

# Media Kit

# THE COMING BACK OUT BALL





A spectacular social event celebrating the elders of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) community.

*The Coming Back Out Ball* is created by All The Queens Men and presented as a premiere event of the 2017 Victorian Seniors Festival in association with the 3rd National LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care Conference.

Supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, City of Melbourne, The Margaret Lawrence Bequest and Victorian State Government.

Auspiced by Auspicious Arts Projects and Victorian AIDS Council.

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## Media Enquiries

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A black and white close-up portrait of an elderly man with short, graying hair. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. He is wearing a plaid button-down shirt. The background is dark and out of focus.

“All we wanted was to be treated  
as a normal couple – people like  
anyone else...”

– Tony Walsh



## About the Event

*The Coming Back Out Ball* is a spectacular social event celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) elders. Hosted by the much-loved Australian arts icon Robyn Archer, *The Coming Back Out Ball* will be presented at the Melbourne Town Hall as a premiere event of the 2017 Victorian Seniors Festival in association with the 3rd National LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care Conference.

Created and produced by All The Queens Men, this night-of-nights will blending showbiz bells and whistles, community celebration, heartfelt story telling, dinner and dancing. This spectacular evening will be free for LGBTI elders 65 + (booking essential); each guest will receive three course dinner and drinks, with entertainment by leading LGBTI performers including Robyn Archer, Carlotta, Deborah Cheetham, Toni Lalich, Gerry Connolly, Lois Weaver supported by an orchestra and conductor Kathleen McGuire.

This premiere event has been augmented with social transformation projects including *LGBTI Elders Dance Club* and *New Moves High Tea*. *LGBTI Elders Dance Club* is held every month throughout 2017 and 2018 at the Fitzroy Town Hall. The long-term vision is that *The Coming Back Out Ball* becomes an adored regular event on Melbourne's social calendar – understood for its inclusivity and cultural significance. The aim is to empower LGBTI elders to assert their social agency, value and worth within a mainstream and ageist paradigm.

*The Coming Back Out Ball* is inspired by pioneering research revealing that some LGBTI elders conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity when they access aged care services – because they believe they are not safe. With so much change over the course of their lifetime, some LGBTI elders have lived through a period when being LGBTI could result in imprisonment, enforced medical cures, loss of employment and rejection by family and friends. For this generation, many who fought for LGBTI equality, impending old age may mean going back into the closet, or the risk of being deprived companionship or quality care when they need it most. There is hope for the older LGTBI community – the Victorian Government has expunged gay convictions and apologised to older gay men for the treatment they received; aged care service providers are embracing strategies to become more LGBTI inclusive; and Victoria will soon create Australia's first LGBTI Pride Centre.

*The Coming Back Out Ball* augments research and social services – it's a public celebration and declaration to LGBTI elders of their worth and value, acknowledging their rich lived experiences.

