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IMAGINING A QUEER AND DECOLONIAL BOTANY

Joyoti Grech Cato is based in Brighton.
"Thanks and full respect to Leigh Davis,
the owner of the Artichokes, without
whom there would be no poem."

Randa Toko (she/they)
aspiring symbiont and flower sniffer
Instagram: @spice.mystic

Grace Ella Wardell (She/Her) PhD student
at The University of Sheffield researching
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agriculture. Interests include climate
justice, racial justice & dismantling the
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sci-fi habit.
Instagram: @scifi_botanist

Faye Gordon (she/her) part time veg box
coordinator for Granville Community
Kitchen's Good Food Box (facebook:
@gck_goodfoodbox), part time doodler,
full time nature fan

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student at The University of Sheffield
researching climate change. She is mixed
British Pakistani, queer, and very
enthusiastic about soil. Her love language
is social justice climate policy.
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passions; as a therapist, yoga teacher
playback theatre performer and quilt
maker. She loves the alchemical process
of making jams and jellies for Foxhill
Preserves.
facebook:
@overtherainbowgardenproduce

Nasha Cash (They/She) is a Sheffield
born, Manchester based artist whose
work focuses primarily on nature and the
human form. Nasha's work is
characterised by fluid lines and nostalgic,
simple shapes that inspire a whimsical
feeling in the viewer. Working primarily in
pen, Nasha then digitally colours each
piece.
Instagram: @nashacashart

Marie Lewis loves growing, cooking,
eating and sharing food. A founding
member of Birmingham Black Sisters and
an ex-footballer, she's now the top
marma-lady and chutney-queen,
conjuring new recipes using 'exotic' fruits
n spices.
facebook:
@overtherainbowgardenproduce

Sam Siva (they/them) & Tom Takezoe
(he/him)
Two plant obsessed nerds with a love of
being outside

Contributors

lone Maria Rojas

ESP:

El diseño fue realizado por lone Maria Rojas, una artista y agricultora que trabaja con la tierra, las plantas, los animales y las personas. En los últimos años lone ha estado explorando su herencia mixta, trabajando en el Reino Unido y México, un ir y venir que fue impulsado por su primer encuentro con el amaranto. Para conocer más sobre la historia del amaranto o el trabajo de Puente, vea su presentación de la Gaia Foundation: Our Seeds are Our Stories.

ENG:

The design is by lone Maria Rojas (she/her), an artist and food grower working with earth, plants, animals and people. In the past few years lone has been exploring her mixed heritage, working in the UK and Mexico, a back and forth that was prompted by her first meeting with amaranth. To know more about the story of amaranth or the work of Puente, watch her presentation for the Gaia Foundation: Our Seeds are Our Stories.

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Jacob V Joyce (they/them)

Multidisciplinary artist amplifying historical and nourishing new queer/anti-colonial narratives.

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Leah McGhee (they/she)

I'm a queer illustrator based in Norfolk prolific in ink and gouache, I love to draw nature and I love to draw people. You can find more of my work on my Instagram

@leahpatrish

Sasha Sasha (Sasha/za/she)

Sasha's space was designed to focus on her appreciation of all things horticultural, whilst decolonizing the system through conversations.

Instagram: @mindyourownplants

Raquel Foster (she/her)

I am an amateur writer writing about whatever makes me feel, see, think or sing in the spaces around me.

For now no platform but happy to receive emails if someone wants to collaborate to share visions and voices.

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Dani and Corinne are siblings and two members of the workers cooperative, Thyme Tu. Thyme Tu takes up space in rural Norfolk, reclaiming land based crafts and beyond-organic food cultivation.

