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NOTABLE DIRECTOR ADAM SHANKMAN JOINS THIS YEAR'S COME OUT WITH PRIDE FULL ENTERTAINMENT LINEUP

Orlando, Florida — September 29, 2016 — Adam Shankman, director of hit films such as *Hairspray* as well as a long-time guest judge on the Emmy Award winning reality show *So You Think You Can Dance*, joins a star-studded cast for this year's **Come Out With Pride festival** *presented by Orlando City Soccer Club* on October 8.

Shankman has enjoyed success as a director, producer, choreographer and writer. Shankman began his directing career in 2001 with his debut feature *The Wedding Planner* followed by other directing credits including *Bringing Down the House*, Walt Disney Pictures' *Bedtime Stories*, and primetime television series including episodes of *Modern Family* and *Glee*. On the small screen Shankman served as co-producer and lead choreographer for the *2010 Academy Awards*. This past year he published his first novel *Girl About Town* co-written with Laura Lee Sullivan.

Shankman is equally dedicated to charity work, serving on the board of the Trevor Project and having co-founded The Dizzy Feet Foundation with dance philanthropist Nigel Lythgoe.

Additional talent at Come Out With Pride includes:

Brian Justin Crum (singer) — Fresh off his star-making appearance as a top finalist this season on NBC's *America's Got Talent*, the rising superstar is making his first post-competition appearance at Come Out With Pride. Crum grew up in San Diego before performing in touring productions of *Wicked* followed by roles in *Altar Boyz*, *Grease*, and *Next to Normal* on Broadway; he later earned rave reviews with Queen original band members Brian May and Roger Taylor in the rock theatrical *We Will Rock You*. Crum now lives in Los Angeles where he is currently working on his much anticipated upcoming EP.

Eli Lieb (singer/songwriter) — In July of 2013 Lieb released his original song "Young Love." A bit of an autobiographical story of a young man coming out, the song and video struck a chord with many people thanks its instantly catchy pop hook and the message of being proud of who you are. Music blog Idolator called it an "uplifting pop/rock anthem that sounds like a cross between Katy Perry and Bruce Springsteen." Later that year Lieb recorded a cover of Miley Cyrus' "Wrecking Ball" that went viral almost immediately. Two days after the Pulse nightclub shooting Lieb and Brandon Skeie co-wrote a song titled "Pulse" and released it in memory of the victims in the shooting.

Brandon Skeie (singer/songwriter) — At just 23 years old Skeie has already begun making a name for himself through his fresh brand of pop music, performing on MTV, Ryan Seacrest and Comedy Central. His YouTube channel has over 190,000 subscribers and features his latest single titled "So Bad." In June

his voice was heard alongside Eli Lieb in the song titled “Pulse” released in memory of the victims in the shooting.

Michelle Clunie (actress) — Though most known for her iconic role in Showtime’s *Queer as Folk* as Melanie, more recently Clunie portrayed a recurring character on MTV’s breakout hit *Teen Wolf* and has guest starred on shows including *CSI*, *House* and *Bones*. Dedicating much of her time to fighting for human rights and full equality, in 2009 she hosted the first fundraiser for the National Equality March on Washington and was honored to speak from the stage to 200,000 attendees. She has organized Get Out the Vote campaigns for key Democrats on both a national and local level and in 2015 became a global ambassador for Pride Nation’s “Global March to Equality.”

Peter Paige (actor) — Best known for his role as Emmett Honeycutt on Showtime's hit series *Queer as Folk*, Paige's later television credits include *Will & Grace*, *Caroline in the City*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *Without a Trace*. Paige, along with Bradley Bredeweg, created Freeform’s (ABC Family) *The Fosters* — a series following the lives of the Foster family, an interracial lesbian couple who are married and raising biological and adoptive children together.

Matteo Lane (comedian) — Before starting stand up, the New-York based comedian lived in Italy as an oil painter and Opera singer; upon realizing that he couldn’t become Maria Callas he began telling jokes to strangers in dark rooms. Lane has performed in the Montreal Just for Laughs Festival and has appeared on Comedy Central’s *The Nightly Show* and *Adam Devine’s House Party*. Lane is currently a cast member on MTV’s *GirlCode* and MTV2's *GuyCode*.

