

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND  
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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January 22, 2019  
Start: 1:19 p.m.  
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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: JAMES G. VAN BRAMER  
Chairperson

KAREN KOSLOWITZ  
Interim Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Joseph C. Borelli  
Laurie A. Cumbo  
Francisco P. Moya

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Tom Finkelparl, Commissioner, New York City  
Department of Cultural Affairs

John Ferver, Performer

Adam Odsess-Rubin, Founder and Artistic Director of  
National Queer Theater

Adam Ashraf Elsayigh, Playwright and Producers,  
Criminal Queerness Festival

Chris Frederick, Managing Director, NYC Pride  
Heritage of Pride

Jason Baumann, Assistant Director, Collection  
Development & Coordinator of LGBTQ Initiative, New  
York Public Library

Eric Marcus, Creator & Host, Making Gay History  
Podcast & Chair, Stonewall 50 Consortium

Inge DeTaeye, Vice Chair, Stonewall 50 Consortium

Michael Benjamin Washington, Actor and Playwright

Frank Carucci, President, La MaMa Experimental  
Theater Club

Ryan Leach, La MaMa Experimental Theater Club

Ken Lustbader, Co-Founder & Co-Director, NYC LGBTQ  
Historic Sites Project

Sasha Wortzel, Director of Access and Community Programs, Whitney Museum of American Art

Daniella Topol, Artistic Director Rattlestick Playwrights Theater

Doug Nevin, Entertainment Lawyer & Theater Producer in New York

Ann Northrop, Reclaim Pride Coalition

Eric Sawyer, Co-Founder of Act Up New York, And a Co-founder of Housing Works

Sean Corcoran, Museum of the City of New York

Jerry Capis, Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art

Richard Lieberman Professor, La Guardia Community College

Olivia Cassarino, Student La Guardia Community College

Wes Enos, Founder and Executive Director, Generations Project

Ally Rickard, Curatorial Assistant, Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, Brooklyn Museum

Catherine Almonte, Government and Community Affairs Liaison, Brooklyn Museum

Ines Aslan, Vice President of Communications

New York Historical Society

Jordan Reeves, Founder, Video Out

Todd Porter, General Manager, Queer Urban Orchestra

Richard Winton, Graduate Social Work Intern, AARP New York

Haam Zudan (sp?) Constituent Liaison with Assemblyman  
Brian Barnwell

[sound check] [pause] [gavel] [background  
comments/pause]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: --and cannot  
be with us today. Good afternoon everyone and  
welcome to today's hearing for the Committee on  
Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International  
Intergroup Relations. We are now formally in  
session. This summer will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
of the uprising of the Stonewall Inn, which sparked  
the sparked the matter in LGBTQ, Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual Transgender and Queer Civil Rights Movement  
and for the first time in its 20-year history World  
Pride will be held in the United States  
simultaneously with Stonewall 50. Today this  
committee is interested in learning more about  
current plans for Stonewall 50 and World Pride events  
in general, and beyond next summer's celebration as  
well as well as efforts (sic) the Arts and Cultural  
Community are creating surround Stonewall 50's  
significance. In the 1950s and 60s the LGBTQ  
community in New York City experienced widespread  
discrimination and anti-gay legal system. New York  
State Liquor Authority penalized and shut down  
establishments that served alcohol to known or

1  
2 suspected LGBTQ individuals on the grounds that the  
3 gathering of LGBTQ individuals was considered  
4 disorderly. The police had the authority to arrest  
5 people for wearing less than three-three-gender  
6 appropriate articles of clothing and so-called gay  
7 behavior such as holding cans, kissing or dancing  
8 with someone of the same sex remained illegal in New  
9 York City. On June 28, 1969, New York Police raided  
10 the Stonewall Inn, which was then known as a gay club  
11 located in Manhattan's Greenwich Village to ensure  
12 that the three-piece clothing law was being adhered  
13 to. Thirteen people were arrested, but as police  
14 pulled employees and patrons out of the bar in the  
15 early hours of the morning. According to historian  
16 David Carter, one woman being arrested yelled to  
17 bystanders, Hey, why don't you guys do something?  
18 And they. The police officers quickly lost control  
19 of the situation and tensions between city police and  
20 LGBTQ residents of the Village erupted into protests  
21 with many of those present being young members of the  
22 LGBTQ community leading to six days of violent  
23 clashes and protests taking place around the streets  
24 around the Stonewall Inn, outside the bar on  
25 Christopher Street and neighboring streets and in

1 nearby Christopher Park. Within several weeks,  
2 Village residents had organized into activists groups  
3 to concentrate efforts on establishing places for  
4 LGBTQ individuals to be open about their sexual  
5 orientation without fear of being arrested. Within  
6 six weeks two major gay activist organizations were  
7 also formed in New York City concentrating on  
8 confrontational tactics and at least newspapers were  
9 established to promote LGBTQ rights. The event—the  
10 events now known collectively as the Stonewall  
11 Uprising shifted not only the fight for social and  
12 legal—legal equal rights for all sexualities, but led  
13 to a shift in our national psyche, a legacy for  
14 international—intergenerational groups of advocates  
15 seeking equity and launched the tradition of pride  
16 marches that many LGBTQ groups still protest—  
17 participate in today. On June 28, 1970, the first  
18 Gay Pride Marches took place in New York City, Los  
19 Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago to commemorate  
20 the first anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising and  
21 within a few years of the uprising new—numerous  
22 additional LGBTQ rights organizations were founded  
23 across the United States and the world. On June 23,  
24 2015, the Stonewall Inn became the first landmark in  
25

1  
2 New York City to be recognized by the New York City  
3 Landmarks Preservation Commission on the basis of the  
4 status in LGBTQ history. And on June 24, 2016, the  
5 Stonewall National Monument was named the first  
6 LGBTQ monument in the United States and this summer  
7 we marked the significance of this important history,  
8 which is not only local history or history to our  
9 community, but truly a nation and even international  
10 legacy. In addition to the Stonewall Uprising—  
11 Uprising's political and cultural influences, there  
12 are numerous ways in which the events took place in  
13 June of 1969 has influenced the artistic community in  
14 New York City many of which have manifested in the  
15 decades since the Stonewall uprising. We are so  
16 pleased to have so many of artist and cultural  
17 institutions with us here today, and we look forward  
18 to speaking to all of them soon. I would like to  
19 acknowledge the members of the committee who are here  
20 today. We're joined by Council Member Laurie Cumbo.  
21 I know there are more downstairs. They'll be up. I  
22 would also like to thank my Chief of Staff to Jimmy  
23 Van Bramer, Matthew Wallace, my—the Legislative  
24 Director to Jimmy Van Bramer, Jack Bernarnovich  
25 (sp?), My Committee Finance Analyst Alia Alli, our



1  
2 Committee Counsel Brenda McKinney and our Committee  
3 Policy Analyst Christy Dwyer, and wit that, I would  
4 like to call on our Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl for  
5 Advocacy [background comments] Oh, CEO of

6           LEGAL COUNSEL: Thanks. Please raise  
7 your right hand. Thank you.

8           COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Yep.

9           LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the  
10 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in  
11 your testimony before this committee, and to respond  
12 honestly to Council Member questions?

13           COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Yes, I do.

14           LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

15           COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Okay, shall I  
16 commence with my testimony? Thank you. Okay, good  
17 morning or good afternoon Chair Koslowitz and members  
18 of the Committee and Councilwoman Laurie Cumbo. I'm  
19 Tom Finkelpearl, Commissioner of the New York City  
20 Department of Cultural Affairs. I'm here today  
21 testify in regards to today's topic, Arts, Culture in  
22 Stonewall 50. This year marks a momentous occasion  
23 for all New Yorker and especially for our LGBTQ  
24 community. Equal rights and free expression are core  
25 values for New York. They're what make our city a

1 beacon for people across the world, and what gives  
2 our neighbors and streets, our neighborhoods and  
3 streets a sense of vibrancy and energy that you can't  
4 find anywhere else. And no small part of this is our  
5 identity, and by no fault a small part of our  
6 identity comes from our city's hard won willingness  
7 to embrace our LGBTQ neighbors. I say hard won  
8 because the events that Chair Koslowitz mentioned  
9 before and we're speaking about today, Stonewall was  
10 a stunning and inspiring display of courage by those  
11 who took part in it. That's something we should not  
12 forget as we mark the 50<sup>th</sup> year. Americans have a  
13 habit of viewing events from the past through rose  
14 colored glasses, but we are committed to remembering  
15 that the Stonewall Uprisings took place in response  
16 to oppression. This year we celebrate how far we've  
17 come thanks to the people who started this path, and  
18 with our partners in the cultural sector, we're also  
19 recognizing how far we have to go. Appropriately  
20 these celebrations will not be limited to a week or a  
21 month. New York City and Company is making 2019  
22 officially the year of Pride. They're working to  
23 tradition NYC as the most LGBTQ friendly destination  
24 year round, and to increase awareness of Stonewall  
25

1  
2 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and its importance to New York's  
3 DNA. We share this commitment to both recognize the  
4 importance of the Stonewall Anniversary and to  
5 celebrate and support our LGBTQ community year round.  
6 Earlier this month we joined the Mayor's Office of  
7 Immigrant Affairs in announcing new cultural partners  
8 offering IDNYC Cardholders free memberships. In  
9 part, in honor to—of the anniversary of Stonewall,  
10 we're thrilled to welcome the Leslie Lohman Museum of  
11 Gay and Lesbian Art to our list of partners. We also  
12 announced as part of these new benefits a third  
13 gender category for IDNYC cards giving New Yorkers  
14 another way to more fully and accurately reflect  
15 their identity. Where it is protest, activism,  
16 commemoration or reflection, art has always been  
17 important for the LGBTQ community. As part of the  
18 Create NYC public engagement process, we have set a  
19 public conversation at MaMa PS1 focusing on the LGBTQ  
20 community and the arts. We are honored to have Chair  
21 Van Bramer join us for this event. That conversation  
22 revealed and interest in archiving and preserving  
23 artifacts and materials related to LGBTQ culture and  
24 advocacy. In part due to these conversations Create  
25 NYC Cultural Plan embraces supporting LGBTQ

1  
2 communities through culture. Some programs we  
3 started or expanding engaging homeless LGBTQ youth  
4 through Public Artists in Residency Program with the  
5 Alzheimer's Disease for Children's Services. I work  
6 with the cultural sector to ensure diverse and  
7 inclusive workforce also investigating—is also  
8 investigating LGBTQ representation in staffs and  
9 leadership of cultural organizations. We plan on  
10 hosting a follow-up Create NYC Office hours ahead of  
11 Stonewall 50 in part to provide a space to share  
12 resources, coordinate planning, air concerns about  
13 how to commemorations are shaping up. At this  
14 meeting we would also like to learn more about how we  
15 can collectively help make these events meaningful,  
16 successful and impactful for groups to continue to  
17 face unique barriers, harassment and discrimination.  
18 Most notably LGBTQ communities of color and trans New  
19 Yorkers. DCLA is now newly a member of Stonewall 50  
20 Consortium, and the agency's LGBTQ Community Liaison  
21 Anthony Meyer who is sitting right here has been  
22 participating in a consortiums meetings programs for  
23 more than a year. The consortium is group and the  
24 consortium is well represented here. You'll hear  
25 from them. The group is non-profit organization

1 collaborating on and coordinating programming,  
2 exhibitions, materials for Stonewall Uprising and a  
3 broader history of LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement in New  
4 York City. Many of the Consortium's members are DCLA  
5 funded cultural non-profits that such as Poets House  
6 at the Whitney Museum and Dance NYC. I'll describe  
7 some of the activities DCLA funding groups—DCLA  
8 funded groups have planned in the moment. The  
9 Mayor's Community Affairs Unit and Citywide Events  
10 Coordination and the Management and Management Office  
11 are supporting a number of planned events by  
12 connecting organizations to relevant city agencies.  
13 This includes both regular annual celebrations as  
14 well as commemorations being planned specifically for  
15 the annual anniversary of Stonewall. The last thing  
16 we want is for the excitement and momentum to be  
17 interrupted by a hiccup with permitting. So, we're  
18 thankful to the Mayor's Office' commitment to making  
19 sure individuals and organizations planning these  
20 events have support they need with respect to safety,  
21 security, crowd control, public transportation,  
22 Sanitation and other city services that we can  
23 provide. The city's new Office of Nightlife is  
24 establishing a subcommittee of its interagency  
25

1 working group, of which DCLA is a member, to address  
2 social justice issues in the nightlife community,  
3 which includes LGBTQ issues. In its listening tour,  
4 all throughout the fall of 2018, 50 CLA  
5 representatives also attended. The Office of  
6 Nightlife heard that protecting spaces supporting  
7 LGBTQ community is top priority. In a few recent  
8 instances the Office of Nightlife has been contacted  
9 by LGBTQ establishments that were facing threats and  
10 harassment to help ensure that the city's responses  
11 is handled sensitively and effectively. As you know,  
12 DCLA's primary function is as a funder of cultural  
13 organizations and programming. More than 100  
14 cultural development fund grantees offer LGBTQ  
15 programming and/or serve LGBTQ New Yorkers and here  
16 are some examples: Arthur Aviles Typical Theater  
17 also know as Bronx Academy of Arts and dance host an  
18 annual Out Like That Festival. This event celebrates  
19 performance work by and for LGBTQ artist and  
20 audiences. Also there are Trans Visionaries program  
21 is a performance series feature cabaret singers,  
22 poets, comics, musicians, dancers and performance to  
23 identify as transgender and/or gender non-conforming.  
24  
25

1  
2 It brings these performances to restaurants and cafes  
3 around the borough of the Bronx.

4 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [interposing]

5 Three there I think. (sic)

6 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Brooklyn's  
7 Thelma Hill Performing Arts Center has a historic  
8 focus on LGBTQ dance, artists of color. The groups  
9 Peeks works in progress is a year-round program that  
10 prevents works by NYC based LGBTQ and women of color  
11 choreographers as well as dance companies of color.

12 In Queens, the New Yorker Lesbian and Gay  
13 Experimental Film Festival's 31<sup>st</sup> New Yorker Queer  
14 Experiment Film Festival is happening at Dreamhouse  
15 Community Arts Center in Ridgewood, Queens next  
16 month. It will feature an immersive environment of  
17 films videos, digital media installations and  
18 performances by LGBTQ artists from all over the world  
19 selected by guest characters (sic) and a panel of  
20 local artists. The Tank in Manhattan has an annual  
21 Pride Fest that offers programming by LGBTQ artists  
22 exploiting queer identities and sexuality.

23 Programming has included a dance show featuring  
24 Choreographer Mark Ninos in a screening of the Trans  
25 Literary Project by May B. Burk and Honest Accomplice

1 Theater a web series about trans—and a we series  
2 about trans issues, and in Staten Island the Alice  
3 Austin House was designated as LGBT Historic Site in  
4 2017 by the National Register of Historic Place.  
5 Members of the Cultural Institution Group also has a  
6 range of programs both honoring and specific  
7 anniversary and recognizing LGBTQ culture year round.  
8 Two years ago Brooklyn Children’s Museum launched a  
9 partnership with Drag Queen Story Hour to highlight  
10 Gender Differences in Fluidity as well as advocacy  
11 and activism for young audiences, for anyone [coughs]  
12 with young ones that may be interested. This unique  
13 partnership happens on the second Saturday of every  
14 month. Queens Theater in partnership with the One  
15 Minute Play Festival will produce a community action  
16 reading and town hall dialogue for 50 theater  
17 moments, one inspired by each year generated by 50  
18 LGBTQ playwrights in collaboration with the wider  
19 Queens community. The work will explore topics of  
20 intersectionality, race, culture and non-English  
21 language narratives specific to the Queens community,  
22 and locating contemporary queer issues within the  
23 shifting cultural landscape of—at this moment. At  
24 the Museum of the City of New York a new case study  
25



1 on trans activism will open in April as part of the  
2 ongoing exhibition Activists New York. Trans  
3 activism will focus on the essential role that trans  
4 New Yorkers such as Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson  
5 and many others played during the Stonewall Uprising  
6 and through the formation of activists groups and  
7 direct service organizations in the 70s and beyond.  
8 On June 27<sup>th</sup> the museum will also host the third  
9 Annual LGBTQ Team Summit a free full day prideful  
10 experience for teens and youth. In July El Misal  
11 Diario in partnership with the Museum of the City of  
12 New York will celebrate Stonewall 50 at the Annual  
13 Uptown Bounce, a free community celebration featuring  
14 music, dance, gallery tours, kids' activisms and  
15 more. The Bronx Museum a member of the Stonewall 50  
16 Consortium will host the exhibition the Life and  
17 Times of Alvin Ball Baltrop opening in August. Bronx  
18 born Baltrop who died in 2004 was a self taught  
19 photographer whose work focused on the dilapidated  
20 Hudson River Piers, other cruising spots and gay men  
21 and their subcultures during the '70s and the '80s  
22 prior to the AIDS Pandemic. This exhibition will  
23 feature Baltrop's photographs and his personal  
24 archives which are preserved at the Bronx Museum On  
25

1 May 12<sup>th</sup> the Pride Center in Staten Island will have  
2 their annual 5K Fund Run on the grounds of the Snug  
3 Harbor Cultural Center Botanical Garden. The Island  
4 wide events culminate on Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup> but Snug  
5 Harbor will be the host site for the annual Pride  
6 Center of Staten Island's LGBTQ Pride Festival. We  
7 have been thrilled to hear how widely embraced this  
8 opportunity would be, and how appropriately diverse  
9 the planned events are from somber reflections on  
10 struggle and loss to the jubilant salvations of our  
11 vibrant LGBTQ communities. I thank the Chair and  
12 members of the committee for this opportunity to  
13 highlight the important work being done to recognize  
14 the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising as  
15 well as other initiatives to support this important  
16 community. I welcome any questions you may have.

