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Anthony Friedkin: The Gay Essay

By Advocate.com Editors

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Above: *Hustlers, Selma Avenue, Hollywood, 1971*

Anthony Friedkin's photographs take us back in time to the gay communities of Los Angeles and San Francisco from 1969 to 1973.

In a series of more than 75 vintage prints, Friedkin's "The Gay Essay" transports viewers into these tumultuous years — a turning point in the history of LGBT political activism.

A native of Los Angeles, Friedkin has been taking pictures in his home state of California since he was 8 years old. Then in the spring of 1969, when he was 19, he started "The Gay Essay" with the hope of recording gay life and its increasing visibility. His work was a combination of reporting and individual discovery, with Friedkin developing close relationships with the people he shot. They were trying to live openly, express their individuality and sexuality on their own terms, and improvise ways to challenge the mainstream.

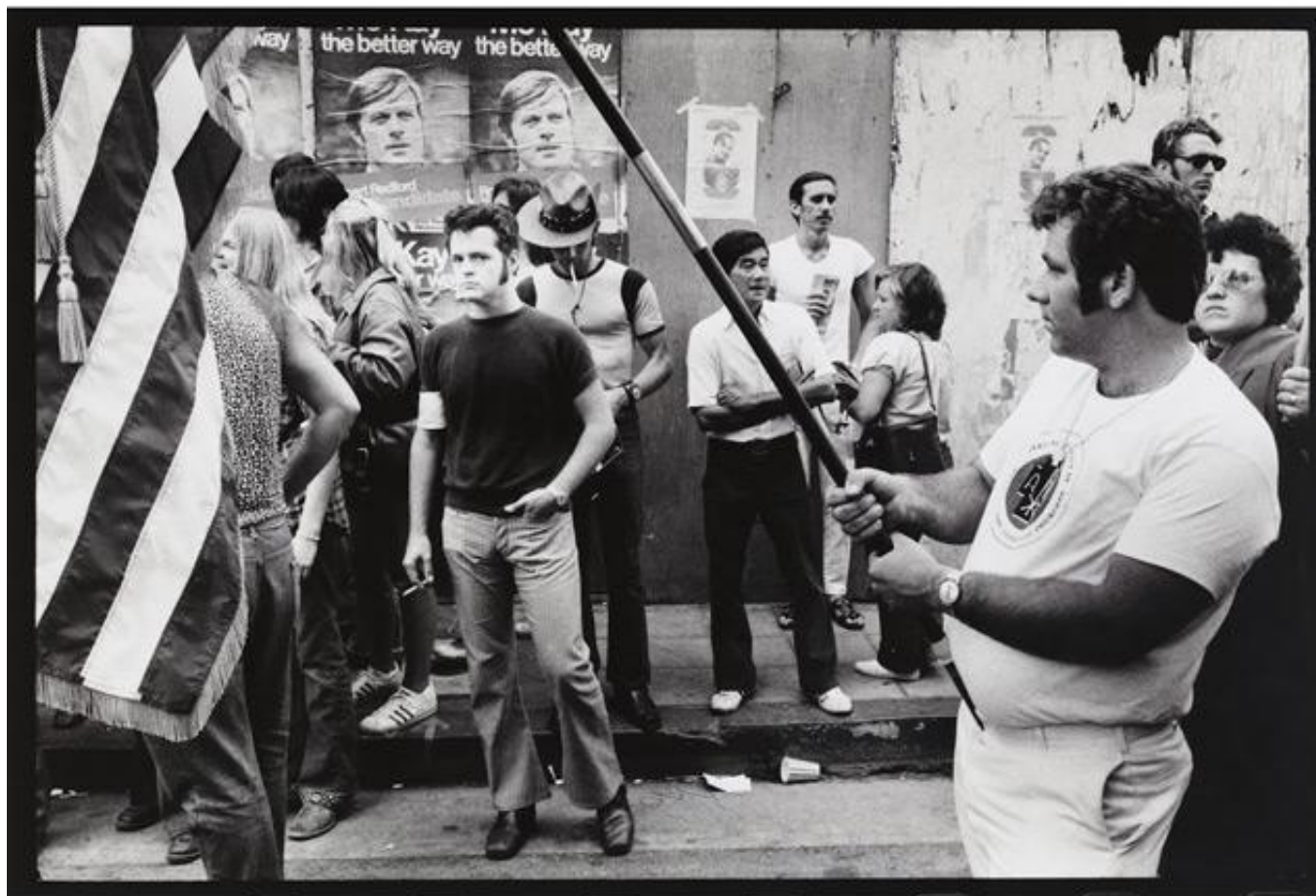
"More than four decades after this work was created, 'The Gay Essay' stands as both a record of historic change in our culture and an eloquent testimony to Anthony Friedkin's passion for the art of photography," says Julian Cox, curator of the exhibition at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. "We are left with a beautiful, sensitive record fit for the ages."

