
Deaf LGBTQIA2S+ Creatives/Surdists Ancestors are honored each day during the National Deaf LGBTQ Awareness week. Please find _____ here to honor today.

April 15, Don Baer (1959-2013) Wax Sculpture, Actor

April 16, Georgette "Gigi" Doran (1949-2022) Actor, Stage Rat

April 17, George Gaska (1930-2014) Tailor, Costume Designer

Robert E. Harding (BH) (1946-1994) Set Designer, Artist

April 18, Rosie Lanier Rodiguez (1969-2006) Performer

April 19, Frank Varveri (1958-1991) Actor

Mark Allen Branson (1955-1997) Actor

April 20, Michael Jolliffe (1945-1998) Artist

Angelo Rosardo-Marquez (1950-1991) Draftsman

April 21, Victor Magide (1963-2016) Photographer

#SURDISTSUNITED

#DEAFLGBTQWEEK

#DEAFQUEERRESOURCECENTER

#DEAFLGBTQANCESTORS

#DEAFQUEERWEEK



Donald Christopher Baer

(November 17, 1959-December 10, 2013)

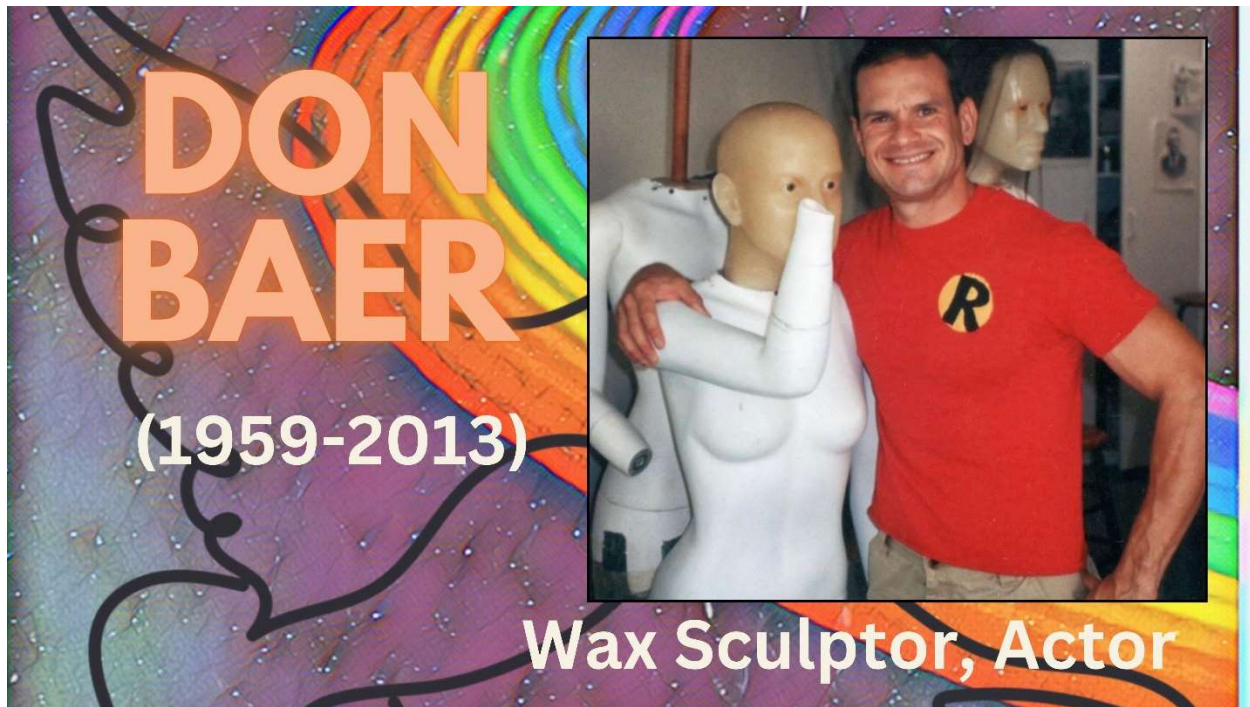
Wax Sculptor and Actor

Don Baer created a legacy utilizing his unique talents to create life-size three-dimensional wax figures of prominent deaf and hearing individuals to celebrate recognition of Deaf history. He founded DeafWax, a non-profit organization, which served to exhibit these wax figures in venues throughout California and Texas. Don was a skilled actor who devoted himself to the arts and stage. A life-long activist and advocate in the Deaf gay community, Don also participated in the promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness.

