



The Lilac Journal

Creation Beyond Transition



Volume 1 Issue 1

Curated by **The Lilac Journal** Editorial Team

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Volume 1 Issue 1
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Introduction

When I was 18 years old, I was taking a creative writing class at my local community college that would change the trajectory of my life. One of the last assignments of this class was to find a literary journal or publication that focused on a topic that meant something to us and write a report on it. I immediately knew what I was hoping to find, a publication of exclusively trans people's work would mean everything to me. I could see the types of art made by people like me, see what they bothered to pour their creative gifts into, see lives that would make mine feel so much more livable as a trans teenager. I searched far and wide, and all I could find was a journal of trans poetry that was discontinued after two years, because it had been the project of a graduate student that ceased upon her graduation. I don't even remember what I ended up writing that report about, all I could think about was the grief that came with the inability to find art and artists like me to connect to.

I spent the rest of my entire undergraduate career thinking about this. The longer I thought about it, the more heartbroken and angry I became that the only popular narratives of trans existence revolved around the spectacle of either our transitions, or our deaths. I wanted spaces for us without the spectacle. I needed to see art made by people who were not performing for the approval of cis people.

As you can see, while reading this online, or in your own two hands, I eventually stopped waiting to find places dedicated to trans existence, and sought to make more of them exist myself. The Lilac Journal is honored to exist as a beacon of trans lives lived, during a

time when far too many wish us not to. I will do everything in my power for as long as possible, to keep this publication running, and free to read online.

I am so grateful to the random circumstances that brought me to the places and the people who were instrumental to making this publication a reality. This publication would have never existed without the tireless artistic care of our designer, Kaiso, and the detailed and data oriented dedication of our other editor, Juniper. I will never be able to thank either of them enough for signing up to this entirely volunteer run labor of love we embarked on together.

It is my greatest hope that this publication may function as a place for trans people to feel seen, and to be authentic to themselves with the art they create. We are so grateful to the lineage of trans collections throughout history that existed before us, and we are so honored for The Lilac Journal to join this lineage of love and transformation. I am honored to present this first issue to our readers, may you feel seen by the creations within it, and may we all remember that we are never truly alone.

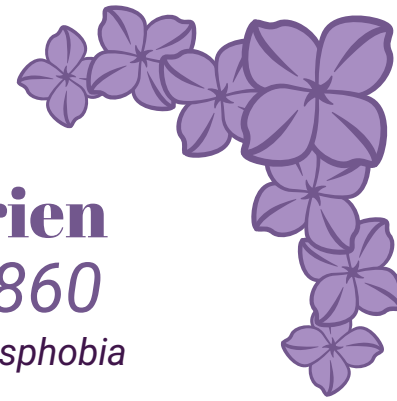
May all that we can create be more powerful than anything that stands to do us harm.

May we all Live Well, and Be Free.

Solace Sinclair, Founder and Acting Editor in Chief



Poetry



Theo O'Brien

877-565-8860

CW: trans death, transphobia

Theo is a nonbinary writer residing in Washington state. While they mostly focus on writing fictional prose these days, they also, on occasion, write poetry with a focus on politics or dreams.

Version One was written in 2018 as a response to a NYT article about Trump wanting to change the legal definition of gender in order to erase transgender people. Version Two is an updated response post-2024 presidential election. The phone number is the US trans lifeline.

hello, it's me, and her, and him, and them, and

our country wants to kill us,

how

do we make it through this?

...

do we make it through this?

1,400,000.

1.4 million.

drag it out over the tongue,

roll it in the mouth,

just picture it

that's how many of us

our country's host- god help us all-

wants to erase, lock us all into binary cages and throw away the keys,

force us to act like "normal" people, if by "normal" you mean

white cisgender and heterosexual,

one wave of a magic wand and poof,

we're gone, isn't that how it works?

I never wanted to have to speak
 up to others about
who I am,
what I am,
why I am.

I never wanted to have to prove
 my own existence,
 that I *am* natural,
 not a parasite leeching off this country,
 not a robot-alien *something*,
 not diseased, not crazy,
 don't need to be fixed, not broken.

877-565-8860, hello,
 it's me, and her, and him, and them, and
 we want to know
 who will spit out the statistics,
 voice choked with the names of the dead:
 Monica Loera, 43,
shot
 Kendarie Johnson, 16,
shot
 Kayden Clarke, 24,

shot
(after police responded to a call about suicidal behavior)
2016 is the deadliest year on record for transgender individuals.

Jamie Lee Wounded Arrow, 28,
stabbed
 Kenne McFadden, 27,
drowned
 Ava Le'Ray Barren, 17,
shot
2017 is the deadliest year on record for transgender individuals.

Vicky Gutierrez, 33,
stabbed
 Zakaria Fry, 28,
bludgeoned
 Vontashia Bell, 18,
shot
 and the 74 others who have joined them these past three years
 (mostly trans women of color)
 (and this year's not over yet)
**2018 (will be) the deadliest year on record for transgender
 individuals.**

877-565-8860 hello,
it's me, and her, and him, and them, and
did you know that according to a study
40% of trans adults have considered suicide?
did you know that 92% of those attempts
were before the age of 25?
and speaking of 25,
that's 25 times the national average, did you know?

“these findings were startling,”
says a researcher.
to whom?
to the parents who threw their child away
because *he* was born *she*?
to the students who single out the different?
to the teachers who do nothing to stop it?
to all of those who don't understand why
“Kill yourself”
should not be a mantra anyone hears?

877-565-8860, hello, it's me, and her, and him, and them, and
we know you're busy but please,

how do we fix this?
how do we get a new host
how do we help
how do we summon the courage to fight
how do we walk down the street without shaking in our shoes
how do we live when our host has turned against us?

877-565-8860, hello, it's us again,
how do we start a revolution?

877-565-8860
(6 years later)
CW: trans death, transphobia

877-565-8860
Hello; it's me, and her, and him, and them,
and it's been a little while, but
here we fucking go again.

We've evolved since we last spoke:
our numbers have grown, and so has
our joy and our sorrow;
our pride and our rage.

877-565-8860
Hello, it's me, and her, and him, and them, and
we're back and all grown up now,
hands on the cheeks
of our younger selves, promising
we've made it and ~~lying~~ promising
that everything will be okay.
(Will it be okay?)

Our souls still carry the names of the dead.
Dejanay Stanton, 24,
“just trying to live her best life as a young girl.”
Shot.
Oliver “Ollie” Taylor, 17,
“an amazing child.”

Kidnapped and shot.
Mar'Quis “MJ” Jackson, 33,
“full of life and love.”
Killed on his birthday.

Club Q:
5 murdered, 25 injured.
They were in a space
that was supposed to be safe.
GUN CONTROL NOW.

Banko Brown, 24,
“made everybody laugh.”
Killed by an armed security guard.

Sasha Williams, 36,
had “a heart of gold.”
Stabbed.

Pauly Likens, 14,
“cherished by all who knew them.”
Found in pieces.

~~2018 was~~
~~2019 was~~
~~2020 was~~
~~2021 was~~
~~2022 was~~
~~2023 was~~

2024 may yet be
the deadliest year on record
for transgender individuals.

We have our own Wikipedia article about being murdered.

T. O'Brien

877-565-8860,

Hello, it's me, and her, and him, and them, and
if we're brought up on the news, it is as
monsters and statistics.

Some things never change, right?

"63% of victims of fatal violence are Black trans women."

"Trans people are grooming children!"

"Over 3 in 4 victims were under the age of 35."

