

# t r a n s f o r m e r

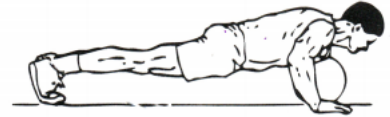
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## ***E17: Zines***

### ***Transformer's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Exercises for Emerging Artists***

August 1 - September 5, 2020



Transformer is honored to announce the public component of [E17: Zines](#), the 17<sup>th</sup> year of our [Exercises for Emerging Artists](#) program – an annual peer critique and mentorship program for DC-based emerging artists. Centered on a different artistic discipline each year, *E17: Zines* is supporting and promoting seven artists interested in zines and DIY publishing: **Ayana Zaire Cotton, Jennifer Lillis, Athena Naylor, Late Comeback Press (Rachna Soun and Caroline Kim), Eyan Roberts, and Julie Sheah.**

Launched in March 2004, Transformer's annual *Exercises for Emerging Artists* program supports DC-based emerging artists at new growth points or crossroads in their professional and creative development. Intended to both advance artists' careers and build peer support, the *Exercises* program consists of comprehensive bi-weekly peer critique and mentorship sessions spanning several months (March – June) to stimulate and encourage the participating artists as they create new work. Facilitated by Transformer staff, the participating artists receive mentorship and feedback from a series of guest mentor artists, curators, and other arts leaders.

*E17: Zines* was led by mentor **Christopher Kardambikis** - artist, Assistant Professor and Director of Navigation Press, a master printmaking residency, at the School of Art at George Mason University, with coordination by Katie Lee, Transformer's Exhibitions & Programming Coordinator. *E17: Zines* artists received additional guidance and feedback from a series of guest mentors, including: **#Blkgrlsworld ZINE (Christina Long & Courtney Long), Erica Federhen (Ipsy Bipsy Studio), Malaka Gharib, Adam Griffiths, Monica Johnson, Adriana Monsalve, and Resolve Studio (Lyndsey Burke & Sebastian Burke).**

In response to COVID-19, all *E17: Zines* peer critique and mentorship sessions were conducted via Zoom calls this spring. As the traditional, in person, culminating summer exhibition of works created through the program is not feasible this year, a poster/mailer highlighting the artworks each artist created through *E17: Zines* will be circulated and shared on Transformer's website. Zine artworks created by each artist will be available for purchase through Transformer's [online store](#) beginning July 29th. The zines will also be presented via a storefront window installation at Transformer August 1 – September 5, 2020.

To learn more about *E17: Zines*, the artists, and their work, please join Transformer for a series of online panel conversations this summer in collaboration with the [Paper Cuts](#) podcast. *Paper Cuts* is an exploration of the contemporary world of zines and DIY publishing. Through a series of podcasts and live events, *Paper Cuts* features writers, performers, and artists who have shared their work in print, on paper, and in small editions. Free; advance registration required:

[Wednesday, July 29th, 2020, 6-7pm](#): Ayana Zaire Cotton & Jennifer Lillis

[Wednesday, August 5th, 2020, 6-7pm](#): Athena Naylor & Late Comeback Press

[Wednesday, August 12th, 2020, 6-7pm](#): Julie Sheah & Eyan Roberts

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## E17: Zines Participant Bios:

**Ayana Zaire Cotton** is a transdisciplinary artist, designer, technologist, and educator, visualizing and collectively crafting a post-work future. Her practice is rooted in black feminist, pedagogy, mutual aid, open source philosophy, labor, and black aesthetics research. This research has manifested in her work via independent publishing, virtually teaching software engineering to students worldwide, and an experimental clothing line as a platform for researching labor studies and aesthetics. As an artist, designer, and software engineer Ayana feels “educator” is a title that most resonates with the full possibilities of her mediums, goals, and practice.

**Jennifer Lillis** is a multi-disciplinary artist, teacher, and administrator in Northern Virginia. She received her MFA in Visual Art from George Mason University in 2019, and her BA in Studio Art from Marymount University in 2012. Jennifer’s work explores the theme of transformation in the function and materiality of objects through the ritualization of her creative practice. She is currently the Gallery Manager at the McLean Project for the Arts, on the coordinating committee of MPAartfest, Adjunct Professor in Printmaking at George Mason University, co-producer of *Paper Cuts*, and founder of the print and book collective ELEMENTS.

**Athena Naylor** is a cartoonist originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, now living in Washington, DC. Through comics, Athena considers what makes the mundane meaningful and how big stories reside within small, everyday events. Alongside her self-published collections of autobiographical comics, Athena has had work featured in *The Lily* and *Nat. Brut.* Her comic *The Checkout Counter* was published through the podcast-publishing venture *Paper Cuts*. Her work can be found at [athenanaylor.com](http://athenanaylor.com) and on Instagram @athena.naylor.

