

compiled by

DEIFY



cover artworks by Tyberius Larking / @burrowsbeneath

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

'Queer Masculinities' was created on the stolen lands of the Ngunnawal, Ngunawal, Ngambri, Wurundjeri and Bunurong Peoples.

As we dream of the future of masculinity for our community, we must acknowledge colonisation's attempts to forcibly erase queer masculinities in Indigenous communities throughout the world. We must create space for and honour the past and present blueprints laid by our queer masculine Indigenous community members.

Always was, always will be.

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ABOUT THE ZINE

While perceptions of masculinity are often entwined with Western and cis/heteronormative understandings, we thought to take this opportunity to emphasise the various ways masculinity can be understood and experienced.

This zine compiles nine lived experiences of masculinity by individuals who both identify as queer, intersex and/or transgender, as well as Bla(c)k, Indigenous and/or a person of colour.

The submissions describe both the flourishing lives of our community, as well as the challenges. Most importantly, they're real.

As a zine, collective and community, we hope to reimagine and redefine what masculinity is expected to entail.

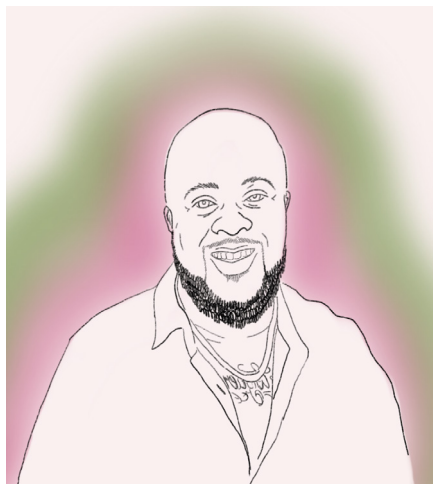
ABOUT DEIFY

DEiFY is a Queer, Trans, Intersex and Bla(c)k, Indigenous and People of Colour (QTIBIPOC) Collective and operates on the stolen lands of Ngunnawal, Ngunawal and Ngambri Country (Canberra).

INTERVIEW WITH KAYDEN COLEMAN PT. 1

This interview (part 1&2) discusses transphobia, racism, anti-Blackness, and Black death in medical and general contexts; reproductive rights; toxic masculinity

Okay, my name is Kayden Coleman. I am a 30 something-year-old trans guy. I live in Houston, Texas, in the good ol' U.S. So I'm a transgender advocate, educator, consultant, keynote speaker. I do DE&I trainings, so diversity, equity inclusion training, and I'm also on the verge of being an author, trying to get this project off the ground. It's just proven a lot more difficult than anticipated, but I guess I am an author now. Wow. I'm an author [of the 'Dads Give Birth' project] as well. I also am a seahorse dad. I have two daughters who are eight and almost two, 22 months now.



DEiFY: *Would you like to tell us more about the Dads Give Birth book and the motivation behind it?*

The book is a children's book it is, you know, very heavily focused on illustration. However, it does, it tells a story from my oldest daughter's point of view, basically about her family and how her family came up, how it came together. The different components of our family being that her sister and her share two different other dads and co-parenting and what that looks like and just the

different, "hey, my dad gave birth," portion and how, though our family is different, we're very much the same as a lot of other families.

I thought about how, at her age, she's able to absorb and understand who I am, where I've come from, where she came from, because I've been telling her since she could recognize body parts and that she had two dads [...] "Hey, where did you come from? What is your dad's thing?" So I know that she understands it. [...] I know a lot of adults that want the book too. So I was like, if I make it a little bit expansive, it would be something that I know a lot of people would not mind having on their bookshelf, like in their repertoire.

DEiFY: *Yeah, definitely. And to have something that can be kind of understood as well in kind of terms or, navigated from an early age as well is quite important.*

Yes, and there are a lot of adults that can only understand transness from a child's age group, as well. So I think

it'll serve a lot of purposes.

DEiFY: Just from your perspective, we were wondering what reproductive justice means to you?

