

MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

Debut Exhibitions at The GLBT History Museum • San Francisco

MAIN GALLERY

EXHIBITION

“Our Vast Queer Past: Celebrating GLBT History” (January–December 2011)

CURATORS

Gerard Koskovich, independent scholar, editor and antiquarian book dealer; founding member of the GLBT Historical Society.

Don Romesberg, assistant professor of women’s and gender studies at Sonoma State University, Sonoma, Calif.

Amy Sueyoshi, associate professor of race and resistance studies and sexuality studies at San Francisco State University.

STATEMENT

To honor the GLBT Historical Society’s 25th anniversary, the curators of “Our Vast Queer Past” burrowed into every corner of the society’s extraordinary archives. To spark the topics for the show, we picked an inspirational object from virtually every year the society has been acquiring collections. Our objectives: raising new questions about familiar gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender stories and evoking largely untold stories that speak eloquently about our diversity.

The resulting exhibition offers a kaleidoscopic view of nearly a century of queer experience in San Francisco and the Bay Area. It does not form a single narrative; our history is too varied and unruly to be limited in that way. Instead, we bring together multiple stories, sometimes interlinking, sometimes isolated, sometimes in conflict. All of them reflect deeply human themes: the search for companionship and pleasure; the struggle for self-determination and respect in an often-hostile society; the value of individual and collective expression; and the spirit, ingenuity and wit that have been keys to our survival.

TOPICS

The exhibition is divided into the following thematic and biographical sections:

- Finding Our Hidden Histories
- Consuming Queers: The GLBT Marketplace
- The Strategy of Equality
- Body Politics: Questioning the Ideal
- Adrienne Fuzee: Queer Arts Visionary
- Del Martin & Phyllis Lyon: Progressive Pioneers
- Drag: Fashioning Our Existence
- On the Margin: Queers & Poverty
- Queers of Color Organizing

GLBT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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- Lou Sullivan: A Life Transformed
- Jiro Onuma: Undocumented/Documented
- Bar Life: Going Out
- Bathhouses: Coming Together or Waiting Outside?
- Lesbian Sex Wars
- Leather: Dark Desires, Public Pleasures
- Erotica: Drawn Out
- Sex Toys: Implementing Erotic Expression
- Out of the Closets & Into the Streets
- Military Matters: Divergent Duties
- Bois Burk: Under Surveillance
- Bearing the Scars: Violence & Trauma
- HIV/AIDS: Grief, Solidarity, Determination
- Tales of Our City

FRONT GALLERY

EXHIBITION

“Great Collections From the GLBT Historical Society Archives” (January–May 2011)

CURATOR

Paul Boneberg, executive director, GLBT Historical Society.

STATEMENT

Often referred to as the “queer Smithsonian,” the GLBT Historical Society maintains one of the largest archives of GLBT historical materials anywhere in the world. This exhibition offers an introduction to the collections by displaying examples from a number of classes of materials the society has gathered during its first quarter-century. The exhibition also highlights the history of the institution itself, the ways in which researchers have used its archives, and their meaning for GLBT people and for society as a whole.

SECTIONS

The exhibition is divided into the following sections:

- Oral Histories
- Personal Collections
- Textiles
- Posters
- Film, Video & Sound
- Ephemera
- Periodicals
- Photographs