

AAHP
AIDS Activist History Project

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Interviewee: Sangyé Chöga Martin

Interviewers: Alexis Shotwell

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November 15, 2014

Persons present: Sangyé Chöga Martin – SCM
Alexis Shotwell – AS

[START OF TRANSCRIPT]

AS: We're talking to Sangyé Chöga Martin, November 15, 2014. The way we start is to ask these grounding stage-setting questions of everyone, so if you remember when you first heard about AIDS, that it had existed, or what it was. Do you have any memory of that?

SCM: It was in the late 80s because I had just come out when I was eighteen.

AS: You were living in Halifax?

SCM: Yeah, living in Halifax. So, it was probably 1988-89. I was eighteen or nineteen and I just started hearing about it in the community. I don't even remember if there existed or if I was aware of the PWA [People with HIV/AIDS] Coalition at that point. So, at first it was just people talking about it.

AS: Do you remember that there was, right around that time... there was a headline in the "Chronically Horrid" (*The Chronicle Herald*) that said something like, "AIDS fiend strikes again." Do you remember that case?

SCM: No, I don't. But I could have very likely been affected by it and not remember it in itself, because it was really, sort of a huge issue. Things were really close and immediate about it for me. I almost felt like I wasn't aware that there was some sort of movement or something happening. It just felt like a bunch of us in Halifax reacting to what was happening and what was going on.

AS: Also hearing about it so very close to when you were coming out.

SCM: Yeah.

AS: Were you an activist when you were young?

SCM: Pretty quickly I got involved, yeah. Partly because I just wanted to learn and it was the only way to learn about it, because I knew it affected me and, you know, this new life I had discovered. So, it was more around just wanting to be educated myself.

AS: Do you remember when you heard about AIDS activism? It would have been around the same time?

SCM: It was so organic. Yeah, it was around the same time. I first started getting involved in the Gay and Lesbian Association of Nova Scotia (GALA NS). So, we would have meetings in Rumours.

AS: Can you describe what Rumours was like at that point?

SCM: Rumours was – for me, when I was coming out – in its hay day. There was a real strong sense of community. What I really miss is that gay men and lesbians seemed so interwoven. I had the impression and the experience that it was quite a harmonious situation when I was coming out there. So, at a certain point, after I had been getting involved, we were going to these meetings for GALA, we had some men, I think, who were either just affected or they may have been involved in PWA. And it just became a discussion of the meeting how there was really no attention to the issue. And we didn't know anything and no one – in terms of the medical profession – was necessarily trying to help us learn anything about it. So, at the same time I heard about activism – this was the announcement of ACT UP [AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power]. One of the guys stood up and he just said, you know, “This is the situation and we're gonna get together and talk about what we can do. We're gonna plan some sort of action,” or some education-type scenario. So, that was the first time.

AS: And was that received well at GALA?

SCM: Yeah.

AS: Everyone was into it.

SCM: Oh yeah, for sure. When I started going to the ACT UP meetings, then I started hearing that there was this... that's when I knew some of the people involved were from PWA. My impression was that they might have started ACT UP actually, out of not being able to be active under the PWA umbrella. Either that or it was like there was disagreement politically with the organization and so they really wanted to get a chapter of ACT UP happening. I think it was introduced as: this is something that's going on in New York, or something like that, right. I don't remember the details about where they got their information or their education. Like I said, I was still just fresh out of the closet and I was like, “Whaaat?”

AS: You were still a baby. [laughter]

SCM: Yeah, a baby. Completely. I think the first action was the die-in, and at first, it wasn't... I don't even know if we had pre-planned the die-in. It might have just come up as we were going up the street, because I don't think we had a right to be in the street doing this action at all. And the first interaction I remember us having – I don't even remember where we left from, we probably left from Rumours – but when we hit Spring Garden Road and we just came up from the library where there's a Second Cup now, at that intersection, I think we had a die-in at that intersection first. So, the idea was that we would interfere with traffic and then a few of us... I was one of the people that was going to go around handing out some information that we had about AIDS and how we needed more research, and all that sort of stuff; and it had to be taken seriously and it was that it wasn't just a gay disease. And I remember walking up to this car and the look on this guy's... he started rolling up his window; he was terrified. He's like, a father with his wife and some kids, I think. I mean, at the time I was sort of, an angry, rebellious teenager still, but I just kind of scoffed

at him. I just remember being pissed off by it, you know, but at the same time almost kind of laughing about it – at the level of stupidity. Because even though I didn't know anything, I knew it didn't make any sense that this could be something that was just a gay disease. That concept just didn't make sense to me just because of my evolution and understanding of how I accepted being gay, right? Then we had marched up the street and we had got up to the Lord Nelson and did a die-in again there. That one didn't go as well, I remember.

