

For Immediate Release: September 5, 2024

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Media Kit available at: <http://www.queerzestzinefest.com/media-kit>

Queer Zest Zine Fest

Event Date: November 9-17, 2024

Event Location: Online

Global — (September 5, 2024) Spotighting the work of diverse queer creators from around the world. Featuring virtual tablers, presentations, workshops, and meetups on zines, queer issues, and DIY culture!

This November, around the world, LGBTQ+ zine makers and fans will gather at the Queer Zest Zine Fest — a two-day all-virtual zine fest accessible to anyone with an internet connection. This will allow folks around the world to meet and exchange ideas where physical limitations would restrict access to these spaces. It will be a place where queer zine makers and queer zine fans can gather to celebrate zines, queer community, and share stories.

The Queer Zest Zine Fest organizers are a coalition of like-minded queer zinesters with a host of event planning experience under their belts. The organizer team met online in queer zine scenes and decided to join together to make this event a reality!

The fest will highlight the work of diverse queer creators from around the world. Applications are currently open for tablers, workshops, and meetups until September 30th, 2024, so get your application in while you can!

Team bios, plus a definition of zines and their place in queer history can be found after the signature. OutReach, Inc. and Barnard Zine Library are supporting this event through fiscal sponsorship and accessibility respectively.

Please reach out with any questions you have or to schedule an interview.

Sincerely,

The Queer Zest Zine Fest Team

zestyqueers@gmail.com

<https://queerzestzinefest.carrd.co/>

The Team

Jasper Martin is a freelance artist, graphic designer, and painter from Ohio who likes to dabble in every kind of arts and crafts they can get their hands on. They are

new to the zine scene but have quickly fallen in love with the medium. When Jasper's not working on an illustration or experimenting with a new art, they're taking care of two cats and two stepkids with their wife, a local musician.

Laura Chenault is an interdisciplinary artist creating art from a feminist and a post-modernist perspective. She believes concept and content must work hand and hand with presentation and display. She is the owner of Laurel Tree Bindery, a small bindery specializing in one of a kind books, zines, and short print runs. Passionate about making, she helps produce the Philly Maker Faire.

Olivia Montoya (she/her) is a 28-year-old creative based in CT, USA. She currently works as a graphic designer and studied computer science at Stanford University. She is a hobbyist in a variety of different areas, including video game dev, TTRPG design, LARP writing and GMing, zine making, programming tools for online gaming, digital art, public speaking, event and community organizing. She has organized the Litchfield County Zine Fest since 2018, taught many zine workshops and talks at conferences, libraries, zine fests, and other educational events. She has solo-run and co-run multiple successful Kickstarter campaigns. She was LARP Area Head at Arisia 2021, is a co-organizer of the LARP Community Organizers Retreat, and has facilitated or participated in a variety of events at gaming conventions, from panels to discussions to games. In the Before Times, she organized in-person queer community meetups in her area. Identities that are important to her include: queer, bi/pan asexual, arospec, Autistic, latinx, and chronically ill.

Lief Bennett (he/they) is a 22-year-old writer and cartoonist based in Columbus, OH, currently studying English at Columbus State Community College and working full time for a web marketing firm. He is relatively new to zines but is excited to grow and learn with the QZZF community. Besides comics, Lief enjoys biking, mending and making clothes, and working on his personal website, <https://houseoflief.com>. He also volunteers with the Cartoonist Coop, an organization working to secure fair pay for cartoonists everywhere.

History and Definition of Zines

What are Zines?

Zines are small self-published booklets on topics as varied as prose, poetry, comics, personal narratives, non-fiction, art, photography, and more. Zines are generally produced with a printer or photocopier—with digital zines becoming more and more popular—and distributed by the same person or small group of people who created them, with a print run of 1000 or less for print zines. Zines are associated with underground subcultures and have traditionally been a voice of those who are underprivileged or misrepresented in society.

What is a Zine Fest?

A zine fest is an event, usually in person, but increasingly online, where zine creators sell and trade their work, socialize with other zine creators (“zinesters”) and zine fans, and where attendees can attend talks, panels, workshops, and/or open mics. There are specifically queer zine fests all over the world!

Why Queer Zines?

LGBT periodicals existed as early as 1870, with the publishing of Uranus by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs. Germany had several queer periodicals in the 1920’s, Die Freundschaft, Die Freundin, and Frauenliebe. Queer life thrived in Germany at that time, but fascism in the 1930’s forced LGBT folks back underground. Although these publications were not specifically categorized as “zines” (the word didn’t exist then), they were independently published booklets and distributed on a small scale.

In 1950’s USA, homosexuality was believed to be tied to Communism, and openly LGBT people were often imprisoned. The UK also had high-profile homosexual arrests at that time period. Gay men were often subject to entrapment in order to “catch” them in homosexual behavior, and bars frequented by LGBT folks were often raided. Even with that risk, the community was driven to find each other, and covert organizations formed.

The Mattachine Society was a society for gay men which published a journal with articles on dealing with police, how to avoid entrapment and other stories of interest to the gay community. The Daughters of Bilitis, formed independently of Mattachine Society, published a newsletter for lesbians which was distributed quietly from person to person and via mail. For an in-depth analysis of these societies and other independent LGBT newsletters, see this article “The Fountain Pen and the Typewriter”: The Rise of the Homophile Press in the 1950s and 1960s or the documentary series Equal on HBO.

In present times, many LGBT and queer folks live isolated lives. Although queer rights have progressed in the US, UK and other countries significantly since the 1950s, folks in rural and isolated areas still struggle to find community and connection. Zines are a form of self-expression as well as a way to connect with others. Online zine swaps and zine fests bring together people and ideas from around the world. It is crucial for LGBT and queer folks to know that they are not alone.