Out in Newark! Queer Club Spaces as Sanctuary

Beryl Satter (BS): Okay, welcome, everyone. We are delighted to welcome you to "Out in Newark: Queer Club Spaces as Sanctuary," which is a panel discussion and celebration of the rich history of ballrooms, clubs, and dance nights created or influenced by Newark's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community. In a city that even today struggles with the curse of homophobia, the ballroom, bar, party, and club spaces created by queer Newark residents have historically functioned as sanctuaries. They were places where LGBT people could form community, express their creativity, and create new forms of music, dance, fashion, and verbal expression that were influential locally, nationally, and even internationally. They were places where style and confidence were prized. They were places where people who faced depression in their daily lives could come and truly be themselves.

Rodney Gilbert (RG): Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Rodney Gilbert. I am the founder of YENDOR productions. That was Miss Beryl Satter from Rutgers University. Please give her a round of applause.

[Applause]

RG: We want to personally thank each and every one of you for coming out and sharing of your time in the celebration of who we are as a people. The Newark ballroom families in particular were also places where the LGBTQI Newarkers cared for each other in times of crisis. During the height of the aids crisis, for example, Newark's House of Jourdan—Bernie, put your hand up—raised—they raised money to fight against AIDS, distributed HIV prevention information, lobbied the state government to devote more resources to the fight against the disease, worked on voters registration, and perhaps most importantly of all, provided care and shelter to homeless LGBTQI youth, some of whom were facing this deadly illness with no support from their primary families. We are proud and happy to showcase tonight some of the creators, the performers, and clubgoers who together created sanctuary right here in the city of Newark. Let's give them a round of applause.

[Applause]

RG: I am proud, Sanctuary is a joint production of Rutgers University Queer Newark's Oral History Project, a community-based and community-directed initiative dedicated to preserving and sharing the history of the LGBTQI Newark, and of YENDOR productions, which is dedicated to promoting hope and healing through access to arts, integrated, and cross-cultural programs and performances.

BS: We would—Rodney and I would both like to thank Christina Strasburger, who—yay! We couldn't do it without Christina, whose smart and dedicated management made this program possible. We'd also like to thank the sponsors of Sanctuary, and it's kind of a long and wonderful and fabulous list, so we're going to read half and half. Sanctuary is sponsored by the Rutgers University Office of the Chancellor, Faculty of Arts and Sciences Newark Dean's Office, the Federated Department of History Rutgers University Newark and New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rutgers University Newark's Cultural Programming Committee, the LGBTQ and Diversity Resource Center, the Paul Robeson Campus Center Rutgers University Newark, the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture and the Modern Experience, FASN departments of African American and African Studies, English, Arts, Culture, and Media, Graduate Program in American Studies, Program in Women and Gender Studies, Honors College, MFA Program in Creative Writing, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Office of University Community Partnerships, Graduate School—Graduate School Newark, Center for Migration and the Global City, Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies, RU Pride, Rutgers University Center—New Brunswick Center for Race and Ethnicity.

RG: Committee to Advance our Common Purposes, Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, Center for Social Justice, Education, and LGBT Communities, Newark LGBTQI Commission, Newark LGBTQI Community Center, Newark Essex Pride Coalition, African American Office of Gay Concerns, Project WOW, Newark Pride Alliance, City of Newark's Advisory Commission on LGBTQI Concerns, Patrick Martin Institute, Out in New Jersey, Femmeworks, NJCRI, and a special thanks to Dr. Homney from the City of Newark Health Department, who sat down with me and is really engaged in helping us come up with some healthy solutions for our community. I would be remiss without thanking my staff. Stand up. They're young, they're dedicated. I appreciate you guys for making this happen for us. Beryl, it's back over to you.

BS: All right, back over to me. We are just—I wanted to just very briefly, before we go further, to tell people that there are two fabulous books to purchase or if you're interested. This, Journey Through the House: House Music, Volume One, photographs by the great photographer Vincent Bryant, who is here and in the back at a table. These are photographs of—amazing photographs of Club Zanzibar, and of course, Gary Jardim's book Blue, which is a foundational book that came out in 1995, 20 years ahead of its time that gave—that's preserved through interviews and various forms of commentary, photos, everything, the—some of this history that you're going to hear tonight, and that was a big inspiration for this entire program. So Blue can be purchased if—out—out the door there, and A Journey Through the House in the back, and these are crucial for any library and I hope you get a chance to own these magnificent books. So right now I would like to introduce Dr. Jan Ellen Lewis, dean of the faculty and professor of history, Faculties of Arts and Sciences Newark, our dearly beloved dean, someone who has changed this campus for the better and from the moment she stepped foot on it quite a while ago. She hired

me, first of all, but—but she—she's just a brilliant, impassioned, fabulous person and has—I'm—this is the only campus I know where everyone loves the administration, and it's largely because of Dr. Lewis, so I'd just like to have her introduce—say a few words.

Jan Ellen Lewis (JEL): Thanks, Beryl, thanks so much, Beryl, for that lovely introduction and hiring you is one of the best things I've ever done and I had no idea that Beryl and her colleagues, Whit, Tim, Christina, would partner with Rodney and YENDOR Productions and the panelists and the incredible—the longest list of partners I have ever heard. And, yeah, I knew you would do great things, not quite this, but it's such an honor to be able to be up here and to welcome everyone to what I know is going to be a spectacular program and a whole series of programs this week and the next couple of weeks. This program and these partners are the embodiment of what our chancellor, Nancy Cantor, sitting there in the second row, she belongs in the first row always, but what Nancy Cantor has called scholarship in action, and what she defines as a commitment to forging bold, imaginative, reciprocal, and sustained engagements with our many constituent communities. This is a kind of scholarship that simultaneously redefines what scholarship means and redefines what civic engagement means. It brings them to life. The images, the music, and Whit Strub is actually—and Tim Stewart-Winter both posted to Facebook, they're my Facebook friends, some of the music that we've heard here tonight and this—it's—this is what scholarship is. It redefines what scholarship is. And as Rodney's introduction makes clear, this is something that's joyous and fun and is also deeply serious in its purpose. And this is what we do here, and we're just so thrilled to have all of you here doing it. It's also—it's next my deep, deep honor to introduce our mayor, Ras Baraka. I've never had the scary responsibility of introducing a mayor before and I hope I can do this—a good mayor, too. Thank goodness it's a good mayor I get to introduce. And I do know that Mayor Baraka, he—before becoming mayor, he was the principal of Central High and was long—as a principal at Central High, he was long our neighbor and our partner and now I'm very happy to say that he's our leader in this city. I've been at Rutgers University Newark a very long time, as Beryl suggested, and i have never seen a political campaign like the one that Mayor Baraka waged, one that empowered the people and spoke powerfully to the importance of education and democracy both. At a time when both democracy and education seem scarily fragile, we are very fortunate to have in the city a mayor who is so strongly committed to both and I think it tells you everything that you need to know about our mayor's commitments and our mayor's values that he would come here to greet you tonight. Mayor Baraka.

[Applause]

Ras Baraka (RB): So first, I just want to say, you know, I'm happy to be here tonight and excited. The only thing that bothered me is to hear Newark characterized as a place of homophobia. But I think that what's happening this evening is a way that we forge against those kind of labels that I, you know. kind of cringed when i heard it being said. It would be like if I

was in a city of Mississippi somewhere and they said "this is a city that's rout with racism." I think the mayor would feel some kind of way if he was a progressive person. So it makes me feel defensive and I should feel defensive but I am encouraged by the long list of people in this city who have supported this event this evening, which means that Newark is obviously moving in a direction that's positive. For people to put on this event also means that there's some encouraging things to say about Newark and its future and to see the dean here to express her kind of love and interest in what's happening here and obviously see the chancellor of the university sitting in this room as well speaks volumes about not just Rutgers and the direction it's going, but about the city and the collaboration that we have made to make Newark a safer place for everyone and I want to thank the chancellor for making Rutgers a sanctuary because that's what she did this evening.

[Applause]

RB: so I—I, you know, again want to welcome you here. You probably should be welcoming me, but I feel good to be here and to make sure that we are—and Newark does its part in making sure that we create opportunities for all of our residents, the LGBT community—community, especially to have safe places to go, safe places that are called sanctuary where we take care and support each other as residents, as citizens, and as human beings here on this planet that we share together. I'm also here because i frequented Zanzibar, probably when I shouldn't have, as a child.

[Applause]

Audience Member: I love that.

RB: But my father was looking for me. I was at People's Choice, I was at Zanzibar listening to Timmy Regisford and Larry Levan and Tony Humphries and the whole crew out there. It was just an amazing, amazing scene if you grew up in Newark at that time. I don't care who you were, you made your way to Zanzibar if you could, and if you couldn't, you did it when you shouldn't, and that was me. And you stood in long, long lines to get in, and when I saw those pictures, it just brought back tons of memories all at once of me standing in line, more than once a week, by the way, to go—to go to Zanzibar, and that's when the clubs let out at five and six o'clock in the morning. This is before any of you guys time out there. I see some of you young—clubs couldn't open up that late. We would stay out to five or six o'clock in the morning and feel safe in some instances out there, and partying and having a great and good time, when music and dancing was a part of our life, of growing up, was a part of who we were in Newark, and I was proud to go to Howard in D.C. and tell everybody i was from Newark and we listened to club music in Newark. We listened all that other stuff. We listened to club music, and nobody knew what the heck i was talking about when I went to school and said, until I whipped out a tape, a mixtape of Tony Humphries on his birthday at Zanzibar to start up "Happy birthday Tony

at Zanzibar," right? And—and—and on some, if you was lucky, you got to see the cat in the cage and you would tell people that was going on. No one ever believed me. They thought I made that story completely up that I danced in a club and there was a cheetah, a tiger, whatever it was, in a cage in there. It was amazing and that was a part of my life that I'll never, ever forget and it's just a part of Newark that's a rich history that's not celebrated, so I'm happy that we're celebrating it tonight. It is the—it is the true history and culture of this city and I'm sorry that it's gone and maybe we'll have the courage one day and the wherewithal to bring the club scene back to the city of Newark.

[Applause]

Audience Member: Yes. Yes.

RB: So enjoy the panel. I know you didn't come to hear me speak. Thank you for coming and blessing us with your presence here in Newark. God bless.

BS: Okay. Yeah.