18 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: I would ask do  
19 you have any idea how many people will be attending?

20 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: I don't have  
21 that estimate, but I was at a NYC & Company—I'm on  
22 the Board of NYC & Company and the—this is a major  
23 topic and it has been a major topic for about the  
24 last year, and I think we could probably get the  
25 numbers from them. The numbers are enormous. That—

1 that to have International Pride Festival here and  
2 Stonewall the way it's been, you know, promoted is  
3 great and I think we'd have to get those numbers  
4 back. I think there might be some estimates, but the  
5 numbers I was seeing are quite large.

7 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Are there any--do  
8 they know how many people were here in the one, the  
9 25?

10 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: I could find  
11 that out for you as well, but I think the thing is  
12 that this year the--the sort of--the international  
13 pride this has been designated as the location,  
14 right. So, in terms of that festival and having sort  
15 of a focal point around what's going to go on  
16 especially in June, it's all year. I think it's  
17 going to be quite different from what happened at the  
18 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, which I don't know if it was such  
19 a--as much a big thing 25 years ago.

20 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [off mic] Yes, it  
21 was.

22 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: It was. Okay.  
23 So maybe we can get those numbers as well. Yeah,  
24 okay and--oh maybe just whoever that was could testify  
25 later and answer the question. I'm--I can get back to

1 with the numbers that I've been hearing, but I can't  
2 quote them myself, yeah.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, thank you  
5 and who else is interacting with you on this whole,  
6 you know, project?

7 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: I mean so  
8 essentially look we're a funding organization so I'm  
9 talking--so we've given lots of, you know, many of the  
10 organizations that we fund were participating in the  
11 consortium, were interacting with NYC & Company and  
12 we will do another of the town halls. So, we're  
13 using our convening, you know, power to have a  
14 meeting. We're working with other city agencies, but  
15 for the most part again we are a funding agency and  
16 that's the biggest thing we're doing is funding  
17 through the cultural organizations that we fund.

18 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, thank you.  
19 Any questions, Council Member Dromm?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: I have a--

21 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [interposing]  
22 Council Member Dromm.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you, Madam  
24 Chair. Tom, I am sorry or Commissioner I'm sorry  
25 that I was late. I had to vote in another committee

1 across the way in 250 and—and I didn't hear all of  
2 your testimony. I don't seem to have it here.

3  
4 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: [interposing]  
5 Okay.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Did you talk about  
7 anything that's happening in the—in the Outer  
8 Boroughs?

9 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Yes, we did.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay.

11 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Yes, we talked  
12 about what's going on at Queens Theater. We talked  
13 in Staten Island. I see we have a Staten Island rep  
14 here. Absolutely what's happening in the Bronx as  
15 well. It's rally citywide. Absolutely not just  
16 focused on Manhattan although there's great stuff  
17 happening in this borough as well.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And do you—do you  
19 know what month those things are happening in? Is it  
20 may that the--

21 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: [interposing]  
22 mean a lot of stuff is happening in June obviously,  
23 but it's a whole year thing. I mean I think that the  
24 Whitney Museum said that they were conscious of an  
25 Andy Warhol show being scheduled for this year as a

1 way—in a way to kick things off. Right now the Warhol  
2 show is already up. So and a lot of this stuff, you  
3 know, a lot of the show—if you go to the Warhol show  
4 really is about the context of the late 60s.  
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And one of the  
7 things that I'm always interested in is highlighting  
8 the local history. As a matter of fact the La  
9 Guardia archives, the Wagner Archives did an exhibit  
10 at Queens Museum.

11 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Yes, they did.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: A lot of my  
13 material is there.

14 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Yes

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: But do you know if  
16 these programs that are going to be in the Outer  
17 Boroughs focus on the local activism that occurred  
18 since Stonewall because often times it's very  
19 Manhattan focused?

20 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Yeah. So,  
21 that's an excellent question. I mean what I—again,  
22 I've been sort of reviewing what's going on and gone  
23 to some meetings. A lot of what is being planned in  
24 the—in the not outer boroughs, the other boroughs  
25 except for Manhattan really I think is focusing a lot

1 on-on the progress that has been made and what's  
2 happened recently. What you're talking about in  
3 terms of the history of the activism in other  
4 boroughs, which is a unique event. I mean I was  
5 there and I saw that was a very unusual situation,  
6 but I think we're going to have some of the  
7 organizers of Stonewall 50 here, and there's been a  
8 lot of interest in-in the whole idea of the question  
9 of the archive and now inclusive the archives are.  
10 So, I think other people might be able to answer that  
11 question. A lot of the stuff that I just listed in  
12 my testimony, which we're happy to provide with the  
13 act is around what's happening, but not necessarily  
14 what's happened let's say in the '80s and the '90s  
15 like that intermediate period. What happened in  
16 Stonewall, happened here in the Village. What  
17 happened after happened everywhere and I think that's  
18 extremely important to know.

19  
20 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Are you working to  
21 ensure that communities of color are represented in  
22 the exhibitions and the—and the planning?

23 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: So, we're—you  
24 know, again we're not doing the shows, but we are—  
25 we're going to do another convening. We did a

1  
2 convening actually in Queens, and we're going to  
3 another in-in anticipation. A lot of the stuff is  
4 being planned actually for this summer, and I think  
5 because that's a--so we're going to be doing  
6 competing. Some people can prepare notes now and we  
7 did say in the testimony that it's important to us  
8 that that be inclusive of the--of the city, and  
9 including specifically calling out that the  
10 organizations currently in a way that we have focus  
11 attention, additional attention to. Not that any of  
12 the organizations that--that everything is perfect,  
13 organizations of color and trans. That's what we  
14 called out in the testimony. [coughs]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Does the Department  
16 of Cultural Affairs work with Landmarks Preservation  
17 or other organizations in terms of the  
18 historicalization of cultural sites, et cetera with  
19 LGBTQ community. A lot of the sites that where  
20 original stuff happened, as you probably know has now  
21 been converted to other uses, and, you know, we're  
22 working with Andrew Berman and others to try to make  
23 sure that our history is not erased--

24 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Uh-hm.

25



1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: --and I'm  
3 wondering if-if your department plays any role in, or  
4 our systematic effort at all?

5 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: So, not-I mean  
6 not officially and so we're not-I'm not-I don't sit  
7 on the Landmarks Commission or anything like that,  
8 but it's obviously something important to the  
9 administration and we support that.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, good.  
11 Alright, thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, we've also  
13 been joined by Council Member Moya. Thank you very--

14 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: [interposing]  
15 thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM:--for your  
17 testimony.

18 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: I'm good?

19 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Yes, you are  
20 good.

21 COMMISSIONER FINKELPEARL: Okay, thank  
22 you.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: You've always  
24 been good. [laughter] [background comments] And

1 Council Member Borelli. I don't know if I mentioned  
2 you.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Yeah, you did.

5 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: And if not, I'm  
6 going to, Danny. [background comments] Okay. Now,  
7 we're going to have the treat. I'd like to call on  
8 Jack Ferver to perform for us.

9 JACK FERVER: Thank you. Thank you so  
10 much for having me here today. I'm briefly going to  
11 give some testimony and then a very brief performance  
12 from a recent piece I just had called *Everything Is*  
13 *Imaginable*, which was at New York Live Arts. It was  
14 the work where I interviewed four queer performers  
15 about their childhood icons. I built solos for them  
16 about that, and you'll hear a little bit about what  
17 my process is in this testimony before I perform.  
18 The queers are not only told that they are natural,  
19 but that they have chosen to be so. It is a  
20 particular kind of hatred and annihilation that the  
21 queer receives with this one/two punch. The result  
22 of this shattering trauma creates a slipperiness of  
23 self. This fragmentation, this relentless brokenness  
24 that continually seeks stability and fails is very  
25 much inside my work. My performers and I drop and

1 shift into various roles or at times are holding  
2 numerous roles all at once, selves and psyche you  
3 shift, collapse and return to something else inside  
4 my performances. I find this state of ever-changing  
5 performativity more truthful to life and characters  
6 that remain a blunt object of their creator. In our  
7 current culture climate, I feel that it is more  
8 important to expose the shattered qualities of the  
9 psyche resulting from violence along with the  
10 wildness and abandon found in play. Play becomes a  
11 political act when performed in an environment of  
12 hatred and distain. Certainly pride is iconic and a  
13 fact. I also want to say that every day I recognize  
14 my existence as an artist and a queer person and a  
15 long shadow AIDS crisis. But during the AIDS crisis  
16 we were also hit with the NEA Four, the resulting  
17 restructure—the resulting restructuring of the NEA  
18 and that funding and support ripple effect on both  
19 the right and left side is not lost on me. Many  
20 artists in my generation regard themselves as  
21 parentless children, the children of murdered  
22 parents. There's the canyon and emptiness. Nothing  
23 can fill it. To be a parentless child can mean many  
24 things. For myself it means trying to be something I  
25

1 didn't have, which is a foundational base of my  
2 teaching and practice. I also means to live with and  
3 to make from that haunted loneliness. This  
4 performances goes to the floor and I'm going to  
5 change the whole thing so I'm standing because we're  
6 not on a rake. So, it will give me some, you know,  
7 chance as we say in choreography. [pause] I don't  
8 know where I am. I'm at my friend's house upstate.  
9 She's out of the country and letting me use her house  
10 so I can finish writing this book. The news is on.  
11 I'm on the phone with my boyfriend when suddenly I  
12 can't see. I turn around, but nothing. Totally  
13 dark, completely black. I sink to the floor. I  
14 whisper something to him. He says he can't  
15 understand me and asks me to repeat what I said. I  
16 choke out too many voices. I hang up. I'm crawling  
17 on the floor. The carpet feels familiar. I wonder  
18 if I'm at my parents' house. The walls are  
19 breathing. They're moving in on me like when I get a  
20 fever as a child and I call out for my mother, but my  
21 voice comes back louder and at a higher pitch. It  
22 gives me a feeling of vertigo and I throw up. No,  
23 no, I'm not at my parents' house. My parents are  
24 dead. I'm at my friend's house upstate. It's so  
25

1 quiet in the house, but I think I hear a car pulling  
2 into the driveway. I wonder if it's her. No, it  
3 can't be her because she's out of the country. My  
4 head is at the landing of the stairs. My bedroom is  
5 up there. I don't want to go up there. I hear a man  
6 scream at the top of the stairs and I run to the  
7 basement to tell my parents about it. I throw up  
8 again. I black out. When I wake up I still can't  
9 see, and then I realize it's just that it's night and  
10 it gets so dark in the country. I feel like there's  
11 someone in the house with me. I should get in my car  
12 and drive back to the city. I try to stand but my  
13 stomach doesn't feel right so I stay down. It feels  
14 like I'm not breathing. I'm going to focus on that.  
15 I'm going to focus on standing up. I'm going to  
16 focus on moving slow. When I stand up, I knock a  
17 piece of the wall off. The carpet dulls the sound to  
18 aside, a hand will reach through that hole and grab  
19 me. I take a step away. My foot pinches sharply. I  
20 lean down and pick a piece of glass out of the sole  
21 of my foot. What was I doing? I knocked a mural off  
22 the wall, and then I stepped on it. Why did it turn  
23 the lights on? Why was I scaring myself in the dark?  
24 Because it felt good. It felt familiar. It felt

1 correct for the situation. I'll be the disease. I'm  
2 thinking of that disease as I listen to the sound of  
3 the wind in the trees. From my childhood bedroom I  
4 could see through a clearing in the trees to the  
5 highway, and the moments I would see a car appear and  
6 disappear. I would think about how one day of me  
7 getting out of there, and the silence and then the  
8 dark. I can remember everything. I remember this boy  
9 in high school and he grabbed me and slammed me into  
10 a locker and there was a jagged piece of metal that  
11 stuck out of the locker, and it cut through my shirt  
12 and into my skin cutting me open while he said, "I'm  
13 going to kill you, faggot" his spit going all over my  
14 face and into my mouth while he used me like it  
15 wasn't my body or it was my body and I was so small  
16 inside of it or I was just so far outside of it.  
17 Like I'm in the third grade and we're on this boat  
18 trip in Alaska, and they tell me if I fall in I'll  
19 die immediately of hypothermia, and it feels so good  
20 to have something be so accurate. And there's this  
21 little otter that's swims by the side of the boat and  
22 he's so cute, and I toss him shrimp every day, and  
23 then the next summer I watch as the Exxon spill  
24 happens there, and all of these animals choke and die  
25

1 because none are evil. Just like him using my body  
2 and cutting me open and I'm looking into his face so  
3 I never forget it, and I never forget it, and I never  
4 forget anything. It's so crazy because that boy he  
5 ended up moving to New York, too. He's a critic. At  
6 first when I saw his name I thought no it can't be  
7 him, but when I saw a photo of him and it is, the  
8 same smirk. He comes to all my shows, and each  
9 review gets increasingly homophobic, annihilating.  
10 He's trying to get rid of me. He's trying to get rid  
11 of me like getting rid of my work. Have you ever  
12 eaten at Japanica? I love it there. I was eating  
13 with my best friend, and I saw him come in, and I  
14 thought alright enough is enough. I'm going to  
15 confront him, and as I went over to his table, he  
16 picked up his tea and threw it into my face and  
17 slammed me into the windows that face University  
18 Avenue. My friend ran over to me and said, Are you  
19 okay? Who was that guy? [pause] As a child he got  
20 sick all the time. It was a good way to avoid  
21 getting beaten up at school. As an adult, he still  
22 gets sick all the time or injured so he doesn't have  
23 to see anybody not even his friends. His friends  
24 grow tired of this, and stop trying to see him, stop  
25

1 calling, stop texting. It feels relieving, but also  
2 a sense of tension. He has to wonder what kind of  
3 friend was he being. He had become so isolated. He  
4 goes to pick up the phone but this butterfly or that  
5 feeling comes over him and he puts the phone back  
6 down. He doesn't know how to talk to his friends  
7 about it. After all, he doesn't know how to talk to  
8 himself about it. He can't put it together. Thank  
9 you so much. [applause] [pause]

11 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: I have to step  
12 out for a little while. I have a meeting downstairs  
13 and Council Member Borelli is going to take my place.  
14 [background comments/pause]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you.  
16 We're going to call our next panel of four  
17 individuals. Forgive me if I butcher your names.  
18 Eric Marcus, Jason Bowman, Chris Frederick, and Adam  
19 Odessa Ruben and Adam Odess Rubin. [pause] Thank  
20 you all. Thank you folks for coming. I bet you  
21 didn't think a Republican was going to chair this  
22 hearing, huh. [laughter] There's no order. Should  
23 we start perhaps from the end? Would that be okay?

24 ADAM ODESS-RUBIN: [off mic] Yes. I'm  
25 Adam-[on mic] Thank you. Good afternoon I'm Adam



1  
2 Odsess-Rubin and I'm the Founder and Artistic  
3 Director National Queer Theater, a new non-profit  
4 theater company based in New York City. Thank you  
5 for having us here to talk about our plans for the  
6 summer. For World Pride and Stonewall 50 this year,  
7 we're producing the Criminal Queerness Festival in  
8 June showcasing four plays from international LGBTQ  
9 writers whose gender and sexuality are criminalized  
10 in their home countries. We're already working with  
11 playwrights from Pakistan, Tanzania, China and Egypt  
12 to build the festival, which will involve over 80  
13 artists and a 1,000 audience members from throughout  
14 the city and around the world. IRT Theater on  
15 Christopher Street is hosting us for a four-week  
16 residency to support this work, which will include  
17 special advocacy panels to help audiences take these  
18 stories outside the walls of the theater and fight  
19 for the rights of our community abroad. We will be  
20 presenting on using theater for global advocacy at  
21 Wide Pride's Human Rights Conference, and we ae  
22 working with the UN and Pride (sic) International as  
23 well as LGBTQ organizations abroad to magnify the  
24 impacts of these plays.

ADAM ASHRAF ELSAYIGH: Good afternoon.

