Dear Pride Bands Alliance Awards Panel:

The San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band (SFLGFB) is proud to present our 2020-2021 virtual concert season for consideration for the Virtual Innovative Programming Award.

When Covid-19 arrived in March 2020, SFLGFB immediately canceled plans for a concert that the group had been rehearsing for three months. After the first month of shelter-in-place and it became clear that Covid-19 was not going anywhere, SFLGFB quickly developed a system to allow our members to rehearse and perform music from home. It was a major challenge to train and equip over 60 musicians possessing widely differing technological resources and knowledge to make and submit their own recordings. We developed internal editing capabilities, created recording guides for members, provided one-on-one assistance, and purchased microphones for members to use for recordings thanks to a generous grant from the Horizons Foundation.

Virtual Concert Programs
SFLGFB staged four unique virtual concert programs during the pandemic featuring 126 musicians from SFLGFB, plus 500 additional performers from around the world. While it had its challenges, virtual concert production provided a novel way to connect musicians, performers, and audiences who wouldn’t normally have the opportunity to interact. One of the great joys of our virtual concerts was reaching audiences in places less friendly to LGBTQIA+ individuals, drawn a combined 8,500 viewers, far exceeding the reach of our traditional in-person concert season.

Concert From Home (October 2020) was a tangible announcement that the Official Band of San Francisco was alive and well, and wasn’t going to allow a pandemic to silence our music. The show was created as a celebration of community strength, resiliency, and hope for the future in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. It included Sousa's Hands Across The Sea as a joint effort with Rose City Pride Bands to show how technology can join musicians hundreds of miles apart.

The Band’s long-running Dance-Along Nutcracker® series is a local holiday favorite first performed in 1985 and typically provides a space for hundreds of kids (and young-at-heart adults) to dance and interact with live music — often for the very first time! The show typically features a parody storyline performed by actors, which presented an extra challenge during Covid-19. SFLGFB innovated to create The Nutcracker Express (December 2020), featuring Clara, Fritz, and a magical train conductor who looks a lot like Uncle Drosselmeyer traveling through time and around the world on a magical train. Each actor was filmed separately on homemade greenscreen sets in an ambitious test of our organization’s newly developed video editing skills. Throughout the show, the audience visits destinations from Dance-Along Nutcrackers past thanks to archival footage woven carefully in with new musical performances from SFLGFB as well as guest performances from several local LGBTQIA+ groups, including CHEER SF, the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco, and the Gay Freedom Band of Los Angeles.

Bandwidth (April 2021) presented a fantastic range of classical music, including three small ensemble performances featuring our woodwind, brass, and percussion sections. Each small ensemble rehearsed regularly with a clinician to help provide more specialized education to our members.
Loud & Proud: A Celebration of Pride Bands from Coast to Coast (June 2021) was the grand culmination of our virtual season and was an enormous undertaking. Growing out of our amazing collaborations earlier in the season with Rose City Pride Bands and the Gay Freedom Band of Los Angeles, Loud & Proud featured 13 performing groups and celebrated the connection among these musical organizations uniquely brought together in a time of global pandemic. SFLGFB was motivated to create, produce, and market this show as a way to support groups who didn’t have the same resources or opportunity to create music during the pandemic. The show’s grand finale featured over 100 musicians from across the country performing Randall D. Standridge’s Deus Ex Machina, a true representation of the way technology enabled us to be together even as we needed to stay physically apart. SFLGFB was honored to distribute the proceeds made from donations, $5,754, evenly amongst all of the participating ensembles.

Diverse Programming

In 2020, SFLGFB made a commitment to further increase the diversity of the voices we elevate in both our Concert and Pep & Marching programs by committing to programming at least twenty compositions by Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color (BIPOC) composers in the coming five concert seasons. Additionally, donations made at our 2020 virtual Dance-Along Nutcracker are being used to commission a new piece by a BIPOC composer. Expected to premiere in spring 2023, this composition will be provided free-of-charge to members of Pride Bands Alliance as a show of appreciation for all for the support and collaborations throughout the pandemic.

Our virtual concert season featured a number of new works written in the last 25 years by BIPOC composers:

A Quiet Journey Home (Ayatey Shabazz, 2006) This highly introspective number is based on the well-known spiritual His Eye Is On the Sparrow and requires mature legato phrasing, and attention to dynamics at a slow tempo.

Alegre (Tania León, 2003) Alegre is a Spanish word meaning ‘joyful,’ and this piece is a joyful showcase of rhythmic dexterity. It also demonstrates the inextricable link in Latin American cultures between music and dance.

General’s Mandate (Mike Wong, 2021, SFLGFB world premiere) General’s Mandate is based on a traditional Chinese melody that has gained prominence in modern Chinese popular culture as the theme to Once Upon a Time in China. SFLGFB Artistic Director of Marching & Pep Mike Wong created a new concert band arrangement in celebration of Lunar New Year.

A Mother of a Revolution! (Omar Thomas, 2019) Commissioned by the Desert Winds Freedom Band, this piece is a celebration of the bravery of trans women, and in particular, Marsha “Pay It No Mind” Johnson, a legendary hero of the Stonewall Revolution in 1969.