Reproductive justice to me is, I mean, literally what it says — justice for reproduction. For people who can reproduce. I know the focus is on women. And I never want to take the focus off of women. I just wish the conversation could be more inclusive without the pushback. I don't understand. I still can't wrap my mind around why it bothers people so much that people who don't identify as women have uteruses and things of that nature. And, you know, I'm doing my best with my platform to educate people on what that looks like and what that means. And try to steer the conversation away from this whole simple biology conversation that people keep having as though biology is simple at all. And what's really helping with that is having people who are, were assigned female at birth, right, who have XY chromosomes who also carry children. And understanding that your idea, even your scientific idea of male means that there are men that can give birth regardless of whether they're trans or intersex or whatever the case may be. It should be an inclusive conversation. So I think that reproductive justice is having autonomy over our bodies as people who can carry and birth children. As to whether or not we want to, carry and or birth children,

and then also what that looks like during the carrying stage and also having that support after in the postpartum period as well.



DEiFY: Definitely. I think there's definitely a really important conversation to be had about movements, with any sort of civil rights, like any human rights movement is always a lot stronger when you have solidarity between different community groups.

Exactly and despite my attempts to say, "Hey, cis women, we are not trying to erase you, the only people who are trying to erase you are the people who are doing these things in the first place. We're trying to walk shoulder to shoulder with you." There's still this like, fight, this gatekeeping of childbirth and abortion and things of that nature. And I don't

think that people are understanding that there is strength in numbers. And if we want to have a conversation about logistics, we can do that. Once we get this taken care of, once we can legally have abortions, once we're not having to go into the back alleys or find loopholes and ways to achieve or attain the things that we should be able to have access to either way.

DEiFY: Yeah, I've seen a bit of your work kind of sheds light on kind of the positivity of medical professionals in the health industry. I was wondering if you felt comfortable, if you would want to share maybe some kind of intersecting challenges that you've faced, while trying to specifically access healthcare.

I think the most obvious intersection would be me being someone who is capable of giving birth and also being Black and also being trans, right. So the mortality rate of Black women in childbirthing spaces is I believe it's 2.5 times the amount of white people. [...] There's this idea in the [U.S.] medical system, that Black people are able to take pain easier, we have a high, a higher tolerance to pain.

So when we go into medical spaces, and it's not just childbirth, we go into medical spaces that were complaining about being in pain, or whatever the case may be. It's almost as though they'll try anything to not treat us. There's always this dismissiveness that happens so a lot

of us end up going on misdiagnosed or under-diagnosed. A great example of that was my first pregnancy. I went into the doctor and I'm listing out all of my symptoms, which in hindsight, are all symptoms of pregnancy. But they kept dismissing me. I found out I was pregnant, despite me being in and out of my doctor's office, who by the way, was an LGBT Clinic. My provider was a trans man. And still nobody thought to provide me with a pregnancy test.

If I was a cisgender, Black woman, or even a cisgender Latinx woman, they would be shoving pregnancy tests down my throat. I know because I've lived my life as, as a cisgender woman before too. You stub your toe and walk into the hospital and they're like "you might be pregnant because [you] don't know anything about birth control and all you do is have sex unprotected and reproduce." Add on that layer of transness and that goes out of the window. Add on the layer of being Black and trans and our medical visits turn into conversations about, I don't know, how far along we're gonna go in our surgery when we're in there for, I don't know, ingrown hair, you know? So we always are having to not only advocate for ourselves as trans people, you know, just asking for basic, please don't misgender me, please provide me with the care that is in alignment with who I am. You know what I mean? Take into account that I'm on hormones, take into account that you know, yes, I might need OBGYN visits, however,

they might not want to treat it as though you were the cis woman and figure out how to do that by you know, educating yourself. Of course, we could go on and on. It took me a long time for me to acknowledge and I guess kind of accept that, I am considered disabled due to my many, many medical things[.] Having multiple disabilities can be super debilitating and we're expected to navigate life,

you know, and not complain because our disabilities are invisible, nobody takes them seriously.

Part 2 is on page 19

Illustrations of Kayden by Thy @t.ilenodo





ESSENCES

Dilsah's artist bio mentions domestic violence and child trafficking.

Mixed media, 2021

Dilsah is a Meanjin (Brisbane) based artist with her roots in Sri Lanka, Switzerland and France. Dilsah has a background in theatre and visual art. Their art reflects her life experiences and the people she has met along the way. The Eastern and Western pearls of wisdom and cultures have played a crucial role in her life as well.

They are a survivor of a child trafficking, domestic violences (mental, physical and sexual) and are raising four children. They recently graduated from the University of Queensland with a Master of Business in Entrepreneurship and Leadership.

Dilsah is an activist and feminist who has participated in an array of projects to dismantle taboos such as violence towards women, and societal gender norms. They want to communicate and make a meaningful change of their surroundings.

