**Virtual She Fest 2020 Livestream Transcript**

**Opening Ceremonies**

* Land Acknowledgment

*[Video appears on the screen with images of San Diego]*

**Narrator:** "From the mountains tops to the valleys, the rivers below from the ocean water to the desert. From the city skyscrapers to the beautiful rural areas of the land we now call San Diego County. You are on indigenous land and as the indigenous people of this land, we greet you in our indigenous language."

*[Indigenous people speaking in their native languages]*

Brittany Krenz, Cupeño People

James Trujillo, Luiseño People

Mario Chutnicut, Cahuilla People

Kennth Ramos - Barona Tribal Descendant, Kumeyaay People

**Erica Pinto, Kumeyaay People:** "Welcome to Kumeyaay Country! Where our ancestors have lived since the time immemorial. I wanted to wish you a Happy Pride Month. Be safe, love one another, but especially love yourself.

*Rainbow of Truth Circle Group*

Man talking: "On behalf of the Rainbow of Truth Circle we thank you San Diego Pride."

**Speaker:** "Thank you for supporting us and creating safe spaces to address intimate partner violence within our Two-Spirit Native LGBTQ community."

**All the group:** "Together We Rise!!!"

* #SayHerName: Black Trans Lives Matter - Reading of the names and moment of silence

*[Video showing photos and names of murdered trans people.]*

Rest in power

Dustin Parker, 25

Neulisa Luciano Ruiz, 28

Yampi Méndez Arocho, 19

John Scott Devore / Scottlyn Kelly Devore, 51

Monica Diamond, 34

Lexi "Ebony" Sutton, 33

Lorena Borjas, 60

Henrietta Robinson, 79

Johanna Metzger, 25

Penélope Díaz Ramírez, 31

Serena Angelique Velázquez Ramos, 32

Layla Pelaez Sánchez, 21

Nina Pop, 28

Helle Jae O'Regan, 20

Jayne Thompson, 33

Tony Mcdade, 38

Selena Reyes-Hernandez, 37

Dominique "Rem'Mie"Fells, 27

Riah Milton, 25

Brayla Stone, 17

Draya McCarty

Merci Mack, 22

Tatiana Hall, 22

Shaki Peters, 32

Bree Black, 27

Summer Taylor, 24

*[One minute of silence in memory of them…]*

* This Little Light of Mine performed by The Resistance Revival Chorus

*[Choir composed of several women and nonbinary singers of all ages and different ethnicities sing:]*

***Lyrics***

*This light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine
Deep down in my heart, I'm gonna let it shine
Deep down in my heart, I'm gonna let it shine
Deep down in my heart, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine
All around the world, I'm gonna let it shine
All around the world, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine*

*[Slide appears on the screen with the words: "Together we let it shine as we share our joy as an act of resistance."]*

**Welcome to She Fest!**

**Asher (She/Her):** Hey everybody! Happy Pride!

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Hey everyone! Welcome to She Fest 2020!

**Asher (She/Her):** Alright, thank you all for joining us today. We are your hosts. My name is Asher.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** And my name is Nika.

**Asher (She/Her):** And we have a lot of events lined up for you today. But before we dive in, let's do a couple of introductions. Nika, let's start with you. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you got involved in She Fest?

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Yeah, for sure! Hello everyone, my name is Nika. I was born and raised in New York, I'm just making my way coast to coast. Some activities I've been fortunate enough to be involved with here in San Diego include the SDAFFL - San Diego American Flag Football League. San Diego Rebellion Women's Tackle Football Team. I do some stand-up comedy. I've volunteered a couple of Pride parades and I actually got involved with She Fest because I volunteered with Build OUT 2020 and two Committee members invited me over and so I joined the She Fest Committee. How about you Asher? What's your story?

**Asher (She/Her):** First of all: wow! That's a very impressive list of activities Nika! That's awesome! You know, I actually...started out..I was born and raised in Kansas, so not even close to a coast, but I did move out to San Diego in 2013 with my partner. I am a stand-up comic here in San Diego and a member of the Misfit Toys Comedy Studio and I found about She Fest through the San Diego Women's Chorus, which I joined in 2017. The chorus does a lot of activities with She Fest and performances. You might have seen Nika and I, both at the Queerantine Comedy Show that was produced by She Fest, and I'm so excited that they invited us back to co-host together. Nika, do you wanna tell us a little bit more about She Fest?

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Yeah, of course! So…

*[Nika begins to read the She Fest mission statement.]*

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** "She Fest is a woman-centered event that celebrates and supports the talents and contributions of women while fostering meaningful connections within and between the LGBTQ+ and larger San Diego communities. Building on second wave feminism's creed of "the personal is political", we are guided by the principal of intersectional feminism: we recognize that while all women experience oppression, we also all experience oppression in varying forms based on race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, and so on and so forth."

**Asher (She/Her):** "We want everyone at She fest to feel supported, included, and represented. She Fest is intentionally inclusive of transgender women, nonbinary people, intersex people, and gender nonconforming folks. We welcome any community member of any gender identity or sexuality that feels at home with "she" and wants to help us celebrate what "she" means to them."

You know, I love that mission statement. I think it's really powerful. Kinda gives me chills. But let's talk about what's gonna be going on today. You know there's a lot happening in different places. We've got the stream that's going on YouTube and on Facebook, and we have some Zoom Rooms with different workshops and activities. Lot's of fun stuff. We're going to be hearing from Celeste Barbier. She is gonna be promoting some of her new songs on her new album. We'll be talking with influential women in politics, including former Senator Christine Kehoe and Councilmember Georgette Gómez. There will be lots of musical performances like some from LA-based Boi Band and UK Band, Unsung Lilly, and we'll hear from some local SD vendors from Dr. Bronner's and we'll be closing out with a Drag King show and San Diego Women's Chorus circle chant, so it's gonna be a full day.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Exactly. I'm super excited! So just to let you all know about the accessibility features that we have. So the livestream portion of virtual She Fest 2020 will have American Sign Language interpretation and automatic captioning services. In order to provide access to folks who are Blind, DeafBlind, have low vision, among others, a transcript and video description will be posted along with the recording on the She Fest page within 48 hours of the event. Virtual She fest 2020 events occurring in Zoom will have ASL interpretation through a separate online portal, also through Zoom. Access to these services requires a computer and internet connection. Feeling a little bit overstimulated? Pride can be overstimulating, even when it's virtual. We've set you a Zoom where you can take a break from the hustle and bustle of our festivities. You can keep your video and sound off if you'd like - all we'll ask is that you introduce yourself in the chat (your name, pronouns, and favorite thing about She Fest!). Bring a coloring book, your knitting needles, or your desire for some quiet conversation with fellow She Festers. And you can visit our website and our Instagram for that link.

About the day, so I'll be your host for the first half of the day and Asher will be hosting the second half of the day. So Asher we'll see you later on.

**Asher (She/Her):** Alright, I will see you then. Take care!

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Awesome!

**Asher (She/Her):**  Goodbye!

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Bye Asher! Now, I know y'all are excited as I am, so let's get the virtual She Fest 2020 started. She Fest wouldn't be the same without a visit from Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins. So let's welcome her to the Virtual She Fest 2020.

*[Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins speaks of the significance of She Fest for her]*

**Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins:** Hello to everyone - and welcome to She Fest. I'm Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins. My pronouns are she/her/hers and I'm joining you virtually from our State Capitol. I'm a big fan of She Fest. And I'm so glad to see the organizers continuing to host this annual event - now in its 7th year - as a virtual event. It's the safest thing to do as we find ourselves celebrating Pride in a time of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She Fest's purpose is to celebrate and support the contributions of women while fostering meaningful connections within San Diego's diverse LGBTQ community and the region as a whole. This is incredibly important work because - as women - we experience oppression in too many ways: from race to socio-economic status, sexual identity, pay, healthcare and reproductive rights. With that being said, I urge you to make sure you are counted. This is Census Year. This is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to help our community get the funding it needs for health care, senior services, child care, and so much more. We need to make sure that everyone is counted, including children, family members, and roommates, because everyone counts. One way to ensure that your voice is heard is for you to fill out your Census form. The deadline has been extended to October. This is especially important for our transgender women, non-binary folks, and gender non-conforming individuals to be counted. Gender identity rights have been a focus for me for some time. In the Legislature I authored SB 179, creating a third gender maker for non-binary residents and easing the process of obtaining state-issued ID and birth certificates that accurately reflect a person's gender identity. I also ensured that birth certificates through AB 1121 in 2013 and death certificates with AB 1577 in 2014, reflect a person's true gender identity. I also want you to know that the State Legislature worked to ensure that our LGBTQ community isn't forgotten when it comes to counting the impact of COVID-19. This pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color, but when we looked into the impacts to the LGBTQ community, we didn't have any data to understand the impact, and clearly, that's not acceptable. We know that some in the LGBTQ+ community may be more likely to be immunocompromised because of HIV/AIDS and other health issues, and research suggested those with chronic conditions are at higher risk of complications for COVID-19. I supported SB 392, a bill that ensures a concerted effort to collect data so California can adequately respond to the unique needs of our LGBTQ community as they relate to recovering from this virus. I also want to say that I stand here - this year - saying that I am an ally. It is more important than ever for us to support our Black LGBTQ community. I see you, I hear you and I stand with you. Demonstrations spurred by righteous grief and anger over ongoing police violence have energized communities all across the country and in the streets of San Diego. I believe this moment shows there is real potential to finally bring about lasting change after 400 years of systemic racism in America. As leader of the State Senate, I am dedicated to working with the Legislative Black Caucus, the LGBTQ Caucus, the Women's Caucus and frankly, with all my colleagues to ensure the momentum we're seeing right now results in real change and better outcomes. We must bring justice to our siblings who have lost their lives, including the Black trans members of our community who have been killed across the country. People like: Tony McDade, Riah Milton, Dominique "Rem'mie" Fells. I know San Diego’s queer and trans people of color have been organizing to demonstrate for justice. It's so inspiring to hear your voices calling in at City Council and County Supervisors meetings. Your voices matter! I can't end this message without honoring and recognizing Aimee Stephens. She became a hero to many when she sued her employer, R.G & G.R Harris Funeral Home, after the business fired her for being transgender. Her fight made its way to our nation's highest court, and it's given us one of the brightest wins in LGBTQ equality: a historic 6-3 Supreme Court ruling to protect LGBTQ people from being fired because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. It's the strength of heroes like Aimee- who stand up and say, "This is wrong", that raises all of us up. This is a major election year, and I hope you will use this momentum to encourage people to register and cast your vote this November. We need you. It is an honor for me to serve San Diego's 39th District while also holding the title of Senate President pro Tempore. I'm not only the first woman, but I'm aslo the first Lesbian in this role. This achievement comes because of those who came before me. The women that I honor who blazed the trail in order for me to run for office. Let's all stand together and support one another and continue our progress. And as we celebrate how far we've come- and how far we still need to go.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Wow, that was awesome! I hope you all enjoyed all the joy of that video as much as I did.

*[The History of She Fest We interview Kelcie Kopf, the founder and former chair of She Fest, about the history of She Fest, how it has evolved, and the importance of LGBTQ+ women's spaces.]*

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):**  Now for our next segment it's only fitting that our first guest be the founder and former chair of She Fest. We're gonna chat about the history of She Fest, how it's evolved and the importance of the LGBTQ+ women's spaces. Everyone please help me welcoming Kelcie Kopf to the stage. Hey Kelcie, how's it going?

**Kelcie Kopf:** I'm doing well. How are you all?

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Doing well, doing well. Thank you so much for joining us.

**Kelcie Kopf:** Of course! This is awesome!

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** So let's get started. Are you from San Diego?

**Kelcie Kopf:** No, I sure am not. I came from Texas in 2006, so it was quite a culture shock.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** [laughs] Excellent! That's great. What made you wanna start She Fest?

**Kelcie Kopf:**  I was a part of a few different events. I was part of the Dyke March in the Women's Fest at the center and in various other community organizations. And one by one they just went away for various reasons. And I just felt like there was a need in the community for a place for women to get together. There are awesome bars. You know we love Gossip, and there's amazing programs at the Center, and of course Pride does an amazing job of serving the community. But I felt like there was a hole where we could provide a space for women to get together and show what they are doing and find ways to connect and so I put it out there and it took off.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** It most definitely did. I appreciate you doing that work and starting from the ground up. How did the name She Fest come about?

**Kelcie Kopf:** That's an interesting story. We were trying to find a name that was indicative of the community that we were trying to spotlight without being exclusionary. And that was very difficult. To be completely honest, we did have some very intense conversations about the name, because more than anything we wanted to make sure that yes, we are spotlighting women, but we are not excluding anyone else. We did settle on “She Fest” because we felt like it showed who we were trying to spotlight, and we just wanted to make sure we went above and beyond to communicate that we were not an exclusionary event.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Absolutely. That's awesome. The first She Fest wasn't too long ago. Can you tell us a little bit about how that was?

**Kelcie Kopf:** It feels long ago! I've got creases on my face that would indicate otherwise!

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** [laughs]

**Kelcie Kopf:** So the first She Fest was much like any first event. There was a lot of learning… We learned a lot. And one of the ways that we learned a lot and that I appreciate about our community was community feedback. We had people who came to the event and told us what they liked, told us what they wanted to see, told us what they needed. And so through that learning we were able to shape future years, but it was an awesome event. And of course Tony Atkis has been a supporter from day one and was there, and supported the event and kinda gave us a little signal boost there. But it was an awesome day and the community came together to support it.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Well, I can imagine. If I was here, you know, I definitely would have joined. Absolutely. Why do you think it was important to highlight women back when She Fest first started?

**Kelcie Kopf:** I think we all know that women are typically--or can be--relegated to the sidelines. They, you know, make less than their male counterparts. There's oppression and there's all sorts of ways that we face challenges and obstacles. I felt like it was important to provide a space to do the opposite of that. To lift up women, to take away those obstacles, to allow for networking, so that you know, we could give women a leg up. And again, while not excluding anyone else. Just provide a fun event that helps to grow the community and support women, and I think that's gonna be a need for the foreseeable feature. I don't know that's gonna go away anytime soon. I think the needs of the women and the type of event may change but overall, I think there's always going to be a need for a space like this.

**Nika (She/Her/Hers):** Most definitely. I feel like She Fest is synonymous with the term “inclusivity.” Why do you believe inclusivity is an important element of She Fest? I know you touched this a little bit on earlier.

**Kelcie Kopf:** I came out later in life. And I think when I came out I expected to join this utopian society where everyone got along and has been through the same things, so I was gonna find harmony. And I did in certain sectors. But I did also find some ideologies that were somewhat divisive and that was troubling to me. And if anything that I was a part of--I didn't want it to be that way. And I think the history of our movement and our community is checkered with some of that. And so I felt like it was very important to create an event. And I think in general for our community, I think it's important that we understand the importance of supporting one segment without excluding others. You can do that. So that's why It was really important that everyone else on the committee (and of course Pride was supportive), they all had that as their North Star that we're gonna support women but everyone is welcome and we're not gonna exclude. And I hope that's a legacy that stands through this event.

**Nika:** I agree. Thanks so much for sharing that. Do you have any hopes of what She Fest can be in the future as it finishes its seventh year?

**Kelcie Kopf:** I think when I started the event, I never would have imagined a virtual She Fest! So kudos to the committee! This is amazing and you all are doing a great job! But I think long term what I would hope for this event is that it is always evaluating itself and changing. Our community is not one that is static. Our needs are gonna change, our goals are gonna change, and I hope that She Fest is responsive to that in a very compassionate and proactive way. I think if seven years down the road, we have an event that looks different or sounds different, that would be fine by me as long as it is serving a need in the community and still showing that inclusivity.

**Nika:** Absolutely agree. Absolutely agree. Just one last question. Do you have any message to some of our viewers who may have been with you since the very first She Fest?

**Kelcie Kopf:** People say “thank you” all the time and it sounds very insincere, but the amount of people that have given of their resources, their time, their energy, their blood and sweat and tears, there's not a word that I can say that truly express my gratitude for those folks--and for the people that just showed up every year and supported the event, and invited their friends, and put it on social media. That's what is needed to create change in a community. And so, I put an idea out into the world, but the people out there that supported the event and came, and we're on the committees and they are the ones that created She Fest, and they are the ones that will make sure that it continues in the future. So from the bottom of my heart, thank you for all that you've done to create this space and make sure it remains.

**Nika:** Most definitely. Most definitely. Thank you so much Kelcie for joining us and blessing us with your presence. Please... join me in thanking Kelcie for joining us today. And Kelcie, I really appreciate you taking time to spend with us.

**Kelcie Kopf:** I appreciate it. Thanks.

**Nika:** See ya.

***[Celeste Barbier - 0:26:50]***

**Nika:** Excellent, excellent. So, now, first of all, it was amazing to have Kelcie on, I must say. You know, I really feel that having the first founder.

So, the first performance of virtual She Fest we'll welcome back one of our favorite local performers, Celeste Barbier! She's here to blow us away with her smooth and powerful jazz-inspired vocals. Now, Celeste lives in Oceanside with her wife and number one fan, Rene Cosby. And it's actually Rene's birthday today, so happy birthday Rene! We're so excited to share three of Celeste’s original songs, two of which are from Celeste's new album Two Worlds, which is being released today. So, folks, please help me in welcoming Celeste Barbier.

*[Video starts playing.]*

**Celeste:** Hello all you beautiful people! I wish I could see your faces. My name is Celeste Barbier and I'm so glad to have been asked back to She Fest this year. Last year was my first time performing at She Fest, and it was an amazing experience. This year, it's a little different, I get to do this from my living room here in Oceanside, California. But I've been a local performer in San Diego and all around the county for many years now, so I hope you guys enjoy my music. You can check out my music at [www.celestebarbier.com](http://www.celestebarbier.com) and today I'm actually gonna be singing 3 original songs, which I've never done before for She Fest, because my records didn't come out until after She Fest. So I have 2 records out--yeah! One came out on Thanksgiving, and had one original song on it that's dedicated to my wife Rene Cosby. This is my first original song, it's called “Tidal Wave,” and this next album came out today! Today is my release date! You can find both of my albuns, the newest record is called Two Worlds, the last one is called Tidal Wave, both records you can find on Amazon, you can find them on Apple Music, iTunes and Google Music, pretty much everywhere, and you can find already Tidal Wave on Spotify, but you can't find this new one yet on Spotify - you will soon though. Thank you guys so much for watching, I hope you guys enjoy listening to my next three songs. This first one, this is dedicated to my wife, this is called “Tidal Wave.”

*[Song starts: “Tidal Wave”]*

When the night falls on the briny deep

And the moon becomes a blazing torch

I will rise up when the world's asleep

I will come ashore

Feel my power drawing near

From the bottom of the sea

I'll wash away all your doubts and fears

And carry you away with me

Tidal Wave

My love is like a tidal wave

Sins of the past

Heartaches you had

I'll bury in the sand

Your life will change

Tidal Wave...My love is like a tidal wave

Instrumental Solo - Guitar

Now I am your siren song

I'll come crashing on your shores

A strange and haunting melody

My love will be all yours

Tidal Wave

My love is like a tidal wave

Sins of the past

Heartaches you had

I'll bury in the sand

Your life will change

Tidal Wave...My love is like a tidal wave

I'll carry you across the sea

We were always meant to be

Tidal Wave

My love is like a tidal wave

Sins of the past

Heartaches you had

I'll bury in the sand

Your life will change

Nothing will remain

Tidal Wave

My love is like a tidal wave

Tidal Wave

My love is like a tidal wave...Tidal Wave

**Celeste:** With the help of meeting my amazing producers Jane Getz and Bob Tucker, I was so lucky to be able to do my first album. I had to go right into doing another album, and I started it at the beginning of this year, but the big COVID thing happened, and I had to stall production on my next album. But I was just recently able to finish it, and I'm super excited to sing these songs to you, the very first people who will be hearing these songs. Nobody has heard these songs at all yet, today is the release date. I have a release party tonight, but it's private and the tickets are sold out. But I really appreciate you guys being here, I hope you love these 2 new songs, and just so you know, when I released “Tidal Wave,” like I said that's my first original song, it went to the radio and it was in the top 10 hits on national radio for indie music, adult contemporary music, and top 40. So that was really exciting, I can't wait to see what happens to these next songs. So this next song I'm singing for you is called “Two Worlds,” and it's based on a poem I wrote when I was 14 years old, and I was really obsessed with the Yin and Yang concepts. So this next song is called “Two Worlds.”

*[Song starts: “Two Worlds”]*

Two worlds one and the same

Both are those from whence we came

One world of dark and disharmony

The other light and melody

Two worlds one and the same.

Two worlds

Let's erase the boundaries

Two worlds

Follow our dreams

See where they lead

Two worlds one and the same

Ooooooh ohhhhhh

Now in the dark there lies a good

And in the light the devil once stood

The good the bad a balance of the two

Darkness and light reside in you

Two worlds one and the same

Two worlds

Let's erase the boundaries

Two worlds

Follow your dreams

Just you and me

Two worlds one and the same.

Instrumental – Guitar Solo

One world of dark and disharmony

The other light and melody

Two worlds one and the same.

Ooooooh ohhhhhhhh

Two worlds one and the same.

**Celeste:** Now, I have to give a very special shout out on that track, because I had the most amazing harp player on there. She lives right here in San Diego, her name is Candace LiVolsi Valentine. She is incredible, she has performed all kinds of amazing symphonies and big stars. So I was really lucky to be friends with her and to be able to have her play on my track. And Bob Tucker with that incredible guitar solo, I love it. And Jane Getz, she is my co-writer, she composes these beautiful songs with me as I write the lyrics.

Now this last song that we wrote together, me and Jane, this is called “I've Come Alive,” and I really hope you like it. I started writing this song in my early 20s, but it evolved into something new and it's an amazing love song. It started out as a song about long-distance love because I was kind of one of those girls that was on a lot of internet relationships, but I found love 15 years ago and now this is a true blue love song and I hope you enjoy this.

*[Song starts: I've Come Alive]*

As your fast asleep and dreaming stars twinkling in the galaxy

Do you feel me here beside you? Do you dream of me?

When you're wandering by the shoreline sand beneath your feet

As you walk along lost in thought do you think of me?

I need your arms around me

I'm all alone in my head

Wrapped around my body

Wanna feel your caress

You are the best thing in my life

Sunny days and starry nights that never end

You make me laugh you make me cry

You make me come alive I've come alive again

I've come alive..... I've come alive again.

Tell me what makes you happy and what inspires you?

Do you long to feel my heartbeat when I'm lying there beside you?

I need your affection. It is no mystery.

You have touched my soul. With you I am complete.

