

HAPPY PRIDE MONTH!



(Illustration by Aarushi Jain)

THE STONEWALL RIOTS- LESSER KNOWN HISTORY BEHIND PRIDE MONTH

Pride Month is a month dedicated to celebrating the LGBTQIA+ communities all around the world. It is about standing united and coming together to celebrate and accept love of all kinds while reminiscing on their path-breaking progress towards gaining rights and how far they have come over the years.

While most of us are aware of the fact that June has been chosen as Pride Month, the history behind it may still be a mystery to a lot of you. On the night of 28th June 1969, the police raided the Stonewall Inn, a bar in New York, notoriously known for serving the city's gay and transgender people. This night went down in history, for it was the first time the LGBTQIA+ community fought back for their rights. They retaliated fiercely by calling the cops names and throwing bricks and bottles their way, leading to the start of a major rebellion. Despite the events of the previous night, the bar opened again the next day, resulting in the community being tear-gassed and beaten up by officers and labelled homophobic slurs in the press. Yet, their perseverance was commendable and to this day they continue to fight in solidarity for the rights they deserve. Global Pride Day is celebrated on the 28th of June, to honour the historic day.



Although June is a notable month in which parades of self-acceptance take place each year, we need to keep in mind that pride doesn't exist only in June. We encourage all of you to continue to support the LGBTQIA+ community and be an ally all year long and not just cave to rainbow-washing during June.

- Saanya Anand
(illustration by Aanya Patra)

QUEER ART AND ITS HISTORY

Emerging from a dark, oppressive and socially unacceptable background, Queer art is widely popularized today. Queer art or LGBTQ+ artworks focus on the experiences/ ideas drawn on gay, lesbian, bisexual etc., imagery. Unlike other art movements, Queer art is unique as it has been shaped by the need to hide queer identities and experiences yet, on the other hand, a desire for visibility. The community reclaimed the word 'Queer' from its homophobic meaning during the 1980s; they felt the word meant abstract or "the spirit of social deviance", as it connotes.

During WW1 and WW2, acceptance could be seen towards queer individuals in artistic, forward-thinking centres like Paris, Berlin and New York. However, artists used codes in their artwork to show the tension and still oppressive culture that forced them to hide and remain covert. Even after America began to decriminalize sodomy, the Hollywood Production code banned sex perversion shown in films until 1968. One major turning point in LGBTQ+ history is the Stonewall riots of 1969, eventually leading to the first pride parade for equality of all sexualities. In the 1980s, the HIV/AIDS epidemic broke out. However, the administration rumoured to have handled the crisis caused by widespread homophobia, leading to countless deaths. This resulted in the iconic poster of "Death=Silence" and the upcoming Gran Fury.



image: brooklynmuseum.org

Then came the episode of reclaiming the word queer from its homophobic meaning. A coalition of a group of Christians spoke out against the government's funding of queer art, saying that money from the National Endowment of Art went towards queer artists. Mapplethorpe's paintings, full of said obscene art was largely criticised and paved the way for a debate leading to US and UK law preventing the government from spending to promote queer art. Ligon, inspired by Mapplethorpe, took on his artworks, feeling Mapplethorpe failed to contextualize his artwork in the broader perspective of racial violence and sexuality. He changed the layout of the book by a bit, allowing the idea to emerge that sex, race and desire are entangled.

The movement developed over the ages with other artists, photographers and ideas coming into play, turning queer art into a huge social movement today.

- Samarth Agarwal

GILBERT BAKER AND HOW HE DESIGNED THE PRIDE FLAG



The Rainbow flag was first made in 1978 by artist Gilbert Baker, born in 1951 who served as a medic in the united states army. He was stationed in San Francisco right when the gay rights movement had begun, and this is where Gilbert Baker’s journey to making the flag began. He had known growing up in Kansas that he was gay, however, he had been told to hide it because, at the time, being attracted to the same sex was forbidden. However, as he joined the army, his fellow soldiers began to catch on to the fact that Gilbert Baker was, in fact, gay. He mentions in a few of the interviews he’s had that he had been sexually abused and subjected to violence because of his homosexuality. This made him realise that others like him must go through the same.

Consequently, he started working as a tailor. He made clothes for gay pride events and anti-war protests, and that is when he realised that there was no sort of a symbol or emblem to represent the gay community, and therefore the stitching of the pride flag began. And hence the flag of gay pride was made when Gilbert Baker hand-dyed 8 colours of the rainbow onto the flag, with each colour representing a purpose and a history behind it. Thus, the rainbow flag represents the diversity between us and how beautiful we all look together in harmony.

On the rainbow flag, Gilbert Baker says, “It fits all of us. It’s all the colours. It represents all genders. It represents all the races. It’s the rainbow of humanity.”

