



Adolfo Santos

The Red Line at Montrose Ave., No. 6

interview and more art on pp 9-14

February 2020 | PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Newsletter

opendoors@pflagillinois.org

Monthly Open Doors

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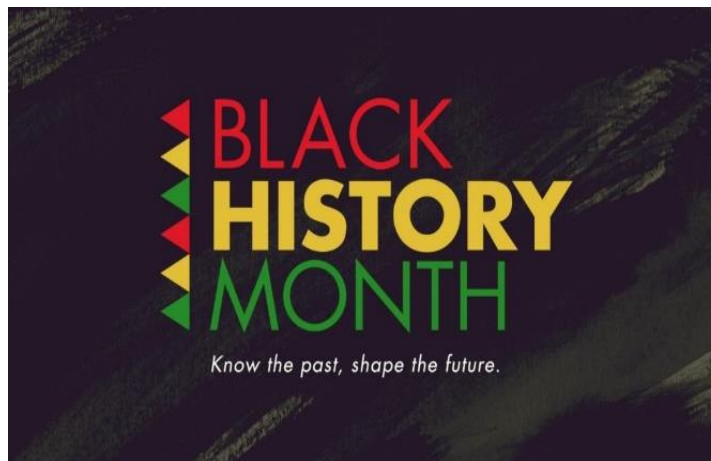
Black History Month 2-3, Chapter Reports 4-8, Art 9-14, Theater 16-19, Events 15,20

History and Perspective: Informing and Shaping our Future

Empathy, kindness and compassion matter. These precious and powerful characteristics are forces to make the world a better place for you and everyone in your circle. In that spirit and in honor of Black History month, I want to invite you to join me in reflecting on racism in our lives. I expect that you may already be having a negative reaction to the implication that racism might be an issue in your life. You might want to let me know that “you’re not a racist”, and prefer we move onto another topic. I know that this can be an uncomfortable topic and I am not here to make accusations. My request this month is that you resist a defensive reaction and join me in exploring and learning from the experience and perspectives of others. The truth is that ALL of us have lives that are somehow shaped by race, and personal growth is often requires us to get uncomfortable.

I recently participated in a world-café style discussion about Race and Implicit Bias at Naperville North High School. I found the experience to be eye opening, thought provoking and quite moving. It made me really consider the depth and complexity of racism and white privilege in society. I never had to caution my children on the risks of “driving while black” and how to handle being pulled over by the police. I don’t pretend to be an expert in this area and can’t do the topic justice. Luckily, there are many books and resources available to us, to help us broaden our perspectives. I only want to encourage you to join me in taking the time to explore a little and to consider how you have been shaped by the forces of racism.

Through our experiences, most PFLAGers have learned much about how our predominantly straight, cis-gender society has institutionalized homo-phobia and trans-phobia. We can relate to the struggle to overcome the bias, prejudice and pain that this has created. A cis/het- norm has created a strong anti-



gay/trans experience for many of our loved ones. In the USA, racism is arguably even much more deeply rooted in our history, social and political reality, and narrative. We live in an environment where the white-norm has created a strongly anti-black experience. If we don’t see it, that doesn’t mean it does not exist. It may be our privilege that renders it invisible to us. Implicit, unconscious bias is a natural human condition. The struggle is real and progress toward equality and enlightenment seems to be on a dangerous back slide.

As a starting point, below some links to videos and resources that might be helpful.

Please click at least one link below and join me in exploring and reflecting on the experiences and perspectives of others in hopes that we may be more self-aware, empathetic, compassionate and kind.

In love and solidarity,

John

Please explore links on the next page



Debunking The Most Common Myths White People Tell About Race (video 3:47)

Robin DiAngelo, author of "White Fragility," unpacks common excuses white people make about race—and how to address them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjHg65JORi8>

White Fragility (longer video for a more in depth look 1:23:30)

University of Washington professor Dr. Robin DiAngelo reads from her book "White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism," explains the phenomenon, and discusses how white people can develop their capacity to engage more constructively across race.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45ey4jgoxeU>

Dear White, Straight, Cisgender, Man People: You Are Privileged (article)

By Sam Killermann. A letter to all the white, straight, cisgender, man people out there — people like myself — who are struggling with the idea of being told to "check your privilege."

<https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2014/05/dear-white-straight-cisgender-men-privilege/>

10 Must-See TED Talks by African-American Visionaries (videos)

<http://dlgmedia.nyc/10-must-see-ted-talks-african-american-visionaries/>

The Dangers of Whitewashing Black History | **David Ikard** | (TEDxNashville video 18:27)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbo4xj7LS34>

'1619,' a Podcast From The New York Times (series of 6 30-40 minute podcasts)

An audio series on how slavery has transformed America, connecting past and present through the oldest form of storytelling.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/23/podcasts/1619-podcast.html>

Joyne Lucas – I'm Not Racist (video 6:56)

Rap video portraying two perspectives on race. (Caution- very harsh language and profanity)

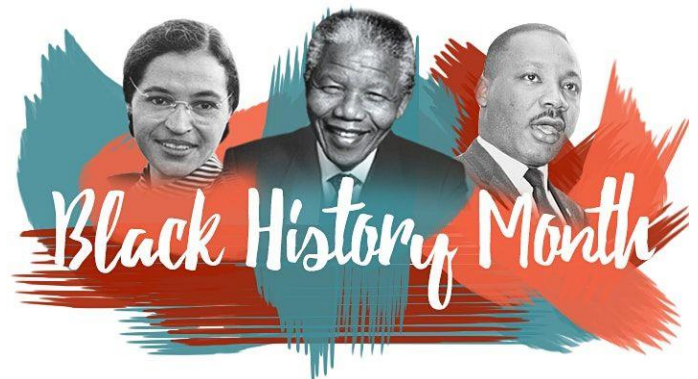
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43gm3CJePno>

National Archives: African American History (website)

<https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/african-american-history>

10 Ways to Celebrate Black History Month in Chicago

<https://www.eventbrite.com/rally/chicago/10-ways-to-celebrate-black-history-month-in-chicago/>



Speech/voice therapy resources for transgender individuals:

- [Northwestern University, Center for Audiology, Speech, Language, and Learning](#)
- [NatFem](#)
- [CHAT Life Changing Speech Therapy](#)
- [Southern Illinois University, Speech-Language Pathology](#)
- [Gender Life Free Transgender Voice Resources](#) - free software and other materials for voice feminization

Q Chat Space www.qchatspace.org

is a community for LGBTQ+ teens, created through collaboration of CenterLink, PFLAG, and Planned Parenthood. It provides [online discussion groups](#) for ages 13 to 19. It is live and chat based; there is no video or audio. Everyone is chatting during the same pre-scheduled time. Discussions are facilitated by caring and verified staff and volunteer facilitators.

