



Rainbow
Cities
Network

*PROUDLY
PRESENTS*

LESBIAN VISIBILITY

2020

*AN
INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION*

THE RCN EXHIBITION "LESBIAN VISIBILITY"

The Rainbow Cities Network (RCN), which today includes more than 30 cities, was established in 2013 on occasion of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) in The Hague.

The network members aim to discuss local approaches in equality and anti-discrimination work for LGBTIQ persons, to learn from each other, and to develop joint strategies to sustainably eliminate discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer individuals, as well as to promote equal rights and participation for LGBTIQ persons in all areas of society.

As a joint project, the Rainbow Cities are organising a photo exhibition on "Lesbian Visibility" to mark IDAHOT on 17 May 2020. The sixteen participating cities contribute one photo each to this international exhibition.

Individual movements to promote minority and human rights as well as queer initiatives have a different history in every country and every city, but there are three aspects they all have in common:

Firstly, they were formed as a reaction to severe grievances – to persecution, repression, discrimination, individual and collective suffering.

Secondly, they obviously did not just come out of the blue, but were usually launched by a small number of committed individuals, who made allies and found ways to highlight these grievances in society. They had the courage to

fight for a better society, and often did so at their own disadvantage.

Thirdly, the individual movements cannot be regarded as separate from each other, or even opposed to each other. Every liberation movement essentially builds upon and reinforces all previous and parallel human rights movements. The present exhibition focuses on Lesbian Visibility, highlighting a topic that our patriarchal society is often reluctant to see: love between women.

What does it mean to be lesbian? Is it an identity, or a relationship between women? A private matter, or part of the women's movement? Is it feminist? Is it a concept? Part of the LGBTIQ movement? Is it queer? Is it part of the city, politics, society, the community? Is it a task and cross-sectional challenge for a modern city? – Yes, it is.

Being lesbian is what it is – let's make it visible!



Wolfgang Wilhelm, Vienna
Curator of the exhibition

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NO. 1, VIENNA



THE VIENNA TRAFFIC LIGHT COUPLES

by Florian Wibmer, City of Vienna-WASt

Vienna is a city of diversity and human rights – a rainbow city. In spring 2015, marking the Eurovision Song Contest and the Vienna Life Ball, the City of Vienna decided to replace the little red and green men on some pedestrian lights with couples, which came in three varieties: straight, lesbian and gay.

In addition to celebrating queer diversity, the Traffic Light Couples also enhance traffic safety because the light-emitting surface is 40 % larger than on conventional pedestrian lights in Vienna. Starting from the Austrian capital, the queer Traffic Light Couples have since made their way to several other European cities.

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NO. 2, MEXICO CITY



THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE, IT IS LOVE

by Karina Buendía Monroy

Every person should enjoy their rights and freedoms without any discrimination.

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NO. 3, LEUVEN



LABYRINT LADIES HAVING A SUNNY PHOTO SHOOT - #STAYHOME

by Karin Van de Velde

Labyrinth is an open-minded and very accessible association for lesbian and bisexual women in Leuven and further for more than 30 years already. Women of all ages join in. Activities range from sports, political actions, walking, talking, having fun and sharing experiences discrimination.

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NO. 4, COLOGNE



SISTER CITIES STAND TOGETHER AT DYKE* MARCH COLOGNE

by Susanne Bonnemann

Since 2015 DYKE* MARCH COLOGNE has stood up for more lesbian visibility and more diversity at the annual Cologne Pride event. In 2019 the march attracted about 3500 participants - including those who identify as "dykes", e.g. lesbians, bisexual or queer women (cis and trans), as well as other transgender, intersexual or queer supporters. This photo, taken on 07 July 2018, shows lesbian and queer activists from Cologne (Germany), Istanbul (Turkey), Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Katowice (Poland), Cluj (Romania) and Tunis (Tunisia) - five of Cologne's 22 sister cities.

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NO. 5, GENEVA



DECADES OF FIGHTING FOR LESBIAN VISIBILITY

by Anna Pizzolante, City of Geneva

In the early seventies in Geneva, many lesbians were involved in the Women's Liberation Movement. Publishing a leaflet entitled "Straights, we are sorry to annoy you!" they denounced the lack of solidarity with homosexual women within the organization. This first emancipation step led in 1982 to the exclusively-lesbian international march in Geneva. In 2003, filmmaker Carole Roussopoulos produced *Who's Afraid of the Amazons?* documenting decades of lesbians fighting for representation. In 2019, the City of Geneva held an exhibition commemorating the rich local LGBTIQ+ history and honoring, among others, the pioneers of lesbian rights.

NO. 6, ZURICH



30 YEARS OF LOS – LESBIAN ORGANIZATION SWITZERLAND

by Sabine Wunderlin

In November 2019, around 100 women celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Lesbian Organization Switzerland LOS, the Swiss umbrella organization for lesbian, bisexual and queer women, in a splendid party. All the Tickets were sold out, the lucky ladies posed in a group photo. LOS works to ensure that women-loving women in Switzerland are visible and have equal rights.

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NO. 8, MUNICH



LEZ BE #VISIBLESBIANS

by Lizzy Mödl (collage and production) and Frank Zuber (concept, design and photography)

LEZ is Munich's soon to be opened cultural center for lesbians and queer people. LEZ is going to be a wonderful place for lesbian women from all walks of life and different cultural backgrounds to connect, socialize, get creative and share their experience. We bow to all women who are currently helping to build this new center, which is going to be a very important step towards more visibility and appreciation of lesbians in Munich – hashtag proudykes hashtag visiblesbians. We love you!

