



JANE DROPS A LOAD. Jane's court victory will inspire us for some time to come.

Court appearance as performance

► **QueerCulture**

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PHOTO BY INGRID HAMILTON

The first thing you saw outside the Old City Hall was the white stretch Lincoln limousine. It was like a gala opening. Everybody was there: the photographers, the cameramen, the journalists hungry for a salacious quote and, of course... the fans.

Move over Zsa Zsa; pack it up Leona; ciao Imelda. TO had its own celebrity trial the other week: the inimitable, the daring, the lovably demented playwright Sky Gilbert stepped out of the car in drag, as... Jane. Passing pedestrians: confused... it was mayhem on Queen (!) Street.

The saga began last February. Sky, dressed as Jane, was on his way to Metropolis writer Ingrid Hamilton's party when his cab was pulled over by the cops for a faulty light. When the boys in blue saw glamour puss Jane in the back seat they decided to leave the cabbie alone and concentrate their harassment skills on his passenger. Seeing a unique opportunity to "serve and protect," they gave Jane a \$53 ticket... for failing to wear a seat belt!

Flash forward two months. The mood in the courtroom was a mixture of both anticipation and boredom. Name after name was called. The crowd began to wilt. Sky's entourage, fans and well-wishers had just assumed that the afternoon belonged to Jane. After all, she was the star. How dare the Crown presume otherwise and treat Jane like... just another extra? As exquisite as timing gets, this event

had even been posted in the QueerCulture festival's schedule!

But there are no dissolves in life, and every moment we had to wait was an agonizing one. Case after case of mind-numbingly stupid traffic violations.

An hour later, after a recess (intermission?), our favourite gender illusionist/dramatist, Mr Sky Gilbert, was finally called to the stand (the stage?).

The fluorescent lighting was a bitch, but Jane, all dolled up in a gold lamé suit which resembled a toga, was primed and ready for a close-up.

The celebs were in the first row, including actors Andrew Binks and Wendy Thatcher; publicist Grant Ramsay and the lovely Ingrid Hamilton were at the edge of their bench. The courtroom was hushed.

It was now traffic court as a performance art installation. Jane sauntered over to the stand in that fluffy shag white coat, that peroxide blonde wig, that make-up that made Tammy Faye look like a nun. Red sunglasses to match red nails and red lips completed this bizarre Jarvis Street ensemble.

Jane opened by stating to the judge that she was dressed in drag to make a statement, to show how she was dressed the night she was busted... to demonstrate how anyone who dresses or looks unusual is a target for the TO police. The judge listened carefully. I thought Jane deserved applause, but the gallery was silent, mesmerized. The judge then seemed confused. He hadn't realized Jane had been fined for not wearing a seat belt in a cab. At first he thought, Is this her cab? A friend's cab? Was she in the front seat? But then suddenly the full absurdity of the charge came to light. The ticket was ripped up. In other words, Jane was innocent.

And so the gallery cheered as their super-star drag queen shimmed on out of the courtroom crying, "Victory is mine — justice has prevailed!"