



**Justin Stayshyn**

@UnionSt



Following

.@aliasA From silver medallist to dying alone in a bathhouse. Story of his fall & neglect possibly too dark for click-hungry media. #CanQueer



12:40 PM - 13 Aug 2012

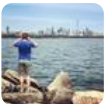


Reply to @UnionSt @aliasA



**Ali @aliasA** · 13 Aug 2012

@UnionSt I can see a culture clash for journos w/his rise, too: Kingston pen & born-again Christianity. But it's a fascinating story.



**Justin Stayshyn @UnionSt** · 13 Aug 2012

@dd\_toronto It was St. Marc's. They tweet about a man passing out that night & I confirmed it w staff later. Xtra rpt also wrong. #CanQueer



**Matthew Kofsky @MKofsky** · 13 Aug 2012

@dd\_toronto @unionst Not really surprising tho. We don't like to think of heroes doing "bad things." Especially as it pertains to sex.



**Aurelia Cotta @AureliaCotta** · 13 Aug 2012

@dd\_toronto @unionst it does sound like he had a full life, so he didn't really die alone. Wish they'd have done a story on him



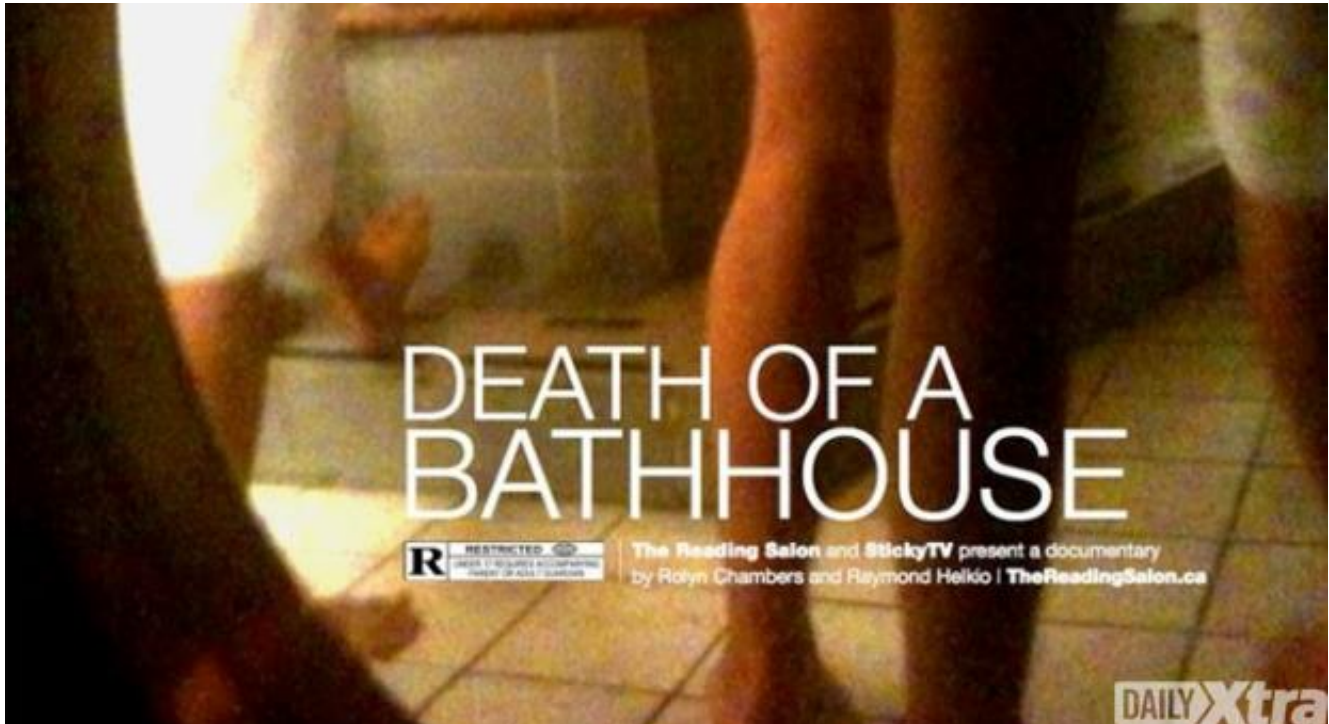
**Matthew Kofsky @MKofsky** · 13 Aug 2012

@dd\_toronto @unionst I don't think we will ever really get past it as a society. Never been my thing, but to each his own I guess.