"Transgender people... [are] not a legitimate category of being."

"A 93% increase in tracked homicides of trans and gender
nonconforming people..."

We just want a day where we're spoken of
as human beings and not as sins,
where we can weigh the price of our authenticity
and realize the cost
is not ourselves.

877-565-8860

Hello, it's me, and her, and him, and them,
and here is a promise we owe to each other:

we may bend, but never break.

We will honor our dead and our living

-out or not-

and work together

to help each other through this revolution.

We will make it be okay.





Maggie Stvns



Blanket pulled back, I fly into a chamber of arms. Broadchested and softer than the duvet down that covers us, I feel your tender breathing. This childhood comforter is too small for the bed. You, my comforter, shrink me to twin-size. I am beneath a pillowed pressure.

/metaphor

I understand something new. Something my girlfriend raves about and I had thought to have understood before. I realize now that there is a uniqueness to the way you hold us, locking your wrists around my shoulders and abdomen, and drawing me close. She sends her love and regards. You giggle at the distinction.

/discovery

There is nothing like the inner circle of a transmasculine, the one drawn around his/her/their heart. The muscle I am pressed against. I can see nothing from within your chest cavity. It is of no consequence, for I see you.

/romantic

Clutch me, not as pearls, but as stones. Smoothed on the flat base of a river, carrying the millstones that pulverized the unfresh grain into flouring.

/springtime

I am your spit. I am the blood gathering at the small of your back, a march of cells splitting among hairs and calloused skin. Gaze into the wound, I want you to find me there.

/intimate

I love the holes in your socks, the way you know they're there but don't seem to mind. The elastic of your boxer briefs are crimped and loosely cling to your hips with the softest of grips. You pull them on with a swift mindless familiarity and smooth them, hooking your thumbs under my armpits you lift me from the floor of my bedroom with a smile. The shirts I steal from you are always so soft with loving wear, I long to be your shirt. To be worn soft from nothing but your repeated company.

/carefree

The sun is falling into gold, making long shadows pool at the end of the new/old streets. You collapse into my bed and whisper the words "tuck me in" excitedly. I find a shirt that reminds me of yours, you press it to your cheek and smile as I shut the door.

/safety

crumbs (rosh hashanah 5785)

I threw shreds of bread
 Into a body of water
 shook out all my clothes,
 took off my toque,
 held it over the glassy surface
 and thought hard
 about what exactly I was casting.

During Haskalah, Maskilim argue
 about whether we should do this at all.
 They call it heathenizing,
 declaring that common people are indulgent
 in a belief we could escape our sins
 by throwing away a symbol.
 Shomer say you can't throw bread
 in bodies
 of water
 on Fridays
 or carry bread,
 for that matter.
 I found myself ignoring both as I stood
 and tore up the heel of a whole wheat sandwich loaf.

I didn't learn this practice from a book.
 We sat at the river and tore up stale bagels,
 watching as they pulled swiftly away.
 We poured cold water from the river
 onto each other's heads
 from our hands,
 a fish must have seen.

I am shaking qliploth from myself.
 As I untuck my shirt (to be thorough),
 a woman stops her bicycle
 to ask me if I've seen any fish
 or herons.

I am here in the Living Forest alone,
 save for the herons,
 the cyclist, and her two small dogs.
 I am trembling from the fish's perspective.

An Apple,
 for sweetness
 I have no money for honey this year.
 Nor a home, for the house I return to
 claims my words call for reapers.
 I joke that I plan to establish
 a sovereign state in her home,
 to see how she likes it.
 I suppose some punks and hippies
 find even less in common
 than a Maskil and a transwoman
 with palms full of crumbs.

neverending song

news today of our future
a streetlight frame, bodies

if i told you about the red writing
i'd hope you live in a world where you
wouldn't believe me

the blues of the stone butch
"as the world beat the stuffing out of us,
they tried
in every way
to protect and nurture
our tenderness"

is it the tearing of a page from a book
that makes it precious?
a secret?
a lesson?

the lyrics are all lost now
but the melody remains

Maggie Stvns is a jewish transwoman against fascism, zionism and colonialism. She thinks people should be given free drugs and unconditional love.

These pieces were/are reflections on: my love for transmasculine expression, the complicated nature of trans jewish identity as it relates to tradition and the stand that must be made against zionism, and transphobic legislation.



Fang Chook Transfiguration

*CW: Decapitation, Gender Dysphoria,
partial nudity*



“Transfiguration” is a clay sculptural work that was made before I came to accept my transgender identity. The hands are shown clawing out of the head, as if escaping its original vessel.

F. Chook

Minor Inconvenience

*CW: Decapitation, Gender Dysphoria,
partial nudity*



Ink Illustration

Art has always been a means of expressing my emotions for when my home circumstances wouldn't allow for expression or when I couldn't find the words for what I was feeling. Since becoming an adult, creating continues to be a vital outlet and form of connection with myself.

“Minor Inconvenience” is an ink illustration reflecting the feelings I felt while experiencing dysphoria and depersonalization.



Carrie Biner

Perseus faces the Medusa

CW: homophobia/slurs

Frozen in the dark
College dorm room
Faces lit in an LED glow
Petrified at 2AM
By her red-lipped, raw,
Anarchistic femininity
Too terrified to kiss
This sneering Medusa's
Crusty punk lips
And yet--

desperately wanting to

Rock hard

She asked me:

What are you?

Some kind of faggot?

Me

A faggot

But what kind?

Some kind of faggot.

The Crass creature shed its skin
A mask unravelled around a shadow
I looked into its face
Reflected in my shield
Past the sneering open mouth
Down the void of my
Paralysis
The stygian emptiness of
That cursed word
Caught in my dysphoric throat.

I saw the creature's face

I saw my own face looking back

What kind of faggot

Are you?

I saw my own face looking back

I saw the creature's face

What kind of faggot

Am I?

The Innsmouth Look

For Clark Ashton Smith.

Mother Hydra,
I'm afraid when
I step outside
People will stop
 & stare,
 & see some hideous Outsider
 or worse-

 a frog-eyed Fish Man.

Father Dagon,
It's not my fault
 I was promised to the sea.

I was born left-handed,
non-Euclidean
noisome
wyrd &
 queer.

Old Man Marsh,
I'm thirsty for mad science
body mods & cosmic
transmogrification.

Maintaining the illusion
of manhood on dry land
is getting harder all the time
thanks to the loathsome
phobes obsessed with my
 Xenobiology.

Howard, H.P.,

Can I call you Howie?

Wouldn't it be easier for me
to show off my new set of
fins & shimmering scales
if I were to

 slough off
 this skin suit
 & slip on a b'kini

Don't be embarrassed by my sac
or go green behind the gills.

You inherited your mother's
nervous tics, anxiety and
sure, you're a little
 ribbit
 reactionary.

But I know
You've got a thing for Tentacle Girls.

In spite of what critics whisper
in dark corners of the internet,

I R'lyeh like you.

for the immaterial girls

I.

I don't need to know your labels
what's between
Your legs
What I want are sweet nothings
The contents of your heart's pockets:
 Smoky quartz for grounding
 The carabiner that holds your worries
 Torn up notes from inky lovers that stain
 your insides
 Keys to your secrets
 & a passion for change
emptied into my trembling hands.

Darling,

I've got an estrogenized girlcock
a granny bag of meds
& gigantic love to give.

