

Quilting Queer Community Line



My Garden

Let me tell you about my garden growing in full bloom
about the daffodil that brightens my life with love
everyday

the Violet sharing their gift of spiritual guidance
the rose that shares their heart and poetry with
vulnerability

The fern building connections with everyone around
them working hard to make it through the struggles
life throws their way

The Marigold working to bring about healing
the bleeding heart with resilience and lessons to teach
about the strength we have when we hold one another

The colourful snapdragons that defy expectations,
The daisy rainbows full of life

The girasol stitching intergenerational connections of
celebration and reclamation

The lavender growing as an act of resistance

The green carnations and pansies reminding me of my
queerness,

The poppy resisting through difficult conditions

The flowers are a kaleidoscope of love showing every
colour of the rainbow

The weeping willow tree bringing shade to cool the
garden on hot days

the droplets of water that come to nourish the flowers
holding space for joy and sorrow

The sun that nourishes the growth of the plants

The earth that grounds the plants giving them a home
sweet home of love

The stars hanging from the sky at night bringing light

The butterflies that flutter from one flower to the next

The bees buzzing around the garden pollinating the
plants

The fish are swimming in a nearby pond

The birds soaring free in the air reminding me of
dragons and unicorns

Mythical and magical land

This garden of mine

This Earth so divine

In nature it doesn't matter if I'm a boy or a girl

I am and always have been both/and

Still here, still queer, and won't disappear

And the flowers continue to grow

And the lives continue to dance

And I am standing here in awe of the beauty of my
garden, my surroundings, and environment,

the strength of my chosen family and friends who
bring me sustenance,

I'm grateful for every piece of it,

every stitch of the quilt comforts my spirit,

this creation made with love

in honour of a community

that helps me grow and blossom

Poem of reflection on the quilts written by Mabe Kyle

Although I've known about my queerness for years, sharing it openly is a more recent chapter. My contributions are pinback buttons, each one discovered in found books from thrift shops or gifted. Every button pressed is a timestamp, a profound token representing a part of me, or a snapshot that reminds me of one of the beautiful handkerchiefs. Like buttons, I don't need to be the centerpiece, I am a connecting piece— holding space, quietly powerful. That's also how I aspire to show up in my work as an expressive arts therapist guiding groups; gently, safely, intentionally, and holding with love & accountability. When Mabe invited me into this project, I said yes without hesitation because anything they ask of me is rooted in trust & care. But I became overwhelmed holding the bandana as I didn't know how to sew. That's why the buttons felt so relieving to press, and supported my ADHD in not having to choose only one idea.

Part of me still wonders: Am I queer enough? And yet, the ways I have been welcomed into the queer community have not only affirmed me—they have aligned me with purpose in showing up fully as myself, supporting others in doing the same. This project is an honour to be part of. Like my journey into queerness, it's just the first of many steps.

Anto is a Queer HK Chinese-Canadian spoken word performance artist, facilitator, mentor, producer, student & writer. He has toured across Canada and Asia featuring on Hong Kong Comedy Festival, Verses Festival of Words & TO Poetry Department's City Block Poetry. He is the founder of the Canada Council funded InnerGenerational and his album of the same name just released during Replay Storytelling Festival 2025. He ran expressive art therapy groups with Queer Art Therapy like "the Art of Masculine" and "Getting Bi+". His life work centres on expansion, intersectionality, and self-love through the page, stage and community.

My Non-Binary Metamorphosis



Created by
**TRACEY
HAMILTON**

A butterfly starts out believing they are a caterpillar and then they cocoon into a chrysalis where they dissolve into goo before metamorphizing into a new sense of self as a butterfly. They must then spread their colourful wings and take a leap of faith into the unknown, hoping they can soar to new heights and explore life from their new perspective. This is a great metaphor for my lived experience as an AFAB trans non-binary person. I needed to go courageously deep within to find my genuine self buried beneath a lifetime of social conditioning and trauma caused by cis-heteropatriarchy, and bring that self to the surface to live in authenticity, something that takes continuous vulnerability, self-love, and a strong connection with a community of care filled with supportive, trauma-informed, empathic people who show up for one another and come together to co-create joy.

