

COVID CAUTIOUS



QUEERS ZINE 2

EDITED BY STEEL TRANSPLANTS

COVID CAUTIOUS QUEERS ZINE

Creating this zine in 2024, year five of the COVID-19 pandemic feels more important than ever, in a time when pandemic denial, lack of safety and isolation are so prevalent for disabled and immunocompromised community members.

The first issue of this zine connected folks beyond borders in solidarity through art, language and virtual connections. This is one of the most powerful projects I have ever worked on. It is an honour to compile a second issue due to so much interest. They have both been created from my crib in solidarity. This zine is a reminder that we are not as alone as we feel most of the time, there is queer community that continues to keep each other safe and show solidarity across intersections.

A general content/trigger warning for discussions of mental health struggles, death, genocide, rage, grief and many other difficult emotions that come with being COVID cautious in a time of denial. This zine might bring up similar feelings for you, may you channel those into art or community support.

NOVEMBER 2024
@STEEL.TRANSPLANTS

OTHER COVID ZINES BY QUEERS: A NON-EXHAUSTIVE RESOURCE LIST

MASKING THROUGH BLACKNESS: MASK FITTING, SELF
EXPRESSION & COMMUNITY CARE BY SABRINA SIMS
CAN BE FOUND AT: [STARLYART.STUDIO/LINKS](https://starlyart.studio/links)

MASK UP, WE NEED YOU: PALESTINE SOLIDARITY,
COVID-19 AND THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION BY
SHEYAM GHIETH AND RIMONA ESKAYO
CAN BE FOUND AT: [LINKTR.EE/SHEYAMGHIETH](https://linktr.ee/sheyamghieth)

COVID IS A LABOR ISSUE BY SHEYAM GHIETH AND
RIMONA ESKAYO
CAN BE FOUND AT: [LINKTR.EE/SHEYAMGHIETH](https://linktr.ee/sheyamghieth)

WHY WE MASK: IT'S NOT "JUST A COLD" BY LAUREL
LYNN LEAKE
CAN BE FOUND AT:
[LAURELLYNNLEAKE.COM/WHYWEMASK](https://laurellynnleake.com/whywemask)

WHAT'S UP WITH COVID AND HOW TO PROTECT
YOURSELF 2024 EDITION BY HAZEL NEWLEVANT
CAN BE FOUND AT: [NEWLEVANT.COM/COVIDZINE](https://newlevant.com/covidzine)

HOW TO CHOOSE A (HIGH QUALITY) MASK BY ELLIOTT
GIANNINI
CAN BE FOUND AT: [CLEANAIROLY.ORG/MASKZINE](https://cleanairolly.org/maskzine)

RA & COVID BY MAR Z.-R.
CAN BE FOUND AT: [TINYURL.COM/RACOVIZINE](https://tinyurl.com/racovidzine)

**OTHER COVID ZINES BY QUEERS:
A NON-EXHAUSTIVE RESOURCE LIST**

**WHY I'M STILL MASKING IN 2024 BY JAM DOUGHTY
INSTAGRAM @WORMYORCHIDS**

**EVER WONDERED HOW YOU WOULD HAVE
BEHAVED AT THE HEIGHT OF THE HIV/AIDS
PANDEMIC?**

**YOU'RE DOING IT NOW BY STEVIE SPRINGS
CAN BE FOUND AT: COVIDANDHIV.CARRD.CO**

**THE SWISS CHEESE MODEL FOR LAYERED COVID
PROTECTION BY STEVIE SPRINGS
CAN BE FOUND AT: KO-FI.COM/STEVIESPRINGS**

**SURVIVAL TIPS FROM QUEER ELDERS: HOW
SURVIVING THE AIDS EPIDEMIC CAN HELP OUR
COMMUNITIES SURVIVE COVID-19**

**CAN BE FOUND AT:
IMAGININGFUTURES.CA/RESOURCES.HTML**

**LONG COVID IS A TRANS ISSUE (NOT ZINES)
CAN BE FOUND AT:
LONGCOVIDJUSTICE.ORG/TRANS**

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

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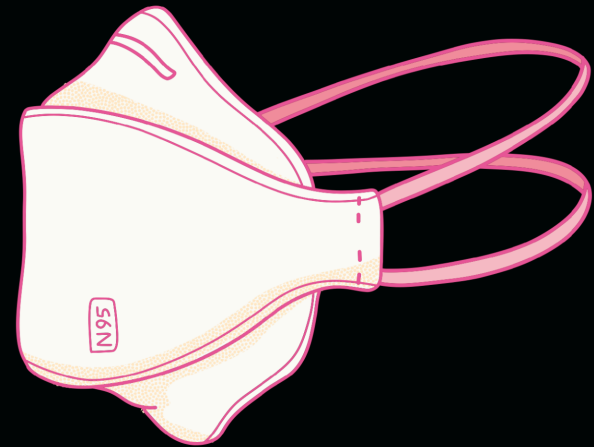


I'm tired, let's get takeaway. Another COVID surge, all of my friends got it. I cuddle my cat. **He is being so sweet today.** I keep seeing people being murdered. **My arms are getting bigger, I like it.** I feel like no one really knows me. To be loved is to be known. His jaw was hanging off. **I need to wash the dishes again.** I wish my body didn't hurt so much. **I can't wait for summer.** Why is that? Maybe I still associate it with a 6-week break. The lesser of two evils won, apparently. I can't get my words out recently. I'm just pleasing people and smiling, saying "okay". Keep all the big feelings inside so they don't explode. I don't know how to connect anymore. It's permissible to shoot out of boredom. How is it permissible to shoot out of boredom? **I'm sorry for snapping.** You see, it feels like my head is about to explode. **It just keeps happening.** I know, I know, I know. **What colour curtains? Green? Yeah, I like green a lot at the minute.** Apparently if you match your lipstick to your nipple, it'll be your perfect shade. Been listening to west end girls, pink pony club, talkin' bout a revolution, and a little respect on repeat. Odd mix of songs but they work. **I'm getting hairier on T. It's cool.** Saw a tweet about PrEP, but the author didn't mask. I don't understand but I'm glad she's encouraging PrEP. I miss my teenage self, she was fearless. How do I get back to that? **Night, sweet dreams. Oh, we need to change the bed tomorrow.** They don't even have a bed anymore. **And I forgot to take my meds again. Sleep well. I love you. So much.**

@t4tbutch@soygrrrrl

Creative inner monologue by Leo (he/they)

COME AND

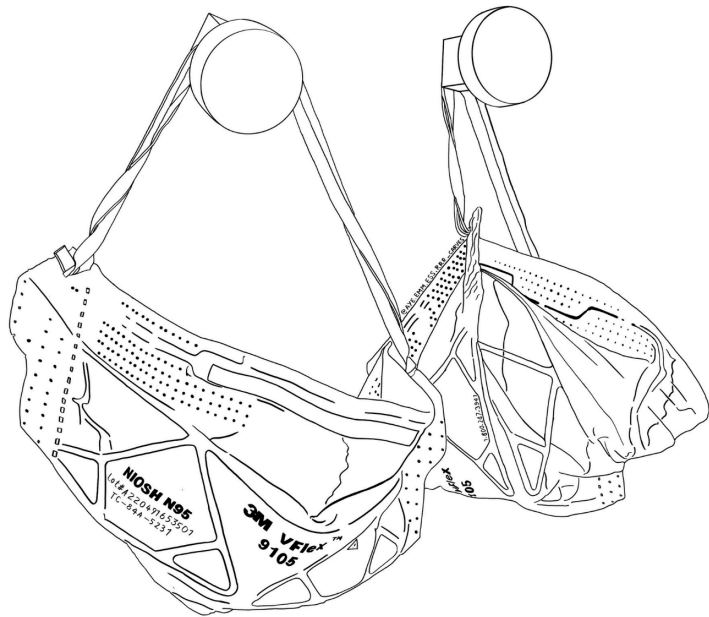


TAKE IT

SARAH DAY ARTS

**come and take it, may 5 2023, digital illustration
by sarah day (she/they)**

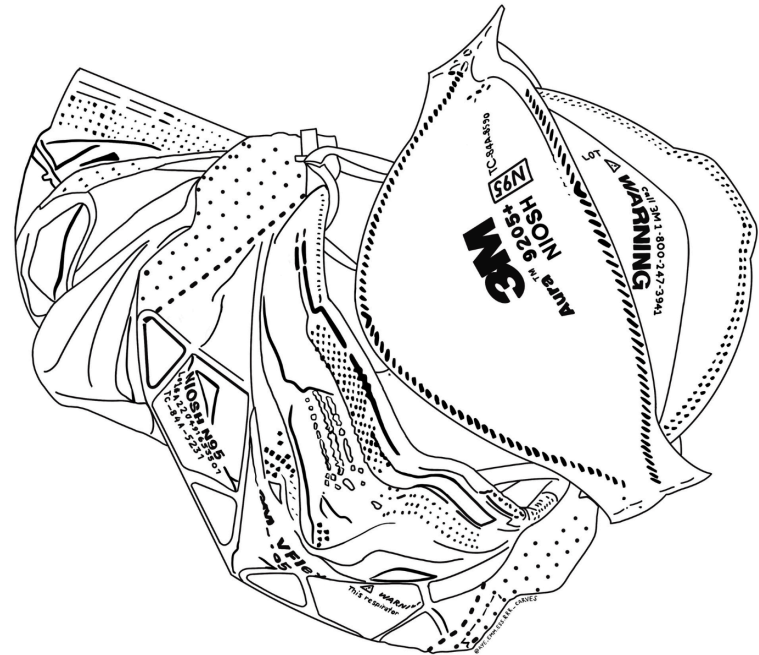
QUEER AS IN



WEAR A MASK

queer as in wear a mask, 19 July 2024, Digital
by sadie randall (they/them)

QUEER AS IN



MASK UP

queer as in wear a mask, 19 July 2024, Digital
by sadie randall (they/them)



Destroy The Ableist In Your Head, 2021, digitized marker illustration Judy Kuo (she/they)



Community Care, 2022, digital illustration by Judy Kuo (she/they)



**Access Intimacy, Watercolour brushpens on paper
by Jax Davis (they/them)**

December day

**Broken fingers on display,
I am spelling my misfortune out.
Something broke inside my brain
And I lost the ability to cry.**

**That cold day in December,
Turned my body into a cage.
And to make sure that I remember,
Thinking is all that I can do.**

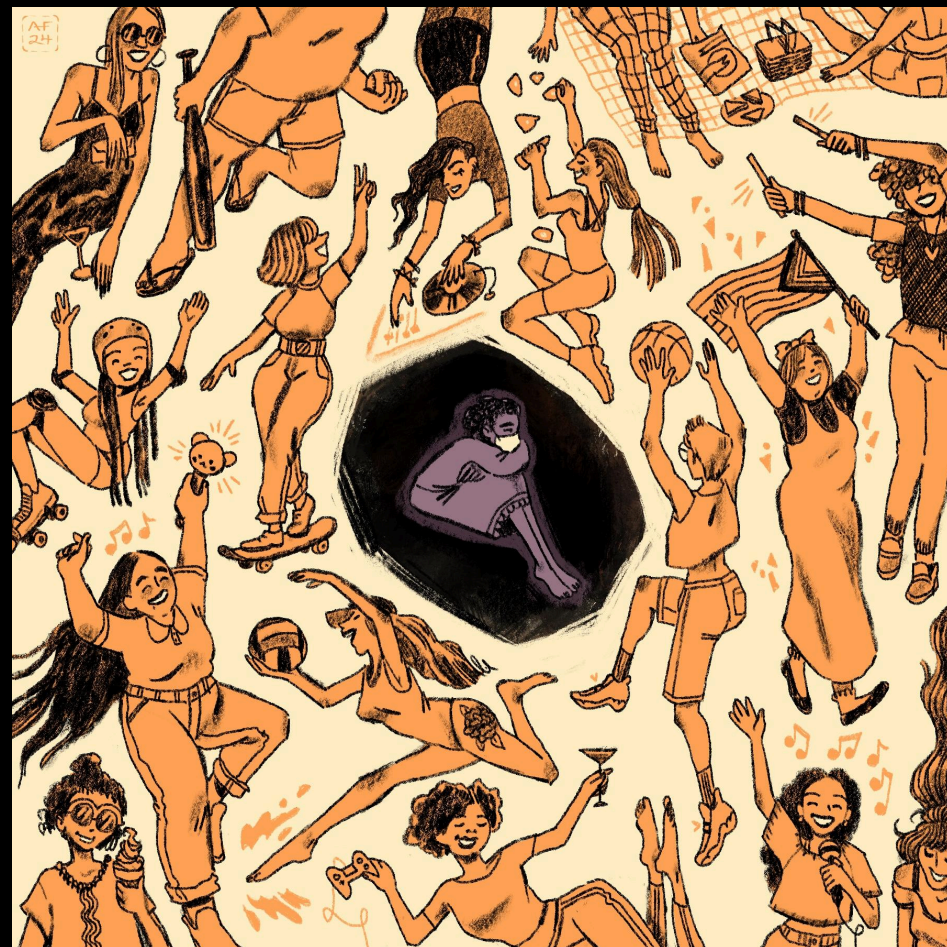
**I no longer know how to get through the day.
I no longer know how to find the words.
And every day stays exactly the same,
While it rains inside my head.**

**I think
I'm depressed.**

**Poem about getting long COVID despite being safe
by Jax Davis (they/them)**



June 2024, digital art (procreate)
by Emmeline Kaiser (they/them)



Sick Girl Summer, August 30, 2024, digital
by Ashanti Fortson (they/them)



Digital illustration by Dylan (they/them)



Digital illustration by Dylan (they/them)

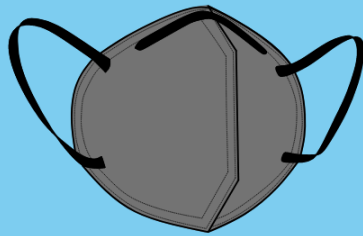


The Toll, oil and acrylic on canvas. Painted May 2020 by Jay



DON'T GET SICK, 17/09/2024, digital illustration by Aries M. Gacutan (they/them)

**DISABLED PEOPLE
HAVE THE RIGHT TO
EXIST IN PUBLIC**



**#NoNYMaskBan
#NoNassauMaskBan**

**On The Front Line of Mask Bans 8/22/24
Digital image and essay on the following pages
by Ngozi (they/she)**

On the Front Line of Mask Bans: A reflection during Black August.
Ngozi (they/she) - Aug 22, 2024

On August 5th, a handful of autonomous organizers from various groups in NYC and Nassau County came together to testify against the Mask Transparency Act— proposed by legislator Mazi Pilip, an Ethiopian Jew and former IDF gunsmith part of the 35th Paratroopers Brigade. Lately, there has been a push of Zionists weaponizing anti-semitism under the guise of feigning concern for their safety in response to the Palestinian solidarity encampments that swept the globe just a few months ago. In real time, from the Ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, to Kamala Harris, to Mazi Pilip, we are seeing imperial nation-states utilize Black faces to carry out their fundamental interests of fascism and genocide, here and abroad.