I'm so tired of chasing
Good Time Charlies
with monogamy hangovers,

avoidantly attached mascs,
Hey Mamas &

Pineapple People
with garden variety phobias
 who don't accept dyke fruits
 like me and you.

Their kisses taste like Durian.

I wouldn't trust any of them
not to bruise me, or
manhandle my ripened produce.
 But not you, Girl.

Getting ghosted
left on read, empty,
wanting way too many apps
to swipe away my loneliness.

Pre-transition self-esteem
second-guessing
everything.

Lo,

somehow you found me
when I stopped to take a breath
 & love myself
 for a change.

In our bed there are
 no scripts,
 no performers,
 no roles assigned at birth,
 but costumes are welcome.

I'm not an inflammatory Doll,
but I want to burn
in the warmth you radiate
when you call me *Mistress*
or *Mommy*.

Oblivious in our aftercare,

your anxious skull resting
against the tender reassurance
of my still growing chest.

Safe in knowing
 I am a woman
 without makeup,
 wearing boxers
 that read NB on the waistband.

It's like Sophie said:
we're ~~immaterial~~ boys
immaterial girls ¹

Two sapphics
dreaming
ourselves
into existence.

We can be anything we want.

-II-

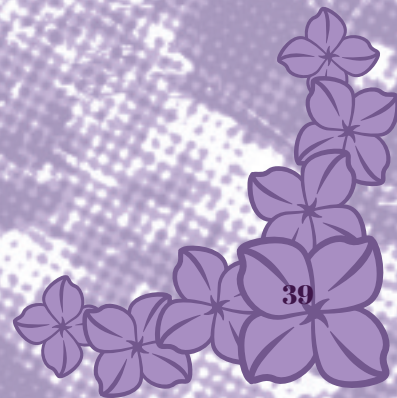
In two thousand years
archeologists
will dig us up
dust us off
say

These were lovers. ²

¹Sophie, "Immaterial," *The Oil of Every Pearl's Insides*

²After "Nuclear Lovers" by Assotto Saint

Carrie Biner is a polyamorous, nonbinary trans butch dyke poet living and working as a settler in Oskana kâ-asastêki, Treaty 4 Territory (colonially known as Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada). She lives with her partner and their cat.





Emil Stoetzer

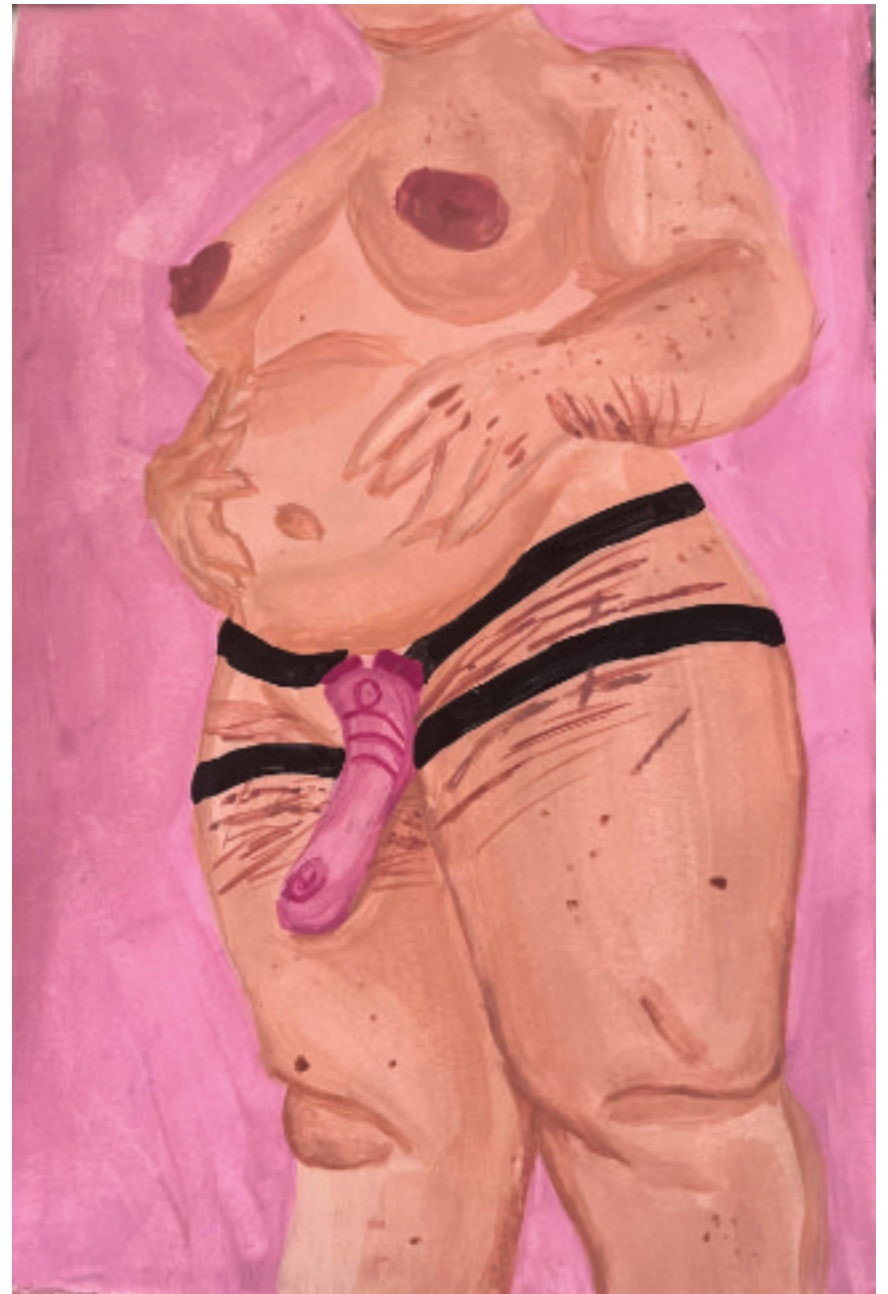
STRAP!

CW: Nudity



Gouache on paper





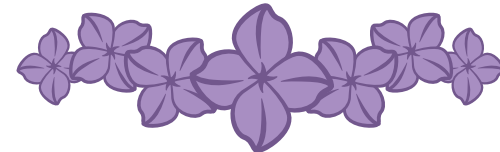






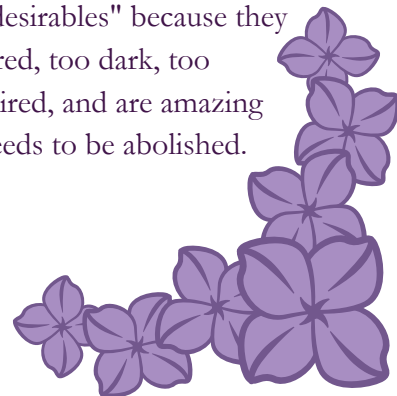
About the Artist

Emil Stoetzer is a multidisciplinary artist. They a queer, neurodivergent artist whose work focuses on the lived queer experience, intersectional feminism, and socio-political happenings through fictional narratives and commentary on society. They are engaged with creating change within culture, communities, and the individual. Stoetzer highlights the importance of human connection and relations through their art practice by encouraging self-reflection and communication.