AS: How?

SCM: Well, I mean when you're young, and sometimes even when you're older, you think that everything's about you. I remember thinking that maybe I made a mistake because what had happened was more of us joined in the die-in and I wanted to join in the die-in even though I was supposed to hand out these things. So, I laid down like I was dead and I was the first to get up and I didn't want other people to get back up. I was getting up to hand out stuff, but it seemed like when I got up everyone else sort of followed. And I remember thinking, "Oh shit. I think I screwed that one up." [laughter]

AS: You've ruined an entire action.

SCM: Yeah. But, you know, that could be just my own self-importance of the time. I'm not sure.

AS: Do you remember about how many people were there? Did it fill the intersection?

SCM: That was part of it, there weren't a lot of us so we really had to make an impact and spread ourselves out.

AS: And that's a bigger intersection.

SCM: Yeah. I think that's one of the reasons why I had joined in. I think most of us kind of did it at that point. So there was nobody handing anything out or even explaining what was happening, and I guess I remember feeling a need, like "Okay, now we have to let them know why we're here." Yeah, I think there might have been... I don't know if twenty is generous or if it's small, but I'm thinking it's around there maybe.

AS: And do you remember what that felt like? I mean, a description of that.

SCM: It was pretty intense. It was an intense experience because - One, there weren't many of us. My first Pride, there were only about thirty people. So that sort of felt the same way. My whole kind of experience - I guess, it was when I came out in Halifax was at sort of at this period where a lot of this stuff was just starting to happen. People were just starting to say, "Okay, I'm tired of feeling like I have to hide."

AS: Yeah. In Sudbury, Pride... what do we say about it? That it still feels much more like a march than a parade.

SCM: Yeah, right. These were definitely marches. Yeah, the people that were looking at us weren't there to watch.

AS: To be like, "Yay, you're so fabulous! We love you!"

SCM: I remember the first time that happened; I was like, "Oh wow." And even at that point we had only reached about fifty and that was just still like maybe just a few people on the road, like in the early nineties.

AS: So, the feeling of needing to be brave to do that?

SCM: Yeah, but it felt choiceless though. I didn't see myself as being brave, I just felt like I was fighting against something that I had to fight against, you know. So, I don't even think I had the concept of being an activist or anything. I didn't see it that way. I just saw it as a natural reaction that I had to have to my situation, you know?

AS: Yeah, that makes sense.

SCM: Even my... I've always thought I'm kind of vanilla, I guess. Compared to a lot of my friends or people that I've hung out with in the gay community, I'm always like, "Wow. You guys are outrageous." Not that I haven't been outrageous in my older life. I've definitely been outrageous myself, but... I'm not even sure where I was going with that now. Oh yes. I remember that when I started getting tested – asking to be tested for HIV – at first it was a reaction to like "Oh my god. Maybe I have it." But once I crossed that and had that first initial... I was terrified actually. And we had to wait for the results. And they never told you, good or bad, over the phone so I got called in to see my doctor, which was one of the worst walks of my life. And when I left I cried because I was happy that I was okay. And then as I started getting more educated about HIV and AIDS – this is why I mention being kind of vanilla – I didn't really have a lot to worry about; I wasn't very risky. After that experience, and because it was so hard to do at that first time, I made a decision to do it every year. And at that point I understood that as actual... for me that was political. That's the first time I thought about it as political activism. I was like, "I'm doing this as a political statement, to have the record there." Because people were afraid to get tested for a lot of reasons. It wasn't only to find out if you might be sick; it was also because of what could happen to you if you just test. Not even if you just test positive or negative, but just the fact of asking for a test.

AS: So, would you have also known then about Eric Smith? He was involved in... would you have known about his situation, because he didn't even ask to be tested, right. They just tested him, added him, and he lost his job.

SCM: Right. He was one of the core people that was part of ACT UP and all of that sort of activity at the time.