## Death of a Bathhouse

*A new film about the closing of Toronto's St Marc Spa*

**Chris Dupuis**



While it unofficially held the dubious title of "Toronto's sketchiest bathhouse" for the latter part of its 19-year existence, there was more to the St Marc Spa than meth-heads and the dealers who loved them. Perched on top of a four-storey office building at Yonge and Wellesley, the long-running sex club was (oddly) about more than just sex.

The year before St Marc's demise, former Fab columnist Rolyn Chambers (who also served as director of operations for its last two years) invited 10 local artists (including Sky Gilbert, Brad Fraser, Drasko Bogdanovic

and Donnarama) to create installations in some of the private rooms. Co-created by Chambers and producer Raymond Helkio, *Death of a Bathhouse* combines footage of the club's final days and interviews with the artists who created there.

### **Xtra: How did this piece come about?**

Raymond Helkio: Rilyn had shot the footage years ago when the club was getting ready to close down. He didn't have a specific intention of what to do with it. It was just a sort of archival documentation. The artists had done all this great work, and it was so sad to see all that beauty destroyed. No one except patrons of the club had ever seen it, so we wanted to take the opportunity to share it with the rest of the world.

### **What made St Marc Spa different from other bathhouses?**

It's the only bathhouse I'm aware of that had a full-time dedicated art space accessible to the public. When you came in the main door, you could go into the club if you were looking to get laid, but there was also the bar space, Grasp, an erotic club that had all kinds of art, performances and DJs. Having those two spaces connected made for this dynamically sexually charged art environment that's not like anything else I've seen before or since. And the individual artist rooms were something special. Brad Fraser did this one that was all decorated with comic-book art. Donnarama made an incredible conspiracy theory installation that had images of 9/11, da Vinci's Last Supper and Marilyn Monroe. You could lie back and get fucked while you stared up at art.

### **There's been a lot of talk about the death of the bathhouse lately, as more gays turn to the internet and smartphone apps to hook up. Are bathhouses destined to become a relic of the past?**

Historically, bathhouses provided a safe space where you could come to fuck and know you weren't going to get beat up. There's definitely increasing conservatism in the gay community, both among young and older generations, and I think that comes partly from the apathy associated with a sense of safety. We have this idea that we have all these freedoms in Canada, like it's a place completely free of homophobia, and that has an impact on how we express ourselves sexually. Bathhouses will always exist, but we're not going to see that saturation level in terms of the number of clubs again.

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**@Joe**

**Jon** - Sun, 2013-06-16 18:45

Joe, you may be being a little harsh. Maybe Raymond Helkio does believe that cute guys die all the time and is actually sad about it. After all, he has submitted death notices for handsome gay men for publication in Xtra. For example, see [http://www.xtra.ca/public/Toronto/David\\_Blair\\_Linton-10862.aspx](http://www.xtra.ca/public/Toronto/David_Blair_Linton-10862.aspx) and [http://www.xtra.ca/public/Toronto/Remembering\\_Dean\\_Kish-11198.aspx](http://www.xtra.ca/public/Toronto/Remembering_Dean_Kish-11198.aspx)

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**He was an achiever, period**

**Joe Clark** - Sun, 2013-06-16 16:49

Actually, Mark Leduc won an Olympic silver medal. And was cute. We all know which of those is actually important, and that it trumps whatever the fuck rewriting of history this "movie" is. "Cute guys die all the time" is the message of this comment thread, a message I doubt Helkio would appreciate having applied posthumously to him when his own time comes.

