



LGBTQ+ History Blog

Q & A and Poetry performance with Felix Mufti– 04/02/2021

GYRO's LGBTQ+ History Month project continued with a banging performance of self-written activist poetry by established creative, performer and founder of Transcend Theatre Company Felix Mufti.

Felix is equally at home on the steps of St. George's Hall with a megaphone as he is on stage with his often intimate performances.

To say that Felix inspired us at GYRO would be an understatement! He even has us thinking about writing our own poetry and we hope to work with him again in the future to get the creativity and activism flowing in GYRO.

Big thanks to GYRO members, Kieron, Sophie and Billie who conducted the interview and made Felix feel so relaxed and welcome in to our little (virtual) home for the evening!!

Again, for your pleasure, below is an abridged transcript of the interview for you to enjoy and hopefully be inspired by.

Kieron: If you could make one positive change in the world, what would it be?

Felix: For everyone to be able to go to the toilet in peace and not have to worry!

Please can we write to MPs to make sure that gender-neutral toilets are always on the agenda?

Kieron: In what ways did attending GYRO or The Action Youth influence your activism?

Felix: I was involved in a project called 'For today I am' with Danny from Thinking Film. The project was making videos for schools and professionals to educate them on the issues affecting transgender young people. That started it all for me. It brought out my love of activism and public speaking. I felt seen and heard, and it was cool too.

Now I have had so many opportunities from that, working with Sophie Green and Roger Hill. In addition, GYRO and activism has given me a community around me, a support system and

that has helped me find my voice. I owe a lot to GYRO, I do not know where I would be without the support I have received from them.

Sophie: How did you come to use poetry as a form of activism?

Felix: What people do not realize about poetry is it can be anything you want it to be. Poetry gets a bad rep especially when your scouse, transgender whatever. Poetry does not need a big budget you can just do it, I have always enjoyed writing songs, rhyme schemes and creative writing, it helps me write speeches. The Liverpool poetry collective are great to help you get started and to get involved in.

Where can we access your poetry? – I post on my Instagram a lot, I have a museum commission coming out on 5th Feb, LGBT hub national museums website. I'm also on YouTube.

Sophie: What is the best thing you have done in lockdown?

Felix: Lockdown has been difficult but I have been able to connect with people from all around the world, and get organized. I coordinated the protest for the GRA. Interviewed people from all over the world for international trans youth day.

Lockdown has also helped me to get to know my family better!

Billie: What do you do when you need inspiration for poetry?

Felix: I have ADHD and my writing process can be chaotic. I have a lot of energy but it is hard to hone it in sometimes. I have to be inspired by things around me, a raindrop, a tweet, anything can get me going.

When I get commissions, I think about an organization and tend to focus on what they do wrong so that they can change. Public issues like Black Lives Matter and transphobia inspire me to write and get involved in activism. I use my poetry as a way to tackle areas that need improving.

Billie: What item are you going to put in to our time capsule as a message of hope to future LGBT+ young people?

Felix: I have cheated here a little bit and am going to out a few items in! These are Polaroid pics that I have taken over the past few years. My Polaroids represent the people and the small moments in life that before lockdown I took for granted. For example: I've had difficulties with family in the past, and lockdown has given me an opportunity to get to know my family, get to know them better. It's a struggle when the people who bring you into the world can't accept who you are – but when they do, it's a beautiful thing.



Note: The theme of LGBT+ History Month is Body, Mind and Spirit and GYRO, in partnership with National Museums Liverpool are putting together a digital time capsule for LGBT+ young people of the future that will share positive messages of hope for their physical and mental health.

Felix received so many positive comments from the young people who attended his poetry reading that he had this to say afterwards:

Hey GYRO!!!

I am genuinely so touched by all the lovely comments, my heart has absolutely melted. Thank you so much for the opportunity.