



GAMES, GAY

An international festival of athletic competitions and the arts, the Gay Games are held quadrennially as a celebration of the international gay community. The first and second Gay Games were held in San Francisco in August of 1982 and 1986. The third Games are scheduled for the summer of 1990 in Vancouver, Canada.

The Gay Games at San Francisco were founded by Tom Waddell and organized by San Francisco Arts and Athletics, Inc. The 1982 Games involved 1,300 male and female athletes in sixteen sports; four years later the games attracted 3,482 athletes with a ratio of men to women of 3:2 in a total of 17 sports. (This may be contrasted with the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles where the sex ratio was 4:1.) Among the events were basketball, soccer, bowling, cycling, diving, triathlon, softball, physique, track and field, marathon, power-lifting, volleyball, swimming, tennis and wrestling. The artistic festival, called "The Procession of the Arts," featured over twenty events including dance, theatre and plastic art exhibits. Although athletes came from many parts of the world, the majority were from North America.

In her opening address at the 1986 Gay Games, novelist Rita Mae Brown highlighted the meaning of the games, "... these games are not just a celebration of skill, they're a celebration of who we are and what we can become: ... a celebration of the best in us."

Tom Waddell said that the Games were "conceived as a new idea in the meaning of sport based on inclusion rather than exclusion." Anyone was allowed to compete regardless of race, sex, age, na-

tionality, sexual orientation, religion, or athletic ability. In keeping with the Masters Movement in sports, athletes competed with others in their own age group. The track and field and swimming events were officially sanctioned by their respective national masters programs. Athletes participated, not as representatives of their respective countries, but as individuals on behalf of cities and towns. There were no minimum qualifying standards in any events.

The Games have been used by gay liberationists for ideological purposes. Historically, homosexuality has been associated with pathology, and the rise of AIDS in the homosexual community has reasserted that association. Many of those who spoke at the 1986 Games said that the Games emphasized a healthy image of gay men and lesbians. Brown also said in her opening address that the Games "show the world who we really are. We're intelligent people, we're attractive people, we're caring people, we're *healthy* people, and we're proud of who we are."

The organizers of the Gay Games have experienced considerable legal difficulties. Before the 1982 Gay Games, the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) filed a court action against the organizers of the Gay Games, which were going to be called the "Gay Olympic Games." In 1978, the United States Congress passed the Amateur Sports Act which, among other things, granted the USOC exclusive use of the word "olympic." Although the USOC had allowed the "Rat Olympics," "Police Olympics," and "Dog Olympics," it took exception to the term "Gay Olympic Games." Two years later, the USOC continued its

harassment of the Gay Games and filed suit to recover legal fees in the amount of \$96,600. A lien was put on the house of Tom Waddell, a member of the 1968 United States Olympic Team.

Just as the Sacred Olympic Games and Pythian Games in ancient Greece were a celebration which gave expression to Hellenic values of the time, so, too, the Gay Games are a celebration and expression of the contemporary spirit of the gay community.

Brian Pronger

GANYMEDE

In Greek mythology Ganymede was a beautiful Phrygian shepherd boy who attracted the attention of Zeus, the king of the gods. Unable to resist the boy, Zeus seized him and carried him aloft to be his cupbearer and bedmate on Mount Olympus. While the motif of flight through the heavens is probably of Near Eastern origin, the abduction recalls the Cretan custom of older men "kidnapping" their adolescent innamorati and living with them in the wild for a time. (Plato states that the myth of Ganymede originated in Crete.) In any event the story is part of a large set of stories of the Olympian gods falling in love with mortal boys.

In ancient art Zeus is sometimes depicted abducting the boy in mortal form and sometimes in the guise of an eagle, his attribute. Vase paintings occasionally show the anthropomorphic Zeus pursuing Ganymede as an analogue to the wooing conducted by mortal pederasts. In later antiquity the motif of the beautiful youth being carried aloft by an eagle was given an allegorical significance, as the soul's flight away from earthly cares to the serenity of the empyrean.

In the medieval debate poem *Altercatio Ganimedis et Helenae* (twelfth century) Ganymede conducts an able defense of male homosexuality. The mythographers of the later Middle Ages

and the Renaissance (above all Giovanni Boccaccio in his *Genealogia Deorum* of 1375) presented a number of examples of the male amours of the Greek gods, and these texts influenced artists. In 1532 Michelangelo created a drawing of Ganymede Abducted by the Eagle for presentation to a Roman nobleman, Tommaso de' Cavalieri, for whom he experienced a deep, though Platonic affection. Other images of Ganymede were produced by Correggio, Parmigianino, Giulio Romano, and Benvenuto Cellini.

In the French language, beginning in the sixteenth century, the divine youth's name became a common noun, with the sense of "passive homosexual" or *bardache*. Joachim du Bellay (1558) speaks of seeing in Rome "Un Ganymède avoir le rouge sur la tête" ["A Ganymede with red on his head," that is, a cardinal]. The *Dictionnaire comique* (1718) of P. J. Le Roux is explicit: "Ganymede: berdache, a young man who offers pleasure, permitting the act of sodomy to be committed on him."

In *As You Like It* (Act I) Shakespeare made the transvestite Rosalind assume the name of Ganymede, "Jove's own page." In 1611 the lexicographer Randle Cotgrave defined "Ganymede" as an *ingle* (passive homosexual or catamite). A pointed reference comes from Drummond of Hawthornden: "I crave thou wilt be pleased, great God, to save my sovereign from a Ganymede" (1649), referring to the tradition of royal minions at the Stuart court. Such associations notwithstanding, in the seventeenth century Simon Marius named Jupiter's largest moon after Ganymede, giving him preference over the god's female lovers who are commemorated in the names given to the smaller moons. Thus the way was paved for Ganymede to enter today's age of space exploration.

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