On the last weekend of June 1970, to commemorate the Stonewall Uprising on the other side of the continent a year earlier, LGBTQ activists in San Francisco held a small march down Polk Street followed by a “gay-in” at Golden Gate Park.

These actions — the nuclei of the Parade and two-day Celebration that have comprised San Francisco Pride for years — also formed the activist-led heart of #SF Pride 50. It was initially expected to draw hundreds of thousands of revelers to Civic Center to commemorate the historic anniversary, as well as more than 100,000 spectators cheering on some 280 contingents with 50,000 marchers to the Parade down Market Street.

Owing to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Directors of San Francisco Pride officially canceled in-person events for Pride 50 on April 14, 2020, instead pivoting to online programming for both days of Pride Weekend in collaboration with longstanding partners Jenn Stokes Productions and IDK Events, as well as an ongoing broadcast agreement with CBS affiliate KPIX.

With just over two months to plan, SF Pride worked in concert with our partners at City Hall to ensure a celebration befitting what has historically been the largest Pride event in the United States as well as the largest outdoor annual event in San Francisco.
In the run-up to Pride Weekend, we began a series of moderated panel discussions every other Thursday afternoon called **Lavender Talks**. Hosted by the Commonwealth Club and emceed by **Michelle Meow** (a radio host and former Board President of SF Pride) this hour-long program provides a relevant take on important issues such as “The State of S.F.’s LGBTQ Cultural Districts” (featuring representatives from the Transgender District, the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District, the Castro LGBTQ Cultural District, and the Mayor’s Office). We are in talks with the Commonwealth Club to continue Lavender Talks as a monthly event from July through September.
Additionally, SF Pride participated in Global Pride 2020, a 27.5-hour collaborative virtual Pride that started on Friday, June 27, and reached a worldwide audience in at least 163 countries.

Global Pride featured content from more than 500 Pride and LGBTQIA+ community organizations from 91 countries. Content included music and drag performances, speeches and messages from activists, and archival footage from Pride events around the world.
Having pivoted on April 14 from the planned, in-person Parade and Celebration to an Online Celebration, SF Pride and its longtime contractors Jenn Stokes Productions and IDK Events forged ahead into uncharted territory with a “let’s put on a show” energy.

In light of the protests and street actions that shook the nation after the May 25 killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, centering the lived experiences of Black LGBTQ+ people — Black trans people in particular — was paramount. Our programming reflected that, with National Center for Lesbian Rights executive director Imani Rupert-Gordon discussing Black Lives Justice, and Uberlândia-born Brazilian transgender artist Urias, alongside special appearances by Bay Area American Indian Two Spirits, body-positive model Harnaam Kaur, and performers from S.F.’s pre-eminent queer bar, The Stud.

Saturday, June 27 1-9 p.m. and Sunday, June 28, 2-7 p.m.
- 13 hours of programming over two streams comes to nearly 26 hours in total
- Two streams:
  - SF Pride’s Main Stage (the “Main Stream”)
  - A combination of several community-programmed stages (the “Community Livestream,” comprised of Soul of Pride Urban Global Village, the Don Julio Latin Stage, Homo Hip-Hop, and the Women’s Stage)

Highlights include performers like Big Freedia (Saturday headliner), Thelma Houston (Sunday headliner), a conversation between Black Lives Matter co-founder Alicia Garza and SF Pride Board President Carolyn Wysinger, Amara La Negra, Los Horoscopos de Durango, and D’Wayne Patrice Wiggins, a founding member of Tony! Toni! Toné!
Primarily presented on three platforms, our inaugural Online Celebration garnered an impressive viewership:

- **YouTube**: approximately 1,000 viewers over both days
- **Facebook Live**: approximately 12,500 viewers over both days
- **Twitch**: approximately 34,500 viewers over both days
- **Totaling upwards of 50,000 viewers**

With impressions over the three platforms numbering in the hundreds of thousands, including over 160,000 unique visitors to our website, sfpride.org, we reached many members of our communities.
SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

**FOLLOWERS**
- FACEBOOK: 47,500
- TWITTER: 17,000
- INSTAGRAM: 8,500

While Facebook remains the easiest and most efficient way to connect with SF Pride’s community, our engagement with Instagram was notable this year. We profiled each of our 10 Grand Marshals and Awardees in the run-up to Pride Weekend, and highlighted performers from the Latin Stage and elsewhere, plus the response to sponsored content was strongest and most positive. Additionally, SF Pride’s Instagram presence saw the biggest increase in followers during Pride Month (300-400), both in absolute terms and as a percentage of our pre-existing follower base.