From the Artist

As a non-binary lesbian, I am interested in what society considers a desirable and undesirable body; what is and isn't kink; who can and can't be a lesbian; what can and can't be accepted. Why is so much of lesbianism catered to cishet white men? Why is lesbianism so white-washed? Why are butches, gender-queer folk, and especially Trans folk never shown? Why is lesbian sex someone's fetish, and not a way of being? The strap is a tool for us queers to utilize, for pleasure, for confidence, for strength. The people depicted wearing the straps are "undesirables" because they are too muscular, too fat, too hairy, too scared, too dark, too flawed. These "undesirables" are us, are desired, and are amazing as they are. This toxic idea of lesbianism needs to be abolished. Queerness has to be intersectional.





Nicole Mae

Cold Szilvás Gombóc

The rising sun left hair strands on my pillow. Pink nosed
 in Sunday shivers. Opal hoarfrost. City cottontails.
 I decided to reread
Your Love is Not Good by Johanna Hedva.
 Eat cold szilvás gombóc that my mother made.
 Watch winter crows
 braid chimney smoke.

“All ghosts are queer,”

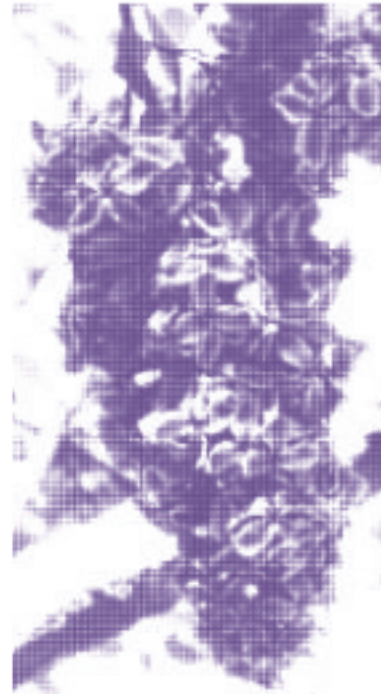
says the page in my lap.
 is no longer.

And my lap,

From the Artist

Sometimes it feels like trans trauma is inescapable. It reveals itself to me on the news, on social media, and in magazines. I take great pleasure in its antithesis: trans joy. I often write about the love I have for my partner. When we're together, my gender isn't on display. We're liquidus.

Trans Unfoldings



Nocturnal snow melts,
 and I know spring has arrived.

We can leave the house
 more ourselves.

Lace top with chest hair;
 boxy hands with nail polish.

He's my girlfriend—
 a vernal equinox.

Warm fog weaves itself
 through sidewalks.

Transitioning seasons
 transition us.

About the Artist

Nicole Mae (they/she) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Treaty Four, Canada. Their poems, films, and art pieces reflect themes of nostalgia, longing, Hungarian diaspora, prairie queerness, ill body, shame, and romantic love. These works can be found online and in art galleries across North America.

www.peachpiles.com

Algae

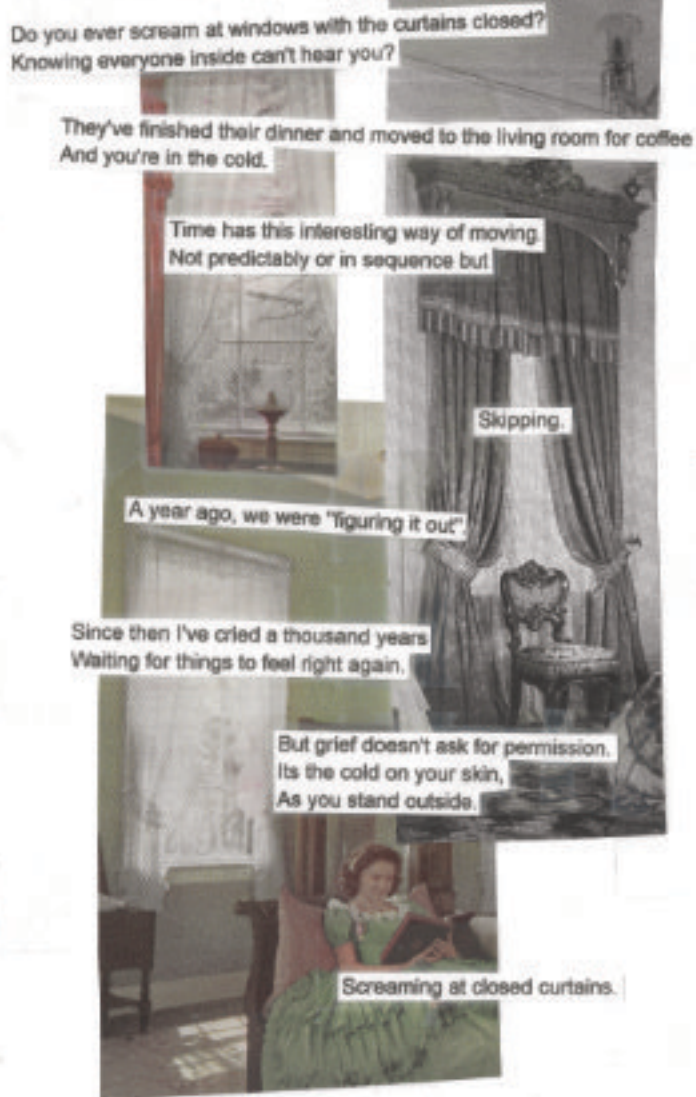
There are a dozen families at this beach.
And then there's you and me.
Kids scream
into corn plastic water guns.
They lung
the Washington forest fire smoke. Sand-kick
debris.
Empty crawfish bodies.

Country music fades as we swim towards buoys.
Creamsicle.
You
shovel dead water striders
and clumped algae
away from my chin.

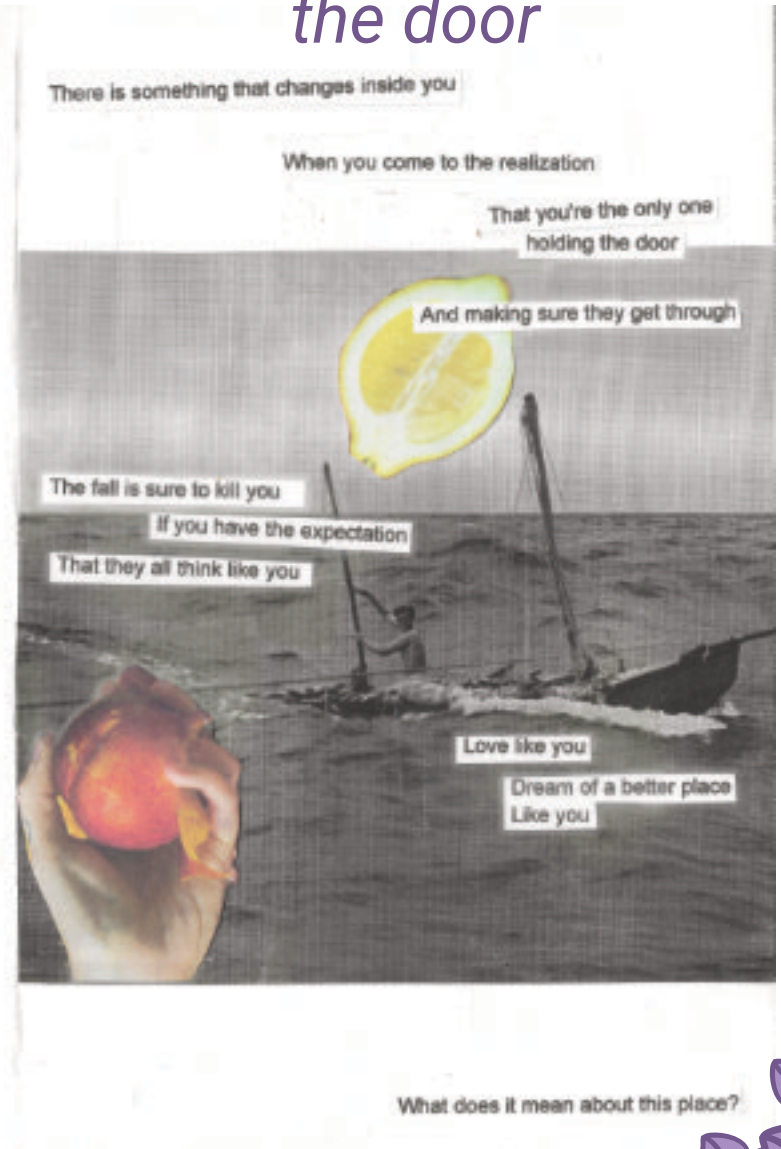
I kiss you in lake slime.



