

SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE 2025
Project Documentation

ZER0 Publishing, Auckland
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BACK TO PUBLISHING. WHAT
SORT OF SATISFACTION HAS THE
PUBLISHING OF DRUMMER
BROUGHT YOU?

ABOUT YOU:
A tremendous amount, sometimes in very personal and subtle ways. We constantly get mail from guys who say how DRUMMER has helped them come to terms with their sexuality and their lives. I particularly like to hear from someone who found that he shares a specific sexual identity or fetish that other men enjoy — and that through DRUMMER they have learned to explore the possibilities of their sexual, physical and emotional selves. In a way that is what they are saying when they write to us that DRUMMER is "a turn on."

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This publication and other related materials are available
for reading online at zach-00.neocities.org.

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Thanks

Thanks to the 2025 Elam Capstone group, especially Lucy, Yolanda, Manaia and Alex, as well as my lovely tutors and the wider teaching staff. Extra special thanks to everyone who contributed to *Gendersex: Collab*, my third zine for the project.

Of course, thanks to my family for bearing with my endless noisy printing and ink-wasting, and for moral support especially in the last couple of weeks preparing and working on my final installation.

Get the Most out of Reading

This publication intends to provide background information to and reflection on my 2025 Bachelor of Fine Arts Capstone project at Elam School of Fine Arts. High quality photo documentation of this project can be found on the Elam Artists website (elam.ac.nz).

This publication is designed to be read with an accompanying online appendix of images relevant to artists that have inspired my work, as I do not have permission to reproduce and publish their images here. At points in order to demonstrate my influences or arguments, I will indicate which image in the appendix I am referring to by use of a number in square brackets, for example [00]. The appendix will be available in PDF format at zach-00.neocities.org/capstone, and I recommend printing a copy to be kept with this publication.

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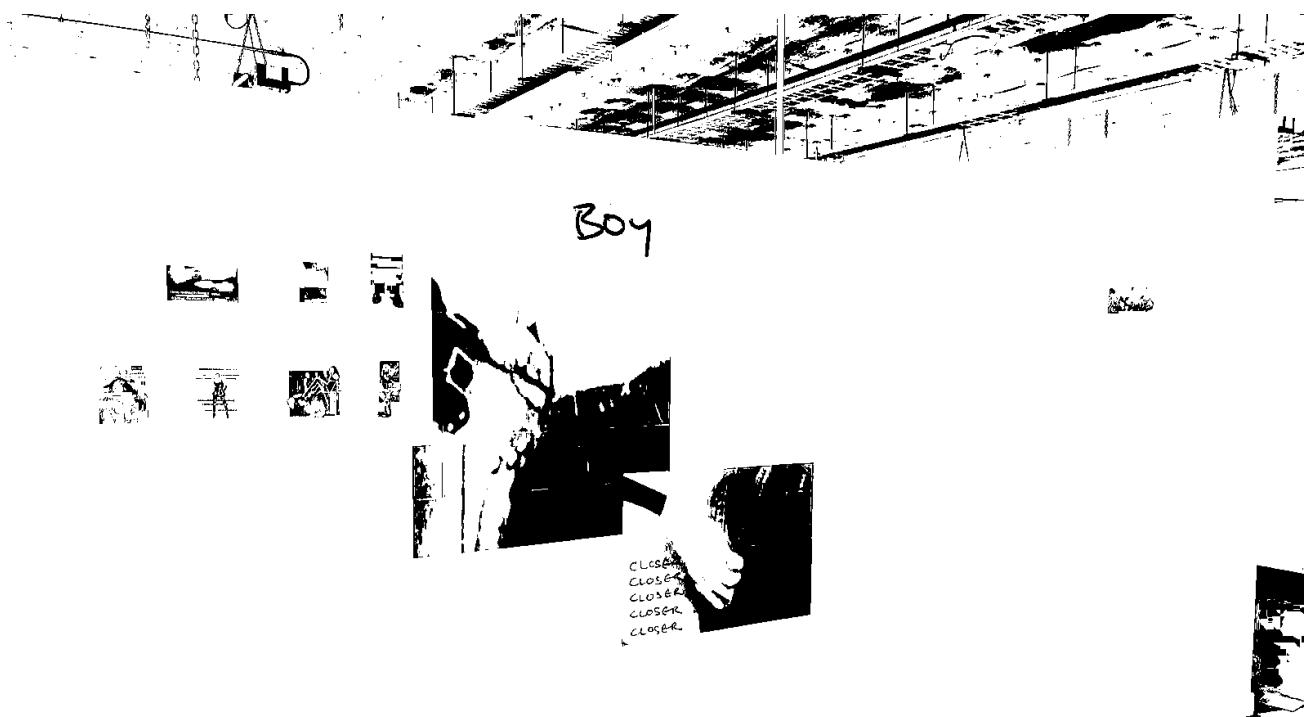
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Artist Statement

SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE desires to open up a dialogue around queer experience through considering the connections between contemporary queer communities and their archives.

The project encompasses two series of works; A5 punk-inspired queer collage zine publications, and posters of varying sizes wheatpasted to the studio walls. Both series are printed mostly in black and white, and the zines are made with newsprint and handbound with cream thread.

The project is made possible through the use of archives, and contemporary relationships with queer creatives. *SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE* reframes images and text from queer history through collage prompting contemplation on how we can look back to understand our current struggles, and to move forward. Use of archival magazine photos can be seen as collaboration with past creatives, however in the third zine issue collaboration with contemporary creatives also serves as a way to build community. This zine in turn becomes an archive of the contemporary queer response to the current anti-queer political climate.

Both mediums presented are physical methods of distribution. Zines originated in punk communities as an affordable departure from capitalist values, used instead as a way of making and connecting with community. They are used here as an escape from the digital echo chambers of social media, prompting a more physical, careful experience of media. Posters have a history of protest, and similarly to zines are a cheap way of spreading their message.

The works take on a cycle of digital-physical-digital-physical, speaking to historical and contemporary traditions of distribution. Starting with image collection from digital archives, the zines move to physical collage, both posters and zines are then digitally arranged, and finally printed physically. Stepping back to the digital, readable versions of the zines are available to the public at the website listed below.

SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE is an artistic intervention which aims to increase visibility for and community around everything queer and non-normative. ■

List of Works

The left wall on entry contains four large black and white posters wheatpasted and layered over each other on the wall.

Genderfuck Me (Anytime)
Touch Me (Positive Sexual Images are Important)
Visual Pleasure
Who's My Lucky Boy

The large right wall on entry contains four black and white posters wheatpasted to the wall.

Lipstick Boy
Why Not?
Boy
Closer

The centre of the right wall contains a pink colour block, holding a selection of A4 black and white pages from the *SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE* zines.

Revel in Being a Sicko (No. 1)
Congenial Couple of Gender Queers (No. 3)
That's Fetish (No. 1)
Boy Fucker dot Com (No. 3)
Dress for a Day (No. 2)
More Man (No. 2)
Fucking Faggot Freak (No. 1)

The smaller pink colour block on the right entryway wall also contains an A4 black and white zine page.

Leather and Drags (No. 1)

The far wall below the window contains A4 black and white repeating posters, some of which are covered by one large tiled poster (first item listed).

Every Inch
Lick Me
Hold Me
Touch Me
Kiss Me
Throb to the Pulse of Life
Slackjawed Staring
Who's My Lucky Boy (Shower)
Raucous Revolutionaries
Dirty Numb Angel Boy
I am a Good Angel

On the table are four stacks of zines, each a different issue of *SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE* zine, as listed below. These are A5 newsprint booklets, bound with cream thread.

No. 1 Freaks Only! No Straights!
No. 2 Obscenity
No. 3 Gendersex: Collab
No. 4 Eighteen Point Manifesto

FRINKS ONLY

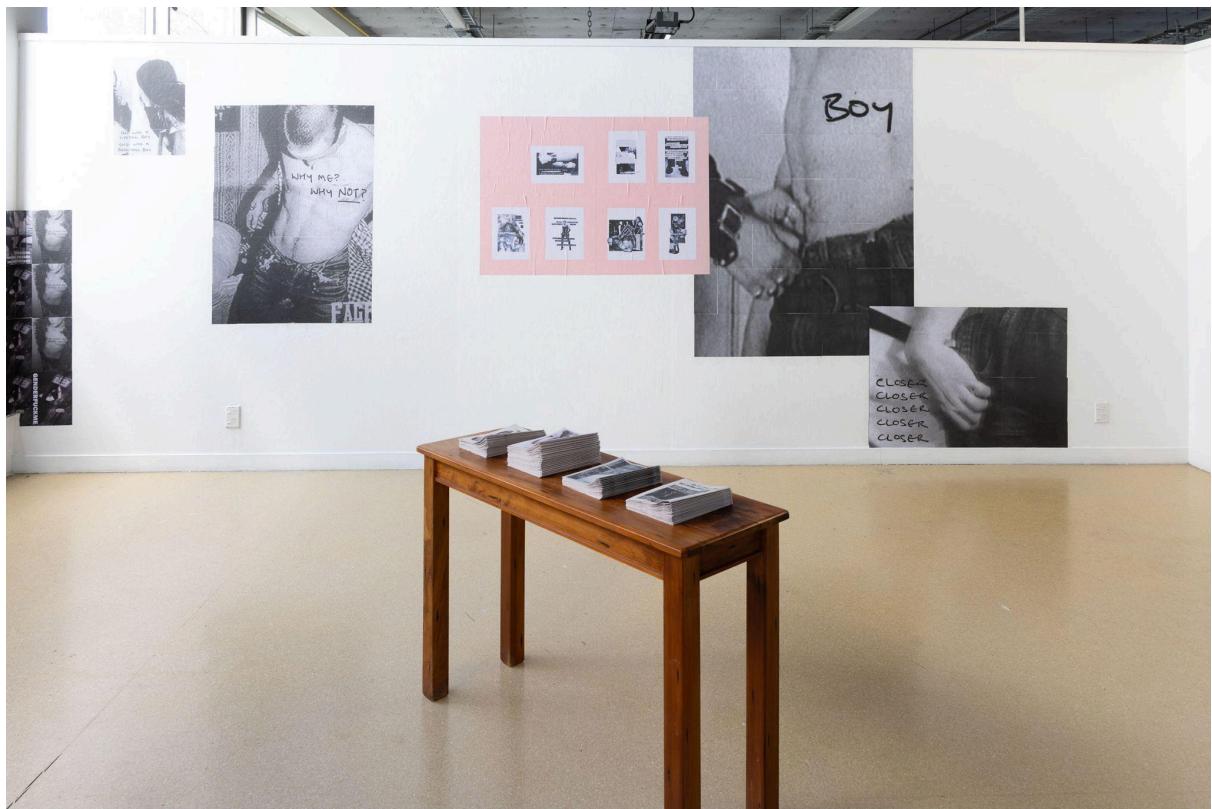


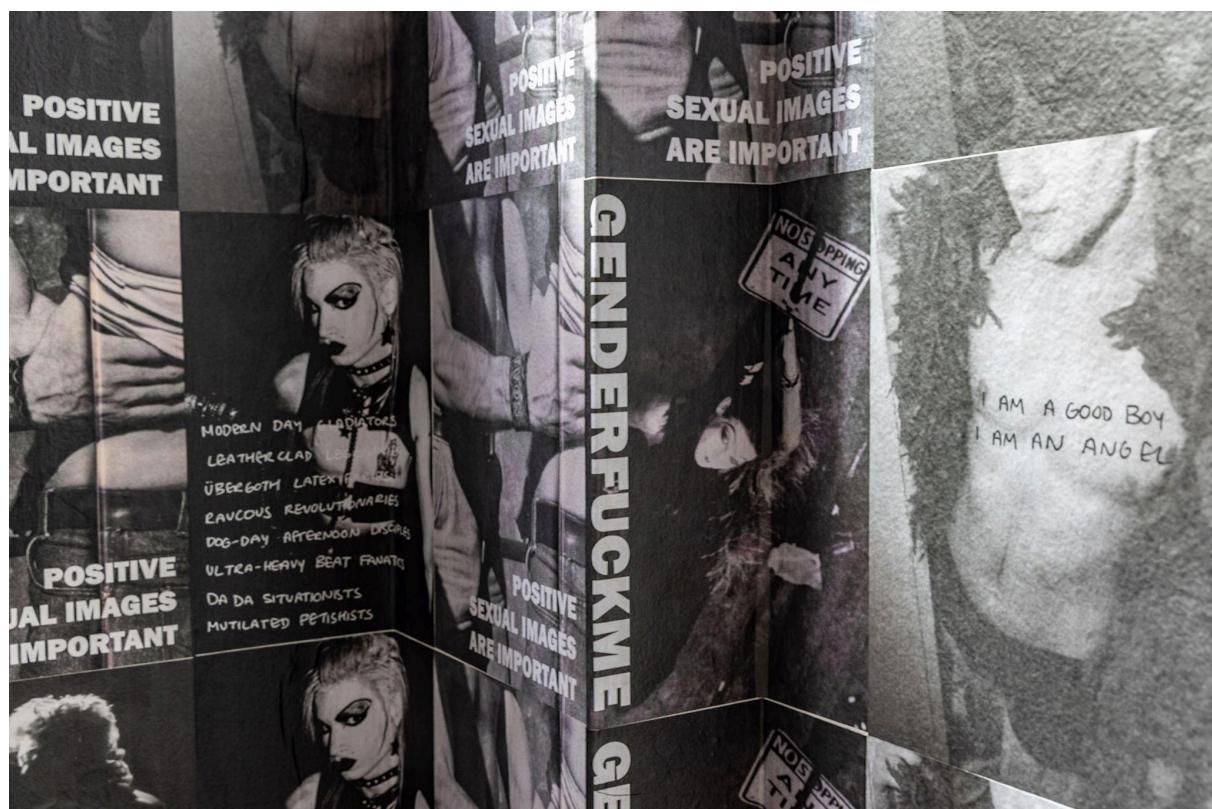
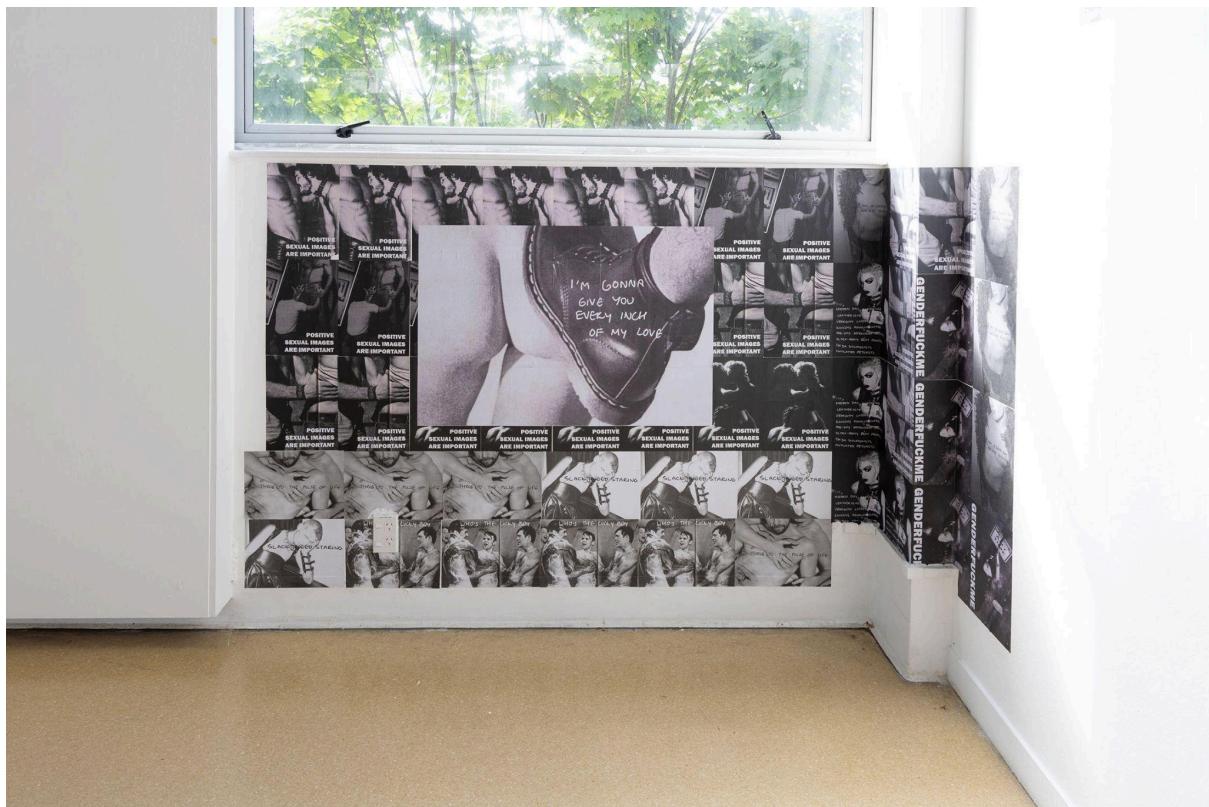
NO STRAIGHTS!

SHOW ME WHAT YOU'RE LIKE.



Final Installation Photo Documentation









Artist Inspiration

Emelia French *Personal Notations* (2015)

[1]

I want to focus my work this semester around writing and publication; around how things are communicated and disseminated. I want to experiment with format and style whilst keeping a similar theme and messaging about queerness, masculinity, etc.

I thought it would be a good idea to see what past students had done for their projects on the Elam Artists website. I was curious as to what amount of stuff people included in their bodies of work, as well as if many people have done publication based work for Capstone in the past. I was also curious as to where these past graduates took their careers and practices.

The most relevant artist I found to my own ideas was Emelia French and her Personal Notations (2015). The work consists of a series of paperback booklet publications that were available to be taken at the grad show. Inside the booklets are lists detailing the artist's life.

She describes the work as "a catalogue of information about my everyday existence, the work

becomes an entry into my life; it is an offering of information attempting to communicate my identity, my existence, and what it means to be human for me."

In her artist bio she states "I believe an artist doesn't create something, but is there to sort through, to show, to point out what already exists, to put it into form and sometimes reformulate it."