**NEWSLETTERS**

Through the month of June, we sent out four newsletters to our Constant Contact subscriber base of more than 20,000 individuals. In a typical year, SF Pride would have booked talent for our Main Stage and Community Stages much earlier in the cycle, but we were able to parlay 2020’s late announcements into news items worthy of standing as teasers in their own right (i.e., Thelma Houston for the June 25 newsletter) along with additional programming announcements plus “hard news” like the Supreme Court’s surprise ruling that outlawed employment discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Consequently, we had a strong, 18-19 percent open rate across the board. This was true even for the June 30 newsletter — which, as a post-event wrap-up, consisted chiefly of thank-yous and acknowledgments.
With our trusted partners at TurnOut.org, we had approximately 100 volunteers monitor our various streams and channels to minimize the presence of homophobic/transphobic/racist comments. In fact, we are pleased to report that our event succeeded at preventing harassment from taking place in our chat rooms! The volunteers will be offering their newfound expertise to other virtual events in the coming months.
In 2019, the Bay Area’s CBS affiliate KPIX showed more than 40,000 views of the parade on kpix.com. To build on this success, we partnered with the station again in anticipation of screening the 50th anniversary parade on live television for the first time ever.

With the shift to online programming, they chose to move their broadcast on Sunday, June 28th to primetime (5 PM – 8 PM).

Consisting of intimate interviews with LGBTQ+ leaders and luminaries, stories illustrating the wonderful diversity of our communities, and archival footage recalling special moments of Parades past, this three-hour special reached tens of thousands of households throughout the Bay Area and beyond. We look forward to a time in the future when the Pride Parade once again lights up Market Street and our television screens.
On Sunday, June 28th, from 11 AM to 2 PM, SF Pride co-sponsored a socially-distant rally in honor of Marsha P. Johnson at the African American Art & Culture Complex (AAACC). Speakers — all of whom were Black and trans-identified — included Janetta Johnson of the TGI Justice Project, Janelle Luster of the Transgender District, and many others.

As well as functioning as the custodians of our photographic archives, the GLBT Historical Society has long been a trusted partner of San Francisco Pride. Taking the closure of their physical space on 18th Street in stride, the Historical Society mounted two online, Pride 50-themed exhibitions in collaboration with SF Pride and the San Francisco Arts Commission: “Labor of Love: The Birth of San Francisco Pride, 1970–1980” (curated by Gerard Koskovich, Don Romesburg, and Amy Sueyoshi) and “50 Years of Pride” (curated by Lenore Chinn and Pamela Peniston).

These complementary shows display remarkable historical acuity and remain accessible free of charge at glbthistory.org.
SF PRIDE 50 HONOREES

Community Grand Marshals
- GLBT Historical Society Executive Director Terry Beswick (Members’ Choice)
- Documentary filmmaker StormMiguel Florez
- Photographer; Founder and Project Director of the Bay Area Lesbian Archives, Lenn Keller (Lifetime Achievement Grand Marshal)
- LGBT Asylum Project (Public Choice, Organization)
- Spahr Center Founder Rev. Dr. Jane Spahr (Public Choice)
- CEO of San Francisco Community Health Center Lance Toma

Celebrity Grand Marshal
- Sociopolitical comedian and TV host W. Kamau Bell, United Shades of America with W. Kamau Bell (CNN)

Awardees
- San Francisco AIDS Foundation Founder Cleve Jones (Gilbert Baker Pride Founder’s Award)
- Author Gabby Rivera (José Julio Sarria History Maker Award)
- San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band Artistic Director of the Marching & Pep Bands Mike Wong (Audrey Joseph LGBTQ Entertainment Award)

San Francisco Pride appreciates the LGBTQ+ community’s support this year, and always.
We want to hear from you!
- Visit our website at www.sfpride.org
- Reach our leadership team at executivedirector@sfpride.org
- General questions? info@sfpride.org
- Become a member today! https://members.sfpride.org/
- Interested in future sponsorship opportunities? sponsorship@sfpride.org

Also, through SF Pride’s Community Partners Program, tax-deductible donations help us grant more money every year to non-profits that work on issues related to the lives of LGBTQ-identified people, such as breast cancer, youth homelessness, and HIV/AIDS.

Generous contributions from our community assist not only SF Pride, but the wider LGBTQ+ community as well.

DONATE HERE!

SEE YOU IN 2021!