

An Artist's Manifesto

Hazel-bee Lever

Hello there! Welcome to this thing

This manifesto is a series of lessons, short stories, and thoughts of mine that reflect who I am as a person, and who I strive to be. It is not meant to be a guide on how to act, but rather I hope people curious enough to find and read this are able to find something they can take away and use in their own life. Read between the lines, see something I didn't intend, and come up with your own interpretations. I will never clarify anything on behalf of you. Only for myself. Whatever the case, I at least hope you'll enjoy what I have written.



This manifesto will be updated with additions over time. Previously written parts will not be deleted, as to act as a landmark for who I was at a period in time. Addendums or comments may be added. To see these updates, visit the QR code to the digital manifesto.

This zine is up to date as of May 2025



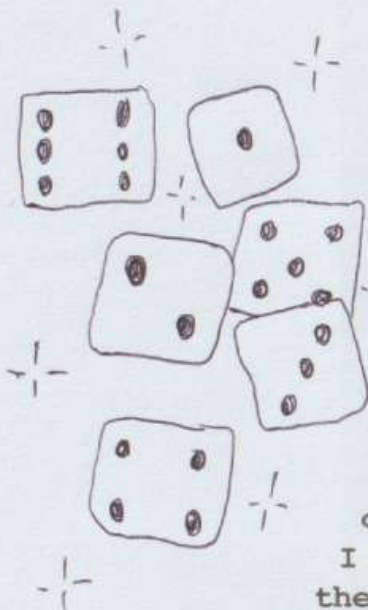
THAT'S
ME!



Spirituality

Written 24 September 2024

I am not a religious person. I've never really believed in any established gods or churches or whatever. I do however, have my own system of belief. A series of coincidences and happenstance that feel far too poignant and poetic to not be real. Part of this belief system includes the idea of Luck. I believe that life is merely a series of rolls of the die. Sometimes you get to choose the die, other times it's chosen for you. You can affect the roll in an number of ways given the situation, but in the end it's chance that plays it's hand in every scenario. Job application? Luck. Getting followers online? Luck. Making friends? Luck. You can never predict the outcome of anything, really. To me, it's given me a great calm in life to believe this about everything. I do my best to push in my favour but in the end, it all comes down to luck.



Another thing that's come into the picture recently is flowers. For the longest time, when I would go out tagging, I would use flowers in my pieces. I liked to add life and fun into the world in these little gardens. Some bright whimsy. I've never been gifted flowers before, that was, until my would-be partner for a time, not so long after we had even met, brought me flowers and soup when I was sick. It was the sweetest thing anyone had ever done for me, and it was then as the flowers were brightest, did I fall in love with someone so prematurely. As time went on and our relationship bloomed, so did the flowers.

I would do my best to keep them alive, and they did their best to always look as bright as the day they were given to me. And then one day I walked into the kitchen, these flowers, in the plastic tupperware vase it had be originally placed in, started to dull. It wasn't all the flowers, just one at the time I noticed. I replaced the water, added some sugar. I

felt a slight distance form between us, she wasn't feeling well, but it was stil good between us. A week later, more petals had dulled. She was growing sick, I felt really bad for her. More time, the duller the petals. When the majority were dull, she stopped being so affectionate over text, and it was difficult to find time to meet up. I was feeling uneasy, and then we planned to meet for some lunch, we hadn't seen eachother in a bit. Before I headed out for the day, I checked in on the flowers. There was one solitary flower, it's petals bright as the day they were bought, surrounded in a sea of black, dead flowers. Later that day, she said it'd be best if we didn't see eachother anymore. I was feeling much the same, the passion we had started the relationship with had faded as our own lives and stresses caught up to us, and we needed to be alone. I didn't want it to end, of course, I wish it could have always been like it was when we first started dating, but I knew in that moment that this was the right thing for both of us. I vowed to still support her, regardless. Love her like I love my friends. When I got home, there were no bright petals. I cannot bring myself to believe this wasn't a mere conicidence. I now hold flowers in a much higher metaphorical sense than I ever did.

Don't buy me flowers, I hate watching them die.