The symbol was well established around 1994; that year was the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. Gilbert created a mile-long version of the flag to commemorate the same.



-Anwita Ganesh

(illustrations by Rohan Jagadeesan)

EVOLUTION OF THE PRIDE FLAG THROUGH THE YEARS

6 STRIPE FLAG



image: flag makers.co.uk

As demand for the rainbow flag greatly increased and Baker ramped up production, he dropped the hot pink stripe because of the unavailability of hot-pink fabric. When hung vertically from the lamp posts, the centre stripe was obscured by the post itself. Changing the flag design to one with an even number of stripes was the easiest way to rectify this, so the turquoise stripe was dropped, which resulted in a six stripe version of the flag.

In June 2018, designer and activist Daniel Quasar released an updated version of the Pride flag. Combining the new elements of the Philadelphia design and the Transgender flag will focus on further inclusion and progress. This new flag added a chevron to the hoist of the traditional 6-colour flag, representing marginalised LGBTQ+ communities of colour, those living with HIV/AIDS and those who've been lost, and trans and non-binary persons.

PROGRESS FLAG



image: flag makers.co.uk

-Ananya Vij

"THE WORLD IS ABOUT TELLING STORIES, I TELL MINE THROUGH FASHION."

in conversation with Mr. Sonam Dubal



image: sonamdubal.com

What exactly attracts us to that one piece of clothing? An article of clothing on the body may seem effortless, but it helps define that person's character. And if the person happens to be one of India's prominent fashion designers, his label is inspired by his personal journey of travelling from the East to the West.

Sonam Dubal, a 1990 NIFT alumnus and founder and head designer of his own clothing label, Sanskar by Sonam Dubal, incorporates a blend of cultures and civilizations into his work. He mixes modern influences and traditional creativity in his designs, choosing the nomadic route to express himself, his Izhaar.

Wanderlust is a prominent theme in his work; travelling inspired him to have an edge, to stand out. *"These days, fashion designers forget the purpose of fashion, and are instead focused on commercializing it."* Even as a young boy, he always knew there was a deeper meaning to life, a search. He was interested in the old and was captivated by history. Despite travelling all over the world, he found his roots in India.



The Nomad story , Autumn-Winter 2009

image: sonamdubal.com

Fashion gave him freedom. It was a space filled with acceptance, non-judgment and individuality. He found himself through fashion. Being experimental, with respect to his sexuality, he highlights the necessity of being comfortable in your own skin. Discovering his sexuality was an intellectual process. "It's essential to be authentic, and your belief in yourself takes a cue for everybody else", he said. He expresses his heritage through fashion, and his sexuality made him who he is. "Each person has to find his or her own space negotiating whatever circumstances you are forced into."

His androgynous clothing line compliments concepts such as acceptance and individuality. He notes that we are in the process of growth and creation; change is taking place for the better. Designers are also testing new boundaries.

Sonam has praise for artists such as Salman Toor and Aamir Rabbani, LGBTQ artists from the subcontinent many may consider niche, but who boldly express themselves.

“The future is going to be diverse and different. While there may be political turbulence, the LGBTQ community in India is growing and is a very interesting moment, it is also liberating itself to create a body of work on its own,” he said.

“Your voice carries the voice of others. The day it becomes ordinary is the day it mends into real life.”



Mr. Dubal at a Pride Parade

It's important find a space to spread you wings, after all,

“If you're not yourself, how will you reach to the next level?”

-Gayatri Batra



” I WONT CURB MY SELF EXPRESSION TO MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF HOW A WOMAN SHOULD LOOK”

Frida Kahlo was a revolutionary artist of her time who was best known for her uncompromising and brilliantly coloured self-portraits that dealt with themes such as identity, the human body, and death. She was an impregnable Mexican woman who had endured several disabilities, including polio as a child and spinal and pelvis damage from a car accident. However, These tragic events did not stop her from emerging as a strong figure of inspiration for the LGBTQIA+ community and bisexual women throughout the world.

Frida Kahlo disregarded the limitations of gender and ideal “love”. She instead let herself be attracted to the creative spirits of both men and women. Her painting *Two Nudes in a Forest* clearly shows her attraction and love of women. In her paintings, Frida would often exaggerate her unibrow and moustache, playing with the duality of masculine and feminine and lending her an androgynous appearance.

She had an open opinion about sexualities and gender which made her an inspiration for many individuals. She was often criticised for how she portrayed herself in her self portraits. She, however, disregarded these comments and commented, *“I won't curb my self-expression to meet your expectations of how a woman should look.”* Her open-mindedness and positive opinions on identity and gender made her an aspiring figure within and outside art.