The de Young Museum

Golden Gate Park, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive, San Francisco, CA 94118

This exhibition will be on view from June 14 through January 11.

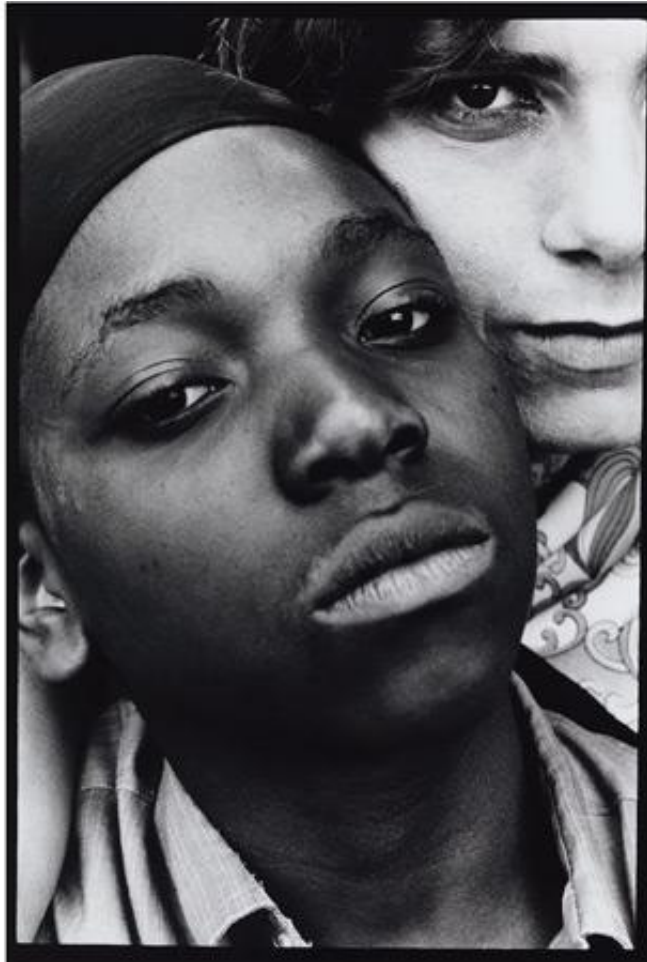
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Gay Liberation Parade, Hollywood, 1972