My name is Adam Ashraf Elsayigh, and I'm one of the playwrights and producers, and part of the Criminal Queerness Festival. In 2019, it is illegal to be gay in 71 countries, and 6 countries still carry the death penalty for queer people. We can't produce our art in our own countries because of censorship and fear of arrest, and yet there is hope in the decriminalized homosexuality last year, which freed millions of queer Indians from persecution. We are using our skills as artists to empower our communities worldwide. Throughout LGBTQ history there has been a connection between progressive social movements and gay performance that's questioned the status quo and push for change such as Angels in America, the Larry Project (sic) and the Normal Heart. Both and theater and active—both in theater and activist circles, however, queer issues are seldom addressed outside of a U.S. or western context. Being an Egyptian playwright who's spent the majority of my life in the Middle East, I am an artist who has had extreme difficulty producing my work. Similarly, I've encountered many queer artists in Egypt, Abu Dhabi, India and London, Lebanon—not

1 London, who have had their work and their  
2 collaborators and their own livelihoods threatened.  
3 This ranged from performance groups participating in  
4 various pride being taken over by the Lebanese police  
5 or the Pakistani Censorship Bureau monitoring—  
6 monitoring one of our artists plays while they were  
7 being performed in Pakistan. After meeting National  
8 Queer Theater and learning of their work and mission  
9 and collaborating with Adam on multiple projects, we  
10 created the Criminal Queerness Festival to showcase—  
11 to showcase these stories from regions where  
12 queerness is criminalized. This first year of the  
13 festival will tell stories from Pakistan, Egypt,  
14 Kenya and China. This festival is unique in that it  
15 majorly benefits artists like myself who are  
16 typically disenfranchised and not given opportunities  
17 to share our craft or our stories. This summer for  
18 example, I tried to present my work to the community  
19 in Egypt, and the only way to do that was in  
20 someone's apartment and promoting it through word of  
21 mouth because if it had gone out to the wrong person,  
22 everybody in the room could have been arrested. Here  
23 in the U.S. I'm able to do my work in a way that I  
24 would not be able to do in my home country. This  
25

1 should have a ripple effect and open up avenues for  
2 more queer artists looking to share stories in the  
3 region and abroad. More importantly the festival  
4 will be incredibly meaningful for queer and straight  
5 audiences alike who can learn about the queen  
6 communities from across the world and learn how they  
7 can make positive changes in these communities. The  
8 same way plays like *Angels in America* change the way  
9 we understand particular moments of queer history  
10 today, the Criminal Queerness Festival launched in  
11 these plays—these plays could be an inciter of many  
12 opportunities to come for U.S. audiences to engage  
13 with the new understanding of how queer issues  
14 emerged in different communities, and how we can  
15 begin to have that conversation internationally.

17 ADAM ODSESS-RUBIN: We at National Queer  
18 Theater believe that story telling has the power to  
19 create real social change in the streets and in the  
20 hearts and minds of those willing to listen. Our  
21 mission is to foster and support LGBTQ communities  
22 through social justice in the performing arts. In  
23 our first six months we've raised \$30,000 with the  
24 help of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Today, I  
25 want to invite you to help bring our artists works to

1  
2 New York City for World Pride and Stonewall 50. For  
3 the Criminal Queerness Festival we are seeking an  
4 additional \$50,000 in funding, and we're looking for  
5 producers and sponsors to help us share these stories  
6 of global queer pride and resistance. We're not  
7 eligible for DCLA funding, but if there are any  
8 avenues through which the Council can support the  
9 Criminal Queerness Festival and our artists, we  
10 welcome your support. Thank you very much.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you. I  
12 know you have to leave early if I'm correct.

13 ADAM ODSESS-RUBIN: We're okay.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Okay. By the  
15 way, since-since this morning, I just saw a BBC story  
16 that there was an arrest of journalist for  
17 interviewing a gay man. I don't know if you guys saw  
18 in this morning's news, but we'll continue with the  
19 panel.

20 CHRIS FREDERICK: Good afternoon.

21 [coughs] My name is Chris Frederick. I'm the  
22 Managing Director of NYC Pride Heritage of Pride.  
23 NYC Pride Heritage of Pride is the organizer tasked  
24 to create world pride in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup>  
25 Anniversary of Stonewall. We'll be creating over 25

1 events that speak to a wide array of individuals  
2 within the LGBTQIA+ community including, but not  
3 limited to the NYC Pride March, Stonewall 50  
4 Commemoration Rally, Pride Fest, Opening ceremony,  
5 Closing ceremony, and Pride Island. Additionally, we  
6 wanted to specifically speak to one initiative that  
7 we are working on for Stonewall 50 World Pride  
8 related to the arts community. NYC Pride is  
9 committed to putting LGBTQIA+ artists to-in the  
10 forefront in 2019. We are happy to announce that we  
11 have secured funding to execute a massive mural  
12 project for World Pride. The World Pride Mural  
13 Project will consist of a minimum of 50 murals in all  
14 five boroughs. The project will consist of murals,  
15 sculptures, pop art, beautification projects and more  
16 and NYC Pride cannot do this alone. The first step  
17 is executing a project of this magnitude is securing  
18 a project manager. We've been—we've been in talks  
19 with a local art collective to take on this  
20 responsibility and we're happy to report that the  
21 contract is 90% signed. The Art Collective will be  
22 working with other art based organizations, city  
23 agencies, and community leaders to execute this  
24 project in full by June 17, 2019. The production  
25

1 process will consist of the following: Securing the  
2 artists both locally and internationally; securing  
3 insurance; securing walls; art mockups and approvals;  
4 securing supplies; production on walls, video, photo  
5 content during the process; NYC Pride announcements;  
6 walking map production, and a launch party event. NYC  
7 Pride will be working closely with the Art Collective  
8 to ensure the success of all our—to ensure the  
9 success of all—all our work. All artist wall mock-  
10 ups will be approved by NYC Pride, and we will ensure  
11 that all artists are LGBTQIA+ and/or allies of the  
12 community. The project will ultimately give these  
13 artists a larger platform during one of the most  
14 important years for the community and provide an  
15 artistic point of view that will touch on numerous  
16 relevant topics. We are confident that the World  
17 Pride Mural Project will be an amazing addition to  
18 our core events such as like I mentioned the March  
19 Pride Fest and Pride Island. NYC Pride is producing  
20 25 events and initiatives to commemorate World Pride  
21 and Stonewall 50 in June. To learn more of the  
22 official events, visit [www.stonewall50.org](http://www.stonewall50.org).

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you.

25 [pause] Next.

1  
2                   JAMES BAUMANN: Good afternoon. I am  
3 Jason Baumann, Assistant Director for Collection  
4 Development and the Coordinator—Coordinator of LGBTQ—  
5 the LGBTQ Initiative at the New York Public Library.  
6 I would like to thank Chair Jimmy Van Bramer and  
7 Council Member Borelli and the Council—Cultural  
8 Affairs and Libraries Committee for holding this  
9 hearing. I would also like to thank the entire City  
10 Council for their sustained support of libraries. I  
11 appreciate the opportunity to testify today on NYPL's  
12 world renowned LGBTQ collections. The 50<sup>th</sup>  
13 Anniversary of the Stonewall riots this year is an  
14 essential opportunity for the LGBTQ community to  
15 reflect on our accomplishments and the many new  
16 challenges we currently face. Libraries and museums  
17 play an essential role in preserving and transmitting  
18 cultural memory, which are what make the reflection  
19 possible. New York Public Library has one of the  
20 most important collections of LGBTQ history in—in New  
21 York—in New York and in the United States. The  
22 library is the archives of pivotal activist  
23 organizations including the Madda (sic) Change  
24 Society of New York, Gay Activist Alliance, Gay Men  
25 of African descent, Gay Men's Health Crisis, and



1  
2 DAFTA as well as the papers of LGBTQ activists and  
3 artists such as Barbara Giddings, James Baldwin,  
4 William Borroughs, Alberta Hunter, and Virginia Wolf  
5 to name a few. In order to provide the LGBTQ and  
6 larger communities' deeper access to this cultural  
7 heritage, during the anniversary of Stonewall, the  
8 library will be holding an exhibition: Love and  
9 Resistance Stonewall 50 opening February 14<sup>th</sup> and  
10 running through July 14<sup>th</sup>. The exhibition will  
11 illustrate the cultural impact of Stonewall in LGBTQ  
12 protects, nightlife, publishing and relationships.  
13 The exhibition will feature the photographs of  
14 pioneering photo journalists Kay Tobin Mahousen (sp?)  
15 and Diana Davies who will also be featured in a  
16 companion volume that we are publishing with WWW  
17 Norton. We will also be publishing an anthology from  
18 our archives, the Stonewall Reader with Penquin  
19 Classics. In addition, we will be holding public  
20 programs across Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten  
21 Island relating to LGBTQ history or New York City  
22 neighborhoods building on the success of our  
23 partnership with the New York City Trans Oral History  
24 Archive. This will include programs for young adults  
25 and children. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Stonewall's

1 pivotal opportunity for LGBTQ communities to reflect  
2 on our path and imagine our future. Libraries and  
3 museums are essential to that process. Thank you,  
4 Chair Van Bramer and the entire Council for your  
5 unwavering support of libraries and the opportunity  
6 to testify today about such an important upcoming  
7 moment in New York City. Thanks.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and  
10 the final. (sic)

11 ERIC MARCUS: Just a quick question. The  
12 clock that says three minutes, what happens when I  
13 run over?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: No, we'll be  
15 starting that in the next panel, I think. You have  
16 as much time as you like.

17 ERIC MARCUS: That saves me from crossing  
18 out half of what I've written, it's not long. I  
19 promise. It's maybe five minutes. I'm Eric Marcus,  
20 Creator and host of the Making Gay History Podcast  
21 and board member on the Planning Committee for the  
22 American LGBTQ+ Museum, but I'm here today  
23 principally in my role as Chair of the Stonewall 50  
24 Consortium. Thank you, Councilman—Council Member Van  
25 Bramer for your leadership for organizing this

1  
2 oversight hearing. Council Member Borelli for leading  
3 and for inviting me to testify today and thank you to  
4 the Council staff including Jack Bernatovicz, Christy  
5 Dwyer and Brenda McKinney. My first time in this  
6 Chamber was in the early 1980s for the Gay Rights  
7 Bill hearing, and I remember sitting up in that  
8 balcony and getting into an argument with religious  
9 fundamentalists sitting behind me who tried shouting  
10 down anyone testify in favor of the Gay Rights Bill's  
11 passage. Back then I could never have imagined that  
12 I'd be sitting here today in my current role  
13 representing nearly today in my current role  
14 representing nearly 200 cultural and educational  
15 institutions planning programming, exhibitions and  
16 educational materials for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
17 Stonewall Uprising. And having been invited here to  
18 testify by an out and proud City Council who isn't  
19 the only out and proud City Council Member. I want  
20 to acknowledge one of my heroes on the Council,  
21 Council Member Danny Dromm. I think it was a dream  
22 come true today, but back in the early 1980s my  
23 imagination wasn't nearly that good. Down to  
24 business. So, I'm the founder and volunteer chair of  
25 the Stonewall 50 Consortium a non-profit organization

1  
2 that brings together near 200 non-profit institutions  
3 and organizations committed to producing programming,  
4 exhibitions and educational materials related to the  
5 Stonewall Uprising and/or the history of the LGBTQ  
6 Civil Rights Movement in the context of the 50<sup>th</sup>  
7 Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. I've included  
8 a complete list of our members as part of my written  
9 testimony. The mission of the Consortium includes  
10 helping participating institutions and organizations  
11 share ideas and best practices, facilitate potential  
12 collaborations, coordinate outreach efforts and avoid  
13 scheduling conflicts and duplication of programming.  
14 We're funded by grants from the New York Community  
15 Trust and the Calais (sic) Foundation. The grants  
16 made it possible to hire our part-time Vice Chair  
17 Inge DeTaeve who I s in the front row, who oversees  
18 much of the work we do. We also have support from  
19 the National Parks Conservation Association, which  
20 generously offer us office space, and the New York  
21 Public Library, which hosts our every other month  
22 meetings. One of the most joyous aspects of this  
23 work has been watching representatives of our member-  
24 of our members at those meetings-I'm sorry. Right,  
25 you host our monthly meetings. One of the most

1 joyous aspects of this work has been watching  
2 representatives of our members at those meetings get  
3 to know each other, share ideas, support one another  
4 and collaborate. Many of those who attend are  
5 members of the LGBTQ communities and many are allies  
6 and all are committed to creating work that  
7 highlights, celebrates and commemorates the 50<sup>th</sup>  
8 Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising and/or some  
9 aspect of the history of the LGBTQ Civil Rights  
10 Movement. The founding of the consortium was  
11 something of an accident. It started two years ago  
12 as a conference call in the fall of 2016 that I  
13 organized between my colleagues at the National Park  
14 Service, and Council Member Danny Dromm who was then  
15 Chair of the Council's Education Committee. My  
16 colleagues at the National Park Service were in the  
17 early stages of working on materials for the new  
18 Stonewall National Monument, and I was in discussions  
19 with Council Member Dromm about creating LGBTQ  
20 Inclusive American History curricula anchored by the  
21 archival audio from my three-decade old oral history  
22 archive from which they're making a history podcast  
23 as drawn. I thought Council Member Dromm and my  
24 colleagues at NPS would be interested in having a  
25

1 conversation. That five-way conference call led to  
2 our first public meeting hosted by Dr. Jason Baumann,  
3 who is sitting next to me at the New York Public  
4 Library. We had about 20 people at that first  
5 meeting, and we've grown from there and grown and  
6 grown. As volunteer chair of this Stonewall 50  
7 Consortium, my focus has been on providing support to  
8 our members. We do this in a number of ways. First,  
9 through our every other month meetings where members  
10 get to brief and present information about their  
11 upcoming programs, and at every meeting we have a  
12 special guest who helps inform our members about some  
13 aspect of the Stonewall Uprising, and the history of  
14 the LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement or Stonewall 50  
15 plans. For example, at next-at next week's meeting,  
16 I'll be leading a conversation with Stacy Lentz,  
17 LGBTQ Activist, Co-owner of the Stonewall Inn and CEO  
18 and Co-founder of the Stonewall Inn Gives Back  
19 Initiative. Second, on our website's Member Only  
20 pages, we provide a list of resources including  
21 services and information that members are offering to  
22 provide one another ideas for how to characterize the  
23 Stonewall Uprising, which was not the start of the  
24 Gay Civil Rights Movement. Sorry, to correct the  
25

1 Council, and a calendar of member events. Until now,  
2 the calendar of member events has been on a hidden  
3 page of the website, but as I've come to discover in  
4 the past couple of weeks, the Stonewall 50 Consortium  
5 has the most comprehensive listing of Stonewall 50  
6 events. Some of those events have already taken  
7 place and the number of events will dramatically  
8 increase in number in the coming months. Just as an  
9 example, New York University alone has 40 different  
10 programs and events in the works. The original  
11 purpose of the calendar was to help our members avoid  
12 stepping on each other's toes as they schedule their  
13 events. For example the New York City Operate, which  
14 is premiering a new operate called Stonewall,  
15 coordinated with the New York City Gay Men's Chorus,  
16 which has commissioned a new work with the Gay Men's  
17 Chorus of Los Angeles to avoid having their premiers  
18 on the same night. When we first created the  
19 calendar we had no plans to make it publicly  
20 available, but we now find we're getting press  
21 inquiries and inquiries from the general public about  
22 what's being planned for Stonewall 50 throughout New  
23 York City, and we have found that the best resource  
24 of that information is the Stonewall 50 Consortium  
25

1 Calendar. So, as of February 1, we'll be making our  
2 public-our-our calendar public so anyone vising the  
3 Stonewall 50 Consortium website can access it. Here  
4 is where I welcome the Council's advice and support:  
5 while our calendar is functional and relatively  
6 comprehensive, it was never meant for general public  
7 use. So, it's not the prettiest thing. While I'm  
8 very proud of what we've created and that's  
9 principally thanks to our Vice Chair Inge DeTaeye,  
10 we'd welcome both in the advice and support of the  
11 Council on what we can do to transform our functional  
12 website calendar into something that presents the  
13 best face possible for the city of New York as we  
14 prepare to welcome the world for Stonewall 50, and  
15 the World Pride. Thank you for your time and for the  
16 opportunity to testify today. Thank you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you, and I  
19 failed to do something in the beginning of the panel  
20 if you wouldn't mind all just stating your name for  
21 the record.

22 Start from this end?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Yes.

24 ERIC MARCUS: I'm Eric Marcus.

25 JASON BAUMANN: Jason Baumann.



1

2

CHRIS FREDERICK: Chris Frederick.

3

ADAM ODSSESS-RUBIN: Adam Odsess-Rubin.

4

ADAM ASHRAFT ELSAYIGH: Adam Ashraft

5

Elsayigh

6

COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you very

7

much. I have a couple of questions. First for Eric

8

about the calendar. I know you said it wasn't

9

pretty. Hopefully the focus is on the art work and

10

the performances, you know, the calendar we could—we

11

could suffer through, but who actually manages the

12

calendar and who resolves the—the conflicts of

13

interest—conflicts of events?

14

ERIC MARCUS: I just tell everyone what

15

to do and they listen. No, I'm kidding. In terms

16

conflicts, there will be so many conflicts. If you

17

look at the calendar already for June, there are

18

multiple events everyday. So, it's up to the members

19

to work things out. So, the—the New York City Opera

20

and the Guinness (sic) Chorus of New York are not

21

going to have events—have their premier on the same

22

day. The office of the Consortium, that's—that's me

23

and Inge DeTaeye, and principally Inge main maintains

24

the—the calendar. So, all of our members are

25

1 submitting information about their events to us and  
2 then that information is posted on the website.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: And—and you're  
5 working with NYC & CO on this to some degree?

6 ERIC MARCUS: Well, NYC & Company knows  
7 what we're doing. They are listing some of the  
8 events. So, it really was in the last couple of  
9 weeks we discovered that their calendar is selective  
10 and it's not listing one-off events, and many of our  
11 members are small organizations from around the city  
12 from the outer boroughs and I hail from Queens, which  
13 is—which I'm very proud of. So, we are listing every  
14 single—every single event of our members  
15 organizations. As I said, we have nearly 200  
16 organizations.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Can you just  
18 talk in your historic opinion how planning for  
19 Stonewall 50 has been different from Stonewall 25.