Article about puberty blockers:

[Puberty blockers can be 'life-saving' drugs for trans teens, study shows](#)

News from PFLAG Grayslake / Round Lake

by Mary Bellomo

A great deal of legislative changes happened in Illinois in 2019! The Grayslake/Round Lake Chapter invited Michael Ziri, the Director of Public Policy at Equality Illinois, to help our members better understand what policies have changed in Illinois over the past year relevant to the LGBTQIA community. Mr. Ziri gave a one-hour presentation to chapter members on new and pending legislation in Illinois, including the Inclusive Curriculum Law (goes into effect the 2020-2021 school year), and the Equitable Restrooms Act, which states that single-occupancy restrooms in places of public accommodation must be labeled as gender-neutral. The invitation for Mr. Ziri came after the Chapter's board surveyed its membership asking what types of educational topics were of the highest interest, and legislative actions and policy were at the top. That's not a surprise considering the very active year the Illinois State Assembly has had.

News from PFLAG Aurora / Fox Valley

by Tom Purl

The guest at the February meeting of the Aurora/Fox Valley Chapter was Don Donahue. He gave us a presentation on how the Northern Illinois Council of PFLAG is structured and how the governing body makes decisions. During our group discussion period we welcomed a new visitor.

Two of our members also shared a story about some volunteer work that they did last Christmas. For the past 10-12 years, Keith and Shelley Strnad appear as Signing Santa and Signing Mrs. Claus for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children. They spend the morning at Chicago Ridge Mall (9:30 - 11:30) and the evening at Louis Joliet Mall (5:00 - 6:30). We absolutely love it and we look forward to doing it every year. This was the first year I grew my own beard (instead of wearing a fake wig and beard) and it was a huge difference. Will be growing my Santa beard from now on.



News from PFLAG DuPage

by Kristin Shulman & Margaret Donahue

Happy New Year! Our first meeting of the year was held on Sunday, January 19th and with that meeting we have started our 17th year!! We hope it will be a good one for all of our PFLAG chapter friends and families!

The December meeting was our annual potluck holiday party. We had close to forty people in attendance and had many, many good things to eat. We love this informal “meeting” where we can share a bite and get to know each other a bit better. It is the perfect way to end a year and spend a little holiday time with our PFLAG family.

With the start of this new year, Margaret Donahue and Kristin Shulman took over the co-Presidency of the chapter from Bernadette and Ron Whitfield. We want to thank Bernadette and Ron for their four years of service as co-Presidents of our chapter. Bernadette and Ron have been tirelessly committed to PFLAG for many years and we are so blessed to have their continued support and guidance as we move forward with new Presidents. Additionally, Jo Ann Larsen took over as Vice President. Bob Lied and Lisa Garber, continue as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively.

Last fall, ten people from PFLAG DuPage attended the 2019 PFLAG National Convention in Kansas City, MO. With that many people there we were able to attend many of the sessions. Our January program was devoted to hearing about the convention from different perspectives. We want to give a huge thank you to Margaret and Don Donahue, Bob Lied and Bernadette and Ron Whitfield for sharing their 2019 PFLAG National Conference experiences. We learned so much including about issues facing intersex people and about support for spouses of people who come out as LGBTQ after marriage. Our February program will also cover the convention with the remaining five attendees sharing their experiences.

On February 8th, at 6 PM, at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Wheaton, PFLAG DuPage will host a film night with the showing of a special episode of Call the Midwife. We will discuss the episode afterwards. All are invited and asked to bring soup or bread to share. If you plan to attend, please let us know at pflagdupage@yahoo.com.

News from PFLAG McHenry

by Toni Weaver

I'd like to focus on our January meeting, for I feel this could benefit all of our PFLAG chapters. The demographic we serve has a higher suicide rate than the general population for a variety of reasons and therefore necessitates training such as this.

We invited PFLAG member Laurie Crain to present QPR training. Q= question; P=persuade; R=refer. Question a person about suicide; persuade someone to get help; refer someone to the appropriate resource.

“QPR is not a form of counseling or treatment. Rather it is intended to offer hope through positive action. By learning QPR, you will come to recognize the warning signs, clues, and suicidal communications of people in trouble and gain skills to act vigorously to prevent a possible tragedy.” (QPR Institute – www.qprinstitute.com)

This training takes roughly 90 minutes and fits nicely within the time constraints of a PFLAG meeting. We highly recommend it to all of our chapters.

The annual People in Need Forum will take place at McHenry Community College on Saturday, January 25. This year, in addition to staffing a resource table, PFLAG McHenry will present one of the breakout sessions. P.I.N. brings together over 100 area wide service providers and social service agencies, thus allowing extensive networking opportunities. It is open to the general public as well.

Our goal is to make other agencies aware of the unique needs of the LGBTQ+ community, their families, friends, and allies and of how PFLAG serves this community.

On February 5 we will once again be involved with a workshop that provides training to mental health professionals on best practices for working with their transgender clients. This is a repeat of the workshop presented in October. The need is great as reflected by the fact that we reached capacity of 100 in a matter of days following the opening of registration for each session.



News from PFLAG Deerfield

by Sue Ginsburg

Our December meeting is traditionally all about great conversation and eating all the wonderful treats that everyone has brought! We take more time going around the circle, telling our stories. This time, we asked those members who have been around 5, 10, 15, 18 years, to try to think of a story they hadn't shared before. It was a wonderful way to introduce our new members to those of us who've been around a while. It was the perfect way to explain our mantra: "When you no longer need PFLAG, that's when PFLAG needs YOU!"

We reminded all who were present to continue writing to your congress people and to the Supreme Court that equal rights for members of our community are part of what makes us Americans! We are all looking forward to a hopeful New Year!

At the January meeting, we were honored to hear the story of our very own Jessica and her journey to realignment, as she prefers to call it, and her remarkable lessons of positivity. Jessica took us back through her formative years, growing up in a family and her constant feeling of just being a "little off." Her family moved to Florida to help alleviate the symptoms of her severe asthma. They moved very close to an airport which was where Jessica began her love for flying.

She married her "soul mate" and had two children, all the while trying not to address that feeling of wanting to be someone else. She knew she had difficult decisions to make, but chose not to use drugs or alcohol but rather worked out in the gym to cope with her personal struggles. A little over a year ago, when she made the decision to 'realign' who she really was, she first made sure her job was secure. Then she spoke to her family. While there were some rocky times, the support and love of her family meant everything to her and helped her find the power to be her true self. She recognized that she really didn't like the person she used to be, but recognized that she is who she is because of

her past and has learned from it. Her family remains intact.

While her journey of employment wasn't easy, she was forced out of her long time job, but did find another, her positivity helped carry her through, to the point where she is now using her voice to inspire others.

Jessica impressed upon all of us that it is up to each of us to take control of our lives and make our wishes happen!

The reason Jessica would rather use "realignment" is that she sees that while her body is being realigned to who she actually is and always was, and her brain is also being realigned to learn how to be that person. She said, "I have become a better version of myself."

We are so fortunate to count on Jessica to tell her story to all who come to Deerfield whose children have come out as trans. To a one, they are comforted, consoled and best of all, given hope and confidence that things can be all right. Thank you, Jessica!!!!

**“I have
become a
better
version of
myself”**



News from PFLAG Hinsdale

by Suellen Cook

In December, the PFLAG Hinsdale Chapter decorated a holiday tree with messages of inclusion and love at the Brookfield Zoo. The 2019 Community Tree Trim Event kicked off Brookfield Zoo's 38th Annual Holiday Magic.

