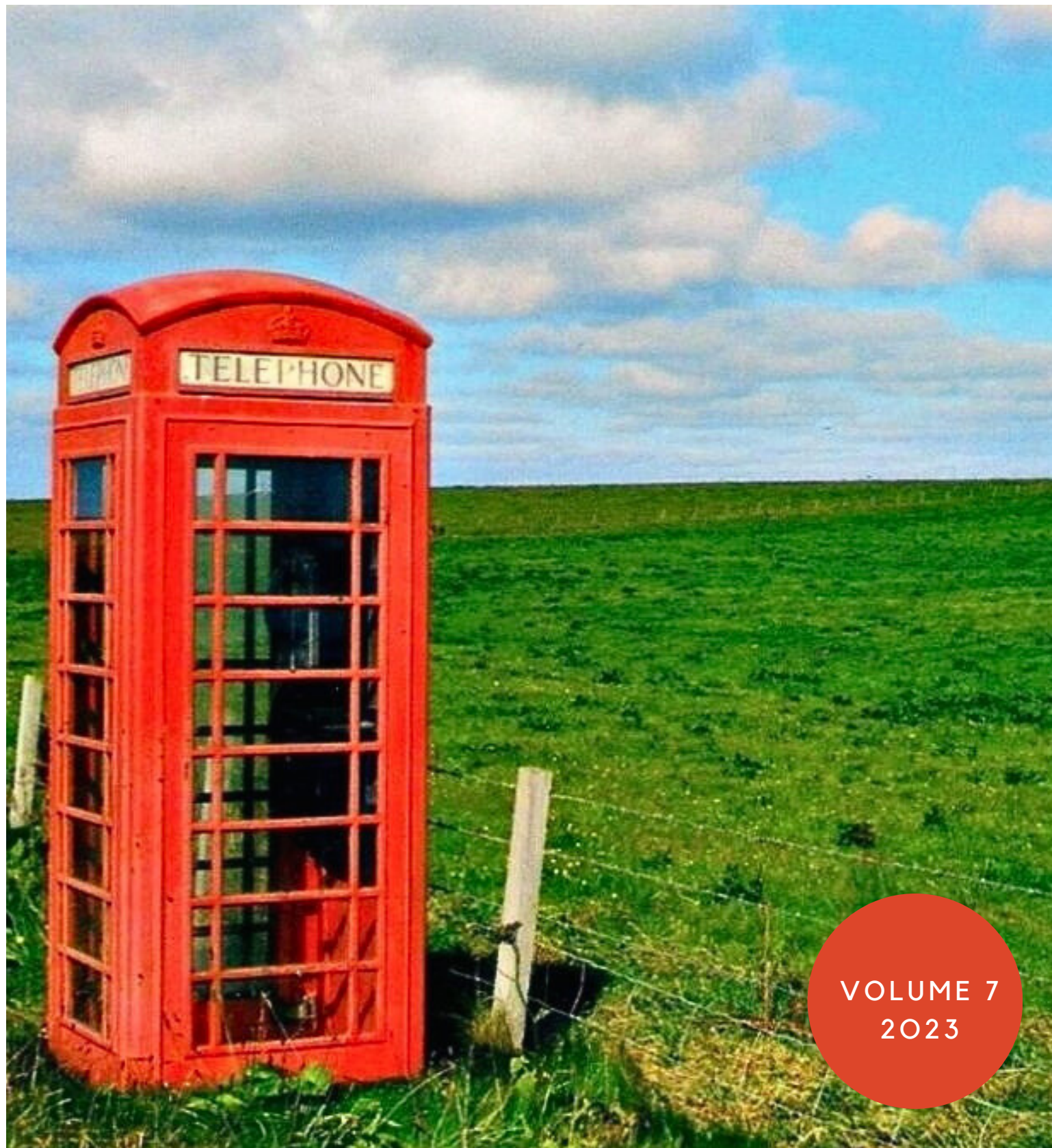


LIBRARY ZINE!

VOICES ACROSS
THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



VOLUME 7
2023

LIBRARY ZINE!

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Dear Reader,

Dear Reader,

As New Yorkers, sometimes it's hard for us to stay out of each other's way. But that doesn't always mean we take time to authentically connect with each other. This year's theme, Stay Connected, invited contributors to explore what it means for us to nurture the ties that bind us to each other, make new friends, and be part of our communities. Everyone in our great city has a part to play, and no one is an island. We all need each other in both profound and mundane ways.

We would like to acknowledge all of the creators who submitted their work to our zine this year. There would not be a Library Zine without the brilliance and passion of the writers, poets, and artists who make it the dynamic anthology that it is. We would also like to thank you, reader, for taking the time to connect with us and your community through reading and experiencing the works in our zine. You are also part of what makes the Library Zine special.

As you peruse our Zine, we invite you to reflect on the ways you stay connected to your loved ones and community. Maybe you will be inspired to forge some new connections in 2024. We hope all of your connections bring you the most joy and peace in the coming year.

Sincerely,
The NYPL Zine Committee

POETRY

Here you will find interpretations of this year's theme where poets explore their connections to themselves, their loved ones, their communities, nature, and more.

Love, interrupted

Megha Sood

This unending cold silence during the pandemic,
These moments of isolation have taken a shape around me.

They sometimes appear as bright flashy texts on my phone screen
as they light up my room in the middle of the night.

I feel the proximity to you, your skin, and your love morphed and molded
in these small texts and emojis. Love needs no deciphering and yet here we are

adding a thousand versions of hugs, surprise, and sadness to this unending dearth
of pictorial symbols. Earlier, love was an indescribable feeling—

simmering in the depths of your soul, unable to be transcribed. A burning passion
ignited by a fleeting sight or touch by your lover.

Love, now, needs expression in its loudest form. Love comes boisterously
as bright-colored emojis and texts; waiting to be read.

Sometimes, I long for your deep stentorian voice of yours filling my soul
and brimming me to the full but yet here again

I wait for the sudden short sound on my phone in the middle of the night
to look at the message saying you missed me the whole day emoting with a damn emoji.

Home :: Pandemic

Megha Sood

The sirens never stop and the sounds keep ringing in my ears
in the middle of the day. A phantom sound dreading into the night.

A thick fog of smoke escaped through the thick rounded opening of the gutters,
a fulmination ringing off the concrete. This loneliness takes myriad forms and shapes

unknown to us. Like us, it also is trying to deceive the virus escaping
through the small gaps, falling through the cracks. A likely presence

like a smile hidden behind the mask. This quagmire of desires churns into
a thick shade of longing with every passing turn, my need to touch the body

of my loved ones for real. Never imagine that love could also be a virtual,
care for my old mother, getting old with every passing day spilling

through the blue screens of my computer. This longing has spilled into my poems.
This concern has changed into the care by which I water my basil every day to keep it alive.

Not to miss a day, even one. Trying to read the pain between the weary smiles of my mother.
To see through a shriveled body with thin lines etched all over her face; a crotched of memories.

Her gazing at me with a bowlful of questions in her bleary eyes,
To ask by habit, when I will come home next.

Park Potion

Hannah Coleman

I have returned to this park I call home
Onto the grass I walk
My feet grateful for the wet soil
I am apart of the process

The trees tower and surround me
Bright, green, powerful and passive

Beneath me the water brings life to the creatures
Many of which I am prone to disturb

From those spirits I seek forgiveness for my destructive
nature
To those spirits I promise to be careful when treading
this garden

Before I leave this park I wish to hold in my hand the
potion

Crystal lavender leaves
A bunch of sun dried lilies
Molded nightshade
Turquoise shreds from the river
The jade tablet
And tigers eye

By the Pier

Hannah Coleman

I have come to that special place, the place you told me to remember
I will wait for you here
Surrounding me are the memories of our past,
How far in the future have we traveled
Does this street remember my feet, the kick of my heel, when I turned in ran
Does this street remember what you said

These memories no longer have power over me

I am unafraid to meet you here, to stand in the same place, all of those years ago
I am ready to listen to you this time, to hear the whole story this time



Irma and Paul Milstein Division of United States History, Local History and Genealogy, The New York Public Library. "Bathing Scene and Happy Land Pier, South Beach, Staten Island [people on beach and float, pier in distance.]" The New York Public Library Digital Collections.