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**in your mouth**

**Raymond Helkio** - Mon, 2013-06-03 00:31

This movie we made was about art and Mark is not a part of that. He was cute, period.

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**Just to sum up here**

**Joe Clark** - Mon, 2013-06-03 00:21

So basically, we've got two jumped-up twits here arguing variously that people die all the time, Leduc didn't technically die at St. Marc so shut up, and Leduc was about to cash in anyway so shut up. Your Olympic medals are where again?

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**did you even what the movie**

**Raymond Helkio** - Mon, 2013-06-03 00:04

Bathhouses aren't my thing, artists are. I did the movie because I love art and the artists who lost the work at that space need to have it documented. And it's important.

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**Then why the film?**

**David** - Sun, 2013-06-02 23:43

Raymond, if you believe that most gay men are living as boys (and I assume you think that is not a good thing), then why did you produce a film glorifying bathhouse sex? That's certainly the tone that Rolyn Chambers took in his pre-screening remarks when the two of you were standing on stage at the Inside Out screening the other day.

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### **Filter Bubble**

**Raymond Helkio** - Sun, 2013-06-02 23:28

Yes, I support free speech. Yes I support QuIAAs right to march. And I believe that most gay men are living as boys.

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### **You're the master..**

**David** - Sun, 2013-06-02 23:20



only Google your name to see all the support you've given to QuAIA and its front organizations. That support goes far beyond a purported desire for free speech.

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### **Cheap shot**

**Raymond Helkio** - Sun, 2013-06-02 23:09

I stand for free speech, mentioning QuIAA is just a cheap shot.

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### **@Joe**

**David** - Sun, 2013-06-02 22:30

Joe, QuAIA supporter and busybody Raymond Helkio likes to quote from, or allude to, the book *The Velvet Rage* when he puts down other gay men for not supporting his cause of the day. The book is interesting. Of course, Helkio's interpretations of it to further his social and political positions are just psychobabble. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychobabble>

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### **Velvet Rage**

**Raymond Helkio** - Sun, 2013-06-02 22:18

Oh Joe, he did not die because he went into a bathhouse, he was well on his way before getting a room there. The place where he died is irrelevant outside of it being a queer establishment, you miss the point of his death. Sad.

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### **Just to answer the**

**Joe Clark** - Thu, 2013-05-30 00:18

I have spent over a year patiently trying to coax a conversation out of the only known survivor who really knows what happened to Leduc. Press reports simply lied and stated he died after being pulled unconscious from a hotel sauna, whatever that is. Nonetheless, thank you for confirming you knew the truth and did nothing to correct the historical record. Additional thanks for your nonchalant acceptance of a high body count in your former industry; we now know the value you place on human life. Mark Leduc was more important than you are.

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## Who needs the Rob Ford crack

**Peter** - Wed, 2013-05-29 21:39

When Xtra columnist Rolyn Chambers was a manager at St. Marc's Spa, I'm sure he was aware of regular use of hard drugs on the premises by patrons and frequent overdoses on the premises by patrons. Who needs the Rob Ford crack scandal! The mainstream media just needs to do a series of investigative reports on hard drug use and drug dealing at Toronto gay bathhouses and the mega-parties on Pride weekend (especially how the "rent a cop" Toronto police at those events take a blind eye to drug use and drug dealing at the party locale - especially in the washrooms).

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## dearh and deaths

**Rolyn** - Wed, 2013-05-29 18:44

^^^^ To Joe Clark: Yes Marc Leduc was found unconscious at St.Marc Spa (he did not die there.) And yes he was famous so we talk about and rememeber this traglc event. But there have been many other deaths at other bathhouses and at parties and at clubs and in restaurants and in private homes and shopping malls. Two words: your point?

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## Two words

**Joe Clark** - Wed, 2013-05-29 18:29

Mark Leduc.

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