

#MuseumFromHome with
the **Elmhurst Art Museum**

LGBTQIA+ ARTISTS, CURATORS, & SCHOLARS

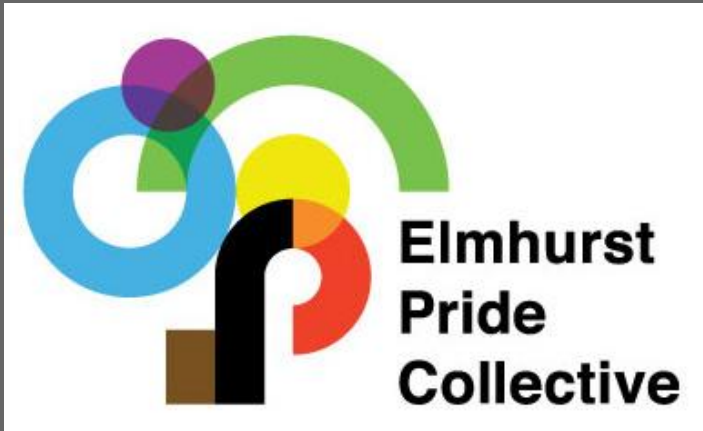


David Salkin, *Opal*, 2018, Hand Knotted wool, 60" x84" This piece is part of *A Space Problem*, Organized by David Salkin, in the McCormick House, Summer 2020..

From ancient societies to contemporary art, queer art history can be observed through a multitude of lenses. While same-sex relations can be tracked throughout history, language surrounding sexual identity and gender identity are relatively recent inventions.

This guide will briefly explore the work of LGBTQIA+ artists, curators, and scholars as well as unpack how we talk about their work today.

ELMHURST ART MUSEUM



The Elmhurst Art Museum is partnering with local non-profit Elmhurst Pride Collective to celebrate pride month. As part of the collective, the museum has pledged to provide a safe and welcoming place for all employees and customers, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, or disability.

The contributions of LGBTQIA+ individuals have helped shape the museum and have allowed us to elevate the voices of our diverse community.

WHAT IS LGBTQIA+ ?

LGBTQIA+ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and other identities related to sexuality and gender. This may sound like a long list of letters, however as society has grown more accepting, it is important to develop language to help communicate and explore the complexities of identity.



Hollis Sigler (American, 1948–2001), *Comes the Day of Reckoning*, 1985, Oil on canvas with painted frame, 50 x 62 in.
This piece was part of the 2019 exhibition *What Came After: Figurative Painting in Chicago 1978-1998*.



Kevin Wolff, *Arm*, 1986, Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 48 in.
This piece was part of the exhibition *With a Capital P: Selections by Six Painters* in 2019.

WHAT IS LGBTQIA+ ?

'LGBTQIA+' encompasses many identities, meaning the experience of the individual that identifies with components of this acronym are vastly diverse. It is important not to speak to each of these identities in the same way, nor equate them all to one linear spectrum (sexuality and gender are totally different). Instead, diversity is best understood and studied through subtle nuances by exploring intersectionality.

Intersectionality allows us to consider how aspects of an individual's identity overlap, and helps us observe injustices that are felt by people due to a combination of factors.

HISTORY

Until recent history, it was not socially acceptable to be 'out' as a LGBTQIA+ person. Before legislation was passed to prevent discrimination and violence towards these individuals, there was simultaneously a need to conceal references to a queer identity/experience as well as a desire for visibility. Many artists hid sexuality or gender to comply with rules of their industry or even to protect themselves.



Kelli Connell, *Floating*, 2005, digital lambda print, 40" x 46".
This piece was part of the exhibition *The Human Touch:*
Selections from the RBC Wealth Management Art Collection in
2017.



Roger Brown, *See Seven Cities*, 1971, Oil on canvas, 47 1/2 x 59 1/4 in. This piece was part of the exhibition *The figure and the Chicago Imagists: Selections from the Elmhurst College Art Collection* in 2018.

HISTORY

Artists like Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, and Frida Kahlo developed visual codes to signify queerness in cryptic ways. In 1969, the Stonewall Rebellion marked a shift towards more visibility and is often credited as the major turning point of the queer rights movement. Patrons of the New York bar (many of them queer and trans people of color) fought back against a routine police raid. This confrontation is often tied to the protest spirit of the time, including civil rights and women's liberation, and it led to a new social movement for lesbian and gay rights.



Kehinde Wiley, *Passing/Posing 15*, 2002, oil on canvas, 56" x 49"
This piece was part of the exhibition *The Human Touch: Selections from the RBC Wealth Management Art Collection* in 2017.

HISTORY

This gay liberation promoted visibility by encouraging people to 'come out' as LGBTQIA+ rather than blending in to heteronormative society. Artists became empowered to make art about their identities, and art historians began to excavate stories that were censored or omitted from history books. The desire to celebrate and document these depictions of queer identity helped politicize sexuality and gender, and has paved the way for contemporary progress.

QUEER ARTISTS TODAY

The term 'queer' was reclaimed to confront homophobia experienced during the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 80s and 90s. This term was used by many LGBTQIA+ individuals because it did not have one fixed meaning and had connotations of social deviance.



Jim Hodges, *A Diary of Flowers (Carolyn)*, 1992, Ink on 73 paper napkins with straight pins, 43 x 69 in.

