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janis ian, hear, lesbian, people, songs, terri, talk, gay, called, years, day, running, polo, tchaikovsky, houston, bisexual, vote, nice, blue eyes, michael

SPEAKERS

Speaker 10, [Music], Speaker 11, Speaker 8, Speaker 12, Michael Crawford, Speaker 9, Jewel Gray, Scott Lewis, Jimmy Carper, Speaker 14



Speaker 9 00:01

You were an activist for civil rights for African Americans, all minorities through the 60s and the 70s. Why did it take you so long to come out as a lesbian?



Speaker 10 00:14

Well, it got complicated by the fact that I married a man in 1978, and that did confuse the issue for a while.



Speaker 9 00:19

Was that to throw people off? Or try and prove something to yourself?



Speaker 10 00:23

Oh, no. Given my track record, I would do something to throw people off something? No, I was in love. And that's why the term bisexual to me does make a certain amount of sense. I don't think at least in my case, that being gay precludes having an intimate relationship with the opposite sex. But my preference is obviously for women. You know, I've always been out to my family and to my friends, everyone I've ever worked with, I've always brought whoever I lived with, to whatever awards shows, etc., but I haven't been doing anything public. It's been 12 years since I last toward or did any kind of publicity. So if the point of people in my position coming out, is to reach a segment of America that really does believe that they don't know any gay people, then it's senseless to come out by calling USA Today, four years ago and saying, hey, my name is Janis Ian. And and I'm queer. And they go, oh, yeah, great. Call us when you have a record coming in. We started planning for this record in 1989. And we started looking for a record company. And at that time, it was real clear to me and my business manager that this

was going to be part of what I talked about, and it took us three years to get funding, and another year to find someone who was willing to put it out. So I feel like I'm almost living in a state of grace that the records coming out right now when this appears to be a very popular issue for the media. It's very strange to me, because four years ago, it definitely wasn't.

 Speaker 9 01:47

That's right.

 Speaker 10 01:48

Though, it's odd to me, because I don't quite know how to respond. I've been out and moved to Nashville, I was out. I've been living with someone there for five years now. Everybody knows.

 Speaker 9 01:58

Even in Nashville.

 Speaker 10 01:59

Particularly in Nashville. Actually, I've had more problems in the north than I have in the south.

 Speaker 9 02:04

Is that right?

 Speaker 10 02:04

Oh, people are pretty upfront in the South. Yeah, they'll stand there and say to your face, I don't understand it. I just don't get it. You're welcome in the house, but I don't get it. Don't talk about it with my kids. You know, they're real frontal, whereas in the north, they're very nice, but they'll make sure that you don't babysit.

 Speaker 9 02:19

We understand, we'll tolerate you. But please don't talk about. You know, why do you have to talk about it.

 Speaker 10 02:24

That's like my partner says, you know, I'll keep mine in the bedroom when you take the wedding picture off your desk. That's right. And I say, they, I'll keep quiet about it. I'd say, you

join me in helping us get our civil rights and the day after we're guaranteed our civil rights, I'll shut up. Well, that's the bottom line, isn't it? You know, and I think that's the bottom line for any anybody with a public audience like myself, who's coming out now is that we really are at a crossroads for the civil rights issues. And if we don't get them now, I'm afraid that they're going to disappear.

[ Music] 03:09

No one knows what it's like to be the bad man to be the sad man. Behind blue eyes. No one knows what it's like to be hated. To be baited. To telling lonely lies.

 Speaker 9 03:37

When Pete Townsend came out a couple years ago, I was immediately able to think of songs like "Behind Blue Eyes" that I knew identified with. I wasn't quite sure why and I immediately went to the album and pulled it out. And of course, it was about his sexuality. I mean, "Rough Boys" was obvious, but Behind Blue Eyes wasn't quite so obvious. Can we do the same thing with Janis Ian? You actually got a piece of fan mail from a 16 year old or a man who was 16 when he heard that song. And you were 16.

 Speaker 10 04:01

No, I will shoot anyone who does. I'm not talking about you and Pete's, but I find that really offensive as a songwriter because as a songwriter, first of all, I do have a track record of some integrity and not being afraid. And second of all, as a songwriter, genderless songs are more universal, and I strive for universality. So I find it offensive when somebody now is going back leafing through my songs and going wow Jesse's about a woman when I know the Vietnam veteran I wrote about, and it's definitely male. There's references in my songs that are real obvious back to when I was a kid with a song called Clean American that talks about two men walking by the fountain holding hands and says your love is not wrong. And I think when I've had something to say, and I felt that I could say it, well, it's been right there. And right up front.

 Speaker 9 04:58

How'd you find out about that? All right. I read your press releases. Yeah. You also were friends with Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix.

 Speaker 10 05:07

I knew her, yeah.

