

# baltimore **OUTloud**

## Pretty in Punk: Ariel Aparicio



Singer/songwriter and restaurateur, Ariel Aparicio, was born in Cuba to musical parents, but raised in Miami. "Honestly, I don't know what the scene is like in Cuba. My family left many years ago, and, unfortunately, I haven't been back."

He currently lives, works and plays in Brooklyn, NY along with his husband and four-year-old son.

Ariel is most heavily influenced by dance and rock. His music is a perfect blend of those elements along with his Latin roots. He draws inspiration from such eclectic punk artists as Grace Jones, Chrissie Hynde, David Bowie, The Strokes and The Stooges. His most recent full-length to date, "All These Brilliant Things," has received praise from HX, Out Impact, Gay Agenda and After Elton. That album spawned two videos which garnered airplay on MTV/Viacom's LOGO channel. The first single, "Life and Times," held the #1 spot on LOGO's most requested video show, "The Click List," for three weeks and was nominated for two PILL Awards. The second, "The New World," premiered on their much acclaimed "NewNowNext" music video program.

Last year, Ariel participated in OUTMusic's "Freedom of Expression Campaign" to address the silent discrimination taking place within the entertainment industry and to encourage LGBT artists to be out and open about their sexuality. He was also selected by MTV as exclusive performer at their "National Coming Out Day" event at the NYC club, Therapy, last October.

Ariel recently held a coveted slot for "Stonewall: the 40th Anniversary Commemorative Concert & Benefit" at the Nokia Theatre in Times Square. This summer, Ariel will be playing featured slots at the Houston, Queens, Brooklyn, San Diego and Baltimore Prides and the Power of Pride benefit concert in NYC.

One of Ariel's deepest regrets is never having come out to his father before he passed away. His son, Axl, has been to a couple of Prides with him, though. "I'm sure he will come to Brooklyn this year" Ariel states thoughtfully "The subject of Pride hasn't come up yet - I'm sure it will."

How does this busy family man juggle two full-time businesses along with parenting and no nannies to speak of? "Soon to be three restaurants!" he corrects "We actually have a great schedule. We work at night, so yes, we do have some help. Our days are free, so we can spend them with our son. We take him to school every day and pick him up - we do pretty much everything together as a family."

In 2009, Ariel covered The Psychedelic Furs' "Pretty in Pink." The Furs' own lead singer, Richard Butler, raved about that cover "I love the version - well done!" The "Pretty in Pink" video debuted on "NewNowNext" and spent eighteen weeks on "The Click List's Top 10," ending the year as the #3 most requested video for 2009. It was nominated for a PILL

award in the Best Music Video/Alternative category and was later revamped as a club hit remix with the help of the renowned Pocketknife team.

Ariel donated all proceeds from the April 2009 sales of the song to The Greater New York Susan Komen Foundation's "Think Pink: Download For A Cause" campaign in honor of his good friend, Celeste Orangers, a Stage 3 breast cancer survivor. "Celeste is doing amazing!!" Ariel enthuses "She's one of my closest friends. However, she's making me help her move soon, so I'm not sure what's going to happen after that."

For his upcoming full-length release, "Aerials," Aparacio has been working closely with renowned producer and filmmaker, Tom Gilroy (who has worked with R.E.M. for many years and produced and performed with Michael Stipe and Hahn Rowe the single "Everything's Coming Undone" off the "Ciao, My Shining Star" compilation album) plus Aaron Kant as engineer and session drummer and long-time musical collaborator, Steve Dawson. The full-length will be recorded with both English and Spanish vocals.

Additionally, a new EP, "The Bedroom Tapes," is set for release on July 6. His website describes it as a "four-song throwback to the punk-rock legends that emerged into the mainstream during the late '70s and '80s." The first single, "Lucille," is whimsical elegy about a transvestite of that name. The second single is an energetic cover of "People Who Died," by the Jim Carroll Band and the only cover on the EP. The third cut, "Torito," is the reworking of "Down in Tijuana/Hang Around" off the "All These Brilliant Things" album. It's a Latin-flavored lullaby written for his son. The fourth and final cut, "The Future," is pure acid punk rock. The tracks are interspersed throughout with cool little horn sections and rad guitar riffs while still maintaining Ariel's classic Latino punk flavor.

For inspiration this time around, Ariel went straight to the classics: "A lot of 'Where the Wild Things Are' and 'Bob the Builder'" he chuckles.

Yep, he's a Dad, alright.

For more information, visit [www.arielaparcio.com](http://www.arielaparcio.com). Remember to catch Ariel Aparacio who will be one of the headliners at the Block Party on June 19.