

## **Nobody Promised You Tomorrow: Art 50 Years After Stonewall** **A Note on Language and Glossary**

Identity markers are constantly shifting, as language evolves and current discourse on race, gender, ability, and sexuality shift. Ultimately, when signifying a person's identity, the best practice is to use the identity language a person uses to describe their own experience when possible, so as not to replicate violent practices of historical classification, specifically for communities of color.

To acknowledge the exhibition's historical and intergenerational scope, we use the term *LGBTQ+*, which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer, with a plus sign as a marker of ever-expanding terminology for sexual and gender identities.

We also use *queer*, *trans*, and *gender non-conforming* as signifiers when referring to LGBTQ+ individuals and communities in the present day and as inclusive words for those who identify beyond, across, or outside of binary understandings of sex and gender. Where relevant, the term *cisgender* is used to indicate when an individual's gender identity corresponds to the biological sex assigned at birth. Our use of these terms in the gallery and publication texts is intended to respect the words chosen by individuals as well as the diversity of identity across time, place, and culture, and to recognize that terms popular today were not similarly embraced in various historical moments.

**A note on gender inclusive language:** Avoid using binary gendered language when referring to large groups, such as "guys, boys and girls, ladies and gentlemen." Common inclusive terms include folk/folks/folx, community/communities, y'all, everyone, etc. The inclusion of the "x" in historically gendered language, such as folx, womxn, Latinx, is becoming more common, however it, like all identity markers, is not accepted by all.

### **Terms and Definitions:**

#### **Sex (Birth Sex/Biological Sex):**

A specific set of biological, anatomical, or physiological sexual markers of the body's sexual differentiation. Sex is assigned at birth based on chromosomes, hormones, primary sex characteristics, secondary sex characteristics, and/or sex related developmental milestones (menstruation, menopause...). Types of birth/biological sex include female, male and intersex.

#### **Cisgender:**

A person who identifies with the biological sex they were assigned at birth. For example, if you were told you were "male" at birth and still identify that way, you would be cisgender. A simple way to think about it is if a person

is not trans\*, they are cisgender. Cisgender is a normative gender identity as it conforms to mainstream, non-queer ways of understanding sex and gender.

#### **Gender Expression:**

The external display of one's gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on scales of masculinity and femininity. However, there are countless combinations that may incorporate both masculine and feminine expressions—or neither—through androgynous expressions. Gender expression may or may not conform to gender stereotypes, norms, and expectations in a given culture or historical period. Also referred to as

“gender presentation.”

### **Gender Identity:**

The internal perception of one’s gender, and how they describe themselves, based on how much they align or don’t align with what they understand their options for gender to be. Common identity labels include man, woman, genderqueer, trans, non-binary, two-spirit, agender, and more. Our internal, personal sense of what our gender is. Everyone has a gender identity.

### **LGBT / LGBTQ / TGNC/ +:**

Acronyms used as shorthand or umbrella terms for all folks who have a non-normative (or queer) gender and/or sexuality. There are many different initialisms people prefer. *LGBTQ* stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (sometimes a “+” is added at the end in an effort to be more inclusive, and/or an “I” for intersex, “A” for asexual [or allied], and a additional “T” or “TS” or “2” for two-spirit); *GSM* is gender and sexual minorities; *DSG* is diverse genders and sexualities; *TGNC* is transgender, gender nonconforming. Other popular options include the initialism *GLBT* (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender) and the acronym *QUILT BAG* (queer [or questioning], undecided, intersex, lesbian, trans\*, bisexual, asexual [or allied], and gay [or genderqueer]). Some may prefer to list the acronym as *TBLG* to place transpeople in a position of importance and to rectify the way trans has historically been omitted, devalued or excluded.

### **Queer:**

A term that has been reclaimed by members of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities to describe people who transgress culturally imposed norms of heterosexuality and gender traditionalism. Although still often used an abusive epithet, many queer-identified people have taken back the word to use it as a symbol of pride and affirmation of difference and diversity.

### **Sexuality / Sexual Orientation:**

The nature of an individual's physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Trans and gender-variant people may identify with any sexual orientation, and their sexual orientation may or may not change before, during or after gender transition. Words to describe sexuality include heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual, gay, lesbian, queer, pansexual, sapiosexual, asexual, etc.

### **Transgender (Trans, Trans\*):**

An umbrella term used to describe people whose true gender identity does not “match” the sex or gender they were assigned at birth. Many identities fall under the transgender umbrella, which are often designated with an asterisk after the abbreviation, “trans.” However, not all genderqueer, non-binary, or gender nonconforming people identify as transgender – and some people who have transitioned to their true gender choose to identify as just a “man” or “woman” instead of transgender. Always be respectful of how someone chooses to identify, and use their preferred identity, name, and pronouns.

### **Gender binary:**

The concept that there are only two genders, male and female, and that everyone must be one or the other. Usually believed in conjunction with the concept that these two genders must align with the sex one is assigned at birth.

### **Woman/women/womxn/girls/femmes:**

When referring to a specific person, woman (or however else they identify) is appropriate. When referring to the gender and the experiences of the gender, a more inclusive term such as “women, girls and femmes” should be used in order to encompass gender-based experiences shared by all, such as gender based violence and discrimination.

### **Femme:**

An expansive way to describe a person who identifies themselves as feminine, whether it be physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually or otherwise. Femme-identified people can be of any gender identity, and femme identity is inherently queer due its subversion of normative understandings of gender. Femme is a reclamation of queerness and subverts traditional, heterosexist proscriptions and expectations of femininity.

### **Faggot (Fag):**

Terms that have been reclaimed by some gay men and gender expansive people to describe, and take pleasure in, a range of gender presentations, queer social relations, and sexual practices that are considered “deviant” within heterosexist and transphobic culture. Although still often used an abusive epithet, some gay- and queer-identified people have taken back the words to use as symbols of reveling in queer gender expressions, identities, and sexual practices.