20 ERIC MARCUS: [laughs] There were—the  
21 biggest event for Stonewall 25 was at the New York  
22 Public Library. It was an extraordinary exhibition.  
23 There were—there's an exhibition at the Museum of the  
24 City of New York. It was a different world 25 years  
25 ago. If I remember correctly, the big banners on the

1 outside of the New York Public Library did not have  
2 the world 'gay' in them. In fact, my book *Making Gay*  
3 *History*, which was published in 1992 was published  
4 under the name *Making History* because the publisher  
5 HarperCollins was nervous about using the word 'gay'.  
6 So, the whole thing has shocked me. I can't believe  
7 the level of interest, the level of comfort among our  
8 members with these issues. Many of the people who  
9 attend our meetings are not LGBTQ, and it shouldn't  
10 shock me that we have allies who really don't care  
11 whether or not someone is gay. They're just  
12 passionate about the—the work. So, I—I don't think  
13 it's possible to compare what's happening this year  
14 to about the—the work. So, I—I don't think it's  
15 possible to compare what's happening this year to 25  
16 years ago. It's such an embarrassment of it in terms  
17 of—of the interest in the arts and cultural and  
18 educational communities in this event, and it terms  
19 of interest of people who are going to be coming  
20 here, one of the reasons we decided to make the—the  
21 calendar public is people have contacted us from  
22 outside the U.S. who want to know what's going on in  
23 May, June, July and they need time to plan. So, it  
24  
25

won't be enough to have these events posted two  
months from now. They have to be up and ready now.

COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Great. Thank  
you. Councilman Dromm.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you, Chair  
Borelli. It's great to see all of you here and it's  
great to hear all of the plans that are going on. I  
just wanted to relate something with Adam as well  
from the Criminal Queer--Queerness Festival. You  
know, in 1972, I was arrested for making out with a  
guy in a car and then I was ashamed to say that I was  
gay, and I thought it was so bad that I--when the cop  
came in the room and the cop said to me: Why did you  
do it? Why were you with that guy? Why were you  
there? I was 16 years old. He said, Did you do it  
for money? I said, yeah, I did it for money and they  
slapped me with a prostitution charge. I was 16 at  
the time in Long Island, and unfortunately, a lot of  
that stuff still happens even in this country, the  
United States of America. So, I admire from a very  
personal level the work that you're doing to bring  
that forward about what's happening in other  
countries, but also to remind us here in this country  
that we need to fight back against that. Today, for

1  
2 example the Supreme Court ruled against our  
3 transgender community in a terrible ruling that's  
4 going to have a terrible effect on them, and before  
5 coming into the hearing today, I held a press  
6 conference in Jackson Heights because a victim of a  
7 hate crime was arrested on an alleged assault charge,  
8 the victim, in other words was charged with a crime  
9 where as the perpetrator was—was—he was arrested. He  
10 was given a desk appearance ticket while the other  
11 while the gay guy had to go to jail for 27 hours.  
12 So, that type of harassment still continues even in  
13 this country, but I thank you both for your—for your  
14 courage and for being able to do this. I just--  
15 [applause] Yes, thank you.

16 ERIC MARCUS: Thank you. Thank you.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: It really takes a  
18 lot of courage. You know, I represent a very large  
19 immigrant community and I hear these stories often  
20 times from people who are seeking asylum here in this  
21 country and often times then find out that they have  
22 to then face the same type of oppression here in our  
23 neighborhoods as they did back in their country, but  
24 anyway, that—that being said, one of the things I  
25 wanted to ask Eric Marcus—thank you for your

1 compliments, and it's always a pleasure to work with  
2 you, Eric. You are really like the foremost  
3 historian on all this stuff, and reading your books  
4 is—is really important. I urge everyone to do that.  
5 One thing that I noticed is that the Department of  
6 Education is not included on your list. Are they  
7 actually working with you on Stonewall 50?

9 ERIC MARCUS: That's a good question. We  
10 originally have the Department of Education on our  
11 list and then were asked to pull them so--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: [interposing] And  
13 then were asked to what?

14 ERIC MARCUS: To pull them from the list.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: To pull them from  
16 the list?

17 ERIC MARCUS: Yeah, and I'm not sure—I  
18 don't recall the reason why. Do you recall Inge?

19 INGE DETAEYE: No.

20 ERIC MCCARTHY: It was a while ago. So,  
21 the—the department—the--the LGBTQ liaison from the  
22 Department of Education attends—often attends our  
23 meetings.

24

25

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So, I'm not  
3 following. If he comes then isn't he representing  
4 the Department of Education?

5 ERIC MARCUS: Possibly not in an official  
6 capacity. So, I haven't—I have not pursued that.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Well, this is not  
8 good news.

9 ERIC MARCUS: Yeah.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And the Mayor's  
11 Office who is represented here right now, needs to  
12 get on top of that ASAP because this is unacceptable  
13 in this day and age, and this is something that I've  
14 been fighting for since I've been in the Council, and  
15 my—my view of what's going on with Stonewall 50 we  
16 know the history. We kind of lived through the  
17 history especially you and I, old men that we are,  
18 but we need to make sure that our young people  
19 understand and know now we got to where we are today  
20 and—and—and—and the DOE must be a participant in this  
21 as well. So, hopefully that will be corrected, and  
22 then with all the organizations here as well, what I  
23 would like to do is to encourage them to reach out to  
24 the schools. Maybe every organization represented  
25 here today could adopt a school and invite them to

1  
2 their events so that they can participate and learn  
3 and see some of the art activities, the cultural  
4 activities that are going on, and I thin that would  
5 be really important toward educating our youth and so  
6 I-I just want to thank you. Of course at Stonewall  
7 25 I was there at the New York Public Library. The  
8 only criticism I would have and I addressed it in my  
9 other questions to the other panel was that it did  
10 not include stuff from the Outer Boroughs and it was  
11 colorless so to speak, and so I hope that we're going  
12 to fix that a little bit as we-as we move along.

13 ERIC MARCUS: Danny as much as I-I hate  
14 correcting you, Jean Manford was represented in that  
15 exhibit.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: She-she was  
17 represented, but not much of the other organizing  
18 that went on. She didn't get a lot of her organizing  
19 in Manhattan. So, one of the things I am interested  
20 in see, Eric, Is actually what happened in the  
21 grassroots out in the boroughs.

22 ERIC MARCUS: I stand corrected. You're  
23 right. She was the representative for the-the  
24 national work that she did with-with PFLAG.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Yeah.



1 ERIC MARCUS: I apologize.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And I think there  
3 may have been one poster in that exhibit, but anyway-

4 ERIC MARCUS: [interposing] Yeah.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: --my hope is that  
6 because, you know, so many of the -the folks of color  
7 for example do live in the outer boroughs and that's  
8 kind of where I'm-I'm aiming-what I'm aiming for  
9 here.

10 ERIC MARCUS: Just one last thing, Danny,  
11 Council Member Dromm, we would welcome the  
12 participation of the Department of Education. I know  
13 our members-many of our members are planning programs  
14 for teens throughout the city, school students. It  
15 would be terrific to have significant involvement of  
16 the Department of Education.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, good. I-I  
18 want to really, you know, make sure that that  
19 happens. So that will be corrected for sure.

20 ERIC MARCUS: Thanks. Thanks for your  
21 kind words.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Absolutely. Did  
23 you want to say something about the Public Library or  
24 no?  
25

1  
2                   JASON BAUMANN: Yeah, and just that's—AS  
3 I'm curating the exhibition, that is one of our  
4 focuses is to make sure that the experience is to  
5 people of color in that era are represented and also  
6 for our programming so we have—so we represent Staten  
7 Island, Manhattan and the Bronx and so that's a focus  
8 of the programming is the local history—the local  
9 LGBTQ history, and so two of the places would be the  
10 Bronx Library Center in Stapleton and Staten Island,  
11 which are going to be the hubs for programming in  
12 those boroughs.

13                   COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay. Good. Thank  
14 you and then for Heritage Pride and New York City  
15 Pride, I know that there are is resist movement that  
16 is planning or working on a march of their own, and I  
17 was just curious to know is there any coordination  
18 between your organization and that group of people?

19                   CHRIS FREDERICK: We've had lots of  
20 conversation with RPC in in—the last year. You  
21 know, there's just differences in terms of vision,  
22 but, you know, we welcome collaborate—collaboration  
23 and we're always kind of willing to talk further with  
24 anyone.

25

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Do you know where  
3 that stands right now?

4 CHRIS FREDERICK: I don't. We're kind of  
5 out of the loop in terms of where those discussion  
6 are—are head with or with the city right now, but  
7 we're just kind of going forward with—with what we  
8 had planned.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay. I just  
10 really encourage that, and I want to say I'm old  
11 enough also to remember Marsha P. Johnson standing on  
12 the corner of Sixth Avenue saying, you know, Pay it  
13 no never mind. Let's move over to Fifth Avenue and  
14 take Fifth Avenue and we actually had to take Fifth  
15 Avenue without permission from the Mayor at the time,  
16 and so that is an important part of our history that  
17 we remember the struggle to even get onto Fifth  
18 Avenue. So, I hope that that situation works out.  
19 Thank you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and as  
21 part of our digital resources, we could accept photos  
22 of Council Member Dromm, and Stonewall 25 if you  
23 happen to have any available. [laughter] Just one  
24 final question. So, we heard about the DOE's  
25 participation. We know DCLA's participation. We

1 know NYPL's participation. Can you—answer whether  
2 there are any other city agencies that are  
3 participating and to what degree? Eric.

4  
5 ERIC MARCUS: I have to look at my list  
6 quickly, but I believe it's—you've—you've said which  
7 ones are involved with us, and that covers us, you  
8 know. But I also want to add to Council Member  
9 Dromm's concerns about—about representation from  
10 across the city. We've been thrilled by the numbers  
11 of organizations that have joined the consortium from  
12 across the city, and we've reached out to Council  
13 Members to get their input so that we could reach out  
14 when we need to, to get organizations to join us. We  
15 are still eager for local organization to join the  
16 Stonewall 50 Consortium. So, if any members of the  
17 Council know of organizations that are not currently  
18 on the list, but should be, please get in touch with  
19 us, and the information is in the printed testimony.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and  
21 the Committee will be following up on—on the DOE  
22 issue. Thank you, folks. Dismissed and the next  
23 panel will be a performance by Michael J. Washington.  
24 [background comments] Michael B. I apologize. I

1 apologize. Michael B. Washington. I apologize  
2 again.  
3

4 MICHAEL B. WASHINGTON: Thank you.

5 Ladies and gentlemen without the microphone. Do you  
6 need this? Okay, great. My name is Michael Benjamin  
7 Washington. I'm an actor and playwright. This  
8 summer I appeared in 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Boys in the  
9 Band on Broadway, and about five years ago I wrote a  
10 play for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary the March on Washington  
11 called Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard  
12 Rustin. How many people know who Bayard Rustin is  
13 here? Excellent. Yes, I came to the right room.  
14 Phylicia Rashad directed this, and we were presented  
15 in a world premier at La Jolla Playhouse against a  
16 city rep and this summer for Stonewall 50 we'll be  
17 doing a full production of a reading for our Rustic  
18 Theater and I'm very, very grateful for them for  
19 asking me to do that. I'm going to do a small  
20 excerpt from my play. In this play it concerns  
21 Bayard Rustin the openly gay architect of the Civil  
22 Rights Movement who was Dr. Martin Luther King's  
23 mentor and taught him pretty much everything he knew  
24 about non-violent civil disobedience from his  
25 education from Ghandi, but was relegated to the

1 shadows by the Civil Rights leaders and Dr. King  
2 because of his homosexuality. So, this play takes  
3 place in June of 1963 where he is given two months to  
4 plan the March on Washington along with his trusty  
5 female assistant Miriam and this is in honor of his  
6 mentor A. Philip Randolph. [coughs] So, in this  
7 particular scene, he and Dr. King who have been  
8 estranged for about two years have to get back on the  
9 same accord in time for Dr. King to sign up to do the  
10 11 o'clock number. [pause] Last night after I  
11 finished my calendar, I went to witness the million  
12 dollar pay check Ms. Elizabeth Taylor has tucked in  
13 her pocketbook. The chronicles of the young queen of  
14 Egypt as she resists the imperialist ambitions of  
15 Rome. While it's banished from our movement here at  
16 home, I went to Rome, then to Egypt, which is in  
17 Africa, then to protect nuclear testing in the Sahara  
18 desert also in Africa. You know what amazes me,  
19 minister? It amazes me that in Africa with our  
20 people, same hue, same hair, same noses and they're  
21 like our people, seem to concern themselves with only  
22 one characteristic concerning me, my ability to—my  
23 ability to speak the truth and speak it to the  
24 highest power. Speak truth to power we chant. My  
25

1  
2 ability to organize. To live my birthright as a  
3 Quaker, to live and teach the true meaning of Jesus  
4 Christ, not just preach it from a pulpit. Please  
5 minister. I've waited I've to breather. Let me.  
6 When I was passed over as the head of the Southern  
7 Christian Leadership Conference, which I set up, so  
8 you could speak as the head and not the tail, I  
9 played it humbly. It wasn't my time. When it was  
10 time for me to excuse myself from the movement  
11 because of the threat that I'd be exposed, I did so  
12 gracefully. Eventually, I fell back into the good  
13 graces or at least the tolerance of leadership, but  
14 when you dismissed me from the movement because of a  
15 lie, and intentional cup falsely concocted by a rival  
16 Negro leader, a Congressman, a minister who  
17 functioned under direct command of the leaders of the  
18 House and Senate, you never thought for a second to  
19 spare me marking. You let Adam Clayton Powell remove  
20 me from the movement because of a lie. When Adam  
21 Clayton Powell threatened to expose you and me as  
22 homosexual lovers, I had but one choice, he did  
23 concoct a lie. I did turn against you. We have been  
24 derailed, but that was over two years ago, and God  
25 has brought us back together by it not to agree on

1 the past or even understand it, but to be God fearing  
2 and mature enough to look past our differences.  
3 Something happened to me in that jail cell in  
4 Birmingham by it. Something shifted in me. It  
5 shifted in me the wrong way.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you.

8 [applause]

9 MICHAEL B. WASHINGTON: Thank you.

10 [pause]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and  
12 I'm going to call our next panel and in no particular  
13 order although we seem to be putting them in  
14 particular order. [laughs] [background  
15 comments/pause] Ken Lusbidor (sp?), Ryan Leach,  
16 Frank Carucci (sp?), Danielle Topple and Doug Nevin  
17 and Sacha Wartzel (sp?) [background comments/pause]  
18 and we do have several panels after this so we'll be  
19 setting a 3-minute timer. [pause] So, we're going  
20 to start with Frank and Ryan as they have a video.  
21 Am I correct?

22 FRANK CARUCCI: Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Okay.

24 FRANK CARUCCI: Hi. Can you hear me?

25 Yeah. Okay. Hi everybody, I'm--



1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: [interposing]  
3 Just the—is the video set up or is it a—

4 RYAN LEACH: Yeah, it should be on the  
5 computer.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Okay, great.

7 FRANK CARUCCI: We'll play that at the  
8 end, okay.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Okay, thank you.

10 FRANK CARUCCI: You know, Good afternoon  
11 everybody. My name is Frank Carucci. I'm the  
12 President of La MaMa Experimental Theater Club. I'm  
13 very happy to be here and have the opportunity to  
14 participate in this fantastic celebration that's  
15 coming. La MaMa is represented by our Artistic  
16 Director Mia YU and our staff. So, I'm here for  
17 them. We're 57 years old and I'm proud to say we  
18 just received a Tony Award for outstanding regional  
19 Theater this year. Our legacy has always been about  
20 supporting new artists, people who would have an  
21 opportunity to perform anywhere else, and that's been  
22 true for 50 years, 57 years from the very beginning,  
23 which led to groups like the Trockadero, Glosany  
24 (sp?) a ballet, the ridiculous theaters. There were  
25 two of them and numerous artists, too many to mention

1 now, but Ryan will tell you about some of them.  
2 Before Angels in America, before the Normal Heart,  
3 Harvey Firestein defined what makes an alternative  
4 family in his great play, the Torch Song Trility-  
5 Trilogy, which recently closed on Broadway a few  
6 weeks ago. La MaMa has had an ongoing relationship  
7 with the New York City Board of Education. We've  
8 done many, many programs, but we were the among the  
9 first to go to the Harvey Milk School in their  
10 original site on the Westside Highway, and bring  
11 artists there and bring them to La MaMa. We've  
12 worked with other groups, many, many of them. I  
13 myself did a series of fundraising events for what  
14 was called the New York City-the New York City AIDS  
15 Education Center. I don't think it exists because I  
16 think the whole programs was abandoned with a just  
17 say no kind of a philosophy to take over. But we  
18 worked bringing students from all cross-sections of  
19 the city or parts of the city mainly the alternative  
20 schools, which had very little participation in the  
21 arts, and we did a final one a number of years ago  
22 with the entire New York City Gay-Gay Chorus working  
23 with our students and doing some really thrilling  
24 activities. This whole thing is very personal to me  
25

1 because I was at a Stonewall 50 or whatever ever  
2 years—50 years ago. I live next door to the building  
3 at 45 Christopher Street [bell] and I was home that  
4 night and heard this commotion—and is my time up?  
5 My—my—there was this commotion outside, and I looked  
6 out the window and indeed this riot was going on. I  
7 went downstairs, and my building was surrounded by  
8 horse barricades and nobody could get to us because  
9 there was a paddy wagon from my building to the  
10 Stonewall Bar, but people were able to get out, and I  
11 went down with my friend, and we looked out, and we  
12 saw this paddy wagon where they were putting the guys  
13 they were pulling out of the bar including some drag  
14 queens into what was then called the paddy wagon. We  
15 waited for the right moment, snuck out the door and  
16 opened the back doors of the paddy wagon, and we were  
17 able to usher a couple of the guys out of the wagon  
18 into the lobby, down a stairwell and down the street  
19 to an emergency fire exit down the block. So, I  
20 always remembered how proud we were that we did that  
21 little thing while people were pulling parking meters  
22 out of the street and ramming in doors. In any event,  
23 this is going to be a very important year for me, and  
24 I'm going to stop now, and let my Managing  
25

1 Association Ryan Leach tell you about some of the  
2 programs and activities that we have scheduled for  
3 this year.

