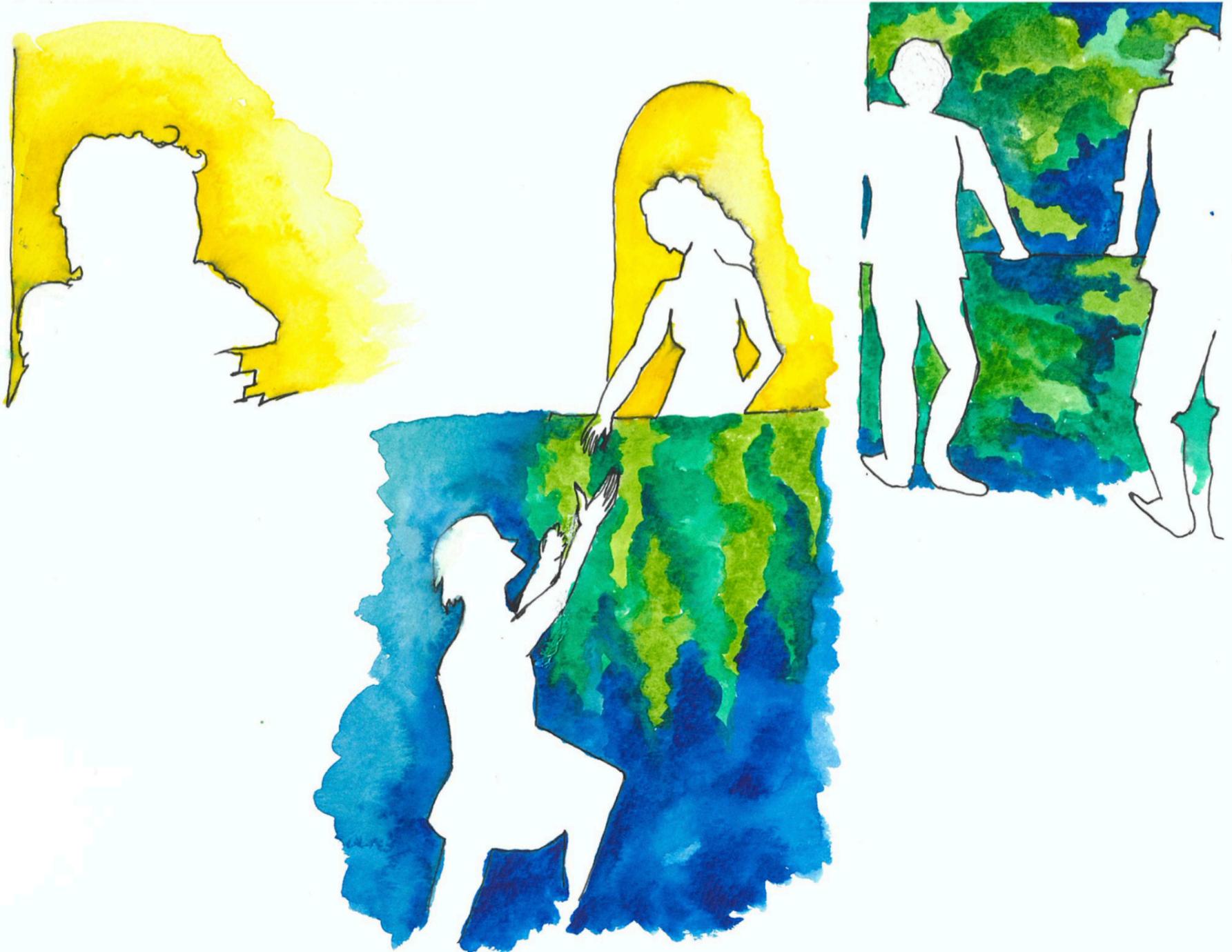


November 2020

THE GAY SAINT

Volume 4 Issue 2



Note from the Editor:

I am very happy to share the second edition of The Gay Saint with you. This time, the theme was on LGBT+ stars and icons. Thank you to Taba Bevan and her Saints LGBT+ Scavenger Hunt team, the Bell Street Bitches, for submitting the illustration used on page 4.

Take a break from work in these difficult last few weeks of the semester, and discover your horoscope for this month, learn about gay artists or even read some poetry!

– Head Editor, Natalie Psillou

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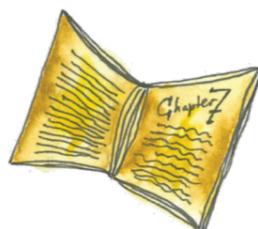
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ARTS & CULTURE

Michelangelo's 'David', the Modern Queer Icon

Hana Schloz

We've all heard it. You're a 10th grader, in your AP Art History class (which you're only taking because it was the only AP they offered to sophomores), and the teacher is covering Renaissance sculpture that day. The girl in the leather jacket sitting next to you side-eyes the flannel/short hair situation you have going on and whispers, 'He was gay, you know. Michelangelo.' And you're not sure what to say because you're fifteen and

vaguely think that homoeroticism in the arts was invented in 1925 when F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote the elevator scene in *The Great Gatsby*, so you kind of nod and continue trying not to look at the entirety of *David's* 'anatomical realism' being projected on the whiteboard in front of you.

We have all heard that Michelangelo was gay, and though some of the stuffier Art Historians out there (who are also big proponents of the classic 'look at these two very good friends', that classic slogan of LGBT+ erasure) would prefer not to affix contemporary labels of sexuality to sixteenth-century figures in the Renaissance canon,

historical evidence truly does point to the extension of Michelangelo's attraction to men beyond aesthetic appreciation of the classical male nude. If you don't believe me, you can keep reading, or you can save some time and look up any of his depictions of women, particularly his *Night* sculpture. The breasts are unconvincing, to say the least.

