

Shows & Exhibitions

The LGBTQI+ Gaze: Go Pride Month Gallery Cruising at These 6 Queer-Centric Exhibitions

Don't miss these highly-recommended New York shows that touch upon everything from pop culture parasites to punk rock to Princess Di.

William Van Meter, June 23, 2023

“A District Defined: Streets, Sex, and Survival” at 401



Lynsey Addario, untitled (1999). Courtesy of *A District Defined: Streets, Sex, and Survival*.

During the lead-up to Pride Month, the news cycle has been dominated by an uproar against consumer brands' supposed championing of queer causes. This cultural upheaval seems inevitable given the corporatization of Pride along with hollow marketing gestures and misdirected virtue signalling. At least we have great art shining a light at the end of the tunnel of bad beer and big box stores.

Here is a selected round-up of cool queer-centric shows currently on view in New York City. They're all devoid of rainbows—most just happen to be

up during Pride Month and represent a broad spectrum from high art to low brow.

For a varied gallery crawl that takes you from downtown to Brooklyn, be industrious and see them all in one day!

Before the High Line, the Standard, and gentrification in New York, Manhattan's Meatpacking District was the nexus of the city's transsexual sex trade and queer nightlife scenes in the 1980s and '90s. It was a time when heading to the wild west meant going past 9th Avenue and West 14th Street. The show "A District Defined" is a poignant visual document of this moment in history, culled from the photographs of Lynsey Addario, Lola Flash, Jill Freedman, Efrain Gonzalez, T.L. Litt, Catherine McGann, Katsu Anita, and Joseph Rodriguez.

This particular era of the neighborhood is trending at the moment. (It's a character unto itself in HBO's new *The Stroll* documentary.) The once-maligned last red light district of downtown and its after hours denizens (many of whom had no choice but to be there during that era's dismal job climate for trans people) are now being viewed with a more empathetic mindset. We're lucky that the photographers on-hand were there to not only capture the decadence, but also the grace.

"A District Defined: Streets, Sex, and Survival" is on view until July 9 at 401, West 14th Street, NY.