Don attended the California School for the Deaf Riverside and later transferred to the CSD Berkeley/Fremont schools. His professional life led him to work at Disneyland, the Salk Institute, and the Bay Area Communication Access company.

During his final years with ALS, Don shared with others his health challenges. He followed his dreams throughout his short life enjoying the outdoors, his friends, traveling, and the arts.

[Photo credit: Linda Pratt]



[image: DON BAER at top left. (1959-2013) at middle left. On right, picture of Don Baer in red shirt with letter R wrapping his right arm around his bald head in white body wax sculpture holding up its missing hand. Another white wax sculpture with missing head standing behind. Wax head sticks out behind Don. Wax Sculptor, Actor at bottom right. The background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[edited obituary submitted by Linda Pratt]



Georgette “Gigi” Doran

(June 17, 1949 – April 12, 2022)

Actor/Stage Rat, Deaf Interpreter par excellence

Gigi Doran loved the theatre, the Deaf community, and making people laugh. She was involved with the Hughes Memorial Theatre, an amateur Deaf community theatre in the Washington DC area, and Gallaudet Theatre where she was actor and stage manager for a number of productions such as *Tales of a Clubroom*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *Elephant Man*, etc.

Gigi was born in New York and graduated from Fanwood School for the Deaf (NY) in 1968. She graduated from Gallaudet University in 1983, majoring in Theatre Arts. For many years, she worked as a Deaf Interpreter for the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) and was recognized as a gifted legal interpreter. She became known for a viral videoclip of her interpreting for the governor of Massachusetts during a televised blizzard warning in 2013.

In later years, she volunteered as a mentor to Deaf youth in Florida. She was remembered for her impact and passion for the Deaf community, and her ever-present sense of humor.



[image: GEORGETTE “GIGI” DORAN at top left. (1949-2022) at middle left. Actor, Stage Rat at bottom left. On right, picture of Gigi in black jacket, white shirt with red lobsters and black tie. Windows top and white bottom wall behind Gigi. The background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[Photo Credit/ Georgette Doran posted herself in Facebook]

[information adapted from Facebook and The Daily Moth report]



George A. Gaska

August 13, 1930 - December 14, 2014

Tailor/Costume designer

George Gaska was an extraordinarily talented costume maker, designer, and tailor. His Mardi Gras costume received a great deal of attention and photographs of George in costume was printed in newspapers, magazines and on posters. He advocated for and created a number of banners/decorative objects for the Deaf LGBT communities in New York City, New Orleans, Washington, DC in addition to other cities.

Born in Peekskill, NY, George attended the Fanwood School for the Deaf. Throughout his life, George designed and donned special holiday costumes creating seasonal decorations as well. He could sew, mend, knit, cook, saw, hammer, and garden.

A frequent traveler, he was described a humorous man with “a kind-spirited and flamboyant personality.”



[image: GEORGE GASKA at top left. (1930-2014) at middle left. Tailor, Costume Designer at bottom left. On right, picture of George smiling in yellow cap, grey hair and white shirt.]

[photo from: Dorsey Carlone Funeral Home site]

[Edited obituary by Ricky Drake]

Robert E. Harding (BH)

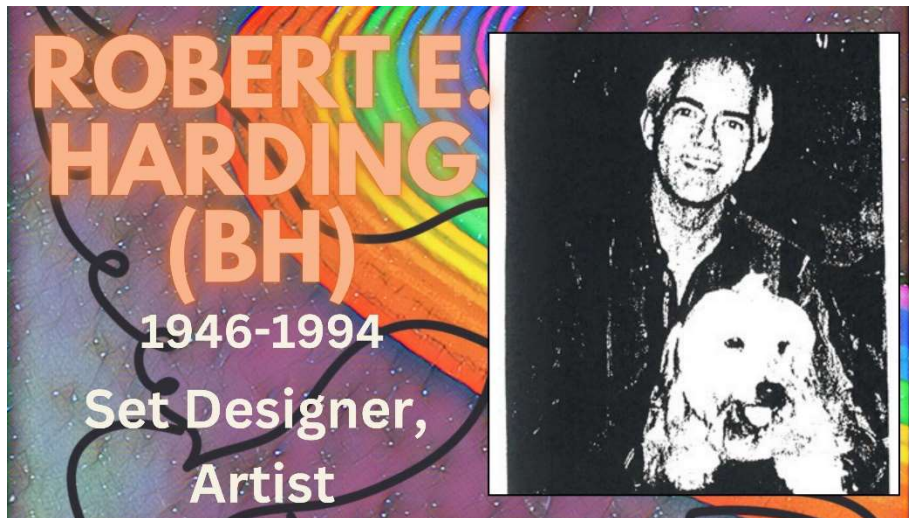


Born: March 9, 1946
Died: August 23, 1994

Robert E. Harding (BH)
(March 9, 1946-August 23, 1994)
Set Designer, Artist, Dancer