It is clear by looking at Michelangelo's body of work (and his poetry and his private correspondence) that he acknowledged and glorified the eroticism of the male form beyond the simple replication of sculptures of antiquity. There is strong evidence to

suggest that the Italian nobleman Tommaso dei Cavalieri, apparently known by contemporaries for his male beauty, was Michelangelo's lover and remained tied to him until the artist's death. Michelangelo's poetry, much of which dedicated to Cavalieri, is even censored by his nephew when it was published posthumously in 1623 due to its overt homoerotic content. Even his famous Sistine Chapel frescoes contain unnecessary decorative male forms despite the religious nature of the commission. Many of these male nudes could perhaps be explained away by the inherent aestheticism of Catholicism.

However, even the portrait of Christ himself in Michelangelo's rendition of *The Last Judgment* is interpreted by some to be a portrait of Cavalieri.

Regardless of the true nature of Michelangelo's sexual identity, it would be difficult for any art historian to refute the space that his iconic nude *David* has occupied in the modern queer community.

It is easy to imagine why this well-respected depiction of such an idealized form of the male body became so popular among the queer community of the 20th and 21st centuries. Think back to Armand and Albert's lavish – albeit flamboyantly decorated –

South Beach apartment in *The Birdcage*; the couple is forced to hide their homoerotic collection of art when their son brings his girlfriend and her conservative parents around for dinner. By the late 20th century, art depicting the male nude had become ingrained in queer culture as a subtle expression of sexuality. The term 'subtle' may be less applicable when it comes to Armand and Albert's 'Greek bowls', but the queering of canonized art was a major avenue for the covert expression of sexuality throughout this period. The iconization of works such as *David* within queer culture has the power to transform these respected pieces of art into representations of

queer love. Personal interpretation of popular works can thus be incredibly self-validating of otherwise taboo expressions of sexuality, regardless of the original artistic intention.

This phenomenon is perhaps better and more concisely explained by Dr Raymond-Jean Frontain of *The Gay and Lesbian Review*: '[...] since becoming canonized as one of the world's best-known pieces of "high art", Michelangelo's *David* has provided gay men not only with a new way of looking at the self, but of allowing oneself to be looked at in an erotic way, however covertly.' The covert appreciation of the self and the connection between

self and sexuality, becomes essential when this sexuality is inherently othered and censored by an unaccepting society. Queer appreciation of male beauty may or may not have been the context in which the artist originally operated, but in the case of works such as *David*, it is essential to interpret how the art is being consumed just as much as how it is being created.



What Hozier's Songs Mean to Me

Milo Hill

Hozier is an LGBT+ icon. If you're confused by this statement, I can understand why. Why is this white, straight, Irish guy such an important figure for so many members of the LGBT+ community? Well, maybe you've never listened to any of his songs. As a lesbian, here's a list--in no particular order--of a few of my favourite songs by Hozier, why I love them so much, and what they mean to me.

'Take Me to Church'

Hozier's most popular song by far was released in 2015 and is now an international hit. It's his

Often they feel like this might be the only chance they'll have. I know I have fallen prey to this. My favourite lyrics are 'cut clean from the dream that night, let my mind reset / looking up from a cigarette, she's already left / start digging in the yard for what's left of me in our little vignette / for whatever poor soul is coming next'.

'In a Week'

Nothing is more romantic than two corpses decaying in a field together. Seriously. I'm not entirely sure why, but there is something inherently gay about wanting to lie in the

most famous song for a reason: a perfect combination of anger at the Catholic Church and beautiful music. Having seen Hozier in concert a couple times now, I know that when he performs this song, he plays the music video to go along with it, and it has never failed to make me cry. Specifically, the song and music video are a response to Russia's anti-LGBT policy, despite the fact that Hozier is singing about a woman.

To me the most heart-wrenching lyrics are "we were born sick" / you heard them say it...there is no sweeter innocence than our gentle sin / in the madness and the soil of that sad earthly scene / only then I am human / only then I am clean'. They seem to capture an experience specific to LGBT+ youth, the feeling of being 'sick' or 'sinful'

grass with your lover until both your bodies are consumed by nature. I think it's the feeling of otherness and contrariness that is seen more in LGBT+ relationships than in heterosexual relationships. Nature provides a safe and loving sanctuary for LGBT+ people that cisgender heterosexual people don't require because they are, by default, accepted by general society.

purely because of who they are. The song fights against this feeling and makes it mean so much more to me.

'Jackboot Jump'

Released in 2019, 'Jackboot Jump' is another song that is a response to the many protests against oppressive governments and societies. With references to the protests at Standing Rock, in Moscow and in Hong Kong, the song embodies the fighting spirit we need going forward in order to overthrow oppressive regimes all around the world.

My favourite lyrics in this song are 'the jackboot only jumps down / on people standing up / so you know good things are happening / when the jackboot needs to jump'. They seem particularly pertinent to this day and age, with student led protests all

over the world campaigning for Black lives, feminism, LGBT+ rights, etc. Right now, 'the jackboot needs to jump' and it's a good sign. It means we need to keep fighting.

'Jackie and Wilson'

Perhaps a more personal favourite, 'Jackie and Wilson' is another love song, somewhat set apart from a modern, popular perception of what a 'love song' even is. The song tells a story of two people falling in love, planning their lives together, and then it turns out this entire love story is just imagined, and the girl Hozier is singing about leaves after the night.

To me the song perfectly encompasses the feeling of finding someone and imagining your entire future with them, and when they leave you have to pick up the pieces of yourself. It's a feeling more common to members of the LGBT+ community.

home and such peace can also be found in nature and with your lover(s).

I could go on and on explaining why the entirety of Hozier's discography is so iconic amongst the LGBT+ community, but there is only so much space here. These are just my personal favourite and most meaningful songs, but of course everyone will have their own opinions, and find meaning in each of them.



Lesbians Are From Lesbos: Sappho and Queer Yearning in 600 B.C.

