



Lavender Notes

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January 2021 - Volume 27 Issue 1

Tribute to a Bay Area Icon

On the Passing of Lenn Keller

Lenn Keller, a well-known photographer in the LGBTQ+ community and co-founder of the Bay Area Lesbian Archives, passed away on Wednesday, 16th December. Five days earlier, dozens of her close friends and family members held a recorded Zoom tribute for her to see as proof of the impact she'd had on so many. According to friends, she was not strong enough to take phone calls or visits during those last two weeks. She will be missed by friends, family members and colleagues in the Bay Area and far beyond.



Lenn, age 8; wielding her camera in the '80s; passing the symbolic torch to younger black lesbians

Lenn's family and friends have agreed to hold a virtual memorial celebration on Sunday afternoon, 31st of January, at a time that will be most workable for most people who have weekends off. For those who are interested in more details, keep checking the Bay Area Lesbian Archives (BALA) Facebook page for details on exact times, as well as Zoom coordinates for attending, as soon as details become available. In addition, an in-person celebration with music and dancing will be organized post-pandemic.

If anybody wants to give a donation in Lenn's memory, there is a yellow "Donate" button on the

BALA website

(<https://www.bayarealesbianarchives.org/>). All donations will help support Lenn's dream of a "home of our own" for the archives (yellow "donate" button, plus one of Lenn's archived photos in this website screen-shot):



For those who would like more information about her amazing life, check out these links:

<https://www.berkeleyside.com/2020/12/21/remembering-lenn-keller-founder-of-bay-area-lesbian-archives>

<https://lavenderseniors.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Lavender-Notes-September-2019.pdf>

STORIES OF OUR LIVES

Anna Maria Flechero

Self-described as an Afro-Filipina Latin-Jazz musician, she turned what began as a stormy nightmarish childhood into a life filled with love, music, children, marriage, home ownership and many other parts of the "American dream" that might have eluded anyone less resourceful.

Born in San Francisco in July of 1948, Anna Maria was the youngest of four siblings – two brothers and a sister – from an African-American mother who never worked outside the home and a father who was an immigrant from the Philippines, who joined the Army in 1945.

"To say that my childhood was rough would be a serious understatement," Anna Maria recalls. "We lived in the projects of Valencia Gardens in a pretty dysfunctional and non-communicative family. My Dad had been disowned by his Filipino family for marrying a black woman and never returning to Manila. My Mom was pretty much an alcoholic with severe mental health issues that seemed to require her being in Agnews State Hospital – also known as 'The Great Asylum for the Insane' in San Jose and Napa State Hospital in Napa from time to time. We were never really told why she disappeared like that so often. As a result, my siblings and I were all pretty damaged early on."

Anna Maria and her siblings bounced back and forth between their mother (known as "Little Momma") and their maternal grandmother (known as "Big Momma"), which resulted in a lack of continuity in education, child-rearing practices and a general sense of security.

"My mother never cooked for us, never told us she loved us, we never had birthday parties and all the other childhood memories other kids might have experienced," Anna Maria says. "Dad was a barber who worked in Chinatown, so sometimes he'd bring home frog legs, fish or other Chinese food, but otherwise we were on our own. Survival was the name of the game. I went to two different elementary schools early on – where I did fairly well until junior



Anna Maria and older sister

high school. The home situation was so bad that I would often run and hide from my mother when she would go off on me in one of her drunken rages. I would run to Miss Watson's house or to the Jones's until she might sober up a bit."

Unfortunately, Anna Maria and her siblings all started coping with their situation via alcohol and drug abuse at an early age – she started drinking by age 10 or 11.

"By the time I was 13, I had become pretty much unmanageable – fits of rage at the drop of a hat. I was incarcerated by the California Youth Authority," Anna Maria reports, "finding myself at the Ventura School for Girls. Oddly enough, it was in that context that I first had the security of three meals a day, a regular schedule and consistent discipline. I had never been able to remain in a regular high school, but did get my GED through the Adolfo Camarillo High School after nearly three years in CYA custody. That stability resulted in my finally getting my wits about me – up to a point, at least."

Another of the scary parts of her childhood had to do with sporadic exposures to religion.

"My mother was a sanctified Pentecostal, who repeatedly got 'saved'," Anna Maria recounts. "I would go with her to this cult preacher, A.A. Allen, who would come into town, set up this big tent and deliver spirits and demons from people. They would fall out, convulsing, foaming at the mouth, speaking in tongues, and so on – terrifying for the shy and angry child that I was. They'd lay hands on Little Momma, casting out the devils. Then the next time they'd show up in town, she would've back-slid and need to be saved again! Big Momma's Baptist religion was scary, too, since they talked about casting out homosexuals and catching them on fire! Boom, that was not for me, either! Though I don't really believe in the hypocrisy of much organized religion, something like Love Center might work for me at some point!"

Though she had been aware of her attraction for other girls as early as junior high, it was only during her years under CYA supervision – surrounded by other girls – that she found another female who felt the way she did.