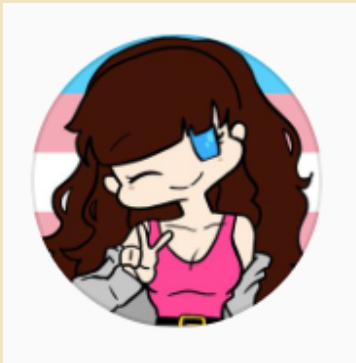


image: theguardian.com

This shows how just one person can make a difference and splash bright paints on the dark canvases of an individual's lives when their surrounding people make their identities feel unjustified.

-Priyanshi Bagga
(illustration by Rushil Yadav)

TRANSDIARIES BY MAVIS

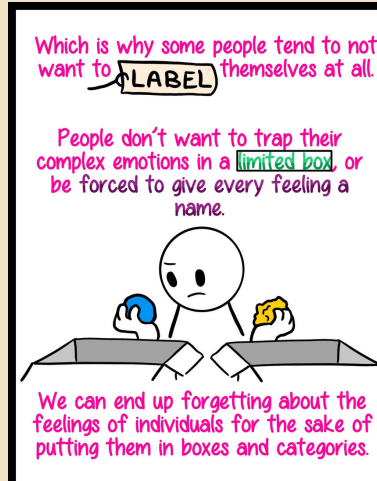


Transdiaries is an online comic run by a 15-year-old proud transgender girl, Mavis, a grade 11 student at SNSG. Through this comic, she aims to provide transgender individuals and other members of the LGBTQIA+ community with a safe space to relate and have their experiences heard, as well as provide non-members with a platform where they can educate themselves and learn how to become better allies to the community.

"LABELS"

source: instagram
(@_transdiaries_)

https://www.instagram.com/_transdiaries/





CLUB MEETING REPORTS

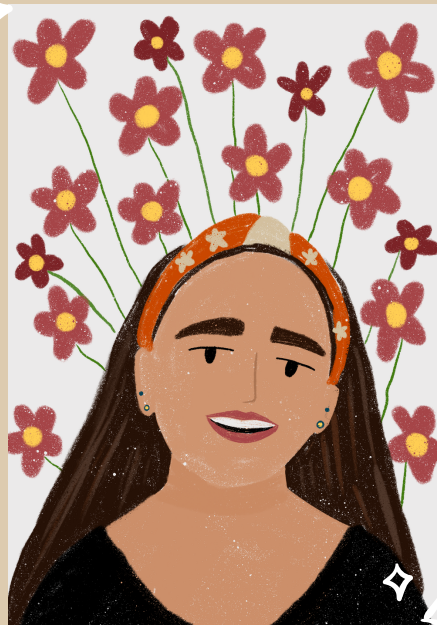
JUNE 4TH: CREATIVE SELF PORTRAITS INSPIRED BY FRIDA KAHLO

On June 4th Izhaar conducted the first meeting for the month of June. Going with the theme of pride month, everyone shared their views on the LGBTQIA+ community. The discussion then moved onto artists that were a part of this community. The artist discussed has been a role model to generations of artists, an icon for female independence and a strong bisexual woman. Frida Kahlo is widely known for her self portraits, but they represent much more than the world around her. They represented her feelings of pain, passion, love and loss. Her art was an unapologetically true representation of her. Learning from this, the artists created their own self-portraits; they were told to explore different styles and let their imaginations run wild. Everyone created something beautiful; some represented the artist's feelings, while others were eccentric and creative. All in all, this session was a great experience for artist's to unlock their brain and rediscover what their art could represent.

- Parina Jain



Aarohi Ghosh
Grade 8



Khushi Soni
Grade 11



Anshuman Jhunjunwala
Grade 11

JUNE 18TH - MONOCHROMATIC B&W PHOTOGRAPHY

INSPIRED BY ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE

Contributing members of Izhaar met on 18th June to create some beautiful art for pride month. Drawing inspiration from Robert Mapplethorpe, a homosexual American photographer, best known for his black and white photography. He created self-portraits, celebrity portraits and pictures of other male and female subjects. Drawing inspiration from his style of art, members created monochromatic portraits. Monochromatic art is created using the tints and shades of one colour to create. Before starting with their work, members were taught the basics of drawing facial features. In addition, they were taught about the proportion of a face, shading the eyes, nose and hair. The artists were incredibly creative with their drawings. Some recreated their childhood photographs, while others created portraits in anime form. All artists displayed incredible skill, paid much attention to detail and created some beautiful pieces.

- Parina Jain



Tanzil Gupta
Grade 7



Tara Rao
Grade 9



Aarav Singh
Grade 6



Tara Rao
Grade 9

JUNE 25TH - BRIGHT AND BOLD LANDSCAPES INSPIRED BY DAVID HOCKNEY

After having the past two sessions on portraits, we decided to switch it up a bit and try our hands at landscapes, specifically landscapes inspired from English painter, stage designer, and photographer David Hockney, an important contributor to the Pop Art Movement of the 1990s. Some major components of his work that we observed were bright bold colours and greenery, which we tried to implement in our pieces as well. Then, we discussed terms like perspective, horizon, skyline and the three components of the piece- foreground, mid ground and background to understand how to sketch the outline of the landscape. Afterwards, we sketched all the elements individually and after a couple of practice sketches, we were able to put them together to create beautiful landscapes as displayed below.