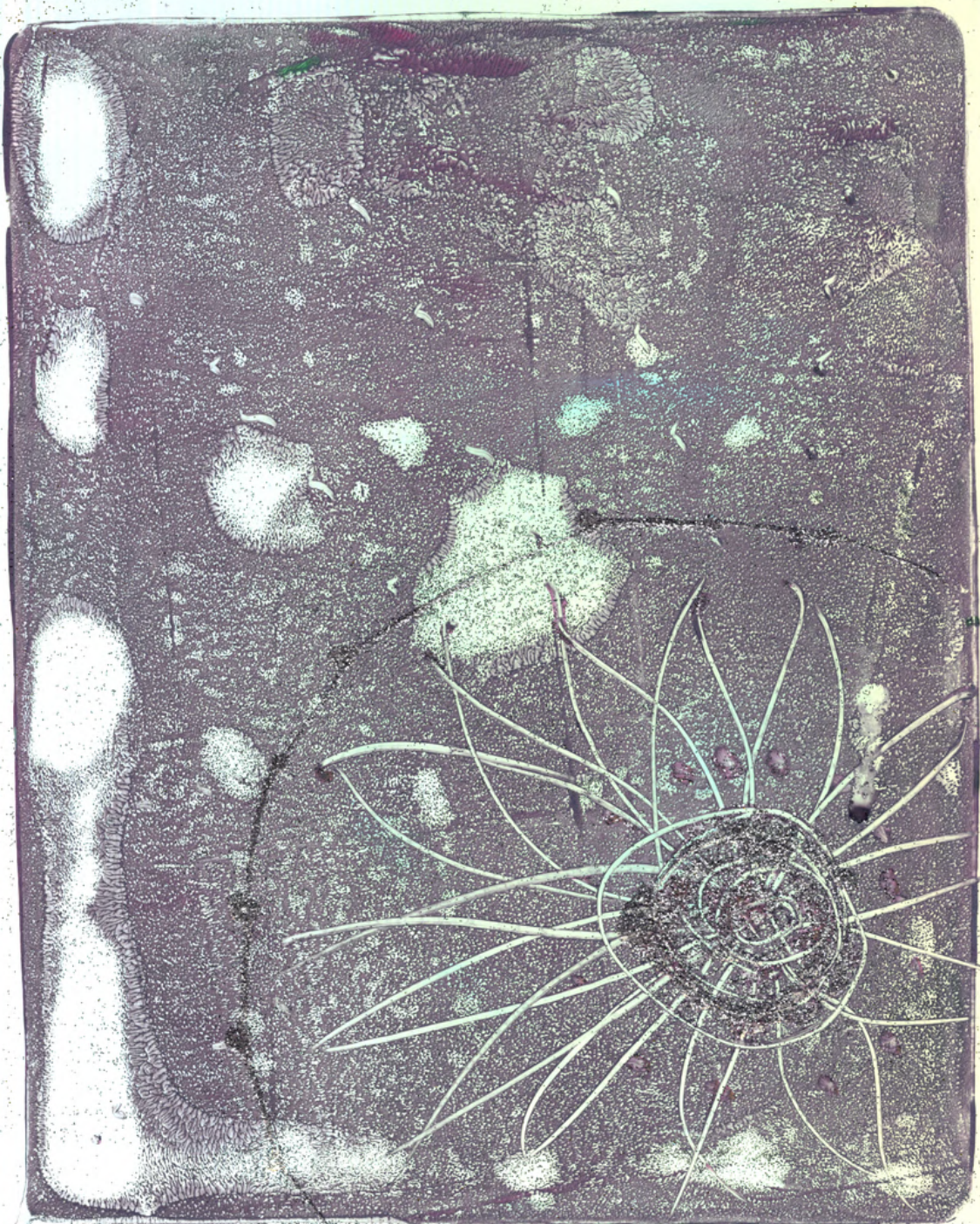
www.thymetu.art

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This is TransPlants, a queer and decolonial submission based zine, produced in collaboration between Land In Our Names and Out On The Land. Within this zine are 11 submissions, from individual and collective creators. Each creator has drawn from their own experiences, beliefs, and practices. This can be seen in the different approaches to queerness, gender, and decoloniality. These divergences bring many understandings of plants and the world to this zine's pages - we have chosen to embrace this, rather than flatten into a uniform voice.

Produced by Zoe Miles and Sam Sivapragasam with support from Mylo North.





huahtli

dok'u / gink'ani / ba-lla / comowawi / amaranto



Ione Maria Rojas

Por amor al amaranto: huahtli (náhuatl), dok'u/gink'ani (hñähñu), ba-lla (zapoteco), comowawi (huichol).

Una celebración del amaranto (una planta vital en México cuyo nombre en náhuatl significa 'la partícula más pequeña dadora de vida') y el trabajo de Puente a la Salud, una organización en Oaxaca, México, que trabaja para promover la soberanía alimentaria a través del cultivo del amaranto. .

La imagen es de Don Cresencio (Chencho), un agricultor de la comunidad yukuxaco en Oaxaca y miembro de la Red Amaranto Mixteca, un grupo de mujeres y hombres que desarrollan economía solidaria a nivel regional a través de la producción, comercialización y consumo de amaranto en Oaxaca. También presenta un estallido de amaranto cultivado y cosechado en la tierra de Devon, en honor a los movimientos agroecológicos mexicanos.

For the love of amaranth: huahtli (náhuatl), dok'u/gink'ani (hñähñu), ba-lla (zapoteco), comowawi (huichol).

A celebration of amaranth (a vital plant in Mexico whose name in means 'the smallest life-giving particle') and the work of Puente a la Salud, an organisation in Oaxaca, Mexico, that works to promote food sovereignty through the cultivation of amaranth.

The image is of Don Cresencio (Chencho), a farmer from the yukuxaco community in Oaxaca and member of the Red Amaranto Mixteca, a group of women and men developing solidarity economy at the regional level through the production, marketing and consumption of amaranth in Oaxaca. It also features a burst of amaranth grown and harvested in Devon soil, in honour of Mexican agroecology movements.

Artichokes

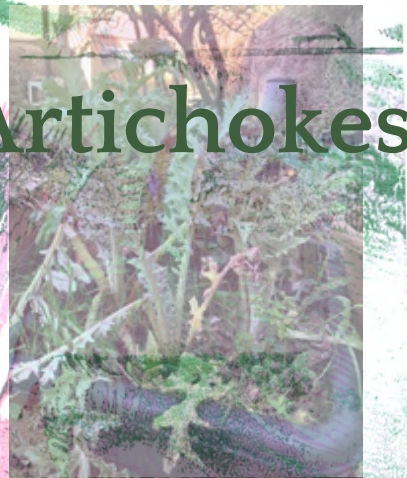
The seedlings had outgrown
The postage box they arrived in,
Sending fingers past the plastic
green By the time we fully opened it
And eased them out of their
Cramped little cells of earth.
That was April

