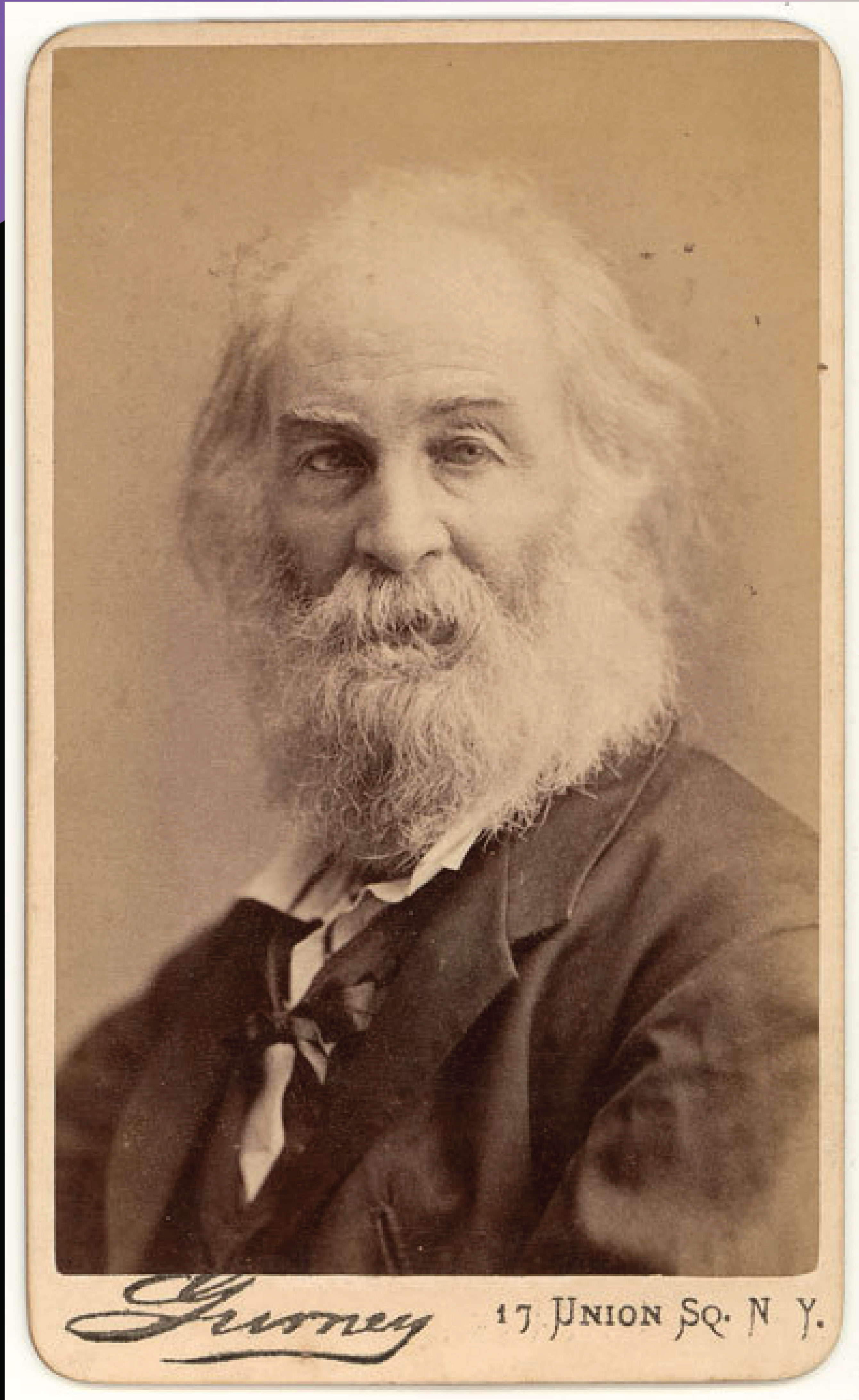


1800s



“The ‘Calamus cluster’ of poems first appeared in the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass*. They and their author, Walt Whitman, were pivotal to early homosexual emancipation efforts.

In verse, the Poet connected the calamus plant to intimacy between males: ‘(O here [at pond-side] I last saw him that tenderly loves me . . . / And this, O this shall henceforth be the token of comrades, this calamus root . . .).’”

Credits

Image: Carte de visite photograph of Walt Whitman, 1871 via Outhistory, The Calamus Poems, <https://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/aspectsofqueerexistence/aspectsofqueerexistencecalamus>.

Text: Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, intro. Justin Kaplan (New York: Bantam Classic, 1983), 100 via Outhistory, The Calamus Poems, <https://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/aspectsofqueerexistence/aspectsofqueerexistencecalamus>.