: African-American, Latino, Asian, and professional drag performances to an audience far removed from the drag scene, the explosion in drag clubs offered not only more chances to perform and earn tips but offered more than 40 scheduled drag performances. In the early 70s, the Academy, a landmark in DC’s drag performance scene, opened in March 1988, with Ella Fitzgerald managing the shows. Ziegfield’s draws large audiences of all backgrounds and orientations to its popular weekend shows, where Ella tells guests to “talk to the queen.” The club serves as one of the city’s main pageant sites.

The Rainbow History Project collects, preserves and promotes the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered history of metropolitan Washington, DC. The project is supported by the gay theatre in DC. The club later became Club 55, to which Academy events returned in 1993.