Though I forgot that I wrote this down in my workbook, the idea inadvertently became a touchpoint throughout my own Capstone work this semester, especially in my theoretical research.

I like the simplicity of the work, as well as the scale. Having made a couple of artist books in FA223 last year I can appreciate how long the process of making the stacks of books must have taken her, unless she somehow outsourced it.

I am drawn to the idea of documenting one's life. The format French employs here is that of the list. Lists are not usually the main subject of books, but rather ways of navigating them, so to employ them

here privileges a usually under-acknowledged way of recording information. The format of the book gives them the authority that the medium bears due to its history of being the ‘official’ way to publish. The splitting of the work into three volumes evokes encyclopedias and old reference books, which increase the authority they are lent.

The fact that visitors to the grad show could take home any of the volumes they pleased is also an aspect of the work that interests me. They get to take with them a slice of French’s life, they get to know a very intimate part of her

without her getting to know them in return. The dissemination of the self is no doubt the life of an artist, especially in today’s social media age.

Since her MFA at Elam, French has moved away from publication and onto other mediums, which are less relevant to my work.

The other publication-related Elam graduate artists were: Diary 3023 (2023) by Peri and When I Sleep (2023) by Sophia Frawley. Both of these were hardback and accompanied by illustration.

Jenny Holzer *Survival Series* (1983-85)

[2]

Jenny Holzer has always been one of my favourite artists, and has influenced my interest in writing in an art context, so for my Research Essay I did some reading about her.

Survival Series was mentioned in Britt Miazgowicz's Masters of the Arts dissertation; You are Responsible for Constituting the Meaning of Things:" Examining Jenny Holzer's Progressively Complex Textual Constructs. The dissertation touched on the specific work DIE FAST AND QUIET WHEN THEY INTERROGATE YOU OR LIVE SO LONG THAT THEY ARE ASHAMED TO HURT YOU ANYMORE.

This text work immediately hit me as poignant in determining the political stance and general tone I wanted to convey in my work.

Like most of Holzer's work, the statement is up to individual interpretation in order for meaning to be properly parsed. With the lens

At the start of my Capstone project I was aiming to focus my work around writing more than my final installation would imply. However, I was plagued by writer's block; I was not confident in my writing. In the meantime I experimented with collage in the hope that my writing ability would come back, though it only returned once it was too late to change my medium and approach.

of my experience and the politics I'm focusing on this semester, it speaks on how queer life in this society comes down to the choice between two paths: assimilation (die fast and quiet), or living out and proud (make them ashamed to hurt you).

I enjoy the confrontational nature of the statement, I like that it demands the audience to both look at it and to think further than simply looking. Even if they're not also queer, or simply read it with a different lens, the questions I want them to answer, both here and in my own work are: where in this statement do they land, are they the 'they' that is indicated or the 'you'? And, if they are the 'you', to interrogate where they stand between dying fast or living long; what good does dying fast and quiet do other than hurt yourself and please 'them'? These thoughts are the way in which I'm approaching my first work.

John Baldessari *Wrong* (1966-68), *The Spectator Is Compelled...* (1966-1968)

[3] [4]

The most interesting element of these works is the relationship the text and image have together. Many things affect this: the fact that they are treated as separate elements on the canvas; the format of the hand inked caption in contrast with the photograph (as opposed to a painting, or the text being a produced font); the fact that both are in black and white together.

The caption subverts captioning conventions, not describing what the work is visually, but rather what it is. It's a statement, bold and clear in the white space of the canvas, holding equal weight and size as the image. It's not a differential little footnote as one would expect a caption to be.

All of the elements of the work come into conversation with each other through the viewer. I am reminded here of Soviet Montage Theory: you are presented with one thing and then cut to another, the brain assumes because the two shots come after each other in quick succession that they have a relationship. This goes for both the text and the image in one work, but also in the presentation of both the works together. The image and

statement may have no 'actual' relationship with each other, but through their presentation as such, the viewer makes connections: the viewer is an active participant in making the meaning of the work. Here Baldessari simply presents selected images and text, and decides what gets shown next to each other. By being shown the 'Wrong' work first, the second work doesn't say 'right', but it is one of the first meanings the mind assumes, due to the viewer's understanding of the relationship between the works.

Researching how Baldessari used text and image, I learnt that he used words as compositional elements in the images of his work, and that the ambiguity of the relationship between text and image was of importance to him.

These two ideas are also of importance to the routes I want to take my work. I like how he uses text, something with 'definite' (I use this term very loosely here) meaning, to frame an image and change how a work is interpreted by an audience. Incorporating selected images and text together is a key part of my collage practice,

and I still hold out hope that I can incorporate some of my own personal writing practice into my work here as well.

At the time, I did not think Baldessari's work was of particular relevance to me. I attempted emulating it, but nothing turned out quite right, nor did it have the same effectiveness as his. Looking back now, I can see how researching his text/image practice has influenced my final posters if unknowingly. I use handwriting (even if it is digitally imposed), and the words and phrases I select are chosen for the message that I think will be received by viewers when they see them together.

Perhaps if I were thinking more consciously about Baldessari's work in relation to my posters, I could have created pairs of posters designed to work together, to have a distinct relationship. Though, my installation methodology doesn't account for this. Instead, the whole installation, all the posters, work in relation to each other both visually and conceptually.

Marcel Duchamp *La Boîte Verte (The Green Box)* 1934.

[5]

At this point in my work I had begun amassing a lot of paper ephemera related to this project: images printed out that have or have yet to be collaged; collages taped and glued together; test prints of zines. It seemed a shame to not do anything with them.

Duchamp's Green Box was a stack of reproduction notes and sketches relevant to his painting La Mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même (The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, even) from his journal, sitting loose in a custom made green box.

The main driver for this work, in my opinion, is care and intention. There is intention behind every decision in an artwork, but especially here. The box was made and decorated specifically to be used for this purpose. The notes too, are painstakingly copied out onto loose paper from his journal.

This work gives value to the work artists put in behind the scenes, both in preparation for making art,

and contextual information. An artist's sketches and notes are mostly cast aside in favour of the final product, but here the final product is the process. It challenges the idea of what an artwork is or can be.

The Green Box also challenges the idea of what a book can be, or what publishing can be. This is an idea I've been toying with, however I'm not sure if this is a method of doing that which I would be happy to present on final install.

This work brings to mind the role archiving plays in providing context and detail to historical things, as well as artist's careers. Even if I don't use my ephemera in my final work, I'm still going to collect it for my personal archive.

After contemplating boxes online at Warehouse Stationery, I ended up getting a cardboard Monster Energy Mango Loco tray from the free box section at Bunnings. To this date, I still have all the things worth keeping from this project (not the stacks of bad misprints, nor the pages of irrelevant notes) in there, yet to be archived away.

Kathy Acker *Blood and Guts in High School* (1984)

[6] [7] [8] [9]

Blood and Guts in High School was not what I expected when I was initially thinking about what a ‘collage novel’ could be, but it is no doubt still collage. It employs multiple styles of writing to create one larger work: letters, poems, drawings, diagrams, script-like dialogue, etc. There is a mix of fonts and sizes: typed text, typewriter text, and handwriting.

The stylistic and aesthetic mix is reflective of how the main character sees the world; not as one linear clear story, but a set of experiences and images and revelations. Some thoughts are louder than others, some thoughts you think over and over again, when you’re talking to

someone you might not remember what they were doing but just what they said. This novel follows a character’s way of experiencing the world, in a very human moment-by-moment way. It could be a good way for me to get back into the groove of writing; not putting too much pressure on myself to create one perfect thing.

I have not properly “read” this, but rather looked at it on The Internet Archive, allowing the diagrams and drawings to jump out at me, and reading passages that caught my attention. I think reading the blurb on Wikipedia put me off a bit, given the heavy topics it deals with. Perhaps I will return to it later.

Researching collage novels after being recommended by Kathy Acker led me to find two of the most influential essays on my practice: *Reality Hunger* (2010) by David Shields, and *The Ecstasy of Influence* (2007) by Johnathan Lethem.

Zoe Leonard *I Want a Dyke For President* (1992)

[10]

This work is one I have liked since I was a teenager and first came across it. I remember thinking it was incredibly profound; I'd never really come across the sentiment before. Reading it now, the person it's calling for is so obviously the person to want in power, especially in the world of politicians we have today. Real people, rather than rich boys who give nothing-answers to pressing questions.

I enjoy both the message it's sending, as well as the way it is formally presented. The repeated 'I want' statements hammer home how personal politics are; how a leader you will likely never meet should be representing you, and one way they can do that successfully is having a variety of life experience. It speaks to the 'real', 'gritty'-ness of life and doesn't sanitise anything like politicians tend to do to make themselves look good (both in their personal lives and in how the country is being run). It speaks to the fact that the majority of people who live actual lives don't ever see themselves represented in how any country is run.

The statement of 'And I want to know why this isn't possible.'

provokes the reader into thinking about the fact that we kind of already know why this isn't possible, but then it also gets them to think about why exactly it's not talked about. It makes the viewer come to terms with how patriarchy and racism and homophobia are perpetuated throughout society even indirectly, and how because it's hard to make changes, people don't want to put the effort in. People like their status quo, their traditionally authoritative person in power, and therefore having a 'normal' or 'average' person in a position of power is a scary idea.

Formally the presentation of this work blown up to billboard scale is very successful. It's presenting something you'd usually see in a more scaled-down hands-on context (piece of paper you could touch), on a massive scale. The billboard is something that is often used for political influence, trying to get you to vote someone specific in. They are usually colourful, and have a big name and face. In this case, Leonard is doing the opposite. She's putting the call out for someone else to be in power; someone who could potentially be the reader. She's advertising for the position, not a person.

The typewriter look goes hand in hand with what I mentioned about scale, but the crossing out of words is also a successful element as well. The crossing out brings more attention to the words, and also breaks up the perfect-ness of the rest of the work. It now looks like something someone typed all in one go, rather than a perfected product, which relates back to what she's asking for. She's asking

explicitly for someone who is not perfect.

I want to write my own something like this, a manifesto of sorts. I also think the form is successful; perhaps I do some posterizing rather than putting something like this in a book-adjacent form. The direct statements are a successful format, too.

Felix Gonzalez-Torres *It's Just a Matter of Time* (1992)

[11] [12]

A lot of Felix Gonzalez-Torres' works make me tear up. Untitled (A Portrait of Ross in LA) is one of my favourite artworks ever, especially for how easily it makes my heart squeeze with both grief and love.

As a young queer person it's important to me to connect with and learn queer history. I believe it's important to understand where we came from and what shapes the views people have today, as well as to be grateful to those that came before us who fought for the rights that we have now.

A part of the queer experience for a long time has been death, and some think that despite no direct ties to those who died, there is an impact on the younger generations. Kasperi Elkki talks about this briefly in their Bachelor's Thesis "You know that a boy who likes boys is a dead boy:" Traumatic Construction of Self in Crush (2005) by Richard Siken. Elkki calls this concept 'queer death' (how straightforward). "For example, the AIDS epidemic of the 80s is an experience limited to the generation that was active and alive during the years, but the effects of the epidemic carried onto the younger generation born after the most

lethal years. The younger generation grew up into a divided society that, on one hand, mourned a generation worth of dead queer people, and on the other, blamed 'a gay lifestyle' for said deaths."

Within the context of knowing that the artist of It's Just a Matter of Time is a gay man who dies of AIDS, the statement present in the work (in the vernacular of where it's shown) reminds the viewer of queer death. To me it's a reminder of the fact that everyone dies, it's just a matter of time in terms of how soon that happens, and within the context of the AIDS epidemic, that time was a lot sooner than it really needed to be, singling out majority gay men.

The work is a memento mori in this way. Tomorrow is never a guarantee, and especially as queer people (though AIDS is no longer the death sentence that it once was, people are still beat and killed for being queer) it is important to celebrate life while we're still holding onto it with both hands. It's reasons like this, that pride parades and partying do matter: sometimes you need a reminder in this world that it's good to be gay, it's something worth celebrating.

In a way, this work is about making the private public. The billboard is a mechanism of advertising, of conveying messages to the wider public. 'It's just a matter of time' reads like both a horrible looming statement, and a passive internal thought that one can live with day to day. The fact that gay people were dying of AIDS was something a lot of politicians in the USA and UK wanted to sweep under the rug; if something's just killing undesirables why should they be concerned? Bringing the idea to the public like this forces people to reckon with the fact that people are dying, and that you could too. It's a vague enough statement in that sense; everyone does die. This more vague memento mori probably comes across more easily to the everyday passer-by who doesn't know who it's by. The fact that it's installed across different countries at different times also reiterates the idea that everyone dies, no matter who or where you are.

The stark lack of colour and choice of font are integral to the success of

the work. Colour often evokes positive feelings (red is anger but it is also love, green is jealousy but also nature, blue is sadness but it is also the sky); black and white are harsh and callous. Death is harsh and callous and does not care when or where it comes for you. The font is gothic and in that vein a little Nazi-ish. Both this and the black & white evoke a sense of the past (which can consume people in death).

The Nazi-ish-ness of the font goes back to what I was saying about politicians and undesirables. It asks the question of who is making this statement and what is their intention. In this context 'It's only a matter of time' about a gay man would be a positive thing to a Nazi or conservative politician: it's only a matter of time before most gay people die and are gone from society. In this way the work has a duality, and comments on the messaging from multiple different communities on the same topic.

Gran Fury *Read My Lips* exhibition (2018), *Act Up* flyers (1988)

[13] [14] [15]

These works I feel operate from a design perspective rather than an art way of making. They take the form of posters and public advertisements, though they are presented in a gallery.

Their visual form is influenced by the design perspective they were born from. All of these works have bold statement titles, clear details beneath that, and a provocative image. All of this is done to catch the viewer's limited attention and get across their message as fast as possible, whilst still providing enough information for those who do stop to read further. Thanks to their form they easily get across a clear political message.

Their purpose dictates a bit of what they can look like. For example,

I didn't realise until now, my pink colour blocks to display zine pages in my final installation are nearly exactly the same as image [14], even though I wasn't directly thinking of it when I made that decision. Sure, they may have better installation methods, and their posters are not wrinkly, but they are functionally the same.

most of the posters and flyers here are printed in black and white in order to keep printing costs cheap for maximum distribution. Despite this there are still attempts at colour when it's appropriate, like using the coloured paper and, because this is in a gallery, eyecatching installation methods that incorporate the work into the space.

In terms of how these works can influence my own work, I like the provocative image and bold title combination, as well as their pro-gay messaging about a current (at the time) political issue. I am also drawn to the wheatpasted posters in the last image, as I believe they best relate to my purposes, and are definitely something I want to emulate in my own work.

Frances Libeau *My cruel enemy grazes on my pain and feeds herself* (2024)

[16] [17] [18]

I was recommended Frances Libeau's exhibition for how it uses the archive to create work through a queer lens. Her work within the archive highlights, upsets and remediates "normative notions of animacy and reproductive flow". She queers the archive by reconfiguring the material in this way.

From what I can see of the exhibition from the photos on the RM Gallery website, I am drawn to the words on screens. I assume the fonts and colours are original to the selected tapes. I feel like they may frame the rest of the video/audio in a way, creating something that could be read as informational. However, this could just be me projecting and wanting to see something similar to my compilation manifesto idea.

The re-editing of many things and bringing them together tells a story, both about what was available to make the video, but of what the artist thought to include/curate from that collection. In a way I have been responding to the archives I've been using all semester, just not particularly intentionally yet. I think there is something in engaging

more intentionally, diving deeper. In the majority of the magazines I've 'read' to find photos for posters and zines, I have not in fact read the articles. This may be, in a similar way, a good place to find things to respond to.

I also appreciate the preservation of the "technical errors, material decay and ephemeral detritus" within her work. This is something I also think about and aim to keep within my work. It demonstrates that the element included in the work has a history to it where every step forward has degraded it just a bit. It also keeps the work in a 'real' realm. It can exist outside a gallery space; it is not perfectly polished and ready for sale.

On the RM Gallery website's description of the exhibition there is included a short list of citations for where the different elements are from. It demonstrates an ethic to her work that marks her work as a reconfiguration of these elements, rather than appropriating them for her own work. I do wonder if this was her idea, that it was important to her and the work, or if it was something the gallery required, like stating their funding partners, who

are mentioned in the paragraph below the citations. Citation is something I need to experiment with potentially including in my own work or artist statement.

I also investigated Libeau's website, and came across image [18] in her

*writing section. This shows a potential option as to how I could present my zines in ways other than having them sitting there. Similarly to this, I could have simple white frames containing images of them being interacted with or *in situ* in people's homes.*

Ava Seymour *Strange Ways*, *Here We Go* (2024), *Heels of Mothers* (2024), *Rubber Love* (1994-95)

[19] [20] [21] [22]

I was recommended Ava Seymour for how she installs her collages.

When investigating her website, one of the first relevant things to my own practice and installation were the piles of posters on the floor in Strange Ways, Here We Go. On Treadler Gallery's website they state that the two posters had editions of 300, though nothing I could find stated whether or not they were for visitors to take. They remind me of Emelia French's Personal Notations.

This is definitely something I will strive for with my final install, though perhaps 300 of anything is out of my budget both time and money wise. Posters are probably a more time and financially efficient way of disseminating my work to people. Maybe to include alongside my final zine(s)?

Seymour's Heels of Mothers (both the work and installation) was the most relevant thing to my own project that I could find on Seymour's website.

The scale is impressive, and the black against the blown out white of the canvas (I'm assuming) catches

the viewer's eye in the sea of white gallery walls. The black creates strong visual shapes both in the heels and the text.

They are obviously collaged, with the defects of overlaps and lines from scanning still present. The images are thresholded (made black and white only, no grey). This is a visual style I like and have used in the past, though not yet for this project. Perhaps it's worth experimenting with here too. The visual of the fetish-y heels does demonstrate that the style works with the kind of images that I would be using.

If the work is installed on canvases or boards, they can be interpreted within the context, of painting (or similar), rather than a billboard. Though, with the statements about 'selling', they do inhabit similar functions.

The statements are direct, but not too easy to interpret. This is a space I need to think about trying to make my posters. Rather than directly telling the viewer something, making them work for it a bit much. With my work currently up on the walls, the harder-to-

interpret work (Genderfuck Me (Anytime)) people tended to veer away from trying to interpret or mention in critique. This would be a good place to create more challenging or confrontational work.

