

# History Happens

News from the



GLBT  
Historical  
Society  
*archives & museum*



## October 2018

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At the Historic Preservation Commission meeting: Shayne Watson, Libby Seifel, Clair Farley, Tré Russell Allen, Roberto Ordeñana, Amanda Hamilton, Terry Beswick, Frances McMillen, Shelley Caltagirone and (kneeling) Nick Large and Jesse Oliver Sanford.



## San Francisco Plans World's First Citywide Effort to Promote LGBTQ Cultural Heritage

by Terry Beswick, Shayne Watson & Ramona Webb

Aiming to curb the effects of gentrification and displacement on LGBTQ heritage and culture in San Francisco, a city-sanctioned group of cultural activists, community organizers and city staff has developed a

series of wide-ranging policy proposals in a draft report recently presented to the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission.

Regarded as the first comprehensive effort of its kind anywhere in the world, the report from the LGBTQ Cultural Heritage Strategy Working Group makes recommendations in three general areas: community services and education; economic opportunity and equity; and arts, culture and heritage. The draft report is available [here](#).

This monumental undertaking was initiated by a 2016 resolution by former San Francisco Supervisor Scott Weiner, now a member of the California State Senate. In addition to addressing housing, services and economic opportunities, the report prioritizes several key proposals crafted by the Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee, a group of about 20 participants which we were honored to cochair over the last year.

Drawing on input from a number of community workshops and meetings, as well as a public survey that received 1,500 responses, our committee established a goal to "honor, protect, and celebrate our rich and diverse LGBTQ+ heritage while nurturing our community of artists and community organizations."

### Five Key Strategies

We enumerated five key strategies: 1) Support and advance LGBTQ cultural districts; 2) establish a permanent Museum of LGBTQ History and Culture; 3) create an LGBTQ Historic Preservation Advisory Group; 4) increase access to affordable housing and workspace for LGBTQ artists; 5) develop LGBTQ focused heritage and arts programming and K-12 and post-secondary curricula and educational materials.

The draft report spells out objectives and action steps to move these strategies forward. Based on feedback from the Historic Preservation Commission and others, the report will be refined in the coming months, then presented for approval to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Along with the Mayor's Office of Transgender Initiatives and the San Francisco LGBT Community Center, the GLBT Historical Society likely will take a leading role in implementing the recommendations.

We hope the Citywide LGBTQ Cultural Heritage Strategy will serve as a blueprint to guide San Francisco municipal policy and budget development to protect and support the heritage and culture of our diverse communities -- in particular those under the greatest economic duress such as the transgender community and queer communities of color. And we trust it will provide a jumping off point for LGBTQ communities in cities worldwide that hope to develop their own preservation and heritage initiatives.

For more information and to submit comments on the draft report, visit

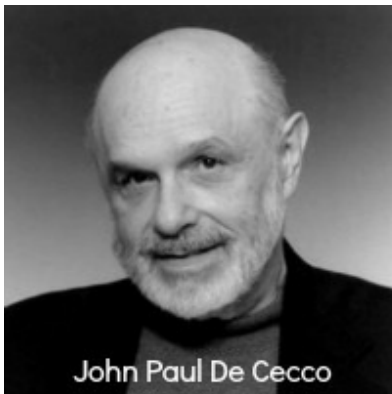
the [San Francisco Planning Department website](#).

*Terry Beswick is executive director of the GLBT Historical Society. Shayne Watson, an architectural historian and preservation planner, is co-author of the [Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco](#) and is founding chair of the GLBT Historical Society's Historic Places Working Group. Ramona Webb is associate artistic director of the [Queer Cultural Center](#), a multiracial community-building organization that fosters the artistic, economic and cultural development of San Francisco's LGBTQ community.*

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## From the Board

### Honoring the Legacy of Dr. John De Cecco



by Tina Valentin Aguirre

Coming up on October 5, our [annual gala](#) gives us an ideal setting for honoring the memory of one of our great benefactors: John Paul De Cecco (1925 - 2017), a renowned researcher and educator in the field of human sexuality and a staunch advocate for social justice. At the gala, we'll formally announce that we're naming our

archives in Dr. De Cecco's honor.

