Stonewall

SPOTLIGHT ON

SYRUS MARCUS WARE

Who are Stonewall?

This resource is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people. At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full. Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

Stonewall is proud to provide information, support and guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion; working towards a world where we're all free to be. This does not constitute legal advice, and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter. To find out more about our work, visit us at www.stonewall.org.uk.

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Syrus Marcus Ware (he/him)

Syrus Marcus Ware was born in Montreal, Canada in 1977. He has a twin sister. Both his grandmother and mother were artists, so he was always encouraged to be creative.

Syrus came out as trans in 2000 and gave birth to his daughter in 2011.

"My identities as a black person, a trans person and a disabled person are all intimately connected, and the impact they have on my life is probably inseparable. In my experience, each of those identities informs another."

Syrus Marcus Ware

Academic and educator

Syrus studied Art History and Visual Studies at the University of Toronto and the University of British Colombia. He graduated in 2002.

Between 2004 and 2020, he co-ordinated the youth programme at the Art Gallery of Ontario

In 2021, Syrus achieved a PhD in Environmental Studies.

Art and activism

Syrus is not just an artist. He is an activist, scholar, youth advocate and educator.

He uses his art to explore issues of social and environmental justice. Syrus uses a range of media and techniques, including painting, large scale drawing, installations and performance art.

Making the invisible visible

Syrus' 'Radical Love' installation centred Black and Afro-indigenous trans women and non-binary people and featured images of them displayed in public spaces.

He is also known for his large scale portraits of community activists, especially Black and trans people.

"It is so rare for Black and Afro-Indigenous Trans folks to see themselves reflected in public space, expected and imagined in city planning, despite the incredible contributions that Black Trans and non-binary people have given to the city. My project interrupts this history of erasure and instead centres these experiences at its core, celebrating Trans lives and embodied presence in our city."

Syrus Marcus Ware

Support for others

Syrus is part of the Performance Disability Art Collective, and worked on projects exploring ways in which theatre can be more inclusive for disabled performers and creatives.

Syrus is also active in the trans community.

Irresistible revolution

Syrus co-founded Black Lives Matter Toronto. Many of their protests have been creative and artistic.

Syrus edited a book on the Canadian Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. In the same year, he began his role as an Assistant Professor in the School of the Arts at McMaster University.