Rebecca Drever

‘For you beautiful woman my mind never changes’

As the theme for this month’s edition of *The Gay Saint* is LGBT+ icons and stars, it felt only appropriate to write about the OG lesbian herself: Sappho.

For the uninitiated, Sappho was the quintessential lyric poet of the Greek Archaic period. Some of her poems were preserved on ancient

Egyptian papyrus but tragically – despite Sappho’s fame in antiquity and huge literary output – mere fragments of her work remain. Like the scattered fragments of her poetry, only a handful of details are known about Sappho’s life. What we do know is that she gained such a reputation for her love and desire for women that the word ‘lesbian’ itself is derived from the Greek island on which Sappho lived: Lesbos. Her name is also the origin of the term ‘sapphic’, describing romantic love or attraction between women. One can only aspire to create art in which your intense passion for women shines through so clearly that your name becomes synonymous with lesbianism.



Perhaps unsurprisingly, some classical scholars went on to try to explain away the queerness of Sappho’s work in desperation to create a heterosexual narrative for the poet. It seems unnecessary to give that line of questioning any focus here or to argue whether we can really apply labels to Sappho’s sexuality. What is important and undeniably evident in the surviving fragments is that her poems focus on women and on women’s emotional lives with one another; male figures, when they do appear, stand on the periphery.

As to what her actual world was like, we can only make educated guesses but Sappho’s poetic world was clearly one that revolved

around women and homoerotic desire.

Sappho was the first Ancient Greek poet to write expressively about the feelings associated with love. Distinct from the work of her male contemporaries, she personalised the physical manifestations of emotions. The association between Sappho’s poetry and feelings of longing and desperate yearning stem less from any typical descriptions of women’s looks but the descriptions of the feelings they evoke. One of the most profound examples of this nature of expression is perhaps her best-known work, *Fragment 31*, which depicts the speaker looking jealously upon a man and a woman as they converse, envious of the opportunity to woo the girl:



He seems to me equal to gods that man

whoever he is who opposite you sits and listens close

to your sweet speaking and lovely laughing— oh it

puts the heart in my chest on wings

for when I look at you, even a moment, no speaking

is left in me no: tongue breaks and thin

fire is racing under skin and in eyes no sight and drumming

fills ears and cold sweat holds me and shaking

grips me all, greener than grass

I am and dead—or almost

I seem to me. (translated by Anne Carson)



The soft musicality of Sappho’s lyrics combined with the overwhelming intensity of the emotions she describes makes for poetry that is at once sweetly tender and visceral in its sensuality. As well as the language itself, the very process of reading

Sappho is one of yearning as what we are left with for the most part is broken lines, missing words, and incomplete verses. However, don’t let the fragmentary nature put you off from exploring more of her work. There is an intimacy to Sappho’s

poetry that feels inherently modern and something powerful in rejecting the classical Greek epic world of masculine warfare in favour of beauty and desire. Of course, there’s a reason why she has come to be understood as one of the most important figures

in queer literary history. As Sappho herself wrote:

‘Someone, I tell you, will remember us, Even in another time.’

HOROSCOPES

Western Star Signs

Aung Hein Htet

As we reach the end of 2020, lots of transformations are on the way. This month packs a big punch. See what it has in store for you.

Aries

(March 21 - April 19)

A month of stress. You will be nervous about the Christmas shopping, but especially about meeting the relatives with whom you have nothing to talk about. You shouldn't have to avoid them, though. Be authentic and confident, and you will make a great impression on them.

Taurus

(April 20 - May 20)

You will feel completely carefree this time of the year. You will feel relaxed and binge on sweets and alcohol – maybe a little too much – so make sure you count your calories and pints.

Gemini

(May 21 - June 20)

Quality time with loved ones is priceless. Plan a trip somewhere and indulge in this peaceful

time to step into next year full of energy and motivation. Even if you choose to stay in and hang out with your flatmates, the small midnight chats will deepen your bonds.

Cancer

(June 21 - July 22)

You will be emotionally unstable in the last month of the year. You will reflect on the goals you have set for this year, but you haven't achieved them yet. However, don't worry about the past and instead, look ahead.

Leo

(July 23 - August 22)

Take care of your body with regular exercise and a healthy diet, and nurture your soul with meditation. You have had a successful year, so there's no point in stressing out.

Virgo

(August 23 - September 22)

If you are planning to go to a big meeting, you should consider whether it would be better to find an excuse and visit the family privately. Christmas decorations might make you feel better if you prepare it carefully, and treat yourself with everything you crave.

Libra

(September 23 - October 22)

You might have some concerns about quarrels that may occur. Even if they happen, you will try to stay positive and solve them with your diplomatic approach. Libras will be proud of what they've been able to overcome this year. Confidence is surely in place because you have lived through one of the most difficult years of your life.

Scorpio

(October 23 - November 21)

On one hand, you will not lack motivation, and on the other, due to the excessive need to be right at all costs, you can be intolerant and self-seeking. Perhaps a short walk to the beach and the sea breeze could help?

Sagittarius

(November 22 - December 21)

A stay in a spa or in the countryside, where you could escape from the reality completely, could help you withstand this difficult time. Allow yourself to charge some strength for the next year, and you'll see that you will take off in all the finery.

Capricorn

(December 22 - January 19)

Holidays, family reunions, and parties will make you leave your comfort zone and at first, you will be very uneasy, but, once you arrive, you will probably be the centre of attention and you will even enjoy it. In the end, you will be very happy that you didn't find an excuse not to go.

Aquarius

(January 20 - February 18)

December will be one of the most pleasant months of the whole year for you. You don't have to worry about spending a lot on Christmas presents – even a small thing can make a lot of people happy. The most important thing is that you spend Christmas with your loved ones.

Pisces

(February 19 - March 20)

Winter holidays will be a great opportunity for you to make plans for the next year. Try to imagine where you would like to see yourself in one year and think carefully about how to achieve it.