"At the youth authority campus, you form your own little family," Anna Maria recalls. "I could finally participate in activities without feeling shame. Some of the teachers, staff and inmates became like your parents, your aunts and uncles away from home. That was when I hooked up with Pearl, delighted to find a kindred spirit as a teenager, something that probably happens easily with other kids from a normal family background in a regular high school finding a 'best friend'."

She was nearly 17 when she left Adolfo Camarillo High School with her GED, after which she spent some time "cleaning up" at Los Guilicos and Perkins Juvenile facilities in Santa Rosa.

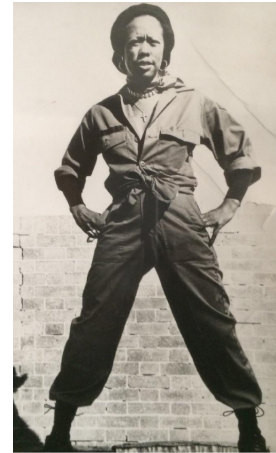
"Those programs helped me get out of most of my bad habits," Anna Maria says, "though my secret and isolating relationship with meth carried on for years afterward. It was during that time that I got heavily involved in what wound up being 44 years in workforce development, beginning with the Neighborhood Youth Corps down in the Tenderloin. I found myself surrounded

by openly-gay people who encouraged me to change my life around. They truly helped me pull my life together."

She changed her name and presentation off-and-on for 3-4 years while there in the Tenderloin – becoming "Ray" when she was not at work.

"A gay friend – who knew all the greatest places to find men's clothes took me on a shopping spree and I had all the clothes I needed to pass as 'Ray'," Anna Maria recalls. "When I showed up at Big Momma's house as 'Ray' in total drag, she never really said anything. She just shrugged her shoulders. I guess that, in comparison to my three siblings – all who eventually died of some drug- or alcohol-related condition – my identifying as a man was easy to take."

She worked for about ten years with what is now called the California Employment Development Department (EDD) and later for three decades in workforce development at Advocates for Women, Women in Apprenticeship and Control Data Institute. During her tenure at Control Data, she decided she needed to take time to get rid of her last remaining addiction: meth. She subsequently developed a career with Alameda County Department of Social Services as Employment Supervisor for a team of Career Development Specialist and Job Developers.



Anna Maria in her 20s

"After I had to identify the body of my older alcoholic brother, I realized I couldn't keep up my meth addiction or I would wind up in the morgue like him. I asked Control Data for a month off to enter the recovery program at Merritt Peralta Institute," Anna Maria recalls. "I came out of that 28-day program and remained squeaky clean for years. It was right after that important transformation – at age 39 – that I met my wife, Ayanna. We have been together now for 33 years!"

Anna Maria's experiences with music, children and love have played important roles in her evolution, all intersecting and overlapping at various points throughout her life.

"My mother was a terrific pianist and my oldest brother was a singer," she recalls, "My grandmother sent me for piano lessons when I was nine or ten years old, though I never learned how to read music or continue those music lessons. Mrs. Foster – who I liked – had the habit of whacking me across the knuckles if I made a mistake. So I finally dealt with my rage by attacking her, which ended that – a frequent problem in my early life. My brother later started a vocal group, for which I played the piano. I play and compose by ear. For my compositions, I turned to electronic music, learned how to use Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) software. Then the pre-recording was given to the producer for post-production, putting in the right chords, timing and enhancements."

She has been involved in several award-winning musical ensembles over the years. Recipient of the Bay Area Blues Society Best Jazz Group of the Year award, she has recorded and performed with numerous distinguished resident and international musicians, e.g., Nelson Braxton, Lewis Nash, David Williams, and Billy Higgins, as well as the late bebop jazz pianist and

luminary, Cedar Walton. Her performances include many international, national and Bay Area venues. She has been involved in the San Francisco Filipino American Jazz Festival, Pacifica's Fog Fest and the Streets of Brentwood.

"In 1973, I began a band with another guy, the singer, which started out with just five pieces," Anna Maria says. "We increased to an 11-piece Latin-Jazz band with me as the keyboard player. I was the only woman – out as a lesbian, of course, to make sure none of the guys got any wrong ideas. Though there was a period – when I was raising three boys – that I didn't work openly in women-only venues, I have performed over the years at such places as the Women's Building, Artemis, Peg's Place, La Peña, Angelicas, Fenix, Savanna Jazz, Yoshi's and Mama Bear's. In fact, it was during a Mama Bear's gig that I met Ayanna, the love of my life!"



Anna Maria at the Mike, Bay Area Blues Society "Jazz Group of the Year" Award and in Promotional website photo

Anna Maria has also produced two CDs – both "labors of love" – one in 2004 ("Journey into the Fourteenth Hour") and one four years later in 2008 ("Into the Fourteenth Hour"). She's also produced a single, "Stand Up for Peace" in 2018. In addition, she has performed internationally in Lithuania, Japan and the Philippines, her father's homeland, in 2014 and 2015. Her trips to the Philippines had an interesting genesis.

