

**SEEN**

**akt x Q<sup>+</sup>**

**CO-EDITED BY THE  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE  
Q42 PROJECT AND AKT,  
INCLUDING**

**ALEX**

**GRAYSON  
GERHART**

**HOSANNA**

**TYLER  
WILKIE**



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# BEHIND THE ZINE

SEEN is a space for LGBTQ+ young people in the U.K to authentically express themselves. We wanted to provide a place for multimedia art, poetry, prose, video and image to be mutually enjoyed. At the same time, giving grounds for young people to channel their thoughts, beliefs, and perspectives into creative works.

SEEN is brought to you by akt and Q42. akt is a national charity supporting LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 who are experiencing homelessness, facing familial rejection, or living in a hostile environment. Manchester's Q42 Project at 42nd Street is a safe and social space focusing on nurturing the emotional wellbeing of LGBTQ+ young people, and collaboratively campaigning for their rights.

## CONTENT WARNING

*This zine contains references to gender and race discrimination that may be triggering for some.*

# SUBMIT

Be a part of our next issue!

As a multimedia digital zine, we're opening submissions to any art form.

Deadline: 18/12/2020

Submit: [akt.org.uk/seen](http://akt.org.uk/seen)





# SARA GARPENTIERI

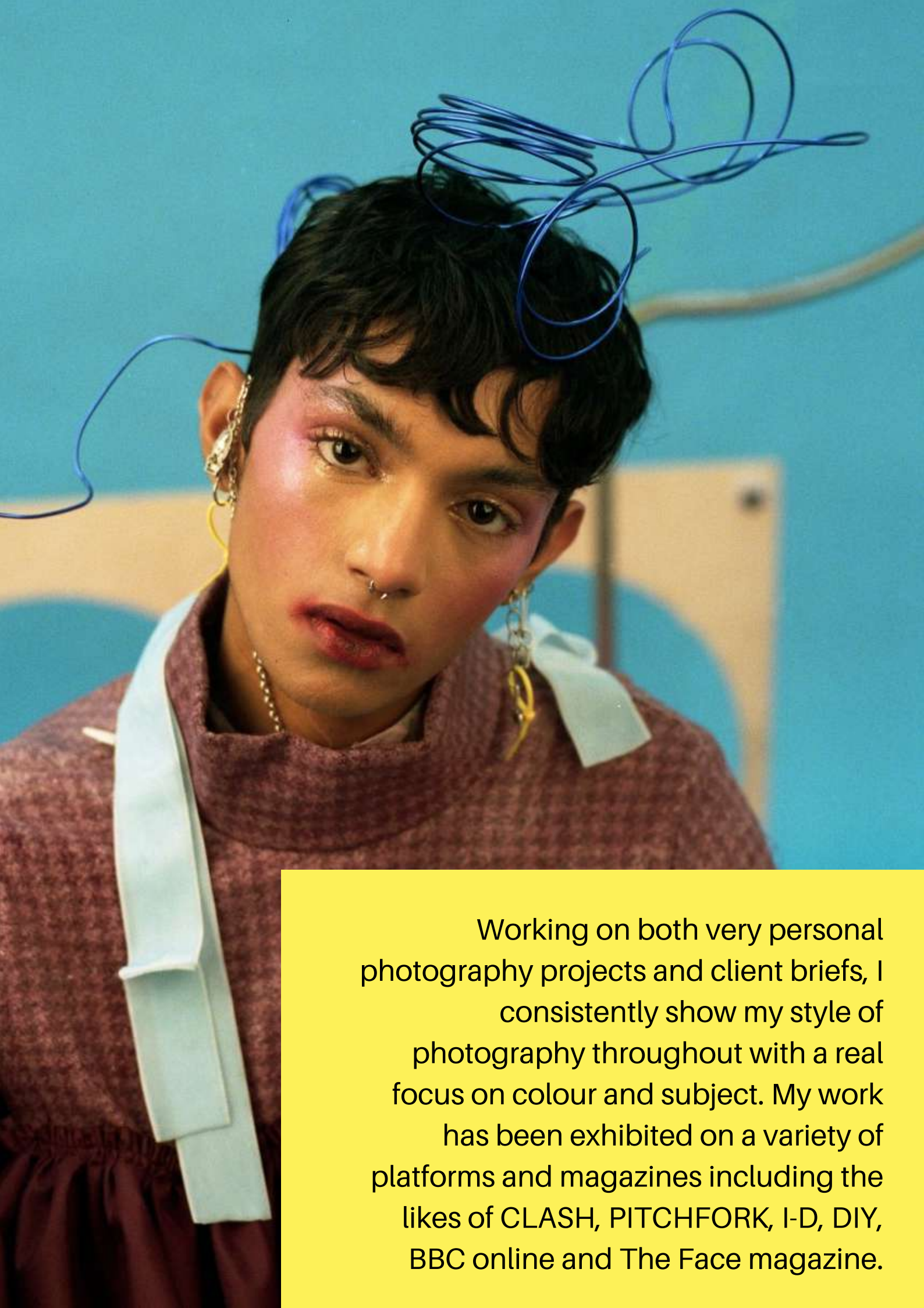
MANCHESTER

**PREDOMINANTLY  
A FASHION  
PHOTOGRAPHER,  
I SEE MYSELF  
EXPLORING  
THEMES  
SURROUNDING  
TECHNOLOGY,  
HUMAN  
BEHAVIOUR AND  
GENDER  
EXPLORATION.**









Working on both very personal photography projects and client briefs, I consistently show my style of photography throughout with a real focus on colour and subject. My work has been exhibited on a variety of platforms and magazines including the likes of CLASH, PITCHFORK, I-D, DIY, BBC online and The Face magazine.





