

General Gayety

by Leslie Robinson . Contributing Writer

It's an off-the-wall world

As 2008 winds down, the worldwide wackiness level jumps up.

In Paris, armed robbers made off with \$100 million worth of jewelry from a Harry Winston store near the Champs-Élysées. Police said the heist ranks among the biggest jewel thefts in French history.

That wasn't all that made the robbery monumental. Of the four thieves, at least two were men in wigs and women's clothes.

Who knew there was so much money to be made in drag?

Bizarreness is also alive and well across the English Channel in London, where Boy George, the former Culture Club singer, was convicted of falsely imprisoning a male escort.

Boy George, 46, was tried under his real name of George O'Dowd. More appropriate for legal proceedings, I suppose, than Boy George or Middle-Aged George.

Norwegian hustler Audun Carlsen said that, following a naked photo shoot, George handcuffed him to a wall at the singer's apartment and beat him after he got loose. George admitted handcuffing him, but denied assaulting him.

It must've been difficult for those watching the trial to refrain from breaking into "Do You Really Want to Hurt Me."

George's sentencing will be in January and odds are he'll see jail time. Two years ago he



swept streets in New York City after pleading guilty to filing a false police report. On that occasion he'd called the cops with a bogus story of a burglary by a male prostitute

in his Manhattan apartment. What the responding officers found was cocaine.

In the London case, George believed the escort had stolen pictures from him. Mixing hookers, drugs and paranoia makes George an un-dull Boy.

Let's turn now to a different kind of court case and a different brand of bizarre. In India, the Delhi High Court has been hearing arguments about whether to scrap the country's law against homosexual sex, the infamous Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code.

The federal government, a big fan of the law, declared in a recent submission to the court that homosexuality is the result of a perverse mind.

Well then.

This claim fits in snugly with similar statements from the government during the legal proceedings. In October the government stated homosexuality is a disease that's responsible for the spread of AIDS in India.

A disease. The result of a perverse mind. How encouraging to hear this up-and-coming world power has such a firm grasp of science.

Now back to Europe for other ridiculous claims, thanks to a man who specializes in them. Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov is Russia's homophobia poster child. For the last three years his administration has banned Pride

marches and he'll always be remembered for calling gay parades "Satanic."

Speaking in early December at an international HIV/AIDS conference in Moscow, Luzhkov pledged to continue putting the kibosh on gay parades: "We have banned and will continue to forbid this propaganda by sexual minorities, as they could turn out to be one of the factors in the spread of HIV infections."

There you have it. Pride parades spread AIDS. Must be something in the paint on the banners.

The mayor added, "Certain homegrown democrats believe that sexual minorities can be a primary indicator and symbol of democracy, but we will forbid the dissemination of these opinions in the future as well."

An autocrat only Stalin could love.

Luzhkov offered another piece of wisdom when he declared, "Certain manufacturers state that condoms are reliable protection against AIDS, but modern science has proven this is untrue."

The assembled HIV/AIDS experts from around the world must've thought the translating mechanism was on the blink. But only the mayor was. ▽

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'online q-poll'

Are you going to Obama's inauguration on Jan. 20?

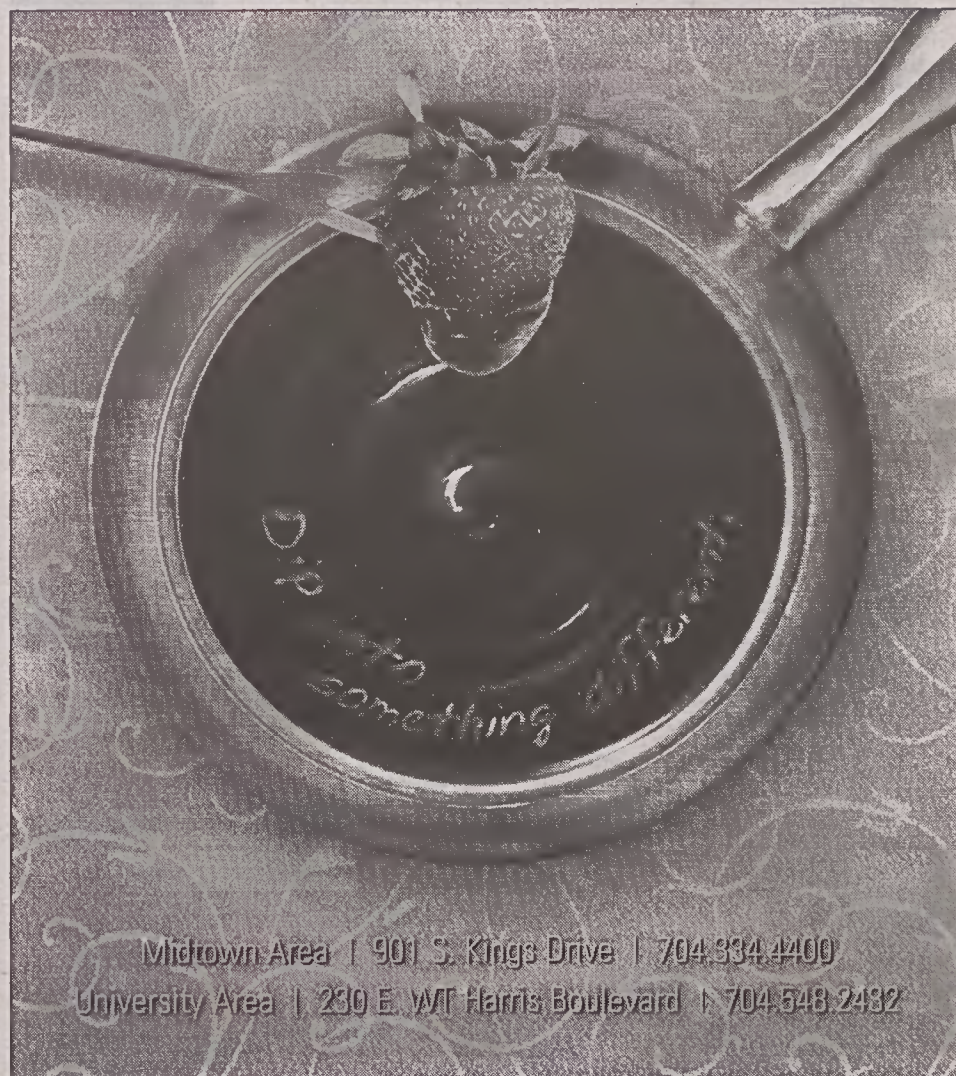
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