

# Pride Suite

by Geoff Schneider (2024)

**Objective:** To create (possibly) the first-ever jazz suite to address LGBTQIA+ rights/daily life in modern day America in eight movements; each in correspondence to the Pride flag's stripes' reinvented meanings (my interpretation of their representation in today's world).

*"The role of the artist is exactly the same as the role of the lover. If I love you, I have to make you conscious of the things you don't see."*

- James Baldwin

## Welcoming Committee (Yellow - Community)

One of the most beautiful things about the queer community is its welcoming nature. Its ability to accept who you are, who you love, and support all that you are, are traits I think the rest of the world's populations can learn from. You don't have to be queer to receive said support and love either; it is a love for all who can demonstrate love and basic human kindness in return.

When I arrived at BGSU, I decided I wasn't going to make any friendships unless I could express who I was. In my undergrad, close friends knew, but it was a part of me I kept hidden out of fear of loss. Loss of family, professional opportunities, rapport, etc. Fortunately, BGSU made it easy. No one batted an eye if I said I was bisexual - faculty or students alike.

When I first came out (publicly) on New Year's Day of 2023, again, I was met with such love and kindness in the form of private messages (paragraphs long), phone calls, texts, personal conversations, hugs, the list goes on. It was a welcoming committee of the highest. Thank you for continuing to be a welcoming committee, not only for me but for all those who need it.

## "Oh Hi, Gay!" (Green - Greed)

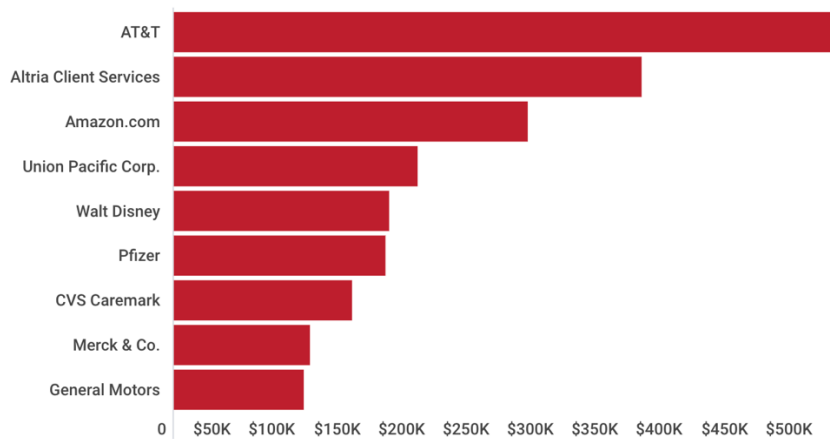
Every June during Pride Month, we see it - the storefront pride flag, new rainbow, "yasified" merchandise sales of our favorite stores, posts about internal/external initiatives, "celebrating" their queer employees, new commercials - expressing how their products play a part of queer lives - all, only to disappear on July 1<sup>st</sup> - this is Rainbow Capitalism.

*"As of June 1 [2023], 323 companies had signed onto the petition "stating their clear opposition to harmful legislation aimed at restricting the access of LGBTQ people in society." But over 50 of those companies or their corporate PACs have contributed more than \$2.4 million since January 2020 to state legislators who*

played a key role in passing bills deemed anti-LGBTQ+ by the [American Civil Liberties Union](#), OpenSecrets' analysis of state campaign finance disclosures found. That year, Idaho [kicked off](#) a wave of legislation aimed at keeping transgender athletes out of sports.

**Nine companies account for 83% of contributions to state lawmakers that played a key role in passing bills deemed anti-LGBTQ+ by the ACLU**

Since January 2020, nine companies that signed the HRC petition each steered at least \$100,000 — through corporate PACs or treasury funds — to lawmakers who sponsored or signed anti-LGBTQ+ legislation this year.



Source: OpenSecrets analysis of state-level campaign finance data since the 2020 election cycle and ACLU 2023 anti-LGBT legislation tracker.