Nassau County Legislative hearing on the “Mask Transparency Act,” consisted of several Zionists and known fascists taunting and mocking disabled people who showed up to testify against the proposed mask ban.

The mask ban in Nassau County passed along party lines, 12-0 (7 abstentions). It makes wearing a mask a misdemeanor (with unclear health and religious exemptions) and gives police the power to fine people wearing a mask \$1,000 and sentence them to jail time.) TO BE CLEAR: we do not want health exemptions for very simple reasons. Disabled people should not be forced to reveal personal medical information to anyone who is not their doctor—no mask bans, period.

As we begin to see the threat of mask bans spread across party lines, there are a few different responses:

Apathy - “That’s unfortunate!” | “Vulnerable people should probably stay home anyway.”

Denial - “That will never happen to us [insert blue state] here!”

Privileged Refusal - “I simply won’t travel there!” | “I hope the tourism board takes the threat of my boycott seriously!”

Faith in the State - “Isn’t this an ADA violation?” | “What about a lawsuit?”

Sympathy without Accountability - “We have to do something about this! We are definitely against a mask ban. We draw the line at mask mandates, though!”

Resistance - No mask bans. No exceptions.

Part 2

For the past few months, disabled organizers have been voicing their concerns about the sustainability of movement protests, when there is a clear lack of safety as it relates to directly challenging the state.

Disabled organizers have tirelessly struggled to implement masking policies at protests to keep everyone safe—even as we’re seeing over 1 million new COVID cases each day, with other lethal viruses looming in the not-so-distance.

As faculty and staff return to campuses for the Fall semester, the University of California declared that masks were banned, from all 10 campuses across the state. We have spent the entire summer trying to repair the damage that has been caused by Palestinian solidarity protestors, and other self-proclaimed “leftists” who have undermined and scoffed at attempts to address the current contradictions informed by anti-Blackness and COVID denialism that exist in our movements. It should take little convincing of anyone against imperialism and genocide, that mitigating the spread of debilitating viruses by wearing a high-quality mask is the bare minimum any of us can do to keep our communities safe. This demonstrates that we are invested in our short-term well-being and our long-term commitment to resisting genocides at home and abroad.

Reactionaries have instead decided that anyone who holds this position is acting in bad faith, or is an agent of the state with intentions to sow divisions in leftist movements. This aggressive perception is commonly directed towards Black and disabled MaGes (marginalized genders). I have personally been on the receiving end of this treatment for several years now, but it is heartbreaking to witness it happen to younger organizers for the first time.

As a disability justice trainer who relies on abolitionist frameworks to inform strategies and tactics, it has been appalling to see former “abolitionist” comrades abandon COVID mitigations. They have abandoned disabled people in their own communities, and couldn’t be bothered to support incarcerated disabled people, as the state siphoned access to PPE behind prison walls.

Prisons don’t distribute PPE, incarcerated people have been retaliated against (in the form of solitary confinement) for any type of self-advocacy when it comes to seeking a COVID test, so they know better than to tell staff that they suspect having an infection...

Incarcerated disabled people are often excluded from having jobs in prisons. Some basic items such as Tylenol and water are subject to significant price gouging. The state relies on funding to fill beds, regardless of whether folks have labor that can be exploited. The state also relies on incarcerated loved ones putting money on commissaries, sending books and other recreational supplies, and charging various rates for limited daily phone and monthly video communications. I won’t even get into how inaccessible video calls are (staticky connections, no captions, loud and distracting background noise, etc.)

Part 3

Experiencing the consequences of mask bans is some people’s first time learning about state repression and it’s hard to express how underprepared we all are. Folks are inquiring about ADA violations and lawsuits as if we could trust the state to begin with! Which person on Medicaid or SSDI has lawsuit money? I certainly do not.

Incarcerated people experience abusive discrimination, especially when advocating for themselves.

It should be no surprise that the same will happen to anyone who becomes criminalized for wearing masks... please wake the fuck up!!

This shouldn’t be the first time folks become worried about disabled people captured by the state, for any amount of time.

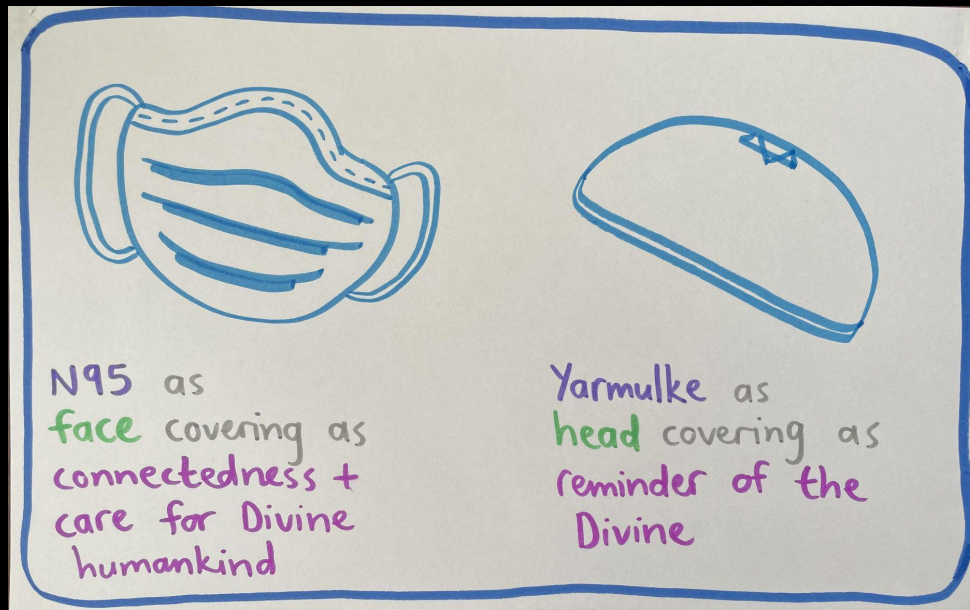
Being locked up in a cage will disable any human being. Disability justice requires abolitionist praxis and when people make concessions...shit like this is happening all over the world! What happened to being anti-imperialist? Or does that stop at holding up a Palestinian flag in the street? We do need to be more militant because the most marginalized people are dying, and a lot of them are locked up and systematically disenfranchised. It is imperative to unpack the denial of genocide that occurs within the imperial core’s internal colonies. Organizers resisting genocide need to deconstruct notions of liberation that move far past these fake borders of nation-states.

We see the state criminalizing the homeless and encampments. We see people becoming further debilitated by Long COVID, unable to work, and relying on crowdfunding to survive. Some people have correctly identified that the state’s goal is to disappear us, through repression and institutionalization. Albeit, many oversimplify the state’s motives being “slave labor,” when it extends far beyond that. Disability justice informed by abolition requires recognizing that the exploitation of people’s labor is not the only motive that the state has. The root of the state’s motives is extraction and disabled people are most familiar with this via the “crip tax.”

Keep wearing a mask. Know your rights. Don’t bend. We do not negotiate with the state. We need to sustain our movements and support folks on the front lines of these fights.

If you consider abolition and harm reduction as fundamental frameworks that inform your pandemic justice work, please send updated COVID info into prisons.

Don’t let the state disappear more of our community. Support incarcerated people.



**Spot The Difference (or Same Same But Different),
Aug 2024, Marker on paper by Jackie (she/her)**

Masks Required

The ease I feel

In a place with masks required

Is unfamiliar.

Would it be too much

To call it euphoric?

I have grown accustomed

To hypervigilance

To constant unease

When I hear a cough

Or see a crowd

Or, worse yet, a beloved one's face

Out, exposed to viruses and pollutants.

With masks required, I feel almost safe

I feel nearly able to relax.

Why

Can't things always feel that way?

I was to settle in

Comfortably

Masks Required, Poem by Jaq (any pronouns)

Queer pining 28

Early into the pandemic,
COVID broke my brain.
The psychological load

The enormity of the effects
Global, local
Social

Before, I thought about diseases
And disease ecology
Centered on wild animals

But we spread disease
Recklessly
If a bat could read,

They'd all fight the fungus
Killing them off.
Why don't we?

I try not to judge
The lack of precautions,
The desire to have normalcy

But it's killing us
This is not normal.
Bodily systems battered around

Ableism keeps folks
From protection and
Thoughts about harm to others

I want to be on the other side of this one day
But, I worry that this
Is forever

How badly
I wish
COVID wasn't a worry

That I could lead you
To a secluded corner

And not worry

When I finally kiss you
That want
Has been there

Since the first day I met you
Before, I was content
With the loves I have

Only pursuing those
Who mask as constantly as I do
Whose high quality mask stash

Rivals my own.
But, seeing you,
Wanting you,

Complicated that.
I tried to just focus
On settling into shared space

And routine
To not pursue
When we're not aligned

In this way
That matters to me
Where would we be

If I didn't have these worries?
Maybe, in a different version of the world,
There's no COVID

And I could have bought you a drink
Long ago
With my only worry

Centered around
where I could take you out
And what I could say to make you smile

Queer Pining 28, Poem by Jaq (any pronouns)

COVID MICROAGGRESSION

BINGO

Are you exhausted by constantly navigating other people's pandemic denial? Are you tired of begging for scraps of care? Why not make it all a game? (If we don't laugh we cry.)

"Masks are encouraged but not required."	"Luckily infections these days are mild."	"Do you remember when COVID was a thing?"	"Our org mission is fostering belonging. No, we won't take any COVID precautions."	"You can't expect me to mask just because you wanna hang out."
"Don't worry, it's only allergies. No, I didn't take a COVID test, why do you ask?"	"Masks not required, but you're allowed to wear yours!"	"COVID is just like the flu."	"Only the sick and disabled will die."	"COVID is going around again. What is this, 2020?"
"It's so weird how everyone's sick all the time!"	"You look so good! What do you mean you're chronically ill?"	FREE SPACE! 	<No other precautions listed> "Hand sanitizer will be provided!"	<Tests positive> "Ah wonderful, I really need a day at home on the couch"
"If you wanna mask, that's fine, but I don't have to. We all make choices about our bodies."	"It's so good to finally be back in person, virtual options just aren't the same!" <I ask if we take COVID precautions> "No, there are virtual options."	"Does anyone else have a cold right now? Is something going around?"	"Why are you wearing a mask? Get away from me if you're sick!"	"Please list your access needs. We want this to be a safe, accessible space!" <I list requests for masking, testing, hepa filters.> "We cannot meet those needs."
"Your tests came back normal. There's nothing wrong with you. It's just anxiety."	Any variation of "Post-pandemic" / "back during the pandemic"	"I'll mask around disabled people but not in my regular life."	"Why are you wearing a mask? COVID is over!"	"The CDC maps say COVID is low and that COVID is endemic, so we don't have to take precautions now."

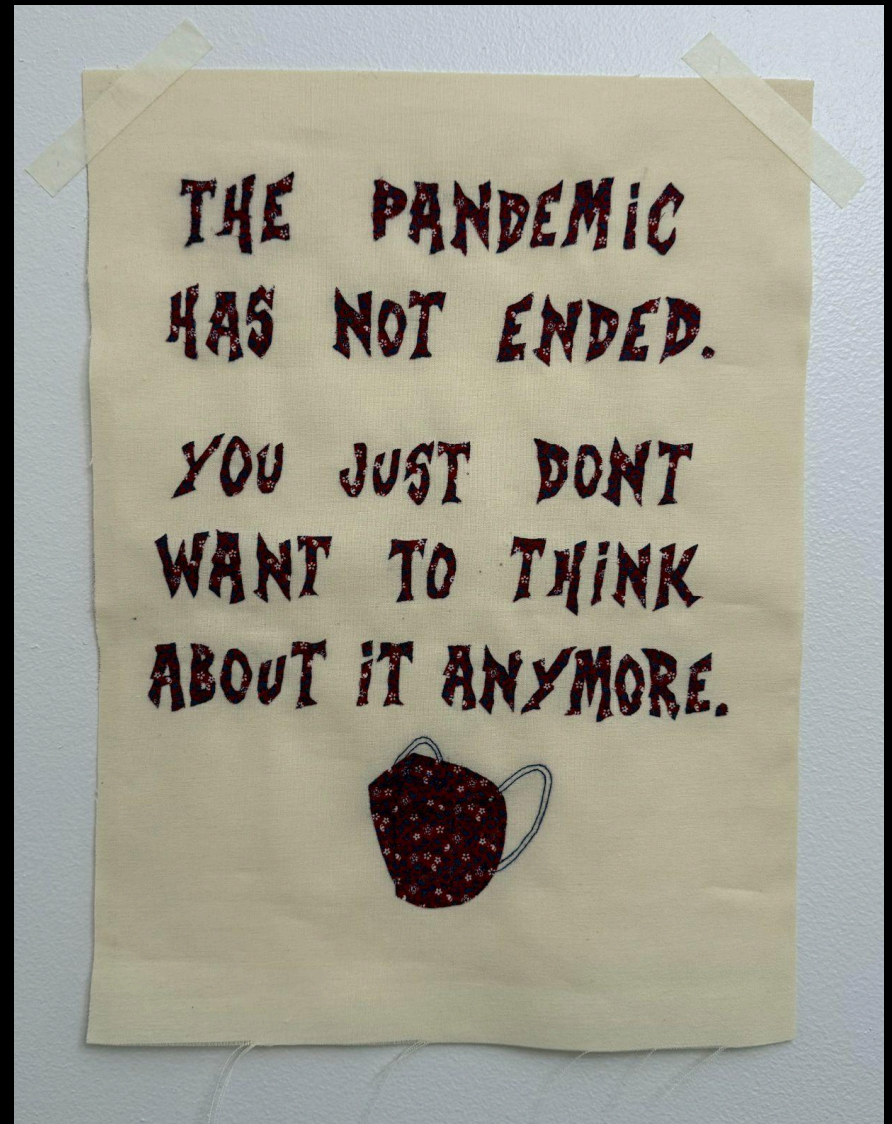
COVID Microaggression Bingo, Sept 2024, Canva digital design by Jackie (she/her)