RG: We forgot just one sponsor also because the Dodge Foundation came on late. They're sponsoring poets for tomorrow night's Sanctuary poetry event. We wanted to thank them. Also want to thank Tamara Fleming for the looping of the gay icons from Newark, that ongoing project that she's working on with all the support of that. And to you, Mayor Baraka. Newly appointed I am to the LGBTQI Commission. We will eliminate the stereotype, the thing that you feel defensive about, we will remedy that together. I'm ecstatic to work under this administration. I've been here my whole life. I've never seen one work as aggressively as they have so I'm—I'm very grateful.

BS: So we're—we're going to open with a reading by Ashley Noel Everett, who is a senior graduating this semester with a dual degree in anthropology and history and African American Studies minor here at Rutgers University Newark, who—she's a member of both Alpha Phi Theta history honors society and Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. She is a former president of our own wonderful RU Pride, which is Rutgers Newark's LGBTQ student organization. So she is completing her thesis on queer nightlife in Newark, New Jersey and she will be reading a part of an interview that Gary Jardim published back in the mid-90s in his book Blue. It was an interview with Shelton Hayes in which he described the formation of some of the early clubs in Newark, and Ashley is going to give us a dramatic reading of—of—of excerpts on this interview as a way to introduce this panel. Okay, thank you.

Ashley Noel Everett (ANE): Good evening, everyone. I don't know how dramatic it will be but I will do my best. I just wanted to say that I feel really honored to be reading this piece because

this was actually one of the documents that I used for my senior thesis so I hold it kind of close to my heart so I feel, again, really honored to be sharing this with you tonight. So let's begin. "It used to be an old art gallery at 36 Halsey Street. The ceilings were unusually high. You could look up from the ground floor and see straight up to the roof. His idea was fun, gala fun. That was Albert Murphy. When you first entered, you walked around a wall and all of a sudden you were in someone's living room and you didn't expect that. Then you would go through the kitchen area. There was a constant flow in the kitchen of whatever he felt like that night, but never any alcohol. The basic fruit Paul—the basic fruit bar was a huge horn of plenty, a basket filled with all kinds of exotic fruits. He always had fabulous girls working behind the fruit bar—fruit bar, always beautiful and done up. Against the wall, there was a huge bookshelf under a suit—under a staircase, and when you went upstairs, there was a den. Albert loved doves and there was a huge bird case of—a huge bird cage of doves there. Off from that was the DJ booth. I remember when they were constructing Le Joc, there was an illustrator named Maning, a jet—a Filipino gentleman who came over and got on a scaffold with some charcoal and sparkles and created what many thought was a woman, but it wasn't a woman. It was a transvestite. Well, it was a drag queen. It was not planned. It was not rehearsed. It was just out of the blue. And I mean, she stood every bit 25 feet tall. The club would open up around ten. We would get there at nine and the famous line was "places." Al would come rushing through the club and he would yell "places, everyone!" It was like a big house party. It never felt like a club. You would walk into the living room and you would see on the sofa the famous model Billie Blair or Pat Cleveland, Beverly Johnson, Steven Burrows, Willi Smith. I mean, how many places in Newark back in the early 70s could you go and see these fashion celebrities? You had people that were anywhere from 18 to 50 and 60 years old. Albert's friends starting off, there was Jamie McDonald, who was a designer from Newark. He drew out a membership card with two drag queens on it. Unfortunately, most of the Le Joc family has passed away. Some of the people who were at the center of the club were Tommy Garrett. Yvonne Garrett, Paul Wilson, Arthur Howard, Ray Parker, Darryl Rochester, Barry Hunter, Larry Patterson, Marvin Davis, Donna Davis, Buford Harge, Carl Wilson, Bobby Lyle, Cybil Moore, Ericka Harris, and the Vaughn sisters. The list goes on. They were all very artistic. The musical feeling of the club would depend on the mood of Larry Patterson that particular evening. Gloria Gaynor was the disco queen then. Donna Summers, Vicki Sue Robinson, City Country City. Now you would call that underground music. You had songs like "Black Skinned Blue Eyed Boys" by the Equals, which was a very popular club song then. It was a rebellion against war. "Black-skinned blue-eyed boys ain't gonna fight no war." Around three, four o'clock in the morning, it would reach its peak, and then from four on, it would start to dwindle down. Some mornings, Al would do a big—a big breakfast. This would go on until twelve, one o'clock in the afternoon. If you felt like going home, you did. If you didn't, you'd fall out, grab a sofa, grab a pillow, and that would be it. Wherever—whenever you'd wake up, you'd make it home. Le Joc had no identity in terms of gender. You could be male, female, gay, straight, it didn't matter. As far as staff goes, there was one Newark policeman at the door, myself at the door, one person in the coat room, the girls

behind the fruit bar, the DJ and a light man. Today Zanzibar has a security staff of 10 to 15 security guards walking around with radios. It's needed now. Then we started to get a lot of confrontations with the police. The area had started to become more residential, so the people were complaining a lot about the loud music. The police would come in, but they could never find anything to shut it down for. So, what they would do is they would ticket all the cars and they would do this every week. Le Joc closed up there and shortly after opened on market street across from Bambergers, but it was never the same again. Moving on to Zanzibar. Eventually the Bergers came on the scene. They bought the Lincoln Motel, which used to be the Holiday Inn. They had this huge ballroom and they wanted to do something with it, but they didn't know what. Apparently Miles Berger was impressed with Al Murphy's vast reputation and—and when the club Abe's came about ,which eventually evolved into Club Zanzibar. We wanted to create a classic club where people could come and feel safe and not have to worry. See, the thing with Le Joc was that they put it together on a very low budget. Miles had finances and Albert had ideas. They both had a knack of overdoing everything. Mike had an entire club done like a jungle. Zanzibar itself is the name of an African island. When they first opened the club, they had these huge satin palm trees. I thought they were the gaudiest thing I had ever seen, but it went along with the theme. There was a cage as soon as you walked in the door with a live boa constrictor. There were animal skins on the walls, leopard cushions, but that gave you the feeling. At one anniversary party, there was even a baby elephant that they had brought into the club. It was a busy—it was a business investment for Miles, of course. It was done to attract people, to make money, but at the same time it was giving Newark something that they had never seen before. That's what I think his whole concept was about—let's do this to shock the city. Let's give them something to talk about." Thank you.

BS: Okay, now our long-awaited panel. I just want to give a very brief intro—introduction of the people on the stage here. Right here is Danielle Cooper. She will be one of the moderators. She is a trans-masculine Two-Spirited artist and activist that creates and resides in Newark, New Jersey and she's a student at Rutgers Newark. This—next to her is Ms. Theresa, a club creator extraordinaire for the past 40 years. I'm sorry, 20 years, sorry. All over—no, no, no, no. All over Newark and even in—she's known in—really, in states across the country for her club promotion. After this is Sir Dane. Sir Dane, a fabulously gifted performer and—who's had several hit albums in the late 70s and early 80s whose fabulous music you heard coming in and who was one of the gracing founding musical soul-stirring performers that made Zanzibar and many other clubs like it come alive at their height. Next to Sir Dane is Peter Savastano, urban anthropologist born and raised in Newark and a clubgoer extraordinaire who had—was snuck into clubs as a quite a young man and kept going for quite a while,, so he will have the clubgoers' perspective for us. Next to Peter Savastano is Darryl Rochester. He is a cosmopolitan—a cosmetologist and beauty salon extraordinaire—I'm sorry, purveyor, and he was involved with Le Joc and Zanzibar in their early years. He was one of the formative people who was mentioned. He was involved in the fashion world, the dance world, and the club world early in—as they were forming to grow into

their height. After that is Janine Robinson, who is a PR strategist by day and a club promoter and creator by night who creates Bliss Entertainment, bisexuals and lesbians, let's see. I get the whole thing.

Janine Robinson (JR): In sexy settings.

BS: In sexy settings. I should have known that. And she does clubs and club nights throughout the Newark area. And next to her is Bernard McAllister. He is one of the founders of the House of Jourdan, currently part of the House of Ebony. It was his work that we heard about from Rodney earlier, whose house did so much incredible work at the height of the AIDS crisis and has continued to be very politically active and a fabulous and important citizen of this of this city. And at the far end, we have Gary Jardim. He—his—he is a journalist. He was a music journalist for many years. He worked for the Village Voice, he wrote for some magazines and papers here in Newark, and he is responsible, in many ways, for this whole panel. He preserved the history of Zanzibar through interviews with some of the main people back in the 90s and that book is, like I said, only now are we catching up to his book. So Danielle on this end and Gary on that end will lead the discussion and I leave it to you

Gary Jardim (GJ): Welcome, everyone. We'll try to make it as entertaining and interesting as possible and we've got a whole great wealth of experience here on the panel so let's get into it. While we have Le Joc somewhat fresh in our mind, Darryl was a member of the Le Joc family and grew up knowing Al Murphy practically all of his life, although Al was 10 years older. For those that really don't know about Al Murphy, and this is the—

[BEGIN SEGMENT 2/5]

GJ: First time you're hearing his name mentioned, he was most well-known later on for being the creative force and the manager of Zanzibar, but he was born in 1943 to a 14-year-old single mother. By the late 60s and early 70s, he was known for giving fashion shows and house parties and in '74, he started Le Joc in collaboration with Darryl and Jamie McDonald the designer, Tommy Garrett the model, Marvin Davis. And Marvin's sister Donna is here tonight, which is so nice. It's the first time I got to met her. Okay. So Darryl, having known Al so well, what can you say to help people understand where this man came from and?

Darryl Rochester (DR): That's a good question, where did he come from, because he was great. Al Murphy was a visionary. He—he—okay. He was a visionary. He had such—such a mind, and he—I think Al loved to create. He loved to mold people. He was a molder. He just liked to take people and change them into—into—into—into these great individuals. Al Murphy was a visionary. He just—he—he was an amazing man. Like, his—his—his skill for decorating was amazing. I mean, he could take anything and just change it, just mold it into something fantastic.