Update/Comment

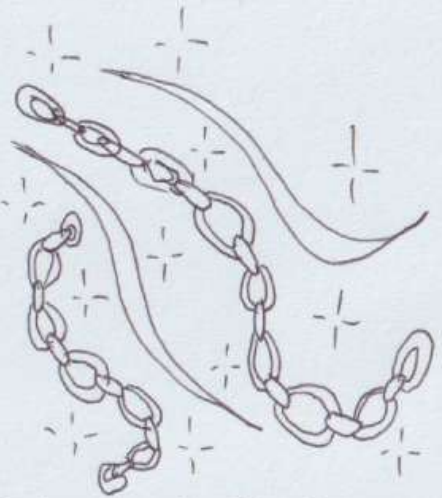
Written 28 April 2025

Recently I have taken this flower thing a bit further. I have been slowly writing a grimoire of the various flowers that impact my life and the world around me. I'm taking it more as a little art project, but it's been interesting to try and intentionally take it seriously. It's an incredibly personal work of art, and I am looking forward to seeing where it ends up going for me.

The Chains That Bind Us

Written 24 September 2024

I assume that many would describe my fashion style as "alternitive", and I'd agree with them there. There are a few key parts that I bring with me between every outfit, and I'm slowly adding more over time as they become relevant. The two most obvious are my handcuffs, and my collar. Let's start with the collar, it's what I got first after all.

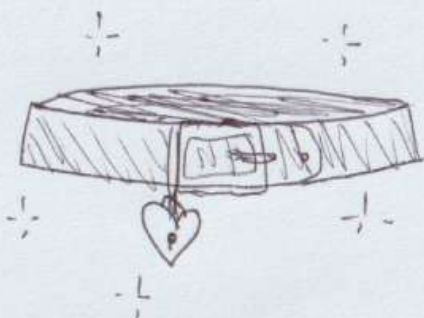


Some of you may know of the youtube channel *Leadhead*. They're one of my favourite creators on the platform, and played a major part in building my confidence to finally transition into the woman I am today. Not only that, they're the reason I'm a puppygirl. roughly 3~ months ago from the writing of this segment of the manifesto, Penny (Leadhead) dropped this video: *The Puppygirl Psychoanalysis*, and it awoken something in me. I went ahead and right away bought a dog collar online, a nice black leather one. A few days later, she arrived, along with my first bra. Trying both on... I was forever changed as a person. I looked sexy, and cute at the same time. It was the confidence boost I never knew I needed. I started

to describe myself as a "Puppygirl" from then on, openly to the right people, and subtly to those who aren't familiar with the concept. I learnt how to bark, and my more affectionate sides of my personality came through much stronger, just as a consiquence of wearing this collar. Now, this is different from every other article of clothing in this growing list, but this collar does not come off, unless I'm in the shower. I sleep with this thing, and I work with it. It gives me a sense of comfort and self. I can't exactly describe what this collar does to me when it's on, but when it's off, everything feels wrong. As a puppygirl with a collar, who's the master some may ask? That's a question I picked up on my thoughts not long after I took the puppygirl mantle. and my answer is as such: It's me, I'm my own master.

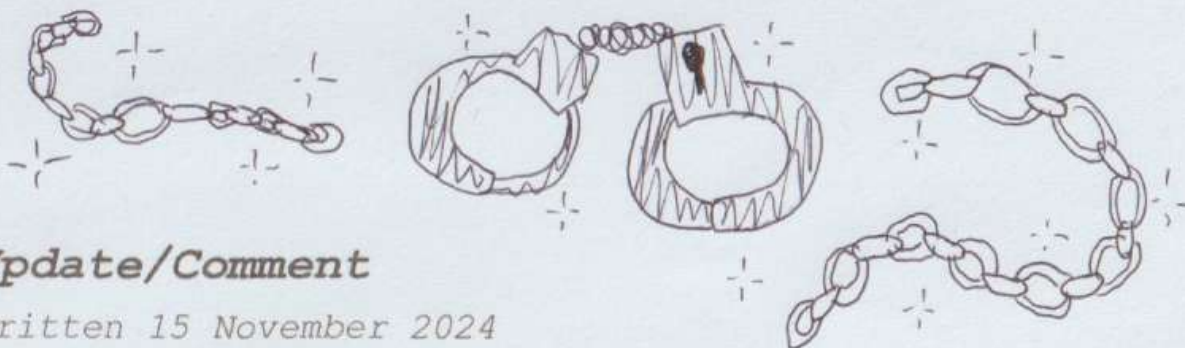


How I Draw Myself!



I control my own destiny, I teach myself new tricks, and I decide where I go. I'm not the puppygirl who barks and sleeps on the floor, (or not yet, I guess) but I am the puppygirl who's incredibly loyal to those she loves. She'll latch onto any new person she vibes with, and fiercely protects those in her pack. She's confident, and she's a darn-tootin' cutie too!