Chinese Zodiac Signs

Aung Hein Htet

Rat

(1960, 1972, 1984, 1996)

A time of planning and reflection; as the new year approaches, it would be wise to look back and decide which path to take next. Also, do celebrate because you have put in a lot of effort in 2020.

Ox

(1961, 1973, 1985, 1997)

Communication is key; you may find yourself in situations where you feel misunderstood. Reach out to the ones in your close circle and talk to them, maybe they could help you.

Tiger

(1962, 1974, 1986, 1998)

Sprint, sprint, sprint; after a long ass year of lagging behind, you may find yourself trying to accomplish goals and tasks you'd planned out long ago.

Rabbit

(1963, 1975, 1987, 1999)

The grass is always greener on the other side; this year, you may have chosen certain options over the others just because the rewards seem greater. Remember, many a times, it is us who define whether or not a reward is better than the other.

Dragon

(1964, 1976, 1988, 2000)

Keep up the good work, success is on its way; this year you have learned a lot. Whether it's a new language, a skill, a life lesson, you have always put in the maximum effort. Strive on and keep up the momentum next year.

Snake

(1965, 1977, 1989, 2001)

Relationships are blooming; whether you have just met a new person or have to been talking to someone for quite a while, you will be given chances to take your relationship to the next level. Grab that chance while you can.

Horse

(1966, 1978, 1990, 2002)

A time to focus on yourself; throughout the year, you have always focused on others and not taken good care of yourself. Retreat and spend more time on yourself and your feelings.

Goat

(1967, 1979, 1991, 2003)

Busy as a bee; you've been spending quite a large proportion of your leisure working and working. But guess what? This hard work is finally paying off!

Monkey

(1968, 1980, 1992, 2004)

A personal issue reaches resolution; something that has been bothering you for the whole of 2020 is coming to a resolution. But it's up to you to decide whether you like it or not.

Rooster

(1969, 1981, 1993, 2005)

Patience is an asset; for this whole year, you've been investing yourself in a lot of projects and activities in hope that you will gain something

out of it. If you have been feeling you're not getting anything, wait and in the long-run, you will surely see it comes to fruition.

Dog

(1970, 1982, 1994, 2006)

Adjustments are required for new beginnings; now is the best time to adjust your mindset and reconsider the path you're taking. You won't regret it.

Pig

(1971, 1983, 1995, 2007)

A time to relax and recharge for the next year; the 'pigs' have been spending most of their leisure time doing work and now is the time to take a deep breath and relax.



半梦：金星成为中国最知名 LGBT+ 名人的历程

Aung Hein Htet

金星是中国第一个公开接受变性手术的人。通过她长达数十年的舞蹈生涯，她向世人演绎了她对舞蹈、对生活、对家庭的奋斗史，也因此成为了世界上最著名的 LGBT+ 名人之一。

出生于辽宁沈阳，金星的父母是朝鲜族人，家里排行老二有一个姐姐。在她四岁时，她就意识到自己与同龄人的不同。年仅九岁的她进入了中国解放军文工团学习舞蹈，是当时军队里最小的。在接下来

的十年，她的努力奋斗使她成为了文工团里最棒的舞蹈演员，同时也能熟练地使用机关枪和手榴弹。

在她十七岁那一年，金星获得了全国第一届桃李杯的冠军，也因此被送到了广州学习现代舞。两年后，她被国家派送到了美国纽约继续深造，也在纽约创下了辉煌的记录，也让纽约乃至美国的舞蹈圈都对这位来自中国的舞者赞不绝口。1995 年，她回到了中国，在上海接受了她人生的一场大手术。随后，她创立了自己的舞蹈团也收养了三个孩子。几年后，金星在中国的知名度急剧上升，而其原因是她在那无所畏惧、敢

说敢骂的性格。而她也因此获得了“毒舌”的称号。犀利的点评和不惧怕舆论的特点成为了她金星的特色，也为日后的“金星秀”做了铺垫。

虽然金星不是第一个接受变性手术的中国人，但在中国“变性”到现在还是一大忌讳。许多媒体和大众也都带着有色眼镜看待此事。但金星却公开了她的变性手术，而政府睁一只眼闭一只眼，没有阻止她的这一举动也让许多人猜测是否在不久后同性恋和变性能够慢慢的被中国社会所

接受。虽然到了今天许多人开始慢慢地淡化了对 LGBT+ 群体的偏见，但一个不可否认的事实是现在这个社会对 LGBT+ 群体依然存在着威胁。

即使身处险境，金星毅然决然的选择了这一路。她说道她在部队里所度过的艰难的日子让她明白自己要变得成熟、要努力、要奋斗。规矩就是规矩，部队不会因为她年仅九岁就偏袒她。她开玩笑道：“我在部队里所挨的打，搁现在那得叫虐待儿童。”

金星承认，当时 28 岁的她在美国变性手术绝对不是问题，跟中国相比之下会容易得太多了。



但她认为，生而为中国人既然第一个人生是在中国开始的，那么她第二个人生也一定要在中国启程。“跟我的父母坦诚并不难，因为我知道他们从很早以前就开始怀疑我了。我不像其他男生一，我喜欢舞蹈，喜欢女孩子们爱干的事情。我也没有女朋友。”

在那之后金星即将接受变性手术的消息很快的传遍的娱乐圈。但是手术过程中，医生没有照顾好金星的左腿，十六个小时后左腿高度痉挛神经全部坏死，医生诊断：很难恢复，即使恢复过来也是个瘸子。

那段时间是金星一生中最为艰难的时刻。“我的第一

反应是我要跳楼。我当时觉得是因为我牺牲的不够，老天爷跟我开了个很大的玩笑。”但是某天下午金星看到了希望，她开始下床活动，但还是得坐着轮椅。从轮椅到拐杖，从双拐到单拐，再到最后一瘸一瘸的走路。三个多月后金星重新拾起信心带着她当时的北京现代舞蹈团再次的站在了舞台上。