It's true about the Zanzibar and the doves. That was really great. I mean, it—it gave you a sense of—of warmth. And I could recall when Maning made—was—was commissioned to do the piece on the wall, the wall was actually commissioned. The model for the wall was this woman named Sherry Gordon. She was a model named Sherry Gordon and Sherry was the instrument behind—she was the muse for—for this particular piece and again, it did come out like a drag queen but it was just—it was a piece of work, a work of art. Al Murphy was just the most—the most kindest person that you could have as a friend, but he was also one, like, a lot of us are not ones to rub against and have as an enemy. Al would take young kids and create, like, fashion shows. He would—he would do his fashion shows. Al loved—he had a thing for—there was a model back in the days called—her name was Emily Miles and Al Murphy, he emulated Emily Miles. That was his—that was his muse, you know, Emily Miles was like this great woman who was a fashion illustrator and model and she would do fashion shows and Al emulated her. That's basically it. I mean, a lot has just been said but that's basically it as far as with Al Murphy.

GJ: Can you say something about when you got out of high school, you graduated in 1971, and Al started showing you around Lower Manhattan?

DR: Oh, yeah. Well, when I first—

GJ: That period is so interesting cause it's right after Stonewall and—

DR: Yeah. Again, like I said, Al would, like, take kids, young kids and mold them into—just mold them into creations, wonderful creations. Like, if you had some sort of gift, a designer, he would encourage you to design. If you wanted to be a model, he would encourage you to be a model. Well, my first—I came out of high school, the night that I came out of high school, Al took took us, a bunch of us, over to a club called—it was called the Planetarium, and the Planetarium was designed—it had a metal floor and it just had, like, lights and stuff like orbits. it was just very, very beautiful, but the thing that—the catch to the Planetarium was everybody wore metal on their shoes, so you just heard "ch, ch, ch, ch, ch." You just—what you heard, because the floor was a metal floor and you had taps and you couldn't have taps big enough, you know. But that was one of the things, and then later on he introduced me to the club called—the—it was called the Loft and the Loft was, like, an amazing club that you could not—the Loft was like the—the Studio 54 of its day, where you could not get in if you—if you went to Studio—if you went to the Loft, you either had someone call in or you could not get in, and my calling person was Marvin Davis/ I would always call Marvin Davis to get me in. The—the membership card was designed like The Little Rascals with Petey and—and—and all the little—the characters are The Little Rascals, and—

GJ: That was David Mancuso.

DR: That was David Mancuso.

GJ: And he—he was close to Larry Patterson.

DR: He was close to Larry Patterson, Marvin Davis, those were his best friends. Actually, Larry Patterson and Marvin Davis was the instrument that—that allowed us to go to—to enter into the Loft, because they knew him, so they were our ticket in, and then afterwards, you know, everyone started meeting everyone and stuff like that. The Loft was just a place that was this gentleman's home. He lived in it, was a loft, it was just a loft in Manhattan and the floor shook. You know, you thought that she was going to fall any, you know, any night you thought the floor was going to collapse. He had one bathroom with a shower curtain that that the section between it was not even a door. But it was—it was just—it was family. And then later on, he had a grand opening. He—he purchased the loft next door and knocked the walls down and opened up that, and he had two lofts, so it was that. And then later on, you know, then other clubs started spurting, just started just coming about. The Shelter, which was a competition for the Loft, and then after that was the Garage, of course

Unknown [offscreen]: The Garage, of course.

DR: Of course. So that's what happened.

GJ: So Darryl, for people who don't know, what was the Loft really like? What was going on there? And maybe Mark and Peter could also—

DR: Okay.

GJ: Go into their—

Unknown [offscreen]: You don't want me to tell you.

JR: Tell it. Tell it, please.

Unknown [offscreen]: I want somebody to tell it.

Unknown [offscreen]: You said Studio 54, I got question.

Unknown [offscreen]: I absolutely want someone to tell it.

DR: One last—one last thing, one last thing I will say about the Loft was that back in those days it was a sense of style. It was something that was like—something in the air. You smell patchouli

and and incense, but you smell patchouli and mus—oil—musk oil. Those are the two things. So everyone in the world, they went and got patchouli oil and that was the big thing. You were not fabulous unless you have patchouli oil on

Unknown [offscreen]: And you needed it because of the sweat.

DR: You—the more you sweat, the more just nurtured, yes. Marc—

Marc Sir Dane (MSD): What?

DR: Tell it, baby.

MSD: What are we going to talk about? Well, Zanzibar, you know, I got a—

DR: The Loft. The Loft.

MSD: Well, I got to say about Zans because we—we're talking about the foundation of the club scene in Newark and, you know, some deeper history, my dear mentor Albert Murphy turned it into major, but there was an individual that a lot of people don't realize was the cause of it being a Zanzibar. For those of you that remember, I mean, I was told this, it was first Abe's Lounge downstairs and that's where a young man was putting things together to create a Zanzibar and his name was Chris Barnes, is Chris Barnes, and because of Chris's visionary and working with Miles Berger and the Berger Corporation, Chris was one of the initial people, or the initial people, to take them to New York to see the Paradise Garage, to get into their heads that we needed something like this in Newark, so I'm just proud to say, throw that in, that Mr. Chris Barnes is with us tonight. Stand up, Mr. Chris Barnes.

[Applause]

MSD: So that was how it was created from the door and my dear mentor got involved with Chris and Miles and turned it out to be what it was. The Loft was a place that you had to have strong willpower to do what necessary to make you feel good, but don't go overboard. The ambiance was balloons and huge pillows, and the loft part, which was his apartment, was upstairs, but on the weekend he turned it into, you know, a room for everybody. And it was just a great environment. The music, of course, was outstanding. I was a—a young kid just coming up from Savannah, Georgia, so I almost lost my mind between Newark and what was going in New York. So, you know, it was just heaven back in the days and once you went in, you didn't come out until the sun was shining.

Danielle Cooper (DC): I would actually like to bring it back to something that everyone who spoke touched up on, and that is mentorship and kind of being indoctrinated into these places through an elder or somebody who knew you and he was just like, "oh, you have a pretty decent head on your shoulders, please come with us." And that's kind of how I was indoctrinated into kind of Newark's LGBT community, through elders and mentors who are really awesome. So could you—this is for anybody speak about, kind of mentorship and how that helped you grow not only within the gay community, but within Newark's gay community and the Zanzibar and the club scene.

DR: Well, my—my experience was, of course, Al Murphy, who later on—later on became my roommate, and he took me under his wing, of course. He later on became my roommate and he just—he taught me from soup to nuts. And—but my mentor back in those days were—was Marvin Davis. Marvin Davis was—I wanted to be like Marvin. I wanted to look like Marvin and Marvin and I were both Aries and I would tell people—we were years apart, but I would tell people we were twins because we kind of—kind of similar. And maybe it's just in my head, look like each other just a little bit. Maybe because of the Afros. I don't know. But anyway. Larry Patter—Larry Patterson was also. So those were my parents. You know, back in those days, you had parents, and those were my parents, you know, and I really give homage to them.

MSD: Well, coming from Georgia, I was scared, nervous, and I don't know how I got involved, but I'm just honored that Darryl is here. Y'all know I'm emotional, so. Albert. Shelton Hayes, another mentor. They taught me class, elegance. They enhanced my way of dressing. Darryl, you are fought. And these were the people that took the younger crowd in that were already experienced, teaching us the dos and the don'ts, and at some times, warning us of certain, you know, beings, because as Darryl said, they were the mentors and they were teaching us about life and especially the gay life, because even back then, you know, we weren't considered as citizens. We were verbally abused and at times physically abused because of our lifestyle, so when you had to deal with all of these issues of trying to find yourself, live a decent life, when you had these people like Darryl and the conglomerate of the mentors, they were the force behind us being who we are today. And they're not here, most of them, but they did a good job.

Unknown [offscreen]: Can I mention something?

Bernard McAllister (BM): Well, for me it was a little different. I came out—I hate to say this. Several—after y'all. But I think what I learned about Al Murphy, cause I met him towards the end, towards the end of Zanzibar and all those things, but what I loved about Zanzibar and that we've lost and the club scene, not just in Newark but in general has—no longer does, we—y'all used to dress up, and y'all used to look so fabulous, and I used to want—that was my goal, to look like y'all, and I remember a long time ago, that my cousin Carnell, he was a bartender at Murphy's, and he—he told us that he was working at this place and we would drop him off there

every night. But he was really a bartender at Murphy's and I was the one who confronted him. I said, "well, we dropped you off but you walked down the street!" He said, "I'mma take you somewhere and you better not tell." And he took me to Murphy's and then he took me to Zanzibar.

Unknown [offscreen]: Wow.

BM: And I was stuck from that point on. Because to me, that was the epitome of making it. Because you—when you were growing—well, back in the day in the 80s and the 70s, all you had to do was look well. And that was the goal. And I think there was a few things that's different with our—my generation than with yours, when we—when when they started attacking us, we attacked back.

Unknown [offscreen]: Right.

BM: There was a difference. I think by the 80s, we had gotten enough of you—"oh, we going to beat up the fags," so now the fags was beating them up. So when they would come down to Murphy's to rob us, you know how we rolled.

Unknown [offscreen]: Right.

BM: We got them.

Unknown [offscreen]: Right.

BM: And that became—that became—that was the difference between—`because we always thought of Al and Marc, Sir Dane, as to be the classy people, like, wow, look how they look. They don't even argue. And we—and we–and we was like—and I remember going to Murphy's and putting on a silk shirt and some Levi jeans and you could—and that was it cause that's what every—they was dressed up. Now when you go to clubs, you get a T-shirt, if you get that, and you'll get some cut off shorts. Like, there was nothing cut off then. There was nothing. If you didn't have a fab shirt from Macy's, cause you would go to Macy's in the morning or after school, and you would get a look from the Bargain Basement, who remember, and you would be done when—by—cause Wednesdays was Murphy's, Saturdays was Zanzibar, what was—what was Fridays?

Unknown [offscreen]: Fridays I think was Zanzibar too.

Unknown [offscreen]: And Murphy's.

BM: And Murphy's. But what was the place that was in between that was on Springfield Avenue?

Unknown [offscreen]: It was on Springfield Avenue?

BM: No, not Springfield Avenue. I'm talking about—I'm sorry, Broad Street, and it was not—

Unknown [offscreen]: Oh, it was Docks, excuse me, Docks.

Unknown [offscreen]: Docks.

BM: And that's when I knew I made it, so that was me.

Unknown [offscreen]: Wow.