Presently, they are actively participating in leadership projects, storytelling, acting, painting and radio broadcasting. Dilsah is soon to become a counsellor/ social worker to support their community.

THE HEART IS A KITCHEN COUNTER BY TIAN

This piece contains mentions of bodily harm

1.

awash in the glow of the refrigerator light and i'm leaning on the granite stacking and unstacking tupperware containers i've pulled from the cupboard.

i don't really like to cook.

my hunger grows alongside lemongrass stalks and lime tree branches tucked in my pocket is a spiralbound notebook of transcribed cooking shows, my mother's watchful eye, patrilineal words borrowed from friends.

i don't really like to cook but i like to eat.

i promise i'm not pot i'm not kettle i'm mortar bones and pestle hands – i silently beg someone to take them and grind down my hipbones

i'd do it for you if you asked, but i hope you won't need me to
everything is simply add to taste.

to bring my face too close to you makes my eyes water, i hope you don't notice that. i am still scribbling alongside the spiral binding – prep, cooking, serving, eating time delayed by the fact that

i don't like to cook though, i say when you try to replace pen with pestle. i mean, i can't cook though.

your calloused fingertips feel like cool riverstones as they smear spring onions and chilli seeds into my eyes.

2.

zhongfan please

i am warming my fingertips in thin breaths of steam.

these fingers have been burnt, singed, scraped against brick. between the ages of 15 and 17 i'd punch the wall like clockwork on the way to lunch.

zhongfan please

there are libraries for how boys can best bloody their hands, but not a single recipe for how rice absorbs water.

does everyone else have to craft the thing that sustains them from scratch?

zhongfan please

once when prepping dinner, the peeler slipped and as i cooled my ring finger on my tongue, looking down at the droplet blood moon against granite sky, all i could think of was

underground caves and water dripping from stalactites.

zhongfan please

15 to 17, you became substance and energy. you were water pouring and you were grains and the heat, the chrysalis pot. i am the cavernous stomach full of blood that never sees the light of day.

do you want to chew on me with the same force?

3.

the cupboard is closed. leaning on the granite, my fingers are mortar and pestle to each other. but perhaps
i allow the sticky flour, water, red food dye to lie on the soft underbelly of my palms, the scrapes on the hull of this knuckle ribcage are knitting back together.

every ailment can be made better by adding ginger, i think, as bubbles of syrup begin to hiccup over the flames.

how can our hands that push and pull with such force be taught to give ourselves life? sustenance?

quieter: maybe i want to learn
you don't answer me, smiling, but we both think of the mortar and pestle, the steam of the rice cooker, the gas stoves under our skins.

the water pours over the stones, breaks them into grains, then into paste, then into ginger that clutters the kitchen counter, covers the granite already smudged with dye.

spiralbound annotation: to cook is to rediscover yourself on someone else's palette. when your teeth become stuck in my rice flour cheeks, i breathe in heavily through my nose *ginger* i let my skin cave in, i don't run from the kitchen. round jaw borrowed from Canton stained red and dusted with fine white powder. finally, i am learning to think not of jawbreakers, but of gently bobbing 汤圆 .

in return, i roll your face between my palms. i am absorbed by you. i am ground down and reformed by you. when i eat, the aftertaste is of you. in thanks, i colour your hands and lips a gentle pink.

please: 食飯 sikfan.

汤圆 : tāngyuán, a Chinese dessert consisting of balls of glutinous rice flour, boiled or deep-fried, served in hot (often ginger) syrup

食飯 / sik fan: "eat rice", a phrase said at the start of a meal to invite everyone to begin eating
zhongfan: "scoop the rice"

Note: Many cultures consider cooking a traditionally feminine task, but I can't help noticing that in my own life, all my closest queer masculine relationships have been uniquely defined by the presence and sharing of food. We've sustained ourselves with Chinese New Year lunches, recited recipes for each other to scrawl down, eaten with our knees knocking under crowded tables and made ruckuses on riversides. Served okonomiyaki with a side of 鱼生 and chased it down with 汤圆 . Thrown together feasts from frozen garlic bread, fried chicken, handfuls of frozen grapes and any other leftovers that need to be eaten. Somewhere amongst the folding of gyoza, elbow-to-elbow, we created ourselves too.

Thanks to all my friends who've ever cooked me dinner – hopefully I can leave the flavours of my love lingering on your tongue too sometime.

