

LOUD!

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

THE LGBTQI+ RESOURCE ROOM CELEBRATES FIVE YEARS!

LGBTQI+ PRIDE, SYMBOLS, AND FLAGS

By Edwin Roman, Rainbow Alliance Advisor

Pride is a vital cultural concept within the LGBTQI+ community that embodies a resistance to discrimination and violence through unity, collectivity, and identity. The associated symbolism conveys to LGBTQI+ individuals that they are welcomed and valued as members of the community. The symbols have a varied history with some originating within the LGBTQI+ community and others stemming from outside influences. One of the earliest symbols in western culture was the green carnation popularized by writer Oscar Wilde who used it as an indication of being gay within his social circle.

The 1970s: Symbols and the First Pride Flag

Nazi concentration camps, during World War II, identified gay men and lesbians with pink and black triangles. Gay rights organizations in the early 1970s reclaimed these symbols to foster awareness of continued persecution and to memorialize the lives of those lost during the Holocaust. The early 1970s also saw the Gay Activist Alliance using the lowercase letter lambda (λ) from the Greek alphabet as a symbol of gay activism. The lowercase lambda is a symbol of balance and energy that has an association with Spartan soldiers as an army united against a common persecutor. In 1974, the International Gay Rights Congress made the lambda an international symbol of gay rights. Today many organizations, including Lambda Legal, use the letter to convey they are a safe place for the LGBTQI+ community. When I was a student at John Jay College in the late 1980s, The Lambda Society was the LGBTQI+ club on campus.



Artist and activist Gilbert Baker is credited with designing the very first rainbow pride flag in 1978 after he was approached by Harvey Milk, the first openly gay politician elected to public office in California, to create a symbol of pride for the community. Baker noted, "Flags are about proclaiming power." According to a 1985 article in the *Bay Area Reporter*, Baker, "chose the rainbow motif because of its associations with the hippie movement of the Sixties but he notes that the use of the design dates all the way back to ancient Egypt." The brotherhood flag which was popular with the world peace movements of the 1960s and features five horizontal stripes

to represent different races: red, white, brown, yellow, and black.

The rainbow pride flag was first flown in San Francisco's United Nations Plaza in June of 1978. Each color has a meaning:



red for vitality, orange for healing, yellow for sunlight, green for nature, indigo for harmony, and violet for spirit. The original rainbow pride flag also included the colors hot pink, representing sexuality, and turquoise, representing art. The hot pink was removed because the fabric and dye in that color was difficult to find at that time which led to the removal of turquoise to make it appear more symmetrical when hanging vertically.

The 1990s and Onward

Activist Michael Page created the bisexual pride flag in 1998 as part of an effort to launch an annual bisexuality visibility day. The flag was created in response to the bigotry and marginalization experienced by bisexual individuals in both the hetero and LGBTQI+ communities. The colors represent the following: pink represents attraction to people of the same gender; blue represents an attraction to those of an opposite or different gender; and purple represents having an attraction to two or more genders.



The transgender pride flag, which first flew at a pride parade in Phoenix, Arizona in 2000, was designed by transgender woman and Navy veteran Monica Helms. The colors on the flag incorporate light blue, the traditional color for baby boys, pink, the traditional color for baby girls, and white which represents individuals transitioning as well as those who feel they have a neutral or no gender, and those who are intersex. Helms consciously chose the pattern so that the flag would look the same regardless of what direction it is displayed. The prototype is now located at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.



The first modern lesbian pride flag was created in 2010 by

designer Natalie McCray. Often referred to as the "Lipstick Lesbian Flag", it consisted of various shades of pink and red as well as a white stripe. While some embraced McCray's initial design, it was criticized for excluding more masculine-ex-



pressing lesbians. The flag seen here was redesigned in 2018 by blogger Emily Gwen who added shades of orange to represent the togetherness of feminine and masculine expressing lesbians, as well as those who are trans or gender non-conforming.