Before this butterfly materialized, I mindfully let go of expectations of “excellence” and allowed myself to freely create using sparkling colourful patches rising from the darkness, where I used fabric from an old t-shirt to represent my traumatic and deeply painful history. My stitches are uneven, the fabric is cut jaggedly, and the beads are disorderly. This represents accepting that I am “good enough” with all my flaws, imperfections, and disabilities that impact my functioning and productivity. There is blank space left on the square to represent the freedom of emerging from being in a tight tense bud where I held my breath in fear and now having the space to expand my wings, take up space, and breathe more deeply as I continue to grow towards what nourishes my spirit.

Tracey (she/they) is a feminist philosopher and non-binary, queer, neurodiverse, disabled person with lived experience of poverty. They are passionate about social justice activism at the systems level and co-creating a community of care. They sing in The Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo-Wellington, an inclusive 2SLGBTQIA+ choir based in Guelph, ON.

*Our Only Grip is
Community*



Created by

RYE HUSTON

This piece is made with a sock sourced from my own inpatient stay at a hospital for my mental health. It has literally been imbued with the steps I've taken in life. Through that time, and all times, it is the folks - especially the trans folks - around me in my life that give me purpose and help me find the joy in life. I wanted this piece to be a commemoration to the community that holds us all together.

Rye Huston (she/it) is a queer and trans settler on the Haldimand Tract. It looks to find ways to build better worlds while acknowledging the current one, which requires finding pleasure and deconstructing systems of oppression. She is passionate about creating safer spaces for queer and trans folks, and finding the best doughnut in Waterloo Region.

The Well



Created by

CASSY DYCK

Red represents passion and life (as it is the colour of blood). I've always felt very profoundly and have had remarkable highs and lows. From a queer bisexual neurodivergent woman who has suffered greatly in my life, I wanted to acknowledge the deep well of pain that has made me who I am, and recognize that that well of pain has allowed me to experience magnificent joys too. Life is a story and good stories have tension and issues, but are resolved satisfactorily. The words of Kahlil Gibran in the text *The Prophet* came at a very formative time in my life, when I had experienced trauma and met incredible people who helped ease the journey. There is much wisdom in the words but the carved well filled with joy and sorrow has stayed with me. May I always have a full life and remember that both joy and sorrow are natural, beautiful, and to be expected during life on this earth.

Cassy Dyck is a queer Christian artist raised in Aylmer, Ontario; she also survived four years at Redeemer University College. Currently living in St. Thomas, she is pursuing a career as a librarian and has way too many hobbies including reading, pet portraiture, plant caretaking, cosplay, video gaming, cross-stitch, and 3D printing. Cassy also enjoys the incredible Queer Social community of St. Thomas, Ontario, and thinks that building and maintaining relationships is vital for our world to be beautiful 

Healing



Created by

ERIN HUSTON

I have been a long time dabbler in textile arts, mainly just bopping along and trying things out. I was thrilled to be able to contribute an orange square to this quilt, the colour that represents healing in Gilbert Baker's original flag. I've had the pleasure of working with queer and trans youth for many years now, and with my square wanted to symbolize the healing and wholeness that come with community that I've seen so many of the youth I work with embody time and time again.

Erin Huston (she/her) is a community-building facilitator and public educator. After finishing degrees at the University of Waterloo in Legal Studies and Peace & Conflict Studies, Erin pursued a Masters degree in Social Justice and Community Engagement at Wilfrid Laurier University. She is a bisexual, cisgender woman, and employs both academic education and lived experience to engage communities in exploring conversations about identity, belongings, relationships, and self-esteem using a trauma-informed, anti-oppressive lens. Outside of work, Erin likes to spend her time camping, hiking, and working on her next embroidery project.

Suns



Created by

**LAUREN
HUSTON**

My square holds various circles, each representing the sun. On the pride flag, yellow represents sunlight. Sunlight brings joy, energy and positivity. These are all elements that I hold dear, and believe are vital to the resilience and beauty of the queer community. Even with that truth, the sunlight can be difficult to hold onto in a world not built for you. I attached each circle with visible stitches, showing them strongly in place, or hastily holding on, some even being patched up and held together. No matter what, sunlight is strength and will always shine on.

