

HOME
IS WHERE YOU
QUEER
YOUR
HEART

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to the homies

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PREFACE

Home is where you queer your heart

and your liver

and your spirit too.

Two thousand and twenty has taken us in many directions.

On August 30, 2019: Our call for work invited the various ways queer writers explore themes and questions of home. We asked: How do queer writers negotiate feelings of home when their nation has further precluded them from a place of comfort? If the future is queer, how do we language home in these, and other, ways? What does it look like on the page, when read? How are the conditions of the times affecting the way we make and write about home?

We assumed we would be solely reckoning with a U.S. presidential election season as we curated this anthology, but the coronavirus, its attendant cultural resets, federal and statewide mishandlings, the murder of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, calls and action to defund the police, home is where we were ordered to shelter in place.

We are home, working from home, schooling from home, growing and shedding at home, alone and not-alone-enough at home, losing our minds and finding our bodies at home. We sing Prince songs while washing our hands. Quarantined in our smaller orbits from here to there, our blood surveilled, our contact is traced. We mask ourselves, in hopes of not spreading or contracting Corona. We are grief-stricken, anxious, and with so much uncertainty, we are in states of emergency.

Once again, we are experiencing a significant story of economic, environmental, and technological change, and I, Miah, and Mo thought it best to extend the deadline—a few times—to give writers and artists the opportunity to process through the current moment. Within our lineages of queer narratives, it has been a matter of survival to leave home, but when you can't, it's a matter of survival to make it anew.

As most folks in these times, we, as an editorial team had to form new balances and habits to manage our daily lives, grieve for loved ones, tend to our mental health, soothe our nerves—hopefully you live in a state where that’s legalized—, and find space to catch and deeply breathe our breath. Found inspirational social media like The Nap Ministry, who tweeted on August 24th what we’ve all been feeling: “I wish the rest of 2020 was just called off for work, schooling and capitalism [were] halted and everyone had all their needs taken care of and we could all just rest, nap and daydream. Pushing and grinding during a pandemic feel[s] inappropriate and traumatic.”

However, working on *Home Is Where You Queer Your Heart*, reading through hundreds of submissions, was a respite from our day jobs. Our virtual meetings were plenty of laughter, chocolate, wine, and kombucha. Despite the limitations of Zoom, we were making home each time we convened to imagine how this book would extend itself into the world. Together and through this anthology, we were prefiguring the homespaces we need to guarantee our well-being and nurture our potential. Home, more than ever, needs to be a generous act, a politic of care. And that’s where we landed as we edited and curated this anthology—in care.

With care as focus, we organized *Home Is Where You Queer Your Heart* so that it moves in a spiritual direction, serves as a guide for our queer future, arriving everyday, and as a compass through these and all times¹.

East

Where the sun meets your face, are writings that come to offer you creative guidance.

North

On the left, where your heart is housed, these works inspire you to seek the most challenging outcome of the day.

¹ Adapted from “The Third Dimension: Linear Space and Time,” found in Barbara Hand Clow’s book *Alchemy of Nine Dimensions*

South

On your right, the organ you cannot say without “live,” stories of those who want to support and nurture you.

West

At your back, the love and homes that have sheltered you are here, loved and housed by the love and homes that have sheltered them, writings that show you what you need to transform and let go.

Welcome to our house.

Sixty-nine contributors strong.

We are grateful for their words.

For the creative beauty to build

Home Is Where You Queer Your Heart.