The non-binary pride flag was created in 2014 by designer Kye Rowan to represent non-binary



people whose gender identities does not fit within traditional archetypes. Yellow represents people whose gender doesn't exist within the cisgender binary (i.e., the traditional male and female gender identities assigned at birth). White represents people with all or many genders, purple represents people with mixed genders, and black represents people who identify as not having any gender.

The Philadelphia Office of LGBT Affairs, in response to the long history of discrimination and exclusion toward Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) within predominantly White LGBTQI+ spaces, created the Philadelphia Pride flag in 2017. The flag added black and brown stripes to the Rainbow



Pride flag to recognize and uplift People of Color in LGBTQI+ communities.

Non-binary designer Daniel Quasar created the progress flag in 2018 which combines the very recognizable rainbow flag with the Philadelphia Pride and transgender flags to celebrate the diversity of the modern-day LGBTQ+ community while simultaneously calling for a more inclusive society.



In the News...

HATE WATCH

Transphobia Runs Amok at Presidential Debate

The Advocate reported that the second Republican presidential debate of 2023 was rampant with anti-transgender sentiment, with trans people being called "mentally ill" and promises from candidates to "ban gender-affirming health care."

Read more at: <https://rb.gy/yi1c3>

A Library in Virginia Will Remain Open Temporarily as the Community it Serves Continues to Grapple with a Push to Remove LGBTQI+ Books

AP News reported that the historic Samuels Public Library in Front Royal, Virginia has received support that will keep its doors open for at least three months, thanks to a temporary funding reprieve passed by the Warren County Board of Supervisors. This move grants the library and the county more time to negotiate the library's control and its policy on LGBTQI+ books for young readers.

Read more at: <https://rb.gy/97brh>

THE ARTS

Now Showing at the Leslie-Lohman Museum:

Christian Walker: The Profane and the Poignant

Christian Walker: The Profane and the Poignant is the first museum exhibition surveying the work of artist, critic, and curator Christian Walker (1953-2003). Active in Boston and Atlanta from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s, Walker was a path making Black, gay photographer who made compelling and experimental work about queer sexuality, race, and their intersections. Walker's artworks, criticism, and exhibition-making addressed myriad subjects, including queer public sex, interracial desire, HIV/AIDS, censorship, drug use, and Blackness and whiteness in public and private image cultures. The exhibition is curated by Jackson Davidow and Noam Parness and is showing until January 7, 2024

Read more at: <https://rb.gy/p5n5m>

Group Moving to Create Museum Focused on Massachusetts LGBTQ+ Art and History

Channel 10 Boston reported that a group is moving to create Boston's first museum dedicated to LGBTQ+ art and history. The Boston LGBTQ Museum of Art, History and Culture would celebrate the history of the community in Massachusetts and support its queer artists. Organizers have yet to select a location for the museum but its first exhibit, set for spring, is planned.

Read more at: <https://rb.gy/3cjp7>

REMEMBERING WITH LOVE

The widespread violence against transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming people continues. Many of those killed are women of color, signifying an intersection of racism, transphobia, and sexism. The violence has likely been fostered by targeted attacks in the media as well as in some state legislatures that have been advancing anti-LGBTQI+ legislation. Since 2013, the **Human Rights Campaign** has tracked incidents of fatal transgender violence and providing action items that can help end the violence. The Bronx Community College LGBTQI+ Resource Room wants to remember those lost to the violence as of September 2023 with love. These victims were real people who did not deserve to have their lives taken from them.

Jasmine "Star" Mack's sister, Pamela Witherspoon, said that Jasmine was "a sweet person." She also said that her sister "loved to sing gospel songs and was an excellent actor." The 36-year-old Black transgender woman who was killed in Washington, D.C. on January 7, 2023.

According to local news, **KC Johnson's** partner Bulla Brodzinski remembered her as being "kind and caring." The 27-year-old white transgender woman who was killed in Wilmington, North Carolina on January 14, 2023, after being declared missing on January 13.