Lauren Huston (she/they) is a queer, neurodivergent artist and photographer in rural Ontario. Her work is rooted in sustainability and nature. She enjoys working in the community to bring more accessible artistic opportunities as well as fostering safer spaces through their work with Strathroy Pride and business, The Studio Floor Creative. Lauren currently resides in Strathroy, Ontario where she grew up.

Kaleidoscope



Created by

SARAH KEENE

At first, I struggled with the design for my square. I felt compelled to use the existing pattern on the handkerchief but I also wanted to create something totally different, something that spoke to what queerness means to me.

I decided to start at the center with a burst of rainbow and worked in symmetrical layers from there. I looked to Pride flags for inspiration, for both palette and pattern, symbols and colours that spoke to my experiences and perceptions.

As each layer flowed into the next, it gradually became apparent that what was taking shape was a kaleidoscope, informed by my own queer identity. The finished product, a vibrant rainbow jumble, beautiful no matter how you look at it.

The border, comprised of Chappel Roan lyrics, perfectly summarizes this piece:

Every color of the rainbow
Don't be afraid to hold it close
It's never just a shape alone
Love is a kaleidoscope

Sarah Keene, HBA is a photographer and childcare worker from Brant County. A wife and mother of two, she enjoys writing, gardening and the arts.

Still here, still queer



Created by

**MICHIKO
BOWN-KAI**

My square is an homage to the Act Up logo which in itself references the pink triangles used to mark queer people in Nazi concentration camps during WW2. The idea of taking a symbol of persecution and reclaiming it in the name of fighting for our community speak to the ways that I understand my queerness to be inherently political. I know i am only as free as my queer and trans ancestors and my queer and trans siblings have been willing to fight. “Still here, still queer” is an expression i have been using for many years to celebrate queer existence as a form of resistance: life is too long to live smaller for the sake of a bigot’s comfort.

Michiko (they/them) is a rural queer with a love for plants, crafts, and dance. They are a minister in The United Church, highland dancer, who loves to bake sourdough to share with anyone who finds themselves at their table.



Created by

MICHELLE



Femme Daddy's Home Sweet Home



Created by

C L DOUGLAS

Years ago, I found a name tag in a queer novelty store that said Femme Daddy. Something drew me to it and I picked it up. My friends all loved the tag and insisted I wear it. A roommate borrowed it for an arts display on queer identity. They never returned it. To my surprise, I got two brand new Femme Daddy name tags from my friends for Christmas that year. I've never been a queer person that's been comfortable with labels, but somehow this one felt both like a gift and a home. Many people are curious if the label pertains to a specific queer or kink identity- but I prefer to think of it as more of a spiritual/personal identity. I've had a lot of queer platonic relationships over the years and often stumble into something that I believe is best described as queerplatonic kink. Over the years, my friends have trusted me with helping them try out new names, pet names, and gender expressions. Some times that's been reading someone a bedtime story and tucking them in with the chosen name/pet name that feels like home, complimenting style and expression with the petnames people dream of hearing, or coming over and calling out petnames/motivational statements while someone cleans their house. Why stick to boring old housecleaning and body doubling when your friend can call you a good little ____ as you clean the dishes? I don't really talk about this identity that much as I fear it being misunderstood. For me it's about having the honour and privilege to help my friends cultivate a sense of home whether physical, spiritual, expressively, or a personal identity. It's not about power, but about vulnerability, safety, and being seen without judgement. I think for me a world that feels most like home, is one in which all my friends and loved ones feel at home and cherished. And I try to bring that spirit into everything I do, even though I cannot be and do not pretend to be a home. I seek to offer a spirit of home and hospitality and hope that everyone can find that for/in themselves.

C L Douglas is currently training to be a music psychotherapist. They consider home to be lands within Treaty 4, Mi'kma'ki, and the Dish with One Spoon treaty. CL is a multi-instrumental musician, music teacher, and theatre technician who is trying to spend more time developing their own artistic practice. They can also be found baking, cooking, drinking tea, and crafting.

My Queer Little Heart



Created by

MAICHINA VERI

My Queer Little Heart.” Embroidery floss, cotton fabric, glue. Completed December 2024.