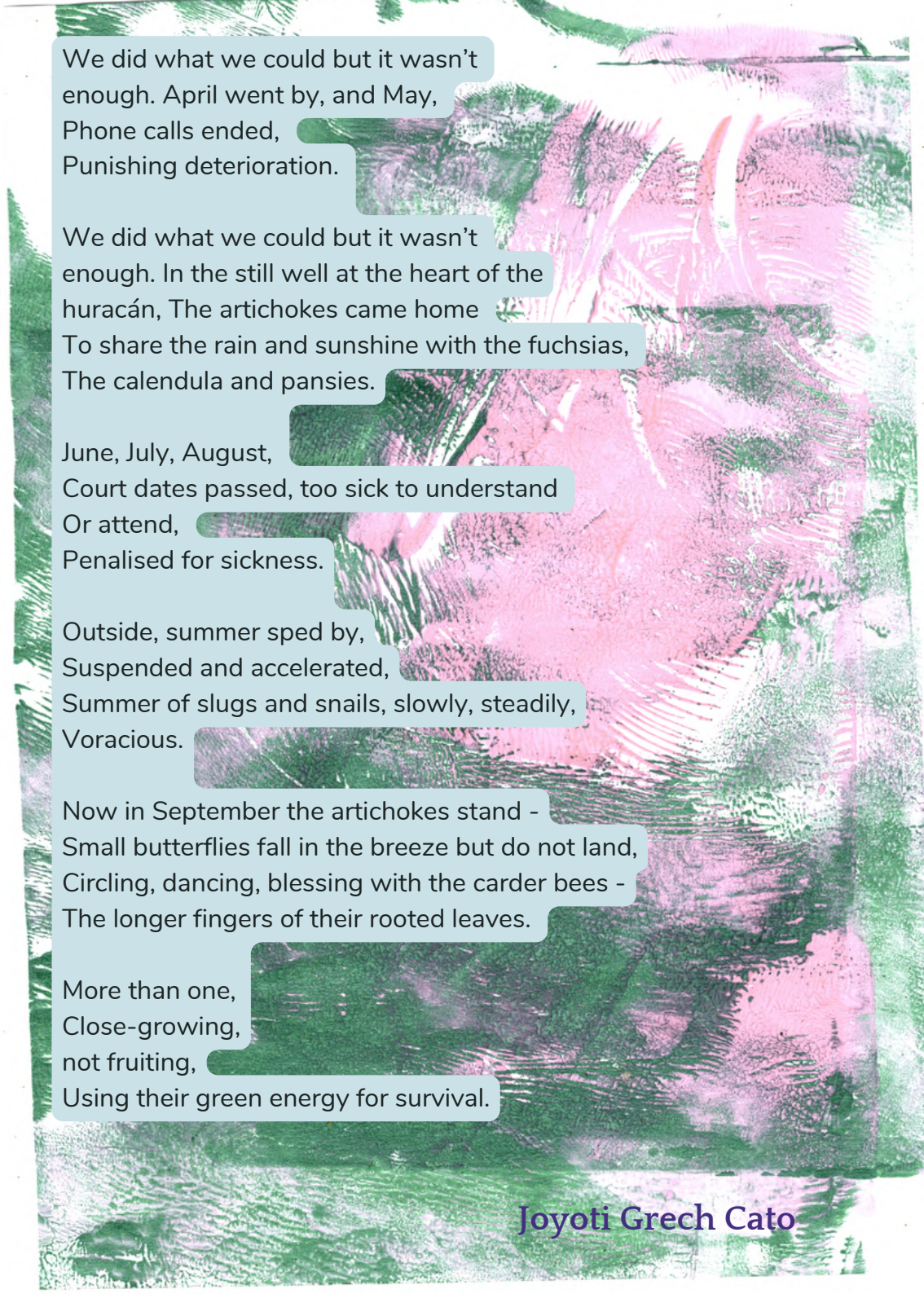
And you'd ordered them before.
Before the worst summer on
earth -Not for you, I can't say that
Before the first incarceration
Not the first criminalisation
Of your survivorhood.

Before the first request for help in
years, Before the first arrest for asking
Before that attempt to end it all
Before the second arrest for asking
Both of them brutal, violent,
criminal.

Before the worst summer on earth
Before tomatoes blighted just by trying
To go on growing in the soil
Before they took you off to HMP
Before all of that and more,

You planned your growing
season, Started seedlings under
lamps,
Had your carers put up
polytunnels In the yard.





We did what we could but it wasn't
enough. April went by, and May,
Phone calls ended,
Punishing deterioration.

We did what we could but it wasn't
enough. In the still well at the heart of the
huracán, The artichokes came home
To share the rain and sunshine with the fuchsias,
The calendula and pansies.

June, July, August,
Court dates passed, too sick to understand
Or attend,
Penalised for sickness.

Outside, summer sped by,
Suspended and accelerated,
Summer of slugs and snails, slowly, steadily,
Voracious.

Now in September the artichokes stand -
Small butterflies fall in the breeze but do not land,
Circling, dancing, blessing with the carder bees -
The longer fingers of their rooted leaves.

More than one,
Close-growing,
not fruiting,
Using their green energy for survival.

Joyoti Grech Cato



Hi,

My name is Raquel Foster.

I am a person living currently in Hackney on a boat. I wake up every morning searching for the sky, and then the trees near by.

My heart is sad at the moment. It is sorting through a lot of pain and sadness that surrounds us in the world but equally she is filled with joy and love with every new connection and inspiration I find from the people around me. We people are powerful and I thank the many ways we receive this power.

Whether from the spirits in our realm or the plants that guide us.

This poem is inspired by Nina Simone's West Wind, Originally by Miriam Makeba. Two wonderful women.

And by my grandparents that left their land to work on foreign soils, making me where I am today.