AS: So, you would have known about his...

SCM: Yeah. Well, he was always there so I knew him and talked to him about his situation and stuff. Halifax is a really small community; so anyone who had anything happen to them in Nova Scotia, or almost even the Maritimes, ended up in Halifax. I remember he was always a thin person. I don't know if it was a result of his status or his illness, or whatever. I saw people getting sick around me too. So, that was a weird experience for me actually. I would look at them and I would sort of think, you know "That could be me," I think was part of it. And then I also didn't want to look at them as seeing their sickness; so it was uncomfortable for me a little bit even having that perspective of them, like sometimes thinking, "Oh, he looks like that because he's sick." That was a real thing of the time. Nowadays, it's less clear.

AS: But in those moments there were really – I remember this too – lots of markers, so you could read what was happening.

SCM: It was also a period of time where even being fashionably slim was a question of, "Is he sick?" So, we were different about our bodies at that point too. I remember when gay culture, for me, became physique obsessed, because that wasn't my experience in the beginning. There was always sort of an admiration of youth, but it wasn't about physique. It wasn't about being muscular or being a particular look. There were lots of looks and it was sort of, I don't know... It was interesting.

AS: When do you remember that shifting?

SCM: I started becoming aware of it in the late nineties, I think, to the point where I remember there were some of us – me included probably – because I've never been the type of person to go to the gym. I tried and then it just wasn't me. [laughter] It was almost like the cool kids; it was very adolescent. It's funny. I used to say, and I think especially for those of us who came out later, we kind of go through a second adolescence. And that's what it felt like for me anyway. There was this sort of adolescent "us/them" reaction that a lot of us would have to the guys who were getting into going to the gym and stuff. But it was so much in... what was the magazine? There was a magazine at that time.

AS: In Halifax.

SCM: Yeah, but not *Wayves*. I loved *Wayves* – that was like news – but I think maybe *Fab* or something? But I don't know if it was *Fab*, that doesn't sound right to me somehow.

AS: No, but there was something else.

SCM: I remember seeing some media at a certain point and it was like the media was very much sort of like it is now. It was very physique oriented and that's sort of when... you know, I was with a lot of people who would comment about how we were selling out.

AS: Right... with that.

SCM: Yeah.

AS: So, would *Wayves* had been one of the ways that you heard about stuff more generally in the community about things going on?

SCM: Later on, but in the beginning I was very much at the core. I went right to the centre and was involved. So I knew what was going on organically. It was sort of coming out. Our GALA meetings were like that. It was definitely... you know all kinds of community information came to those meetings.

AS: Okay. So, ACT UP has that first demonstration. Do you remember, around the march and die-ins, was there any kind of reflection or sense of, “Let’s keep doing this,” or?

SCM: Oh yeah, definitely. We had another... I don’t remember what the time span was. But we had another action that we talked about for a long time, I seem to remember – figuring out how to do it because this time we wanted to walk down the road and have like a march. And we really wanted to try and get permission to do it. And I think there was more effort and time put into that, and about thinking up a way to, you know... We had debates or discussions around, “Okay, do we just do it on the sidewalk or do we keep fighting to try to get permission, or what do we do?” And we ended up deciding on a donkey; walking a donkey down the sidewalk. And at a certain point we would go out into the street unplanned. They knew we were going to be there, right.

AS: Right, because you had asked for a permit and they just hadn’t granted it.

SCM: Yes, so we had to figure out a way to get around that and someone was able to get a donkey. We were like, “If we get the donkey on the street, good luck for them to get us out of the street.”

AS: Do they want the donkey on the sidewalk? No. [laughter]

SCM: My thought was like, yeah, they were supposed to be really stubborn, so maybe it’ll just create commotion and it’ll be hard for them to stop us. So, that it was almost becoming less, “It’s not that I’m refusing to obey your orders, but this donkey, I can’t get it to move.” That was sort of the plan, you know. That was fun. I remember that. For some reason, I don’t remember how far we got. I only really remember the section right around the library. Being on Spring Garden Road and walking down to Barrington, that intersection there. Maybe that’s when we went out on the street or something, but that’s what stands out to me about that second action.

AS: And were there more people there that time?