**@SARA\_CARPENTIERI\_**

**SPENCER  
COOPER  
MANCHESTER**















**@THEGAYPHOTOGRAPHER**

ART

# REUBEN BROWN BELFAST

**STUDYING FINE ART  
AT BELFAST SCHOOL  
OF ART, I HAVE  
BEGAN USING VISUAL  
ART, SPECIFICALLY  
SCULPTURE, AS A  
TOOL TO EXPRESS  
WHAT IT FEELS LIKE  
TO GROW UP QUEER IN  
NORTHERN IRELAND.**







Through mundane found-object sculpture and assemblage, I utilise objects from my own childhood to challenge my association of these objects to particular memories in an attempt to normalise my own experiences of queerness within a typical Irish household.

I am also working on a new series at the minute surrounding ideas of queer comfort in isolation; this series will involve sculptures and oil paintings with sculptural elements depicting: women of powerful influence in my life, queer relationships, and a documentation of when I as a young queer person first questioned my sexuality and gender identity.



Citing themes of sexuality, innocence and the aesthetics of sex, many of my sculptures take on an anthropomorphic and phallic nature. Using my own personal understanding of acceptance, exploration, desire and self-worth I attempt to embody various coming-of-age experiences unique to that of the LGBTQ+ community.





In Darnell L Moore's "Structurelessness, Structure and Queer Movements" sits the quotation, "what is at stake in the life of a queer who is not white, able-bodied, cis-male or 'naturalised'" or in other words "what is at stake for the queers of the queers". This has stuck with me and my practise and I commit myself to inter-sectional queer-activism through visual art. Using tactile materials such as leather, rope and latex I address the human form and the sexualisation and fetishisation of the queer community.