I am the soil

I am the soil from which They came
The climbing tentacles
The beating veins
humming green eternal
and unseen
Breath that feeds us all

I am the soil from which They came
hear me now remember my name
remember the face that you have claimed
I am here I am standing tall

I am the soil from which They came
the unwritten work the unwritten pain
Roots and seeds of the unbeaten plane
carried on winds of dust

I am the soil from which They came
beating the ground that made your fame
when will we ever be free again?
is Our history just written in rust?

I am the soil from which They came
from me, from you, I'll remember the names
I'll carry the Seeds of generations of strain
I'll plant the beauty of your eyes

I am the soil from which They came
what grew through You will grow again
never again will this garden be tamed
unified We shine in your demise

Raquel Foster





Jacob V Joyce

A queer black person with a basket of vegetables and huge grin. They are standing in front of many vibrant plants which look like the ones from Henri Rousseau paintings. The style is important because Rousseau was famous for creating images that defined the way westerners imagined the Caribbean. His work was kind of like "look how fantastical and exotic the black countries are" during a time of colonial expansion but they are also about how nature is full of joy and beauty.

Over the Rainbow
20 acres in West Wales
plus 1/2 acre

20 Acres & half
a mule



by Rose Thorn & Marie Lewis

Proven Ingredients:

Antiquant
Dutch
German
farmers
makers
menders

Tamaicant
Jewish
Syrian
farmers
growers
traders

loganberries
gooseberries
raspberries

Red
Black
currants
Apples
Walled garden

chillies
tomatoes
beetroots

There have been many Lewis owners but Marie is the first black & owner

Can I speak to the owner please?
(= you're black & can't possibly be the owner)

How did you manage to buy this?
(= you must have been selling drugs !!)

Do you do ALL this on your own?
(= where's your husband!)

GROWING

questions & ?

Frequent FORK-TONGUE



garden

Polytunnel

Foxhill

CYFFEITHIAU - PRESERVES

PRESERVING

HARVESTING

trading with local growers

cooking apples
plums
beetroot

marrows
pumpkins

foraging

Crab apples
damsons
rosehips
bullaces

the white legacy of sugar

environmental monoculture

African slave labour

We make:
Jam
Jellies
chutneys
marmalades

GRAND

Foxhill
DAMSON
jam

Queer Botany Cosmos

Disclaimers:

The piece contains a few botanical words. If this is your first time encountering them, take your time. Don't worry we took quite a while to dissect this too.

The mapped cosmic elements are not true to scale but scaled up for the human eye to enjoy.

When we look at the world to describe what we see, we see through the stories we tell ourselves, the metaphors that were created before us
In plant reproduction this is a story of male and female.
But let's take a closer look at how plants reproduce:

Plants live through an alternation of generations in their life cycle.
Going from sporophyte to gametophyte to sporophyte to gametophyte...

The sporophyte is the plant that we usually see.

for example a tree

It produces spores.

*in the tree internally and microscopically,
in a fern externally and visible with hand lens*

A spore grows into a gametophyte which can produce eggs and/or sperm.

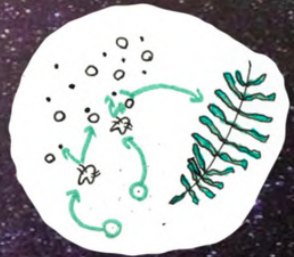
*for the tree this is the organ
that grows into embryo sac and/or pollen,
for the fern it is a separate being
that produces egg and sperm cells*

These come together to make an embryo.

*in the tree held in seed,
in the fern held in water*

The embryo germinates and grows into a sporophyte.

*This is the tree or fern that we know.
In mosses we tend to see the gametophyte,
while the sporophyte is much smaller.*



Plant sexual reproduction may have evolved via gene swaps with unrelated species involving bacteria and/or viruses, and/or fungi

how queer is that?

So, the reproductive organs of plants make gametes in two sizes

- Megagametes - these are larger, produce egg cells and were labelled "female"
- Microgamete - these are smaller, produce sperm cells and were labelled "male"

But how does this labelling scale up?



Is your head spinning yet?

Can we really call an entire plant male or female? And when we do, do we already start to unsee the plant that had both stamens only flowers and pistils only flowers? Or the plants that have flowers which have both? (these get called 'hermaphrodite' or 'perfect'...)

How do we scale up without becoming mixed up in our metaphor?
The problem is not metaphors. The problem is that one metaphor, male and female, was applied as Truth and scientific fact by early botanists from the white western colonial empires. This metaphor restricts our field of vision and clouds our ability to "create" multiple metaphors, many science fictions that can help us see more of what the plant world is up to.

There's a whole multiverse of metaphors out there...

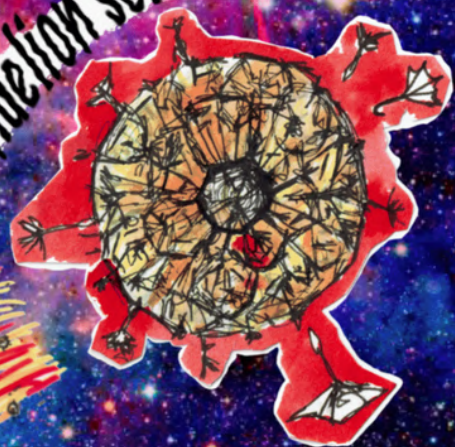
Symbiosis galaxy



Birch planet

Nymphaea

Dandelion selfing sun



Self cloning spider moons



Can you spot the bird-spaceships and the insect-asteroids and space weather phenomena (solar-pollen wind, rain,...) that are contributing agents in plant reproduction?