Sabrina Jalees (writer/comedienne) — Born and raised in Canada, Sabrina’s early years in comedy were capsuled during her decade long run as a staple of Much Music’s pop culture tear-

down show *Video On Trial*. Her TED talk on the importance of honesty and embracing diversity was featured on several sites including *Upworthy*. She's written, performed and held down the newsdesk on CBC's iconic *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* and made her Comedy Central debut last year on *Adam Devine's House Party*. Currently Jalees is host of the weekly serial *My Sexy Podcast* and is developing the next iteration of her webseries *How Many Questions* with Comedy Central's digital house.

Drew Droege (actor/writer/comedian) — known for his parody character “Chloe” on the popular YouTube webseries of the same name, Droege is a veteran of the famous Groundlings Improv Company in Los Angeles. His voice is regularly heard on shows like *Bob's Burgers* and he's recently appeared on Amazon's *Transparent*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Kroll Show*, *Key & Peele* and *New Girl*. He is currently performing his one man show *Bright Colors and Bold Patterns* in Los Angeles, directed by Michael Urie (*Ugly Betty*, *The Good Wife*).

Michael Cerveris (actor) — Having performed in many stage musicals and plays, in 2004 Cerveris won the Tony Award as Best Featured Actor in a Musical for *Assassins* as John Wilkes Booth. In 2015, he won his second Tony Award as Best Actor in a Musical for *Fun Home* as Bruce Bechdel. *Playbill.com* called him “arguably the most versatile leading man on Broadway,” playing roles from Shakespeare's Romeo and The Who's Tommy to the German transsexual rock diva Hedwig in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* and the homicidal title character of Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*. Cerveris has also appeared on numerous television roles including the FOX sci-fi series *Fringe* as the Observer code-named September.

Alice Ripley (actress/musician) — Known in particular for her various roles on Broadway in musicals, Ripley has performed within the casts of *Side Show* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Next to Normal* where she earned the 2009 Tony Award for Best

Actress in a Musical. In March Ripley joined the cast of the Broadway musical *American Psycho*. As a singer and songwriter, Ripley has performed as a solo artist and has released albums with her band RIPLEY including the 2012 single “Beautiful Eyes.”

Christine Pedi (actress) — The “lady of a 1000 voices” can be seen using quite a few of them (Oprah, Joan Rivers, Fran Drescher, Paula Dean, etc.) in the hilarious off Broadway revue *NEWSical the Musical*. On Broadway she recently played Mama Morton in *Chicago*. On the radio she is the daily host of Sirius XM Radio’s *On Broadway* channel playing music of the stage & screen and interviewing showbiz legends every weekday morning and afternoon.

Sherri Saum (actress) — Saum began her acting career in the NBC daytime soap opera *Sunset Beach* as Vanessa Hart, earning her a Daytime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Younger Actress in a Drama Series. From 2006 to 2007, Saum played the role of Natalie in the FX drama series *Rescue Me* and over the next few years had guest-starring roles in CW's *Gossip Girl*, CBS's *Unforgettable* and ABC's *Body of Proof* and *Revenge*. In 2012, Saum was cast in a lead role alongside Teri Polo in the drama series *The Fosters* for Freeform (ABC Family).

Hayden Byerly (actor) — Beginning his professional career at the age of ten, Byerly won first place in a national talent competition here in Orlando and is now best known for his current role as Jude Adams Foster on the Freeform (ABC Family) drama series *The Fosters*. A March 2015 episode featured Byerly's character sharing a kiss with actor Gavin MacIntosh in what is believed to be the youngest LGBT kiss ever in U.S. television history.

Jazz Jennings (actress/activist) — Notable for her LGBT rights activism, Jennings was born male but embraced her female transgender identity at a young age. She is now the subject of a reality series on TLC titled *I am Jazz* based on her children’s book

of the same name. In 2014 Jennings was named one of “The 25 Most Influential Teens of 2014” by *Time* and was recognized as the youngest person ever featured on *Out Magazine’s* “Out 100” and *The Advocate’s* “40 Under 40.”

Adam Berry (actor/paranormal investigator) — In 2006 Berry’s interest in the Paranormal piqued when he experienced strange supernatural activity in Gettysburg, PA following numerous encounters as a child. He studied ghost hunting and paranormal activity and in 2010 was given the opportunity to put his investigation skills to the test on the SyFy channel original series *Ghost Hunters Academy*. Berry is happily married to his husband Ben and they split their seasons between Provincetown and NYC.

