
"Your silence will not protect you." - Audre Lorde

CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

REMEMBERING THE ACTIVISM OF SYLVIA RIVERA

By Edwin Roman, Rainbow Alliance Advisor

Homeless LGBTI+ individuals face daunting challenges that stem from the fact that they have greater difficulty finding shelters that accept them. In particular, trans people are at the greatest physical risk due to the lack of acceptance. On May 22, 2019, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development introduced a new rule that would weaken protections for transgender people at homeless shelters. The new rule allows federally funded shelters to deny transgender people entry on the basis of putative religious beliefs. It would also force trans women to share bathrooms and sleeping quarters with cisgender men. Trans women placed in men's housing experience a much higher rate of violence than when housed according to their gender identity. Rolling back federal protections legitimizes the idea that trans people do not deserve legal status and protection, making them much more likely to end up in homeless shelters.

Every holiday season since 2012, the Rainbow Alliance has held a sock drive to assist the homeless LGBTQI+ youth of Sylvia's Place. Sylvia's Place was named after Sylvia Rivera, a Puerto Rican Venezuelan American queer liberation and transgender rights activist. Before Harvey Milk, she was a formidable figure in the gay rights movement. Before Laverne Cox, she was one of the country's first transgender activists who worked tirelessly for justice and civil rights--her activism helped put the "t" in LGBT!

Sylvia Rivera was born Ray Rivera on July 2, 1951 in New York City. Her early life was quite tempestuous. She was abandoned by her father when she was still an infant. When Rivera was three years old, her stepfather threatened to kill her and her mother. Not long after, Rivera's mother killed herself. Rivera was then raised by her grandmother, who did not approve of Rivera's effeminate mannerisms, especially after she began to wear makeup in the fourth grade. Rivera refused to conform to gender norms and began living on the streets at the age of 11, working as a child prostitute. Later, she was taken in by the local community of drag queens, who gave her the name Sylvia. Living on the streets made Rivera tough, but empathetic for people who shared her circumstances.

Rivera is perhaps best known for her activism after the Stonewall riots of 1969. She was a founding member of both the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activists Alliance. However, Rivera's relationship with the

Gay Activists Alliance, which formed as a result of the riots, was not an easy one because they often rejected the role transgendered individuals (the majority of whom were people of color) played in the Stonewall riots. In 1973, during the fourth annual Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally in Washington Square Park, Rivera challenged the gay and lesbian community as she took the stage and was met with an nearly overwhelming chorus of boos. Not one to back down, she gave her now well-known speech, "Y'all Better Quiet Down." She shouted back at the crowd, over the boos, that they don't care about the rights of others:



"You all tell me, go and hide my tail between my legs.

I will no longer put up with this shit.

I have been beaten.

I have had my nose broken.

I have been thrown in jail.

I have lost my job.

I have lost my apartment.

For gay liberation, and you all treat me this way?

What the f**k's wrong with you all?

Think about that!"

Rivera later co-founded the gay and transvestite advocacy organization S.T.A.R. (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries) with her close friend, Marsha P. Johnson. S.T.A.R. focused on giving shelter to queer, homeless youth. Rivera's activism was not exclusively related to gay and trans people as their issues traversed with other issues stemming from poverty and discrimination faced by people of color. In her later years, she became an active member of the Metropolitan Community Church of New York, where she was the director of the food service program and a leader in the MCC-NY Gender People program. MCC-NY's LGBTQI+ youth shelter is called Sylvia's Place in her honor.

Sylvia Rivera died of complications from liver cancer on February 19, 2002.

In May, 2019, it was announced that Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson will be commemorated with a monument in New York's Greenwich Village, near the epicenter of the historic Stonewall riots. The monument was publicly announced on May 30th, in honor of the 50th anniversary of Stonewall.

In the News...

On September 18, *Out* reported that Pulse survivor, Brandon Wolf, delivered a speech to Congress Urging gun reform. "Honor them with action." That was Brandon Wolf's message to the Committee on Ways and Means in the House of Representatives

Read more at: <https://www.out.com/politics/2019/9/18/pulse-survivor-delivers-speech-congress-urging-gun-reform>

On September 18, *Queerty* reported that the Arizona Supreme Court has ruled in favor of two Christian business owners who pre-emptively sued the city of Phoenix so they wouldn't have to abide by its requirement to provide services for a same-sex wedding. In 2016, the "devout Christian" owners of Brush & Nib — an Arizona-based business that makes hand-written calligraphic invitations and signs — sued the city of Phoenix because the city's anti-discrimination ordinance allegedly violated the company's freedom of speech (ie. their right to refuse service to same-sex couples).