By taking the human formed concepts of male and female as our main lens through which to see plant reproduction, we miss the role of humans as symbionts - our engagement with plants is a co-development. Whether we think of the food/forest gardens of indigenous peoples or the long story from foraging grass seeds to monoculture wheat.

Are humans a plant reproductive part?

In horizontal gene transfer, genes are transferred between unrelated organisms and then passed on. For example ferns may have gained the ability to thrive in the dark forest understory from hornworts (a moss-relative). The hypothesis is that a hornwort came into contact with a fern's gametophyte - the gametes of this fern carried the gene and all of its progeny have benefited'.

Sexual reproduction is not the only way for plants to multiply - many plants reproduce vegetatively

How did you get your house plant?

Nymphaea prolifera is a night flowering water lily that makes a tuberous flower, which produces three flowers and a clonal plantlet. Each of the flowers it produces behaves the same way - making three more flowers and a plantlet, this continues exponentially into the hundreds until it burns out?..

Woow!!

If a tree puts out suckers which grow into more trees and eventually create a miniature forest - is this one individual or many?

The bramble provides parental care to the future oak grove.

Some plants even evolved sexual reproduction and began to favour vegetative reproduction using these new organs - for example many species of dandelion (around 250 in the UK) don't produce pollen anymore - they clone themselves via their seeds³.

One advantage of sexual reproduction - combining gametes - is that when two of these come together the resulting organism has a new diversity of genetic material. Sometimes plants combine across species or in ways where the next generation is infertile. This is often described as an evolutionary dead-end; but is not being able to reproduce really a dead-end? Not for the being involved. Occasionally an infertile organism manages to double its own chromosomes and reproduce - becoming a new species.

The end is not the end - what other examples can you think of? Draw here!



Further reading

Fara, P. (2003) Sex, Botany and Empire: The Story of Carl Linnaeus and Joseph Banks.

Gay Plants, Issue 1: Monsters Available at:

<https://gayplants.noblogs.org/files/2017/10/Gay-Plants-One-Monsters-viewing-colour.pdf>

Roughgarden, J. (2004) Evolution's Rainbow: Diversity, Gender, and Sexuality in Nature and People.

Schiebinger L. (1993) Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science.

And of course: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gametophyte>

¹ <https://datadryad.org/stash/dataset/doi:10.5061/dryad.fn2rg>

² <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6772974>

³ <https://bsbi.org/identification/taraxacum>

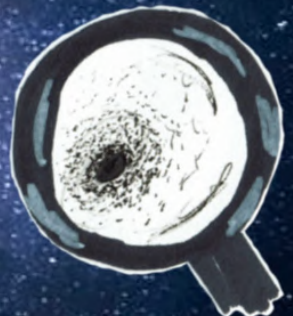
Ideas and words by:

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Randa (they/she) @spice.mystic

Illustrations by:


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Leah McGhee



We are living through the greatest period of change in human history, with our environment taking the toll. There is a sense in westernised culture that we are not connected to nature, most of us don't know where our food or water comes from beyond the tap and supermarkets. But mother nature has been trying to teach us ways in which we can grow, survive and thrive in tune with nature for a long time, and **we need to start listening.**

Mother Nature knows best

Soils

Our soils are home to more than 25% of the earth's biodiversity. Billions of microorganisms are communicating with each other beneath our feet. Their relationships with each other and plants underpin our agricultural systems. They cycle nutrients and can stop pests and pathogens from infecting crops. The more diverse the soil microbiome is, the more resilient it is to drought, pollution and pathogens.

Fungi play an important role in the soil, by forming intricate webs of mycelia that connect up plants and the underground world - **the wood wide web**. These plant-fungal interactions have co-evolved over 450 million years. Plants share their sugars in exchange for nutrients scavenged by the fungi. Plants can even communicate with each other through the mycelia and warn others of predator attacks. 80% of land plants have relationships with mycorrhizal fungi. However, the agricultural and industrial revolution, which was intertwined with the expansion of colonialism, led to the excessive use of fertilisers and pesticides. In this nutrient excessive environment, our crops are less reliant on maintaining these beneficial relationships. Some modern cultivars cannot form these relationships as well wild relatives. Farming practices that aim to **restore the soil** can reduce the need for excessive fertiliser use.

Soils teach us that biodiverse communities are more **resilient**. This is a lesson for our local and growing communities, building resilience will be important in adjusting our agricultural systems to **climate change**. Like plants, we should nurture symbiotic relationships with each other.

Seeds

Britain's summers will be longer and dryer and winters waterlogged and milder, with more extreme weather all year round. Although longer, warmer summers might seem like a good thing, plants need to rest over winter otherwise they are vulnerable to pests and diseases.

Seeds teach us we have everything we need within us, but we need the right conditions to emerge. Seeds are a balance of feminine and masculine energies, they can wait patiently for over 120 years for the right conditions to flourish. They teach us to have courage that the right conditions for growth will come, and when they are provided we will be rewarded. Seeds connect us to our land and cultures, even when we have been taken from, or, our land was taken from us. **Heirloom seeds** contain the past diversity needed to face the diverse growing conditions of the future.

Romona Button, from the Pima tribe and reservation on Gila River, facing drier and drier growing conditions has revived the growing of the tepary bean. Tepary bean is a variety of bean grown by native people in the Gila River region for generations. It can close its leaves and turn away from the sun, making it incredibly drought resistant. They grow best under stress. Ramona's revival of the tepary bean helps to feed her community and reconnect people to their traditional foodways and culinary history and heritage. All thanks to her seed saving father who stashed a jar of tepary beans in an old truck, which she found decades later.