Masculinity
Masculinity's Toxic? Nahhhh!
All you gotta do is be a man!
So Suck it Up son!
Come on now your a man ain't ya!
Unaware Emotionally!
Let me Bottle up and
It'll be fine! It's just a boy thing after all!
Nah his just a boy being a boy.
It's not like it'll happen again!
They won't do it again but!
Yesterday, Today, Some Days, Everyday?
Hmm

Written by MadB

Chosen oh so carefully, I set myself free.



Alexander Sarsfield

LINES

This piece of writing discusses gender identity and body image

there is a line that runs down my palm

the back of my arms, the middle of my stomach

tied to me like the hands of an infant child
to a mother, a tight tuck;

these lines paint my skin with the love of my elders and my kin

and yet — a certain vigilance embalms me
when your prying eyes flit down

and criticise me.

there's a hole in my chest
the size of a little girl

who was told her body was not her's solely
there is a dress that sits on my bed

and today I take the chance to sew, wear, undress and be
unaware

of any lines that any body could draw on me
I reminded myself of the dream

where a tongueless song escaped from the lungs
of a boy who looked very little like me

his eyes were asleep
but I was wide awake and I saw him scream,
from across that unending lake

I gathered the courage to close my eyes

and to awaken inside his dream.
he was me, and I was him

I stitched and I stitched, until I'd crudely patched up our seam

if I run my hands past the fabric and smoothen down every curve
that's nobody's business but my own
if i were to draw the lines across all my t's and dot every i

like it's "supposed to be"...
would it be better if I were straight, or white or anything else you'd like me to be?

who would I be.. if I wasn't true to Their history?

DON'T draw lines on me and
DON'T dress me in clothes you've seen on other bodies
DON'T treat me like a blank canvas

and don't touch me like I'm just no body.

you think I'm acting out?
this all an act, and you think
you're my saving grace?
you think this is the part where I go through

some sort of sick, delirious, rebellious phase?
where the lines are "improv" but I can see right through
the acting,

you know you've had your choices memorised.
you've thought this through more than just once
you've had me villainized.

but this is my stage and my lines are... MY LINES.

you don't get to be the authority.

if the lines on my button down are any clue to you
don't throw me against a wall and claim to know me,
like a father knows his son, names side by side for posterity

Don't draw your perfect
pretty
precautious
lines onto my page and do not preach sincerity.

I promise to make you see:
that little girl or boy, or whoever else I might've been

I'll make sure their words
do not go unsung,
I'll draw my own shapes and lines

i'll draw them with clarity.

Ni (they/them) is a queer, non-binary person of colour, born and raised in India and is now based in Sydney. They are a part of the Youth Committee at the MCA expresses themselves creatively through poetry, music and visual arts. This piece was written at a workshop run by Laniyuk for Collective Imagining (run by FYA). It was written as an exploration of the idea that in a perfect world, bodies would not define a person's worth.



INTERVIEW WITH MALCOLM XY

This interview contains mentions of apartheid in South Africa

1) Please introduce yourself! Tell us a bit about who you are and your work.

Hey, my name is Anivuyina I'm South African and in queer spaces I predominantly perform as drag king- Malcolm XY (He/She/They).

2) What have been the reference points for your masculinity (i.e. role models, media representations, cultural phenomena etc.)?

I enjoyed discovering my masculinity. I remember while visiting my grandmother in her village and playing 'house' upstairs with girls and I always ended up being 'dad' and leading different adventures.

Some of my reference points for my masculinity are; Gladys Bentley, Malcolm X, Xhosa gar-

ments, Boyz in the Hood (film), Sylvester, Grace Jones, Dennis Rodman, Lafayette from 'True Blood', all of the anti-apartheid activists who lead us to freedom i.e., Ida Fiyo Mntwana and literally Lil Bow Wow.

3) How has your Blackness and/or queerness influenced these reference points?

Pre-colonial times Africa was so fluid from the GNC garments to the fact that in Xhosa we do not have 'she' or 'he' pronouns (there is no grammatical gender). And so I remember being confused when people were looked down on for not conforming to strict gender roles.

I was lucky to have Nelson Mandela become our president a year before I was born, and be that first generation to experience a life knowing freedom. To be honest it is my ancestors, history and the anti-apartheid freedom fighters, that inspire everything that comes from me- my masculinity, my femininity, my fluidity, my Black pride.

