Three Questions for Archivist Sara De Giovanni: Joining the International Fight Against Prejudice

An archives symposium in France included Gerard Koskovich (center) from the GLBT Historical Society and Sara De Giovanni (right) from Il Cassero. Photo: Michael Sibalis.

The first international exhibition at The GLBT History Museum, "Migrating Archives: LGBT Delegates From Collections Around the World," highlights queer archives in nine different countries. Among the participants is the Il Cassero Gay and Lesbian Documentation Center in Bologna, Italy. The exhibition runs through August 15.

Last month, Gerard Koskovitch from the GLBT Historical Society joined the Il Cassero center's director, Sara De Giovanni, and other organizers at an archives symposium held in conjunction with EuroPride in Marseilles, France. He took the opportunity to interview De Giovanni about "Migrating Archives" and the value of transnational connections for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender archival work.

What impact has taking part in "Migrating Archives" had on Il Cassero?

Taking part in the exhibition put together by GLBT History Museum artist-in-residence E.G. Crichton gave us an extraordinary opportunity to join in learning how to give value to LGBT memory through an artistic perspective. Being a partner of the museum had a very positive impact on our organization, and we also received significant coverage in Italian and international media. Sending our "migrating archives" to the exhibition put us in contact with other archives throughout the world and added to our knowledge base.

What was your favorite part of the symposium in France?

My favorite part of the symposium in France was the opportunity to present our work to an international audience and the chance to learn about other archives from around the world. It was an exciting and educational experience.

What is the value of transnational connections for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender archival work?

The value of transnational connections is immeasurable. It helps us learn from each other and expand our understanding of queer history. It also allows us to share our stories and experiences with a wider audience, helping to build a more inclusive and informed society.

How do you think technology will play a role in the future of queer archival work?

Technology will play a crucial role in the future of queer archival work. It will allow us to reach wider audiences and share our stories in new and innovative ways. It will also help us preserve and protect our archives for future generations.

What advice would you give to someone starting an archival project?

My advice for someone starting an archival project is to start small and build from there. It's important to start with what you have and work with what resources you can. It's also important to seek out mentorship and support from others in the field.

What is the most rewarding aspect of being part of the GLBT Historical Society and the GLBT History Museum?

The most rewarding aspect of being part of the GLBT Historical Society and the GLBT History Museum is being able to preserve and share our history with others. It's a way to honor our past and inspire the future.

Get Connected
Click on the event title for the Facebook invitation.
increased our visibility and produced valuable new contacts for us.

What are your reactions to the symposium during EuroPride in Marseilles?

The symposium was a great chance for LGBT public-history organizers from Europe and the U.S. to compare notes. We very much valued the opportunity to tell the story of our documentation center. We also appreciated learning about the visions and strategies for preserving LGBT cultural heritage pursued by all the participants. I hope the connections created by the symposium will help solidify an international network and encourage further collaborations. At Il Cassero, we're certainly looking forward to working with the groups that took part -- including The GLBT Historical Society.

Why is it important for LGBT archives, libraries and museums to collaborate across national borders?

We need to know each other in order to exchange best practices and learn different methods for processing and caring for our collections. More importantly, by working together, we not only can share knowledge, experiences and resources to preserve the collective memory and personal stories of LGBT people, we also can contribute to the fight against prejudice, homophobia and transphobia in our own countries and around the world.

Activism With a Beat: New Exhibit Celebrates 25 Years of San Francisco's Real Bad Party

A new multimedia exhibit opening August 8 at The GLBT History Museum highlights the history of Real Bad, a queer dance party held in conjunction with the Folsom Street Fair in San Francisco. "Be Bad...Do Good: Activism With a Beat" marks the 25th anniversary of the annual event; entirely produced and funded by volunteers, the party has raised nearly $1.7 million for local GLBT nonprofits.

"Be Bad...Do Good" explores how the city's queer tradition of compassion, creativity, club culture and giving coalesced in the Real Bad dance extravaganza starting in 1989. The exhibit will feature 1980s party ephemera; Real Bad posters, invitations and photos; a video documentary custom-made for the show; and a wall-size infographic tracing the fundraising impact of the party over 25 years.