4  
5 RYAN LEACH: Thank you so much for having  
6 us here today. We're thrilled to participate in the  
7 Stonewall 50 celebration as member of the Stonewall  
8 50 Consortium, and La MaMa has always been an  
9 international institution recognized as the seed bed  
10 of new work by artists of all nations and cultures,  
11 and in 57 years we've presented more than 150,000  
12 artists from more than 70 nations. So, we welcome  
13 all World Pride participants to New York City, and we  
14 share their vision of a world where there is full  
15 cultural, social and legal equality for all. Our  
16 theater pre-dates Stonewall. Our archive remains an  
17 enlightening resource of pre-Stonewall queer  
18 performance. The gays seen in New Yorker in the  
19 1960s was an underground whose gathering places  
20 included La MaMa. Some members of our La MaMa family  
21 who remember the Stonewall riots are still alive  
22 today including Frank. The work of these artists  
23 often spoke frankly about and even celebrated  
24 marginalized sexualities and gender identities in a  
25 way that shocked even the existing avant-garde

1 movement. So, I'll talk a little bit about our  
2 Stonewall 50 Celebration and Festival. This whole  
3 season of our performances a have queer performers  
4 including Kink House by Gunnar Montana; Vagina Town  
5 by MUR. The Stonewall 50 will include four different  
6 productions from May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> at La MaMa. La  
7 MaMa Squirts is one of those productions, which  
8 continues an incredible line-up of intergenerational  
9 queer performance. Past performers have included  
10 Justin Vivian Bond, Kate Bornstein, Steven Winter,  
11 Sarah Schulman, Pamela Schneid (sp?) Charlene, Fata  
12 Hammell, Shay Diamond, Jess Tom, Patty Harrison and  
13 the incredible House of Labasia. In partnership with  
14 the Helix Queer Performance Network. This performance  
15 also serves to fundraise for charities that advocate  
16 for queer people including the Sylvia Rivera Law  
17 Project, New Alternatives, and Audre Lorde project  
18 and Trans Women of Color Collective. Stonewall 50 at  
19 La MaMa celebrates World Pride with exciting voices  
20 from around the globe with multiple generations of  
21 queer performers as they pose questions on our  
22 legacies and ignite the present. Italy's Rocco  
23 Salvino bring global gay. Korea's Byung Kwan and Dia  
24 Lee premiering 13 Fruit Cakes and the Bearded Lady's  
25

1  
2 Cabaret from Philadelphia will perform *Contradict*  
3 *This*, a birthday funeral for heroes all included in  
4 our brochure that you have. All of our programming  
5 is affordable, and accessible with tickets never more  
6 than \$30 and we would appreciate your help in  
7 spreading the word to your constituents especially  
8 young people who can engage with this important work,  
9 including our archive and let them know that they can  
10 find a rich history of queer performance and connect  
11 with performers who will redefine this history. For  
12 example, our archive will be open during the entire  
13 month, and we also have a lot of space, rehearsal  
14 studios and places where people can meet, and we  
15 always encourage non-profit organizations to contact  
16 us to arrange a situation that's affordable and  
17 accessible to use those space. [bell] Thank you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and  
19 can you state your name for the record?

20 RYAN LEACH: Ryan Leach.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and  
22 are we ready with the video?

23 RYAN LEACH: Uh-hm.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you.

25

1  
2 RYAN LEACH: And this is from Squirts,  
3 one of our performances. It's a promo video. [pause]

4 VIDEO: [music playing/no dialogue]

5 RYAN LEACH: Thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you. That  
7 will be tough to follow [laughter] but I think we'll  
8 go with Ken next. Ken, if could just state your name  
9 and if possible if we can keep to the three-minute  
10 timer. We do have copies of all your written  
11 testimony. So, that will be entered in the record.  
12 So, Ken.

13 KEN LUSTBADER: Whoop. Ken Lustbader.  
14 For the record and at home it was 2 minutes and 59  
15 seconds. So, Good afternoon Council Members. Thank  
16 you for the opportunity to testify on this important  
17 topic, and upcoming celebrations. As I said, I'm Ken  
18 Lustbader, one of the co-founders and co-directors of  
19 the NYC LGBTQ Historic Sites Project, a cultural  
20 herniate initiative and educational resource that is  
21 comprehensively identifying, cataloguing and  
22 interpreting sites connected to the LGBTQ history and  
23 culture of New York City. We're also members of the  
24 Stonewall 50 Consortium. Launched in 2015 by  
25 Preservation professionals, the project seeks to make

1  
2 an invisible history visible by identifying historic  
3 LGBTQ locations that establish a visceral link to the  
4 city's past on what has largely been an unknown  
5 narrative. Beyond the already unrecognized  
6 Stonewall, we are identifying hundreds of existing  
7 sites from the City's early days to the Year 2000  
8 that illustrate the richness of LGBTQ history and the  
9 community's contributions to American culture. Our  
10 project website features an interactive map with at  
11 the current time 150 locations that interpret places  
12 of importance to LGBTQ history. We have another 350  
13 on our database that we're adding to the website as  
14 research. We have a social media presence at the  
15 handlenyclgbt sites. The project is advocating for  
16 local designation of LGBTQ sites such as the Walt  
17 Whitman Residence in Brooklyn. We recently completed  
18 the historic context statement of LGBTQ history in  
19 New York City, which is the first ever sort of guide  
20 to establishing criteria on how to evaluate LGBTQ  
21 site in the five boroughs of New York City. That was  
22 done in partnership with the State Historic  
23 Preservation Office. We are also nominating sites to  
24 the National Register of Historic Places. We've been  
25 involved in six. We're nominating two more, and



1  
2 developing educational programming. Last year we  
3 completed and LGBT Walking Tour Guide of sites around  
4 the immediate vicinity of Stonewall that is being  
5 distributed by the Parks Service at the Stonewall  
6 National Monument. Leading up and through Stonewall  
7 50, we are engaging the public on a series of LGBTQ  
8 heritage projects, lectures, events and tours. These  
9 will include traditional talks on LGBT placed based  
10 history events such as LGBT TributeNights, LGBT  
11 walking tours of neighborhood including LGBTQ Rainbow  
12 pride flaggings at Woodlawn and Greenwood cemeteries.  
13 Thanks to a grant from the City Council, we are  
14 working with the Department of Education to do 20  
15 classroom presentations about LGBT history in each  
16 specific borough that we are serving, and it is  
17 scheduling as we speak. We are also drafting two  
18 more national register nominations, one for the James  
19 Baldwin Residence on the Upper West Side, and one for  
20 the Church of Holy Apostles in Chelsea, both  
21 associated with LGBTQ history, and we are also  
22 developing a walking tour at-through the sponsorship  
23 of American Express and Con-Edison that we launched  
24 in May in time enough for people who are [bell]  
25 visiting the city. So, I will end it on that note,

1 but I just want to stress that LGBTQ is American  
2 history.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you. Next  
5 we'll hear from Sasha, please. State your name.

6 SASHA WORTZEL: Sasha Wortzel. Good  
7 afternoon and thank you Council Members for this  
8 opportunity to speak at the Whitney's participation  
9 in the Stonewall 50 Consortium and our ongoing work  
10 to engage the legacy of Stonewall and commemorate  
11 Stonewall 50. My name is Sasha Wortzel. I'm the  
12 Director of Access and Community Programs at the  
13 Whitney Museum of American Art. The Whitney is a  
14 contemporary art museum located in Lower Manhattan.  
15 As preeminent institution devoted to the art of the  
16 United States, the Whitney presents the full range of  
17 20<sup>th</sup> Century and contemporary American art with a  
18 special focus on living artists, many New York City  
19 residents. The museum's location, which was newly  
20 opened in 2015 near the Hudson River Piers and at the  
21 intersection of the Meat Packing District, Chelsea  
22 and Greenwich Village, a short distance from where  
23 the Stonewall Rise took place, has provided a  
24 critical lens for us to engage with queer history,  
25 art, artists, and audience—audiences in and ongoing

1 way year-round. So I'm going to just share a little  
2 bit about some of the upcoming programming that we've  
3 planned in conjunction with Stonewall 50, but in  
4 addition to that, I just want to note that we have  
5 ongoing programs related to queer art and artists  
6 from Stonewall 50 that we'll be doing with teens,  
7 schools, families and community organizations, and we  
8 do that on a yearly basis So, Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup>,  
9 we're going to hold a Queer Teen Night in  
10 collaboration with the LGBTQ Center, one of our  
11 community partners. Queer Youth and allies are  
12 invited to a celebration inspired by the life and  
13 work of Andy Warhol. Youth from the Center and  
14 Whitney youth incites leaders who will welcome teens  
15 for free art making, performances, snacks and toys of  
16 our Andy Warhol exhibition that was mentioned  
17 earlier. On Wednesday April 17<sup>th</sup> we'll be hosting an  
18 after Stonewall public program. This will be a panel  
19 of artists who will explore art and the Hudson River  
20 piers in conjunction with the exhibition After  
21 Stonewall at Leslie-Lohman Museum that is curated by  
22 art historian Jonathan Weinberg. And on Thursday,  
23 June 13<sup>th</sup>, we're going to be holding a very large  
24 Stonewall 50 celebration at the Whitney. This event  
25

1 will include performances by LGBTQ+ artists in the  
2 Whitney bi-annual of 2019, which will open in mid-  
3 May. We'll also continue on select Fridays May  
4 through September a program that we initiated last  
5 summer in 2018, Queer History Walks. These free  
6 sunset walking tours explore the rich queer history  
7 of the Whitey surround neighborhood and makes  
8 connections to the Whitney's collection and special  
9 exhibitions. We're also going to continued ongoing  
10 thematic gallery tours that serve as queer themes.  
11 One example of this tour from 2018 was titled No One  
12 Exists Alone: Queer Belonging, which explored  
13 gender, sexuality and LGBTQ+ perspectives in the  
14 exhibition Where We Are: Selections from the  
15 Whitney's Collection. So, we remain grateful for the  
16 ongoing support from Speaker Johnson, Chair Van  
17 Bramer and our colleagues in the City Council as well  
18 [bell] as the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs who  
19 has enabled us to continue this work. Thank you.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you very  
22 much and finally this panel will have Daniella Topol,  
23 and Doug Nevin. Frank perhaps can I ask you to scoot  
24 over a little bit. Thank you very much everyone.  
25 [background comments].

COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: State your name  
and you may begin.

Daniella Topol. It is an honor to be  
here and in such amazing company. We are also a  
proud member of the Stonewall 50 Consortium, and  
proudly funded by DCLA. My name is Daniella Topol,  
Artistic Director of Rattlestick Playwrights Theater  
and I will shortly turn this over to Doug Nevin,  
Producer of pride plays Festival of the LGBTQAI+ work  
a Rattlestick in late June. Rattlestick is located on  
Waverly Place in the heart of the West Village. We  
are a 24-year-old theater that is dedicated to  
producing ambitious new works, and we are very  
committed to giving voice to LGBTQAI+ artists and  
subject matters. To this end, some of our notable  
past productions include Jonathan Toland's *Last  
Sunday in June* and *Buyer and Seller* starring Michael  
Urie; *Lewiston and Clarkson* by Samuel D. Hunter,  
*Mushtaq Deen's Draw the Circle* and *My Lingerie* play  
by Diana Oh, and we are currently in development for  
our fall 2019 production of a new play about Saint  
Vincent's Hospital. We believe in creating and  
inclusive space for community to gather and engage  
with ambitious and dynamic theatrical work that

1  
2 inspires conversation and leads to positive social  
3 change, and it is for these reasons that we are very  
4 excited about our partnership with Doug Nevin and  
5 Michael Urie who are the creators and produces of  
6 pride plays, a festival that will be happening at  
7 Rattlestick from June 1 to June 24<sup>th</sup>, and now it is  
8 my pleasure to introduce Doug.

9           DOUG NEVIN: Thank you Daniella and what  
10 a pleasure it is to meet all of you. As Daniella  
11 mentioned, my name is Doug Nevin, and I am an  
12 entertainment lawyer and theater producer in New  
13 York. I counsel Broadway producers and productions,  
14 and when I'm not doing this, I'm advocating for  
15 artists and working to develop ne talent and voices.  
16 As Danella mentioned, Michael Urie and I are co-  
17 producing directors of pride plays. Michael is a  
18 renowned award winning actor who recently starred in  
19 the Revival of Harvey Fierstein's *Torch Song* on  
20 Broadway, and prior to that, *Buyer and Seller*, which  
21 I produced with Rattlestick and *Ugly Betty*. Michael  
22 and I along with our Festival Director Nick Mayo  
23 (sp?) are collaborating with Rattlestick on a four-  
24 day theater festival celebrating theatrical pride.  
25 In particular, we aim to explore the twin legacies of

1 the theater and the Gay Rights Movement to examine  
2 how they've intersected and indeed supported and  
3 enhanced one another. We will shine a spotlight on  
4 plays and artists who have left their mark on the  
5 community and contributed to our legacy. Our desire  
6 is to bring awareness to the artists who have shaped  
7 and continue to shape our culture through a prideful  
8 celebration of their theatrical work. This will  
9 include seminal works worth revisiting, pieces by  
10 artists lost too soon, and as you saw today, a  
11 showcase for the next generation of LGBTQIA voices.  
12 We are in the process of assembling a force of  
13 artists, writers, producers, directors, actors,  
14 designers who will join us in exploring how pride  
15 pulsates through the theater of the last 50 years.  
16 We hope to create a uniquely New York City event  
17 where community members of diverse backgrounds,  
18 ethnicities, orientations and age can come together  
19 to be entertained, to learn to engage and to  
20 remember. Audience members can expect to hear  
21 readings of plays such as William Hoffman's seminal  
22 age drama *As Is* and Michael Benjamin Washington's new  
23 play: *Blueprints to Freedom* about the marginalized  
24 gay leader of the Civil Rights Movement, which you  
25

1 were lucky enough to hear an excerpt of earlier this  
2 afternoon. You can also expect musical moments,  
3 symposiums of leading rights and emerging voices, and  
4 a variety of reflections on what pride means to you.  
5 We can't wait to celebrate 50 years of Stonewall and  
6 of pride by doing what theater does best: Bringing  
7 people together. Thank you.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and  
10 thank you again for sharing Michael Benjamin's  
11 performance with us. Thank you Michael as well.  
12 Council Member Dromm.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Yes, and thank you  
14 Michael Benjamin Washington also. We've got to get  
15 you into the schools I think. That would be great.  
16 This is a real less there, you know, a lesson  
17 starter. I just want to say thank you to all of you.  
18 I can hardly wait myself until this very exciting,  
19 until all of this stuff happens, but I maybe make  
20 another suggestion. I mentioned the Department of  
21 Education before. Certainly I hope people are  
22 reaching out to the DOE, but also to the  
23 Administration for Children's Services for our youth,  
24 LGBTQ youth, which is at high numbers in foster home  
25 and foster care and homeless youth as well, and in



1  
2 DYCD. So, hopefully people will be reaching out to  
3 those agencies to get our youth into these exhibits,  
4 and thank you all for coming in.

5 DOUG NEVIN: Yes, thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you all.

7 DOUG NEVIN: Thank you.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Our next panel  
9 will feature Jerry Tagpus (sp?). Forgive me if I  
10 didn't say that right. Eric Sawyer, Ann Northbrook  
11 and Jerry Gallagher and Sean Corcoran. [background  
12 comments/pause] Just for the record, I'd like to  
13 recognize Council Member Koslowitz who will be  
14 rejoining us as the Chair of this committee.

15 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you.

