NEW YORK -- A pair of museum exhibits in New York City celebrates Pride.

Taken together, these two LGBTQ-themed art shows take visitors from the first decade of the 1900s right up to current times.

LGBTQ experiences are prominent in two exhibits at two New York-focused museums. One explores LGBTQ lives past, while the other stays in the present.

At the New York Historical Society museum is a J. C. Leyendecker retrospective. Some of his illustrations from the early 1900s are described by art scholars as having a gay aesthetic.

The exhibit also features video clips from the early 1930s of LGBTQ film characters and New York neighborhoods, including Harlem, where the culture appeared to thrive in the same period.

- Click here for more Pride Month coverage.

Another museum brings the conversation forward to current times.


"I identify as a queer artist," said 22-year-old Laila Annmarie Stevens.

Stevens focuses on LGBTQ subjects under age 25.

"Home is with each other," Stevens said. "These are everyday, intimate moments that couples share regardless of gender. Regardless of their sexual identity, as well."

Back at the Historical Society museum, a display focuses on celebrated opera singer Anthony Roth Costanzo. He sang live on the Pride float for Met Opera in 2019 and will do it again at Pride this Sunday.

"The voice is an incredible primal expression of who we are," Costanzo said.

For him, Pride is also about celebrating progress, including a personal triumph -- surviving and thriving after cancer.

"When I was 26 years old ... I found out I had thyroid cancer. But to come back from that and then to sing at the Met after that has felt like such an affirmation," Costanzo said.

He says the world of opera is expanding to include more and more LGBTQ storylines.

An open book is how the artists describe their lives, both now revealed in museum spotlights.