Lastly, and perhaps currently least relevantly her Rubber Love series is very interesting to me. I wish I'd seen it earlier in the semester before I decided on a collage style. The bright, upbeatness of the 'home' spaces contrasts wonderfully with the alien-like out-of-place latexed figures, doing decidedly not family friendly things. The places within the house that are used are arguably the more 'public' parts of the house, that are

used by all household members, as well as guests. This furthers the contrast, the perversion of it; bringing such a private thing out into what is, so to speak, the public.

The angling of certain works in the Rubber Love series makes the collages feel like snapshots from a phone. This goes especially for the one on the far right; it doesn't center the pair, but rather the couch. All of the works give this same offcentered feeling to the viewer, like they've just accidentally stumbled through the wrong door, especially in the ones where the figures face the viewer, looking over their shoulder at a disturbance.

Book Presentation: Inhouse *The Chair: A story of design and making in Aotearoa* (2025),

Katie Kerr *Someplace Else* (2021)

[23] [24]

I have not yet attended a book launch, and my knowledge of who makes and shows books is at this point limited to what the Print Publication course (FA223) I took last year taught me. I looked at Katie Kerr's website, her publishing house GLORIA Books, and Objectspace's past exhibitions archive to see if there was anything relevant to my practice. In these places the majority of photos are taken to demonstrate what the books look like, and I do not know if this is the same, similar or different to what they are presented like book launches/events.

The Chair photo has an analogous background to the monochrome colour of the images printed in the book, giving a cohesive feeling; the book extends/influences beyond its pages. The choice of a dull pastel make the whole image easy on the eye, inviting to look at. On the other hand, Someplace Else uses a bright, distinct contrast to draw the viewer in. The bright red book exists in a dark void; there is nowhere else to look, nothing to distract the viewer from the book.

In terms of presenting multiple books (copies of the same, or different publications) at once, I only found a couple of things. One was of books neatly stacked on top of each other, forming a perfect block. The other was lining books up like hanging photos on the wall, with some standing upright for height/visual interest. These only have so much applicability to my zines due to my work's floppy, lopsided nature, but it was worth looking for inspiration.

I attended the 6th of October Katie Kerr Greenfield Talk at Elam, and came away with a few key takeaways.

Firstly, I decided I definitely need to have a zine/publication element to my final hand in, with a larger print run than my past ones. Kerr said to make at least 100 of each book you make; you never know if you're going to need more. I think this is a little overzealous for my purposes, but good to know for future reference.

My second takeaway was that it's always a good idea to get ISBN numbers for your work, and to send them in to the National Library's Legal Deposit. After discussions of queer art and publishing in Bent meetings this year, this solidified my decision to get ISBN numbers for my works. At the very least, I need to print more of my past zines to send them in, even if I don't end up using them for my final hand in.

Kerr also went over reasons for publishing that resonated with me.

Publishing (not just books) is important to her for experimenting with what books "should" be like, and building community in non-standard ways within the publishing world, aka books are a way to make friends.

She also mentioned Expensive Hobby as a potential place for distribution. Their website states "at this time we do not distribute zines or booklets." However, this is still good to know if I expand outside of zines in the future.

Wolfgang Tillmans *Nothing could have prepared us – Everything could have prepared us* exhibition (2025)

[25] [26] [27] [28]

The most immediately noticeable aspect of Tillmans' composition for his walls at the Nothing could have prepared us – Everything could have prepared us exhibition at Centre Pompidou is the variety in the scale of work displayed. It's not simply two sizes of work either, but a true variety. The works' sizes both contrast and compliment each other, balancing each wall out. The differing sizes force the viewer to be constantly moving in and out from the wall to properly see each piece, prompting more direct engagement with the works.

The walls themselves also have a sense of movement and flow because of how they are laid out. Visually they make a sort of sense, have a rhythm or logic. This makes them interesting and engaging to look at; you're not put off by how disjointed it could be. The works seem to operate on a fine grid; they may not be on the same lines, but they are parallel to each other, and in some cases are equal distances apart from other works in a cluster (see the small works in image [26]).

This grid system seems reflective of the floors, at least images [25] and [26], as well as potentially the

outside of the Centre Pompidou (images [27] and [28]). It makes the exhibition more of an experience rather than something that's just seen in one or two rooms. This is especially relevant as it was the first exhibition after the reopening of the Centre, and Tillmans was allowed to use the whole building to display work.

There is also visual cohesion in the choices of what works go next to each other in terms of colour. In the first image on the previous page the purple of the left work is carried over into the bottom left corner of the work on the right. In the second image, the bright green work and dark blue work both compliment and contrast each other. The green and blue are analogous; both cool tones that work well together. The dark and light provide contrast, emphasising each as their own separate work.

Lastly, while the walls are busy with many works, they do not overpower the wall. White space is utilised effectively to frame each work and to demonstrate the relationships between works; how closely they should be examined with relation to each other.

I'm already doing something similar with my wall posters, however, it may be interesting to experiment further with the smaller side of scale. I have some quite big ones,

but the variety in Tillmans' work really helps emphasise each work as its own thing, as well as the overall work that is the composition of the wall/exhibition.

Tillmans' method of installation has been recommended to us since first year at Elam, but I was resistant to it at first, I think largely because of how my fellow students executed it (read: badly). They had little regard for balance and relationship, but rather focused on having everything everywhere. Tillmans' expert execution of it has grown on me over time, and the method is now my go-to in terms of both gallery installation and decorating my room at home.

Bjarne Melgaard *The Casual Pleasure of Disappointment* (2017)

[29] [30]

Melgard was recommended to me at the Artspace critique, though I do not remember in what context he was mentioned for being useful to me. I think it's more likely for his fashion line stuff (in relation to potentially making merch from my collages) than his painting or installation, so I'm just looking at his The Casual Pleasure of Disappointment exhibition stuff.

The Queer Fear bomber jacket in image [29] particularly stuck out to me for a variety of reasons. For one, its bright orange, quite hard to miss. "QUEER FEAR" prompts the viewer to question what way this statement is meant; is it that people do/should fear queers, or that queers fear? I personally think it's the former, when considered in conjunction with the other writing on the jacket in image [30], written from what I would consider a queer perspective; saying no to all kinds of assimilation.

The human shaped target is incredibly provocative, making the viewer question who is the target in this situation; the person wearing the jacket? Is the one in the jacket doing the shooting? Traditionally the queer person has been the

target, and here the pose of the target could be read as gay.

However, the overall message of the jacket in my reading is along the lines of 'bash back'. It turns the conventions of who has authority (through threat of violence) on their head with its rejection of institutions, use of symbolism and word choice. It's a bomber jacket; a military design, something for war.

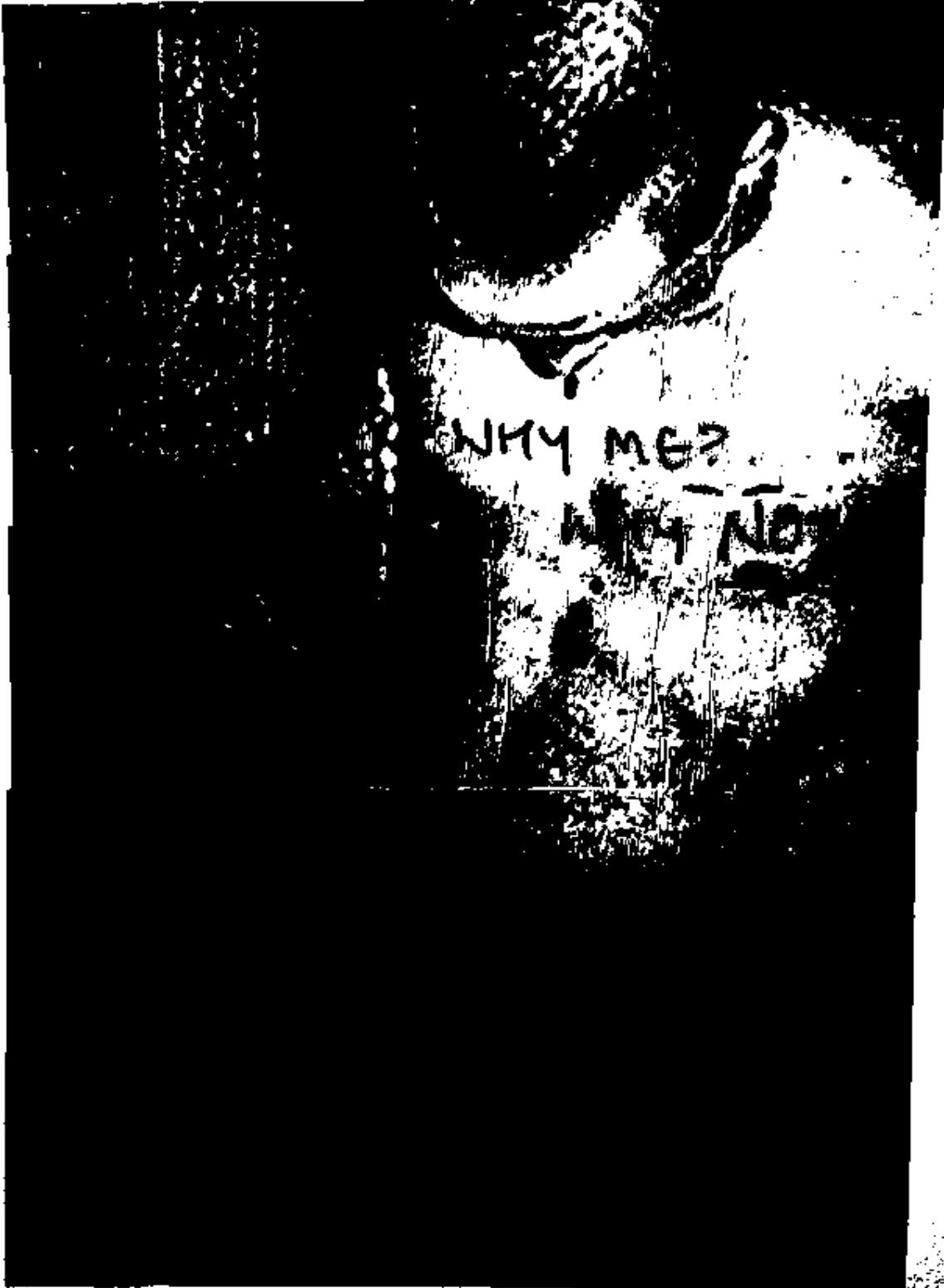
In terms of my own work this would have been something interesting to consider earlier on in my work - then it would have been another avenue to experiment with. I have done a little exploring as to what merch with my favourite zine page collages on them would look like, though this is not to the same extent of thought that Melgaard has put in here.

This work interrogates the relationships/crossovers between branding, advertising, fashion and art. Is this art? Is it fashion? What role does branding and advertising play in the art world? What role does art play in the branding and advertising world? In relation to this I think of custom clothes, editions of clothes (1 of 50, etc.), and of course

the modern obsession with logos and 'real' designer items (many dupes are produced in the same factories, is the value of the item solely in its brand identity?).

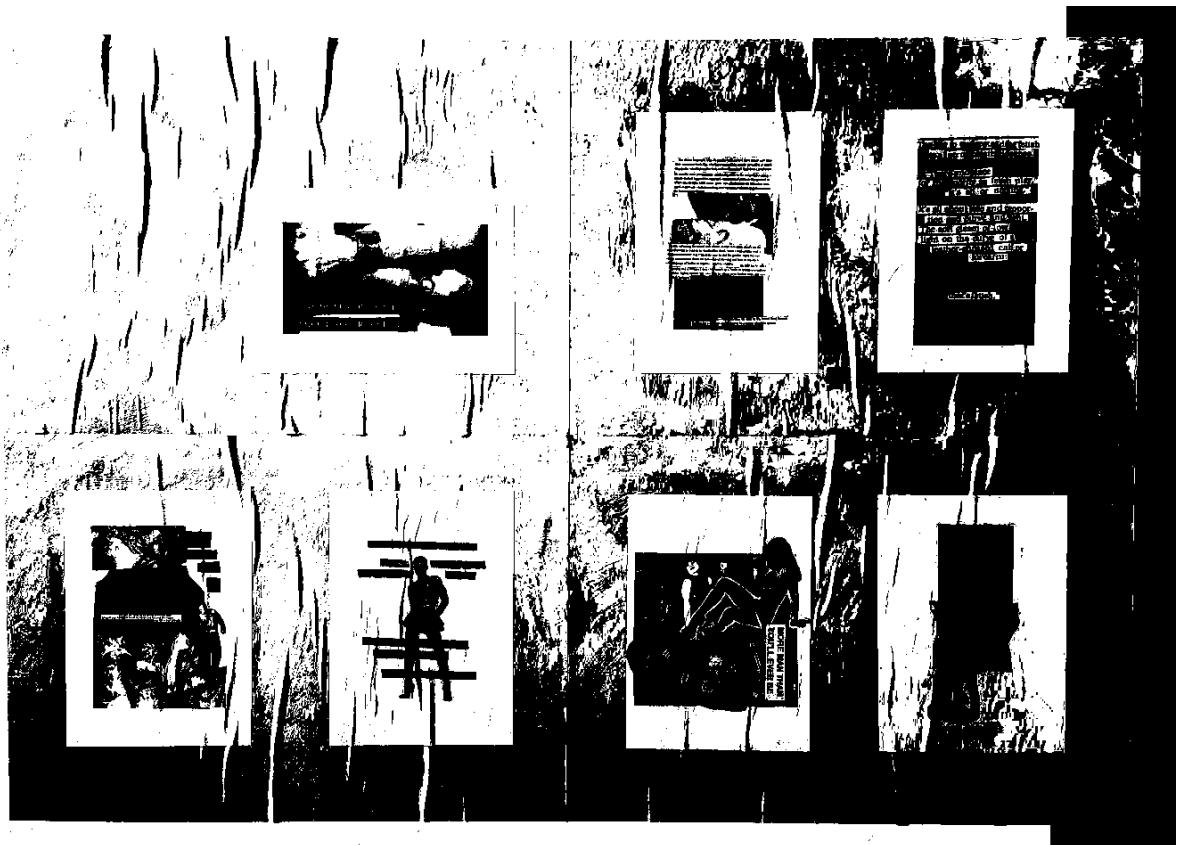
This is definitely something that I'll look into next year, expanding on my capstone project in terms of the advertising & identity angles.





WHY ME?

WHY NOT?



SHOW ME WHAT YOU'RE LIKE

Zach Mat

Note: This project celebrates sexuality and contains partial nudity.

SHOW ME WHAT YOU'RE LIKE desires to open up a dialogue around queer relationships through considering the connections between contemporary queer communities and their archives.

This project encompasses two series of works: A5 punk-inspired queer collage zine publications, and posters of varying sizes輪ispersed to the studio walls. Both images are printed mostly in black and white, and the zines are made with Newsprint with handbound with cream thread.

The project is made possible through the use of archives, and contemporary relationships with queer creatives. SHOW ME WHAT YOU'RE LIKE releases images and text from queer history through dialogue prompting contemplation on how we can look back to understand our current struggles, and to move forward. Use of archival magazine photos can be seen as collaboration with past creatives. However in the zine zine these collaborations with contemporary creatives also serve as a way to build community. This zine in turn becomes an archive of the contemporary queer response to the current anti-queer political climate.

Both publications presented are physical methods of distribution. Zines originated in punk communities as an affordable departure from capitalist values, used instead as a way of making and connecting with community. They are used here as an escape from the digital echo chambers of social media, promoting a more physical, tangible experience of making. Posters have a history of protest, and similarly to zines are a common way of spreading their message.

The works also run on a cycle of digital physical-digital physical, speaking to historical queer traditions of distribution. Starting with image collection from digital sources, the zines move to physical zines, both physical and zines are then sold online, and finally printed physically. Shipping back to the digital, the zines are sold online, and finally printed physically. Shipping back to the digital, the zines are available to the public at the website listed below.

SHOW ME WHAT YOU'RE LIKE is an artistic intervention which aims to bring the queer community around existing spaces and environments.

SHOW ME WHAT YOU'RE LIKE

Zach Mat

The left wall on, entry contains four large black and white photographs and layered one another on the wall.

Genderfuck A5 (Archive)
Touch: No (Positive Space)
Visual: Importance
Visual: Pleasure
Who: My Library Day

The large right wall on, entry contains four black and white photographs layered one another on the wall.

Genderfuck B5
Who: No
Guy: Chaser

The large left wall on, entry contains four large black and white photographs and layered one another on the wall.

Genderfuck A5 (Archive)

Genderfuck B5
Who: No
Guy: Chaser

Zinemaking Processes



The first step in making any good, self respecting collage zine is collecting things to collage with. With this project, I wanted to employ online archives, mostly because they would have potentially a wider selection of images, but also because my collection of images was not at this point terribly extensive. Below is a list of places or sources that I used for my zines. No doubt I have forgotten other important sources, but this is the majority.

Drummer Magazine

Digital Transgender Archive

The Internet Archive

Propaganda Magazine

Original Plumbing

Female Mimics International (FMI)

Dragazine

Kingdom Magazine

AsiaPasifiQueer: Rethinking Genders and Sexualities

Transgender Tapestry

Drag: The International Transvestite Quarterly

Ladylike: Exploring and Expressing Femininity

Mr S Leatherco Supplement

SM Guardian Utopia

Secret Magazine
Boys in Leather
Body Alchemy: Transsexual Portraits

No Skin Off My Ass

Other images taken from Instagram and Tumblr

The Faggots and their Friends between Revolutions

I Hate Straights

Other text from Tumblr posts and tags

The general process for all my zines is as follows.