 Speaker 9 05:08

We hear a lot about Janis being a lesbian and Jimi being gay and

S

Speaker 10 05:13

I didn't know about any, I was 14 and 15 and

S

Speaker 9 05:15

No drugs?

S

Speaker 10 05:16

Well, I had some drugs with those guys but certainly nothing near what they were consuming, parties and stuff, backstage stuff, we get to a certain point and everybody would realize I was in the room and kind of gently shoved me out of the room.

S

Speaker 9 05:28

Nice to be protected.

S

Speaker 10 05:30

Yeah, I was really lucky. I mean, if I think about the amount of people I knew who died

S

Speaker 9 05:35

From drugs.

S

Speaker 10 05:36

From drugs, from drowning in swimming pools while on drugs, from overdosing at the Chelsea Hotel.

S

Speaker 9 05:43

Those were those days I'll tell you.

S

Speaker 10 05:44

Oh yeah, it was a great

S

Speaker 9 05:45

Yeah wonderful time. A lot more hair to wash back then too.

[

[Music] 05:49

S

Speaker 8 06:53

Bert Weiland and brings us more of the words and music of singer songwriter Janis Ian next time on This Way Out.

J

Jimmy Carper 07:01

Ooh, but for any of you out there who thought that maybe Janis Ian had gone away, let's, let's bring back that song that she, we just heard a little piece of, "This Train Still Runs." Janis Ian with "This Train Still Runs," sure does, sets off of her new CD called "Breaking Silence." We played a couple of cuts off of the CD in past weeks, and you'll hear more in the future. Now continuing with the QMZ, the queer music zone, I thought it would be a good idea to bring maybe artists that you don't normally hear on KPFT. Not all queer artists are making music right now. Some, some of them aren't with us anymore. Some of the great masters have been gay. And along that vein, we've, I've picked Tchaikovsky this week. I've got a short little piece I want to play from Eugene Onegin. It's the "Polonaise." Yes, Peter Tchaikovsky, with the "Polonaise" from the opera, Eugene Onegin. And so, like Christmas time when you go to see Swan Lake or you go to see the Sleeping Beauty ballet. And you realize that Peter Tchaikovsky wrote that, you know that he was one of us way back when. And there's no reason that since we talk about QMZ being by gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgenderal artists that it shouldn't be from all artists. You'll hear country and western. You'll hear women's music. You'll hear gay men's music. You'll hear bisexuals, transgenderals. Even we've got heavy metal stuff. In fact, that's why I'm talking right now because I didn't want to give you whiplash by going from Peter Tchaikovsky to Helot Revolt, which is a brand new heavy metal, openly gay group, but they do have a great message and here we go.

S

Speaker 11 10:16

The Avant Garde program is moving to Wednesdays, 10pm to midnight on KPFT Houston.

S

Speaker 12 10:38

Only one 1993 model has all these features. Fuel injected via drivers side airbags, anti lock brakes, automatic door locks, bright pink, leather interior, cruise control, new car smell, stereo, 100,000 watts of power and of course, Adrian Belu, weightless Friday mornings at three only on KPFT Houston.

S

Speaker 14 11:22

Jodie, Jodie Foster. Jodie, this is Nancy. You know who this is, Nancy Ford. Don't pretend you don't know who I am. And if you're listening, you know you're listening to, After Hours, a continuing tradition here on KPFT Houston, 90.1.

J

Jimmy Carper 11:40

Okay, we're back. And that does conclude the QMZ with Jimmy this week. We'll be back next week with more. I just always seem to run out of room. I could run out of time, I could play twice as many songs. But you know, hey, we've got other things to do, too. And Jewel is here and she's tapping her foot and she's ready to take over this mic. I'm hooked. So okay.

J

Jewel Gray 12:06

Let me step on your

J

Jimmy Carper 12:07

Don't, don't step on my thing again.

J

Jewel Gray 12:12

I don't, I'm not even plugged in. I can't hear myself. Okay. We're, we're back. And I know you can hear me. It's not, it's not loud enough. But I know you can hear me. Okay. We're back. We just got a call from a friend of this friend of the show. Polo, who is responsible for Project Red Ribbon. And yes, yes, we're real proud of Polo and his efforts in the community. Polo you sent me something in the mail the other day, and I didn't get it down here. But I promise in the very near future, we will go into detail about Project Red Ribbon. And now there's a new one he's got, Think Pink, an effort that he is instigating, I believe he is instigating about making our community aware and trying to get funding for more breast cancer research, which I think is a nice move. He says, and I'm not quoting but he says that he thinks that the lesbians in our community have supported the male population in this time of great need with their money and their support. And they're volunteering for organizations and trying to help where they can and he thought it was important and time that the male community respond in kind with a serious lesbian health problem. And God, I don't know why it's a lesbian problem. But I hear that there are reasons, sexual reasons and stress reasons that lesbians are more, more predisposed to getting breast cancer. So I think that's a valiant effort. And I really commend him and we'll get more information about that to you. Oh, we gave away the tickets. We gave away the tickets. I'm so glad we get the tickets. I have a production room full of people here. And I've got some stuff I want to read to you. Looks like, no we want to put this away until closer to October because October he will be here. She will be here. He will be here. I wish Diane had been here tonight, poor Diane's home she's not feeling well tonight. She called earlier so she could decipher these notes she took from Torie Osborn. I have these notes. It says Jewel, that's the only thing I'm really sure it says. I know these were written just for her so she could, it's like a secret language here. There's some 77006. She's writing notes about what,