The cuffs, handcuffs, like cop cuffs. 'cept these are kink cuffs that look like real handcuffs, because they're easier to relocate around. I usually keep these on my belt, and occasionally on my wrist as a gnarly wristband. I've always loved the cuff aesthetic, from games like Death Stranding, Freedom Wars, Astral Chain, feature characters with a pair of prison-like cuffs that bind on their wrist. The thing is though, these cuffs are what gives these characters their powers, not to bind them to a cell. I wear cuffs because I see them as a metaphorical way of saying I am bound in myself, the only thing keeping me locked in is myself, again with the whole "control my own destiny" thing. And they look cool. But I like to see the meaning in these things, they come with me everywhere. They mean something to me, and I think it's okay I haven't gotten the meaning 100% down just yet.



Update/Comment

Written 15 November 2024

As a bit of an update to the whole puppygirl thing, I've been barking a lot more as a form of vocal stim, mostly around friends, but sometimes I'll just do it alone. It's fun! I dunno exactly why I enjoy doing it so much, but it's not uncommon if you're hanging around me to just randomly bark whenever I get happy to excited. Thanks queers for making me weirder lol.

I've also had an update to my pronouns, I'm now a girl who goes by She/Her and It/It's pronouns. It's likely that I'll be adding a new section to this manifesto touching specifically on my experience as a puppygirl and why I feel comfortable with the idea of being called a puppy and using it/it's pronouns, but that might take a little while as I'm still discovering this side of myself.

I Think More People Should Be Creating For The Sake Of Creating, or: You Should Start Journaling Too

Written 25 September 2024

Last year, I wanted to start a journal. or diary, or something. Just something I can write my thoughts in and draw little sketches and whatever. A place for my thoughts and my thoughts only. This book wouldn't be shown to anyone, at any time. I planned to keep a collection of filled journals in a box somewhere, and bury it for someone to find at a later date. The thing is, I don't want to know who finds it, or when, or how, or if ever. These are small stories of a life unknown written in terrible handwriting with drawings that can be barely understood; it's a person's life.

But I couldn't find the size of journal I was after (not without spending too much on some high-end book or whatever) and decided to just make my own. I folded a piece of paper and cut it down to A6 spreads (A7 per page), found some thin cardboard to use as the cover, and stapled it all together. It was a tiny thing, perfect to fit in my back pocket. I wrote it's title on the front; "BOOK". It's not a very impressive-looking thing, but who cares! It's for me to write in. I did so almost every day, and then maybe missed a few days, a week, but then writing in it (making sure to write the date on each new day I write in it) and continuing on like nothing happened. I eventually, almost poetically for the reasons stated above, lost this book. It pretty



much never left my pocket, but one day it vanished, and I forgot about it for months. So much had happened and when I decided to write it down, I couldn't find it. I had nowhere to spill this brain juice onto a page, make it damp with my experiences.

I made another one, titled it "BOOK 2", and included a note in the front mentioning how I lost the first one. So far I haven't missed a day, and I've been finding that I can finally "tell someone" about my deepest, darkest secrets, my deepest darkest problems, and all sorts of thoughts I have no-one close enough to me to share.

All I know is that someday, I'm either gonna lose this pocket autobiography or put it somewhere for someone to find, so someone might read it, and maybe they'll understand what I'm going through. Maybe they won't. Maybe they'll throw it away, maybe they can't read it. I don't like to write it like I'm writing for someone else though, it has no target audience. It's mine, I write for me. That may sound contradictory but I don't really care lol.

I've been refering to this journal to all those who ask about it or those who have the misfortune of hearing me gush about it as a personal work of art. I'm creating this with poetry, with drawings, with short stories, with tales, with experiences, and I go into it knowing full well it might never see the eye of another. I want to create more art like that, it makes me feel alive, like a real person. I think you should give it a try someday.

Okay to be honest
I havent made a Book3
as such, but I do have
this sketchbook I've
been carrying around
with me every day and
occasionally i'll use it as
a Journal to write my
thoughts down. I think
It's a really cool and
deeply Personal book
of art and emotion and
doing Book 1 and 2
helped me figure out
this sketchbook's flow
and ethos.
♡ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨

MAKE
STUFF!!



Collective Action Starts With You and a Friend

Written 06 November 2024


First things first, don't ever lose hope.