1. Collect images and print them out in black and white (from home or Elam printer, it does not matter).
2. Cut out images. Some make more sense when the figure is cut out around the shape of their bodies, others do not.
3. Select the most striking images, or one's favourites, then begin to build groups of relevant images to those to collage together. Begin to introduce words.
4. Create compositions from each group of images, then stick them down with glue or tape. Their fragility doesn't matter, they're going to be scanned.
5. Create the overall composition of the zine by ordering the collages so they tell a narrative or flow well.
6. Scan the pages in order, then convert the scanned PDF into PNGs so they are easily inserted into an InDesign document. Make sure to label the files so the correct order is maintained.
7. Create an InDesign document with facing pages, and arrange the collages. This is the time to resize collages that may have been made with larger/smaller images so they fit alongside the others.
8. Format the document into a printable booklet-arranged PDF.
9. Print a test booklet. Fold the booklet, then go through and mark what needs changing, then make those changes.
10. Print a second test. If this works out exactly how you want, then proceed to the next step, otherwise repeat part two of step nine.
11. Print at home on newsprint. Make sure the newsprint is completely flat (weigh it down under something heavy for a while if there is even a slight curl) otherwise the printer will tear it up.
12. Fold zines and bind with needle and thread.

However, each zine had its own problems and processes.

#1 Freaks Only! No Straights!

I began experimenting with collage in an Elam context last year in FA245: Identity Agency and the Self, but did not continue with the medium in the course past week one. However, I did continue it in my personal zinemaking practice, right up until Capstone this year. It was this personal zinemaking practice that I was inspired by in order to make my first zine for Capstone.

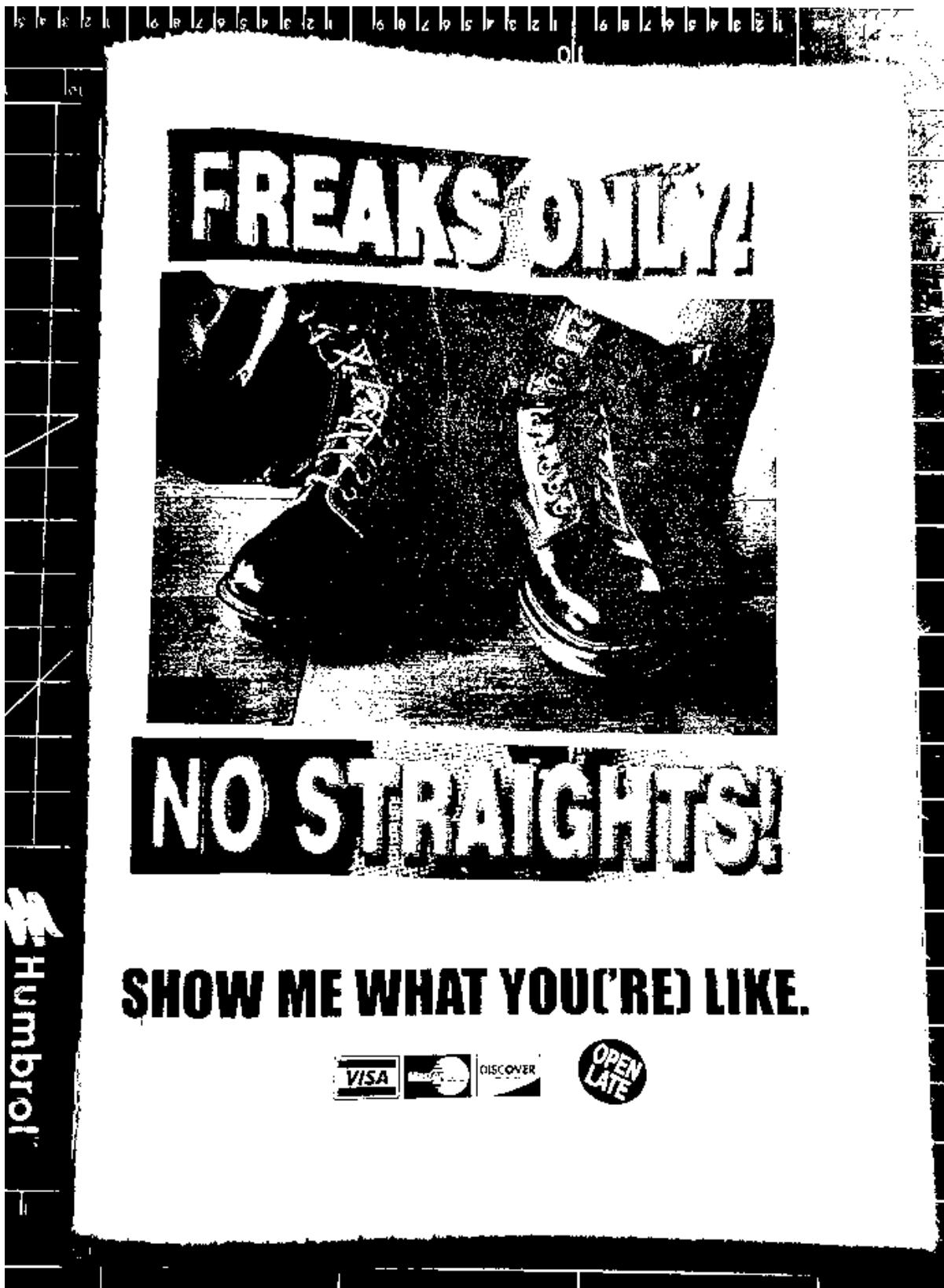
My vision for this project was a small booklet of collages, with the middle flat page utilized for a spread of some kind. I created my collages, each of them being their own kind of theme, and then ordered them in a way that flowed well and made sense. After scanning and inputting the pages to InDesign, I printed.

I tried to print my first zine on newsprint on the computer lab printer at Elam multiple times but the paper was too floppy to feed through the machine for more than half a page. I went with newsprint because of its floppiness, to have something more interactive and hard to deal with than usual printer paper- you have to pay active attention to it/be careful- I thought this was pertinent thematically for the zine. I thought it would be ok to put through the machine, given I have printed on butter paper in the past which is far more fine.

One good thing out of it was that I liked how the image quality looked on the paper: the image quality didn't stand out as awful as it did on the white printer paper. The grey tone of the newsprint also helped not draw attention to the deteriorated image quality. The grey also feels more gritty, less office-like, which is more fitting.

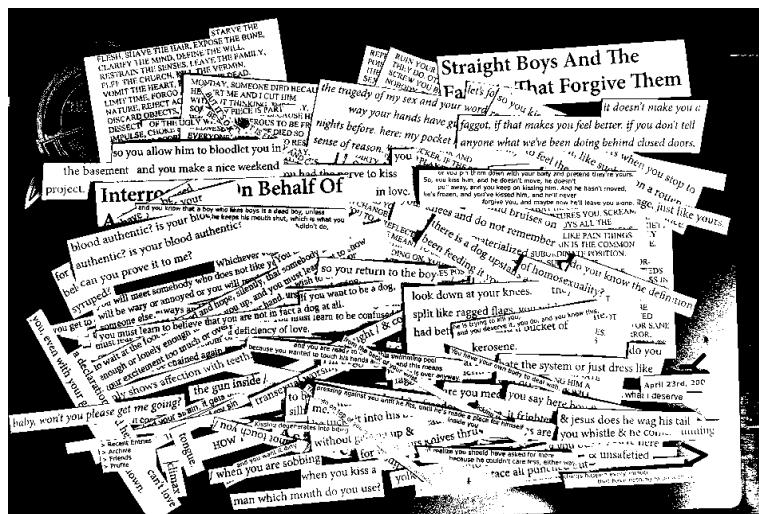
The images degrade with every step, too. Save images from online scan -> print images and collage -> scan in on old home printer -> import to InDesign -> enlarge/edit -> print again.

It was with this first zine that I hit upon the brilliant decision that was using newsprint as my paper. I also considered asking what kind of paper Artspace currently uses for their catalogues, as I enjoyed that colour and texture. However, as with all aspects of this project, I let the founding principles of zinemaking guide me. This means I went with a cheap option - the newsprint. At every critique I presented a newsprint zine at, people remarked on how formally well resolved the work was. This is probably one of the reasons why I did not do as much experimenting materially- I happened on a good thing basically immediately.



Collage Poems: *RUIN YOUR FUCKING SELF BEFORE THEY DO*, and *Interrogation As Advertised*.

Even though I had not made many zines for Capstone at this point, these two works were a fun break from them. It was a new challenge for my brain trying to find the story between different words and phrases as opposed to images, especially with so many phrases and words to pick from. Despite not including this in my final installation I decided they were worthy of inclusion in this publication, and I will definitely be returning to this method of making work in the future.



The poems chosen to be cut up were a selection from Grit by Silas Denver Melvin, Primer for the Small Weird Loves by Richard Siken, Inflammatory Essays by Jenny Holzer, and How to be a dog by Andrew Kane. Also included are Sin and Eraser by Nine Inch Nails.

Selecting text to cut out and then choosing what goes together thematically for each poem allowed me to become more familiar with how my favourite poems are written, their themes, etc. This functions as a kind of research for

potentially writing something similar myself later.

There are some thematic and tonal similarities across the poems. The majority of them are about queer experiences with a sad spin on them, which is really a reflection of the society they were created in. There is an explicit use of pronouns throughout: you, he, they, my, etc. This indicates a direct communication between the speaker and the reader/whoever is being spoken to. It comes across as either apathetic or desperate depending on context. These conventions are therefore also part

of my own poems as they were the words available for use.

After selecting and ordering text, I glued the pieces to a page and scanned them into my laptop. I then thresholded the images (made them only black and white, no grey) and edited out the noise. I also reordered a few of the lines and changed some text sizes so they each made a bit more sense.

They effectively draw the eye around the page & control the pace of reading. The different fonts create a visual interest, and indicate that the words are sourced from different places.

To me, there's a game within them. I feel like if you let someone similar enough to me stand in front of it for long enough they would maybe be able to recognise where some of the phrases are from. Putting the poems together, I felt like I was leaving behind a trail of easter eggs. Perhaps they're in a way an inside joke between me and anyone who's read any of the same things.

Both the poems themselves tell the viewer something about me, and so do the sources if the viewer recognises them. In relation to Barthes' The Death of the Author, I think approaching things without knowing the author is a good way to get to know them. You do make

your own meaning from your understanding of the work, but the artist/author also did choose to put all those elements into the work, it's perhaps an equal task in making meaning. I think this goes for getting to know people in general. You can put as much of yourself out there as you want, but people are never going to interpret it as exactly what you intended it to be.

These works do bring up the concept of titling works. In this context, one of my main reasons for choosing these titles is because of their bold nature, standing out from the rest of the text formally. The second reason was because they succinctly capture what's going to happen in each of the poems. Titles can be used to add depth to people's interpretations of work. With visual art they are often the only writing that gives any extra context to the work.

The little menu to the left of the title in RUIN YOUR FUCKING SELF BEFORE THEY DO implies the existence of a wider site or place with more of these poems, which I think is an interesting idea. The phrase 'Interrogation As Advertised' implies the existence of a previous advertisement. If I had time, it could be fun to make an accompanying work that contrasts with the poem here.

> Recent Entries
> Archive
> Friends
> Profile

**RUIN YOUR FUCKING SELF BEFORE
THEY DO.
April 23rd, 2009**

It comes down to this
i'm begging, i'm busted. by that i mean: give me purpose
Need you, dream you
my changeling mouth, trying to bite. not be bit.

first you must learn to wait.
DISCARD OBJECTS, FORGET TRUTHS,
baby, won't you please get me going?

Stale incense, old sweat
so you return to the boy / & be dragged by the hair /
& your damp mouth drools kerosene faggot & decadent.
Within, take in
tongue.
YOUR HANDS ARE NEVER MESSY.

PULLED FROM TONGUES AND MINDS.
LET IT EXPLODE. break you

CHOKE SWALLOW
GAGGING, OR SOBBING

his other hand
tucks it into his belt
without getting up

he cannot touch you /
You have your own body to deal with.

you look down at your knees.
on your knees
you find bruises

Interrogation As Advertised

i feel faggot & vicious.
furious & depraved.
blood-hungry

you must learn to relinquish all control over everything
you might wish to control.

can you prove it to me?
here: my pocket knife.

FEAR IS THE MOST ELEGANT WEAPON.
Need you, dream you / when you are sobbing and you want it dirty.

YOU'RE SO SCARED,
your body pinned down

SCORN RELEASE, CLIMAX, SWEETNESS,

SHRIEK WHEN THE PAIN HITS SCREAM

I'LL CUT THE SMILE OFF YOUR FACE.

just to feel the ache and satisfy the wince
if that makes you feel better.

I CUT HIM knives thru his gorgeous face burst open & leaking out
yolk bleeding into the pavement

kiss your fist & his face all punched out
split like ragged flags inside
bloodlet him

taste you, taste you, taste you,
GET BLOOD ON HIS mouth:
a nice weekend basement project.

is your blood authentic? is your blood authentic? is your blood authentic?

#2 *Obscenity*

My approach and use of materials here has been the same as my first zine. However, I wanted to change my message and the way I was going about it a bit. The first zine was more erotic & fetish focused. In this one I was influenced by what I've been reading. I wanted my message to be more directly pro-queer, but I think because of my sources (text from magazines, etc.) and the aesthetic it might come across a bit dated?

I definitely prefer the majority of my first zine over this one, though there are some pages that I like from this one. It would be good to make one big zine at the end with the best from each zine, as well as with my poems, my scraps of writing, and the contributions I've been collecting.

I was mainly influenced in wanting to change my message up by Toward the Queerest Insurrection and Criminal Intimacy by the Mary Nardini Gang, a contemporary queer anarchist group. I like their messages, and how it indicates a continuation of the queer struggle, calling for similar things as publications from the 20th Century.

This is probably my least favourite zine overall, despite having some favourite pages from it, and I spent the rest of the semester improving out of spite. It is also the only one that I did not do on InDesign.

One of my main takeaways from these readings was that I'm too lazy to be an anarchist; it seems like a lot of work all the time.

However, I still think their themes and messages should be proliferated throughout the queer community these days. A lot of people are getting complacent; if you're not out and proud, it's a lot easier for the majority to forget to care about you, and it's a lot easier to scapegoat a group they don't know personally. I feel like a lot of gay people (to me there is a distinction here between people who are gay, and people who are culturally queer) in Aotearoa feel okay with assimilating; just fitting in because it's easy. It's especially prevalent with people who haven't read much queer history, let alone NZ's queer history.

Another influential thing I'd been reading was the 1990 Queers Read This pamphlet created by Queer Nation, an offshoot of ACT UP formed to protest homophobia outside of just AIDS. A segment of this is featured in the Obscenity zine.

Obscenity

CHOICE WHAT YOUR LIVE



#3 *Gendersex: Collab*

This zine was the one I was most looking forward to from basically the second week of semester onwards. It is also one of my favourites, as I no doubt put more effort and love into it because I was looking forward to so much. I also handled my friends' contributions with perhaps more care than I had handled my own collages in earlier zines. There are of course some things I would change, mainly a couple of typos that didn't get caught until it was too late.

The collaboration aspect of this zine has given me a passion for collaborative publication creation, my first example of which is this publication itself, with the essays from friends towards the end. Despite my main method of creation being collage all semester, the direction I feel my practice going in is that writing/publishing/magazine space at the moment. Whether I do that independently or become part of an established organization, who knows just yet.

I do wish I had done a book launch of some kind for any of my publications, but that joy can come later when I have perhaps something a little bit more worthy of it down the road. And perhaps after I've attended a few more book launches myself first.

I advertised a callout for contributions early in the semester: on my art Instagram account, through posters at Elam, as well as on my personal social medias. The majority of respondents were my close friends, as well as a couple of people online from America. Once the closing date arrived, I began putting all the contributions together.

I wanted to put some of my own work into this zine, to properly make it a collaboration. When I call it a collaboration, I mean that it is a collaboration between the other artists and myself, not solely with each other. I have used some of my past visual and word-based

collages from this course, as well as other things particularly relevant (my JFK transgenderism poster), though of course nothing from other courses, as well as my own writing at the end.

I tried looking for more kinds of people outside the cis-male-gay when looking for new collage material. I didn't collect any more stuff from Drummer Magazine. On the Internet Archive I Looked at Original Plumbing, Propaganda Magazine, Female Mimics International, Body Alchemy: Transsexual Portraits, Dragazine, Kingdom, AsiaPacifiQueer, Drag, Ladylike, and Transgender Tapestry. The Digital Transgender

Archive also had some other stuff but less of the alternative/punk-esque look I was going for.

I used Arial in bold for the title page because it is eye-catching and easy to read, which is the exact function a title page needs to fill. For some of the text contributions, as well as the playlists I used a typewriter font I downloaded, as it had more texture than the basic typewriter fonts available, and accurately embodied the punk look more. For the contributions notes, list, and intro page I used Gothic Letter Standard in italics, to be similar enough to the bold downloaded typewriter font, but also skinny enough to disappear into the background unless you're looking for it.

I also included playlists. I saw them executed well in Propaganda Magazine and thought it would be a good way of curating a message. I made four playlists but only included three. Playlist one was sex themed. Playlist two was politically themed. Playlist three was gender/crossdressing themed. Playlist fourth was more romantic themed and didn't fit anywhere. I'm not sure they ended up in proper order in the zine, as I ended up taking off their titles.

Playlist four:

Always on My Mind - Pet Shop Boys
Not In Love (feat. Robert Smith) - Crystal Castles
Born Slippy .NUXX - Underworld
Casings - Ethel Cain
Crush - Ethel Cain
I Threw Glass at My Friend's Eyes and Now I'm on Probation
- Destroy Boys
Make Damn Sure - Taking Back Sunday
Masterpiece - Motionless In White
Punching Bag - Palaye Royale

I have always considered making playlists to be an exercise in curation. Different orders and kinds of songs can create different experiences and conclusions. To me it's a parallel to collage, though it just requires more effort on the part of the reader in order to engage more than visually. I didn't want to put QR codes for people to scan and listen to as that would disrupt the punk-y look to the zine.

In terms of contribution citations, my initial plan was just a numbered list at the front or back. However I've read a couple issues of the Artpaper recently and liked the way they formatted it, which I've tried to emulate in this zine. I did keep the final page list idea, as it feels nice to have everything acknowledged in one place.

I was also thinking about including a reading list, but ultimately came to the decision that I was no authority on reading lists.

While this is a zine, I did want it to feel more magazine-y or properly publication-like, so I included a list of past issues on the first page of the zine. This gives the work a bit more authority, thanks to the association with traditional publishing.