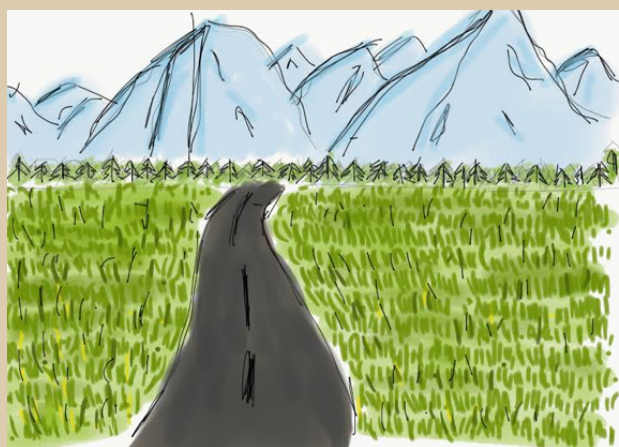
- Ananya Vij



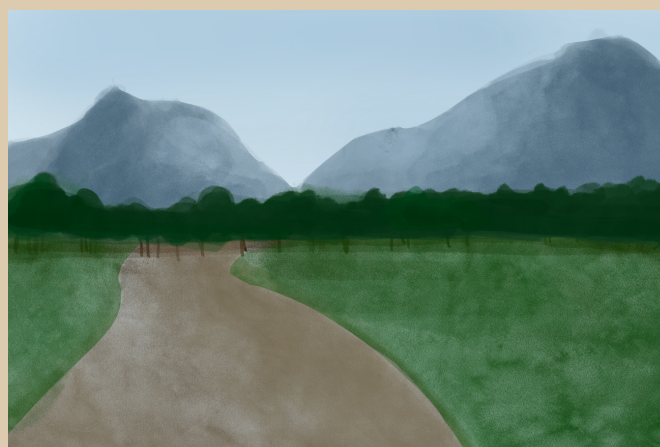
Ruhaan Jaggi
Grade 6



Tanzil Gupta
Grade 7



Keerat kaur
Grade 7



Khushi Soni
Grade 11

POSTER DESIGN COMPETITION RESULTS!

Contributing members of Izhaar were given links to 3 NGOs that supported the LGBTQIA+ community and were asked to make a poster based on the work they do and what they stood for. The following designs have been chosen keeping in mind the above and how creatively they have presented the same! Following are the links of the websites for reference:

1. The Humsafar Trust
2. Nazariya
3. Naz



Tara Rao
Grade



Pratyaksha Agarwal
Grade

CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH THE WINNERS!

How To Be Allies

tips & suggestions

from members of the
LGBTQIA+ themselves

being an ally isn't just not being queerphobic. it's actively taking steps for the betterment of the community

ask questions (respectfully) if a person is open to answering and always keep educating yourself to be a better ally

don't use the word gay as an insult, even around straight people, as you never know who's in the closet, it'll just demotivate them to come out further. Besides, being gay isn't even an insult

as an ally, your goal should be to amplify voices of the members of the LGBTQ+ community, not speak over or on behalf of them

use our preferred pronouns and don't be insensitive about it

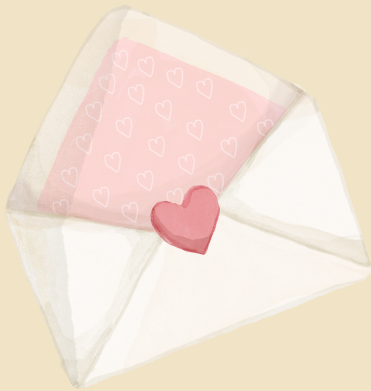
instead of just posting posts on social media, talking to your friends, family and relatives who aren't acquainted with the LGBTQ+ community or are homophobic. Changing their mindsets can make a MUCH better difference. also stand up to your friends who make homophobic jokes

don't treat us differently when we come out. i've seen people become awkward and closed off in front of LGBTQ+ members as they're afraid to offend them, which makes us feel excluded. instead just do your research and talk to us like you would to anyone else

respect our privacy. coming out is hard for most, and we might be overwhelmed to talk about it at first. once you make them feel appreciated and accepted, they'll automatically open up :)



GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY!



izhaar.sns@gmail.com

mail all your submissions for monthly prompts & competitions here!



[@izhaar.sns](https://www.instagram.com/izhaar.sns)

follow us for regular updates regarding workshops, themes, events and much more!