Have you ever wanted to make change in the world? Start a revolution? Stick it to the fuckin' man? Consider this an informal guide. Or, I guess, more so an idea. A theory. Something I've been slowly putting into practice.

So, you wanna change the world, but you look outside and nobody is listening. Maybe people are, but nothing is changing??? It sucks, it's frustrating, and it's enough to make any self respecting anarchist break down and cry about how the world fucking sucks and everyone in it should die. Don't be such a crybaby. Or do, but now's not the time. Suck it up and listen. Step one is supporting yourself. Get yourself on you feet, best you can. Ask for help, if you need it. Supporting yourself can mean getting support from others, the idea here is you can have a place to think. Step two is getting yourself a friend you can rely on. If you don't have one, try your best to find your community, talk to people, find a friend. Got one? Good. Talk to them. The next step here is to get make some assurances for them. For me, this is stuff like "If you ever need a place to stay, my house is your house. You don't need to pay rent, you don't need to worry about food" or "If you need financial aid, I am willing to provide it" or "If you ever need to be picked up from somewhere, I'll be there as soon as I am physically able". You may have already been thinking these things about your best friend, but you need to assure this one friend, remind them, that you are there to support them. Ask them give you assurances. They don't need to be the same ones, not everyone is able to do everything you can. But this is how we build community, this is how we build collective action. We make promise, we make assurances, and most importantly, we act on those assurances if and when the time comes. And then, when you're tight with your friend, when you've given them your assurances and signed



the pact, find another friend. Do it again. When we support our friends like this, we build networks, nodes, communities of people who care for each other. This is how we change the world.

♡ :-
I think ♡
:- the mere
concept of :-
money to ♡
be disgusting!!
:-  :- ♡

Now this might all sound like wishful thinking, and it's a lot of effort, but we have to try and make a better world. No movement started with a thousand members. Anarchy doesn't happen because you call yourself an anarchist. Action happens when you realise it. Build that community, and maintain that community. An easy way to maintain community is to check in regularly. Do you have a discord server with your community? @everyone and ask how they're doing every day/week. If it's more scattered, set alarms to check in on everyone. More the artsy type? Create a zine keeping people informed on what you've been up to and what you're doing, and encourage others to do the same. Hell, you might wanna start a newsletter with input from your community.

Keep this in mind; community starts small. A community between you and one other person is still a community. Keep that community strong, keep it connected. Expand it one person at a time. Don't rush. The world won't change overnight, but if you build your community and keep it close, keep it connected, you might be able to influence change in your school. In your club. In your university. In your street. In your neighborhood. In your council. In your country. In your world. Don't rush, take it slow. A better future IS possible. It's gonna take effort, and it's gonna take collective action, and it starts with you, and a friend.

♡ :- ♡ :-
:- Shout-out to DSC and GU Ties :- ♡
Update/Comment
Written 08 April 2025



As of late, I have found myself an existing group of people who have welcomed me into their arms, and it has been a wonderful experience. Shoutout DSC.

To add on a little bit, do not discredit the existing support networks and communities that already exist in your area. It might be difficult for some, but attending protests, gigs, and meetups of things you love, will net you a community to rely on. Talk to the people who organise these things, and learn from them.