Read more at: <https://www.queerty.com/arizona-supreme-court-allows-business-discriminate-gay-couples-20190917>

On September 5, 2019, *The Advocate* reported that Drag Artist Marti Gould Cummings Is Running for N.Y. City Council. If elected, Cummings would be the first drag artist to be sworn into public office in the state of New York, and the second in the country following the victory of Los Angeles-based drag queen Maebe A. Girl, who was elected to the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council in April. José Sarria, who made history in 1961 for being the first out candidate to vie for office in the country, was also a drag performer.

Read more at: <https://www.advocate.com/politics/2019/9/05/drag-artist-marti-gould-cummings-running-ny-city-council>

THE MUSIC OF LA LUPE

By Edwin Roman, Rainbow Alliance Advisor



The Queen of Latin Soul, La Lupe, and a long-time gay icon, was decades ahead of her time and often described as the first performance artist.

La Lupe was born Lupe Victoria Yolí in Santiago de Cuba in 1936.

In 1954, Lupe skipped school to sing a bolero of Olga Guillot's, called "*Miénteme*" ("Lie to Me") on a radio contest that invited fans to sing imitations of their favorite stars. She won the competition. Lupe's family moved to Havana in 1955, where she was enrolled at the University of Havana to become a teacher.

Lupe got married in 1958 and formed a musical trio, Tropicuba, with her husband Eulogio "Yoyo" Reyes and another female singer. In 1960 her marriage, as well as the group, broke

up. She began to perform her own act at a small nightclub in Havana, La Red, which had a distinguished clientele. She acquired a devoted following, which included Ernest Hemingway, Tennessee Williams, Simone de Beauvoir and Marlon Brando. Lupe recorded her first album, *Con El Diablo En El Cuerpo* (*With the devil in the body*), in 1960. The following year she made her first television appearance on Puerto Rican television which caused a stir due to her frenzied, vibrant performance.

After difficulties with the Fidel Castro Government -- "Castro took my club, my money, my car," she told *Look* magazine in 1971 -- she was exiled to México, but soon moved to New York City to work with Mongo Santamaría. In New York City, Lupe performed at a cabaret named La Berraca and restarted her career, making more than 10 records in five years. Lupe's passionate performances covered a wide range of music that included *son montuno*, *bolero*, *boogaloo*, *merengue*, *bomba* and *plena*. For most of the 1960's she was the most acclaimed Latina singer in New York City due, in part, to her partnership with Tito Puente.

In the mid-1970's she moved to Puerto Rico, where she played concerts and television programs. She later returned to New York City, but her career had declined and her second husband's medical expenses exhausted her savings. By the early 1980's she was living on public assistance and during this time, she also attended Lehman College. In 1984, she took a fall that injured her spine. Not long after that, her home burned down. She sang with Tito Puente for the last time in 1985 at a benefit concert to help pay her expenses.

In the late 1980s, Lupe began singing Christian music, performing regularly at *Iglesia Pentecostal el Fin Se Acerca* in the Bronx. She also recorded a series of albums with devotional lyrics.

La Lupe died on February 28, 1992 at Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx. She was 53 years old.

In 2002, New York City renamed East 140th Street in The Bronx as La Lupe Way in her memory.

Selected Discography

Con El Diablo en El Cuerpo 1960

Mongo introduces La Lupe 1963

The King Swings, The Incredible Lupe Sings 1965 (with Tito Puente)

Tú y Yo 1965 (with Tito Puente)

The King and I 1967 (with Tito Puente)

The Queen does her own thing 1967

Two Sides of La Lupe 1968

Queen of Latin Soul 1968

La Lupe is The Queen 1969

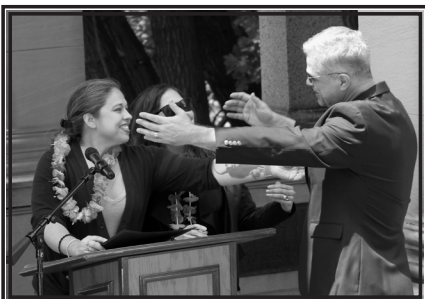
Definitely La Yiyiyi 1969

That Genius Called The Queen 1970



SCENES FROM LAVENDER GRADUATION 2019

The first known Lavender Graduation ceremony was created by Dr. Ronni Sanlo, a Jewish Lesbian, in 1995, who was not allowed to attend the graduations of her biological children because of her sexual orientation. This helped her to understand the pain felt by LGBTQI+ students at graduation. The 2019 Lavender Graduation, held on May 24, 2019, was a time for our LGBTQI+ students to celebrate themselves and one another with the support of the college.



