"Blossom & Wilt" Featured at UWM Library

As a community leader and Director of Education & Outreach for Milwaukee Pride, Vince Tripi III (’11 English Education, ’16 Administrative Leadership) is truly making an impact in Milwaukee.

Tripi, who uses co/co/cos pronouns, programs and organizes educational presentations and events on LGBTQ+ history, culture, and advocacy.

Tripi’s “Blossom & Wilt: Queerness Under Fascism is a 9-panel exhibit that examines the development of modern gay and transgender identities in pre-1900’s Germany, the rise of fascism, and queer resistance to the Nazi regime.

Originally presented at PrideFest Milwaukee in 2022, “Blossom & Wilt” was on display in UW-Milwaukee’s Golda Meir Library at the beginning of the Spring ’23 semester.

In a desire to branch away from white Western perspectives, Tripi’s next work will focus on several indigenous cultures’ relationships with gender and sexuality across North America, South America, and Africa.

Cos future exhibit, Precolonial Indigenous Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality, will be released this June. Tripi’s LGBT history exhibits help empower people “to see their lives as chapters in a long, queer story that will never end,” co says.

While in the Honors College, Tripi especially enjoyed Honors College Professor David Southward’s course on aesthetic theory, “The Arts in Theory & Practice,” which taught co non-Western ways of thinking about creativity and what it means to be creative.

Tripi fondly remembers cos time in Southward’s classes and the impact he had on co.

“I still remember what Professor Southward said to me after he read my thesis for the first time, and I was like, that was the mountain top,” co says. “I don’t think I would be the person that I am without having gone to UWM for the opportunity to engage with the Honors College.”

Honors College Professor Lydia Equitz was also important to Tripi’s time at UWM.

“Her particular way of teaching how to write is on occasion, austere and stark, and you come out feeling ripped to shreds: those are growing pains,” co remembers.

“Like I learned as an undergrad, writing is thinking. If you write better, you think better. The Honors College is focused on that and rightly so.”

Tripi encourages current Honors College students to be active members of the community and to participate in the programs and events it offers.

“Getting involved in all kinds of things is totally worthwhile,” co says. “You get so many different experiences through the Honors College in your undergrad times that you just don’t get elsewhere. Even if you love writing and researching and want to go to graduate school, it’s nowhere near the Honors College experience.”

Vince Tripi’s next art exhibit will be on display in June. You can find Tripi at cos website vince.lgbt.