Find Your Stairway

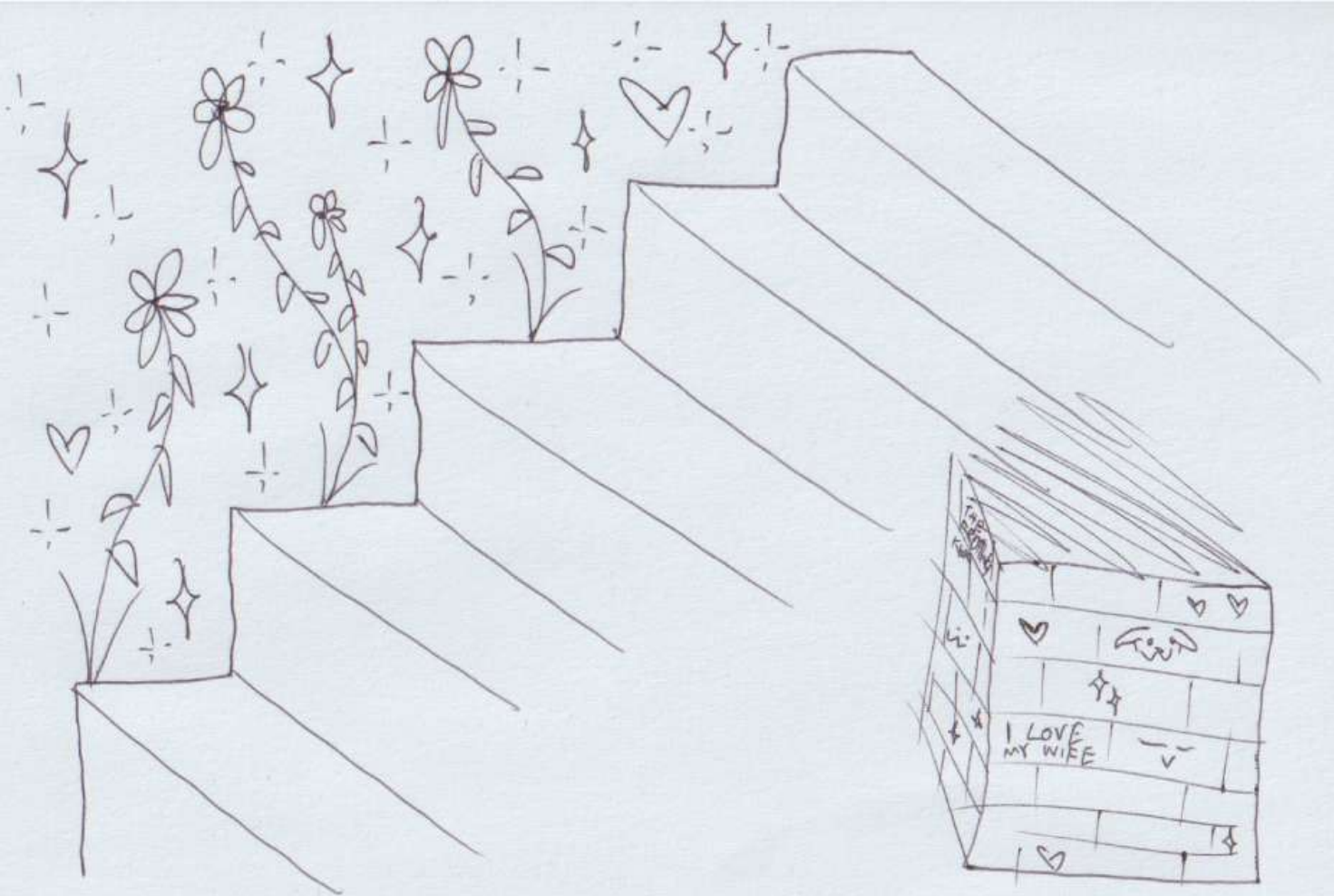
Written 13 November 2024

This year has been about many things for me, discovering my gender, my identity, what I believe in, and becoming so much more curious and attentive than I've ever been.

This curiosity has led me down many paths, both in mind and physically. Travelling down weird alleyways, entering abandoned buildings, when there's no rain I might go check out a storm drain or two. I'd not recommend this hobby to everyone, it is indeed a dangerous thing to do. Done safely however, and with curiosity and discovery in mind over the idea of "notoriety" or whatever, it can be a fulfilling and rewarding hobby. I've learnt more about myself by spending hours walking around a half collapsed nursing home than I have in my many years as a human on this earth. Recently I've been looking around my local area for weird nooks and crannies I can sit and relax in, and there's this one that's become quite a favourite of mine. I've taken to calling it the "lesbian staircase" (or 'Leswell', a portmanteau of "lesbian" and "stairwell", that one of my friends came up with), and I've been spending a lot of time there recently. I'm writing this very section of this manifesto on this staircase. It's on the roof of a carpark, and leads to a locked door. Now I call it the lesbian staircase because there's a lot of graff and writing on the walls and door about girls kissing girls and I think that's super cool cuz like, I'm a girl, I kiss girls, this is my kinda place.

Recently I've been coming here in the afternoons and night to relax, listen to loud music, and reflect upon my life and days and whatnot. I've written a few things here, a dnd session, meaningful messages, I've thought thoughts about my life and my purpose, and

♡ Quote from some graffiti on the staircase: ♡
"WE'RE HAVING VICIOUS GAY SEX ON
THATCHER'S GRAVE"
♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡



I've discovered a lot about myself here. It feels like a safe place I can return to again and again. I've added my own writings to the walls here, of course, but I won't tell you about them here, because this is my place. The other souls who call this staircase home can read it, it's for me, it's for us.