This is how my queer heart beats: with love, of course, but also fear, grief, wonder, and awe. These emotions are very real and feel so big – it's as if my heart could burst with all of them. For this piece to accurately reflect my queerness, I had to include all of these aspects in it.

Instead of defining each feeling as it relates to myself, I'd like for folks to reflect on how these emotions exist and show up in our communities and, essentially, our lives. How do we overcome, how do we celebrate, how do we love?

Maichina Veri is a writer and community organizer in Brantford, Ontario who uses pens and threads to create various artistic pieces. Her identity can't be pinned down exactly, but exists somewhere in the realms of the queer and the complex.

*Queer Jpy Will
Persist*



Created by

KAY HUGHES

One of my absolute favourite things is the pure joy that queer people exude when allowed to exist as their truest selves. In a time where the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is under attack, where we are actively being told not to be ourselves and where our joy is being suppressed, I wanted my square to exist within this community quilt as a reminder that our queer joy will persist!

Using scraps of fabric, I created a pathway, representing the nonlinear journey of queerness. The colourful braided yarn around the edge signifies strength and togetherness. While the rhinestone lettering is intended to be flashy and eye-catching, it also gives a nod to the fabulous drag community, who are constantly being misrepresented in mainstream media. In the lower right hand corner, I used paint, yarn, feathers and rhinestones to recreate a collaborative art piece originally created between myself and Mabe Kyle, which has brought and will continue to bring queer joy.

Kay Hughes is a multimedia artist in Brantford with ties to community care. They are the organizer of the Neurodivergent Artist Collective which aims to make art more accessible and build community.

Growing Flowers and Hanging Stars



Created by

A.J.

I honestly decided on my design accidentally. I cannot remember what it was but I was thinking about something and thought “growing flowers and hanging stars” And then I thought “hey that’s a good idea for the handkerchief!” This is my first attempt at embroidery and I’m pretty proud of it! I really love stars and was glad I could incorporate them. I don’t have much of a love for flowers but after this project, I can appreciate their beauty better.

For me, community is joy and warmth, specifically achieved through the beauty of diverse people coming together. I was interested in participating in this project because I think the finished quilt will be a lovely snapshot of what it is to create community; bringing a group of people together, give them the free range to individually create and then bring it together to create something bigger than ourselves. There was no right or wrong way to do this. We just brought our authentic selves forward and created something harmonious.

A.J. (she/her) is simultaneously a silly goofy girl and jaded old woman. She is a queer, neurodivergent, woman of colour and a mother to a sweet kiddo. She enjoys good times w/friends, nature, shopping, conversations about reimagining the world and raging out against the system. She also enjoys spreading kindness and compassion(when not in a jaded mood

Rakui



Created by

LIZBET TARR

I'm new to sewing and embroidery so I wanted to try something different than my usual art for this piece which is very focused on horror. I've had a lot of anxiety over my identity and, up until my last year of highschool, I didn't even have the language to express myself. So, when I was thinking up possible designs I knew I wanted something comforting. And being a total horse girl (gender neutral) that's horses. While I struggled with my understanding of gender and self expression, my obsession was constant.

Lizbet Tarr is a Paris-based writer obsessed with everything horror. After a brief stint as an office worker, they fled to the countryside to work with horses and create zines. They're most known for their pieces: *Hundred-Acre Bloodbath* and *Chemical Valley High*. They can be found haunting poetry nights and decrepit graveyards. Their future goal is simply to write paranormal romances.

The Rainbow Dragons



Created by

JESS GIBBS

When I volunteered to do this piece, I searched for a quote that I could resonate with because I feel that us, queer people, who stand together strong can make a difference in the world, because we exist. I then chose to use a dragon theme because I feel that while dragons might be a fantasy/fictional creature, they are also powerful and represent that strength for me. The strength it takes to endure, grow, and fight for myself, for those I love, and for life. Each dragons are filled with the colours of certain pride flags which also represents myself just existing in this world, not just as queer but also as a disabled person who struggles often with self identity, and a lot of barriers out there.

I felt like my dragon was to go on a quest to find who I am, and to embrace myself. Another reason I chose the dragons theme is because of my father who was my biggest supporter in my life.

