

https://dspace.org/

Crafting Spaces: Exploring the Potential for a Queer(ed) Curatorial Practice through Zines

Baia, Tristan

2024
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/44920
Baia, Tristan. (2024). Crafting Spaces: Exploring the Potential for a Queer(ed) Curatorial Practice through Zines [Masters dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg]. WIReDSpace. https://hdl.handle.net/10539/44920

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Research Report – Contemporary Curatorial Practice

Crafting Spaces

Exploring the Potential for a Queer(ed) Curatorial Practice through Zines

Tristan Baia
1894571

This Research Report has been written and submitted in fulfilment of a Masters in Contemporary Curatorial Practice by Coursework and Research Report, at the University of Witwatersrand

Name:	Tristan Baia
Student Number:	1894571
Supervisor:	Dr Nicola Cloete
Date:	01/08/2024
Ethics Clearance Number:	WSOA20230829-13
Word Count:	15100

Plagiarism Declaration

I, Tristan Baia (Student Number 1894571), hereby declare that the work contained in this research report is my original writing and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signed: TBaia

Date: 01/08/2024

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 3
Introduction 4
Situating the Problem 4
Research Aim and Overview 6
The Crafting of Spaces 8
Chapter 1 – Theoretical Framework 10
Zine Materiality 10
Trans Care – Caring for People, Objects, and Spaces 13
Locating the Curatorial 16
Chapter 2 – Legacies of South African Queer Printed Matter 19
Sunday's Women 21
Fanfare 21
Glowletter 23
Chapter 3 – The Zine Jam 26
Zine Jam Prep and Process 26
Analysing the Zines 29
Reflecting on the Workshop 33
Chapter 4 – Crafting Spaces 36
A DIY Ethos 36
Communal Care 37
Conclusion 40
Reference List 42
Appendix A: Zine Jam Prompt 46
Appendix B: Zine Jam Documentation 47
Appendix C: Zine Scans 60
(1) 60
(2) 62
(3) 64
(4) 66
(5) 68

Acknowledgements

I am incredibly grateful to my supervisor, Dr Nicola Cloete, for her time and support throughout the process of writing and realising this research report. I truly am thankful to be able to have worked with you over this period, and I am grateful to have had you as my supervisor.

I am also very grateful to the staff at GALA Queer Archive, especially archivist Linda Chernis, for providing access to a wealth of valuable queer research materials. This project could not have been realised without the presence of the archive as an important part of my personal research practice.

To my peers, the staff, and the lecturers at the Wits School of the Arts, and the Curatorial, Public and Visual Cultures department – thank you for the advice and generative discussions that have informed and inspired me throughout this period.

Thank you to Reshma Chhiba at TPO for providing a valuable space to realise the practical component of this research – it would not have been possible otherwise, and I am grateful for your assistance.

To my family, thank you for assisting me throughout this time and being there when I needed it.

Finally, to my friends and queer support network. Thank you for being there throughout this process – as research participants, confidants, and muses. I am forever grateful for the many ways you have supported me throughout this process, and this research truly exists because of you, and all the queer little ways we support each other.

Introduction

Situating the Problem

After graduating in 2022 with a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts from the University of the Witwatersrand, I emerged into a contemporary art scene that felt insular, closed off, and hostile to emerging artists. In attempting to navigate South African contemporary art environments, I became frustrated with commercial and mainstream art institutions: a scarcity of opportunities, funding, and residencies; spaces that seemed to choose to continually showcase established voices at the expense of emerging or 'unpalatable' artists; and art collectors that appeared to prioritise profit over care for both artists and the artworks in their collections. These feelings were amplified by hearing the experiences of other artists that I knew. How they often struggled to find work or felt instrumentalised by commercial art institutions, having had their work damaged during or after installation, or the resulting stress from galleries delaying the return of their artworks or their payments after interning, selling, or exhibiting art – if they were paid at all.

At the same time, I had begun to consider what curating and the curatorial might offer me, as well as the artists around me. In response to the lack of opportunities offered to artists outside of hegemonic art spaces, I began to consider how working as an artist-curator might afford me not only more chances to engage with my own artistic practice, but also opportunities to provide support to the artists around me. However, I found that the same issues that I was experiencing when attempting to practice as an artist – difficulties relating to access to spaces, resources, jobs, and funding, and an art ecosystem that was largely confined to hegemonic art institutions – emerged once again when attempting to practice as a curator.

Beyond my own personal experiences, these concerns have also been echoed by other artists, curators, and arts writers who have lamented on their experiences of a South African arts ecosystem that has been described as elitist and exclusionary (Nyathi, 2021) (Serame, 2019); or actively hostile, in the case of Sharlene Khan and her experience of being ostracised and censured after "critiquing the lack of racial transformation in the visual arts field in South Africa" (Khan, 2015: 5).

These complications are further articulated by Paul O'Neill in his text *The Curatorial Constellation and the Paracuratorial Paradox*, where he states:

> *"This is registered by a number of curators and commentators who have called for a regression to the artwork-first model of curation: curating as selecting from an already-sanctioned art market; the disappearance of curatorial self-reflexivity; curatorial labor restricted to object-oriented exhibitions; curating reduced to working within institutions; establishing a canon or selecting from within a canon; curating associated with, or working within, a private collection or museum context as the only way forward"* (O'Neill, 2012: 59)

Here, O'Neill reflects on a kind of insularity that not only prevents a moving forward towards new modes of curation, but also an embracing of new voices, new artists, and new ways of thinking within contemporary art spaces.

At the same time that I was struggling through my attempts to navigate the contemporary South African art scene as an aspiring artist-curator, I was also engaging with a personal zining practice. A zine is a small-scale, small-circulation, noncommercial print work – although online zines do exist, which can increase their distribution size somewhat. Zines are self-published by their authors and feature a diverse range of topics, from human rights advocacy to sharing art and fanfiction among fandom communities. In my practice as an artist and researcher (and also in my personal life) I have been utilising zines as a medium for both creative expression and disseminating my research, due to their low barrier of entry; the freedom that I felt in being able to write about and publish anything that I cared about, no matter how seemingly esoteric or banal; the ease of both production and reproduction; and the affective moments that emerged in the sharing and making of zines with others. It was this decentralised materiality to create that first drew me to zines, and has continued to encourage my engagement with the format.

It was here, when considering my personal zining practice and my difficulty in navigating what I perceived to be an insular and uncaring art ecosystem, I began to wonder if – and how – I could begin to combine these two fields that I had been engaging in. I wondered how the accessibility of zines and zining, as a form of queer curatorial practice, could be used to create spaces and platforms for fellow artists and curators beyond the boundaries of mainstream art institutions.

Research Aim and Overview

Keeping in mind these institutional failures, this research aims to examine how and where the materiality and history of zines and zining can be drawn on in order to engage with a decentralised, affective, and queer(ed) curatorial practice. These three specific terms were chosen for this research report as they reflect what I consider to be my biggest challenges in attempting to navigate the contemporary South African art ecosystem: an overreliance and dependency on mainstream art institutions; a lack of care for artists and curators; and largely hegemonic distributions of power, wealth, and access. As such, this research's focus on zines and zine praxis is a proactive measure that foregrounds artistic and curatorial agency, as a strategy to counter the dominance and overwhelming reach of mainstream art institutions.

Here, I will situate these terms within the broader context of this research. *Decentralised* is being deployed in relation to O'Neill's writing on the paracuratorial as both within and outside the curatorial, a terrain of praxis in moving away from an exhibition-first model of curating (O'Neill, 2012: 55). In keeping with this, I wish to move away from not only the exhibition-first model of curating, but also away from mainstream art institutions – including, but not limited to the gallery and museum – as the only valid points for the development and production of artistic and curatorial practice.

The term *affective* is primarily being deployed in relation to the politics of care work as a form of affective labour. Regarding the curatorial, Helena Reckitt acknowledges in her text *Support Acts: Curating, Caring and Social Reproduction* (2016) how the ambit of curatorial work has expanded over time to encompass various acts of affective labour, including "…communication, liaison and social networking" (Reckitt, 2016: 8). This is often in itself underpaid and underappreciated work, especially when compounded with existing social dynamics like class, race and gender (Reckitt, 2016: 9) – however, she also warns that curators are also capable of reproducing these unequal dynamics of care labour through their work (Reckitt, 2016: 7). Beyond this, affect is deployed to encompass not only curatorial care work, but also the "embodied, visceral, pre-conscious, but also relational, tuning of bodies of various kinds" (Parikka, 2012: 31) – bodies, in this context, referring to zines, curators, publics, institutions, and other entities that this research will encounter and encompass. Therefore, drawing on Parikka's prior statement, affect in the context of this research is used to specifically refer to the *feeling* of connection between individuals. How exactly zines in particular begin to enable these connections, across geographies, temporalities, and other boundaries will be explored throughout this research report.

Finally, in this research report, *queer(ed)* is being deployed within two registers – firstly, *queer* as a positionality, specifically in relation to expressions and modes of gender and sexuality that diverge from and exist counter to cisheteronormative norms and ideals (Love, 2014: 172); and secondly, *queered* as an action, a doing, a turning away from the hegemonic and towards something new. As articulated by José Esteban Muñoz in *Cruising Utopia*, "Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present" (Muñoz, 2009: 1). In the context of this research, I consider this "quagmire of the present" to be the dominance of art institutions in determining the value and circulation of art and artists, the inaccessibility of contemporary and historical art economies, and the institutional failures that are intrinsically woven among these points.

This research report will consist of four chapters. In Chapter 1, I begin this research report by unpacking zines as objects and zining as praxis, and the various theoretical and conceptual terrains that this practice moves through and engages with. I draw on the writing and research of various zine scholars and writers, such as Adela Licona (2005), Alison Piepmeier (2008), and Nina Nijsten (2017) to navigate the discursive terrain that zines occupy. Simultaneously, I draw on Hil Malatino's (2020) theorisation of Trans Care as explored in their book of the same name and other theorisations of care within curating, such as Alberta Whittle's (2019) text *Biting the Hand That Feeds You: A Strategy of Wayward Curating*, to create a theoretical framework centred around Trans Care as a lens through which to examine the intersections between the circulation of zines and queer communal care networks. Finally, I move into a discussion on curating and the curatorial, drawing on the writing of Maria Lind (2021), Jean-Paul Martinon and Irit Rogoff (2013), and Paul O'Neill (2012), in order to quantify precisely how the curatorial is being deployed in the context of this research report, especially in relation to zining and Trans Care praxis.

In Chapter 2, due to the lack of written inquiry into zines from a Southern African perspective, I turn towards the GALA Queer Archive and a selection of independent pre-1994 South African gay and lesbian publications, in order to examine how queer individuals have turned to printed matter in response to systemic exclusion from and misrepresentation by cisheteronormative cultural spaces and platforms. While the print works examined in this chapter are not zines – a distinction which will be examined and made clear in the chapter itself – they nonetheless hold value in relation to this research in their positionality as queer print works and as an example of queer worldmaking. I use worldmaking, in this context, to refer to the construction of queer communal spaces located both within and around the

printed works – in a similar vein to K. J. Rawson's writing on cyberspace as a platform for transgender worldmaking, where worldmaking refers to "alternative spaces and practices of cultural, communal, and identity construction and knowledge making that are always in progress" (2014: 38). As such, this chapter aims to foreground historical examples of this research's core argument – that is, how print media might assist in the generation of decentralised communal care networks, which may, in turn, contribute to the curatorial potential of zines and zining.

In Chapter 3, I move away from the purely theoretical concepts and historical examples explored in Chapters 1 and 2 in an analysis of this project's practical component, which took the form of a queer Zine Jam. In this chapter, I reflect on the temporal moment of the workshop itself and the queer, affective tactility of *making together*; visual analyses of the zines themselves and how each of the participants chose to engage with the zine format. Through these reflections, I then consider how the curatorial emerges in the process of zining.

Lastly, in Chapter 4 I move through the themes and concepts identified and addressed in the previous three chapters by discussing how zines' decentralised nature and ability to enable communal networks are best suited for actualising the creation and maintenance of a decentralised, affective, and queer(ed) curatorial practice. However, I am aware of the scope of this research in relation to the enormity of contemporary mainstream art institutions. As Nat Raha explains when discussing how zines and queer printed matter that are circulated within transgender communal care networks;

> *"The gender binary may not simply fall at the hands of trans printed matter, but the embodied consciousness and forms of organizing that might bring about its obsolescence are readily available among these pages."* (Raha, 2021: 195)

Likewise, I do not attempt to claim that zines and zining exist as a perfect solution to the problems and limitations of institutional art spaces. Rather, I wish to position this research as a way of thinking towards engaging new modes of curatorial and artistic practice on one's own terms – a moving away from the "quagmire of the present" (Muñoz, 2009: 1).

The Crafting of Spaces

Before moving on to the first chapter, I want to address this Research Report's title. In the context of the art, the term *crafting* is often associated with a long history of traditionally feminised, often racialised, forms of labour, which are often positioned as *low* in relation to the *high* of fine arts (Bryan-Wilson, 2017: 5) – a positioning that has in turn served to denigrate and diminish the work of many queer, black, and women artists (Bryan-Wilson,

2017) (Gqola, 2022). This was the first reason for the usage of the term crafting in the title – to reflect the often invisible, undermined, and underappreciated acts of feminised and racialised affective labour that have supported and enabled both modern and contemporary artistic and curatorial practices.

Secondly, crafting is often a communal activity – sewing circles and quilting bees, for example – where individuals gather together to take part in *making* together. The term crafting was therefore chosen to call to mind the communal creation of something, and this was exemplified by this research's zine jam component. As I will discuss later, as the participants worked together to produce their zines during the zine jam, both myself as the curator of the zine jam and the participants were also engaging in the production of an affective, communal space – affect, as mentioned earlier, specifically referring to interconnectedness, and the feeling of being connected to someone else. In this way, the zine jam became not only a *crafting* space, in that it was a space where crafting took place; but also a *crafted* space, in that the affective qualities of the space itself were crafted through the joint efforts of each person present in the space, connecting them to each other not only through their joint efforts, but also by the zines that each participant took home with them. It is my hope, therefore, that this approach towards a communal *crafting* of spaces might begin to activate a more holistic, collectivist, and affective approach to not only the curatorial, but contemporary art spaces as a whole.