I might not call this place my main solo hangout spot forever, but for now, this is my place to relax away from the world. It's my place to think, to ponder, to exist. Yeah I'd recommend it. Go out, keep an eye out. Find a spot where you feel safe and comfortable. Go there to think. Too many distractions at home for me, if I try and write about life the universe and everything in my room, I'll inevitably open steam and forget about these things. At my staircase, it's me, my music, and my thoughts. It wasn't built to be, but it's my space.

These days, my "staircase" is a
 Carpark near where I live.
 Not as queer, but still Cool!

Draw Stuff On Walls

Written 08 April 2025

The past 12 or so months has been quite a time for me. I've gone through relationships, breakups, I've moved houses, had my income threatened multiple times, among other things. A lot of it stressful, but also, a lot of it truly inspiring.

Throughout all this time, there's been a constant in my life. Pens in my bag. I keep them there so I can draw stuff on walls. Paint pens, ink markers, ballpoints, spraycans if I'm somewhere safe. Drawing stuff on walls isn't just a vandal's ego trip, it's an escape from the norm, a return to the basic human need to communicate. Since time milenia humanity has been writing stuff on walls. It's only reletively recently where the canvas that is the space around us has been relegated to parchment and paper. I do quite enjoy drawing and writing in paper books, but my deepest, most poetic thoughts are temorary marks on the walls of abandoned buildings. People who break from the norm, punks who reject the world made for us, come to these places to read the messages left behind by others, and leave behind a mark of their own. A part of the beauty of writing things on walls is that largely, it is anonymous. Despite this, through messages left on concrete drain pipes, I found myself a community. I met in person the people behind the writings, they showed me more places, and together, we keep the tradition of drawing stuff on walls alive. Most of the time, this is in the form of leaving our names, or iconography, behind. A way of saying "I was here" to the others in our hobby.



Graffiti is an artform. The works I have seen deep in the stormdrain pipes, on the walls of abandoned buildings, and in the direct view of the public have been astounding. Talking to people on the streets, it seems as if most people enjoy seeing these random acts of art in our world. People leaving behind great big pieces that took years to master, others leaving behind silly sketches, stickers too tell their own story, from activism to merely a "Hello!". To draw on a wall is not merely taking pen to a rough canvas, but to mark and shape the world around us. A poster, held against a wall with a thin piece of tape, is drawing on a wall. A flower, placed intentionally in the crack of a brick building, is drawing on a wall. We retake the space taken from us with our

own messages, however simple or complex. Many have expressed a distaste on the humble 'tag', often single in colour, the detractor will say "These street artists are nice and all but I hate it when young people do their ugly tags everywhere!". And there is merit to their argument, if you lack the context. A tag is the simplest form of leaving your mark. Despite their low amount of effort, it says "I was here". It signals others in the community that you've experienced the very same place you are currently at, and you've changed it in some way. Seeing a tag on a wall scrawled in tags, one may see the opposite of beauty, while another sees a sign in wall, of the names of their friends and family.



In a way, having your own tag, your own alias separate from your legal identity, is a form of personal expression. An expression of identity. I draw dogs, I draw flowers, that is what people in that community see me as. Others I have talked to express how they do not wish to be perceived in a corporeal sense, and thus graffiti brings them solace. They can exist, they can be perceived, on the wall. To create a tag, an alias, is to create an identity. And what you do with that identity, is ultimately up to you. To 'get up', as the term goes, is to show to the world that you exist. That you have existed. That you will continue to exist. We who leave our marks on the walls in our society do so with the knowledge that what we leave behind will not be visible forever. Our tags, our art, will be buffed, built over, destroyed. But we do it anyway. We do it, because we reject the world that tells us that these spaces are not ours to change.

The streets are not the only place one might find the pen of another scrawled on the canvas of brick and mortar, the bathroom is another such place. I have been to many public bathrooms in the city, in pubs, in clubs, you name it, scrawled with writings and drawings. Some of the most poetic words I have ever read are in the bathroom. Oftentimes, depending on where you go, places will encourage this behaviour by refusing to buff the walls. These places understand that in places of absolute privacy, the truth is spoken. To know that whatever you draw or write onto these walls will be read by a stranger, who will never know it was you who left their mark, brings to mind what I talk about in the section about journaling. The things you write may be glanced over, they may be drawn over, or, perhaps, they may mean something to someone.