Bob Harding was a talented and creative soul who was a set designer, decorator and dancer. He designed and created floats for the Astro Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf as part of the Houston Gay Pride parades in the 1980s. He was the stage designer for the Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf gathering in Dallas. A member of the Gay Texas dancing troupe, Bob was the only Deaf dancer. Additionally, he competed as Mr. Gay Texas.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Bob attended the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (WPSD). After moving to Houston, he ran a business as a wedding and holiday decorator with his hearing partner. Later, he took over the business and ran it on his own.



[image: Robert E. Harding (BH) at top left. (1946-1994) at middle left. Set Designer, Artist at bottom left. On right, black & white picture of BH smiling in dark shirt and “salt & pepper” hair and holding a dog in the dark background. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[Photo from: Deaf GLOW Conference Program book 1994]

[Credit to Brian Determan, Bruce Herman and Zant Kellam]



Rosie Lanier Rodriguez

(January 16, 1969-July 20, 2006)

Performer

Rosie Rodriguez enjoyed performing (especially lip syncing) and performed at the 1994 Miss Gay Texas and 2004 Miss Deaf California Leather contests. A fierce advocate for the Deaf community, she inspired in others an appreciation for the world of comedy.

Originally from Fort Worth, Texas, Rosie was assigned male at birth and given the name Marvin Earl Wilson. Her parents were of Black, French, and White ancestry. She legally changed her name after she began her transition from male to female. This was one of her biggest dreams and Rosie no longer felt trapped in the wrong body.

Rosie was outgoing, enthusiastic, well-educated and always up for an adventure. She loved cooking, gymnastics, art, and performing.



[image: ROSIE LANIER RODRIGUEZ at top left. 1969-2006 in the middle left. Performer at bottom left. On the right, is a color picture of Rosie smiling with her tongue playfully peeking out, wearing dark leather jacket, low-cut green & white spotted shirts and long, curly brown-red hair hanging out the black head band in the open structure scenery. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[Photo from: Deaf AIDS website]

[edited from <https://deafaids.info/main/rosie-lanier-rodriquez/>]



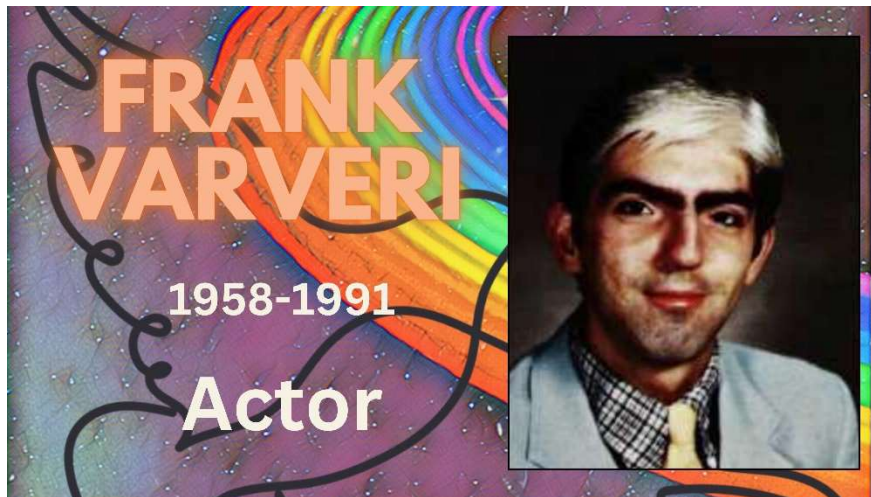
Frank J. Varveri

(June 10, 1958 - November 2, 1991)

Actor and Performer

Frank Varveri was actively involved in many theatre productions while a student at Gallaudet. He played the title role in *The Elephant Man* winning the Outstanding Performance by an Actor award. For another production, he received the award for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role.

