



# GEORGE CHRISTY

Alex J. Berliner/BEIimages



**The Lovely Bones' Rachel Weisz and Saoirse Ronan at Paramount's premiere in Hollywood**

Holidays, and our Hollywood Who's Who jet far and away with private planes or burn up the road with Porsches and Ferraris for their favorite getaways. Partying in Aspen were **Kate Hudson, LeAnn Rimes, Eddie Cibrian, Zac Efron, Seal and Heidi Klum.** The ski slopes of Vail welcomed AEG's **Bernadette** and **Tim Leiwecke.** Miami's night life attracted **Lady Gaga, Jamie Foxx,** New Moon's **Kellan Lutz.** Sunning and surfing in Hawaii were producers **Brad Krevoy** and **Steve Stabler** with their families, and **Owen Wilson** with friends.

In stormy St. Barth's, the **Lindsey Lohan** party animals rang in 2010 with Russia's 43-year-old oil and steel tycoon **Roman Abramovich,** worth \$8.5 billion and owner of the world's largest yacht, the \$450 million Eclipse (557 feet). Big spender Roman orchestrated a \$5 million New Year's Eve party with girlfriend **Dasha Zukova** at his \$90 million beachside compound (70 acres), where more than 250 guests were entertained by **Beyonce, Prince** and **Gwen Stefani,** each performer paid upwards of \$500,000. A pre-New Year's Eve party was hosted by LA/NY supernova art dealer **Larry Gagosian** and Microsoft co-founder **Paul Allen** on Paul's 414-foot Octopus yacht (the world's eighth largest).

Gambling scenesters such as **Christina Aguilera, Josh Duhamel, Fergie** and the **Black Eyed Peas, Nicole Richie** and **Joel Madden** headed to Las Vegas, where Elvis Presley's 75th birthday is being celebrated by Cirque du Soleil's *Viva ELVIS* tribute to his life and music. *Viva ELVIS* is playing in previews at Las Vegas's

swanky **Aria Resort and Casino,** a centerpiece of the grandiose \$8.5 billion **CityCenter** that passes for a city of its own. Covering 67 acres and evaluated as the most expensive private development in the U.S., the extravagant complex has been designed by a series of international architects. Grand hotels and residences, elegant shops and dining rooms, luxurious spas -- such Sin City lavishness soon prompted snarky Las Vegas habitués to sniff that other hotel properties now seem dowdy.

Besides its humungous casino, the **Aria,** overseen by a staff of 10,000, houses 4004 rooms on its 61 floors, nine bars and seventeen restaurants. The resort includes a theater with 1,840 seats, where the **Elvis** spectacle premieres on Feb. 19 after these weeks of previews. Singers, dancers and musicians comprise the cast of 70-plus -- "not a show looking at Elvis, but a show that's with him ... not an historic piece, more like a live concert," claims producer **Stephane Mongeau,** adding that Elvis's voice sings the 30 songs.

After Elvis's overwhelming commercial success with his music pioneering "black" sounds with "white," **Al Green** declared, "He opened the door for black music, broke the ice for us black singers." Al cited **Chuck Berry, Fats Domino,** and **Little Richard,** who considered Elvis "a blessing." And *The New York Times* editorialized that "before Elvis became camp, he was its opposite: a genuine cultural force." Suddenly, Elvis impersonators cropped up everywhere.

Elvis Aron Presley was born on January 8, 1935 in Tupelo, Mississippi, moved with his parents Gladys and Vernon Presley to Memphis, Tennessee at age 13. His childhood favorite food of a peanut butter, sliced banana and



Producer Aimee Peyronnet



Executive Producers Tessa and Ken Kamins with Paramount's Adam Goodman



Executive Producer Steven Spielberg



The film's Reece Ritchie and Rose Mclver



Paramount's Brad Grey with director Peter Jackson



The film's Michael Imperioli



The film's Nikki Soohoo, Stephanie Owen and Andrew James Allen



The film's Susan Sarandon with son Jack Henry Robbins



The film's Stanley Tucci with Christian Ashdale

bacon sandwich with butter on Wonder Bread didn't take long to land on the culinary map of cross-

country America. No less a personage than New York City Mayor **Michael Bloomberg** confessed he would want that sandwich for his "last meal." The sandwich's also appeared in a cookbook for dogs.