二十多年过去了，她的脚始终还在恢复的过程中。既然不能像年轻的时候一样跳得完美，金星把重心放到她的舞蹈团；她开始编舞，教年轻人跳舞。这些年来，她也陆续地收养

了三个孩子。即便社会舆论批判她不可能成为一个好母亲，她的回应：“等我的孩子长大了，你们再来看看我是不是一位好母亲。”

在她三十八岁那年，金星遇见了她的先生汉斯并且两人注册结婚。但却因为汉斯是德国人孩子们要上户口的话必须走国际领养程序，非常之麻烦。也因为这个原因他们的三个孩子迟迟没有户口也没有身份证。因此在 2012 年，金星和汉斯两人做了个艰难的决定：离婚给孩子们办中国户口。当时民政局的人问她原因，金星说了句：因为德国队输了，我要找个意大利人结婚。这

整个过程前前后后花了六年的时间，终于在 2018 年，金星和汉斯在意大利举行了他们迟来的婚礼。两位“新人”在他们的三个孩子以及亲朋好友的注视下完美的结婚了。

对于中国近年来变化迅速的发展而言金星说道：“我的犀利和独立的个性到现在为止还是不能被某些人接受，但这没问题。年轻一代人看着我的故事夸我是“中国的自由女神。”或许我的使命就是为了推翻当今社会仍然存在的封建的、具有偏见的思维模式。所以别当我的道。人不犯我，我不犯人，人若犯我，我斩草除根！”

Warum der Biedermeier gar nicht so bieder war wie man uns in der Schule erzählt hat – über die Lügen des heterosexuellen Kanons

Toni Andres

Eine der vielen Superpowers, die mit queer-sein einhergehen, ist die unschlagbare Fähigkeit, queere vibes aus frustrierend heterosexuellen Zeilen herauszulesen. Bevor die mainstream Medien mit *Call Me By Your Name* und *The Song of Achilles*

gesegnet wurden, war queer-coding (bzw. queer-decoding von Heterosexualität) das absolute status quo und wurde erst in den letzten Jahren mehr und mehr durch adäquate (und realistische!) Repräsentation von queeren Charakteren ersetzt. Die jahrhundertlange Abwesenheit von literarischen Vorbildern macht klassische Literatur allerdings aus diesem Grund umso weniger zugänglich für queere Leser*innen, da sie konstant an die historische Verdrängung von Queerness erinnert. Der ständige Kampf, die eigene Identität in dem überwältigenden Ausmaß von literarisch dokumentierter Hetero- und Cisnormativität wiederzufinden, ist schlichtweg ermüdend.

Als ich in der neunten

Klasse war, habe ich mich genau diesem Problem ausgesetzt gesehen. Ich bin als heterosexueller Cis-Mensch in das Schuljahr gestartet, allerdings hatte der Rahmenlehrplan andere Pläne mit mir – nach wenigen Wochen von Liebeliteratur (interessanterweise haben sie das rausgenommen – zu viele verzweifelte queer teens?) wurde ich bodenlos verwirrt wieder ausgespuckt. Diese Verwirrung erreichte ihren Höhepunkt in der Revelation von einem rauchenden und um seine Julia schluchzenden Leonardo DiCaprio; meine queere Epiphanie lebte ich beim Abschlussprojekt aus, indem ich Romeo in Viktoria umschrieb. Aber dann haben gender Dysphorie und internalisierte Homophobie an die Tür geklopft und die erste

Welle von Regenbogeneuphorie war vorbei. Die Frustration darüber, dass ich weder Romeo war noch mich mit Julia identifizierte, stellte sich sehr schnell als ein Grundproblem heraus, mit dem ich mich nicht nur in der Realität, sondern spezifisch in Literatur konfrontiert sah. Obwohl mich das nicht davon abgehalten hat, Literatur weiterhin als Leidenschaft zu verfolgen, haben die Dichter und Denker der deutschen Literaturgeschichte graduell queere Aggressionen in mir ausgelöst. Im *Gay Saint* habe ich einen queeren Ansatz Frankenstein zu lesen verfolgt und so versucht zu zeigen, dass der literarische Kanon aus der Schule fast so viel Stoff für eine queere Dekonstruktion hergibt wie es queere Menschen gibt: eine Menge.

Wie aber bereits erwähnt, ist es unendlich erschöpfend, konstant nach Krümeln in kanonischer Literatur zu suchen, wenn die Kirsty Logans und Madeline Millers des 21. Jahrhunderts ganze Regenbogenkuchen backen. Für lange Zeit habe ich mich einfach damit abgefunden, dass die große Literatur der letzten Jahrhunderte schlichtweg hetero-, cisnormativ war – Orlando und *The Picture of Dorian Gray* können schließlich auch noch ein fünftes Mal gelesen werden. Diese selbstarigische Schulterzucken im Angesicht von historischer Verdrängung von queerness aus dem öffentlichen Bild ist aber dennoch nicht die Antwort auf dieses Dilemma. Denn queer war die Vergangenheit mit Bestimmtheit – die Menschheit hat logischerweise keine Pause vom queersein zwischen der Antike und dem 20. Jahrhundert eingelegt. Abgesehen von Sappho jedoch war das Wenige an queerer Repräsentation in der Historie von Literatur fast exklusiv die Abbildung von schwulen Männern, wie zum Beispiel in Catull's