## Plea for Humanity (Blue - Hope)

The impetus for this tune was not a happy one. It was written as an outlet for my emotions after my boyfriend and I were harassed by a group of young teens in a shopping center in Indiana; saying they hated gays, that we were disgusting abominations, that their families also wished we would be eradicated, etc. until we left. All we were doing was sitting and enjoying ice cream on a bench.

For this to be the attitude so abhorrently present in young kid's minds is terrifying. Influence of intolerant surroundings, misogynistic/homophobic influencers (like Andrew Tate, Matt Rife, Dave Chapelle, etc.), and of the extreme right-wing conservatives of this country have taken control of some of our younger population. How can we grow if that seed is already planted? What discussions can we hope to have?

My plea for humanity is simply that we can learn to love and accept without question, learn to keep our hands and thoughts to ourselves, treat everyone with the same dignity and respect we'd want for ourselves. What's yours?

*"Hope will never be silent." – Harvey Milk*

### **Sun-Kissed Beauty (Orange - Warmth)**

Experiencing love can be such a beautiful thing. Most of us can recall our feelings of finding our "first love," whether it be in a relationship or hobby or any aspect of life. After multiple heterosexual relationships and finally coming out as bisexual, finding my first queer love was incredible. It was like the first time I experienced love all over again and then some. I finally felt complete.

This tune is all about that feeling and any feeling in life that just makes your soul feel like dancing/vibing/whatever you want to call it. That love you feel, is your love and no one can say anything about it.

### **Heart's Wisdom (Red - Sacrifice/Coming Out)**

This tune is about a few things: trusting your initial feelings/intuitions, a heart through trauma/love/American chaos, and knowing the hard choices are sometimes the best ones (i.e., for me, coming out) among other things. The story I feel I was writing about subconsciously and then realizing in post was this:

*A "decision" presents itself in the **A section** where it expands upon its own rumination. It finally breaks into honeymoon ideals of splendor, peace, prosperity, love, and happiness within the spacious **B section** until anxiety kicks in (**Interlude**). Chaos barges through the door and leaves its mark while your heart beats strongly until it subsides and feels prepared to continue. The conflict of emotion/experience finds new light within the **C section** - the make-or-break moment before freedom, posing a question initially of "is this the right decision." Later we see the **Coda** affirming that we will experience this again and again in new lights. All we can say is "I'm ready" (C^7).*

### **Pulpit 46' (Violet - Religion/Politics)**

This movement calls to attention the ongoing issue of Christian Nationalism in this country. Believing in your religion is one thing, but demanding the subjugation of other to your own is wrong. It is the same attitude that led the Nazi's to power in WWII and enable them to argue such atrocities against humanity through religion.

Religion tends to be brought up quite a lot in Congress to argue legislation - and more recently, post-Roe v. Wade policy and anti-LGBTQIA+, specifically, anti-Trans legislation. This perversion/corruption of Christianity to fit their campaign agendas has been noticed and decried by Christian families and environments across the country as well causing dissonance within the Church itself.

## **Senselessness (in memoriam) (Trans/BIPOC+/LGBTQIA+)**

This past year, we saw an immense uptick in violence and hateful rhetoric towards the LGBTQIA+ community resulting in deaths and injuries of many, with Transgender, Non-Binary, and BIPOC+ communities being affected at a disproportionate rate; not to mention, the uptick in suicide rates amongst queer people of all ages (HRC). When will the senselessness of violence and harmful legislation end in this country/the world?

## **Harbingers of Change (Progress)**

Last year, we saw 510 anti-LGBTQIA+ laws/bills proposed on house floors across the country and Congress (ACLU). As of today, 2024 has seen 429 proposals so far (ACLU) and it's only mid-February. We're tired of being in the dark, treated like second class citizens like so many other minority groups in America. We have to work together and learn to love and appreciate one another to get through this. Tolerance is not enough. Thoughts and prayers are not enough. Empty promises of institutions are not enough. Human rights should not be a matter of political policy anywhere. Let's celebrate the progress we've made, but acknowledge the work is far from over.

*"History isn't something you look back at and say it was inevitable. It happens because people make decisions that are sometimes very impulsive and of the moment, but those moments are cumulative realities."* – Marsha P. Johnson

*"We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers."* – Bayard Rustin

## **Sources**

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