Read stuff on walls. Draw stuff on walls. It might change your life.

Genderfuck Identity-whore

Written 14 April 2025

I expect this segment to have at least a few comments and additions over time. My identity has changed a lot over the past few years, and has sort of rapidly begun changing seemingly on a week-by-week basis. I get these grandios ideas and form my whole personality around them, only to realise how naive I'm being and swap gears. Regardless, whenever I do have these moments of hightened ego, I always carry a part of that new self into the next self. Sometimes I'll swap selves with a previous and find myself conflicted, not knowing who I am, what I am, why I am. It can be extremely intense at times. I've had panic attacks over who I see myself as.

Despite this, I've had to embrace this these changes in identity. I honestly don't have much of a choice. It can be extremely painful leaving one self behind in order to embrace another, and the remnants of the self before slowly eat away at the psyche of the current self. It's easy to say though, that I'm being unreasonable with my thoughts, that I shouldn't think these things, and yet they take over my mind. I'm a trans woman, and transitioning has been one of the biggest shifts in my identity in a long time. At first, I would dress as femme as I could, but as I have continued my transition, I have leaned more towards a 'tomboy'-esque vibe about me. I tend to dress punk, I expressly deny the expectations the world made for me set upon me, and despite calling myself a woman I feel like something else, a dog, a machine. The parts of the people I have loved, the people I love, and the people I have yet to love, grafted onto me. The more people I meet, the more people I understand, the more I change, radically. No change seems small, none minor, and the lived experiences I have gone through and the lived experiences of those I love have gone through and the understanding I take away from that the more I change as a person, as an entity, as a thing. It feels almost, as there are many people inside of me, vying for control. I am always concious, always aware, but whatever takes control of me shapes my actions and who I am, and I wonder, do I even know what I am?

All stories of transition are personal, and all are different. Like many, I loved playing video games as a child. Games where you could customise your character were my favourite. Oftentimes, I would go between two different paths. An old man ronin type character, or, a woman. Any woman, didn't matter the archetype. I guess this was my first moment of gender expression. It wasn't uncommon, as many trans people may tell you, for me to answer the question of "If you could press a button and wake up as the other gender, would you press it" with a resounding "Of course! Who wouldn't?". Fast forward to post highschool graduation, I move cities. I identify as non-binary. At the time, I didn't change much about my appearance, I had a big thick beard, and wore "quirky" mens clothes. I was no twink, either. Of course, it was rare for anyone to respect my chosen identity, my pronouns, and so it became harder for me myself to accept my own identity within me. For a short time, I experimented with being 'Gender-fluid', I had purchased a skirt, a pair of cute glasses, some makeup, and a whooooole lotta hair removal stuff. When they all came in, I went for it immedietly. Shaved and

waxed all my facial and body hair off (I have some very hairy genetics, this took a while.) I styled my hair, I put the skirt and glasses on... I was a girl, for a moment. I told my roommate "When you see my dressed like this, please use she/her pronouns". He was chill, he respected me. Shoutout Henry. Outside of work I was always presenting femme, but a week goes by and the shaving gets too much. I couldn't keep up with it, and I refused to dress femme without going all the way. It was embarrassing to me otherwise. I had grown up surrounded by people who were constantly transphobic to anyone who even slightly didn't pass, so what was the point, I thought, if I wasn't going all the way? I gave up. Put the skirt and makeup away, glasses rested in a drawer somewhere. Hair-removal products pushed to the back of the shelf. Back once again to being non-binary. Slowly, I became more and more masculine. Sure, I grew my hair, but it was in a Kyle Hill, hippy-cool-guy type way. Due to a breakup half a year prior, I was craving human touch. I was craving sex. I didn't wanna be the weird guy on the apps, or at bars, so I took what little money I had and spent it on escorts. Once, sometimes even twice a month if I could justify it, I would indulge myself in the body for cash. I don't wanna get it twisted here, I have a lot of respect for sex workers, even more so after being a consumer of such things, I learnt a lot about the industry by talkin with them before and after the act. Treat them with respect. For me though, it was indeed a dark time. I wasn't proud of it, and it was the catalyst that lead me to revoking my manhood. One night, specifically January 3rd, 2024, at 10:30pm, I was seeing a new escort. The encounter was like many others, and without going into detail, there was something different. She felt me up, complimented my masculine features. My beard. My shape. My voice. As she said more and more about my masculine structure, I became less and less comfortable. Not with the situation, but with myself. Afterwards, I said my thanks, and bid farewell. On the train, roughly 11:20pm, I decided I hated my identity, I hated my body, and I hated how people would always reject my chosen identity. I got home, shaved all of my facial and body hair off once again, put on the glasses, and saw myself looking back at me in the mirror, for but a moment, for the first time. Since that moment, I have held the conviction nessicary to make this identity work, make it myself.