# RURAL QUEERNESS

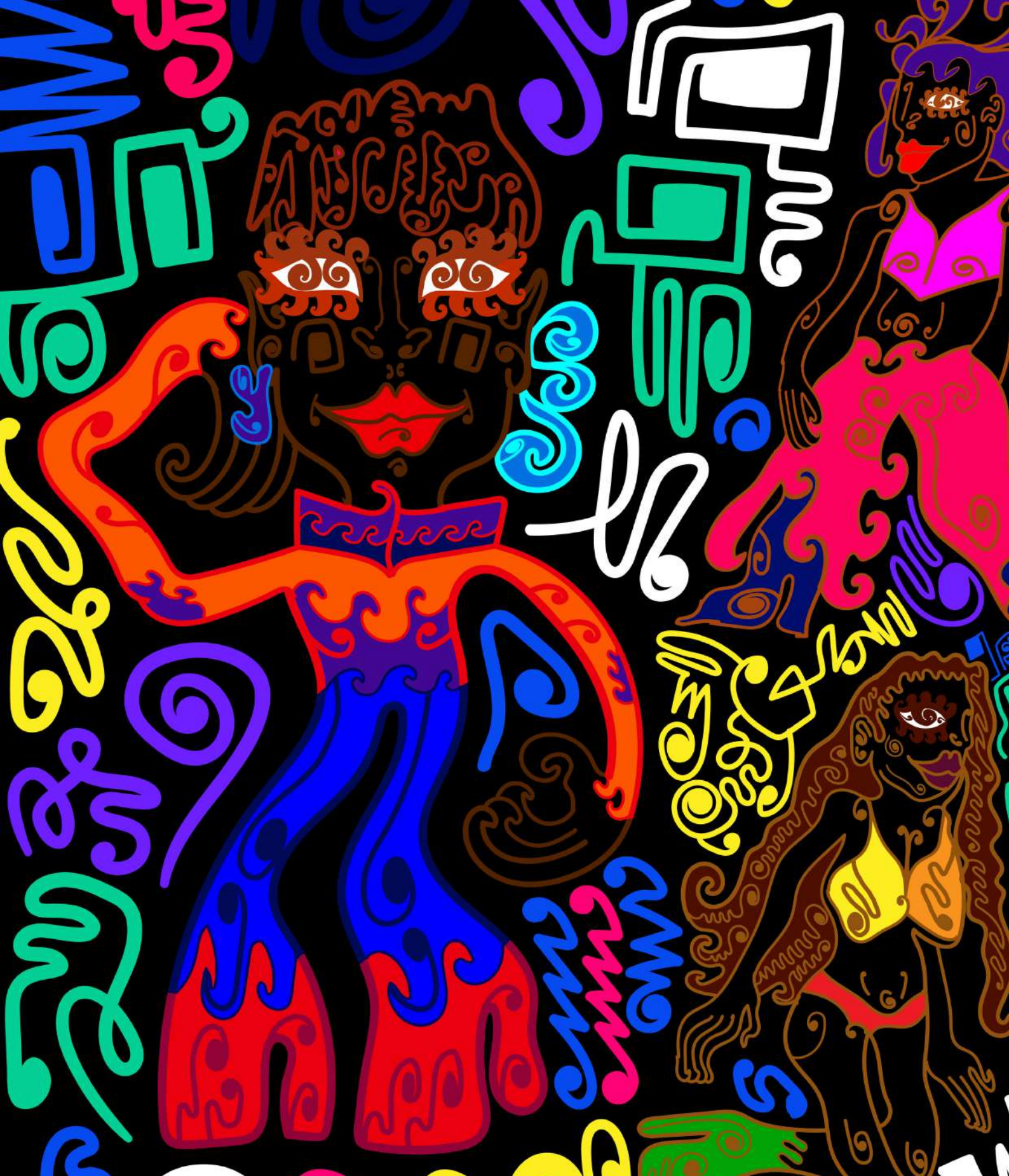
During lockdown I have been living back in my childhood home, which is in rural southwest England.

**I have been thinking a lot about rural queerness and where I feel at home.**

I made this print when I was reflecting on which bodies are made to feel welcome in this landscape and which are not.