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47d9-cc17-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

A Proper [Cost] Effective Treatment Plan

Tom Pennacchini

in a world
Gone
Topsy Turvey
and that's going at it
Mild

it is a good thing to have
Some assistance in
Fortifying
The
Bone to Back

things
Like classical radio QXR
and
The library
Thanks you guys

What a Resource
Thanks

It is fine and good to have this glimmer
Sitting up and rubbing my eyes
In the park
Under this splendid tree
A nap and a gentle reminder
That grace is everywhere
and that grace is free

Winged Ones

Tom Pennacchini

Bustling old fella dashing biddly bop by dressed to the
nines
with briefcase stuffed under his arm equipped with
fixed maniacal grin jabbering to himself while
confirming his expressions
to an equally jazzed and jaunty westie he calls Ralph
trailing exuberantly behind
let's me know
that there are actually still some living beings out
there
to learn from

Found

E.B. Fouts-Palmer

I found a penny. Copper date gleaming
up at me from the gum-black sidewalk.

Brand new penny, never touched.
It must have fallen from a truck on its way
to the bank.

One edge is so smooth that I can see
my mother's face reflected back at me.

The Strangers I See

Every Day

E.B. Fouts-Palmer

Every morning I stand on the same corner
With the same man
And wait for the bus.

He always carries the same umbrella,
And the same people drive past us
Drinking their coffee.

On the bus, the same people
Get on in the same order
And sit in their seats.

Every morning one strange man
Smiles and says "Hello" to
The people he sees every day.

Silent Connection: Eyes Wide Shut

Li Ruan

I am still retraining my eyes,
elevating their performance,
so, when two-thirds of my face is covered by a mask,
my friends, also my better half,
can decipher messages conveyed through my eyes,
comprehend my emotions—
joy or something happier,
sorrow or something deeper,
genuinely grasp my intended meaning—
this is paramount for my significant other
to peek out

what a daunting task
in a process of coaching my eyeballs
to adopt the role of traditional communication—
spoken words flowing from my lips.
naughty oculi resist my instructions, perhaps sensing
they can never supplant verbal exchanges.
this strange, avant-garde style, a sheer barrier,
hinders my mouth from
voicing feelings and ideas—
delicate ones, even old-fashioned expressions,
struggle to relay

three years since the COVID,
my organs of sight continue battling
to master, embrace, adapt to
this novel method of reaching out to the world—
its past, present, and future,
my husband's deep heart,
my friends' laughter and thoughts,
new encounters' queries—
all feel compelled to go through
such an unconventional channel
of daily connection.

Where I'm From: A series by students from a local middle school

This writing assignment, prompted by Anna Villanueva, produced many excellent works that fit the theme of Stay Connected.

Ms. Villanueva shared that these poems were prompted by the works "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon and "Where Are You From" by Renee Watson. The resulting poems are excellent examples of individuals staying connected with themselves, their communities, and their cultures.



Irma and Paul Milstein Division of United States History, Local History and Genealogy, The New York Public Library. "Tenement row; Long Acre Storage; Children playing ball in street." The New York Public Library Digital Collections.

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/e7d46160-0f7d-0132-66cb-58d385a7bbd0>

Joel J.

I am from the bright lights phones and
electronic devices
From the emulators to the puzzle game
apps, the headphones
From the evil eye necklace that i never
leave behind
i am from the cluttered, clean home
The white walls , long halls , and loud noises
i am from the soon-to-die jade plant, that
gave us good luck 2022-2022
I am from the family gatherings and the
cookouts of birthdays and baby showers
From the debates at home to the ear
ringing screams of my baby brother
I am from the sayings of “history repeats”
and “pay attention!”
From the praying before meals to the
gospel music
I am from the state of north carolina
I am from the time my finger got stuck in a
bike chain
And the first steps of my brother
To the crochets to the life lessons about
black history of my grandparents
I'm from the local parks of manhattan
I am the one and only joel jefferson
The only one who wrote this poem

Yaretzi B.

I am from art and culture
from sugar skulls and coca cola.
I am from the plain white walls
gray old carpets, portraits of the past, and charming
wind chimes.

I am from the marigolds in the garden
it's gorgeous big leaves and exotic yellow orange
petals

I'm from Day of the Dead and the kindness
From Beltran Cardona and Mozo Gutierrez.
I'm from the strict rules and cooking food
From doing dishes to sweeping old wooden floors.

I'm from a catholic family, who believes in god.
I'm from homework, music, and shelves full of books
From tamales, tacos and mole.

From the death of my aunt who brought her baby
into this world
from the skin my father lost.
I am from the old pictures in the closet that hold
memories
From the people who are still here to people that are
no longer here.

Tierra B.

I am from where the ocean is brown
From playlists and black magic only pays
I'm from the place my mother grew up in
Loud, busy

I'm from the plants in the window
I'm from praying together and talking over
each other

Im from my mother and dad
I'm from always getting in trouble and
yelled at
I'm from "Lifes not fair" and "You don't
always get your way."

I'm from sleeping in on sundays
I'm from the busy streets of harlem

Brysel T.

I am from portraits from paint and mondo llama paint
brushes. I am from
the big bricked buildings,
lots of stairs, annoying neighbors, the smell of
Dominican food. I am from
lovely mango trees growing in my family's backyard
Im from traveling to DR yearly and dancing merengue
from Bryanni and Jayden

I'm from the prayer in thanksgiving before we eat and
watching my dad
play softball every sunday
From "don't wait until the last minute" and "that cut
is nothing you will
grow".

I'm from praying , placing statues in my apartment.
I'm from the tropical coconut trees, sancocho, and
Dominican potato
salad.

I'm from my cousins made a big mess on Christmas
from my little sister falling off the couch.
My mom always leaves a picture of her parents in her
room to show the
love of family.

Jeremy Alejandro G. T.

Yo soy de el faro de la esquina de
electricidad y petróleo
Yo soy de el cuarto de arte de
pintura,música,y aroma de jasmin
Soy de la ensalada de tomate con pequeñas
pizcas de limón y sal
Soy de café con pan y risas contagiosas de
Nolberto Torres
Soy de apagar luces y cerrar puertas de
responsabilidad y
travesuras
Soy de creer en dios y admirar su creación
Soy de Ecuador mestizo de padres lojanos
chicharrón, con mote
Desde el nacimiento de mi abuelo en su
pueblo de mi tío divertido
tardes
Emocionantes de pesca y aventuras hasta
union fortaleza y amor

I am from the lighthouse on the corner of
electricity and oil.
I am from the art room of painting, music,
and the aroma of jasmine
I am for the tomato salad with small
pinches of lemon and salt
I am for coffee with bread and contagious
laughter by Nolberto
Torres
I am one to turn off lights and close doors
of responsibility and
mischief.
I believe in God and admire his creation.
I am from Ecuador, mestizo, of chicharrón
Lojano parents, with a
nickname
Since my grandfather's birth in my uncle's
town, fun afternoons
Exciting fishing and adventures to unite
strength and love

SHORT STORIES & ESSAYS

The Essayists and Storytellers in this section truly captured this year's theme by exploring handwritten notes, pen pals, and new technological ways to stay connected.

THE CHALLENGES TO STAYING CONNECTED

Karen M. Resnick

As an adult business and computer instructor, I worked with computers 7 hours a day, 5 days a week. I was like the old story of the shoe repairman who repaired his customers' shoes but walked around with his own shoes in disrepair because I was a computer instructor who did not utilize my own computer. I found that I needed to distance myself from computers in my free time in order to relax. I communicated with friends and family via my landline phone; I reserved my basic cell phone for emergency use.

When I unexpectedly retired about 7 years ago (after the 80-year-old not-for-profit where I had worked for almost 40 years suddenly went bankrupt), I decided that it was not necessary for me to buy a computer to do research and to send and receive emails because I would have access to computers at my nearby New York Public Library branch and at several senior centers (now known as Older Adult Centers) that I was now frequenting. This released me from having to make a number of decisions such as: Should I buy a laptop or a desktop computer? Which brand? What operating system? How much storage space would I need? What apps should I buy? What Internet service should I use, and how much would I need? How do I maintain the computer? All these decisions, costs, and upkeep were made thankfully by the New York Public Library and the senior centers—similar to all those decisions and concerns having been taken care of by the knowledgeable IT personnel at work. In addition, I realized that not having a computer at home would be a further incentive for me to get out of my apartment and be among other people—thereby helping to eliminate possible social isolation.