Gedichten. Karin Lützen macht 1990 allerdings darauf aufmerksam, dass lesbische Liebe sehr wohl literarisch festgehalten ist – zwar nicht in öffentlich zugänglicher Literatur, sondern in Form von unendlichen Briefen, die über Jahrhunderte geschrieben wurden. Historie hat einen vorzüglichen Job von queer erasure ausgeführt. Ähnlich wie Lützen hinterfragt Angela Steidele in ihrem Buch *Geschichte einer Liebe – Adele Schopenhauer und Sibylle Mertens* die scheinbar exklusive Existenz von heterosexueller Liebe zu Zeiten Goethe's und Schiller' (auch nicht besonders heterosexuell im Angesicht der Menge an Briefen zwischen den beiden – ganz viel Stoff für Fanfictions!). Dabei erzählt sie von der Liebesgeschichte von Adele Schopenhauer, der Schwester des Philosophen Arthur Schopenhauer, der so intellektuell einflussreich wie misogyn war, und Sibylle Mertens. Eine weitere wichtige Rolle im Leben der beiden Frauen spielte Ottilie von Goethe, die durch Heirat in die Familie Goethe aufgenommen wurde und

von Goethe regelrecht als Tochter behandelt wurde. Sowohl Adele als auch Sibylle wurden 1797 geboren und lernen einander im Mai 1829 kennen. Sibylle war zu diesem Zeitpunkt bereits verheiratet und Adele hatte gerade erst Weimar verlassen, wo sie schwerst verliebt in die (höchstwahrscheinlich) heterosexuelle Ottilie gewesen war – der Plot ist nur Ilzu wohl bekannt. Mehrere Aspekte an dieser (realen) Geschichte sind bemerkenswert. Erstens gibt es ein happy ending: Sibylle Mertens und Adele Schopenhauer kommen eventuell zusammen und verbringen ihr Leben bis zu ihrem Tod gemeinsam – Disney könnte sich eine Scheibe abschneiden. Zweitens nimmt Steidele eine Perspektive deutscher Historie ein, die nicht von einem heterosexuellen cis-Mann erzählt wird. Die intellektuellen hobs sowohl um Ottilie als auch um Sibylle herum zeugen von einer blühenden Kultur von Dichterinnen und Denkerinnen, die Menschen wie Annette von Droste-Hülshoff hervorgebracht haben. Und drittens zeigt die Entdeckung der Briefe der beiden Frauen, dass durch die queere Linse die

Historie der Welt nicht nahtlos von Sappho zu Virginia Woolf gesprungen ist. Geschichte wurde nicht nur von Shakespeare und Goethe gemacht, sondern genauso von den Adeles und Sibylles. Sicherlich bedeutet das Wissen um die Problematik des literarischen Kanons, der aus diesem Grund die Versinnbildlichung und literarische Reflektion von jahrhundertlanger, systemischer Unterdrückung von Minoritäten darstellt, nicht, all diese Literatur einfach loszuwerden. Goethe hatte unleugbaren literarischen Wert und Shakespeare hat nachhaltig Liebesliteratur geprägt. Aber das haben Sibylle Mertens und Adele Schopenhauer auch getan. Ein Teil des Aufrufs nach Repräsentation in Medien ist daher, Geschichte(n) so zu erzählen, wie sie tatsächlich stattgefunden hat (haben), anstatt denselben Zyklus zu perpetuieren. Repräsentation fängt nicht erst 2020 an.

CREATIVE WRITING

All the Moons // All the Skies

Lucien Newton.

I wonder

What you see
When you
Look up at the sky.

Do you
Chart the path of
Freckles
Down my spine
When you map the stars?

Do you
Look for tales in comets
And wish upon them,
And wonder
What I wish for
When I
See a flicker of light?

Do they
Remind you of
My eyes,
My smile,
The beads of water
Rolling over collar bones
After a summer shower?

Do you ever
Look at them
And look at me,
And try to find the words

To say all of the things
You mean
But can only
Write
In metaphors?

Or do you
Sit
Alone
Exhausted
Cold.
And cradle your tea,

Watch the cigarette burn
down
And remember
The ocean.
And how you
Talked about life
When I
Thought about death?

Because,
Sometimes,
I look up
And it's so vast,
So beautiful
And I write you poems
You'll never read.

But,
Sometimes,
I look up
And it's all
So far away,
So vast
And I feel so small.

And you're never here.



A More Enlightened Time

Lily Coleman.

my darling,

at the time of my writing this letter, the night hangs heavy in the air – that thick, oppressive sort of darkness that seems to wring one's soul out. i usually detest this hour of night, my darling boy, as you very well know, and prefer to sleep and wake early so as to avoid having to see it - but tonight i have had the strangest dream, and felt i had to get up from my bed and write to you about it. i miss you quite terribly. i wish that i had awoken to the vision of you

beside me, your hair spread so charmingly across the pillow, what little light the moon had graced us with illuminating the line of your nose, the soft curve of your cheek, sanctifying you, making you an angel. would that i could have gently woken you with a kiss, whispered against your ear the story of my dream, and watched your kind eyes take on that expression of immeasurable warmth that they do sometimes, often when i'm saying something ridiculous. ah, but i digress...

this dream, my love, this brilliant, queer dream. have you ever had one of those dreams in which you feel like you aren't sleeping? i

truly believed that i had awoken: i found myself lying in my bed with the strangest and most insistent urge to walk to the window, an urge i could not shake. i believed, as though it had been whispered to me while i walked that thin line between the human world and that of dreams, that there was something out there that i had to see, something that - were i to miss it - i would feel forever incomplete, would forever have an irreparable wound deep within my soul. so, i rose. with a drifting, ghostly movement that seemed so natural to me in that otherworld, i moved over to

the windowpane, finding it coated with a thin sheen of mist that swirled and shifted inexplicably; nonetheless when i looked out into the night, i could see clearly. two figures, my dearest boy, two figures stood close together under the flickering light of the lamp that illuminated the street; standing close enough that even i- the onlooker, the voyeur- could feel the warmth between them, feel the intimacy that cracked in the air where they stood.

they reminded me of us, my dearest one; they were like us.