I need your arms around me

I'm all alone in my head

Wrapped around my body

Wanna feel your caress

You are the best thing in my life

Sunny days and starry nights that never end

You make me laugh you make me cry

You make me come alive I've come alive again

I've come alive..... I've come alive again.

Instrumental

Do you love the way I make you feel?

Do you feel the same?

You know my words come from the heart.

I don't have to explain!

You are the best thing in my life

Sunny Days & Starry Nights

You make me laugh you make me cry

You make me come alive

I've come alive.... I've come alive

I've come alive again.

**Celeste:** Thank you She Fest, I love you guys so much! Thank you so much for having me.

**Nika:** Ooh, that was awesome. That was absolutely fantastic. Thank you Celeste for those tunes, and you all please make sure to check out the album that dropped today.

So just a quick plug for the next room. So we actually have--it started at 11am in Zoom Room 1--but you can get your meditative zen on with Shannon. And, in Zoom Room 2 a workshop about setting boundaries and self-care. So if any of those interest you, by all means please join.

**Highlighting Artists (44:20)**

**Nika:** So, what a performance!

In our next segment we will be highlighting some artists and chatting about how the arts have always had close ties to activism. Arts have also played an important role in expressing how we feel as a community and holds an especial place in my own heart.

Joining me shortly will be a panel of artists comprised of Lindsay, Katheleen, Mariana and...Danielle.

So, without further ado, please join me and welcome Lindsey, Katheleen, Mariana and Danielle.

**Nika:** Hi everyone! How are you?

*[Artists say hello.]*

**Nika:** So, you know, just start off with your name, pronouns, and what org you’re representing or if you’re representing yourself.

**Kathleen:** I guess we just go?

**Nika:** Yeah! So you can start!

**Kathleen:** Hi, I'm Kathleen Hansen she/her. I'm Artistic Director of San Diego Women's Chorus.

**Danielle:** I will go next! I'm Danielle, I use she/her pronouns and I am part of San Diego Resistance Revival Chorus.

**Mariana:** Hi everyone, I'm Mariana Monasi. I'm a photographer. I have my own small business.

**Lindsay:** Hi, I'm Lindsay, I'm she/her, and I'm founder of the lady brain collective, Lady Brain Presents.

**Nika:** Awesome, awesome, thank you all for joining us. So, I will call your names and then you can respond to the questions and respond to another panelist's answers. So, how long have you all been in the roles. Danielle, if you can start off for us. How long have you been in your role and how did you get into it?

[silence]

**Nika:** We’ll actually shift over to Kathleen. So how long have you been in your role, and how did you get into it?

**Kathleen:** Sure! I've been the Artistic Director about five years. Before that, I was the assistant for a year. And it was actually really interesting, I had to leave my teaching due to health issues. And bit by bit as I started to get better, I was taking on different jobs, and a friend of mine forwarded me this job opening and I didnt know too much about it and I was like "well that sounds really amazing." I went to the Women's Chorus website and I saw their mission statement and instantly fell in love. I was like "that is an organization that I definitely want to be a part of.”

**Nika:** Fantastic! I know that usually that mission statement usually gets you and when you resonate with that, it's like” ok, this is where I'm supposed to be.” So that's awesome. That’s fantastic.

**Kathleen:** Yeah! And I'll just say it's “to encourage women’s creativity, celebrate diversity and inspire social action through music.”

**Nika:** Perfect. Absolutely perfect. So yes, Mariana tells us a little bit about how you got into the role and how long have you been doing it.

**Mariana:** I've been a photographer for about eight years. But just about a year and a half, two years ago I started my own small business. But yeah, I’ve just always loved photography. I love capturing candid moments, and it's been great.

**Nika:** I did check out your website and you absolutely have some beautiful photographs of some weddings you’ve taken and some family photos.

**Mariana:** Thank you!

**Nika:** Absolutely awesome. So, Danielle, you know, tell us some about your role and how did you get into it.

**Danielle:** Yes, well, I found the San Diego Resistance Revival Chorus by going to one of the shows that they were supporting the Prison Yoga Project. And I knew somebody in the organization, so I went and I just saw this collection of people who were using their voice to resist with joy. And I just felt so called to it, so I [audio cuts out]...after Mo and kind of made my way in…[audio cuts out]... And I am in charge of the member outreach and the admin. I do any kind of outreach within our members and to the community.

**Nika:** This is awesome, fantastic! Thank you for that. And so Lindsay, how did you get into your role and what do you love about being in your role?

**Lindsay:** It's still relatively new. We started at the end of 2018, so we're still a baby organization. And it really just started as I invited a few people over for brunch, a few women-identified artist that I knew just was like "let's talk about what it’s like to be a woman-identified creative in this town.” And it just kind of blossomed on its own. And so now we're doing workshops, we are doing showcases, we're doing all kind of things to just kind of create this culture of sharing resources and providing opportunities and also marrying the art that we do to the causes that we care about. And so yeah, it’s been really great to see it kinda grow from a breakfast. [laughs]

**Nika:** Right, right, right. And that’s fantastic that in 2018 it started and you were able to come on and do all those events, and that's really awesome. So, we can start with you, Lindsay. What would you say are some obstacles you are facing as an artist related to COVID?

**Lindsay:** On a personal level it’s kind of more about...a lot of work, just kind of disappeared, you know, so from a basic survival level that's hard to deal with. From a collective standpoint, I think what has been the hardest challenge is that this was started out of an idea that we wanted to get off of our screens, go out into the world and really show up for each other in physical spaces. And we just as we were getting momentum and getting people to come out and be a part of the workshop or come out and support the showcase, this all happened. So I've been sort of like begrudgingly planning virtual workshop after virtual workshop, being just like "when this is going to be over?" But it's important to have these safe digital spaces anyway. This is the sort of the world we live in. So I'm kind of getting over my initial frustration and disappointment, just kind of like “okay, this is the world we live in right now so we have to sort of embrace the dumpster fire and put out as much of it as we can on our own and try to stick together.” And I think a part of that is staying really patient because every member is sort of dealing with their own level of stress, and insecurity, and uncertainty. So just keeping the microphone on and not necessarily expecting everybody to show up and do their song and dance. But if they want to have a creative outlet, making sure that we keep that available to them. That's been my main goal.

**Nika:** [audio distorting] Ok, and you know, my belief is that, because we've been quarantined and locked up, people get that push to come out to these events. It’s like, I’m going to go to more events than I’ve ever done before. So I'm definitely looking forward to that.

So Mariana, how would you say COVID has affected you?

**Mariana:** Everything got canceled! [laughs] Every wedding, every event, every conference, photoshoots. I'm actually really lucky. This isn't my full time permanent job. I would love for it to become that at some point but I do have a government job that I can fall back on. So obviously I had that extra income that was very helpful before, but I still have my job, so I'm really lucky. For the first month I didn’t even touch my camera and I was really antsy. I'm sure everybody's experienced the antsiness, but then I went to the backyard and started photographing my dogs. I was like: “I need someone to be my model.” [laughs] So I got some cool shots of my dogs. And then I just started going on walks every day and started taking pictures of more flowers and stuff that--obviously everyone was interacting with people less, but just trying to find a little bit of beauty and what I had to deal with.

**Nika:** Right, right, right. And so my hope, again, is that most people have been shacked up, hopefully they're like "you know, it's time to get married," and so they can hit you up and you get the photos taken for the wedding and so on. So that's awesome, thank you.

So Danielle, same question for you. Are there any obstacles that COVID has thrown your way as an artist?

**Danielle:** [audio distorting] Definitely, one is about developing a community, singing together and showing up for different community organizations by hosting performances and raising money for them that way.

[audio cuts out] ...having a physical space to do that and also practice, [audio cuts out]...so we've had to get a little bit creative in the way that we teach music, and in the way that we sing together, and in the way that we [inaudible] our community. We just recently held a virtual vigil for George Floyd, which was really special and beautiful. And that felt really good to be able to [audio cuts out]...but we're still trying to figure out how to continue to support the community in that way.

**Nika:** Right, right. And definitely it will take some time, but it seems like you all have the right focus and mindset on how to bring more folks together to do that. So, that’s fantastic!

Kathleen, for you, how would you say that COVID has been putting obstacles in your way as an artist?

**Katheleen:** Sure. The first obvious point that’s been made is loss of gigs and it's very destabilizing when it happens. As a conductor, I felt very silenced. I rely on other people's voices, so it’s like my instrument has been taken away. But organizationally, we provide a very safe musical family space for women and nonbinary treble singers, just surrounded by making music. And we're in the middle of preparing for all of our big events. We were supposed to be in Minneapolis last week for a big festival. So having to reimagine what that looks like when we are not by each other. We know that singing together synchronizes us--it synchronizes our breath, it synchronizes our systems and brings us together in such a unique way. So, just trying to reimagine that.

I mean, my current job now I have been running some rehearsals online, like Danielle said, just trying to figure out new ways to rehearse, and I'm becoming a digital sound engineer. [laughs] We've been able to put out some virtual choir projects, we've got a couple debuting this week, we've got a virtual cabaret coming up this next Thursday. After the initial shock, we were like: “okay but now we still have to go, we still have to do.” Figure out a way to connect and get our message out there and stay as close as we can even though we can't be close.

**Nika:** Right, that makes sense. You know, it is forcing us to take on roles we haven't had before, which can be exciting and it can be really nerve-racking, but you are doing an awesome job at it. So just a little bit on closing basics, how can folks support you all and your organization right now? So we will start with you, Lindsay.

**Lindsay:** Yeah, you can go to [www.LadyBrainPresents.com](http://www.ladybrainpresents.com)--that’s our social media handle as well. If you are a creative woman-identified person in this community and you are looking for folks to help lift you up, then you can join us as a member. If you are in the community and just want to support our mission and what we do, you can also contribute financially or just *show* up to our *show*cases. [laughs at the play on words] Honestly, it just feels good to see someone liking or sharing our information at this point. I think we're all just trying to keep the wheels on, and just know that people are out there and still supporting the art, still supporting women identified creatives in this community--it means a lot. So I'd like to say that I'm really happy to be here and see all of you, because I think--we have members that are in your organizations too. So, it's nice to reach out to everybody and say hi.

**Nika:** Oh, yeah! Most definitely. Mariana, how can folks support you and your photography?

**Mariana:** Yeah, connect on social media is great: @marianamonasiphotography. I have done some [laughs] socially distant photoshoots. I did some graduation porch photos, and that was really cool because I was just getting creative in a way that I definitely hadn't pushed before. But yeah: reach out. If you have the means, buy prints. [laughs nervously]

**Nika:** Perfect. Perfect. And Kathleen, for you, how can folks support you and your organization?

**Kathleen:** Like Lindsay was saying, there is a little tiny silver lining: we're connecting with people where we haven't been able to connect with before. So absolutely, find us on Social Media, follow us on Facebook, Instagram, SDWC.org. We're going to start a new season in the fall, we're going to be taking new members even though we are probably gonna be rehearsing a lot like this. And supporting your local artists, those of us who do this. Reach out. We're reinventing and teaching digital lessons. There’s so much, I think we can just think a little harder on how to be creative and support each other.

**Nika:** Agreed. Agreed. Fantastic. And then Danielle, for you, how would you say folks can support you and your organization right now?

**Danielle:** Well, [audio breaks] some new auditions once we're in person. So you can email us at sdrrc@gmail.com. [audio breaks] And then you can also follow us on Instagram, we are @sdresistancerevivalchorus (SD Resistance Revival Chorus). Really, what we’re looking for is people who are involved in different social justice projects and organizations [audio breaks] , people who have large spaces that we can sing, and [audio breaks]...

**Nika:** Fantastic. Fantastic. Well, I want to thank you all so very much. Danielle, thank you, Kathleen, Mariana, Lindsay: thank you so much for joining us for SheFest 2020. And for all the folks: if you missed any of the information, it will all go out in virtual She Fest 2020 follow-up email for their social media and websites. Thank you all again so much. We appreciate each of you taking out the time of your day to chat with us.

**Kathleen:** Thanks for having us. Good to see everyone.

**Mariana:** Thank you for hosting.

[END OF SEGMENT]

**Women in Politics - 1:01:00**

**Nika:** Alrighty! So starting at 11:45am in Zoom Room number 2 is a workshop “Coping With Stress in 2020.” And a few minutes ago “Art Activism” with Gini got started in Zoom Room number 1, so please check those out if you are interested. So, now, for our next segment the topic will be Women in Politics in San Diego. This will be moderated by our guest host Janessa Goldbeck. Everyone please join me in welcoming Janessa. Hi Janessa, how are you?

**Janessa:** Hey, everyone. Great to be here. Thanks for having me.

**Nika:** Thank you. So I'll pass it off to you and I'm going to head out of here.

**Janessa:** Sure thing. Well, thank you so much, thanks everyone who has tuned it this afternoon. I just want to apologize in advance, I'm in a house in the mountains and my wi-fi's a little spotty. So, hopefully you'll be able to understand me and I'll be able to understand the panelists. It's a real honor to be here today talking with a couple of real trailblazers in the San Diego community. Our first panelist is San Diego City Council President Georgette Gómez. Council President Gómez is the daughter of working class immigrants, she grew up right here in San Diego and earned a BA in Environmental and Natural Resource Geography from San Diego State University. She went on to lead the fight against neighborhood polluters, advocating for stricter laws on lead paint that threatened the health of children and helped expand affordable housing for seniors and low-income families. She is the first LGBTQ Latina elected to the San Diego City Council, and she's also an elected ADEM delegate for the California Democratic Party. And we are really excited to have Council President Gómez with us today. How are you doing?

**Georgette Gómez:** Hi, I'm good. Good to see you Janessa.

**Janessa:** Nice to see you as well.

Our second panelist today is the honorable Chris Kehoe, who I see has just joined us now. She is a former California State Senator and a legend in the LGBTQ community here in San Diego. She became San Diego County's first openly LGBTQ elected official when she was elected to the San Diego City Council in 1993. And she served as council member for District 3 until 2000, when she was elected to the California State Assembly and to the California State Senate in 2004. During her time in the State legislature she served as the Assembly Speaker pro Temp, only the second woman to hold that title, and she was the founding chair of the LGBTQ Caucus. She left elected office in 2012, having forged the path for LGBTQ elected officials. And since her election in 1993 San Diego's 3rd City Council District has been consistently represented by an openly LGBTQ elected official. Chris continues to be involved in the community, mentoring many women LGBTQ up-and-comers, she has most recently served as the co-chair of the Community Advisor Counsel for the San Diego History Center as the LGBTQ+ San Diego Stories of Struggles and Triumphs.

So, it is a real honor to have you both here today, and I'm excited to get the conversation started.

**Georgette Gómez:** Yeah, it's going to be good.

**Janessa:** So, I'll go ahead and get started. The first question is to both of you, but I'll start off with Council President Gómez. What made you decide to run, and was that something that you would have expected to do before you jumped into the race?

**Georgette Gómez:** No. I was thinking about it in terms of how to engage in this conversation. I've never thought of myself ever running. For me, the work that I've done and I've dedicated my energy and my entire dedication, it really is to transform our communities and have government to be more inclusive and more just for all community members. That's where I've dedicated my work and really never thought ever in my life that I would be running for any type of government election. So really, I've always centered the work that I do to really advance social justice, inclusion in our community, for our community. And that's because, as you were introducing me, being the daughter of immigrant parents growing up in a very low income community, and having experienced those injustices myself, I always just thought that we can be better, we can do better, and we should do better. So that's always been my motivation. That's why I started as a community organizer, started doing public policy advocacy. I got very involved in electing other people to represent our communities. And there was a point in my life where that question was posed to me and I really needed to think deep because that's a different lens, and I always thought myself as an outsider influencing those that make decisions. But I really thought "why not? Why not me? What is it that I'm not thinking of myself in that way?”

So really that it was a full circle for me. When I decided to say “yes, I'm going to run for city council,” it was something that was uncomfortable, but I think we need to do more of that. And I know later on we're going to have discussions about policy-making, but we definitely need to see ourselves in those positions and figure out how to get there if we feel like that's the drive. For me, my drive and the reason that I do what I do is social justice and really creating a government that is inclusive to who we are. And that's been my motivation and that's the reason I got into where I am now as the Council President for the City of San Diego.

**Janessa:** Thank you. Same question to you, Chris. How did you get involved, and did you ever see yourself in that role?

**Chris Kehoe:** Thanks Janessa. Georgette is great to see you. I hear there's a lot of people tuned in, so that's wonderful. Happy She Fest 2020, everybody.

Like Georgette, I didn't grow up wanting to be a City Council member. In fact, if you asked me even 5 years before I ran, I don't think I could have given you a strong yes. But it naturally grew out of my community engagement--gay pride, lesbian solidarity, back in the middle 80s, early 80s really, working for the Center for Women Studies and Services, the Hillcrest Business Association. So gradually my community engagement got broader and I built relationships that turned out to be incredibly strong and really helped me a lot when I ran.

It was a very short race. It was an odd year race--we don't have them anymore--so it was a very focused campaign. Georgette will appreciate this, because she's gotta campaign all over the place. But I was proud to be the first gay elected official to win a seat in San Diego County. Others have run prior, and there was a pent up demand in the community. LGBTQ voters in San Diego really wanted to have an out person in some office. And circumstances aligned so I got the opportunity to run. I declared in, like, June, the primaries in September, and the generals were in October, so it all happened in less than 6 months. It was a community campaign, it was a people's campaign. Literally some Saturdays we had more volunteers than we could manage, and that's the luckiest thing that can happen in a campaign. Especially now in the time of COVID!

I know Georgette, running for congress, one of the 2 most important races in San Diego is dealing with this year, along with Todd Gloria running for mayor. For those of the viewers that wanted to get engaged in politics, because I know that's one of the questions, contact these campaigns today and say "I want to help, how can I help?"

**Georgette Gómez:** Thank you, Chris.

**Janessa:** She's a good ringer.

**Georgette Gómez:** She is, she is.

**Janessa:** So, both of you are trailblazers, both of your campaigns got a lot of attention for being the first XYZ when you were running. There are a lot of people who are getting more interested in politics, who might not fit into what society thinks as a standard candidate, right? We are expanding the definition of what it means to run for office--what elected officials should look like. So, for those in the audience who maybe don't see anyone who looks like them or has the same experience as them coming up in the world in office right now, what advice would you have for them, based on your own experience, having that experience as well when you were running?

**Georgette Gómez:** Chris?

**Chris Kehoe:** Take the leap. That’s what I would say. Thanks, Georgette. There is no way you can forecast what it’s like to jump into a campaign as an individual. Your right Janessa: politicians, elected officials candidates, come in all different sizes, shapes, colors, and abilities. And it's expanding every cycle. The only way you'll know if it's something that you want to do, that you can feel it in your gut, is to jump into a campaign. And I think you should definitely get your feet wet. If you are seriously thinking about running for office, please engage with Georgette Gómez or Todd Gloria and really see what is like. Especially in the time of COVID, because it's a whole different ball game. But it's people to people, it's real-time, it's emotional, you really have to get your guts into it. So, the only experience that really counts is what *you* bring to the campaign and you bring to the table. You gotta do it yourself.

**Georgette Gómez:** Yeah, I will just add--I echo what Chris just stated. I would just add, I think getting an understanding of what campaigning is, is really important. Because it's not sexy work, it's grueling work. It's being on the phone, it's talking to people that you’ve never spoken to, and it's engaging others, motivating others. It's a lot of work. And sometimes people have this perception of "I can do that," and yes, people can, but I would say start with getting involved in other campaigns, understanding what campaigning means, but also understand why you want to do it. What's the drive? Because I think we all think "oh, I can do that," but understand. For me, I was grounded in community work, and I continue to be grounded in community work, and I understand what that means for me. So, I came in and I wasn't the traditional candidate either when I ran. I wasn't supposed to win. And now I'm in a different campaign now that is the same thing--I’m somebody that comes from the non-traditional. And my background is community work, is advocacy. It wasn't me hanging out with the downtown people, it was actually working with the people that are closest to the issues that we are trying to address--from housing to economic justice, to LGBTQ issues, to just everything that we can lay out. That's where I come from, that's the root that I come from.

So, I would say, if anybody is interested, (A) get an understanding of what it means. Get experience through the phone, the texting, the fundraising for other candidates, that's really important. But also be grounded in what motivates you. I think that's really important. Because what I see sometimes is I encounter people that are doing it for other reasons that aren't to advance policies but it's to advance just resume creation. And I don’t know that--it’s not that I don’t know, that's not what people want. People want electeds that are going to be pushing policies, shift government to address their livelihood. And they want to see more of that, and we are seeing that throughout the nation in how campaigns are turning out.

So I would say to people that are thinking about it: (A) Reach out to me. I'm more than happy to talk to people, make myself available. I want to share my experience. I want to share what City Hall looks like--if you are interested in spending a week, a month, whatever it is, to see the inside. Because also, once you’re there, it's not sexy either! [laughs] It's grinding work. It's not the House of Cards or those political Netflix documents that we all see. It's real work, it's grinding work. It's a lot of sacrifice from your loved ones. But it's because of that motivation that one has that you are willing to do that. So, reach out to my office, I'll make myself available to people to discuss it more.

**Janessa:** Council President Gómez, would you say it's less of House of Cards and more like Parks and Rec? Or closer to Veep?

**Georgette Gómez:** [laughs] I would say more like Parks and Rec, actually. But it's rewarding, it really is. It's chaotic and it's frustrating. Because you are dealing, in the local level, you have 9 different council members. That's 9 different opinions. We’re not all made the same way, we are not in it for the same reasons. So navigating through that can be frustrating but, at the end of the day, it's extremely rewarding. I feel extremely privileged to hold the office that I do, and I'm going to maximize it to the very end.

**Janessa:** Great. I'm going to add something that Pete Butigieg said in the campaign that really stuck out to me. Someone asked him "is America ready for a gay President?", and he said "there's only one way to find out.” So, whether you are the first person like you to run for a seat, there's only one way to find out if you are quote unquote "electable." It’s to run.

**Georgette Gómez:** Yes.

**Chris Kehoe:** Yes. You’re not electable until you win.

**Janessa:** That's right.

**Georgette Gómez:** Exactly.

**Janessa:** I'm going to start with you again, Council President Gómez. You talked a little bit about coming out of the activist community. And there's definitely a difference between being an activist on the outside and governing. We live in a time right now where we are seeing a lot of social upheaval, policy upheaval, a lot of questions about what status quo is and what we can do to change that. How do you balance making tough decisions when there are really vocal constituencies, really important issues at hand, but you are also balancing--like you talked about--these 9 different personalities. How do you make those tough decisions? What do you center yourself on as you make those decisions?