SCM: No, I think it was sort of the same. Not a lot of people were willing to get active because there was... I mean, I don’t remember there being a lot of actions either. In fact, they’re the only two I can remember. I’d looked at your questions before and I saw you ask about Queer Nation – I’m not sure if that didn’t sort of create the shift. Although I liked the ACT UP politics; I liked the extreme activity. I think Queer Nation started happening maybe a little later. And I didn’t get drawn to it; I didn’t get involved, really.

AS: Can you talk about what you thought it was?

SCM: Well, I remember my impression, at the time, being that it was safer. You know, it claimed to have the same desire, but I felt like it was that same offshoot that was making the *Fab* magazine sort of thing. It was a glitzy, kind of dressed up version of who we were; so it accepted mainstream – or there was some conformity to mainstream – was my understanding of what it kind of represented and what it was doing. And I connected with ACT UP because it didn't try to do that. It was more, "This is just who I am and this is the situation and deal with it." Because that was the view, it was a little more in your face I think.

AS: Interesting. There was another action that I think might have been more a PWA Coalition action, it's kind of unclear. I think part of this time was trying to say there needs to be a provincial AIDS strategy. Maybe this was like, a year after the donkey, they brought a cake to the strategy development meetings.

SCM: I don't remember that.

AS: Okay. Well, apparently they brought a cake and were like, "Congratulations! It's been a whole year and you still haven't done anything."

SCM: Oh, when you say that it sort of rings a bell. I'm not sure. I might have heard about it.

AS: You probably would remember.

SCM: I probably heard about it. No, I wasn't there for sure.

AS: The other thing that we're just wanting to get a little bit – so, you weren't directly involved in the PWA coalition?

SCM: No, I was never involved with PWA and I don't know why. ACT UP caught my attention and that was straight where I went.

AS: Yeah. It's really great to be talking to you because you came directly into ACT UP. And one of the things that we are also just wanting to capture a little bit is just how things were going then. So, around that time also there was what people talk about as the "Shirtless Wars" at Rumours. I don't know if you remember anything about that or want to talk about it.

SCM: Yeah, I do. Well, to me, I see that as where Rumours started to fall apart and GALA started to fall apart. It was a tough one. It would come up at the... Gay and Lesbian Association of Nova Scotia ran Rumours nightclub, so that's why we would have that sort of business coming up in this organization's meeting. Yeah, a group of guys who – I didn't know any of them really well, but of course we all knew each other, right. They weren't people that I would hang out with outside of seeing them at Rumours. They expressed that... and it's interesting because they weren't physique people, I know it was not about physique, it wasn't part of that glitzy, you know "show off my

muscular body” or something. It was actually a group of guys who had felt shamed as young kids. I remember being extra self-conscious and I think now it’s because I was gay and hadn’t identified that. It’s just a different scenario, right, when you have boys/girls changing rooms and you have boys changing in changing rooms and boys are attracted to boys. It creates a different dynamic. So I think that’s part of what made it this extra kind of experience for me. Not that I was getting tuned on or that it was particularly sexual; it was just something to do with not being completely comfortable about my physique and about changing with a bunch of boys. But most of them were comfortable so that was another thing that kind of highlighted, “I don’t feel comfortable. Why don’t I feel comfortable?”

AS: Yeah, there’s some difference here.

SCM: Yeah. And so, I could understand that. I got a little teased at times because there was this period when I’m reaching puberty where, I guess, boys started noticing that I acted a little differently than they did. So, I got teased, but I didn’t get ridiculed like some of these guys who I’m talking about who started taking their shirts off and really wanted to be able to do that. It was important to them. They told stories about really being ridiculed and treated, I would say extremely poorly, like nothing compared to what I had to go through. I had it easy from that point of view – the gym locker room. And so as now grown men, they felt some celebration, right. I mean, also there was a practical side, I think, that started it. I actually think it more came out of... because Rumours used to get *really* hot. It was like being in a cave with however many people just dancing crazy all night long. It used to get really hot so I always thought it sort of just came out of that. But out of that, someone who did that had some sense of liberation. I really believe that. And it grew in this small group of guys and it really became what they did. So, they didn’t necessarily wait to get all hot, I think. It became just, “I’m taking my shirt off and dancing.” And so I could understand it and I thought, “Why do we want to stop that?” But there were women who had horrible experiences, whether being raped or molested or what have you, and they were saying that they didn’t want to see a male torso. That was traumatic; it gave them flashbacks or memories, or things like that. And I can’t relate to that experientially, although I have experienced being molested as a child and I was raped, but I’m not these people.

