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- news
- viewpoint
- local life
- main feature
- nite life
- arts
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- advertising
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NITE LIFE

Crobar pried open

The club of the millennium — finally — and worth the wait. Alegria moves in. Hello, Trai La Trash and viel glück, Peter.

By [Matt Kalkhoff](#)

Now that the holidays are at a safe distance behind us, let's focus on making 2004 one hell of a fantastic year. But first let's just tie up a few of December's loose ends.

Crobar finally pried open its doors last month and everyone showed up. Literally. Unfortunately, only those of us who arrived early (before 10 p.m.) on opening night got in. (I knew better after experiencing the club's debut in South Beach years ago!) It's a shame that so many VIPs, press and industry folks were turned away, though, especially since the party was billed as a VIP, press and industry event.

So was it worth the wait? Absolutely!

The expansive club is a true masterpiece of design, drink and decadence. And the coat check's even efficient. Lady Bunny's music and projected live image greeted us in the "Reed Room." (Oddly, the booth almost reaches the high ceiling leaving the DJ obscured, hence the video feed, I guess.)

A white tiled tunnel deposited us into the massive main room amid a psychedelic circus of heteros, homos, freaks and fools. An erotic arsenal of naughty nymphs and lusty lads adorned platforms throughout the venue in a flesh-filled orgy of perversion not seen around these parts in quite some time.

If Ringling Bros.—Barnum & Bailey had gone the nightclub route instead of the circus, I'm guessing this is what it would be like. My personal favorite: the lusty -and- busty harp player.

Unfortunately, we missed Frankie Knuckles' set entirely, having had to leave at 1 a.m. (school night, you know). Johnny Dynell kept the dance floor filled earlier with a funky mix of familiar tunes. The music in the "Prop Room" was a little too hip-hop for my taste, but the gorgeous décor was beyond stunning.

In the main room, we explored the catwalk and its many lush alcoves and secluded booths. Sadly, that may be the last time I get to experience the magnificent views from above. Two subsequent visits — for Larry Tee's "Outsider Electronic Music Festival" and the supposed "Queer Eye Snow Ball" a week later — have both relegated me and other VUPs (very unimportant persons) to the first floor



Roxy regular DJ Peter Rauhofer is up for a Grammy — his second.

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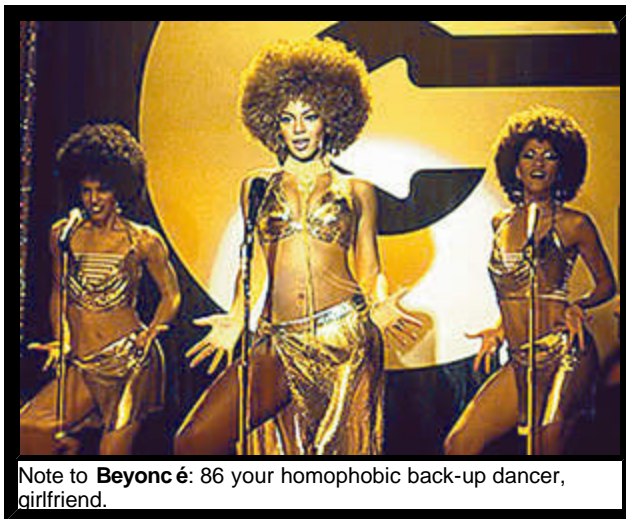
The Prop Room and entire upper level were apparently roped off for bottle service and reserved tables. This seemed particularly odd considering the cut-rate crowds the club has drawn in so far. With a \$25-30 cover and \$9 cocktails, it might not be such a good idea to restrict access to half the club. So much for creating a fun and welcoming experience free of pretense.

Despite my concerns, I am optimistic that Crobar will eventually work out the kinks (no pun intended) and realize its full potential. Will it draw much of a gay crowd? That remains to be seen. We've been sparsely represented so far, but Victor Calderone (and a coherent marketing plan) could change all that when his biweekly Saturday night residency begins in late January. Stay tuned.

Ric Sena recently announced that he is going to move his Alegria parties to Crobar from Sound Factory. His first blowout in the new venue will take place on Sunday, Jan. 18, the night before Martin Luther King Day with DJ Abel. It should be plenty gay that night! Visit AlegriaEvents.com for ticket info.

Pier Dance DJs

Heritage of Pride has chosen the DJs for Dance 18, which will be held on a pier along the Village waterfront the last Sunday of June despite prior concerns that renovations might force a move. I'm happy to say it's a brilliant line-up that truly represents a wide spectrum of New York's gay nightlife.



Note to **Beyoncé**: 86 your homophobic back-up dancer, girlfriend.

Unfortunately, I can't tell you who they are until later this month. But I can give you a hint. One is a famous marquee name synonymous with the Saint-At-Large, and the other is a superstar DJ/producer who's stormed the Circuit this past year. If you think you can figure it out, send your guess to contest@mattunleashed.com before Jan 23. Three lucky winners will receive a mix CD from each artist.

Congratulations!

I'd like to welcome the lovely Trai La Trash to the esteemed pages of the New York Blade. If it were anybody else I might be upset since this means my column will now run every fourth week instead of every third. But I do love me some Trai La (Miss Trash if you're nasty).

Just in case she doesn't take this opportunity to shamelessly promote her budding career herself, let me throw in a plug to catch this remarkably talented gender illusionist's cabaret show at O.W. Bar on Wednesday nights. Big blond hair, flawless make-up, gorgeous frocks (and not off the rack, either), a tremendous voice (yes, she sings live) and a rotating roster of cute "assistants" give her East Side lounge act a refreshing, sassy edge.

Congratulations to Roxy's resident DJ and Star 69 impresario Peter Rauhofer for his Grammy nomination for Best Remixed Recording, Non-Classical, for Christina Aguilera's "Beautiful." Rauhofer won his first Grammy back in 1999 in this category's predecessor, Best Remixer. Viel glück, Peter!

Until next time: Be Smart. Be Safe. Be Yourself. Except for Beyoncé's back-up dancer who called a friend of mine "faggot" as he departed Roxy after the superstar diva's incredible surprise performance. Take your homophobia elsewhere, dumbass.

Contact **Matt Kalkhoff** at Matt@mattunleashed.com



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