It all worked out well. Then all of a sudden, my world unexpectedly turned upside down again. In March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown began. Now having my own computer suddenly became a necessity rather than a luxury because the computers at the New York Public Library and the senior centers were no longer available for use. This was something that I had never imagined would ever happen! The television news now supplied websites to check for additional Covid-19 information; I had never noticed prior to that time that the news expected its audience to use a computer for further story-line information. People were ordering food and other products online. I normally purchased items directly from brick-and-mortar stores. The news announced shortages of computers. In addition, since I did not have access to the Internet, I could not research reviews of computers nor order an available one online. It became a Catch-22 situation. For the first time, I felt disconnected.

When I was finally able to purchase a laptop from a computer store (luckily, prior to the pandemic I had taken a computer class at a senior center where the instructor was a tech person, and he recommended that us seniors buy a laptop and gave us all the necessary requirements we would need to have), I took it home and turned it on. I was ready to start using it. I did not know that it needed to be set up before it would even work! I had worked with and taught various computer courses for about 50 years, and I myself had been a student of numerous computer courses, and at no time was it ever mentioned that a new computer needed to be made ready for use. I had to go back to the store for assistance as the little pamphlet of instructions was insufficient. I realized afterwards that the computers at work must have been set up by our IT staff before the students and I ever used them.

The next step was to get Internet service. Some years ago, the broadband wiring was put into my apartment. I called my telephone provider. The representative offered me a “deal” for the phone and Internet. Since I already had the broadband wiring, he claimed I could connect the equipment by myself—no worker needed to come to my apartment during the pandemic. Since he was sending the contract to my email, I had to go to the library to read it since I did not have Internet access. I was in for a real surprise. The written contract differed from what he had verbally told me. I had taken two law courses in college and knew that what was in writing would nullify what we had agreed upon verbally. I wound up canceling it, had to return the equipment that never should have been sent to me, and was on the phone every month for several months with various telephone representatives straightening out my incorrect telephone bill as a result of this fiasco.

Upon discussing the situation with one of my nieces, she suggested I get a hotspot. I went back to the library to research this and discovered that they worked with a smartphone. At that time, I only had a basic cell phone. I remembered that when I had a tablet (which had stopped working properly), I had free access to a hotspot from the New York Public Library for 1 year. That did not require a smartphone. It was given to school children and seniors at that time, and it was from Sprint which was no longer in business. However, the New York Public Library came to my assistance once again. I decided to ask the librarian for her expertise. It turned out a former librarian at my branch who gave computer assistance (and I had previously taken a jewelry-making class with her) was back at my library branch that day and resolved my problem! She told me that what I needed was a Mi-Fi and not a Wi-Fi and suggested that I could get the equipment I needed for the Internet from Verizon and T-Mobile. It turned out in the intervening years, it was made even easier to connect the Internet equipment as this time I was able to connect it without calling the help number for assistance!

With my own computer and Internet capabilities, I have expanded my computer usage. I have utilized Zoom to take Webinars, classes, virtual guided tours all over the world, listened to live concerts, and joined religious services. I volunteered to help an overseas high school student with his conversational English. I participated in a study performed by a college utilizing a new program similar to Zoom. My experience with Zoom and having previously reviewed beta software was of particular value to this study. With the Internet, I am able to reserve and renew books and reserve a computer when needed from the New York Public Library's website.

In addition, with the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown, I used my television remote and discovered three channels that offered free movies. I found the AllArts television channel and watched some wonderful shows. I listened to CDs and watched DVDs. Looking for things to do, I rediscovered the radio—finding programs I liked besides listening to the news, weather, and traffic reports only.

Through my recent experiences, I realized that I took for granted what the New York Public Library offers. It is so true that once something is gone, you truly learn to appreciate what you no longer have. I am glad it is in operation once again. It is also true that when one door closes another one opens—as a whole new world has opened its doors to me.

Penmanship Is Still Important

Diane Murray Ward

I always liked to write handwritten notes. As old as I am, I too have Elders. I am fortunate. When their hearing was an issue, even though now resolved for they admit their need of aids, I still write them a note. It's not that their voice is irritating, I still recall the jarring effect on me of yelling into the phone at my Elders.

I will write them a note. A note, a letter, legible enough I think for them to read. I write in my hand script, not too long a note, sometimes just a bright cheerful card.

Just to let them know that I am thinking of them. It's still helpful. We're still connected. We're still expressing love. And sometimes they will call, knowing I can hear them, and they can hear me.

When I call them, their phone line is busy! Hearing is working for them again. Nonetheless... I still write a periodic note.

A handwritten note is a hug, and pieces of my epithelia on a stamp, only forever stamps. Again, connecting with stamps of all types, of heroes and heroes commemorated on stamps. My handwritten notes to my personal heroes and heroes, what a beautiful added benefit! My Elders are special to me, and they helped form my development for patience, people, friends, acquaintances and love.

So, staying connected differently without technology all of the time, and being more personable, I think best stated, shown with a handwritten note which never grows old though we all do.

I know my note doesn't go the cloud, it's read perhaps by eyes becoming clouded with tears, not necessarily glaucoma or cataract, thank God. I can still gift in their mailbox, a surprise they now I think expect occasionally.

As I still can and they remain or not on this earth, connected even later on, they and I will both remember, handwritten notes, with my script carefully formed and purposely written slightly bigger, never cramped, with letters I try not to arthritically slur. So, if a word is misread, they know, its love, love, and more love.

Staying connected through the library

André P

The New York Public Library is asking: What does it mean to stay connected to your community, family, friends, and presumably through them, to the library? A lot.

Conversely, what does it mean to stay connected to your community, family, and friends, *through* the library? Even more. These, and your workplace, or potential employers, are the connections that matter the most.

When you're homeless and staying in a NYC DHS-funded shelter, as is about 1% of the city's population, and your caseworkers suddenly transfer you to another shelter with no prior notice, as they inevitably will, especially if you complain about the substandard conditions, unreasonable rules, or mistreatment by other clients or staff, you'll very likely end up in a neighborhood you don't know in a borough you don't know.

Then the first place you should find the next day is the local library branch. There, you can get on a computer, check your email, write to your family and friends where and how you are, tell your social media friends, followers, or the world, about your experiences (though you might use or create an account that can't be traced to you, so DHS can't retaliate easily), and find out what is where in your neighborhood: delis that sell coffee and food, fast food joints, pharmacies, coffee shops where you can spend daytime hours, the nearest subway stations, 99-cent stores, and the church or other temple of your denomination if you're religious.

You should also get a free MTA bus map of the borough, and start marking all these places on it, to find them when you need them again, soon, or if you end up nearby again after another series of shelter transfers closes the circle.

Pen Pals

Leela F.

From: Schoolkid10!

To: DogLover24

Date Sent: November 1

Subject: Hello

Hi. I'm Lisa. My pronouns are she/her/hers. I live in New York City. I am in fifth grade. My teachers are making me do this pen pal thing. I don't want to do it. I hate writing emails and reading the ones I receive. It's soooooo boring. There is a poster taped to the smart board with a list of questions to ask your pen pal. What's your name? What are your pronouns? What city and country do you live in? How old are you? What grade are you in? It's all dumb. You don't have to respond to this email. If you don't, I have an excuse to draw in my sketch book, which is what the teacher said to do if you finish or can't write to your pen pal. I'm not amazing at drawing, but I'm ok. Another way for me to get out of this assignment is for you to write your response in your language. My teacher says you don't speak much English. I don't care what you do. That's all I have to say.

From: DogLover24

To: Schoolkid10!

Date Sent: November 3

Subject: Hi

Ciao Lisa. I'm Alfonso. My pronouns are he/him/his. I live in Cannaregio, Venice, Italy. I am also in fifth grade. I too feel like I don't need a pen pal, but my teachers made me. And I too have a list of boring questions to ask. But they are far more boring than yours. Do you have siblings? Do you have pets? You get the point. I have already answered all your questions except for how old I am, and the answer is eleven. Eleven and one month. Your teacher was wrong about my not knowing English, though I see why she may have thought that, since not many of my friends speak English. They're all using Google Translate for their letters. I only know English because my parents work in the more touristy side of town, and they speak it at home. I understand you want to get out of social studies, and so do I. I'd rather read this new book about dogs I checked out from the library. But we can't, so let's make the most of it.

From: Schoolkid10!