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NO. 9, NUREMBERG



LESBIANS – ARE EVERYWHERE

by Norbert Kiesewetter, Gaycon

Lesbians are everywhere. They could be teachers, parents, gay, queer, single, families, police-wo*men, students, nurses, doctors, managers and usually activists just because for being lesbians. Nuermberg is proud, hosting the dyke march and stand together for lesbian visability, every day, everywhere.

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NO. 10, LJUBLJANA



OUR STREET

by Matej & Katarina Weddings

Klara and Maša: "Just married we get on the streets of Ljubljana when we see a passing same-sex couple who draws an even bigger smile on our face. We walk around beautiful Ljubljana, hand in hand, in our love bubble, and we didn't care for all the passing street views. On our most beautiful day we also took a walk along our favorite street in Ljubljana."

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NO. 11, MANNHEIM



GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN

by City of Mannheim/ Alexander Kästel

Like in this picture of the CSD Rhine-Neckar 2018 celebrated in Mannheim, women* have been an important, formative and indispensable part of the queer community since the beginning. The visibility of women* in the queer community is a major concern of the City of Mannheim, which encouraged the foundation of the network "Queere Frauen* im Quadrat Mannheim" in February 2019. It aims to support existing initiatives and associations to network and work together on concrete projects.

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NO. 12, HAMBURG



COME AS YOU ARE! BE OUT AND PROUD!

by Gila Rosenberg

Young Lesbian*s! We are more than you think.

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NO. 13, BRUSSELS



LESBIAN AND QUEER CREW FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCES AGAINST WOMEN. L-FESTIVAL BRUSSELS 2019.

by Daniela Castro

Every year in Brussels, the Lesbian and Queer Crew organized by the L-Festival, a lesbian, bi, trans and feminist festival, joins the big March for Elimination of Violence Against Women. Every year we take the streets to share inclusive, queer and feminist slogans, and to gather our communities.

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NO. 14, BERLIN



1st BERLIN AWARD FOR LESBIAN* VISIBILITY 2018

by Luca Caratozzolo

In 2018 Berlin awarded its first ever prize for lesbian* visibility. The prize, at a value of €5,000, is awarded every two years by the senator in charge of LGBTI issues, to a person or group of lesbian* identified people for their contribution to lesbian* visibility and lesbian* life in the rainbow city of Berlin.

The * is to signify that 'lesbian' is defined irrespective of the gender assigned at birth and it highlights intersectional dimensions.

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NO. 15, HANOVER



DYKE* MARCH HANNOVER – DEMONSTRATION FOR LESBIAN VISIBILITY

by Jana Thiessen

Language can exclude groups, even while claiming to include them. So the City of Hannover updated its official documents regulations in order to address all genders explicitly. This idea also applies to sexual identity and orientation, as a lot of communication in German refers to “the gay community” only. This results in the public erasure of certain groups such as women* who identify as lesbian. To give them a voice and a face, the group “Lesbians in Hannover” is currently organizing the Dyke* March: a demonstration on behalf of the rights, visibility and support of a diverse lesbian identity.

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NO. 16, SÃO PAULO



LOVE IS LOVE

by Jaime Oide

As part of its public policy for visibility and affirmation of LGBTI rights, the City of São Paulo organizes the “Equal Collective Wedding” annually. In 2018, during the event, among other couples celebrating the right to officially register their marriage, Maria Tereza Perez and Vania Sala Lorençato were photographed in a moment of joy and love, which symbolizes the connection and commitment of two lives. Their vows were registered in a public ceremony, which aims to democratize the access of this population, which historically has been put on the margins of society, to rights already guaranteed.

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LIST OF REFERENCES

No. 1, Vienna: „The Vienna Traffic Light Couples“ by Florian Wibmer,
City of Vienna-WASSt

No. 2, Mexico City: „There is no difference, it is love“ by Karina Buendía Monroy

No. 3, Leuven: „Labyrinth ladies having a sunny photo shoot - #stayhome“
by Karin Van de Velde

No. 4, Cologne: „‘Sister Cities Stand Together‘ at DYKE* MARCH COLOGNE“
by Susanne Bonnemann

No. 5, Geneva: „Decades of fighting for lesbian visibility“ by Anna Pizzolante,
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No. 6, Zurich: „30 Years of LOS – Lesbian Organization Switzerland“
by Sabine Wunderlin

No. 7, Rotterdam: „Spread your Wings“ by Daniëlle van der Veecken

No. 8, Munich: „LEZ BE #VISIBLESBIANS“ by Lizzy Mödl and Frank Zuber

No. 9, Nuremberg: „Lesbians – are everywhere“ by Norbert Kiesewetter, Gaycon

No. 10, Ljubljana: „Our Street“ by Matej & Katarina Weddings

No. 11, Mannheim: „Girls Just Wanna Have Fun“ by City of Mannheim/
Alexander Kästel

No. 12, Hamburg: „Come as you are! Be out and proud!“ by Gila Rosenberg

No. 13, Brussels: „L-Festival Brussels 2019“ by Daniela Castro

No. 14, Berlin: „1st Berlin Award for Lesbian* Visibility 2018“
by Luca Caratozzolo

No. 15, Hanover: „Dyke* March Hannover – Demonstration for Lesbian Visibility“
by Jana Thiessen

No. 16, São Paulo: „Love is Love.“ by Jaime Oide

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