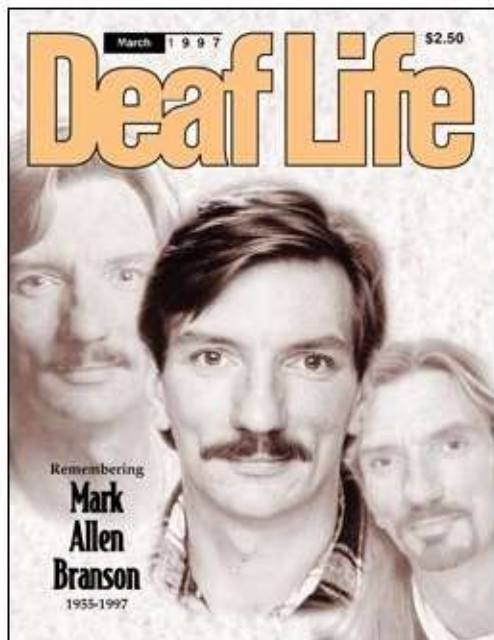
Born in Baltimore, Frank graduated from the Maryland School for the Deaf in Frederick in 1977. After he completed his Theatre Arts studies at Gallaudet University in 1983, he persisted in his passion for theater with the Fairmount Theatre of the Deaf in Cleveland, Ohio. A talented and creative actor, he was able improvise as a performer. He was known for asking an audience member for a topic and then moments later performed an A to Z handshape story on the requested topic—leaving the audience in awe.



[image description: FRANK VARVERI at top left. 1958-1991 in the middle left. Actor at bottom left. On the right, is a color picture of Frank smiling, wearing light blue jacket, plaid shirt, yellow tie, and a patch of white within dark hair in a dark tan background. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[photo from: Gallaudet Tower Clock 1983]

[written by Bob Rourke & edited by Karen Christie]



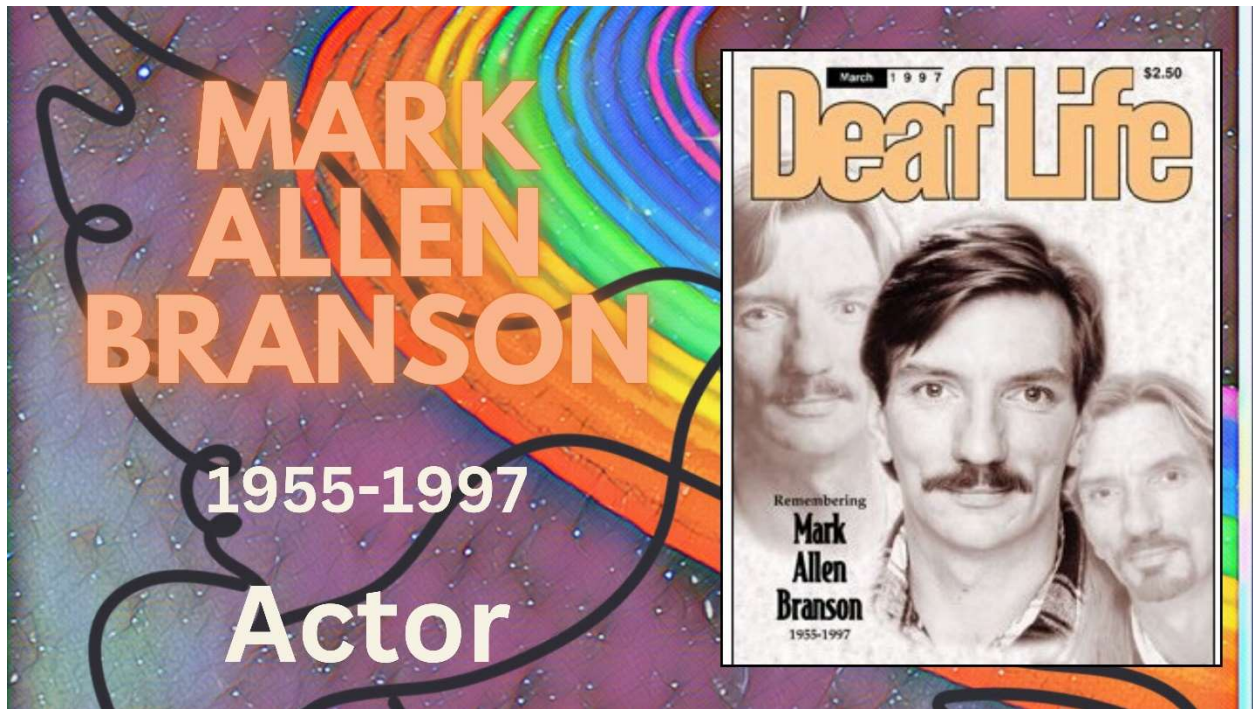
Mark Allen Branson

(February 2, 1955-January 9, 1997)