"At one point, I started receiving Facebook messages from someone claiming to be related to me," Anna Maria reports. "Although I dismissed the messages initially as just a misguided fan, she ultimately sent me some photos I recognized from my father's own photo collection. It turns out she IS my cousin, daughter of my father's brother, someone who had somewhat disowned him because he'd never returned home. I decided it was time to bridge the gap and find out a bit more about my Filipina roots. I went there two years in a row, performing at the West Philippine Sea Jazz and Blues Festival at the Birdland Beach Club resort in Bolinao, as well as various clubs and hotels in Manila. It was such a pleasure to meet some of my relatives who I'd presumed wanted nothing to do with me. We remain in touch."



Making the Philippine connection: Father as an adult – and as a child (far left in group photo)

Meanwhile, Anna Maria has raised six of other people's children in two separate families.

"When I was with one of my first long-term girlfriends, I became close with her mother and two younger sisters," Anna Maria recalls. "Before the mother died of cancer, she asked us if we would raise the two sisters, ages 7 and 9. Thus began my first foray into parenthood. We felt we had to go a bit underground to avoid dealing with authorities like Child Protective Services, since they may not have allowed such young – never mind lesbian – women to raise these kids. We got jobs, rented a house, put the girls in Catholic school, made sure they had three square meals a day and never looked back. Though my girlfriend ultimately decided to marry a man – and we broke up – we are still close friends today. Each of us knows where the other came from and that's a rare connection. Those 'girls,' by the way, are now 60 and 58 years old!"

Her second family came about from rearing of two great-nephews and a great niece.

"Since my niece was strung out on drugs at the time, I agreed to 'temporarily' take care of her three children," Anna Maria recalls. "Since the first child – at age four – had been put into foster care already when I returned from some gigs in Japan – the other two hadn't been born yet – I felt I had to make a life decision – to raise him and, subsequently, his two younger siblings, both of whom I took home straight from the hospital delivery room and raised like my own."

Anna Maria moved from San Francisco's Mission District to the East Bay with the children when things started feeling a bit unsafe there, particularly in the neighborhood they'd been living in.

"Some of my 11-year-old son's friends were getting shot in 'drive-bys' at the time and he was afraid to go to school," Anna Maria says. "So we moved to the Claremont section of Oakland, then Pinole and finally wound up here in El Sobrante. Another great-niece I had to ask to leave, because she was becoming unmanageable, getting too heavy into alcohol. I believe she's finally pulling it together, I hear by the grapevine – though in many ways, it felt like I was looking in a rear-view mirror when I watched how oblivious she was to what she was doing."

After holding a commitment ceremony in 1993 and a private “legal” wedding ceremony in 2014, Anna Maria and Ayanna held a big formal wedding – attended by over 100 people – at the Rockefeller Lodge in San Pablo in 2015. All of Anna Maria’s children and their spouses attended that wedding.



The “Official” Wedding in 2014



The Celebratory Wedding – complete with tuxes and gowns – at Rockefeller Lodge in 2015

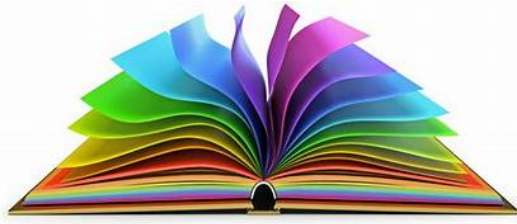
Soon after their return from the last trip to the Philippines, re-connecting with family and performing gigs in 2015, Anna Maria started noticing she had all-too-frequent sore throats that were affecting her ability to sing. Once again, she had to turn into survivor mode.

“After a series of medical treatments that didn’t seem to help my throat, there was finally a biopsy done on my epiglottis, the all-too-important flap that separates the airways to the larynx from the esophagus to the stomach,” Anna Maria explains. “The unfortunate diagnosis was that I had cancer of this particularly important little flap! I had surgery in September 2016, removing nearly one-quarter of this flap, after which they had to actually slit my throat to remove some lymph nodes to make sure all of the cancer was gone. That effectively ended my singing career and rekindled a serious bout of depression during my recovery process. I had to re-learn how to swallow and how to breathe, all of which contributed to my depression.”

Never one to sit on her hands too long, however, Anna Maria and Ayanna are making plans for returning to life as it was before COVID forced them to pause for a year. The “Anna Maria Flecheros’ Music” studio, which she had begun for teaching students the various elements of performing – microphone techniques, critical listening, stage performance, etc., via an AM-FM studio she started, had to be put on hold. Once the pandemic is over, they want to pursue Ayanna’s dream of traveling across the country. They’ve done some remodeling on their home, waiting out the epidemic.

“In a nutshell, I’m a survivor,” Anna Maria summarizes. “I’ve faced serious challenges throughout my life. I’ve dedicated much of my life to raising children. As an out gay woman – named ‘Ray’ for a while – I’ve outlived my entire nuclear family. Since my father lived to be 80, I’m sure I have a good deal more time to enjoy my wife, my children, my home, my music and – yes – I’m looking forward to extensive traveling with my adorable wife.”