An opening reception is set for Thursday, August 8, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. The exhibit runs through Oct. 27, 2013.
By reading passages from biographies, memoirs and historical studies, Michael Flanagan will recreate the vibrant queer world that beat poet Allen Ginsberg inhabited in San Francisco in the 1950s -- and will trace how that world changed with the approach of gay liberation in the 1960s. The talk also will tell the story of how bohemian and beat San Francisco did and didn't blend into one another and will highlight Ginsberg's contemporaries including Jack Spicer, Sam Steward, James Broughton and José Sarria. Flanagan is a reference librarian, writer and independent scholar who lives in San Francisco. Cosponsored by the Contemporary Jewish Museum.

Admission: $5.00 (general); $3.00 (California students); free for GLBT Historical Society members.

**Panel Discussion**

**March on Washington: 50 Years Later – Where Are We Now?**

Wednesday, August 21
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

A discussion of the legacy of Bayard Rustin, a prominent gay strategist for the 1963 March on Washington. Participants will look at the African American community's journey over the past 50 years and will address issues of queer economic status and demographics today. Panelists: **Rev. Israel Alvaran**, national organizer for economic justice, General Board of Church and Society; **Billy Curtis**, executive director, Multicultural Sexuality and Gender Centers, U.C. Berkeley; **Kenneth P. Monteiro**, dean, College of Ethnic Studies, San Francisco State University; **Andrea Shorter**, Andrea Shorter, Atlas Leadership Strategies. Cosponsored by the Bayard Rustin LGBT Coalition. Admission: $5.00 (general); $3.00 (California students); free for GLBT Historical Society members.

**Film Showing**

**Sistah Sinema Presents Queer Women of Color Shorts: Tracks & Gender Freaks**

Wednesday, September 11
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

The back of the leather vest owned by San Francisco's Mr. Red features a teddy bear in full leather. The vest is one of hundreds of objects in the Artifact Collection.

ON THE WEB

For in-depth information on the GLBT Historical Society and The GLBT History Museum, visit our website.

For updates on the museum and archives, like us on Facebook. (Be sure to select "Get Notifications.")

For an overview of the goals and history of the museum and archives, see our entry on Wikipedia.

For an array of videos from our archives and programs, see our YouTube channel.
Launched in Seattle in 2011 and now sponsoring programs around the U.S., Sistah Sinema is a monthly event showcasing queer women of color cinema. Each showing is followed by a moderated discussion. The group's first San Francisco event, taking place at The GLBT History Museum, will feature two short films about queer youth: director Deanna William's Tracks (2010), the story of a shy runaway who falls for a flirtatious high-school basketball player with an overbearing, church-loving grandmother, and director Rebecca Louisel's Gender Freak (2012), with Rachel accepting Sammy into her band to play for a school dance, where Rachel defends her friends against homophobic insults from the audience.

Admission: $5.00 in advance (purchase here); $10.00 at the door; free at the door for GLBT Historical Society members.

EXHIBITIONS & PROGRAMS

The GLBT History Museum

Location: 4127 18th St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Phone: 415-621-1107
Website: www.glbthistorymuseum.org

Admission: $5.00 general; $3.00 with California student ID. Free for members. Free for all visitors on the first Wednesday of each month (courtesy of the Bob Ross Foundation).

Hours
Mondays - Saturdays: 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sundays: Noon - 5:00 p.m.

ARCHIVES & READING ROOM

GLBT Historical Society

Location: 657 Mission St., Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: 415-777-5455, ext. 3#
Website: www.glbthistory.org

RESEARCH HOURS

Weekdays: By Appointment & Subject to Availability
Members: Wednesdays - Fridays: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Nonmembers: Fridays: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturdays: No Appointment Needed
Open to members and nonmembers 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. the first and third Saturday of the month; no appointment needed. Hours subject to change; before visiting, check the GLBT Historical Society website.