**Georgette Gómez:** That's a good question and there's not a straight answer, so I guess it's good that we are having a queer conversation here, right? [laughs nervously]

For me, I always center my decisions on advancing social justice. It might be an inch, it might be a mile. I don't know, but it's about that. So knowing that if there's a way to do that, I will do that. So, yes, right now we are seeing it more, but these issues that we’re seeing right now have been there for centuries. Our nation, in our government--I mean, I grew up in a low income community, a community that government decided to make center polluters, that impacted people's health, quality of life. And the environmental justice movement is a very long movement, is decades long, but that's where I come from. So, for me, doing what I do every single day, I always center justice, inclusion, in my decisions. Even when I was elected, I created my team based on that and based those experiences.

I'm always reminded that this work, you are in it for a very, very long time. Change happens in very, very small and incremental ways. And I'm aware of that. So I just have to keep reminding me that. But does it hurt me? Yes, it does, because at times it's frustrating that we can't do more right now. If we look at the city of San Diego, we have a majority Democratic council, but not all Democrats are created the same. Different values, different guidance, different constituencies. So it's not just as easy as to say "why aren't y'all doing more?". Well, it's because of the political dynamics, and that's unfortunately the reality of politics.

Now, governing is different. I will always govern from a social justice lens. That's not a question whatsoever. I'm challenged constantly in how to do that and how to move that needle even if it's an inch. And I'll continue to do so, just because that's why I'm there. I'm not there to continue growing my personal career, it's not about that. For me, there's no question whatsoever as to why I'm there, why I'm taking up that space, and I will continue to do so. People might not see it in such a way, but I can tell you that every single day, the way that I engage is from that lens.

**Janessa:** Thank you. Chris, do you have anything that you would like to add to that? Otherwise I have a specific question for you as well.

**Chris Kehoe:** I think Georgette really, really described her thinking of that very well. And I just want to say I think Georgette's support comes a lot because people recognize her values are authentic. They can count on her.

**Georgette Gómez:** Thank you.

**Janessa:** Awesome, thank you. So, my question is for you then, Chris. You have been an amazing mentor for so many people who have come up behind you, helping them, showing them the ropes, introducing them to the right folks. Those of us who want to see more black, indiginous, and people of color elected, how can we help support folks who are coming up who might not be connected already? How can we as a community really elevate these voices that are underrepresented in our political sphere today?

**Chris Kehoe:** Definitely people of color are underrepresented. We need more Black elected officials, we need more Latino elected officials, and we need more women elected officials of color also. And let’s not lose track, we’ve got an all women’s page here, all lesbian page here, but in the legislature of the US Congress, women are still underrepresented. So that's always important.

But, to reach out to the communities of color, be in the community. There are so many new organizations--and long standing organizations--that have sprung up in just the last few years around social justice, around criminal justice reform, how to make changes, how to reduce the injustice and the routine abuse of Black citizens by the police, and traffic, and that sort of thing. So, there are leaders in the communities that are outspoken, that are heading up in the organizations, San Diegans For Social Justice and more. A lot around Black Lives Matter, and the recent and ongoing civil unrest. And just get out there. Tell people that you are with them. Also, we've had more people of color running as candidates! And, again, like I started, volunteer in one of these campaigns. Get to know the candidate and that candidate's supporters, and you will be meeting lots of people of color who are engaged and motivated and looking at how to make change through politics.

**Janessa:** That's great, thank you. I'll just add in there as well, there are so many fantastic candidates who are running who are Black women, women of color, right here in San Diego that I would encourage folks in the audience to definitely check out. If you are not already plugged in, Standing Up For Racial Justice San Diego can help elevate and showcase some of those candidates. We have a lot of up and comers here in San Diego, and that's very exciting to see.

**Chris Kehoe:** We do.

**Janessa:** So, we got just a few minutes left before we change to the next panel, so I would just like to ask each of you: what is one thing that you are most proud of from your time at office?

**Chris Kehoe:** Well, I can be brief Georgette. It's kind of where I started. I'm proud of my legislative record, I did a lot of good things in the City Council, including expanding gay rights and LGBT appointments at the time. But winning that first race kind of opened the door for so many more LGBTQ candidates, office holders, judges, elected and appointed officials. And it really changed the conversation in San Diego, and I'm most proud of that.

Second would be the way Senator Toni Atkins’ career has advanced. We worked together from day one in 1993, including the campaign. She was on City Council, she was Speaker of the Assembly, and now she's the president of the California State Senate. And so, keeping our people in office is always important too. And expending the diversity within our cohort of gay elected officials.

**Georgette Gómez:** Yeah, I would say being able to have won my election was pretty significant and I'm very proud of that, because that's something we were able to do because of the community support. It wasn't because we had the money. And Chris Kehoe was key, Toni was key, Todd was very supportive, but at the end of the day it was a very strong grassroots campaign. We walked the district in a significant way. There were a lot of people that got behind my campaign that were doing the community work and they continue to do the community work, so I'm very proud of that.

Now, in terms of the policies that we've been doing and the fact that I was able to get elected by my peers to be the Council President twice, that was pretty significant, because I never have hide--my values are very present in how I engage. But I'm also very mindful of being able to collaborate with others that are not coming from the progressive movement. And how you do that, I've been able to earn the support of folks that I normally wouldn't be speaking to. The mayor is a Republican and we have a good relationship. We might not see eye to eye on policies and how we see things, but we've been able to move things such as updating the affordable housing policy that Toni Atkins introduced when she was councilmember--over a decade old and nobody wanted to touch it because it’s not an easy lift to do. I did it, it took me several times but I was able to do it. I made it illegal for landlords to discriminate against people that were on government assistance to pay their rent. That actually influenced state policy.

I mean, I can continue, the list goes on. But I've been very aggressive and pushing strong policies because that's what we should be doing--as councilmembers, we are the legislative body. And I've been very aggressive, and that's because I come from that lens of influencing policies, so I'm very proud of that work. I'm very proud of lifting the importance of public transportation in San Diego. We created a strong platform. It took a mild turn because of COVID. But that was not an easy lift as well, and it's something we need to continue pushing.

Actually, because of the district that I represent, very diverse, I'm the representative of the district that is a home to the refugee community--I have been able to lift the voices at the city council, where right now we are working on a project that, if successful, we are going to be able to have an actual refugee center in the city of San Diego. And that will be very significant, because we are actually acknowledging who our community is. So I've been very successful in bringing the POC--the people of color--voices to City Council, and that's something that's very important to me, because that's who I am.

**Janessa:** Fantastic. Well, thank you both so much for being here. For those who are listening, they both offered to have conversations to whoever is interested.

**Georgette Gómez:** 100%.

**Janessa:** [laughs] Georgette is a little busy these days. But I also have run and was beat by council president Gómez in a primary, but I have experience being a first-time candidate. I'll say I had a great time, I learned so much, it's a real privilege to run, and I'll run again for something. If you have any questions and would like to speak to me, I think She Fest is blasting out all of our contact information, but please reach out. I'd love to have a conversation with anyone who's watching who might consider running in the future. I definitely recommend it. Thank you both former state Senator Chris Kehoe and Council President Gómez, I appreciate your time.

**Chris Kehoe:** Thank you. Good to see both of you.

**Georgette Gómez:** Thank you, Janessa. Thank you, Chris. Good to see ya. Happy She Fest.

**Janessa:** Happy She Fest.

**Queering the Census - 1:30:00**

*[Video plays:]*

**Jeremy:** My name is Jeremy Payne, I work with Equality California. It's hard to overstate how much is that [audio breaks] through the 2020 census for the LGBTQ community. The LGBTQ community has disparities that are far greater than our non LGBTQ peers.

**Adreeiane:** My name is Adreeiane Roy and I work with Equality California. The stakes become very clear: that if we don't get an accurate count you won't get the resources we need for our community.

**Dolores Huerta:** And then what's gonna happen if people don't get counted? Our community will lose $2,000 per person. Over 10 years that's $20,000.

**Adreeiane:** That's $20,000 that comes back to our community, to our LGBTQ community, to our Black community, to our communities of color, to our rural communities. These are resources that go to our roads, to our schools, to our hospitals. That matters.

**Dolores Huerta:** I know this is going to be virtual so people can actually get counted on a cell phone, on a computer, but they have to know that. If we're not counted, that money is not going to come to our communities. That money is going to go to other states. And that's our money! That's our money that we paid in federal taxes.

**Adreeiane:** Frankly, that's why my jam is getting out and talking to folks.

**Jeremy:** Equality California wants to make sure that we are involved in doing our part so that we all will be counted.

 *[end of video]*

**Nika:** Hey everyone. How's it going? So, in our next segment, we just saw the video from EQCA, and now I'm going to chat with Olga, our special guest Olga, about Census and why it's so important. Hi Olga, thanks for joining us.

**Olga:** Of course. Thank you for having me. Thank you, Nika. My name is Olga Cortez, pronouns she/they/he, and I do civic engagement at San Diego Pride. Did you know that right now over 9 million LGBTQ adults are registered and eligible to vote in the 2020 general election? So, the more of us going out to vote, means more of us can support pro equality candidates and policies giving us more political power.

**Nika:** Wow, this is great information. How can folks register to vote? How can you check if you've already registered?

**Olga:** Well it's super easy, it takes like 5 minutes, and all you need to do is go to [www.sdvote.com](http://www.sdvote.com). And the only thing you are going to need are the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number or your California ID number. In California, vote by mail ballots are going to be mailed to each registered voter prior to the November 3rd election. And this is an addition to offer an in-person voting. And you are going to get your ballots by October 3rd, Mean Girls day.

**Nika:** [Laughs]. So where can I return my ballot?

**Olga:** Well, it's postage free, you can drop it back in the mailbox. Or you can drop it at any polling location or registrar’s office on election day.

**Nika:** Sweet. So what can you do to take action and make sure our community goes out and votes?

**Olga:** Great question. You can go to [www.sdpride.org/vote](http://www.sdpride.org/vote) and pledge to vote. And we can also definitely use some volunteers to help engage the community. Email vote@sdpride.org and San Diego Pride will get back to you and plug you in. And also, I'll be in a workshop later today with a few other amazing organizers around San Diego talking about how y'all can get involved. Join us at 1:15pm in Zoom Room 2.

**Nika:** Awesome, awesome. So talk about the Census. Can we still do the Census?

**Olga:** Yes! The new Census deadline is October 31st, so you can complete it online, by telephone, or by mail. You can actually go right now to [www.my2020census.gov](http://www.my2020census.gov) to fill it out today.

**Nika:** Awesome. So what if I didn't receive my census in the mail and I don't have my unique Census ID?

Olga: Well, even if you didn't receive it in the mail, you don't actually need your Census ID. Just, when you go on the link, just click on "I don't have a Census ID - click here,” and you will be linked in with your address.

**Nika:** Perfect, ok. So, why would you say it’s important for every one of us to complete the 2020 Census?

**Olga:** Oh, that's because this way we can all have accurate and complete population count, and this data is to make sure that everyone is equally represented in our political system, and that government resources are allocated fairly. And everyone gets counted, the Census counts all people who reside in the US, regardless of citizenship or immigration status.

**Nika:** Ok. And what questions does Census ask?

**Olga:** They ask your name, sex, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity, as well as those details for everyone else who's living in your household. And all the information is your own self-identified information, including name, race, ethnicity, and gender identity.

**Nika:** Ok. And what are the gender options?

**Olga:** Well like many [audio breaks] the Census restricts responses to male and female only, unfortunately. Unfortunately this question fails to acknowledge the myriad of sexes and genders that exists. You can self-identify the way that you feel most comfortable, but the Census Bureau will not cross reference individual's answers on the Census with any other documentation.

**Nika:** Ah, ok. So, what do you say the Census is safe and the Census Bureau won’t share my information?

**Olga:** Title 13 requires your information to be kept confidential and prevents your responses to being used against you by any government agency. It's illegal for them to share your information. So, you can go to [www.my2020census.gov](http://www.my2020census.gov) to fill out the Census today.

**Nika:** Sweet. And, folks, if you missed any of the information, it will definitely go out on an She Fest 2020 follow up email after the event is over. So, Olga, thank you so much for informing us and I know that everyone has gotten information and they will definitely get it again. So make sure to get out and fill out that Census.

**Olga:** Thank you so much Nika.

**Nika:** Take care.

**Olga:** You too.

**Boi Band - 1:36:15**

**Nika:** Alright, fantastic. So, up next, we have LA-based Queer heartthrobs BOI BAND. Boi Band is an all-queer pop vocal cover band. They are tributes to boy bands of past and present that we all know and love, and are out here reimaging your favorite pop anthems. They feature 5 talented people of various sexual orientations and gender identities, representing the beauty and diversity of our queer community. We are going to watch their music video and follow up with a live Q&A, so start typing in those questions that you have for them in the chat. Without further ado, please enjoy Boi Band's music video for “Drag Me Down.”

*[Video starts:]*

I've got fire for a heart

I'm not scared of the dark

You've never seen it look so easy

I got a river for a soul

And baby, you're a boat

Baby, you're my only reason

If I didn't have you, there would be nothing left

The shell of a man that could never be his best

If I didn't have you, I'd never see the sun

You taught me how to be someone, yeah

All my life

You stood by me

When no one else was ever behind me

All these lights

They can't blind me

With your love, nobody can drag me down

All my life

You stood by me

When no one else was ever behind me

All these lights

They can't blind me

With your love, nobody can drag me down

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me down

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me down

I got a fire for a heart

I'm not scared of the dark

You've never seen it look so easy

I got a river for a soul

And baby, you're a boat

Baby, you're my only reason

If I didn't have you there would be nothing left (nothing left)

The shell of a man who could never be his best (be his best)

If I didn't have you, I'd never see the sun (see the sun)

You taught me how to be someone

Yeah

All my life

You stood by me

When no one else was ever behind me

All these lights

They can't blind me

With your love nobody can drag me down

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me down

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me

All my life

You stood by me

When no one else was ever behind me

All these lights

They can't blind me

With your love, nobody can drag me down

All my life

You stood by me

When no one else was ever behind me

All these lights

They can't blind me

With your love, nobody can drag me down

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me down (down)

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me down (down)

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me down (down)

Nobody, nobody

Nobody can drag me down

*[video ends]*

**Nika:** Whooo. What a spectacular cover. So, without further ado, I'd like to introduce the members of Boi Band.

**Sonya:** Whooo.

**Kayden:** [Laughs]. Hey guys.

**Betsy:** Hellooo.

**Sonya:** What's up She Fest?

**Nika:** How is everyone doing?

**Sonya:** Awesome, awesome. See, how are you?

**Nika:** Good, good. All right, perfect.

**Sonya:** There are a lot of us.

**Nika:** Well that was a spectacular cover and I started singing along and sort of auditioned...You don’t happen to be looking for additional members, are you?

[everyone laughs]

**Sonya:** Hey! Next time we have auditions, you’re in, alright?

**Nika:** So for everyone wondering who is Boi Band. Who are the members? So, you let us know your name, your pronouns, and your favorite song to perform.

**Sonya:** Yeah, totally. I'll start. My name is Sonia, I'm she, her and my favorite song to perform is actually kind of new to our set it's Lizzo - Feeling Good as Hell.

**Nika:** Sweet, sweet. Next, Kayden?

**Kayden:** Hi, my name is Kayden. My preferred pronouns are they, them. And my favorite song to perform would probably actually be “Drag Me Down,” it's a fun song.

**Nika:** Jamie?

**Jamie:** Hey guys, my name is Jamie, my pronouns are she and her, and my favorite song to perform is Justin Bieber, “Boyfriend.”

**Nika:** Kristen?

**Betsy:** I think Kristen's audio is weird.

**Nika:** Okay, okay. No worries, we can just come back.

**Kristin:** [audio breaking]. I'll change my wifi really quick or something.

**Nika:** Sounds good, we'll come back to you Kristin. So, Betsy?

**Betsy:** My name is Betsy, I'm she, her, but often at work, I get called “Sir” and that's cool too. You know I'm kind of down with it all. My favorite song that we perform, I think I'm gonna agree with Jamie, is “Boyfriend.” That one's just like it's so much fun I really like that one a lot.

**Nika:** Awesome, awesome. Fantastic. So, how did you all connect and form Boi Band?

**Sonya:** So I'll take that one. I had this idea, it's been brewing in my head for a really long time because I've been a live performer with lots of groups, mostly choirs and stuff growing up and not too long ago as part of a different cover band. And I was like, “you know, I love my queer folks I love my community, so why not pursue a project specifically for that audience and represent, you know, the spectrum of who we are.” So we decided to put a group together and posted for auditions and you came upon all these super talented folks, and our chemistry and our energy and our vibe it just works so well and, you know, we just got lucky that we all came upon each other.

**Nika:** Right, right, of course. And that’s kind of one thing when you have a band--you want to mesh well and just work together. And from everything that I've seen, you all totally do that.

**Sonya:** Absolutely!

**Nika:** So why did you choose to cover boy bands, those songs specifically?

**Sonya:** Yeah. Yeah. I grew up with, not to give away my age, but I grew up with New Kids On The Block, NSYNC, Backstreet Boys, and I just loved how all the women were falling all over them and how much love they were getting on the stage. And I know that my fellow band members can kind of identify with that feeling. So it felt like a really natural fit. We wanted to kind of give that androgynous--bordering on masculine but mostly androgynous--feel and that kind of fit with the theme and I'm a lover of pop music and I know that the numbers are too. So it just worked out that way.

**Nika:** Excellent. So I see from you're “Dragging Me Down” video and everything seemed flawless. Can you give us some behind the scenes and if there was anything difficult or, you know, easy about filming?

**Sonya:** Well, I'll say a little and I'll have some of the band members chime in, but, um, it was a one day shoot it was kind of ragtag we've got a really solid team, you know, a great manager, a solid buddy who's super talented behind the camera, in front of the camera and all those other things and makeup artist and you know, all of these people came together to really make us shine. And then the talented people in front of the camera too. Do you guys have anything to add?

**Jamie:** I'm frozen over here.

**Sonya:** We see your smiling face though, Jamie. You look good.

**Betsy:** Yeah, that was a fun day of shooting. It was a long, actually it wasn't really a long day we just got a lot in that day. So we all like we're on the same page, and it was really amazing, the funniest part was the when we're all kind of in our red black outfit, we went to, like, a friend of a friend's house and we just kind of were like hey, we're about to shoot here like this is cool and they were so supportive and they were like, “get on our roof like let's do this!” And like that was super scary because we had the camera guy on the roof, like it was, it was pretty insane but it was, it was so much fun.

**Nika:** Oh, awesome, awesome.

**Jamie:** So I’ll add there--

**Nika:** Go ahead, Jamie.

**Jamie:** Yeah, the craziest part about me for shooting the Drag Me Down, was getting on top of that house. There's a scene in that video where we're shooting on top of a house and that was like my first time being on a house you know with no medics on site and things like that, so kind of said a prayer inside and Sonya kind of held my hand up there. Got some really nice sun-kissed shots and just that was.

**Nika:** It looked good. I was wondering about that and, you know, I was like well maybe there’s some, you know, strings. That's what's cool to know, well, interesting to know that you know there wasn't a medic on site. [Laughs].

**Sonya:** [Laughs]. Living Dangerously.

**Nika:** Yeah right. Kayden did you have any experiences from behind the scenes?

**Kayden:** It's funny because they're all talking about that roof on the house. First of all you have to know, there was no ladder, we did not use a ladder, we used a refrigerator. [Laughs]. So, but yeah if anything like that was the most fun I've ever had shooting a music video it was, it was amazing. Everyone had such a great attitude. Um, and, yeah, it was a lot of fun.

**Nika:** Awesome, awesome. So what's next for Boi Band? Like where are you all headed from here?

**Sonya:** Yeah, I mean, we would love for this pandemic to go away but glad that at least She Fest gets it right and is keeping people at a distance so this could finally go away. We really really miss being together and then performing for a crowd, so we'd love for that to happen. But we're also working on original music soon, we just need the opportunity to get together so we can really collaborate. When we're all together, magic happens, so we are just waiting for that.

**Nika:** Awesome.I feel that too, and I know for certain you've gotten me as an additional fan so how can I follow and support you all?

**Sonya:** We are on Instagram @queerboiband, and Facebook and you know we're not posting a ton right now but we're gonna definitely keep our presence up there and support other organizations like She Fest and everybody who is supportive in the queer community who want to be a part of that message as well. So stay tuned with us and we'll be in tune with you guys.

**Nika:** Fantastic, I'm proud of myself because I was like, "ok, I can't fan girl too much” and I think I did it.

**All:** [laughs]

**Betsy:** So give us a ten seconds of fan girl. I just want a taste!

**Kayden:** Let's hear it Nika.

**Nika:** Will do a quick "aaahh". [Laughs]. But that’s it.

**Betsy:** Dreams come true. Dream come true right there.

**Nika:** Now everyone please be sure to follow Boi Band on social media and the website and keep in touch. Thank you all so much for your time and I'm looking forward to your future performances, along with everyone else. Thank you for joining us with She Fest.

**All:** Thank you.

**Sonya:** Thank you Nika. Thank you She Fest!

**Betsy:** Thanks for having us, thank you for everybody watching we're big supporters, we love you guys.

**Nika:** We love you as well. I love y'all. Thank you.

**Highlighting Our Vendors - 1:49:14**

**Nika:** Awesome. So our next segment is all about highlighting our vendors, but before I introduce the guest host, I want to thank you all for letting me host the first half of virtual She Fest 2020, and I hope you're all thoroughly enjoying yourself from the comfort of your home. Asher will be taken over as a host for the second half of She Fest. Now please help me give a warm welcome to your guests host for the next segment, Carmen. Hi Carmen, how's it going?

**Carmen:** Hi. It's going well, how's it going for you?

**Nika:** Going well, going well, can't complain. So I'll give it to you and the floor is yours.

Thank you everyone.

**Carmen:** Awesome. Happy Saturday.

**Nika:** Happy Saturday.

**Carmen:**  Hi everyone, my name is Carmen, my pronouns are she, her and hers. I am the business owner of Lotus Love Reiki. I am a Reiki Master. And I've actually been with She Fest since the beginning, way back in 2014. When it just started out as a small group of women who wanted to do something for our community. And so from there, it just grew, and for me, She Fest means so much more than when it first started, because now we are more inclusive, we are more united, and I just can't wait to see how it continues in the future.

By the way, a little bit after this, the last five minutes of our broadcasts we're going to have a live segment where you guys can come on in and ask all the questions that you have for our vendors, including myself, and let's get to it. So, we’re just waiting for a few folks to come on right now. I want to say thank you to our lovely interpreter. And yeah, so we're just waiting for people. So if you guys can get those questions that you have started on a list, and also check out the website on Pride, so you can get a list of all the vendors and kind of peruse and see what we have to offer and then also have those questions ready. So hi everybody.