Unique Banks, a 21-year-old Latina trans woman, was killed in a mass shooting along with her mother, Alexandra Olmo, on January 23, 2023, in Chicago. Unique's father Omar Burgos said that his "heart is torn apart" and that he had hoped for her to live with him in Florida. Three other people, including two other trans women, were also attacked during the shooting, leaving them in critical condition.

On a GoFundMe page for **Zachee Imanitwihah's** funeral expenses, the Black transgender woman was described as someone who was "well-loved by family, friends, and coworkers, and that she lived her life bravely and authentically." She immigrated to the U.S. from Rwanda and was killed on February 3, 2023, in Louisville, Kentucky in the parking lot of her workplace.

Maria Jose Rivera Rivera, a 22-year-old Latina transgender woman, was described by her immigration lawyer as "lively, funny, and dynamic" and "a joy to work with." On January 21, 2023, Maria Jose was found fatally shot in Houston, one of two people found dead at an apartment complex in an apparent murder-suicide. Her death is at least the fifth violent killing of a transgender or gender non-conforming person in 2023.

In a GoFundMe started to help cover funeral costs for **Chashay Henderson**, the 31-year-old Black transgender woman is described as "a bubbly spirit with a down to earth, tell it like it is personality," who was "as beautiful as can be, inside and out." The GoFundMe also notes that Cashay is survived by her father, mother, sister, and niece, as well as other family and "many, many friends." Chashay was shot in Milwaukee on February 26, 2023.

Tortuguita, a 26-year-old Indigenous queer and non-binary environmental activist and community organizer, is remembered as a "radiant, joyful, beloved community member" who "brought an indescribable jubilation to each and every moment of their life," and "fought tirelessly to honor and protect the sacred land of the Weelaunee Forest. Tortuguita was shot and killed by Georgia state troopers in Atlanta, Georgia on January 18, 2023 during an ongoing protest alongside other self-described "forest defender" protestors against a proposed \$90 million, 85-acre police training facility deemed "Cop City" by activists, slated to be built in the Weelaunee Forest in Atlanta.

Tasiyah Woodland was a Black "high-spirited" transgender woman who was "protective of those she loved." On a GoFundMe page, Tasiyah's aunt, Lizzy Woodland, said "she made everyone around her know that they were loved." Tasiyah was tragically killed in St. Mary's County, Maryland on March 24, 2023.

Ashley Burton was a 37-year-old Black transgender woman who was described as "a courageous fighter" by her cousin. Her brother Patrick praised her authenticity as a trans woman saying, "The way my sibling moved in life, it was...take it or leave it. 'This is how I am.' You can respect it or neglect it, but Ashley put it out there and let that person know. It's not going to be a secret." Ashley was killed in Atlanta Georgia on April 11, 2023.

Koko Da Doll was a 35-year-old Black transgender woman, a successful rapper who was working on new music, and starred in the barrier-breaking, award-winning Sundance Film Festival documentary, "Kokomo City." Tragically, Koko was found shot to death near an Atlanta shopping plaza on April 18.

Banko Brown was a 24-year-old Black trans man who is remembered as being "brilliant" and as someone who made "everybody laugh." Julia Arroyo, the co-executive director of the Young Women's Freedom Center where Brown was working as a community organizing intern, said Banko "made friends easily and connected deeply with others." On April 27, 2023, he was killed by an armed security guard in San Francisco after an altercation with an armed security guard at a local Walgreens store.

Ashia Davis was a 34-year-old Black transgender woman from Detroit who was full of joy, devoted to her faith, and a loving dog owner to a Yorkie named Clyde. On June 2, 2023, the second day of Pride Month, Ashia was found dead in a Highland Park hotel room.. Allona Anderson, Ashia's good friend who is also transgender, spoke to FOX2 News and said they had known each other since they were children. "And we loved each other. That was a good friend of mine."

Chanell Perez Ortiz, a 29-year-old Puerto Rican transgender woman, was a cosmetologist. She was interested in fashion, makeup and hair styles. She shared quotes from French designer Coco Chanel. According to PGH Lesbian, Channel "shared a lot of playful, fun content, and clearly had strong friendships with people who are grieving her deeply." Channel was killed in Carolina, Puerto Rico, on June 25, 2023.

