

MAR 10–  
APR 02



# THE LEGEND OF GEORGIA MCBRIDE

*comedy by* MATTHEW LÓPEZ

*directed by* JENNA TAMISIEA ELSER

[warehousetheatre.com](http://warehousetheatre.com)

*Sponsored by*

**think up**

SHARON & ADRIAN STEINMANN

Recommended Reading &  
Resource List

## The Black Flamingo

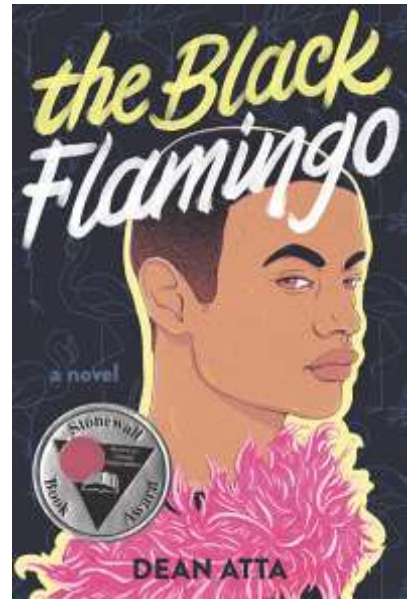
By Dean Atta

*Stonewall Book Award Winner*

*A Time Magazine Best YA Book of All Time*

### Book Jacket:

Michael is a mixed-race gay teen growing up in London. All his life, he's navigated what it means to be Greek-Cypriot and Jamaican - but never quite feeling Greek or Black enough. As he gets older, Michael's coming out is only the start of learning who he is and where he fits in. When he discovers the Drag Society, he finally finds where he belongs - and the Black Flamingo is born. Told with raw honesty, insight, and lyricism, this debut explores the layers of identity that make us who we are - and allow us to shine.



### Connection to *Georgia McBride*:

For many in the drag community, finding a character is also about finding a part of oneself that is either intentionally or unintentionally hidden or repressed. In *Georgia McBride*, Casey takes a similar journey, though as a White, heterosexual male, the context is different. Still, the book and the play both make the argument for drag providing a crucial critique and opportunity for liberation from repressive gender roles.

### Guiding Questions:

- Consider the various identities that you possess (gender, race, ethnicity, vocational, etc.). How do those various identities intersect? Do they work in concert? Do they ever feel like an uncomfortable fit?
- Can you relate to Michael's experience of not feeling "enough" of a particular identity to inhabit it entirely? Was it internal or external factors that made you feel that way?
- In the book, Michael never feels like he can fully be himself until he finds the Drag Society at his university. What community of support do you have that enables you to be your full self?

## Drag: The Complete Story By Simon Doonan

### Book Jacket:

Drag is transformation, communication and, above all, exaggeration, where gender non-conformity is the plat du jour. *Drag: The Complete Story* observes this increasingly complex world by exploring drag's journey through the twentieth century. Corralled into thematic chapters, including glamor drag, art drag, butch drag, black drag, historical drag, comedy drag, and popstar drag, this book is the first flamboyant and poignant survey of drag culture. *Drag: The Complete Story* is not just for fabulous queens and drag enthusiasts but for anyone interested in gender fluidity and the culture surrounding it.



### Connection to Georgia McBride:

Complementing the fabulous images in the book is a breakdown of the Drag into various subgenres. Matthew Lopez's text leaves the roles of Georgia, Tracy, and Rexie up to the interpretation of the actors that play them. In our production, the actors explore a variety of the subgenres mentioned in Doonan's book, including Comedy Drag, Popstar Drag, and Black Drag. Additionally, the book provides vital historical context for some of the dialogue in the play.

### Guiding Questions:

- What surprised you about the various subsets of drag that Doonan outlines in his book? How would you categorize the drag performers that you've seen?
- One of the most striking aspects of this book is the collection of images and photography. How would you describe the relationship between the visual and the verbal and aural elements of drag performance?

## King of Hearts: Drag Kings in the American South By Baker A. Rogers

### Book Jacket:

While drag subcultures have gained mainstream media attention in recent years, the main focus has been on female impersonators. Equally lively, however, is the community of drag kings: cis women, trans men, and non-binary people who perform exaggerated masculine personas onstage under such names as Adonis Black, Papi Chulo, and Oliver Clothesoff.