To: DogLover24

Date Sent: November 8

Subject: My Family and Pets

Neither of us likes social studies. That's one thing we have in common. But yes, we are stuck being pen pals. I'll answer your questions, since you answered mine. I do have a pet, a pair of goldfish. Their names are Nicholas and Brian. I won them at a carnival last week. My mom says she's surprised they've lived this long. But the only reason they stay alive is because my dad insists I take

care of him. And whenever we have questions about how to take care of him my dad uses this Fish Vet app. We can't tell my three-year-old sister Simone we have the fish, or she'd stick her hand in the bowl and try to eat them. So we keep them in what my mom calls the "nice bathroom" where kids aren't allowed, apart from me when I go to feed him. Speaking of siblings, since you asked, I also have an older sister Emma and two younger brothers Rocky and Davis, who are twins. That's my family. What about you?

From: DogLover24

To: Schoolkid10!

Date sent: November 10

Subject: My Family and Pets

Hi Lisa. I'm an only child and have no pets. But my parents say I might be able to get a puppy soon. And though I have no siblings, my friend Federico has lived in the apartment next to mine my whole life and he is like a brother to me. He is one year ahead of me, in sixth grade, but still eleven. I hope I get my puppy soon. I think I'd name it Alfonso II. My father says it will be my responsibility to take care of him, which means feeding, walking, and cleaning up after him. I don't mind, though. I just want the company.

From: Schoolkid10!

To: DogLover24

Date sent: November 17

Subject: Nicole

Alfonso, guess what? Nicholas is actually Nicole! Or maybe Brian is Brianna? The point is, there are baby fish! Rocky and Davis both counted seven. I got ten, which was odd. Emma, who was decided was the tiebreaker because she's the oldest, counted fourteen. So, there are fourteen baby fish. We still haven't shown Simone. We gave one of the hatchlings to the couple with the wailing baby upstairs. And another to Nate, this kid I swear I once saw biting his toenails. He's obsessed with Finding Nemo, though. I know because I saw his Finding Nemo backpack. So, I thought he might like it. We still don't know what we'll do with the other twelve. You know, I thought I'd hate having a pen pal, but you're not so bad.

From: DogLover24

To: Schoolkid10!

Date sent: November 19

Subject: Exciting News

Thank you for that last line, Lisa. That was very nice. You aren't so bad yourself. The fish story was funny. And very exciting. I have some exciting news as well. I got my dog! A dog! I found him/her in the Piazza San Marco on the way home from school. He was just wandering around. There are some pretty ferocious dogs out there, but this one seemed fine. I grabbed the dog and ran

home, and sure enough my folks said we could keep him! Federico took one look at it, and told me it was a girl, and her name was Federica. I told him he was just trying to name it after himself, and he said that's what I had tried to do, which was also true. My parents won't let me keep her/him in the house, so at night he/she sleeps at Federico's. In a way it's his dog too. He/she will continue to sleep at Federico's until my father gets down to buying him/her a dog bed to put in his trattoria. He thinks a friendly dog will attract more tourists.

From: Schoolkid10!

To: DogLover24

Date sent: November 26

Subject: Cool!

That's awesome. I have no news except that four more baby fish were taken, all by my social studies teacher, Mrs. Wheeler. Emma, who is now fifteen, says she'll put an ad on her Instagram, which my parents are now finally allowing her to have. Which is also good for us siblings, too, because we can sneak on her laptop and post things on her social media. We've already posted a picture of Emma's head photoshopped onto an elephant!

From: DogLover24

To: Schoolkid10!

Date sent: November 28

Subject: Visit

Lisa, I have some news. I am coming to New York for my aunt's wedding! We will be there from November 30 to December 14. I do not have time off school, but my aunt really wanted us to be there when she got married. Her fiancé is from Philadelphia and is willing to have it in Italy, but his grandfather is so elderly and senile he can't fly to Italy for the wedding, but insists on attending, so they're having it in New York to compromise and make a shorter flight for the grandfather. She flew to New York a month ago to get ready. I told Federico who is now twelve I'd miss him, and he muttered something about how I'll only be gone for a few weeks, but I could tell he will miss me too. We will bring Alfonso II/Federica. We took her to a vet and learned that she is a girl, so technically her name is Federica. But we still call her Alfonso II/Federica because we are so used to it. And I'll be able to see your fish! But back to the visit. My parents say I can come over to your house on December 13th if your parents are OK with it. Here is my mother's email for your parents to contact her: Lucia1123.

From: Schoolkid10!

To: DogLover24

Date sent: December 5

Subject: Yes!

Alfonso, I would love to meet you! My mother's email address is Brenda14. Tell your mom to expect an email from her. We gave away the rest of the baby fish to a girl named Nina who picks her nose at age twelve. All but one. We named it Nicole Junior. We're keeping her. We finally told Simone, who is now four, about the fish. She promised not to eat them. I hope we can meet.

From: Schoolkid10!
To: DogLover24
Date sent: December 14
Subject: You better apologize!

Alfonso, I am not in social studies right now. I was so angry I didn't write to you two days ago in class. But you owe me an apology! I can't believe I was even excited for you to come to New York and ruin my life in the first place! How dare you tell Emma that I wrote on her social media page! She told my parents, and they took away my laptop for two months! The only way I'm writing to you now is because I stole it from my mom's closet! I will never write to you ever again!!!!!!

From: DogLover24
To: Schoolkid10!
Date sent: December 15
Subject: You're wrong!

Lisa, I think you owe me an apology! After we met, you posted a picture of my dog without asking me first! So, I did the right thing and told Emma as soon as I saw it posted! This is the last time I will ever write to you! Goodbye, Lisa. You will never hear from me again!!!

From: Schoolkid10!
To: DogLover24
Date Sent: February 16
Subject: Hello Again

Hi Alfonso. It's been a while since we've emailed. I just got my laptop back two days ago from its two-month-imprisonment (even though I've been using it this whole time anyway) and I'm in social studies. The first thing I thought about when I got it back was you. I just wanted to apologize for the way I acted. If you think about it, what we were arguing about was kind of silly. Let's wipe the slate clean. Start over. Whatever they say in Italy. Rocky and Davis turned eight and for their birthday we went to Costa Rica. They begged and begged to go, but my parents refused to take us, saying it was too expensive for all of us to go on a plane. So, the next month my aunt took us and paid for the trip. I learned how to surf there. I'm turning eleven in March and I'm already begging to go back. All three fish are alive and healthy. I got out of social studies and a lot of other classes for two months, since I "didn't have a laptop." How's your dog? How'd you get out of social studies? You don't have to write back, but I'd like it if you did.

From: DogLover24
To: Schoolkid10!
Date sent: February 18
Subject: Hi

Hi Lisa. Truth be told, I missed you too. I agree with what you said about a fresh start. In Italy we say nuovo inizio. And I didn't get out of social studies. I just stared at my laptop, waiting for you to write to me, pretending to write to you so my teacher wouldn't get suspicious. Alfonso II/Federica

is doing well. And Federico is doing well. I'm sorry for what I did. I'm glad to hear you and your family are doing well. And your fish. Let's go back to writing every week, okay? We'll still have to do social studies, but I think it'll be worth it.

From: Schoolkid10!