I moved to Australia at nine-years-old, then went back to South Africa for 1 year and then finally came back to permanently live in Australia at eleven. It was an adjustment and so thank god there were Black



TV shows and artists out for me and my brother to binge and feed our souls with. And it was enough as we ended up visiting home once a year.

4) How has your career as a drag artist influenced how you conceptualise masculinity or vice versa?

It's definitely freed me more. For example, sometimes I pack and/or bind when I am just running errands whereas before drag I didn't realize I could. Drag gave me that epiphany that I can do whatever and that there are no rules. I went to a Mardi Gras event in a beard and people thought I was in drag but really I just presented how I felt that day. That was just how I wanted to look. The next year I was a Black Barbie. I'm genderfluid but that doesn't mean you owe people constant androgynous presentation. There's many layers and intersections to masculinity and I mix things up a lot – clothes, pronouns, genders, names of affection – to be honest anything goes.

5) In some of your performances, politics are interwoven amongst disco music and dance – when you're putting together a set or a look, what ideas and feelings are you tapping into? What's your aim for each set?

I always want to enjoy myself, have fun with my sets and spread love. I like to wear my hair as it is in dreads, or put on my braids or big Afro and 'LIVE' on stage. Recently at Drag N Dine I danced to Sylvester for a whole month – I love paying homage to Black and/or Queer icons who were ahead of their time, whether it's through lip sync or sampling a Malcolm speech, etc. At Queer events, Black [drag] kings, producers and audience members are quite scarce and so there is some work to do and visibility is important.

6) Can you talk us through some of the times you have felt most held and supported by community?

'The Drag Kings' run by Laura Hart was the

first stage I dragged on and where I basically recited a whole (reworked) Malcolm X speech and from there I remember Gabe recommended to Heaps Gay that I perform and after I did, Marlena put me on a Bowie Cabaret and it's just sort of continued and sometimes it's a blur and I should really post more. Laura made me aware of the 'People of Cabaret' whom I ended up doing various shows with at the Darlo and they helped me grow so much. That was also where I met Tyra and Honey and joined the @super_massive_blaq_moles and it has been the best time. Just trust that what is meant to be will be and that there is no need to ever force things.

7) What would you say to any young BIPOC who would like to navigate/get into the drag scene? Any closing words?

I would say to fully embrace yourself, do not second guess your instincts or try to replicate, no one can do you better than you. People are drawn to authenticity. And listen to yourself, i.e., if you need a performing break, take one and I love my breaks – I'm on one right now. And just have a good time doing with what you are doing.

BLAK LOVE POEM

(BROTHERBOY/4BROTHERBOY NO WHITEFELLAS NEED APPLY)

This poem mentions colonisation in so-called Australia

You feel familiar to be around, warm & cozy
a well-worn path, or the sweater Nan handed down,
handed down by her mother before. You are
every missed sunrise & all the full moons
witnessed in the sky. Recreate tracks of
Country along the scars on your arms, deep as
the wrinkles splitting open the dry land.
Learn to love my boy spirit the way you do,
carve a space into myself the way Dungula
carves herself into the dirt, unapologetic
& wild & life giving; this Blak body
which gives and takes life, too. I am
nhanha & tjeera, the slow grevillea of
body hair furls along my arms, chest,
thighs –
buries itself into your mouth
& you laugh, murmur something
about how it'll be your turn soon
to grow.

Every night you lay lips upon the soft swell
of my stomach, rub gel in. I like to imagine that
we watch as bush grows thick & unrestrained
like the land before the white man came
& colonised the earth.