JR: Well, when you talk about mentor—mentorship, I think it's—that's really important. When I got to Newark, it was long—way after, you know, all of this wonderfulness and I think one of the main things that I was taught, I came to Newark from Atlanta in the ear, you know, in, like, early 2000s. Very recently, and that was when Atlanta, you know, Atlanta is—was like on fire with—with lesbian parties. My neighbor in Atlanta was—was a promoter. She did a lot of the major parties in Atlanta at the time, and so I—I clung to her. So when I got to Newark ,I was just all about, "I want to do a party. I want to do a party. I want to do a party" and the mentors that I met, you know, people like June, they were like, "well, you need to work for the community first before you start throwing parties thinking you know what they want." And so that was kind of the message that I bought—I got, because it was really—there was really a lot of work being done at the time. You know, June had started Newark Essex Pride Coalition at the time and Newark was gearing up for one of its earliest Prides and so it was really community-driven. And so a lot of my mentors kind of drilled that into my head before I was able to kind of jump out there and do parties.

Peter Savastano (PS): Well, I just like to back it up a little bit. I got to Newark in 1951 when I popped out of my mother's body and I could tell you, growing up, whether you came from Georgia or not, I was scared too. I had a dilemma, and my dilemma as I grew up was to figure out how I was going to live in the Newark of the 1960s and the 1970s as a gay person. And one of my dilemmas was, I needed to dance. I wanted to dance. It was a way of spiritual release and how I was going to do that. So first I'd like to dispel a few stereotypes. One is, it's not true that all white people can't dance. And it's also not true that all Black people can, because I've been out on that dance floor and I have seen that. But at that time my dilemma was, and particularly in the 1960s, late 1960s into the early 1970s, how was I going to a dance, how was I going to dance, and I mean dance freely with my body, abandon myself to the music, in a culture, particularly in

the Italian American culture that I grew up in, where if you were a guy and you danced, you were a fag and you got beaten up. I went to a huge Catholic high school in Newark and gratefully, there was, in that high school, an African American students organization and I joined. In those days, you could join, and I joined and I made many friends there and I figured out that in the African American community, if you were a guy and you danced, you weren't necessarily a fag. It was okay. And I first found one of the greatest spaces to dance right over here at the YMCA in Newark at these African American fraternity parties. And while I did not have any mentors, I had friends there, and one of those friends, who is no longer with us, Lonnie Hopson was his name, said to me, "I want you to meet me at 2 o'clock in the morning on Sunday morning, 2:00 Saturday morning." In those days I was thinking Saturday night 2:00 in the morning, "And I am going to take you somewhere with me." So I snuck out of my mother's house, I went and met Lonnie, and he took me to this place over behind where Bambegers used to be. This would have been around 1967, 1968. And there was a place back there called DMI, Drafting Materials Incorporated. It was on the corner of Market Street and Washington Avenue there, and above it was this huge empty loft space. And there was a party going on there and Lonnie and I were among the few people—I was the only white guy there and Lonnie and I were among the few people who were not dressed in women's clothes. And we danced our brains out until about 1:00 the next afternoon. I learned that these were a series of parties that moved around the city. He took me to about two or three of them and that led, by sort of a chain reaction, to other places to go and dance before actual gay clubs began to emerge that we could go and dance in. And interestingly enough, one of those places was located in what is now Symphony Hall, used to be the Mosque Theater.

Unknown [offscreen]: Right.

PS: It was the place where Channel 47—there was a dance show there called Disco Teen and I met more gay kids there dancing incognito. I am so heartbroken that all of the footage of that whole era is gone because in those days they used to take the film that they would film this show with and they would erase it and use it over again, so there are only two episodes or shows of that left on the internet and I can actually look at them and and figure out and remember who all the gay people were that were there. And one of them actually turned out to be a very famous DJ, Richie Kaczor, who spun at Studio 54 for quite a long time. So it just sort of interested me, what did we do, how did we find these spaces? Well, it wasn't necessarily by mentors, but it was by friends in so many ways. Then eventually, clubs began to show up in Newark fairly—fairly early. One of them, interestingly enough, was over on North Fifth Street called the Other World and one of the most important things about that place was not only was it somewhere where you could also go and dance your brains out and it was very well integrated, even in the early 1970s, but in the basement of that place was the formation of one of the first gay activist organizations in the city, the Organization of Gay Awareness. The—the club let us use their basement to form this organization.

Unknown [offscreen]: Great. Great.

PS: And that was, you know, really, I think, something quite incredible as I think back on it. Gratefully, the trail led for me to Zanzibar and Le Joc and Murphy's, my favorite place to go on Wednesday night and Sundays when I was bored and exhausted from being in the Paradise Garage all night. And it was just a—a much different time and it did seem to me, in many ways, dancing in all of those places that there was something churchlike about it. It was—

Unknown [offscreen]: It was spiritual.

Unknown [offscreen]: It was spiritual.

PS: Yes. It was spiritual. It was where I know I went to free my spirit from all that I had to carry with me during the week every day, the chance of walking around any corner and being beaten up, which often happened. Having to figure out what way I was going to walk to to get home safely, how I was going to get to where I wanted to go to dance without getting the crap beat out of me or harassed in some way or another. So I just think it's important also to consider those aspects of what eventually led to the appearance of all of these wonderful clubs that are unfortunately no longer with us now.

Unknown [offscreen]: That's great.

Unknown [offscreen]: Wow. I don't know how to follow that. Do I need this?

Unknown [offscreen]: Yeah.

Unknown [offscreen]: Other one. The silver one. The silver one.

Ms. Theresa (MT): Hello? Okay. Microphone check. Okay. Hi, everybody. Well, hello everybody. I'm Ms. Theresa. I feel honored to be up here in front of this panel, these—the panel of experts and fabulous people and I'm seeing a lot of people in the audience who let me in the club when I didn't have ID and all of that good stuff. I thank you, thank you very much. Ta-da, I'm here. Okay. We talked about mentors. My mentor happened to be, of course, Mr. Shelton Hayes and Miss Tracy Norman, better known as Tracy Africa.

[Applause]

MT: Shelton taught me how to count money, how to make sure club is ran properly, how to come in and just execute things and that led me to go on and have my own club, Ms. Theresa's,

which was formerly known as the Bridge Club, turned into Ms. Theresa'a in the 2000s. However, to make a long story short, a lot of people in the industry and a lot of people in the club business, you get to know who's who and you get to know who's a mindset and who to listen to, who not to listen to. Happen to have Mr. Marc Sir Dane. I've joined him many a nights in my early 20s.

[BEGIN SEGMENT 3/5]

Early, early 20s, along with George Lawton out there, Chris Barnes also, and who else did I see? And Eric Levy gave me my first mic and allowed me to do the mic back in the day when I used to do Martin Stadium and different things like that. Went on to do Jean Carn remixes and singing, so I was part of the house music era with Marshall Jefferson and I went on the mics and sang. I did Studio 54 with Marshall, house music with Curtis, and different things like that, but to make a long story short, I feel honored to be here because when you think of mentors, a lot of them are gone, and the younger generation is looking to look for guidance from someone, somewhere, and Idon't know, they picked me for a lot of reasons, but I've picked a lot of you for a lot of reasons, so. And that, in turn, by me having—I've been at so many clubs. I have written some down. And I would like to go by some of these names, of course. Well, my first club that I ever did a party up was at LaSalle, and that was in East Orange, New Jersey when I went to Upsala College and Bob Miles and Mr. Green, they ran it. All right, then we had—I did Shadows on Central Avenue. Of course, the Robert Treat where I first got my first job, 19 years old, with Miles and I'm formally there, back there, within a year. I've been there for about a year in the banquet services and Mr. Brger's always had my back. The Armory Tavern. Euphoria Cafe, I had Bert's Lounge on Branford Place, Rio Lounge, Murphy's, of course, where I took over after Patty Pendarvis passed. I took over the drag nights and I was the only female. Me and Elaine, we're running around doing the shows. Yeah, we could do shows too. Okay, that's what happened. We had the Blue Swan, of course.

Unknown (offscreen): Wow.

MT: The Blue Swan, honey.

Unknown (offscreen): Blue Swan.

MT: And that was down there at the Black Box, where George was first and then turned into Black Box. Then we did Club 88. Of course, we had the Stadium Lounge, Club Harlem, with Aviance. First Choice. That was off the hook. Terminal D, the African Globe, of course, the Blue Mirror, Metro Galaxy, Mirage, Sugar Ray's, Mahogany's, Sensations, Miss G's, the Overton, Visions in Irvington, Irvington Manor, Russo's Manor, and the list goes on. So all of those places embraced gay parties, okay, gay and lesbian parties in my generation. These are the places that I've ever given a party at, so to make a long story short, I've enjoyed myself. I've had a lot of

mentors. Some of y'all are still looking young as ever like you used to look back in the day. And guess what? I'm happy to be here and thank you for having me.

[Applause]

DC: I was actually gonna go back to something that was kind of discussed in terms of, like, harassment and safety and numbers. Like, so when I heard that Newark had a gay club, I was like, here? And people knew about it? Like, you knew where it was? And gay people went there? And they came out safely? And there was no shame? And it was just like, and also I—I feel like I'm also throwing questions out there, like, in terms of, like, I have mentors and stuff like that but I guess I also want to hear also about some stories that maybe you have with a mentor, like, what did your mentor do when they saw you getting into your ambiance with your controlled substance of whatever and not controlling yourself, or coming to the club in a t-shirt and not necessarily the same silk blouse that you had on or walking away with a very unhealthy piece of trade that everybody knew about except you? You know what I'm saying? Like, what did these things look like?

Unknown (offscreen): Hold up now. Hold up now.

DC: Hold up now.

Unknown (offscreen): Don't start nothing.

DC: I start things. That's why I'm on the panel

Unknown (offscreen): That was a question.

DC: Trade.

MT: Well, I'mma say this. My mentor, Tracy Norman, Tracy Africa, she convinced me that size has no barrier on beauty. I used to walk balls and do things like that and I was always the chunky one, but she said, "you are beautiful. You can withstand the test of time and you can always represent the epitome of beauty." So I went on to do Ebony Fashion Fair. I went on to model. I went on to do other things and I wouldn't have done it if it wasn't for her because I went on to own my own Miss Full Figure USA pageant and I always kept my girdle, on my lash on, and my hair on to this day.