I used embroidery thread, and my basic embroidery skills to create different dragons around the quote; “We are here, we are queer, we won’t disappear.” It took me about two months to finish, and I am very happy with the results, and inspired to now create another to keep for myself.

Jess (she/her) works as a dog sitter and foster mom for puppies which she really enjoys. She loves to read and has a huge library that she has collected over the years. Her other love is to craft and draw. She uses a variety of mediums when she gets a creative idea. She also loves doing puzzles and hanging out with her friends. She is one of the creators and co-hosts of the group, All Out Craft and Chat get together where queer people can hang out and create crafts together comfortably.

*Happily Queer
Queerly Happy*



Created by

**ALEJANDRA
HIGUERA**

This celebratory square is a joyful declaration of queer identity, centered around the phrase "Queerly Happy! Happily Queer." These words are both affirmation and resistance—a bold claim to joy, belonging, and wholeness in a world that often denies queer people space to thrive. The mountains and waves echo the Andes, a reminder of where I come from, grounding my identity in ancestral land and memory. Created in collaboration with my mother, Luz Tirado, who supported the sewing, this piece carries intergenerational care and connection. It is a vibrant offering of pride, rooted in place, love, and the freedom to be fully, beautifully oneself.

Alejandra Higuera (she/her) is a queer multidisciplinary, visual storyteller focusing on video, illustration, animation, embroidery, and projection. Her work focuses on themes of migration, feminism, memory, grief, healing and ritual. She is committed to creating spaces for dialogue about the complexities of our experiences that celebrate our differences. Further, as an artist/parent, she understands that she is learning from her child as much as she is teaching her. Higuera has received grants and residencies from the Ontario Arts Council, MOTHRA, and SummerWorks Lab. Her work has been presented by the Regent Park Film Festival, the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival, the Latino Canadian Cultural Association, and TO Live.

AKA Daisy Rainbow

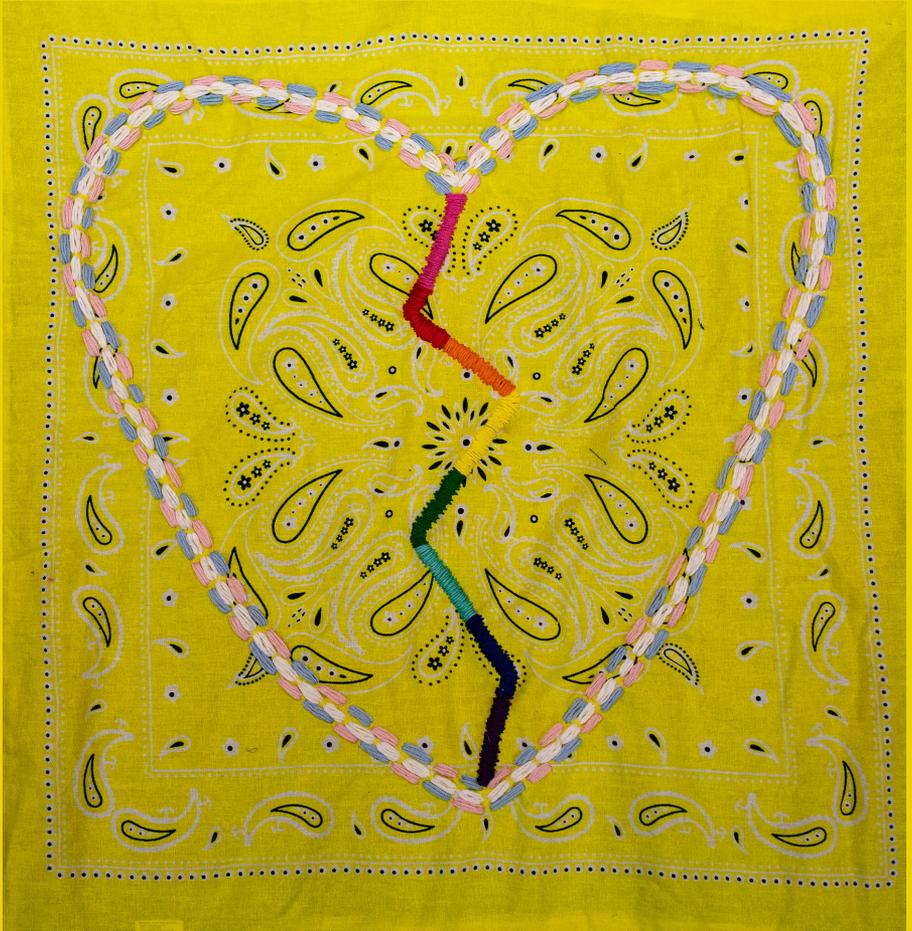


Created by

BOBI

Bobi is a queer artist happily married for 17 years.