Actor

Mark Branson was an actor who performed in many stage productions including several with Boston Theater of the Deaf and The National Theater of the Deaf. He created and performed his own one man show, *The Trunk*, which illustrated observations of life as seen through the eyes of a deaf person. In the 1993 Disney movie, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, he played the role of William Wilks.

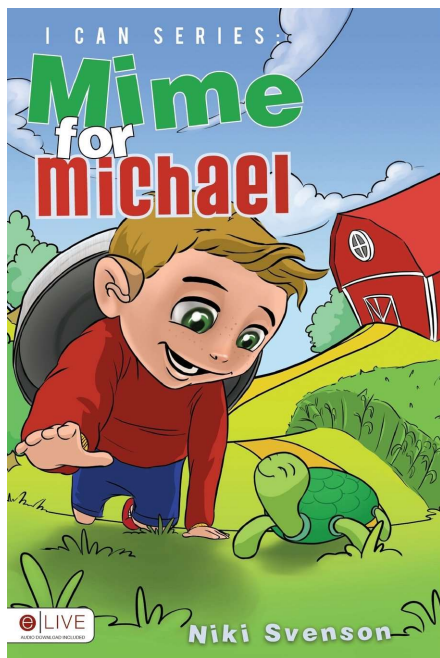
Mark was born in Oklahoma and attended the Jane Brooks Oral School for the Deaf. He was a champion rodeo rider. In addition to acting, Mark was an ASL teacher, interpreter trainer and HIV/AIDS counselor. He strived to educate Deaf people in the LGBTQ community through the Oak Lawn Community Outreach Center in Dallas.



[image description: MARK ALLEN BRANSON at top left. 1955-1997 in the middle left. Actor at bottom left. On the right, the light tan and white picture reads Deaf Life in yellow on top with three different pictures of Mark in moustache except the right one with goatee. On the lower left, it reads "Remembering Mark Allen Branson 1955-1997. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[photo credit: Deaf Life Magazine]

[Edited obituary by Scot Pott]



Michael Jolliffe

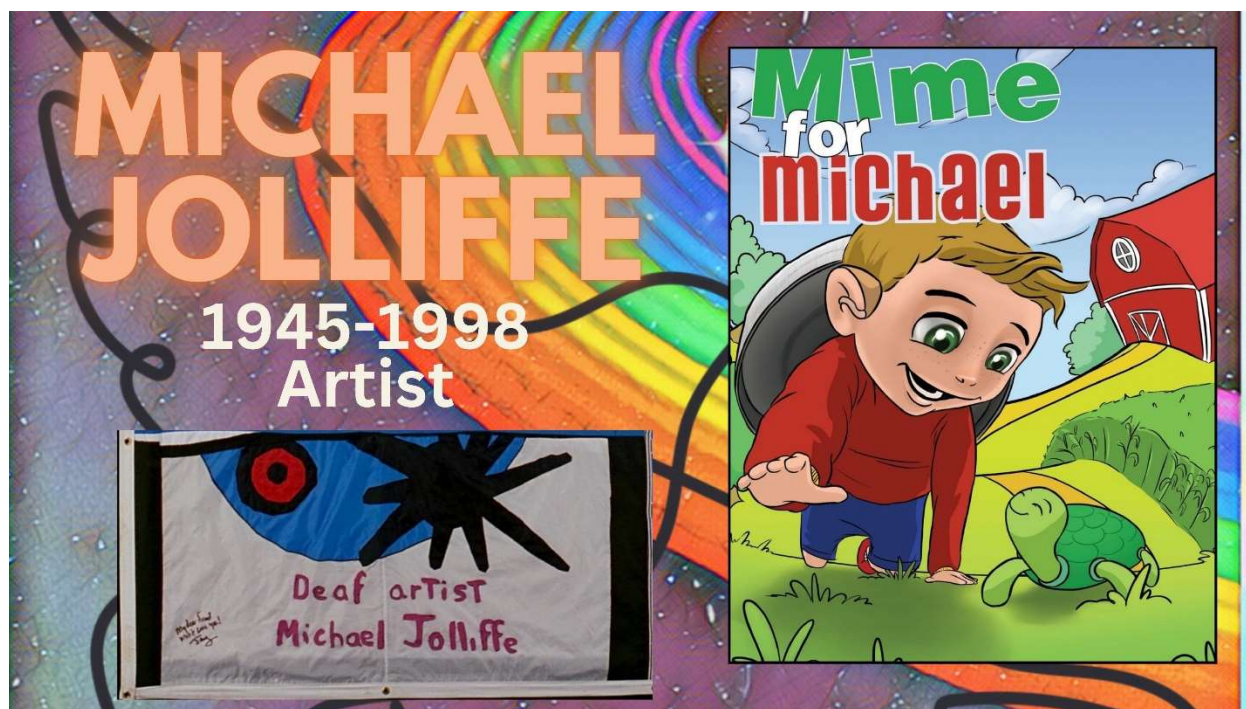
(1945-1998)

