



"We Are Here" Opens at Garfield Park Conservatory

Images of African-American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Chicagoans Displayed on the West Side

Chicago, IL - "We Are Here," an exhibit of photographic images of African-American lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Chicagoans by Richard Lee Gray (pictured) opened at 12 noon on Friday, October 6, in the Community Room at Garfield Park Conservatory, 300 N. Central Park Ave., Chicago, announced Clarence N. Wood, Chairman of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations.

"We Are Here" will be displayed from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and to 8 p.m. on Thursdays, from October 6 until October 30. A reception to celebrate the exhibit will be held from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. on Friday, October 20, in the Community Room at Garfield Park Conservatory. The exhibit and reception are open to the public.

"The Commission on Human Relations is proud to be a sponsor of this groundbreaking exhibit during Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month," said Wood.

"The idea for "We Are Here" came when I saw the 'Just Married' exhibit at Hull House in Chicago, which featured photographs of same-gender-loving people being married in San Francisco," said Richard Lee Gray. "A number of Black people commented that they saw few Black gay people in that exhibit and those they saw were with white partners. As a photographer of African-American descent who is same-gender-loving, I felt the need to respond. "We Are Here" is a result of my commitment to highlight images of African-American same-gender-loving people. It is a naming project meant to put a face on the diversity within the larger Black community."

"This is an expanding exhibit," added Gray, "and additional portraits have been added for this display. Eventually "We Are Here" will include a larger collection of images, videos, art, and voices of African-American same-gender-loving and transgender people and their families."

"We Are Here" premiered at SteeleLife Gallery, 4655 S. King Dr., in February 2006 and was displayed at Stephen Kelly Gallery, 750 N. Franklin St., during Gay Games VII.

People currently included in the exhibit are:

Moshe Adams, singer, actor, Chicago native, partnered.

Jacqueline Anderson, activist, philosopher, community organizer; 1996 inductee in the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

Lorraine Sade Baskerville, founder of transGenesis in 1995 as an agency to advocate for and address the concerns of Chicago's transgender community; 2000 inductee in the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

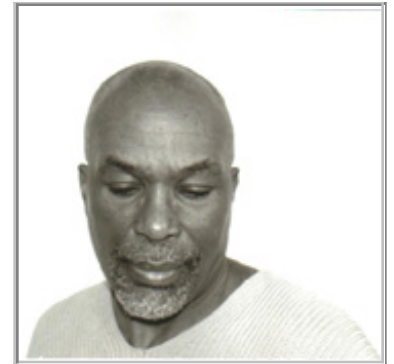
Lois L. Bates, transgender advocate and health educator

Charles "Ralu" Bishop, 71, teacher, poet, mentor; former member of the Black Panther Party and former teacher in the Black Panther Party's school on the West Side; partnered for 45 years.

The Rev. Eric J. Edwards, founder and senior pastor of Resurrection & Hope Ministries, with his partner, Dr. Lee Patterson, pediatrician.

Troy J. Ford, liaison to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities for former U.S. Senator Carol Mosley Braun; personal assistant to former U.S. Ambassador Carol Mosley Braun.

Sanford E. Gaylord, actor, writer, long-term survivor with HIV.



Glennon Graham, professor of American History, Columbia College; two-time Fulbright Scholar; member, Westside Black History Project.

Richard Lee Gray, poet, photographer, and social worker; 1992 inductee in the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

Marian Houston, PhD (Law), former homeless person; with her Latina partner, Carolina Bono, and her son, James Morgan.

Sherri Jackson, political activist, womanist, seminarian.

Marianne Jordan, photographer, community activist.

Charles Edward Nelson II, political and community advocate; gold medal winner for Track & Field in the 1994 Gay Games; 2002 inductee in Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

Gregory D. Norels, advocate; prevention and education specialist at Working for Togetherness.

The Rev. Juan Reed, social worker and Episcopal priest, vicar of St. Martin's Episcopal Church; 2005 inductee in the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

Louis O. Spraggins, long-term survivor with HIV; treatment education coordinator at Test Positive Aware Network.

Ronald Wadley, co-chair of the Same Gender Loving Ministry at Trinity United Church of Christ.

Nedeja Wesley, advocate for same-gender-loving youth

Photographs of Otis Richardson and Victor Pond will be added later in October.

The "We Are Here" Web site is www.geocities.com/We_Are_Here_Chicago.