Thank you for sharing so much of your amazing life with Lavender Seniors, Anna Maria! All best to you and yours for 2021 and beyond!



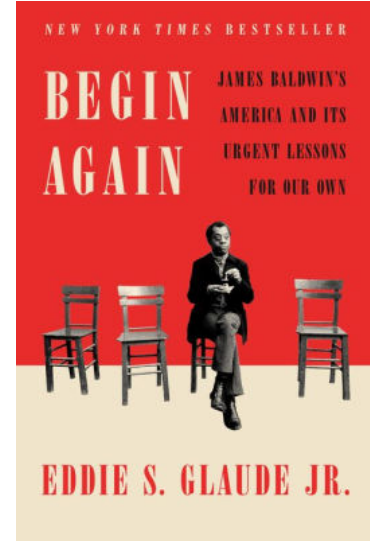
BOOK REVIEW

Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own

By Eddie S. Glaude Jr.

If we want to fully comprehend the contributions of Baldwin, we need to let the historical record of Baldwin flow into our conscious minds. His years embrace **The Fire Next Time** (1963) to **No Name In The Street** (2007).

Baldwin began his journey in Western Europe and then to the eastern parts of America. He suffered many times both economically and psychologically as his blackness made him a national target by the government and the public at large. He wrote "History is literally present in all we do."



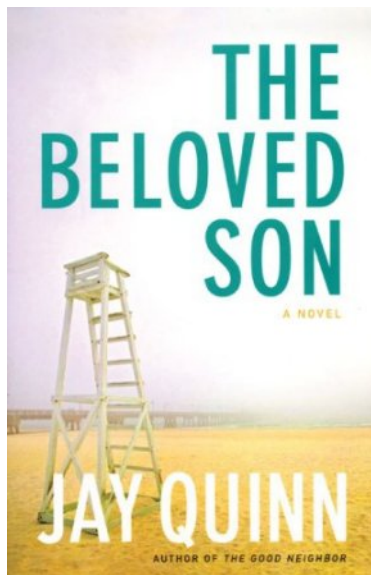
Readers will be rewarded and gratified by absorbing this powerful book.

- Frank J. Howell

BONUS BOOK REVIEW

The Beloved Son

By Jay Quinn



This is the tale of two brothers – one gay and one straight – who have to confront the reality of being the “sandwich-generation” between their aging parents and their own kids – feeling various emotions – sometimes conflicting – about needing to take care of both.

The older brother, Karl, age 52, is straight, married, father of a 20-something daughter, living in a cushy North Carolina suburb. Life has been pretty easy and lucrative for him.

The decade-younger brother, Sven (Mom has Swedish roots) is gay, in a long-term (for 26 years, since high school) relationship with his lover and

has been the primary caregiver for his parents, as Mom (Annike) descends slowly-but-surely into dementia hell. Sven and his Mom have a very close relationship, sometimes excluding the other two men in the family.

When their usually-brusque father, Frank, requests that the two sons gather in Boca Raton for a weekend, the entire nuclear family has to face some earth-shaking decisions that are being made. The resulting 305-page 2007 novel is thought-provoking and well-written.

The author, who is gay and lives in Florida with his long-term partner, has written eight other novels, usually with at least one or two LGBTQ characters. His in-depth description of the intricacies of family relationships will keep the reader engaged.

- John David Dupree, Tinamastes, Costa Rica

CONNECTIONS



Have you moved out of the area, do you want to get in contact with other Lavender Seniors near you or someone you have lost contact with? [Email us](#) and we will try to help out. No information will be shared without your specific permission.

LAVENDER SENIORS FRIENDLY VISITOR PROGRAM HAS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE.

Volunteers with the Lavender Seniors Friendly Visitor program are background checked, interviewed and trained, after which they are matched with a senior to visit regularly, usually for a couple hours each week. Visitors can share stories, chat about mutual interests and current events, and if both are willing and able, volunteers can take their seniors out for a walk in the park, a bite to eat, a cup of coffee, shopping or maybe a movie or a trip to the museum.

We ask volunteers to make a commitment of at least six months.

If you are in need of a Friendly Visitor, we can help with that too!

Please contact us at karen@lavenderseniors.org or (510) 424-7240 and we will be in touch with you soon. Thank You!

Notes from the Friendly Visitor Program

Some may have thought that COVID restrictions and shelter-at-home meant that clients of the Lavender Seniors Friendly Visitors program might be feeling totally isolated and uncared-for. On the contrary, our Friendly Visitor Program Coordinator has been busier than usual finding volunteers to vet, train, match with clients and, subsequently, supervise. Karen A. Anderson brings her multi-faceted background as a military veteran, educator, probation officer, and long-time college benefits analyst to bear in helping meet the needs of LGBTQ+ seniors who might need a bit of assistance with every-day survival

needs.