PFLAG Hinsdale also celebrated the holidays at our December meeting by enjoying a potluck luncheon and filling thirty stockings for delivery to the Crib/Night Ministry. The stockings were

filled with a variety of both necessities and treats such as hats, gloves, warm socks, deodorant, lip balm, and assorted candy. The Crib provides young adults ages 18 through 24 with safe and supportive overnight emergency shelter, as well as life and leadership development skills.

On January 5, 2020, PFLAG Hinsdale appreciated an informative presentation by Ron Chernobrov, a volunteer with Youth Outlook. Youth Outlook is the first social service agency in Illinois dedicated solely to supporting LGBTQIA+ youth typically ages 12-20 years. Youth Outlook runs nine drop-in





filling stockings for delivery to the Crib/Night Ministry at the December 2019 meeting

centers in six counties in the Chicago suburbs for youth. The drop-in centers are in the following cities: DeKalb, Elgin, Elmhurst, Geneva, Naperville (Drop-in and Transcend), Ottawa, Palatine (Transcend), and Sterling. The centers are for social support rather than therapy. The goals of the centers are for the LGBTQIA+ youth to meet weekly in a social setting, to be safe and have a good time. Two of the nine drop-in centers are geared toward transgender and non-binary young people and are called Transcend. Youth Outlook also facilitates two Thrive parent support groups that allow parents of LGBTQIA+ youth to connect and receive support and education.

Ron described what a typical evening meeting might look like. Volunteers arrive at 6PM, and the youth arrive between 6:30-7PM. Snacks are served, and at 7PM it's circle time and check-in. Youth Outlook staff also meet with every youth one-on-one on their first visit. This meeting is required for all youth, and is confidential, important, and a one-time occurrence. Following

circle time, there is a break for socializing. Programming begins at 8PM and lasts until 9PM.

The program can be serious leading to discussions or lighter involving arts and crafts. The program wraps at 9PM, and the Youth Outlook staff person and volunteers stay a bit to debrief.

Youth Outlook works with the young people to build up their confidence and leadership skills. The youth are trained to run the groups and participate in speaking events.

Youth are encouraged to take an active role in their groups. Youth Outlook staff and volunteers also provide professional

development training for adults typically at schools and medical facilities, and professional development training hours are offered to those attendees.

Looking to the future, Youth Outlook would like to open additional drop-in centers, but it takes professional staff, volunteers and funding. If you are interested in volunteering, training will be offered in March 2020 (three weekends). Twenty-four hours of training is required for volunteers. Email: volunteering@youth-outlook.org for additional information. If you'd like to attend an upcoming one-hour mission tour at one of the drop-in centers, use the link available on the following webpage: <https://youth-outlook.org/get-involved/#volunteer>.

Our February speaker will be Mona Noriega, the Commissioner of Chicago's Commission on Human Relations. She'll speak about the civil rights protections offered by the City of Chicago. She'll be joined by Mike Ziri, Director of Public Policy from Equality Illinois.



Interview with Chicago artist and architect

Adolfo Santos

“PFLAG has always been an inspiration to the LGBTQ community. Every pride parade my heart leaps for joy every time PFLAG passes by. It’s like a homecoming.”

-- Adolfo Santos, in response to our interview request

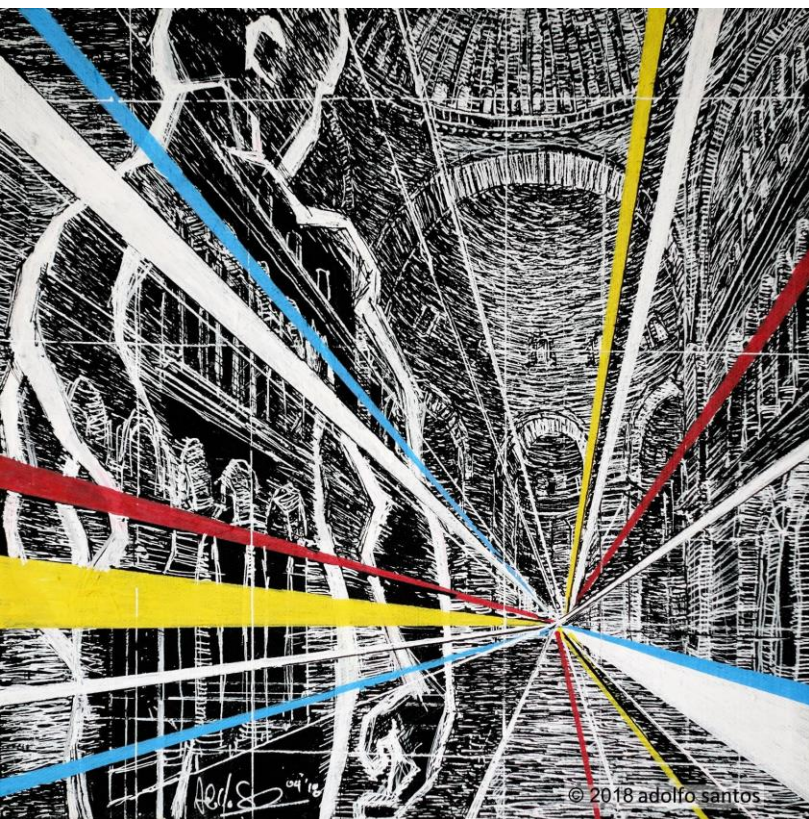
Find Adolfo’s work online:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/adolfosantosart

Instagram: www.instagram.com/adolfosantosart

Behance: www.behance.net/asantos12

To inquire about purchasing Adolfo’s work and commissions, email to asarchitect@live.com



There’s a City in My Mind, No. 2
April 2018, Acrylic paint on canvas



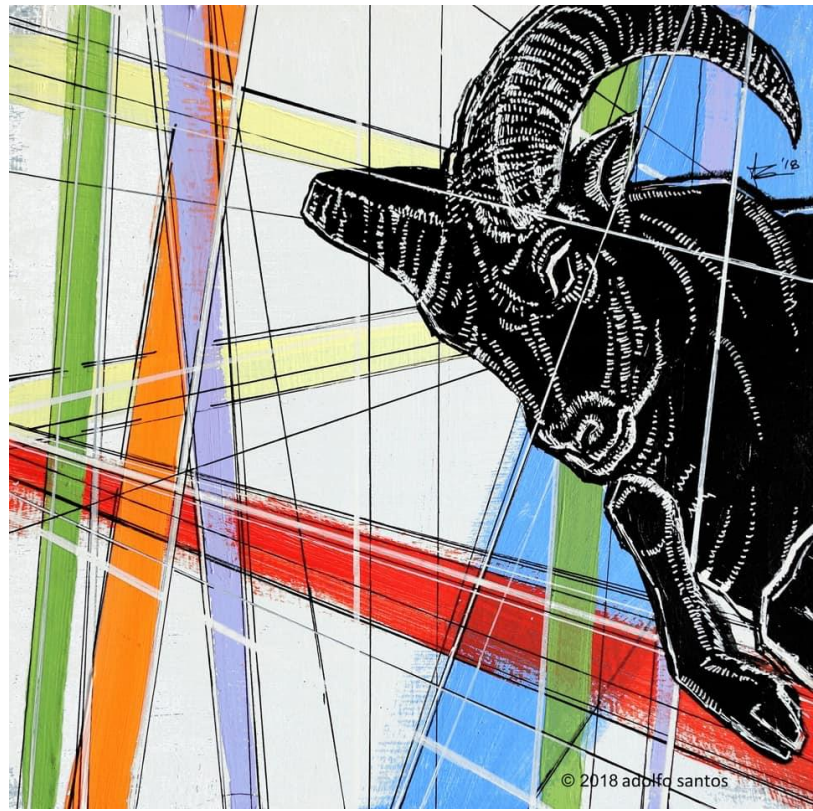
Open Doors: When did you first know that you wanted to be an artist? What led to it?