Forests

We have survived for 200,000 years because of our ability to cooperate. We can convey complex information to each other, through language, art, and e-mails. But we have shifted away from communities based on cooperation, and we now value competition.

How we've studied nature - in western society - has been dictated by how we think and feel about each other. Scientists used to think plants were in constant competition for scarce resources. They believed nature mirrored our competitive economic systems - rooted in colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy. Foresters were advised to cut down *competing trees* in plantations. But eventually, we worked out the truth, the key to plants' success on this planet is due to their **cooperation**. In fact, the more stressful the environment the more likely plants are working together for mutual survival.

In forests, trees nurse saplings, their leaves provide nutrients to help the sapling establish and protect seedlings from harsh conditions. Mother nature teaches us to **plant for partnership**. Companion plants can block wind, hold soil, source water, fix nitrogen from the air, and boost soil nutrients, just to name a few! Companion planting or agroecology can make a huge difference as plants deal with shifting weather patterns and growing zones.





Land

Access to land is unequal, unfair and we should ask ourselves, should an individual or corporation be allowed to own vast swathes of land anyway? Sharing the stewardship of our natural resources with a diverse group of people could work against the domination of large-scale industrial farms that degrade the natural environment.

Indigenous peoples practise communal land stewardship. They comprise 5% of the global population but their lands hold 80% of the world's biodiversity, emit the least amount of greenhouse gases and hold the largest carbon reserves on the planet. Clearly, they have been doing something right. Indigenous land stewardship works as well as, or better than, government imposed protected areas for reducing deforestation. Yet since the creation of the euro-centric scientific community, indigenous teachings have been ignored and their relationship and knowledge about the land discounted.

Indigenous peoples have deep knowledge and awareness of the complex interconnectedness of the natural world, which has been built up through thousands of years of co-existing and observation. This knowledge is passed down through their oral and cultural history, and now the scientific community is starting to listen. Their lives and values are shaped around a core understanding of kinship, and interconnectedness, and based on concepts of reciprocal sharing and inclusivity. Indigenous land practices provide a framework for sustainable land management which balances the needs of nature and humans.





DECOLONISING Houseplants

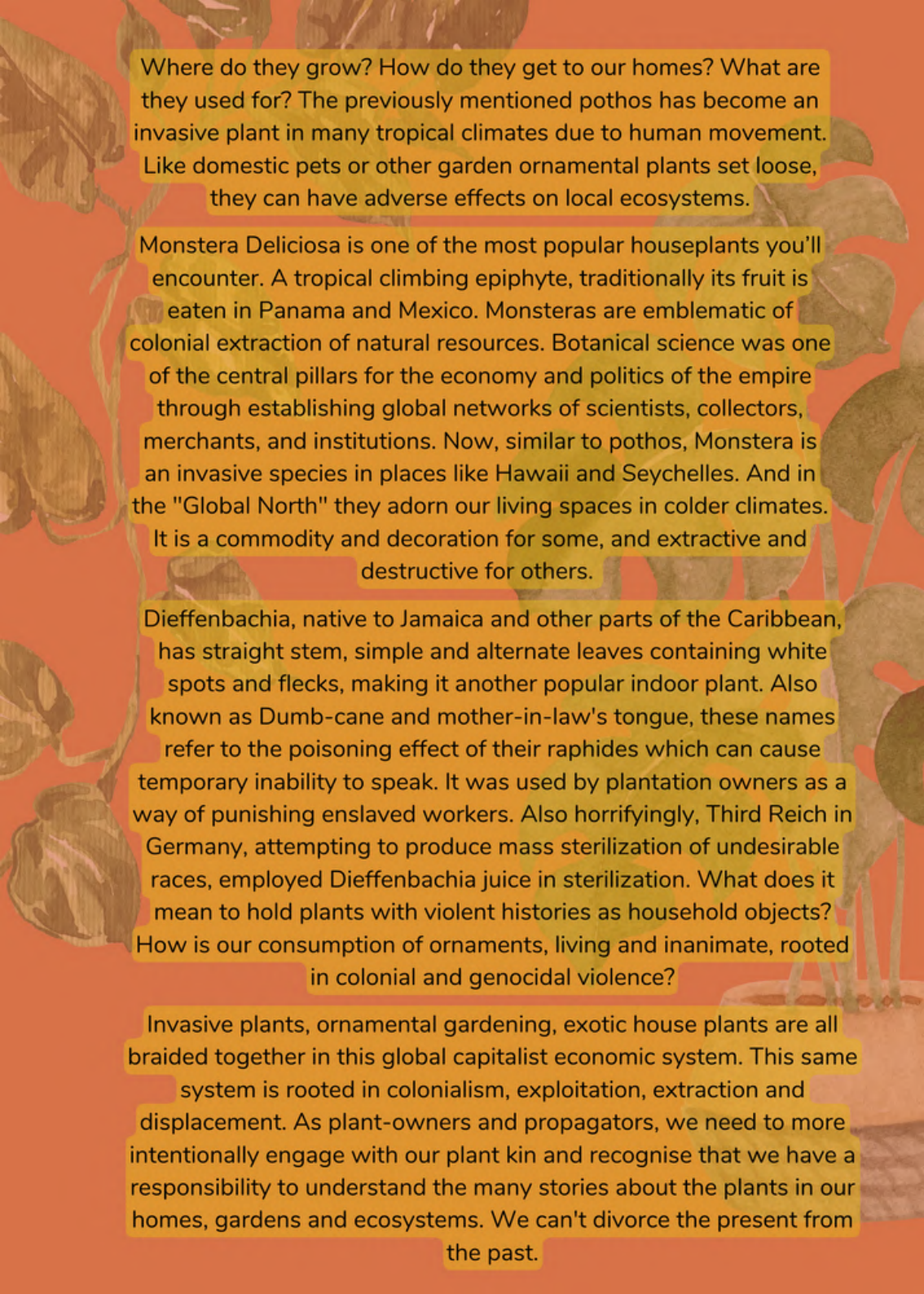
Houseplants are commonplace in a millennial/gen z's home. "Online plant store Patch said 67% of Londoners bought a houseplant in the last 12 months, according to its research.