[Applause]

BM: You know, for me, I—I didn't never really think about mentoring because I guess when I came out, we were so full of ourselves and we thought we owned the world that I didn't—okay, I'mma be honest with you, by the time I came out, Allen was considered old and we thought we would—we could change the whole world. We thought we could change the whole world. We was going to do it differently and we eventually did it the same way they did it because you—but, during the 80s we weren't looking for that . I think it was a more—it was spiritual, but there was a sense in Newark—there was two types of gay clubs. There was the gay club where straight people came and you party, and then there was the gay club where the kids came. Wow there was a part—now Zanzibar was a fabulous party, but First Choice was a fabulous party too. Totally different crowd, but—

Unknown (offscreen): It was the generation, different generation.

BM: Generation. Yeah, it was generational, and by that time we were on our way to—not saying being accepted, because I don't feel like we're fully accepted now, but it was not as—how can I say this? We weren't on an island by ourselves. By that time when there was Murphy's, there was like three or four clubs by this time, and we felt like we not only what—could we go, we were entitled to go, and who was going to stop us? By this time—cause they had already did the work, they had did the—they had did the work. So by this time, we were kind of walking in our sunshine at that point, and we didn't have to worry about being attacked as much and I think with after me, Theresa came after me, and each year, it got a little better to the point that it became a normal thing in Newark. It wasn't like a shock to have a gay club. The thing of it was to try to get a gay club to be at your venue so you could make money because at one time, gay clubs was the only clubs that were making money. Well, for many, many years

JR: I think—I think what Bernie talks about in terms of by his time, you know, people not feeling like they need mentors, I know now when, you know, when I have an event or when I throw a party, I don't get people looking for, you know, advice or guidance or wanting to learn, you know, the business. You know, when I would go to Theresa, to Ms. Theresa's actual bar, I would sit there and just watch and kind of see and try to learn, you know, like, how—okay, how's she doing this? What's going on? What is she doing? Now, the—for me, when the folk—when the girls come to my party, they're there trying to see how they can, like, snatch whatever you're doing out from under you and try to take it and run with it, so it's not that—it's hard to—harder now, I think, to forge that relationship with, you know, the folks who are gonna come and patronize your—your—your venue, your spot. It's not—it—to me, I think it's lost a little bit of that—because it is so normal and because it is so free and because you can walk down to, you know, where they're having the gay party without having to worry, you don't feel like you need anybody, right, and I think that that has an impact. I think it has had an impact on the—the way that the clientele is, you know, back, you know, back in this day, from what I hear, it literally was, you know, kind of a sanctuary and if you went anywhere else, it was going to be a problem.

Now it's not so much like that, so I think it has a negative effect on the way that a promoter interacts with his or her customer.

MSD: Well, I think one of the things that Bernie was talking about and you're talking about, you know, there has—the times change, generations come along, and we were—I don't see a community where it's really united and full of love like it was back in the day when they were back in the day, you know what I'm saying. We were a family. We were a unit, and back to your question, you were asking, how do these people get through to you when it came to picking up the wrong person, it was just normal.

Unknown (offscreen): Yeah.

MSD: Because—

Unknown (offscreen): You were told.

MSD: There was a mental connect, and if you had any relationship, it's just like when I was growing up, I could be in my Pentecostal church in Savannah acting up on the left side and one of the members would look at my grandmother on the right side. My grandmother would stand up and look at me, and then everything would change. But today, I don't know what's—it's a major difference, and first of all, it comes from respect. I don't think that the younger generation really understand the history of—this is my first time ever participating in this type of forum ever in my life, because I've always kind of knew who I was. It took years to find out, as the song that—being played as you came in by Marc Sir Dane, take me as I am. This is all we wanted to be. Who we knew we were, but we had these people to guide us, and then when the Bernies came about, Bernie was one of the leaders of that generation of that change, but still yet the mentality and the way they dealt with each other and because there was no club, really major club life, it lost the ambiance of a family.

BM: And also too, you know what, if you really think about it, the boy—I'm gonna say ballroom. Clubs change when music changed.

Unknown (offscreen): Yes

BM: If you go to a gay club right now, what are you gonna hear? You don't hear house music.

Unknown (offscreen): No.

BM: House music used to talk about love.

Unknown (offscreen): Yes. Yes.

BM: God, growth, we going to get there together, we going to do this, you know, I got your back, the sun is yours, you get all that, but as times change, what you found out that songs became more about how great I am as a person.

Unknown (offscreen): Still. Yes.

BM: Because if you remember, house music was always about togetherness. Everybody was welcome. We would welcome people that we know jumped somebody last week because they wanted to hear music and let them stay there and—and but that's how it was, and when the music changed, and—that's, to me, was the shift and that's the only thing that I can point to as—as a fact or as evidence that the scene changed when the music changed. And I'm gonna give you a perfect example. Now, all of a sudden, all these straight folks love house music. Everybody's going to house music. They go outside, they go to the park, all these people—"Oh, I was at Zanzibar." You ain't never had your ass in there.

Unknown (offscreen): In Zanzibar.

BM: You couldn't get in. You was a not. Nobody saw you.

Unknown (offscreen): You was a not. Oh god.

BM: But now all these—y'all laughing because y'all know. All these people, every week, they house partying somewhere. "Oh yes, oh this is—" and I'm like, you wasn't there. No. I was—I was high, but you wasn't there

Unknown (offscreen): Yes! Yes!

BM: And, you know, but—see, but that's—that's what's going on, so when you talk about the difference, I think we should call a thing a thing. What happened was the music changed, because no matter what happened, we said it earlier, it was the spirituality of the music. remember being at the shelter and they played something by Jennifer Holliday and Stevie Wonder came to the shelter. Now, I don't know why he was there. I remember standing in the middle of the floor crying, nothing but pure unadulterated joy, and the music that they took me—it felt like I wasn't even on the floor. And this was when I was in recovery. So I wasn't high. I literally was lifted off the floor and the music took me somewhere. The music only takes me to the projects now. It doesn't take me anywhere. It doesn't allow me to—

JR: Can I tweet that?

Unknown (offscreen): All right.

JR: I'm gonna put that on Twitter.

BM: That's the only place it takes me. I mean, music used to take you somewhere. You ever hear Gladys Knight and she's talking about, "ooh, back in the day, the songs." There's no songs.

MSD: Because it had a message. It was real, real lyrics, you know, and the stuff you—I'm—I'm sorry.

BM: No, you're fine.

MSD: But you know, Bernie, but that's it. It's the way music is con—and I'm a musician and an artist so I know. It's the—the structure of the—the lyrics. The lyric content. Colonel Abrams called me one day many—a few years ago, Colonel, yes, y'all know Colonel Abrams. And he had just got back from Europe and he called me, said, "Marc," he said, "they're looking for you in Europe." So I said, "looking for me in Europe for what?" So he was like, "they want you to come over." I said, "and do what?" He was like, "sing your music." I was like, "that stuff is 25 years old." He was like, "the American music that was played back in our early days is still being played now." I was in shock when I got over there and the way I was treated and the radio stations and if some of you went on YouTube and checked out the interview with the program director from Europe, Gary Spence, go on YouTube, Marc Sir Dane Gary Spence interview, there's a song that I did by him, too, man, Lucas, years ago, called One Minute from Love and the interviewer said that that song, if he could give me a pound every time the song went on, the people crowded the dance floor, that I would be a millionaire and I'm saying, I wish I had known because I would have been over in Europe much sooner. But it's the—the—the quality of the music, and in America, which is sad to say, we change too periodically and the substance and the quality of good music, whether it be house music, R&B music, rhythm and blues, we are more popular overseas than we are in our own country, and that's because writers and producers have to go back to real lyric. The track is easily going to come but it's what is being said and the stories are not being told now.

MT: Bernie, what you were saying—oh, can I say one thing?

BM: Yes, please.

MT: Bernie, what you were saying was true. I remember making phone calls to my customers and saying come out. I remember sticking a stamp on an envelope and mailing out the invites because a lot of your friends and family didn't know you were gay. That was because the parties

were private and we had fun. Social media has turned this world into a frenzy. Now anybody can come to your functions. Now anybody can see what you're doing. Even FBI knows what you're doing, every minute on the minute.

Unknown (offscreen): They do. They do.

MT: So social media has interrupted what we have started, what was fun. They see what we saw was fun. Now everybody's a part of the fun.

BM: And it's always the straight people taking stuff from us.

MT: Because they missed it because they didn't know.

BM: Straight people take everything we do. Damn, if I do a dip, they gonna dip. You got straight boys voguing. Damn. I can't even get my bowl.

MT: It looks fun. Cause it looks fun.

BM: Let's be honest about, it they take everything we do, they imitate it, roll it into a different package, and say, "here, I bought you a new cake." No, bitch, I bought—I baked it. You can't give me what's mine. And that's what happens. They've taken almost everything we did and, like, they made it into white flour. It's generic. There's nothing to it and unfortunately, if you want to hear house music, you got to go to the reunions, and you got to deal with—and I—I know I'm sounding like I'm so anti-straight people. I'm anti-everybody, really, so, you know, don't make a dance with me. But the reality of the situation is, you got to sit there and hustle through straight people to get to—you—did anybody go to the Zanzibar reunion?

Unknown (offscreen): Oh please, that was—

BM: Okay, that was—

JR: Tell it.

BM: And the Garage reunion. These people that come to these reunions are people who always wanted to be a part of, that couldn't get in the door and all of a sudden they fab now.

Unknown (offscreen): Yes, yes.

BM: And I still treat them like nots because I'm fair and I'm very honest and it's no shade. See, they take what we do and actually, I said they take, we give it away.

Unknown (offscreen): Okay.

BM: We're giving it away. Nobody's taking anything. We give it away. And that's what's happened to our music.

PS: Well, now that Bernie has read everyone in the room—

JR: All of us.

BM: Bye.

PS: I'd just like to say two things about, first of all, generational differences and second, about the music and the differences. I think maybe one of the differences is our generation, if I might be so bold as to speak for the others who are part of my generation, we had to carve out spaces for ourselves. We had to carve out sanctuaries and safe spaces, and after we did that ,that created the solidarity because we felt embattled and besieged. And as far as the music goes, not only was it about the music and the lyrics, but it was also about the DJs and the way that they mixed, that you could be in a club for seven or eight hours and the music was one continuous story, right? There is nowhere in the world that you are going to find—you could search for it, the 35 minute long rift in the middle of Love is the Message because it was Larry Levan who knew how to keep hitting in that particular part repeatedly so it appeared to be a seamless 35 minute incredible—you all know that part. If you know that song, you know the part I mean, and that was about artistry. That was about a certain kind of sensitivity to meaning and wanting to take everyone that was present in that space on a journey together and that journey created this sense of oneness no matter who you were. I mean, I'm—the only place I ever dance now is in the shower or in my living room but I—so I don't know what clubs are like now but I—I have a feeling they're not. At least I teach in a university. I know what my students tell me. It doesn't sound anything like what some of us in the room experience.

