

Marin Pride: Upcoming events celebrate LGBTQIA+ community

By Isabella Cook | Jun 6, 2023



IMAGE One of the concepts behind Brian Van Camerik's 'Homosocial' is to showcase intimate works that represent the LGBTQIA+ community throughout various eras. Photo courtesy of Sausalito Center for the Arts

June is here, which means it's time to break out those rainbow flags and loudly and proudly declare support for the lesbian, gay, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and otherwise members of the community.

Though Marin, the greater Bay Area and much of the state of California are historically known for being at the very forefront of acceptance and advocating for

the legal and social advancement of the LGBTQIA+ community, there's always room for improvement—and, in the case of this year's pride-packed month of June, improvement could very well refer to Sausalito's plan to unveil the first-ever citywide collaborative celebration of all things pride.

“Marin has always been very openly supportive of the LGBTQIA+ community,” said co-executive director for the Sausalito Center for the Arts (SCA), Louis Briones. “Obviously, it's a liberal county surrounded by liberal cities, so I think in general Marin is very open to the LGBTQIA+ community, and I don't suspect we'll get a lot of pushback from people who are not in favor of pride.”

“Sausalito has always been very open as well,” continued Briones. “Possibly due to the prevalent artist community that has been established here since the '20s and '30s—it just seems like a logical, inviting and supportive place.”

SCA is set to kick off Sausalito's month of celebration with their “Pride Not Prejudice” exhibition, where two separate exhibits will come together to highlight the June-wide spirit of pride. The first exhibit showcases Brian Van Camerik's project entitled “Homosocial.” The concept behind “Homosocial” is to display an intimate, endearing and ever-growing body of photos, artwork, media and more, all of which represent the LGBTQIA+ community throughout various vintage eras.

“Brian is a very deliberate artist, and ‘Homosocial’ is a project that celebrates

queer culture and is, at its core, a collection of vintage couples displaying a sense of intimacy, and there's multiple pieces to the collection," said Briones. "['Homosocial'] really is a true exhibit, very thought provoking. We saw that as something that would be educational and would have a lot of interest given Pride Month."

Alongside Van Camerik's "Homosocial" exhibit, SCA will showcase a gallery featuring the work of over 28 LGBTQIA+ artists from across California. The show was curated by Charlie Barboni and will feature works from notable artists such as Ajuan Mance, Clark Mitchell, Hunter Harvey, Shae Rocco, Wendy Franklin, Joseph Abbati and more.

"The exhibits are going to be divided," explained Briones. "We're setting up 'Homosocial' in a type of discovery space where there will be an entrance and you'll kind of meander around to the displayed art panels. There will be a clear path to it, and it will invite you to enter and explore, whereas the gallery portion will be set up in a more traditional layout."

The "Pride Not Prejudice" double-exhibit exhibition will be open to the public from Friday, June 9 to Tuesday, July 4— opening night will take place as a free and open-to-the-public celebratory reception with artists and allies alike in attendance. This event promises a chance to meet and speak with the artists, listen to live jazz and sip on light refreshments, all while getting a glimpse into the future with tarot card readings. Donations are welcome in lieu of an entrance fee.

Alongside the “Pride Not Prejudice” exhibitions, Sausalito is set on providing other opportunities for safe, celebratory spaces for the local LGBTQIA+ community to gather with allies during the month of June. The city has, in that spirit, developed a partnership with the Spahr Center, Marin’s own LGBTQ+ and HIV nonprofit support group.

“When we were coming up with the idea of creating a citywide nonprofit event for Pride Month, the Spahr Center was an obvious inclusion, as they do have some amazing resources and are right here in Marin and highly respected,” said Briones.

“If you look at the partners for this Sausalito Pride Month, you’ll see it’s the city itself,” continued Briones. “The mayor, the council, the chamber of commerce, Spahr Center, small businesses — the whole city is getting behind it!”

True to Briones’ description of the coming month, Sausalito’s June calendar is jam-packed with the following pride-themed festivities that will take place in tandem with SC’s “Pride Not Prejudice” exhibition:

From 2 to 5pm on Saturday, June 17, seafaring supporters of pride are welcome aboard the LGBTQ+ Pride Sail on the *Matthew Turner*.

From 5:30 to 7:30pm on Wednesday, June 21, a free-to-attend author discussion and film screening event will be held at Sausalito Books by the Bay, highlighting author and single father Bill W. Jones. The event will offer an opportunity for dialogue on Jones’ book, *Bachelor Father: The First Single Man to Legally Adopt a*

Child in America, as well as a screening of *A Family of My Own—The Bill Jones Story* documentary.

From 5 to 7pm on Thursday, June 22, Caledonia Street Pride Happy Hour celebrations will honor pride and the people who comprise it together as a community with food, family and friends.

Sausalito will also play host to Pride Night at Jazz and Blues by the Bay from 6:30 to 8 on Friday, June 30. Everyone is invited to come out and celebrate at this pride-themed evening of entertainment in the continuing City of Sausalito's summer music series.

And, though the Night in Drag: A Glam Entertainment Evening event at Gene Hiller Menswear just barely misses the Pride Month marker with its 6:30 to 8:30pm show on Saturday, July 1, it most certainly makes up for the delay by being the epitome of the term, "fashionably late."

Other Marin-based Pride Month celebrations include the CAFILM *Pride—A Celebration of LGBTQIA+ Creativity in Cinema* at the Rafael, the Mill Valley Library's Drag Queen Story Hour and Marin County's Queer Prom (to name only a few).

"We definitely invite families and all ages to see the 'Pride Not Prejudice' exhibitions," said Briones. "It's interesting, when you start putting together an art show that is comprised of LGBTQIA+ artists, because some people automatically jump to homoerotic imagery and nudes, but that's a

stereotype, and one we're aiming to address through this exhibition.”

For more information about the SCA's 'Pride Not Prejudice' exhibition, visit the website at sausalitocenterforthearts.org. To learn more about Sausalito Pride Month and its events across the city, visit sausalitopride.org. Additionally, information pertaining to the Spahr Center is available on the website, which may be found at thespahrcenter.org.