As an academic, Dr. De Cecco published scores of books, articles and edited volumes. He served as editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Homosexuality* from 1975 until 2009, helping establish multidisciplinary scholarship in the field of LGBTQ studies. In the late 1970s, he was the primary founder of the Human Sexuality Studies Program at San Francisco State University, where he remained as director until 1997.

Dr. De Cecco was also an early supporter of the GLBT Historical Society. He regularly made financial donations -- and in 2001, he gave us 71 linear feet of his [academic papers](#). In his will, he designated our archives to receive his personal papers and memorabilia, including a classic professor's tweed jacket that I can picture in a future exhibition.

#### Giving a Historic Gift

Just as importantly, Dr. De Cecco bequeathed the single largest financial contribution we have ever received, making him a founding member of our [Legacy Circle](#). We are gratefully putting these funds to use by expanding our archival staff to better serve researchers and to process our growing collections. Dr. De Cecco's generosity also is enabling us to invest in capacity-building, bringing us closer to the day

when we open our New Museum of LGBTQ History and Culture.

In appreciation of this gift and in recognition of Dr. De Cecco's seminal contributions to the understanding of sexual and gender diversity, our board of directors has passed a resolution naming our collections the John Paul De Cecco Archives of the GLBT Historical Society. The plaque we'll mount at the archives will be unveiled at the gala on October 5, where we will also honor Dr. De Cecco for his life's work.

*Tina Valentin Aguirre is chair of the GLBT Historical Society Board of Directors.*

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## In the Archives

### Digitizing the BAR: Mission Accomplished



by Mark Sawchuk

After many months of careful work, we have completed digitizing the *Bay Area Reporter* from its inception in 1971 to 2005, when the BAR started posting its content online. Reflecting the work of a project archivist, Bill Levay, and a team of indefatigable volunteers, this monumental effort was made possible by \$68,000 in grants from the Bob

Ross Foundation, named after the BAR's founding publisher. Completion of the project will be celebrated at our [annual gala](#) on October 5.

The oldest continuously published LGBTQ weekly in the United States, the *Bay Area Reporter* was previously available only to researchers who could visit our archives in person or were willing to brave the San Francisco Public Library's microfilm collection. It took nearly two full years of time-intensive labor to finish manually scanning the more than 1,500 issues of the paper -- more than 77,000 pages total -- and to make them searchable by keyword using optical character recognition technology.

Having the entire run of the newspaper available at one's fingertips will open up new research opportunities for both casual readers and professional researchers. The BAR's digitized archives are available on two sites that provide slightly differing functionality: the California Digital Newspaper Collection, which offers stronger search capacity, and the Internet Archive, which offers an interface better adapted to browsing. For more information and links to the BAR archives online, visit our [BAR project web page](#).

*Mark Sawchuk is a member of the Communications Working Group of the GLBT Historical Society.*



## Upcoming Events

### Voter Education

#### Art for Everyone: Yes on San Francisco Measure E



Tuesday, October 2

6:30-8:00 PM

Minnesota Street Project

1275 Minnesota St., San Francisco

Free | RSVP required

The Board of Directors of the GLBT Historical Society has endorsed [Proposition E](#), a city measure on the November ballot that will give San Francisco voters an opportunity to increase funding for arts and culture without raising taxes. [Art Care Friends of the San Francisco Arts Commission](#) and the Minnesota Street Project are holding a voter education forum to explain how Proposition E will work to support and enhance the efforts of small cultural nonprofits like the Historical Society. The forum is free and open to the public. Advance registration is required: To RSVP, send an email to [info@artcaresf.org](mailto:info@artcaresf.org). To learn more about the measure, visit the [Yes on E website](#).