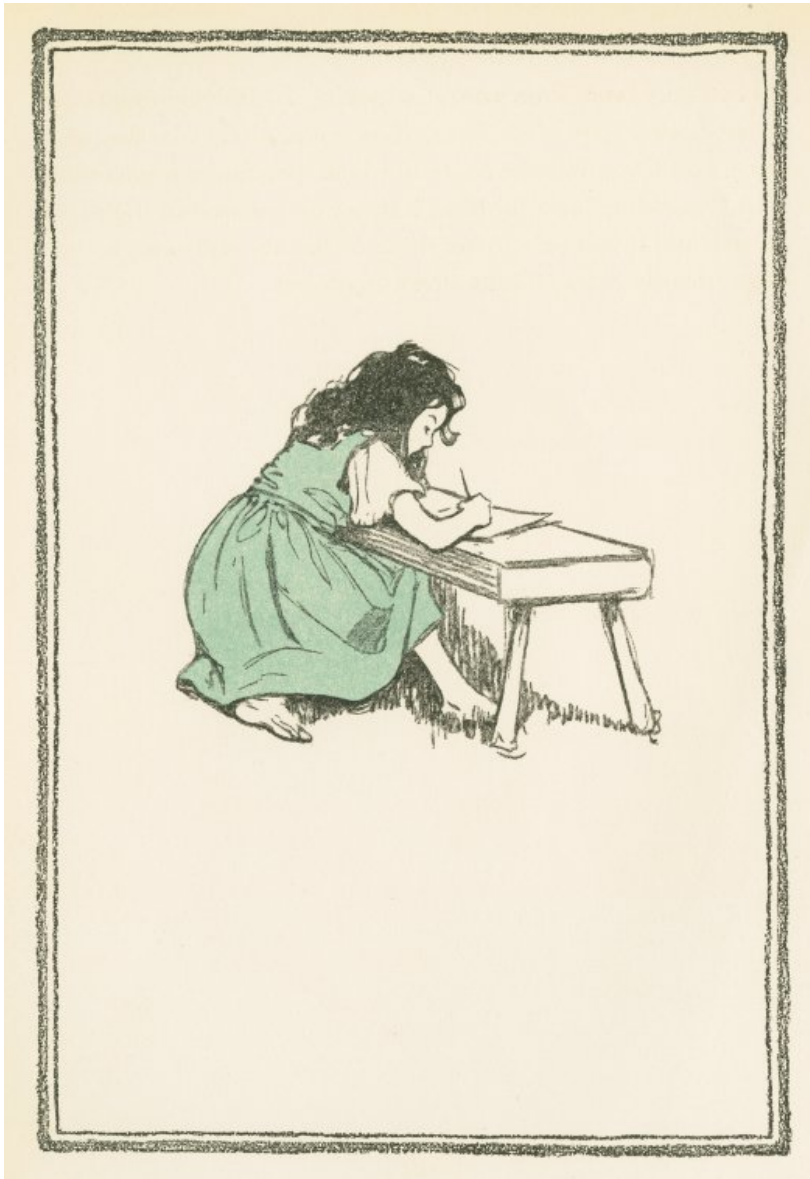
To: DogLover24

Date sent: February 25

Subject: Let's do it

Sounds good to me. I hope we stay pen pals for a long time.

(And they did.)



The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. "Heidi writing." The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1922.

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/69691007-3318-bf84-e040-e00a18064a07>

ARTWORK

This last section contains the visual representation of the theme and no two interpretations are alike.

While the Artists included a statement about their work, we still invite our Readers to use their own interpretation.

Fabio Sassi

Fabio Sassi is a visual artist living in Bologna, Italy. He makes acrylics and photos using what is hidden, discarded or considered to have no worth by the mainstream.

Fabio uses logos, icons, tiny objects, and discarded stuff. He often puts a quirky twist to his subjects or employs an unusual perspective that gives a new angle of view.

He really enjoys taking the everyday and ordinary and framing it in a different way.



Hello



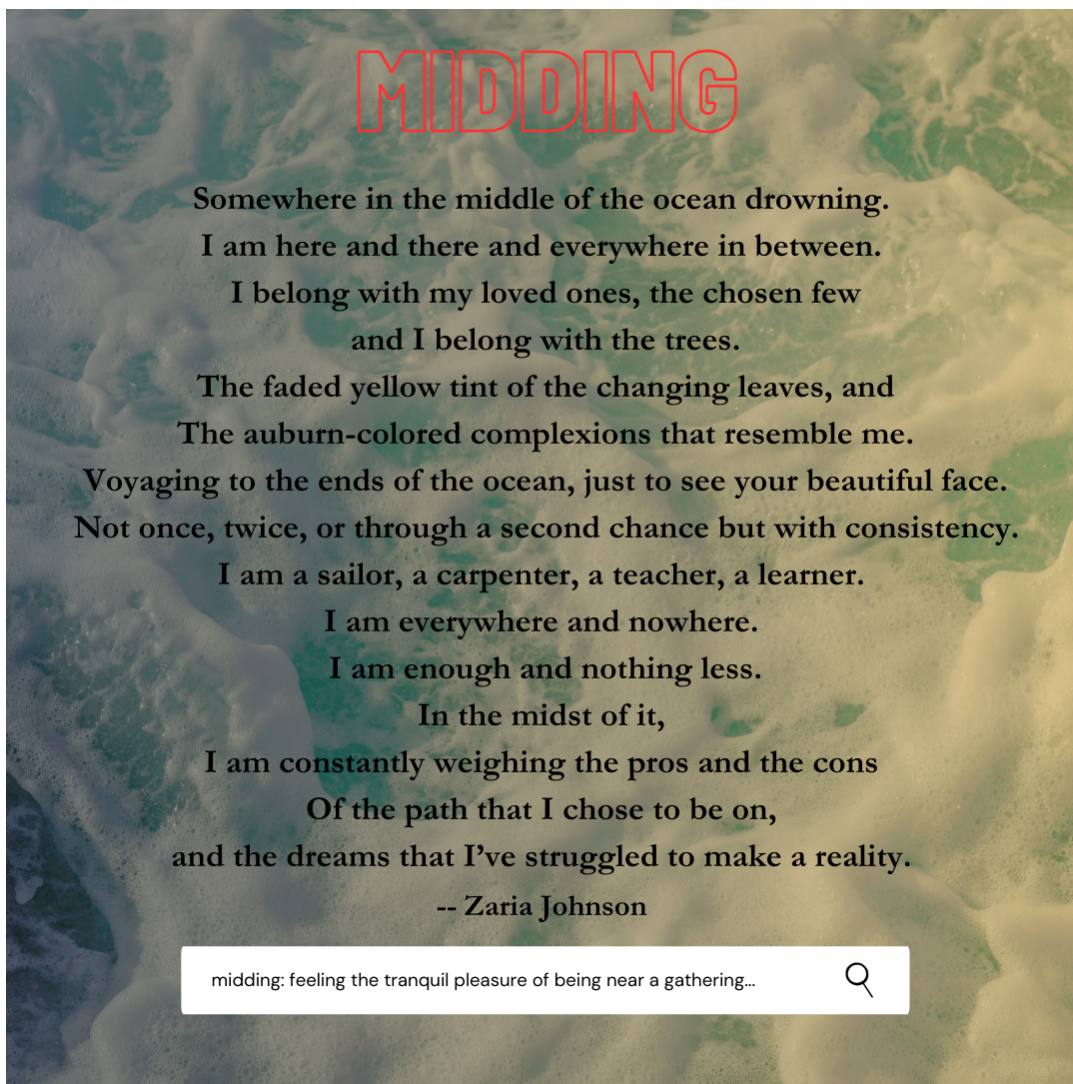
Linked

His work can be viewed at: <https://fabiosassi.foliohd.com>

Zaria Johnson

Island-born and NYC-based, Zaria Johnson (they/them), is a Brooklyn-raised writer, visual poet, and storyteller. Their art is eclectic in that their eccentric wordplay will take folks on a journey of self-discovery, love, and transformation. Academically, they attended Brooklyn College and is an avid believer in empowerment and intersectionality. Professionally, they work within the youth sector providing inner-city youth with tools to foster a safe space within and amongst their community. In their free time, they enjoy cooking plant-based meals, dancing, and reading.

Midding



This piece depicts my experience of navigating through depression, grief, and life and its ups and downs. The process has been challenging yet fruitful.

Zaria Johnson

"Las Aventuras de Puerto Plata"

The dog days are over.
 The dog days are over.
 I am here and present, yet
 I can feel the distance between now & then. The land es muy verde, even in the distance.
 A feeling of tranquil enters my vessel as I take in the scenery.
 A power nap at 3, I wash my face to snap into reality. I take a few more moments to adjust, it almost feels like I am home away from home.
 En Nueva York, la cultura de Dominicano es aquí.
 Para almuerzo, tenemos arroz con frijoles y bistec.

The aroma, so remarkable.
 The steak, so tender.
 The knife, cut right through.
 Los frijoles were a yellow pigment,
 but tasted so familiar.

Walking the streets of Puerto Plata, the natives admire from a distance. Shouting "Hola, que tal?!" to their childhood best friend.
 Seeking refuge outside of myself, I venture off into unfamiliar territory.
 Escaping to the jungles of Tubagua, embarking on adventures to find peace again.

Para mi bisabuela, Altagracia.
 Con mi amor, Zaria

Las Aventuras de Puerto Plata

This piece pays homage to the loss of my great-grandmother, Altagracia Matthias, I will miss her dearly. I went to DR June 2022 and it was the first time I felt connected to the saying "a home away from home."

Familial Love

This piece is an ode to the ones I love.