Chapter 1 – Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I aim to identify and navigate the various theoretical terrains that this text will move through. I begin this chapter by moving through various histories of how zines have been employed by marginalised individuals, alongside a discussion on various elements of zine materiality – in order to discuss later in Chapter 4 *which* elements of zine materiality might assist in the generation of a queer(ed) curatorial practice, and *how* this might be achieved. Secondly, I will be discussing Hil Malatino's (2020) notion of Trans Care as both a theoretical framework and praxis, alongside the writing of other queer and trans writers and their own writings on care praxis. This is done not only to establish this research report's theoretical framework, but also to examine how zines and zining often intersect with modes of Trans Care praxis. Finally, I move to a discussion into the curatorial and how it is specifically being deployed in the context of this essay, so as to examine how zines can be deployed within the ambit of the (para)curatorial, and how the curatorial emerges within the medium and practice of zines and zining.

Zine Materiality

As mentioned earlier, zines can be simply described as "noncommercial, nonprofessional, small-circulation magazines which their creators produce, publish, and distribute by themselves" (Duncombe, 1997: 10-11). It is commonly understood that these booklets first originated in science fiction spaces in the 1930s as self-published print media for readers to discuss and critique science fiction media, and later, talk about themselves and their own personal experiences[1]. From here, these booklets moved into various fandom spaces with the production of fanzines[2]. Later, zines continued to gain popularity from the 1970s to the 1990s among underground punk scenes as objects for distributing anarchist or counterculture writing (Baker & Cantillon, 2022: 542), and among feminist groups such as Riot Grrrl as tools for self-expression and forming communities in response to their exclusion from certain spaces, such as underground music scenes (Leonard, 2007: 142).

As objects, zines often possess a certain aesthetic that has alternately been described as DIY, punk, or a kind of "scrappy messiness" (Piepmeier, 2008: 222). This is due in part to the wide variety of methods that can be utilised in the making of a zine, which can incorporate a wide array of elements, including:

[1] Zines created to discuss personal matters are sometimes referred to as perzines – an amalgamation of the words *personal* and *zines*

[2] In the same way that a perzine relates to personal matters, the word fanzine is sometimes used to refer to zines that deal with matters of being a fan of a certain kind of media – TV shows, books, musicians, etc.

> *"The recycling of pre-existing media material and found-text through collage, irregular approaches to layout, numerous different typefaces and handwritten notes, the use of the photocopier as the means of production, and the personalisation of the photocopied text"* (French & Curd, 2022: 84)

In this way, zines often tie together a wide variety of visual styles and artistic techniques, which thusly results in the aforementioned *scrappy* style. However, while this is the most commonly known and referenced style of zine, particularly due to the format's history within punk and counterculture spaces, it is not the *only* one. A zine can be as neat or as disorganized as its creator wishes, and one could consider that there are as many styles of zines out there as there are zines themselves – something that most individuals involved within zine culture would agree on is that there is no right or wrong way to create a zine.

This DIY aesthetic is a feature of the relatively accessible nature of zines. In part due to their simple materiality, anyone with access to paper and a writing tool can produce and publish their own zine(s) on whatever topics they wish. This accessibility, in turn, feeds into the wide array of stylistic choices present within the medium. It is this very same accessibility and ability to publish on any topic that has led to zines being frequently used by underground subcultures and marginalised communities due to their role as independent print media. For many groups that are "underrepresented or alienated by dominant narratives" (French & Curd, 2022: 8), zines play a vital role in establishing communities and circulating vital information which often would not be platformed by more mainstream publishing spaces such as newspapers – information that may be considered either too unimportant or counter-hegemonic to publish. However, it must be acknowledged that *access* is a tenuous term, especially in the context of South Africa and its steep wealth gaps and class inequality (Chatterjee, Czajka & Gethin, 2022) – I will return to this point in this research report's final chapter.

As an example, in the United Kingdom and Europe, a contemporary network of transgender healthcare zines has emerged as a method of providing communal care and medical assistance towards transgender individuals, in response to rising levels of global and government-sanctioned transphobia within medical spaces and the media (Raha, 2021). Utilising a mixture of poetry, manifestos, articles, memes and artwork, trans zinesters engage with the accessibility of print media to establish and activate diverse and far-reaching care networks to share information on "trans-specific aspects of health care (such as accessing hormones and surgeries, pathologization, transition, and other treatments)" (Raha, 2021: 189), which are often not widely addressed or spoken about within mainstream

media spaces. This, in turn, allows for the creation of a decentralised transgender healthcare network outside of cisnormative medical spaces through the sharing of zines and print media.

In a similar vein, the low-budget, easily producible nature and niche audience of zines has also allowed them to serve as self-care and empowerment tools within contemporary feminist spaces (Nijsten, 2017). This is in part due to the self-produced and published nature of zines, which allows them to avoid institutional restrictions in the form of advertisers, funders, or editors who may compromise the content that they seek to put out, in turn allowing them to function particularly well as tools for circulating sensitive or personal information (Nijsten, 2017: 80). This ease of production and the ability to circulate sensitive information has also given zines particular value within protest spaces and social movements. For example, zines were utilised by protest groups in Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement in 2014 (Tong, 2020) and the Anti-ELAB Movement in 2019 (Sharon & Ma, 2023) to disseminate their manifestos, ideologies, and political views, as well as establish communal networks both within the social movements and to alert the greater public about important events (Tong, 2020: 66, 70).

A commonality between these three examples is the value of zines in establishing and reinforcing communal connections between individuals. A common method of distributing zines entails swapping one zine for another, or passing them on to new individuals once it has been read. Trading becomes an important point within zining communities, and as these objects move from person to person, from creator to reader, they create communal connections localised around the zines themselves and the physical, embodied action of passing a zine along (Piepmeier, 2008: 229). This aspect of trading or gifting is also important to note in relation to zine's status as noncommercial or not-for-profit objects. While some zines are sold, they are traditionally only sold with the end goal of breaking even or raising enough money to finance the next run of zines – as Stephen Duncombe explains, "…the very idea of profiting from a zine is anathema to the underground, bringing with it charges of 'selling out'" (Duncombe, 1997: 15).

During this research, something that has emerged in nearly every author's writing on zines has been a focus on the affective tactility of zines. As objects, zines are fundamentally tactile in their form and function: not only as paper booklets intended to be folded, unfolded, and paged through, but also in the embodied nature in how they are distributed and shared between individuals. This tactility also plays a vital role in how zines are engaged with – from Nina Nijsten's discussion on how "getting their [her students] hands on actual zines is

necessary to ignite this creative urge" (Piepmeier, 2008: 213), to Daniel Brouwer and Adela Licona's focus on touching and holding the "bodies of [their] favorite zines" (Brouwer & Licona, 2016: 73) and the emotional resonances in holding and touching an object and being touched in turn (Brouwer & Licona, 2016: 80) – there is a heavy emphasis placed on how physically engaging with zines is important facet of their materiality.

In thinking through zine usage among marginalised communities, their positionality as sites of counter-hegemonic expression, and their role in establishing and enabling embodied and communal connections, I turn to Professor Adela Licona's writing on feminist zines in relation to what she identifies as *third spaces* and *borderlands rhetoric* – two terms which are important for contextualising much of this research's focus on queerness and decentralisation. As Licona explains, the concept of the *third space* exists as both a strategy and location, emerging out of the intersection between dual points – and within these third spaces, new modes of knowledge can be produced and cultivated (Licona, 2005: 105). Simultaneously, she posits the idea of borderlands rhetorics as a transformative activation into these third spaces, wherein a theoretical moving between physical and conceptual borders allows for engagement with the third spaces that may emerge in the intersections between the borders of two or more distinct spaces (Licona, 2005: 124). For Licona, feminist zines hold particular value as "vibrant and vital counter-hegemonic sites" (Licona, 2005: 110) as they straddle the intersections between the terrains of gender, queerness, race, and class – while simultaneously creating communal connections outside of hegemonic spaces. In this way, zines in and of themselves often occupy a third space positionality and generate and enable discursive third spaces through their role and materiality as independent print media. Additionally, queerness and queer individuals often exist as "borderlands dwellers" (Rowe 2014: 381) in that they exist outside of the borders and restrictions of cisheteronormative spaces and ideals. In thinking through these constellated points, this research therefore considers how to navigate a decentralised curatorial practice which might exist as a third space between the intersection between zines and queerness, outside and independent of the borders of mainstream art institutions.

Trans Care – Caring for People, Objects, and Spaces

The second part of this chapter focuses on establishing Trans Care as a theoretical framework through which this research will be contextualised. This theoretical framework begins with and emerges from Hil Malatino's reflection on transgender communal care networks in their book *Trans Care*; drawing on a crip-femme reworking of mutual aid practices (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018: 46), Malatino considers how forms of Trans Care

emerge as queer, collective and decentralised responses to institutional, social and political rejection and refusal (Malatino, 2020: 3, 65). Considering the ways in which transgender communal "solidarity as a direct response to the vagaries of the medical-industrial complex" (Malatino, 2020: 8) has taken various forms – including crowdfunding, transgender healthcare zines and newsletters, and other forms of fiscal, communal, and emotional support – Trans Care practices consider mutual aid as a strategy towards caring for others according to need and capacity.

This relates to Alberta Whittle's discussion on the extant forms of communal care that QTIPOC artist-curators engage with in response to contemporary art institutions in her text *Biting the Hand That Feeds You: A Strategy of Wayward Curating*. Here, Whittle moves through her experiences as an artist and artist-curator, where she focuses on the "urgency to manifest care work within curating" (Whittle, 2019: 111) in response to "hegemonic principals of contemporary art that have historically been based on exclusion and erasure" (Whittle, 2019: 111). It is worth noting here that Whittle's decision to practice as an artist-curator parallels my foray into the curatorial, as in her own words her desire "to change course and practice simultaneously as artist and artist-curator stem from scarcity of opportunities to exhibit and an intention to practice in solidarity with others" (Whittle, 2019: 110). Simultaneously, she also recounts different expectations labour expected of QTIPOC artists and curators and how these unequal distributions led to breakdowns and collapses within attempts towards care (Whittle, 2019: 120).

In thinking through care work as labour, I turn to Harry Josephine Giles' articulation of transition as "the labour that continually gives birth to gender, that produces liveably gendered lives under intolerable conditions" (Giles, 2019: 5) in her transfeminist-Marxist manifesto zine *Wages for Transition*. Here, adopting a Marxist view of gender – moving between gender-communism as emerging within mutual aid practices; and gender-capitalism as both adhering to and stymied by cisheteropatriarchal conceptions of gender and transition – Giles addresses the multiple forms of unpaid, (trans)gendered labour that transgender individuals are expected to perform within social, medical, and fiscal spaces. Giles also addresses the communal care engagements that emerge as methods of supporting and enabling trans life outside of hegemonic medical spaces:

> *"Everywhere there are trans people, there are people communally producing transitions. In trans communities, we teach each other the skills of dress, voice, deportment, body modification and self-imagining which are essential to liveable trans lives. We distribute hormones. We zap each other's hair. We share the resources necessary to support our co-learning. We grow chosen families*

> *in which trans life can be reproduced, in which the pooled resources of hustle, theft, sex work and waged labour sustain trans being"* (Giles, 2019: 8)

Giles also makes careful note on how the failures of capitalism are reproduced and reinforced even within spaces that are excluded from hegemonic spaces; much like Whittle, she acknowledges how the burden and expectations of care are "often carried by racialised people, by disabled people, by capitalism's subalterns" (Giles, 2019: 9). Malatino echoes these concerns in considering how Trans Care work is often unpaid, unsustainable, and unequally distributed even within communal care networks, which can result in an affective burnout due to overwork (Malatino, 2020: 21). These concerns are also echoed by Amy Marvin, where she considers the risks of erasure, uneven expectations of labour, and the "deeper failure possible across power differences between differently situated trans people" (Marvin, 2022: 15) when overemphasising and over-relying on T4T[3] spaces; and Chris Barcelos, who discusses on how T4T crowdfunding campaigns tend to reflect existing social dynamics, wherein young, white, transmasc individuals tend to garner more fiscal and communal support than transfemmes and trans people of colour (Barcelos, 2022: 33). Here, I return to Reckitt's discussions on curatorial labour, where she warns that curators "often prioritize their care for artists and artworks in ways that increase their own prestige, while ignoring their dependence on other activities across the production cycle" (Reckitt, 2016: 7) – highlighting the unequal distribution of care, pay, and resources distributed within contemporary art spaces.

Finally, I turn to the embodied and tactile notions of intimacy and the "transgenderational" (Carter, 2018: 697) forms of care in Julian B. Carter's text *Sex Time Machine for Touching the Transcestors*. Here, Carter ruminates on the temporal shifts that occur within T4T relationships, whether romantic or platonic, and how queer elders can serve as sources of intergenerational support, knowledge, and guidance – and how those who may transition or come out first serve as guides and role models to those around them:

> *"You said 'It's odd how queer generations work; one of my housemates is ten years younger than me but he transitioned seven years ago so I'm the baby.' I nod. This kind of temporal pleating is common and amusing in my social world, where creative life paths result in unpredictable generational sequences"* (Carter, 2018: 701)

[3] Originally emerging from online spaces like Craigslist as a way for trans individuals to signal that they were searching exclusively for other transgender individuals as romantic or sexual partners, the term is now also used for a variety of trans-centric practices, including activism, outreach, and care work (Awkward-Rich & Malatino, 2022: 2)

Additionally, Carter frames intimacy, affect, and tactility as vital for engaging with historical and temporal queer legacies and archives, and as a way of connecting with the embodied forms of Trans Care. He also considers "causing and experiencing salutary discomfort" (Carter, 2018: 696) as vital when moving towards countercultural and anti-hegemonic ways of working and knowing – salutary discomfort, in this context, referring to the necessity of disrupting normative expectations and institutional boundaries in order to actualise radical change, posed by Carter as a "countercultural ethic" (Carter, 2018: 696).

