

# MAN OF THE 'CATHOUSE'

## 'Pimp's' lawyer takes reins

### EXCLUSIVE

By BRAD HAMILTON,  
LAURA ITALIANO  
and JEANE MacINTOSH

Despite a crackdown on high-end hookers, one of Manhattan's most expensive "escort services" was back in business just three days after being busted — and it's now listed in the name of the accused pimp's lawyer, who's also been linked to a murder, The Post has learned.

Escorts at NY Confidential, which charges up to \$2,000 an hour, were flocking to a new outpost in the East 30s less than a week after cops raided their swanky, Moroccan-themed digs on Worth Street on Jan. 7 and three days later arrested alleged pimp Jason Itzler, sources said.

Itzler's lawyer, Paul Bergrin, then listed himself as the official contact for "NY Confidential Escorts, Inc." on Jan. 25 — and put down the three-story Kips Bay brownstone rented by Itzler as its place of business.

Bergrin, 49, told The Post he didn't know anything about an East Side operation — despite his name appearing as the only rep for the firm on new state incorporation paperwork.

"But if it were operating, I don't think it would be what it was they said Jason was doing. It would be strictly an escort agency under the strict references to what that means," he said.


But that's not what residents of the building say.

They described a changing cast of attractive young women coming in and out of the walk-up, some openly kissing and cuddling in the stairways with men in business attire,

### Busted

**A vice squad crackdown has resulted in a 20 percent spike in arrests between November and January, compared to the same period a year ago:**

Nov. '03	589 arrests
Jan. '04	
Nov. '04	715 arrests
Jan. '05	



along with late-night drinking and loud arguments.

One neighbor stumbled across a half-dressed couple having sex in the building's hallway. Another said a confused "gentleman" knocked on her door, holding a bouquet of roses.

"It's a family building — not a red-light district building — and it's pretty obvious what's going on here," said the resident, who asked that her name not be printed.

According to people in the building, the escort service's new home is a one-bedroom, \$3,000-a-month apartment on the first floor.

Sources said that while Itzler, 37 — busted on charges of promoting prostitution and held at the Metropolitan Detention Center on \$150,000 bail — fidgets in jail, his company has made a quick return thanks to Bergrin.

"Bergrin ordered the agency back up and running after Jason's arrest," said a legal source close to the case.

An industry source said Bergrin and Itzler have been friends for years and that the lawyer dates an agency booker who was busted in the raid.

Bergrin has represented Queen Latifah and is defending an Army reservist charged in the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, but his past is checkered.

Federal prosecutors in Newark say he passed along information about a federal informant who was later shot dead in 2003. They said Bergrin slipped the snitch's name to a defendant he reppead.

Bergrin has not been charged, but the feds asked a judge to remove him from the case.

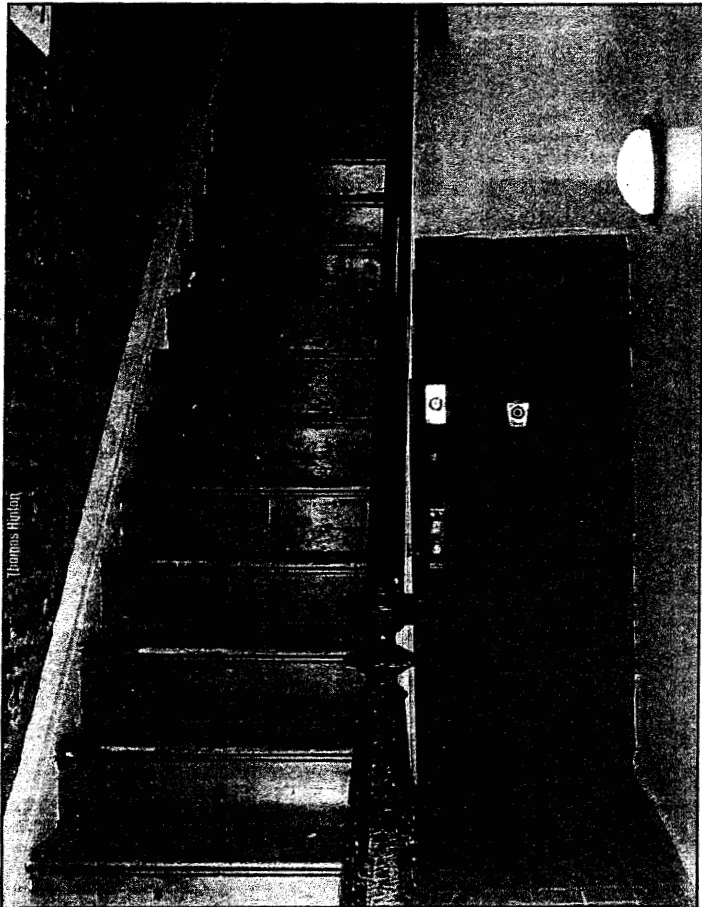
NY Confidential's sudden return shocked others in the industry, many of whom have gone quiet during a police crackdown in which a dozen top brothels have been shut down or voluntarily rolled up their bedsheets.