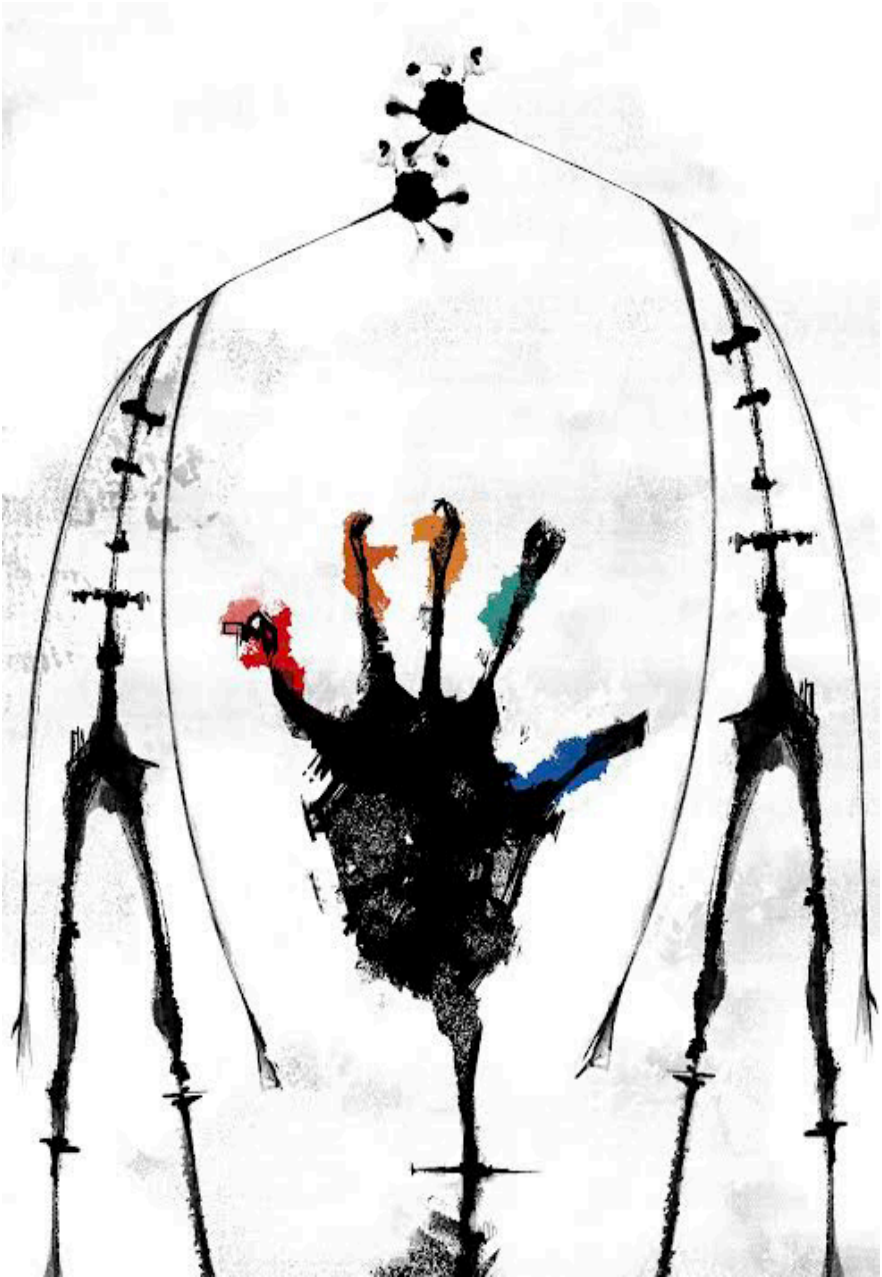
Rémy Cohen (xe/they/he) is a Blak, Jewish
brotherboy living on Wurundjeri Country in Naarm.

Xer work focuses on decolonisation, healing intergenerational trauma, and the relationships we have between ourselves, our families and communities, and the environment. Xer focus on connection to Country and language and radical Blak love works to decolonise and celebrate narratives otherwise stolen through the process of colonisation.

NGANI NAT

Trailing hands long old biyula skin
spirit singing for that big feed
rejuvenating self on ancestor's Country
feet bare-soft on rich brown soil
Blakfulla soil, where moirra meets man
(and woman, and
brothaboy, and sistagirl, and and and)
I tilt my head back, breathe
saltwater air freezing my warm lungs
imitate crow call filtering down – laughing
as Waa cackles back to me,
reminding I am here always
and always have been since the
slow dark turn of the earth.

Here,
I imagine my father still
holds me, rough hands cradling the
borrinyu of my small djurda body
vulnerable in a way we've never
allowed ourselves to be.
Perhaps this is what heals
the promise that if you show
me the soft flesh of your
underbelly I'll shield it for as
long as you shield mine, too;
reclaim me
and I'll reclaim you.



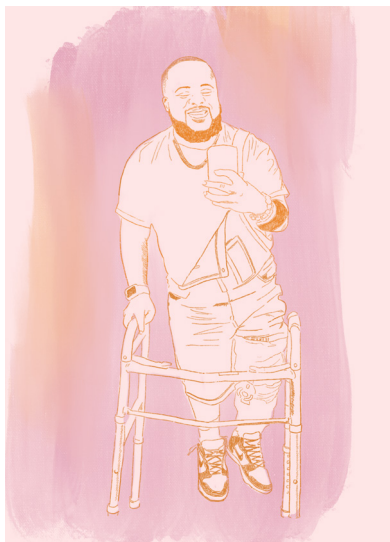
Tyberius is an Indigenous (Mirning) and South Asian trans masculine artist who works with both digital and physical mediums.