Therefore, when constellating these different points and in the context of this research, Trans Care is being used to examine the resonances between zining and queer mutual aid networks – how both exist as decentralised, affective, and communal forms of care that have emerged in response to systemic exclusion from hegemonic spaces – and how these resonances can be utilised in moving towards a queer(ed) curatorial practice that in turn engages with the decentralised and affective materiality of zining and queer mutual aid praxis. These resonances will emerge and be further discussed at various points within this research report.

Locating the Curatorial

When viewing zines as curatorial spaces, one could make a straightforward comparison between an exhibition and a zine – if one were to compare the display of objects and artworks in an exhibition to the display of text and images in the pages of a zine. However, this comparison falls apart at multiple points. Firstly, it fails to account for the differences in affect, intimacy, reach and institutional power between the two, and attempting to force these points of connection would lead to transmediated shifts and losses in both affect and context (Brouwer and Licona, 2016: 78). Likewise, there is often a difference in relationality and intimacy between the exhibition space and a zine, where exhibitions are often intended for view by a broader public often linked to the institutional space that the exhibition is held in, whereas zines are often intended to be read by specific groups or individuals as defined by the creator (curator?) of the zine. While both of these points can be contested – some zines are produced for view by a broader public, either due to a larger print run or the idea that the zine be traded or passed along after reading, and some exhibitions may have private or set guest lists – there is nonetheless a tactile and affective difference in experiencing a zine as a tactile object and viewing an exhibition. Furthermore, this comparison is highly reductive, and reinforces the exhibition-first model of curating – that is, the idea of the exhibition as the only medium through which the curatorial can be realised, and vice-versa, that curatorial engagements are only validated through their

proximity or similarity to an exhibition (O'Neill, 2012: 55). As such, it is not the aim of this research to frame zines as an alternative to exhibitions – rather, to consider how zines might allow for new and generative modes of curation and curating, beyond the exhibition-first model and outside of hegemonic art institutions.

In *Situating the Curatorial*, Maria Lind argues the distinction between curating as a "technical modality" (Lind, 2021: 73) relating to the institutional display of art and artwork, and the curatorial as a generative and "multidimensional role that includes critique, editing, education, fundraising, etc. […] the curatorial goes beyond roles and takes the shape of a function and a method, even a methodology" (Lind, 2021: 73). Likewise, in the preface of Jean-Paul Martinon's book *The Curatorial: A Philosophy of Curating*, Martinon and Irit Rogoff make a distinction between curating as relating to the technical aspects of exhibition-making and "other modes of display" (Martinon and Rogoff, 2013: ix) and the curatorial as an "event of knowledge" (Martinon and Rogoff, 2013: ix) that encompasses both the intentional and unintentional happenings and aspects that occur as part of the process of curating.

Furthermore, Lind, Martinon and Rogoff all view the curatorial as both a disruptive and generative force. For Martinon and Rogoff, the curatorial disrupts and challenges the process and moment of curation to create a new narrative – as they state, "'the curatorial' is a disturbance, an utterance, a narrative." (Martinon and Rogoff, 2013: ix).

Likewise, for Lind, the curatorial allows for the disruption of established norms and the creation of new narratives and ideas through the politics of display and the "relationships between objects, people, places, ideas, and so forth" (Lind, 2021:73-74). The relationality here is important – I return to Paul O'Neill's notion of the paracuratorial and the curatorial constellation. Drawing on the work of Rogoff, Lind, and other curators, O'Neill frames the curatorial as a constellated framework, comprised of the relationships between multiple theoretical, discursive, and practical points that emerge within and alongside the moment of curating (O'Neill, 2012: 57). By engaging with the curatorial as a constellation and the paracuratorial as a point that both works with and destabilises the curatorial, new modes of curation can be engaged with – new points through which the curatorial can be actualised beyond the form of the exhibition.

This is the discursive framework through which this research frames zines as curatorial spaces. O'Neill himself posits zines as an example of a form of paracuratorial engagement, as a point on the curatorial constellation that allows for "an extended artistic practice"

(O'Neill, 2012: 58) within the ambit of the curatorial. At the most basic level, the curatorial emerges in zines through how they are produced. The types of materials used, colour choices, fonts, whether to utilise collage and photography or rely solely on hand-drawn imagery – all of these are considered, curatorial choices. Piepmeier considers these choices both a strength and a core element of zines, as they allow the zine's creator complete control over each step of the production process, thereby making the process of zining a highly tactile and embodied one (Piepmeier, 2008: 221). In comparing and contrasting zine praxis and conceptions of the curatorial, I find that there are multiple parallels between the two - for example, framing the curatorial as a disruptive or destabilising force resonates with the history of zines as countercultural objects existing in rejection of hegemonic spaces or concepts. Furthermore, Lind's theorisation of the curatorial as manifesting in the relationships "objects, people, places, ideas, and so forth" (Lind, 2021:73-74), and O'Neill's conception of the curatorial as a constellation linking multiple diverse points of theory and practice, both resonate with the history of zines being utilised to actualise and strengthen communal connections. In this way, this research considers that the curatorial emerges through both the process of zining and zines themselves, in how they might enable various curatorial moments to occur.

Chapter 2 – Legacies of South African Queer Printed Matter

As the initial body of research for this report developed, I found that much of the writing and critical inquiry on zines, zining, and zine culture is primarily centred around a Western perspective, which in itself is predominantly located within the United States and the United Kingdom. In turn, there is a lack of critical inquiry into these fields from a Southern African context. While this research report in and of itself serves as just one response to this knowledge gap, this chapter in particular will work through a discussion of three newsletters – *Sunday's Women*, *Fanfare*, and *Glowletter* – sourced from the GALA Queer Archive, as a way of contextualising the themes explored within this research report and providing a historical foregrounding on queer printed matter in South Africa. In relation to this research's greater argument – that is, how the materiality of zines and zining might enable a decentralised, affective, and queer(ed) curatorial practice – the aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, as a way of showcasing historical examples of how queer individuals have utilised printed matter in order to engage with decentralised modes of community building outside of hegemonic structures; and secondly, as a way of further situating the socio-political and geographic context of this research in relation to my own identity as a queer individual in South Africa.

While the GALA Archive contains an extensive array of queer print media, the three newsletters examined in this chapter were chosen for two reasons. Firstly, they had the most archived issues compared to other newsletters, and as such, provided the widest array of data to cross reference when attempting to extrapolate content about the newsletters and the organisations that produced them. Secondly, each newsletter has its own focus on specific identity groups of the LGBTQIA+ community: *Sunday's Women* focused primarily on the concerns and lives of lesbian, gay, and bisexual women; whereas *Fanfare*'s audience consisted of primarily transgender women, crossdressers, and drag queens. Lastly, *Glowletter* was primarily created to address the concerns of and provide a platform for black gays and lesbians fighting both for queer liberation and against apartheid. As such, these three newsletters were chosen due to their positionality on the periphery – not only as queer individuals positioned away from a heteronormative centre, but also within the queer community itself as intersectional identities of women, trans, and black respectively that often lacked the resources and power of white, cis, gay men.

Before I begin this chapter, I must make the distinction that these publications *are not zines*. The issue of what makes or defines a zine is in itself a contentious one – at their core, zines

are a decentralised and fundamentally *punk* mode of publishing and creative self-expression, lacking defined rules or conventions on their format. One needs only turn to the Zine Librarians Interest Group's blog to find a discussion started by a blogger with the username 'jenna' about what might constitute a zine and what aspects might disqualify a particular piece of publishing from being identified as a zine, and even then, as 'jenna' states; "We also won't all agree on what is or isn't a zine anyway" (jenna, 2009). Where one individual might point to the inclusion of advertising as a disqualifier for classifying a publication as a zine (Thomas, 2009: 30) – potentially due to the presence of advertising running counter to the spirit of zines as "noncommercial" (Duncombe, 1997: 10) publications – others might point to historical evidence of popular zines that incorporated adverts into their pages to assist with their circulation and production (dan10things, 2009).

Therefore, in this research report, I avoid framing these publications as zines simply because their authors did not identify or intend them as such, and I do not wish to instrumentalise their materiality and status as queer print media to further this research report. However; due to their shared materiality with zines, these publications will be drawn on in order to examine how queer individuals in South Africa pre-1994 utilised independent print media for purposes of self-expression, political activism, and communal engagement, despite the clear lack of zine subcultures in South Africa at the time.

I must note the precarity of this aspect of the research, in that many queer archives exist as informal personal collections of ephemera (Robinson, 2014: 196) which tend to move between individuals over time – in this way, the archive becomes malleable, and while transitions between individuals may add contents to the archives, so too may content be lost to time. This holds true for GALA's Gay Library Collection, which once existed as a library within an unnamed person's house before moving to the offices of the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE), before finally being moved to GALA in 2013 after the NCGLE closed down. This is compounded by the fragile and delicate nature of paper work which is prone to tearing, creasing, and damage from the elements, and as such, I am left to infer information about the organisations that produced these printed works. However, given that this chapter is not intended to focus on the organisations themselves, but rather on how the themes and materiality of zines explored in the first chapter might be read in relation to histories of queer independent print media, this inference therefore does not detract from the main point of the argument.

Sunday's Women

The first publication that I am examining here is *Sunday's Women*, which was the newsletter of the KwaZulu-Natal-based lesbian organisation, the Sunday's Women Group. This organisation was short-lived – as can be inferred from the short print run of their newsletters held in the archive's Helen de Pinho collection – and seems to have existed from around 1990 to early 1992. The particular issue being examined here is the December 1990 issue. An eight-page, A4 newsletter printed on plain paper using black-and-white printing, this issue begins with an article with a bold heading declaring 'IDENTIFY YOURSELF: DURBAN DYKES – I MEAN…LESBIANS – I MEAN…GAY WOMEN…SPEAK THEIR MINDS'. The article takes up the bulk of the issue, and features interviews with five women – Liz, Sammy, Margot, Donna, and Lucy – on various issues affecting queer women at the time, from issues of identity and labels to the intersections between issues affecting gay women in South Africa at both a personal and political level. The newsletter also contains a section wherein readers could mail in their questions and concerns for the editors or other readers to respond to; discussions on gay liberation movements; scheduling information for various events related to the organisation; as well as a page dedicated to poetry that contributed by the newsletter's readers.

Notably, the newsletter also contains a centre insert that addresses the topic of lesbians and AIDS – information on the disease, guidelines as to which individuals are most at risk, and advice on safe sex practices. This is particularly important due to the androcentric discussions on HIV/AIDS in both mainstream and gay publications at the time, which more often than not did not focus on the risks and concerns of women about the virus, regardless of whether they identified as queer or not. This can be read in relation to the circulation of contemporary transgender healthcare zines discussed earlier, and how both exist as forms of mutual aid in distributing medical information among communal networks. In this way, the newsletter not only becomes a space for gay women and lesbians to express themselves creatively and connect with community members, but also a space to address important community concerns that would not ordinarily be given space within mainstream publications or media – here, we start to see the decentralised nature of queer independent print practice begin to emerge.

Fanfare

The second piece of queer print media being examined in this chapter is titled *Fanfare*, a quarterly magazine produced for the Phoenix Society – as a note, these were the only publications that I accessed in the form of digital reproductions, as opposed to the original

printed copies. The Phoenix Society was a group for primarily white crossdressers, drag queens, transvestites, and transsexuals – as they self-identified according to the language conventions at the time – to meet and connect with each other. As a note, applying modern-day verbiage and conventions to these labels is difficult. In the contemporary moment, crossdressing, drag, and trans(gender) identity are seen as disparate fields – especially in the context of crossdressing as an act, not an identity, with no bearing on one's gender or sexuality. In contrast, at the time when these magazines were produced, the lines between these concepts were heavily blurred and they were often used interchangeably to describe each other.

These magazines contained mainly biographical (and sometimes fictional) stories contributed by the readers detailing their experiences relating to passing (or attempting to pass) as women in the conservative atmosphere of apartheid South Africa, as well as the occasional stories from a partner or family member of a reader explaining their own experience with their partner or sibling's gender expression. Additionally, they also contained advice to assist in presenting as women, from cosmetic and makeup tips to how to sew clothing; photographs sent in by Phoenix Society members; and articles detailing global and local news related to living as a transexual or transvestite; all accompanied by small comics and illustrations. These magazines were printed using black ink on plain white paper, and as more issues were printed the magazine's covers began to be printed on coloured paper, with stylised illustrations switching to black and white photographic covers over time.

In *Trans Care*, Malatino refers directly to "trans newsletters detailing supportive medical professionals and gender hacks […] as a direct response to the vagaries of the medical-industrial complex" (Malatino, 2020: 8), as just one of the many ways that transgender individuals have gathered together to form communal care networks. These same "gender hacks" shared in the pages of *Fanfare* not only place the magazine within the realm of transgender communal care networks – even if many of the readers would not be considered transgender today. Furthermore, this magazine played a vital role in forging connections between queer individuals in a social atmosphere wherein queerness could not be fully outwardly expressed, thereby allowing for the generation of queer communal spaces and networks.

Glowletter

Finally, I move to *Glowletter*, the newsletter produced by the Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand, also known as GLOW. Formed in 1988 by Simon Nkoli, Beverley Palesa Ditsie and Linda Ngcobo, the organisation emerged with the aim of producing an anti-apartheid gay liberation organisation as a response to predominantly white gay organisations – such as GASA – that felt that gay liberation and anti-apartheid efforts should be kept separate (Botes, 2023: 4). The *Glowletter*, which was distributed at gay-friendly bookstores in Johannesburg (Martin, 2017: 2), contained a variety of articles detailing news on both local and global advancements in gay rights movements, political manifestos, "advertisements for pen pals […] book reviews, comics, and letters from GLOW members reacting to a range of topics" (Martin, 2017: 1). The September 1990 issue, for example, details to the lead up to the first Gay & Lesbian Pride March in South Africa which went on to take place on Saturday the 13th of October that year, alerting readers to the date and also sharing letters of solidarity from local and overseas allies and gay rights organisations; while also sharing information on safe sex and HIV/AIDS; and an open letter to Nelson Mandela from Simon Nkoli reiterating the intersections between black liberation, women's rights, and queer liberation in the struggle towards the end of apartheid.