“**Shep689**” (online personalities) — With nearly 362,000 shared YouTube subscribers, Florida natives Will Shepherd "Shep689" & R.J. Aguiar "TheNotAdam" set out to demonstrate just how normal everyday gay life could be via their YouTube channel Shep689. Both are activists and advocates within the mental health and LGBTQ+ communities, with Aguiar most recently featured on a White House panel during Bisexual Awareness Week discussing his experiences facing biphobia from within the gay community.

Esteemed local talent from Orlando includes:

Orlando Gay Chorus — The Orlando Gay Chorus (OGC) is one of the largest mixed gay choirs in the country and is comprised of individuals from all walks of life, ages, and orientations. The chorus now numbers over 100+ strong and performs at two major concerts in May and December as well as three smaller cabaret concerts: “OGC UNCUT Cabaret” each October, “Love Is...” around Valentine’s Day, and “A Lotta Night Music” at the end of June. In addition to music, the OGC is known for humanitarian

efforts throughout the year including partnering with the Children's Home Society to sponsor families in need of Thanksgiving Day meal baskets.

Central Florida Sounds of Freedom Band and Color Guard — With a mission to provide exceptional music entertainment and inspirational services for the community, the Band and Color Guard serves to promote LGBT awareness, acceptance and equality in a positive way through performances ranging from parades and concerts to visual arts.

Emily Kopp (singer) — Kopp's musical beginnings started at a young age and continued throughout college in Orlando. Since releasing her debut full length album "Serendipity Find Me" in October 2013 to high praise, Kopp stayed busy touring the U.S. and releasing her "Making Sense Of" EP in 2015. With music *The Advocate* dubs a marriage between "bluesy heartache vocals and pop songwriting smarts," Kopp works in the grassroots-esque style of countless artists who she most admires. She has shared stages with Matchbox 20, Michelle Branch, Parachute, and The Gin Blossoms amongst others.

Brian Michael Diaz (singer) — Artistically known as Brian Michael, Diaz demonstrated the passion and desire to become a singer at a very young age. During high school, he began to perform locally and nationally throughout Puerto Rico at various events and talent shows. After auditioning for shows like *Objetivo Fama* and *American Idol*, in 2004 Diaz continued his vocal studies and began to sing phonetically in different languages. The experience of mastering songs from Broadway and Italian classic arias allowed him to perform in new venues expanding his audience and repertoire. He has shared the stage with El Gran Combo, Tito Nieves, and Prince Royce and has been featured on Telemundo, Univision, Wapa PR, La Rumba and La Mega.

Evin (singer) — The teen singer and songwriter Evin is aiming to put the pop back into pop music with authentic performances consisting of herself, her guitar and a loop pedal. The daughter of a back-up singer for Britney Spears, Evin grew up surrounded by music but knew she wanted to create her own signature sound. With only the uncanny knack for learning any instrument instantly, the Orlando native wrote her first song at age 12. In 2015 Evin released her first EP “Boom Box” while a new holiday song “Boyfriend for Christmas” landed her a national TV performance.

Additional local talent will be appearing at official events throughout pride week including the Official Launch Party on Thursday October 6 at the Abbey featuring hostess **Addison Taylor, Angelica Sanchez**, contemporary violinist **Jose Navarro** and **DJ Joanie**. (Doors open at 7:00pm, show begins at 8:30pm.)

On Friday night, Hamburger Mary’s Orlando will be showcasing local and national talent at the 2nd annual **Church Street Block Party** downtown. The lineup includes out country star **Ty Herndon**, Miss America 2004 **Ericka Dunlap**, comedy duo **Amy & Freddy** from Chicago, **Leigh Shannon, Crystal Chambers, DJ JD Burgos, The Minx & the Broadway Bunch** and finally the hot men of **The Rock Hard Male Revue**. (8:00pm – 11:00pm.)

Pride week concludes on Saturday night with the **Official Pride After Party** benefitting Pulse. Headlining the event at the Abbey is well-known Latina musician **Noelia**; additional local talent includes **The 69 Boyz, DJ Simon & DJ Infinite, Kenya Michaels, Chavella Belleza, Jasmine International, DJ Flawless, Axel Andrews, MRMS Adrien** and **Kai’ja Adonis**. (6:00pm – 2:30am)

The annual Come Out With Pride festival, now in its 12th year and which also features the Most Colorful Parade and the Pride

vendor Marketplace, is expected to attract over 150,000 visitors and aims to celebrate diversity, honor lost friends and heal Orlando in the wake of the devastating attack at the Pulse nightclub on June 12. Come Out With Pride, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization run entirely by volunteers, and through its mission provides scholarships and grants via its 'Pride Gives Back' program.

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