Michelle Backstage, "C'est La Vie" Club, North Hollywood, 1972



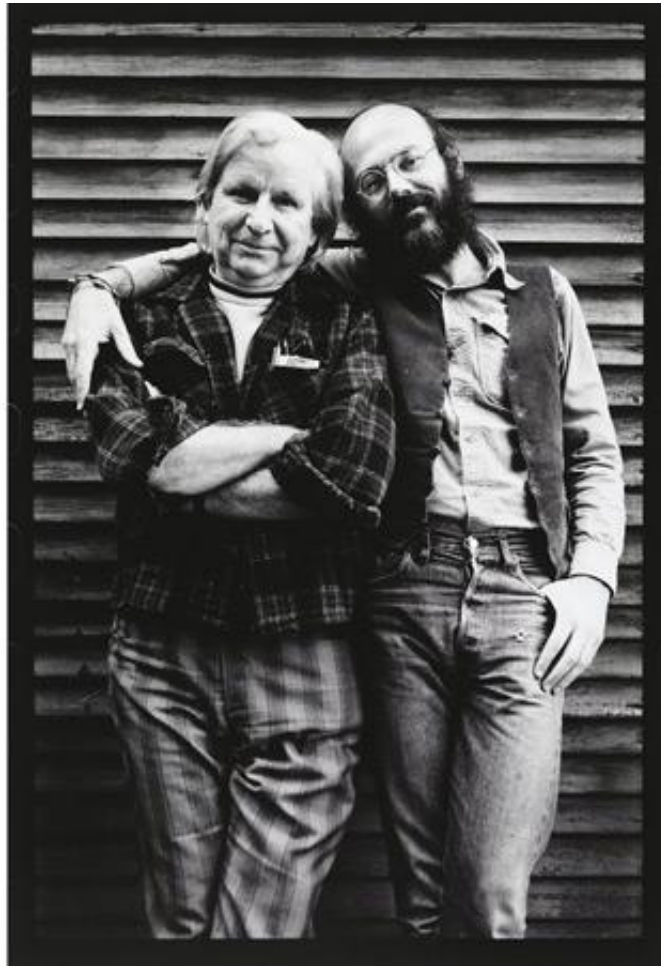
Couple, Los Angeles, 1970



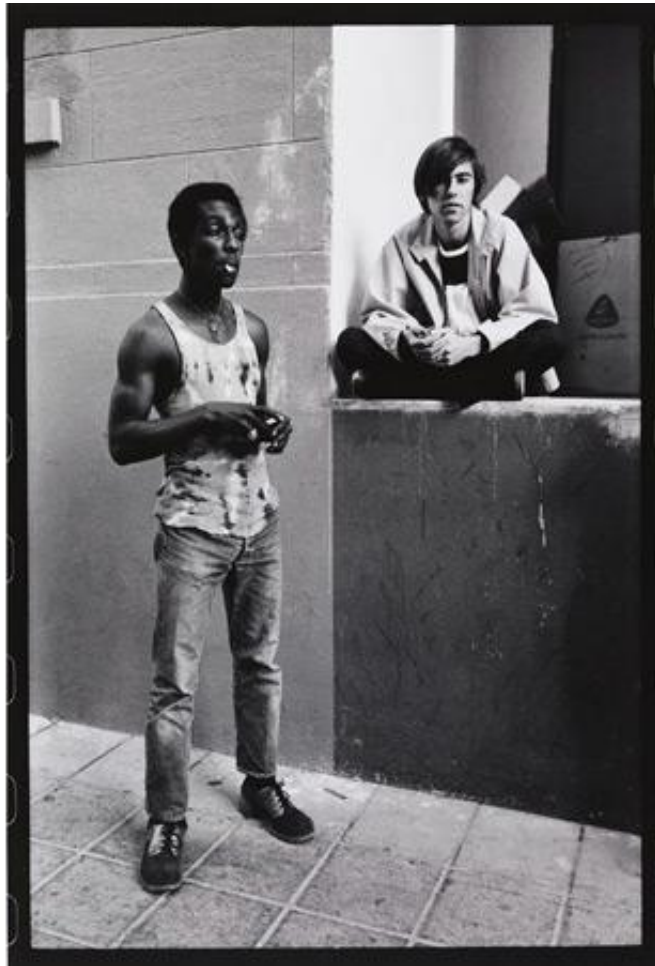
Jim, East Los Angeles, 1972



The Reverend Troy Perry, Gay Activist, in His Burnt Down Church, Los Angeles, 1973



Don Kilhefner and Morris Kight at the Gay Community Services Center, Los Angeles, 1972



Young Hustlers, Selma Avenue, Hollywood, 1971



Pristine Condition, The Palace Theater, San Francisco, 1972



Drag Queen, Long Beach, 1971



Jean Harlow, Drag Queen Ball, Long Beach, 1971



Jim and Valerie, Trouper's Hall, Hollywood, 1970



May Doll, Gay Liberation Parade, Hollywood, 1972



Couple in Front of Church, Los Angeles, 1970



Couple in Front of Church, Los Angeles, 1970

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