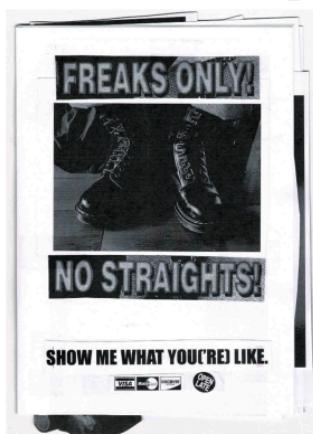
All of my past zines for Capstone have been in black & white, however the majority of contributions I've received have

been in colour. I did some tests on different combinations of colours and kinds of paper: colour on tracing paper, colour on newsprint, and black & white on newsprint. My conclusion from these experiments is that colour should be good. It shows up well enough on the not-white newsprint. The printing on tracing paper didn't turn out terribly well. I bought it thinking it was butter paper, which I have used in the past. Butter paper absorbs ink better; tracing paper is prone to smudging before it dries, and needs to be pinned flat in order to not dry in a curl.

SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE

Looking for:

- essays
- poems
- collages
- art
- drawings
- photos
- how-to's
- contemplations
- complaints
- questions



Focused on:

- queerness -
- identity -
- transness -
- masculinities -
- freakishness -
- fetish -
- difference -
- intersectionality -
- friends & lovers -
- the very personal -

**CALLOUT FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE PART OF A SERIES OF ZINES
AND POTENTIALLY A FINAL MAGAZINE FOR MY CAPSTONE PROJECT.
PREFERENCE TOWARDS THE WEIRD, THE UNPOLISHED, THE CONFRONTING.**

Contact me (Zach!) with your ideas or finished piece & how you want to be credited (a name (pseudonym or otherwise) and/or a social handle). If I use your work you're entitled to a free copy of the edition it's in! [@zach.b_00](mailto:imui275@aucklanduni.ac.nz)

Copies of the first edition of SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE are available in my studio for reading.



**SHOW
ME WHAT
YOU'RE**

#4 Eighteen Point Manifesto

I gathered a total of 28 quotes to create my own 'collage' manifesto. This selection was cut down to 18 to create a cohesive narrative, though I did not aim for this number. All phrases are selected from readings I've done for this semester's work. My rules for selection were that each quote be something I also wanted to say, and that it be relevant to my work's current themes.

The choice for the numbered headings was inspired by the layout for David Shields' essay Reality Hunger which I have read and used in my Essay for FA322 (see example below). He uses numbers to indicate new ideas, however I found the spelt-out look to have more visual interest, and function better as headings.

My reasoning for using quotes/excerpts from other sources to make 'my own' manifesto was again heavily inspired by Shields' essay, as he discloses at the very end that a lot of his book is simply quotations from other authors. I wanted to do my own version of that. Like Shields, I too have included a list of sources, less because of legal reasons (though those do weigh over on me), but more so that if anyone was interested in a portion of the

manifesto, they had a place to start doing further reading. I have not made it too easy for them to go looking though- there are no footnotes or things saying what quote is from, and I don't believe they're in the same order as the bibliography. My sources are simply listed, and if anything affects anyone enough, they have the ability to go looking.

I then arranged all my quotes in InDesign, aligning them all at the same distance from the bottom, and justifying the text blocks to go from one side of the page to the other with no spaces on the right. Each of the quotes is a different size, and so takes up a different amount of the page. I chose a typewriter font to again invoke the punk/80s vibe. I did not use quote marks as it made the quotes feel too disjointed, like they didn't all read as one thing.

After using the computer lab I returned home to do the accompanying collages. I printed no new images, but went through those I hadn't already used to find images that would fit the message of each quote. I was tempted to do 'proper' collages, with multiple images each, however I wanted to compliment the text with the images, rather than distract from it. In this way I merely selected one

image per quote, and collaged the number titles on top of that image. I was inspired by Max Ernst's A Week of Kindness in terms of layout with the text at the bottom & image on top.

The last thing I need to remark on about this work is the inclusion of ISBN numbers. During my three years at Elam, at least once a semester someone around me (or myself) is told 'oh! You should make a publication for that, get an ISBN number for it and send it to the National Library!' Last year with my publication course, the books I made were one-offs, far too complicated to make copies and send them to the National Library. This year with the Bent exhibition it was mentioned again that they were going to put together a publication about the exhibition and the history of Queer Pictures, get an ISBN number and send it in. To my knowledge this has not come to fruition, however it did remind me that it was something I could do with my work this semester.

I was slightly hesitant about getting & putting them on my zines. It's not exactly the most punk thing to register your DIY publications with a government operated institution. However, it does relate back to another key aspect of my work- the archive!

While collecting images & browsing archives to find things relevant to what I wanted to make, I did notice themes of what is or isn't archived. There's not a lot of LGBTQ+ stuff, and within that the majority is related to cis gay men. Then there's a small amount of trans men related items, but the majority of trans stuff is focused on trans women. It's made me realise the importance of archiving my own stuff, so that when the next person comes along there's a little bit more to learn from.

In relation to Bent again, using the National Library as a way to archive your exhibitions was brought up as something especially important to do as a queer artist because it's far less likely that someone's going to write about your work and do it for you.

For these reasons I thought it was a good idea to use the ISBN numbers to archive my work at the National Library. For the same reasons, I've also put PDFs of my zines up on my website, and am contemplating putting them up on the Internet Archive later as well.

After receiving the numbers, I assigned them to my works, and had to go back and edit my InDesign files and re-export them in order to put in the numbers and copyright in the correct places. I also used this as an opportunity to

make a couple of small edits that I'd noted since printing 'final' versions of my first few zines. I will be

printing new/revised versions for final install.

When I presented this work in my final critique, I got the same from informing the group that the manifesto is not written by me, but rather collaged, as I had myself when reading the ending of *Reality Hunger*. This both amused and pleased me, and it felt like the work had achieved its goal in a way. Another compliment was that they were glad people like me were writing manifestos, given the general reputation of the people that write them (bringing to mind the unabomber, various shooters, etc).

I am very happy with how my zine practice has evolved over the course of the semester, with this being the peak of it. On the other hand I am still slightly annoyed about how I was not able to do much of my own writing over the course of the project. As much as I love the similarities to *Reality Hunger*, I think I would be more proud if I had been able to articulate my own ideas. Maybe I will write my own manifesto properly further down the line. 21 is maybe not the best age to be stating all my beliefs and opinions, given that I have not yet lived much of my life.



EIGHTEEN POINT MANIFESTO

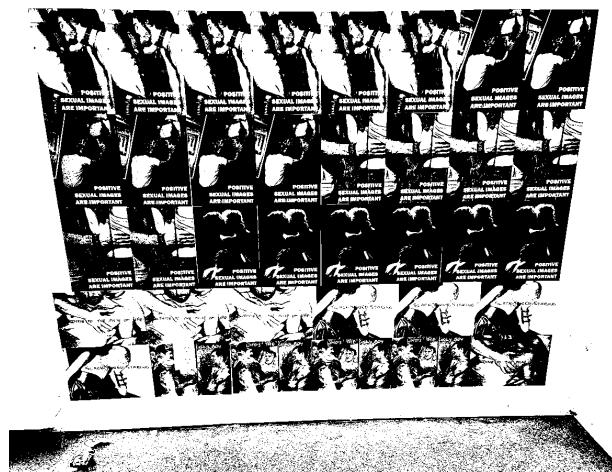
SHOW ME WHAT YOU'RE LIKE #4

Postermaking Processes

Like with the zines, I would collect more images before each round of posters. However, the things I looked for in poster images were not necessarily the same things I looked for in zine images, so each time I would go looking for new images instead of drawing on the collection I already had. I also would collect text from songs, readings, as well as simply writing things that I remembered or that came to mind.

Neither of these things were done hand-in-hand with each other; I figured out which image fit which piece of text once I'd gathered both kinds of element. I would then combine/collage them digitally, as opposed to with the glue and tape I'd been using for the zines.

First Round of Posters



I didn't have images that fit for all my words, but I pushed myself creatively and made do with what I had.

This was an experiment with increasing scale through repetition of an A4 series rather than bigger tiled posters. It also fits more with the usual way wheatpasting is used in reality - a couple of the same posters put up next to each other.

The font choice was something I deliberated over. I originally was going to go with Arial, then tried Bahnschrift SemiBold, but finally landed on Franklin Gothic Heavy in bold, just to make it a bit bigger, more in-your-face advertisement-esque.

I printed some landscape posters, which I laid out to see if they would work on the wall, but ultimately

favoured the portrait orientation ones. The majority of posters out on the street are portrait orientation.

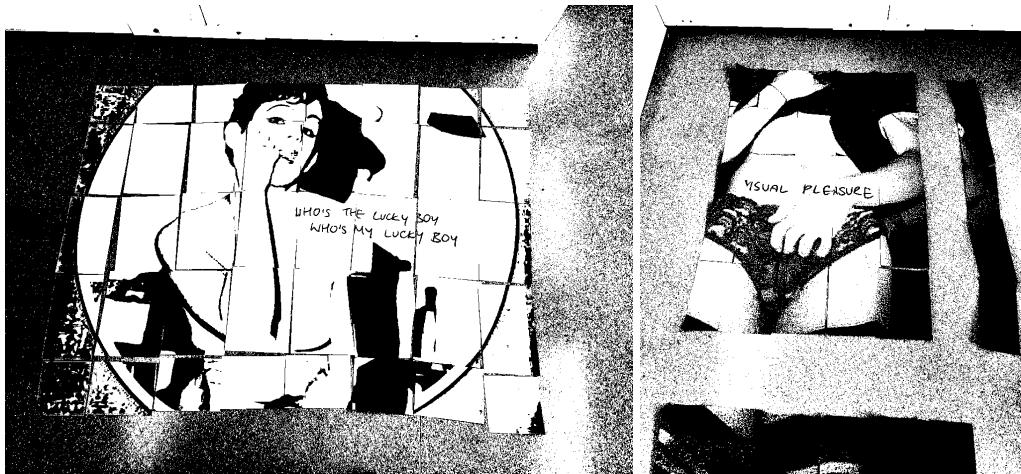
Before pasting them up on the studio walls, I experimented with the order in which they would go. My logic here was to alternate between series of lighter and darker posters so that it didn't feel top/bottom heavy.

These were more of an experiment rather than a direction I was passionate about going in. Looking back however, they could have been an interesting and different direction I could have taken the project at the time. There were many avenues I could have explored like this one, however I was very set on trying out my list of things I'd planned rather than going with the flow.

It is also something that could be interesting to take outside of the studio/gallery context. At multiple points over the course of Capstone I've been asked if I plan on putting my posters up around the city. This did not take a priority though, as artist research and developing my practice in order to get a good grade was a priority. That's not to say it'll never happen though! Maybe keep an eye out.

I decided on the width based on the practicality of how many I could fit on the wall in one line, not how many I printed. This was so that they flowed into each other better and it wasn't just rows of the same poster - there is some overlap and difference in each row.

Second Round of Posters



With this round of posters, I decided to take a less direct, in-your-face approach with the words/lettering. I wrote the words out by hand, scanned them in digitally and overlaid them onto the pictures. I decided on the handwriting approach as it gives a more personal touch, and links better with my zines, which also include handwriting at points.

The words I picked are not quite the direct statements that the last posters had. I wanted to make these a little more poetic, and to require more thought to parse the meaning - they don't straight-up tell you. Most of it is song lyrics, some are things I came up with, or found in other places.

Because I've already installed on the walls & plan to paste over them, I did some mockups to see what would work best to prevent the

hassle of having to plan when I'm in the studio installing. This was only helpful to an extent, as printing large posters out as tiles wasn't terribly accurate to the dimensions I aimed for. When I was printing the posters I had little clue as to how big they would actually come out, but decided to go bigger than perhaps necessary - you can always cut down, but you can't put back what you don't have.

The Visual Pleasure one I struggled a bit more with deciding how to crop. Like Who's My Lucky Boy, I thought it was a bit too big to use all of the image tiles. The right side was the least necessary part of the image to have up, so I got rid of that. I really wanted to keep the thigh-high socks in the image, however I didn't like the aspect ratio with them in, so after contemplating, they got left off too.

I struggled a bit in getting the ones on the big wall where I wanted them in relation to both the preexisting posters, and each other, despite my mockups. I also only went off my memory of the mockups, so they are not perfectly aligned to what I planned. The way the big wall looks now makes the blank spots feel very blank, like they need something else covering them.

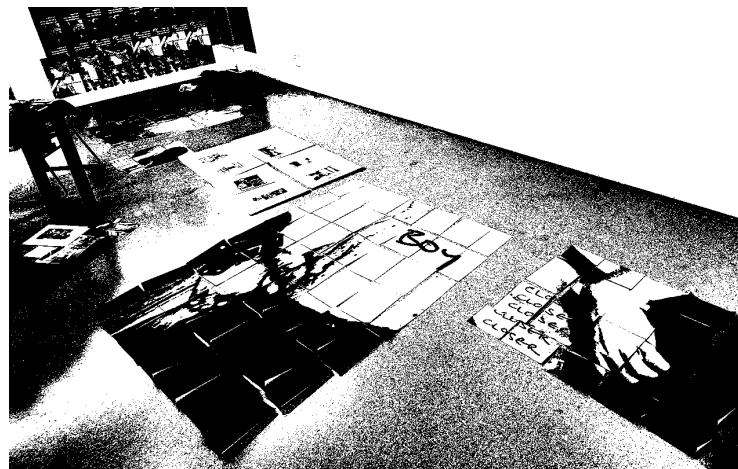
When installing the big Visual Pleasure poster, I started at the

These two posters by themselves are by far some of my favourites out of the wall-installed posters, however I think their composition on the wall could have been given a little more contemplation. The white space feels odd, but that may just be me preferring how the original posters on the wall looked without the new ones overtop.

This large-scale overlapping is something else I would have experimented with, had I had more time than a semester for the project. The text peeking out is of great interest to me; it's playful and speaks to how queer voices are spoken over or censored. Further engagement with this could have improved how my materiality and concept worked with each other.

bottom in order to not have it accidentally hanging off the wall by starting too low at the top. Halfway through I began doubting how straight I'd got it, and tried to align it with the bottom of the Genderfuck Me (Anytime) poster already there, resulting in the big white line through the middle of it. I wish I'd just let it be crooked, because it's far more noticeable now.

Third Round of Posters



Most of my new images for this lot of posters were screenshots from Bruce LaBruce's 1991 No Skin Off My Ass, which I watched recently and enjoyed for the most part. I continued with the handwriting, as that was successful in my critique. I played around with cropping the images in order to focus the viewer's attention in select posters.

I cut all my printed tiles down in the computer lab upstairs, then came down and laid everything out on the floor to get a general idea if my prints were the right size.

I had measured the wall, and found it to be about 7 A4 sheets tall. I tried to print the Boy poster this big, however I forgot to add in a little extra to compensate for how much white is left around the edge of each tile on the A4 sheet before it's trimmed, so it came out a bit smaller than intended. I only really

noticed this once I was halfway through putting up the Boy poster, and saw that there was not enough tiles left to reach the floor.

If I had known it would be too small, I may not have started the Boy poster at the top of the wall. This difference from my mockups meant I had to readjust my plans on the fly. I decided to align the Closer poster with the floor to balance them both out and make how they touch the top look intentional.

I also flipped the order of the Lipstick Boy and Why Not? posters on the left so the wall didn't look as bunched up down that end. At the other end, the entryway wall looked incredibly empty in a way that didn't go with the rest of the work. To remedy this, I made a mockup to see if another colourblock would seem balanced and intentional on that wall. It did, so I installed it.

ENDERFUCKME



Black Wall Flyposting

Ambrose Marloch

BACK WALL FLYPOSTING

Along the back of the space, an irregular grid of black and white repeating posters is wheatpasted to the wall, sitting in the space between the window and the floor moulding and crawling out around the corner. These posters sit flush next to each other, repeating like illegally flyposted advertisements. Over top sits a much larger tiled poster, depicting a close-up of a leather Doc Marten boot raised to kick a naked ass. "I'm gonna give you every inch of my love", a lyric from the Led Zeppelin song *Whole Lotta Love* is written over top of the boot, sexualising the image and nature of the act. The ten different poster designs in the background depict people who are half-naked or dressed in a nonconforming manner (crossdresser, goth). Each has a quote written over the top, emphasising blatant, unapologetic sexuality or self-expression, acting as a call to action to all who see it. The call to action is particularly apparent in a series of four posters, which show pairs of men engaged in foreplay, with text stating "POSITIVE SEXUAL IMAGES ARE IMPORTANT" written over top. As the only posters to share text, the repeated statement emphasises the call for more visible, open, and positive depiction of (queer) sexuality.

ANTI-ADVERTISMENT

The posters exist as - and in contrast to - advertisements. The repeated shoulder-to-shoulder wheat pasting aesthetically and materially references illegal flyposting, a cheap advertising technique particularly effective in targeting people in specific locales.

Commercial advertising is obscene, it is morally repugnant, offensive, and dehumanising.

The purpose of an ad often isn't to get you to immediately buy a product, but to ensure it's the first thing that comes to mind when you need something like it. For this, it must be omnipresent - taking up as much visual and mental space as possible, blocking your connection to yourself and the world around you. It reduces you to nothing more than your money, using whatever techniques it can to get a hold of it as cheaply as possible. It uses all your values, interests, loves, and fears as levers to separate you from it. It believes all the things you, or the people around you, could do should instead be done by their product. Don't call your friends to help you move; don't pack the boxes yourself and sort through what you want to take with you. Hire someone to do it. A commercial advertisement wants you to be alone. It wants you to be unhuman. It wants you to be a machine whose only purpose is to spend.

Within our culture, commercial advertising has to be as PG as possible to achieve this purpose, so as it tries to fill your mind, blocking everything else out, it strips you of your sexuality and ability to know sexuality. These posters mimic commercial advertisements but act as a reversal. The images within them are vulnerable personal moments of connection. They aren't asking you to spend. They aren't asking you to separate from yourself or the people around you. They are simply showing you other ways people can live - as themselves and with others. If they were plastered on a street, they may shock some people at first, but through repeated exposure, they would become everyday and background, normalising queer and fringe relationships and self-expression. The posters want to rehumanise you; to help you reconnect with yourself and the people you've been estranged from. There is no advertisable product that can hold you. That can kiss down your chest and kneel before you. That can make you happy to be yourself. Those things only come from connecting with yourself and the people around you.