Some of the program's current developments – thanks to Karen's deft leadership skills – include the following:

- She has worked with the Samuel Merritt University College of Nursing to have students in the program provide Friendly Visitor services to LGBTQ+ senior clients as part of their curriculum.
- She has organized a "birthday acknowledgment" program with one of the program volunteers sending birthday cards to LGBTQ+ seniors and their allies on their birthdays. Anyone whose birthday (year of birth is not necessary, though it is appreciated) hasn't been acknowledged should provide their full name, date of birth (with or without year) either via Info@LavenderSeniors.org or by leaving a message at +1-510-736-LGBT and your name will be added to the list. Also, any volunteers who want to assist in this program should make contact, as well. Letter- and card-writing may seem like a lost art to some, since it appears that many of our grandchildren are not even being taught how to write in script anymore. Many of us aging "Palmer method" script-writers still enjoy seeing a nicely-written card or letter in our snail-mailboxes!
- Most recently, Karen and Gwen have organized – with the artistic help of long-time volunteer, Gabriel Delgado – packages and envelopes, to make sure that all Friendly Visitor clients had a colorful gift delivered for the holidays.



Karen filling bags and addressing envelope



Gwen & Gabriel (at 2017 Harry's Hofbrau event) with cart

Unfortunately, the holiday tradition of holding December's Second Saturday and Third Friday Lunch Bunch together for a gathering at Harry's Hofbrau had to be called off this year because of the pandemic. Gabriel has always showed up with a cartful of colorful door prizes put together with a former florist's artistic eye and hands. This year, his creative skills were focused on decorative touches for the gifts delivered to Friendly Visitor clients.

Anyone who wants to volunteer to be a Friendly Visitor – or who would like to have a Friendly Visitor volunteer – should contact Karen@LavenderSeniors.org or call her at either +1-510-424-7240 or +1-510-388-2992.

Thank you to Karen, Gabriel, Gwen and the many volunteers who have adjusted so admirably to this pandemic and continue providing services to our LGBTQ+ seniors, brothers and sisters.



How'd It Go? Where to From Here?

For many of us, this may have been an unsatisfactory holiday season – with no communal meals, hugs from friends/kids/grandchildren or popping corks of champagne to bring in 2021 – never mind perhaps the most devastating year of our lives! On the other hand, technology allowed some of us (not everybody's on the internet!) to stay in touch with loved ones via Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, Google Hangout or WhatsApp.

But anybody who's reading this clearly survived this crushingly isolating year, semi-vicious election season and subsequent challenges to our democracy. Some of us lost loved ones to COVID – or other basic life-cycle occurrences like cancer, strokes/heart-attacks and car crashes. Some of us saw (or at least heard about) usually-more-joyful things like births or marriages among family and friends, usually a cause for bridal or baby showers, wedding receptions with music and dancing.

So we're kicking off this year's Second Saturday with discussions of how we survived the year 2020 and what our hopes are for the rest of the year (and maybe the future of the concept of Second Saturdays). A little bit of history first:

As recently as five years ago, Lavender Seniors sponsored (with some government-agency support) three "congregant meals" programs in Alameda County. A monthly meal and program was planned in Fremont (co-sponsored by the City of Fremont). The Third Friday Lunch Bunch was co-sponsored by the City of Oakland Aging Services Department. And the Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch - once called simply "the Second Saturday Potluck" because there was no co-sponsorship to help pay for nutritious meals (this would encourage attendees to get up Saturday morning and put together their seven-bean salad, latkes or lemon bars to share) was paid for entirely by Lavender Seniors out of its limited budget. When the City of Fremont stopped co-sponsoring, the Fremont lunch program was discontinued, so we've just been doing the two meetings for the past five years.

Since March 2020, however, we have been relegated to no "congregation" and no "meals", using Zoom. This has helped keep people involved in the LGBTQ+ senior community, socializing being one of the key purposes of the lunches, along with stimulating education, entertainment and Q&A programmed after the meals.

We are at a fork in the road, programmatically, as we launch into the third decade of the 21st century. Dr. John David Dupree, Board Secretary for the past five years, has decided he needs to take a year off (also indicated in the bylaws), which means he will not attend board meetings or take board meeting minutes for the 12 months of 2021. He has agreed to continue as a volunteer, writing the monthly "Stories of Our Lives", writing book and film

reviews, as well as programming, writing newsletter blurbs for and hosting the Third Friday Lunch Bunch.

But – though he is willing to attend the Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch Zoom meetings, he is cutting back on both the programming of, writing newsletter blurbs about and hosting of the Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch for 2021. He has reserved the Zoom timeslot and coordinates for the entire year, but if/how it gets programmed, publicized and hosted is another question to be decided. With Gwen Boozé's resignation from the board as its Vice President (to pursue the Lavender Seniors "Communication Relieves Isolation" initiative) and other board members already at full-tilt, there were no volunteers at the December board meeting to continue this long-standing Second Saturday commitment.

Obviously, the program could be continued as a sort of on-line LGBTQ+ "support group", especially for people who work five days a week and are only available on weekends. Or responsibility for coming up with subjects, speakers and entertainers could be rotated among those who participate. All of that to be discussed after check-ins focused on how we ended 2020 and what we're looking forward to for 2021.