Artist, Mime

Michael Jolliffe was a professional painter and mime artist who was the subject of a children's book. Michael's oil pastel works are part of the the Deaf art collection at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Born in Canada, Michael attended the Kansas City Art Institute earning a BFA. He also studied at NTID and the Le Centre du Silence Mime School in Boulder, Colorado. His great niece was

inspired learning family stories about Michael and wrote the book, “Mime for Michael,” in which his exceptional ability to mime was described as his “most prized talent.”



[image description: MICHAEL JOLLIFFE at top left. 1945-1998 Artist in the middle left. On the right, a color picture of the book cover titled Mime (in green) for (in white) Michael (in red). A boy, wearing a hearing aid, brown hair, red shirt, and blue pants, crawled and carried a “metal round piece” (probably a garbage can top), imitating next to green turtle smiling and crawling on hilly grass with red barn, trees, and blue sky with clouds in background. 2nd picture on the lower left, the fabric quilt was sewn with blue half circle on top with black and red round like eye inside and rough black star burst from inside to outside of the blue half circle area, it reads Deaf artist Michael Jolliffe on white background. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[1st photo on right: children book cover “Mime for Michael” by Michael’s great niece, Niki Svenson]

[2nd photo on bottom left: Name Project quilt of Michael Jolliffe displayed at National Deaf Life Museum at Gallaudet by Bob Rourke]