Unknown (offscreen): It's horrible.

JR: The—you know, it's—it's so true. You know, I rece—I previously did a—a party here in Newark every Friday night at a little bar called Nyx on Central Avenue and we played, you know, house music. Mus—I was not a house music person. I didn't know these songs. All I knew was when we played this music folks went crazy, and—old songs, not anything new, not anything that was, you know, hot on the radio. Songs from years ago, decades ago, and if you think that you can take a song by one of these artists today and play it 20, 30 years from now—

Unknown (offscreen): Thank you.

JR: And invoke the same type of reaction or response that—that I—

Unknown (offscreen): That's what I'm talking about.

JR: Witnessed, you know, at my own party, you're fooling yourself. And so I think that that is true, what you're saying about the—the—the lyrics and the music and also the DJs, you know, I had—I turned—you know, I had—it was—it was hard to find a Dj who even had house music in their repertoire, right, who, you know, I, you know, before I found the right DJ, I went through about three or four DJs trying to find the one and I did. I ended up—we ended up working with Ironbound, DJ Ironbound, who was still, when I met him in the late 90s, early 2000s, carting around vinyl, like, you know, still carting around vinyl. I think he only recently went over to CDs, you know, in the last maybe couple years. But you know, it takes that type of connection, I think, to what you all are describing in order to—to create that experience.

BM: Not to sound like an old person, though, let's be honest about this, our—my experience was my experience. I believe every generation has to find their own spot, their own way, and they get sick and tired of us saying, "well, you know, y'all don't party like we did." And then they said, "oh, but y'all did this" and I even tell them, like, when I see people using drugs at the clubs, because, like, drugs is rampant in clubs now. I go out sometimes. Drugs are rampant. But I don't—and I'm not condoning drugs by any means of the imagination, but this was the 80s, so it's all out my system. But—

Unknown (offscreen): Yes.

BM: Let me say this, they went hand in hand, and anybody to say they didn't is lying. If you partied in Newark, you were stoned and you danced. You danced and you danced to your heart desire because you was dancing with the music, and drugs did not have the same semblance. It was for pre-crack. Do you all remember pre-crack?

Unknown (offscreen): Yes.

BM: When part—you all know when you could get stoned, and that's before you end up in rehab and you sold your house and your car? You all remember, because that's what it was. That's what it—prior to that, you got stoned at the club, you was done, and you was good till the next time you went to the club. It's not like that anymore and I—and — tell young people—or I used to. I kind of refrain from let—they have to have their own experience, but when I tell them about my experience, I tell them about dancing all night to three o'clock in the afternoon, they'd be like, "for real?" Yeah, and not necessarily stoned. We didn't stay for the drugs. We stayed for the music. And another thing too, you mentioned DJs. Do y'all remember when there wasn't that

many DJs around? Now every cousin Pookie, Ali, everybody's a DJ now. You notice? There's DJs everywhere. There's not a shortage of DJs. One time you couldn't find a DJ. Now everybody named Manny is a DJ. You tell me. Have—is it—has—are they, like, did they go to school for DJ-ing? No, they took what they heard about Larry and them doing and made it theirs and that's what happens.

DR: Excuse me—

PS: I'm gonna admit to nothing.

DR: Yeah, well, I'm admitting because—because, you know, like, we—we were talking about drugs and stuff like that and—but doing a real tip, everyone—everyone got high.

BM: Yeah.

DR: Everyone got high that went in and went to get some refreshments.

PS: I'm shocked.

DR: If you went to get the refreshments, it was in the punch and you wonder, why'd you dance all night?

Unknown (offscreen): Yeah, you was fucked up.

DR: Because it was in the punch and I can remember going to the garage—no, I was at the Loft. It was a Christmas at the Loft and they had a Santa Claus at the door with a gigantic bags of joints.

Unknown (offscreen): Yes. Yes. Yes.

DR: You know, so everybody—every—and as you—as you went in, you got a joint and you had your punch because David Mancuso's law, you definitely was on some speed. You was on acid. You danced.

BM: But it was a different time.

DR: And you loved—but it was a differenet time and it was different love.

MSD: And everybody looked out for everybody.

DR: Everybody looked out for everybody and if you saw somebody that was really, really high and you just kind of, like, you know, took them to get some coffee or something like that.

Unknown (offscreen): Drive them home.

DR: You drove them home or something like that because I know that I—I definitely was a victim.

Unknown (offscreen): I volunteered.

DR: I was a child and—and you said—someone spoke earlier about—you spoke earlier about, what did your mentors do? Either they—they took you and threw—there was a club—there was a room in Zanzibar called the VIP room and I can remember literally being thrown in the VIP room from my pants and my top of my shirt. Thrown in and locked the door.

Unknown (offscreen): Oh wow.

DR: Because I was so wasted.

Unknown (offscreen): Oh wow.

DR: You know, but I mean, that was the real—it was real. It was true. It was the truth and a lot of times my—my—the way you—you try to say it down, "you're not coming there next week." That scared me. They was scared. That's how they sacred you and you pulled it together and you got in and then you went around a corner in the alley in the dark and you did your little pill and you did the same thing again. But that was the reality of it.

BM: And also—

DR: That's my confession

BM: You know what—you know what killed—and you know what else killed house music clubs too? AIDS. AIDS killed so many people. Oh, HIV killed so many people off, and a lot of y'all remember, and I'm looking at faces, I may not know your name but I saw you there, don't you—I mean, I love—I love audience participation, but do you not agree when AIDS came, when so many people were dying, we had gotten to a mood in Newark where it was just abysmal. I could think about a seven year span in the 80s going into the 90s where there wasn't nothing going on.

Unknown (offscreen): That's right.

BM: Murphy's was there and what—only time you went there was to get drunk because you were so damn depressed from going to funerals.

Unknown (offscreen): Right.

DR: It was a real thing.

BM: So—so let's—let's keep—if you're going to tell the story, I want to tell the good, the bad, and the ugly. You have to tell the whole story, then you don't get the story.

PS: And in case some of you are wondering, you just heard the reason why the colored lights from the club were at your house when you got home after it was over. Because it was what you took in the punch that helped those lights keep going.

Unknown (offscreen): Exactly.

DR: And the ringing in your ears and stuff like that, but I mean it was a decadent—it was a decadent time. Also, I mean, let's not forget the bathhouses, you know.

Unknown (offscreen): The murders.

DR: The murders. All of those things.

Unknown (offscreen): The fights.

DR: The fights. And I praise the drag queens, I really do. I—I tell you what, the drag queens, not only because of Stonewall, but the drag queens really started the first clubs that really opened up in Newark were bars. There used to be a club called 177, Jackson's Lounge, that was on Springfield Avenue, and those were fights. I mean, you went to—you went to those clubs and it was basically drag queens and—and—and—and you just went there and it was going to be a fight, because that's all they talked about. Who's going to turn each other, who's going to get hit with some hot grits and lye tonight, you know, and that's what the thing was but Jackson's Lounge and they had like little—

[BEGIN SEGMENT 4/5]

DR: Parties afterwards, which was on Tichenor Street. These little places where, you know, icons, you had to go to those little places.

Unknown (offscreen): The Dollhouse.

DR: The Dollhouse.

Unknown (offscreen): The Dollhouse.

Unknown (offscreen): The Dollhouse. The Dollhouse.

DR: The dollhouse was a drag—was drag queens. That was—it was originally started by Bobby White.

Unknown (offscreen): Bobby White, yes.

MSD: Dorian Paris.

DR: By Dorian Paris. Yeah, the Bobby White. But the original—the original place that they had was the first time I ever got mugged. It was called—it was called—it was called, oh, I just—was in my mind. It was the Electric Palace. It was on Clinton Avenue.

Unknown (offscreen): Yeah. Yeah.

DR: And they just used to just do these little drag shows there, and the drag queens would come in full drag because they didn't really have much to do back in those days, except for the—what they call on Halloween, the fags ball, and the fags ball was a big thing to go to because that was the one night that you could get in drag and you can—you could get full, fullest drag, and don't worry about the cops putting you in jail because you could put on panties and brassieres and stuff like that. And the other time that you went out in drag, if you would stop by the cops, you had to pull off your brassiere and stuff like that because if you was—if you hadn't have any male undergarments on, you were carted off and beat up by the cops.

Unknown (offscreen): Wow. Wow.

DR: So the Electric—so that—they would have the fags ball and that was like a big event in Newark, and I remember my mother in there, my mother and them, they used to go to these—these—I mean, they just loved the fags ball. Everybody went to the fags ball. It was a comp—

Unknown (offscreen): Like the mayor.

DR: Yeah, it was a competition and that they would go and they would—they would—you know, they didn't have houses back then but they had—they would—they would—they would duel for Miss Faithful Face, you know—

Unknown (offscreen): Body.

DR: Body,, you know, it was compe—it wass a big competition and—

BM: They were the precursor to the ballroom scene.

DR: Yeah.

BM: Because Bobby White then, that was Paris Dupree, Bobby White and them, Paris from Jersey, but at that time—

DR: They threw—

BM: Yes, and they—and at that time, they were like our heroes because they was the ones that was fighting. They was the ones that was on the forefront. Drag queens was the first ones to fight.

DR: That's right, the drag queens.

BM: And then once they jumped on the drag queen, you had no other choice but to jump because it's probably your cousin, so you had to jump in the fight, and, you know, and then we weren't fighting because we were tough. We were fighting for survival, you know, we—because the music—I remember being in bed, about two o'clock in the morning, and the music calling me to come to Zanzibar. It would call me out my bed. I'd be asleep. I'd be like, "okay, it's time." And I'm not the only one, because when you yell, you know, it calls you, and you would end up at the club. You had maybe twenty dollars and that was it. You didn't need nothing else because once you got in the club, your family took care of you.

Unknown (offscreen): Right.