Tay Griffin Closed Curtains



You're the only one holding the door





Euan O'Leary *Herself*

She/Her/Hers/Herself/
 Her friends/Her family/Her mother/Her father/
 Daughter/Sister/Girlfriend/Wife/
 Ma'am/Miss/Girl/Lady/
 A nervous smile when she looks in the mirror/
 A name, word, or dress that fits just right/
 Something familiar, and totally new/
 Redefinition/Recomposition/
 She/Her/Here/Henceforth/
 Here from the start/Here to stay/
 Here withstanding/Despite/Nonetheless/
 "Here are my pronouns"/Her true self

I am a trans female writer,
 a Concordia graduate
 currently based in Nova
 Scotia.




Mallory Minerva *Autoperiodization*

CW: Referenced Child Abuse

Introduction to the Author

I'm Mallory, an undergrad in anthropology and linguistics. My mediums are public speaking, essays and acrylic abstract expressionism, and I'm getting into prose poetry.

About the Work

This essay is a semi-academic work dealing in anthropological theory, suggesting a possible method, but also an actual example of what I propose, meaning it is autobiographical and autoethnographic. There are also little bits of satire.



I decided I would start this essay by explaining what "periodization" means. After writing it my own way I realized it was uncannily similar to how it is written in the Wikipedia article for Periodization. I figured there is no point trying to do better what has already been done best, so I will now quote Wikipedia. I am very sorry.

In historiography, periodization is the process or study of categorizing the past into discrete, quantified, and named blocks of time for the purpose of study or analysis. This is usually done to understand current and historical processes, and the causality that might have linked those events.

Periodization's purpose is convenience. Historians famously don't have the best memory, and don't memorize dates. I've studied history. It's hard. There's a lot. What's easy to remember is eras. I'm not a psychologist and I cannot explain why, but periodization lubricates the study of history so much. By subdividing the temporal space into overlapping eras, the mass of historical content becomes processable, and from there we can investigate causes and effects through the lens of periods, rather than the true mass of events. The problem of periodization is that periods aren't real. The pre-Socratics didn't know they were pre-Socratics. These are narratives we create, and we render concrete ideas discrete, and these concrete ideas are so nebulous that concrete even feels inaccurate somehow. Yet we do it anyway. The purpose of narratives is to render an objective reality so hopelessly complex that we could never actually comprehend it as humans with finite brains into an idealized reality we can work with consequentially. The world is not actually governed by simple structures, however if we pretend it is, we can get on with it. I am a wanker who sincerely identifies as a post-modernist.

Ethnography is the study of individual ethnic groups. It regards their rituals, symbology, mythology, ethics and norms, views and narratives and so on. The ethnography in ethnography reflects that ethnographic works are at the end of the day works depicting something. Ethnography is so often documentary through various media. Who does the documenting? The anthropologist usually. It is usually the case that a cultural anthropologist, an ethnographer, goes to the community they are researching. This is popularly imagined as a severe contrast of cultures, a Malinowski with a tent, hanging around "tribal" people somewhere remote or tropical. This imagery is a symbol for ethnographic field research, and in people's imagination

when it occurs there is absolutely some mental colonizing happening. However, ethnographic field research does still happen, tent included. In these cases, anthropologists set out to live with a community, build rapport, work with informants, ask questions, observe, and so on. There has been a system of ethics built over time, and amongst other goals, the anthropologist is not to merely anthropologize. Indigenous people don't just exist to be subjects of research so an anthropologist can advance their career or be some special interest. This research has to be published and available to the community it is about so they may benefit from it.

While ethics in anthropology have come a long way, from grave robbing to the methods and ethics we have now, there is still something uncanny about a white guy from North America hanging around hunter-gatherers and taking notes about them because it is his job. Of course, not all ethnographic research is like this, oftentimes one does ethnography of their own culture. In fact, that is probably the most common because it is the most practical, and because ethnographic methods are, as it turns out, really helpful for a whole slew of things. And yet, despite the wide range of forms this can take, from international travel to going a few blocks to a local hospice, there is this meta of the anthropologist studying people, and it so often is to advance a career. There is an assumption that clueless normal people need an anthropologist trained in their qualitative methods to perform research to learn anything. Indeed, culture is water a fish swims in, and we are the fish. Often it is through each other how we learn, and ethnography does center the role of rapport. Researchers are open and work with the people they want to learn from, and maybe there is something to this mutual relationship, and we are past the time of Boas stealing bones because indigenous

people (understandably) told him to fuck off. It's all how you frame it. But there is another method.

Enter: autoethnography. The subject ethnographizes themselves, and output is not a research paper adapted from field notes, but a creative work that is made with the express goal of being learned from. Ethnographic autobiography in short. There is great variation in the possibilities of form and style. Writing or film, formal or informal, there is as much personal expression as there is cultural expression. It is sometimes an art, since there is no need to be academic. What unifies autoethnography individuals ethnographically portraying themselves, and acknowledging the water they swim in. There is a love that permeates autoethnography, for the self, for the community the self represents, and for the act of creation.

Here's a novel question: what if we synthesized autoethnography with periodization? A work that explores the self for the interested reader, that can be learned from and comes from a place of pride. A work that narrativizes for the sake of easier processing, so that cause and effect can be easily explored; autobiography that periodizes a life. I shall do this now to myself, because I am proud of myself, and I think I am clever.

The Autoperiodization of Mallory Minerva, at age 24

Birth and Early Childhood Development

I was born on August 6, 2000. This has prior context of my parents fornicating and creating evidence of such with the pregnancy that would result in me and then getting married because my mother's father is a religious conservative who disapproves of

women being something other than housewives who birth and raise kids after they are married. Approximately sixteen, twenty and twenty-four later he would vote for Donald J. Trump. I was born and assigned male at birth. Not the best call in hindsight. I was gendered before I was able to intake any gender socialization. I also was raised and gradually grew. I began language acquisition. English. Not bad as it is the global lingua franca, but I am reminded now of language revitalization movements. My brother was born. All of this is theoretical as I do not remember any of this, I just use my knowledge from the social sciences and guess that I am not an anomaly. I resided in an apartment in Vancouver, Washington. Not BC, not DC.

Early Socializing

By now I have a gender (uh oh), a functional language, and a sense of self, I think. I converse with my parents. Autism symptoms show up and my parents notice but think nothing of them for the next decade and a half. My earliest memory of my brother is around here. There won't be more details of him because I decided to exclude details of my abuse from this text. I also learn what my name is. I actually remember this. I asked my parents because I knew the concept of personal names before I knew mine, and they told me. I also remember my sheer fucking disappointment. What an awful name. I knew it even then. No, I will not say it here. I came to learn of my relatives, especially my grandparents.