Angelo Rosardo-Marquez

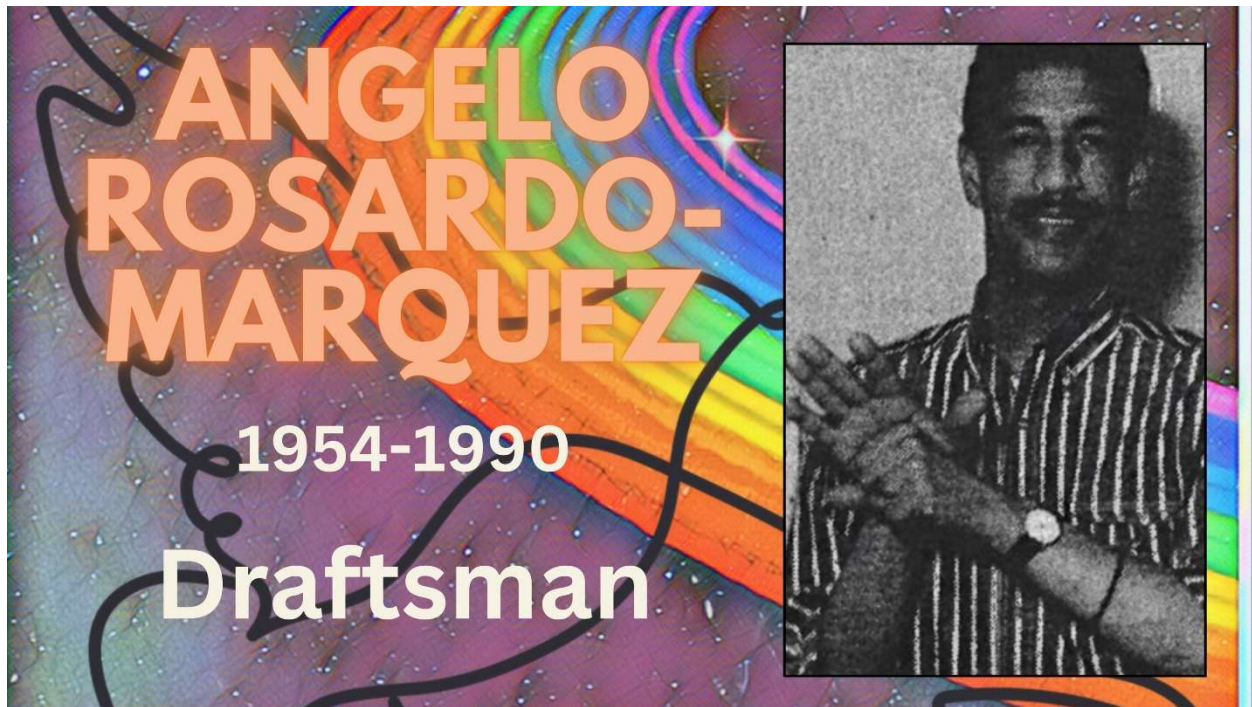
April 3, 1954 – November 17, 1990

Draftsman

Angelo Rosardo-Marquez was born in Brooklyn, NY, but his family moved to Puerto Rico when he was very young and he attended a private Catholic Deaf school run by nuns. He also went to St. Joseph's School for the Deaf in Bronx. Moving to San Francisco in 1975, he worked as a draftsman and then with the state of California.

He was very active in the gay deaf community. He served as president, vice president and board member of the Rainbow Deaf Society. He was very active in helping deaf gays with AIDS and was director of Deaf Community AIDS project which he helped establish.

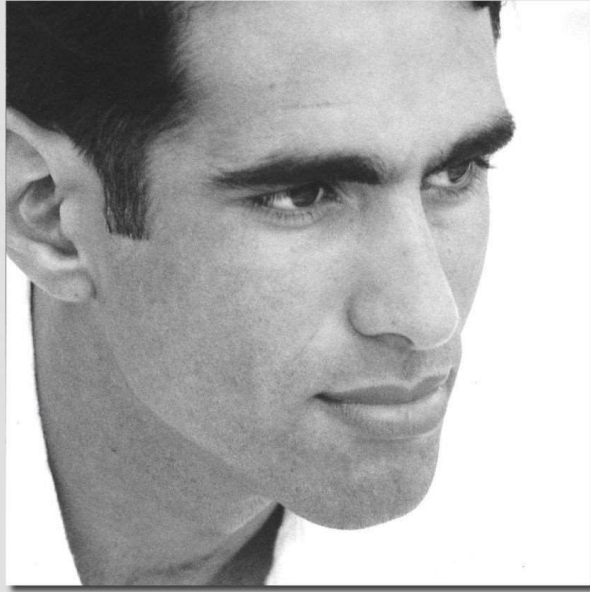
Angelo's favorite star was Elizabeth Taylor. He never missed an episode of the iconic TV show Dynasty. He loved to chat with deaf friends at Castro Station bar. He enjoyed dressing and competing in drag, even channeling both Alexis and Krystle from the Dynasty. He had a wonderful sense of humor.



[image description: ANGELO ROSARDO-MARQUEZ at top left. 1954-1990 in the middle left. Draftsman at bottom left. On the right, is a black & white picture of Angelo smiling, wearing dark moustache, stripes shirt, watch and thin bracelet on his left, signing “enough?” with his left hand shadow on a plain gray background. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[Photo Credit/ Deaf AIDS website]

[Information adapted from Albert Walla and
http://obit.glbthistory.org/olo/imagedb/1990/12/13/19901213_Rosardo-Marquez_Angelo/m19901213_0.jpg]