UNSENT LETTERS:

Familial Love

Dear, (loved ones)

(I have so much yet so little to say to you).
 I practice (proper communication) and I was under the impression that (you gave me space to do so). I moan and groan (around the place) because my (heart aches for) I am unsure what (I am to you at this moment).
 All I ask for is (a moment of clarity), (let me know what's going on) before I maneuver the situation terribly. I miss you (but) not if you do simply because I said it first.
 I just need (transparency), (be open with me), please.
 If you're still (recovering from things) let me know, otherwise, I'd like to ask permission to (hug) you if I ever sense you may need a (hug) at that moment. I want you to be comfortable around me, without having to worry about anything else.
 I (know) our dreams are aligned like the stars, vast yet open and on the same path. I (envy) your willpower at times because you are (stronger than I could ever be).
 My (admiration) for you is out of this world. (Mystical beauty),
 you soothe me in ways like no other.
 Your love is felt even when we are miles apart.
 You've cared for me in ways no one else has, and for that, I owe you my (love).

Love, (Zaria Johnson)

poem key: (insert words that apply to your experience)



If every star is an eye in the sky

This piece was conceived as a result of an attempt to be more intentional in expressing my gratitude, and is, above everything, a tribute to the people who have made me feel less alone in my smallness. Painted in blue are the eyes of 13 of my friends, which frame my own (painted in full colour). Though the highlights in their eyes mirror the unblinking stars in the sky, each of these 13 eyes are sentient, warm, and scatters the otherwise isolating skyscape with a sense of familiarity.

It can feel lonely to constantly marinate in the feeling that my existence is impermanent and unimportant, yet knowing that there are others whose lives I have made a positive imprint on the same way they have mine, is unfathomably reassuring. Because I'm grateful to be floating on this pale blue dot— a speck of nothing in the grand cosmos— with them, to traverse the highs and lows of being human surrounded by the people I love.

André Pace



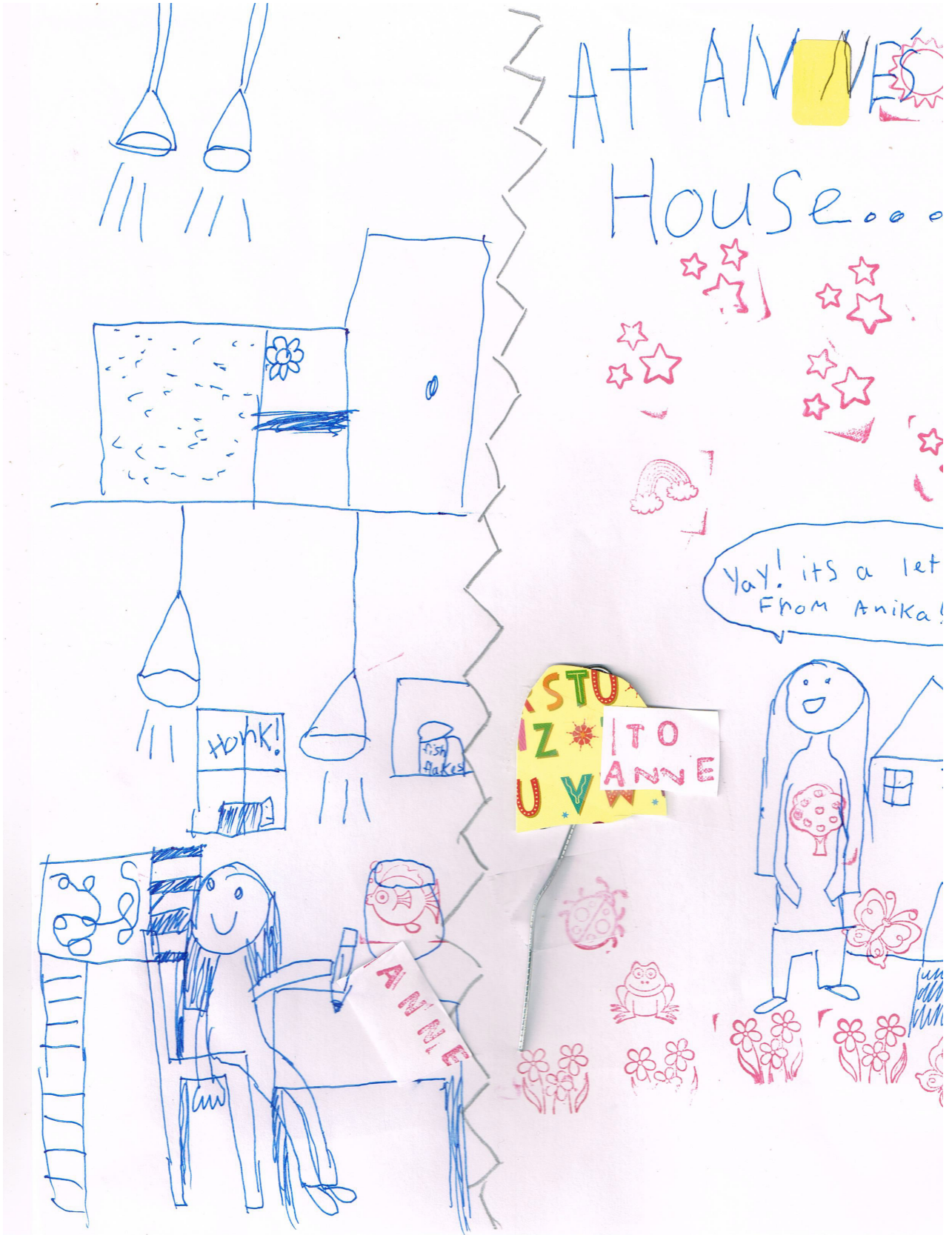
Lady with Book

André Pace

Hollywood Africans

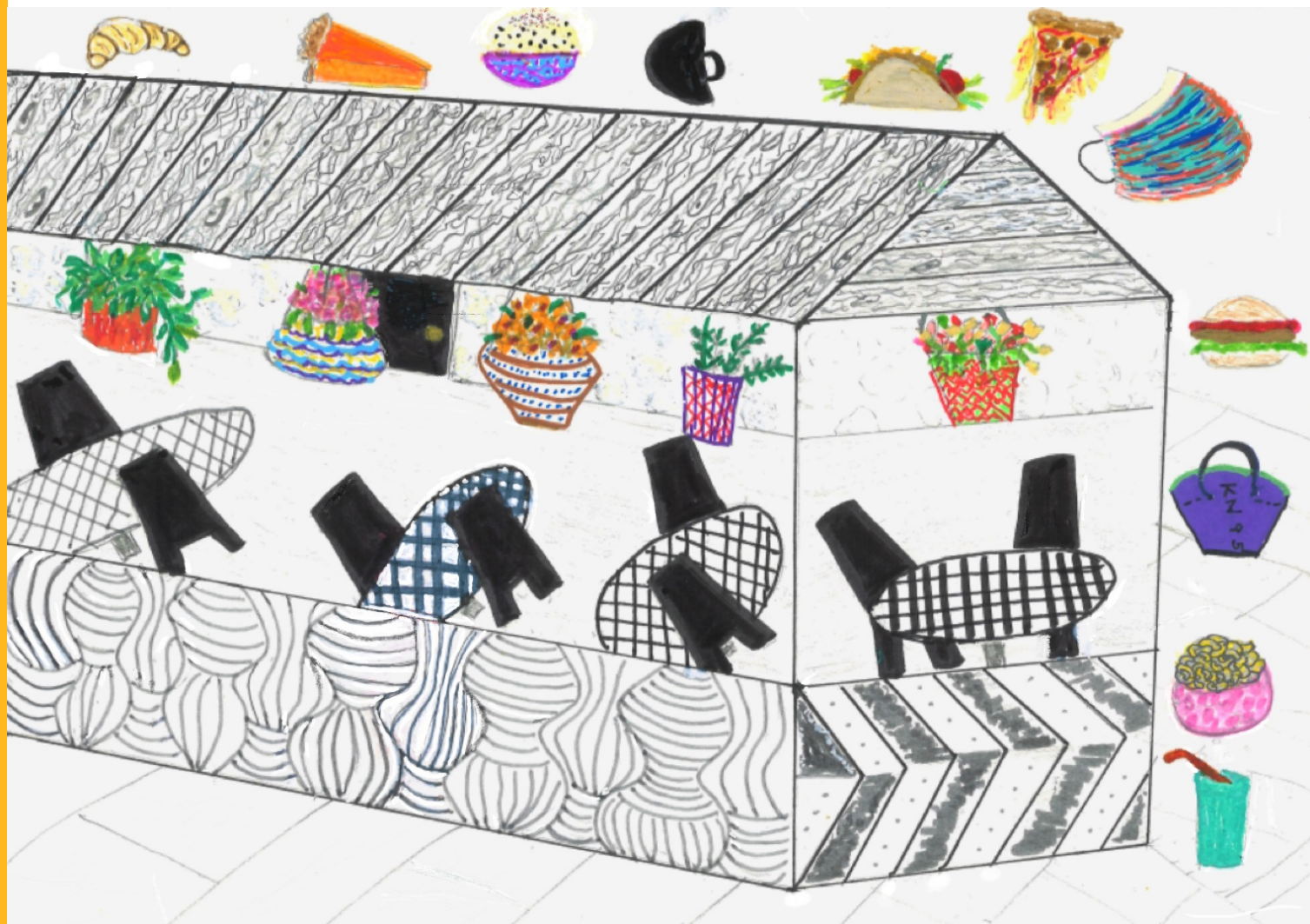


The Artist task a retrospective reinforced by the verbal remains of the image identifying these elements they are seen afresh with expanded expressions of color and patterns its not gender nor identity the complicated issues still matters leaving visible traces of contemporary art and Mix media design works..