**Late Comeback Press** is a Northern Virginia micropress run by **Rachna Soun** and **Caroline Kim**, specializing in avant-garde zines. Late Comeback Press’ name derives from the French term *l’esprit de l’escalier* – thinking of the perfect reply a little too late. As two Asian-American artists, they live within the hyphen, struggling, at times, to convey language that exists in one culture but not in the other. Communication and existentialism are the center of their art, flourishing in the space before choices are made, when the possibilities can seem paralyzingly endless or distinctively finite.

**Evyann Roberts** (she/her) is a queer, fat, black, femme who is deeply committed to intersectional feminism and #blackgirlmagic. She lives in MD and is currently pursuing a Masters in Social Work, where she intends to keep working to promoting equity for sex workers and trans folk. Her writing has appeared in the poetry anthology *A Garden of Black Joy: Global Poetry from the Edges of Liberation and Living*, as well as online literary journals such as *Kissing Dynamite* where she was the featured poet for August 2019, *Ithaca Lit*, *Not Your Mother's Breast Milk*, *Rogue Agent*, and elsewhere.

**Julie Sheah** is a graphic artist whose drawings explore the horrors and curiosities of otherwise ordinary subjects. She has a keen interest in the surreal and absurd and is an avid connoisseur of puns. As a first-generation Taiwanese-American, growing up in rural Texas gave her an odd sense of humor that came from grappling with social isolation, Otherness, and dual culture identity. Today she lives in Washington, DC where she continues to draw and create visual puns through her artists’ books.

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E17: Zines Guest Mentor Bios:

**#Blkgrlswurld ZINE (Christina Long & Courtney Long)** is a small press based in Harlem, New York that celebrates and documents Women of Color who participate in heavy music genres like Metalcore, Hardcore, Punk and Black Metal. Interviewing bands, attending concerts and vending at zine fairs, #Blkgrlswurld ZINE introduces readers to new music and the diversity within music.

**Erica Federhen** is a designer, illustrator, maker and creative director of **Ipsy Bipsy Studio** in Washington, DC. Ipsy Bipsy Studio is independently operated by Erica, who prints and hand crafts every item with care and intention.

**Malaka Gharib** is an artist, journalist, writer based in Washington, DC, and author of *I WAS THEIR AMERICAN DREAM*. She is the founder of *The Runcible Spoon*, a food zine, and the co-founder of the DC Art Book Fair.

**Adam Griffiths** is a cartoonist, illustrator, and artist living in Takoma Park, Maryland who approaches his cartoons as a visionary agent that skates the edges of contemporary art, illustration, outsider art, and underground comics. His artwork explores the symbolisms and mutabilities in historical imperialism and the overall class system.

**Monica Johnson** is a comix zinester, community organizer, curator, and mama living in Brooklyn, New York. She is a graduate of San Francisco State University (BA), and CUNY Hunter College's Integrated Media Arts Program (MFA). She is currently Managing Director at **Booklyn**, a not-for-profit artist and bookmakers' organization in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. In her spare time, she organizes Radical Playdate, programming for children and people with childcare responsibilities, for Interference Archive.

**Adriana Monsalve** is an artist, book maker, and educator, located in the DMV. She is the co-founder of **Homie House Press**, a skeleton bones crew of femmes creating, publishing, and reclaiming their space and power in the foto book medium. Within her photographic practice, Monsalve is a storyteller & visual communicator producing in-depth stories on identity through the nuances in between race, gender, and immigrant adjacent experiences.

**Risolve Studio (Lyndsey Burke & Sebastian Burke)** is a family-operated print and design studio located in downtown Lancaster, PA, run by husband and wife team Sebastian and Lyndsey Burke. Founded in 2017, Risolve was born from a shared love of printmaking, design and innovation, and celebrates Riso printing and works to expand the technical limits and boundaries of the digital duplicator process.

E17: Zines is supported by a generous donation from The Robert Lehman Foundation.

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**t r a n s f o r m e r** is a Washington, DC based 501 (c) 3 artist-centered, non-profit visual arts organization. Founded in June 2002 by artists & arts organizers, Transformer provides a consistent, supportive, and professional platform for emerging artists to explore and present experimental artistic concepts, build audiences for their work, and advance their careers. A catalyst and advocate for contemporary artists and emergent expression in the visual arts, Transformer connects and promotes emerging visual artists within regional, national and international contexts through innovative exhibition and programs partnerships with a broad & diverse range of individual and organizational partners.

**t r a n s f o r m e r's** 2020/21 Exhibition Series and programs are supported by: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The CrossCurrents Foundation, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works, The Robert Lehman Foundation, The Sachiko Kuno Foundation, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer – a growing group of individual donors & corporate sponsors.

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