EIP

LGBT+ History Month 2021: Darren Smyth reflects

LGBT+ History Month is marked in the UK in February of each year. The month aims to celebrate and raise awareness around gay, bisexual and transgender history as well as the history of the gay rights and related civil rights movements.

In support of LGBT+ History Month this year, EIP's Partner, Darren Smyth collaborated with CIPA and IP Out on a number of blog posts throughout the month.

Personal Reflection and Introduction

To kickstart the series, Darren Smyth reflected on LGBT+ history and the legal changes that have taken place throughout his life. Darren writes: "I turned 50 last year and have been in a reflective mood. It strikes me that I have been alive for most of the period in which LGBT+ history has been able to be increasingly open in this country."

Darren's full personal reflection is available to view on the IP Inclusive website .

Representation in the Arts – Tales of the City

In Darren's second blog of the series, he explored LGBT+ representation in the arts and how this has changed over time.

Darren writes: "There is now no shortage of LGBT+ representation in the arts, whether in pieces that focus on LGBT+ characters and issues, or in pieces where the sexuality or gender identity is incidental to the main plot. The quality of representation in mainstream pieces is also improving – it is no longer essential that a gay character is tortured and unhappy, or is killed off in the first five minutes (although that still happens). But when I was a child, there was literally nothing, and so to me this constitutes huge progress."

Darren's representation in the arts blog is available to view on the IP Inclusive website.

Queer Spaces

In Darren's final blog of the series, he delved deeper into how venues for LGBT+ people have changed since the late 90s, in particular in London.

Darren writes: "Physical places are important in history – civic buildings, cathedrals, monuments clearly stand as markers to the history of a place and a people. Queer history likewise wants its spaces, but the LGBT+ community has struggled to claim particular spaces with any lasting continuity."

Darren's final blog of LGBT+ History Month is available to view on the IP Inclusive website.