Teresa Tyler

Stayed Connected With Food



New York City, a place to nibble yummy cuisine.
When my curious stomach desired a new routine,
I traveled via foot, ferry, taxi, bus and or subway line,
Halted in one of five boroughs to fine, comfort or lightly dine.
Restaurants infused with ginger, garlic, soybeans,
Scotch bonnet, bean sprouts, basil, black beans,
Bay leaves, chives, chickpeas, pigeon peas, sage, sesame,
Onions, oregano, jalapeño, habanero, Parmesan, parsley,
Fennel, feta, tarragon, thyme, cumin, curry,
Stomach snarled, picked up pace in a hurry.
Got inside, a foreign land's decor in view.
Tried the unfamiliar, a scrumptious stew.
Tables filled with people chatting, celebrating,
Dating, waiting, anticipating, or just debating.
Photographs of homeland, establishment's creators,
On a wall, I noticed photos of local news commentators.
Fabulous food. My stomach told me, "I had enough to eat!"
Rested. Wondered. Am I occupying a famous person's seat?

Walked out the door, inhaled, sauntered down the block.
Eyed various merchandise store owners had in stock.
Purchased staples needed and a gift for a friend on a whim.
Headed home, checked mail, changed, went straight to the gym.
On my second return home, I felt plenty of blues. I heard on the news,
Freedom limited, no dining in cafes, no gym, few stores to peruse.
Worked and worked out at home. I tried not to despair,
As donned face coverings were seen everywhere.
Pick up or delivery. That was all I could do.
Read cookbooks. Home cooking to pursue.
Baked Alaska melted. Burgers were a success.
Deviled eggs delicious. Croissants were a mess.
Homestyle noodles mushed. P and J sandwiches, a must.
Sweet potato pie perfected. Creamy rice pudding, a bust.
One day, limits slightly lifted. I was back on the street.
Makeshift outdoor seating was where people could eat.
Wasn't exactly eatery interiors but many spots had flair,
Reminders to socially distance, skipped a table or a chair.
Pandemic slowed, folks flung restaurants' doors open,
And enjoyed cultural ambiance, delectable dishes again.

Rubeen Salem

Tea Party

My name is Rubeen Salem. I am an artist based in New York City. I have been creating art since I can remember, utilizing it to learn more about my subconscious self. I believe there are underlying matters within us that just take a little creating to bring out and understand. This is what I've come to learn about myself so far.

I use my art to express my feelings and emotions in ways that words can't emulate. Externalizing my relationship with The Creator, traumas, heartbreaks, losses, and yearnings, in order to make amends with my past. To feel my feelings freely, process them through my art, letting go and allowing them to take no more time in my mind. It works sometimes.



Rich Pour

You're rich when you pour
High tea and decor
Sweet subtle teas
And silver galore

There's enough tea if you wanted more
It doesn't run out, what' you running for
Honey sweet red and I think I'm sure
I know the things I can be good for.

Mind Full

I missed you when I never had you
“A mind full of who I made you”
But I lied, you are all I wanted-
How I wished you saw what I did.

But you're not what I wanted.
Truly, you're not.

A future unaligned with
mine of divine design
Dreaming of you
Has become a pastime of mine
No longer a desire
To have our lives entwined
You couldn't love me right
If you tried

So I drink of the tea I made you
As your cup still sits idle
I reminisce our days of the summer
And I find myself with a smile.





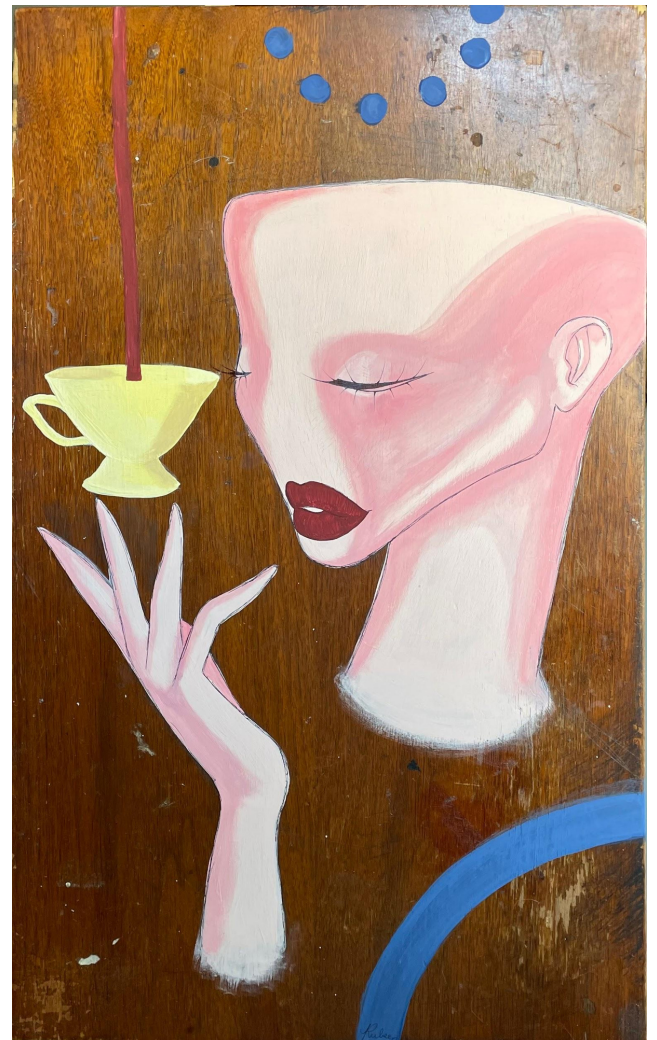
My Flooding

What loves awakened under your chest
 What words have lead you within my grasp
 What you, so tender, but strikes so fast
 Those words you tell me now flow steadfast

What minded press on my lips so rich
 What tall walls have fallen so sudden?
 How for embraces of yours I've wished
 These are the days I call "my flooding"

Phosphoros

Cherries, sweet, and sapphire blue
 Yellow lights, they shine for you
 Feast your mind and your heart too,
 There's nothing else I'd rather do
 Sparkle, clean, and well-refined
 What led you to be this kind?
 Subtleties and jewelry
 What art echoes in your mind?





My Indulgence

Lemonade tea, and Tiffany blue
Truly there's nothing else I'd rather do
Than to be walking through central park with you
I tell you there's nothing else I'd rather do

Linen and gold, you're showering me
Journaled in ink, diamond jewelry
I indulge in you, as you indulge in me
Tiffany blue and lemonade tea

Deysi Barzallo

Lonely City



As an artist based in Spanish Harlem, my work is informed by my experiences as a front line worker in NYC. Through this work, I have come to understand the importance of radical self-acceptance and learning how to cope in a time of uncertainty.

My art serves as a modality to speak about the unspoken and convey things that cannot be put into words, but rather into pictures. It is a means for me to express my feelings and emotions in a way that is not always possible through language. My goal is to create work that speaks to the human experience and inspires us to connect with ourselves and with one another on a deeper level. Through my art, I hope to inspire others to seek solace in expression, and to convey feelings that may be difficult to put into words. By sharing their personal experiences and using art as a tool for healing, I hope to create a sense of connection and empathy to my audience, particularly to my community in NYC. I hope that art can foster deeper connections with others, both on a personal and universal level.

ABOUT LIBRARY ZINE: VOICES FROM ACROSS NYPL

Meet the Editors, learn about the next theme and how to keep up to date with Library Zine: Voices from Across NYPL!