**All:** Hello. Hi.

**Carmen:** Oh I love seeing all these faces, look at all these awesome vendors. Just waiting for a few more folks to come on. Let's see, let's see.

So, for the vendor today, just a few questions that I want you to take into consideration. You know, let us know why She Fest, what does She Fest mean for you? And then you know go ahead and introduce who you are, let us know what your pronouns are as well. And a little tidbit about your business. And how has COVID, you know, how has it either put a little kink in your business or and how have you gotten past that kink because, you know, whether there's COVID or not things come up and we are persistent and we are resistant. That's what we are, we are a group of persistent and resistant folks [audio breaks]. Ah, let's see who we have here. Does anybody want to go ahead and start about who they are, what they are about, and what She Fest means to them?

**Toni:** We can start. I'm Toni, she/her/hers.

**Katherine:** I'm Katherine, she/her/hers.

**Toni:** And our company is called Pet Cartooning. So we create custom cartoon pieces of your special pets.

**Katherine:** We also use our platform to bring awareness to social injustice and to communities that mean a lot to us, LGBTQI, black, the black community as well so it's really important to

to use that platform to speak up.

**Toni:** And did you want us to talk about the past and what it means to us or kind of just let everyone introduce themselves first?

**Carmen:** If you could do that, that would be wonderful.

**Toni:** Okay, perfect. Um, so what She Fest means is, do you want to go ahead babe?

**Katherine:** Oh, um, so we went, the first time we went, we rescued our dog, who's over here, taking a nap. We just thought it was awesome, it was such a safe space for diversity, it was so inclusive. The whole idea of just feminism and just being able to be in a place where we felt safe and looking around at all walks of life, it was just beautiful for us to be a part of that. And with the dog thing and that was our favorite memory, Toni will tell you.

**Toni:** We, they have like a little doggy fashion show, yeah, and they get all dressed up and stuff. And that was the cutest thing. Those dogs were like, sweetness. So we love that we're like “oh this is awesome.”

**Carmen:** Can we see your pup or, is your pup busy doing pup things?

**Toni:** She's sleeping so I wouldn't call that busy, that's like her norm. Yeah, we'll show.

**Carmen:** Oh yeah, they will. Oh hi pup pup. Thanks for being a She Fest pup.

**All:** [laughs]

**Carmen:** Awesome well thank you, you two. I really appreciate and I don't want to speak for our community, but I'm going to just say thank you on behalf of, you know, all the folks at She Fest for coming on board. I really appreciate it. Awesome. Sylvie, do you want to go next?

**Sylvie:** Yeah, I'd love to. My wifi cuts in and out, so hopefully this will be awesome and I'll be able to stay on. You want to find out who I am and a little bit about my business?

**Carmen:** Yes what She Fest means to you and why She Fest?

**Sylvie:** Awesome, Sylvie, I use she/her pronouns. Came to last She Fest, because I love the idea of women and LGBTQI space. I think it's really important to have, like, those kind of inclusive spaces that people who don't often feel like, you know, what's happening out and about, is really for them. So I think She Fest felt like an inviting place to show up to and my business was called Vie Cycle and I teach bike maintenance classes and exclusively people identify as women and LGBTQI, so She Fest just made a lot of sense. And I had a bunch of fun at the last one. So, because of that I decided to get involved again and join the committee. And I was new to San Diego when I got involved with She Fest, initially, so it was a really cool way to begin to find my community in San Diego.

**Carmen:** Awesome. Where do you see yourself right now, as business progresses, moving forward with COVID-19?

**Sylvie:** Yeah, I've made a bunch of adjustments. I haven't taught any face to face classes, obviously, I had to go with doing an online class, but teaching people bike maintenance on Zoom is really challenging. So what I've been doing instead is focusing on, like, not quite that side of like education but the community building side of it, so I put on a couple of virtual workshops with, you know, 50, 60 people that have been about highlighting some voices of women and LGBTQI folks in cycling. And I'm going to keep doing those because that's been a much needed kind of educational space to highlight and represent people that you don't see in cycling as often.

**Carmen:** Thank you for sharing. Let's see. Next, [audio breaks] my screen gets a little blotchy so hold on here. So Yinka, do you mind going next?

**Yinka:** Sure, I'm Yinka, my pronouns are she/her/hers. I am an independent event planner and I own my own event planning company called Triple Pocket Events based out here in San Diego. This is actually my first She Fest, and I am super excited to be participating in it. I work a lot with San Diego Pride, and so I know a lot about She Fest, that I've actually never participated until today. So unfortunately I don't have a memory but this is going to be my first memory of She Fest.

**Carmen:** Oh, I'm super excited that the virtual She Fest is going to be your first one because from here on out, you can say, “you know what, a little COVID never hurt me. A little COVID never stopped me from participating and celebrating.” So, you're like, “you know what, I got this. Cheer when we're all in person, you know, this is fine, I got this,” right?

**Yinka:** You are 100% correct, at least, I am here virtually and that is a lot to me.

**Carmen:** And how great is it for everybody in the audience right now that you guys can actually join us, still being in your PJs, and we may not know it, or if you want us to know it and you look fabulous in your PJs or your sweatpants, although it is super hot and humid, no judgement. If you want to be in sweats, awesome. We're just happy to have you join us. And next, can we have Canna Pride, introduce themselves for us?

**Tara:** Hello everybody, my name is Tara...oh, and she/her/hers. Sorry.

**Kayla:** And then I'm Kayla, she/her/hers. We have Canna Pride so we have CBD products for people and pets. And so She Fast, our first time going was last year. And it was just a wonderful experience. Just the whole vibe of everybody just so, so much love in the air. So then I joined the committee this year and, just realizing like we're all in this you know for the same reason so I just love, you know, part of it.

**Tara:** And our sound… oh, there you go.

**Carmen:** You guys are coming through right now. So, I know some of you have already asked how has COVID affected their business. I'd also like for you to kind of comment too, you know, so that you can also give other business owners who might not be on this forum right now, a little bit of hope and a little bit of, you know, some hints about to go when it comes to COVID and continue our business, or if you have anything else that you'd like to contribute because there are people who are listening to us thinking, “well, I feel lost, I just started my business, this year and then boom” and they had this sense of “why me?” So, you know, moving forward I would like to have that sense of why me, why not me. If you guys can kind of elaborate on how you are progressing with COVID-19 in your business, that would be wonderful. So would Pet Cartooning like to go first?

**Toni:** Yes, we can go first.

**Carmen:** Thank you.

**Toni:** No problem. So, I think it ends up being a little different if you can do things online. So we actually just started our business last month, in the middle of the COVID, feeling like it would be an opportunity to kind of do something in the e-commerce space, since people weren't getting out and doing things. With that in mind, we are aware that it's not an essential product. So it's not something that people need to buy or have to buy. We just kind of look at it is as something that can kind of, you know, brighten your life if you do, do it. I think for us we kind of jumped in and we were like, you know, we'll see how it goes. COVID is already here, we’ll just see what happens. So that's kind of our take on it.

**Carmen:** Awesome. Um, Sylvie, are you still available for us?

**Sylvie:** Yeah. So, I am lucky enough that my business is designed to be mobile. And, you know, the virtual thing is definitely new but I don't have shop space I've always like gone to people's community spaces because so much of making people feel like they can fit into a space they usually don't see themselves in I think is like meeting people, you know, in the spaces they already have a connection to. So, with that said, yeah, it's been a big challenge to see, you know how I can do what I used to do in the same way. So I think this time is all about adaptability and just realizing that, you know, like, not all the components of my business will be accessible in COVID. But what I think is most valuable in this is community building and highlighting folks that don't get seen as much as cyclists and so that's something that's still easily available. And, you know, I think also it's been cool to be involved in a movement and a moment that's happening now and make my business, like, really synced up with that in a way that it has been in the past but that hasn't been the main focus. So, yeah, bringing like education and representation into my business way more than it might have been when it was just a face to face like just let's all hang out and kind of activity I think has been, you know, maybe it's not a way to make money at all, but the value of what I do is still really available. And this is my side business, thankfully. It would be challenging if all I was doing was teaching bike maintenance I think I would be out of luck. [laughs]

**Carmen:** I think it's important to state that, you know, when we do this, and we have our businesses on our own, whether it's you know, in accordance with what we do full time, part time, you know, in between, it's nice to know that you're with a group of folks who do this because they truly love it. And I think part of that love transmits through our business. And I think that, you know, it's sometimes more than the pay itself. Although we want the pay to come in, but the love of our business and being with community gives us so much, I don't know, like so much, just pay out on its own, that it's worth, sometimes, all the challenges that it comes with right.

Yinka, can you go ahead and elaborate it for yourself?

**Yinka:** Sure. So I started, I went out on my own and started my event planning company, towards the end of last year. And as we all know when COVID hit events were just done, live events at least were gone. And so, I took some time and started learning different virtual event platforms that were out there. And then once I felt really good about it, I then started educating clients that I had that didn't know how to navigate a virtual space and doing demos with them and, you know, showing them that you can translate a live event into a virtual event. It's not going to be exactly the same but it is possible. And I found that within the last couple of months, my business has really started picking up again. I mean see She Fest, this virtual private is going to be virtual, and so, that is helping a lot, because people are getting more comfortable being online. So I say to anyone who wants to start a business right now, do it. Honestly, it to me it's given me the time I need to really think out of what I want my company to be, the types of clients that I want to have, how I want to brand it, and I wouldn't really have that time, if we were all in a normal pace of life, because I would just be going, going, going with the live event. And so, this time has really, I could really sit down and really think about what I want my business to be, to look like. So, if anyone is out there, and they want to start their own business right now. I think one of the best times to do it, you know, and if your business can survive this. You're gonna do it. I mean, right now you can only get higher, you can only do more, so, yeah, go ahead and start your business.

**Carmen:** I so love that and I'm so resonate with that. If not now, when. If not, when, why not. And I love that message, thank you so much for sharing that. Canna Pride you are up next! Do you want a few minutes?

**Kayla:** [audio breaks]. Sorry our cat was wheezing, so weird.

**Carmen:** That's when you need to bring your fur baby on with us, that's okay too. We welcome all the fur babies! Or lizard babies or bird babies, all inclusion here.

**Kayla:** Thank you. Yeah. I think he’s good, yeah, he’s good, just needed some water. All right.

**Carmen:** Yay!

**Kayla:** So let's see. What is it, COVID? It’s COVID that we are talking about, right? So, as far as COVID, it made us.

**Carmen:** Yeah.. So how has COVID… Sorry, go ahead.

**Kayla:** I don't know our connection is so bad. Let’s see. Can you hear me?

**Carmen:** I can.

**Kayla:** So, COVID just made us... We used to do a lot of outdoor events. So it just made it more, you know obviously virtual for us. But it's been great to connect with people even outside of San Diego where we are right now so I think that's, you know, that's a good thing that everybody should take from it is, you know, we're all connecting still on a different level though.

**Tara:** Yeah, I think it's impacted most businesses in a positive way, you know, hopefully, this kind of like, you just have to switch it up a little bit and improvise and still be able to connect with the community and that's the important part.

**Toni:** That connection is interesting. We were just talking about it today, and Katherine was saying she feels like she's friends with different people she’s connected with on Instagram.

**Katherine:** It’s so awesome because I think now that we're all woke you know we're not going to ever go back to normal and we've always wanted to start a business and this was, like, such a great time. And at the same time it was so awesome to be able to connect with people who are aligned with our values and, I don't know if there would have been like Yinka said I don't know if there have been a better time to start a business, I mean it sounds odd but, yeah.

**Yinka:** Yeah, I being in a virtual space too I think I'm either, Tara, Kayla said it, but you do, you get to meet people from all over the world that's the one good thing about virtual. So usually when you are just, live, [audio breaks] city but so if you have whatever your business is think about how far we're reaching can have being virtual.

**Carmen:** I know for me, I'm doing energy work, it's been so different when it comes to doing Reiki or hosting meditation sessions. It's been so different, but yet so fun in a way that it's because it's new and it's interesting. And, you know, I get to choose how I format it, you know, versus how maybe we've been so used to the business side of it being in front of people that now we get to evolve our business, as folks who own businesses right, we get to connect [audio breaks]. Sorry, like you said, you get to connect with people all over the world now. And being able to do like a [audio breaks] session to someone maybe in Australia, it was totally different for me. And there's adjustments that need to be made, but those adjustments just means moving forward, and doing things virtually now has been super interesting, and I welcome the changes and I welcome all of you who do that, and I thank you for everything that you are and everything that you aren't, because that makes you all perfect. I don't know if you guys have any questions for each other on here before we go on to the next segment at She Fest, any questions? Or any questions from the live audience?

**Sylvie:** Yinka, I got a question. I'd love to know what is the most common type of event you usually plan, like, without COVID going on and how has, how have events shifted. What do people want to be doing now?

**Yinka:** So I actually do a hodgepodge, I do not limit myself to one type of market or event so I do, it’s going to sound weird, but I do a lot of sporting events. I do a lot of corporate events and private events like birthday parties, anniversaries, things, like that as well. Basically if I love my client I will do whatever event it is that they want. And so for me it's really interesting that you ask me that, but for me I really choose, I choose my clients, more than I choose my event. Because I am such a person, I just love connection, I love being able, being able on the same wavelength as someone. And so that's how I go about doing it. What was the second part of your question, how it's changed?

**Sylvie:** Yeah, what kind of events do people want now that you know maybe the shifts in what people have been doing?

**Yinka:** Hmm, connection is so important right now that I think people just really want events where they get to see each other and they get to have a big group of people in a space. And so what I've been doing a lot is finding virtual events platforms where it's not just a webinar style platform where you don't get to see the audience. I've been looking for platforms where you get to see everyone who is in the platform, who is in the room, so that you can really have as much of a human connection as possible. So, I've been doing a lot of wellness festivals, actually.

**Carmen:** Hm, I might have to partner up with you on that one.

**Yinka:** Anytime Carmen!

**Carmen:** So we're gonna start wrapping it up. Does anybody have any other questions for each other or anybody from the live feed? Any questions, any comments? Let me see, I have something that popped up here.

**Sylvie:** Hmm. I guess an ask of the panelists and the audience, so, one of the things that I’m getting...

**Carmen:** So there's a question, what is… Go ahead, sorry, sorry.

**Sylvie:** Yeah, just as a call out thing, one of the things I'm doing in San Diego is helping to set up a BIPOC history ride, which is going to be, you know, kind of a virtual bike tour of San Diego is focusing on places that have had an impact on folks lives or places that like something significant has happened that affected the community in San Diego but fully focused on the BIPOC community, as well as the LGBTQI community. So I'd love to just put that out to the public, but if anyone has you know, site, and statues anything else in San Diego, they think is significant. I'd love to help build this. I got a couple of folks on board at the moment but we really want to open this up to the community to help us design this kind of educational event.

**Carmen:** That's awesome. Is there a way that maybe you can put the information on the Pride website for us to reach you and contact you? That would be awesome.

**Sylvie:** Definitely.

**Carmen:** Thank you. We did have one question come up. What is the best advice you have received as a business owner. And I open up to anybody here. Anyone?

**Yinka:** I’ll go.

**Tara:** Be open minded.

**All:** Yeah.

**Carmen:** Yinka, you were gonna say something?

**Yinka:** Yeah I was gonna say a friend of mine who owns her own business as well, we were talking and she told me about passion breaks, and she was just like, take passion breaks. And when you are a creative and you own your own business, you tend to just go, go, go, go, go all the time, and burning yourself out, in your passion break is just take some time to really concentrate on you, your well being, so that you can keep doing what you love to do. So that's my advice, take passion breaks and don't be afraid to take that.

**Carmen:** Before we wrap up… Sorry, go ahead.

**Sylvie:** Just don't get caught up in you know making a logo and like building the best possible website, all that stuff is what you do, is what's going to be valuable like focus on building that and make that great and then you can come back to the website and the logo and all of those, you know, add on things.

**Toni:** That's awesome and I also think that sometimes we do all that because we're like, we just want it to be perfect. We want it to go well and if we get all that done and it should go great. Well, don't be afraid to fail too, because sometimes you can get those things done or maybe you don't, and it could fail but that's okay, because it's a learning experience. I've learned from a lot of the things [audio breaks]. So, just don't be afraid to fail it helps to be able to [audio breaks].

**Carmen:** I love that I really love that business owners, we want things to be so perfect. And so perfect for our clients, right, that sometimes we get wrapped up in that and we forget about the process of loving what we do. Just so to wrap up, if each of you can kind of go along and kind of just restate, who you are, and how people can find you maybe through social media, or do you have a website. Can we do that before we wrap up?

**Toni:** I can jump in, so Pet Cartooning, so you can find us on Instagram @petcartooningbrand. There's also a link to get to the shop. We use it Etsy, but even if you did petcartooning.com it will take you directly to that page. We're actually doing a giveaway on there now. So, copy in the post we did today give directions for that. You can win a canvas, we've given away one of our 16 by 12 canvases and put your pet on there.

**Carmen:** Ooh, I have two pets, I might have to go in there.

**Yinka:** I can go next. So my company is called Triple Pocket Events, and you can find me on Instagram just @triplepocketevents or Facebook, Triple Pocket Events, and I'm currently working on my website so it is still under construction. But still working.

**Carmen:** Awesome. Canna Pride. How about you guys?

**Tara:** So you can find us on Instagram, and Facebook @cannapridelifestyle. And we are, we have a code off still from Pride Month, was it pride15? Pride15. And you can use that on our website, [www.cannapride.com](http://www.cannapride.com), go check it out. We also have some awesome blogs on there as well. Education is key.

**Kayla:** Thank you for having us.

**Carmen:** Silvye, can you?

**Sylvie:** My company is called Vie Cycle. And it's the same thing on Facebook and Insta. And as a shout out a lot of folks that signed up to She Fast and didn't make it off this panel, but we have made a website to kind of showcase all the people that would have had booths at the She Fest. So hopefully that link will be talked about at some point, you can actually find all of us, and the 20 plus booths that didn't make it out. Give them some love.

**Carmen:** And my name is Carmen, and business owner of Lotus Love Reiki. You can find me on Facebook and Instagram under Lotus Love Reiki. and I am excited to now pass it on. Oh, and say thank you actually to all our folks who came on today, and those who couldn't make it. Like Sylvie said, go to Pride and check out all the businesses that couldn't make it with us today and for those who did, and give us some love and give some shout outs, about, you know, if you have any questions or [audio breaks] we are here for your services. So before I pass it on to Asher who will be hosting the second half of She Fest, I just wanted to wish you all my love, and much light, and that I give you and share with you all the love that is possible in this world. So, passing it on. Goodbye everybody.

**Yinka:** Thank you. Bye.

**Youth Activism**

**Asher:** Hey, everybody. Thank you so much Carmen, and the San Diego small business owners who were able to make it on for that segment. You know owning a small business is no small task and especially during the age of COVID. So thank you so much for sharing your experiences with us.

Up next, I'm super excited. We'll be hearing from some of the kids from San Diego Pride's youth program. They're going to talk to us about how adults can be better allies to youth, the importance of LGBTQ+ youth and some other fun things, so stay tuned for that. Thanks!

Alright so they are queuing up that footage, sorry to leave you hanging there. It will just be a couple of minutes. All right, looks like they have it, take it away.

*[Video showing "Youth Talks" with members of the SD Pride Youth Collective]*

**Jasper (Jax - He/Him/His):** Hi, my name is Jasper. I go by Jax for short and my pronouns are he, him and his. I'm 13 years old and I know She Fest passed through San Diego Pride Youth Programs.

**Sophie:** Hi, I'm Sophie, and I use she, her and hers pronouns. I'm just going to talk a little bit about my experience as a youth and LGBTQ+ spaces.

*[Question: How did you get involved in the community/activism?]*

**Jasper:** That started for me just for actively searching for career events, Youth groups, trans groups and I ended up finding San Diego Prides Youth Leadership Academy last year in 2019. And I started attending more San Diego Pride youth events and my relationships grew and I started getting more involved just by attending the events. If you put yourself out there, then you can find your place, your community, your people, they're there, I promise.

**Sophie:** So I've been going to Pride Parades since I was about six. My dad's company at the time, March the parade every year. So from the ages of like six to around 12, I would go and I would march and I would get all dressed up, and it was one of my favorite times of the year at the time. Since I was so young, I didn't quite understand the meaning or how impactful these events were, but as I got older, that definitely shifted and I definitely came to appreciate them a lot more. So when I was younger I always loved to see the drag queens. I would call them my sparkly friends and they were the most beautiful people in the world to me and so that was definitely one of my favorite parts. As for activism, my family has always been known as the activist family between friend groups and larger family groups. And so, ever since I was really little, I've been going to protests, or marches, or overall just about big issues and events, having my voice heard. So this has not stopped or slowed or changed. I've definitely been going to a lot of protests and marches, more recently about the bigger events going on right now in our world.

*[Question: How has being involved in activism affected your life?]*

**Jasper:** Activism is really, really great for growth. Whether that be in relationships you find great people through activism, really compassionate and strong willing individuals are involved in activism. I have found my family through being an activist for the LGBT community. I have learned a lot and I have grown.

**Sophie:** I feel that activism, personally, has really affected my life in a positive way. I feel that activism has made me more aware and more understanding of different perspectives. I feel like it's definitely given me a lot more confidence in using my voice and using my platforms to use them to speak about what I feel is important. So overall optimism has been a very, very, very important part in my life personally.

*[Question: How have adults supported you, and how can they continue to support you?]*

**Jasper:** So typically, adults are much more respected than youth. We are very, very, underestimated. And since social media is not safe for minors regarding having Public Accounts is very important that the adults that are comfortable having Public Accounts spread information spread anything about your local youth groups and promote these events as much as possible. So less involved youth can find these events, find their community. You can also donate to these organizations and participate as a youth advisor, so that you can provide advice and emotional support and a shoulder for these youth. We need to be listened to. We need our voices to be heard, because we are all just as valid as adults, we all have great opinions and great things to say.

**Sophie:** Well, like I said, my parents have always supported me and always taken me to these kinds of events, and always cared about my opinion and these types of topics. So that's been really helpful. More recently I've joined a lot of groups that have also been really, really important in bringing my voice up and letting it be heard. So I think that's definitely important. There have definitely been some situations where people have just looked at me they're like: "But you're a kid. Do you really know what you're talking about?" And that obviously hurts sometimes but that just makes me try better and do better and make the outcome, better within what they thought it would be. Personally I think just listening to youth more ideas and kind of not locking us out of the room where it happens kind of thing would be really, really great if that could continue to happen, and happen more.