In looking deeper into the archive, I noticed that much of this international support was activated by the presence of another kind of printed media – a pamphlet. This pamphlet was scanned and faxed to many gay liberation organisations across the globe, where it was printed out, signed with messages of support, and faxed back to GLOW. While this particular method does lose some of the embodied nature of hand-distributing printed ephemera, it does also greatly increase the range at which these materials can be distributed, thus "allowing geographically isolated people to correspond with each other and share a common sense of identity" (Leonard, 2007: 144). Because of this, the *Glowletter* served as an important tool for not only empowering and connecting South African queer communities and individuals with each other on an intersectional level; despite not only the apartheid regime's punitive laws against people of colour and queer people, but also in rejection of many of the insular predominantly white male gay liberation organisations at the time.

Each of the three publications share a similar material and aesthetic quality. None of the publications are staple bound, and three are printed exclusively using black ink on plain white paper – with the exception of the coloured paper used for the covers of later issues of *Fanfare* – which most likely would have been the most accessible and economical option at the time. Additionally, each one also incorporates a combination of photographic images and illustrations alongside their text. In discussing these publications' materiality, I wish to return to the concept of affective tactility explored earlier in this research report, where I discussed how the tactile nature of zines and zining is implicit in their production, distribution, usage, and affective qualities. While these are, once again, not zines, I found that these objects began to engender similar affective responses through tactile engagement that zines did – that is, via holding them, paging through them, and experiencing them as tactile, lived objects.

This was first made apparent to me on two separate occasions where a friend of mine accompanied me on a visit to GALA (both these friends would later take part in the zine jam workshop). On both these occasions, each friend commented that they felt a certain emotional connection to the publications and the stories and articles within them - to the people that had produced them, their struggles and resistance against cisheteronormative cultural violence towards queer liberation, and the various communities, individuals, and spaces these publications passed through before they entered the archive. One friend even commented on the topical nature of some of the issues explored in the publications, referring to an article in an issue of *Sunday's Women* that addressed the verbiage that various queer women used to identify themselves. By handling through them, affective connections are forged through these publications, between the queer individuals reading them in the present, and the queer individuals who initially produced, held, and distributed them.

In reading these three publications, one can begin to read how queer individuals have utilised print media as important tools for community building, counter-hegemonic activity, and the dissemination of information. Much like zines, much of this value is empowered by the scale and materiality of printed matter, in both its (relatively) inexpensive production cost and ease of distribution. This allowed these magazines to reach disparate and disconnected audiences across South Africa through hand-to-hand distribution methods, which in turn allowed for the formation of widespread queer communal action and therefore, an expansion of queer mutual aid networks. As the community spreads, so does

the potentiality for interpersonal care and assistance as more individuals connect to the care web's lattice.

However, the materiality of these three publications differs from zines at the point of their autonomy. While they can be considered as existing as "vibrant and vital counter-hegemonic sites" (Licona, 2005: 110) due to their positionality against cisheteronormative political and social structures at the time, they were nonetheless ultimately linked to the institutions and organisations that produced them. Because of this, they were potentially limited in what they could do by the very institutions that gave them their platform and ability to access and generate these widespread communal networks. This is not to imply that a lack of agency from institutional constraints might be the reason for a publication not engaging in greater institutional critique – it would be erroneous to suggest so, considering that the formation of GLOW and *Glowletter* emerged in part due to white gay organisations not focusing on anti-Apartheid activism. Rather, I simply aim to acknowledge of the potential losses of autonomy that accompany institutions and funding bodies (Malatjie, 2013: 375).

In this way, the publications differ from zines in that zines are self-produced and published – whereas the newsletters and magazines examined here are not – and as such, zines can access more radical and transformative modes of expression than might be considered acceptable even within these queer publications. However, these radical modes of expression still come at a cost, as many zinesters often lack the institutional support, access, and reach to distribute and produce their zines, with most zines being produced out of pocket, which is further compounded by the often marginalised identity groups that many zinesters belong to, as discussed in chapter 1. In a similar vein, it is here where I consider how to best balance the decentralisation of a curatorial practice – while existing on the borderlands (Licona, 2005: 124) of the contemporary art scene might certainly grant a level of freedom and autonomy, it might also limit access to resources and platforms to generate- and maintain the health of communal care practices.

Chapter 3 – The Zine Jam

Zine Jam Prep and Process

For those within zining circles and communities, a zine jam is an occasion where zinesters gather to produce zines, often based around a specific theme, topic, or concept. While many zine jams may take place in person as informal and embodied crafting get-togethers, others are much more decentralised, taking place on an individual basis across wide geographic locales with the results shared primarily in online spaces. There is no written documentation of exactly where the term "zine jam" originates, and turning to my zinester friends and networks yielded no answers on the matter – however, I would guess that it may be somewhat related to the concept of a *jam session*, wherein musicians come together to experiment and produce music together. It is precisely the communal and embodied nature of the zine jam that informed my choice to select this format not only as a research methodology but also as this research's practical component relating to curating and the curatorial.

This zine jam was intended to be a space for two curatorial moments to occur, in that I aimed to curate both the space and the affect within, which would in turn allow for the participants to engage with the process of curating through the medium of zines. One of my first curatorial choices in preparing for the workshop was how I chose the participants. The participants for the zine jam were sourced from my personal queer care networks – that is, close friends of mine who self-identify as queer or LGBTQIA+. My choice to limit participants for this zine jam to close friends was twofold: primarily, to engage with the materiality of zines as ephemera that are commonly circulated within personal or intimate community networks; and secondly, as a way to promote familiarity and comfort between the participants within the workshop space. Here, I turn to J. Halberstam's assertion in the discursive potentiality that can be generated between queer individuals that "coexist in the same friendship networks" (Halberstam, 2005: 162); and David Scott's writing around friendship as a network of collective care, as "a quotidian art of learning to live and think together differently" (Scott, 2017: viii). In this way, by selecting a group of individuals for the workshop that all had a baseline level of trust and intimacy with each other, I hoped to curate the affect of the space in such a way that the participants felt comfortable working both within the space and with each other, to echo the environment of zine jams as "intimate spaces of production" (Brouwer and Licona, 2016: 79).

Moreover, each participant possessed varying levels of artistic experience and relation to the contemporary arts and curatorial scene, ranging from individuals with no artistic experience at all to graphic designers and established practising artists. This was an important element in selecting participants for the research – while limiting participants to close friends did result in a smaller focus group, a diversity of artistic experiences, ages, ethnicities, sexual and gender identities, and socioeconomic and class backgrounds can allow for the full potential for a multiplicity of expressions to emerge through zining. Lastly, this workshop received all necessary ethics clearance, as required by the University of the Witwatersrand.

Prior to the zine jam, participants were provided with a written prompt containing a brief discursive history of zines focusing on their history and material qualities, as well as links to a few online zine archives – most notably, the Queer Zine Archive Project, or QZAP for short. By introducing the participants to zines in this manner, I hoped to illustrate the multivalent nature of zines and zining, and the queer potentiality evoked by the medium – this culminating in a loose prompt for the workshop gathered around the idea of "expressing oneself" – utilising this open-ended materiality to engage with any concept or subject matter that the participants may have wished to. Additionally, based on a suggestion by my supervisor, I requested that each participant create a short playlist to be added to a larger group playlist that would be played during the workshop. This was a small step towards queering and renegotiating some of the power dynamics inherent to the workshop format by allowing participants a level of control over the space – in this case, how the workshop sounds. By not only playing music, but also allowing the participants to decide what music was played, I hoped to shift the affective registers and atmosphere of the space away from a strictly regimented research workshop and towards a more casual and warm crafting space. These playlists also served as a moment for the participants to begin engaging with elements and processes of curation before the actual workshop, in how they selected and paired together different songs.

The zine jam took place on a Saturday, to ensure that as many of the scouted participants as possible could make it to the workshop. I began by passing around some zines from my personal collection, which included some personal zines that I had created, as well as a selection of zines that I had obtained as an undergraduate student during the University of the Witwatersrand's Watershed Programme in 2018. This moment of sharing and passing around the zines was vital towards catalysing the workshop process – I return to Piepmeier's reflection on her zining classes and how "getting their [her students] hands on actual zines

is necessary to ignite this creative urge" (Piepmeier, 2008: 213). By touching and holding these tiny booklets, paging through them, unfolding and refolding them, participants are able to get a tactile sense of the zines' form and format. While they were introduced to some zine history and materiality, as well as QZAP's extensive queer zine archive before the event (as mentioned earlier), I found that it is one thing to read about zines, and something else entirely to hold one in your hand and experience it as a tactile, lived object.

After this introductory moment, participants were guided through the process of folding and preparing a standard single-sheet zine. This format consists of a single sheet of paper folded into eight segments, with a slit cut down the centre four panels – from here, the sheet is folded so that it can be paged through like a book. They were then given free rein to produce their zines using the materials on hand. While I provided some of the materials at the workshop – namely sheets of white A4 paper, stationary, and a printer – participants were also encouraged to bring from home any other materials they thought they might want to use in their zines, such as special paper, images, or stationary. Additionally, GALA's archivist Linda Chernis was kind enough to contribute a selection of old South African LGBTQIA+ magazines for the participants to cut out images from to make their zines, after I spoke to her about the zine jam and what it entailed. Unfortunately, due to the lack of stable WIFI and an established printer-device connection at the venue (the printer that I provided for the purposes of duplicating the zines could only print documents that it had scanned) participants were unable to source and print digital images for their work. While this was largely a concern specific to the venue where the workshop took place, it does also reflect issues relating to accessibility in South Africa, specifically in relation to internet and printer access.

One participant elected to work entirely with collage as a way to express and engage with their concept; another utilised nearly exclusively hand-drawn visuals, with only a few photographic images pasted in. Throughout the process, the participants shared materials and techniques with each other, discussed their zines and concepts, made jokes, chatted about their personal lives and shared gossip, sang along to the music when a particularly catchy song came on, and when the workshop ended, assisted each other in assembling and folding their zines – all in all, the overall atmosphere and affective register was not that of a formal research workshop, but rather an intimate, casual zine jam or similar crafting-based get-together. Once each participant had completed their zine, they were then scanned and duplicated to produce 10 copies per participant. Using a scanner to duplicate zines is standard practice within zining circles if a zinester wishes to distribute their work,

although some zinesters may instead turn to more specialised printing methods, like risography, or instead opt for a digital distribution. While these duplicates may differ from the originals – not only are textural elements flattened, but many printing techniques produce margins, which inevitably shifts or cuts off elements of the original zines, which can be seen in the photographic images of the zines produced during the workshop – the scan-print method of reproducing zines is still a classic element of zine production distribution

Additionally, while the workshop was initially intended to run from 9:30 to 14:00 with a 1-hour lunch break, the participants requested for the workshop to be extended as they were enjoying the process of crafting and wished to continue working together without having to rush to complete their zines – as such, the workshop continued to run for an extra 2 hours until about 16:00. The workshop culminated in a discussion session where the participants spoke about the contents of their zines, their stylistic and aesthetic choices, and their thoughts on the process of zining while also taking the chance to trade their zines with each other. By the close of the workshop, each participant left with not only the knowledge of how to create and publish a zine and copies of their own zine to distribute or reproduce at home should they so choose, but also copies of each other's zines to begin – or add to – their own zine collections.

Analysing the Zines

In this section, I will be analysing each of the zines produced during the workshop – both as visual objects and the visual, aesthetic and curatorial choices that went into their production – and how they might relate to broader discussions around the curatorial within the scope of this research. For the purposes of this research participants will not be identified by name but by "Participants A through E" to protect their privacy.

All of the zines produced during this workshop are double-sided. I did not instruct the participants to do so – rather, each participant chose of their own accord to work on both sides of their zine. This may have been influenced by some of the zines that were shared with the participants before the beginning of the workshop – with all of the WITS Watershed zines and some of my own zines being double-sided – which might have opened up the possibility of using both sides of the page. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, all of the zines produced during the workshop utilised the classic eight-fold zine format; as such, I will be focusing on the actual content of the zines, rather than repeatedly talking about their form.

The first zine that I will be examining is Participant A's punk-inspired zine *YOUR *QUEER (CUNT)RY NEEDS YOU* [See Appendix C(1)]. Inspired by their own queer identity, Participant

A's zine focuses on the nuances of positioning lesbian identity as a gender identity, with the reverse side focusing on (trans) lesbian identities and existing as a nonbinary lesbian. Throughout the zine, gendered cutouts and phrases from the various magazines are cut-and-pasted into the zine where they are examined, crossed out or challenged based on their inclusivity and positionality concerning lesbian identities.

Participant A explained how they were inspired by the history of zines in relation to queerness after reading up on zines before the workshop, and how they felt that zines existed as a tangible form of resistance, communication and organisation within the queer community. It was this theme of resistance that inspired Participant A's punk aesthetic in their zine, featuring bright pinks and yellows, scratchily drawn graphics and text, and a "scrappy" (Piepmeier, 2008: 222) cut-and-paste style common to zines and other punk publications. Participant A's zine embraces this scrappiness, as they explained that they wanted to focus on a stylistic choice that intentionally went against commodified and mainstream aesthetics; furthermore, they expressed that they enjoyed the act "of flipping to the other side, the actual active physical act and effort of that flipping" as something that spoke directly to their concept and the discussions around the binary that they developed in their zine. In this way, the form of the zine speaks directly to its contents, and vice versa.

