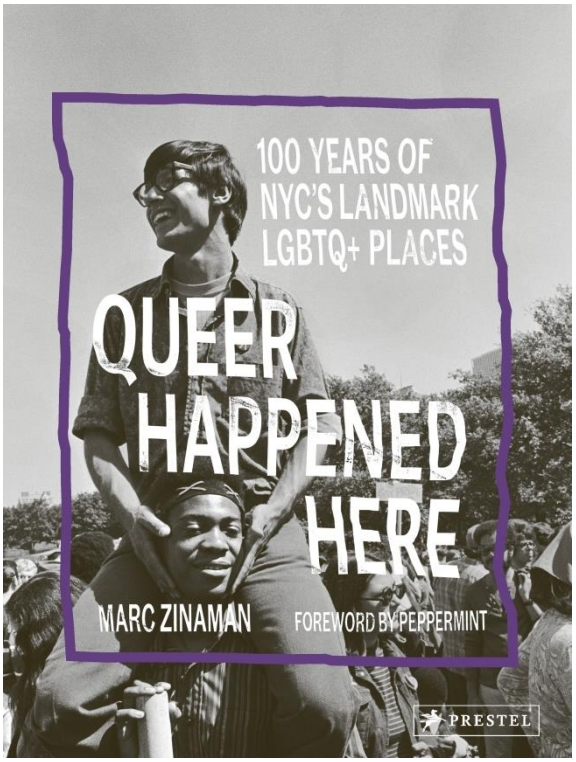

Leseprobe

Marc Zinaman

Queer Happened Here

100 Years of NYC's Landmark LGBTQ+ Places

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Seiten: 304

Erscheinungstermin: 14. Mai 2025

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Zum Buch

This sprawling, unique visual history of New York City's queer spaces documents the evolution of LGBTQ+ culture, community, and activism within Manhattan's dynamic landscape over the course of a century, spanning from 1920 to 2020.

New York's LGBTQ+ history is everywhere, but rarely is it visibly documented. Aside from current venues and a handful of landmark plaques, important queer spaces from the city's past have otherwise been forgotten about, or remain entirely hidden. This multifaceted book joyfully and poignantly explores a century of LGBTQ+ gathering spaces across Manhattan through hundreds of historic photographs, flyers, posters, club membership cards, magazine spreads, and more. Author Marc Zinaman's carefully researched, engaging text includes first-person accounts and little-known facts that range from the humorous to the heartbreaking. From 1920s bathhouses, drag balls, and the ascent of homophobia during World War II, to the protests and parades of the 1960s and 1970s to the horror of AIDS; from the vibrant nightlife scene of the 1990s, to the rise of geosocial dating apps, every major milestone of LGBTQ+ social history is thoughtfully documented. The result is a testament to the endurance of queer culture, and an important contribution to its preservaton and celebration.

Autor

Marc Zinaman

Marc Zinaman is a New York City-based writer and historian. Since 2021, he has been running the social media account @Queer_Happened_Here, which maps the the forgotten LGBTQ+ history of the city. He has also been a contributing writer for the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project and Making Queer

FOREWORD BY PEPPERMINT

I believe New York is one of the most unique and special cities on earth. To me, it represents vibrancy, success, community, and connection. And who am I? My name is Peppermint. I am an artist, actress, and drag entertainer who has lived and worked here since the early 2000s.

This book, and books like it, are increasingly essential in the attempt to redeem the once-lost stories of those in the queer community who have contributed to the tapestry of society. Throughout time, and even in recent years, queer culture and history have been successfully obscured and, in some cases, erased. This is part and parcel of why the New York City of today doesn't quite resemble the New York City I first laid eyes on.

Queer individuals have historically fled discrimination and persecution in small towns in search of community and support in larger cities like New York. They bring with them, of course, their imagination, panache, and artistic ambition.

One of my first jobs in the city was at the infamous Tunnel nightclub, where college students stood in line weekly to attend parties that featured as many types of music as they did so-called designer drugs. (At the time, Tunnel, Limelight, the Roxy, Palladium, and Twilo were the royal houses of clubland; the huge "anything goes" warehouse dance clubs.) The Tunnel building is now an office building. I remember standing with one of my drag queen friends, socializing in the bathroom, watching her wig burn on a sconce at Limelight while we were waiting to go into the H. R. Giger-decorated room (the creator of the Xenomorph monster in the movie *Alien*). Limelight is now some sort of shopping center.

I eventually went on to work at the original XL nightclub, where I once hosted the Pussycat Dolls in the weekly return of the game show *Faggot Feud*. Chelsea at the time was where most of the white middle-class gay men hung out, so naturally it was a good (albeit basic) starting point for a queer college kid to look for community. Even Big Cup, the gay internet café where folks would meet up and leave messages on the board for each other throughout the week, was buzzing.

In the '90s, a night of going out dancing could end in one of several ways for a young LGBTQ+ person: losing yourself at the dance club, losing your life on the way home from the dance club, or risking your life in a heated night of passion after the dance club. Which is not necessarily unique to New York or the '90s,