Early Elementary School

My family moved into a suburban house in 2004, and I began kindergarten at age five. This is where my memory becomes good.

The school I was in was near the house my parents chose. This affected this era heavily. These factors are not particularly affected by my development but by the context I was born into. That will remain true for a while, but my agency does come to play a greater role later. This was shapes and colors class. I learned about racism for the first time from a picture book about Martin Luther King Jr. I was taught that racism was a problem a few decades ago, and then Martin Luther King Jr. solved it, was killed, and now black and white kids can sit on the carpet together. My problem with authority also began as I had a teacher that year who hated kids. It is worth asking why this happens, and this will be a unifying feature across several periods. First and second grade I was taught by a teacher who was of a similar personality type. I experienced ableism as an undiagnosed autistic child, and bullying from this teacher. I was also at age six ostracized by neurotypical peers for the first time. I had my first special interests and hyperfixations: astronomy and medieval European civilization. My dad helped facilitate these. I was becoming a gifted kid.

Later Elementary School

This period seems most characterized by intellectual growth. Mostly though I got good at reading, became more knowledgeable than my peers at science topics (although not math), and read Wikipedia articles about sharks for fun. I wanted to make a documentary. I was starting to become more social. I discovered the existence of pornography due to unrestricted internet access. I became more interested in media consumption as a hobby. I was known to be a smart fifth grader, and people were very proud of me by the end. This was a very happy period where I was able to be an

autistic child with a hunger for knowledge, mostly unfettered. I came out hating men a little bit though I didn't realize it at the time. I became a writer too, which was very nice in hindsight. I also came to understand I was different and having an almost academic interest in castle architecture while struggling to talk to people was atypical actually. No this was not looked into.

Middle School

Middle school was a period of dramatic transformation. I became political, and the setting for my political development was a profoundly panoptical middle school. It is my experiences here which I most relate to Foucault's ideas of panopticism and power. I thought my middle school was run by dictators who carefully used language to control us and how we think about our surroundings. I realized "Greek mythology" and Christianity were not so different as both can be understood in a religious context. I realized veteran's day was bad because we should not celebrate imperialists. I had no friends and was bullied so I spent a lot of time thinking to myself. I reached all these conclusions that way. I independently developed utilitarianism and later found out it wasn't done first by me. I ended middle school asexual. I always sympathized with queer people, whom I called at the time "LGBT people" without knowing what the T meant. Now I realized there was more diversity, because I was in it. I found the asexual community, and it dawned on me that I was queer now, and I was proud of it. I imagined the experiences of other kinds of queer people. Particularly, I found lesbians important to empathize with because I knew they were so distant from me as the opposite gender that I would never, could never be one. That is

also foreshadowing. What marks the end of this period is the start of my independent music taste, one that would expand and evolve for the rest of my life, but I believe does have a distinct starting point of June 2014.

High School

High School was mostly building from what I ended up with at the end of middle school. I let my queerness simmer, learning more about the queer community, including trans people and all the other possibilities. I explored myself as a social creature, trying and failing to make friends or at least make myself a spectacle. I found my interest in the humanities and social sciences, and decided I would eventually specialize in some social science or perhaps history, which was right. Trump became president around the middle of this time. I tried and failed to enter relationships. It was loud and confusing. Some teachers were cruel. I didn't know what I was doing. I was smart, according to other people, but graduation was barely accomplished. I got long hair. I cross-dressed on one occasion. I survived and had some very cool achievements, but mostly I just came out traumatized. I also entered a friend group. Online. In a toxic community. The biggest achievement was figuring out my own autism. This saved me.

The Neet Era

While there is evidence of this period on the internet and I do know where to go looking, I will not. My memory is little and what I do remember is either not important enough or too unpleasant. The

trauma of high school healed but was replaced by other traumas. This was a dark age for me. I did accomplish one thing though: I finally stopped being cis! I became agender because I was just kind of apathetic to my masculinity, but didn't outwardly change much. It would be five years. I was so close.

The First College Era

Because my high school experience went as poorly as it did, by the time I was able to progress, my route was community college. That's fine though, I enjoyed it a lot. I developed so much confidence and critical thinking skills. There is a very hard and unambiguous start to this era, the beginning of 2022. I was so happy to be out of where I once was among neurodivergent and queer students I could get along with. I was making friends that weren't mysterious or pathetic people online. This was just wonderful, and I even found that in a college environment I was a strong student. I chose anthropology after floating some alternatives. Among my friends I was finding, I did notice that more than half of them were trans women. I was starting to wear more jewelry, and I decided that I would grow out my hair for some reason. I was also very loving of and even jealous of my trans friends. Among us, I was the only one to not be transfem. Anyways one night I was voice training and bothered to ask myself why I was voice training. I became deeply perturbed, so I met with them the next day. I told them I thought I may be a trans woman like them. They were cautious. They did not want to fumble this. I was asked to imagine myself in a decade all transitioned and everything, and how I felt. I said I liked what I imagined. Then they became exuberant, hi-fiving me, congratulating

me, and I knew that little litmus test was liminality, and I went through a rite of passage. Anyways my new name is Mallory and I use she/her pronouns.

The Present

I now feel ambitious and highly capable, and I, away from my parents at a university, can explore my gender freely. That's it. I'm trans now. That's a pretty big crossing of eras isn't it. Now how good of a periodization have I done? Before school, my eras map vaguely onto stages in childhood development. Beyond that it mostly just maps onto schools. Elementary, middle, high, community college, university, not very imaginative is it. But it feels right somehow. Only changing my entire gender feels worthy of marking a new period. What is at play here? I think we conceptualize our personal history based around demarcations, and there are a few types of demarcations. One is institutional, such as changing schools or moving to a new location. Another is liminal, creating a discontinuity in our chronologies. That moment of coming out, and then broadly of changing my gender, is liminal. Personally, I have resisted rites of passage. Yet that one could not be escaped, and that failure is maybe the best thing to ever happen to me. There is also the role of trauma in these demarcations. I mark one gap both institutionally, and when my memory picks back up. I mark the entry into the present institutionally, as a transfer to another school, spatially, going to another city, and liminally, transing my gender.

I do not mean to blow smoke up my own ass here, I realize that my life is not so interesting to warrant autobiography for its own sake, but I do want to suggest something here. We probably periodize

our lives whether we mean to or not. Cross-culturally, there is a prevalence of rites of passage, especially coming of age rituals. There is trauma and other great change. I struggle to imagine a human with no discontinuity in their life. Even I, clinging onto that for a long time, had a classic Turner-esque liminal rite of passage in the end. There isn't really a right way for me to subdivide my eras, I just went with what feels right, and that feeling is in a cultural context. In American society, schools are eras for us. Pre and post coming out can be like BC and AD. Thus, I propose that autoperiodization have a role in autoethnography. Let us tell our life stories, and let us periodize them to help understand our progression through a convenient little narrative, and then let us think critically about why we chose the periods we did, and what that implies about the cultural context those periods are in. There is an ethnography to be found in my own life story, an ethnography of a queer autistic American, with each of those three dimensions bearing culture that influenced my own personal narrative. Mostly though, there is love and pride, which permeates autoethnography, even here. Maybe not for the American school system, but for queer and neurodivergent people for whom I am a part of.





Logan Samuels *hair love*



Collage using magazines and a glue stick. This art was created by cutting out images and words/letters from magazines and putting them back together like a kidnapper creating an artful ransom note.

i am not clay (trans golem)



Mixed Media using watercolor, glue, markers, and other pens and inks.