**THE COMING BACK OUT BALL**

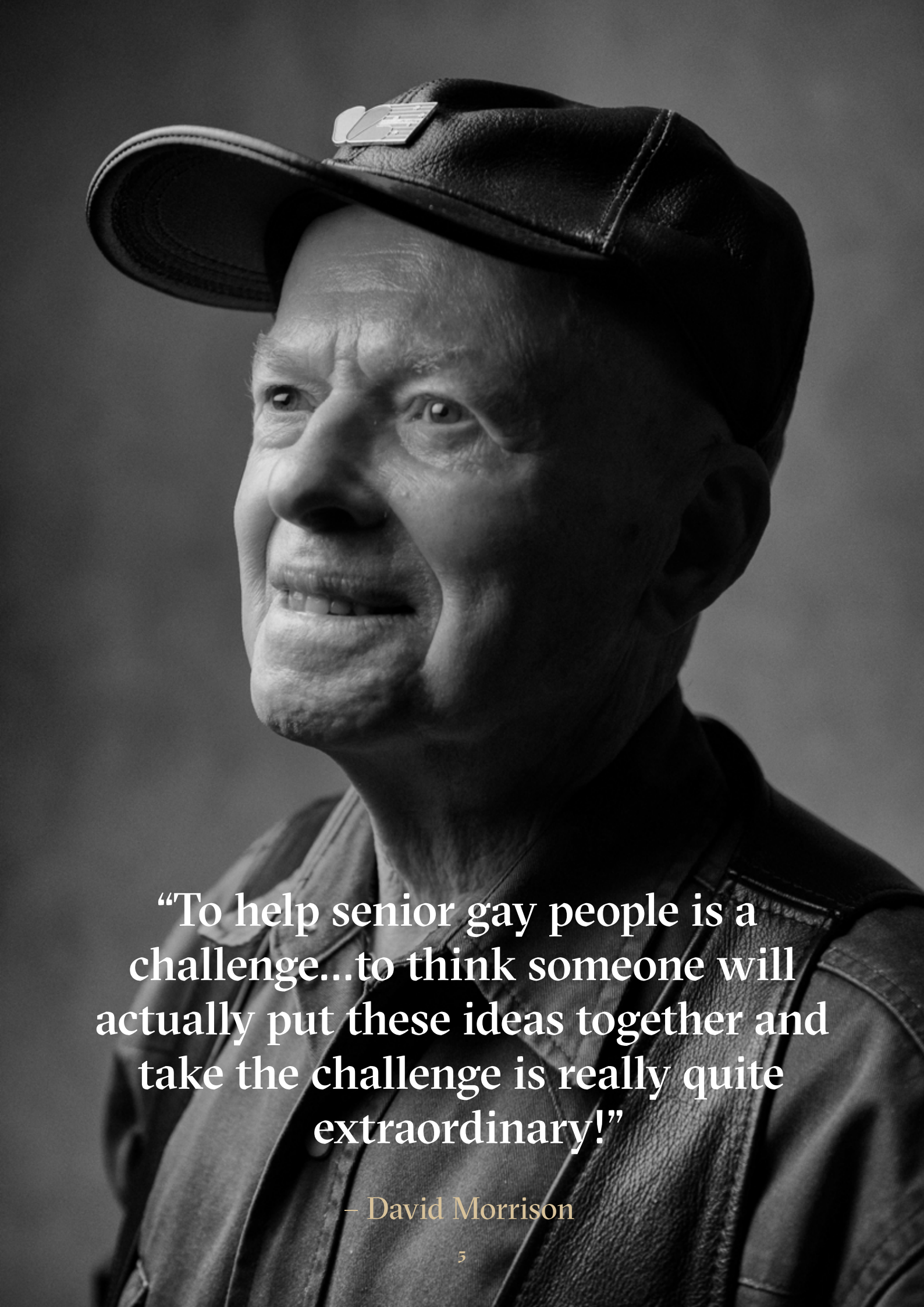
**Saturday, 7 October 2017 at 6.00pm**

Melbourne Town Hall, 90-130 Swanston Street, Melbourne

TICKETS Full: \$100 / Senior Concession: \$50 / LGBTI elders 65+: FREE

Bookings: [www.comingbackoutball.com](http://www.comingbackoutball.com)



A black and white portrait of an elderly man, David Morrison, wearing a dark leather cap and a leather jacket. He is looking slightly to the left with a thoughtful expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**“To help senior gay people is a challenge...to think someone will actually put these ideas together and take the challenge is really quite extraordinary!”**