*[Question: Why do there need to be dedicated youth spaces at Queer spaces/events?]*

**Jasper:** Well is very beneficial having older young adult and adult friends is much easier for a youth to speak to other youth, and often queer spaces are very like sex, alcohol, drugs, and that's totally fine but it's not very youth accepting and we're often excluded from those areas. So having an exclusively youth section or space of an LGBT event, or area is very, very beneficial. We find it easier to mingle and be accepted and find people that are other youth, if it's a designated area for us.

**Sophie:** Well, It makes us feel like we're not excluded. In this community I've definitely come

to realize that it is about not sitting people, it's about bringing people in, it's about caring for people who feel excluded in their day to day lives. So honestly these kinds of spaces for youth, where we can just be ourselves and maybe it's not safe at home or we go to school and we're bullied for who we are. And these spaces that I really appreciate honestly, it's, we can be ourselves, we can talk about that cute girl that we saw down the street, or we can talk about how maybe we want to wear makeup, or we want to wear boys clothes or whatever we are feeling inside about who we are, we can bring those up. And we can bring them up around safe people who understand, and who will help us get through that. And so, personally, I have benefited so much from these programs, I love talking to everybody. Everyone is so sweet and so kind and so understanding and just wants to hear what we have to say, and it's truly a beautiful thing. You say spaces in the LGBTQ+ community is a space for people who may not be able to go to, you know, a gay bar or to anywhere else that may not be kid friendly and still be themselves.

*[Question: Pick a slang word that you heard adults misuse, and explain its meaning.]*

**Jasper:** I think one of my favorites is probably "this song slaps" or "this song is a bop." There's not...the songs do not make you physically or even mentally hurt. I mean, it could, it could really do stuff to your emotions, but typically it means that this is a great song, this is probably one of my favorites, I can't stop listening to this song, I can't stop moving, and dancing, is a song that is so good that just has that effect on me. Another term I have heard a lot of and I use a lot of is "big brain". It just needs to be super smart like that's a really good idea. And then "smol brain", not small right, "smol" brain is basically the opposite of that like "maybe that wasn't the best thing to say, that wasn't the best. You're smarter than that” type of thing. And then relating to that "smol" is just the, like, kinda, it can be cute, or dislike, a less sophisticated version of small. And then I use this one the most "vibing" or just "vibe". It just means be cool or chill like where you wanna be in life if you're "vibing", like that's exactly the mood I would like to have right now, forever. Just cruising. So congrats! Now you can, you've achieved level one fluencing speaking Gen Z here.

**Sophie:** Well, there's a lot! Our generation has definitely been creative and coming up with these kinds of things as a lot more than the generations before have. And so I think one of the funniest ones would probably have to be what TikTok sees as a "top" and a "bottom" because I had explained the original definition to my parents and they're like so "What's happening on TikTok?" and I had to explain that that's more like how people show who they are and it's more of like a style and an aesthetic. Then the other thing, which was very uncomfortable, but it was very funny because then they're like "Okay, that makes sense. That they're kind of using this in a more kid friendly space and more kid friendly way". For other slang, probably like "slaps," like “this slaps” because obviously older people think slaps and that hurts or like that's bad. But personally, and I know a lot of people use as like "that's really good, that's really great," like "I like this!" So that's another thing that I've had to explain that's pretty, it's pretty funny. Yeah so thank you for listening to what I had to say about youth in LGBTQ+ areas and spaces. And thank you!

**Jasper:** Thank you She Fest for all that you do. And for all you other youths, and baby gays out there know that you were super valid, no matter how you identify, no matter what groups you were born and you we're so, so, so valid, and you can find your community if you just put yourself out there.

*[end of video]*

**Vendor’s presentation - 2:36:47**

**Asher:** How awesome were those kids? That was such a cool segment. I love that they've organized and established themselves in a community and space that embraces the LGBTQ+ community. It's super inspiring. So I’m gonna backtrack a little bit back to our vendors. So our vendors missed meeting you and missed introducing you to the incredibly talented small businesses and orgs that grace our in-person festival, so please pop by the She Fest marketplace and check out the vendors who are missing you this year. And we have a quick slideshow showing you some of the businesses that are featured.

[Presentation with no sound.

Lick it lollipops.

Pride 5K.

MERAKI - Adventure story with Greek Gods and Gay Heroes!

The Dance Series by Krisy Cato.

Support She Fest Vendors and Organizations [www.sdpride.org/shefest-marketplace/](http://www.sdpride.org/shefest-marketplace/).

End of video.]

**Asher:** All right, so we have an interest stories with Greek gods and gay heroes, Meraki, this is an LGBTQ comic book series. Have you ever felt as if you were part of the story, come on a journey of love life and family and a dance series by Kristy Cato. And this is available on Amazon.

Support our She Fest vendors and organizations, there is a link listed there to do that.

**Unsung Lilly - 2:39:06**

**Asher:** Awesome. All right, so it's time for our next segment. We'll be hearing some live music from Unsung Lilly. Unsung Lilly is a wife and wife team, Sara and Frankie, they began making music together back in 2012 in the UK. And a few years into the project, they fell madly in love with one another and moved to California to work on developing their music as a duo. They're now based in Los Angeles, Sara and Frankie create epic and empowering pop anthems with soul. Their message that love knows no boundary is one that has ignited thousands of their fans from around the world. We are so excited to share four of their original songs with you all today. Have a listen.

*[Video plays:]*

> Unsung Lilly, if you haven't heard our music before we are wife and wife and we make music together. Thank you so much for having us. It is a pleasure to be part of She Fest, one awesome event.

> Yes, thank you so much for having us.

**Fly**

Verse:

Gave me all you had but I'm still breathing

But you hold on til the end

We could fight all night but I'd still be there

Gonna hold on til the end

But a mountain sits upon my chest

And I'm tired of shallow breath

We could fight all night but I'd still be there

Where the road ends, where the sun lives

All we need to do is...

Chorus:

Fly

It's not enough to just survive

You and I could really thrive

If we just close our eyes and fly

Verse 2:

Gave me all you had but I can't see it

But you hold on til the end

We could shout all night into the silence

Or rise above it to the air

All we need to do is...

Chorus:

Fly

It's not enough to just survive

You and I could really thrive

If we just close our eyes and fly

All we need to do is fly, all we need to fly

You and I could really thrive if we just close our eyes and fly

Bridge:

Fly

It's not enough to just survive

You and I could really thrive

If we just close our eyes and fly

Chorus:

You and I could really thrive

If we just close our eyes and fly

All we need to do is fly, all we need to fly

Close our eyes

Thank you. So, that was “Fly,” that’s an album that’s on Spotify called Twelve. And this is another song, it’s called “Hear Us Roar.”

**Hear Us Roar**

Verse:

A world divides, there's walls and exits at every turn

It's one last fearful attempt to ignore all that we've learned

Go with it or be left behind, everything is changing

Evolution leaves it's bind, everything is changing

Pre-Chorus:

Grab them by the hand and show them we will stand together

Linking one by one we build a new forever

Shout one song like we've never heard before

A new day is done, hear us roar

Chorus:

Hear us roar

Hear us roar

Verse 2:

She fights for love, in all its truth so feel no fear

But he's holding on to thousands of years

Go with it or be left behind, everything is changing

Evolution blows our minds, everything is changing

Per-Chorus:

Grab them by the hand and show them we will stand together

Linking one by one we build a new forever

Shout one song like we've never heard before

A new day is done, hear us roar

Chorus:

Hear us roar

Hear us roar

Hear us roar

(Hear us roar)

Hear us roar

(Hear us roar)

Hear us roar

Hear us roar

**Demons**

Verse:

My demons are so heavy there's no space for tears

These demons lie with me beneath all my years

Whisper to others calling them in

Just to remind me I'll never win

As I sit in the darkness I can see

My demons have demons just like me

They are the faces of my past gone by

They are the voices silenced through ancient time

And as they drift into the sky

I am free, I am free

Chorus:

My demons, my demons, my demons are free

My demons, my demons, my demons are free

Verse 2:

A fight to make it safer, safer not to try

To hide out in the sand from a deeper knowing why

Yet they pull me deeper, down and down I go

The unsmoking of the mirror my reflection starts to show

As I sit in the darkness I can see

My demons have demons just like me

They are the faces of my past gone by

They are the voices silenced through ancient time

And as they drift into the sky

I am free, I am free

Chorus:

My demons, my demons, my demons are free

My demons, my demons, my demons are free

Bridge:

As I sit in the darkness I can see

My demons have demons just like me

Chorus:

My demons, my demons, my demons are free

My demons, my demons, my demons are free

My demons are free

Thank you so much!

Alright, we are just going to do one more song, but if want to check out more music by us, we are called Unsung Lilly, check out our website, we've actually just a couple weeks ago released a new covers EP of like reimagined songs that we're offering as a free download on our website so go check that out, it’s unsonglilly.com. You can also check us on Spotify and all the other streaming platforms and also support us on Patreon, it’s patreon.com/unsunglilly.

Yeah, thank you so much She Fest for having us. We are very lucky ladies. And this is our last song, called “Queen of Tomorrow.”

**Queen Of Tomorrow**

Verse:

Swipe through life like that's all there is

Head down, way down, blinded down

Fight through life like that's how to live

Head down, way down, lost my crown

There's a distant glimmer calling up

But I can rarely see it

There is something rising through this doubt

And I can almost be it

Pre-chorus:

And I've got one last step til I get it,

Try to turn it up and I can't forget it

And I've got one last step til I get it, try to

Turn it up and I can't forget it

And I know...

Chorus:

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Oh, I'm the Queen of tomorrow, yeh

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Oh, I'm the Queen of tomorrow, yeh

Verse 2:

Eat through life like that's all there is

Weighed down, way down, blinded down

Planning my life, every second counts

Do it now, right now, get your crown

There's a purer feeling calling out

Hidden behind indoctrination

Beauty searching for a voice to shout

About this procrastination

Pre-chorus:

And I've got one last step til I get it,

Try to turn it up and I can't forget it

And I've got one last step til I get it,

Try to turn it up and I can't forget it

And I know...

Chorus:

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Oh, I'm the Queen of tomorrow, yeh

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Oh, I'm the Queen of tomorrow, yeh

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Oh, I'm the Queen of tomorrow, yeh

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Aah aah aah aah

Oh, I'm the Queen of tomorrow, yeh

> Thank you so much She Fest.

> Thank you so much. Enjoy the rest of your day. Bye. We love you all.

Asher:All right. That was amazing. You can check out Unsung Lilly on their website at unsunglilly.com and follow them on Instagram at @unsunglilly.

**Queer Stretch Break: Yoga edition - 2:58:01**

**Asher:** So who is ready to move? I know that I am! Lucky for us, we are being joined by She Fest’s very own Shannon Linzer, who is going to be leading us, and then much needed, stretch break. Welcome Shannon.

**Shannon:** Hi everyone! Oh, you can totally see just my knees, let's fix that. You think in the world of Zoom, I would have sorted my camera out 100% all the time, but you know, that's alright. We'll get this working... Okay, so come on up, please. I don't know what is going on with my camera today. It was working yesterday, we're gonna give this one more try. Thank you folks for being patient with me. Okay, let's try this. Asher can you see me all right?

All right, so come on up. Come on up with me if you can, please, if you don't please that's okay too. First rule of anything: if it doesn't feel good, don't do it. We're here to make our bodies feel awesome. I don't know how we can not be all flopping around a little bit after some real amazing….

But, just in case we are gonna get afternoon and the first thing we are gonna do is just take a walk. We are gonna to step up and we are going to reach back. And if your shoulders don't feel good, just take a step and if your knees don't feel good, just reach your arms. All is good. You are gonna make this feel nice and long in this huge big reach. I'm probably gonna lay off of my screen ‘cause I’m a string bean and that's just fine.

And we're gonna switch to the other foot. I think it really helps to move off of our not strong leg from time to time, because that makes it stronger. And we're gonna reach and we're gonna come back. And now we are gonna come to the middle. Whenever I teach this one to folks, they kind of think like "Hey, pretend you’re at the best concert of your life.” We’re at She Fest, it’s the best concert of our lives. Hopefully.

And yeah. So let's get back to the center. We are out here for a second just twisting. There's always remind me of being a kid in a park, standing with the butterflies. It's a really nice one to do to get away from your desk for 30 seconds during the day. I think we all need to get away from sitting, from time to time. It feels really good, right? Now we're gonna take that sideways one back for just a second, we’re going to come here. And then instead of just keeping our feet glued to the ground because that's not [inaudible] very much, you take a big step up to the side and come back, and up to the side, and come back and do that one more time. Up to the side… And this time, if it feels nice cross your leg over to get a bigger side stretch and come back to the middle. Shake your hands out, get a little bit of something groovy going on here. Now go to the other side and come back, and to the other side and come back. One more to the other side. And this time again if it feels good you can get your feet cross...and come back. Alright shake it out.

So I was trying to think of something specifically yoga to pull into this today, because we did advertise it first for yoga edition. And I was thinking, what could be more She Fest than doing a little bit of something called a “moon salutation.” If you don't often get to do so we are going to do a modified form of this one. We're going to make sure we have got a lot of space sideways, steps, I'm going to step all the way over the side and this next little bit is going to look pretty familiar. We are gonna reach our hands up as high as we can. And we're gonna go to the side and for the side and again. As we go to the side, we are gonna keep this two inches below your belly lifting really really long and high. That's what centers us. It's literally from our middle. Take a big step up to the side and we're gonna put your arms up, super strong, kinda like a god or goddess or nonbinary deity of any [inaudible] and hang up here. And put all our weak into our hips, because it's where our power comes from. And take one more nice and kind of long moment there and enjoy it and we're gonna stand up really strong. We're gonna turn around and straighten out this leg a little bit. It just makes it possible to bend and lean forward and get a good stretch in our hips and we really gonna bend that knee a little bit. Increase the bend in that leg. If you got really, really tight hamstrings like a lot of our folks who spend a lot of money in practitioners, really be sure about to spend some time to make it feel a little bit nicer. Because it feels good to get a bit of balance from time to time we're gonna get our back foot behind us a little bit. You can put your back foot down a little bit, You could and you can drop into your knee a little bit and we're gonna reach those arms all the way up to the ceiling and you might get this nice stretch in front of your hip. This definitely gets tight when you sit and watch in front of the computer all day . We're gonna hang out here for a second and we're gonna come back to our side. We're gonna go a little bit sideways. This way.This thing you do when you feel like is all you. Right into those rips.

Just like a moon has phases right, we’re going to turn around and do that same phase on the other side. So here we're gonna hit into the front left hip here and we gonna reach that moon nice and long and come back, reach up nice and long and If you're having a little trouble with your balance it is super okay to lean on something, just make sure that is something that's not gonna move off. Back and we are gonna come back to that nice triangle shape with our legs and we're gonna move forward and come back and maybe you gonna bend into that knee and straighten it out a couple of times. Make it feel good wherever you are at. Keep your belly in and then when you come up you don’t want to “bend and snap,” you want to bend and lead with the chest you always want to do that to keep it out of your back. Take one nice big step to the side and bend to the other side and come back one more time to this nice deep squat, nice deep stretch and stay here just for a second and maybe shift your ribs side to side and maybe you got your belly up enough and strong enough and lift up onto your toes. Just for a moment be strong and put it back down. Give a big step over to the side and reach as high as you can and then bend your knees and reach and come down . Let your body be gentle. Maybe you can put your hand on your elbows and shake your head out yes, and more yes and no and come all the way back up pushing the floor away with your feet pushing our backs lifting and we are call it for today. This has been a short intermission in your lovely She Fest performances.

Thank you guys for letting me hanging out with you. If you want to find me on socials you can look me up at social@sync2health. And I'm also physical therapist, in addition to the yoga teacher. And you can also email me if you're old school, as I'm. The email is on the screen shannon.linzer@dpt@gmail.com, that's Doctor of Physical Therapy, we use this movement as medicine. Thank you guys.

**Asher:** Thanks Shannon. Before you head off I had a few questions for you. Can you maybe tell us a little bit about yourself and your passion for yoga.

**Shannon:** Yeah, so I'm a physical therapist, I've been practicing since 2009. It makes me old in physical therapy and I'm also a yoga instructor. So where that kind of blends in is the point of yoga, that's the weather is not the point exactly, but to me as a point yoga is learning how to find your center from the ground and to be calm while you do all sorts of crazy silly acrobatic things and acrobatic things don't matter so much if they are coming back to yourself over and over again, and you get to know yourself from your heart and your body at the same time. I find that it makes me a much happier person. So I love to do that and I hang out with people every day who Basketball is their yoga, gardening is their yoga and knitting is their yoga. By that I mean it's something that brings them back to themselves and it's you know maybe they were picking up their grandkids, and they hurt their shoulder and now they can’t garden and they need help with that. So that's why I like to teach people during the day and there's where my true passion is to learn how to live and move in ways because the more at home in our bodies as all of the yoga and you know the same goals as that sounds. That's what I do.

**Asher:** Yeah, that's awesome. I've never heard that interpretation and I love it. it's kind of just about finding your center, and that thing that like grounds you. So, thank you for sharing that with us.

**Shannon:** Thank you so much for having me. I hope to see you again somewhere.Or maybe someday sooner rather than later in the real and safe world.

**Asher:** Absolutely. Well enjoy the rest of your day Shannon thank you for joining us on the segment,

**Shannon:** You too. Take care everyone.

**DIY Self-Care with Dr. Bronner's - 3:08:03**

**Asher:** Alright, so, up next, we will be hearing from our presenting sponsor Dr. Bronner's. And I believe Caroline will be joining us. Hi Caroline, how are you?

**Caroline:** Hello, sorry, I was muted for a second. Hi, thank you so much for having me.

**Asher:** Absolutely. I'm looking forward to hearing all about Dr. Bronner's and if you want to go ahead and just take it away, you've got this, what is it, 15, 30 minutes?

**Caroline:** Yes, 30 minutes, thank so thank you so much. So, as you probably just heard, my name is Caroline May. I am the new demo event coordinator here at Dr. Bronner's taking on this new role has been a challenge in itself, a good one. And then the pandemic came and turned everything upside down. It has taught us ingenuity, creativity and how to adapt and overcome. And I'm so glad we were able to maintain some normality, like remaining to be a title sponsor of She Fest as we have been for the past few years, at least. So today, instead of working hard to keep things normal we're going to take a step back and do some self care with Dr. Bronner's, using our regenerative organic coconut oil, some sugar and some essential oils. Joining me today and walking through this self care routine will be Ariel Vegosen, founder and director of Gender Illumination.

**Ariel:** Hi, it's so great to be with you all so excited to be on She Fest online Thank you for having me.

**Caroline:** Awesome. Yes, thank you for joining us, Ariel. I'm really excited to get into our interview. But first, you have all your supplies you're ready to start making?

**Ariel:** I’m ready to rock, I got all my supplies right here.

**Caroline:** Awesome. Let me get some better visuals for you guys here. Like I said, it's only just a few ingredients I think we can bring up the ingredient list and recipe. But it's super simple. All you need is your regenerative organic agriculture. Dr. Bronner's, actually this is a big success for us. We've spent the past few years working so hard to achieve extremely high standards certification. Think of it like a trifecta between Fair Trade, animal welfare and sustainability, all in one certification. We achieved a silver level certification for coconut oil. Ariel, can you point up the regenerative organic seal for us please? Keep an eye out for this on your products, a one small decision to switch to a regenerative product can have a huge impact on the world. So, we have two different kinds, Ariel has our whole kernel, which is a more nutty robust flavor and nuttier smell coconut oil. This one is our white kernel. It's gonna be more mild and delicate, so we're going to be using these just mix with a little bit of sugar or salt as your exfoliant, and then add your favorite essential oils. We’ll be using tea tree and lavender today.

It's a super easy recipe as I've mentioned, you just need two parts exfoliant, so salt or sugar, to one part coconut oil. I'm going to add just enough to make a little bit from my hands and lips today. Just two spoonfuls of sugar. Seal this up. You don't want to spill it like I did during the run through. And then one apart, coconut oil. This is best if it's melted. It's easiest that way but you don't want it to be hot. So, you melted either just 30 seconds in the microwave will do, without the lid on, of course, or you can let the jar itself sit in a bowl of warm water for about five minutes. It's gonna mix that up together. Like I said, this is so simple. Just take five minutes to step back and take some time for yourself and treat yourself, don’t have your phone in your hands, or the TV on. And you're going to add your favorite essential oils, one or two drops, unless you’re making more.

Then, I would recommend leaving this in the fridge for just a few minutes. So that'll cool down, feel better on your skin and also prevent the sugar from sticking to the bottom if you've made quite a bit. So I'll bring this back up here. So Ariel, super easy, right?

**Ariel:** Yes, this is awesome. It's fun to me, especially now that we're in quarantine. It's so nice to be able to just have a fun and easy amazing thing that you can create, it's great.

**Caroline:** Sometimes the hardest thing about making this is finding the time, so it's best that it's just so quick and simple. You can find more recipes like that on Lisa Bronner's blog or our all one blog link to [www.drbronner.com](http://www.drbronner.com). So, Ariel, tell me about yourself. Welcome.

**Ariel:** Sure. So my name is Ariel Vegosen, I'm the founder and director of Gender Illumination. We're a nonprofit focused on creating safer spaces for trans and non binary community, and the work that I do in the world is I’m a healer and activist and educator and inclusivity and diversity trainer, and I'm also someone that loves to perform and to experiment and play with gender and help people step into their full selves when it comes to gender exploration.

**Caroline:** Beautiful, I love it. So Gender Illumination, what is your company's mission.

**Ariel:** So, Gender Illumination’s mission is to serve the trans and non binary community through healing leadership ritual healing and mentorship and we do this through our programs, workshops, our events, our performances. We also have an amazing mentorship program, it's an adult mentorship program, I'm going to tell you more about that later on in this interview. And a very important piece of Gender Illumination is that we come from the understanding that an anti oppression lens is necessary to do this work. So the work of Gender Illumination is addressing, and working to end, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, and doing that in a context that raises up and lift up the voices of those most marginalized, and specifically those in the trans and non binary community.

**Caroline:** Awesome. All one, right. So, here at Dr. Bronner’s we're very deeply rooted in our six cosmic principles that guide everything that we do, really, so, love that mission, love the unity and step into something we all need more in our lives. So you mentioned programs and workshops, can you tell me about those?

