Films, Hikes and Food

Lately, there's been a lot of interest expressed in GBF in providing opportunities for the Sangha to do things socially. In light of this, GBF will start, in March, a monthly outing to see a movie. The movie, meeting place, and time will be announced in the GBF newsletter. Movies selected may be interesting-sounding, mainstream movies, or lesser known "films". They may strive to be enlightening or just escapists (hopefully, we'll avoid the more violent and stupid outpourings from Hollywood). The movie selected for March 13 is the 7:45 pm showing of "Kundun" at the Regency 1 Theater on Sutter and Van Ness in San Francisco. We will meet at 6:00 at Tommy's Joynt (a restaurant/bar) on Van Ness and Geary, and head over to the theater about an hour later.

GBF will also be leading hikes every other month, provided the Bay Area ever gets another sunny Day. The next hike will be in April: the annual wildflower hike to Chimney Rock, in Pt. Reyes. Details will be announced in the April newsletter.

We are also considering resurrecting the monthly GBF potluck, if enough interest is expressed. People interested in opening up their homes or apartments occasionally for such an event or in receiving more information about scheduled hikes and movies please contact Clint Seiter or Nick Kolivas.

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Our Hidden Gay History

By David Holmes

Cassell's Encyclopedia of Queer Myth, Symbol, and Spirit: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Lore by Randy P. Conner, David Hatfield Sparks and Mariya Sparks; Foreword by Gloria E. Anzaldúa

This book is a treasure. I must admit that I have not had time to read it cover to cover, but then again, an encyclopedia of this sort is probably best enjoyed as a

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GBF Mission Statement

Gay Buddhist Fellowship supports Buddhist practice in the gay men's community. It is a forum that brings together the diverse Buddhist traditions to address the spiritual concerns of gay men in the Bay Area, the United States, and around the world. GBF's mission includes cultivating a social environment that is inclusive and caring.

The Gay Buddhist Fellowship Newsletter is published monthly by the Gay Buddhist Fellowship. All signed articles express the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the GBF.
personal voyage—following a trail of entries and cross-references deeper and deeper into one’s own psyche.

Start anywhere. For me, it was with my ancient guide and mentor, Leonardo da Vinci. Having learned of his homosexuality and of that of my other hero, Michelangelo, at the tender age of nine, I confirmed my secret belief that gayness was a gift, perhaps not one generally prized by our society, but a great gift nonetheless.

The entry describes Leonardo as a “homoerotically inclined artist, scientist, and philosopher of the Italian Renaissance. Inspired by the androgyne of ALCHEMY, Leonardo frequently and subtly blended homoerotic desire, transgenderism, and the sacred in his works, such as in his painting of St John the Baptist, a second version of which become a portrait of Bacchus (DIONYSUS). Armed with these two cross-references, I begin the hunt.

The rich flood of gay mythological references nested within the entry DIONYSUS (each word that appears in “all-caps” refers the reader to another related entry) indicates no fewer than twenty forks in the path, each one further elucidating our hidden gay history. Under DIONYSUS, a reference to MICHELANGELO’s Bacchus. From MICHELANGELO to one of his frequent subjects, GANYMEDE, “the prince loved by ZEUS, who assumed the form of an EAGLE in order to carry Ganymede to his abode, where he would become his lover and CUP BEARER.

CUP BEARER looks interesting. Here there is made mention of the mystics of Islam, the WILDAN. “The Arabic poet Al-Gobari writes, “The boy who pours the wine gives off an enchanting perfume. His saliva enters my mouth like steel from a Hindu Saber.” Hot stuff!

This book invites you to many such armchair adventures. As a reference book on gay spirituality, it appears most exhaustive. The entries vary in length from a few sentences to articles of several pages. The scope is impressive, apparently covering myths and symbols of gay culture from ancient times to the present, from all corners of the globe. It is an encouragement to any gay person attempting to reconnect to a time (fabled or real) when gay, lesbian and transgendered people were seen as crucial elements in the greater picture of human spirituality and sexuality.

In addition to the alphabetical listings are an impressive fourteen page bibliography and a ten page thematic index. I was a bit disappointed to find only twenty-nine entries under the heading of Buddhism and Related Traditions, but perhaps that points out the fact that we still need to explore and uncover our gay Buddhist history.

I give this book four lotus petals.