The Music of Will Marion Cook: Selections from Clorindy and In Dahomey (arr. James Lamb, 2021, SFLGFB world premiere) Will Marion Cook was a true early 20th Century BIPOC pioneer who composed the music to several of the first all-Black Broadway productions. Cook was a classically-trained violinist but discriminatory practices prevented him from a classical performance career. He turned to popular music where he led touring symphonies and inspired and taught numerous jazz luminaries including Fats Waller, Eubie Black, Ethel Waters, W.C. Handy, and Duke Ellington.

Thank you for your consideration of our application.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon Moss (he/him)
President, Board of Directors
San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band
Concert from Home
Presented October 24, 2020

Concert from Home was the first virtual concert produced by SFLGFB. The music celebrated community strength, resiliency, and hope for the future in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. We partnered with Rose City Pride Bands to perform John Philip Sousa’s Hands Across the Sea, which featured a special introduction from San Francisco Mayor London Breed.

La Réjouissance from Music for the Royal Fireworks (published 1749, arrangement 1997)
George Frideric Handel (1685 - 1759)
Arr. Frank Erickson

A Quiet Journey Home (published 2006)
Ayatey Shabazz (b. 1971)

Hands Across the Sea (published 1899)
John Philip Sousa (1854 - 1932)
Performed with Rose City Pride Bands
Introduction from San Francisco Mayor London Breed

Alegre (published 2002)
Tania León (b. 1943)
Solos: Sue Leonardi (trumpet), Chris Mills (tenor saxophone)

This Is Me from The Greatest Showman (published 2018)
Benj Pasek (b. 1985) & Justin Paul (b. 1985)
Arr. Jay Bocook

Dancing Queen (published 1976; arrangement 2005)
Benny Andersson (b.1946), Bjorn Ulvaeus (b.1945), & Stig Anderson (1931 - 1997)
Arr. Michael Brown; percussion by Will Rapp
Guest Vocals: Leanne Borghesi

I Left My Heart in San Francisco (published 1953; arrangement 1962)
Douglass Cross (1920 - 1975) & George Cory (1920 - 1978)
Guest Vocals: Leanne Borghesi

Links:
Digital Program
Performance Recording
2020 - 2021 Virtual Concert Season

Dance-Alone Nutcracker® 2020:
The Nutcracker Express
Presented December 12, 13, 19, & 24, 2020

The Dance-Alone Nutcracker is SFLGFB's annual original musical production that blends Tchaikovsky's classic The Nutcracker ballet with a new entertaining theme. During an in-person production, the audience is invited to put on their tutus and sashay along with the cast every time The Nutcracker music plays. 2020's virtual show included a new original story performed by a cast in front of green screens, some past performances, new virtual productions, as well as new recorded performances from several partner organizations in San Francisco as well as the Gay Freedom Band of Los Angeles.

**Concert Suite** from *The Polar Express* (published 2004, arrangement 2004)
Alan Silvestri (b. 1950) & Glen Ballard (b. 1953)
Arr. Jerry Brubaker

**Hot Chocolate** from *Selections from The Polar Express* (published 2004; arrangement 2016)
Alan Silvestri (b. 1950) & Glen Ballard (b. 1953)
Arr. Paul Murtha

**Vocals by Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco (LGCSF)**

**Choreography by CHEER San Francisco**

**Christmas in a Nutshell** (arrangement 2019)
Traditional
Arr. Chris Sharp

Links:

- Digital Program
- New Performance Recordings
  (for licensing reasons, archival footage from past shows is no longer available)
Bandwidth
Presented April 3, 2021

Bandwidth celebrates the diversity of composers and sounds in our increasingly digital world. Smaller ensemble performances from our woodwind, brass, and percussion sections round out this concert.

Studio Ghibli’s Anime March (published 1988)
Joe Hisaishi (b. 1950)
Arr. Yo Goto

Solomon’s Ring (published 2015)
Hayato Hirose (b. 1974)
Featuring the Brass Section

A Dance on Three Legs (published 2015)
Andrew Balent (b. 1934)
Featuring the Percussion Section

Folksongs from Somerset from English Folk Song Suite (published 1923, arrangement 1999)
Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 - 1958)
Arr. David J. Gardner
Featuring the Woodwind Section

Semper Fidelis (published 1888)
John Philip Sousa (1854 - 1932)

General’s Mandate (arrangement 2021)
Traditional
Arr. Mike Wong
WORLD PREMIERE!

The Music of Will Marion Cook: Selections from Clorindy and In Dahomey (arrangement 2019)
Will Marion Cook (1869-1944)
Arr. James Lamb
WORLD PREMIERE!
Performed with UC Davis Concert Band
Loud & Proud: A Celebration of Pride Bands from Coast to Coast
Presented June 26, 2021

*Loud & Proud* brought together performances from thirteen Pride Bands across the country, as well as one joint piece with performers from all groups. The show celebrated and supported the connection between these musical organizations, uniquely brought together in a time of global pandemic.

*Sure On This Shining Night* from *Four Songs* (published 1938, arrangement 2004)
Samuel Barber (1910 - 1981)
Arr. Richard L. Saucedo

*A Mother of a Revolution!* (published 2019)
Omar Thomas (b. 1982)

*Deus Ex Machina* (published 2020)
Randall D. Standridge (b. 1976)

Featuring over 100 Musicians from Across the Country!