– David Morrison



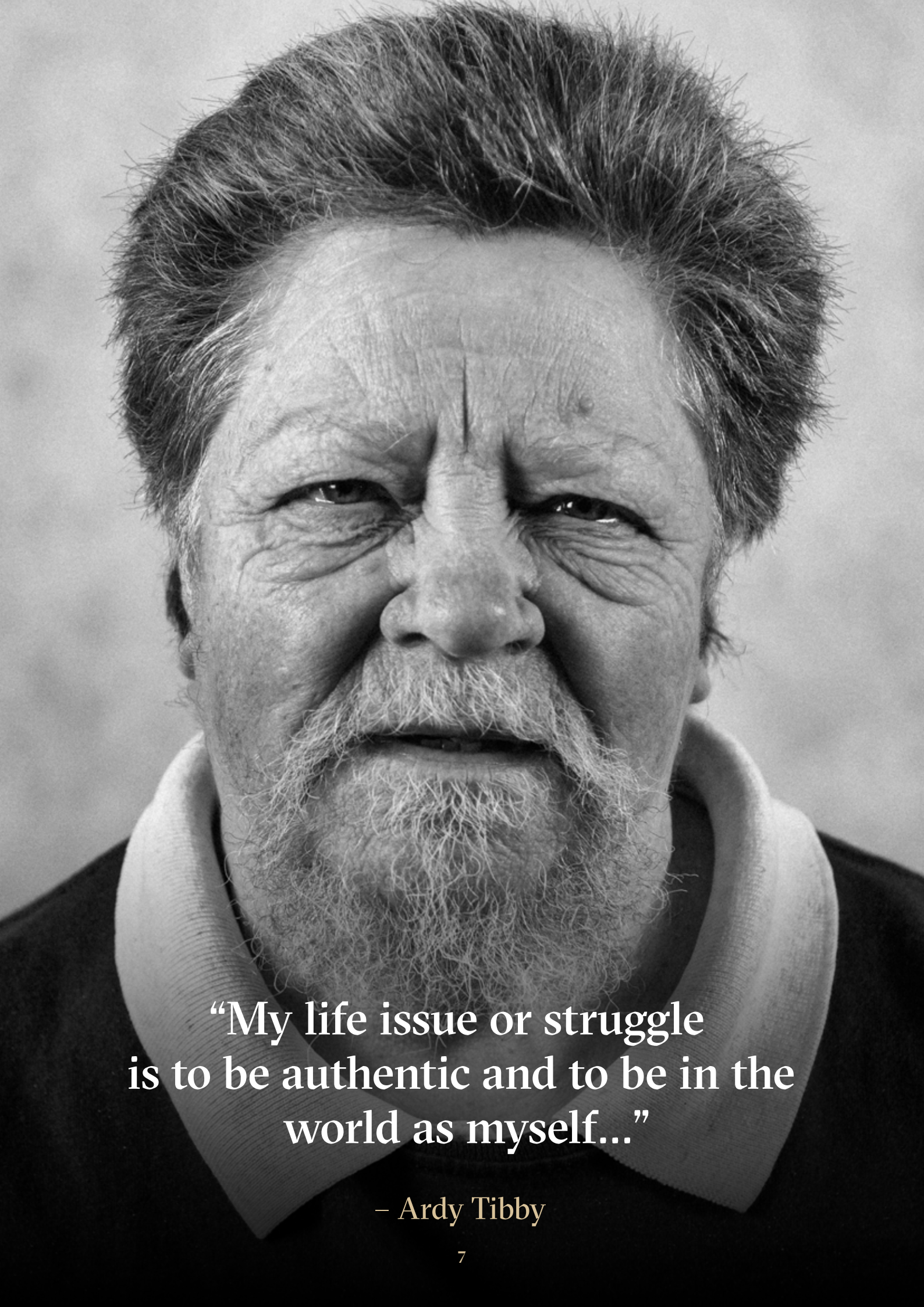
## Social Aims



*The Coming Back Out Ball* aims to:

1. Connect disparate and isolated LGBTI elders, through a network of community gatherings and creative social events (that also includes *LGBTI Elders Dance Club* and *New Moves High Tea*).
2. Foster a strong and supportive LGBTI elders community throughout Victoria through regular contact and relationship building among individuals.
3. Facilitate leadership and creative ownership of an annual Victorian LGBTI elders public awareness event – *The Coming Back Out Ball*.
4. Facilitate the physical, cognitive and emotional benefits of regular creative practice for this marginalised pioneering generation.
5. Produce an annual event (*The Coming Back Out Ball*) that honours the creative expression, storytelling, advocacy of LGBTI elders and engages the broader community with their narratives and needs.
6. Contribute to restoring a reverence to the 'elder', as is articulated through First Nations cultures, to the contemporary Australian culture which contends with ageism, materialism and discrimination.
7. Capture the learnings from this community development process (*LGBTI Elders Dance Clubs*, *New Moves High Tea* and *The Coming Back Out Ball*) with LGBTI elders in a way that further informs research, the aged care sector, community initiatives and the broader community.
8. Produce a documentary film which chronicles the life experience of some unique LGBTI elders – the last Australian generation who have lived through historical and systemic discrimination due to their sexual and gender orientation.





“My life issue or struggle  
is to be authentic and to be in the  
world as myself...”

– Ardy Tibby

# LGBTI Elders



## David Morrison

David is an 87 year old gay man previously married for over 60 years. Since his wife passed away, David came out as proud gay man at the age of 83. He is the President of Vintage Men, an organisation that supports the social and recreational needs of older gay men. He loves line dancing and is a regular attendee at *LGBTI Elders Dance Club*.

**“I was married for 35 years... and it was only after my wife died I just felt I wanted to belong to a group and I joined activities at the gay community and loved the company of men... and after all those years, I’m still very gay but perfectly happy with myself as I am”.**

– David Morrison



## Ardy Tibby

Ardy is a 73 year old out and proud lesbian. She is a regular and active member of the LGBTI community volunteering for organisations such as *Matrix Guild Victoria*, *Australia Lesbian Gay Archives* and *Performing Older Women’s Circus*. Out and proud most of her adult life, Ardy often wears a fabulous purple jumper with the slogan “This is what an older lesbian looks like!”