Adolfo Santos: For as long as I can remember I have enjoyed making things. I was the quiet kid who liked to draw. Making music is also a lifelong passion. I always considered these passions hobbies. Stories of starving artists and singing for your supper filled my head, so I relegated art and music to the sidelines of my life.

While in college in the late 1980’s, to channel creative drive I decided to pursue architecture. I graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1990 with a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies. Once out in the real world, I found that I hit wall after wall in my professional journey in architecture. A recession in the early 90’s and a lay off put a damper on things. I had the talent, but I was not finding the opportunity. In the late 1990’s, I finally accepted that I was gay, and I came out! This was a revolution in my life where I sought to live my life more honestly and openly, more honest and more open to others and myself. I was inspired to come out by the stories of other people. Eventually and most circuitously I gained enough architectural experience to attain my architectural license in 2003. I worked on a wide variety of jobs over the years that included home renovations, additions, offices, restaurants, retail shops, and hotels. From kitchen remodels to international hotels, I enjoyed applying my creative drive in solving design problems for clients.



Acrylic No. 26
September 2019, Acrylic paint on panel

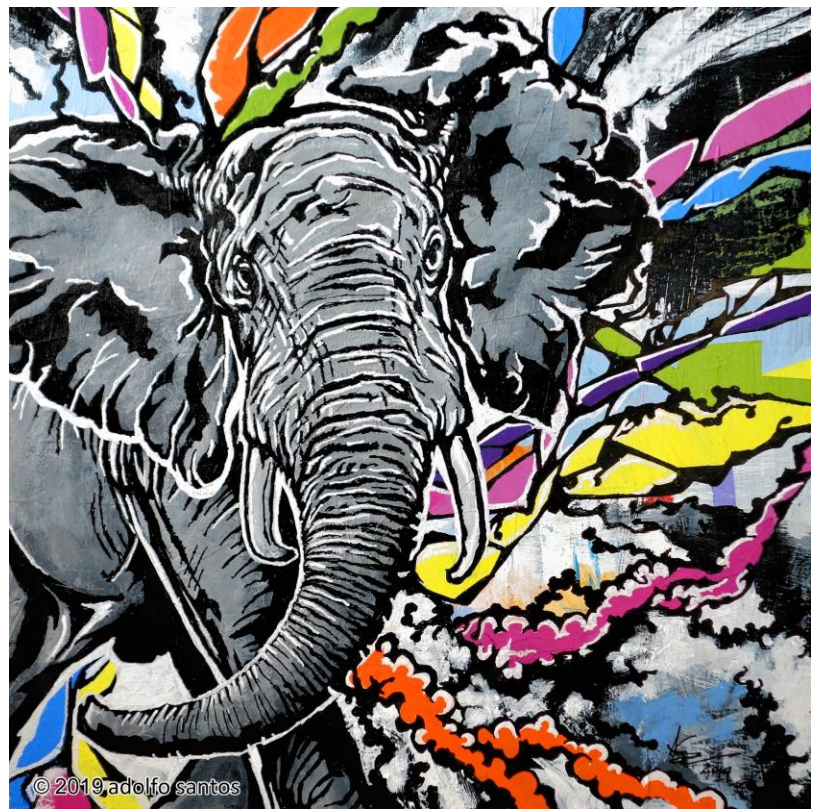


Animal No. 21
November 2018, Acrylic paint on panel

Interview (continued)

Then 2008 came along, another recession, and another lay off. With this wall, I felt I had to really dig deep down and take stock of my true passions and skills before I moved forward. It was like a coming out in many ways. This time instead of ignoring that quiet kid who liked to draw, I embraced him. This was over ten years ago. Now at middle age in my early 50's, I call myself an artist and an architect. It was art that led me to architecture. I consider myself extremely lucky to be surrounded by loved ones who have been with me through every turn. My partner Ken has always encouraged and supported my artistic pursuits. We met in 2011 and were married just last year. Likewise, my family has always had my back. Perhaps they were the first to accept that quiet kid who likes to draw. They were just waiting for me to do the same. Their love is priceless to me. This is where I applaud the work of PFLAG. Your work is an ageless, priceless work because it is built on Love. I am honored to share my story here.

I was inspired to come out by the stories of other people



Animal No. 28
November 2019, Acrylic paint on panel



Interview (continued)

Top to bottom:
Animal No. 7– Bighorn Sheep
Animal No. 6– Moose
Animal No. 11 – Mountain Goat
all works from May 2017, Digital

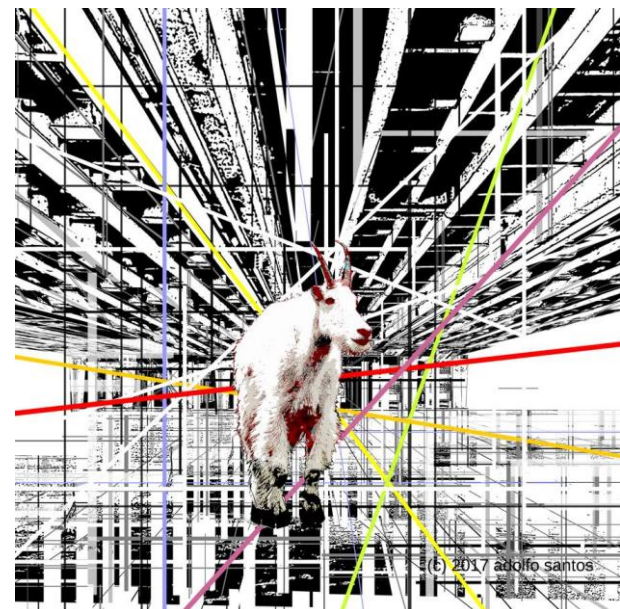
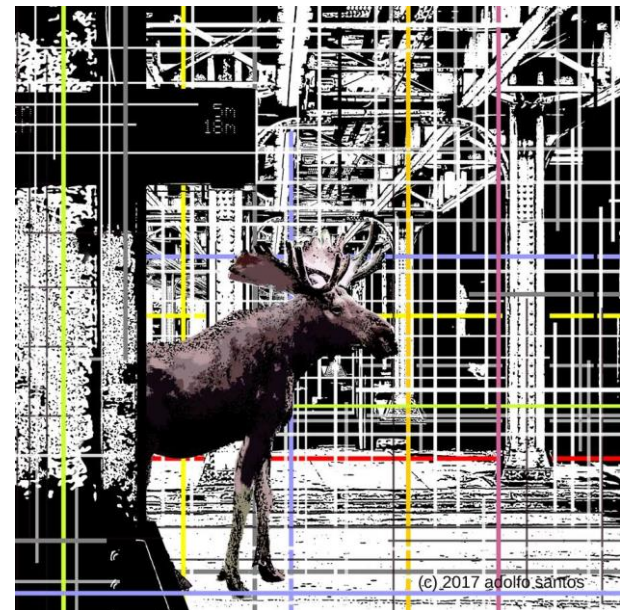
OD: Wild animals appear in many of your works and they are often placed in an urban setting. Do you see symbiosis or conflict between wildlife and civilization?