Meanwhile, here are the Zoom coordinates for the January 2021 Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch.

Gwendolyn Boozé and John David Dupree are inviting you to a scheduled
Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch meeting on Zoom.

Topic: Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch

Time: January 9, 2021 12:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89671026595?pwd=TGRtYkxaTzZGbWFFTTB1WWpQNpZWZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595 Password: 153953

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595 Password: 153953



Quarterly Museum/Artist Tours Begin 15th January

'Blueboy' & LA Gay Bar Scenes

Lavender Seniors is kicking off a quarterly Museum/Artist Tour series at this month's Third Friday Lunch Bunch Zoom Gathering on 15th January. The first such tour, held in October and well-received, featured the works of lesbian artists, Romaine Brooks and Mickalene Thomas.

The January tour will be led by educators from the UCLA-affiliated Hammer

Museum. This first tour of 2021 will include an online conversation about artworks by Reynaldo Rivera and Monica Majoli, two artists featured in the Hammer's current exhibition *Made in L.A. 2020*. Both artists explore overlooked histories of LGBTQ+ communities in their work. The conversation will be led by Hammer student educators, UCLA students from diverse disciplines who bring unique perspectives to the artworks.

Examples of works to be discussed during the 15th January Zoom gathering include:

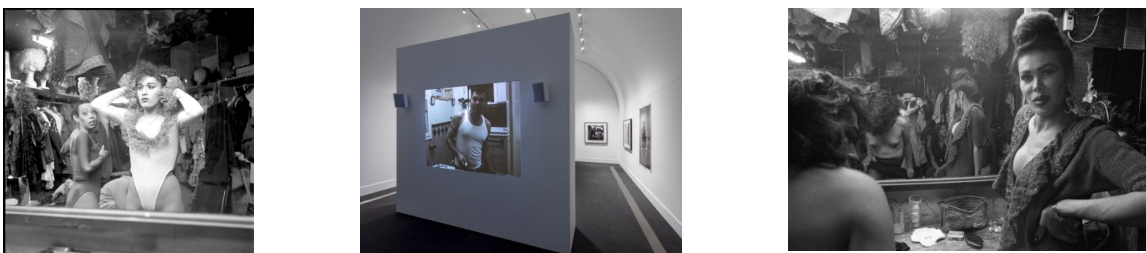


Monica Majoli: Blueboy (Roger, Ted & Ryan) on display – Blueboy (Armando) in front; Reynaldo Rivera: Performer, La Bar
(Majoli Art Courtesy of Artist & Galerie Buchholz, Berlin/Cologne/New York)
(Rivera Art Courtesy of Artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York/Los Angeles)

Monica Majoli is an artist, educator, and champion of others in the art & queer communities. Since 2015, Majoli has developed a series titled *Blueboys*, named after an early national gay magazine, published from 1974 to 2007. Majoli focuses on magazine centerfolds from 1976-79, the halcyon years of gay liberation, when homosexuality had become politically charged and under threat. To the artist, these images showcase a tragedy yet to unfold, as they were photographed on the cusp of the AIDS epidemic. Majoli's "*Blueboys*" series is a rumination on illness, loss, and history via images born of liberation, an attempt to locate and document a period when queer political and sexual identities became visible to a larger public.

In these works, Majoli scales up *Blueboy* images through a white-line printmaking technique developed in early-20th-century Provincetown, primarily by women artists influenced by traditional Japanese woodcuts. The artist describes these works as deeply related to their content: produced through a transfer process wherein the image itself is partially lost, or ghosted, while printed. The white carved line creates an impression of a negative, an image turned inside out. The outcome reveals the interplay between what the artist can control and the mechanics and materials of making, which override her hold on the image

[Editor's Caution: Ms. Majoli's Blueboy paintings include male frontal nudity]



Reynaldo Rivera: Gaby, Plaza – Display of "Oblivion Seekers" & "Las Reinas de la Noche" – Gaby, Reynaldo & Angela, La Plaza
(Courtesy of Artist and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York/Los Angeles)

Reynaldo Rivera was born in Mexico but spent his childhood traveling within the United States – mostly between San Diego de la Unión, Mexico; Los Angeles; and Stockton – before settling as a young adult in East L.A. Rivera's large (and largely unseen) body of photographic work captures the city's queer clubs and house party scene in the 1980s & 90s. These images depict a version of Los Angeles that has all but disappeared: Echo Park as a predominantly Latinx neighborhood rife with artists, writers, and performers full of flair and queer glamour.

For *Made in L.A. 2020*, Rivera shares a selection from this archive, including intimate photos from clubs (front of stage and back), bars, and house parties. A vital aspect of his ongoing project is remembering and lending visibility to a community of vibrant trans women and drag performers who often died tragically and young. His images of people missing from public ledgers and administrative records offer a reminder that L.A. – and the LGBTQ+ community – has a deep history and – for some people – a short memory.

