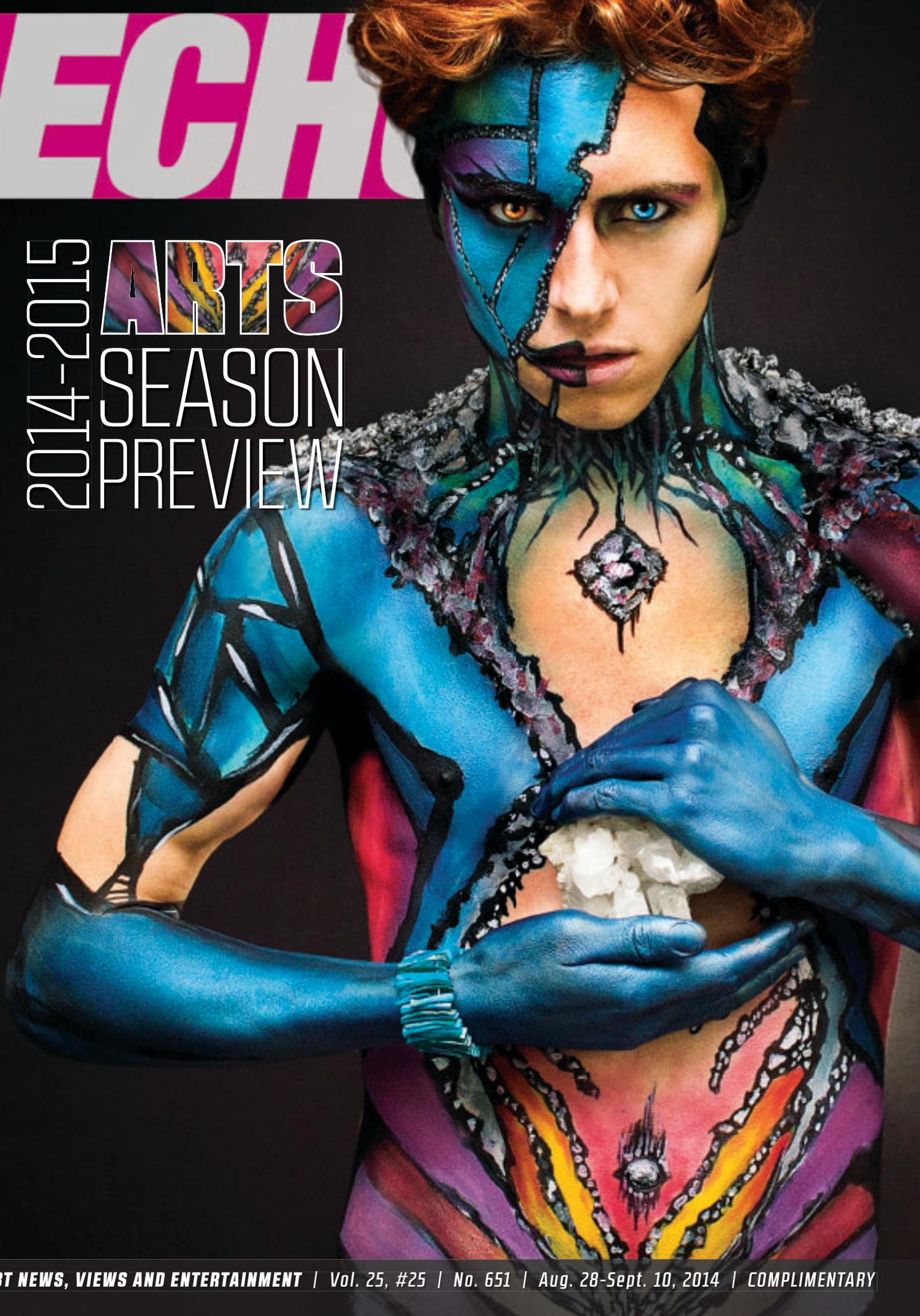


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2014-2015 ARTS SEASON PREVIEW



# 7 LGBT Valley artists to watch this season

By Richard Schultz

As the new theater season kicks off, many familiar faces and names return to the stage (or, in some cases, behind the curtain). Here's a look at seven of our community's most promising theater artists, whose work has garnered praise from audiences and critics alike, that merit a closer look.



## 1. DANNY CHIHUAHUA

Danny Chihuahua is the go-to costume design guru for Stray Cat Theatre. This fall, he returns for his third season with Stray Cat Theatre. His credits include *All New People*, *Sons of the Prophet*, *The Whale* and *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*. Outside the valley, his recent design credits include the Actors Theatre of Louisville and the Humana Festival of New American Plays.

## 2. MARK CLEMENTE

Mark Clemente has directed more than 12 productions at Desert Stages Theatre, including *Lombardi* in January. For more than 15 years, he's been directing and choreographing theatrical performances. Clemente moved to Phoenix from Milwaukee where he worked at the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre and was part of University of Wisconsin's Professional Theater Training Program.

## 3. HECTOR CORIS

Originally from the East Coast, Hector Coris arrived in the Valley in 2010 and has made quite an impression onstage and backstage since. He has appeared in numerous roles with Scottsdale Musical Theatre Company, including his upcoming lead role of Max Bialystock in *The Producers*. He also has directed a critically acclaimed production of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* at Hale Theater.

## 4. PHILLIP FAZIO

Described as "a theatrical force to be reckoned with" Phillip Fazio directed *Ragtime* last season at Theater Works and is returning this spring to direct *Follies*. Phillip has worked for three years as an artist-in-residence at Phoenix Theatre. Phillip directed *My Big 'Gay Camp' Talent Show*, a quick-change farce that follows the stories of several young campers at a gay reform camp, at the New York International Fringe Festival, Fire Island and Provincetown.

## 5. DWAYNE HARTFORD

As an associate artist and playwright-in-residence with Childsplay, Dwayne has written numerous plays including *Rock the Presidents* and *The Tale of Two Cities*. Four of his plays have been published by Dramatic Publishing and have been produced around the country and in Canada. His most recent play, an adaptation of Kate DiCamillo's *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, premiered last season and created quite a buzz; in fact, Childsplay brought it back this season. He is also teaching artist who will be directing several shows including *A Thousand Cranes* and *The Three Javelinas* and acting in *Junie B. Jones in Jingle Bells*, *Batman Smells!*

## 6. KURTIS W. OVERBY

As a celebrated performer, director, musical director and choreographer, Kurtis plays an integral role at Arizona Broadway Theatre as a skilled associate artistic director. His choreography has been cited as some of the best in the Valley including *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Peter Pan* and *Hairspray*. During ABT's upcoming 10th Anniversary Season, he will play an essential role as part of the producing team for all shows, as well as creating the choreography for *Sweet Charity*.

## 7. SPECIAL SHOUT-OUT TO ELLEN BONE

Actors at Stray Cat Theatre won't be in the dark when Ellen Bone, the resident lighting designer, lends her talents. In addition to a long tenure with Stray Cat, she designs lighting for dance all around the country and works at Barbizon Lighting during the day. — E

Richard Schultz is a playwright, actor, director and freelance writer based in Phoenix.

Do you know a talented LGBT theater artist to spotlight in the future? If so, drop a note and short bio to [RLSchultz41@aol.com](mailto:RLSchultz41@aol.com).