**LOUI  
WILLIAMS  
SOUTHWEST ENGLAND**



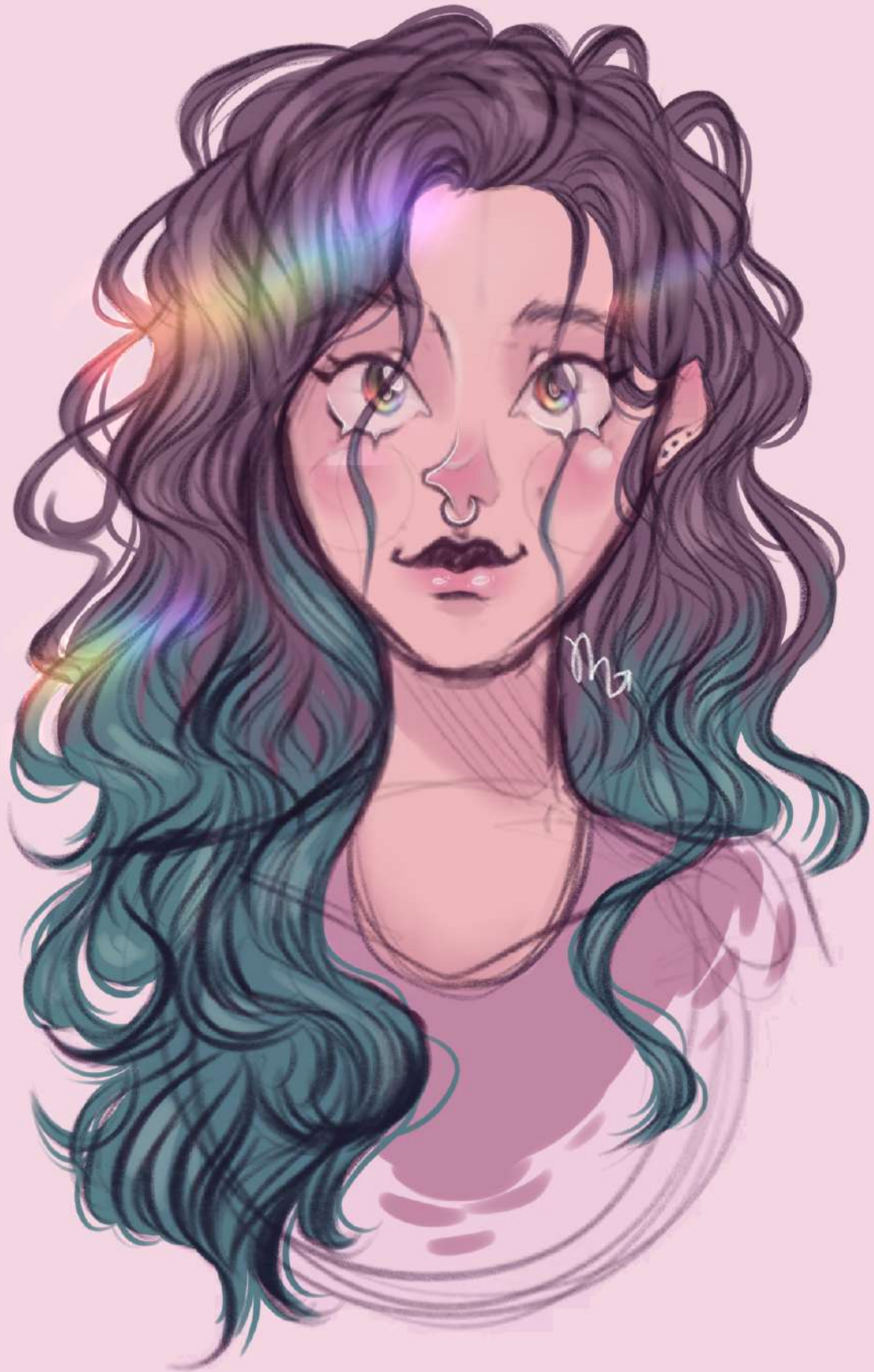


# RHYANRHYAN-ART

During lockdown I have used my talents to illustrate QTIPOC and Queer Experience.



RYAN RHYAN  
ART



RAINBOW BRIGHT



WRITTEN  
WORD

# MY COMING OUT STORY

**MOLLY**  
**WALTON** **STOURBRIDGE**

It all started in secondary school. I always felt a bit left out when it came to relationships. While a lot of my friends were talking about cute boys and their crushes, I was thinking to myself 'why don't I feel the same way? Why don't I have crushes on boys or find them attractive and want a boyfriend?' And I just thought that it just wasn't something that I was interested in and that maybe when I'm older I will suddenly want a boyfriend and want to date. That all changed when I started to find one of my female teachers attractive.

At the time I thought I liked her because she's kind and funny and she has nice eyes. I'm thinking that should have been a clue. 'Why am I feeling this way?' I thought. 'Surely I shouldn't be feeling like this?' But I did and those feelings didn't go away. I remember watching a TV programme and being attracted to one of the female characters. 'Ok, maybe this means something,' I thought. 'Maybe I find girls attractive as well as boys. Ok that's fine.' But as time went by I knew that wasn't the case. I had never experienced those feelings when it came to boys, only girls, so for a few years I kept it to myself and didn't tell anyone, hoping it would just sort itself out.



Little did I know that actually talking about these things can often be better than keeping things bottled up inside and eventually as time went on I knew that I couldn't keep this part of me hidden forever.

I wanted to be honest with my family and tell them the truth. And I did. I told a few of my close family, (some by text because truthfully I didn't know how to really say something like that over the phone so I thought texting would be easier) and they honestly couldn't have been more supportive and loving and I'm so grateful for that. I told my mom quite casually really, it wasn't at all what I had built up in my head. She said that she loved me and supported me and it felt like a massive weight had been lifted.