For those who might like to plan ahead, the other three museum/artist tours scheduled quarterly for 2021 are 16th April, 17th July and 16th October. All Third Friday Lunch bunch Zoom gatherings are from 12 noon until 2pm PST – we have reserved the time/space for the full year of 2021, though, hopefully, we'll be meeting in person again before then. Meanwhile, following are the Zoom coordinates:

Gwendolyn Boozé and John David Dupree are inviting you to a scheduled **Third Friday Lunch Bunch** meeting on Zoom.

Topic: Third Friday Lunch Bunch

Time: January 15, 2021 12:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85235825964?pwd=WmptRG5SU2RDVUNyQ1hFWGM2NlZOQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 3582 5964 Password: 569546

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 852 3582 5964 Password: 569546

We hope you will join us for the first of our 2021 quarterly series of Museum/Artist Tours via the Third Friday Lunch Bunch Zoom gatherings.

COVID-19 is affecting us all.

For LGBT older people and those aging with HIV that are worried,

Older? LGBT? Need someone to talk to?

The SAGE Hotline is open 24/7 in English & Spanish:

877-360-LGBT

sage Advocacy &
Services for
LGBT Elders
We refuse to be invisible

stressed or in need of help, know that the **SAGE** USA hotline is available to you at 1-877-360-LGBT(5428).

More info on the web:

<https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/>

And on Facebook: **National Resource Center on LGBT Aging**

Stagebridge Winter Classes Starting

For those wanting to get in touch with their inner actor/singer/dancer/performing artist, there's no better place than Stagebridge, founded in 1978 with the mission "to foster a vibrant community where all lifelong learners are celebrated and enriched through the performing arts." Winter classes are scheduled from 25th January to 19th March 2021.

Those who attended the Third Friday Lunch Bunch in December got a taste of the kinds of story-telling skills a person can help develop participating in Stagebridge classes. An old friend of Lavender Seniors, Bruce Bierman, is offering a number of classes (e.g., "Making Theater Move" and "The Joy of Dance"), including an LGBTQ-playwright-specific class. Classes are open to all "lifelong learners", of course, no matter what their sexuality or gender identity.

The LGBTQ Legacy: A Play Reading Circle | Led by Bruce Bierman, Wednesdays, 1 - 2:30pm. Enter this safe haven for LGBTQ+ elders and allies to explore perspectives and voices from the best of queer dramatic literature. While this opportunity is useful for students looking to hone their play reading and analytical chops, this space will help expand empathic understanding through a mix of analysis on LGBTQ+ plays and open discussion on the theatrical canon. Plays scheduled to be read during this class include Sholem Asch's controversial banned play, "God of Vengeance" (which created a decades-long scandal for Yiddish Theater when it featured the first lesbian kiss on Broadway in 1923; documented later in the play "Indecent"); and Jane Chambers' "Last Summer at Bluefish Cove", the classic 1980 "lesbian love story" about eight women out on a fictional Long Island Beach town – a first-of-its-kind credited with rounding out three-dimensional lesbian characters. Maximum enrollment: 12. Price: \$194



STAGEBRIDGE

Winter 2021 Performing Arts Institute

JANUARY 25 - MARCH 19, 2021

ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENS DECEMBER 7, 2020

(516) 210-3773
register@stagebridge.org
stagebridge.org



Original Cast of Sholem Asch's "God of Vengeance," 1923

The New York Times

PLAY'S THEME: LESBIANS WITHOUT APOLOGY

By Alvin Klein, Feb. 8, 1981

JANE CHAMBERS is a playwright who speaks for the cause of women in general and lesbians in particular. Ask her which has been the greater obstacle in her life: her gender or her sexuality, and she answers: "That's easy - judgments are based on seeing; one of the things about being gay that doesn't get in the way is that, most of the time, you can't see it, but being a woman is something you have to deal with every minute."

Begin NYT Review of Jane Chambers' "...Bluefish Cove"

To see the complete list of winter classes, check out the following link:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5820fdf1440243808e76dfe0/t/5fd943458770e9749099c8d/1608074056192/SB_2021WinterPAICatalog.pdf

Notes

The newsletter of the
Oakland Gay Men's Chorus

A Holiday Gift for You

The holidays are all about traditions. The fancy platter for the Thanksgiving turkey that came from your grandmother. Your favorite aunt's crispy latkes. The ornaments the kids made. Partying with friends on New Year's Eve. But this year has been different. This cruel year made us leave behind our traditions, temporarily, we hope. Here are a few things that didn't happen this year:

Chanticleer did not sing Biebl's "Ave Maria." The Symphony Chorus didn't present "Messiah" at Davies. Our brothers across the bay won't be "Home for the Holidays" at the Castro. The Interfaith Gospel Choir didn't join the "Break Bread" concert at the Paramount, because it didn't happen. Neither did your church choir's annual Christmas concert. And, of course, the Oakland Gay Men's Chorus couldn't perform the holiday concerts that have been a tradition with us, and with you, for more than 20 years.