BM: Your family took care of you. Now that's—guess what, you gonna stand outside till they get out the club, because—because no stuff. And you got a phone. We couldn't even reach nobody in the club then, remember? You had to—you—"oh, if you see so-and-so, tell them I'm out here." That—that was the—now you call them, they don't even answer the phone. It's like, I know you got a phone. See, it was just a different—it's a different era.

MT: You know, it's funny that you talk about fights and Newark and people, places, and things. Now, y'all know, I've—I've always been a sensitive woman, but the fights that have gone on at my parties and after my parties

Unknown (offscreen): That's—Lord. That's—Lord.

MT: Paddy wagons coming, I've had sawed-off shotguns in my face, I have went to brawls wigs off, but you know what? I rep my city, so you're not going to come from somewhere else and disrespect us. You're not going to do that

Unknown (offscreen): No you're not.

MT: Okay, you're going to respect me. You're going to respect the women that are in the club. You're going to respect what we stand for. If not, you're going to have to get a beat down, and I'm sorry that's what happened back in the day. I'm a lady, always, mind you, with the girl in a wig on might have came up a couple of times, but we had to always work together as a community and the drag queens, even my Khadijahs, all of them, all my big girls, they always was right there ready. He—Bern, you never lie. If they mess with somebody, and especially if it's a house member. Now to the—

Unknown (offscreen): Jourdan.

MT: Now to the ballroom scene, I can honestly say that's when I saw, like, little mini gangs come about and then the gangs started, so a lot of things—I'm in the era, everybody, which I was—when there wasn't gangs, then it was gangs, and then it turned into something else, so social media. So I came into this whole thing, what's going to happen new? What's next, the next thing? What's going to be the next new thing? We don't know, so hopefully we're all documenting all of this and hopefully we're not scaring anybody out there, because you can still go out. I'm at 618 Market Street, Newark, New Jersey, at Rio Lounge, every Tuesday is free for all of you, so come on down, five to one and it's a safe haven and it's down the neck, so come on out, come on out. Just a little promo plug, that's all.

GJ: Can we poke around at this idea of sanctuary a little bit? Like, to what degree was Zanzibar a safe place to be gay?

Unknown (offscreen): Yes, yes.

Unknown (offscreen): That's interesting.

Unknown (offscreen): It depended on what night you went.

MSD: Well, I don't—I don't ever remember it being an unsafe place.

BM: And you—but you know what, though? That has to do with Al Murphy.

MSD: Yes.

BM: Because he created it as a safe space.

MSD: Yea, it wasn't unsafe.

BM: And I think that a lot of clubs kind of imitated after that. Like First Choice, like, we ran First Choice.

MSD: Right.

BM: But the thing with—about Zanzibar, and I'm gonna tell you about the sanctuary. For me, you always found that people, when they got to Zanzibar, they may have never spoke to you in the street, and I'm talking about straight people—

MSD: That's right. Yeah.

BM: But when you got to Zanzibar, "oh, hey!" And they didn't want to speak to you outside the club, but they would speak to you like you were best friends in Zanzibar, because there, we as gay people had status. They looked to us for fashion. They look for us for style. Guess what? They couldn't even have—couldn't get girls without us, really.

MSD: That's true.

BM: Because the girls came with the queens, so let's keep it real. So I—so—so we was that conduit for them to have any type of anything,, so when they came to us, they were in our sanctuary.

Unknown (offscreen): Yeah.

BM: And I don't never remember seeing anybody get beat in Zanzibar.

Unknown (offscreen): Yeah.

BM: I don't remember that type of thing. I don't—now Murphy's, by the time Murphy's coming around, yeah, we was a little rough around the edges there.

Unknown (offscreen): Yeah.

BM: Yeah. But it was warranted, and I wouldn't think of Mur—I'd have never thought of Murphy's as a sanctuary and I'm gonna tell you why. Because the owners of Murphy's never cared about us.

Unknown (offscreen): No.

BM: We had nowhere else to go by this time, so we used Murphy's.

Unknown (offscreen): They were making money.

BM: If Murphy's was what it was, there was no love, you know, and nobody said, "oh, I love Murphy's," you know, you love the drinks in Murphy's. That was—that—what that was, but with Zanzibar, even First Choice, I always found when you had an owner or—or a manager who—that was in tune with the community, you had—that's where you had sanctuary. If somebody just owned the building, it was not sanctuary. So there was a difference.

JR: Yeah, and I think that that's now why—and I know, you know, speaking personally for me, I think that's now why clubs—and Theresa, you could probably speak to this too—we have to change venues so much now, you know, because when you first have that conversation as a promoter with an owner, it's all good and wonderful. It's beautiful. They're like, "oh yes, please, bring the lesbians, we love them" and then, you know, a couple months, a year down the road, it's another conversation, it's a whole other thing, and so it's a lot of work now, I think, on this—on the part of a promoter. You know, that's why, you know, I, like, when I first got here, my first party was at Guitar Bar in the Ironbound. I was there for two years and, you know, making money hand over fist and walked away because the owner was not someone who believed in this idea of sanctuary. It no longer became a safe space for me and for the women that I wanted to bring there, and so I think now it's a lot more work to find owners in spaces that are—that do provide that—that sanctuary. And, you know, Theresa said a little while ago, everybody wants to be a promoter and everybody's not going to do that work, right? Everybody's not going to sit there and have those hard conversations with owners about, "well, what—make sure that, you know, when—if I have a trans person in my—in my clientele, we're not doing male and female bathrooms on my night, right, where, you know, anybody can use whatever bathroom they want and, you know, if you have your bartenders behind the bar, they need to be treating, you know, all of my clientele with respect." And it takes a certain type of promoter to be able to have that level of conversation and I think it's a little bit different from what you got with, you know, a

Zanzibar because, you know, these are not—they're not gay-owned. Most of them, they're not gay-owned venues, and so there's always, I think, that rub between the promoter and the owner.

MT: Well, Janine, right now, a lot of the clubs, they accept the women with open arms. They love—these owners love to see women with women on women, but then when the men—with men, they have a problem with it, then I have a problem with it, then I have to go. Because we are one family, always, no matter what. I'm a lesbian, I live as a lesbian, I always have for a lot of years, over 20 something years, so I don't know how to be anything else right now. I think I could. I don't know. I'm like, I don't know, but men are gorgeous. I still love our men. You know, but at the end of the day, these club owners love to see women with women. They welcome the women, but I would like to see them also welcome the men, so when they don't do, that I leave. I gotta go.

BM: But that also goes to that—what we were saying. I keep—let me see this. So this goes back to the fact that hatred oversteps money. Do you know, they would rather give up money than to see two men dance and this is not uncommon in Newark.

Unknown (offscreen): Right, right.

BM: And, you know, and they do tell you, Janine, "oh yeah, we—that—I have no problems with that. Have a ball here." And once they see a chick with a dick, and don't let them have some—let her be good looking, because if she's good looking, your whole club is ruined, because now you're messing up, they're his boys, and—and it just—and it just doesn't equal—it's not a good soup. It's not the ingredients that's needed. And I—and I—and Iequate it to prejudice because anytime that you are willing to sacrifice profit just the dislikes, you know what I'm saying? And just to let people dance. Me and Theresa had a conversation last night. I will not mention any names because—and there's a club owner in Newark, gay,, don't want no gays, no gay men up in there. Don't—everybody—child, he a big old queen. Everybody know. But it's not about people knowing. It's about him being comfortable with himself and I'm telling you, it has—we have more gay-on gay hate.

JR: Right.

BM: And we don't talk about that, because this guy has a beautiful club and it's not even open. Not even open. And he knows he can make some—make money. He closed all week. But, "I'd rather not do it."

Unknown (offscreen): Yeah.

BM: And that says a lot about us, the times, and how we call ourselves, have grown, when we really have—times have moved on and we haven't really grown as much as we like to say we have.

Unknown (offscreen): Right.

BM: Everything is not really for inclusion.

DC: I'm gonna ask like two more questions because we definitely—Janine brought up the topic of trans people, trans men and women,, and they are often an ignored and silenced and often targeted subsection of our community, so wanted to know how do you feel clubs a sanctuary benefited, like, the trans population or, like, did they do enough or can you speak about that?

JR: Well, I—I know that here—when I came here, I was surprised because like I said, I—I'm from New Jersey but I moved to Atlanta and that was really when I got into kind of gay nightlife and in this—it's—it's ironic, but when I was in the South, I saw a lot more embracing of the trans community. Here in Newark, I don't—it's an interesting kind of sub—subculture within our—within our community that I think has, from at least in my experience, only been kind of targeted—targeted or engaged from kind of a health aspect. You know, I think we're just now starting to see the trans community be engaged on—on other levels, but I think it's always been about supporting mental health or supporting, you know, you know, physical health in terms—in terms of the—the trans community here, but I do think that that's—that's changing significantly here in Newark. And I—and I just—and I know that any event or party that I've gone to here in Newark, whether it's been one of my own, whether it's been a Newark Pride event, there's always been a concentrated effort to engage the trans community. But I think that also speaks to, like, where trans people are in this country in general, right, like, I think all over the country, we see transgender populations and members of the transgender community being marginalized or ostracized, even within the gay community, and so I think as that begins to change nationally, I think we will see, and we've already began—we've already begun to see, kind of that trickle-down effect to have it happen here in Newark.

MSD: Well, answering your question, if we must say, from back in the day, in Newark, we didn't have a—a—any population of transgender. What did you call it, Theresa? It was like—

MT: It was butch queen up in drag or drag queens.

MSD: Or guys.

MT: Or guys dressed up.

MSD: Or lesbians.

Unknown (offscreen): They didn't hang with us.

MT: Or butches, bulldaggers.

BM: Yeah, because back then femme queen or transgender people, they actually lived their life as women mostly.

Unknown (offscreen): Right.

BM: It's only now that you're getting these transgenders that—which I don't quite understand, but they're free to do whatever they choose, that—they hang—I thought they—they wanted to be women back then. They didn't hang with us. And if you saw a femme queen in the club, if you saw Tracy Africa in a club, it was because she had been begged. They pulled her out the house and she did it for a friend, because again, we kept them on pedestals.

DR: That's what I was about to say.

BM: We had them on pedestals. Now, transgendered women, you can go get them like you can go get a pack of cigarettes. They're right down the street. Your neighbor got in one, you one, and then the other one.

