



GLBT  
Historical  
Society  
*museum & archives*

May 3, 2019

**MEDIA CONTACT**  
Mark Sawchuk  
(415) 777-5455 x 8  
mark@glbthistory.org

---

## **Latinx LGBTQ Family Albums in a New Light: Exhibition Documents Queer Kinship**

---

**San Francisco** — A new exhibition opening June 7 at the GLBT Historical Society Museum displays photography, ephemera and text to center both biological and chosen Latinx LGBTQ family connections as structures that build hope and resilience.

The Bay Area's LGBTQ Latinx community has a rich heritage, one that has withstood the ravages of AIDS and the threat of gentrification and displacement. Yet a lack of connection between generations of queer Latinx people persists, partially because stories about the community have focused on specific places, historical events, politics and moments of loss. What is missing is an understanding of how the queer Latinx community has collectively overcome challenges and mobilized by building strong bonds of kinship. This is the story of the *familia*—the family.

“Chosen *Familias*” examines queer Latinx stories by documenting real-time, real-life Latinx relationships. By appropriating and queering the concept of the traditional family photo album, the exhibition reframes documentation of queer mothers, daughters, fathers, children, aunts and uncles. Each of the contributors to the exhibition has shared family photo albums for display, allowing visitors to leaf through the pages and discover the unique constellation of people who make up their *familias*. In addition, the exhibition features a video station that will play interviews with and footage of Bay Area LGBTQ Latinx activists and artists of the past four decades.

The exhibition showcases the ways that queer Latinx people have forged personal and community bonds. Curated by Tina Valentin Aguirre, chair of the GLBT Historical Society's board of directors, “Chosen Familias” expands the definition of LGBTQ family to encompass not just biological relatives, but also mentors, coalition members and the networks of people that are part of the *familia*.

“Chosen *Familias*’ focuses on the ways our contributors document their relationships and personal evolutions in material form,” says Aguirre. “Each of

the contributors shapes and shares their narrative through tangible, visible storytelling. The exhibition helps us to connect the dots between us by featuring intergenerational stories of our queer families. By doing so, we hope to inspire our own Latinx community and those who visit the museum to rethink the meaning of family in ways that honor and empower queer forms of kinship.”

“Chosen *Familias*” opens Friday, June 7, at the GLBT Historical Society Museum, 4127 18th St., San Francisco, with a public reception set for 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The curator will offer introductory remarks, and light refreshments will be served. Admission is \$5.00; free for members of the GLBT Historical Society. Tickets are available online at <https://bit.ly/2Ilm8Of>.

For more information, visit the GLBT Historical Society website at [www.glbthistory.org](http://www.glbthistory.org).

-- end --

### **About the Curator**

**Tina Valentin Aguirre** (genderqueer, they/them pronouns) is a poet, movie director and opera producer, holding a BA in communication from Stanford University. They moved to the Bay Area for in 1986 and found a vibrant queer Latinx community mobilizing against AIDS. In the early 1990s, they helped set up AIDS programs at Mission Neighborhood Health Center’s Clínica Esperanza and Community United in Response to AIDS/SIDA (CURAS). Later, they worked with Queer Latino/a Artists Coalition (QueLACO), the Institute for MultiRacial Justice, and Tenth Muse Productions, producing an art festival, a movie festival and an opera. They currently serve as the associate director, Institutional Giving at the Shanti Project and as the chair of the GLBT Historical Society’s board of directors.

### **About the Museum**

Open since January 2011, **the GLBT Historical Society Museum** is the first stand-alone museum of its kind in the United States. Its Main Gallery features a long-term exhibition on San Francisco LGBTQ history, "Queer Past Becomes Present." Its Front Gallery and Community Gallery host changing exhibitions. The institution also sponsors forums, author talks and other programs.

The museum is a project of the GLBT Historical Society, a public history center and archives that collects, preserves, exhibits and makes accessible to the public materials and knowledge to support and promote understanding of LGBTQ history, culture and arts in all their diversity. Founded in 1985, the society maintains one of the world's largest collections of LGBTQ historical materials.

For more information, visit the GLBT Historical Society website at [www.glbthistory.org](http://www.glbthistory.org).

### **Graphics for Reproduction**

The following graphics may be reproduced free of charge only in conjunction

with coverage of the “Chosen *Familias*” exhibition at the GLBT Historical Society Museum. Credits cited in the captions are mandatory. For high-resolution files, contact Mark Sawchuk at [mark@glbthistory.org](mailto:mark@glbthistory.org).



Curator Tina Valentin Aguirre and exhibition collaborators. Top row: Fabian Echevarria and Shane Zaldivar. Second row: Prado Gomez and Donna Personna. Third row: Rigoberto Marquez, Angel Fabian and Tina Valentin Aguirre. Fourth row: Adela Vazquez, Natalia Vigil and Olga Talamante. Bottom row: Lito Sandoval and Mason J. Smith. Photo by Fabian Echevarria/Bill Jennings.





“Chosen *Familias*” curator Tina Valentin Aguirre. Photo by Fabian Echevarria.



A personal family photo in the “Chosen *Familias*” exhibition depicting curator Tina Valentin Aguirre, second from left, with their mother and brothers. Photo courtesy of Tina Valentin Aguirre.

The GLBT Historical Society | (415) 777-5455 | [info@glbthistory.org](mailto:info@glbthistory.org) | [www.glbthistory.org](http://www.glbthistory.org)

