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Tue, Jul 25, 2023 9:30AM 20:25

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

harvey milk, harvey, perversion, act, city hall, houston, listen, lesbian, song, heard, cry, unite, matter, heart, christmas concert, died, win, sang, mother, call

SPEAKERS

Roger, Ray Hill, Buddy Johnston, Jimmy Carper

Roger 00:01

faggotry from their myths, they will not come clothed in brown and swastikas are varying chests heavy with gleaming crosses, the time and need for such verses are over. They will come in businesses to buy your homes and bring bodies to fill your jobs. They will come in robes to rehabilitate and white coats to subjugate. And where will you be when they come? Where will you or will we all be when they come? And they will come? They will come because we are defined as opposite, perverse, and we are perverse. Every time we watched a queer hassled in the streets and said nothing. It was an act of perversion. Every time we heard I don't mind gays. But why must they be blatant? And said nothing. It was an act of perversion. Every time we lied about the boyfriend or girlfriend at Coffee Break. It was an act of perversion. Every time we let a lesbian mother lose her child and did not fill the courtrooms. It was an act of perversion. Every time we let straights make out in our bars. While we couldn't touch because of the laws, it was an act of perversion. Every time we put on the proper clothes to go to a family wedding and left our lovers at home. It was an act of perversion. Every time we heard who I go to bed with is my personal choice. It's personal, not political, and said nothing. It was an act of perversion. Every time we let straight relatives bury our dead and push our lovers away. It was an act of perversion, and they will come for the perverts. And it won't matter if you're homosexual, not a faggot. Lesbian, not a dyke. Gay, not queer. It won't matter if you own your own business have a good job or an SSI. It won't matter if you're black, Chicano, Native American, Asian or white. It won't matter if you're from New York or Los Angeles, Galveston, or Sioux Falls. It won't matter if you're Butch or FIM not intervals. monogamous, non monogamous. It won't matter if you're Catholic, Baptist, atheist, Jewish or MCC. It won't matter if your socialist communist libertarian Democrat or Republican, they will come they will come to the cities and to the land to your front rooms and in your closets. They will come for the perverts and where will you be when they come? Thank you.

03:01

Beautiful poem. Thank you so much. Thank you. We have a very special treat about to happen right here on the steps of City Hall literally. Every week in Houston, Texas on Monday nights, a group of women meet together to share music to share song, but more than that they need to

create and provide a safe and loving space so they can be nurturing to each other. And so they can prepare music so that they can go out into the community and be nurturing with others through their music. These are women who know the full meaning of song from the heart and they are my sisters in song please welcome Heartsong.

B

Buddy Johnston 04:47

They are wonderful? We're listening to a broadcast a rebroadcast of the celebration of life rally that took place in 1988 from the steps of Houston City Hall on after hours. morning it was to commemorate and remember 10th anniversary of the killing of Harvey Milk who was the first openly gay politician. And we're listening to heart song. And that's my favorite song. The reason I had to stop the tape right now is to tell you a little story, because we didn't have a lot of support for this rally. If it hadn't been for the money and financial support from Larry Lingle and Lobo and Charles Armstrong, and the support of the River Oaks theater, it would never have gotten that true. And by the time we got this far into the rally, Jimmy, I remember I was just wrecked because we had had the middle of scene with the GOP see, and we talked about last week. And I had picked Carrie Brett up at the airport who was sick, he didn't feel good. He had spent Thanksgiving with his mother who lives in Port Arthur, right. And when I picked him up, he said, How many speakers do you have an hour with? I don't know. 10 or 12. And he went, That's too many. And all the way down here I was like, Oh, Jesus, why have I done that day? I remember we were pulling the piano out of City Hall. It looked like it was gonna rain hold and it was miserable. But by the time Heartsong got up there and sang, it just all felt right. Yeah. And I remember I walked down to the end the east end of the reflection pool and look back at the stage which was on the steps of City Hall. I was standing at the far end of City Hall at the other end of the reflection pool and heart song sang this next song I hope it's the next song from a distance. And when they sang that it's really the first time I've ever listened to this song and paid attention to the words but when they sang that this morning I knew it was right. I knew that we were supposed to be there

J

Jimmy Carper 07:34

this is what I believe the name of this is breaths

B

Buddy Johnston 07:36

It's very pretty. And it was very cold and this young woman that played the piano I don't know how the hell she did it. She was banging on those keys with frozen fingers girl song has a new consent out by the way do they have their third annual concert which will be playing and they will probably come down here now and skin me alive for talking while they're singing?


J


Jimmy Carper 08:02


Yeah

B


Buddy Johnston 08:05

 Buddy Johnston 08:02
well I thought they were gonna sing from a distance


 Jimmy Carper 08:07
I think they sing that next yeah no


 Buddy Johnston 08:09
they do because it says right here from


 Jimmy Carper 08:13
I see

 Buddy Johnston 08:26
met great and you know this is called from a distance Okay, and when I heard this song that's that's what you knew. That's when I knew it was okay. Listen to this Mary wow, I thought it was on here. Oh, it says from a distance.

 Jimmy Carper 08:47
Well, we're here and work with and you're listening to please don't come down to City Hall or rebroadcast of the November 27 1988 broadcast of celebration of life rally that's what it was called the celebration of life. Even though it commemorated the death of Harvey Milk or can we listen to heart song

 Buddy Johnston 09:11
yeah sleaze finally.

 09:24
Heartsong

 09:32
under the direction of Lynn Wayne and and we're very lucky because coming I think in this next week, the first recorded cassette of heart song from their spring concert will be available. And Lynn, when is your Christmas concert? Where St. Thomas Jones Hall Okay, December 17 at St.