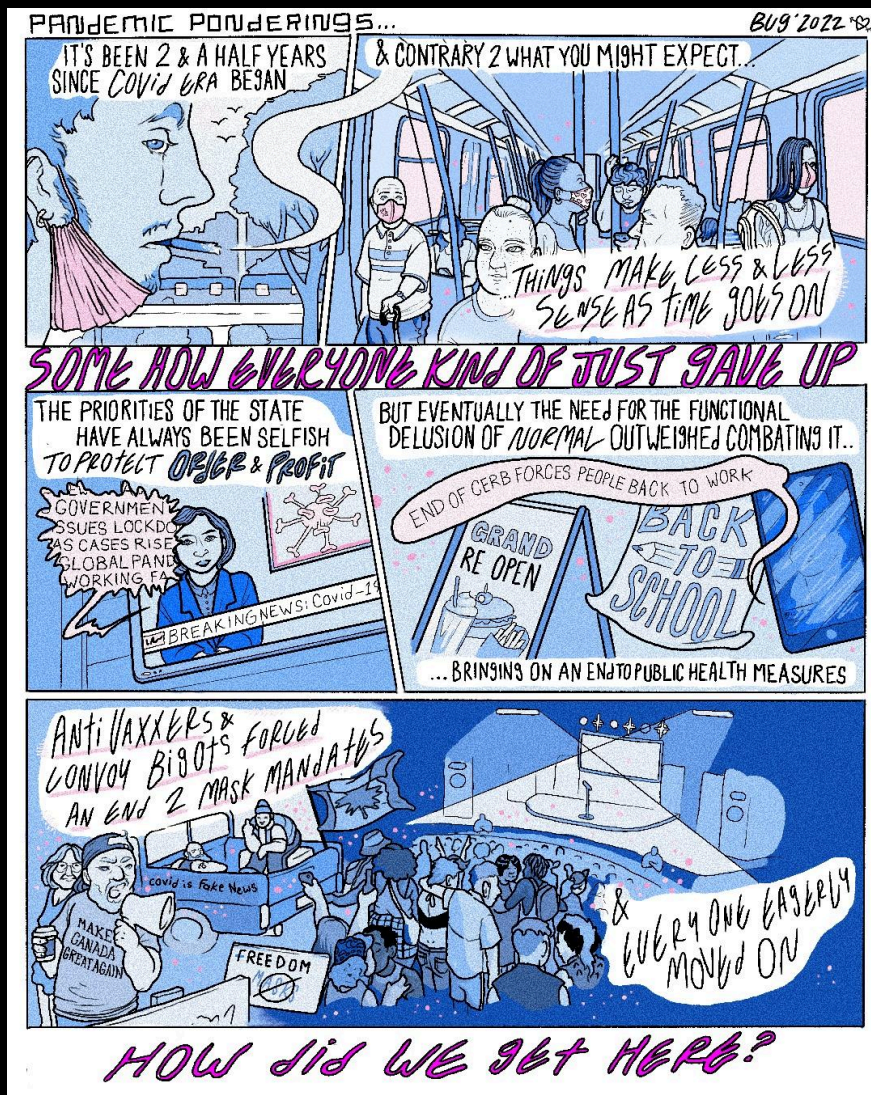
To Pine, Watercolour and Charcoal on paper by Aster (they/them)



Covid Kicking Ball, September 2024, stainless steel and polyester felt by Theo (they/them)



Elephant in the Room, September 2024, Embroidery/Applique by owen (he/him)



COVID Comic, Page 1
 by Bug Cru (they/them)



COVID Comic, Page 2
 by Bug Cru (they/them)

Part 1

A letter from your Covid Cautious friend.

—Bug Cru, June 9th 2024

It's coming up on four and a half years since covid hit and I wish to be candid on how and why my life has changed because of it.

Most of you know that I continue to mask up both in public and personal settings, take extra precautions to reduce chance of spreading and contracting it, and keep up on how it is evolving. The simple reason I give is because of being chronically ill and on immunosuppressant medicine, but in actuality that is only a part of it. From the best information I can gather it seems that lack of precautions are increasingly putting the average person at greater risk with each infection. Regardless of my social realities (disability and other marginalizations) it's important to me to take every measure available to me because I believe it is the right thing to do.

Post lockdown and vaccine roll out the majority of people began to think of the pandemic as a thing of the past. I understand this status quo to exist because the ongoing damage of this disease is not a priority to the current societal (social, political, economic) landscape. In effect, these priorities for me have come at a great cost, often including but not limited to exclusion from community, events and public spaces. Barriers to daily life like work, family and socializing. Loss of friendships, isolation and by effect great damage to mental health.

My own health experiences and access to information put me in the position of being

Part 2

acutely aware of what is at stake for us all with infections; how they are resulting in Long Covid and comorbidities increasingly contributing to disabilities and death. There's lots more I have to say than I will here, in terms of my own feelings and opinions.

Ultimately, I am uninterested in shaming others. Themme Fatale, an Australian performer and Covid Activist said "*All we have is each other*," in reference to the understanding that it is up to us to care for one another in an exploitative system that prioritizes profit over the common person. Imani Barbarin, a Black and disabled Communications Advisor and Public Speaker with a focus on Disability Justice said "*The only difference between me and you is time and luck*," in reference to the fact that all people exist in relationship to disability.

Covid discussion, sharing information and inspiring others to think critically are all deeply important to me. Being in a state of constant exhaustion in the upstream effect of giving a fuck means I often feel unwelcome doing so. At times as covid cautious people we feel angry, defensive and volatile. Like all other people in survival mode experiencing ongoing trauma, we deserve kindness, attention and nuance.

New classes of disability are evolving out of the ongoing pandemic. People are being shut out of public life due to vulnerability to the disease, in ways that range from subtle to severe. The most isolated exist on spectrums of homebound, unable to risk exposure in public space. Others are being disabled by covid in great numbers, losing (or already without) jobs and housing, without diagnosis, access to information, complex care or social infrastructure. Governments continue to fail us, creating more barriers and failing

Part 3

to provide access to cleaner air and functional mitigations.

There is a trust and understanding I have lost with other people, making it harder to relate. Based in frustration, backlash and disinterest towards the complexity of my situation and accommodation needs. It is common to react poorly to having your comfort challenged and dehumanizing when that comes at the cost of others. Regardless of how interesting or accessible learning about and taking covid mitigations are to you, I hope reading this allows you empathy and insight into some of what has gone unsaid for me and many others.

**A letter from your Covid Cautious friend
June 9th 2024 by Bug Cru (they/them)**

I live in a homeless shelter and right now, many got covid. Someone in my dorm has tested positive, I haven't... but got the same symptoms.. I caught covid for the first time since 2020.

I am the one that provides high quality masks and covid tests to the shelter. I got an injection center to order from Donate a Mask so their workers and users can be well protected. It's surreal to see the impact of my work on the daily. I'm happy I can help to try to protect everyone, even the covid deniers, cuz they too are human and worthy of protection.

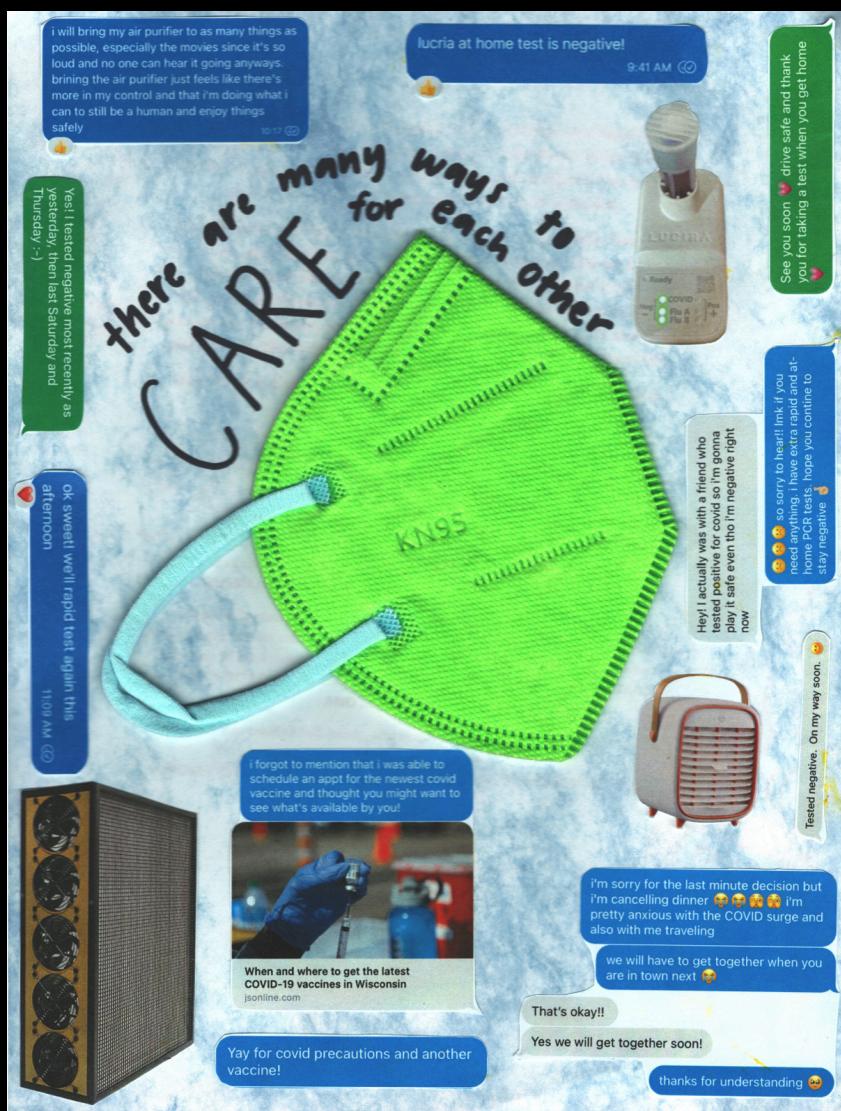
It's amazing (in a scary way) to see that the covid denier at the shelter all act in ways that strongly support "Imperialist White Supremacist Heteropatriarchy"*. I cannot see covid denialism as separate from these mechanisms. Especially now that I know what the deniers are like daily. When other anarchists refuse to mask, it doesn't take long to notice Imperialist White Supremacist Heteropatriarchy alive in them too. Ofc people who mask and understand it's necessity, have reproduced these systems, but I noticed.. most are aware of it and on the lookout for ways to take root far from these life killing grounds.

I am not in jail but some of the aspects of the shelter reminds me of it. I keep on thinking about how much more free I am. How I can mask, have my nazal spray, my CPC mouthwash and my St-John Worth tincture.. how people in jail do not necessarily have access to this, and how, if all anarchists who aren't currently in jail masked, we could protect our incarcerated siblings better and say a fuck you to the system who kills prisoners, who kills the poor and anyone they see fit to dispose of.

We protect us <3

*bell hooks' phrasing

**Homelessness, September 13th 2024, written text
by Joe Hawthorn (they/them)**



There are many ways to care for each other,
30 sept 2024, mixed media collage
 by Kayla Kuo (she/her)

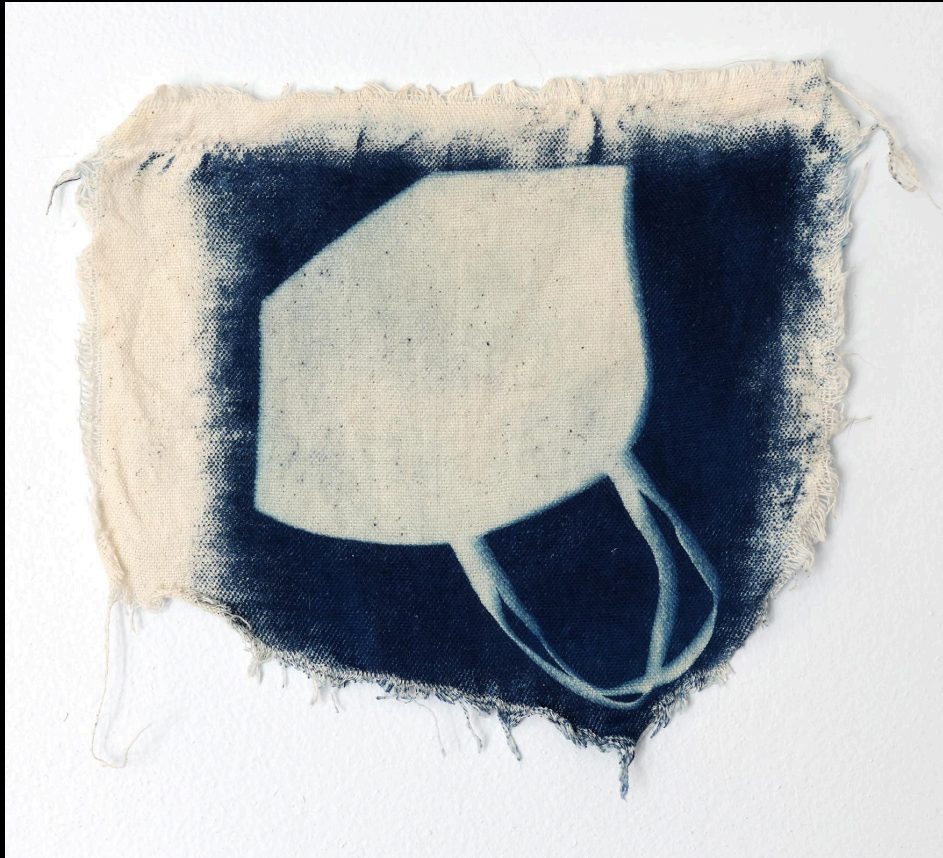
Navigating COVID safety when the U.S. government has so thoroughly abandoned us is exhausting. These past four years are full of immense grief and fury. There are many friendships that have fizzled out because of the risks I'm not willing to take and the boundaries they aren't willing to abide by. These precautions are a form of community care but, I wonder, how many more friendships will I lose as the pandemic continues to rage on?

Despite the growing list of friendships lost and grieved (still grieving), it makes the handful of friends, most of us queer and/or disabled, that take daily COVID precautions more tender and intimate. There is a shared understanding that our COVID precautions are a form of community care.

The title of this piece, "there are many ways to care for each other," serves as a (visual) reminder that there is no singular strategy that will prevent the possibility of COVID exposure; we need layers of support and safety mitigations. That is why I continue to practice a multitude of safety precautions: masking indoors, rapid and PCR testing on a weekly basis, purchasing air purifiers, getting vaccinations, and sharing all of these resources with my friends as much and as often as possible. Care is abundant!

"there are many ways to care for each other" illustrates the ongoing conversations about risk mitigation, safety planning, and sharing COVID-19 related resources. The text messages that frame the collage are from conversations with friends from the past four months, though iterations of these conversations have been happening since March 2020. These text messages are validation that I am allowed to ask for what I need and that I am not asking for too much.

This art piece is a love letter to my COVID conscious comrades. There are many ways to care for each other and our acts of community care should always be rooted in safety, disability justice, and liberation.



KN95 Cyanotype on Canvas, October 1, 2024
by Bec Miriam (they/them)



THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT HURT ANY LESS
BY LONE HEART (they/them)

under the shelter
i look into the window of the bus
and our eyes meet
under the greenish hue of fluorescence
you gaze to where my lips should be
suddenly realizing
how packed
the city transit
it really is

i watch you pull out
a surgical mask
from somewhere out of sight
slightly crumpled and worn
and you stare ahead
face now covered

my heart aches
as the bus pulls away
i dont mind
holding the burden
of being lonely
so that when the time comes
you don't have to be
and we can stand together
in solidarity

**bus shelter, october 2024, poem
by Cherubim Kuma (they/he)**

Mask4mask?