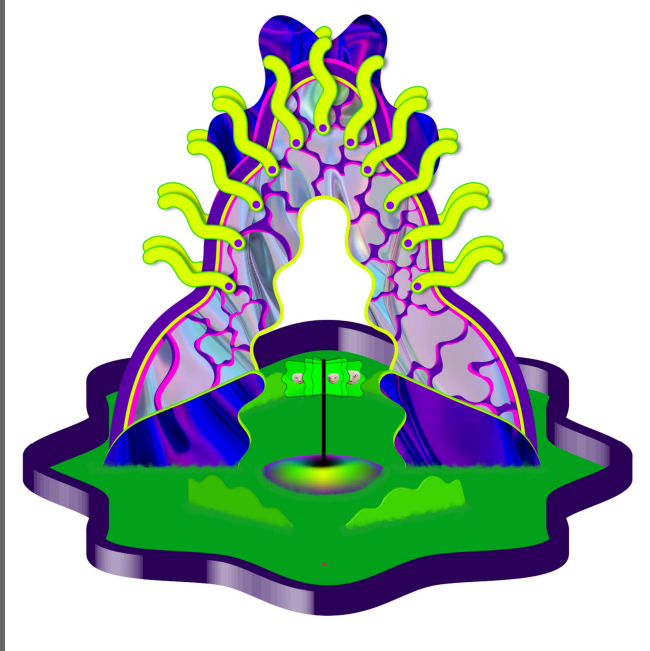
This piece was part of the exhibition *With a Capital P; Selections by Six Painters* in 2019.

During this time, the art world lost thousands of its members to HIV/AIDS. In addition to reappropriating 'queer', the work of many artists took on more of an activist role to increase visibility and respond to this crisis. Because this was such a pivotal time, some artists called for change while others used their work to respond to this huge loss from a place of empathy and sadness.

QUEER ARTISTS TODAY

In the past, art that was produced by members of the LGBTQIA+ community was often framed solely by the individual's gender or sexuality. While some artists incorporate explorations of identity as part of their practice, labeling an artwork with its creator's identity oversimplifies the art and gives us a limited view of the individual.

For some, embracing their marginalized identity is empowering and a way to increase representation. For others, identity does not explicitly inform the work they create.



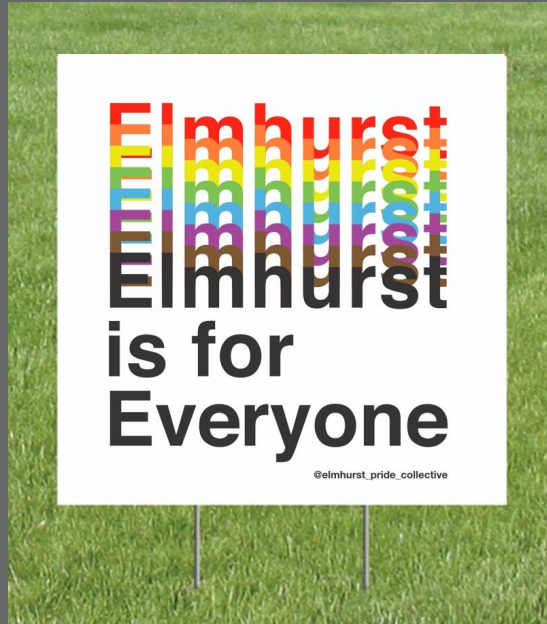
KT Duffy, Rendering of *The Idol*, a mini golf hole designed for the exhibition *Par Excellence Redux*, which is scheduled to open summer 2021.

QUEER ARTISTS TODAY

While many LGBTQIA+ artists incorporate their lived experiences into their work, it is important to remember that their output should be treated as separate from their body and identity.



Magalie Guérin, *Untitled*, 2017, Oil on canvas on panel, 30 x 24 in.
This piece was included in the exhibition *With a Capital P: Selections by Six Painters* in 2019.



Show your support for the Elmhurst Pride Collective and help make our community a more accepting and inclusive place. Merchandise, like this yard sign, is [available for purchase](#). All proceeds go directly to helping connect and educate our community on LGBTQIA+ topics and issues.

ARTS & ACTIVISM

Because gender and sexuality have become highly politicized, art has been a way to mobilize people for a cause. Art can take the form of a call to action, critically question societal norms, or even be used to process and respond in a meaningful way.

Whether it be a sign for a protest, displaying support in your yard, or political cartoons, art allows us to communicate and learn in a powerfully different way. It also allows us to reflect on our own experiences and can connect us as a community.

FROM HOME ACTIVITY



Embrace the '&' that makes you, you! Create your own non-binary, chimera butterfly to explore the different components of your identity.

[CLICK HERE](#)

for the activity

Share your projects on social media with #MuseumFromHome and #ElmhurstArtMuseum



COMMUNITY PROJECT: ART IN THE POST

You are invited to contribute to a collaborative mail art project by sharing something about your life. Originally created for responses to COVID-19, our mail art project also allows for your reflection on racial injustice and other current events. Tell us how you are passing the time, write a poem, or even share a recipe. We'll exhibit these at the museum after reopening.

CLICK HERE
for more on this
Community
Project

MUSEUM STORE

ITEM OF THE WEEK

From Architect and designer Alex Donahue comes the PRIDE Watch, a timepiece dedicated to those individuals who have bravely stood with pride for the rights of all people.

The watch features six colors that continually move about the face. Twice a day, at both noon and midnight, the colors come together to create the shape of a rainbow. Beauty comes in all colors...and is heightened by those colors' alignment. Show your PRIDE with this stylish timepiece.

5% of all profits from the sale of PRIDE will be donated to True Colors United in support of their innovative solutions to youth homelessness that focus on the unique experiences of LGBTQ young people.



[Online Museum Store](#)



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