AS: I see both symbiosis and conflict between wildlife and civilization. What we build is a direct expression of our values. Our cities, our nations, our laws, our societies, economies, and cultures are very real manifestations of what we hold dear. In its beginnings my art made interpretations of our built world. Being a Chicagoan, I focused on interpretations of my hometown, its architecture and infrastructure, hoping to encourage others to relook at their city, their home, and see what they would want that home, that city to be. Making our cities work will help us face the many challenges ahead.

Animals are a lifelong passion of my husband Ken Stone. He loves them, even writing about them in a book, *Reading the Hebrew Bible with Animal Studies*, published by Stanford University Press. Ken is professor of bible and culture at Chicago Theological Seminary at the University of Chicago, a school focused on social justice including theologies that are inclusive of lesbians and gays. One day as I was trying to find some inspiration for new work, Ken suggested that I look at animals.

Including animals in my work I hope to bring seeming disparate worlds together. What does a bighorn sheep have anything to do with Chicago's mass transit system, the Chicago Transit Authority or CTA? I suggest quite a lot. Chicago, our cities and communities, our world is not separate from the wild animal world. Both worlds share the same land and resources, the same precious Earth. Increasingly we are finding that their fate is tied to ours. Their health and success are tied to ours. There is a statistic that only 10% of all the land on Earth remains truly wild. This is a problem. As we forge on building our More-Perfect-Union it seems that we must consider how we build it and where we build it.

*I applaud the work of
PFLAG. Your work is an
ageless, priceless work
because it is built on Love.*



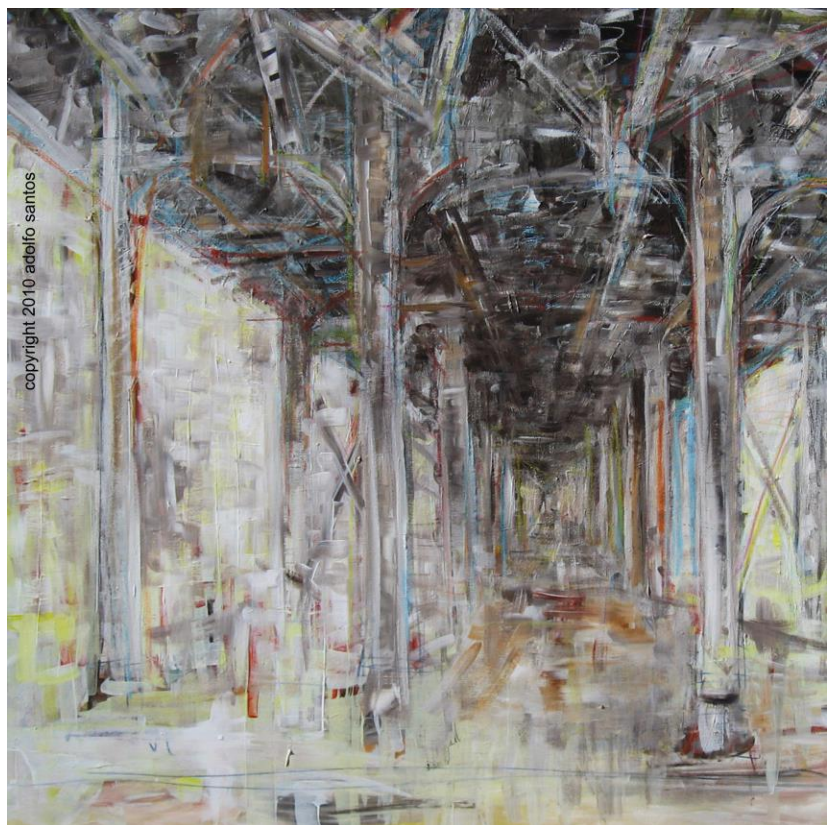
Interview (continued)

OD: What is the meaning of "cultural heritage" to you?

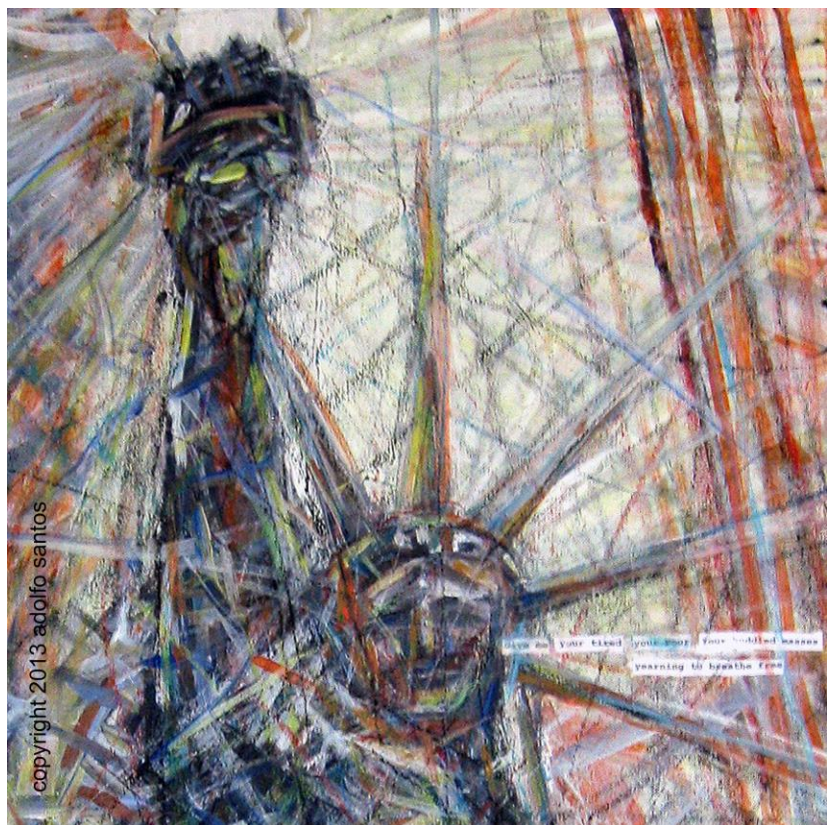
AS: The hope of America is its promise of Liberty and Justice for all. This promise is a foundation to its cultural heritage. Perhaps every democracy holds this promise for its citizens. This promise was so powerful a draw to my father that he decided to move his family from the Philippines to America. My sister and I were only preschool age. Being so young, my memories of the Philippines feel more like dreams rather than concrete events. There are only a handful of images, moments, and sounds I can recall. One was playing in the streets with other kids during a monsoon. There is another of a noisy and not in the worst way smelly open market where the fish were right at the level of my toddler height nose. Another happy memory was standing in line for freshly grilled pork barbecue on a stick. It was night and I remember flashes of fireworks and sparklers. My mother still makes this same barbecue on special occasions. Another reason we came to America was to flee martial law which had just been declared by Marcos in the Philippines. It was 1972. My mother's father pulled my mother aside and lovingly admonished her that in his experience, in times like these, it would not be a good time for her and her young family to stay in the Philippines. So off we went.