Butch disabled dyke, 24, seeks some solidarity from my queer community. Would love to find someone to enjoy long naps in bed with as the sun sets. Love wheelchair maintenance and Covid caution. Looking for: anyone who cares enough about our communities, to have a good time with while masking and layering protections! Call me if you're mask4mask like me ;)

Mask4mask? - 12/10/24 - written poetry by Emyr (they/them)

Satirical (and slightly silly) poem about masking in the queer community. It comes from trying to attend queer events in my area and finding absolutely nobody masks or has any covid precautions. And having to come to terms with my queer community actively harming me and my disabled loved ones. I was inspired by the vintage personal ads in newspapers to create a written piece based on these but specifically about masking and covid caution.

CW: mention of r*pe and suic*de and murder



On My Knees Begging You To, 2024, Lino print on handmade paper by cassy rose (he/they/she)

on masking

do i have to wear a mask forever?

will the water be polluted forever?

will the women be raped forever?

will the suicides go on forever?

will the books be banned forever?

will the prisons fill forever?

will the concrete pour forever?

will the police brutalize forever?

will the police exist forever?

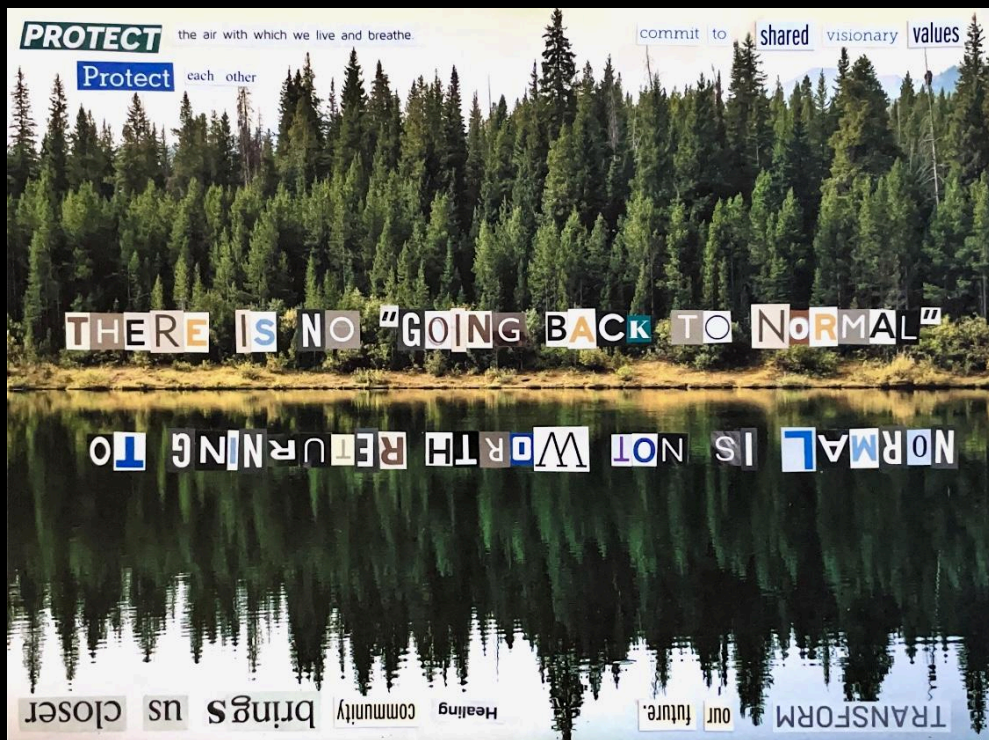
will the children be murdered forever?

will the bombs drop forever?

will the occupation go on forever?

should i really resist forever?

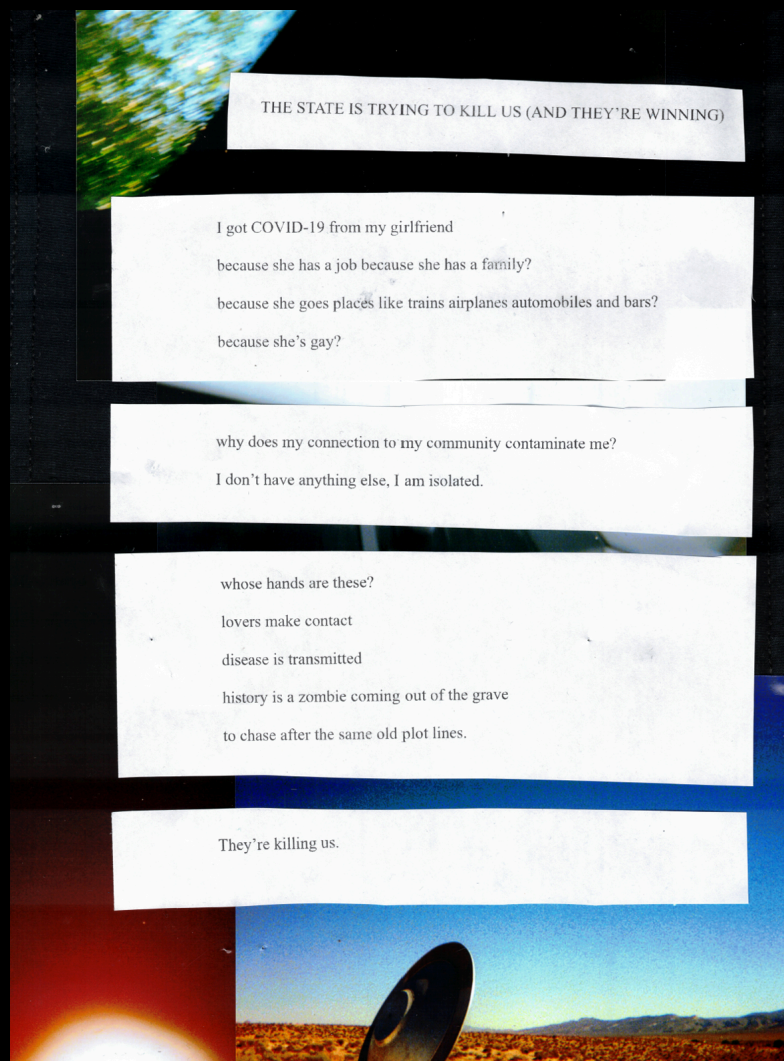
on masking, poetry by elston (they/them)



No Going Back to Normal, October 11 2024, collage on paper by Jay Jones (they/them)

This is one of a collection of cut-out collages and mini zines made from magazines, junk mail, and other leftover materials, exploring political themes and radical possibilities - with a focus on ongoing crises and our place in those struggles. By cutting apart and rearranging words and images, I aim to find and create radical political meaning from mainstream and “apolitical” materials as a practice of subverting traditional media in the service of liberatory movements and messages.

The imagery of this piece imagines the supposed “normal” that which many individuals and institutions claim to have returned to as a distorted reflection of our material reality - with regard to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the genocide of Palestinians, worsening climate change, and other ongoing and emergent crises. This piece rejects the pressure to return to normal, not just because COVID-19 is still a prevalent threat to our survival, but also because even the pre-pandemic “normal” was violent and undesirable for those of us invested in building a better world.



**THE STATE IS TRYING TO KILL US (AND
THEY'RE WINNING), 2024, multimedia collage
poetry by Ryann Ripley (she/her)**



**Price of Salt, 10/25/22, ballpoint pen on paper
by Hayley Marie (they/them)**



**JUST THE VULNERABLE WILL DIE, 2024,
embroidery by Maeve Sherry (they/them)**

I am a hand embroidery artist. When I became ill with Long Covid, I lost all of my previous hobbies, and I found joy and self-expression in embroidery. I created this piece to express how it feels to hear people say good news, just the vulnerable will die.

This sentiment has haunted me for four years. I've heard it repeated by everyone from government officials to people I once considered friends, all with seemingly no recognition that "the vulnerable" are around them and are listening to their callous calls for eugenics. We are not distant, rare, or abstract. We are not conceptual enemies to indoor dining and unmasked selfies on airplanes. We are humans, and we hear you. We hear that our deaths are a promising sign that you are safe. And we will never forget that you celebrated our expulsion from public life because it meant you could get back to normal in fair conscience.

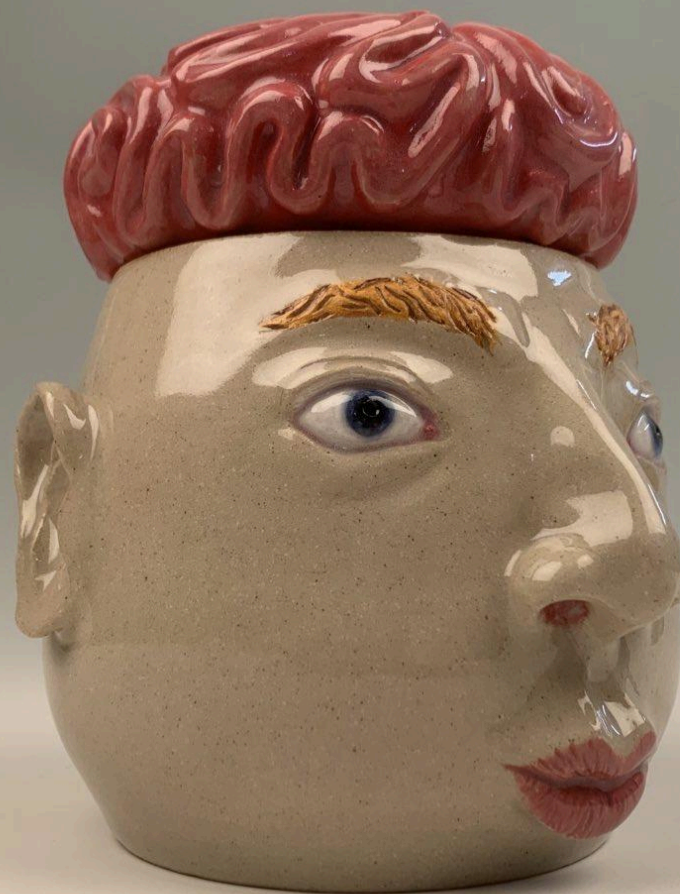
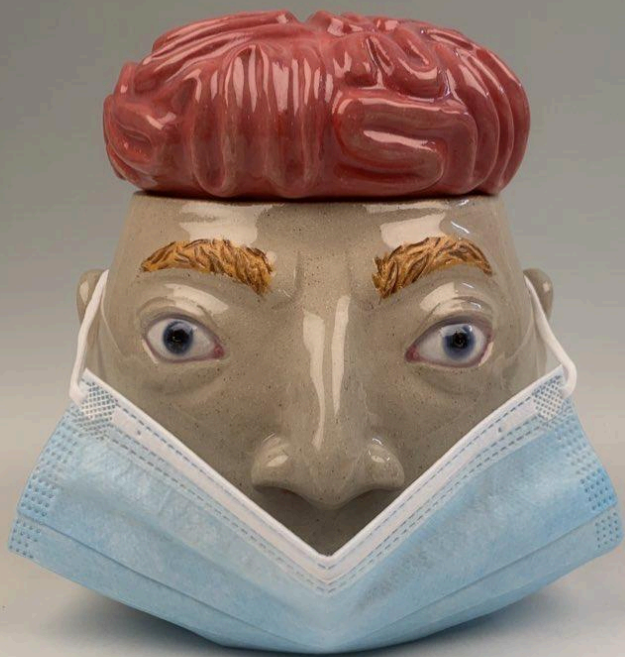
What does it mean to be The Vulnerable? To me, it means walking alone on a winding path that has no end in sight, surrounded by reminders that you could be the next casualty at any moment.



masks = love, October 2024, digital illustration
by Ocean Rain (they/she/he)



Be Cool, digital drawing by Rachel Smith
(they/them)



Big Brain, 2022, Ceramic by Zoe (she/her)

I sit in the library
watching every unmasked kid
and every unmasked parent
breathe in unclean air

I know the statistics
I know the death rate
I know about the consequences of long covid,
and brain fog,
and this vascular illness
I assume they don't

Because if they do
it makes things
so
so
much worse

When these kids grow up,
twice as likely to get diabetes,
more likely to get sick more often,
with heart problems,
with gastrointestinal complications,
if they grow up at all,
will they look at their parents and say:
"Why didn't you protect me?"

And I have to guess they will say they didn't know
I don't know if we will have the records of every time they scrolled past an article informing them
of the risks
whether it was because their own symptoms made it hard to concentrate on a block of text that
long
to decipher abstract numbers and convert them to people they know
people they love
people they've already lost

Maybe the article was never written - because five years into a pandemic
statistics aren't as attention grabbing as they used to be
Maybe it never made it to that parent's feed
Because all their friends were busy posting pictures of concerts
eating out at restaurants
and getting things "back to normal"

Maybe, even if that parent saw that headline and understood it,

they didn't want to feel bad about themselves
They think "I am a good person,
so I can't be doing something wrong.
I wouldn't hurt my kids.
I wouldn't purposefully endanger my kid.
So,
this must be fine."

And I'm no better
Every Thursday, I meet the same group of teenagers
for a library program
And I don't tell them why I think it should be mask mandatory
I don't tell them the reason why all our employees are sick all the time
And in return,
they don't ask why I'm the last one masking

I stay quiet about the plague
because talking about such things is
"too political"
and could cost me my job

In ten years
twenty years
if I see those kids again
and the adult versions of them ask me
"Why didn't you do anything?"
Maybe I will have talked myself into an answer
that parents are convincing themselves of now.

