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Out of the Closet and Into the Archive: Imagining Modes of Futurity for Queer Archival Practices

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ABSTRACT

Out of the Closet and Into the Archive: Imagining Modes of Futurity for Queer Archival Practices investigates the limitations of queer archival practices and offers alternative strategies of archiving queer histories, lived experiences and stories in such a way that is inherently collaborative by making use of curatorial practice. The project answers the main question: what is the configuration of a queer archive that utilises collaborative archival strategies by prioritizing the voices of living queer bodies? The exhibition sets up a temporal archival space which demonstrates these alternative possibilities for queer archival practices by creating a space that is inclusive of diverse voices and creates a platform where queer individuals can be part of the queer narrative that is recorded and shared, creating and demonstrating collaborative archival strategies. This project examines two existing queer archives in order to find areas for improvement while informing the exhibition in order to offer modes of futurity. Semi-structured interviews and items contributed to the exhibition form part of the data collection, presenting an opportunity to think through and address the research in a practical way. Collectively, these aspects engaged in a practical embodiment of modes of futurity, demonstrating the possibilities of collaborative archival practice.