More recently, my war over my identity has been focused on my sexuality, and whether or not I am monoamous or polyamorous, or reject both, run it rogue, figure my own stuff out. I went through a breakup that shattered my brain a little, the strongest example of two identities fighting over eachother. What's happened has happened, and whether or not it ends up being the right decision, those experiences are what make me who I am. The ups, and especially the downs. Being more open about my sexuality, my kinks, and who I desire, has brought me both peace, joy, love, and turmoil, anger, frustration. Regardless, One place I have felt safest has been with those I surround myself with. No matter what goes through my head, someone in the queer community has a story to tell that I can use to help figure myself out.




I don't know what gender I am, if I even am a gender at all, if I even am human at all, therefore I am a genderfuck. I don't know what my identity it, I don't know who or what I am, but I want to be all of them, all at once, therefore I am an identity-whore.

The Aesthetic Of Tools // DIY Everything

Written 21 April 2025

As the days go on and on I become less and less interested in participating in capitalism. I plan to go into further detail regarding how I've reshaped the current world and society to better fit my wants and needs in a future segment of this manifesto, but for now I feel it important to talk about the things I spend money on.



It's no secret to those around me to know I fucking hate money. I hate the way I acquire it, I hate that I have to use it, I hate that we need it, I hate what it says, what it stands for, I hate everything about money. Regardless, I get money. I do not get enough of it to afford things like my own house, but I do earn enough to pay rent, bills, and eat food. What little excess earnings I do have, these days, goes to a very small number of things. The two primary things are my friends, first and foremost, and tools. In this instance, tools have a bit of a loose definition. I buy books to draw in, I buy markers to draw with, I buy cans to spray with, I buy cameras to record with. All of my clothing budget is relegated to the op-shop, second hand clothing. I can't remember the last time I purchased something "new", and honestly, I don't ever want to. I've been DIYing my own clothes recently, repairing stuff when it breaks, and sorta running with the aesthetic of torn clothes when it suits me.

I love to record stuff, take pictures, shoot video, I'm becoming somewhat of a journalist in the little punk/queer spaces I find myself in. I carry these tools in my bag primarily, however recently I've had the idea to make some bags for these and strap them to my belt, a sort of public display of these tools. One thing I have picked up on from others in my space is the way their rugged, punk aesthetic is not only visually cool, but entirely practical too. A close friend of mine likes to wear military surplus gear, as



they contain lots of pockets to hold various items in, markers, pens, notebooks, water, food, anything and everything. They've even patched more pockets onto their pants. The aesthetic has inspired me to DIY my own practical clothing items to wear my tools on my chest. A bandoiler of paint markers, a pouch for my cameras. I can be more creative, more often, more easily, by carrying these tools with me. The outward display of these tools and the DIY nature of them fashioned to the body invites the public to think differently about the world. You needn't stick to the rigid, ready-made clothing and tools the capitalists charge you for, you can make your own tools, your own patches. If I wore nothing made specifically for me, by me or the friends close to me, I would merely be agreeing with the fascistic mentality this society seems so ready to slip into. It's comfortable, to wear clothes made from a slave factory. It's easy, it's cheap. It means nothing. It says nothing. It is nothing. DIYing my own clothing, my own tools, my own life, has opened the doors to so many wonderful things. No longer constrained by the whims of capitalism, the only barrier is the time it takes to learn these skills but oh once they have been learned, you help not only yourself but the community around you. I love to make jewelry for my friends, and soon I hope to make pouches, bags, harnesses, pockets, tools, art and everything for me and my friends. I get the materials from everywhere. Hard rubbish dumps often contain treasures and the raw materials needed to make your own items and tools for free. Handled properly, cleaned, and treat with care, the tools you make today will last a lifetime, and the skills you learn will last forever.

To get off my high horse; stop buying so much shit. Make your own stuff. Get your friends to teach you, strengthen that community. Free resources online! You can teach yourself anything these days. Buy less, make more. And hey, once you build up these skills and make this stuff on your own, you'll look cool doin' it too. The aesthetic of tools is fuckin' rad.