Classifieds

Housing Needed

I would like to find a quiet living situation in San Francisco. I am a Zen monk and would prefer being with other practitioners. Please call David

Summer furnished sublet sought by writer/psychotherapist from Santa Barbara (who can also do house exchange).
The Local Dharma
March 1998

[Note: Sometimes schedules change, so we recommend you call to confirm events.]

Special Events

The Zen Hospice Project invites you to attend a special fundraising benefit commemorating 10 years of Mindful and Compassionate Service. The reception will be held at Green’s Restaurant on March 22, 1998 at 5:30 pm. The guest speaker will be Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D., author of “Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories That Heal.” All seats are $150. Call 415 863-2910.

Please help us fill this space. Volunteers needed to help with GBF Newsletter. If you are interested in helping please call GBF Newsletter at 415/974-9878.

A BOWL

IMAGINE THE TIME THE PARTICLE YOU ARE RETURNS WHERE IT CAME FROM

THE FAMILY DARLING COMES HOME, WINE,
WITHOUT BEING CONTAINED IN CUPS,
IS HANDED AROUND.

A RED GLINT APPEARS IN A GRANITE OUTCROP,
AND SUDDENLY THE WHOLE CLIFF TURNS TO RUBY.

AT DAWN I WALKED ALONG WITH A MONK
ON HIS WAY TO THE MONASTERY.

I TOLD HIM, “WE SUFFER THE SAME.”

HE GAVE ME A BOWL.
AND I SAW:

THE SOUL HAS THIS SHAPE.

SHAMS,
YOU THAT TEACH US AND ACTUAL SUNLIGHT,
HELP ME NOW.

BEING IN THE MIDDLE OF BEING PARTLY IN MY SELF,
AND PARTLY OUTSIDE.

-RUMI
(TRANSLATION: COLEMAN BARKS)

Contributors

Thanks to the following people who helped with this GBF Newsletter: Howard King, David Holmes, Scott Stahlhaker, and Larry White.

Dharma Centers

[Each center offers ongoing programs and activities; if interested, please contact them directly.]

- BAP: Buddhist AIDS Project, 415/522-7473 or (www.wenet.net/~bap).
- BSC: Berkeley Shambhala Center; 2288 Fulton Street, Berkeley. 510/841-6475.
- CDS: California Diamond Sangha, P.O. Box 2915, Petaluma, CA.
- CMLC: Community of Mindful Living, P.O. Box 7355, Albany. 510/527-3751.
- DI: Dudjom International, P.O. Box 40155, Berkeley. 510/849-9923.
- EGZC: Empty Gate Zen Center, 5707 Oakgrove Ave., Oakland. 510/653-5991.
- EHMC: Enlightened Heart Meditation Center: 415/235-0798.
- HSZC: Hartford Street Zen Center: 57 Hartford St., SF. 415/863-2507.
- NLNY: Nyingma Institute: 1815 Highland Place, Berkeley. 510/843-6812.
- ODD: Origen Dorje Den: 322 7th St., Oakland. 510/8393146.
- POL: Pema Osel Ling: 2013 Eureka Canyon Road, Corralitos. 408/751-6266.
- SBC: Saraha Buddhist Center, 3145 Geary Blvd. #515, SF. 415/731-5973.
- SCZC: Santa Cruz Zen Center, 113 School Street, Santa Cruz. 408/457-0206.
- SFSC: SF Shambhala Center: 1630 Taraval St., SF. 415/731-4426.
- SFZC: San Francisco Zen Center: 300 Page Street, SF. 415/865-3136.
- TSC: Tzu Chen Ling Center: 4 Joost Ave, SF. 415/333-3261.
- VI: Vajrapani Institute, P.O. Box 2130, Boulder Creek. 408/338-6654.
Dharma Gateways

We have been seduced into weighing the advantages and disadvantages of every action, leaning this way, then that, thus forgetting our own real center. Talking, we utter absurdities and end up speaking at cross-purposes. Confronted by all sorts of problems, we tend to deal with them superficially, not understanding their true meaning. Vacillating between action and inaction until the next problem arises, we end up going along with the current of the time, muttering with crowd, “After all, what can be done about it anyway?”

-Sen Soshitsu XV

How to Reach Us:

GBF Sangha: Send correspondence and address changes to GBF, 2261 Market Street #422, San Francisco, CA 94114. For 24-hour information on GBF activities or to leave a message, call 415/974-9878.

GBF Newsletter: Send submissions to: Editor, GBF Newsletter, 2261 Market Street #438, San Francisco, CA 94114. If possible, include a DOS or Windows disk in Word or as a text file, along with your hardcopy.