There was a 10% rise in plant purchasing for 25- to 34-year-olds. The store sold 130,000 plants in 2018 and is on track to sell 300,000 in 2019." (The Guardian). There are jokes about how houseplants have become the new pets, and pets the new children as young people struggle to make ends meet. Moreover, scientific studies confirming common sense and thousands of years of indigenous wisdom that plants are good for our mental health have us surrounded by emotional support pothos.

Botany is intricately tied with colonialism. From the introduction of breadfruit from Tahiti to Jamaica to feed enslaved workers, to plantation crops such as tea in India and Sri Lanka. In the end, the house plant industry is just that - an industry, another market under capitalism. Plants were the green gold of European empires and houseplants are just part of that continuation. Assumed and accepted as a benign feature of our homes, we ignore the history and present of these plants.



£60
Dyffenbachia



Where do they grow? How do they get to our homes? What are they used for? The previously mentioned pothos has become an invasive plant in many tropical climates due to human movement. Like domestic pets or other garden ornamental plants set loose, they can have adverse effects on local ecosystems.

Monstera Deliciosa is one of the most popular houseplants you'll encounter. A tropical climbing epiphyte, traditionally its fruit is eaten in Panama and Mexico. Monsteras are emblematic of colonial extraction of natural resources. Botanical science was one of the central pillars for the economy and politics of the empire through establishing global networks of scientists, collectors, merchants, and institutions. Now, similar to pothos, Monstera is an invasive species in places like Hawaii and Seychelles. And in the "Global North" they adorn our living spaces in colder climates. It is a commodity and decoration for some, and extractive and destructive for others.

Dieffenbachia, native to Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean, has straight stem, simple and alternate leaves containing white spots and flecks, making it another popular indoor plant. Also known as Dumb-cane and mother-in-law's tongue, these names refer to the poisoning effect of their raphides which can cause temporary inability to speak. It was used by plantation owners as a way of punishing enslaved workers. Also horrifyingly, Third Reich in Germany, attempting to produce mass sterilization of undesirable races, employed Dieffenbachia juice in sterilization. What does it mean to hold plants with violent histories as household objects? How is our consumption of ornaments, living and inanimate, rooted in colonial and genocidal violence?

Invasive plants, ornamental gardening, exotic house plants are all braided together in this global capitalist economic system. This same system is rooted in colonialism, exploitation, extraction and displacement. As plant-owners and propagators, we need to more intentionally engage with our plant kin and recognise that we have a responsibility to understand the many stories about the plants in our homes, gardens and ecosystems. We can't divorce the present from the past.

Decolonising x queering botany with @mindyourownplants

"Nobody wants the plantation grown, chemically ripened plantain." - a Jamaican grandad with knowledge.

-

When I asked myself who this piece was for I recognised it's for my *landworking comrades* and those yet to reconnect with the land, not those seeking labour intensive free education, with that in mind, remember, this piece isn't a lecture, I approach you with the assumption that our intellectual levels are comparable.

I, like many other trans femmes, want to provide joy, who doesn't? But how can joy exist without acknowledging the hardships that queer people still find themselves subjected to on a daily basis, it goes beyond the tweets, the hate crimes, the targeted violence and micro aggressions, in the uk, it's truly systemic it goes beyond failings, neglect and discrimination.

Meanwhile our realities have been commodified and sold back to us as a Eurocentric diluted version of something that aims to represent and imitate us, many seek representation and in my opinion representation is too liberal, I implore you to seek more, take up the space you're entitled to occupy, change the directions of the discussions, take their institutions out of the archaic binary past and ensure the voices of your ancestors are heard.

-

A message to those dominating agriculture, horticulture and botany as a result of historical colonial oppressive tactics, we *see you, we won't be silenced, our inclusion isn't to be tokenised*, your historical narrative is in desperate need of a radical and sincere overhauling.

-

"To be genetically specific." -

Some call them gender critical's, others *call them* terf's, but here we categorise them by their own logic, they're categorised by *what they are*, trans exclusionary bigoted fossils, unwilling to change and stuck in an age of binary categorisation that just doesn't fit for many individuals living in this current society.

Carl Linnaeus, known to the modern day Anglos and those adjacent to the established institutions, as the Father of Taxonomy, dictated and theorised that

"Plant taxonomy was based solely on the number and arrangement of the reproductive organs; a plant's class was determined by its male organs, and its order by its female organs.

This resulted in many groupings that seemed unnatural." - Bigotry and biology.

We all hear the same old lines from terf's, screaming about genetics, biology and organs like the sinister eugenicists they wish to be, it seems like the way we think about categorisation was never quite right, it is misunderstood and obsolete, it's important to recognise that fractional parts of individuals identities cannot always be defined within the binary, regardless, to overlook that and act with disregard is directly harmful and constitutes erasure.

As queer individuals in society we know there is more to life than the superficial one-dimensional binary identity.