what went on at the tour, at the dinner, the GLPC anniversary dinner, and she's going to want to talk about that with you in the future. There are some other things going on in town that I think are pretty interesting. I want to remind you one thing. Polo called this evening and decided that he wanted to help us with financing here at the station and made a generous donation. And I want to let you know that come, what day was it you said, the 13th? I believe we're at KPFT going to be begging you for money again. So if you don't want to be begged for money on the After Hours program, just send it now. Just send it now, we're about halfway to our, our, our, our three our goal already, so if we can get it, then we will just be very quiet on marathon, on marathon weekend, let you know that it's going on. But we won't have to raise you, if you, if you are a constant listener, you will remember the last time we did marathon, boy, we were really good. I think we got \$1,000 that night.

 Scott Lewis 15:47

We did. Michael Crawford's already told me this time I will not be offered as a premium. He feels we can raise more money that way.

 Jewel Gray 15:55

Well, that's something we have to do is think about premium maybe we can get some, it's not very

 Scott Lewis 15:59

Good for the ego when you're when you're lowered from a 200 to a \$35 premium. And no one's still calls. They were throwing in dinners.

 Jewel Gray 16:10

Oh, poor baby. And we know that Michael Crawford is a catch in any, in any company he would be a catch. I asked Jimmy a minute ago about doing a PSA that Michael did. I didn't mean Michael, our Michael. I meant Michael at the history, moments in history, kind of thing. They're not up here. Okay. So we'll do them another night. Do we have a call?

 Jimmy Carper 16:36

Yes.

 Jewel Gray 16:36

Who we got there? Our Michael. All right, Michael. All right, Michael. Are there Michael?

 Michael Crawford 16:43

Yes, I'm here.

 Jewel Gray 16:44

What's up guy?

 Michael Crawford 16:44

I promise to promote the GLPC upcoming presidential elections.

 Jewel Gray 16:49

Oh, that's right. And who would you like to see into that, elected into the

 Michael Crawford 16:54

Well, okay. I should say when it's going to be first. It's going to be next Wednesday, which is September 1. It's going to be at the Stouffer Hotel and Greenway Plaza. And I'm assuming it's starting around seven to 7 to 7:30. But just be sure to get there at seven to get a good seat.

 [Music] 17:09

Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, get a good seat to vote?

 Scott Lewis 17:11

Wait back up. Yeah. Where is it?

 Michael Crawford 17:13

Stouffer Hotel, Greenway Plaza. Okay, and apparently you

 Scott Lewis 17:18

Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. Let me back up. Okay. Did they have nothing better to do with that money than rent one of the fanciest hotels in town for a meeting?

 Michael Crawford 17:28

I said part of it is that something really screwy is going on with the Mac center

S Scott Lewis 17:33

So they rent the Stouffer presidente?

J Jewel Gray 17:36

I rental my house.

J Jimmy Carper 17:37

They use to, they used to have their meetings there every month.

J Jewel Gray 17:41

Oh, so Stouffer has been very,

J Jimmy Carper 17:42

Yeah, it's not that big of a deal. Yeah.

I [Music] 17:44

I'd like to see you rent a room over there.

J Jimmy Carper 17:47

The air conditioning is or something has been really fouled up at the Mac center.

J Jewel Gray 17:51

Yeah, when I went to see Nuchia It was awful. It was awful in the room.

M Michael Crawford 17:55

Okay. But okay, it's got, your criticisms are taken into account. And on, on Wednesday the, the administration will change. And actually, one person who is running is Terri Richardson, who we all know from acts of code.

J Jewel Gray 18:10

All right, Terri.

M Michael Crawford 18:11

Um, she's been on on after hours several times. And to be perfectly honest, I am really excited to see her running for president. I mean we all know that I hated the, I hate no the current president and I've asked, you know GLPC but I'm hoping that Terri can come in and you know be a progressive voice and promote a more progressive inclusive agenda and you know, I'm really hoping that people will go out and vote for her, and there's some other person running, a guy, but you know, guys are guys we don't need any more guy presidents.