POSTERS, PLACES, AND PEOPLE

Flyposting and posters are effective at connecting with people in a particular locale. A poster for an event in Wellington isn't going to do anything for people living in Auckland, but in Auckland, it could be the only thing that gets anyone to come.

Zach describes the purpose of the work as examining queer histories to understand our current struggles and find solutions for our futures. As flyposting is locale-specific, this purpose must be assumed to target queer and nonconforming Aucklanders - but do these posters and the images on them represent the struggles of the queers who will see them?

The quotes are from songs by Americans, Germans, and Brits. The images depict American masculinities - with blue jeans and locker room showers - no Kiwi plaid jackets or short shorts and gumboots to be seen. Otherwise, they show British alternative fashions and cultures - the central boot clearly identifiable as a Doc Marten.

But does Aotearoa have an identifiable historic punk aesthetic? And are queer struggles confined to their locale? Aotearoa's queer history is not as well-documented as other places. Although Kawe Mahara Queer Archives Aotearoa maintains a collection of historic queer media, it's not digitally accessible and can only be accessed physically in Wellington. Most queers will never be able to see any of it. Countries like America and the UK have a much more accessible queer (and fetish) history by sheer virtue of numbers. There were more people to create more things and more people to hold onto those pieces of history. It's hard to find queer records in Aotearoa.

Additionally, queerness is an international struggle; we learn from others internationally, we take their help where we need it, and offer our own where we can. Turning to the archives of international queerness is not a bad thing,

especially when they're the only histories we can access. However, we can't let the only history we know and see be the international one. Beyond that, if we are referring to a global history, it should be broader than Anglo cultures. Only half of Aotearoa is white, and yet all the bodies displayed in the posters are white. The Queer struggle nationally has always involved Māori, Pasifika, and other racialised groups, and internationally has involved every single racial and cultural group. To reflect on the queer histories of these locales requires an engagement with more than just white queerness.

Much of the same can be said about punk and alternative cultures in Aotearoa. Although there has been a punk presence here, it's deeply informed by the scene in the UK, as many punks who grew up in the 70s or 80s went overseas to join the alternative scene in London. But while Aotearoa might lack a distinct historical punk aesthetic, the British one we adopted is still involved with racialised people and cultures - with mods, rockers, skinheads, punks and other continually evolving alternative subcultures following music and styles informed by Caribbean and Black American sounds. The posters depict a real queer and nonconforming history and speak to real queer and nonconforming contemporaries, but to look back at queer and nonconforming struggles and show only white participants fails to fully depict our histories in a way that speaks to the totality of the locality the posters exist in. There were more than just white queers and punks then, and with growing Pasifika, Māori, and Asian populations in Auckland, there are more than just white queers and punks today.

THE ARCHIVES

Wheatpasted posters are functionally the material opposite of archived materials. Like they're made for a specific location, they're also made to exist in a particular moment in time. They'll advertise for an event and be left to fall away. The paper wets and dries and curls off the wall - or

it's peeled off by displeased onlookers. A vast majority of posters put up will never be displayed or even seen again once they've come down. This material contrast between carefully maintained pieces and those meant to be left to decay is used to depict the ephemeral nature of queer experiences and how they're often forgotten, intentionally or otherwise, by the dominant culture.

The posters depict passing moments of historic queerness. A hand sliding up a shirt, laughter between naked men, a pose for a photo. To be queer in past times often meant having to hide yourself and keep those moments as moments, lest they offend someone who would hurt you. A poster drags out the moment, from seconds to as long as months, but inevitably ends the same. They fall away or are torn down.

But these posters textually reject the idea that the moments should be hidden or forgotten. The quotes on each one call to an earnest and visible queerness. By dragging out the moments, they publicise them and make them impossible to ignore. Yes, they won't last forever, and yes, there is a risk of destruction, but it's worth it to know and be known by people like you. To show those still hiding that there are good lives to live outside of the norm, even as the political climate gets worse. Our predecessors have lived well through hard times. These posters say we can too, no matter how short they may be.

Alternatively, the use of posters acts to contrast the poor accessibility of the existing archiving. Although our histories have been archived, they remain almost entirely undigitized and only marginally accessible if you live in Wellington. Posters, being explicitly made to share and spread information, invert this inaccessibility and allow the public to view queer histories and ways of living that they otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to see. Although they may be temporary, they show the public queerness in a way that hidden archives never can.

Our archives are poor quality, not because they don't exist, but because our communities lack the resources to properly maintain and digitise them. Queer people are less likely to be employed, are paid less when they are, and are more likely to lack stable housing, and our governments do little to alleviate these pressures. We don't have the resources ourselves, nor do we have access to external resources to supplement our lack.

The use of cheap paper acts as an adaptation to our inability to archive, allowing us to make our histories known in a way that our communities can afford. Even if we can't archive our history to make it last forever, we can make it last longer than a moment. Posters are cheaply made and easily replaced; should they get destroyed, they can be pasted up again. Archives preserve individual pieces through careful maintenance out of public view, but we need our histories to be seen, especially as the dominant culture continues to deny not only our pasts, but our presents too. Until our archives are digitised and accessible, archiving is not a feasible format for recording our histories. These posters instead suggest the potential for a record through public display maintained by sheer stubbornness. Our past and present will continue to be pulled down and denied, but a poster is easily made and easily replaced. They show that we are and were here, and how we can, have, and will live.

MY BEST FRIEND THE GOVERNMENT

The aesthetic reference to flyposting uses the illegal nature of the practice to reference and reinforce the historic (and current) relationship of censorship and oppression between queer communities and institutional powers.

By their nature, the government must remove flyposting, must destroy the art and ephemeral moments of queerness. This could be seen as a repetition of how queer communities were treated historically, where bars and other queer spaces were

raided or refused loans that would have been given to a non-queer organisation, leading to the closure of significant queer locations. Public display or knowledge of queerness was punished by any institution part of the dominant culture. In many ways, this continues so long as the dominant culture continues to reject queerness.

Our government continues to try to hide and reject queerness. Education on queer relationships and forms of expression removed from school requirements. Puberty blocker bans. The decades-long or indefinitely closed waiting lists for any transgender surgeries. They obfuscate the paths to take to live a good queer life in hopes that you'll live a non-queer life instead, bad as it may be for you. As they would tear down the posters, they try to tear apart our hard-fought-for pathways and protections.

END

The use of posters, particularly in reference to flyposting imagery, to depict historical queerness and call to be more earnestly and crassly queer, creates many questions and angles for analysis and commentary. It allows the works to explore how media is sanitized to turn us into spending machines, whose queer histories are being remembered, how queer histories can and are being remembered, how we continue to struggle, and much more. They ask us to move forward, remembering the past, to do so even when the world is against us, and to do it publicly and unashamedly. ■

SHOW ME WHAT YOU[RE] LIKE:

Pianormous' Response

Pia

Zach is a friend of mine who I have lived with. I've been interested in his art since we met, so it's exciting to be tapped to respond to his capstone project.

Like Zach, I'm a weird gay person and art student. Thus, I think it's awesome to see his grad work present as explicitly and politically queer. It's important to have this kind of work around, especially in Aotearoa. Similarly, it's important that we respond to this work - to do so out of personal investment and not institutional obligation.

BREEDER BEWARE!

Entering the space, you're struck immediately by Zach's massive posters. These are composed of monochromatic pieces of A4 paper, which have been wheat-pasted haphazardly (casually, confidently) into works that eat up as much wall room as they can. They're overlaid on top of each other, posturing themselves in competition for viewers' attention. These posters feel independent of one another - as if they've been built up over time, and by multiple, anonymous authors. Their rhythmic, layered arrangement is reminiscent of digital image encounter: I'm reminded of spam, pornographic pop-ups, algorithmic media diets. In contrast, their materiality links directly to the urban environment. I'm thinking of gritty streets, posters that appear overnight and greedily plaster over what was there before, slowly becoming absorbed into their infrastructure. The posters share language with real spaces, both physical and digital. These spaces' conventions of anonymity mean that while the posters are direct and explicitly sexual, they're eerily impersonal - they stare straight through the viewer with lazer-beam homosexuality.

In the centre of the room is a table of zines. Where the posters felt closed and immediate in their assertion of queerness, the zines feel active, communal, like something to slowly take in. They feel tender (flaccid even, ha), crafted from delicate newsprint and cream thread.

The four issues are composed of collage works, drawing from digital archives and the whim of the artist. Across each edition span themes of transgressive queerness, fetish, heterophobia, and genderfuckery. The first two are reminiscent of Lee Edelman and the death drive, David Wojnarowicz and Kenneth Anger, hedonistic and lustful expressions of queerness during the AIDS epidemic. The third issue is collaborative in the traditional sense, and the last (my favourite) assumes a manifesto form. Across eighteen points, it asserts the power of the erotic and transgressive, referencing conditions of the past to advocate for rebellion in the present. It appropriates its text from radical queer sources, proudly sharing space with past theorists. Here, we see Zach's affinity for the archive, and for zines as tools for community formation, excitation.

A SAFE SPACE FOR SPIRITUAL NEUTERING

I'm thinking about what it means to be queer today. To a degree, our identities have become part of the mainstream; it's fashionable to be queer, even. In and outside of our communities, we're identified by our media: RuPaul and SATC, Chappelle Roan, Charli, and Taylor. We're identified by our fashion: carabiners, having dyed hair and bits of metal in our faces. Queerness used to be about dissidence, criticality, and community - today, it's about our affinities for oat milk and poppers. It's about the things we buy and consume.

Across the years, we've gained a couple of rights, established new homonormative standards, and amoeba-tized ourselves into the capitalist market. We've been convinced

that queer liberation is over; we've lost our radicality, becoming pragmatic and short-sighted in our politics.¹ Anxious to keep our meagre privileges, we look down on community members we see as abrasive. The queer community has fragmented, atrophied. Now, conservatism is creeping back in, slowly reassuming control over our media, research, medicine, our reproductive and economic rights.²

At first glance, this project might appear to capture a closed and niche kind of queerness, overly sexual and masculine. It's true that the bodies and media represented are niche - but there is a universality to the sentiment being put forward here, and how. The media in the zines and posters is deliberately provocative. To encounter it as outsiders (queer and not) reveals how we've internalized messaging, enabling departure from assimilationist rhetoric. Modelling ourselves after it is of even more utility. If we're brave, we can return to the abject, the unintelligible and uncommodifiable, breaking from isolating and stagnant ideas of queerness. In a time when everything can be sold back to us, this may be the best way forward - "in the postmodern age, the only real thing left is sex".³ Zach's work enacts utopia through the perverse.⁴⁵

SWINGING TEMPORALITIES

I like that this project so proudly inherits from queer history. This manifests in two ways. In repurposing images from digital archives, the work reanimates past queer identities and experiences. It creates a sense of community

¹ Muñoz, J. E. (2009). Queerness as Horizon: Utopian Hermeneutics in the Face of Gay Pragmatism. In Muñoz, J. E. (Ed), *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. (pp.19-32). New York University Press.

² exemplary, our recent ban on new puberty blocker prescriptions:
<https://thespinoff.co.nz/politics/20-11-2025/puberty-blockers-banned-the-reality-of-raising-a-trans-child-in-2025>

³ I've lost the source of this quote, but the words are not mine.

⁴ Freeman, E. (2010). *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*. Duke University Press.

⁵ Muñoz, J. E. (2009). Take Ecstasy with Me. In Muñoz, J. E. (Ed), *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. (pp.185-190). New York University Press.

across time, digital substrate. As mentioned earlier, the work also looks back in terms of intellectual and artistic heritage. It directly quotes from texts of queer theory and references the work of artists such as Gran Fury, the Gay Liberation Front; it inherits from queercore terrorists of print and drag, like Vaginal Davis. The zines in this project assume interesting modes of presentation and distribution, looking back to figures such as Henrik Olesen and Felix Gonzalez-Torres. These works are self-reflexive. They disperse themselves, going home with viewers like a virus or a secret.

The use of appropriation and citation here is apt. It celebrates the heritage of our ideas and identities, the people who cleaved space for us to be where we are now. It shows evidence of queerness through time - evidence that often departs from mainstream, clear-cut narratives of history. Looking critically at the past, we can recognize patterns of the present and see how our community organized and advocated for change. Or simply how they had a good time... I'm looking at you, Leigh Bowery.

MAY THE MALADJUSTED RULE

Zach's capstone project can be read in stages. We're initially confronted by the hard sexuality of his posters, which on the surface present as singular experiences of homosexuality. This confrontation sets us reeling: reflected upon us are our digital and urban spaces, the environments that mediate our ideas of queerness. We can see in slightly better resolution how isolation, consumerism, and conservatism have sunk their teeth into the queer contemporary.

We turn our attention to his zines, which present strategies for utopian manifestation. These are playful, empowering, communal. They bulldoze through the viewer's brain, peppering prospective rabbit-holes throughout their four issues. It's obvious that they're a call to action: we're

being asked to join in and take form. We're being asked to shout back, to chop everything off, to put on leather and put on lace; we're being asked to get voracious.

Engaging with queerness on a surface level will get us nowhere. We need to descend below the buckle, mingling with our legacies of radicality and perversion to overcome the sodomite slump we find ourselves in today. ■

Skim: to Move Quickly Just Above a Surface Without Touching it

Lucy Siufan Wong

ephemera is blown up and pasted, fixed in time.
bodies create a second skin for the walls,
i imagine this as a membrane, stretching along karangahape,
down queen street.

how might queer media infiltrate the everyday? subtly
rewiring.
cushions for a heterotopia⁶ (or homotopia?)
and should it?
at what point does queerness become a spectacle?

for when the weight of my gaze hits the paper
i find the figures are just bodies.

i am a voyeur, a spectator.

the photos are impenetrable;
like barthes, i cannot reach into this photograph.
it is a this-has-been.⁷
like baldwin, i recognise a body, realise my difference.⁸
they are strangers; i navigate them blindly.
but zach is an insider looking out in triumph.

i feel an aggression,
white bodies on the edge of violence.
the images teem with anger masked in sensuality.
bodies on the edge of dynamism, muscular.

⁶ "Utopia is a place where everything is good; dystopia is a place where everything is bad; heterotopia is where things are different - Walter Russell Mead" the term was coined by Michel Foucault in *Order of Things*. 1966

⁷ Roland Barthes in *Camera Lucida*. 1980.

⁸ James Baldwin in *If Beale Street Could Talk*. 1975.

where umberto boccioni's muscular dynamism⁹ is lusty, fluid,
this media feels weighty. at the edge of something.
beginning? or begun?

have to say, i am unfamiliar with this.
stripped of colour and full of contrast,
the images lack the softness and care which i associate with
sensuality,
with the erotic.
with the mysticism of my own queerness.

the erotic vs the pornographic:
"pornography emphasises sensation without feeling"¹⁰
do i feel?

my fear of anger will teach me nothing.¹¹
how might rage be used?
excessive, overflowing rage that demands attention, demands
looking
zach gives and does not take back.

this this-has-been sits to confront, to challenge.
to disrupt, to disturb.■

⁹ Umberto Boccioni's *Muscular Dynamism*. 1913. [artwork, pastel and charcoal on paper.]

¹⁰ Audre Lorde in *Uses of the Erotic*. 1978.

¹¹ Audre Lorde in *Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism*. 1981.

ON AUTHORSHIP, QUEERNESS AND COMMUNITY: Exploring Connections Between Research, Artist Influences and Personal Practice Within the Capstone Project

Zach Muir

My practice has always been driven by a need to express or externalise myself. This has taken a variety of forms, however with my capstone project, my main interests have been in interrogating the idea and the role of the author/artist, how my work functions within and for a community, as well as a thematic interest in the erotic and the queer.

I looked at Roland Barthes' *The Death of the Author* as a theoretical basis for my approach to authorship and influence in terms of making meaning. Jenny Holzer's practice also provided me a lens through which these and other similar ideas of authorship could be practically implemented in terms of selection, editorship, and curation. I also looked at Richard Siken's poems both as a way of exploring how identity affects authorship, and his queer themes. Reading *Towards the Queerest Insurrection* by the Mary Nardini Gang gave me the language to express the politics of queerness that I was looking for. I read Audrey Lorde's essay *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power* through that same queer lens, providing a comprehensive, thought out version of the ideas I was having on the topic. Similarly to my use of Barthes' essay in terms of authorship, I use Jonathan Lethem's article *The Ecstasy of Influence* to provide a theoretical framework for my appropriation of others' work to use for my own art. Lastly I looked at how zines can function as an archive and how important it is in queer circles to document our own history. These authors and artists overlap in theme, and

have served a variety of functions in inspiring my collage, zine, and poster-making works so far this semester.

THE AUTHOR IN THEORY: Roland Barthes

Roland Barthes' seminal work *The Death of the Author* is integral to understanding the approach I have towards making art this semester, as well as being the base off which later readings build off in terms of authorship. I read Barthes' essay towards the end of semester one this year, and recognised how it fit with my zine-making practice at the time (I had no art-making classes that semester and zinemaking fit into the little time I had outside of studying).

My interest in authorship came from a place of insecurity, given my heavy use of collage in my zinemaking practice; none of it was my own drawing, or writing or photography. Barthes gave me a well-known, respected theoretical basis through which I could justify the work as something my own, or 'original'.

Barthes describes the text an author creates as "a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture."¹² The author does not come up with anything 'original', but brings together different cultural elements and concepts to create something then perceived to be new. Barthes' concept of authorship, to my understanding, is that originality is required for one to be an author, and because texts are amalgamations, not originals, then it is impossible to be an author. In my collages there is a literal comparison between what Barthes talks about and what I do. I physically bring together different cultural elements, the words and images of others, and when combined to convey certain concepts or messages, they become 'new' works or texts.

Barthes wrote his essay to provoke his contemporaries in response to contemporary issues of people attributing too

¹² Roland Barthes, *The Death of the Author* (Aspen, 1967), 4.

much of the meaning of a text to the author's biography. His arguments go against that grain: Barthes recognises that much of one's work is largely influenced by everything one ingests from the world, knowingly or not.