Like the "complex" plants, we exist with pride, unapologetically, regardless of external affirmation.

Resist the white picket fence. -

Their preferences for lawns and concrete driveways over fruitful gardens and community spaces reverberates, it's generational, we know they favour plastic wrapped, mono cropped vegetables, some call it "the American dream", but to many it's nothing but an amplified nightmare and sadly, it's been exported to the capitalistic colonies across the world and it's at the expense of queer people and marginalised communities.

A fence is nothing but a boundary, marking the territorial dominion one wishes to maintain dominance over.

As queer individuals in botany and horticulture we often see the effects these mindsets and ideologies have on communities like ours, not only is it restrictive and hostile, it's almost like allowing Monsanto products into to our *Eden*, it's illogical, as we know the value of the ecosystems we're responsible for restoring and learning from.

To many, community has been neglected, underserved and devalued, the barriers in place restrict the opportunities for development, it extends across industries, urban

developments and community projects, but what actually happens behind the white picket fences?

We see their lawns, they remain desolate, inspired by the French colonial era, the grass that has failed to reach heights that will ever support diversity, it's periodically reviewed by the "owner" and it's growth is restricted, for a superficial appearance is favoured.

The white picket fence could be seen as a symbol of the colonial and capitalistic intersections in ideologies, but, it's a literal fence, it's hostile by nature.

As we observe the constraints and barriers throughout the world we recognise that they're normally used in conjunction with authoritarianism, think, "it's my land", "this is private property", just two simple examples of hostile phrases many have sadly experienced and heard.

As maintainers of the land we *know* working towards a land without constraints and borders is how we will succeed in flourishing, as our pollen is created to spread, like our teachings, we share with the hope of creating a future that we can see ourselves and others like us thriving in.

So why is *it* that as individuals in society we still favour fortresses over communities?

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Trans planting ideologies. -

Are movements that aim to support queer individuals *attainable within* this current framework?

The giving nature within, seems to be below bare minimum, the teachings of sharing and observing life, have been sidelined for convince, the gift which keeps giving, has yet to be given.

Give a plant to your queer homies!

Propagation, it is the gift that keeps giving, it enables the act of sharing through division, but a division that serves the community, it could be root division or segregated cuttings, either way, its good. Remembering the goal is not to overflow in greenery, like the colonising queen and her many Victorian estate gardens, but to spread the lessons and teachings, quite literally, exchanging and giving plant gifts, swapping seeds, just some simple acts that are somewhat accessible, receptiveness is the key.

When we reflect back on the past few years, to the varieties of trauma the trans communities *have* been subjected to it's very easy to call for some sort of collective care, but knowing what that should look like is difficult, we have seen many individuals and organisations try, some with success, but mostly we have *seen* a stress for resistive rest and reflection but how can one rest and reflect within the same stagnated surroundings?

I don't claim to have all the solutions but I can honestly say the lessons available to individuals when connecting to the earth, are intrinsically valuable and shouldn't be overlooked.

-

Not all plants are equal, some are cultivated for desirable traits, some are wild, be wild.

We must reflect on what we deem to be dispensable.

Now we rest - we plant - we grow.

There's a lot I could say, but in defence of the plants, we tend to overlook a lot of the teachings and still to this day many individuals continue to recategorize species based on their new findings and teachings, let that demonstrate that there's still much to learn.

Until the revolution comes, we *resist* through our actions, our words and the crops we maintain



Sasha - MindYourOwnPlants



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Occupy The Countryside

occupation is a protest. we protest to protect, not what privilege has preserved in the countryside, but, Nature

itself. unruly, wild, generative, everything that a manicured lawn in a stately home is not.

occupy the countryside is about the journey involved with occupation; what it takes to get to there and also what

lies beyond in the future. it is the re-membling of marginalised people to spaces and places where they've been told they don't belong.

we grew up here, hazy sunshine on endless golden fields, and hate speech, violence and anger on the winds.

elements shape you.

we are mixed race and we came to be on this island through the violence of colonialism; our mauritian ancestors

had been displaced so that britain could drink sugar in tea. of course our history is british history. despite its

attempted erasure, despite the quagmire of rural racism.

elements shape you. journeying away from this place was necessary so that we could return, defiant, to reclaim

our space to grow. the hostility of monoculture fields and delusions make it harder to do what we must - occupy -

but the countryside is for everyone, especially those who are not already claiming space.

the pushback is immense. white supremacy has a grotty, gnarly edge when it is challenged by something as

beautiful as authenticity. when we cultivate a garden, we are actually cultivating ourselves, truth and justice. we

are many. in solidarity we rise even in the most inhospitable places. we turn hatred into fertiliser and we sow our futures.

Dani & Corinne

Dani and Corinne are siblings and two members of the workers cooperative, Thyme Tu. Thyme Tu takes up space in rural Norfolk, reclaiming land based crafts and beyond-organic food cultivation.

This piece is part of their artistic collection,

Occupy the Countryside

www.thymetu.art



Produced by Zoe Miles, Sam
Sivapragasam & Mylo North

Cultivating Justice is a narrative project
focused on platforming and uplifting the
voices of Black people and people of colour
as well as people of marginalised genders in
landwork. It was a collaborative project
between Land In Our Names, Out On The
Land and Farmerama

You can buy all the zines and merchandise
at landinournames.community/shop

You can listen to the podcast at
[soundcloud.com/farmerama-
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Our exquisite logo is by @blkmoodboy -
another comrade for the revolution



CULTIVATING JUSTICE