I didn't have to hide who I was anymore and that felt amazing. And then I told my brother and he is so important in my coming out story because he showed me that it is ok to be me and to be truly myself, and I honestly don't think I would have come out when I did if it wasn't for him. He was a great support for me and a role model, (thanks Jack!) And that friends is my coming out story.

One thing I would like to say before I go is being able to live your true self is incredible and there's truly no better feeling. I know who I am and that's gay and that's ok. Being able to now live my true self, well, that's amazing.

Until next time friends, bye.

# MY COMING OUT STORY

## ANONYMOUS

On meaning: Am I something? Do I exist? The fight for personhood. A pull in my heart that reminds me of a time when I had a name. Looking into the eyes of someone who loved me more than I thought I loved her, seeing a reflection of someone she wanted to see but would always find a mere fragment of something. I walked around almost expecting someone to say hello, but they were just birds tweeting words in the air inside my brain. My hands in my pockets, replaying the only thing I knew as certain: the past. She had cut her hand on something and it bled as we trailed down Bethnal Green Road. A stranger told her it was bleeding, looking at me as if I was somehow negligent for not noticing first. I felt at that moment the whole world could see we shouldn't have been together. Some secret, underground affair. Why are queer stories tragic and invisible?

Sitting opposite the counsellor: 'Do you have a boyfriend?' It was the third question. I always found it easier to answer 'no' than to explain the truth of why a seemingly plausibly intelligent and good-looking 20-something should not have things together or, crucially, a male significant other. It was like accepting your social death as a woman, or declaring yourself a minority, an invisible creature, an abhorrence to those who always expected to marry someone like you, as many songs had professed to them in moments of drunken, world-weary brotherhood. The looks when you went in the pub, expecting to find in you their future spouse, only to look away in disgust and terror.



I guess I should have had some idea that the world was a far from perfect place. I always thought I was going to live through World War Three as a child and somehow fight the 'baddies' in control of the world. I dreamt this as if it was real, yet my imagination often failed me. Was I in love? Did I ever know myself? Would I ever? My eyes gazed out of the bus window to look at the sunset. In front of me, a man opened a can of cider to swig alone. Every day, the same people got on the same buses and never spoke. I always thought what a strange world it was we were living in. Are our stories and our songs always internal? I always wished I could share mine with others, but I knew what they would say.

'What a fairy'. Ridiculous. Pretentious. 'Gay'. My life after that fateful afternoon stood in Peckham High Street, watching the message on my phone declaring the end of a cycle, the end of my lease, the end of my degree, the world crashing down and ending, was the same scene of leaves blowing over supermarket car parks, cats perilously avoiding death crossing busy roads. Work was a kind of decoy to escape the internal symphony blasting out at 100% volume almost all day every day. I wanted to tell everyone. To shout from the rooftops. To make myself heard. But I knew it was futile. I had already been called a weirdo enough times to know that was a bad idea. I felt like lying. Why not? Invent a story. Life is too short and painful and complicated otherwise.