**covid will be the lead paint of our generation,
Oct 21st 2024, poem
by Ky (he/him)**



**Masked Royalty, March 2024, Mixed media
by Vox Margo Short (they/them)**

mask

the way you look at me
I have become the virus

-

old bones

just remembering
how we have been left behind
over and over

**mask, old bones, 8/27/24, poems
by Caleb Weinhardt (he/him)**

sick 4 sick // 2 sick 2 stand up

i work from bed more days than i'd like to admit. soft duvet around my subluxe knees,
i barely have energy to remember leah lakshmi piepzn-samarasinha's recitation:
"writing from bed is a time-honored disabled way of being an activist and cultural worker"
(*care work*). this is true—and it is also true that even when i do not feel particularly radical,
time-honoring, or Disabled, i am often still too tired (too disabled) to do anything
but draft half-thoughts & drift off against my pillows.

i work more than i'd like to admit. i call any break in hyper-productivity "time theft"
so i can feel subversively powerful & socialist instead of guilty about being a person
& not a mechanic plant. i am unsure whether to name the desperate itch internalized ableism
or a rational response to feeling disposable & always-about-to-become-disposed
as a chronically ill worker. either way, i want to justify: watch, my bodymind resists capitalism
& "to be a failure is very important. if one wants to be a revolutionary, one can't be truly successful
in the system in which one is em[bed]ded" (hans skott-myhre). but i didn't start failing or fainting
in public to oppose labor exploitation & ableist expectations. i simply did not succeed,
& the rationale—the "residue"—came later.

mid-burnout, i am beginning to date another disabled lesbian, amusedly deeming ourselves
sick 4 sick. i was so dizzy that month defined by my distant crush on them—insomniac & intolerant
to heat, rolling like the overcast clouds over my mattress, until i discovered my thyroid had flared
to overactive. states away, they were isolating from covid-19 at a parent's home, herding the goats
back into their pens. watching them on facetime did not answer my old question—how does one
maintain the simplistic ideal of a cute, cottagecore farming commune, if one cannot leave bed
to feed the animals, cannot configure the tractors, cannot pull weeds without their hips spasming?
once as a baby gay i might have wanted the real answer, but i don't care for a clearcut path
anymore. i cannot, will not, yeet into the empty woods & leave everyone else behind. i only miss
having some sense of the utopia i'm working toward.

the lack haunts me like the opposite edge to the famous ask: "how do you throw a brick through
the window of a bank if you can't get out of bed?" (johanna hedva). how do you ever become well
enough to leave bed if someone you trust isn't throwing bricks through the bank windows?
it sounds sexy to sleep until noon everyday. to write this essay while thieving time from the 9 to 5
i am arguably too unwell for. to send my girlfriend home covered in hickeys they need to conceal
before they can film a video on stacey park milbern's legacy. maybe it matters when it's all i can do.
but it won't liberate us—it won't even liberate me.

meanwhile the 9 to 5 is reinstating in-office days & i am exhausted from commuting & masking
& masking & commuting back. hans has a pin that says femme 4 femme 4 mask & i want it & i want
hans to be my coworker so i'd feel safe but they're not. i have to feign being fine to get paid.
i wish i were fine enough to unionize. in college when we all tried to unionize i asked
the campus organizers to stop chanting "stand up, fight back" & no one stopped. from what
i remember of weekly organizing calls, i usually felt too awkward to introduce myself to new folks,
like my autistic mask would leak off. yes, the intangible realities of our revolutions matter, the means
we use to push toward our evasive radical ends. yes, i endlessly wish i could offer more.

"show up as your full self," they say. but show me a self that isn't some version of a mask, mom.
"the second you think you know who you are, it becomes a story you are telling yourself"
(devon price). like how i've made every partner i've ever had realize they're probably autistic.
maybe this is crip praxis, but mostly it feels like accidental byproduct. i'll only mean what i share
if you already know what i mean. emergent access intimacy. like when my mom asks if i'd take
a magic pill to never have been sick—no, i don't know the femme i would have become & i doubt
i'd like her. but my also-sick roommate knows to ask if i'd take the pill now to fix the future,
embrace an early twenties without fatigue or progressive pain. i want to say no. i want to mean no.
we both know i don't know. i'm too embedded in my own chronically ill contradictions to know
anything else. like the tiktok "to this day whenever i'm really sick—like sobbing can't move want
to peel my skin off sick—i am also unspeakably h word" (@_sadoe_). sure, it sounds sexy
to spend all day in bed (during the same month i also come down with mono). the joke goes,
it's sunday morning & my girlfriend's legs don't work again.

this is where i tell you my girlfriend & i got covid at a sapphic pride party 2 years ago & we still fog up
like car windows when we try to tell a linear story. i see instagram stories that "you are at risk
for long covid" and i wonder why we're still addressing the folks only at risk & not aftermath
after [something] wanting so badly to be after after after it. my periodic paralysis spiked after covid
& there's no clean way to know what is & isn't related other than what feels embodied & true,
which is of course everything is connected, long & twisting back on itself. now i can't show up
to the front lines because at any moment i might stop moving & i can't make other people vulnerable
to violence with me. i fear this goes against what i politically want, just as masking sometimes feels
like i am antisocial or afraid of social spaces when i want to see others as my comrades. if only
they might wear a fucking mask. i don't want to be pessimistic but i have to be realistic.
i perpetually want more friends.

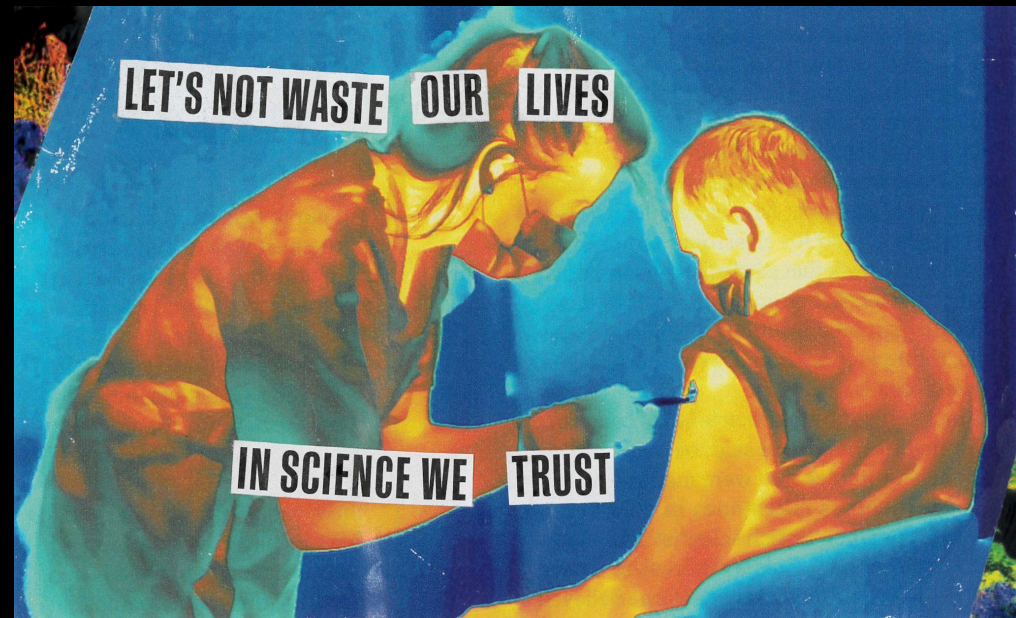
i know i'm not 'cripping' anything, whatever it means to set another principle
around what we can measurably accomplish. no amount of over-intellectualized hope
changes that sometimes i literally cannot leave my bed to organize my own laundry, let alone
organize people. i map the landscape but i can't traverse it.
& yet i want to, i'm trying to, i want to try to.
any bricks i can lob, any diso[bed]jence
i can keep beginning.

<https://arsenalpulp.com/Books/C/Care-Work>
<https://www.madinamerica.com/2021/10/can-critiques-psychiatry-help-us-imagine-post-capitalist-future-interview-hans-skott-mvhere/>
<https://www.topicalcream.org/features/sick-woman-theory/>
<https://www.topicalcream.org/features/why-its-taking-so-long/>
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CqVKZOixNO1/?igsh=ODVkdN5fcad3OXdm>
https://www.tiktok.com/@_sadoe_/video/7080958719839702318?_t=8SmCk5qPAFC&_r=1

sick 4 sick // 2 sick 2 stand up
10.25.2024, longform poem
by court(ney) felle (they/them)



Is This It?, 2024, collage by M (she/he)



In Science We Trust, 2024, collage by M (she/he)



**Love in the Time of Covid, October 2024, Digital
Drawing by Ky "Why" Wyman (he/they)**

"Past Tense"

In a world of careless mouth breathers you kept my mind safe.
Hands clutched tight as we navigated the terrors of the weekly farmer's market.
Narrowly avoiding strangers coughing on us while we picked out vegetables.
Trying to make eye contact with the other mask wearers to find some solidarity.
We'd find a small patch of grass for our weekly prize of sausage, egg rolls or dumplings.
Relieved, finally we could rest and watch the parade of fur babies while enjoying our food.
I guess we pretended the dog owners didn't think the pandemic ended four years ago.
Or maybe I just did, I would never ask you to.

and i know i'm not a poet like you,
but being alone together on days like these -
was a gentle paradise.

**Past Tense, October 2024, Poem
by Ky "Why" Wyman (he/they)**

lockdown never ended
by yankel akiba

we were supposed to survive the end of the world together.
during the fires we got good respirators, gave them to our neighbors;
we built diy air purifiers,
invited our loved ones into filtered air.
when the nazis came, we split duties:
you defended against them on the front lines,
and i cared for our defenders behind the scenes.
we laughed at the confused faces of queerphobes who tried to figure us out,
our lips meeting in the shape of our smiles.
when white supremacists glared at us, we readied our brass knuckles and pepper spray;
we glared back.

when the virus came we were wrenched apart,
a fissure that grew with grief and trauma.
you swallowed the ableist stories of your fake leftist roommates
and regurgitated their gaslighting at me,
tinged with the grief of abrupt separation.
you could barely look at me,
you blamed me for shielding myself (though you never admitted it)
and you chose denial over mutual survival.

we were supposed to survive the end of the world together.
instead, we went on separate paths,
and now you're gone.

this world is so big, blooming with danger and threat,
pollinating denial and forgetting.
my world has shrunk in turn,
just my room, just my cats, just people on screens,
where i can continue to shield myself from harm.
i used to miss you, but now i grieve what we (could have) had,
what we (could have) accomplished.

the world is so big but feels empty, full of waking dreams people live while denying this
nightmare reality,
full of death we aren't allowed to talk about.
i barely even want to go out in it anymore.

lockdown never ended.

**lockdown never ended, 8.19.2023, poetry by
yankel akiba (they/them)**



**Wild horses, October 2024, Digital illustration
by Eden Caruso (he/him)**

When you sigh,
'I've lost track of the warmth in me',
I don't know the answer.

I met you in the spare room
Of the self-catered holiday let
I couldn't afford;
Budget luxury
In lieu of community,
Clearance auction linen
Indented with the name of a hospital.
Trains, moulded silicone and trauma
Kept me up
One night too many
And there you were.
Funny,
I knew
I'd booked that second bed for
Someone.

When I got the office job,
Each day was a blessing;
Not in a good way.
I kept protecting myself
Because I had you to come home to,
Because you, I could love.
You were the soft
Blue seed of Waiting at my core.

Walking home together,
You pulled me down shortcuts
Where all I'd seen was brick.
You pointed out the birds
Whose song my headphones redacted.
You were the one who could mourn.
You were the one who knew
What sorts of roots will
Grow in decay.

When you can't take the fear
Another second,
When you hide under the blanket,
I'll always find you.

When you sigh,
'I've lost track of the warmth in me',
I don't know the answer,

Except that every time someone says,
'In this post-pandemic world...'
I owe you a kiss.

The Walk-in, January 2024, poem
by Dax Hart (fae/faer or he/him)



Food Rotation, Comic by Forest Kameran (he/him)

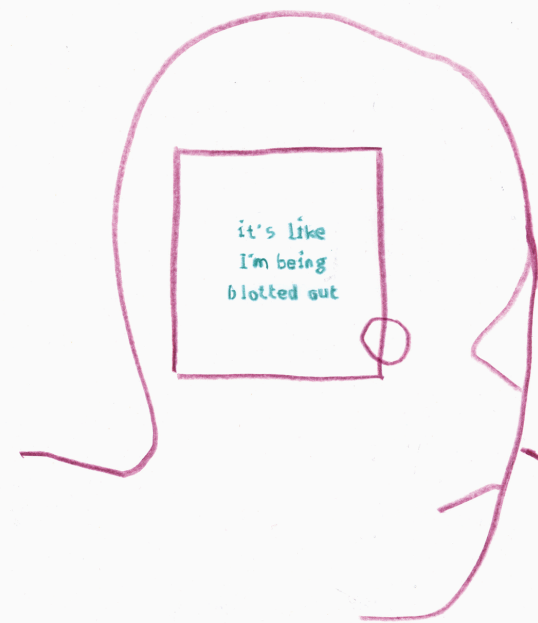
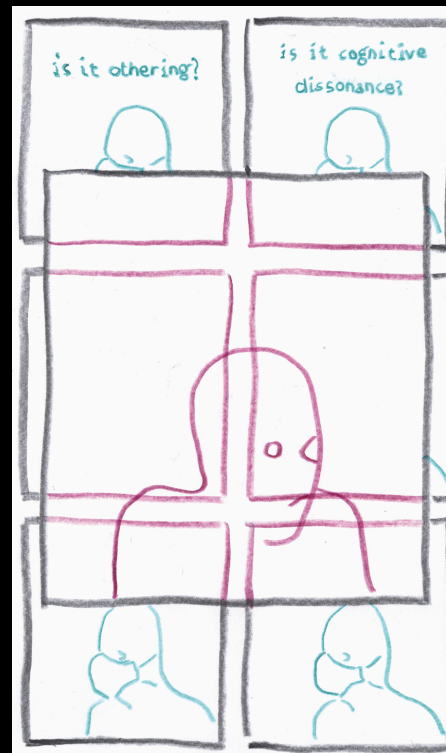
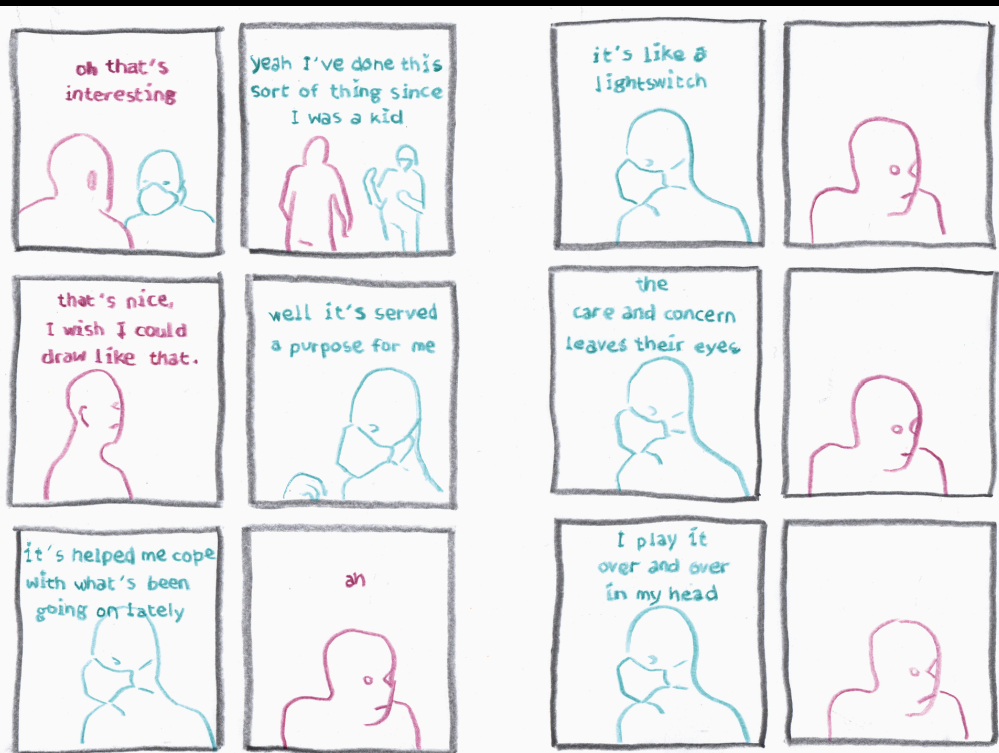
Detailing the process of reintroducing foods with MCAS/gut dysbiosis caused by long covid