King of Hearts shows how drag king performers are thriving in an unlikely location: Southern Bible Belt states like Tennessee, Georgia, and South Carolina. Based on observations and interviews with sixty Southern drag kings, this study reveals how they are challenging the region's gender norms while creating a unique community with its own distinctive Southern flair. Reflecting the region's racial diversity, it profiles not only white drag kings, but also those who are African American, multiracial, and Hispanic.

Queer scholar Baker A. Rogers—who has also performed as drag king Macon Love—takes you on an insider's tour of Southern drag king culture, exploring its history, the communal bonds that unite it, and the controversies that have divided it. King of Hearts offers a groundbreaking look at a subculture that presents a subversion of gender norms while also providing a vital lifeline for non-gender-conforming Southerners.

### Connection to *Georgia McBride*:

Though *Georgia McBride* deals mostly in the realm of Drag Queens and female impersonation, Drag Kings also play a critical, even if underexplored, role in the fabric of drag in the South. Rogers highlights that one of the primary questions at play in this community concerns who is allowed to perform drag, a question that sits at the heart of Matthew Lopez's play.

### Guiding Questions:

- The question of "who can participate in drag performance" is intimately tied to one's definition of drag. How would you define drag?
- In their research, Rogers concludes that, although drag performance has a variety of political and social implications, by and large, Drag Kings in the South don't view themselves as advocates or contributors for a larger social project. They are more interested in personal preservation or transformation. Do you think that the impact can be bigger than the intent?
- How do you feel about the argument that misogyny against the presumed gender identities of Drag King performers is an essential element in the lack of publicity, platform, and investment received by Drag Kings versus Drag Queens?



**NPR: It's Been a Minute: The Great Big DRAGisode**  
June 25th, 2019

Episode Description:

Drag is having a moment – from RuPaul's Drag Race, to DragCon, to Drag Queens appearing on the big screen. In this episode, we walk through the history of drag, chat with the creative minds of the show that made drag mainstream and talk to some drag performers about where drag is headed next.

Connection to Georgia McBride:

Though several years old (and doesn't 2019 feel like a lifetime ago?), this episode of NPR's *It's Been a Minute* feels like an essential time capsule for a moment in time when drag was really hitting the mainstream. It's interesting to consider if some of the turmoil the drag community is experiencing now is a conservative pushback against this commercialization of an artform that has its roots in alternative performance.

Guiding Questions:

- In light of the rise of shows like RuPaul's Drag Race, drag performance has become a more mainstream and, as a result, commercialized endeavor. What do you think is lost when the art form moves away from its root community to a wider audience? What's gained? Do the pros outweigh the cons?
- What about the Drag Kings? How do you feel about the idea that it's a collective misogyny that prevents the skewering of masculinity from hitting the mainstream similarly?



## The New York Times: **"Tennessee Bans Drag Show on Public Property"**

March 2, 2023

[Read the Article Here](#)

## The New York Times: **"Tennessee Law Limiting 'Cabaret' Show Raises Uncertainty About Drag Events"**

March 5, 2023

[Read the Article Here](#)

### Connection to *Georgia McBride*:

Just this month, we've seen the escalation of attacks on the art form by public officials in politically conservative regions. While the ban limits "adult cabaret" performances that feature "topless dancers, go-go dancers, exotic dancers, strippers, male or female impersonators," advocates in the state argue that the law won't, in fact, limit much traditional drag performance. Because the law explicitly bans obscene performances that would be "harmful to minors," it fails to consider the full scope of what drag can be and how performances are designed to suit specific audiences, be they children or adults, at a library story time or an after-hours bar.

### Guiding Questions:

- In failing to understand the full scope of what drag performance can be, the lawmakers seem to be revealing their prejudice that drag is inherently sexual in nature. How does an understanding of drag as art that explores gender differ from one that explores sexuality?
- There is currently a similar bill making its way through the South Carolina General Assembly, deeming any business that holds drag shows as a "Sexually Oriented Business." You can read the bill [here](#). How do you think titling the bill the "Defense of Children's Innocence Act" shapes the conversation around the bill?