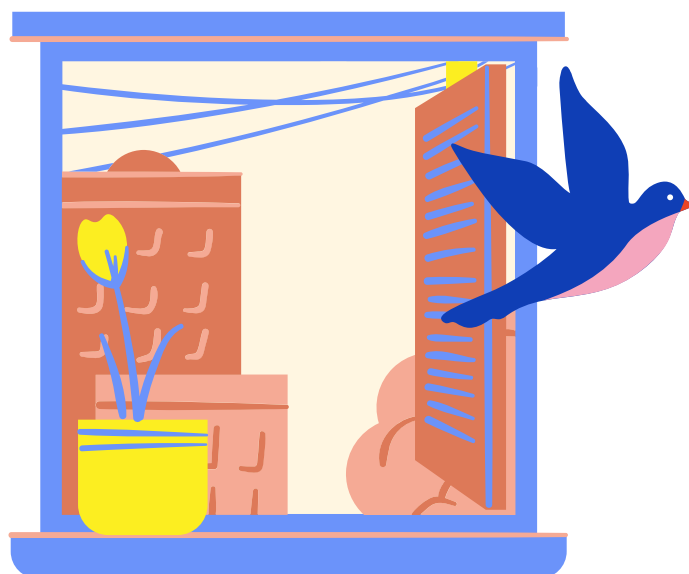


My soul was aching. I knew it was a feeling of restlessness, of wanting to open up and connect to the world again, perhaps. But somewhere there was this feeling of resistance. Longing coupled with looking at what I had to offer. A 24 year-old woman in search of a life, a job, an everything, not knowing where to start. Not even knowing who she was apart from a collection of imprints, a few words shared with people, intimacy created then rejected. Too scary. Who was I to matter? This world seemed too anonymous and senseless sometimes. Yet you only had to scrape below the surface to see how many of us felt the same. Equally imprisoned. I found this thought alone depressing. How we were confined to our cubicles, not thinking laterally or reaching out beyond making a few headways in pre-approved directions.

Oh how I longed just to move, to breathe, to dance again. To smell the scent of natural perfume, the air, the atmosphere shared by beautiful people aware of themselves, willing to play with life itself and experiment with the possibility of harmony in such a disharmonious world. I felt these were the true noble warriors, yet I always felt a little too removed from them, like somehow there was a huge weight that had to come off me before I could truly be free like that. I remember a conversation with a friend, or a lover, it was never truly clear at the time. Too many gins and tonics and I remember declaring how this skin I was born into was too oppressive. Always the same mindless repetition, the same everything!

I just wanted to be free. I looked across me on the 2am Tube at the glittery faces, sweaty, satisfied, mollified by alcohol. How there was happiness mixed with melancholy, an element of false connection and loss, regret, constriction, sadness. I always sensed sadness around me but could never really put my finger on it. As a child, holding the hands of adults and feeling the clammy, bitter, angry, depression. How they could never be authentic. Something about this world was cold and contrived. I wanted to go home, even as a child. All there was to keep me through this time was one thought, subtle but clear: 'there has to be another way'. Seeing homeless teenagers on the street, barely a few years younger than me, already drinking, already fighting the impulse to not just give up entirely. Seeing politicians in their suits telling us how it was and what we were supposed to do now, speaking with increasing righteousness and emphatic, absolute weight.

I used to sometimes feel like I was living in a computer simulation, some nightmare that was too unreal to hold any inherent meaning beyond the fact there was none. 'There has to be another way'. The wind breathing up the same street where I would walk every day to work, blowing along the leaves. Birds perching on the benches, the sun shining us on into our uncertain future, gently but surely. The smile of a force beyond our worries, a gentle giant paving a new reality whilst we were busy sleeping our way through life. 'There has to be another way'.



MUSIC

# DANIEL **LONDON** MOLYNEAUX



This is my new album, 'FREE', which is an honest account of who I am as a gay man. The album is an honest account of how I accepted myself as a gay man, and boldly sharing things that I've experienced as a gay man, with the intent to help the LGBT community. With over a year in the making, I would like to use my album to be a voice for the LGBT community, and help the world see how normal it is to be gay. With this album, I would like to help teach the world the truth that yes, someone can in fact be born gay.

**And with this album, I would like to get homosexual music seeped into mainstream media more, so that such music is heard and accepted on the same level as heterosexual music as both sexualities are equally as natural as the other. My album features LGBT dancehall, R&B and more, and is available now on all music platforms. Please buy the album as all funds raised go straight will be used to promote to the world how normal it is to be gay!**



**FIND DANIEL ON**



**LINKTR.EE/DANIELMOLYNEAUX**



lgbtq+? have you experienced any form\* of homelessness in the last five years when you were aged 16-25?

[akt.org.uk/survey](https://akt.org.uk/survey)



\*someone who is homeless might be staying in a hostel, night shelter or B&B, sofa-surfing, squatting, or rough sleeping.