**My Little Family, April 14, 2024, digital
photograph by Katrina Dreamer (they/them)**



**Masked in the Garden, April 25, 2024, digital
photograph by Katrina Dreamer (they/them)**





blotted out, 10/31/24, comic in pencil/colored pencil by
Kimball Anderson (they/them)

Everyone was laughing, In the lost years
clinking glasses On the inside of the windows
And the air was spilling out onto the street

We were walking through the darkness, In the lost years
And it only made it harder to be close instead of farther
To witness all the ways we couldn't breathe

At first I pounded doors, and I begged to be let in
Beseeched them not to leave us all behind
But it didn't bother them, It was an inconvenient thing
And it was easier to say a slow goodbye

Say a slow goodbye, say a slow goodbye
Say a slow goodbye, say a slow goodbye

I wonder if someday you'll change your mind
I wonder if someday you'll change your mind

The conversations wove In the lost years
At first so carefully, Then carelessly
around the things unsayable, unknowable
Pretending not to see
Absolutes and lines became negotiable
The ones who couldn't chance it were disposable
And the plan to solve it all was drifting out of reach

At first I pounded doors, and I begged to be let in
Beseeched them not to leave us all behind
But it didn't bother them, It was an inconvenient thing
And it was easier to say a slow goodbye
Say a slow goodbye, say a slow goodbye
Say a slow goodbye, say a slow goodbye

I wonder if someday you'll change your mind
I wonder if someday you'll change your mind

**The Lost Years, March 2024, song/lyrics
by Forest Kamerin (he/him), [listen here!](#)**

PATTERN OF HARM
you don't see it, don't you?

do you see?
no?

can I take your hand?
can you feel?

the texture of the pattern?

the texture of the pattern,
you might feel it with your soul
or rather,

It might be more about what you don't feel

the pattern of this denial of feeling

PATTERN OF HARM
today I saw, the signatures, how they look alike
the challenge is: the signatures are shaped accross time

*do you feel how you are not feeling accross time?
do you see the pattern to it?*

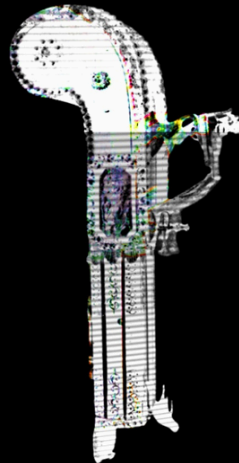
the same signatures:
COVID-19 is the climate change within
COVID-19 is the meteorological chaos of the body
COVID-19 is the horizon of a personal collapse
COVID-19 is a messenger above all

PATTERN OF HARM
we, as individuals, are enmeshed in the pattern
who's weaving?

how can me turn into the hands
that are weaving?
we need to thread something new

so many knots strangling us
but we are not yet at the end of our rope

the first step is to notice the pattern
here you are.



WEAVE ME CLOSER

*no I don't want to breath the same air as you but
you are me I don't want to breath the same air as me
I am the virus no you are but we are all one*

please WEAVE ME CLOSER
and protect me at once
I kiss you with my eyes distant eyes
I am trying not to look
at the smile
that makes me sad

hide those teeth, desiring to bite
in life
with all the vigor it can

hide them,
I shall love you better later on

Instead
let me stare at your beautiful eyes

this is all I need
to keep you alive

we need mysteries to survive
hide everything else

*I'll touch you when we will be safe
I'll touch you to safety*

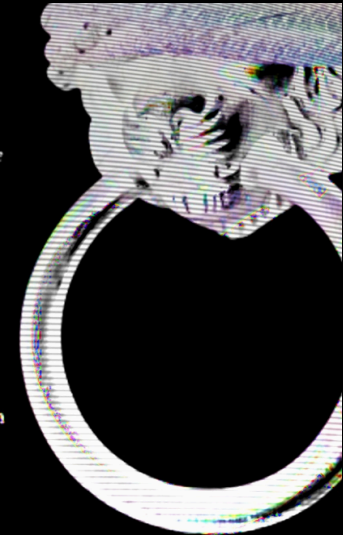
so please WEAVE ME CLOSER

I too want to love and connect
deeply
with all my desires to live
and not merely survive

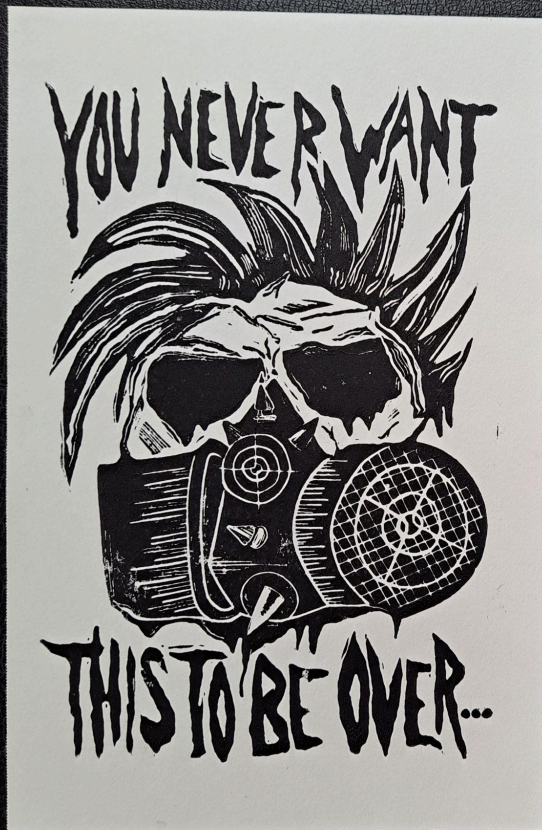
and I love you even when
you show me the smile
I shouldn't see

there are so many other clues available
for me to read you

please protect yourself at once
and kiss me with your eyes

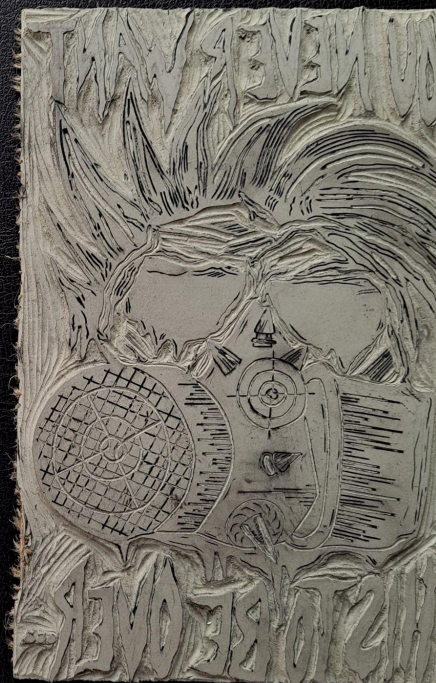


PATTERN OF HARM+WEAVE ME CLOSER, Oct2024,
visual poetry by ari b. (they/them)

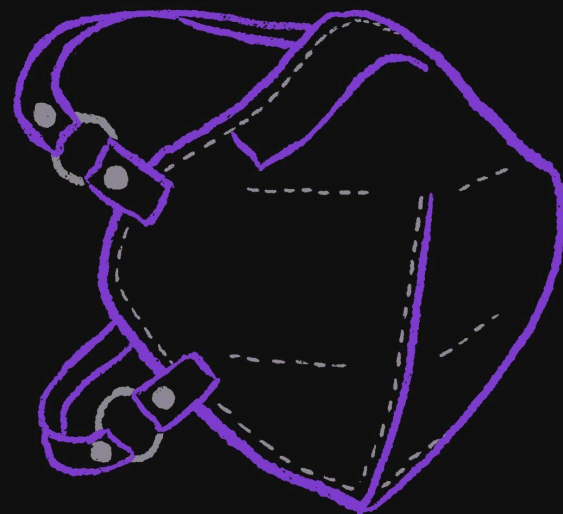


You Never Want This To Be Over, 2023, linocut on paper by Wells (he/him)

Text is from the song Witch Image by Ghost



STRAP



ON

@mask_produced

STRAP ON, September 2024, digital art by Amanda Farman (they/she)



Nervous Breakdown, 4/2024, digital collage
by sara beth brooks (she/they)



Ransom Note, 2/2024, digital collage
by sara beth brooks (she/they)

After the pandemic.

There is a deep sadness within me
Spreading like a fog ,
Pulsing as it draws nearer
To my heart and mind.

There is a *strong* emanation within me
Of a *bitter* taste
That grows *sour* at the sight
Of all the *bare* , selfish lips
Streaming *poison* into the world
To my heart and mind.

There is a vast *rift*
before me,
A turned back split into *shadow*
Hugging loose shoulder blades
Between an end that brings no *forgiveness* ,
And a sickness that can't be forgotten
To my heart and mind.

**After the pandemic, Written 7/20/24, revised 10/31/24,
poem by SnackGnatRat (Nathaniel Ratón, He/It/They)**

I follow a bunch of CC accounts on insta, and one of them shared a tweet that said something along the lines of "Even if COVID were to be over tomorrow, the hurt and distrust disabled people will have will remain for years." It's something that really resonates with me. So, this poem is basically about that - how I am going to feel after the pandemic is ACTUALLY over. Ironically enough, I found that I've been exponentially feeling those feelings in the poem over the past few months. This poem expresses my current, constant agony of feeling abandoned by the world before I would've thought to have written about it.

ghost of a good friend:
all face, no mask, stings sight and
i still can't feel you

**ghost of a good friend, Written 7/27/24, revised
10/31/24, Haiku poem by SnackGnatRat (Nathaniel
Ratón, He/It/They)**

I'm gradually, silently slipping out of my longest lasting friendship due to the fact that this friend of mine still won't mask. When I first wrote "ghost of a good friend", I hadn't come to terms with the fact that I needed to end the friendship, but it was clear that it was now very empty and distant feeling on my end. Revisiting the poem, I find that there's nothing better to call this friend a ghost. I've been grieving the friendship as if I were grieving a literal death, and my perception of my friend is so disconnected from what it once was. It led to me creating a CC community group back in late May / early June, and thankfully has helped me deal with the loneliness.



In this 'necroeconomy', lives are rendered and disposed of

COVID-19 in Palestine
The Settler Colonial Context
Nadia Naser-Najjab
Jan. 11, 2024

Naser-Najjab makes it clear that s
experience is not isolated from the Isr
direct and deliberate consequence of it
whole picture, making clear "the state
health system under occupation, the pas
provision in the territories and the p
considered to be a glob
blocking or delaying the s
testing centres, not prov
the dumping of infected workers

Post 2:11PM May 21, 2024

Omar from Gaza
@OmarHamadD

A little girl named Hala stopped me today and gave me this mask. She said, "You're handsome, you shouldnt get viruses. Wear it and stay healthy." I told her, "You're the beautiful one, really." She made me happy.



this, there exists the b
and conflict, in which he
hospitals, ambulances, and
destroyed; and homes demol

asma'a Adjerid

Post your reply

Abduction of children
The Israeli military arrests and detains 500-700 Palestinian children yearly

For doctors and patients inside Gaza, the implications are excruciating. There are numerous reports of preventable deaths for lack of oxygen and ventilators. Over 2 children have undergone leg amputations in Gaza some without anesthesia.

Omar from Gaza
@OmarHamadD · 04 Jun :
Hala used to always be at the intersection in Deir al-Balah. It's been three days and I still can't find her.

I asked the children who are usually at the same intersection, and they told me, "Didn't you know? She went to heaven three days ago." Thank you world.

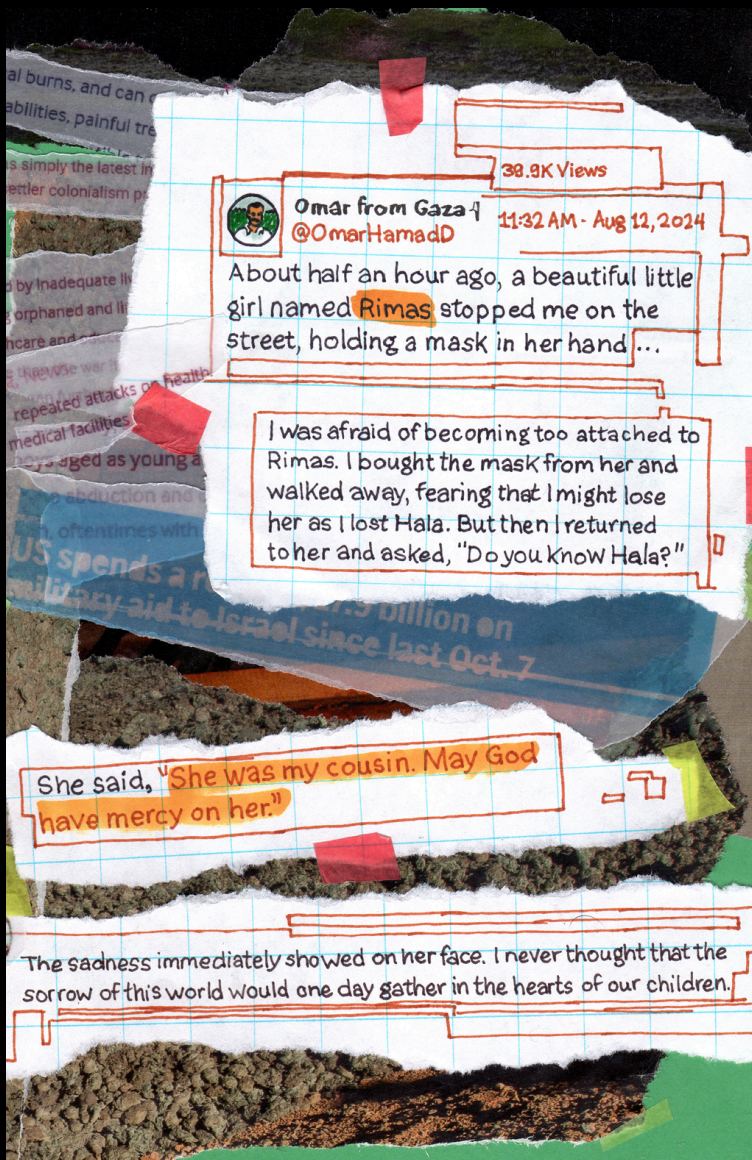
Long List of Banned Items

destroyed Palestinian infrastructure. essential for water, sanitation and hygiene machines, oxygen cylinders, ventilators and water treatment plants that have ended up in bureaucratic limbo include dates, sleepers, ventilators, x-ray machines and anesthetics, crutches

Omar from Gaza
@OmarHamadD · Jun 4
Because of my deep sadness and the many tears that have fallen, I wished I had never met her. Why do loved ones die, leaving behind memories that consume what remains of our bodies?

Why all this pain?

