



# Pride – celebration or protest?

Pride events today are often seen as a celebration of LGBTIQ+ lives and of cultural and legal achievements. Their history can be traced back to anti-oppression activism and protests which followed the Stonewall riots in New York in 1969. The largest transgender memorial in America is a 2100 square foot mural, designed and painted by Brian Kenny in Dallas. It honours Trans women of colour Marsha P Johnson (1945-1992) and Sylvia Rivera (1951-2002), two of the pivotal figures in the riots and the activism that preceded and followed it.

For many people, Pride events are still an opportunity for voicing concerns about discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people. Recently, parts of the community have been organising alternative Prides, in reaction to the feeling that not everyone in the LGBTIQ+ communities feel welcome at all Pride events.

The gatekeeping that has traditionally happened around pride organisation and activism is being challenged by the formation of these prides.



## Oxford Pride

In 2002 at a Spring bank holiday celebration of the Queen's golden jubilee, the Jolly Farmers and Castle Tavern held a street party on Paradise Street. Because of the fantastic turn out, it planted the idea that Oxford needed its own Pride event. Oxford Pride Group Ltd was founded in 2003 and saw its 1st first pPride event on Saturday 3rd May in Oxpens Field. The event moved from May to July in 2005 with the 1st first parade in 2008. In 2009, the date was moved to early June to accommodate the city's, university's and incorporated festival events. Charity status was awarded in 2012 and the festival, parade and event day continue to grow year upon year. with the The June 2019 event being hosted by The Castle Quarter and the Westgate shopping centre in June 2019.

## Zayna Ratty

Chair of OxFriend, Oxfordshire's LGBTIQ+ mental health charity OxFriend, Hypno-Psychotherapist, trainer, speaker and consultant. Stonewall Role Model and shortlisted nominee for LGBT Positive Role Model at National Diversity Awards 2019. Zayna became the 1st PoC (Person of Colour) female Chair of Oxford Pride in June 2019., with the theme of DiverseCity The theme of Oxford Pride 2020 will be DiverseCity, with the parade day on 30th May 2020.

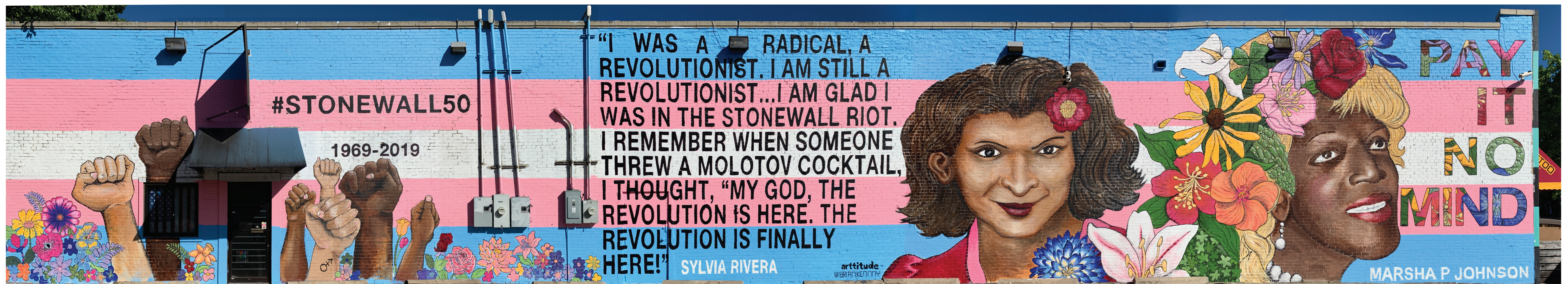
*"I want to focus on inclusion and diversity, mental health, welcoming marginalised communities, along with acknowledging the intersectionality of systemic discrimination."*

## UK Black Pride

UK Black Pride began in 2005 as a day trip to Southend-on-Sea by members of the online social network Black Lesbians in the UK (BLUK). By 2019 over 10,000 attended UK Black Pride in London. UK Black Pride is Europe's largest celebration for LGBTQ people of African, Asian, Caribbean, Middle Eastern and Latin American descent. They promote unity and cooperation among LGBTQ people of diasporic communities in the UK, as well as their friends and families.

## Bi Pride

The inaugural Bi-Pride will take place on 7 Sept 2019 in London. Its importance for commonly marginalised groups should not be understated. *"We believe that people who experience attraction beyond gender deserve to be able to celebrate their identities publicly, visibly and proudly in all spaces without fear of ridicule, erasure or harassment."* Safe inclusive spaces for all is vitally important and the growth in prides demonstrates there need to exist.



A 2100 square foot mural, honoring Trans women of color Marsha P Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, key figures in the Queer Liberation Movement, present at the Stonewall Riots. Designed and painted in Dallas by Brian Kenny.

Photo courtesy of Brian Kenny.

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