

# actors' theatre of washington

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## **ATW GETS A NEW NAME AND EXPANDED MISSION Ganymede Arts To Offer More Than Just Theater**

WASHINGTON -- The Actors' Theatre of Washington (ATW) has changed its name to better reflect the arts organization's mission in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. The announcement coincides with the start of the 2007 Capitol Pride festival.

Beginning June 1, 2007, Ganymede Arts' new Web site -- [www.ganymedearts.org](http://www.ganymedearts.org) -- will be a one-stop shop for the public to learn about the troupe's extended offerings. ATW's legacy of high-quality theater will continue, in addition to dance and musical performances, poetry readings and art shows.

The expansion has always been part of Artistic Director Jeffrey Johnson's vision but it was put on hold until the theater became more self-sustaining. The change received the full backing of ATW's staff and board, Johnson said.

"Not only are we here for the GLBT community, we are offering them something that we've never really had before," he said. "It shows more of a responsibility toward the community we serve. The options we have now are wide-open."

At Ganymede Arts, there is "history within the name," Johnson said. Ganymede was a young male who was taken by Zeus to be his lover and the cupbearer to the Gods. The myth has influenced art, politics, pop culture, science and spirituality.

Cicero, Homer, Ovid, Plato and Virgil all referenced the legend and it was used by religious leaders in the Dark Ages to show the sinful Pagan ways. It was revived by Renaissance artists as a symbol for homosexuality, only to be used again by the church to renounce the Pagan past.

Ganymede has inspired Franz Schubert, Goethe, Shakespeare, Rembrandt and Vollmer. Anheuser Busch used the myth in a 1904 advertising campaign. In science, Ganymede is the name of Jupiter's largest moon.

Ganymede Arts will be a highly visible element of the Capitol Pride festival. Look for staff and board members in the parade on Saturday, June 9 and at a festival kiosk on Sunday, June 10.

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