**Ariel:** Yes, so Gender Illumination has a whole world of programs, you can actually check it out online at genderillumination.com, you can see the programs that we offer there, the one that I want to highlight right now is the mentorship program. So this is a program that, during the pandemic, we've been able to move from being an in person program to an online program, and in doing that we've been able to go way more expensive in the scope of who's able to participate in this program. It's now available to everyone throughout the country so we've had people in this program from Washington DC, Washington State, New York City, Texas. We've had people from all over the country, San Diego, we've had people from everywhere be able to come and participate in this program. And what it is is an adult mentorship program. So we are partnering people and making sure that people in the trans and non binary and gender non conforming community have someone that they can talk to and go to for support. So this program gives specific support for people that are newly coming up or have questions, or just need an extra additional person that they could reach up to their life. And what we found is especially now when things are so challenging, and so hard, and so many people in our community are struggling with housing, and finances, we've found that this mentorship program has been a key area of support for people. And the mentorship program also provides online Zoom workshops, so the way the program is structured is people have these one on one mentor-mentee meetings, and then we also have these all group sessions that happen over Zoom, where everyone comes and we do workshops on decolonization, anti racism workshops, we do workshops around social justice, and then there's a whole activist component to it and a lot of our members have been able to actually take those workshops and apply it to their lived experiences and take that information and immediately put it into action. And it's been a wonderful thing to see these past three months of being in quarantine how important this program has been for our community.

**Caroline:** That sounds awesome. I love that we can adapt and overcome like I was saying earlier, um, the same thing is gonna happen when She Fest, from what I heard we've had a lot more participation with these online events because it's so much more accessible to more people. And we've all tried parking Downtown and Hillcrest, so really glad that we're here not commuting Downtown and able to work around that. So that's fantastic. You also mentioned, that mentorship program sounds super important, but you also mentioned some performances. Those look like that's so cool.

**Ariel:** Yes, I'd love to talk to you about our performance work. So we co-founded an amazing performance piece called “The MultiGenderVerse” and we launched this at the Oakland Museum of California, in collaboration with their “No Spectators” exhibit, which was an exhibit on the Burning Man festival. We run a theme camp called “Gender Blender,” which is the safe space on Playa for trans and nonbinary people, and we welcome people of all genders. We help people explore gender, we talk about gender, we get expansive with what gender is and what is possible.

And “The MultiGenderVerse” is a performance piece that is for people of all ages. So we had young people in the audience, ages five years old, all the way up to, someone was 85 years old in the audience, and we created this performance piece so that everyone can collectively come together and see what it's like to explore and experiment with gender. The performance pieces are often political in nature, in terms of striving for unity, striving for a time when we have a world that has really come through some of the hardships and the terrible things that we see happening now. And so the pieces that we produce for “The MultiGenderVerse” are really about liberation and collective liberation, and we hope to continue this performance work, and we're brainstorming right now “what does it look like to do performance work in a pandemic? Is there any way to do social distance performance work and have it be live? What can we do online?” Where's so many great job artists that have taken the work onto Zoom and we've been inspired by all of that and we're looking into what does it mean to be performance artists in a pandemic, and how does this situation actually inform our art.

**Caroline:** Awesome, super cool. I'm actually gonna try this scrub here while we're talking, because I know my hands can definitely use it. Um, I was wondering, though, about how did this all get started?

**Ariel:** So, I founded Gender Illumination about three years ago and the reason why I started this nonprofit is because of my own identity as a queer person, as a non binary person as someone that really was noticing that our community is so marginalized and often, we are left out of key resources. And I notice that we can do this for ourselves, we can procreate this we can build our own healing, we can create or mentorship, we can provide ourselves with ritual. Ritual is a huge part of Gender Illumination, is a core part of this, and I myself am an ordained priestess in the Jewish tradition, and I wanted to bring these skills, and this knowledge and this wisdom about ritual and bring it to a community beyond just Jewish people, bring it to the secular community bring it into trans and non binary community and also combine and see what are the other ritualists and other spiritualities that play in. And what does it look like to co-create ritual around coming out, ritual around main changes, ritual around stepping into our full gender selves and our true gender identities. A lot of the rituals that we've been able to do in Gender Illumination, have been around showing who we are showing our pride and showing who we are and community, creating special rituals in terms of our families, or friends, working with places of faith and creating inclusive rituals that actually apply to us and our lived experiences.

**Caroline:** Awesome, well, it's so nice I love learning, like more about you because I know I feel like our work has been kind of overlapping for so long. We haven't gotten to work directly together yet so this is really interesting you do so many things. [Laughs]. I'm really impressed. So speaking of that, tell me more about one of the Dr. Bronner's has been a big supporter of the LGBT community for years and years, more than just sponsoring She Fest or Pride or helping out with Gender Illumination. What other ways do we work with you to support the community?

**Ariel:** So I want to honor and thank Dr. Bronner's because I think this is, it's so important to see people and companies that actually really care, and that are actually working to make a difference and I see this with Dr. Bronner's in terms of the LGBTQ community, in terms of actually doing so much amazing work when it comes to environmentalism, when it comes to ending GMOs, when it comes to regenerative agriculture, Dr. Bronner's has been on the front line for so many important issues and it's such an honor to see how much they take a stand for the LGBTQ community and how they are a part of. Sometimes I think companies don't have anything to do with a community and they try to be supportive. What's amazing and unique about Dr. Bronner's is they are part of, y'all are part of, we are actually one community. We're part of the LGBTQ community, there's no separation.

And I also want to highlight that Dr. Bronner's has been very supportive of an important initiative that I also co-founded, that is called the Queer Dome, and the Queer Dome is queer-centered psychedelic harm reduction. And so we've launched that this past year, Queer Dome is about one years old, and the work that we do is going into festivals, or parties, workshop spaces where there's a real need to create safety. There is so much use of psychedelics in queer community and there's just so many different issues that queer people are living through that potentially people are not living through. And we found that we were able to create a space [audio breaks] and with queer people that are able to hold and sit with people and be with them during challenging journeys. And this has been a very important piece. We have over 100 volunteers that are part of Queer Dome. And if that's something people are interested in, I want people to be able to get in touch with me after this, so people go to Gender Illuminations web page there's a contact page there and I'd be happy to connect more and to build this community with people that are interested in this work.

**Caroline:** That's super awesome. Just a question, kind of backtracking a little bit. Are you guys still gonna be participating in the virtual Burning Man?

**Ariel:** So virtual, this is my hoping around Burning Man right now is that I really think that Burning Man is everywhere now, and I get that there's gonna be a virtual Burning Man. Personally, where my energy and my excitement is what can we do in our everyday lived experiences? One thing that I will highlight is that there's an amazing food pantry that set up like Comfort and Joy, it's called the Amber Food Pantry. We're helping people all the time with this food pantry, we're helping queer people that don't have access to food. I think, right now, there's so much intensity, I'm really paying attention to what's happening to the most marginalized people for me very important to be focused on what's happening to Black trans community right now, especially Black trans women, and to figure out, as a white person how am I’m operating in solidarity and putting the energy and the effort, and the resources into supporting the most marginalized.

So, in witnessing The Playa not happening this year, it doesn't mean that Burning Man does not happen this year. It simply means that there is no event on Playa. I'm curious what it would look like for all the people who put a lot of resource, financial resource into Burning Man, to take that resource and put it into the Black Lives Matter movement, to take those resources and apply it to Black trans women and to the work that they're doing in the world and to uplifting that I think it's a unique time for burners everywhere, to shift focus and pay attention to what's happening right now in terms of the system that we're in, and the system that we actively need to change.

**Caroline:** Nice. Yes, I love that challenge to companies and everybody. I know that Dr. Bronner's themselves actually made a 10-year commitment, and we've up to $10,000, maybe 10 thousand dollars a year of donating to the Black Lives Matter movement, and we just established a diversity, equity and inclusivity task force within our company to really narrow down on the issues and what role we can play in healing this problem. So, I love it, I love your call out there. I know a lot of other people that were burners and are burners and are doing the same thing with their time and the money in your energy, transitioning that to the most essential problems of the movement right now.

**Ariel:** And we have the skills I want to say that burners really have the skills, we know what it looks like to live in a really harsh environment, we know what it looks like to build, we know what it looks like to create. I think we can take those skills and apply them to what's happening right now, apply them to COVID issues, apply them to supporting Black Lives Matter. I think burners are in this unique position. We also have this creativity and this artistic background. And I think that's what's needed more than ever, and I'm in the Bay Area right now and I've been attending these amazing protests, and I have seen people apply their resources to the protests, and that's been really powerful.

**Caroline:** Awesome. I'm curious if any of the viewers, are you guys burners, are you guys protesting? Let us know your challenges and achievements. With this whole pandemic and with the movement itself, and it will be attending Burning Men online. I'm just interested in that. Then we have an active comments section going so we're keeping an eye on that as well. If you've seen me kind of fidgeting by the way. So they did this awesome sugar scrub, I can't wait for you to try it after this segment, because it feels so good. And then I went in afterwards with our magic balm, it feels so good. I was talking about this earlier, but it's beautiful in the hands on cuticles especially after that sugar scrub, and I was fidgeting for no reason here.

**Ariel:** I want to give a quick shout out because I had the hand sanitizer with me right now. Give a massive shout out I've been using this all day every day during this intense COVID times it's been really important to have that with me so I just want to remind people that hand sanitizing and wearing masks are so important at this timeframe.

**Caroline:** Yes, please wear your mask. And I like the spray because I can do my phone too, and like my steering wheel, and all these other common places that I touched and can't wash. So great shout out there, thank you. And, one more thing I wanted to kind of transition back to Gender Illumination and everything I know that I invited a lot of my friends nationwide, and a lot of people outside of the community so that they can get more, you know, exposure to this and realize [audio breaks] such a loving community that needs unity right now. I think it's super important, ao I was wondering if you could define queer, or at least what it means to you. For those who maybe aren't exposed to it all the time.

**Ariel:** I personally love the word queer, I want to name that this word carries different meaning for different people, if you were to ask my parents about this word, they're from a different generation, and for them, they have memories of this word being harmful, they have memories of people getting beat up in the street and being called queer. And for me, I feel like I've reclaimed this word and I feel power in the word, and I feel like this word reminds me of what does it mean to be the other and in the context of being the other. It makes me stand with anyone that's ever been marginalized and collectively fight for liberation, collectively fight for justice, to me the word queer is actually bigger than just sexuality. Yes, it is an umbrella term, it does cover a lot, it covers people's sexuality, but for me it also covers my political identity as someone that is committed to fighting for justice, is committed to standing on the side of liberation.

**Caroline:** Awesome. Love it. So I'm muting my mic so that there's not so much of an echo, but it does still sound good on this end, but thank you so much I know that's it's a question that I personally I'm still learning more about. I'm still exploring everything so I really appreciate you creating that space and answering that for us. Well, good place to do it right?

**Ariel:** Yeah, and one thing I want to share is the work of education is a big part of my life. So, in addition to Gender Illumination I also am an inclusivity and diversity trainer, so I get to go into corporations and nonprofits and places of faith and do this work of teaching people about what different words mean, teaching people about the LGBTQ community, teaching anti racist workshops, so for me I actually love receiving questions like this, because this is a part of the work that I do in the world, and if people want to see more about that work, they can look at shinediversity.com, and that's just another amazing piece of the activism work that I do.

**Caroline:** Nice, so definitely checking that out and sharing it with all my family and friends. So speaking of that, does Gender Illumination have any upcoming events, workshops?

**Ariel:** Yes, Gender Illumination is launching the second cohort for the online mentorship program. And so, remember, this is like this whole thing is very amazing in the sense that we took a program that existed in person, and we expanded it dramatically, and made it an online program where anyone from across the entire country can participate in that. So, if you're sitting in the US and you're watching this and you want to participate, all you have to do is go on genderillumination.com. You can go under programs, you'll see there's an application for the second cohort of the mentorship program, and you can apply to either be a mentor or a mentee, depending on what you're looking for and what’s needed. Through this program you'll receive a lot of tools and leadership, a lot of tools around social justice, do amazing work just through this particular program. And there's also other ways that people can get involved. So one way is this mentorship program but if you're interested in the ritual or the specific healing programs, we also offer specific programs around family creation, around what does it look like for trans people who want to create families, create children. So there's a lot that you can see on our website and each program has a different way to plug in, so when we go under the program section of the website you just click what you're most interested in, and then there's forms that you can sign on to and we will get back to you and let you know how to be part of those programs.

**Caroline:** Awesome, nice. There's a lot of benefits coming out of COVID actually.

**Ariel:** Yeah it really expanded the scope right, we went from a very California based nonprofit to really expanding the entire scope of the organization and being able to do work all across the country. And that's something that is going to last with us for a long time, even when we go back to in-person events which I do think it's important to have a time hopefully where we get to be in person, I think there's something special about being a person, and I think in the meantime, we stay resilient, queer people have always been resilient, trans and non binary people we've always been resilient and using Zoom as part of those tools of resiliency right now.

**Caroline:** Love it. Of course not to diminish the struggles that we're all facing right now, some a lot more than others, but focus on the good things, positive things, that’s awesome too. So, you mentioned your Instagram handle on how to get a hold of you and everything, right?

**Ariel:** So the best way to get ahold of Gender Illumination again is the website genderillumination.com. The best way to get ahold of me if you want to find me online, I actually have a performer name, my performer name is Trixie Lamonte. So, if you want to personally get a hold of me I do have Instagram and Facebook under Trixie Lamonte. And Gender Illumination also has an Instagram and also has a Facebook so, really either way is fantastic, if you want to be part of the organization, please go on the website and sign up for one of the programs. And if you want to reach out to me personally, please do so at Trixie Lamonte.

**Caroline:** Awesome, I love it. And you can find us on Facebook, Instagram, all those things, Twitter @drbronner, no S, no period in there, just Dr Bronner. Well, I know we're almost out of time here, I just want to ask you one more question. What is your everyday use most favorite Dr Bronner’s product?

**Ariel:** Oh my gosh. Well, I actually have 2. So, on everything okay I definitely use my rose Dr. Bronner's love it so much, and I also am using this hand sanitizer non stop I just will say, I've been using this hand sanitizer, way before COVID ever hit. I'm a huge fan of this, this has always been in my backpack at all times and now it is like, non stop 24/7 using this as much as possible. I'm also a really big fan of the peppermint toothpaste, this is my favorite toothpaste, so I want to give a shout out, and I love Dr. Bronner's products, and I love you all in terms of who you are as people and the work that you do in the world. And the way that you show up with an all one vision, and the love and care that you show for the LGBTQ community, the way you're part of our community. And also just the immense amount of liberation work, justice work environmentalism that you all are up to. I'm so thankful to be in this with you, and so thankful to be part of this and so thankful to have been a part of She Fest, it's such an honor and I'm so glad that we're continuing to be resilient, even in these challenging times, we're still showing up with brilliance and bright.

**Caroline:** Awesome. Well thank you all so much for tuning in. I hope you enjoyed this, I hope you enjoy yourself care, and definitely go check out Gender Illumination and all the ways that you can benefit the community. Stay safe everyone, stay healthy and happy, wear your mask, please, sanitize and enjoy She Fest, Thank you, She Fest for having us.

**Ariel:** Thank you, love you all.

**Asher:** Thank you so much, Caroline and Ariel. The timing for this segment couldn't be more appropriate. I use Dr. Bronner's products and hearing from both of you just makes me that much more of a fan, and Ariel I loved learning about Gender Illumination and the programs and workshops, you're doing a lot of really fantastic things. So, thank you both for coming on for the segment. Really appreciate it.

**Caroline:** Thank you so much for having us.

**Ariel:** Thank you so much, it was so great to be here.

**Asher:** All right, so, you all are watching from YouTube or Facebook right now, but I just wanted to give a shout out to what's happening in the Zoom rooms right now. We do have some awesome activities going on over there and Zoom Room number 1 at 2pm, there's an interview with Nalgona Positivity Pride’s Gloria Lucas. And in Zoom Room number 2, there will be a workshop about how cis adults can support trans and nonbinary youth. So, a lot of interesting things happening in those rooms if you want to check that out.

But right now, in our main livestream, we are going to bring on a guest host, her name is Rosie, and she is going to be introducing our next segment called Ahead of the Curve. And that's going to be a documentary discussion with director, Jen Rainin and Curve founder, Franco Stevens.

**Ahead of the Curve: Documentary discussion with Director Jen Rainin and Curve founder Franco Stevens (3:37:50)**

**Asher:** Please welcome Rosie to She Fest! Hi Rosie!

**Rosie:** Hi Asher, thank you so much, I really appreciate it. Yes, and thank you everyone online for joining our virtual She Fest 2020. This has been an incredibly exciting day. I am thrilled to be here today to talk about this amazing documentary Ahead of the Curve which is about the founding days of Curve Magazine and I am personally very excited on to be talking to our two guess here today, two women that have an amazing amount of admiration and respect for, the director of the documentary Jen Rainin as well as the the Curve Magazine founder herself Franco Stevens. Before we bring, well we are bringing them on, thank you and welcome, it's great to see you! Before we get started with some questions for y’all, let's take a look at the trailer for the documentary, and we will be right back.

*[Video starts:]*

"Please welcome our panel of power dykes Francis Stevens publisher, and editor and Chief of Deneuve, the hottest Lesbian Magazine.

Deneuve, the leading Lesbian Magazine.

There was not a glossy magazine for lesbians anywere.

She decided I'm going to make that one, that's total rock and roll.

I love my job, I love my job, I love my job!

Whoever was in Curve like that was it. That's how you knew what was going on like in terms of artists.

I think it's only in hindsight that I can fully appreciate what Franco had to sacrifice.

It was very hard to be out and open in the late 80's.

I think we should do away with gays if possible.

A lot of people lived in fear. Once I had a guy spit in my face.

We did not see ourselves represented in any positive mainstream way.

There was nothing that showed what my life was all about.

I was the one who was supposed to start this magazine.

She got the idea and she was just like "Oh my god, I need money".

So I just applied for a bunch of credit cards, all on the same day. I just cashed them all in.

With a bet an exacta with two long shots, and my horses just came in the first and second.

At the end of the day I had enough money to start the magazine.

Do you know the difference is between parsley and pussy?

What Franco?

I don't know, I don't eat parsley.

When the magazine put me on the cover, it allowed women in our own community to see a well spoken, funny, and challenging, charming gentlemen lady butch, which is basically who I am unless you cross my fucking path.

For the first time we could see black, lesbians, asian working class women, just the power of seeing me.

In the last 24 hours, you know, I heard this thing that I never wanted to hear, that the magazine could be coming to an end.

As we became more visible, we also became a target.

We live in a systemic racist, sexist, anti LGBTQ world, and we have to fight it every day.

Dear straight people, why do we have to prove our love is authentic?

Visibility looks like us being able to be the authors of our own experience.

When there's so much at stake, our positive stories are some of the most powerful tools we have.

Every time we put out a magazine it felt groundbreaking. Like the work is so important. And the work is not done.

*[end of video]*

**Rosie:** Okay. So, I have to say I was very privileged to have a chance to watch this documentary. It was amazing. There were some really nostalgic moments for me. I was one of those queer kids in the middle of the country in Ohio growing up in the early 90s, I was a teenager and I was one of those kids who would go into the bookstore and see Curve magazine, or at the time was Deneuve, and I was terrified. I was terrified to pick it up because what if somebody saw me? I know that things have changed pretty dramatically, and obviously you know we still have a lot to fight for but things have changed. So let's talk a little bit about lesbian activism and visibility in the 90s and Franco, for you, what drove you to start the magazine during that time?

**Franco:** Sure. Well, part of the reason why I started the magazine, Rosie, was because I really wanted it for myself and I saw the need for it in the community. I worked at a different light bookstore, which was a gay and lesbian bookstore at the time, right in the heart of San Francisco's Castro district, and women would come in asking for a magazine like I had envisioned, and one day it just dawned on me that instead of complaining that somebody should make this magazine, it should be me. And I think I was 21 or 22 at the time. I’m going to start a magazine! Just as easy as that.

**Rosie:** Absolutely. You know, we all have this ego, at that age, and Jen, for you, what was your motivation for putting together a documentary on this particular subject matter?

**Jen:** Well, I married this incredible woman. And, I met Franc, kind of, well, many years after she started the magazine and I didn't really know all the stories around the starting of the magazine, I wasn't out in the 90s, I didn't have that experience that you both had. And, you know, in the early years of the marriage, Franc would drop these little nuggets in my lap every now and again just in casual conversation that would blow my mind, things like, “oh, you know, it was a huge deal to put the word lesbian on the cover of magazine in the 90s,” or “oh yeah, you know, to get the money to start the magazine, I took out 12 credit cards in one day cashed them all out and went to the racetrack”, like little things like that, and I thought, this is such a great story like, it would make a wonderful movie.

So I set about writing a script, because I thought it should be a narrative film, I still think it should be a narrative film. But as I was researching for the script, I started to realize how little we have documented queer women's history. And this felt like such an important piece of our history to capture and share! And it became clear really quickly that it needed to be a documentary film. So, that's how that happened. And it started really as just a historical piece to document that piece of history that the juicy sexy 90s around Franc and her merry band of fabulous women who came together to put this magazine out into the world. And something happened in the middle of filming that caused us to shift a little bit and and bring the storie’s relevance into today when that's--you know, you saw I think in the, in the trailer Franc got a call from the woman who owns the magazine now, someone I know you are familiar with, Rosie, Silke Bader, who said “gosh Franco, I'm so sorry to tell you this, but as with all publications all print right now, we're struggling and we're not sure we're going to be able to continue.” And Franc's response to that was to go out into the community and see what the community needs today, and that journey is really captured in the film. So, yeah, there's a lot of rich archival diving into what it felt like in the 90s. And there's a really intentional look at what queer women's visibility looks like today and what the community needs now.

**Franco:** And my idea for going out into the community and finding these younger people

who will help figure out what the community needs now was really based on, okay, when I was young and starting the magazine, I didn't have any fears really. I was like “well you know I'm 23 by the time I'm 30 if I go bankrupt, you know, I can have that off my record.” And I think when you're young, you're more willing to take chances. And so I really wanted to identify some women who were, you know, at the forefront of our community really starting to make the changes that we need to make as a publication or whatever Curve is going to become next, to serve the community in the way that I always envisioned.

**Rosie:** Right. I mean, it truly is a brave new world, it's been pretty heartbreaking to see what's happened in the publishing industry over the years. But at the same time it’s an amazing opportunity. It's an amazing opportunity to have all of these online options out there, and in some ways it's giving us even more visibility or more channels to get stories out there. So one of the things that we kind of talked about is kind of changes in generational attitudes and such, you had mentioned you know using the word lesbian back in the 90s. A there's still kind of this feeling about “the L word”. And one of the things that has happened over the years, more and more people are starting to use the word “queer” and that's something that you also mentioned in the documentary and was in the trailer. So what are your thoughts about the language that we use, and the readoption of the word “queer” versus the use of the word “lesbian”?