The second major part of his argument is that meaning comes not from the author, but the reader: "there is one place where this multiplicity is collected, united, and this place is ... the reader".¹³ The idea that a lot of the work creating meaning is placed with the reader is something I think about when creating my work. I agree that the majority of meaning comes from the reader's knowledge and experience, however, the author does curate the set of images/words that the reader has to work with. This space of curation is where I feel I do most of my work in artmaking.

At the time of reading *The Death of the Author* I was also enrolled in Media Studies 101, where for a week we studied auteur theory, as well as dissenting voices. The 'Auteur' aligns with the conceptualization of the Author that Barthes was arguing against. The term was coined in the 1940s by Andrew Sarris, positing that the director is the sole creative genius behind a film.¹⁴ An Auteur director is supposedly characterized by having a distinct visual style and common themes throughout their filmography. The argument against is similar to Barthes'; the director is choosing relevant cultural elements to include or exclude in their work to create something 'new'. There is also the argument that the crew holds a great deal of creative power, from the costume and props department making things, to the technical skill of the camera crew influencing just how shots are taken. Much in the same way that nothing is original, there is no such thing as a sole creative genius when it comes to filmmaking, nor by extension artmaking.

In the context of my work, I am by no means an Author, nor an Auteur. In many circumstances I am influenced by what my

¹³ Barthes, *The Death of the Author*, 6.

¹⁴ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Auteur Theory," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

friends send or suggest to me, for example links to magazines on The Internet Archive, pictures from which have ended up in my collage zines. Similarly, online posts which my friends share have pictures I use. Artist models have also been recommended to me by friends. I am by no means the sole creative genius and would not be able to do my work without the influence of others.

THE AUTHOR IN PRACTICE: Jenny Holzer

I first saw Jenny Holzer's work in person in 2019 at the Guggenheim Bilbao. It was an installation of floor to ceiling LED signboards with text scrolling up in multiple languages. I could not read it for how overwhelming the speed and lights were. However I later came across her other works, and my love for her art grew from there.

Her *Inflammatory Essays* are some of my favourites, but until reading Britt Miazgowicz's 2010 Masters of the Arts dissertation I had not sat down and thought deeply about why I liked them and how they functioned. Miazgowicz investigates Jenny Holzer's relationship with authorship through examining a wide range of her works. It's Holzer's practical approach to interacting authorship, rather than the purely theoretical writing of Barthes that makes this text useful to me.

Despite offering a more practical approach, Barthes' spectre remains. Miazgowicz refers to Holzer's relationship with her work as being an editor or scriptor, rather than an author. "She sifts through information and retrieves that which she finds compelling. It is only after the material has been removed from its original context and placed into her unique medium of display, that these texts take on new meaning, are looked at differently, and establish new relationships with viewers."¹⁵ An editor chooses what is included or excluded,

¹⁵ Britt Miazgowicz, ""YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSTITUTING THE MEANING OF THINGS:" Examining Jenny Holzer's Progressively Complex Textual Constructs" (M.A. diss. University of Miami, 2010), 10.

reworking a text for both accuracy, and ensuring the style is relevant to the text's intended viewers; one would employ different standards editing a children's book and a scientific article. Holzer selects from the plethora of texts that exist in the world, with her intended work and audience in mind, editing the style of her mediums to reframe the text.

In my own work I have taken to calling this editing process curation, a term more relevant to an art context. This is most relevant to my collaboration zine, where the texts I am working with are made to be their own fully-fledged works. I use 'curation' as it feels reductive to say I've 'edited' them into the overall work that is the zine. In terms of collages, where I have cut some things out and reframed others, I would feel more comfortable calling my work editing. Overall I am drawn to both these terms as they distance me from authorship, or artistship, something which seems too lofty and official for me and the DIY-inspired, politically motivated work I am creating this semester.

Apart from my emotional attachments to their definitions, there is a practical application to being an editor. When Holzer aesthetically manipulates her chosen texts to convey certain meanings she "becomes what Barthes terms a "scriptor," existing not to explain the work, but to produce it."¹⁶ In this sense she is explicitly not an author, but lets the audience come to their own conclusions without authorial guidance. This is exemplified in her works outside gallery spaces, where the viewer's knowledge of Holzer's previous work and approach, as well as gallery writing accompaniments (roomsheet, plaque) don't come into play. For viewers who do not know Holzer's motivations or do not recognise the work as hers, encountering the work in a public space allows them to come to their own meanings/conclusions, without the knowledge of an author/artist indicating how they should understand it. There is an openness that anonymity allows: viewers must become active in their own experience and interpretation of

¹⁶ Britt Miazgowicz, "YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE", 45.

the work; moving from "a passive viewer to become an active questioner by inviting reflections on intentions, meaning, and authorship."¹⁷

Your knowledge of who the artist of a work is always affects your reading of the work. This can deepen your understanding of, and emotional response to the work, or it could prejudice you against it. For example, knowing Felix Gonzalez-Torres is a gay man impacted by AIDS always deepens the experience of his works. His work *It's Only a Matter of Time* means something different coming from a gay man than it does anyone else.

I have reflected on whether or not it is important to be recognised as the artist behind my own work. I want my work to function without the frame of reference that it's made by a queer, trans guy - I feel like that's obvious when it's viewed. This was my approach at the start of the semester. Anonymity is a place of comfort; there's no professional or personal stakes other than the time and effort expended. On the other hand I feel like there's a responsibility queer artists have in being open about their identities, especially with how their identity impacts both their life and work. Being visible is and always has been important for all minorities, so I think it is important to keep the work associated with me and my identity.

There is one last aspect of Holzer's work that resonates with me, and my artmaking approach this semester. Miazgowicz quotes Holzer; "I can do more art if I don't try to write. I can try what I am better at, to make things look right. And I can have more and better content if I'm choosing rather than generating it."¹⁸ She puts words to the exact feeling I've been having this semester: that my work is not on the same level as others'. In some ways this is true; I am a third year fine arts student, not Michelangelo of course, but it does make it harder to have confidence in my own work. It is reassuring that such a prolific artist believes

¹⁷ Britt Miazgowicz, "YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE", 11.

¹⁸ Britt Miazgowicz, "YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE", 21.

that there is a place in the art world for the manipulation of others' works and texts to create something with a new meaning in a new context. It alleviates the worry that my collage works are not 'art', despite all the references and artist models I have to back up my claim that it *is*.

QUEER IDENTITY & AUTHORSHIP: Richard Siken

One of my plans for capstone is to do some prose writing, expanding on the kind of thing I did for FA245 last year. This has taken a backseat to my zine and poster-making because I had trouble getting past writers block for the majority of the semester. With my third zine I have begun to break through this block, hopefully allowing myself to begin working properly in this direction.

One of my favourite poets since I was a teenager has been Richard Siken. While I have not read every one of his poems, but poems like *A Primer for the Small Weird Loves*, and *Little Beast*, stick with me close in my heart the same way *Untitled (Portrait of Ross in LA)* does. They are moving, saddening, and make you want for something you can't have. It's a cathartic experience, somewhere between hitting too close to home and being glad that someone else out there feels like that too.

Kasperi Elkki in their 2018 Bachelor's Thesis discusses the construction and context of Siken's work. One of the key themes within Siken's writing is 'queer death', a generational trauma passed down through the community because of general cultural understandings of what the gay experience entailed/entails (death from AIDS, death or harm at the hands of homophobes, emotional suffering from homophobic prejudice, etc.).¹⁹ Siken's work acknowledges the realities of queer death that other media (TV, film) shy away from. As Elkki states, "it is safe to assume the queer

¹⁹ Kasperi Elkki, ""You know that a boy who likes boys is a dead boy." Traumatic Construction of Self in *Crush* (2005) by Richard Siken", (Bachelor's thesis, University of Oulu, 2018), 2.

community is working through the trauma caused by homophobia with self-expressive tools of art.”²⁰

There are two sides to queer art that I deal with: queer utopias and queer realities. The majority of my publication and poster-making work has tried to marry the two. I campaign for said utopias whilst acknowledging and standing in a place of reality. The little writing I have managed to do sits mostly in the reality camp, like Siken’s. Thematically his poems are similar to things that are important to me and I want to address in my own, future prose work: living, loving, sex, pain (both emotional & physical) and agency, as well as the relationships between them. Each has their own utopia and reality, both of which I believe are important to acknowledge and share.

As I discussed in the Holzer Authorship section above, there is a logic to being known as a work’s creator. Identity is a key motivator in all work I make, both for capstone and personally, and therefore is important to understanding my work. Elkki states in their thesis that “the universes of a fictive character and a real-life person are parallel as well as interactive with each other; the text gets its contents from the reality, and the product that is consumed by a reader shapes that reader’s cognitive understanding of the world.”²¹ While they describe how Siken’s texts work with him as their author, this can also be applied more widely. One’s experiences shape what one writes about; what they know and they think is worth writing about. There will always be an interplay between personal taste and life experience in the work one creates. Identity, queerness in this circumstance, is a continual experience, and so I feel like I will always be making art about it.

POLITICS OF QUEERNESS: Mary Nardini Gang

My work this semester is rooted in a political message that I have not put into words yet, but I do know that I want my work to function as a form of community-building for queer

²⁰ Kasperi Elkki, “You know that a boy”, 5.

²¹ Kasperi Elkki, “You know that a boy”, 8.

people, as well as protest against the growing conservatism around the world and Aotearoa. Because I knew my work was going to function in a political vein, one of the first things I did was to investigate manifesto-writing.

In my exploration of queer manifestos and adjacent writings, I came across the Mary Nardini Gang, who have written many queer anarchist texts, all of which can be found at theanarchistlibrary.org. *Towards the Queerest Insurrection* was the most personally interesting and agreeable of their texts. Through my reading of their texts I came firstly to the conclusion that I do not have the dedication to be an anarchist. Secondly, they put into words key ideological points that I had not until then put into sentences any longer than 'assimilation is stupid' or 'god, straight people are annoying sometimes'. In this way, they are key to understanding the politics behind my work, even if my work is not as anarchistic.

Queerness is incredibly important to both my work and *Towards the Queerest Insurrection*. There are many ways to define queer, but queer itself is against definition, it's amorphous in the way most labels or words aren't. When I think of 'queer', I think of queer culture (different from just being gay), I think of everything outside the norms of cisgender, heterosexual society, be that people who identify as queer, people who are queer but don't realise it, people doing queer things (this is where I feel kink comes in; that's outside of the norm too), then there's the action of queering things- that's a whole other subject.

The Mary Nardini Gang defines 'queer' as "a territory of tension, defined against the dominant narrative of white-hetero-monogamous patriarchy, but also by an affinity with all who are marginalized, otherized and oppressed."²² Similar enough to my own vague definition. They continue on, this time in the direction of why they're writing about an 'Insurrection': "Queer is the abnormal, the strange, the

²² Mary Nardini Gang, *Towards the Queerest Insurrection* (Mary Nardini Gang, 2014), 3.

dangerous. ... Queer is the cohesion of everything in conflict with the heterosexual capitalist world. Queer is a total rejection of the regime of the Normal."²³

Their positioning of queer as incompatible with 'Normal' ideologically combats the rising tide of gay assimilation into both heterosexual and capitalist society that has been increasing since gay marriage was legalised. This is not to say that gay marriage is bad; within the systems currently in place, everyone needs access to the rights and privileges marriage gives couples, but it has legitimised gay people as a group that can be advertised to: "The "LGBT" political establishment has become a force of assimilation, gentrification, capital and state-power. Gay identity has become both a marketable commodity and a device of withdrawal from struggle against domination."²⁴ By buying into the products, media, and advertising marketed to gay people we are letting ourselves be told what the gay experience is, rather than creating our own experiences, connections and relationships. It takes the culture out of queerness, subliminally assimilates anyone who doesn't want to look deeper.

It's from this stance of queerness standing against assimilation to the 'normal' that my work operates from. My work is about taking your experience with the world and society into your own hands; making your own media and your own community not founded on assimilation or heterosexuality or capitalism. My zines in their form are non-conformist, they do not take the traditional form of books. I don't do the capitalist thing and sell them. I work in conversation and community with others and I spread my message with and through them.

Overall, *Towards the Queerest Insurrection* argues for an upturning of all societal structures, as anarchists tend to argue for. They do not want queer people to be able to join the military because the military's job is to kill people,

²³ Mary Nardini Gang, *Towards the Queerest Insurrection*, 3.

²⁴ Mary Nardini Gang, *Towards the Queerest Insurrection*, 10.

that's not an institution anyone should join or support. It's idealistic, but one has to have something to strive for in order to even make little changes. My work's aim is to in some small way help someone break out of the pro-hetero, pro-capitalist assimilation mindset taught by society, or even get them just one step closer to being there.

THE EROTIC: Audrey Lorde

The erotic is a particularly important idea to me from a queer perspective. Historically, queer people have been punished for having romantic or sexual relationships with each other, or in the case of lesbians and bisexuals, had their identities erased. Even simple depictions of queer people holding hands has and still is seen as pornographic or obscene to some. While Audrey Lorde wrote her essay *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power* from a feminist woman's perspective, the themes can be applied to all marginalised groups. I read it with a queer lens.

Lorde describes the erotic as a source of power which comes from the expression "of our unexpressed or unrecognized feeling".²⁵ Because oppression requires the suppression of all other forms of power other than that of its beneficiaries (cisgender white men) in order to perpetuate itself, the erotic has been suppressed for both women and queer people. Because the erotic is suppressed, both by patriarchal, heteronormative society and our individual selves that have internalised its beliefs, the erotic is often confused "with its opposite, the pornographic. But pornography is a direct denial of the power of the erotic, for it represents the suppression of true feeling. Pornography emphasizes sensation without feeling."²⁶

Depicting queer sexuality and love as erotic and not pornographic is an important theme within my work. Most

²⁵ Audrey Lorde, *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*, (Crossing Press, 1984).

²⁶ Audrey Lorde, *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*.

directly relevant being my *Positive Sexual Images are Important* poster series. Representation matters, and the way in which people are depicted has an impact on how those groups are treated in real life. I want my work to have a positive impact on my own queer community. I hope the depiction of the queer erotic in my work has the potential to give audiences the moment of acceptance of unrealised feelings Lorde described where one can gain erotic power for themselves - one of the aims of my work is to help others come to terms with or accept themselves as anything outside of the norm.

The other relevant aim of my work is to use the power of the erotic to reclaim from the oppression of the patriarchy, as Lorde states, "our language, our history, our dancing, our loving, our work, our lives."²⁷ The erotic is a core part of queer resistance against heteronormativity which is lived out in every aspect of queer lives where the cisgender and heterosexual is not centred. To free oneself from repression and bathe in the erotic is to affirm one's own queerness and in turn further destabilise the grip patriarchal power has over the world. Experiencing the erotic widens one's horizons; why should you settle for less (staying with a straight partner, not transitioning, etc.) when there is so much more in the world to feel? Being able to clearly see what you are fighting for is a motivating factor in fighting back against oppression.

²⁷ Audrey Lorde, *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*.

APPROPRIATION: Jonathan Lethem

In a similar vein to authorship, as discussed at length above, "appropriation, mimicry, quotation, allusion, and sublimated collaboration", however you want to label it, is an important aspect of my work.²⁸ I started with collage, which requires using others' images in order to create your own. I used collage with words to create my own poems. With my posters both the images and text are others', being artfully lifted, cropped or edited and recontextualised into my own work.

Appropriation can be seen "across all forms and genres in the realm of cultural production", from art (motifs, styles), to music (sampling), to literature (quotation, allusion, etc.), Jonathan Lethem states in his article *The Ecstasy of Influence*.²⁹ He posits that "art is sourced": "Finding one's voice isn't just an emptying and purifying oneself of the words of others but an adopting and embracing of filiations, communities, and discourses. Inspiration could be called inhaling the memory of an act never experienced. Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void but out of chaos."³⁰ In this way, his argument is consistent with Barthes'; the author is someone who pulls together a range of inspirations from a variety of sources and orders them in a new way in order to create a work. Only here, Lethem discusses this within a distinctly art-relevant context.

In his use of the word appropriation, Lethem does not mean it in the negative sense it has come to mean contemporarily (cultural appropriation), but in a much lighter tone. He argues that humans have always been building on the ideas of others; how else would progress be made? Either way, in the context of my work, to use an image without someone's permission is hardly the greatest crime ever, especially in the sea of images that we live with on the internet today.

²⁸ Jonathan Lethem, "The Ecstasy of Influence," Harper's Magazine, 2007, <https://harpers.org/archive/2007/02/the-ecstasy-of-influence/>.

²⁹ Jonathan Lethem, "The Ecstasy of Influence."

³⁰ Jonathan Lethem, "The Ecstasy of Influence."

The other key point that Lethem makes in his article is how the 'gift economy' that art exists in functions within narratives of appropriation. The gift economy goes as such: "A gift establishes a feeling-bond between two people", therefore when you encounter art "which moves the heart, or revives the soul, or delights the senses, or offers courage for living," you establish a feeling-bond with the artist, as you experience something similar to what they did making it.³¹ You receive the work "as a gift is received".³² Being gifted something means that it is now yours to do with as you wish; the artist cannot deny that you have felt a connection, and they cannot take away your experience of it. From here you can switch from 'consumer' of art and culture to 'producer'; making art inspired by this gift, in any number of ways both direct, appropriative, or allusionary. Art is founded on sharing (nevermind if you call it copying or appropriating); the sharing of techniques, ideas, motifs, etc.

Lethem's gift economy argument is another soothing idea that provides me a justification for the work I'm doing. In this theoretical framework, I am 'allowed' to use others' work within or to inspire my own. It's also important to me to be placed in a visual community with other queer artists where viewers can recognise my references/inspirations.

The idea that my own work may establish a 'feeling-bond' with someone else is the prime motivator for making my work. My political motivation of community building comes into play with wanting people to resonate with my work, be moved by it, or simply love how it looks. The idea that I could be in a similar position to the artists I look up to, influencing someone else to go on to make their own work with or inspired by my own (or the artists' work I've put into my own) is what I aim to do. It's the greatest way to build a queer art community, continuing the chain of inspiration.