"It's incredible, mind-boggling," said one former madam who spoke on condition of anonymity. "It's either incredibly arrogant or Jason has some great connections."

Sources said he may be cooperating with authorities, but Bergrin denied it. Others said investigators are cooperating with an employee to keep the agency running as police continue to investigate.

The NYPD's Vice Division has made 21 percent more call girl arrests this year over the same period last year. A vice squad source said the crackdown came directly from Mayor Bloomberg, anticipating the city's push for the 2012 Olympics.

Additional reporting by Heather Gilmore



Thomas R. Hart

### Trick or treat



**JASON ITZLER**  
Accused pimp in jail.

Cops have been cracking down on alleged brothels, including the new East Side location of the NY Confidential "escort service," seen here. Others recently raided include:

- 79 Worth St. (Jan. 7, NY Confidential)
- 336 W. 49th St. (Jan. 27, Julie's of New York City)
- 326 W. 49th St. (Jan. 27, Julie's)
- 143 E. 35th St. (Jan. 27, Julie's)
- 437 W. 46th St. (Jan. 27, Julie's) *Shalom bldg*
- 364 W. 51st St. (Jan. 27, Julie's) *Shalom 11*
- 242 E. 60th St. (Dec. 2, American Beauties)

# Phone escorts still treading — but carefully

By BRAD HAMILTON

A police crackdown on Manhattan's most expensive call girls has made it difficult to partake of the world's oldest profession — but not impossible.

A handful of escorts contacted by The Post said they wouldn't book an appointment with any new "client," but Holly, who posted her photo and number on the Erotic Review Board Web site, said yes.

A member of the All Concierge Services agency, she arrived nearly an hour late for the 10 p.m. meeting, and knocked gently on the hotel-room door.

Holly came in smelling of strong perfume. She was 24, blonde, petite, from a mountain town in Poland, and wore bright pink lipstick, tight black pants, a sweater and a coat.

She smiled and entered. A reporter took her coat, offered

her a drink. She wanted water.

She said she had been in the country only a couple of years. She was studying to be a pharmacist at a university in New Jersey, she said, and joined the trade only six weeks earlier. She used Holly as a professional moniker because it's the name of a friend in Florida.

The police crackdown troubled her.

"I worry about being arrested," she said. "So many

people ask me when I come, 'Are you police?' And of course, I ask them, too, 'Are you police?'"

For a \$625.25 fee, the customer was entitled to one hour of her time. Holly was reluctant to say what services she offered but made it clear almost anything was available.

"Maybe I should get naked," she said and began to pull her sweater over her head.

She stopped when told the reporter wanted only information.

Kirsten Taylor, an independent call girl who advertises online, said that "the feds are busting girls all over the place, so we independents have to stick together to protect ourselves."

She was among five escorts who would not agree to an appointment with the reporter — because he was not a regular.