**Franco:** Well, let me just start by saying, Rosie, when you went to the bookstore as a teenager and picked up that magazine that had the word “lesbian” on it, you were coming out. Every time you read the magazine in public, you were coming out, there it was loud and proud. And I think the term “queer” is out loud and proud, I mean it's more encompassing. And I think in my own opinion people should have the ability to identify as they see themselves. If you want to use “queer,” I think you should absolutely use “queer.” You want to use “lesbian,” use “lesbian.” When part of the film we were in a panel, and we asked the people in the audience “do you embrace the term ‘lesbian’?” and I thought it was going to be a very low number, but it was actually the majority of people that said yes, they still appreciate that term and use it to identify. So really, for me it's about self expression, and going forward, we know that we need to be more inclusive. Curve is always trying to be inclusive but really letting people self identify and not excluding people is of the utmost importance.

**Jen:** Yeah, and I think also recognizing that how you choose to identify doesn't diminish how I choose to identify.

**Franco:** Yeah, I mean, I identify queer, gay, dyke, you know, whatever you want to call me, just don't call me late for dinner. [Laughs]. But yeah, it's different if it's somebody yelling at you on the street with a rock in their hand.

**Rosie:** That’s true, definitely.

**Jen:** That word “queer,” when I was growing up, when we were growing up, it was yelled at folks.

**Franco:** See for me “lesbian” was yelled as an insult for me, or “lesbo,” or “dyke.”

**Rosie: “**Lesbian” was definitely an insult. Definitely an insult. And me, you know, growing up in the 90s being kind of an 80s and 90s kid growing up in AIDS I mean “queer” was definitely a word that was kind of thrown out as a really nasty word. Um, so, um, we don't have very much time left and I kind of want to get to the future of this fabulous film, and the future of the various projects that you folks are working on so, starting out, I know that Ahead of the Curve, the documentary was premiered at the FrameLine Film Festival in San Francisco, during pride weekend in San Francisco. So tell us about that.

**Jen:** Oh my gosh that was amazing. Holy Wow. It felt really scary, frankly.

**Franco:** It felt groundbreaking. What you did was groundbreaking.

**Jen:** Well I had some inspiration here, look who I'm hanging out with. But yeah I mean it was so in the middle of a pandemic like you can't, we had always imagined our FrameLine premiere would be at the Castro theatre, with a roomful, a theater full of 1400 happy cheering dykes, and that clearly wasn't going to be something that could happen. So like my co director Rivkah Beth Medow had this genius moment where she said “what if we asked FrameLine if they would be open to letting us premiere at a drive in theater?” And over pride weekend, where we could ask our audience to decorate their cars, and, you know, bring their protest signs and their pride banners and flags and put them up on the fence. And we could bring in a DJ--we brought in Page Hodel who appears in the film who is an extraordinary talent and dear friend, and she spun from the back of her pickup truck. And everyone came was very respectful, wore their masks.

**Franco:** The most important thing is, well, everyone had a great time and nobody got sick. You sold out all 1000 cars. 1000 cars, you know.

**Jen:** It was over 2500 people, ended up being the largest event in person event in FrameLine’s history. Incredible to me.

**Rosie:** Congrats. That’s amazing. Absolutely.

**Jen:** It was thrilling. Okay [audio breaks] moving on and you know we are attending a pretty robust festival run. We can't announce quite yet all of the festivals that have us on the lineup. But if you will go to [www.curvemagmovie.com](http://www.curvemagmovie.com) you can join the email list to make sure that you get updates and see when we're going to screen next. But I can tell you that we are going to be the closing night film at Austin's Gay and Lesbian Festival, which we believe was just announced yesterday.

**Rosie**: aGLIFF.

**Jen:** Yes, aGLIFF.

**Rosie:** Yes, aGLIFF. I used to live in Austin and volunteer for aGLIFF, so I mean that's amazing! Congratulations! I'm so excited. I'm so excited for you.

**Franco:** One of the things that came up when we were making the movie--that I know you know about--is that when we went on this journey to figure out what Curve should become next, one thing became clear is that Curve needs to, whether it continues in print or just online, needs to start a foundation for giving back to the lesbian and queer women's communities. And we are gathering information now and building a team of advisors, and people can sign up for the mailing list there at [www.thecurvefoundation.org](http://www.thecurvefoundation.org).

**Jen:** Yeah, it's not officially launched yet but it's something we really want to build in community. We want to make sure that we are really reflecting the needs of the whole community, as we figure out how we're going to move forward with this organization. So we hope that you'll come and join us.

**Franco:** And it will be launching soon, like in the fall.

**Jen:** Yeah, this fall.

**Rosie:** Excellent, excellent to hear. I'm so, so glad to hear that you're moving forward in the community with an organization like this. I'm really excited. Of course I had heard about this previously on, and I'm really excited to see what direction, what form it takes and what direction it takes, and I'm happy to have you here. I am looking at the comments and a lot of really good things happening, the responses happening on the trailer so I know people are really excited to see the movie. I'm not sure how much time we have left. Do we have any other questions or anything else that you want to talk about?

**Jen:** Oh my goodness. Well, there’s something [audio breaks] earlier, Rosie about how things, around publishing, how much they've shifted, but that there's now different kinds, different levels of access in the world, and especially with all these online formats. I think one of the things that I really learned that surprised me, there's so much that I learned in making this film but one of them is, how much our community needs to be able to tell our own stories, and now we have all these, I mean, I think in the 90s when we started the magazine, there was no email.

**Rosie:** Access to information.

**Franco:** Access to information was very limited. Wifi was not a thing. Internet was only for really computer.

**Jen:** Yeah. So, being that the ability now that we have the community to be the authors of our own experience to, you know, to connect, to lift up the diversity of our community to be present for each other and to tell our stories is, it's thrilling. It's a big deal. So, and I [audio breaks] formats like this like She Fest, that allow us to come and talk about what we're doing and connect with folks like the last people who are here and the work that they're doing and the people will come next after us, this is really cool. Thank you.

**Rosie:** It's amazing. Sorry?

**Franco:** Oh, I was just wondering if we're gonna have time to take any questions from anybody who's watching if anybody has any questions.

**Rosie:** I do see a question about where one can see the documentary.

**Jen:** Excellent question that I get every day. But yeah, we are working on a broadcast deal right now so I'm hoping that it's going to be widely available soon. For now, it's going to be through festivals, through festival distribution. So, if you do go to our site curvemagmovie.com, you'll be able to see where we're screening next and. And if you want this film to be widely available we sure would appreciate your help, going to the big streamers like Netflix, and Showtime, and Hulu, and asking for it. There are links actually on our socials, you'll see there are links where you can just click and go if you have an account with one of those streamers and go directly and request that they pick it out that would actually be really helpful for us.

**Rosie:** Definitely and that's curvemagmovie.com and also your social media handle @curvemagmovie. Right, and that's interesting that one can just as a consumer can go to Netflix and say hey I want to see this film so I would really encourage people to go and ask for it. I think that this is, hopefully, the pandemic you were saying earlier you know that this virtual chief has been a lot of fun to put together but you know we are usually a live, face to face in person festival, and you know we got to put this together. And we're living in this very online world, and, you know, they get to a pandemic to drive people to finally take up some of this technology and do things like that. And so, you know, a lot of movies these days are they're premiering online versus being available in a movie theater. So, yes, go to curvemagmovie.com and sign up for all the notifications, and then of course, for the Netflix and Hulu, and ask those big streaming services to put movies like this in their service, because we need more visibility.

**Jen:** We do. We really need more content.

**Franco:** And we need our outlets to be accessible to different people, different abilities. So I love the fact that this is, there's an ASL interpreter here. I'm a disabled person, and, you know, we want to make all the venues where we show the movie be wheelchair accessible and closed captioning, or open caption.

**Jen:** Yep and we have an audio descriptor version as well for visually impaired folks. So,

yeah, it's really important. Thanks for bringing that up.

**Franco:** You are welcome.

**Rosie:** Inclusion inclusion inclusion inclusion. All right, I'm gonna wrap it up again folks curvemagmovie.com. Also you can go to thecurvefoundation.org to find out more about The Curve Foundation that will hopefully be serving our community soon. Jen and Franco, again, thank you so much for being here with us today. It's been a real joy and a pleasure for me and I know everyone else involved in this. And Happy Pride! Enjoy the rest of your day.

**Franco:** Happy Pride, Rosie. Thank you so much, it’s always great to see your face, I want to give a shout out to all my people that I love that are in there now.

**Asher:** Very awesome. So I think we're transitioning back over. I just wanted to say, you know, representation matters, right, that was a big topic in the last segment. I think it's awesome that Curve magazine was at the forefront of that for the LGBTQ+ community and I also appreciate the inclusivity and the ability of the magazine to grow and reflect the changing society and community, I think that's very important for the current organizations that are out there so I'm really glad that they're doing that and I look forward to watching that documentary. So yeah thank you Rosie, Jen, and Franco for that. Alright, so, got some other stuff going on right now. We have in Zoom Room number two, Cooking for QTs who don't cook with Chris Mock. That sounds like that's a room that I should be in, but I'm here, so [laughs]. But, head over there that sounds like it's something interesting for you that will be starting at 2:45pm. And here we're going to have a little She fest history from the current crew. They're going to be talking about what She Fest means to them and what they do, as part of She Fest, and how you all can get involved if you wish to do so. So I'm going to be bringing them on and having a little fireside chat.

**Meet the Committee - 4:4:04**

**Asher:** So please, welcome them: Rosie, Liana and Aracely! Everybody is here. Great. Hi everybody!

*[Committee says hello.]*

**Asher:** Long time no see, Rosie.

**Rosie:** I know. Like déjà vu.

**Asher:** I’m glad you were all able to join. Um, yeah let's just go, I guess roundtable Liana can you tell me a little bit about how you first got involved in She Fest?

**Liana:** Yeah, so I first heard about She Fest when I saw a Pride post about the committee, it was November, so it was not Pride time yet. But, then I heard about She Fest from that post and I was like, "how did I not know about that? This is amazing", you know, a woman centric thing, this is so cool. So then I went in and I looked on Instagram, and I sent a message saying, "hey, are you guys looking for members?", and then Stacy responded and she said "yeah we would love to have you on" and then I just joined, it was kind of organic.

**Asher:** That's great. Yeah, Stacy is awesome shout out to Stacy.

**Liana:** She is amazing.

**Asher:** So what about you Rosie? How did you find out about She Fest and start getting involved?

**Rosie:** Yeah, so, I had moved to San Diego, back in 2014. My wife and I have a kid. And so for the first year or so I think we were kind of getting settled in. We had done some Pride events but, you know, we got situated enough that started to feel like I really want to start getting involved. I wanted to start learning a little bit more about my community and trying to figure out how I could get involved. I had heard about She Fest, and I think at that point I hadn't been to one and then maybe the next year I went and had a really amazing, fabulous time at the actual live She Fest event. I knew some folks who were involved with putting on She Fest and just kind of kept my eyes open because I knew it was volunteer driven. And, you know, at some point I think because I followed She Fest on Facebook, I saw a post that they just had a volunteer event, and it was, I think, back in October, November, so I'm like "well this must be like how one starts, you know, getting involved for She Fest, which usually happens in July". So, you know, this was my first year getting involved with She Fest. I think, you know, a lot of us were expecting something very different [laughs] when we started having those meetings, back in fall. We started getting pretty serious about our physical like live event and person events when all of a sudden, we got the stay at home order, and had to try to figure out how to shift.

**Liana:** Yeah, for a while there we didn't know actually if the event was going to happen at all. So, yeah, I was pretty stoked when we decided to have the event digitally because not being able to meet face to face is not a good enough excuse for us not to have this amazing gathering of people.

**Asher:** Yeah, I mean, and I think the community at large is very excited that this is happening. I mean, there is right now over 100 people just watching this, so I'm really glad that it worked out. Yeah. And we have Aracely here. So, would you like to answer the question as well? How you initially got involved in She Fest?

**Aracely:** Yeah, definitely. You can all hear me?

**Asher:** Yeah, we can hear ya.

**Aracely:** Okay, good. I was hearing an echo. I don't know where it was coming from, maybe I had two screens up.

**Asher:** We don't have an echo on this side. So it sounds good.

**Aracely:** [audio distorting]Okay, very good. I'm hearing echo still, so I just gonna go ahead and ignore it. I got involved about two years ago. This is my second year with She Fest. I met Stacy and Jen, at a Gossip [laughs] through a friend of mine. And I was talking about some of the events where I could see you guys could grow. And I kind of just put myself in there, and I became sort of the outreach coordinator and activities, but I'm a very people person and also I love working with performers. So I can definitely see moving forward, that we have this online, as well as live next year if everything pans out. I think we would reach more of a bigger audience. So I'm hoping that’s definitely something we do.

**Asher:** Yeah, I mean I definitely agree with you. We're able to reach a lot more people with varying abilities as well too in a virtual format so I think it's great. So whoever wants to answer this first, what do you enjoy most about being a part of She Fest?

**Liana:** I mean, it's so amazing, I have to say the people. Yeah, we are an amazing group, look at that. We have a lot of fun. We started having Zoom meetings I think probably in March, and it's been going on and now we meet at least once a week, twice or three times a week for some of them. And we are really fun. We have a lot of fun together.

**Asher:** Yeah, I'm gonna have to agree with that. So I've been in a few Zoom meetings, you know, this past week, to prepare, and it's just been a blast, you know, it doesn't feel like work, it's a fun time. Yeah. What about you, Rosie. What's your favorite thing about being a part of She Fest?

**Rosie:** What I really like about voluntary for She Fest is, one can be really hands-on. I think that, especially now with the virtual events that we've been putting on, if you have an idea, you can put that idea into reality, you know, make it become a thing and you have really fabulous people behind you to help, you know, make it happen. I actually work with Liana on our social media team. Again, it's very hands on, you know, we're not just coming up with ideas and then other people go and do it for us, you know, we're actually the ones who actually go and do it. I think

**Asher:** I might have been muted. Aracely, you want to go ahead and answer that same question? What is your favorite part of being involved in She Fest?

**Aracely:** [audio distorting] I would say for me, it’s the whole putting together your segment--and there could be many of blunders along the way, obstacles, maybe sometimes getting into uncomfortability that kind of thing. Sometimes it's just not the way that you're envisioning and not being perfect, but in the end it all comes out. And we all have fun doing that.

But I love seeing that She Fest has grown. For me, in particular, I was able to connect with a San Diego Latinx group last year, and I really loved seeing the collaboration with them as well. I'm part of that coalition. So, for me, as far as being an outreach coordinator, I love reaching out to the community. Because I know that we're here, all the services that we provide them and I love it.

**Asher:** Yeah, I mean, for me, I've done work with She Fest on the perimeters for the most part, until now. But I've been able to do those events through She Fest, I just, I did a stand up comedy show recently so it's like all the things that I love and I get to do it with some really amazing talented people. So, yeah, I just love the variety that She Fest offers.

So yeah, I mean you talked about your position, Aracely, I was wondering, you know, Rosie, Liana, do you want to go into detail about what exactly you do?

**Liana:** Yeah. Like Rosie said before, we do a lot. We do a lot of random stuff. But, officially, I guess I'm part of the tech team so basically the team that is putting all this, making it live, and I'm the leader of the Social Media team.

**Asher:** Very nice. And that is a huge effort. I know my wife is in charge of marketing for a company and it's insane, and for an event like this going through StreamYard, Facebook, YouTube, it's a lot, and you guys have done an amazing job. I've got to give props to you all.

**Liana:** Yeah, they are all pretty good. Sarah, Michelle, and Rosie, part of the social media team, they are killing it.

**Asher:** Yeah. So, um, Rosie, you guys have the same position?

**Rosie:** No, actually Liana, I guess she would be my manager on social media. No, um, you know, when I signed up for She Fest I kind of signed up for a couple of different committees because I wasn't really sure where am I gonna find myself to be the most useful and, you know, I was part of the entertainment committee and when it was going to be live we took in a lot of applications and, you know, did a lot of listening to performers and got together and made a lot of decisions, tough decisions and really you know fun decisions about entertainment.

And you know, I had already, I always see visions that you know the day off I just kind of be there to help. However I possibly could, um, when things switch, and it became apparent that either we were not going to have she Fest, in person or that we were going to have to do something virtual, I started thinking, you know, trying to come up with some ideas of things that you know, might be, you know, fun and interesting to do, or to watch online. I reached out to my networks, and talk to. Jen Rainan and Franco Stevens regarding the documentary that they put on that I just interviewed those folks. And you know I did as much as I possibly could to make that happen. And I did what I could to support other people. And that really you know it's a really really tight group of people really tight, culture, and we help each other out, do what we have to do, roll up our sleeves.

**Asher:** Yeah, yeah. I mean, it takes a village for something like this for sure. And I think it's just kind of funny you said that you thought that you just be kind of trying to help out and here you are like doing interviews on [inaudible over crosstalk] just like all in, I love it. It's great. Well, do you have, (we need to kind of wrap it up) but do you have any advice to anyone watching who wouldn't want to get involved, and she best.

**Liana:** Yeah, so our committee, so our planning committee is growing every year. Here we are, some amazing, some of the amazing people we have in our community. And you can just talk to us follow us on Instagram send it send us a message Follow us on Facebook, send us a message. We're gonna be there or you can email stacey@sdpride.org, and she's gonna reply and then we're gonna just get together and have some fun.

**Asher:** Awesome. Wonderful. So, yeah, everyone who's watching take note of what's on the screen there they've got the website. If you're interested in learning more how you can become a member, like they said, reach out to the planning committee. And also, I know it's a tough time for a lot of people financially. She Fest is a nonprofit so if you are in a place where you are able to donate, please consider doing so. I think that you can probably find that information on the website as well, because there's a lot of people putting in a lot of work behind the scenes as well. Thank you so much for talking with me today. I appreciate all that you guys do.

Yeah and Happy Pride!

**Rosie:** Happy Pride. Thank you.

**Liana:** Thank you, Asher.

**Asher:** Oh, you're welcome. Thank you so much.

**Get Dragged! - 4:18:00**

**Asher:** So, we have an exciting segment coming up.

A moment, a lot of you have been waiting for our drag King, a segment is going to be coming up and we have several people on the docket. I do want to give a heads up that some, some of the drag kings will be doing a live show. After the She Fest event on their Instagram accounts, so you'll be able to check out Legs Benedict and Sailor Mouth on their Instagrams at around 3:30pm for after party performances. So be sure to put that on your calendar and tune in at that time.

And we're going to be having Aracely come on, to talk to some of the drag kings, do a little bit of an interview. After all, what is a celebration without some royalty? So we are going to be bringing on these drag kings very shortly.

Oh, and there she is. Hello! Welcome back.

**Aracely:** How are you?

**Asher:** I'm great. I am looking forward to this next segment and I'm very jealous that you get to do this interview, it's gonna be a good time.

**Aracely:** All right, awesome and part of it is with you.

**Asher:** Great.

**Aracely:** Perfect. Nice to see you again, Asher, by the way.

**Asher:** Yes. How is the audio now for you? Is it better?

**Aracely:** Very good. Very good. Yeah, I had to turn off, I had to mute the live feed. That was the problem, so we're all good.

Hi everyone. Happy Pride. I'm Aracely Lara, who is ready to get dragged? I know I am! So, I hope you are too. I know you're anticipating this segment. So, I'm Aracely Lara, I'm very excited to put this together. I put together the special virtual She Fest after party that is being hosted by Sailor's Mouth and Legs Benedict, also known as Leggy Benny on Instagram. And their accounts are and you should see it on the live stream at Sailor's Mouth, and at Leggy\_Benny starting at 3:30pm. I hope that you can see it. And then, so you should see their Venmo accounts being placed on the actual screen as well. So all the donations today will be going towards the mutual aid fund project called love affair that provides funding for trans non binary, and queer POC, people of color individuals. Love Affair is here in San Diego. And so if you can give again like Ashley said if you can give just a little that'd be fantastic. They will be going on at 3:30pm. After She Fest has done, and that's the after party, and then She Fest will follow them on their feed, so don't forget to stay around until 3:30pm for Sailor's Mouth and we'll be going on live. Due to some restrictions and scheduling with Legs Benedict will not be performing today. However, they have put two videos on their Instagram account that you can go and view. So I'm so excited to give you a preview of the amazing Happy Party Performers as well as their for as a live performer going on today. So the three dark performers are their amazingly talented, creative artistic and dare I say badass. You know, Drag Kings has been around for a while but some people say it's in its infancy still, and that's too is for more ideas of masculinity and various parts of the world, there are emerging groups exploring the world of Drag King, and they're turning masculinity into their own magical playground. What you will see is the audience today and you will quickly realize that there is no actual formula for Drag Kings, there's no specific makeup outfits character. There's no genre to fit in. And no, there's no certain narrative. Every Drag King has their own story and the reasons why they perform. So with that being said let's get to know some of our fabulous Drag Kings today.

The first person I want you to see is Uncle Freak 2020.

**Aracely:** You should be seeing a--

[audio and video cut out]

**Aracely:** ...A Drag King with a flair for the dramatic and theatrical, he has graced many stages from WOW Cafe Theater, House of Yes, and even on school campuses. He is currently streaming for your viewing pleasure online. He can be found every Friday with Mad Deep. It is a Black and POC drag show, burlesque, and news program or once a month with untamed Afro Burlesque--that’s a black burlesque variety show. I see, I've been watching Mad Deep. It's fabulous. Please go on there. You can take a look at all the information on Uncle Freak 2020 that's the IG handle, please do so. So also he is also considered The Lady Whisper, a social justice warrior, lover of life and preserving it one dance move and lipsync at a time. Basically, your Drag King dream.

[Aracely continues]

So, I'm not sure where we are at right now. Perfect. Yeah, the time lapse video. So what I did here was, I wanted to put in a few things about the performers. Whenever you go and see a performance, you see them on stage as the artist but I wanted you to appreciate, how they get ready, both physically and also mentally as far as a performer artist and you go up on stage. So here's a time lapse video of Uncle Freak getting ready.

*[Uncle Freak 2020’s time lapse video. Uncle Freak puts on makeup in front of a camera.]*

**Aracely:** Okay, looks like we're gonna replay with the audio. One moment.

There we go.

*[Uncle Freak 2020’s time lapse video with audio. Music plays in the background of the video.]*

**Aracely:** Fantastic! You're going to be seeing a video later of a fabulous, fabulous sort of video and PSA put together. At the end of the other two performers that I'm going to talk about right now. Again, 3:30pm, watch them on Instagram Live.