Because I arrived in America at such a young age, my family became the only Philippines culture I knew. My parents encouraged us to work hard, study hard, and laugh hard. They taught us listen to your parents, respect them, honor your elders, and look out for one another. Family was first. Be courteous to others. The worst punishment that you could receive is to learn that you have disappointed your parents. These lessons proved invaluable when my father suddenly died in 1982. I was fifteen. My mother, sister, and I soldiered on, resolving to hold our family together. When I look back at that tragic time, I am filled with gratitude that we chose to make it through. My sister has her own family now, three beautiful, smart, talented young women. When I see them, I realize that my father's legacy lives on in them. I feel I am witnessing a miracle.

These values, these miracles, and legacies are a part of my cultural heritage. Looking at them, it seems that many cultures would share and honor these same



Detail *The Red Line at Montrose Ave, No. 2*
October 2010, Acrylic paint and pastel on canvas



Detail *The Tower of Babel, No. 4 - Liberty*
August 2013, Acrylic paint and pastel on canvas

Interview (continued)

things. There are obvious differences such as food and expressions in folk art and dance. These differences add flavor to the melting pot. In my hometown of Chicago, a city of neighborhoods, every block seems to have its own cultural heritage. Certainly, the LGBTQ community has its own cultural heritage that adds its own colors. This is what makes Chicago great, its diversity, its neighborhoods, its variety. There are times when these differences appear to tear the town apart but when it holds together it is made stronger. It gets better. It's like great jazz, many voices, colors, and views coming together to make a bigger music. If it works for Chicago, then it can work for the country, for any democracy. I hope that America will continue to abide by its promise to be a beacon to the tired, the poor, and the huddled masses yearning to breathe free. A people that celebrates its differences is a great wonderful thing.

By advocating to keep families, their LGBTQ children, and their allies together, PFLAG helps to ensure that our cultural inheritances are passed on. More is added to the melting pot. All are enriched by this. LGBTQ people are no longer cut off from the rich cultural heritages from which they came.

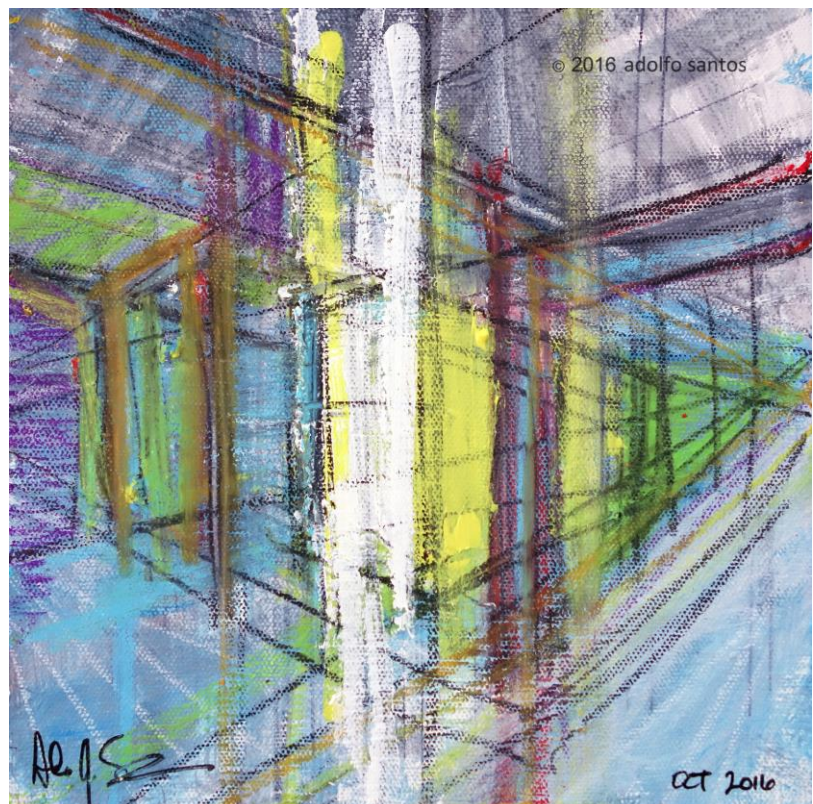
OD: You are an artist and an architect. Does either side dominate, or do they naturally complement each other?

AS: One discipline influences the other. Architecture is the realization of a client's needs through design and construction. Whereas art is pure expression. Architecture is many times called art. While art often expresses some architecture and structure. Architecture, design, and the making of art all start with an idea. Art and architecture are expressions of a creative spirit that is a fundamental part of myself. It was art that led me to pursue architecture.

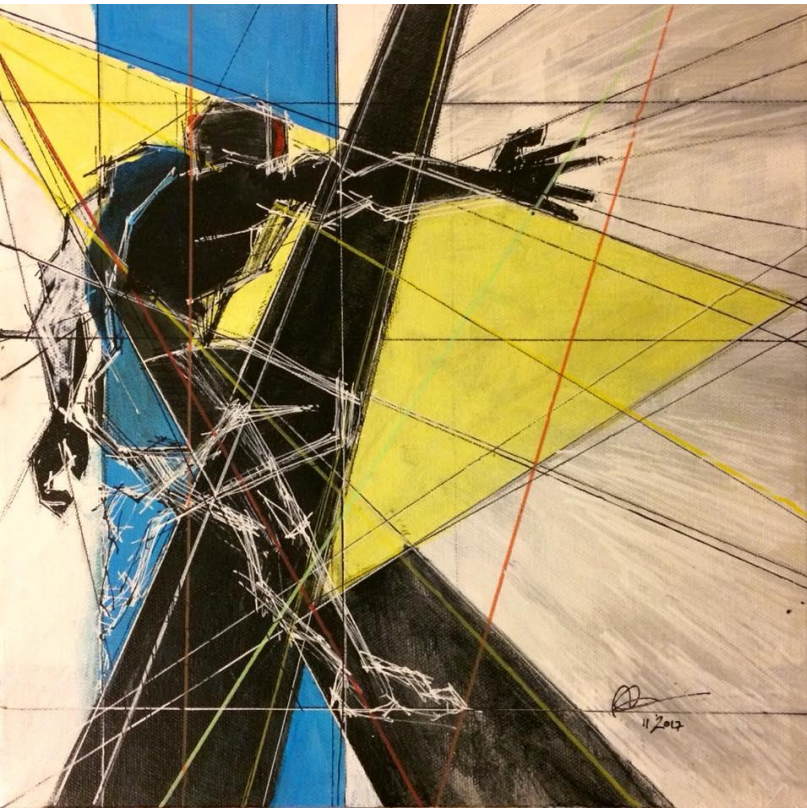
In my hometown of Chicago, a city of neighborhoods, every block seems to have its own cultural heritage... This is what makes Chicago great, its diversity, its neighborhoods, its variety.