Whole Hearted



Created by
AERY
STRINGER

No Name



Created by

PRINX LYDIA

My quilt square is inspired by my ever changing gender identity and the age old question "are you a boy or a girl" to which there is no answer. The spiraling shape is to express the questions, shifting perceptions and the feeling of constant repetition of correcting people/coming out.

Prinx Lydia is a textile artist and clothing designer/maker. They have over 15 years experience working in London (UK) as a professional designer, pattern cutter and stitcher. They cut their teeth in the London theatre and film scene working with many high profile clients, such as Vivienne Westwood, The Spice Girls, The Gorillaz and The Royal Opera House (among many others).

In their own work they specialise in queer and gender non conforming clothing and creating safe spaces for people to express themselves through fashion.

They own and run a local shop making clothing for their local community in Paris and surrounding area.

*The Only Way
Out Is Through*



Created by

TAY BERZINS

"The only way out is through"

The concept for this square came to me while I was ebbing and flowing through the pain of being in my 30s & having my parents reject me. It was a choice that would have stung regardless, but materialized in the wake of a year that included a major job change, a reality altering breakup, and a big medical diagnosis. I was doomscrolling to stave off the feels, but the news was also very very bad.

I suddenly found myself wondering how the hell anything could move any direction but sideways right now. What is forward? Where are we going? How do me & my chosen family, my community inch towards a future? Is the future forward?

I found myself remembering that although it's painful and gross, but the only way out of these times is through. And in the truth of this, nothing is linear or straightforward. Through is whatever we decide. And through we shall go!

Tay Berzins (they/them) is a writer & forest freak who labours in the terrain of community organizing by both trade & passion. Tay loves to make things, eat sandwiches, chaos garden, wander (both in nature & in mind), and hang out with their familiar (a 7lb chihuahua-mix called Gert). Tay believes that magic is both real & everywhere, humour can temper any storm, and that their calling in life is mischief since they were born under a bad sign.

Dyke



Created by

**KEERA
MERKLEY**

I love the word dyke — sharp, defiant, and unapologetically ours. This square is a celebration of the parts of queer identity that refuse to be palatable, especially to the straight gaze. I wanted to honor the multidimensionality of dyke identity: femme and tough, joyful and angry, tender and unyielding. For a word historically weaponized to mean “too much”— too masculine, too fat, too racialized, too loud — this piece reclaims it with femme flair and layered pride. I wanted to stitch the contradictions — the femme and the defiant, the tenderness and rage — into something whole. Dyke now stands with pride in every thread.

The lettering was shaped by my partner, Torin (they/them), whose handwriting is far better than mine. Together, we chose shades from the lesbian flag to represent that collective pride in the fabric.

Keera (they/she) is a dyke.

*Joy is an act of
resistance*



Created by

**RACHEL
THORBURN**

When I thought about what I wanted my quilt square to represent, it was hard not to think about how we live in a time where I am afraid for my trans loved ones, and unsure what the future holds. This winter, I learned that a young trans person I used to work with died, likely by suicide. I felt immobilized and lost. I remember Blake as a ball of light, wickedly funny, and a talented creative. I was always so impressed with their ability to know themselves so well and feel comfortable expressing it at such a young age, especially as an adult that continues to grapple with my own sense of gender identity and expression. When Mabe asked me to create this piece, I had been thinking hard about this phrase “Joy is an act of resistance”. All of the systemic discrimination we are seeing right now is designed intentionally to demotivate us. I am determined to continue finding spots of light in a world that continues to confront us with darkness, and do my best to share it with those in my community who need it, too. They can take our rights, but they cannot take away our joy.