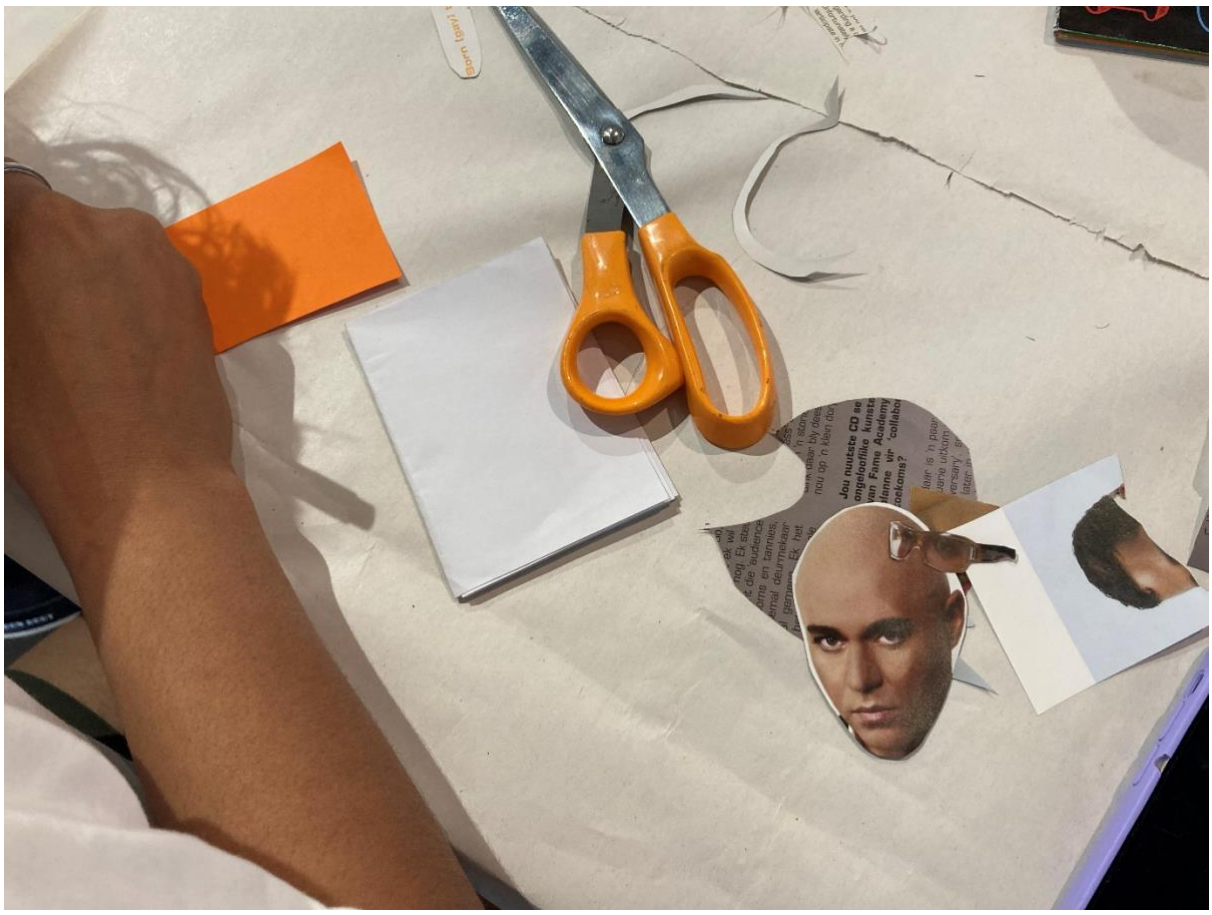
Next, I move to Participant B's zine *WOULD YOU LOVE ME IF I WAS A WORM (ON A STRING)?* [See Appendix C(2)]. Inspired by the meme "Would you still love me if I was a worm?" combined with Participant B's love of the Worm on a String toy, this zine navigates questions of identity politics through the lens of memes and pop culture. On each page of the zine, the sentence "Would you still love me if I was a worm on a string" is repeated with a new adjective or identifier added – queer, autistic, immigrant, disabled, and many more – drawing from the intersectional identities of both Participant B and those around her. These questions continue onto both sides of the zine when reversed, with the front side utilising primarily blue text, and the back side utilising pink – outside of the change in ink colour and the individual focus of each page, the zine does not change thematically or visually between the front and back sides. Additionally, the zine primarily uses handwritten text and drawings, with the occasional usage of collage or photography pasted in where it might relate to the particular identity being foregrounded on each page.

This zine is highly personal in its execution – alongside the many political and personal identifiers mentioned within the zine, it is also filled with various inside jokes that might not make sense to readers who are unfamiliar with Participant B. As discussed earlier, this is an

important facet of zines – the ability to creatively express and disseminate personal information that may ordinarily not be platformed by mainstream publications or spaces.

Another zine that deals with the personal is Participant C's zine *"IT'S TIME TO RELEASE YOUR INNER DAWG"* [See Appendix C(3)]. This zine is inspired by the participant's love of the American rapper and musician Pitbull, and incorporates the lyrics from his songs into the zine alongside drawings and collages. When unfolded, the zine diverges from the lyric-centric format, instead containing photographs depicting images or subjects that the participant associates with the singer as a photomontage. As Participant C explained, she intended for the zine to not only act as a celebration of her interest in the singer but also as a motivational piece to inspire potential readers to embrace their confidence and audaciousness, as qualities that she sees and appreciates in Pitbull. As explored earlier, zines are commonly used as spaces for personal expression, and although the two zines differ in their subject matter and execution – Participant B's zine is considered a perzine due to its focus on the participant's personal experiences and opinions, whereas Participant C's zine is very evocative of early zine cultures that first emerged from fans of musicians – they still demonstrate the ability of zines to freely platform and share personal information, interests and experiences.

From here, I move to Participant D's scrapbook-inspired zine *Try it Sometime* [See Appendix C(1)]. The first side of the zine focuses on the theme of queer intimacy through photographs that depict moments of tactile intimacy between individuals – hand holding, embraces, and cuddling – affixed to the zine's pages using masking tape. The second and third pages of the zine are left black, with two strips of masking tape stretching across the pages – according to the participant, these two pages were intended as a writing space for readers of the zine to use as "a dedication or response page, a diary or journal". This side of the zine features no text to accompany the images, aside from a short cutout from an article stating, "Try it sometime you might just be amazed at how your life and world-view benefits". When unfolded – unlike the other zines discussed here – the reverse side of this zine can be displayed as a poster or piece of collage art instead of being refolded into another zine, much like Participant C's zine. This reverse side displays a photograph of a Greco-Roman statue of a male satyr that appears to be instructing a young man on how to play a pan flute, with the satyr sitting close to the young man with his arm draped over him. Collaged over this image are snippets from various articles discussing historical examples of homosexual activity from around the world, from Uganda to Japan to Italy.



Participant C cutting out images from the magazine to use in her zine – because the magazines did not contain any images of the singer Pitbull, the focus of her zine, she instead chose to use an image of South African celebrity Nataniël as proxy

According to Participant D, she was inspired to create this zine after encountering the image pasted on the front cover of the zine, which then led her to search further for more images depicting touch. As she explained, she wanted her zine to address themes of intimacy and touch between individuals that, while initially ambiguous, would then become overtly queer once the zine was unfolded and the reverse side's queer collage was revealed. This zine is also heavily inspired by a scrapbooking aesthetic and the tactility of said process, which inspired her usage of masking tape over glue in the process of producing her zine.

The final zine produced during the Crafting Spaces zine jam was participant E's zine *Untitled Piece (Vodka)* [See Appendix C(5)], which explores the queer nightclub scene, its relationship to alcohol and addictive substances, and the potential risks and dangers of hooking up, especially as a queer individual in South Africa[4]. Unlike the other zines

[4] There has been a spate of attacks on gay men by criminals who utilised the gay hookup app Grindr as a way of finding victims – they would entice these men to their locations under the premise of a sexual engagement,

examined in this chapter, this zine contains little to no written text – instead, it is made up of collages, with repurposed news article headlines making up what little text there is.

As Participant E explained, he appreciated the pageable format of a zine as a way to break down his concept into smaller, curated sections – "the medium allows you to break up your concept into small bits, it tells a story" – as such, he created their zine with this format in mind, with the intention that the zine be read sequentially like a book. The zine begins with an image of a cell phone – intended to represent receiving a call to hook up – before moving to collages of newspaper clippings smeared with a red marker to give the appearance of blood, speaking directly to the violence that queer individuals might face when seeking sexual or romantic encounters. However, on the zine's reverse side these grim images give way to bright colours and images of smiling people, fairies, fruits and flowers – as Participant E explained, these images are intended to represent the euphoric feelings of being drunk or high, which can leave one vulnerable to, and unaware of the danger surrounding them. When read in its entirety, the participant wanted the zine to explore the relationship between substances and hookup culture based on his own experiences and observations as a queer man in South Africa.

Reflecting on the Workshop

These five zines vary widely in tone, content, aesthetics, and themes. However, they are all nonetheless linked by the fact that they were created out of the desire to express something – whether personal, artistic, or political – that the participants of the workshop cared deeply about. The intention of this zine jam was to curate an affective, interactive space wherein the participants would be free to produce zines on whichever topic(s) they so wished, after which the zines would be analysed to examine how the curatorial is evoked during the process of zining – and in turn, how zines in and of themselves can act as curatorial spaces. While the zines themselves exist as curatorial objects produced during the zine jam, I wish to reflect on some of my own choices in curating the event as a space that enabled the zines to be created. In considering Jay Pather's assessions on the futility of creating temporal and ephemeral moments – specifically live art – (Pather, 2019: 83) I am referring to the sets of choices that I made when conceptualising the event in order to allow the zine jam to develop organically, instead of attempting to force the workshop to evolve in a specific way. I must note here that I am not attempting to reduce curating and the curatorial to simply

where they would then beat, rob and/or extort them. One such example is the Grindr7 Gang case, in which a Wits University student was kidnapped and tortured (Igual, 2023).

pre-selection – rather, I am attempting to illustrate how pre-selection served as a viable strategy in the curating of this workshop.

Beginning with the prompt: as mentioned earlier, the participants were provided with an open-ended prompt of "Express Yourself". The decision to leave the prompt open-ended was an important curatorial choice for me when conceptualising the workshop. In speaking to various individuals in the initial stages of the research, it was often suggested that I give the participants a defined prompt to respond to. However, by choosing to keep the prompt open-ended, I hoped to not only evoke the spirit of zines as a proverbial blank canvas for the expression of any concept or idea; but also to allow the participants to engage with the medium however they chose, as opposed to making them feel boxed in by a prompt that may not interest them. This sentiment was echoed by participants during the workshop, where they expressed that they enjoyed the chance to truly write about and create a platform for their interests, whether they be personal or political, however they chose to do so.

The second curatorial choice I wish to discuss is encouraging the participants to create their own playlists for the event. As mentioned earlier, I hoped that allowing the participants to create their own playlists would not only begin to deconstruct the power relations between researcher and participant by granting them a level of power over the space, but also work towards shifting the affective registers of the space away from a formal research environment and towards a casual crafting gathering. I feel that this measure was largely a success – when questioned on the affective registers of the space, all of the participants agreed that they enjoyed the shared playlist that they had created together – here, I return to my initial discussion in the introduction on the notion of *crafting together* in relation the title of this research report.

Thirdly, I wish to reflect on my choice of which exact format of zines to introduce the participants to. As mentioned earlier, the participants were introduced to the A4, eight-fold zine format. I chose this specific format primarily due to its low resource requirement – only requiring a single sheet of A4 paper to produce, as opposed to other methods which may require multiple sheets of paper, as well as potentially more advanced binding techniques. Additionally, this format was also selected due to its ubiquity among zining circles and spaces, as one of the most common zine formats. It must be noted that the participants did struggle to grasp the folding method in such a short period, with some participants expressing frustration with not being able to consistently fold all the copies of their zines – this, however, did result in moments of communal action, where those who did grasp the

folding method assisted their fellow participants in folding their zines. This embodied the communal nature of zining practice in a way that I had not initially expected the workshop to enable.

This communal aspect was further reinforced by the sharing of zines at the end of the workshop. When conceiving of the zine jam, I chose to structure the workshop around the trading of zines at the end – this involved producing multiple copies of each zine, as opposed to each participant simply producing a single copy to keep as an object. This was intended to embrace the hand-to-hand nature of zine distribution. However, in the workshop itself, the moment of trading zines became a communal moment where the participants took the time to sign their zines and write personalised notes and comments before trading them with other participants – there was a certain level of intimacy and relationality that I experienced that I had not often experienced within contemporary art spaces before. In this moment the zines became a locus for the generation and activation of a queer network, actualised through the sharing of the zines – communal connections made tangible by leaving the workshop with not only their own zines, but also copies of their fellow participants' zines.

Reflecting on the workshop, two themes were made clear to me. Firstly, zines' ability to enable moments of communal engagement, connections, and care practice – as seen in the creation of a group playlist, the sharing of zines at the end of the workshop, and participants assisting each other in folding their zines. Secondly, zines' ability to provide a platform to allow for a wide array of self-expression, whether creative, personal, or political, due to their inherently decentralised and often anti-institutional nature. These same two elements have simultaneously emerged throughout the research itself, when considering how zines and other forms of queer printed matter have been used – both globally and in South Africa – as tools for mobilising decentralised queer communal care networks due to their relative accessibility and low barrier of entry. In this research report's final chapter, I will examine how these two elements might enable a queer(ed), decentralised, and affective curatorial practice.

Chapter 4 – Crafting Spaces

Throughout this research report, as I have explored and examined the history and materiality of zines and queer printed matter, two core themes have continued to emerge as constants: the ability of zines to enable and reinforce communal connections; and their scrappy, DIY-driven method of production. In this final chapter, I aim to consider how – drawing on these two elements of zine materiality – zines could enable the generation and actualisation of a queer(ed), affective, and decentralised curatorial practice going forward.

