In June of 1987, a small group of strangers gathered in a San Francisco storefront to document the lives they feared history would neglect. Their goal was to create a memorial for those who had died of AIDS, and to thereby help people understand the devastating impact of the disease. This meeting of devoted friends and lovers served as the foundation of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt.

Today the Quilt is a powerful visual reminder of the AIDS pandemic. More than 48,000 individual 3-by-6-foot memorial panels — most commemorating the life of someone who has died of AIDS — have been sewn together by friends, lovers and family members. This is the story of how the Quilt began…

**Activist Beginnings**

The Quilt was conceived in November of 1985 by long-time San Francisco gay rights activist Cleve Jones. Since the 1978 assassinations of gay San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone, Jones had helped organize the annual candlelight march honoring these men. While planning the 1985 march, he learned that over 1,000 San Franciscans had been lost to AIDS. He asked each of his fellow marchers to write on placards the names of friends and loved ones who had died of AIDS. At the end of the march, Jones and others stood on ladders taping these placards to the walls of the San Francisco Federal Building. The wall of names looked like a patchwork quilt.

Inspired by this sight, Jones and friends made plans for a larger memorial. A little over a year later, he created the first panel for the AIDS Memorial Quilt in memory of his friend Marvin Feldman. In June of 1987, Jones teamed up with Mike Smith and several others to formally organize the NAMES Project Foundation.

**The Inaugural Display**

On October 11, 1987, the Quilt was displayed for the first time on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., during the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. It covered a space larger than a football field and included 1,920 panels. Half a million people visited the Quilt that weekend.

The overwhelming response to the Quilt’s inaugural display led to a four-month, 20-city, national tour for the Quilt in the spring of 1988. The tour raised nearly $500,000 for hundreds of AIDS service organizations. More than 9,000 volunteers across the country helped the seven-person traveling crew move and display the Quilt. Local panels were added in each city, tripling the Quilt’s size to more than 6,000 panels by the end of the tour.

**The Quilt Today**

Today there are NAMES Project chapters across the United States and independent Quilt affiliates around the world. Since 1987, over 14 million people have visited the Quilt at thousands of displays worldwide. Through such displays, the NAMES Project Foundation has raised over $3 million for AIDS service organizations throughout North America.

The Quilt was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 and remains the largest community art project in the world. The Quilt has been the subject of countless books, films, scholarly papers, articles, and theatrical, artistic and musical performances, including “Common Threads: Stories From The Quilt” which won the Academy Award as the best feature-length documentary film of 1989.

The Quilt has redefined the tradition of quilt-making in response to contemporary circumstances. A memorial, a tool for education and a work of art, the Quilt is a unique creation, an uncommon and uplifting response to the tragic loss of human life.
NYC PRIDE is teaming up with The NAMES Project Foundation to bring 20 panels to be displayed in New York City during WORLD PRIDE in 2019. The 20 panels will coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising. We are hoping to display the panels in a public space in order to not only educate the public about the history of the quilts, but continue to raise awareness about the AIDS pandemic and the impact of this disease.

Opening Reception (Unveiling)

NYC Pride will host a reception to debut the AIDS Memorial Quilt before the exhibit is open to the public. The reception will allow press to preview the quilts, speakers from the community, The NAMES Project Foundation, NYC Pride and more to talk more in depth about the AIDS epidemic and why projects like this are important to the LGBTQIA+ community and more.
**Hanging/Rigging Display**

**Grounded Hanging Display**

**Quilt Specs & Display Requirements**

- All displays must be indoors
- Display area should be regularly monitored and be able to be locked when display hosts or building security is unavailable to monitor the area
- Quilt must be hung; it may not be laid out on the floor
- The area where the Quilt will be hung should measure at least 12 ft. by 12 ft.
- Display dates - Entire month of June 2019 OR the last 2 weeks of June 2019 (June 17th - June 30th)