### Exhibition Opening

#### A Picture Is a Word: The Posters of Rex Ray



Friday, October 12

7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

\$5.00 | [Free for members](#)

A new exhibition surveying the graphic works of internationally renowned San Francisco queer artist and designer Rex Ray (1956 - 2015). "A Picture is a Word: The Posters of Rex Ray" features posters reflecting the Bay Area music scene and LGBTQ publishing from the 1990s to 2014. Vibrant and subversively accessible, Ray's art effortlessly mixes high and low culture, timeless beauty and post-modern conceptualism.

Curators Cydney Payton and Amy Scholder draw attention to Ray's signature graphics, first developed using a Mac Plus computer long before design applications changed the course of that technology. This distinctive digital style went on to influence subsequent generations of

artists, clients in music and publishing, and their audiences. The opening reception will feature brief remarks by the curators. Light refreshments will be served. Purchase advance tickets [here](#).

## Community Forum

### Fighting Back: Health & Wellness for LGBTQ People



Wednesday, October 24

7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

[Free Tickets](#) | \$5.00 Donation Welcome

The latest in our monthly "Fighting Back" series exploring contemporary queer issues in a historical context, this community forum will outline how social, physical and mental health resources for LGBTQ people first emerged in San Francisco and will address how to further strengthen and care for LGBTQ communities. A panel of historians, health providers, community organizers and advocates will discuss the evolution of LGBTQ health initiatives while underlining how this history can help inform today's resistance movements. Reserve your free ticket [here](#).

## Fundraiser

### Make History! The 2018 GLBT Historical Society Gala



Friday, October 5

VIP Reception: 5:30-6:30 PM

Gala: 6:30-9:30 PM

The Green Room

War Memorial & Performing Arts Center

401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

[Individual Tickets: \\$150 - \\$250](#)

Join us for a spectacular evening featuring Tony-nominated and Obie-winning trans-genre cabaret star [Mx. Justin Vivian Bond](#)! Emceed by Michelle Meow, with a hosted bar, resplendent hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction featuring art, photography, vintage LGBTQ memorabilia, travel, fine dining and other lots. At this year's gala, we'll highlight the vibrant history of our community as we honor archivist, collector and curator Lisbet Tellefsen; the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus on the occasion of their 40th anniversary; and Thomas E. Horn, president and trustee of the Bob Ross Foundation. We'll also celebrate the memory of pioneering LGBTQ studies and human sexuality scholar and educator Dr. John P. De Cecco with a very special recognition. Purchase advance tickets [here](#).

# MAKE HISTORY!

GLBT HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
**GALA 2018**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2018**  
VIP 5:30-6:30 GALA 6:30-9:30

**THE GREEN ROOM**  
SF WAR MEMORIAL &  
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

[CLICK HERE TO BUY TICKETS](#)



GLBT  
Historical  
Society  
museum & archives



Photo: David Kimelman

**FEATURING  
MX JUSTIN VIVIAN BOND**

## Visit Us

### MUSEUM

#### Exhibitions & Programs

4127 18th St.

San Francisco, CA 94114

(415) 621-1107

[www.glbthistory.org/museum](http://www.glbthistory.org/museum)

Monday - Saturday: 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Sunday: Noon - 5:00 PM

### ARCHIVES

#### Collections & Research Center

989 Market St., Lower Level

San Francisco, CA 94103-1708

(415) 777-5455

[www.glbthistory.org/archives](http://www.glbthistory.org/archives)

Call to schedule a research appointment.

**CREDITS.** Feature: Photo courtesy Tré Russell Allen. From the Board: Photo courtesy San Francisco State University. In the Archives: Project archivist Bill Levay scanning issues of the BAR in 2017; photo by Gerard Koskovich. Upcoming Events. Rex Ray Exhibition: Detail of a poster for Paul McCartney at Candlestick Park, San Francisco (2014); Rex Ray Graphic Art Collection, GLBT Historical Society Archives; gift of the estate of Rex Ray. Fighting Back: Lesbian Midwives and Gay Nurses in San Francisco (1978); photographer unidentified; Amber Hollibaugh Collection, GLBT Historical Society Archives

**Editor:** Gerard Koskovich    **Design:** PEPE Creatives

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