



POZ Awards 2024 / Winners

Here are the winners as voted by POZ readers!

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BEST CELEBRITY ADVOCATE

Madonna

In the fifth decade of her career, Madonna's advocacy around HIV hasn't stalled. At each of the stops on her 2024 Celebration Tour, a victory lap in the form of a concert, the pop icon created a sort of [living musical memorial](#) to the people she knew who died from an AIDS-related illness, as well as many whom she had never met. The singer worked the Instagram account @theAIDSMemorial to gather photos of many people lost to the virus. She also spoke at several stops about how personal the loss was to her. In doing so, she reminded us that one of the Great American Pop Songbooks of our time is also inextricably linked with the HIV epidemic.

BEST IN FILM OR TELEVISION

Fellow Travelers

Based on the 2007 novel by the same name, [this eight-part miniseries](#) tells the love story between two political staffers, Hawkins "Hawk" Fuller and Tim Laughlin, during and beyond the 1950s Lavender Scare. While the show begins with one moral panic, it spans decades, eventually showing the relationship between the two characters in the 1980s, when Tim is diagnosed with HIV while living in San Francisco. The series is American history through a queer lens and packs an emotional punch. Not only did the series recount important moments in history, it used real historical iconography to tell its story: the finale included [real panels from the AIDS Memorial Quilt](#). Travelers went on to receive much critical acclaim, winning a Peabody award and was nominated for three Primetime Emmys.

BEST IN LITERATURE

[Criminalized Lives: HIV and Legal Violence](#) by Alexander McClelland

Despite the many advances made in HIV treatment and prevention since the beginning of the AIDS crisis, the legal framework regarding people with HIV lags woefully behind in many cases. Aiming to lay out this harmful legal framework is the work of Criminalized Lives by Carleton University professor Alexander McClelland, who is also a member of the Canadian Coalition to Reform HIV Criminalization. Not only does McClelland dive deep into the ways that Canada's laws harm people with HIV, he also emphasizes its disproportionate impact on marginalized people, including people

of color, indigenous people, LGBTQ people, and people living in poverty. More than just offering McClelland's views, the book includes personal stories from many people who faced HIV criminalization firsthand.

BEST IN VISUAL ARTS

[The Body, The Host: HIV/AIDS and Christianity](#), Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio

There's no doubt that the relationship between the HIV community and religion is fraught: while some nuns responded to the early crisis by caring for the sick, some preachers spouted sermons that were openly serophobic. But regardless of your own take on the relationship between AIDS and religion, there is no doubt that Christian iconography is deeply embedded in our collective subconscious, and that artists who are making art about AIDS often incorporate these images in their work. This show, at Oberlin College's Allen Memorial Art Museum, explores artists who used Christian motifs to respond to the AIDS crisis, as well as concerns regarding "judgment, shame, guilt, suffering, martyrdom, plague, death, redemption, resurrection, salvation through blood, and the sacredness of wounded bodies."

BEST REASON TO KEEP ACTING UP

[Project 2025](#)

If you haven't heard of Project 2025 — an overarching vision to reimagine and dismantle the federal government launched before the re-election of Donald Trump to the presidency — take a moment to search it online now. (We'll wait.) There is almost no marginalized group of people that won't be negatively affected by this vision of the government, which would endanger the health of all people, workers' rights, reproductive freedom, LGBTQ rights. There's a lot to it, but [some highlights include](#) consolidating presidential power, reducing spending on fighting poverty, and eliminating the Department of Education.