



GLBT
Historical
Society
museum & archives

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Multimedia Exhibition Highlights San Francisco Leather Pioneer, Mr. S Leather Founder “Daddy” Alan Selby

San Francisco — A new exhibition opening May 16 at the GLBT Historical Society Museum recounts the story of “Daddy” Alan Selby, the founder of the iconic South of Market leather and kink emporium Mr. S Leather, within the context of a changing SoMa neighborhood and the emergence of a distinct leather and kink culture.

“The Mayor of Folsom Street: The Life and Legacy of Alan Selby” surveys Selby’s life from his establishment of Mr. S Leather in San Francisco in 1979, to his community efforts during the AIDS crisis, to his undisputed position as “Daddy of all Daddies” in the city’s leather and kink subculture. It also traces the evolution of his small shop into a de facto community center and international destination that continues to occupy a unique place in the history of alternative sexualities.

The exhibition has been co-curated by Jordy Jones, Selby’s biographer; Jeremy Prince, the GLBT Historical Society’s museum and exhibitions director; and Gayle Rubin, renowned feminist and sexuality theorist and professor of anthropology at the University of Michigan.

“‘The Mayor of Folsom Street’ is a portrait of a man, a business, a subculture and an era. Selby’s workshop was connected to the kink dungeon as well as to the hospital ward,” Jones says, referring to Selby dividing his time between S/M playrooms and volunteer work in hospitals during the AIDS crisis. “Mr. S. is more than a brand. This exhibition reflects Selby’s role as a public Daddy, one whose protection and support could always be counted on.”

Drawing on materials in the Alan Selby papers preserved in the GLBT Historical Society’s archives and on recent scholarship, the multimedia exhibition showcases artifacts, fine art, photographs and scarce historical documents.

The show also reflects Selby’s participation in the daddy/boy subculture of consensual relationships that involve personal and erotic mentoring of younger

men by older men in the gay leather and kink community. Underscoring the importance of cultural transmission and inheritance as a significant aspect of this subculture, the exhibition seeks to foster connection across queer generations.

“The Mayor of Folsom Street” opens Thursday, May 16, at the GLBT Historical Society Museum, 4127 18th St., San Francisco, with a public reception set for 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The curators will offer introductory remarks, and light refreshments will be served. Admission is \$5.00; free for members of the GLBT Historical Society. Tickets are available online at <https://bit.ly/2UjlyN6>.

For more information, visit the GLBT Historical Society website at www.glbthistory.org.

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About Alan Selby

Alan Selby (1929–2004) was born Alan Henry Sniders in Yorkshire, England. He entered the Royal Navy at the age of 18 and served as a medic and nurse in the years following World War II. Selby became a gentlemen’s clothier after leaving the service, working as a representative for a textile firm.

After a 1969 trip to San Francisco, where he was inspired by the nascent leather scene, Selby partnered with his lover Peter Jacklin—a skilled leatherworker—to establish a small factory and retail outlet, Leather Unlimited, in London’s Wandsworth neighborhood.

In 1979 Selby and Jacklin moved to San Francisco and founded Mr. S Leather on 7th St. in the SoMa district. Jacklin’s death from AIDS in 1987 led Selby to sell the business and devote much of his energy to volunteer and charity work fighting the epidemic. He remained active in San Francisco’s leather community until his death.

About the Curators

Jordy Jones is a native Californian and a longtime San Francisco resident now living in rural Mendocino County. He is an independent scholar, curator, artist and activist. He received his PhD in visual studies, with an emphasis in critical theory, from the University of California Irvine in 2008. He is the author of *The Mayor of Folsom Street: The Auto/Biography of “Daddy” Alan Selby, aka Mr. S* (Fair Page Media, 2017).

Jeremy Prince started with the GLBT Historical Society in 2011 as a volunteer in the newly opened GLBT Historical Society Museum. He is now the society’s director of exhibitions and museum operations. He holds an MA in early modern European history and museum studies from San Francisco State University. In 2013 established an independent archives dedicated to collecting and preserving the history of gay “bear” culture.

Gayle Rubin received her PhD in anthropology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 1994 and has been teaching there since 2003. She is

the author of a series of groundbreaking articles on the politics of sex and gender collected in *Deviations: The Gayle Rubin Reader* (Duke University Press, 2012) and a forthcoming book on gay leather culture in San Francisco.

About the Sponsors

"The Mayor of Folsom Street" is sponsored by Mr. S Leather and David Hyman.

About the Museum

Open since January 2011, **the GLBT Historical Society Museum** is the first full-scale, stand-alone museum of its kind in the United States. Its Main Gallery features a long-term exhibition on San Francisco LGBTQ history, "Queer Past Becomes Present." Its Front Gallery and Community Gallery host changing exhibitions. The institution also sponsors forums, author talks and other programs.

The museum is a project of the GLBT Historical Society, a public history center and archives that collects, preserves and interprets the history of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and the communities that support them. Founded in 1985, the society maintains one of the world's largest collections of LGBTQ historical materials.

For more information, visit the GLBT Historical Society website at www.glbthistory.org.

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Alan Selby at the Mr. S Leather store on 7th Street in San Francisco (circa 1980). Photograph by Alexander V. Areno, all rights reserved; courtesy of Gayle Rubin.



Daddy Alan Selby (right), aka Mr. S, and his boy, Johnie Garcia, at the National March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights (1993); photographer unidentified; collection of the GLBT Historical Society.

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Proudly Presents the 7th Annual

LEATHER DADDY'S BOY CONTEST

\$8.00 Donation at the Door

Sunday, September 3rd at 3p.m.
At the S.F. Eagle (12th & Harrison)

Masters of Ceremony

Zach Long
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**Guest Celebrity Judges,
and Auctioneers**
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Beerbust, and Delicious Food
(Donated, prepared and
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Gate Guards.)

Entertainment by
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**Door Prizes and Many
Valuable & Interesting
Auction Items!**

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The S.F. Eagle.

All proceeds go to the Aids Emergency Fund, an all volunteer
organization providing direct financial grants to people with
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Illustration: Uyvarri

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Poster for the Seventh Annual Leather Daddy's Boy Contest, presented by the AIDS Emergency Fund (1989); graphic by Robert Uyvari; collection of the GLBT Historical Society.



Mr. S Products (U.S.A.) Ltd. product catalog (circa 1979); artwork by Lou Rudolph; collection of the GLBT Historical Society.

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