JR: I'm not one.

BM: Well, I didn't mean you.

JR: Yeah.

BM: You sure? No, I'm joking. But—

DR: No, because we—we were—we were—we—we in our own community was biased, racist, about as far as—you had to be gorgeous. Just call it like it is. You had to be drop dead gorgeous to be associated for drag queen or the—the Martha Danes and the—the Al Murphys and all the rest of them to really have anything to do with them, because like someone said, it had to be invited. Like he said.

BM: You had to be invited.

DR: You had to be invited or asked out.

BM: You didn't have—

DR: You were—you were an item. You were—you were a token.

BM: And we treated you as such.

DR: We treated you like that.

BM: But now that, like, every three, every block.

JR: And I think you point—made a good point that transgender is a relatively, you know, new term, right.

PS: Not even 20 years old.

JR: Exactly, so I think that that definitely speaks to where we are in terms of just embracing the community and also into—integrating the community.

PS: And just to wax anthropological for a moment, the studies actually show that what arouses violence on the part of people more so than two people of the same physical anatomy having sex together, what arouses violence more is people who transgress the gender norms. And our problem is, we have a two-gender system and the transgender identity is saying "we don't want a two gender system. We think those rules don't work. We want to mix it up. We want to be who we are. We want—why is it that only boys should wear blue and girls wear pink and only women can wear dresses and men wear pants? What happens if I want to wear a dress and I happen to have a penis, right, or the other way?

Unknown (offscreen): Make sure you tuck.

PS: And this is—and this is the problem that we are faced with now, and the gay community is unfortunately not immune to that kind of cultural conditioning. You know, what do you do when you have only a two category system but people who inhabit other categories. There—there's nowhere to put them, right? They become, as one anthropologist said, like matter out of place, right, they just don't fit in. And this is what we are struggling with. We—we did not have to deal with that. I mean, I can even remember remember in my own period, being a teenager, people just automatically presumed if you were a male homosexual,, it meant you actually wanted to be a woman, right, and what could be worse, right? Here's how misogynistic our patriarchal culture is. What could be worse than—than being a woman? Why would a man want to be a woman?

And second, for a woman who desired other women, that meant she wanted to be a man in their minds, and what could be more arrogant than you, a woman, inspiring to be a man?

BM: Because we are top of this food chain.

PS: Yes.

BM: And that's—that's true too. And I remember AGs used to really have it bad. They used to have it really, real—but I mean—but I'm talking about as far as the club scene, because remember, we didn't really have a place for the AGs but with us, again, it was such a different world. Like, if a woman wore men's clothes, it was okay, we just said she was a butch.

JR: Aggressive. I see people looking, "What's an AG?" Aggressive.

BM: Sorry about that.

PS: I thought it was a supermarket.

[Laughter]

DC: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Okay.

[Faint unintelligible talking]

DC: So my last question is where do you believe this concept of a club as a sanctuary will evolve to, you know, based on your knowledge of the community and your history? Yeah, each person.

MT: I feel that history has a way of repeating itself, all right, and somewhere along the line, some—not my generation, the up-and-coming generation, they're going to get it right and we're going to welcome them in and they're going to have a safe haven and they're going to have mentors and things are going to repeat itself. I know it will.

Unknown (offscreen): I hope so.

MSD: Before I have to put my teeth in a cup, because I love to dance, I really miss—I was very saddened at the so-called—and I'm—I'm saying it, Zanzibar reunion. As Bernie and different panelists have said, I—I really like to party in New York because it's just a freer vibe and freer spirit. No egos, nobody looking at you out of their eyes, so I was at the Garage reunion the week before and I came to the Zanzibar reunion pumped up because it's home, so the first thing I go in and I'm saying, "well, who are these people?" Because I could count on maybe both hands real

Zanzibar heads. They were all new people and, you know, you tried to get in, you tried to get in, but it's just not there. So with the hope of divine order, before I have to be rolled in the club in the wheelchair, I hope somebody does open up another venue for people of free spirit. We don't want to label it.

[Applause]

MSD: Take me as I am.

PS: Well, I think—

MSD: Go to my website

PS: I think one of the big problems that we faced before the create—recreation of club spaces as sanctuary is the fact that everything is digitalized. People no longer need to leave their houses for any reason. You can order food, you can order sex, you can get it all right to your door and until the grid collapses and we all discover that we need to be with each other face to face rather than on Skype or doing our premier act on YouTube, all of that needs to somehow—we need to get some kind of perspective on that or it needs to collapse or change in some way before the recreation of those kinds of spaces become possible, where you can have that kind of intimacy, even with people that you only know, as Bernie pointed out, or only know you in that club. You know, I think of those club spaces, it's like when you go to the drive up window at the bank. The teller talks to you and she knows you but if she sees you in the supermarket, she doesn't know you because she only knows your face peering out of your car at the drive up teller, and it works, I think, the same way with the technology that we have and the way that has eroded civic space and even private space in so many ways. So we need to have some kind of reformation there before the creation of sanctuary in the way we are talking about it becomes a possibility once again.

DR: I agree exactly what you say. I'm passing on that

JR: I think, in terms of any—where do I see it evolving, where do I see it going, I think—I think we're going to have to be able to connect with this younger generation at the core of of their—of their, our, I don't know, but I'm at that weird age where I'm like the youngin but not really. At the—at the core of their vulnerability, right, and so—and I think that back, you know, back in the day, that vulnerability was easily, I think, you know, identified and defined. I think now for a lot of the reasons mentioned here, whether it's social media, whether it's kind of this, you know, this digitized world, the vulnerability of people is—is often hidden and we don't hear about it until they've hung themselves in their closet, right, and so I think if we're able to connect with these youth at kind of this core of their vulnerability, we'll be able to create spaces that truly tap into

what their sanctuary needs to look like. And it may not be a club, right, it may not be a club. It may, you know, maybe that space and that time has passed, but I do think there is a need for a different kind of sanctuary and—and I hope that both—like, all generations will need to be kind of connected in order to figure out what that is.

BM: I know it's gonna sound silly. What was the question?

JR: You know what—

BM: I'm gonna—I just want to make sure I'm answering it correctly. What was the—

DC: What do you believe the—

BM: About sanctuary.

DC: Yes. Clubs as sanctuary. Like, the evolution of this concept.

BM: Where do I—where do I see it going? Be honest with you, I don't—I don't have a clue, but I think we shouldn't have a clue. I think we don't need to find the answers for the next generation. They need to find their own sanctuary and only thing we could tell them is what we got out of it. You understand how sanctuary helped me. I can't tell you—I don't—that you're going to have this great sanctuary and you're missing out. Find your own sanctuary, because my mother didn't tell me Zanzibar was going to be mine. She didn't. She—I'm just being honest so I found mine, and I respect the next generation enough for them to find their own. You know, so I don't want to give them a quick fix saying, "oh, you missed out on"—yeah, you missed out, you can't get it back, it's done. But you need to—they need to find their own niche. Now when I do go to the clubs, they're dancing to hip hop like they dancing to Grace Jones, pull up to my bumper. They getting it in, and I'm sitting there like, wasn't this just playing on the radio? But that's where they're at with it, so I think sanctuary is going to have to come from the heart and it will lead you and it will call you and when you find sanctuary, you know you're safe. And that's when you know you're in sanctuary, when you feel safe.

[Applause]

BS: I think it's ten after nine and I think we might need to actually stop now but it's been a fabulous, fabulous panel and I just want to make a few quick announcements and then we will give a hand to our fabulous moderators and panelists. One is that we have three more upcoming events that we hope you come. Tomorrow night is Out Loud: Expressions of Sanctuary, 7 to 9 p.m at 765 Broad Street, 7th floor. It's an expression—evening of poetry and spoken, word sponsored by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and we're having great poets, great spoken

word people, and great music by DJ JustLove, who you want to hear. So we're talking about music.

[BEGIN SEGMENT 5/5]

Out in Newark! Queer Club Spaces as Sanctuary (Part 5)

BS: Second who does it, and she—she does it. So then this Sunday, October 19th, three to nine PM, is a long tea party, date party, festival. We're having special film screening, panel discussion, part with—which is part of the Get Down Campaign's No More Stigma film series. This will also be at 765 Broad Street, seventh floor again. These—the—this—the information is the back of your—of your program, so please hold on to that. And then Saturday October 25th from 5 PM to 3 A.M they—we are—they are bringing back the Fireball.

[Cheers]

BS: Fire and Ice, the Fireball returns. This is like something, it's—it's been, you know, 12, 14 years since this has been put on. It's a total history making event and it's going to be fabulous. And if there's anybody here who wants to advertise at the Fireball there's a— information on that in the—in the last page of the program, but this is going to be an amazing, amazing thing, and the things you've been hearing about and things you've been seeing, here it is. We're talking about "where's it going to be." Well, this is back. And it's a—it's a—

Unknown (offscreen): Sanctuary.

BS: And it is a benefit for the LGBTQ community center here in Newark, so—but I just can't urge you more enough to attend the Fireball. There's some flyers. Fire and Ice: the Fireball Returns. One more quick thing. There are purple sheets in all of your programs and it is really, really, really important to us that you fill out these sheets. They are basically, you know, a survey about what you felt, thought about the program and we really need to have that so, you know, yeah, so we can do more. And could we have a round of applause to these wonderful, wonderful, brilliant, fabulous people?

[Applause]

RG: Just—just thanks to all the panelists, the moderator, Rutgers University, and especially, again, to each and every one of you for coming out and giving of your time. We are community. It can't end here. We are preserving history, but if we stop, like we normally do after we have an event, we will not be able to preserve it. Hello, Newark Arts Council over there in the corner, one of our sponsors. Lynnwood Oglesby. This is a part of Open Doors as well. Thank you so

much for coming out. I'm very excited about the future. Everyone have a blessed night. Thank you.

BS: And remember, photos of Zan—the photo book of Zanzibar at the back table, Vincent Bryant, photographer ,and copies of Blue outside.

RG: And Dean Credle has tickets for the Fireball.

BS: And Dean—

RG: Raise your hand, Dean Credle, so they can see you. We need to sell these tickets. It's a fundraiser. Get them. Twenty—twenty dollars.

BS: Yeah, you can get it now right here. Okay.

RG: They're twenty now.

Unknown (offscreen): Where would you like us to—