So I remember, at one point in this meeting, I tried to bring these two together somehow and I was trying to sort of support that these guys wanted to do this, although, I wasn’t one of these people. I’ve never danced with my shirt off unless maybe I got too drunk one night and don’t remember or something. That wasn’t my thing, but I could hear what was being asked for. But I didn’t want to diminish what was being asked for by these women either; although, I did on some level. My first gut reaction was that they were stopping these guys from doing something that was liberating. But I think that sort of thinking just came from my youth and also it being that I could relate to this experience personally more than I could relate to this experience. But even though I thought this was going on, I never spoke to anyone as if that’s how I thought it was because I wanted to be respectful. But my inner feeling around that time was – I’m almost embarrassed to admit but I feel it’s part of the story – that I felt like there were some women who just didn’t like us men, you know. That really was my experience of it and they were trying to control the situation because they felt like... I mean there was always this, you know... but being a man is hard for me, right; being a boy, I was really a boy. So, it was hard for me to understand these larger concepts and, in hindsight, they’re still not clear to me. I really saw the division came about by a

handful of people. So, that's what I kind of can't shake. Yeah, it was such an interesting debate – because I thought the solution was, “Well, women should be able to take their shirts off,” right. And some women loved that idea and they were on board with that and supporting the men's thing.

AS: So, you had some women who were saying, “I don't want to see men's nipples” and then some women who were saying, “I want to be able to take my shirt off and show my nipples.” I mean because usually, in conventional and straight society, there's this real distinction where you can have men shirtless, but not women.

SCM: Right. We felt like that didn't make sense. I think there was some discussion around... I seem to remember us talking about the law because there was always a concern... we don't want Rumours to get shut down, right, but we also don't want to do stupid things we're told to do just because we're told to do them, you know if they don't make sense. I was part of the voice and I think that a lot of men, we all sort said that we would stand behind women if anything happened. We thought it was a fight worth having, if we had to. But in the end it didn't go that way. In the end, things just kind of started to splinter. We couldn't find enough common ground to work from or something.

AS: It's really sad.

SCM: Yeah, it was. For me, it was, I guess they say, the end of an era. It was really an end of something that has never been repeated, to my knowledge, in Halifax or even elsewhere. I mean, just the fact that it was... I don't know if it was the largest in Canada; I remember it being said that it was the largest gay and lesbian owned club, like, a jointly gay and lesbian owned club that was owned by gays and lesbians.

AS: And by a community association, right?

SCM: Yeah, a community-owned club.

AS: Yeah, that seems so important.

SCM: And that wasn't the beginning... Well, no. Because I think there were other clubs before, but they must have been privately owned, I guess. I don't know. I don't know the history of them.

AS: No, me neither. Robin Metcalfe has written a book that has some of the history of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Nova Scotia (GALA), so it has some of that.

SCM: I think Robin was one of the guys that wanted to take his shirt off if I remember. He was always fun on the dance floor.

AS: Do you have any memory – this probably would have been around that time – of an ACT UP intervention at Rumours, a night when ACT UP stopped the music and said, “You have to relate to us; you have to relate to AIDS”?

SCM: I don't remember.

AS: It might've just happened to be the Saturday that you weren't there.

SCM: It could've been, although I doubt it because I was probably there. At the time, in the first few years, that was my community centre. That's where I went all the time. Whenever it was open I was usually there. I do remember there being some stuff that happened in the club along those lines, but I don't remember the specifics of that being the message or that being said.

AS: There would have been some obvious conversation about, "ACT UP is here. Here's what's important."

SCM: I think I have a vague memory of that kind of happening. I do remember a night when... but I don't know if I knew that it was going to happen or that I was involved in that one. It's probably why it's more vague to me. Because I remember a night of the music stopping and I remember a lot of people complaining that the music was stopping. That was sort of what I was aware of. And that there was this message, but it kept getting shouted down a little bit.

AS: Do you remember any ACT UP parties or where ACT UP would have meetings?

SCM: I don't remember where. Did we meet at Rumours? No, I think we met somewhere else too. I don't remember where we met.

AS: There was apparently a loft. Someone had a loft apartment.