³¹ Jonathan Lethem, "The Ecstasy of Influence."

³² Jonathan Lethem, "The Ecstasy of Influence."

ZINES: A Community Archive

The last things important to my practice that I've researched are zines and the archive. The archive has always been a presence in my life; my family is into family history, and therefore we have accumulated a wealth of knowledge there, as well as an archiving practice for important things in my brother and I's life- we have boxes of certificates, school photos, and years-old birthday cards chronicling our lives. I have personally continued this practice, and have previously made work with these family archives in FA242 last year. The archive has continued its presence in my life this year as I have worked on cataloguing Artspace Aotearoa's archive as part of my volunteer role there.

According to Sarah Baker et al in their journal article, zines are "self-published, do-it-yourself booklets that have a long history as tools for activism in social movements."³³ They are low-cost, often personal or informational, and can cover any topic a creator wants, though they have a history rooted in punk music fandom and political activism. Today the majority I see in Auckland are offputtingly wholesome art zines, designed to be sold to a wide audience - gentrified, as I have heard some say. In my work I opt to make a political, aesthetic, and practical return to the roots of zinemaking.

Archives are traditionally made and held by institutions. Those in power here, or those with power over those institutions' funding are in a unique position to decide what is worth keeping on historical record. Often these choices are made by cis, white men whose priority, consciously or unconsciously, has never been minorities. There is a way the traditional archive and its prejudices has and can be subverted; by the community archive.

³³ Sarah Baker, Zelmarie Cantillon, and Chelsea Evans, "Zines as community archive," *Archival Science* 22, (2022): 539, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-022-09388-1>.

Baker defines a community archive as "a non-traditional archival collection specifically tied to a particular group, often one that may be undocumented or under-documented by traditional archival institutions."³⁴ They are often "political and subversive", as they respond directly to archival institutions, interrogating them on what is 'worth' archiving and what narratives their archives perpetuate by demonstrating how an expanded, inclusive archive could be made for and by the community.³⁵ Zines share a similar political, subversive and community-based history. They are often about the personal lives, struggles and interests of a community. "Zines can, therefore, be of significant value as primary source material, documenting individual lives, community networks and societal changes."³⁶ Therefore, zines are valuable inclusions in, and act themselves as an archive.

The idea of zines as a community archive is especially important to me from a queer perspective as the majority of information about queer people and culture is either not written by or for queer people. My own connection to the queer community both past and present has never been greater than when I'm with people, or reading something created both by and for queer people. This goes especially for things further back in history, when queer people had less of a voice, and the only way they could get it out was through self-publishing; making their own DIY magazines that only got a couple of issues before dying off and another cropping up. These magazines offered "marginalised communities a highly visual way 'to record their stories, share information and organise'."³⁷ These voices of history are incredibly important for queer people to keep alive, because institutions often do not see the importance of archiving these works. If they do archive them; the majority are only accessible to those who have the time to visit the archives in person, effectively removing the work from the community it functions within.

³⁴ Baker, "Zines as community archive," 541.

³⁵ Baker, "Zines as community archive," 541-542.

³⁶ Baker, "Zines as community archive," 543.

³⁷ Baker, "Zines as community archive," 542.

In my collaborative zine I try to encapsulate and archive the current queer voice present within my direct community. It includes work about personal experiences, as well as more general responses to the current conservative political climate that's creeping its way from American politics to Aotearoa.

In my other zine and collage works, I work within others' archives, using what images I can find in queer or transgender archives online, and queer magazines that have been archived on The Internet Archive. By working within these archives I bring images back into the public eye, recontextualising them for a contemporary context, but they still bring with them the connotations and memories of their time. I think it is particularly important to always be using the resources available, like these archives; if they go unused they will eventually be defunded or shut down. When working with images from these archives you realise that not everyone is represented within them. Images of cis gay men are incredibly easy to come across, and though slightly less so trans women are quite visible (the reasons for this are oftentimes not so wholesome). There is a distinct lack of trans men, which says a lot about the priorities both when things were being made and of what later people thought were worth archiving. This imbalance of representation is also something that I had at the forefront of my mind, and tried to balance while making my works.■



POSITIVE AND SEXUAL - 100%

POSITIVE
SEXUAL
IMAGES
ARE
IMPORTANT

POSITIVE
SEXUAL IMAGES
ARE
IMPORTANT

Visual



Reflections after Final Installation and Submission

After finishing installation and handing in my workbook, I'm very happy with what I presented, but the journey to get there was equally as important. It's given me a breadth of knowledge, an understanding of my own practice, and a good idea of where I want to take that practice in the future.

Reflecting on the successes and failures of the project, there are a couple of things I would nitpick and change if I had infinite time to keep improving on it. First, and most importantly would be to more accurately size my tiled posters. This is the main thing that sticks out to me about the final install vs. my mockups; mainly the Boy poster too.

Overall I'm surprised with how close to level I managed to get everything, despite not using a level at all and simply eyeballing the first tile & aligning the rest of them to that. However, the colour blocks highlight every little imperfection in the leveling and alignment of the zine pages inside them. For example, in the top left of the main colour block, there is not an equal distance between the bottom of the zine page and the edge of the pink paper, and the side of the zine page and the side of the pink paper. This is even more obvious when the bottom row of the big colour block is looked at: the zine pages

themselves are not exactly in line with each other. This isn't really the most serious problem, as the nature of wheatpasting posters up in public is that it doesn't matter if they're level, as long as they get the message across.

My least favourite wall out of all of them is the small far wall. The repetition of the A4 posters feels slightly out of place in relation to the rest of the works. Also, in adding more posters over the architecture on the right I had to cut off some of the bottoms of the posters, which looks even more odd. It could work if I had a better idea of what I was doing when I first put it up, or if I had incorporated more of the repetition in other places, however this is not the case.

Lastly, if I had infinite time on my hands, I could have made a custom table or plinth. The current one is basically my bedside table; it's from the room that I've done most of my work for this project in. As lovely a table as it is, it draws attention

slightly to itself rather than letting the zines have the viewer's full attention.

Despite these self-critiques, I am pleased with my final installation, the work, and the effort that has gone into the whole thing. One of the first elements that comes to mind that I like most is seeing my own handwriting on such a large scale in the works on the big right wall. It was definitely the right move to step away from the digital fonts and into that more personal evocation. It also gives some text elements more emphasis or emotion where a font could not. The distortion of being printed so large, in combination with the wheatpasting (and probably also how they were digitally overlaid) gives them a sort of fuzz or glow which a simple font would not.

Speaking of scale, I am very glad to have finally made something on such a big scale. I can always go bigger, but this is the biggest I've done in all my time at Elam. In terms of the image, the scale is also interesting. From a distance and pieced together, the images are clear; you don't even think the images are that grainy or distorted. However in my process of making, it's fascinating to see the poster go from grainy squares of smudges of colour to the laid out puzzle on the floor, to the fully knitted together

image on the wall. It's not grainy, but it's made up of grains.

The way I overlapped things on the right wall is very successful in my view, especially in comparison to my first attempt on the left wall. It pulls both the works and the wall together, into direct conversation and relationship with each other rather than being their own individual works that happen to be displayed together. I definitely wanted the installation to be a work in itself in this way, and I'm happy that it can be read in that way.

I also enjoy the materiality and imperfection of the posters. The wrinkles and alignment errors add visual interest and depth. They break up the straight lines and right angles, the sort of grid the posters attempt to operate on. They also evoke the body; the person who put them up or the fact that they were put up by a person. This is similar to the way I operate as an editor in my zines. Yes, all of these elements exist out in the world, but the fact that they're here, together, implies someone pulled them together for a purpose, to tell a story. You don't need to know who made them in order to experience the work and come to your own meanings.

In the same vein of materiality, lastly I enjoy the distinctly temporary nature of both the

posters and zines. Sure, I have the digital files and could print the posters again if I needed to or felt like it, but the environment will never be the same, neither will the paper wrinkle in the same spots. Even if I installed in the same place, I could never get it exactly same. There's a beauty in this to me, similar to the fleeting nature of everything else in life. I (and everyone else) have to sit back and enjoy them as they are now, for the limited time that they're up. I do plan on printing more of the zines later down the line, but even then, those will not be engaged with inside the installation that they are now. Those copies will not be the x/20 that were printed and bound for the 2025 Grad Show either.

This is one of the reasons I'm looking forward to the Grad Show;

Apart from nitpicking the form of my Capstone work, there are a few things that I will be bearing in mind as I move forward in my practice. One of the greatest criticisms of my work throughout the semester was the lack of diversity in different bodies in my work. The lack of people of colour in my work has been called out, as well as the lack of transgender bodies, and women.

My methods of picking images for my zines and posters have always been what catches my eye, what I'm personally attracted to. I am demonstrating my own sexuality, my own queerness. Perhaps I could have thought deeper about this when I was creating work urging the wider queer community to take action, though I did not put these two ideas together until it was too late. After it was brought up however, I did go out of my way to look for more queer people of colour to add to my collage picture collection.

seeing everyone's first and probably only experience within the space. I'm also looking forward to seeing how people who've seen my smaller stuff react to the increased scale. As always with my zines I am curious as to what kinds of people will take them home. Or react in interesting ways - I've had people pick up some of my other zines, read a page, go 'AGH!' put it down and leave. Entertaining.

The finished installation and the handing in of my workbook are decidedly not the conceptual end of this project. Researching and collecting things for it has opened up many different avenues for continuations and branching off points.

This is to make excuses of course. Representation is important, especially for those who are not the overrepresented white gays and lesbians of the queer community. Perhaps if my project involved photography, and I were taking photos of my own friends and community (as suggested repeatedly during my project) there would be a greater diversity in bodies. It's definitely a perspective I will be taking into my future projects.

There is a text I read a couple of months before beginning capstone that I am now reminded of: *Facing Sameness: Reconsidering the Radically of Tom of Finland* by Hunter Scott. It describes how intertwined and worshiped whiteness and a certain able-bodied masculinity are within Tom of Finland's work, and how that has affected gay perceptions of what 'good' masculinity or gayness is. This would have perhaps been a good thing to read in the context of Capstone, rather than outside of it where it was easily pushed aside. It's also something I'll be reading again to reflect on my own attractions.

Putting this aside, outside of both form and concept I have learned a lot about general artist practice through Capstone. One of the key takeaways from this project is learning how to interrogate my own work outside (and alongside) critique. The following are questions that shaped the approaches I have taken this semester, which hopefully will be helpful to someone out there, at least in part.

What is my message?

What is the work's function or purpose?

What is the work saying? What is it saying *about* what is left out? What is it saying *with* what is left out?

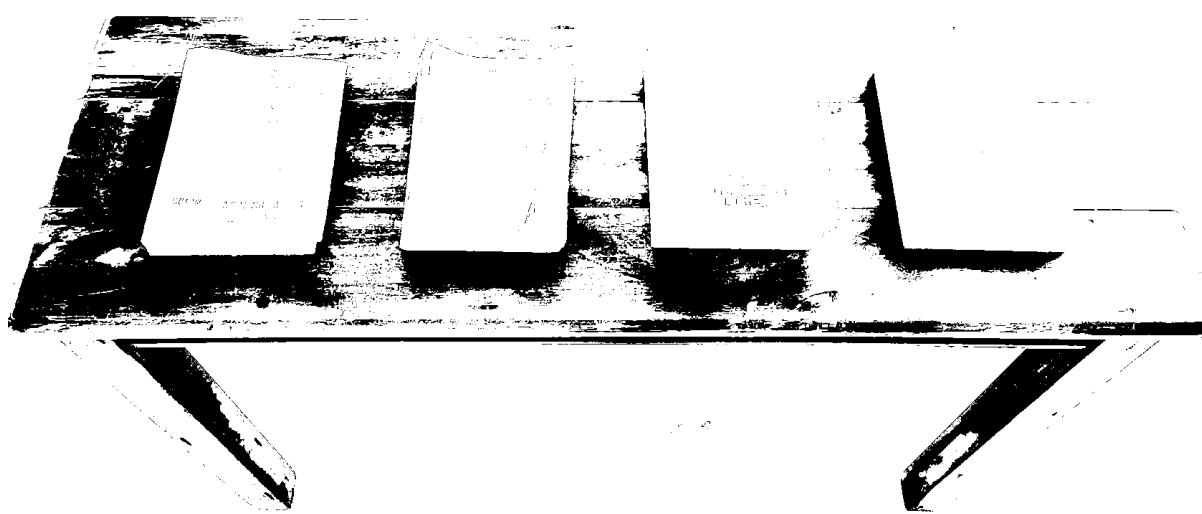
Who is my intended audience? Who am I addressing? Who will see it?

How does this work engage with the wider world? How do I *want* it to engage with the wider world?

Where does this work fit into the *art* world?

So where to from here? Well. The first step is printing and binding this publication. Step two is to keep making work, that's the real challenge. My things-to-read list is now over 20 items long, so that's probably a place to start, including the classics I have somehow not yet read; *Ways of Seeing* (Berger, 1972), *In Defense of the Poor Image* (Steyer, 2009), *The Medium is the Message* (McLuhan, 1967), *Queer Art: A Freak Theory* (Lorenz, 2012), and also finishing reading *Bringing out Roland Barthes* (Miller, 1992). Writing is finally calling to me, so maybe I'll do the writing I planned but never got to do for Capstone. Maybe I'll publish that, maybe I won't.

Who knows what the future brings? All I know is that summer is approaching faster than I'd like, and that I need to get a job with more hours.



Biographies

The Artist

Zach Muir is an artist from Tāmaki Makaurau, who will be finishing a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Elam in 2026. His current practice consists of writing, collage, publication, and drawing. His work focuses on the contemporary queer experience in relation to queer histories, merging personal experience with a research and archive-based practice to create works that present both the realities of queer life as well as the potential for queer utopias within and beyond contemporary realities.

His work can be found online on his website zach-00.neocities.org, or his Instagram @zach.b_00. He publishes under ZER0 Publishing.

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Contributors

Ambrose Marloch

Ambrose is a Pākehā artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau. He is studying Law and Fine Arts, though he has also taken an eclectic mix of other courses. He is interested in queerness, cultural identities, construction of meaning, and car crashes.

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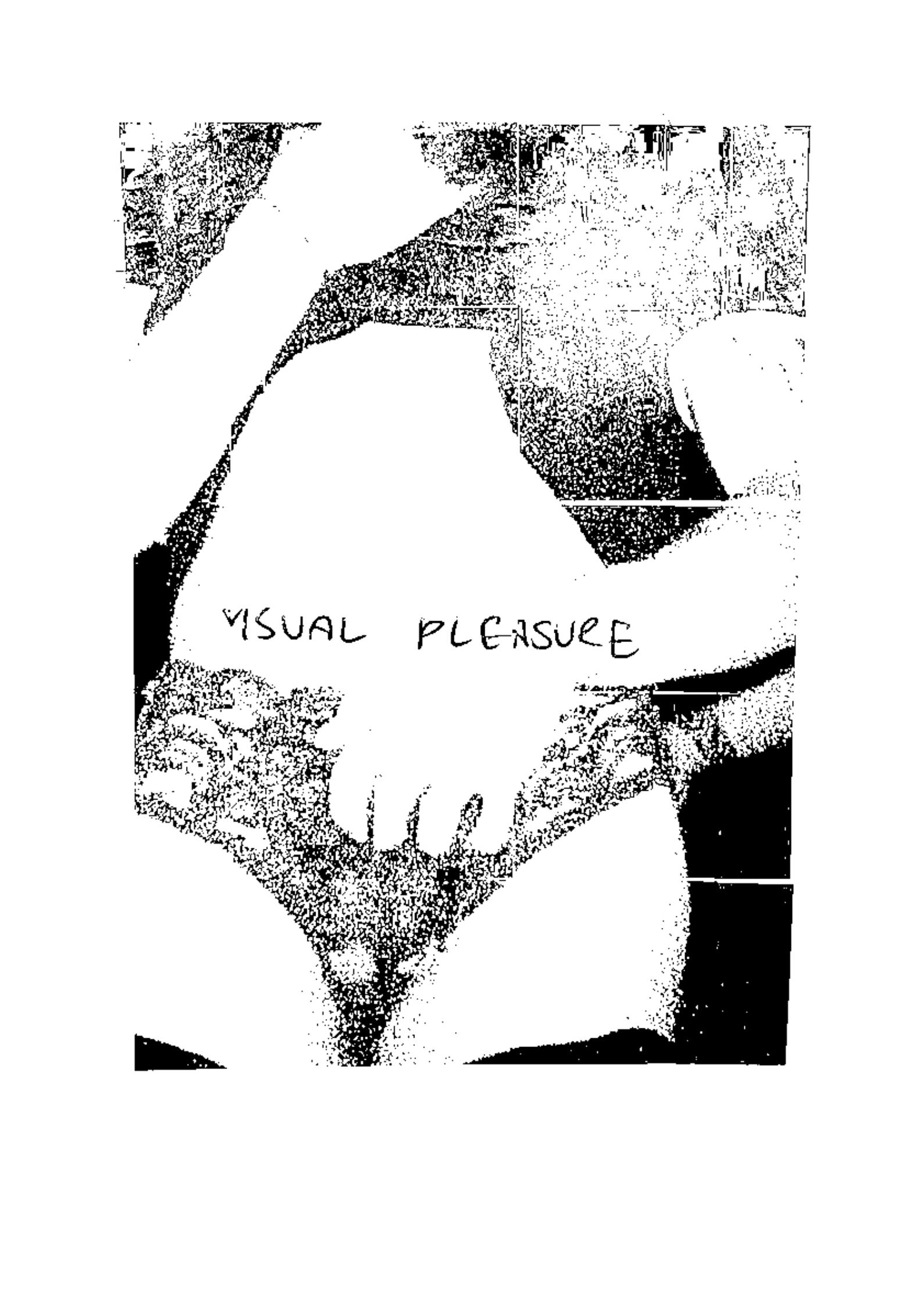
Pia

Pia is an artist based in Aotearoa. They study Computer Science and Fine Arts at the University of Auckland. They are passionate about superficiality and trolling, as well as technology, art, and cultural/cognitive change.

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VISUAL PLEASURE