INTERVIEW WITH KAYDEN COLEMAN PT. 2

DEIFY: So I guess, we were wondering, what in conceptualising your own masculinity would have been your reference points? Like any particular really important people in your life. Or like media or cultural representations, anything?

So this question is, is interesting to me. Because I think a lot of people think that I've always been this version of myself, and that's absolutely false. Before I started my transition, and in the very beginning stages of my transition, my masculinity was from Black men. And not to say that all Black men exhibit toxic masculinity and misogyny, but it is rampant. It's rampant. It's only been recently that those things [...], those generational curses, if you will, are starting to be broken down and people are starting to see them for what they are. So my beginning representation, especially as a trans masculine person was other trans, Black trans men. Specifically in the ballroom scene [...] where it was taught that in order for you to be real, in other words, passable or accepted by the cis gendered community, you have to act, be a certain type of way, which is super masculine to the point of, you know, even degrading women and things of that nature. You had to be sexual, you can only date women, you couldn't date a man, you couldn't exclude any feminine qualities. Your feminine features are things you wanted to hide and disguise and anybody outside of that. It was like, why would you even transition? That's just where we were at. That's where I was at.

I'm not gonna lie to you. Honestly, I cannot, I can't say that I have any, any influences [...] I think it was just more or less of an internalised journey for myself. Because I wasn't inherently masculine prior to transitioning, and I didn't under-



stand the idea of changing who you were, just because you started medically transitioning. I didn't understand that. I wanted to, yes, I wanted my physical to match how I felt inside, but I didn't want to have to put on a mask and be someone else just to be accepted.

And to my sexuality as a gay man. I knew that one I didn't want to be was problematic and I wasn't okay with reducing women down to nothing or making them feel like they're weaker or [the] inferior gender. I could never subscribe to that idea. And then also just navigating the Black gay male community, there are so many different variations of what a man can be. And in none of those spaces, does anybody question whether or not those men are men. They might see a feminine man and be like, "Well, why is he acting like a girl? That's [a] whole man?" Right? But they're never like, oh, this person is acting

like a girl or dressing like girl, they must be trans. But when it came to transness, if there was any form of femininity, our whole gender identity was being called to question. I didn't like that. And I always say I did not step outside of a box and step inside of another one. So for me, I was refusing to allow society to make me be anybody else, other than who I am.

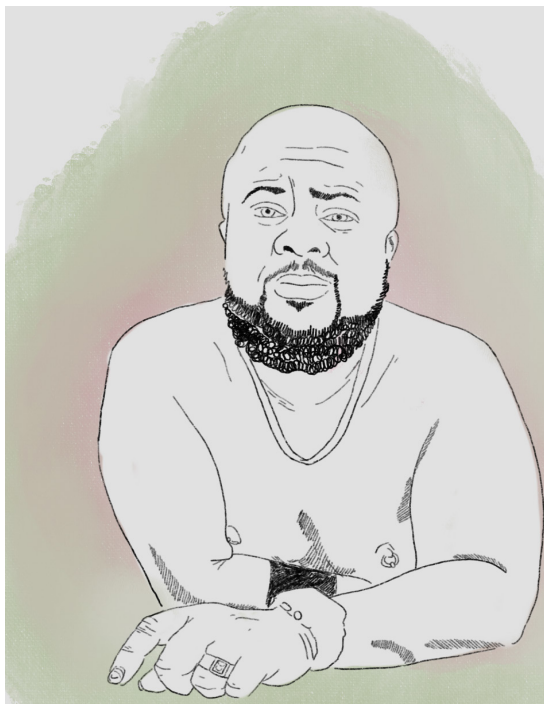
And I'm noticing [...] when I was starting to transition [...] when you went on YouTube, you only really saw white, trans masculine people, and white trans masculine people were able to do whatever they wanted, dress however, they wanted, wear makeup if they wanted, be gay if they wanted. Black people, we couldn't do that. And I was like, oh, absolutely not. I'm not doing that. That's not fair. That's not fair. So that was just where I was at. I was like, I don't see why I can't be myself. And I just decided that that's what I was going to be.