To the singers of the Oakland Gay Men's Chorus— and to all the singers in all the choruses— this is a profound loss. Singing is at the heart of who we are, and nothing can take its place. Our highest hope is that our organizations can survive this challenging year to sing for you again. We don't know yet when that will be, but we hope and pray that we won't have to endure another Christmas without carols.

In the meantime we've been trying to stay busy. Last month we released a Virtual Choir video, debuting a song that was written for us by our own Wally Bee. We're delighted to be able to send you a link to it below, with our sincere wishes for a joyous new year. We hope it puts a smile on your face!

You can play your part in keeping us afloat through these stormy seas. Every contribution matters! Please consider the Oakland Gay Men's Chorus for your year-end donations. From our family to yours, thank you!



DONATE



LGBT Online Support Group for Caregivers

If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender and caring for someone with ongoing health problems...**you are not alone!**

Family Caregiver Alliance's online LGBT Caring Community Support Group connects you with others facing the day-to-day challenges of caregiving. If you're assisting someone with Alzheimer's, stroke, Parkinson's, traumatic brain injury, or other chronic health problems, you can get support from the convenience of your home.

Share experiences, resources, and ideas in a supportive, caring environment. Available 24 hours a day, all you need is e-mail, and it's free!

Visit [LGBT Caring Community Online Support Group](#).

**Well Connected
Enriching lives and supporting
well-being.**

(FORMERLY SENIOR CENTER WITHOUT WALLS)

Community Phone Calls

This award-winning program offers activities, education, support groups, and friendly conversation over the phone or online.

Just a few of the things offered:

(The times are no longer listed in the generic catalog, once you have signed up you will get a link to a catalog with times in your time zone)

LGBTQ Chat 2nd and 4th Mondays

This group is open to all LGBTQ older adults to connect with others socially in a supportive environment where participants can share individual and collective experiences. Facilitated by Ariel Mellinger, ASW, Support and Wellness Coordinator, Openhouse SF

Music's Memory Lane Tuesdays

Each week we'll discuss a hit song, vintage television variety show, or a memorable musician in music history. From Big Band music to the Beatles, we'll dive into our recollections of concerts, lyricists, and pop culture. Facilitated by Steve Maraccini

Perplexing Questions Sundays

Have you ever wondered how a fly can walk upside down on the ceiling? Or how a camel can go so long without water? Find out the answers to some head-scratching questions. Facilitated by Sharon Schwartz

View the Current catalog of community phone calls [here](#). (As of this posting the catalog for 2021 is not up yet) Check the [website](#) for more information. To participate in these or other Well Connected telephone activities, or to learn more about their programs, call 877-797-7299 or email coviaconnections@covia.org.



Out Standing Seniors - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Jan 5 & 19, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. (1st and 3rd Tuesdays)

Meets via Zoom email outstandingseniors2@gmail.com for info.

A welcoming space for LGBTQ seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information, and support. FREE, though donations are welcome.

LezBold Peer Support Group

Jan 7 & 21 2:00 p.m. (1st & 3rd Thursdays)

Meets via Zoom email lezboldgroup@pacificcenter.org for info.

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

Older & Out Therapy Group - Berkeley - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Jan 8,15,22,29 3:00 p.m. (Fridays)

email Anne@pacificcenter.org for current meeting information.

Free drop-in therapy group for LGBTQ community members age 60+

Older & Out Therapy Group - Oakland - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Jan 8,15,22,29 2:00 p.m. (Fridays)

email Anne@pacificcenter.org for current meeting information.

Free drop-in therapy group for LGBTQ community members age 60+

Older & Out Therapy Group - Hayward - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Jan 4,11,25 1:00 p.m. (Mondays)

email Anne@pacificcenter.org for current meeting information.

Free drop-in therapy group for LGBTQ community members age 60+

Living OUT in Livermore - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Jan 5, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. (1st Tuesdays)

Meets via Zoom email Anne@pacificcenter.org for info.

A welcoming space for LGBTQ seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information, and support. FREE, though donations are welcome.

Lavender Seniors Board Meeting

Jan 13 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (2nd Wednesday)

via Zoom

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Lavender Seniors Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch

Jan 9, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (see info above for joining us via Zoom)

Lavender Seniors LGBTQ Film Series

Look for announcements...returning soon via Zoom!

Tri-Valley Rainbows - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Jan 21, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. (3rd Thursday)

Meets via Zoom email Anne@pacificcenter.org for info.

A welcoming space for LGBTQ seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information, and support. FREE, though donations are welcome.

Oakland Third Friday Lunch Bunch

Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging/Adult Services & Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Jan 15, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (see info above for joining us via Zoom)

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Board of Directors

President: Victor Aguilar Jr

Treasurer: Carmen Chiong

Secretary: John David Dupree (on hiatus)

Founding Member: Barbara Jue

Communication Director: Melissa West

Member: Ana Bagtas (on hiatus)

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Message: 510-736-LGBT (510-736-5428)

Friendly Visitor Program: (510) 424-7240 or

karen@lavenderseniors.org

Newsletter Editorial
Board:

Beckie Underwood

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Contact
Us