they were dressed strangely, in a style i did not recognise, wearing clothes made from strange materials that i could not name, but small matters like that were only significant for an instant, because it was at that moment that the taller of the two men took a small step forward, bringing them closer together, closer than i - if i had never met you and known that particular intimacy - closer than i would have thought two men could ever stand. he took a firm hold of his jaw, and he kissed him. it was a sweet kiss, tender and gentle, but passionate too, unmistakably so. i couldn't look away from them: my

heart soared, for they reminded me more and more of the two of us. but it shivered too, not out of sadness or fear for those two young men, since something in me knew they were not of this world, that they were protected, but my heart still shivered with the absolute certainty that this was a vision. a dream, perhaps, but a vision nonetheless. these two young men, the shorter of the two now reaching up to caress the line of his lover's jaw with the side of his thumb, were not fiction, were not imagined, were real and true and flesh and blood and my god i knew with absolute conviction

that they were from another time, a more enlightened time. and although they were entirely different people from you and i, from what may as well be a different universe to the one we inhabit, i thought that there's little difference between you and i and those two young men. we both love in the same way.

the image of their faces has faded from my mind's eye, and only fades more as the flickering glow of the candlelight i am writing by banishes the heavy curtain of sleep from behind my eyes, but that is of no consequence. i remember them. i will always

remember them. perhaps history, in their time, will remember us.

i remain, forever, faithfully yours.

x



02:18: hey

02:18: are you up?

02:22: i guess you're not. i don't suppose you'll get these until the morning then

02:22: i really miss you yknow. i miss the way you look when you're sleeping, the way your face looks so sweet and peaceful,

the way your eyelashes somehow seem to catch the little bit of light that always comes in through the gap in the curtains and how your cheeks still look a bit flushed even though you're asleep. i'm always awake before you, which means i always get to admire you, and when i do i always think that i'll never be so content again for as long as i live.

02:23: until you wake up and hit me with your pillow and tell me to stop staring and kiss you

02:23: and i don't mind that much at all.

02:25: anyway i just wanted to text you because i just had the weirdest dream and i couldn't wait to tell you about it

02:26: you know those dreams where you think you've woken up ?? it was like that

02:26: i thought i'd woken up and i didn't know what time it was and it was too hot so i got up to close the window but the window seemed fogged up only when i put my hand out to wipe it clean, i saw it wasn't fogged up at all, it was shimmering with this weird mist

02:27: and that's when i noticed two men standing outside

02:28: they were wearing really old fashioned clothes and normally i would have just assumed they were in costumes or cosplay or something but it looked too real.

02:28: i don't know, they could have just been in costumes but in the dream i was so completely sure that they really were from the past and i could see them through some kind of portal or something.

02:29: and the weird thing is i still feel like that now.

02:31: i know this sounds so crazy but even now i'm properly awake it doesn't feel like remembering a dream, it feels like remembering a vision or a prophecy or something like that.

02:31: anyway, these two men, they kept looking around, like they were scared of someone seeing them, and they looked sad too. they were standing so close together that their

noses were basically touching

02:32: they really reminded me of us. like last summer at the train station when you had to go home and you wouldn't let go of my hand even though it was like 30 degrees out and we were both kind of clammy and when you told me you had to go onto the platform i grabbed you and kissed you so hard that that old couple gave us a dirty look but we didn't care and when you were telling me that you'd text me every day and come back as soon as you'd saved up for another ticket you had your face so close to mine that my eyes couldn't even focus on your face and your nose was touching mine

02:35: they looked just like that. nobody stands like that unless they're in love.

02:36: anyway, one of them put his finger against his lips, like a shushing kind of gesture and then put the same finger against the other one's mouth, then he turned away like he was going to leave

02:36: but then the other guy followed after him for a couple of paces and grabbed his arm and spun him back around and kissed him on the mouth. it wasn't a long kiss by any means but even from where i was i could feel he really meant it and i thought if they really were from the old days then it

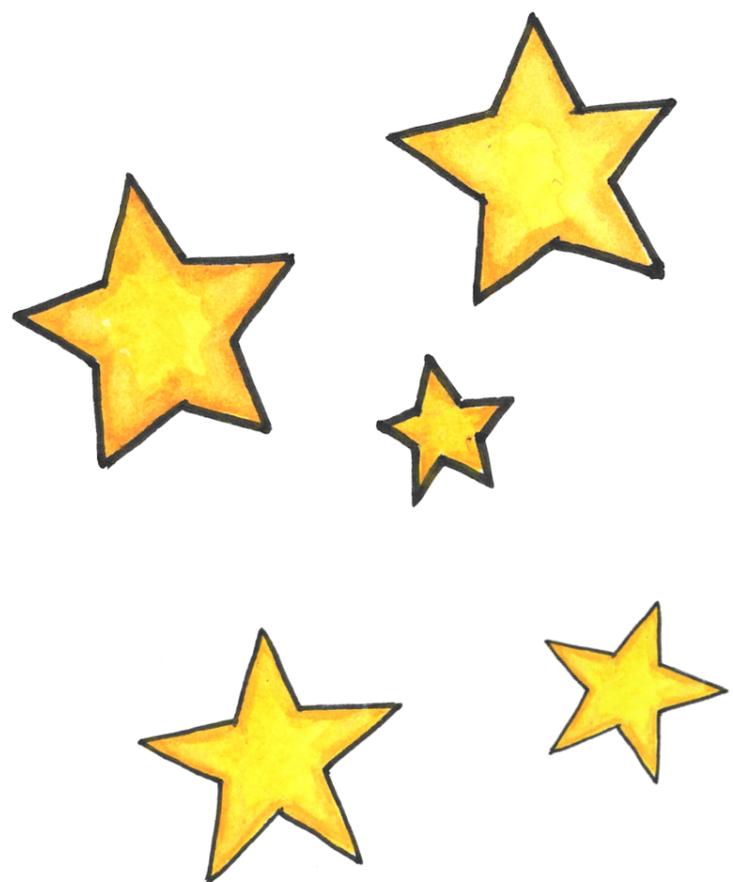
must have been pretty dangerous doing that kind of thing.