So the next person I like to speak about is Sailor's Mouth, she will be the first person to go live on Instagram at 3:30pm. No preferred pronouns, they have been performing Drag for two years. Drag is an outlet for their creativity and gender expression. They are pansexual and gender fluid, having questions or gender the majority of their life, performing drag gives them a place to explore sides of themselves they haven't always understood. Every time they put on a beard and get a little bit more closure and security on their gender expression that is a Sailor's Mouth right there is her ID handle and as well she put a time lapse video together for us on what it takes to prepare to do a performance.

*[Sailor’s Mouth’s time lapse video]*

**Aracely:** Nice. Wow, so I know I take a long time in the morning doing make up but they said that took about 45 minutes or so. So, that's the time lapse video so that is a long time. Thank you.

All right, the third person I'm going to cover right now is Legs Benedict, her ID handle is Leggy\_Benny, and they go by the pronouns they/them. I love the bio on the Instagram page. San Diego's brunch hunk serving you the finest eggs legs and loops, all night. Expect gender bending entertainment that for a king, from this flexible frying pan, sexual sensation hoverboard this gravy boat for the richest creamiest reason to ruin your cholesterol. Legs also support uplifting the community directly and getting involved in a mutual aid fund called Love Affair, as I spoke about before, that provides funding for trans, nonbinary queer POC individuals. All of the donations to them, today, both Sailor's Mouth and Leggy Benny will go directly to this mutual fund project.

They also created a small time lapse video to share. I will put them right now.

*[Legs Benedict’s time lapse video]*

**Aracely:** Once you go there at 3:30pm they'll also have their Venmo ID that for you to donate as well. Right now what I'm going to do is, have you enjoy Uncle Freak 2020’s video. I absolutely adore it. It's fantastic. And it's very current in the times that we're living in right now, I want you to enjoy it and turn up the Music. Turn it up! There we go.

*[Uncle Freak’s video. Uncle Freak and Foxy Belle Afriq dance and pose in a variety of settings while Tevin Campbell’s song “Can We Talk?” plays in the background. Text on the screen reads:*

CAN WE TALK? Uncle Freaks’ PSA. Featuring FOXY BELLE AFRIQ. Police brutality. Racism. Black lives!! Hard conversations are ok! Don’t censor yourself! BLACK LIVES MATTER! BE PROACTIVE, USE YOUR VOICE! Want to know ways you can help? What you can do? WRITE TO YOUR LOCAL STATE LEGISLATORS! DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY: 1. Request a federal standard prohibiting use of police. 2. Prohibit racial profiling. 3. Eliminate federal programs that equip police with military equipment. 4. Prohibit use of no-knock warrants. AMERICA! WHITE PEOPLE THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO BE A TRUE ALLY! STAND FOR BLACK LIVES! BLACK TRANS LIVES! BLACK PEOPLE ARE MAGICAL! Gloves are off! There is work to do! Roll up your sleeves! Support Black initiatives, organizations, and folks! Talk to your employers, talk to your family, keep the conversation going! We are not a trend! Defund the police! Don't tolerate racism! White people - DO BETTER! Black Americans 2.5 times more likely than whites to be killed by police.

End of video]

**Aracely:** Fantastic! I hope you enjoyed it, you love the message, follow Instagram, follow Uncle Freak 2020 Instagram, East Coast vibe coming in. So stay tuned 3:30pm live on Instagram Sailor's Mouth, and videos for Leggy Benny. Thank you so much.

**Asher:** Hey, I was totally grooving to that. That was great.

Yeah. The more I do that, the ASL interpreter can just follow along right. it's great. [laughs] I’m having too much fun right now. Okay. All right, so.

**Gossiping with Gossip Grill's very own Moe Girton - 4:38:00**

**Asher:** We are kind of closing out for the day soon, but before our last segment we are going to be hearing from the San Diego living legend Moe Girton and her iconic wife Dawn Girton about their favorite bar, the bar that we all know and love: Gossip Grill.

Hi, Moe and Dawn! ...Can you hear us?

**Moe:** Hello!

**Dawn:** Hi everybody! Super excited to be here! Happy Pride! I think everyone can hear us right now, but I’m sitting here with Moe Girton, I’m Dawn Stultz, I’m Moe’s wife basically and I’m gonna walk you through, oh my pronouns, I’m going to make sure I do all this correctly right now, that my pronouns are she/her/herself. And I’m super excited to be gossiping with Moe. A lot of stories I know but a lot of you don’t, so we are going to walk her through.

**Moe:** I'm a bit nervous.

**Dawn:** Because you never know what's gonna come out of either one of our mouths, so it is gonna be a lot of fun. And I hope that we answer some of your questions that you've been dying to know about Gossip and about Moe Girton herself. So, Moe?

**Moe:** Yes, Dawn Stultz.

**Dawn:** You want to tell them about yourself first off?

**Moe:** What do you want to know? I mean, it’s kind of a loaded question.

**Dawn:** Well, I heard that you own a bar, out here in Hillcrest. Do you own a bar in Hillcrest?

**Moe:** Yes. Gossip Grill. Which is where we're at now unfortunately the inside is closed for indoor dining so we have the inside to ourselves. We live together so we're quarantined together. But yeah, I'm married.

Anyway, so yes Gossip Grill is the only women's bar in Southern California and only one of the two in California and one of 16 left in the United States.

**Dawn:** And that's also something we're going to be talking about through this. But, Let me ask you, like, how are you doing this right now and how are you dealing with everything that's happening in Gossip?

**Moe:** You know, I’ll be honest, it's tough. It's hard, you know we're taking a big hit to our business or normally nightclub, and bar, and you know neither one of those are safe activities for us to do at the moment, but we're making it work. The word of the year is pivoting to find new fun things to do. If you hear something or see something in the background that's Jace, DJ Jace. He is volunteering his time to spin. But we've got trivia, we've got some fun activities and really trying to keep things light, and upgoing during this time because it's a very heavy time in our life. And yeah, we're just one day at a time, one day at a time. Lots of to-go food, lot’s of to-go booze, so anything you need we can sell to-go.

**Dawn:** So, just to rewind a little bit, I know a lot of people wanna know really: how did you get here? And before all of this, do you wanna share a little about your stories and your past?
 **Moe:** Sure. So back in 2000, I moved here in 99, and in 2000 I took a fun little part-time job with a bar called The Flame, which was a women's nightclub, lesbian nightclub. I worked as security. I got hired for security, and my first night, working as security, I quickly realized that was not a fit for me. I am not a security guard. So I decided that I was gonna let the management know that it would be my one and only night working and that it just wasn't a fit for me.

So as I was walking up to the front door to let them know that it was my one and only night, one of the managers came out by the name of Patty (I'll leave her last name out of this because I don't know if she wants me to throw her out there) but she looked at me and she whacked me on the arm hard like "you look like a bar back!" and I'm like, “oh, okay.” And she's all "do you want to barback?", and I'm like, “okay.” I am literally five feet away from quitting. And she took me in, and I started barbacking that night. And then I ended up staying, and I ended up becoming a bartender. Won bartender of the year a few times, became a manager. And here we are. So, when The Flame closed in 2004 is when what is now known as Baja Betty’s opened up, and I was part of the original hiring group there.

**Dawn:** So funny because, I have so many memories of The Flame myself and I wish because when I came out, in 93, I used to go to The Flame that was like where we went, between the Flame and Bombay, and I only wish I would have been able to meet you at that time.

**Moe:** You probably would not want to meet me, I was a kid at that time.

**Dawn:** That's another secret. Glitter eyeshadow and lipstick. Yes, she did it. [Laughs]. See, I told you, you never know what's going to come out. All right, so, but let me just say, before you really got into this world of LGBT and working in bars, you were also a swim coach. And a lot don't know that, it was a huge part of your life.

**Moe:** I would say, I was a competitive swim coach for a team of 250 kids for nine years. I did coach in La Jolla for a couple years which was a smaller team but seven of those years were in Riverside with a team of 250. And I was also a high school volleyball coach for four years. So, I've done a lot of coaching and I kind of… Whoo, it's the hardest job I've ever had. And this is kind of a cakewalk compared to that. But it really prepares you, because one thing that coaching and managing have in common, dealing with a five year old, it's very similar to dealing with a very drunk adult, you know, the way you have to be patient, and communicate with them and explain things in a certain way so I feel like it set me up with the tools, put tools in my toolbelt.

**Dawn:** And sometimes those five year olds actually behave better than some of those drunk adults. But that’s just, you know, liquid courage. Cheers.

**Moe:** Part of the business.

**Dawn:** Cheers baby. Alright, so I know you did say when you first started out, there's only a handful of lesbian bars, queer bars that are around anymore. And really what do you think sets Gossip apart? Because 10 years strong, you're still here, and from one location to a bigger location. What makes you different, and why have you survived, and why will you continue to survive in this climate?

**Moe:** Yeah, so when we decided to open up Gossip, when I was offered this job from Mo's Universe and Chris Shop, I was really adamant about it not being a quote-unquote "lesbian bar". I felt like the lesbian bar box is too small. And I really wanted to have a bigger box, people don't all fit in the same box, especially nowadays. There are so many different boxes and labels and pronouns, and it is what it is and everyone is welcome and I love that. And by having a lesbian bar I feel like you really boxed, everyone in on that and that's not who we are. And I fought really hard, really hard, with my business partners, to create a “women's bar” and take the word “lesbian” out of it. So the way I looked at it, and I want to clarify this because I know there's been some confusion via social media that we're not lesbian bar, and that is not correct. But, let me explain it real quick.

So the way I want to look at it is when the “women's bar” being the big umbrella--the bigger umbrella being “LGBTQ+”. And then under that umbrella is the “women's” umbrella. And then under the “women's” umbrella, you have lesbian, gay, queer, trans, hans, bi, straights and every single type of person that connects with being a woman. Or having even 10%, if you only connected with 10% of their female side. Any of that is welcomed here. That's is our main focus. When you look at the LGBTQ+ alphabet, for me, for me, the part that I'm most passionate about and what I want in five years is a capital L and and a capital T. That is something that Gossip offers. But when it comes to “are you a lesbian bar?” We are not just a “lesbian bar.” We are a women's bar, to cover everything under there. And we're also LGBTQ+ family for all of those letters. We welcome everyone on our playground, hundred percent. And it's the things that you do to make sure of the integrity of that, our drink menu, our food menu, all the pictures on our wall. There is nothing, there is no male on the walls. No cis male on the walls. Everything we do is geared towards women.

**Dawn:** Yeah.

**Moe:** So in our staff, you know, as well, it's very diverse but you know we do lean more on that side.

**Dawn:** There's so many times like I don't know if any of you guys can actually see not putting on the spot but, you know, just a little teary eyes like I know Moe like nobody else knows. I mean I've been with someone for over nine years and I just, the passion that she has when she talks about all of you out there, all of our guests, all of our staff. Just what this bar means to her. And what this means to the community. It is always about the community. It was always about all of you, and those times when we sit, you know, just having those conversations which, a lot of times right now has just been sitting outside the backyard and really just digging deep and just how much that this means to her, and it is always her mission every day to think about what she's grateful for. I mean, even in her office, she has literally written up signs because that's just how Moe is and staff here knows that there's always signs around them, who are you been, and just about taking a moment to be grateful, but that is truly, who she is. And she is the most humble human being that you would ever meet. And so I know a lot of you guys know her personally and or you just might know her that smile or you know that wave that you see "good times", because that is Moe, but she is just the most amazing human being. So, anyway, it's important. Absolutely. You were talking a little bit about the pictures on the wall, and there's there's little hidden gems inside of Gossip that unless you, again, really dig deep and know about some of the stories...And some of the special things about Gossip, like the disco ball and the pictures, when we first made the tables, you know, the labor of love... So, tell us about some of the pictures and tell us about the disco ball.

**Moe:** Well, the pictures on the wall, everything is, it's all women, different types of women. And during COVID, it gave us a really good opportunity to pull everything down and read through it, so I can't wait for everyone to see. We really needed to diversify our walls a lot more, and we hadn't had the chance to do it because it requires shutting down the inside for a while. But right now was the right time to do it. So, half of it is up, it’s not all up, but we have contacted local artists and we have gotten a ton more art pieces that we're putting on the walls this week. Super excited about that.

But kind of a hidden secret that not a lot of people know about Gossip, is the disco ball. There's a disco ball that hangs in the VIP area right above the screen right there. And that disco ball is actually Bette Midler’s disco ball from when she performed at Caesar's Palace. It's a disco ball that she came down on. For any of you that saw that show, you're gonna know exactly what I'm talking about. That is that disco ball, we, [inaudible] my business partner, flew to Vegas, bought it, and then drove it back, and we put it up. But what that disco ball is to us, I know Dawn knows this, and we've done this together. But over the years, unfortunately, we've lost some of our guests. You know, passed on, and we don't, we don't want to lose our memory. So guest, staff, everyone's welcome. For our guests that passed away, we put a picture in the disco ball. So they're always on our dance floor with us. They're always part of business. There's so many up there, when that thing comes down I have no idea what's going to come out of it. But anybody that is a guest of Gossip that has unfortunately passed away, feel free to come up here and put their picture in the disco ball so they're always part of our family, our framily.

**Dawn:** There’s those eyes. There's those little tears right there. [Laughs].

**Moe:** I’m just an emotional being. It’s one thing [inaudible] haven’t called me yet. [Laughs].

**Dawn:** Yeah, for sure, for sure.

**Moe:** One of many things.

**Dawn:** And you know it's interesting, bringing back The Flame is thinking about that because the Flame was always known for having ghosts and, you know, they can talk about that right now here at Gossip because, you know, some of those guests are still visiting us.

**Moe:** There seems to be a little energy around here lately and I think I know who it is, but I’m not 100% sure. Weird things happening lately.

**Dawn:** Yeah. It's such a special thing, and, you know, even in some of the other bars, like Mo’s Universe there's hidden pictures underneath bars. Not that you guys are out there looking underneath the bars, but there is those little hidden gems so, anyway.

All right, couple other questions, I wanted just to, you have so many people out there that look up to you, that you only know about, that they look at you as a mentor. And with that being said, I mean, what kind of advice would you give someone right now who is looking at their future and what they want to do and being an LGBTQ+, being queer, what kind of advice would you give them as mentor?

**Moe:** For me, number one is gratitude, be grateful for what you have in your life. But a good piece of advice is, have a five year plan. Look where you want to be five years. Wherever you want to be five years, act and be that person now, prepare for that. There was... Okay, so I'm gonna throw…

**Dawn:** Come on, this is like the hot seat right now.

**Moe:** So, there was something I was thinking about doing for a short time in the future. And that was possible and, it's not a thing for me right now, and it's not in my immediate future. But one thing I've thought about maybe in my future at some point, I might run for City Council.

**Dawn:** That's not happening now.

**Moe:** It's not happening now. But this is an example. You know, I started making sure I was put together when I went out. I just wanted to make sure my hand movements and my language and everything was in mind with, if I did decide to do that, that is where I need to be, but I run my business the same way. Where we're going to be in five years, and how we are going to operate now. But the number one thing is treat people kindly, have good relationships, have good integrity, follow your word, and be grateful. I'm grateful for everybody, everything.

**Dawn:** And dress for the job that you want to be in, now always for the job that you’re currently in.

**Moe:** “Dress for the job that you want to be in.” That's a lot easier way of saying that whole thing.

**Dawn:** I mean, I am corporate so that’s what I think all the time. But it gets great. Also, I really, I think that a lot of people have wondered being, let's say, 21. If you were 21 right now, what advice would you give to your 21 year old self in walking into Gossip for the first time? You know what is proper etiquette? Is there proper etiquette? You know, do's and don'ts, tips and tricks for your 21 year old self that's going out for the first time to a queer bar.

**Moe:** Well, number one, you don't know everything. So, be open to feedback. I think, yeah, that the main thing is consent. You know, don't grab, touch anyone without consent. Consent is sexy. Consent is proper. Use consent. Number two: you know, to the bartenders, I don't know that parties and servers actually pay eight cents on every dollar for everything they serve. So, when I was 21, I had no idea. I didn't know. I didn't know. And I couldn’t figure out why the bartender was always giving me a dirty look. I was like, “I don't understand. I gave him a dollar for my 40 dollar round,” right. Well, no wonder, now I know. So, eight cents on the dollar. If you don't get the bartender, he actually pays out of pocket for that on the server. So be kind, tip. If you're not sure, ask. Consent. Never leave your drink alone.

**Dawn:** Absolutely.

**Moe:** Ladies, I don't care where you are. Never leave a drink alone. Always have it with you. Always keep an eye on it. You can never be too safe. It's always good to come with a friend or a buddy. Don’t walk home alone. We have to be safe. Ok, we are still women, we still have to be safe.

**Dawn:** Absolutely.

**Moe:** But, yeah, it's mainly just: consent, have a good time, be open to feedback and yeah.

**Dawn:**  Yeah. I think this is a big thing right now. You know, going out, you know, 27 years ago into this fair world as, you know, this very young lesbian then. Is how different people are now and that it is ok and how people behave in a bar. I mean, I can’t tell you back in the day how many times I'd sat down on a chair where someone put their hand down. That was inappropriate and without permission, of course. But just how much that really affected me and bothered me and that I love, sitting down now with younger queer people that talk so much about these different issues. And watching them actually say “no” or put their hand up.

**Moe:** Yeah. Yes!

**Dawn:** I think it is so important that you ask permission. It doesn't matter. First kiss, whatever it is. It is sexy. Like I said, consent is sexy.

**Moe:** Yeah. Great.

**Dawn:** Times goes by so fast! I cannot even believe it. But, all right, can you just kind of wrap it up for us and let people know what would they experience when they come into Gossip right now. What does it look like and do you feel safe in here?

**Moe:** Yeah. Yes. So one thing Gossip, all of Mo's Universe, one thing we are really adamant about is safety. Okay. It's not like we're putting business first. We're putting safety first. This community is so incredibly important to me. We are a safe space for people to come from this community and feel welcomed. We're their framily. We're their home. We are it to them. So I want to make sure to protect that and keep that space open in the future for that. So one of the ways that we're doing that is there is plexiglass everywhere! Everything is either distance or plexiglass. There's hand sanitizer. Hand stations. Everywhere. There is plenty of supply.

**Dawn:** QR codes for the menus.

**Moe:** Yeah. So, besides all the safety precautions we have taken, we have also been taking temperatures at the door of staff, and guests to make sure we're safe. And we're not bending on it. So, sorry folks. If you don't want to wear a mask, I'm going to ask you not to come here until this is all cleared. Because masks are required.

**Dawn:** Three warnings, right?

**Moe:** Yeah. Three warnings.

**Dawn:** If you regard that person and you can’t help yourself and has to go visit another table. It is against the rules.

**Moe:** Yeah. We are just following the rules. We're also offering everything to go. We are on Doordash. We are offering everything that you get at Gossip, it is available to go. Liquor and booze are discounted. If you buy bottles, you get a discounted price.

**Dawn:**

And it is not bottle service price.

**Moe:** No. Same price as the liquor store. So, if you love our business you can buy from us instead!

**Dawn:** And there's so many great packages for Pride, I mean with Pride being next weekend, you know, Moe's really made sure that she's up to her seating, going outside, even more so outside.

**Moe:** Yeah I got a parking lane permit for Pride weekend, so we're gonna have an extra 15 tables outside, distance apart, so that helps with folks that want to have lunch in a LGBTQ+ establishment.

**Dawn:** And I would definitely say right now guys that, please know we have been, we're so adamant about where we go about doing it right and, if I'm going to be anywhere without a mask right now when I'm sitting and eating, I want to be in Gossip, or in Mo's Universe, because when you look at those guidelines there is not one that you are not following. I feel like I'm in a safe space. And not just because, you know, with COVID, and a safe space in general for ourselves, and as a woman. So, anyway, I wish we had more time

**Moe:** I just wanna say, love and gratitude to our community. I love them so much. I thank you for everything and I can't wait to see you soon. Welcome home, beautiful.

**Dawn:** Thanks guys.

**Goodbye from She Fest with special performance by the San Diego Women's Chorus - 5:00**

**Aracely:** Hello I am back. Alright so we are going to go over, she was going to follow Sailor's Mouth for her live performance on Instagram. Are we ready? And I believe you should be able to see their Venmo accounts as well, if not on our Instagram account. If you would like to donate to them today, or Love Affair. All right, and I'll turn it back over to the host.Thank you so much. Thanks Asher.

**Asher:** Thank you.

**Aracely:** You both did such a wonderful job today. You are fantastic!

**Asher:** Thank you! Nika, I think you are muted friend.

**Nika:** Am I good now?

**Asher:** Yeah, you’re good.

**Nika:** Perfect. Well, we were fortunate enough to have our opening include a wonderful song from the San Diego Resistance Revival Chorus. Now, as we close out our event, we can think of no better way of closing than with the powerful emotion of the San Diego Women's Chorus. Asher I know the San Diego Women's Chorus holds a special place in your heart. Can you tell us about your experience with them?

**Asher:** Yeah, absolutely. I joined the San Diego Women's Chorus in 2017 and in that group I found a sisterhood and a community that is inclusive and celebrates diversity and encourages creativity and it's just a group of very talented individuals. And honestly probably one of the most difficult parts of being in quarantine during all this has been not being able to be there in person and sing with my sisters. So, I'm very excited and happy that this wonderful day is going to be ending and closing with the San Diego Women Chorus singing Circle Chant which is a very special song to our group. So on behalf of myself and my co host Nika, today's volunteer tech crew, and the entire She Fest Planning Committee, thank you for joining us today.

*[Song starts:]*

*[Screen displays text:]* Each week, at the end of our rehearsals, we form a circle to support and celebrate one another. Our chorus family is strengthened as we wish one another peace, freedom, and wholeness through this song. Even when we are not together, we hold each other in our hearts. We extend these same wishes to you today.

*[a split screen shows 55 singers from the San Diego Women’s Chorus singing via video call. They are wearing black, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple shirts. The singers are arranged such that their shirts make a rainbow. In the middle frame is a baby in a green shirt, wearing a microphone headset.]*

Circle round for freedom,

circle round for peace.

For all of us imprisoned,

circle for release.

Circle for the planet,

circle for each soul.

For the children of our children,

keep the circle whole.

Circle round for freedom,

circle round for peace.

For all of us imprisoned,

circle for release.

Circle for the planet,

circle for each soul.

For the children of our children,

keep the circle whole.

*[Video with the virtual planning committee:]*

Stacy: Alright, 3, 2, 1.

All: Thanks for watching.

*[Credits.]*

*[End of event.]*