A multimillion dollar enterprise, Elvis's legacy is packing in thousands of fans to Memphis this weekend to pay homage, along with his wife **Priscilla Beaulieu Presley** and daughter **Lisa Marie.** A Smithsonian exhibition is featuring 60 photographs by **Alan Wertheimer** of Elvis at 21, including that infamous "kiss" photo of tonsil hockey with a young beauty. (Wertheimer's prints fetch thousands, and a thatch of Elvis's hair when he was shorn for his army service sold for \$18,000.) In Milwaukee, the Harley Davidson museum is exhibiting more photographs, and tickets will be discounted for visitors with sideburns and dark glasses.

In March, at Elvis's Graceland estate, exhibits of his iconic fashion style and artifacts from Graceland will be displayed. By late summer, Graceland will host a week-long party of music and dance in honor of The King, and scheduled for November are Elvis cruises to the Bahamas, departing from Jacksonville, Florida to Nassau. About Graceland, the 18-room mansion on 14 acres which he bought for \$102,000, our late Memphis friend, Whit Brown, noted it belonged to his Aunt Grace -- "she's buried there."

Even though Elvis's music wasn't his thing, **Steve Binder,** who directed the '68 *Comeback Special,* reflected, "I'm straight as an arrow, but I got to tell you, whether you were female or male, that you stopped in your tracks to look at

him. The moment he entered a room, you knew somebody special arrived."

Girls were attracted around the clock to Elvis's Greek God looks, and they filled his life, the unknown as well as the known that included **Cybill Shepherd** and **Peggy Lipton,** who found him "virtually impotent," with Peggy attributing it to his boyish innocence and drugs. **Lori Williams** dated Elvis early on, and reported he was "very sweet and a perfect gentleman." He and his *Viva Las Vegas* co-star **Ann-Margret** were very close, but she never mentioned any intimacy. **Cher** turned him down when he asked her to stay with him in Las Vegas. **Elvira** reports she spent a night with him but all they did was talk. And **Linda Thompson** says that only after months of dating did they consummate their togetherness.

In **Alanna Nash's** tell-all memoir, *Baby, Let's Play House,* she quotes Elvis's cousin, **Billy Smith,** who asked Elvis why he put up with one of his babes, who was sleeping in the adjoining room. Elvis answered: "I'm just getting too old and tired to train another one."

Rumors surfaced that to turn on female audiences he had a lead bar sewn into his tight pants. Also that Elvis placed a cardboard toilet roll in his crotch for obvious reasons. Some say that when he performed on the *Milton Berle* and *Steve Allen* variety shows, he substituted a soda bottle.

"I don't do any vulgar movements," Elvis insisted about his swiveling and sexually charged performances ... I don't think I'm bad for people.

If I did think I was bad, I would go back to driving a truck." He vouched that he "didn't know anything about music, in my line you don't have to ... I know by heart all of James Dean's films, I could watch *Rebel Without a Cause* a hundred times over ... I'd like to sing ballads like **Eddie Fisher** and **Perry Como** do, but the way I'm singing now makes the money ... I sure lost my musical direction in Hollywood. My songs were the same conveyer belt mass production, just like most of my movies." Elvis starred in 31 films.

It had to happen. *The New York Post* has created a 2010 **Tiger Woods** golf calendar with sexpot photos of Tiger's bimbettes. Miss January is **Rachel Uchitel,** the first of Tiger's hook-ups, while "madam" **Theresa Rogers** is crowned Miss November, that brutal month when all hell broke loose between wife **Elin** and Tiger. Is it true that a cool \$3 million is what Elin's asking in their divorce settlement? All the same, close friends anticipate the golfing superstar won't back off from participating in the Masters this spring. Bare-chested and buffed, Tiger is *Vanity Fair's* cover guy for February -- an old photo from **Annie Leibovitz's** archive.

Online at [www.bhcourier.com/georgechristy.cfm](http://www.bhcourier.com/georgechristy.cfm)



An Elvis impersonator at the 2001 premiere of *3000 Miles To Graceland*

Alex J. Berliner/BEIimages