Digital Painting

Luna Mortenson
Demonized

CW: Nudity



Poetry

Flynn
Mantras for Becoming

I will grow out my facial hair until it is scraggly. I will wear tape on my chest that is fraying and peeling underneath a cropped t-shirt that shows everything. I will stick this needle into my soft stomach every week until the line of hair from my waistband to my chest is dark and wiley.

I will grow like brambles and vines over old iron fences. Prickly to the touch, taking over the space that I need. I will spread my roots of community over cracked asphalt roads until the old paths towards nowhere are unrecognizable. I will invite sparrows to nest in my wild hair. They can bring in sticks and leaves until the top of my head becomes synonymous with home.

I will become unattractive to the gaze that feels entitled to my body. I will become irresistible to those who see beauty in the mess of becoming. Who see intricate paintings of time on the broken bark of trees. Who understand hitched breath and salty tears as the most moving performances one could share.

I will be sharp and soft and hairy and loud and no one will be able to look away from the sight of me. And no one will take any of this away from me.





FEATURED COVER ART BY

Vern Martin-Ivie
*The Beauty of the
Transsexual*

Vern Martin-Ivie is a multi-disciplinary artist based on Anishinaabe land. They create to connect to their body and inner self, and often use themes of gender, disability, religion, and mental health in their art.





Abby Baker
*MY GENDER IS
LESBIAN*

I want to be the big strong boy who carries three metal chairs in
each arm

I want my slender tall lover to hold my hips and bridge the ship-
wide distance
run their hands from top to bottom like curvature ceramic

I want to sit in the hazy dooming light, smoking cigars and talking
politics
my handshake iron gentle and my presence anchored stone

I want to have a pillow fight and let the girls paint my cheeks rosy
and twirl my hair
Let the woman-ness bleed off my face in the shower later and feel
myself again

I want to be an elegant spy in long black clothes
I want to be the one who saves the princess from the enemy castle
(She will carry me like a bride
back through the cheering masses)

I want to be the sexy bassist in your favorite local band
I want to be the one in the corner, mysteriously lighting a cigarette
and reading poetry
I want to be the smoke that travels through the air at the show
All parts of me absorbed into the total blood of every body

I want to be the mirror and not the image
I want to be a baggy shirt and flat as a board
I want to be the short lace slip that cascades down my tits like
mountain springs

I want to be your peer and I want to be the paper you doodle on in
the waiting room
Let the image live through me

I will be the little boy with his dinosaur
and the ancient witch with her cauldron

Rolling around in all the primordial star goo and angel wings
I'll know at last the piece of my body
the one little creature inside that is mine
the nature spun planet who hums only for those who listen





Photography

Journey

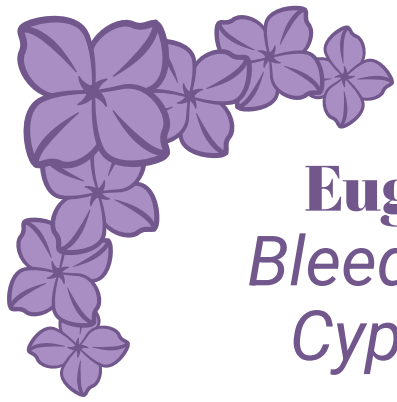
Kix

CW: Nudity

I photographed my sweet roommate and bestie before he got his top surgery

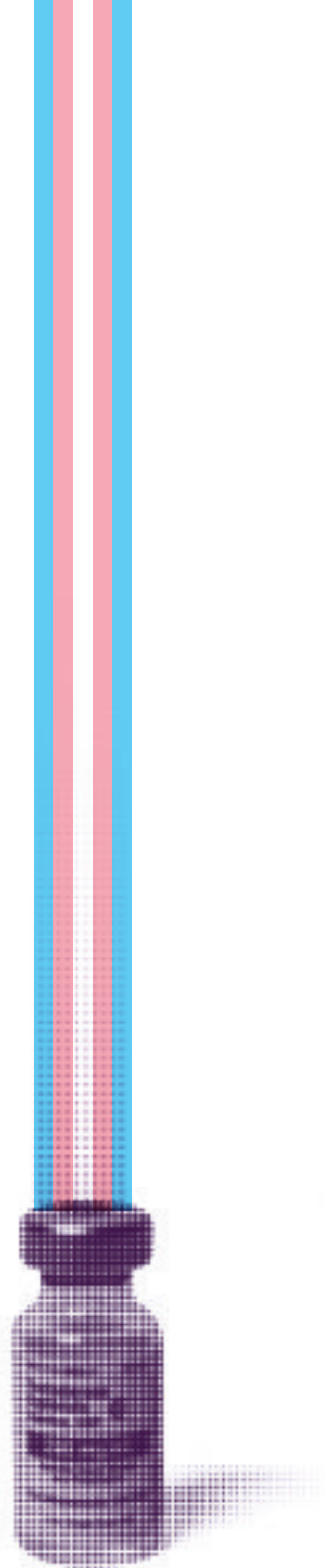
journey is a multimedia lover who likes to photograph their friends, write about big and small feelings, and dance and play and be a freak in the woods





Eugene Maier *Bleeding Out of a Cypionate Vial*

Is the change in my throat strangling you?
Does my renewed heart beat too loud?
So loud you can't be near me?
Do your ears ring at the sound of joy?
I love the parts of me you hate;
My cracking voice,
My scruffy pre-teen beard,
My strange and changing body.
Does the fact that I'm alive
Fill you with terror and dread?
You fear that I'll find joy,
Fear that I'll run into the arms,
of someone who loves every part of me.
Fear that I'll change too much,
And make you cry before dinner.
Do you fear your own child?
If your own blood makes you faint
How do you ever expect to heal?
Do you even want to?
Find me when you do.
My wounds are scars now,
Stitched with my own hair,
Healed by my own cells.
I am myself;
I am your blood
And I am my own veins.



The Working Man's Pussy

The working man's pussy
Has rosemary up the urethra
And butter in the vagina

The working man's pussy
Has a line through the center
Ready for the butcher

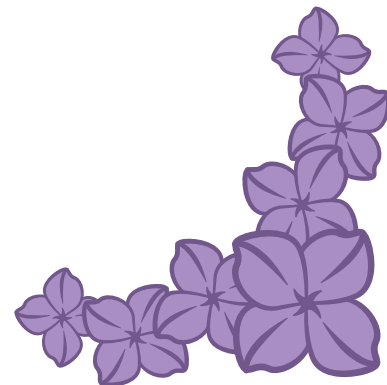
The working man's pussy
Is a burden to bear
And a father's nightmare

The working man's pussy
Is form over function--
A "fuck you" kind of revolution

The working man's pussy
Is the power put back in our hands
When God put a pussy on a man

Universality

We have all been a child
From the moment we are born, we are all the same for a brief moment;
Tied in loose knots
Around the pinky of our collective mother;
The cord between us
Wrapped around our necks and holding our heads up to the sky.
Again we are all the same
The first time we touched the grass and felt the dew of the morning on our hands,
Our wonder is universal.
We remember the color of the sky the first day without our parents beside us,
We have all come to learn
That the comfort of a guardian is more powerful than any drug;
Some die chasing,
But despite how we end, our beginnings are humble and unchanging;
Hospital, dirt, bed, or water,
The background changes around the humanity that can never be taken from us.
It's not our cells,
Nor our skin, bones, or biology that ties us; but the fact of our existence
That pulls us into tribes
Of love and torture, humanity's doomed implosion growing ever closer.
For now we chase children
Down grassy hills and through carpeted living rooms,
Trying to preserve them
And what's left of our memories of birth and the discovery of grass.