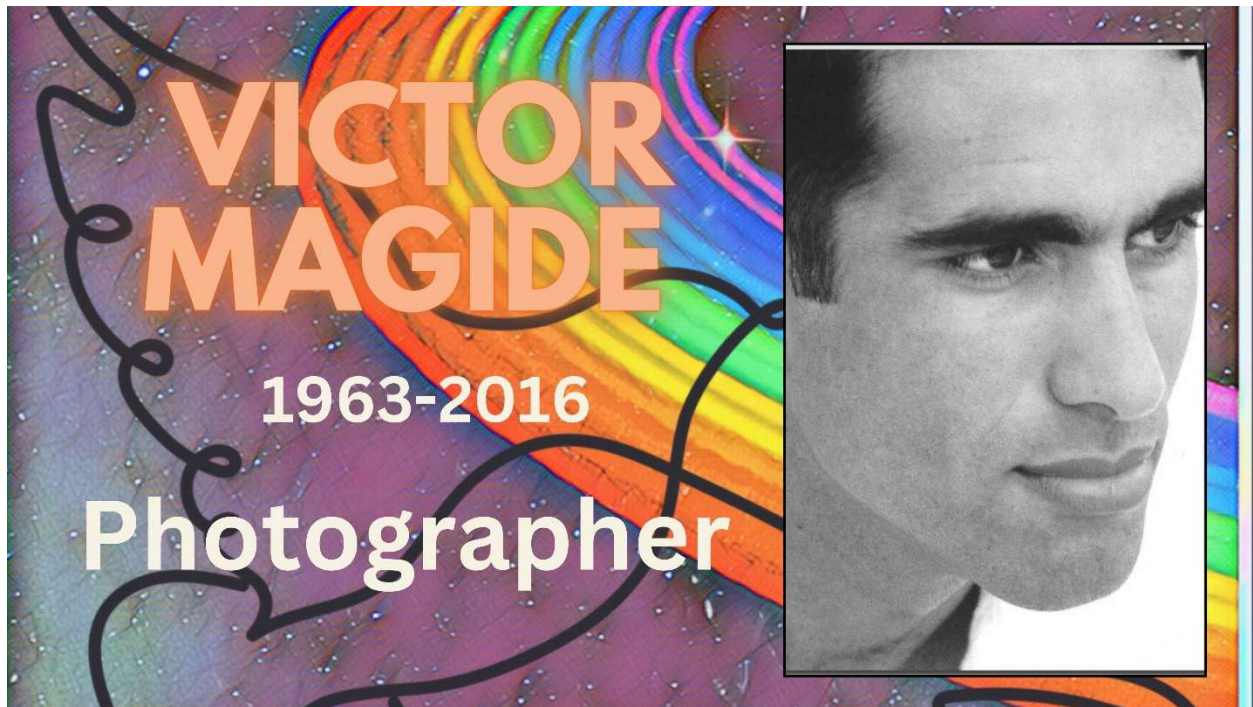
Victor “Choco” Manuel Magide

(December 12, 1963 – July 14, 2016)

Photographer

Victor Magide was an accomplished photographer who specialized in unique fashion, entertainment and editorial print work as well as male erotica. In addition to many shoots in South Beach, his work took him all over the world. Victor opened his own photography studio in Miami working with fashion clients and creating photos of catalog products.

Victor was born in New York City to parents who escaped Castro's Cuba. He was raised in Miami, Florida and attended the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind. Victor became fluent in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language. He attended the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) graduating in 1996 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Victor enjoyed flamenco dancing and acting in Deaf theatre productions. He is remembered as a “Deaf gay Cuban leatherman who had an infectious smile and was a talent photographer.”



[image description: VICTOR MAGIDE at top left. 1963-2016 in the middle left. Photographer at bottom left. On the right, is a black & white close-up picture of Victor smiling slightly, wearing dark hair, thick dark eyebrows, and strong chin, looking to right in a white background. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]

[photo credit: David Alan Cornett posted in Facebook]

[Credit: deaf-art.org and Deaf Queer Resource Center FB page]

Gone But Not Forgotten

Don Baer

Georgette “Gigi” Doran

George Gaska

Robert (Bob) E. Harding

Rosie Lanier Rodriguez

Frank Varveri

Mark Allen Branson

Michael Jolliffe

Victor Magide

Angelo Rosardo-Marquez

Thank you for joining us and honoring the Deaf LGBTQIA2S+ Creatives/Surdists Ancestors event during the National Deaf LGBTQ Awareness week. Your time and attention are truly appreciated. We hope you found the week’s event informative.

If interested to search for more Deaf LGBTQ+ Creatives/Surdists Ancestors on Facebook, you can use the search bar at the top of the Surdists United page and enter #DeafLGBTQAncestors. All the Ancestors that were posted on Facebook last year and this year, should appear.

If you have any questions or share any information, please feel free to pm or dm to Bob Rourke on Facebook.

[image description: Gone But Not Forgotten at top. On left reads from top to bottom: Don Baer, Georgette “Gigi” Doran, George Gaska, Robert (Bob) E. Harding, Rosie Lanier Rodriguez. On right reads from top to bottom: Frank Varveri, Mark Allen Branson, Michael Jolliffe, Victor, Angelo Rosardo-Marquez. The color background has rainbow arch and dove shape black curve line.]