

# **Inventory of the Tommi Avicolli Mecca Papers**

**(#2000-52)**

***Note:** This document is a preliminary inventory, not a completed finding aid. The collection is surveyed but not processed, and its organization and composition are subject to change. This inventory is intended to help researchers better understand the general scope and content of the collection.*

**Repository:** Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society

**Collection Title:** Tommi Avicolli Mecca papers

**Collection Number:** 2000-52

**Physical Description:** 4 linear feet (three cartons, one oversize folder)

**Creator:** Tommi Avicolli Mecca

**Date (inclusive):** 1975-1999

**Language of Material:** English

**Abstract:** Tommi Avicolli Mecca is a writer, performance artist, and tenants' rights activist. From 1991 to 2000, he worked at A Different Light bookstore, where he organized events and eventually became assistant manager. The bulk of the collection consists of materials from A Different Light from the late 1980s to 1999.

**Preferred Citation:**

[Identification of item], Tommi Avicolli Mecca papers (#2000-52), The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

**Conditions Governing Access:**

Collection is open for research.

**Publication Rights:**

For the status of the rights to this material, please contact the GLBT Historical Society archives.

**Acquisition Information:**

For this material's acquisition information, please contact the GLBT Historical Society archives.

**Processing Information:**

Inventory created by Isaac Fellman in 2020, based on a preliminary survey completed by Marjorie Bryer in 2011.

This inventory uses terminology for LGBTQ people that was in current use at the time of its creation. Descriptive language for queer identities evolves quickly and some of these terms may now be dated or even offensive. Finding aids are themselves historical documents; they reflect the moment in which they were written and often reflect the terms that subjects used for themselves. Please contact the GLBT Historical Society Archivist with questions or comments.

**Biographical/Organizational History Note:** Tommi Avicoli Mecca is a writer, performance artist, and tenants' rights activist. From 1991 to 2000, he worked at A Different Light bookstore, where he organized events and eventually became assistant manager.

**Scope and Content:** The bulk of the collection consists of materials from A Different Light from the late 1980s to 1999.

**Indexing Terms:**

Gay men

Literature

**Container Listing**

Carton 1:

Artifacts—A Different Light mug, memorial candle from candlelight vigil, 1999; San Francisco Gay Softball League sponsor plaque, 1996

Nine videotapes, including materials from A Different Light Readers & Writers Conference, Mecca's personal home videos (circa 1984-1986), shows taped from television, Defense Training Series.

A Different Light tapes: *Writing the Jewish Politic*; *Queer Theory: What's the Big Deal/Voices in Print*; *Inspired by the Mediterranean/Writing Working Class* (all 1994)

Three audiotapes—Roy Barber songs, John Calvi music, Rita Mae Brown, Iowa 1975

Materials related to open mic night and other reading series run by Mecca at A Different Light, including a brochure, "You're a Star at Mecca," highlights of open mic reading series at A Different Light; notes, memos; correspondence, circa 1997-1999

A Different Light newsletters

Jim Breeden (A Different Light owner) incoming correspondence, circa 1995

Folder marked “Bo Houston” contains impressions of various writers

A Different Light event flyers, awards, programs, circa 1990s

Subject files, including Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence

Donations/sponsorships (mostly to Richard LaBonte, A Different Light manager)

Financial records, such insurance, printing, invoices

Terry Anderson (manager?) incoming and outgoing correspondence, circa 1988

Materials regarding A Different Light in Los Angeles

“What’s New,” and flyers with lists of bestsellers, circa 1998-1999

Miscellany from various events/organizations, includes materials from London

Interviews and stories that may have been published in the A Different Light newsletter

Cartoons

Carton 2:

Richard LaBonte (and other managers) incoming correspondence, including circa 1989-1996

Caricatures of writers (copies)

Flyers for events

Materials from A Different Light in Los Angeles

Conference materials from Readers & Writers Conference, 1994-1996, including press releases, notes, flyers, calendars, newsletters

Job applications

Invoices, inventories, and other financial records

Flyers for non-A Different Light events and queer protests

News clippings and periodicals

Headshots of various local actors

Event schedule forms

Carton 3:

Materials regarding annual Readers & Writers conference, including surveys, writer biographies, memoranda, correspondence, release forms, newsletters, 1994-1997

Bookmarks

Personal snapshots, 1988

Flyers, newsletters, and ephemera regarding other organizations (related to Mecca's activism)

A Different Light awards

Inventories

Materials on Joan Jett Blakk and other news clippings

"A Different Light Review"

Calendars, event flyers, press releases (apparently Mecca coordinated the Different Light calendar)

Memoranda and correspondence, circa 1990s

Movie stills

Chapbook: "The Lake Merrimen Players Presents the Hardly Boys in A Ghost in the Closet by Mabel Maney"

Journal/date book—just a few filled pages.

Copies of books written/edited by Mecca: *Smash the Church, Smash the State: The Early Years of Gay Liberation* (2009), *Hey Paesan: Writing by Lesbians and Gay Men of Italian Descent* (1999), *Between Little Rock and a Hard Place* (1993)

**Oversize Folder:**

Includes posters for events; layout for *Jerome: After the Pageant*, 1996; original art, such as a *Hothead Paesan* drawing, 1991, and hand-colored Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence poster, 1999; A Different Light AIDS files and Resolution from the State Senate (1983); Essex Hemphill Memorial poster, 1995