In the absence of appropriate medical supplies, Abu-Sittah concocted a solution to fight infection: dish soap mixed with vinegar and saline.
October 23, 2024



Wear it and stay healthy, October 2024. Mixed media, collage, marker by Laurel Lynn Leake (she/they)

GET SICK LESS

ADD A 15 SECOND GARGLE
INTO YOUR "EVERYTHING
SHOWER" ROUTINE

TAP WATER IS FINE!
15 SECONDS IS ALL YOU NEED

SALT WATER IS GREAT!
SOOTHES, CLEANS, AND HEALS

GARGLING MOUTHWASH?
SURPRISINGLY USEFUL!

GET SICK LESS

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND
OTHERS FROM PREVENTABLE ILLNESS

VARIOUS CULTURES THROUGHOUT HISTORY USED **MOUTHWASHES AND THROAT GARGLES** FOR VARIOUS HEALTH PURPOSES. IN SOME JAPANESE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, GARGLING A CUP OF WATER IS THE LAST STEP OF THE INSTRUCTED HAND WASHING ROUTINE. (I DO IT WITH TAP WATER IN THE SHOWER, OR WHEN I WASH MY FACE BEFORE BED!)

THE ROUTINE GARGLING OF **TAP WATER** IS SHOWN CLINICALLY TO HAVE **REDUCED INSTANCES OF UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS & REDUCED SEVERITY OF SYMPTOMS** DURING UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS.

A **SALTWATER** GARGLE IS A TRIED AND TRUE TECHNIQUE FOR **PREVENTING, MANAGING, AND RECOVERING FROM UPPER RESPIRATORY ILLNESS**.

1/2 TEASPOON OF SALT : 1 CUP WARM WATER.
GARGLE FOR 15 SECONDS OR MORE.

(I USE A MUG & HEAT THE WATER IN THE MICROWAVE FOR 30 SECS. ALWAYS MAKE SURE ITS NOT SCALDING HOT. **BURNT THROAT IS NOT GOAT**)

USING A MOUTHWASH CONTAINING **CETYLPIRIDINIUM CHLORIDE (CPC)** IS NOT ONLY GOOD FOR YOUR GUMS, BUT IT IS FOUND CLINICALLY TO **REDUCE INFECTIVITY OF COVID, FLU, RSV, AND HERPES TYPE1** IN HUMAN SALIVA. SO MANY BENEFITS IN ONE! NOT ALL MOUTHWASH HAS CPC, SO **CHECK THE LABEL!** (I USE THIS BEFORE & AFTER SOCIAL EVENTS.)

Active ingredient
Cetylpyridinium chloride 0.05%

Active Cetylpyridinium chloride 0.07%

Purpose
Antigingivitis/Antiplaque



SOURCES

Get Sick Less: Gargle by Mira (he/him)

There is no solidarity.

There are healthcare workers speaking at a protest against Genocide, not wearing a mask.

I had the feeling that we lost before we even started this fight, as there is no idea of what solidarity is, not truly. How can there be, when those who are most vulnerable are not regarded by the masses?

Amongst a sea of protestors, masks are a fleeting sight. There are more cops wearing face coverings, but even this is when they put their helmets on to come beat us. What does it mean when a disabled person masks and they are the only one who does it, amongst a crowd of 'comrades'?

Standing out, is something disabled people are already accustomed to, and a lack of solidarity, is our everyday. Wearing a mask makes you stand out, because in our day and age, nobody else does. (They ask you if you're trying to hide your identity, then they laugh at your attempt to be kind to your own life)

The weekend churns out rave after rave, where on the dance floor, nobody can escape. Poor ventilation, high co2, cigarettes, covid permeates the air; are you dizzy? Are you feeling sick yet?

In the smallest venue of the city, a queer party with mandatory covid testing takes place, the owners barely break even.

So find the other people who mask, they are fleeting but they're there, in a big city, you can't be the only one fighting against a genocide while disabled. Bond over your lonely transness, with no one to celebrate, as you cannot risk infection—it comes anyway, in being social, a virus will always find the paths of least resistance.

It seems education cannot hinder the spread, reminders of the danger are only an annoyance, proper protective methods and preventive measures can only take you so far, when you are a social being, surrounded by other social beings.

We have been failed by the government, all we have is each other.

Is your life worth anything? Do they fall into ignorance about your health, due to their denial about the raging wave of SARS-CoV-2 that crashing through each body it meets.

Do you not hear the chorus of coughs, echoing through the public transportation, in the lecture halls, in the market, at the doctors, from your loved ones?

There is no solidarity, there is denial of the fifth deadly pandemic in human history, a virus that chips at our immune system with each compounding infection.

Chazal is a young girl in Gaza, who distributed masks everyday to make a living.

'You're handsome, you shouldn't get viruses. Wear it and stay healthy.' Hala told Omar from Gaza. She has been martyred.

Where is your solidarity?



Deep Fried Slam, 30/10/24, graphic design and text
by prim (he/it)

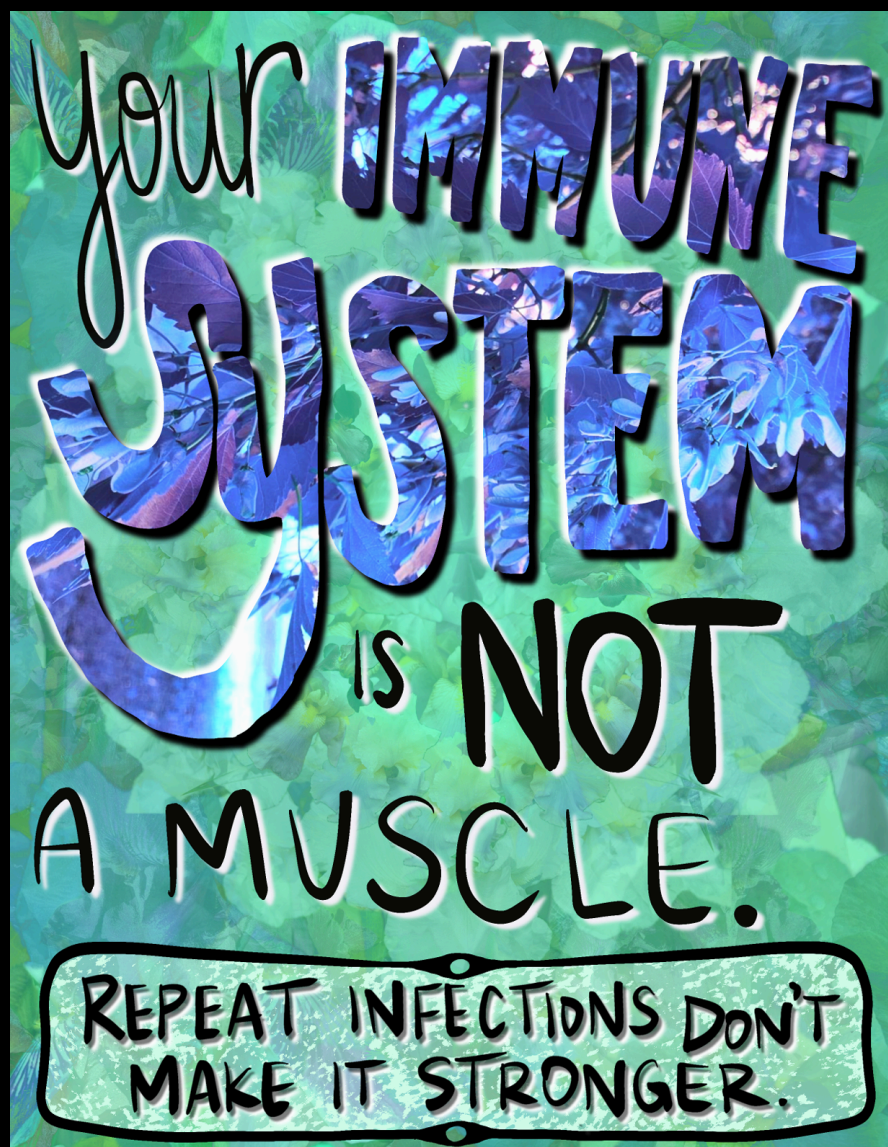
Disrupt eugenics/No normalizing genocide & mass
death, Oct 2024, Linocut by @printingworldstocome



Care Blanket: piece 2 (N95), October 2024, Hand knit with Briggs and Little "Heritage" (100% wool) and Briggs and Little "Tuffy" (80% wool, 20% nylon) by Aron Shaw (they/them)



Everything Compounds: Nov 1 2024, digital collage of photos from camera roll by Terrence Adams (they/them)



Your immune system isn't a muscle, October 2024, Procreate with photography by alys (they/them)



Riding together, September 2024, Procreate with photography by alys (they/them)

WHY I ♥ WEARING MY FACE MASK

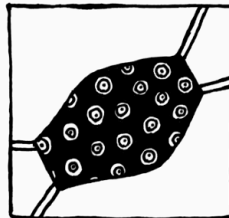
(huge thanks to my friends for helping me to compile this list of advantages... and there might be many more reasons why face masks are useful and cool)



helps protect other people from covid-19 and other viruses



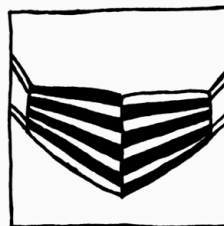
can help reduce allergic reactions to pollen and pollution



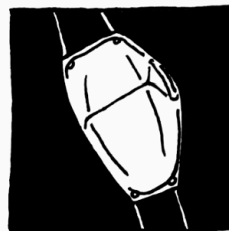
helps protect against dust and flying bugs when walking or cycling



anonymity for activists and introverts



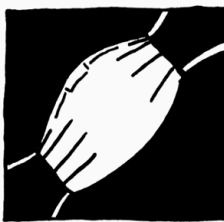
another proof for the ridiculousness of anti-burqa laws



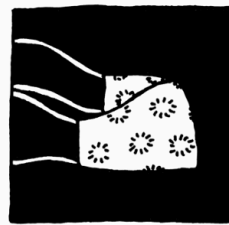
no need to shave or apply lipstick



the colourful and fun patterns of reusable masks



warm, cosy, and snuggly on cold days



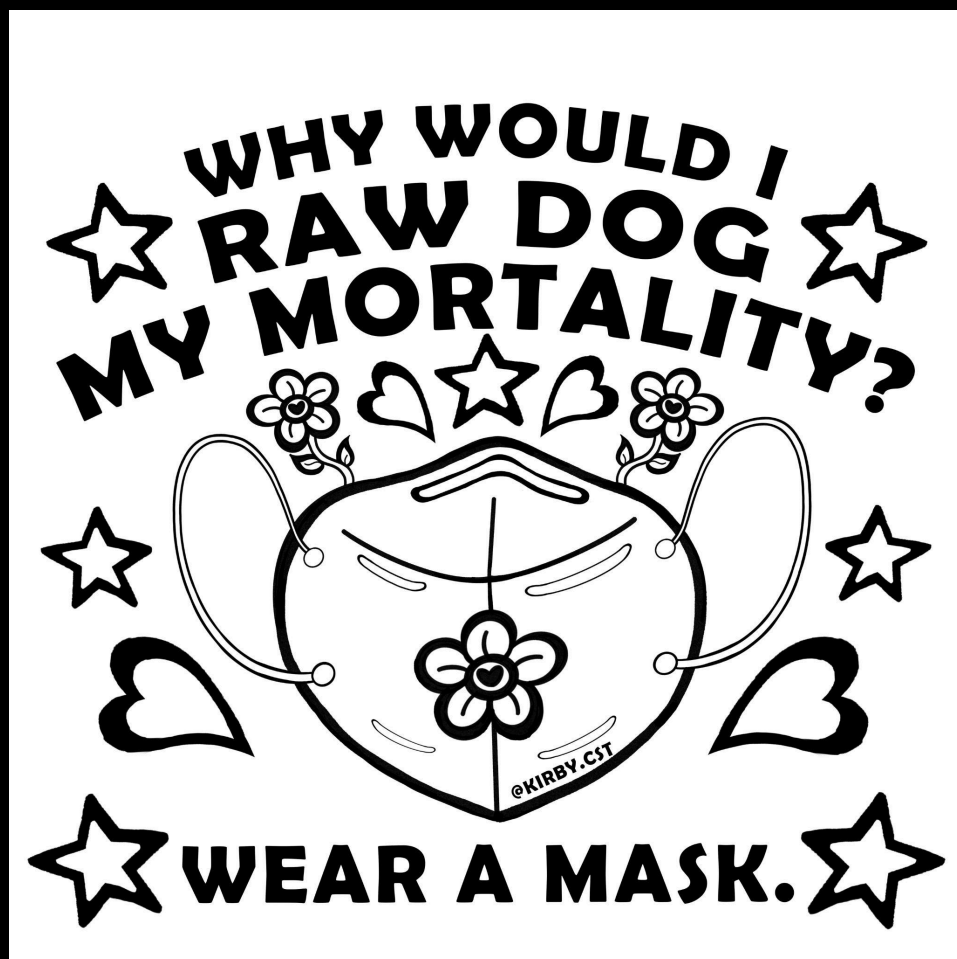
easy to hide your facial expression and no pressure to smile

Why I love wearing my face mask, 2022, black pen on paper
by Nina Zina (she/they)



FREE CLIPART
cleanairolly.org/art

Covid Cautious Clipart, November 2024, digital illustration
by Elliott Giannini (they/them)



Why would I Rawdog My Mortality, 2024, digital
Illustration by Rhiannon Salt (they/them)



Community Care Makeup Self Portrait, 2023, Makeup
and Rhinestones by Rhiannon Salt (they/them)



**Folk Cryptid Horror, August 2022, Masked Group
Photoshoot by Sam Evans (she/her)**

Flag Proudly

With Prairie Fruit Arts Enamel Pins

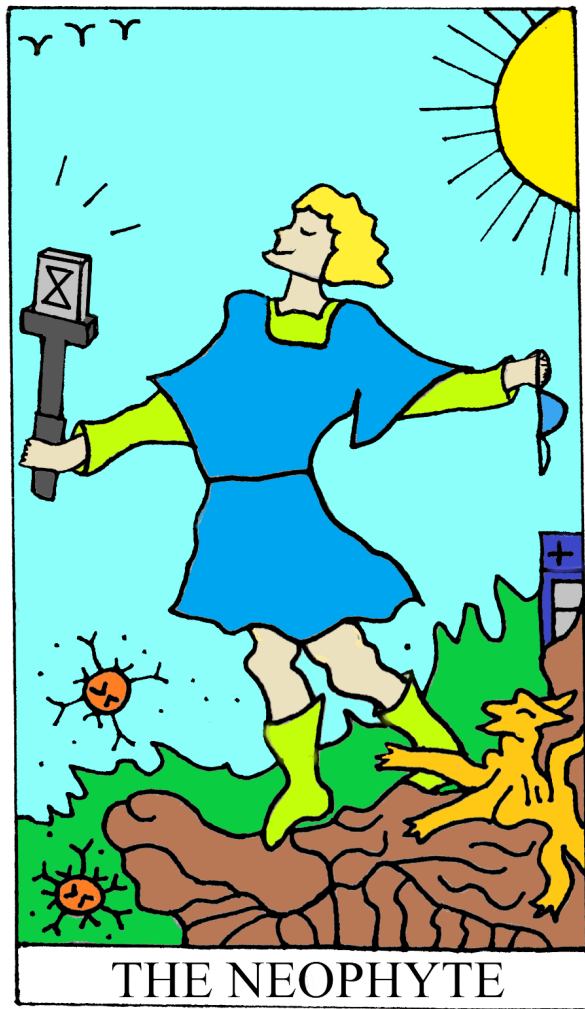


@PrairieFruitArts

Covid Conscious Queer Enamel Pin, 2024, digital
by Spencer Blackwood (they/them)



"S.O.S.", Fall 2024, multi-media collage
by algae wunder (they/she // tee/hee)



The Neophyte, 2023, black fineliner on paper & digital colourisation by Andrea Barrett (she/her)

From the Latin for 'newly planted,' the Neophyte is the archetype of the newly initiated into the gift of life. Whether a day, a year, or a decade- or beyond- every transplant participant (and all of society participate in its spectacle, not just donors or recipients) can slip into embodying the archetype of the Neophyte.