Jacob Williamson, an 18-year-old transgender man, worked at a local Waffle House and was beloved by coworkers and even had moved in with one of them about a month prior to his death, according to his coworker's TikTok account. Jacob loved to sing and draw. Jacob was killed in Monroe, South Carolina, on June 30, 2023.

Camdyn Rider, a 21-year-old white transgender man, was eight months pregnant at the time of his murder which occurred on July 21, 2023, outside his home in Winter Park, Florida. Camdyn had recently posted on Facebook about how excited he was to welcome a child into the world.

According to news reports, **Camdyn** was killed by his partner, Riley Groover, during an argument. Groover then died by suicide. Sheriff's deputies investigating the murder revealed that Groover had a "history of violence," and that prior domestic violence incidents had not been reported.

According to reports, **DéVonnie J'Rae Johnson** - a 28-year-old Black transgender woman - was a vibrant artist who was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She had moved to Los Angeles in order to transition. Those who knew her called her "a well-loved and cherished friend and member of the community." DéVonnie was shot and killed on August 7, 2023, during an altercation with a security guard just one day after her birthday, according to news reports and social media.

Thomas 'Tom-Tom' Robertson, a 28-year-old Black gender non-conforming person, was working as a cook at a local IHOP restaurant in East Chicago, Indiana, having relocated there from Chicago, Illinois, where he was born and raised. On August 17, 2023, Thomas and a 25-year-old individual were victims of a fatal shooting in Calumet City, Indiana.

TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20 | RBSC 311A | 12:00 -1:30PM

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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 !

THE LGBTQI+ RESOURCE ROOM, LOCATED IN THE ROSCOE BROWN STUDENT CENTER IN ROOM 312, IS OPEN MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY 12-5PM, AND FRIDAY 1-4PM.

WEDNESDAYS

LGBTQI+ Support Group | 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Share. Express. Support. Let's come together to express thoughts, hopes, and feelings with other like-minded people. Meets virtually through Zoom. To gain access please email LGBTQI@bcc.cuny.edu or Emalinda.McSpadden@bcc.cuny.edu.

THURSDAYS

Rainbow Alliance Club | 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

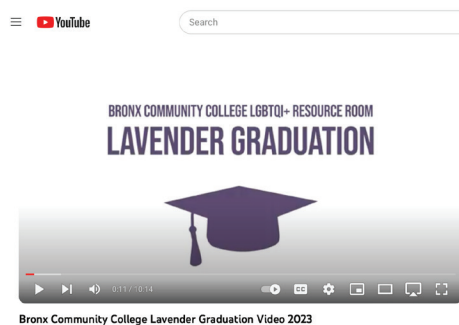
The Rainbow Alliance, the oldest LGBTQI+ club on campus, provides extracurricular cultural activities that address the needs of LGBTQI+ students as well as the greater campus community. This group meets in person in the Roscoe Brown Student Center Room 312. Please e-mail edwin.roman@bcc.cuny.edu.

Queer Lit Book Club | 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Provides an opportunity for students to read and discuss queer literature of various genres and examine the ways in which this literature has inspired students' own creative works. Please email LGBTQI@bcc.cuny.edu or Emalinda.McSpadden@bcc.cuny.edu.

Black and Queer

Black & Queer is an events based group for and by queer-identifying BCC students of the African Diaspora. Topics and events typically focus on the intersectionalities of Blackness, queerness, and a host of others experienced by students at BCC. Please email LGBTQI@bcc.cuny.edu.



Bronx Community College Lavender Graduation Video 2023

**BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE
2023
LAVENDER
GRADUATION
VIDEO
AT
<https://rb.gy/084d6>**

We are looking for STUDENT writing for the Spring 2024 issue of Loud! If you are interested in submitting an article please send an e-mail to edwin.roman@bcc.cuny.edu.