

dates

GALLERIES | EXHIBITS

POPI: An exhibition exploring visual correspondences and thematic differences between the 1960s genres of Pop and Op art, including works by Robert Indiana, Roy Lichtenstein, and gay artist Andy Warhol. Runs Jan. 21 through Feb. 22 at Conner Contemporary Art, 1730 Connecticut Ave., NW, 2nd floor. For more information, call 202-588-8750.

NICHOLAS F. SHI: Gay artist Nicholas F. Shi's paintings are presented through March 1 in "Multiple Dimensions," an exhibit at the Galeria at the Latin American Folk Institute, 3800-A 34th St., Mount Rainier, Md. For more information, call 301-887-9331.

KEVIN H. ADAMS: Local gay artist Kevin H. Adams is part of a group show at the Watergate Gallery through Jan. 31. His paintings of Provincetown landscapes can be viewed at 2552 Virginia Ave., NW from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays. For more information, call 202-338-4488.

COLOR FORMED: Exhibit by Scott Hunter, Aster da Fonseca and Marielle Mariano to benefit Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League. RPM Salon, 225 Pennsylvania Ave., SE. Runs through Jan. 19. For more information, call 202-547-8989.

READINGS | SCREENINGS

"BROTHER OUTSIDER: THE BAYARD RUSTIN STORY," a film about Martin Luther King's gay advisor and the coordinator of the 1963 March on Washington, is presented by "Port of Harlem" magazine and P.O.V. on Saturday, Jan. 18, 7-9:30 p.m., at Us Helping Us, 811 L St., SE. For more information, call 202-583-3438.

DRAG | CABARET | COMEDY

ACADEMY OF WASHINGTON hosts a Leather Weekend show on Sunday, Jan. 19, and the Gaye Royal Ball on Sunday, Jan. 26. 3 p.m. Club 55, 55 K St., SE. \$7. For more information, call 703-671-1617.

ZIEGFELD'S: Located at 1345 Half St., SE, the club offers a buffet of drag performances every week. Weekly performances include Ella Fitzgerald and Her Ladies of Illusion on Fridays and Saturdays at 11:30 p.m. and 1:30 a.m. and Sundays at 11:30 p.m. Also, on the last Thursday of every month, the club hosts Amateur Drag Night with a \$50 cash prize for winners. For more information, call 202-554-5141, or visit www.ziegfelds.com.

OMEGA: Located at 2122 P St., NW, the club hosts a drag show featuring the cast of Diva Las Vegas every Monday night at 10:30 p.m. The club also hosts Drag Karaoke starring Talulha on Thursdays at 10 p.m. For more information, call 202-223-4917.

TITAN: Located at 14th Street and Rhode Island Avenue, NW, the club hosts the cabaret performance of "The Ester Goldberg Show" with the Fabulous Viagas every Saturday night at 8 p.m. For reservations, send e-mail to reservations@estergoldberg.com. Also, on Thursday nights, Ester hosts "The Feud" at 9:30 p.m. 202-232-7010.

CLUB CHAOS: Located at 17th and Q streets, NW, it offers Drag Bingo every Tuesday at 8 p.m.; Saturdays is Drag Cabaret beginning at 10 p.m. hosted by Xavier Onassis Bloomingdale; and Sundays offer the Hollywood Brunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. with entertainment provided by celebrity look-alikes. For more information, call 202-232-4141, or visit www.chaosdc.com.

JR'S BAR & GRILL: Located at 1519 17th St., NW, the bar welcomes "Feygele Feud" every Wednesday at 10 p.m. with host Lena Lett. For more information, visit www.jrsdc.com.



Gay artist **Nicholas Shi's** paintings are presented at the Latin American Folk Institute through March 1. (Photo courtesy of the LAFI)

out in d.c. JEN MABE

Local lesbian singer **Michelle Swan** builds a career while helping fellow musicians and supporting the causes that she cares about.

A graceful Swan

MICHELLE SWAN GOT HER FIRST guitar when she was 9, and she has been playing it ever since.

The singer-songwriter from Arlington, Va. has worked her way up from performing solo gigs at open mics to a regular rotation of area concerts, including an upcoming benefit Saturday, Jan. 18 for the Montgomery County chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

"I think it's a wonderful organization," she says, adding that she's glad to do whatever she can to help out.

The concert will be held at St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Deerwood, Md.; admission is by voluntary donation. The church is also sponsoring the event.

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, faith-based organization dedicated to eliminating substandard housing around the world, and Montgomery County chapter officials say they are doing what they can to give people who would like to be homeowners a "hand up" rather than a "hand out."

SWAN DOES A FEW BENEFIT concerts during the year, but her focus is not any particular cause. Her focus is her music.

"When you do these concerts you hope to help out the cause, but it's also great exposure for me too," adds Swan, whose debut CD, "Whistling in the Dark," was released on an independent label in May 2002.

Swan plays a number of gigs throughout the year, including many house concerts and coffeehouses, but she is also fond of giving new artists the opportunity to shine.

"I'm very much about promoting other musicians and people who need to be heard," Swan said. "There's so much talent out there." To that end, Swan hosts an open mic night at St. Elmo's Coffee Pub in Alexandria, Va.

"It's incredibly gratifying to see all walks of life and all types of talent walk in there and play," she says.

Still, as much as she enjoys promoting others, her own music is what's paramount to her daily life. In June 2001, after moving to the area,



Singer/songwriter **Michelle Swan** will appear at an area fund-raising event to benefit Habitat for Humanity on Saturday, Jan. 18.

Swan began to take her songwriting and playing to a new level when she decided to make it a full-time career.

"I'm [now] doing what I love to do more than anything. And a lot of it is who you know and meeting the right people. But you don't want to sell out or kiss ass or anything like that," she says. And she certainly doesn't sell out.

Swan first began in the late 1980s and early '90s singing solo and playing guitar at open mic nights here in the DC area. She was performing mostly cover songs, but she soon found a home as part of a duo. Eventually, Swan decided to break out on her own again and start writing original songs while releasing her first solo CD.

"I write almost as if I'm speaking," she says. "I write the truth. I write about personal experience," she explains. "I write a lot about family which is my therapy."

The intense truthfulness in her music is what makes Swan's lyrics so addictive to listen to.

Those who decide to check out the Habitat for Humanity benefit concert on Saturday can look forward to two short sets with Swan and her crew, partner Gail Collins on backup vocals and Brian Kent on lead acoustic guitar.

MORE INFO

Habitat for Humanity - Montgomery County
Coffeehouse Fund-raiser
St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Saturday, Jan. 18 at 8 p.m.
<http://habitat.montgomery.md.us>
www.michelleswan.com

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