16 [background comments/pause]

17 ANN NORTHROP: Shall we start? Alright?  
18 Yeah?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Yep.

20 ANN NORTHROP: Hello. I'm—I hope Council  
21 Member Borelli has not actually left. I wanted to  
22 talk to him about Stonewall 25, but maybe we can  
23 answer some questions. I'm Ann Northrop. I am here  
24 representing the Reclaim Pride Coalition, which is  
25 planning to stage an alternative march on June 30<sup>th</sup>,

1 Sunday, the Stonewall 50 March for Human Rights and  
2 Social Justice. While we gather today to discuss our  
3 plans to celebrate the legacy of the Stonewall  
4 rebellion and the vast progress we have made in the  
5 last 50 years, and celebrate we should, but we gather  
6 on a day when the Supreme Court of the United States  
7 has told the President of the United States that he  
8 can prevent transgender people from serving in the  
9 United States Military. Although tens of thousands  
10 have served and continue to serve with distinction,  
11 we have a very long way to go. Millions of lesbian,  
12 gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual, two-  
13 spirit and other people have fought for centuries to  
14 bring us to this place and let me emphasize the verb.  
15 We have fought. No one has given us this. No one  
16 has suddenly woken up one day and decided oh, we  
17 think we'll stop discriminating. We have  
18 demonstrated in the streets, come out to our friends  
19 and families and bosses to demand respect in the  
20 workplace and in schools. We have fought for our  
21 dignity and our rights in the medical system, and on  
22 the sports field, and yes, in the military not to  
23 mention fighting to be alive in the onslaught of HIV  
24 and AIDS, and maybe most of all we have had to fight  
25

1  
2 for our own self respect in the face of world telling  
3 us we are sick, disgusting, law breaking human beings  
4 that it is a wonder that any of us have survived.  
5 So, I think we've won the right to celebrate  
6 ourselves, but the fight is far from over. In this  
7 city the NYPD still harasses and illegitimately  
8 arrests transgender youth for walking while trans,  
9 and a restaurant in the met packing district hassles  
10 and ejects gay patrons. While we've made some  
11 progress addressing our issues in the schools, if  
12 anyone here thinks that our schools are safe places  
13 for most of our young people, please stand up.  
14 Right. In this country there is no federal non-  
15 discrimination law covering sexual orientation or  
16 gender identity or expression, and the Trump  
17 Administration has systematically shredded and  
18 repealed the rules and regulations that protected us  
19 while elevating the concept of religious freedom to  
20 insane heights specifically to hurt us.  
21 Internationally, we see fundamentalists attacking,  
22 brutalizing, and killing LGBTQ people in Chechnya,  
23 Indonesia, and Kenya with the complicity of their  
24 governments. [bell] Sorry, I—the new president—I'll  
25 be quick—the new president of Brazil hailed by Trump

1 is a proud homophobe. The government of Egypt, as  
2 was referred to, has just jailed a TV new caster for  
3 a year for interviewing a gay man. Brexit, if  
4 fulfilled may deprive the United Kingdom and LGBTQ  
5 residents of the protections they currently enjoy  
6 under European Union rules, and major faith groups,  
7 many of which receive millions of dollars in grants  
8 from this Council to perform what are supposed to be  
9 public services available to all, teach their  
10 follower and their children that homosexuality is  
11 evil and disordered. This is a very brief review.  
12 There is, of course, good news, too, but we who have  
13 reclaimed pride believe that we are still in the  
14 midst of the fight, not at the end. So, we believe  
15 the appropriate way to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
16 the Stonewall rebellion is not with the corporate  
17 floats in the Heritage of Pride—Pride Parade,  
18 although peace be to them. Nor is it with the over-  
19 barricaded and over-policing of that event by a New  
20 York City Police Department that has yet to apologize  
21 for its assault on the LGBTQ people 50 years ago, and  
22 beyond. The precipitating act after all--

24 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [off mic]

25 [interposing] Can you please--

1  
2 ANN NORTHROP: --for the Stonewall  
3 Rebellion—one more paragraph. Reclaim Pride will  
4 make this moment with a joyful, angry, creative,  
5 political Stonewall 50 March for Human Rights and  
6 Social Justice. On Sunday, June 30<sup>th</sup> we will march  
7 from the Stonewall to Central Park for a rally on the  
8 great lawn following the route of the first  
9 Christopher Street Liberation Day March in 1970, and  
10 every step of the way we will remember and honor our  
11 ancestors and recommit ourselves to the fight for  
12 liberation and justice. I apologize for going over.

13 ERIC SAWYER: Thank you to the City  
14 Council members for being here today to hear us and  
15 to government officials as well. My name is Eric  
16 Sawyer, and I'm one of the founders of Act Up New  
17 York, a co-founder of Housing Works and after close  
18 to a decade, recently retired from UNAIDS the HIV  
19 programs at the UN. After 30 years of speaking truth  
20 to power I know the power of political activism. At  
21 Act Up we fought to change how drugs are developed,  
22 and to fight for medications to save our lives. At  
23 Housing Works we fought for medically appropriate  
24 housing, care and support. At UN AIDS we fought for  
25 global access to HIV medications, but we also joined

1 several UN agencies in the fight for LGBT rights  
2 because homophobia fuels the HIV epidemic. While  
3 we've made some progress over the years, we have a  
4 long, long way to go. In the U.S. the current  
5 president array-erased LGBT rights and all mention of  
6 the National Office of AIDS Policy from the White  
7 House website on inauguration day. Many queers have-  
8 have gained their rights. Many of the rights that  
9 queers have gained are being overturned especially  
10 for transgender people. Funding for domestic AIDS  
11 globally as well as domestically are being cut by  
12 this Administration. Today, we still have less than-  
13 we still have 20% of people living with HIV in the  
14 U.S. who do not have access to treatment. Globally,  
15 only about 60% of people with HIV have access to  
16 drugs. We heard from our prior speaker that 71  
17 countries have laws that make it a crime to be-to be  
18 gay. That's out of about 180. So, do the math. It's  
19 close to half. Half of those countries have a  
20 mandatory prison sentence of between 10 and 25 years,  
21 8 of them or 6 of them have a death penalty. In the  
22 U.S. more countries lack a law to protect LGBT people  
23 from discrimination than have it. More than half of  
24 the states in this-in our country can legally fire  
25

1 you, employers can fire you just for being gay. We've  
2 heard about how in African Countries and Central Asia  
3 our people are literally being persecuted by  
4 government sanctioned actions and in Chechnya,  
5 there's a concentration camp that legalizes torture  
6 and has literally killed people. Because of these  
7 realities and my belief in speaking truth to power,  
8 I'm helping to organize the reclaimed pride march and  
9 rally, which will march from Stonewall to the great  
10 lawn on Central Park. We feel that it's really  
11 crucial for us to give a voice to people from around  
12 the world [bell] to address their plight, their lack  
13 of rights, their persecution around the globe and to  
14 provide a vehicle for them to share the word, spread  
15 the word and speak truth to power and try to organize  
16 a more effective global response in the fight for gay  
17 rights, LGBTQ, et cetera rights for everyone. We at  
18 Reclaim Pride believe that no LGBT person is free  
19 until all LGBT people are free. We hope you'll join  
20 us at that march. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you. Next.

23 SEAN CORCORAN: Hello. My name is Sean  
24 Corcoran, and I'm here representing the Museum of the  
25 City of New York. I want to thank the Council for

1 having us here today, and I'll be a bit briefer  
2 because Commissioner Finkelppearl mentioned some of  
3 our activities already. So there is no reason to  
4 repeat, but specifically, he didn't mention an  
5 exhibition that we are developing, and exhibition  
6 that is comprised of more than 30 photographs, and  
7 the title is called Pride Photographs from Stonewall  
8 and Beyond by Fred McDarrah. The exhibition is a  
9 companion show to a retrospective exhibition of-of  
10 the photographer's work that we're in-in the midst of  
11 developing. For those of you who might not know who  
12 Fred is, he was the first photographer and picture  
13 editor for the legendary alternative News Weekly, the  
14 Village Voice and is considered to be by many of the  
15 ultimate chronicle of New York City's downtown scene  
16 particularly through the 50s and 80s-through the 80s.  
17 McDarrah was at Stonewall in 1969 and took some of  
18 the-the few photographs that exist from the uprising  
19 and its immediate aftermath. In later-later in 1969  
20 he photographed a rally in Washington Square Park  
21 known, of course, in 1970 the-the first march on the  
22 uprising's anniversary. Fred Continued to photograph  
23 marshes and create portraits of community leaders and  
24 document significant events of the LGBT community  
25



LGBTQ community throughout the '70s, '80s and '90s.

The exhibition coincides with the publication of—

actually I should say the repub—the republication of

the expanded edition of his original book that was

published on the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Stonewall. This

is called—this new edition is called *Pride*

*Photographs After Stonewall* and includes a new

forward by Hilton Als. The Museum is very proud to

be a member of the Stonewall 50 Consortium, and are

very happy and proud to be a participating member as

we were at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you.

JERRY CAPIS: Jerry Capis, Leslie-Lohman

Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art. Thank you Chair

Koslowitz and the committee on Community Affairs or

Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International

Relations Group. We look forward to celebrating the

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Stonewall Uprising on June 5<sup>th</sup>—

June 28<sup>th</sup> of 2019 that signifies a crucial and

historic milestone for the LGBTQ community, the City

of New York and our organization the Leslie-Lohman

Museum. Our mission is already—our museum is already

a key LGBTQ destination and we have planned a block

buster exhibition that supports the I Love NY LGBTQ

1 Initiative through the state of the city. It's time  
2 for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of Stonewall, *Art After*  
3 *Stonewall* is the first major exhibition to examine  
4 the impact of LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement on the art  
5 world. Comprising some 200 art works and documents,  
6 the exhibition focuses on openly LGBTQ artists like  
7 Nan Golden, Holly Hughes, Robert Mapplethorpe, Tim  
8 Miller, Catherine Opie and we'll draw upon private  
9 collectors and several institutions that will lend  
10 work to the exhibition. We are partnering with the  
11 New Yorker University Gray Art Gallery to display the  
12 exhibition, which will be on view from April 24<sup>th</sup> to  
13 July 21<sup>st</sup>. We welcome the hundreds of mainstream  
14 cultural institutions that are joining the  
15 celebration. However, it is important to celebrate  
16 the LGBTQ culture everyday. LGBTQ arts and cultural  
17 history are an important part of New York City  
18 history, and we as an LGBTQ-focused cultural  
19 institution play an important role in preserving and  
20 telling the story of a community and its fight for  
21 civil rights. The origins of the Leslie-Lohman  
22 Museum can be traced back the Civil Rights Movement  
23 of the late 1960s. In the context of Woodstock Music  
24 and Art Fair and Stonewall Gate and Uprising, gay art  
25

1 collectors Charles Leslie and Fritz Lohman presented  
2 their first exhibition of gay artists in their SoHo  
3 loft in the summer of 1969. In the midst of the 70s  
4 Gay Liberation Movement, our founders continued to  
5 exhibit the work of gay artists in storefronts in  
6 SoHo, finally settling in a basement space at 127  
7 Clinton (sic) Street, which became host to art  
8 exhibitions and cultural programs. Leslie and Lohman  
9 were also activists in presser—in preservation of the  
10 SoHo neighborhood and unique architecture, and the  
11 nascent community of artists living and working in  
12 spacious lofts. During the AIDS Pandemic, Charles  
13 and Fritz opened their refuge for artists and their  
14 work. Providing lodging and caring for artists, they  
15 rescued work from dying artists from families out of  
16 shame, ignorance or inability to properly preserve  
17 their work. Today, thanks to the hard work of  
18 generations of activists and artists, our community  
19 has gained a greater visibility. However, the fight  
20 for our rights is not over. The foundation has  
21 transition to a museum that aims to preserve LGBTQ  
22 cultural identity and build community, reclaim  
23 collars (sic) skipped from a queer perspective and  
24 providing a training ground for queer artists and  
25

1  
2 cultural workers. As we continue to stand at the  
3 intersection of art and social justice, [bell] we act  
4 as a cultural hub for LGBTQ individuals and their  
5 communities. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you. Thank  
7 you very much all of you. Yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very  
9 much. I really appreciate you coming in. I hope you  
10 are working on the Stonewall film as well.

11 JERRY CAPIS: Yes, Danny, yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So that's in the  
13 works, and for the New York City Museum I remember  
14 taking my class there when I was a teacher and I had  
15 an exhibition on the struggle to get into the Saint  
16 Patrick's Parade, which was quite eye-opening for my  
17 students as well, although they all figured I'd be,  
18 you know, part of that struggle as well, but I also  
19 want to thank Ann and the Act Up for coming in today,  
20 and to recognize your continuous fight for  
21 recognizing that we're not finished, and I want to  
22 lend my support to your efforts, and I just want to  
23 ask where you're at with the city and what type of  
24 permits? How is that process going?

1  
2 ANN NORTHROP: And I want to thank Eric  
3 specifically for what he said about this march being  
4 conceived to provide a voice and an organizing tool  
5 for people from around the world who will be coming  
6 here, and who always benefit from these kinds of  
7 marches. We submitted about three months ago permit  
8 applications to the NYPD for the march, and to the  
9 New York City Parks Department for the event on the  
10 Great Lawn. We are currently in very amicable talks  
11 with the Parks Department about the Great Lawn event.  
12 Eric is taking the lead on a lot of the organizing of  
13 the logistics for that. Norman Siegel, legendary  
14 civil rights attorney is working with us, and he also  
15 worked with us for Stonewall 25 on the dueling  
16 marches then. That's a whole other history, and is  
17 working with us and the Parks Department to make sure  
18 we work all that out. The NYPD three months later  
19 has not contacted us so we contacted them last week,  
20 and we are working on setting up a meeting with them  
21 to discuss the logistics of our march. Let me be  
22 clear that we—we have a very different agenda from  
23 the Pride Parade. We have met with them repeatedly  
24 for months some months ago, and we just agreed to  
25 disagree that they have their agenda, we have our

1 agenda and we are two very different events, and we  
2 are not looking to collide or interfere with their  
3 event nor are they as Chris Frederick said very  
4 nicely looking to interfere with us, and so we are  
5 planning to pull off an event that will be peaceful  
6 and inclusive and inspiriting.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: You're looking to  
9 go up Sixth Avenue?

10 ANN NORTHROP: [off mic] Right. [on mic]  
11 That's the idea, and to do it early enough that we  
12 will not coincide with the Pride Parade, which  
13 doesn't step off 'til noon higher up on Seventh  
14 Avenue. We want to just lickety-split go up Sixth to  
15 Central Park. My joke is that we can do it in 15  
16 minutes because we have no floats [laughs] but I  
17 think that may be an exaggeration.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you, Ann and  
19 I-I also want-I concur with you on-on Heritage of  
20 Pride. You know they do this year after year after  
21 year. It's a very difficult chore. They were very,  
22 very helpful to me when I started Queens Pride and I  
23 do want to recognize that and thank them.

24 ANN NORTHROP: They work very hard all  
25 year long and they have an enormous, enormous task to

1  
2 accomplish and we appreciate that. We just want to  
3 put on a very different kind of event.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And that's good.

5 SEAN SAWYER: And—and there was mention  
6 before of the Stonewall 25 the Anniversary March,  
7 which Ann and I were involved in the organizing. It  
8 was primarily and act up drive event, and during that  
9 negotiation process the police actually never  
10 granted—granted us a permit at all. Basically a few  
11 days and—and Norman was involved in our attempts  
12 legally, and—and in negotiation with the police to  
13 get that mark—that march sanction and to get a police  
14 permit, but a few days before, they basically said,  
15 Look, we're not giving you a permit. We'll do what  
16 we can to facilitate your march because we know  
17 you're going to do it anyhow. We fear that that may  
18 be the scenario that is unfolding for this year, but  
19 if you or the Mayor's Office or anyone would be  
20 willing to weigh in with us to the Police Department  
21 and encourage a permit granting, that certainly would  
22 be welcome.

23 ANN NORTHROP: We'd also appreciate any  
24 work on getting an apology from the Police Department  
25

1  
2 and the city for Stonewall and all the actions  
3 against the LGBTQ community then and over the years.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: I'm fighting the  
5 Police Department today, Ann and--

6 ANN NORTHROP: [interposing] I understand  
7 completely.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: You know--

9 ANN NORTHROP: [interposing] Me, too.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: I was not waiting  
11 for that apology. I do congratulate you and thank  
12 you for the work that you're doing. It's very, very,  
13 very important, and thank you.

14 ANN NORTHROP: Thank, you and the one  
15 thing that hasn't been mentioned about Stonewall 25,  
16 of course, was the gay games, which was a two-week  
17 Olympic event. It's the biggest sporting event in  
18 the world, and it came here in '94 because of  
19 Stonewall 25 and was an enormous event in all the  
20 boroughs of the city. Closing ceremonies were in  
21 Yankee Stadium. I was one of the organizers of that,  
22 and that was huge. Nothing like this year, but huge.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you. Thank  
24 you.

25 SEAN SAWYER: Thanks. Thanks so much.



1  
2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: The next panel  
3 Ally Rickard (sic) the Brooklyn Museum; Wes Enos,  
4 [pause] Olivia Cassarino (sp?) Richard Lieberman, and  
5 Inez Asia-Asian. [background comments/pause] Okay,  
6 you may begin. [background comments] Okay, who is  
7 going to begin? Okay.

8 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Hello. Can you hear  
9 me? First of all, I'm thrilled to be here with such  
10 supportive people in the audience and the Council  
11 Members particularly the Chair Karen Koslowitz who  
12 I've known for many years. The Archive was created  
13 by Arthur's Office and so we met a long time ago.  
14 Danny Dromm who's been a major supporter of  
15 everything we're doing at La Guardia Community  
16 College and especially the recent LGBTQ efforts. So,  
17 Karen and Danny, thank you so much for everything  
18 you've done for us. Good afternoon everybody.