02:37: and then i wondered if i'd still kiss you if we could get arrested for it and i know it's stupid of me to say but i thought that yes, i would.

02:38: and then i thought that there isn't really any difference between us now and them then. not really. we love the same as they did.

02:39: anyway, i just wanted to tell you about that dream. i hope you're sleeping well baby

02:40: i love you <3



AGONY AUNCLE



As deadline season comes closer, and winter begins to fall over us, life can be quite overwhelming, especially with the days being so short. So, I have curated a list of comfort movies, podcasts and bands to turn to when you might need a breather from all the work, or just something to be distracted with. Without further ado, here we go:

1.) *Love, Simon*: This is a lovely, wholesome movie about a teenage boy and how he survives high school, coming out, and how he navigates relationships and friendships. It's absolutely perfect for getting into the Christmas spirit and is a

brilliant movie with a happy ending. In case you're interested, it is based on a book called *Simon vs. the Homo sapien Agenda* which is a deeply funny and enjoyable book!

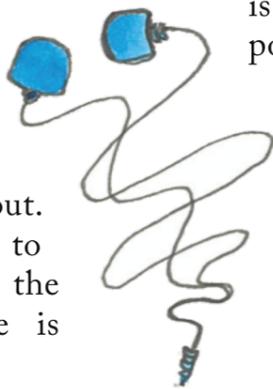
2.) *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*: While this movie might not have a 'happy' ending, it is one of my absolute favourites. The cinematography is gorgeous, the dialogue is lovely and, for any Greek mythology lovers, there is some subtle and beautiful symbolism sprinkled throughout. The costumes are to die for – and so is the acting. The movie is

about two women who come into each other's lives in 18th-century Brittany and fall in love. It is perfect if you want accurate representation of women who love women or if you want to cry your eyes out at the end without feeling utterly heartbroken. It is available on Mubi.

3.) *Alice isn't dead*: More lesbians!? Who would have thought? Alice isn't dead is a beautiful fiction podcast about a woman who goes on a road trip all over America looking for her wife who is presumed to be dead. It has some

amount of gore, wonderful writing, lesbians, some horror, and it dunks on capitalism. It also has a happy ending, perfect for listening to while walking or cooking or even sitting in bed with candy! It is available on Spotify.

4.) *Less is Morgue*: Trans Awareness week has just passed and *Less is Morgue* stars a nonbinary ghoulish and lesbian ghost who talk about stuff! Despite the main characters being ghouls and ghosts, it is a surprisingly wholesome podcast that deals with themes of friendship, love and contains some wonderful gay jokes.



It does also contain a fair amount of gore, so if that's not your thing, I'd stay away from that! It's also available on Spotify.

5.) *Wooden Overcoats*: If you're looking for a laugh, *Wooden Overcoats* is perfect! It is a comedy podcast revolving around a man who owns a funeral home. It's hilarious and refreshing and perfect for sitting down with on a cold morning under a blanket. It's also available on Spotify.

6.) *Saint Sister*: If you're looking for more bands to listen to, *Saint Sister* is a wonderful duo whose songs are lovely,

wholesome, with witchy-lesbian vibes – and their voices are a delight.

I hope you all have a wonderful end-of-term, and get your assignments done on time to have a chance to relax and have some fun, while staying safe, of course.

To any queer and trans people reading this, this is your reminder that you are worthy and loved and deserve good things.

Love,
Agony Auncle.



Celebrities and their Sexualities

Neo Jernigan

I don't have a lot of opinions about Harry Styles, which seems weird to say. It is because I was never into One Direction and his music just really isn't for me. That should be a good enough reason, but it seems as though there is an obsession with Harry Styles from so many people, both queer and not, that I just don't seem to get. However, within this obsession, there also seems to be a fascination with Styles' sexuality, which I do understand.

I think any queer person has been curious about a celebrity's sexuality, be it for representation, a crush, and/or a sense of community. It is not strange to wonder. What does, however, go too far is when this fascination turns to ridicule when said celebrity doesn't want to disclose that fact about them, and Harry Styles (and many others) face that too much.

It was recently announced that Styles would be playing a gay man in an upcoming romance movie, based on *My Policeman*, and it was almost immediately met with backlash. Many people wanted the main character to be played by a queer man and they felt that the

casting of Styles, who has not been very open on his sexuality, was wrong. To me, however, I had to wonder what if he is queer. So what he hasn't come out? Do we really need to force people to come out just so we know?

I think for a lot of people that answer is yes.

Becky Albertalli, the author of the book that inspired *Love, Simon*, actually was forced out. Fed up with question on her capability and rightful place in telling queer love stories, Albertalli, a cis woman married to a man, came out as bisexual in article titled 'I know I'm late.' Discussing the critique of her being a seemingly straight woman

writing queer stories she discusses how her questioning her sexuality all whilst being attacked for it created a very negative space for her.

'I know I'm late.' went on to be a very successful and highly praised article. Suddenly people who had been critiquing her were applauding her for her honesty. Her queerness suddenly gave her the right to write these stories, but she was always queer. She was always not an allocishet, and yet she was met with ridicule for failing to disclose that.

For many people, coming out is still monumentally difficult, and just because a person is a celebrity does not mean that it can't be.

The need for queer stories to be told by queer people, however, should not be downplayed. It is very important that queer people can be the center of their own past and future, but questioning people are also a part of the community, and what is so great about queer identities is they can constantly be in shift and can constantly be redefined to meet the needs of a person.

So yes, Harry Styles is not an out queer man, even if he has been tongue-in-cheek about his sexuality, but he could still be. He doesn't owe anyone to come out, and he doesn't need to be out to justify his role. What instead was a critique of someone's

sexuality, should have been a celebration that we were getting a queer love story. We should be focussing on the monumental occasion that is another queer story making the silver screen and the fact that this movie might help so many people on their journey to self acceptance.



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