A DIY Ethos

I begin by addressing zines' DIY-driven method of production. As explored earlier in Chapters 1 and 2, print media has had widespread use by both queer individuals and communities, and other marginalised social groups, due to its relative ease of production. Because of this widespread use, multiple different styles, genres, and techniques have emerged in the field of zining. This in turn has resulted in zines being a diverse medium with no strict rules or formatting conventions, as each person who might produce a zine will approach the format with different opinions and goals towards their zine and its contents, audience, saleability and edition size. It is this nigh-anarchic spirit of zines and zining culture that I propose might serve as a path forward towards a decentralising and queering curatorial practice. In *Wages for Transition*, Harry Josephine Giles called for reappropriating the technologies of gender transition from cisheteropatriarchal societal hegemonies, stating:

> "*When we seize workers' control of the production of our genders, we are struggling towards a transition beyond capital, and kin beyond the family. When transition is taken away from the administration, exploitation and custody of health care institutions, it emerges as the form of collective resistance*" (Giles, 2019: 10)

In the same way, there is a need to reorient and explore a curatorial practice outside of the institution – a curatorial space not defined by its relation to the institution, but by the curators and artists that give it life. Since their conception, zines' primary reason for production has been the drive to create spaces divorced from the restrictions and paradigms of dominant forms of media. Drawing on this drive to produce and disseminate information on one's own terms, zines might enable the generation of a decentralised curatorial practice by providing a curatorial platform outside of mainstream art institutions. Because of their inherently decentralised nature, zines are not beholden to the same institutional restrictions as mainstream art spaces – as such, they could serve as valuable sites for the realisation of

curatorial or artistic endeavours that might not be able to be actualised within mainstream spaces due to institutional limits.

Furthermore, this is assisted by the (relatively) accessible materiality of zines. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, due in part to the low level of skill required to make a zine, alongside their relatively cheap materials – at their most simple, requiring nothing more than a piece of paper and something to write with – and lack of strict formatting conventions, zining is often considered to be a highly accessible medium. This in turn has encouraged and cultivated zining's DIY attitude. It is important to situate the term *accessible* in the context of this essay. In continuing to work through O'Neill's writing, he draws attention to a:

> *"…troubling desire for a reductive field of curatorial practice within an art world based on privilege, as a place for the few: those who have access, those who are "in the know," those who have resources or clout, those who are able to operate within a limited, fragile, reputational economy…"* (O'Neill, 2012: 60)

It is here where I situate the term *accessible*, in relation to the often opaque, elitist, and inaccessible nature of art institutions. At the same time, it is equally important to consider the relativity of the term accessible, especially in the context of South Africa. Comparing social media and zines for the purposes of accessing an audience, Elizabeth O'Brien writes: "making a zine is just as easy. To make one, only three things are needed: paper, something to write with, and access to a photocopier" (O'Brien, 2012: 91). However, this is challenging in South Africa, where access to a photocopier – or even the price of visiting a print shop – to produce multiple copies of a zine cannot be taken for granted due to systemic wealth inequality and class disparity. Moving beyond zines, similar accessibility issues are present within contemporary art scenes. For artists or curators who lack institutional support or funding, it can be extremely difficult to find spaces to exhibit work or realise curatorial projects, with these difficulties compounding across class lines. This is where the second element – communal care – comes in.

Communal Care

As explained earlier, due to their relatively inexpensive methods of production and the lightweight, often pocket-sized nature of the format, the primary method of disseminating zines occurs primarily by hand, directly from the author of the zine themselves. In some cases, zines may be bought from zine libraries and distros[5], and others may be uploaded online for individuals across the globe to print and distribute on their own (Giles' *Wages for Transition* being an example of a zine with an online distribution) most zines are obtained

[5] Short for distributor – businesses or individuals that distribute zines, often informal

directly from the zine's author. Alternatively, zines might be traded or passed on from one reader to another. Because of this, as they circulate and move between individuals, zines are able to establish communal connections and networks. It is these communal networks that I propose might serve as an answer to the earlier issue of accessibility. As Sandra Jeppesen states in relation to zines and their usage by anarchist communities:

> "*Second, related to non-professionalism is resource sharing: items as diverse as computers, paper, printers, money, food, art spaces, and long-reach zine staplers – supplies that might otherwise be provided in or by a work environment – are shared*" (Jeppesen, 2012: 269)

In a similar vein, if one is to establish a curatorial practice that exists outside of mainstream art institutions, it is vital that it is accompanied by a robust communal care network to account for the gaps in access and accessibility, especially in the context of South Africa. Through the sharing of resources, communal care networks are able to assist those who might be struggling with access to resources, spaces, and opportunities. It must be noted that forms of collaborative curatorial practice have already emerged in post-apartheid South Africa, as Jayne Crawshay-Hall states, as a method of accounting for limitations in access and resources (Crawshay-Hall, 2021: 25) – however, collaboration alone is not enough to fully access a queer(ed) curatorial practice, as queerness is not attainable without decentralisation.

In saying this, it is important to once again emphasise that moments of decentralised communal action are still at risk of reproducing the violences and power dynamics of capitalistic hegemonies. As mentioned by Giles (2019), Malatino (2020), and Barcelos (2022) earlier in this text, these violences are most often experienced by feminised, racialised bodies due to existing social dynamics, and as Marvin (2022) cautions, these power dynamics may be further heightened by assumptions that all individuals should contribute equally to an apparent group, despite differences in socioeconomic status and privilege outside of said group. As such, I echo Giles' assertion in *Wages for Transition*:

> *"These solidarities must recognise the diverse conditions under which different trans people work, and the struggle for wages for transition is a struggle to make clear multiple ontologies of labour and liberation"* (Giles, 2019: 13)

A queer(ed), affective, and decentralised curatorial practice cannot sustain itself as long as it echoes and re-performs existing social inequalities. It is not enough to simply move away from mainstream art institutions – one must recognise that the paradigms and conditions that make these mainstream institutions hostile can exist even at the borderlands (Licona, 2005), and accordingly, make a concerted effort to avoid reproducing these conditions.



Image showcasing the zines produced during the event, held by their authors. Photograph by Tristan Baia

Conclusion

In the introduction to this research report I addressed the challenges that I, as an artist-curator, as well as the artists around me, were having in attempting to practice within the South African contemporary art ecosystem. These issues, including lack of funding, space, resources and other benefits, are smaller symptoms of a larger issue – that is, a lack of institutional support – which can often leave artists and curators alike struggling to realise their practices and creative endeavours. Similarly, I found that there seemed to be an overall lack of care extended towards artists and curators beyond their ability to provide profit to art collectors and auction houses, which resulted in artists feeling instrumentalised and work being damaged. As such, I propose that the medium of zining might contribute towards the realisation of a queer(ed), affective, and decentralised curatorial practice, in response to the hegemonic, unfeeling, and institution-centric art ecosystem that I and many of my peers and colleagues were experiencing. This is due, in part, to two categories of zines and their materiality – their DIY-based method of production, and their ability to reinforce and generate communal connections.

As examined in Chapter 1, due to their usage by multiple underground and marginalised identity groups, zines lack defined aesthetic or formatting conventions – and many zinesters will disagree on what constitutes a zine or not. This makes them powerful tools for disseminating a wide range of material, especially that which may not be platformed by mainstream institutions - such as information about protests or other radical political work, personal expression, transgender healthcare information, and more. Furthermore, their ability to sustain communal connections has made them useful in cultivating queer communal care networks. These queer communal care networks have emerged as a way of providing medical, emotional, affective, or fiscal support to those individuals that have these resources withheld from them due to cisheteropatriarchal paradigms, whether they be social or medical.

While they are not zines, a prime example of this can be seen in the various newsletters examined in Chapter 2, and how they were able to connect queer individuals across South Africa with broader support groups and communal care networks, due to their exclusion from both the broader cisheteronormative society of apartheid-era South Africa and predominantly white, gay male spaces that existed within the queer community itself. As such, this illustrates how queer printed matter has been vital in fostering queer communities and mobilising political action.

These two aspects – decentralisation and community building - were made apparent in this research report's practical component, the *Crafting Spaces* zine jam, wherein I aimed to curate the affective register of the space in order to enable participants to produce zines on whatever topics they wished. This resulted in a wide array of diverse zines on an even more diverse range of topics, illustrating the materiality of zines as prime spaces for the dissemination of information. Additionally, by trading their zines at the close of the workshop, the participants were left with tangible reminders of their experiences at the zine jam and of their fellow participants, thereby solidifying the events of the day and reinforcing the connections formed there. In this way, the zine jam became both a space for crafting, and a space that was crafted through the efforts of the participants – even when the formal event ended, the zine jam lives on through the zines themselves.

Therefore, as seen not only in the historical examples of the newsletters held by GALA Archive, but also in the contemporary moment of the zine jam workshop, zines and queer print media are able to generate and enable communal action and foster communities. In this way, by engaging with the *spirit* of zining – a drive towards communal action and self-expression outside and in spite of the restraints of the institution – curators and artists may be able to engage with a more holistic approach to not only their own personal practices, but also the practices of those around them.

Reference List

AWKWARD-RICH, C. & MALATINO, H. 2022. Meanwhile, t4t. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 9(1): pp. 1-8.

BAKER, S. & CANTILLON, Z. 2022. Zines as Community Archive. *Archival Science* 22(4): pp. 539–561

BARCELOS, C. 2022. The Affective Politics of Care in Trans Crowdfunding. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 9(1): pp. 28-43

BOTES, J. 2023. "We Are Claiming Space, We Are Visible!": The Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand as a Space of Solidarity, 1980s-1990s. *Gender Questions* 11(1): pp. 1-17

BROUWER, D. C. & LICONA, C. A. 2016. Trans(Affective)Mediation: Feeling Our Way from Paper to Digitized Zines and Back Again. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 33(1): pp. 70-83

BRYAN-WILSON, J. 2017. *Fray: Art and Textile Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

CARTER, J. B. 2018. Sex Time Machine for Touching the Transcestors. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 5(4): pp. 691–706.

CHATTERJEE, A. CZAJKA, L. & GETHIN, A. 2022. Wealth Inequality in South Africa,1993–2017. *The World Bank Economic Review* 36(1): pp.19–36

CRAWSHAY-HALL, J. 2021. Collaborative Curating: Democratising Inclusion. *de arte* 56(2-3): pp. 4-28

DAN10THINGS. 2009. *not a zine* [Online] Zinelibraries. Available from https://www.zinelibraries.info/not-a-zine/ (Accessed 15/11/2023)

DUNCOMBE, S. 1997. *Notes from the Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture*. Indiana: Microcosm Publishers

HALBERSTAM, J. 2005. *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University Press

FRENCH, J. & CURD, E. 2022. Zining as Artful Method: Facilitating Zines as Participatory Action Research within Art Museums. *Action Research* 20(1): pp. 77-95

GILES, H. J. 2019. *Wages for Transition*. Edinburgh: Easter Road Press

GQOLA, P. D. 2022. *Black women artists in a monumental exhibition* [Online] New Frame. Available from https://www.newframe.com/black-women-artists-in-a-monumental-exhibition/ (Accessed 11/04/2023)

IGUAL, R. 2023. *Seven "Grindr Gang" accused appear in court* [Online] Mamba Online. Available from https://www.mambaonline.com/2023/10/10/seven-grindr-gang-accused-appear-in-court/ (Accessed 24/01/2024)

JENNA. 2009. *not a zine* [Online] Zinelibraries. Available from https://www.zinelibraries.info/not-a-zine/ (Accessed 15/11/2023)

JEPPESEN, S. 2012. DIY Zines and Direct-Action Activism. In: K. Kozolanka, P. Mazepa & D. Skinner (eds) *Alternative Media in Canada*. Canada: UBC Press, pp. 264-281

KHAN, S & ASFOUR, F. (eds) 2017. *I Make Art*. Johannesburg: Sharlene Khan

LEONARD, M. 2007. *Gender in the Music Industry: Rock, Discourse and Girl Power*. United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishers

LICONA, A. 2005. (B)orderlands' Rhetorics and Representations: The Transformative Potential of Feminist Third-Space Scholarship and Zines. *NWSA Journal* 17(2): pp.104-129

LIND, M. 2021. Situating the Curatorial. *eFlux Journal* (116): pp. 70-81

LOVE, H. 2014. Queer. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1(1–2): pp. 172-176

MALATINO, H. 2020. *Trans Care*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

MALATJIE, P. 2013. Alternative/Experimental Art Spaces in Johannesburg. *Third Text* 27(3): pp 367-377

MARTIN, Y. 2017. *The GLOW Collection* [ONLINE] GALA. Available from https://www.gala.co.za/resources/docs/Archival_collection_articles/GLOW.pdf (accessed 21/11/2023)

MARTINON, J. P. & ROGOFF, I. 2013. Preface. In: J. P. Martinon (ed) *The Curatorial: A Philosophy of Curating*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. viii-xi.

MARVIN, A. 2022. Short-Circuited Trans Care, t4t, and Trans Scenes. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 9(1): pp. 9-27

MUÑOZ, J. E. 2009. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York University Press

NIJSTEN, N. 2017. Unruly Booklets: Resisting Body Norms with Zines. *DiGeSt Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies* 4(2): pp. 75-88

NYATHI, D. 2021. *Caption it | why haven't we written ourselves into art history yet?* [Online] BubblegumClub. Available from https://bubblegumclub.co.za/art/caption-it-why-havent-we-written-ourselves-into-art-history-yet/

O'BRIEN, E. 2012. Zines: A Personal History. *New England Review* 33(2): pp. 89-99

O'NEILL, P. 2012. The Curatorial Constellation and the Paracuratorial Paradox. *The Exhibitionist* (6): pp. 55-60

PARIKKA, J. 2012. *What is Media Archaeology*? Cambridge: Polity Press.

PATHER, J. 2019. The Impossibility of Curating Live Art. In: J. Pather & C. Boulle (eds) *Acts of Transgression: Contemporary Live Art in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits Press, pp. 82-103

PIEPMEIER, A. 2008. Why Zines Matter: Materiality and the Creation of Embodied Community. *American Periodicals* 18(2): pp. 213-238

PIEPZNA-SAMARASINHA, L. L. 2018. *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

RAHA, N. 2021. Embodying Autonomous Trans Health Care in Zines. *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 8(2) May: pp. 188-198

RAWSON, K. J. 2014. Transgender Worldmaking in Cyberspace: Historical Activism on the Internet. *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking* 1(2): pp 38-60

RECKITT, H. 2016. Support Acts: Curating, Caring and Social Reproduction. *Journal of Curatorial Studies* 5(1): pp. 6-30

ROWE, A. C. 2014. Borderlands Rhetoric. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20(3): pp. 381-383

SCOTT, D. 2017. Preface: Friendship as an art of living. *Small Axe* 21(3): pp. vii–x.