Thomas Jones Hall will be a Christmas concert of Hearthstone Ong and Montrose singers and the MCC our choir, so we're lucky enough to hear all of you again and, and the Lone Star band wonderful no words are needed



10:20

a cry to unite is in the air, fear, death and dying, even despair. But hopefully determined we will survive by keeping the flames of our faith alive. A cry to unite is in the air. Sing praises have cried. The cry to unite is in the air. A time to celebrate. To love to care. Forever united, we must stand or divided, we will surely fall. Listen to the cry. Rise up, stand tall. A cry to unite is in the air. Sing praises of pride. Cried to unite is in the air. bonding of souls and hearts everywhere. Our dreams unite must come true. The courage to face the world as you a cry to unite is in the air singing praises of pride.

B

Buddy Johnston 12:08

Ladies and gentlemen, in June of 1984, about a year and a half after coming to Houston, I went to work for the Houston Police Department as a dispatcher. In April of 87, I was going home to visit my mother in Arkansas. That's a hell of a trip. If you've ever spent a weekend with my mother. She threw me out of the house when I was 17 and has never accepted the fact that I like to get down now I better not say that. And in preparation for the trip to Arkansas, Roger and I were making cassettes to listen to I figured if I could hear the word Houston every once in a while, I would enjoy the trip a little bit more since I love this city so much. And while scanning the dial and recording my tape, I came across a madman on the radio raising hell about the Houston Police and how they had raided our bars and how he was sick and tired of it. And we're not going to take that anymore. The next week, I turned the radio on at nine o'clock on KPFT and cried when I heard the words we are all gay and lesbian people because I knew the power of radio that I've come to love and respect the power of the man I'm about to give you now. Personally, I would like to see him as the Grand Marshal of the parade this year. I'm going to start that little push because in the last 20 years since Stonewall, who has done more for the gay lesbian movement in Houston. In my friend and yours, Mr. Ray Hill

R

Ray Hill 13:51

Excuse me. I'm an old radio man. I work with a mic real close. It's been a wonderful evening. I must have heard the Altoona speech. Two or three dozen times. I think I've even given it twice. But I don't think I ever clouded up and cried like I heard it presented tonight. You see, I didn't know Harvey Milk very well. We only had three conversations before he died. And two of those were arguments. I wanted to call for a national congress. And he wanted to lead a national march on Washington. He won the argument. You see I was hung up on the nuts and bolts of building a movement. And Harvey was committed to win the souls and build the hopes of lesbians and gay men. He won because he was right. We had no movement to build until our people were convinced they deserve the freedom for which we were about to struggle. In 1978, we had not yet achieved that. And in 1988, we're still not there. But because of Harvey Milk, we're on our way. There have been some detours, you understand, hardly died before aids. Harvey died before the White House of the United States became a hostile force against us. Jimmy Carter didn't act like that. Harvey had no notion that the Justice Department of the

United States of America could be used as a bully pulpit by the religious fanatics who openly call for our death and destruction and nice did that. Frequently, I have wished I could pick up the phone and call Harvey for his advice. What do we do now? How do we get out of this mess? How do we accomplish our goals with no money, no support and very slim resources, the great and continuing questions of our movement in our time. We have an ancestor Walt Whitman, who peered ahead in history and left a few words, so that we would know he understood that loss from the Leaves of Grass. Oh, captain, my captain, he wrote. It is some dream, that on the deck, you have fallen cold and dead. My captain does not answer. His lips are pale and steal. My leader does not feel my arm. He has no poles. Nor will. But Walt Whitman's clairvoyance, and wisdom is of little help. If we are fighting a plague, confounded by a plague of indifference and a plague of fear and ignorance and a plague of hate and violence. I instinctively know that Harvey Milk would not buy for an instant that we suffer what we suffer is an accident. The 1000s who have died in the scores of 1000s, who are dying of AIDS are no more victims of an incidental medical curiosity. Then the newly 300,000 gay and lesbian people who died in Nazi death camps are the products of an historical accident, someone is to blame. We must not and cannot fall into the trap of blaming ourselves even though others are pointing the finger and saying we are at fault. Look at the gentle loving people around you. Look. Do you believe that these people are responsible for the carnage we have seen and the even greater carnage we are about to say? Listen to their voices are those voices filled with the bitterness and hate we hear from others? Now consider those in the seats of power with their cold indifference. They're calculated excuses, their history of the war and violence. It is as clear to me as it wouldn't be to Harvey Milk, we are not responsible. The difference is, he may have known how to better fight this battle than 10 years ago, on a makeshift podium, across the street there by the library. Only hours after his assassination. I likened Harvey Milk to Moses. I said Harvey's job was not to lead us out of bondage, but to show the way so that we could set ourselves free. I still believe that I learned from my prison experience, that it is the convicts that build the prisons, we are the keepers of our own keys, the this it is incumbent on each of us to declare Faith and Freedom and struggle for it. But without struggle, there is no freedom. And without declaration, there is not even the hope of freedom. It is possible to win or lose that struggle. But if enough of us are committed that to the idea that we deserve that freedom and are willing to devote our talents and our abilities to that cause How can we lose? We have supplied that talent for the rest of society's progress, scientific, economic, political and all of the other areas. Harvey Milk was fully aware more of who we are and all that we can do. And what he was trying to tell us is that we too should recognize our own importance and our own abilities. If even at this distance, we would only listen to him. We would win our cause because we are able and our