**“One of the reasons that I like working with [All The Queens Men], and am willing to, is because I see that you are doing something that will result in something real of benefit and joy for my people!”**

– Ardy Tibby



## Liz Craig

Liz is a 72 year old recently retired out and proud lesbian. She used to work as an HIV Clinical Nurse Consultant with the *Royal District Nursing Service* in Melbourne. This service works, in partnership with the Victorian AIDS Council, to provide community care and support to people living with HIV in their homes.



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**“It’s important we have these things [The LGBTI Elders Dance Club] that go on for us because there are many other things that you don’t join because you may not be welcome...”**

– Gordon Wilson



## Gordon Wilson

Gordon is an 80 year old gay man who has been out his whole life. He is the co-host of JOY FM’s radio program *Been There Done That* and is a long term member of Vintage Men. Gordon is a wonderful artist, painting beautiful work in oil and acrylic. He regularly attends *LGBTI Elders Dance Club*.

**“I went to my father and said Dad I want to learn to be a ballet dancer. And he said but people will call you a sissy and I said, I am, so what.”**

– Gordon Wilson



## Judith Slate

Judith is an Australian female shearing champion. She has lived her life as an out and proud lesbian. At 88 years old, Judith is the oldest member of *Matrix Guild Victoria*. She is the only lesbian in her aged care facility in Sunshine and hopes to relocate to a new home with more LGBTI people.



## Heather Morgan

Heather is a 73 year old lesbian who until recently worked as Team Leader of Community Care and Support services at the Positive Living Centre in Melbourne. She was a founding member of *Switchboard*, a volunteer phone counseling services for the LGBTI+ community. Heather and her husband split years ago after both admitting they were gay and lesbian. They are great friends and now grandparents.



## Michelle Brooker

Michelle is a 64 year old trans women. An active member of the LGBTI community, Michelle volunteers for many organisations including *Transgender Victoria*. She speaks at many public LGBTI events to inform people of trans issues and her lived-experience.



# Spokespeople

## The Coming Back Out Ball

**Tristan Meecham**  
Artistic Director

**Cameron Menzies**  
Event Director

**Bec Reid**  
Choreographer / Producer

**Robyn Archer**  
Host

## LGTBI Elders

**David Morrison**  
**Judith Slade**  
**Gordon Wilson**  
**Heather Morgan**  
**Liz Craig**  
**Michelle Brooker**

## Performing Artists

**Carlotta**  
**Deborah Cheetham**  
**Gerry Connolly**  
**Dr Kathleen McGuire**  
**and Lois Weaver**

## Project Partners

**Pauline Crameri**  
Co-ordinator - 3<sup>rd</sup> National LGBTI Ageing  
and Aged Care Conference







# Media Resources

## Images

LGTBI elders

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dky7hejr4ez83ml/AABdXgukCblmEDcxe8XvXx-va?dl=0>

LGBTI Elders Dance Club

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5yxnnzqvo3g79ml/AADefrY-fsVwnuBZulyyP7IEa?dl=0>

All images by Bryony Jackson and Gregory Lorenzutti

## Vision

The Coming Out Ball

<https://vimeo.com/atqm/comingbackoutball>  
Film by Sue Thomason

New Moves High Tea

<https://vimeo.com/atqm/newmoves>

On the Couch

<https://vimeo.com/atqm/onthecouch>

## Web links

The Coming Out Ball  
[comingbackoutball.com](http://comingbackoutball.com)

All The Queens Men  
[allthequeensmen.net](http://allthequeensmen.net)



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## All The Queens Men



Led by Tristan Meecham and Bec Reid, All The Queens Men create spectacular theatrical and participatory arts experiences.

All The Queens Men champion social equality by providing creative opportunities for diverse members of society, celebrating these everyday experts in exciting and technically proficient art contexts.

Combining contemporary and popular art forms and tropes, All The Queens Men mission is aligned to that of pioneering UK company Duckie who state:

*... we believe that art and performance can be used as tools to bring about community solidarity, to make ordinary people happy and even for personal development and recovery for the most vulnerable amongst us.*

*... we use popular forms of entertainment, volunteer participation and the poetics of partying to make our shows accessible to communities that are marginalised from society.*

With over 30 years combined experience in contemporary community engagement, All The Queens Men have presented leading large-scale community projects around the world including at Arts Centre Melbourne, Bleach Festival (Gold Coast), Ansan Arts Festival (South Korea), ANTI Contemporary Arts Festival (Finland), Sydney Festival, Darwin Festival, Arts House (Melbourne), Brisbane Powerhouse, Next Wave Festival (Melbourne), Festival of Live Art (Melbourne) and City of Melbourne.

[allthequeensmen.net](http://allthequeensmen.net)