Rachel Thorburn (she/they) is a queer person, child and youth therapist, and emerging embroidery enthusiast. Rachel has had the privilege of being a part of several initiatives to provide peer support to queer youth, including Open Closet in London, ON and the Rural Ontario Community of Queer Youth, founded by Mabe Kyle. Rachel is currently completing a dissertation on the role of peer support for queer youth suicide prevention, and beginning a community-based program based on this work as part of the Sprout Fellowship Initiative. Rachel currently lives in Toronto, while completing what feels like a never-ending doctoral program in School and Clinical Child Psychology.

That's so gayyy



Created by

**RUBYYY
JONES**

I started my work as an artist and activist through the written word blogging and writing about sexuality, feminism, art and culture in London, UK; I love to bring words to all the art I create, especially any visual works; My work is punchy, provocative and, often, short and so is my series of artworks featuring short statements and single words to evoke the audience. My creation for this quilt invites humour, reflection and feelings of solidarity; it was wonderful to be a part of a community piece, thank you Mabe.

Ruby Jones is a creator, curator and Creature of the Night! Ruby has been moonlighting in arty nightlife spheres for the last 15 ish years in London, UK and across Europe; Ruby's work in the body and the bawdy has seen them hosting events, headlining festivals, directing productions, choreographing movement, giving creative consultancy and shaping the Cabaret scene as a mentor and live artist.

A sparkling star of the Queerlesque movement, Ruby Jones' work is provocative, poignant and playful; Ruby's work in Queer Performance has taken them to stages all over the world including: Copenhagen International Performance Art Festival, Vienna Live Art Festival, Florence's Queer Performance Festival and more.

Waterbaby



Created by

**JESS
DOROSHENKO**

I've always loved fish, I find them beautiful. I also love all that they represent. Their inherent fluidity- they live in literal fluid- and the ways in which they can adapt to their surroundings. There are so many forces trying to box people into their genders under the guise of science or some "natural order as it relates to sex" but fish exist in direct opposition to that idea. So many of them can change their sex, and it's an important reminder that nature is much more fluid than it is fixed.

Putting my square together was an exercise in imperfection and being gentle with myself. I love working with felt because it is forgiving, and it also really captures the colours and beauty of the fish I chose, a goldfish and a salmon. I used a punch-needle to do some of the details, and it's a skill I am still learning. The underside of my piece is a total mess, and I initially had a much more complicated vision, but creating this piece helped me to remember that there is beauty in simplicity and making mistakes is how you learn.

Jess Doroshenko (she/her) finds beauty in all the weird messiness of life. She loves supporting people in finding their most authentic selves and living into that. She lives into her most authentic self and her Queerness by following her fluidity wherever it may take her. She has spent most of her life advocating for gender equity and helping to build communities where everyone belongs. She loves games and "third places" and facilitating fun, and she believes common ground can always be found through play. She is happiest in or around water or amongst trees and her closest companion is a big bear-of-a-dog called Gustav.

Free as a bird



Created by

DELL PITTMAN

Dell Pittman is a queer artist and writer based in Ontario. He enjoys art as a form of expression, healing, and storytelling, and is always looking for opportunities to experiment with new mediums and connect with the other artists in his local community.

Petals of us



Created by

NICOLE

This square was made with love, in honour of a community that helps me grow and blossom.

Red Thread



Created by

REN LAI

I began my piece by needle-felting a Chinese dragon in the middle, and I then used embroidery to highlight the paisley print on the handkerchief. I thought the teardrop shapes looked more lively when highlighted, and they reminded me of visual depictions of thoughts and feelings emerging from the dragon's mind. In terms of colour symbolism, the rainbow thread is meant to represent my queer identity, and the prominent use of the colour red is meant to represent my identity as a Chinese adoptee. The colour red has important symbolism in China, and represents (among many things) both happiness and luck. I chose to represent both queerness and Chinese identity because both aspects are fundamental to my personal identity and affect how I move through the world.

Ren (she/her) is a queer policy analyst who has been handicrafting since she was a child. She has been an enthusiastic crocheter for the last few years and currently runs a crochet group for the queer community. The group is meant to help other queer handicrafters connect with one another over a shared love of fibre arts.

Our Roots Run Deep



Created by

**LAUREN
DRUIF**

A tree growing strong, flowered with as many colours of the inclusive pride flag as possible, with roots going deep and gold flowing upwards, representing strength, honour and dignity.