19 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [off mic] For the  
20 record-[on mic] For the record, state your name.

21 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Richard Lieberman  
22 born in Brooklyn, teach in Queens. [laughs] Let  
23 that be on the record. I'm delighted to be here. I  
24 find myself taking notes about everybody I want to  
25 work with who's here and all of the creative projects

1 we can do this year. I teach at La Guardia Community  
2 College. CUNY is now officially in the room.  
3 Education is now officially in the room. Queens is  
4 here, and so I represent many, many people and I wear  
5 many hats. We educate 50,000 people a year at La  
6 Guardia Community College. Half of our student  
7 population is foreign born, and are you ready for  
8 this? They come from 150 countries. There are 119  
9 language groups in halls of La Guardia Community  
10 College. You can applaud whenever you want. I'm  
11 delighted to discuss the major initiatives at the  
12 Archives in the context of Stonewall 50. Since 2016,  
13 which seems like yesterday, now I realize it's almost  
14 going to be three years ago, we were discussing the  
15 papers of New York City Council Member Daniel Dromm,  
16 Co-Founder of the Queens Pride parade in 1993 and  
17 since then, we've worked very hard on a robust agenda  
18 with La Guardia students and faculty and with all of  
19 the other CUNY campuses in Queens. Five CUNY campuses  
20 working together on LGBTQ projects. While we  
21 understand the historical importance of the Stonewall  
22 Rebellion in Manhattan, as a catalyst in the battle  
23 for LGBTQ rights in the nation, we decidedly shifted  
24 the focus to Queens to illustrate the pride and  
25

1 protest of a community unknown to most New Yorkers.  
2  
3 Indeed until the 1990s, most New Yorkers associated  
4 the city's LGBTQ population solely with Greenwich  
5 Village. Our initiative is to broaden that. Our  
6 initiative is to say this is a city of five boroughs,  
7 and there is LGBTQ community outside of Greenwich  
8 Village. Our initial program was an exhibition, the  
9 Lavender Line coming out in Queens. It opened at the  
10 Queens Museum in 2017 to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
11 Queens Pride Parade. It used photographs, flyers,  
12 video, audio, which illustrated the fight for LGBTQ  
13 activists for equality and dignity in Queens since  
14 the 1990s and I would like to personally thank [bell]  
15 Danny Dromm for the historical portion of the  
16 exhibit. What we're planning on now, I-I heard the  
17 bell so I'll skip to what we're planning on is that  
18 the next exhibit will be about the LGBTQ community at  
19 La Guardia Community College. We're asking some  
20 tough questions for our students, our LGBTQ students  
21 to answer looking at their lives, looking at what  
22 it's like to be Latino and gay, what it's like to be  
23 black and lesbian, what it's like to be Asian and  
24 queer. We'll be launching an exhibit in May and June  
25 on this topic, and I'm proud to say that sitting next

1 to me, it's please to intro-introduce Olivia  
2 Cassarino. Olivia is an English major at La Guardia  
3 Community College and President of the Straight and  
4 Gay Alliance Student Club on campus and is here with  
5 me today to talk about not only her participation in  
6 the upcoming exhibit, but also about her pleasure to  
7 testify here. Probably her first time testifying  
8 before the City Council. Olivia.

10 OLIVIA CASSARINO: [off mic] Good  
11 afternoon members [on mic] of the New York City  
12 Council. This is on now. I'm Olivia Cassarino a  
13 student at La Guardia Community College and the  
14 President of the College's Straight and Gay Alliance.  
15 I'm here to speak briefly about my experience with  
16 the archives and the impact their work has had and  
17 will continue to have for our schools LGBTQ  
18 population. As is the case for many other LGBTQ  
19 youth, I've had significant challenges with accepting  
20 my own identify. My experience coming from a  
21 devoutly religious immigrant family contributed  
22 greatly to my personal challenges with accepting  
23 myself. As the President of the La Guardia Straight  
24 and Gay Alliance, I've been able to foster community  
25 with many other students who have similar

1 experiences. Each LGBT individual—identifying  
2 individual I've met at La Guardia has a unique story,  
3 which incorporates the many challenges they strive to  
4 overcome. Each story is important, which is why the  
5 Archives Lavender Lawn Project is so significant to  
6 our community. Until only recently, through our  
7 presentation of LGBT individuals in pop culture in  
8 history has ben unfortunately slim. This has made  
9 the acceptance of LGBT individuals difficult for  
10 those who do not identify within the community and  
11 even those who do. I remember hardly seeing LGBT  
12 people in the media while I was growing up, and every  
13 celebrity coming on the story being treated as  
14 controversial and shocking. I went to public schools  
15 up until high school, and I cannot recall any mention  
16 of LGBT individuals in historical curriculum. Even  
17 though the validity of social media's positive impact  
18 on the world is often questioned, it has undeniably  
19 contributed to the newer generations' acceptance of  
20 the LGBT community. However, it is so important for  
21 the stories of LGBT individuals to be considered and  
22 recorded in more formal settings. The Archives  
23 Lavendar Lawn Project has made it possible for the  
24 intersectional stories of several LGBT students at La  
25

1  
2 Guardia to be documented and saved for historical and  
3 academic purposes. It's an awesome opportunity for  
4 one's one narrative to be acknowledged. I would like  
5 to thank the New York City Council for your support  
6 with the LGBT Public History Project at the La  
7 Guardia and Governor (sic) Archives. It's so  
8 important to raise awareness about the history and  
9 culture of our city's LGBT population. Thank you for  
10 your time.

11                   WES ENOS: Thank you and Good afternoon  
12 to the members of the New York City Council, and all  
13 of my fellow appreciators of history who are here  
14 today to help commemorate the historical 50<sup>th</sup>  
15 Anniversary of Stonewall. My name is Wes Enos, and  
16 I'm the Founder and Executive Director of the  
17 Generations Project, a fiscally sponsored non-profit  
18 organization based here in New York City. The  
19 Generations Project preserves the history of the  
20 LGBTQ+ movement and promotes intergenerational  
21 support through storytelling. Our teams facilitate  
22 intergenerational workshops and film live  
23 storytelling events to document and share the history  
24 of the LGBTQ+ Movement to people of all ages. We have  
25 made it a priority to not just celebrate pride during

1 Pride Months, but to memorialize the journeys that  
2 have led us to where we are today, all year long. The  
3 Generations Project is creating the Stonewall 50 time  
4 capsule. So, imagine if there were a time capsule  
5 from the Year 1969 created for the communities of New  
6 York City that contained messages, stories, photos  
7 and wishes from those who helped spark the LGBTQ+  
8 Movement. What if up to 1,000 LGBTQ+ groups or  
9 individuals in this 2019 year, each received an  
10 envelope created in 1969 from someone who directly  
11 experienced the impact of the Stonewall Rebellion.  
12 What lessons would we learn? What stories could be  
13 inspired to share with others. For the 50<sup>th</sup>  
14 Anniversary of Stonewall, the Generations Project is  
15 utilizing our intergenerational platform and cross-  
16 generational programs to build the Stonewall 50 Time  
17 Capsule, which will be stored for 50 years until it  
18 is opened for the hundredth anniversary of Stonewall  
19 in the year 2059. The Stonewall 50 Time Capsule will  
20 be a physical manifestation of the LGBTQ+ Movement  
21 captured through the perspectives of people of all  
22 ages and all backgrounds. From now until June 2020,  
23 so the year after the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Stonewall,  
24 the Generations Project is engaged in groups and  
25

1 individuals to collect, donate and generate primary  
2 resources such as photos, handwritten memories,  
3 diaries, et cetera to be sealed in manila sized  
4 envelopes to three avenues. The first is Projects  
5 Fitting in the Generations Project Workshops or  
6 attending one of our live storytelling events,  
7 portable photo printers and prompts will be  
8 available. We have also—the second is we have  
9 created a prompted do-it-yourself free right to  
10 attach photos and the third is to engage groups in  
11 group projects such as projects that explore the  
12 history of (a) organizations, (b) neighborhoods, and  
13 (c) individuals. We will collect the community  
14 generated content between June 2019 and June 2020.  
15 The Stonewall 50 Time capsule will be sealed in June  
16 2020 to commemorate the first march in 1970 by the  
17 Gay Liberation Front. All participants who  
18 contribute to building the Stonewall 50 Time Capsule  
19 will receive a golden ticket to the 2069 Stonewall 50  
20 Time Capsule opening party. Within their lifetimes  
21 golden ticket recipients will be encouraged to attend  
22 the 2069 opening party or pass their golden ticket to  
23 someone to attend in their place, which will be  
24 creating a unique intergenerational opportunity  
25



1 missing in LGBTQ community. The Stonewall 50 Time  
2 Capsule will contain detailed instructions for a  
3 special committee to be formed during or before 2068  
4 under the discretion of (a) the Generations Project,  
5 Incorporated of (b) the Stonewall 50 Consortium or  
6 (c) the largest collective group of LGBTQ+  
7 organizations collaborating together to commemorate  
8 the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Stonewall. Unless more  
9 suitable location is secure the Stonewall 50 Time  
10 Capsule will reside at the LGBTQ Center's Archives  
11 until it is opened in the year 2069. For anyone who  
12 would like to get involved, you can visit our website  
13 at the Generationsproject.org to learn about joining  
14 an intergeneration storytelling workshop, attending  
15 one of our live events or to state your intention to  
16 contribute to the Stonewall 50 Time Capsule. I guess  
17 I'll stop there. Thank you.

19 ALLY RICKARD: Good afternoon. Thank you  
20 Chair Koslowitz and members of the committee for the  
21 opportunity to testify about the Brooklyn Museum's  
22 programming and exhibitions in commemoration of the  
23 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. My name  
24 is Ally Rickard, and I'm Curatorial Assistant for the  
25 Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the

1 Museum, and I'm joined by my colleague Catherine  
2 Almonte, Government and Community Affairs Liaison.  
3 We are here on behalf of the Brooklyn Museum and as  
4 members of the Cultural Institution Group, and I'm  
5 one of five, one of five curators working  
6 collectively on a special exhibition that we'll be  
7 opening later this year. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Brooklyn  
8 Museum will open the only exhibition dedicated to the  
9 work of LGBTQ artists born since 1969, and working in  
10 the legacy of the Stonewall Uprising. The artist  
11 included in *Nobody Promised You Tomorrow: Art 50*  
12 *Years After Stonewall* at once looked to history and  
13 faced the future to pay tribute activists for parents  
14 and ask how we will care for tomorrow's generations.  
15 The exhibition also centers attention on the everyday  
16 acts of care that undergird public activism and  
17 sustained communities. Through painting, sculpture,  
18 installation and performance and video, the artists  
19 engage interconnected themes of revolt,  
20 commemoration, care and desire. They grapple with  
21 the unique conditions of our political time and  
22 question how moment become monuments. The exhibition  
23 centers artists of colors—artists of color and trans  
24 and gender non-conforming artists. *Nobody Promised*

1  
2 *you Tomorrow* is supplemented by an interactive  
3 resource room for visitors to engage LGBTQ histories  
4 and organizing and to connect with community  
5 organizations. As a Stonewall 50 Consortium member,  
6 we'll be working closely with community partners to  
7 expand conversations around art and LGBTQ organizing  
8 in history. We'll present performances and public  
9 programs that center intergenerational dialogue, and  
10 just last week we invited over a dozen LGBTQ  
11 organizations throughout New York City to convene at  
12 the museum and discuss the exhibition and different  
13 possibilities for collaborations. Beyond this  
14 exhibition the Brooklyn Museum is continuously  
15 committed to welcoming and serving the LGBTQ  
16 community. Every year LGBTQ teams joins us for a  
17 paid internship that explores gender and sexuality in  
18 art, and plans events for other LGBTQ youth.  
19 Throughout the run of *Nobody Promised You Tomorrow*,  
20 this program will be supplemented by our ongoing  
21 expansive education programs, which offer different  
22 program opportunities for from toddlers to teenagers.  
23 The exhibition will also extend our commitment beyond  
24 our Annual Public Programs such as our DapperQ  
25 Fashion Show and Pride First Saturday and we'll

1  
2 deepen our dedication to providing inclusive  
3 programming year round. Furthermore, we will be  
4 improving accessibility in our restrooms this year.  
5 We'll be making a permanent change to our bathroom  
6 facilities, which will offer visitors multi-stall  
7 all-gender restrooms for the first time at our  
8 museum, and we're excited to offer all of our  
9 visitors safe and inclusive options not only for the  
10 run of *Nobody Promised You Tomorrow* but into the  
11 future. Thank you, and we'll be happy to answer any  
12 questions. [bell]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Nobody else on the  
14 panel? No. Okay. Alright thank you and how do  
15 teenagers get involved in the internship?

16 ALLY RICKARD: Sure. So, it's a paid  
17 internship program that's run through our Education  
18 Department, and they can apply to be a part of the  
19 program, and then once they're accepted into the  
20 program, they work with our team programs in  
21 education to plan events around exhibitions. We have  
22 teen nights that happen for every major exhibition,  
23 and those are also an extensive education component  
24 where they're learning about art and sexuality and  
25

1 meeting with curators and other members of the  
2 museum.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And what do they  
5 do? Do they go to the Brooklyn Museum website?

6 ALLY RICKARD: Yes. It's all available  
7 on the Brooklyn Museum website.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, great. I  
9 hope you'll invite me there to see some of that or--

10 ALLY RICKARD: [interposing] Of course.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: --or just  
12 experience some of that.

13 ALLY RICKARD: We would welcome you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay. I went to  
15 the Bowie Exhibit. So that was fantastic.

16 ALLY RICKARD: Thank you.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: [laughs] And then  
18 this is a very interesting project the Time Capsule  
19 and that's going to be at the Center. If I'm not  
20 mistaken, that's what you said.

21 WES ENOS: Yeah, it will--it will be  
22 created now until June 2020 and then it is set to  
23 reside at the Center until 2016 unless we find a  
24 better more suitable location for it.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay because they  
3 have an archive there as well.

4 WES ENOS: Yeah.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, good and  
6 then in a shameless example of self-promotion, I want  
7 to hold up these two items this is the book on the  
8 history of Queens Pride, a couple of pictures of  
9 Council Members are in there, and the latest project  
10 of the La Guardia Community College Archives is this  
11 wonderful calendar *Out and About LGBTQ Live in New*  
12 *York City* and it documents a lot of the history of  
13 New York City in general, but also including some of  
14 the borough stuff, but particularly also focused a  
15 lot on Queens, and so these are available free just  
16 by connecting with La Guardia. How do you get that  
17 Richard?

18 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: So just contact me at  
19 La Guardia Community College. You can Google  
20 LaGuardia and Wagner archives. You can Google my  
21 name Richard Lieberman or you can see me after this  
22 and I'll give you my card, and you can get no only  
23 calendars for you but also for your group. We  
24 published I think 10,000 calendars so we have lots of  
25 calendars. The book I think there's a few hundred,

1 and if there is a tremendous demand, we will try to  
2 raise money and publish more. There's another book  
3 coming out at Queensborough. So, just see me or  
4 Google La Guardia and archives and Richard Lieberman,  
5 and I'll get you as many calendars as you need.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And Olivia, I  
8 think you may be the most important person in the  
9 room here today because by you coming out and  
10 acknowledging your membership in the Gay-Straight  
11 Alliance, and giving testimony here today, this is  
12 exactly what it's all about. It's what all of the  
13 work that we're doing is all about is trying to make  
14 it easier for folks who are LGBT+ much easier for  
15 them, and so I-I really admire you being here and  
16 thank you for giving testimony today.

17 OLIVIA CASSARINO: Thank you. [applause]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you.

19 INES ASLAN: [off mic] I actually didn't  
20 get up there because she was in the seat. (sic)

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Oh, okay. I'm  
22 sorry. Sure.

23 INES ASLAN: [off mic] Yeah, I was at the  
24 side of the table.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Oh, yes.