So I guess, if I was thinking of influence, it would be the Black gay male community. Honestly, just watching, because that is a revolutionary act for cisgender Black gay males to be unapologetically themselves, you know, because stigma and misogyny and all that stuff. So I think that would be my influence.

DEiFY: I am just thinking everything over and it's interesting because I have such a similar experience. In terms of, yeah, before I transitioned was like, not necessarily overly masculine, kind of did transition and then whilst transitioning had this experience of, oh, there is now, because I'm trans, an expectation they have, not just masculine or wherever I want to be, but hyper masculine. Hyper masculinity and navigating that is such a kind of an interesting thing to then kind of go back and reflect and go, you know, who are you actually, what do you want to present, and what are you just kind of

doing because you're expected to.

Exactly. I think a lot of people go through that because society tells us. It's not just that, it comes from within the trans community. But society tells us if you're going to transition, what's the point? [...] What's the purpose of you transitioning if you're going to do fill in the blank? And it's like, no, no, no, that's not how any of this works. You don't see very many people walking up questioning cisgender men, straight, gay or otherwise, as to why they're dating other men or why they're bisexual or why their shorts are above their knee or, you know, why they're doing certain things. So I don't understand why there's this extra pressure put on trans masculine people to be the epitome of cis gender – cis het, chiseled body, masculine jawline, deep look. Like I'm not doing all that. I'm just not.



And just to point out, that also our idea of masculinity and the way that society pushes on us, I'm gonna keep saying this, is also a product of white supremacy. Across the world, we all had different gender expressions and so many cultures look to same gender loving and two spirited and genderfluid people as superiors, as God-like people, and white people came around and said, "no, that's sinful. That's an abomination." And they violently ingrained that into people and now it's the baseline. So we all need to unlearn that, but that will take a lot of time.

DEiFY: We're producing around a theme, specifically centering queer people of colour. A lot of people who are starting their transition journey, or questioning or were interested in parenthood. I'm wondering whether you kind of had any words that you wanted to share? Any final words?

I would say is first of all, living in your truth is radical. It is revolutionary, it is something that we all should be able to do. You know, this world does not buy spaces for us to be able to do that.

So I think that it's super important to be unapologetically you. And that means as long as you're not causing harm to anyone and what I mean is like, actual harm, not like, oh, well, my mom's feelings might be hurt if I transition. I mean, actual harm, like real harm to someone. You shouldn't literally do what's going to make them happy. If that means transitioning, transition. If that means not transitioning, don't transition. If it means having a baby – think about it, think about it. It's expensive. It's expensive to even live alone right now. So just think about that part long and hard, but if you have the means, and you still want to move forward, and you can, you know, deal with the terrible twos and the terri-

ble threes and all that good stuff. I say go for it. If that's what's in your cards.

Again, when we as queer and trans people come out, or, you know, live in our truth. We are already stepping outside of the box that society tried to put us in. It makes no sense to step out of that box, just to set yourself at another one. Step outside the box and live in your truth. Whatever your truth looks like for you, we all deserve happiness. It is not something that you have to earn. It's not something that you should have to fight for. At a baseline we all deserve happiness, period.

DEiFY: Absolutely.

I might still be looking for an illustrator [for the 'Dads Give Birth' project] and I am prioritising Black and brown, queer and trans people, so, you know, check me out on Instagram (@kaydenxcoleman) and see if I'm still looking.

DEiFY: Thank you so much, especially those last words. I think that for a lot of people kind of questioning or kind of early on in the journey. And even later on, it's really nice to kind of have that kind of confirmation of identity and showing kind of unconditional support to yourself as well and what you believe in.

Yes, and that's the thing. We don't show unconditional support to ourselves. We navigate our transness based on everybody else, even though there's nothing more personal. There's nothing more self-loving than acknowledging who you are at your core. And so I think that I like that statement that unconditional love for ourselves. That unconditional self-love is super important.

A big thank you to all our contributors for being a part of the project and to all the readers (you!) for taking the time to pick this zine up.

If you would like to contribute to DEiFY's work, hear about future events or want to connect with the queer, trans and intersex BIPOC community, we are on Instagram (@deifycbr) and Facebook (@DEiFYcanberra).

DEiFY is autonomously and voluntarily run by QTIBIPOC individuals and often relies on community-raised and personal funds to make events/projects happen. If you would like to support future events, you can send an email to deifycbr@gmail.com or contact us on social media.



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