When presented with the task of representing queer community and what it means to me, my thoughts immediately went to our history. The people who have come before us and put their lives at risk to fight for queer people to be able to live out and proud. That tradition carries on still, and while working on my piece I spent the time meditating on the gratitude I feel, and what my responsibility is.

Lauren Druif enjoys creating in many different forms, until now largely for themselves. Currently they are working in theatre, doing hair and make up. They enjoy using art as a way for them to connect with their identity, the natural world around them, and their history.

Unfolding my wings



Created by

MABE KYLE

When I was looking at this handkerchief I felt like the pattern that was on it appeared to be a butterfly. I decided that as someone who is transgender and has ADHD that making a butterfly would be a beautiful way to symbolize my queerness. I found ways to weave other symbols that are important to queerness and neurodivergence throughout the piece including over 30 different flags represented, highlighting the flags closest to me inside the butterfly. I included flowers and the life stages of the butterfly and dandelion on the piece to symbolize the growth that I have experienced throughout my life journey gaining pride in my queerness and confidence in myself. I included poetic affirmations inside the wings and around the border as poetry is my main artistic modality and I like incorporating it into my work. The affirmations inside the wings are to remind myself of the ways I am connected to nature, community, queerness, and art. The affirmations around the border remind me of the ways I have grown and gives me hope for the ways I will continue growing. I created this piece through hand embroidery and needle felting over nine months. The outside border is sewn on with a machine.

Mabe Kyle (they/them/theirs) is a disabled transgender peer support specialist and an expressive arts therapist in training. They enjoy building community by organizing events through Brant Pride and the Rural Ontario Community of Queer Youth, two grassroots organizations that they co-founded. They are currently working on editing an anthology of Rural Queer Stories with Caitlin Press. They were selected as a Community Changemaker by 8 80 Cities and as a Rural Community Changemaker by the Ontario Rural Institute. Mabe was raised and lives on their family's farm on the Haldimand Tract in the County of Brant.

Text on Mabe's handkerchief

On the butterfly's wings

Top left wing:

I will build community by showing up time and again like butterflies who return through migration.

Top right wing:

I will reciprocate what I receive like butterflies who pollinate the flowers whose nectar they drink.

Bottom left wing:

I will create beautiful art from my heart by expressing what I feel like butterflies who flutter dancing in the field.

Bottom right wing:

I will be flamboyantly queer and delightful like butterflies who spread their wings bright and colourful

On the border

Top border:

I believe I can transform by expanding my comfort zone like an egg cracking to experience the unknown.

Right border:

I believe I can transfigure by nourishing my soul like a caterpillar growing bigger and bigger

Bottom border

I believe I can transmogrify by trusting my process like a chrysalis going through metamorphosis

Left Border

I believe I can transcend by enacting my dreams like a butterfly unfolding its wings

In June of 2024 I had attended a leadership training program for youth in Nova Scotia. At the end of the week long training there was a blanket that everyone had put gifts on. One of the ones that was left at the end was “One Handkerchief Makes a Small Quilt” by Margó Takacs Marshall and I decided to grab it as my mom and grandma were both passionate quilters. After looking through the book I had the idea of making a queer community quilt with handkerchiefs. Knowing a bit about the importance of community quilts in the queer community through the AIDS quilt that was created and is the largest community quilt ever created and knowing about the handkerchief code that was used in the queer community in history I thought it would be a cool idea to combine them into what became this project. I am amazed by the creativity and generosity of the 31 artists that contributed to this project through creating a square, buttons, or taking photos for this zine. I would like to thank Amber Farrington of Honey and Lux for assistance with the photography for this zine and Prinx Lydia for helping to put these quilts together and all of the artists that contributed a quilt block. I’m grateful that this project was able to not only come into fruition but to be such a rich bounty of art and love for community.



This zine contains the artist statements and bios of those who contributed to this project as well as photos of the squares taken by Amber Farrington of Honey and Lux Photography. It was compiled by Mabe Kyle, the visionary behind this queer community quilt project. Thanks to the Laurier Students' Public Interest Research Group (LSPIRG) for grant funding that in part made this project possible.