Detail *Tribune Tower, No. 4*
December 2015, Acrylic paint on canvas



CTA Red Line at Addison
October 2016, Acrylic paint and pastel on canvas



The Red Line at Montrose Ave., No. 7
November 2017, Acrylic paint and pencil on canvas

Interview (continued)

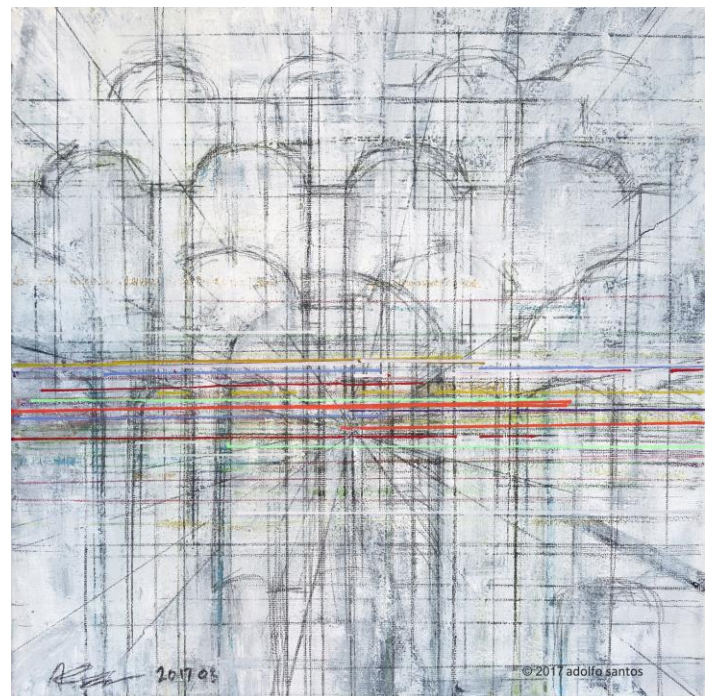
OD: What new projects are you working on now?

AS: In art my mission will continue to bring the wild and the city together, focusing on issues of sustainability. Themes inspired by science, social justice, and interpretations of architecture and animals will continued to be layered together in my work. I am encouraged that a new generation is already taking up the battle for our Earth. Greta Thunberg has inspired millions worldwide to call for a more sustainable way of life. My hometown Chicago provides many opportunities for artists to display their work. Over the years I have had some great opportunities to show art in exhibitions in Chicago. I also maintain a Facebook page called “A High Place for Chicago.” I describe the page as “The ramblings of a Chicago architect on the sacred and profane.” The page started as a blog in 2006 that focused on architectural concepts and ideas to make Chicago a more sustainable city. “A High Place for Chicago” has grown into a personal platform to share ideas about art, music, architecture, social and political commentary, everything really. If we are to be sustainable, we must address social justice issues.

There is no progress unless we take care of our own. We must ensure the promises of Liberty and Justice for this and every successive generation. It is all up to us.



There's a City in My Mind, No. 1
February 2018, Acrylic paint on canvas



The Sacred Guardians, No. 7
March 2017, Acrylic paint, pencil, ink, and pastel on canvas



Calendar at the Center on 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago



Friday, Feb. 7 6 - 8 pm

LGBTQ Art Gallery Opening

A new LGBTQ Artists Gallery Opening Exhibit launches on Friday, February 7, from 6:00-8:00 pm. The opening night event is the official premiere of the work by artists **Alan Emerson Hicks & Angelica Campbell**. Opening night reception will include a cash bar.

Center on Halsted | 3656 N. Halsted

[RSVP HERE >](#)



Sunday, Feb. 9 6:00 - 10:00 pm

And the category is... A Night with Oscar

Center on Halsted's signature event for more than 10 years, A Night With Oscar, is Chicago's premier Academy Awards viewing party with fanfare red carpet arrival, dinner, libations and live-broadcasted awards ceremony.

322 W. Armitage | Park West

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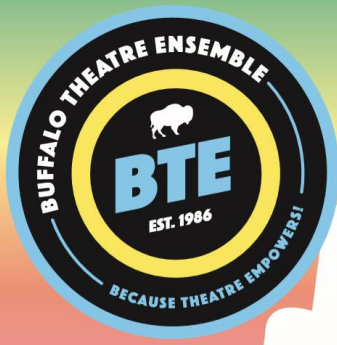
CENTER ON 3656 N. HALSTED

WOMEN & CHILDREN FIRST

Becoming a Man: A Story on Transition

A conversation with Trans activist and author P. Carl, moderated by Barrie Jean Borich

Sunday, Feb. 23
4-5 pm
3656 N. Halsted



THE CAKE

Written by Bekah Brunstetter
Directed by Steve Scott



20% OFF
code: PFLAG

AtTheMAC.org

JAN. 30 - MAR. 1

Interview with the director **Steve Scott**

Photos by **Rex Howard Photography**



THE CAKE is considered a Dramatic Comedy. Do you see more drama or comedy in this story?

I think THE CAKE has equal elements of each, but certainly the seriousness of the situation involves a great deal of soul-searching on the parts of all of the characters, and results in some scenes that are at times heartbreaking. The author does a terrific job, though, of leavening what is essentially a very serious discussion with moments of real humor and tenderness.

What do you think is the role of art in changing the society and breaking obsolete dogmas?

What art (especially the theater) provides is a look at the humanity that lies beneath the dogma. In our currently fractured world, we often forget that the most divisive political conflicts involve people, usually well-meaning people, whose beliefs come out of a complex mixture of experience, education, tradition or a reaction against it, and a desire for happiness. What plays like THE CAKE can provide is an opportunity to discover the human faces on both sides of the argument, and an opportunity to empathize with those people even if we don't agree with them. What I like most about this play





is that it doesn't demonize anyone, but instead urges us to approach both sides with compassion and understanding. Dogma, I think, is created most often out of fear--of the unknown, of the "other", of trying to bring rigid rules to human behavior which cannot be easily codified. Once that fear is lessened, dogma in and of itself is less necessary, and becomes secondary to the human issues involved.

What was the most difficult decision that you had to make as the director of THE CAKE?

For me, the biggest challenge (and the biggest reward) of working on this play has been to recognize my own sometimes rigid political opinions so that I can maintain the balance which the story requires. THE CAKE deals with issues about which I feel very strongly; but those strong feelings sometimes stand in the way of a more enlightened, rational and human response to the people that I often simply see as my enemies. I've actually learned quite a bit from working on this piece, and I hope that audiences on both sides of the political issues explored here can reject their own rigidity when they consider the very real human issues on both sides.



What can you tell us about the cast and other people who have contributed their talent, passion, and resources to this productions?