THE BCC LGBTQI+ RESOURCE ROOM PRESENTS

SAFE SPACE



FALL 2019 TRAINING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2019 | 12:00 - 2:00 P.M.
LANGUAGE HALL ROOM 001 (FACULTY & STAFF LOUNGE)

Come to a day of training to become an ally to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual or Questioning Students.

SIGN UP ONLINE AT:

<https://bit.ly/2ZmDGUA>

Check social media or the BCC Broadcast for the direct link



Have additional questions?
Contact the LGBTQI+ Resource
Room at X5300



First Meeting of the Fall 2019 Semester

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2019 | 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. | ROSCOE BROWN STUDENT CENTER ROOM 301

The Rainbow Alliance Club meets every Friday in RBSC 301 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. except for the days detailed below.



Film: *Before Night Falls*
Friday, September 20, 2019
1:00-3:00 p.m. | Meister 226

The Rainbow Alliance celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month with a showing of *Before Night Falls*, the film based on the autobiography of Cuban poet and novelist, Reinaldo Arenas. Popcorn will be served.



EVENT: *Club Fair*
Thursday, September 26, 2019
12:00-1:30 p.m. | On the Quad!

Meet the Rainbow Alliance, the QueerLit Book Club and more than 35 other clubs and organizations that connect you to the academic, cultural, and social aspects of campus life. If it rains, the fair will be held in Colston Lower Level.



HALLOWEEN MOVIE: *Batman: Hush*
Friday, October 25, 2019
1:00-3:00 p.m. | Meister 226

The Rainbow Alliance celebrates Halloween with a showing of the animated movie, *Batman: Hush*, based on the graphic novel of the same name. Popcorn and Halloween candy will be served.



Workshop: *Safe Space Training*
Wednesday, October 30, 2019
12:00 - 2:00 p.m. | Language Hall 001

Come to a day of EDUCATION to become an ally to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual or Questioning Students. Open to all students, faculty and staff. ASAP approved workshop.



Workshop: *Scholarships 101*
Friday, November 15, 2019
1:00-3:00 p.m. | Meister 226

Learn the step-by-step process of writing a scholarship essay and how to find scholarships. Open to all students. ASAP approved workshop.

7th Annual Holiday Sock Drive

The Rainbow Alliance will be collecting new socks for the homeless LGBTQ youth of Sylvia's Place starting Friday, November 22, and up to Friday, December 13. Socks may be dropped off at the LGBTQI+ Resource Room in RBSC 301, Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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MISSION

The LGBTQI + Resource Room at Bronx Community College works to foster an inclusive, safe, and welcoming environment for students, faculty, and staff of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. The LGBTQI + Resource Room aims to sustain visibility and a sense of community by providing education, programming, and support services on campus.

Weekly !

- MONDAYS

Pride Slice

A weekly discussion series focusing on different LGBTQI+ topics and concerns. Pizza is provided to all who attend, and students are invited to offer topic suggestions for ongoing programming. 12-2 p.m. in RBSC 301.



- TUESDAYS

LGBTQI+ Support Group

Share. Express. Support. Let's come together to express thoughts, hopes, and feelings with other like minded people. 4-5 p.m. If you are interested please visit RBSC 301.



- FRIDAYS

BCC QueerLit Book Club

Provides an opportunity for students to read and discuss queer literature of various genres, inspiring their own creative works. 11a.m. -1 p.m. in RBSC 301.



Rainbow Alliance Club

The Rainbow Alliance provides resources and extracurricular activities that address the needs of LGBTQI+ students as well as the greater campus community. 1-3 p.m. in RBSC 301.



The LGBTQI+ Resource Room is open five days a week 9a.m.-5p.m. except on Thursdays when it is open until 8p.m. and Fridays until 7p.m. when class is in session

Students, faculty and staff are always welcome to drop-in at the above mentioned days and times