SERAME, M. 2019. Pushing against elitism in the arts. [Online] News24. Available from https://www.news24.com/citypress/trending/pushing-against-elitism-in-the-arts-20191020

SHARON, S. Y. & MA, C. 2023: Being Water: Protest Zines and the Politics of Care in Hong Kong. *Cultural Studies* 37(3): pp. 1-29

THOMAS, S. E. 2009. Value and Validity of Art Zines as an Art Form. *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America* 28(2): pp. 27-36, 38

TONG, K. 2020. DIY Print Activism in Digital Age: Zines in Hong Kong's Social Movements. *ZINES* 1(1): pp. 65-76

WHITTLE, A. 2019. Biting the Hand That Feeds You: A Strategy of Wayward Curating. *Critical Arts* 33(6): pp. 110-123

Appendix A: Zine Jam Prompt

The following prompt was sent to the research participants a few days ahead of the zine jam, to familiarise them with the medium and allow them to begin thinking on how to approach their zines and the workshop.

Zine Jam Prompt:

Express Yourself

While the origin of zines is disputed, it is commonly understood that they originated in science fiction spaces in the 1930s, as self-published text works where fans could produce and distribute their own writing within fandom spaces. These booklets then gained popularity in 1970s punk scenes as objects for distributing anarchist or counterculture writing, or in the case of Riot Grrrl feminist groups, as tools for self-expression and connection between women and girls in response to their exclusion from the music scene.

Since then, zines have seen widespread use by individuals who wish to make their voices heard, but who lack mainstream reach or resources. They have been used within queer and feminist spaces as tools for self-expression and raising awareness; as easily-disseminated protest tools for political advocacy, as seen in Hong Kong's Umbrella and Anti-ELAB Movements; and as tools to share transition hacks and tips within transgender and gender-nonconforming communities, alongside many other counterculture and queer(ed) applications.

At the core of all these engagements is the idea of access – these scrappy booklets allow for anyone with simple stationary – and some method of duplication, whether that entails some form of printing or hijacking the office scanner – to readily create, duplicate, and disseminate whichever information they may so choose, in whatever manner they like, to whomever they see fit.

For this workshop, I would like you to produce a zine on *any* topic that you want to talk about, or that you feel other people should know about. This can be personal, political, social, medical, or purely artistic – the aim of this workshop is not to guide you to produce a zine in a specific format, but rather for me to see how you access the medium of zines to express yourself, as your own curated space.

To learn more and see some examples of zines, check out these links:

https://archive.qzap.org/index.php

https://www.reddit.com/r/zines/

https://www.lgbtculturalheritage.com/zines

Appendix B: Zine Jam Documentation

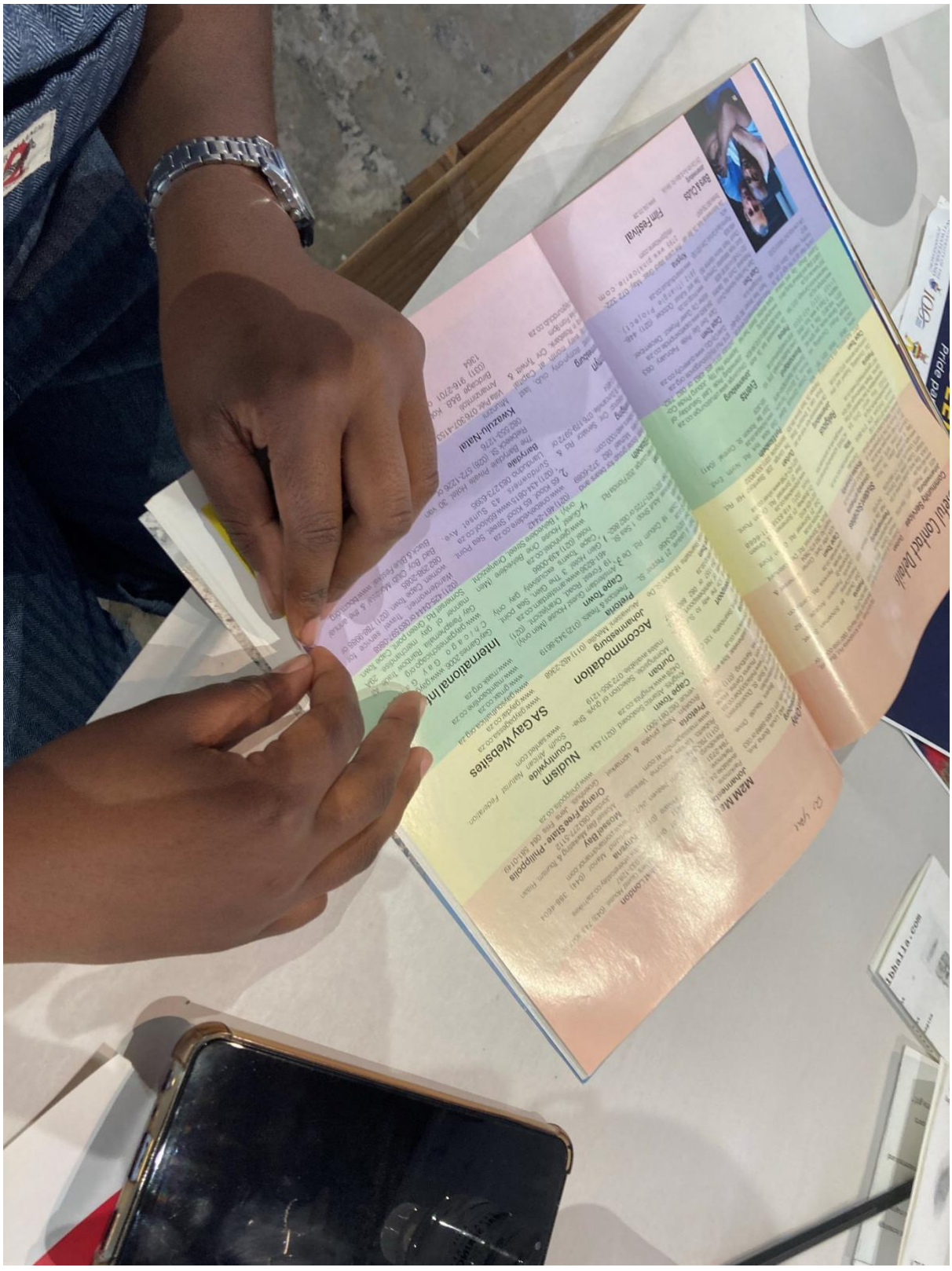
Below you can find images taken during the process of the zine jam, documenting the space and the zines being produced. All of the photographs below were taken by me.



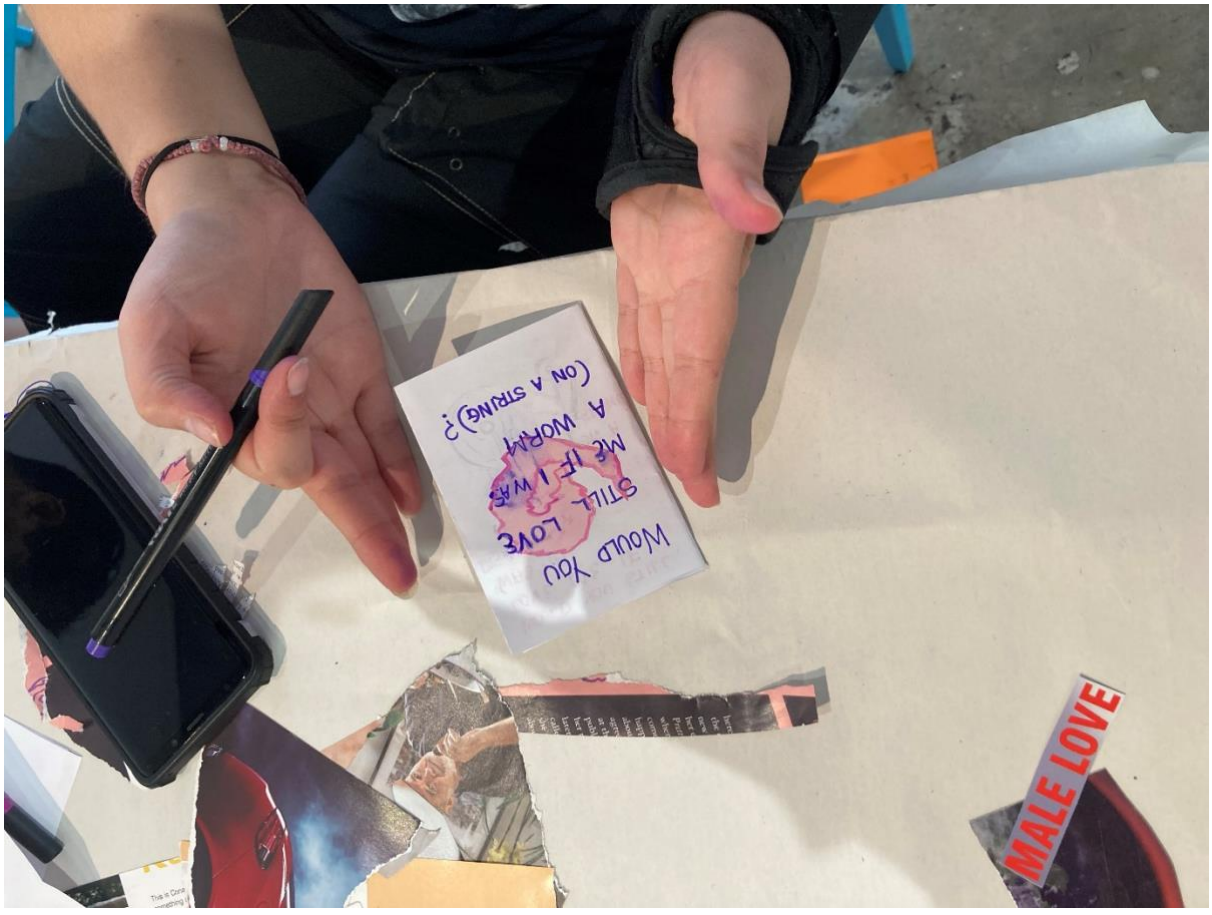
Zine Jam table setup



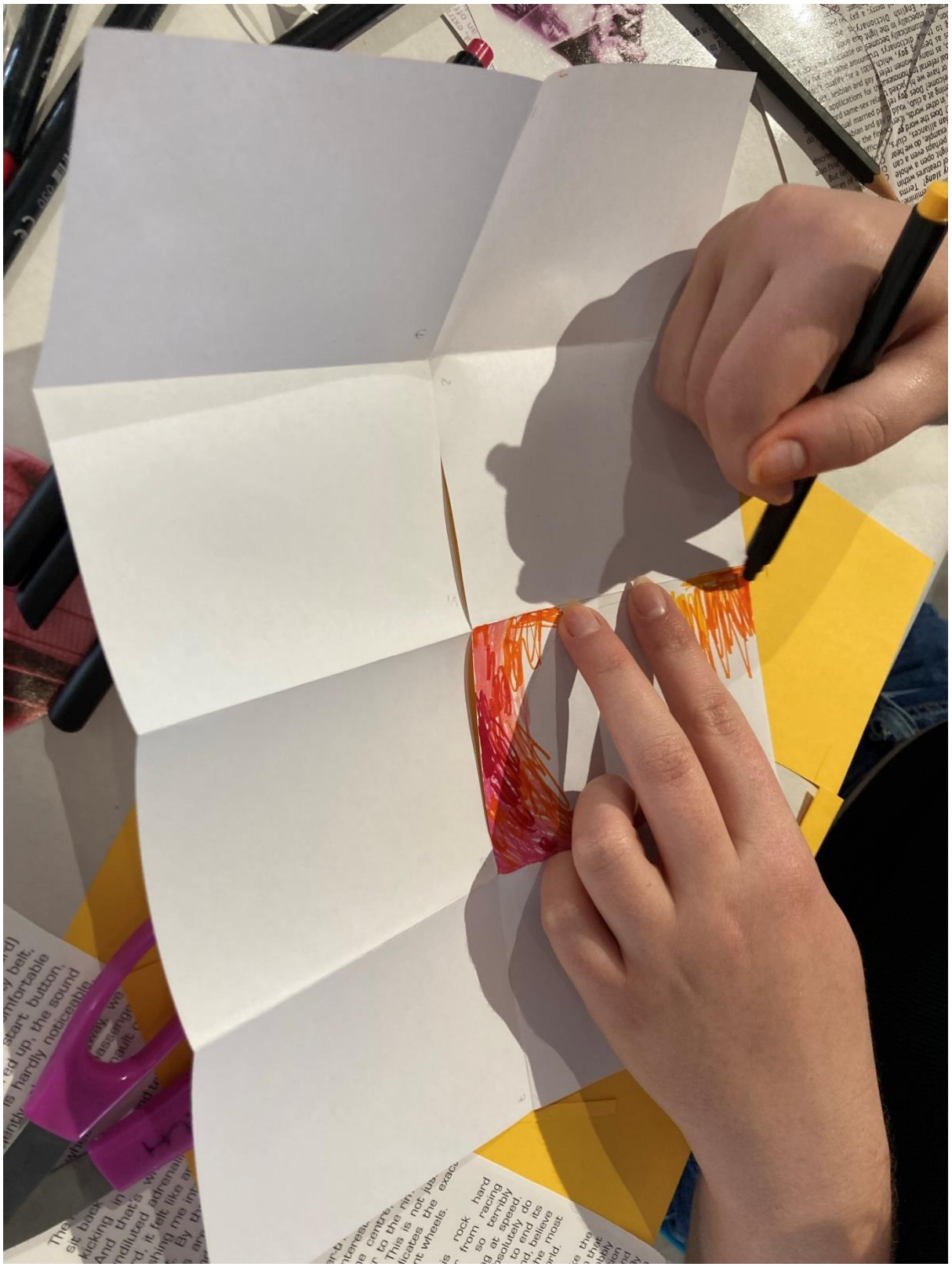
Printer used to ducplicate the zines during the jam