As is always the case at BTE, the artists with whom I'm collaborating are extremely accomplished, and their skill shows, I think, in the high quality of the work onstage. But more than that, these artists are also really good, strong, articulate people who have shown great courage in tackling a story which is nuanced, delicately balanced, and potentially highly controversial. During rehearsals we've had a great many discussions about our own lives, beliefs and experiences, and these discussions have engendered an extraordinary trust among us. That trust allows us to really delve into the most complex parts of this story without fear that we'll be offending each other as we explore the conflicts between characters, as well as the conflicts that exist within every character. It's been a wonderfully positive experience for all of us, and has allowed us to do what the playwright want our audiences to do: to explore the differences between us with empathy and understanding for the "opposing" viewpoints. As the play suggests, there are no easy answers to any of the questions we're exploring--but the only way to deal with those questions is actually talking to each other about how we feel, rather than resorting to incendiary posts on Facebook.



THE CAKE discussions with the audience:

About the production:

- Pre-show discussion with the designers and director (lecture with questions)
Thursday, January 30, 6:45 - 7:15pm
- Post-show discussion with the cast, stage manager, and crew (open questions from the audience)
Friday, February 7

Don't forget to use 20% Coupon Code PFLAG when [ordering tickets!](#)

About the issues raised in the production:

- Post show discussion with cake with Dana Thompson (College of DuPage Counseling Faculty) , Dennis Emano (College of DuPage Counseling Faculty), and Pastor Jared Olson of St. Paul's in Wheaton
Sunday, February 2
- Post show discussion with cake with Nathania Montes Associate Dean, Counseling, Advising and Transfer Services
Sunday, February 16
- Post show discussion with cake with retired UCC minister John Rogers, and Pastor Jay Moses from Hope Presbyterian Church
Sunday, March 1



Pride Films & Plays

by David Zak
Executive Director
pridefilmsandplays.com
866 811 4111.

PRIDE

Pride Films and Plays and Arc Theatre Chicago present a thrilling revival of Diana Son's classic **STOP KISS**, and the critics are loving it:

"...it's a delight to see a relatively rare revival of this groundbreaking play that honors its history, its period, its openheartedness and its determination to embrace and teach audiences of all kinds."
(Chicago Tribune)

"This production of STOP KISS is an absolute success."
(Broadwayworld.com)

Join us in the Buena Theater, 4147 N Broadway, through Feb 9 for STOP KISS.


Purchase tickets at pridefilmsandplays.com or 1 866 811 4111



Open Doors considers support of LGBTQIA+ art, theater, cinema, literature, and other creative expressions one of its core missions. Please email ideas for future publications to opendoors@pflagillinois.org

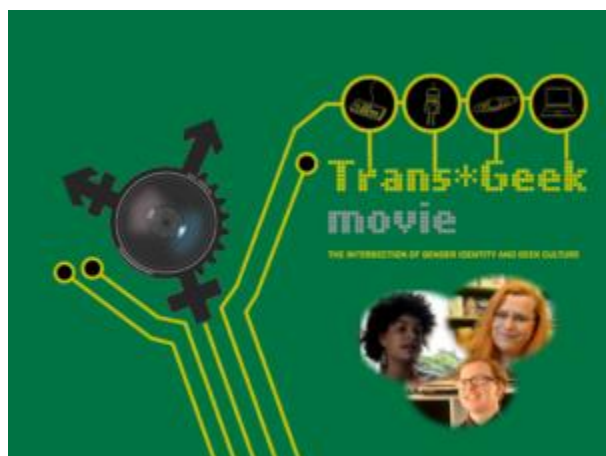


EVENTS

 Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva
Come as you are.

Come join us for a free screening of the new documentary **TransGeek**

Sponsored by UUSG and Interweave



The Intersection of Gender Identity and Geek Culture

Friday February 28, 7pm

Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva
102 S. 2nd Street, Geneva, IL 60134

The film will be followed by a discussion led by the director/producer Kevin McCarthy.

TransGeek brings together the stories of transgender people working in the tech industry and existing within geek culture. These are the stories of people that risked their careers and their lives to be their authentic selves. *TransGeek* Movie is about making a place for transgender people to tell their own stories in their own voices.

Click [here \(IMDB\)](#) for more information about the *TransGeek* Documentary.

You may also contact Lynn Steele at 630-815-6535

TRANS YOUTH AND FAMILY SUMMIT



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INCLUDES WORKSHOPS & ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND ADULTS

REGISTRATION (\$10) OPENS 1/21/20: bit.ly/tyfs20

QUESTIONS & SCHOLARSHIPS: LIZZY.APPLEBY@YSGN.ORG

Sunday, 3/1/20

9:00am-1:30pm

Youth Services
3080 W Lake Ave
in Glenview

Night of Stories and Songs with Bobby Jo Valentine

Saturday, February 22, 7 pm – 8:30 pm

First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn

[Click here for tickets](#)

Evening of stories and songs as we weave together tales of trials and triumphs and how life rarely turns out how we imagine but often it is more beautiful than we could ever dream! Kids under 12 are free!

PFLAG Northern Illinois Chapters

PFLAG McHenry
Meetings held 2nd Tuesday – 7 pm
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd
McHenry 60050
pflagmchenry@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (McHenry)
Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday – 7 p.m.
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd, McHenry 60050
pflagptimchenry@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Grayslake/Round Lake
Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday – 6:30 p.m.
Star Homes
783 Barron Blvd.
Grayslake, IL 60030
pflaggrayslake@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Rockford
Meetings are held the 1st Monday – 6 p.m.
Rockford Public Library's Montague Branch
1238 S Winnebago St
Rockford, IL 61102
pflagrockford@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (North Shore)
Meetings are held the 3rd Sunday – 6 p.m.
Winnetka Presbyterian Church
1255 Willow Rd, Winnetka, IL
pflagptnorthshore@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (Chicago)
Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday – 7 pm
Center on Halsted
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagptchicago@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Deerfield
Meetings held 2nd Thursday – 7:15 pm
Congregation BJE
1201 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield 60015
pflagdeerfield@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG DuPage
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
St Paul Lutheran Church
515 S Wheaton Ave, Wheaton 60187
pflagdupage@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Metro Chicago
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
Center on Halsted (Senior Room)
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley
Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2 pm
New England Congregational Church
406 W Galena Blvd, Aurora 60506
pflagaurorafoxvalley@pflagillinois.com

PFLAG Oak Park
Meetings held 4th Sunday – 3 pm
First United Church
848 Lake St, Oak Park 60304
pflagoakpark@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Bolingbrook
Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2 pm
305 E Boughton Road, Bolingbrook, IL 60440
pflagbolingbrook@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Homer Glen / Lockport
Meetings held Last Tuesday, 6:30–8 pm
Cross of Glory
14719 W. 163rd, Homer Glen, IL
pflaghgl@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Oak Lawn
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 p.m.
Pilgrim Faith UCC
9411 S 51st Ave
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
pflagoaklawn@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Hinsdale
Meetings held 1st Sunday – 2 pm
Unitarian Church Hinsdale
11 W Maple, Hinsdale 60521
pflaghinsdale@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Tinley Park
Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2-4 pm
Zion Lutheran Church
17100 69th Ave.
Tinley Park, IL 60477
pflagtinleypark@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Ottawa
Meetings held 4th Sunday - 2:30 pm
Open Table United Church of Christ
910 Columbus St., Ottawa, IL 61350
pflagottawa@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Will, Kankakee, Iroquois
Contact Rev. Barbara Lohrbach
revlohrbach@gmail.com
plagkankakee@pflagillinois.org

Click anywhere on the map to open it online