SCM: I kind of can see us in a big – not that big – room, but I don't remember where it was. It might have been the Barrington Street area or something like that. I can't really remember where we actually went to meet.

AS: We're talking twenty years ago, so... And do you remember what happened to ACT UP or how it stopped?

SCM: It's unclear to me. When that splinter happened, it just seemed to have some effect. It might have just been my involvement. It could be that I became... Yeah, maybe I became less involved at that point and wasn't as connected. I would have also started practicing Buddhism around this time. There was a time when I didn't have work for a while and I went back home and lived with my father for six months.

AS: It could have been around then.

SCM: Yeah, it was around then. I got more involved with the Shambhala community then and was less involved with what was going on politically. And then my sense was, like even when I would try, I felt like there was nothing as much happening with the gay community. My perception was

that it was splintered and had fallen apart. There were still some clubs that people would go to, but I didn't have the sense of community anymore.

AS: And this was around when we met.

SCM: Yeah. And so, I don't know if ACT UP still existed then or if Queer Nation still existed then, but my sense always was that perhaps those people had a similar kind of experience – that that was sort of a blow out of the community and it didn't repair itself, at least in my time, I didn't feel. There were still sort of silos of people doing things like EGALE [Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere], the PWA Coalition, and stuff like that, but the political action that felt like it was coming from the community wasn't there anymore. Even the getting together, like I remember significantly missing there being lesbians around me when I went to the bar. That changed the dynamic for me a lot. Some gay guys used to say I was a lesbian because I really valued those relationships I had. I liked the Indigo Girls more than I liked Cher, you know – that kind of stuff. [laughter]

AS: You probably are a lesbian. [laughter] Good. So, we're kind of coming to the end. And one of the things that we're wanting to do is – because we can only talk to people who are still alive – and you don't have to have any memories but we're just inviting if you have any memories of people who maybe did work or you just remember from the gay community who died, who didn't make it through. If there's anyone's name you want to name, or a story you want to tell.

SCM: I'm so bad with names, so I really can't remember. I remember this one guy in particular though. I remember when he was getting really sick and when he was dying, and then I had found out he died. [...] I knew his partner more. I think he used to meditate, actually. He had gone to the Shambhala centre a few times or something, I think. I can't remember their names, but I remember him getting sick and getting really frail.

AS: I think there are actually more overlaps with the Shambhala community than I knew. I was in Montreal going to school.

SCM: Yeah, I discovered them a lot of times years later.

AS: We just did an interview with someone in Vancouver who was active in Nova Scotia. She gave us some pictures and one of them is of Colleen Logan at an ACT UP thing.

SCM: No way!

AS: Yeah! So, then the last thing is just if anything else has come up that you want to say or mention, or any memories that are sparked. Also, if there are any other people that you think we should be sure to talk to.

SCM: [...] Nothing comes to mind except there's a story, like, an incident that is coming up. It's not particularly about the AIDS movement or ACT UP or politics, but just about what Rumours was

and the community that I felt once was in Halifax. Was it Andrea? I think her name was Andrea. She was a musician. She sang in a female woman's group... "The Four" something?

AS: Four the Moment? Andrea Currie?

SCM: Maybe. I remember some guys coming after me. It was sort of happening slowly where they were calling me "fag" and stuff like this. You had to get buzzed into Rumours and there was nobody there at first. And these guys were walking across the street and calling out names to me and stuff and being intimidating and threatening generally. I remember being really scared and just thinking to myself, "I hope someone comes to the door before they get there." And I was still walking to the building. And Andrea, I think it is, was with her partner or a friend behind me and she engaged these guys and just sort of pacified the situation. And someone opened the door and I got in, and then after that she came in. Ironically, later, after I had stopped being involved in the gay community, I encountered her at some meditation programs at the Shambhala Centre. But that moment, to me, would always come up in my mind as something that represented that we were part of a family. We were in this together. And it's something I sort of miss about the gay community in a way, now that we've specialized into different categories of people, you know.

AS: Right. That moment where it was like, "We're all here..."

SCM: Yeah, and we're all in it together. I have some nostalgia for what used to be marches that are now parades because I feel like a lot of times the parades are a sell out. It seems to be more and more for people who are... it feels like a congratulations to the people who are supporting us rather than a congratulations or a celebration of us being us. Yeah, I think that's it.

AS: Thanks so much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]