1  
2           INES ASLAN: My name is Ines Aslan and I  
3 represent the New York Historical Society. As you  
4 might know, New York Historical is the oldest museum  
5 in the city. It was founded in 1904 after the city  
6 had been burned to the ground twice, and so it's  
7 purpose is to preserve and share the history of the  
8 city and as its people, and so in the context of  
9 that, we serve annually over half a million people  
10 and half of the are actually public school students,  
11 which we service with New York and American history  
12 curriculum K to 12. It is in the context of that,  
13 that we're planning to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup>  
14 Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising with the  
15 initiative that it's called Stonewall 50 at New York  
16 Historical that includes different exhibitions as  
17 well as public programs and family programs and if  
18 you—you take initiatives like professional  
19 development and for teachers with Stonewall related  
20 curriculum as well as camps and programs for  
21 students. We actually started commemorating the era  
22 in June when we displayed a special installation  
23 about Billie Jean King in the La Guardia Airport  
24 related to other years open timeframe, and we also  
25 have currently on view an exhibition called Billie



1 Jean King: Road to 75 that celebrates her 75<sup>th</sup>  
2 Birthday. It was actually were given her archives  
3 when she found that we had started the Center for  
4 Women's History so she could relate to the idea that  
5 women's history as well as every—every person's  
6 history, and that's why we're here today. It's part  
7 of American history and it's not a separate kind of  
8 history that needs to be told on the side. So, I'll  
9 be happy to tell you quickly about what the three  
10 exhibitions are about. The first one is called  
11 *Letting Loose and Fighting Back: LGBTQ Nightlife*  
12 *Before and after Stonewall* and will the history of  
13 LGBTQ bars and concept nightlife in New York City  
14 during the second half of the 1900s. The second  
15 exhibition is called *By the Force of Our Presence*,  
16 highlights from the Lesbian Herstory Archives and it  
17 will feature—feature a rich selection of objects  
18 highlighting Lesbian experiences before and after  
19 Stonewall, the central role of queer women in LGBTQ  
20 activism, and the ongoing significance of the Lesbian  
21 Herstory Archives. And the third one is a special  
22 graphic installation called *Say it Loud, Out and*  
23 *Proud: 50 Years of Pride*. We'll use imagery from  
24 five decades of New York City pride marches to  
25

1  
2 animate a timeline of significant moments and  
3 national and New York LGBTQ history. We are putting  
4 all this together with a mix of our own collections  
5 and long-term a lot of different New York cultural  
6 institutions. Something that want to bring up because  
7 you were wondering about two instances [bell] that we  
8 actually got funding from the Keith Haring Fund for  
9 Youth Audiences. So, we were able to partner with  
10 community based organizations in the five boroughs to  
11 provide free museum visits for disadvantaged city  
12 teens. So, in addition to being grateful for your  
13 ongoing support, we want to ask for you feedback in  
14 terms of suggestions for community organizations that  
15 might be able to send their kids over for free. I  
16 think that's that. Thank you very much.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you and yes,  
18 I love it when you walk into the New York Historical  
19 Society and you look up to the--at the ceiling--

20 INES ASLAN: [interposing] Thank you,  
21 thank you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: --of the--where you  
23 buy your ticket to come in and you have to Keith  
24 Haring work right there on that ceiling, which is  
25 great.

1  
2 INES ASLAN: Welcoming everyone who  
3 comes.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Yes, yes and—and I  
5 know that you do a lot of that work with the  
6 teachers, but I do want to say we've got you beat in  
7 Queens because we have a have a hole tennis center  
8 and stadium named after the Billie Jean King so--

9 INES ASLAN: And you have the Hideaway.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: She's a top  
11 lesbian, she's a top lesbian in herself. Thank you  
12 very much.

13 INES ASLAN: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [off mic]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So that again on  
16 the mic, Karen? [laughter]

17 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: A wonderful  
18 picture of my colleague Danny Dromm in the ball park.  
19 (sic) I know a few [applause]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: I was so young.  
21 [laughs]

22 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you to the  
24 panel.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you very  
3 much. Okay. I believe this is our last panel Kansa  
4 Den representing Assemblyman Brian Barnwell. Is he  
5 here? Okay. Suzanne Rose, Richard-what? I can't-  
6 Winteran (sic) Chard Parker; and one more. Jordan  
7 Reeves. [pause] Okay. Okay state your name and give  
8 your testimony.

9 JORDAN REEVES: Wow. Hello everyone.  
10 Glad you all stuck around. Thank you all for having  
11 us here. My name is Jordan Reeves, Founder of Video  
12 Out, and I'd like to do something very quickly a  
13 little unconventional. So, I want some audience  
14 participation. Is that okay? If you're queer stand  
15 up. Awesome. Now look at these people, right, loo,  
16 at all of us. I should be standing, too. I'm really  
17 queer. [laughter] They are-they're-they're real  
18 people. They have experiences much like your own.  
19 They have joys and triumphs, they have sorrows and  
20 disappointments, and they're also queer. So, they're  
21 just like the rest of us. We can be seated. I did  
22 that because it's kind of uncomfortable to be asked  
23 to display something fundamental about your identity,  
24 but that's really what coming out is. That's the  
25 process in which each queer person does in their

1 lifetime whether it's coming out to themselves,  
2 coming out to others, and it's also something when  
3 you're asked to come out when that's an expectation  
4 it's in an alternate universe something that could be  
5 used against you. I think that that's why people  
6 struggle with that moment coming out. Do I want to  
7 do it? Do I not want to do it? God, my parents are  
8 going to kill me. I'm going to kill myself. All of  
9 these things go through your head, but what we know  
10 about coming out now is actually the total opposite  
11 of all of that stuff. So, I'm also—I was going to be  
12 really articulate, but I'm trying to stick to that  
13 three minutes so I'm trimming down here. I'm not  
14 very good at editing. I'm stereotypically  
15 loquacious. So, the opposite is true. We base all  
16 of our work on three psychological principles.  
17 They're in my written testimony. Briefly they are by  
18 Gordon Allport, Jeremiah Garretson, and Daniel  
19 DeLoaposta, and basically those psychological  
20 principles say that coming out can change the way  
21 people perceive the community. We've also traced as  
22 recently as last year how coming out can even shift  
23 the way people vote on specific LGBTQ protections.  
24 So, just by coming out, you change the way people  
25

1 vote. Let's see. So Video Out's mission is to  
2 amplify the voices of LGBTQ people. We've traveled  
3 around the country, and so far we've collected  
4 hundreds of stories, produced dozens of events and  
5 reached about 5 million people worldwide. In May  
6 we're partnering with the Center to do our first of  
7 five events to celebrate Stonewall 50. It will be a  
8 story-story collection day. There will be two days  
9 where we have two cameras going at all times for  
10 anyone to sign up to share their personal story.  
11 Shortly after that we're doing an event called Speak  
12 Out where we pick four to six people to share their  
13 story in front of a live audience. There's also a  
14 community activation component to that event where  
15 people can come and mingle, get to know one another,  
16 and then we'll be doing that event again on June 27<sup>th</sup>  
17 in partnership with the Brooklyn Brewery, and so if  
18 you like beer and you like stories, come out on June  
19 27<sup>th</sup> and I'll be there. In for the quick story. So,  
20 I'm from Huey--[bell] a very, very quick story. I'm  
21 from Hueytown Alabama. Anybody ever been? No.  
22 You've heard of it, though, I'm sure. It's a  
23 bustling metropolis of hundreds of people. So,  
24 growing up in Hueytown, it wasn't a very nice place  
25

1 to be as a gay person. Everybody was really nice,  
2 but not nice to queers. So, I cried myself to sleep  
3 every night. I contemplated suicide and what saved  
4 me was a story. I heard at 23 years old, my college  
5 professor sharing his own experience coming out.  
6 That gave me the courage to then share my own and to  
7 encourage others to do the same. So, if the power of  
8 one story can save my life, what's the power of  
9 hundreds or thousands of stories to save others? So,  
10 to get involved visit [videop.org](http://videop.org). Email me  
11 [Jordan@videop.org](mailto:Jordan@videop.org). Can't wait to see you and in the  
12 words of Harvey Milk: You must come out. Thank you.

14 TODD PORTER: Good afternoon and thanks  
15 for having me here. My name is Todd Porter. I'm the  
16 General Manager for the Queer Urban Orchestra. The  
17 Queer Urban Orchestra or QUO is a flourishing  
18 community based ensemble with a loyal following.  
19 This year, which coincides with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
20 of Stonewall Riots also marks our 10<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>  
21 Anniversary as New York's only symphony orchestra  
22 serving the needs of the LGBTQIA community. These  
23 anniversaries have special resonance for the  
24 commented historical moment when authoritarian  
25 governments around the world are threatening to turn

1 back the clock and undo the steady advances of the  
2 Gay Liberation Movement. For this occasion QUO is  
3 planning its annual gala concert at our home the  
4 Church of the Holy Apostles in Chelsea on June 21<sup>st</sup>  
5 at 8:00 p.m. QUO is inviting queer musicians from  
6 around the United States and abroad to be part of  
7 this concert benefitting our orchestra. The first  
8 combined rehearsal will be on June 19<sup>th</sup> with another  
9 on June 20<sup>th</sup> followed by a get acquainted party  
10 welcoming the visiting musicians. The gala which  
11 marks the end of our 2018/2019 Queer We Are Season,  
12 will feature cabaret star Molly Pope as host and  
13 include music from Bernstein's *Westside Story*, and  
14 Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. We want to  
15 underscore the importance of this event for quo and  
16 for the LGBTQIA musical community at large. There's  
17 no better vehicle than music to strengthen the bonds  
18 of our communities that are still fighting for  
19 acceptance and the most basic human rights. Thank  
20 you. [pause]

22 SUZANNE ROSE: Good afternoon, Chair  
23 Borelli, Council Members. My name is Suzanne Rose  
24 and I'm a producer at WNET and as you know, WNET is  
25 the parent company of 13 WLIW 21 operator of NJ TV



1 and we reach about—more than five million viewers  
2 each week, and as part of our mission to support  
3 lifelong learning and in recognition of the  
4 historical significance of Stonewall, we are planning  
5 a range of programming to commemorate the—the  
6 anniversary, but I'm a producer in the Education  
7 Department. So that's what I would like to share  
8 about. As you know, WNET has a strong partnership  
9 with the Council, and through the Council's generous  
10 support, we've created a suite of professional  
11 developments and curriculum, digital media resources.  
12 These feature videos, essays, discussion questions,  
13 teaching tips and other support materials. The  
14 collection is called the LGBTQ+ Identity Collection  
15 and this collection and along with in-person  
16 professional development workshops supports an LGBTQ  
17 inclusive and affirming curriculum in New York City  
18 schools and beyond. And key component of the  
19 collection is a video program on the history of  
20 Stonewall, and its pivotal role in sparking the  
21 modern LGBTQI movement. So, leading up to the  
22 anniversary we'll promote the collection and our—on  
23 our programming on air, online and through social  
24 media, and in partnership with the New York City DOE,  
25

1 we'll provide face-to-face workshops, professional  
2 development workshops to introduce teachers, guidance  
3 counselors and administrators to the collection. We  
4 plan to reach 100 plus educators across the city and,  
5 of course, they'll take the information back to their  
6 schools, and share it with educators and students.  
7 This collection is available for free on PDF  
8 Learning Media and that is a website that reaches 1.8  
9 million educators across the country, 69,000 in New  
10 York State. The collection has page views of 20,000  
11 to date. So, it's being used in New York City  
12 schools across the city and-and nationwide. So, we  
13 look forward to continuing our strong partnership  
14 with the New York City Council, and we are working  
15 with each Council Member to expand our collection so  
16 that we can reach even more educators. And just to  
17 bring some of the voices of educators into the  
18 classroom, I just want to share some of the feedback  
19 that we've received—one educator. [bell] I'll just  
20 say the project is amazing and I'm so excited to  
21 continue using it in my classroom. I learned how to  
22 be more aware of the vocabulary to use with my LGBTQ  
23 students. I love the training. I want to do more  
24 and on and on and this one. Students in my school  
25

1 would like teachers to know more about the concepts  
2 of spectrums relating to gender identify, gender  
3 expression and sexual orientation. Perhaps most  
4 importantly they want their teachers to be adept at  
5 quickly—dealing quickly with it and effectively with  
6 homophobic, transphobic and any anti-LGBTQ behavior.  
7 So, thank you so much for letting me share today, and  
8 we wish—we wish Chair Bramer a speedy recovery. So,  
9 thank you.  
10

11                   RICHARD WINTON: Good afternoon. My name  
12 is Richard Winton, and I'm graduate Social Work  
13 Intern at AARP New York. On behalf of AARP's nearly  
14 38 million members nationwide, almost 900,000 of whom  
15 self-identify as LGBTQ, as well as our 800,000 in New  
16 York City. I thank you for the opportunity to share  
17 our views and intentions for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
18 Stonewall and World Pride 2019. New York City's  
19 population is aging. Nearly one-third of residents  
20 is over the age of 50 and that group is expected to  
21 grow by nearly 20% between 2010 and 2040. The growth  
22 for the 65+ age group is projected to be even more  
23 dramatic with an expected 40% increase in that same  
24 time period. We know from our recent report  
25 Maintaining Dignity: Understanding and Responding to

1 the Challenges Facing Older LGBT Americans that LGBT  
2 people age 45 and older have concerns specific to  
3 their sexual and gender identities. Thirty-four  
4 percent are concerned they may need to hide their  
5 identities to have access to suitable housing. About  
6 40% are concerned that their LGBT identifies will  
7 affect the quality of healthcare they receive  
8 compounded with racial discrimination for those  
9 within intersectional identities. Fifty percent of  
10 older LGBT adults are only somewhat optimistic that  
11 the problems they face today will be rectified in the  
12 next 20 to 30 years. You can access the full  
13 research report as well as see all that AARP is doing  
14 for the LGBT community at [aarp.org/pride](http://aarp.org/pride), but all of  
15 this is to say that there is work to be done to  
16 safeguard the LGBT community against continued  
17 discrimination, and a large part of addressing  
18 stigmatization is with the visibility through  
19 comprehensive social support. In 2019, AARP is  
20 committed to participating in World Pride and  
21 Stonewall 50 while partnering with LGBT organizations  
22 here in New York City. We are also a proud member of  
23 the Stonewall 50 Consortium. We are already going to  
24 be new relationships and produce meaningful  
25

1 programming during this pivotal year, and we are  
2 hopeful that the city of New York will continue to  
3 support us all in this endeavor. AARP is also  
4 dedicated to ensuring that pride celebrations are  
5 accessible to people of all ages. We supported SAGE  
6 in its creation of the Welcome to Pride Initiative  
7 and the Age-Friendly Pride Pledge achieved in  
8 partnership with Center Link, Heritage of Pride,  
9 Interpride and the Center for Black Equity. This is  
10 a useful tool for ensuring that the physical spaces,  
11 forms of communication, transportation, and civic and  
12 social participation are enacted in ways that are  
13 accessible, inclusive and respectful of older LGBT  
14 folks. We ask the City of New York and organizations  
15 participating in World Pride this year be mindful of  
16 ways pride can be welcoming to people across the age  
17 spectrum, and what we do here can and will affect the  
18 national discourse and perception of how to best  
19 support the LGBT community. We have tremendous  
20 opportunity and responsibility in this historic year  
21 to lead by example, and elevate the greater social  
22 understanding of our community. For AARP, Stonewall  
23 50 and World Pride NYC mean the development of  
24 important partnerships and programs we can  
25

1  
2 potentially bring nationwide by engaging in this  
3 city's rich LGBT culture. We are very thankful to  
4 the New York City Council and this committee for your  
5 ongoing support and we look forward to building an  
6 age-friendly and successful World Pride together.  
7 Thank you.

8           HAAM ZUDAN: Hi. My name is Haam Zudan  
9 (sp?). I'm a recently hired constituent liaison with  
10 Assemblyman Barnwell. Brian wishes he was here  
11 personally, but he is unfortunately in Albany. I'm  
12 happy to be here at this event. It is a special even  
13 that is on the anniversary of the Stonewall, which is  
14 a historic event in our nation's history. Thank you.

15           COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Great. Thank you  
16 and thank you and please extend our tanks to  
17 Assemblyman Barnwell as well. He's my neighboring—a  
18 little bit of his district is in my district also.  
19 Thank you to all of the panelists who have come in.  
20 I particularly want to say thank you to WNET for the  
21 advertising that you're putting on in between—I don't  
22 know if you would call it advertising. I call it  
23 advertising in between programs to inform the public  
24 about the availability of the resources. Three or  
25 four times now when I've been watching WNET and

1 particular on Saturday morning, which think is  
2 important because you get a lot of students I think  
3 watching WNET at that time. Out pops the add about  
4 the resources that are available online and I really  
5 encourage your to continue to do that so that it's--  
6 it's made more accessible and more people will know  
7 about that because the curriculum is excellent as  
8 well. So, thank you for that, and equally so for  
9 AARP. I've noticed the ads and the rainbow flag in  
10 the ads, and the same sex couples in the ads. So,  
11 that is a big step forward, and I was trying to do  
12 the math on, you know membership. 38 million members  
13 and 900,000. What percentage is that?

14  
15 RICHARD WINTON: Oh, I--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: I know it's a--

17 RICHARD WINTON: It's not a question I  
18 was prepared to answer.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: 3.8 would be 10%.

20 RICHARD WINTON: But, yeah, that's  
21 relatively new data. We just collected that. So, we  
22 don't ask upon registration for any self-identifying  
23 gender or orientation--well probably sex information,  
24 but nor gender identity or sexual orientation. So  
25 this is relatively new data that we're trying to

1 start to implement more successfully in the in-fill  
2 programing and using this, you know, really as kind  
3 of a launching point nationally as well as, of  
4 course, here in New York City where this will all be  
5 going on.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: I think it's small  
8 business actually because I think if you have 900,000  
9 willing to identify now, and you're talking about my  
10 generation and older where there's a lot more  
11 hesitancy to be open about their sexuality. I think  
12 you're going to see those numbers increase more and  
13 more as time goes on.

14 RICHARD WINTON: Definitely.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So, thank you for  
16 that also, and I do want to thank Chair Koslowitz for  
17 chairing this meeting and we call her the Kos, and  
18 she's wonderful. She yes--[applause] she's been a  
19 huge supporter of the LGBT community and we love her  
20 very, very much and I want to just extend my best  
21 wishes to Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer as well.

22 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: The very same  
23 here. Tell him to get better quickly. Thank you  
24 very, very much. This is really--this hearing was  
25 very, very informative and I thank you very, vey much



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to everyone that testified today. This meeting is  
adjourned. [gavel]

MALE SPEAKER: She's like grading  
herself. (sic)

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Oh, you go that.  
[laughter] [background comments/pause]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date February 10, 2019