Participant D searching for material to use in her zine



Participant B, having just completed the cover page of her zine



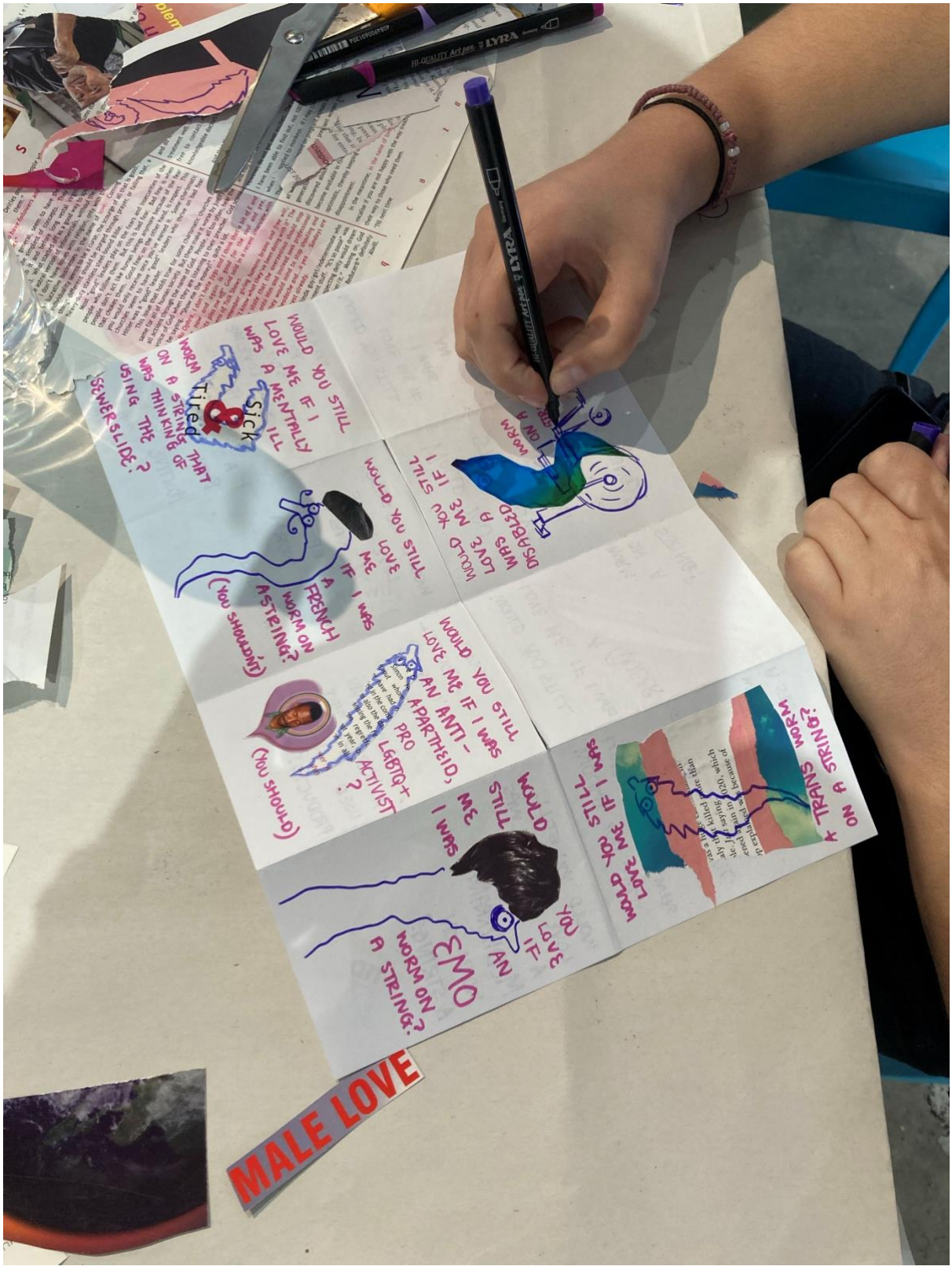
Participant A, having foded and begun working on their zine



Participant C cutting out images from the magazine to use in her zine – because the magazines did not contain any images of pitbull, the focus of her zine, she instead chose to use an image of South African celebrity Nataniël as proxy



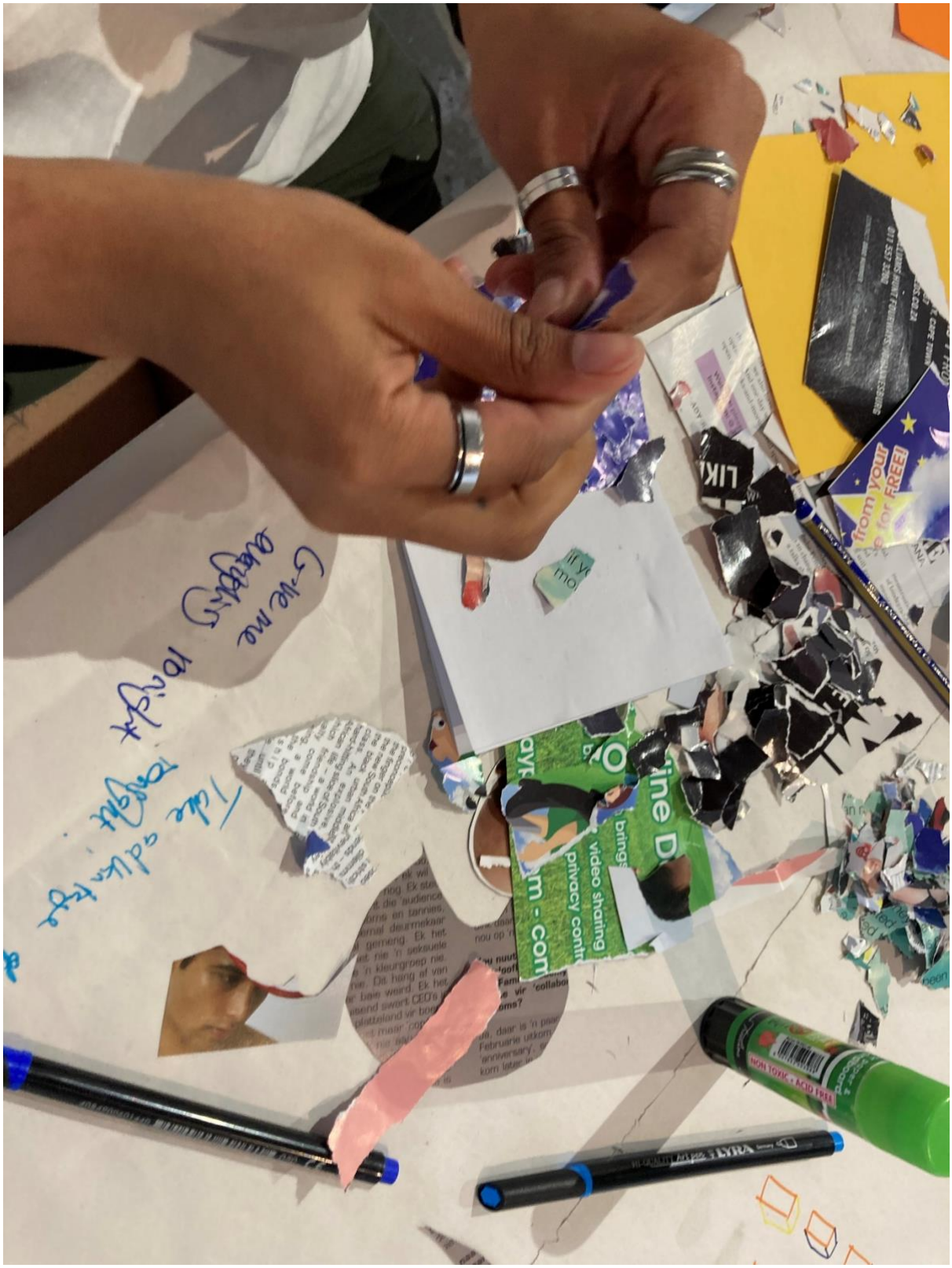
Participant E's strategy involved collecting as much interesting material as possible, and then deciding how to incorporate it into the zine



Participant B, now working on the reverse side of her zine



Progress images of Participant A's zine



Participant C pictured here tearing images into scraps to use in a collaged image later



Beginning the process of printing zines – 10 copies of each zine were printed



Continuing to print zines



Image showcasing the zines produced during the event, held by their authors

Appendix C: Zine Scans

(1)

Participant A's Zine (Front Side)



Participant A's Zine (Back Side)

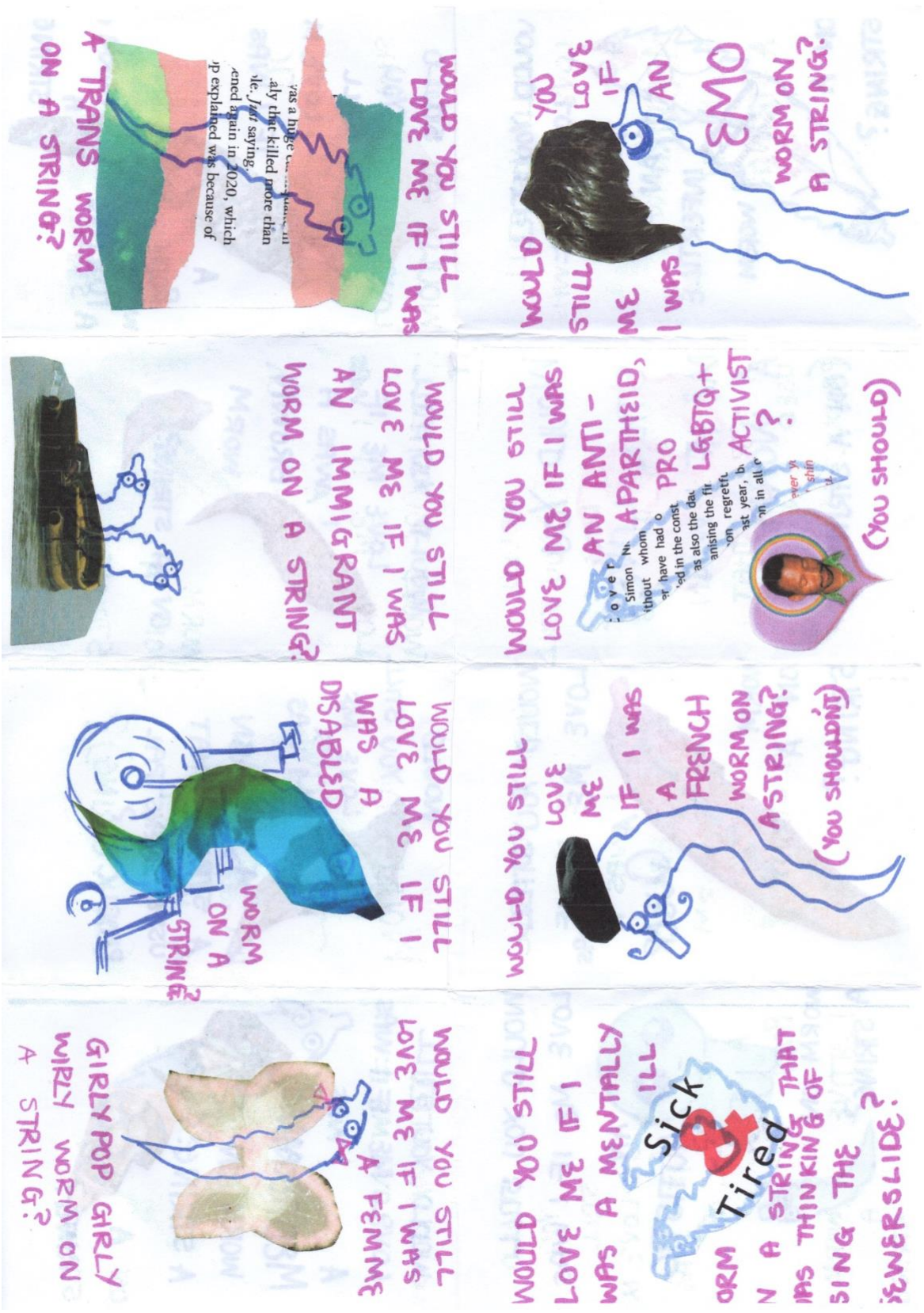


(2)

Participant B's Zine (Front Side)



Participant B's Zine (Back Side)



(3)

Participant C's Zine (Front Side)



Participant C's Zine (Back Side)



(4)

Participant D's Zine (Front Side)



Participant D's Zine (Back Side)

In Africa there is documented history to illustrate that there was an accepted 'third sex' in society. Harems of kings in Uganda were well known for containing both women and men. Among the Ashanti and Akan cross-dressing men, who engaged in homosexual relations with other men, were accepted in society.

Michelangelo took Tommaso dei Cavalieri, a nobleman, as his lover. Their

In Chinese prehistory there are tales of love affairs between noblemen. At times, bi-sexuality was even openly exhibited. The tale of Emperor Ai and Dong Xian

"Gay Gospel"

Reviewing mankind's existence on our planet we find that, while the tolerance of loving homosexual relations varies greatly, they have been prevalent throughout history in some form. "

History is filled with tales, rumours, and recorded fac Some are dramatic and almost mythical in substanc about Jack and Joe Soap.

The Samurai class was known to have relationships with young men. Such relationships were not only common amongst the Samurai, but also the ruling class, monks, and ordinary townspeople.

Now, of course, homosexuality is considered as "un-African" and an abomination of western civilisation. Homosexuality, cross-dressing, and transvestism are

more "African" than the bible is. It may have been the intervention of "Western" ways of life and missionaries of faith that have caused the shift in perception.

Naturally

(5)

Participant E's Zine (Front Side)



Participant E's Zine (Back Side)