Four librarians—**Whitney Davidson-Rhodes, Adena Gruskin, Tabrizia Jones, and Karen Loder**—came together with the idea to start a publication that celebrates the artistry of the New Yorkers. They applied for and won The New York Public Library's 2017 Innovation Project, which is made possible by a generous grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation. **Liz Baldwin** and **Farhan Islam** have since joined this initiative to form what is now the New York Public Library Zine Committee. Meet the editor's for The New York Public Library's literary magazine, Library Zine!

Liz Baldwin is an Adult Services Librarian at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library. She loves Zines and has been reading Zines, writing Zines, and attending Zine fests for over ten years. She loves how Zines allow people to tell their own stories like so few other mediums can. She's very excited to see what the patrons of the New York Public Library can create and how those pieces can come together in a collaboration.

Whitney Davidson-Rhodes (they/them) is an Associate Manager in the Young Adult Programs and Services Department. Though an upstate transplant, they found a home in this bustling big city and calls The Bronx home. Whitney was previously on an art gallery committee that showcased original work from LGBTQ artists from the tri-state area. With a background and passion in art and literature, they've always wanted to produce work that showed off the talents of the people in their community. Whitney's lucky to have found other people who shared the same goals.

Adena Gruskin is an Adult Librarian in Manhattan. While she has been published before, this is her first time working on a Zine and she is very excited to get to see her fellow New Yorkers' creativity firsthand. An avid reader and writer, Adena is thrilled to have the opportunity to work on this zine with colleagues who share her passions. She is particularly excited about this project because it provides a showcase for our talented patrons and beautiful city.

Farhan Islam (he/him) Is an Information Assistant from the far away lands of Staten Island, and has yet to run into some vampires out for world domination. He likes to read, love, laugh Sci-Fi and Spec fic. Loves a good time loop film(Groundhog day, Palm springs etc.); and vintage, Slice-of-life anime. Although he's never been part of a publication community, he's an admirer of the arts, music and literary creations; and is excited to tag along with our patrons in their pursuit of their awesome creative endeavors.

Tabrizia Jones is a Young Adult Librarian in the Bronx. As someone who was born and raised in the Bronx, she has seen the great things that make New York a creative and vibrant city. What better way to display that creativity than in a magazine that celebrates New York! Tabrizia has participated with literary magazines and newspapers in high school, both working on them and submitting to them. In her spare time, she loves to write short stories and poems, do art, and of course, read!

ABOUT LIBRARY ZINE

The Innovation Project's mission is to expand our horizons by surfacing and supporting staff ideas and creativity throughout NYPL. We aim to break down barriers, to imagine the impossible, to support and encourage each other, and to create a culture of "Yes! Let's try that!"

The Innovation Project is part of an innovation landscape at NYPL which, along with the Innovation Communities, provides pathways for exploration and experimentation with the aim of improving our programs, services, and processes in ways that advance our mission and strategic priorities. NYPL staff bring smart, creative expertise to their roles in every corner of our organization and are often closest to understanding what innovative ideas might align with that aim. If you are a staff member with an innovative idea, this project can help bring it to life.

The Innovation Project Team is made up of staff from across the Library, including past awardees, to ensure representation of the entire system. All staff will have a voice in the process, by submitting their ideas, voting, or both. Also importantly, this process will expose staff to each other's projects, which we hope will in turn spark more ideas and conversation across the system.



Nobody's perfect. As we have seen in the past couple of months, our community and our world is still a work in progress. But that is the case with anything that requires strength and effort. We still have more work to do and that is what we are asking in our 2024 Zine Theme. What causes are important to you? What events have transpired, personally or globally, that made you take stock in what's important to you? Did it make you grow or transform as a person? What can others gain or learn from these changes?

Answer these questions and more in our 2024 Zine theme: Progress Is A Process. This theme is centered around our world being a work in progress". Although the past few years have been challenging for many, don't feel limited to addressing current events. The Zine Committee is looking for creative and unique takes on how the world is growing.

Call for work to begin February 2024!

Written Works

All written works must be typed in 12-point font with one-inch margins, and checked for spelling and grammar. At the top of your submission, please include your name, address, primary phone number, and email. **Written Works exceeding 8 pages will not be accepted.**

Poetry should be single-spaced and not exceed 1,000 words.
Short stories can be 500-2,250 words, about 2-8 pages double-spaced.

Essays should not exceed 2,250 words, about 8 pages double-spaced. We encourage essays to be about a book you have read that impacted your life.

Written submissions must be in .doc or .docx format, and/or readable in Google Drive and/or Microsoft Word. At the end of the document, include a paragraph of what inspired the work.

Submissions can be written in any language.

Artwork and Photography

Physical copies of artwork (e.g. paintings, sculptures, etc.) or photos will not be accepted. We prefer a scan of your work in one of the following formats: .JPG/JPEG, .TIFF, and .PNG. Images must be 300 pixels per inch (PPI). If you are unable to scan, a photo taken in ample lighting will also be accepted.

Images containing nudity will not be accepted. Images made majorly from AI (Artificial Intelligence) generators will not be considered.

Along with your image, attach a separate Word document with a description of your work and a paragraph of what inspired the work. Any images included in the artwork must be the artist's original work and not under copyright of another party or entity.

Do not submit your entire portfolio or submit art in a word document.

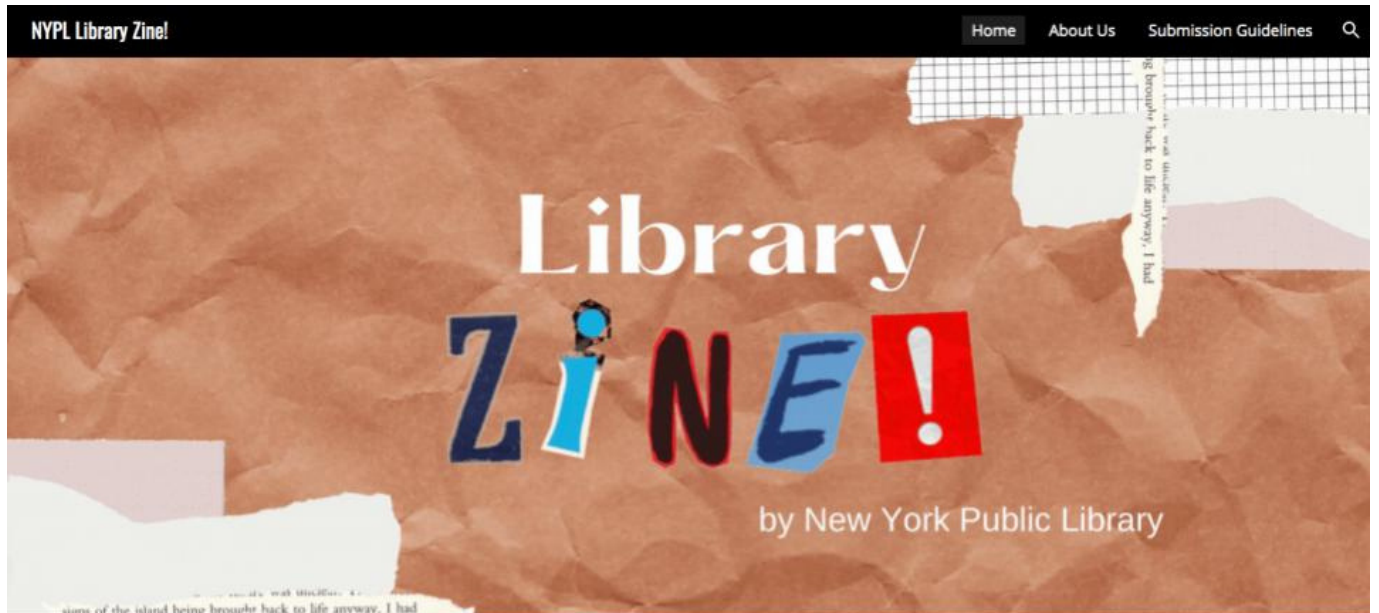
Please Be Aware

Library Zine! is an all-ages publication for anyone inside and outside of NYC. There is no prize other than the prestige of being published.

While Library Zine does not want to limit our patrons' creativity, be aware that this publication is intended for all audiences. Submissions must be mindful of language, the use of graphic violence and abuse, and the depiction of harmful stereotypes based on age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and mental/physical disabilities.

Limit of 5 submissions for review per person, no guarantee that any or all will be selected.

THANK YOU FOR READING!



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Date Programs and So Much More!

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