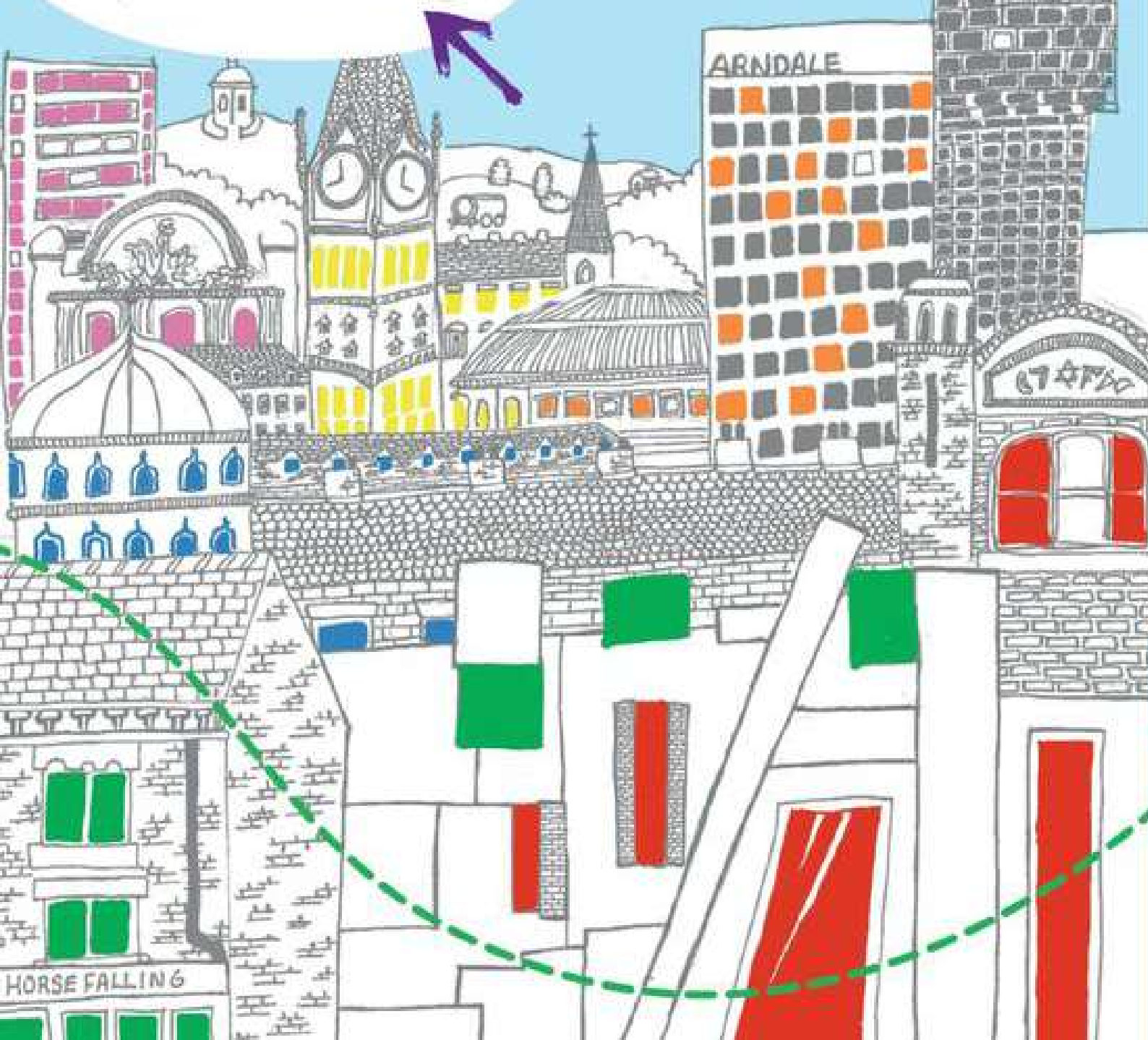
# AN LGBTQ+ ONLINE PROJECT

13-18 YEAR OLDS



ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER

[WWW.Q42.ORG.UK](http://WWW.Q42.ORG.UK)



HORSE FALLING



FIND A PLACE TO BE

SHARE YOUR IDEAS & STORIES

FUN, SOCIAL & WELCOMING

## ARE YOU A...

- YouTuber
- Blogger
- Podcaster
- Instagrammer
- Web designer
- Poet
- Artist
- Illustrator
- Animator

## CREATIVE PROJECT IDEAS:

EMAIL: [ideas@Q42.org.uk](mailto:ideas@Q42.org.uk)

FOLLOW: @Q42project

VISIT: [www.Q42.org.uk](http://www.Q42.org.uk)

- Meet other lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and questioning young people
- Share your ideas and stories
- Develop your creative skills
- Showcase your creative talent
- Meet creative professionals
- Help to shape how young people connect in the LGBTQ+ community

## GET IN TOUCH:

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**akt**