ERIS / Biosphere Decay

Douse Yourself in Gasoline

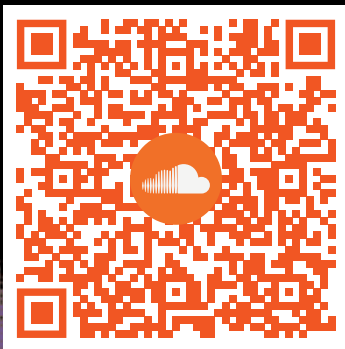
CW: Self-Immolation

About the Artist

Folk Punk artist and ancom. I'm learning ukulele as fast as I possibly can I promise.

This song was inspired by me finally accepting that I'm non-binary after 9 years as a trans woman. It allowed me to sing for the first time in my life, which I never thought I would be able to do. But here it is.

Scan for Song:



I see a stranger in the mirror
But sometimes my true self appears
I comprise your greatest fears
No matter how many years you hide away from my overflowing
tears

I will not dis-a-ppear

So douse yourself in gasoline
Light a match and set me free
Take a bath in kerosene
Spark an arc let me be seen

<-Inching -closer >to the closet door
Trying to walk where the floor was before
But it's crumbling beneath me
I don't even know where to place my feet

>I see a light at the end of this years long tunnel
Just relax let go and take a deep breath
You'll have to let me out to walk with you one day
It doesn't matter what those other people say

Their opinions don't matter you just need to realize
that you are me and that I always have been you
So strike that match and we'll be a perfect team through and
through
And We'll both come out of this a happier person too



Atlas Ducote

Masculinity Through the Lens

To be a man

Is not to be hard, and cruel.

To be a man

Is not to let your anger rule.

Masculinity is soft, beautiful, loving

And being masculine does not mean

You cannot be androgynous, or feminine.

You do not need to feel you have to pick between

The three of them.

Glasses have two lens

For you to see through.

But they reflect and bend the light, so you can see *everything*.

The world is not black and white,

There is not always clear wrong or right.

Being a man is whatever you make of it.

There is not a box you must be confined to fit.

To be a man

Is to be soft, loving, kind, caring.

To be a man

Is to be yourself, love yourself, and to love others.

To be a man, is to be human.

Being a member of the human race

Is not always a feeling of grace.

Often we feel stuck.

We feel as though we don't belong, and *fuck*

Maybe sometimes we don't belong

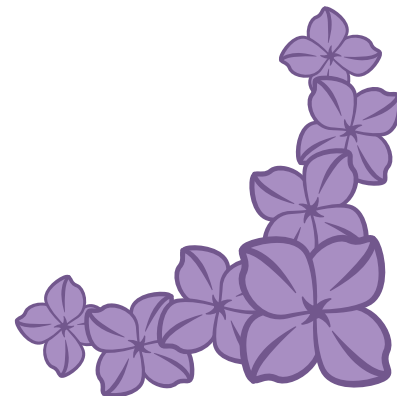
Because there is no one to bring us along

With them, and show us the beauty of the world.

However,

You do belong somewhere.

You will always belong *somewhere*.





Jamie Lauzon
In God's Image

“In God’s Image”

My body is a temple
To the transcendent earth
Ever shifting twilights and
Bruises fading to dawn
Illuminating the landscapes in my skin
Vast gardens atop cut shimmering stone
And precise man-made ravines

I’m a cathedral
To divine cultivation



Photo and embroidery by Jamie Lauzon. The photo depicts an embroidery image of a flowering trans body with top surgery scars. To the left are the words “Malvolio 2.5.128,” referencing the famous line and dick joke “Be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em,” from Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. Photo includes the cover of a queer zine (title not found) at Out on the Shelves Library.





Roan Mabanglo
RED TIDE

Shivering, shaking, my stone butch's undone,
Your cascade of eager algae in my blistering sun.
You had my blood on your tongue before you ever saw my cunt.
I give you what I want and not a drop less.

You crave brine and I crave you daily.
I sprinkle lime salt in your food and you bring me to the poisoned
sea.

I love you to the point of destruction,
Instead, we amass and call our blooming holy.

Fish go belly-up when we pass by,
See my red nails and electron microscope stature
Hand you the bill and skedaddle before we both choke them out.
Our lives wash over them regardless, anoxic.

Roan Mabanglo is a death instinct / genderqueer /
transsexual Filipino-American androgyne born in
1997. They are the child of a poet, lover of art(ists),
wife, husband, partner, and stone femme.



Aina Zabinski
Take a Notion

I am in a staring match
with the tyranny
of a ticking clock
and I am cupping
the face of suffering
in both palms
and I am bowing my head
but not in defeat!

Closing my eyes
I surrender my pride...and I am
walking a tightrope, testing the torsion of
resistance and love, and I am
turning inwards, too,
to discover... something else
Do you know what I found?
you cannot solder an abyss with air

but you can use it
to keep a fire alight

And I am

You are here.

Somewhere between hope and despair,
floating with the tide of
anger, fear, longing, and relief

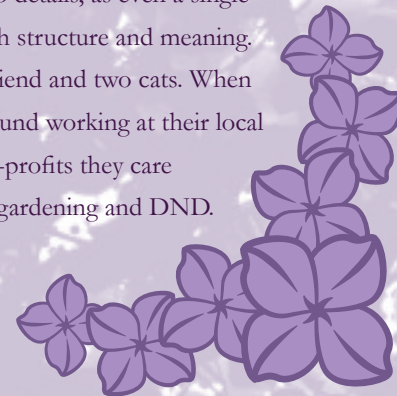
You crash on the coast of presence.

Grief is so intricately woven into my fabric,
I need to stretch both sides
for joy to shine through.

Still... I am here.
You are here.

Thank goodness.

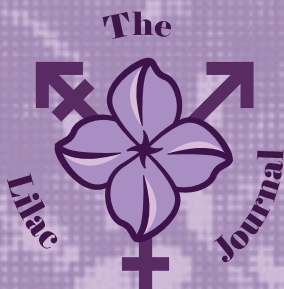
Aina has been a lover of words their whole life, and recently graduated with a Bachelor's degree in English Literature. Poetry is one of their favorite forms of literature because of its musicality and the way it demands your attention to details, as even a single pause makes a significant impact on both structure and meaning. Aina lives in Bellingham with their girlfriend and two cats. When they're not writing, Aina can often be found working at their local indie bookstore or volunteering for non-profits they care about. Aina also enjoys hiking, crochet, gardening and DND.



The Lilac Journal is a multi-media publication that was created to be a space dedicated to only publishing the works of transgender and other gender diverse people. We wanted there to be more opportunities for the breadth of trans narratives to be in the spotlight. We had grown tired of trans stories that only center on either the act of transition itself, or the tragedy of our deaths by the hands of hatred.

While this collection surely includes works that center transition, as well as tragedy, this collection makes clear that these are not the only things weaving the fabric of trans existence. Our lives are rich and full of boundless forms of creation and love.

In our debut collection, we span from visceral artworks, to heart wrenching poetry, to small moments of beauty witnessed by only us, and so much more. This collection is but a window into the incredible lives these people lead. The Lilac Journal is proud to publish this collection as the first of many, as much needed windows into the complex beauty of trans existence.



Designed by **Kaiso**