This card overtly mirrors of the Fool card of the Rider-Waite-Smith deck. The sun is shining; the Neophyte wishes to relay only the best of life back to the universe (via social media). There is a beauty in this way of shining brightly but for a shorter time. A bleached white sweetness leaving an artificial saccharine aftertaste. Oh shiny bloodless PR image of transplantation. Caught up in the moment, past and future out of mid. In a bubble of presense-normalcy. Losing self in the need for belonging among the society of the non-transplanted. Signifier of 'transplant success' by clinicians and society alike.

Most surface persona, most public face, how positivity subsuming whole identity suffices. Yet, heed its warning: Looking away from what is right in front of you and having a 'positivity only or else!' mindset can set people up to encounter more issues than taking in what's actually in the moment & responding accordingly. Wanting to see the bright reflections of the sun can lead to blind spot in approaching danger & a forever sunset, a premature end. The Neophyte's last words, seconds from falling off a cliff: "Life is short, so let's put complexity to the side. Let's focus on the here and now. I'm doing fine, you are too right- everything's amazing! Best make the most of this very moment!"



The Veteran, 2024, black fineline on paper & digital colourisation by Andrea Barrett (she/her)

The inverse of the The Neophyte; the Veteran is the archetype of learning through taking on the mantle of being a soldier in the war against communicable diseases.

It is another Battle of the skies- for our foe is in the air once again- our tools likewise addressing this plane, this time that the Covid pandemic has brought (germs rather than the Germans of WW2). Learner of lessons, with 20:20 vision (with regular vision checks), armed with tools in the fight. For human flourishing, for valuing of all human life as worthy, not just against viruses and the like, but against ideologies of eugenics, against health supremacy, and for mutual aid and community care, for adjustments for the most vulnerable and equity as praxis.

The Veteran's rallying cry: "Mask up. Bring a spare. Filter the air. Freedom in connection, in considering our community; we are not alone; every action, has a ripple effect." Bound by ties with each other, like a the beaded loop a connecting thread to the world, both in front of us in the tools that are fastened to our bodies, and across the globe, via the technologies that make connecting more widely than every possible.



Protect Us, November 2024, Digital Collage
by Steel Transplants (they/them)



Destroy Fascists, November 2024, Digital Collage
by Steel Transplants (they/them)

ARTIST STATEMENTS

sarah day: this piece is cheeky but also filled with rage. a response to fascist mask bans that are rolling out on state and local levels, in cities and universities. this piece flips a common conservative catch phrase on its head, both illustrating the absurdity and hypocrisy of american conservatism, and demonstrating the ferocity with which i defend my right to mask in an ongoing pandemic, and protect my body now and always.

sadie randall: I'm a printmaker and digital artist. I practice reducing my masks by hanging them on hooks and wanted to draw that to show what my reality looks like as a Black Lesbian who still takes covid precautions. I also wanted to follow the trend where people began the statement "Queer As In" and fill in the blank with a nod to Act Up. It's important for queer folks to wear a mask as we are the ones who are at a higher risk of long covid and death.

Jax Davis: I write and usually paint. I'm relearning how to paint lying down so I'm using brushpens now.

Emmeline Kaiser: I wasn't intending to make an animal crossing x masking series, but here we are apparently! quote is from Themme Fatale by way of a tweet from elle_carnitine. I very simply believe we should care about other people (and ourselves!) and have our actions reflect that, which means people who can mask NEED to mask up!

Ashanti Fortson is a multidisciplinary artist, cartoonist, writer, and more.

Jay: This was my way of expressing the wright of what is to come-via covid. The darkness, isolation, fear, the deaths. I was trying to capture the idea that covid is more mental than physical. It was my way of foretelling how bad it will get. But also trying to get out the heaviness of it all from myself into canvas so that I may be free of its burden for atleast a short while. The two crosses symbolize two more waves of pandemic to come-

ARTIST STATEMENTS

Aries M. Gacutan: threw together a little mini-comic/illo about the ever-present threat of Getting Sick when doing literally anything

Jaq: These are two poems centered around Covid and the difficulties of relationships and socializing while the pandemic is raging

Aster: I made this piece when I was feeling COVID isolation acutely. It reminds me of pines, water, being in a dark and lonely place but also in the company of those natural elements. I work in a variety of mediums but lately have enjoyed mixing mediums and my art often explores social and natural decay, ecological collapse, isolation and alienation

Theo: Kick Covid in the ball. Stress relief for disabled folks. 1 mask = 1 kick. Include the excluded. If you can't kick it, throw it, squeeze it, whack it, or think really mean thoughts at it. Made and photographed in bed.

owen: A piece I made to address the people who have decided that "covid is over".

Bug Cru: I'm a visual artist, illustrator, writer and tattoo artist from the Salish Coast of the Canadian colonial occupation. My art is about introspection, reality expansive thinking and queerness. More at bugcru.com

Joe Hawthorn: i am a multi disciplinary artist going from writing to music to visual arts

ARTIST STATEMENTS

Bec Miriam: The nature of Bec's art practice is shaped by their bodymind's everchanging, unpredictable states. They are often hyper-focused & forgetful of their existence, making, studying, experimenting with new art mediums, or organizing things likely sitting/lying down beneath a laptop & a hard drive or with their hands stained by charcoal & surrounded by paints (always with cats in-view). The Founder and Festival Director of RestFest Film Festival, Bec spends much of their time lovingly organizing gentle, virtual Crip gathering spaces around art & film & care & rest.

LONE HEART: This piece is about feeling left behind by the general public, friends, and community due to being disabled in general, but especially since Covid started. The majority of people are no longer taking any precautions to protect themselves and others, those that cannot afford to take that risk are being left behind to die. It's so disheartening to see the world move on without a care, to see people I love move on without a care.

Ryann Ripley: Today, I wrote a poem about how I DIDN'T get COVID-19 from my girlfriend. I got it from this alien, anti-human system called capitalism. Certain people are allowed to get sick and die on purpose, and I wanted to express my rage about that. Follow me for updates about my horror novel, which is coming out in 2025.

Zoe: I create a lot of pieces with open eyes to convey an awareness of continuous suffering around the world. I also make hand sculptures about ablism and the way we are known for our utility. The work I am submitting here features an inflamed brain from repeated covid exposure. The head is an empty jar. Surgical masks are not sufficient to prevent brain damage from covid.

ARTIST STATEMENTS

Ky: I'm a long time spoken word poet and mostly work in freeform

Vox Margo Short: Teacher, singer/songwriter, poet, and crafter of whatever mediums I feel drawn to, including embroidery, beads, wire, clay, collages, fabric, papermache, mixed media, and more!

court(ney) felle: i consider myself a multi-genre writer as well as fiber artist & activist!

Ky "Why" Wyman: The poem and drawing are two parts of the same piece - a snap shot from a day spent with my ex at a farmer's market. Reflecting on small observations and feelings while navigating the dangers and frustrations of going out in public to do something as simple as shopping. (The pieces can be separated if you like.)

I'm a multi-media performance artist with concentrations in illustration, puppetry, drag and video. These days Covid makes the performance aspect more difficult, seeing that most venues ignore Covid precautions, so it's nice to connect with drawing and poetry more. I make art to connect with people and tell stories. I'm heavily inspired by children's books that I used to look at as a kid, because reading was difficult for me as a child. Due to this my larger body of work is a bit whimsical and absurd. I live laugh love queer trans joy. :)

Eden Caruso: This piece depicts two horses lovingly enfolding each other, almost like a hug. Both of them are wearing KN95 masks. I selected horses after coming across pictures of them showing acts of love to one another.

Their tenderness and warmth reminded me of how masking and other COVID precautions are an act of care among times of uncertainty, grief and vulnerability; how we can look for and protect each other. The title of the artwork was borrowed from the song of the same name by the Rolling Stones, touching upon themes of melancholy, longing and love.

Just like the wild horses couldn't drag us away, our current conditions won't take away the hope and community we've build up through our collective efforts

ARTIST STATEMENTS

Dax Hart: This poem came out of my experience of homelessness, in-person work and social isolation, as a clinically vulnerable person during the ongoing pandemic. I write poetry and fiction and make collages, some of which I hope to start putting online in the coming year.

Katrina Dreamer: This year I leaned harder into joy and I took more masked photos of me enjoying myself. I wanted a record of the moments my heart felt full, so I can look back and see more than the pain and isolation that have dominated the last five years.

Kimball Anderson: I make a lot of comics and visual poetry about sensations. Trying to capture the feeling of them, analyze them, understand them. It comes from the way I have to manage my health issues while dissociated/brain fogged, looking for the tiniest hints in the blankness.

ari b.: I'm a poet and glitch artist. This artwork is a poetry piece in two part, which plays with the idea of pattern and weaving to talk about interdependence (between crises, but also between us, and how we keep loving the people who don't mask.)

Wells: Wells is a creator interested in graphic design, typography, printmaking, DIY multimedia, and poetry. His art is often inspired by macabre and punk music culture, as well as raw explorations into trans experience.

Amanda Farman: I make digital art celebrating COVID safety/community care! Grateful for the joy I have in my life from the people I've met through these shared values. I try to make designs that embody the fun and creativity that is part of COVID cautious queer life.

ARTIST STATEMENTS

sara beth brooks: These collages represent an emergent art practice for me. I am a multi-media artist who writes poetry, paints, sculpts, and does digital drawing. During the pandemic I wanted to expand my collage practice but I was having trouble finding resources to make analog collages, so I turned to digital collage. Ransom Note is made from images found on Canva, and Nervous Breakdown features my own digital drawing of the nervous system laid over my Covid vaccination card, with the words "overwhelmed" and "stop" on the page to explain the system overload. Digital collage has helped me to display my experiences in a new medium.

SnackGnatRat (Nathaniel Ratón): While neither of these poem explicitly mention queerness, they are connected to the feelings. The sense of the abandonment is so much worse knowing that it's contributed by fellow queer and other marginalized people. My friend, like me, is transmasculine and has been with me throughout most of my transition. Losing him means losing a core part of my journey as a trans man.

I've also first-hand seen my disabled friends and peers get shunted in so-called leftist spaces. If they're educated on COVID and still refuse to mask, it's like, shouldn't you know better?

Laurel Lynn Leake: My process always involves collecting and assembling in some way, and this comic is a very literal example of that. I built it around the direct words and photographs of two Palestinians, Omar Hamad and Muhammad Smiry. The stories they shared about young girls selling masks in Gaza have stuck in my mind throughout this past year. I bring in scraps of context for their words with printed transparent excerpts of scientific articles, books, and news articles about Covid-19 and settler colonialism in Palestine. As a queer and disabled settler living on Turtle Island, COVID solidarity to me means global solidarity with everyone fighting to survive the USA empire.

ARTIST STATEMENTS

prim: This artwork contains a snippet of slammed out text in anger and despair after countless attempts to get 'comrades' to mask. As a fiction and non-fiction writer, and as a digital + physical artist, I am trying to place my words into a visual field that grounds my experiences and emotions. I drew from images of Petri dishes, weighted graphs, textural distortion, and deep cut colors. The piece is hard to read, it makes your eyes hurt and the edges of the words feel difficult to reach. Hoping to convey the frustration I have experienced, trying to convince the people I organize with to mask.

Aron Shaw: I'm less of an "artist" and more of a maker. I've dabbled in lots of mediums, but my practice has settled mostly into: collage, mixed media sculpture, and textiles.

The current iteration of my work, Care Blanket, is an eventual hope of creating something larger out of more manageable parts. I create patterns for and knit panels with words or images that connect to the ideals I hold around care. I lean towards textile work in general as winter approaches as I need to spend more time in bed due to my sickness/disability. This fall I have had to learn very quickly to care for myself with little support from others, and the Care Blanket is a collection of my internal learnings.

Terrance Adams: This is a journal reflection on the past few months by means of collage. We are shaped by the places we inhabit, so I take care to take photos of the things that I find meaningful. I've tried to use colour in a semi-symmetric-style, but the rules are very loose. I've included multiple art pieces I've done lately to respond to political grief, or are related to political action. Trans liberation, disabled liberation, Palestinian liberation are interconnected and active politics are deeply felt while practiced.

alys: Creating as a way to understand the world. Linocut. Procreate. Collage. Painting. Sculpting. Whatever I find in the free pile that I can breathe life into.

ARTIST STATEMENTS

Nina Zina: I'm a zine maker and illustrator who enjoys making art about social issues. This poster is a way for me to resist ongoing anti-mask views and support immuno-compromised friends.

Elliott Giannini: I decided to make a bunch of high quality PPE digital illustrations for other clean air orgs and covid cautious folks to use for graphics, flyers, zines, etc.

Rhiannon Salt: As an artist I make chaotic, colorful and affirming art, jewelry, apparel and stickers centering disabled queer and trans experiences. I am a makeup artist and I love maximalist and colorful makeup !

Spencer Blackwood: I designed this Covid Conscious Queer enamel pin early this year and almost didn't order it, thinking it must just be too niche. Now it's one of my top sellers, and every time it sells I feel a little less alone as a Covid Conscious Queer in this world.

algae wunder: For my collages, I tend to collect all sorts of materials with interesting imagery, patterns, and fonts, such as patterned envelopes, cereal boxes, junk mail, vintage magazines or catalogues. The base image is from a 1970 issue of Life magazine and I've been cutting out the lettering for the past several months, which I started during my most recent COVID infection in late August to pass the time.

Andrea Barrett: This pair piece explores the topic of being Covid aware through the medium of tarot card designs; mixed media, hybrid of created by hand and by technological mediation- like all my various piece, from fine art to sculptures and beyond.

The Veteran (Neophyte Inverse) builds on The Neophyte (AKA The Fool) which was part of a transplant themed set I created and exhibited in 2023 to explore some facets of the paradoxical lived experience being a transplant recipient.

My art practice began in 2019 in response to the limits of the academic (indeed even in the liberal arts and the medical humanities) at expressing a patient-centric biography of care and sickness.