J Jewel Gray 18:43

Gary. Gary Van Ooteghem. Yeah, whatever.

M Michael Crawford 18:47

I don't know anything about him.

J Jewel Gray 18:49

I'm getting, I'm getting sign language here.

S Scott Lewis 18:54

That Joan Rivers, Joan Rivers thing

J Jewel Gray 18:57

Yeah. So they're gonna be voting and what do you have to do to vote?

M Michael Crawford 19:03

I'm not sure what to be honest. I'm not a member.

S Scott Lewis 19:05

You have to be, you have, in order to vote, you have to have been a member for at least 30 days.

M

Michael Crawford 19:10

I guess we can't now that we've, since we're not, well, Scoot is a member so he can vote but I'm not so I can't.

S

Scott Lewis 19:15

And I will be there voting for Terri Richardson.

M

Michael Crawford 19:18

And there's also apparently two board seats that are opening up and one, I know that it's better guys running for one of the seats and I'm hoping he gets elected if only so there can be more more people of color on the board.

S

Scott Lewis 19:31

Those board seats open up faster Jimmy's legs, what is going on over there.

M

Michael Crawford 19:38

I think people kind of just like, I mean, since, since the GLPC hasn't been particularly active lately, I think people kind of sort of lose interest in it and their minds go down the drain. And hopefully with, with, with Terri coming in, I've already decided she was going to win, mind you, and I'm going to be covering the story for After Hours so we'll have all the, all the dirt, but hopefully with Terri comes in with have a more activist GLPC, and it can get up and running and you know, all the things that it should be doing.

S

Scott Lewis 20:06

Well, and when they say at their dinner that what a diverse crowd we have tonight, they won't be talking about the fact that not all the men are wearing black jackets.

M

Michael Crawford 20:15

Exactly. Yeah, that was pretty lame. That was, the dinner itself was lame. And Torie Osborn's speech wasn't even all that great. Oh, she made a few good points about the need to destroy the closet.

J

Jewel Gray 20:27

She. she talked about the need to destroy the closet and keeping the passion and the anger

she, she talked about the need to destroy, the closet and keeping the passion and the anger revved up. Didn't she talk about that?

 Scott Lewis 20:34

She gave a gay rights speech number seven, I was very disappointed.

 Michael Crawford 20:39

Yeah. Well, I mean, she didn't say too much about keeping the passion revved up. She mentioned a couple of things about saying, you know, the usual thing about that gay leaders always say, that we don't hold our politicians, our elected officials to fire, which we've been saying for decades, and we still haven't done it yet. She said something about how we need to have a code of ethics so that we don't, aren't too harshly critical of our, of our leaders. And, you know, my point of view of that is when they're doing something stupid, expect to be criticized. I mean, she also talked about how she wanted to see a queer civil rights bill by the year 2000. Now I personally can you know, live with having one before then. And I don't know, it seems to me that she has the same, well, okay, now, I don't, I don't, I won't say the exact same limited political viewpoint of Chris Bacon. And but she still, I think seems to place too much interest, I mean, too much faith in electoral politics. And as we've seen with the Clinton administration, and Richard, Bob, one year, and all those people who we've given our money and our votes to, that electoral politics doesn't really work for us. And we have to find alternative means of getting where we want. So, but actually, right now, and actually, this is really what I called to mention. Health care reform is coming up when Congress goes back into session next month. And obviously that's important to us because of people with HIV and AIDS and women with breast cancer. And what's going down right now is the Clinton administration is trying to force on us this madness, competition crap, which basically, are according to, basically what it does is, it would give all power over how much health care we get to really big insurance companies like American General, and I read, but it wouldn't do anything really, for poor people like me, would still be a multi-tiered system of health care, where the people who had money would get the best health care and people without would get screwed, but there is an alternative, and it's called the American Health Security Act. And it's been, it was introduced into Congress in March of this year. And basically what that would do would set up a single payer system of national health care that provides universal access, free choice of doctors, cost containment and all those, all those cool things that we know that we want. But part of what we need to do right now, the people on the grassroots level, all the people listening to After Hours right now, is really need to contact your congress people right now, and tell them that you want them to support the American Health Security Act, and in the house, it's House Resolution 1200, and the Senate, it's Senate Resolution 491.

 Jewel Gray 23:32

Cool. Thanks, Michael. I really appreciate you giving us that information. And if you want to follow up on any of that you can find out more information by calling either the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard or the GLPC. Or you can even call here and leave a message here with someone who answers the phone here to put in our box and we'll, we'll see what we can find out. Yeah, he's gone. Thanks, Michael. And we're always up to listen to anybody out there with

a dissenting opinion or who has information, who wants to add to or wants to discuss something. We often get calls from various people in the community who want to discuss this stuff and we're open to listening to those, those people.