

Transcript: Queer Out Here Issue 04

[Pre-transcript introduction](#)

[Queer Out Here](#)

[Issue 04 link](#)

[Content notes](#)

[Transcript](#)

[Opener - various contributors - 0:00:00](#)

[Introduction - Jonathan and Allysse - 0:00:45](#)

[Sweeper - Abby - 0:02:20](#)

[Link - 0:02:32](#)

[River - Cecilé Rose - 0:03:03](#)

[Link - 0:05:12](#)

[I Am Still Breathing - Allysse Riordan - 0:06:09](#)

[Link - 0:13:19](#)

[Beauty in the Rain - Mags - 0:14:47](#)

[Sweeper - Ross - 0:15:57](#)

[Link - 0:16:05](#)

[Autumn on the Red Hill - Mike Parker - 0:17:43](#)

[Link - 0:27:17](#)

[A Southern Queer Rambles - Aaron Calidris - 0:27:52](#)

[Sweeper - Martha - 0:34:02](#)

[Link - 0:34:31](#)

[The LGBTour in Amsterdam - Sara Espi and Sanne Pols - 0:34:59](#)

[Link - 0:44:20](#)

[American Lesbian Odyssey - Carol Prior - 0:44:54](#)

[Link - 0:54:42](#)

[Chris Harnois - Storms and Saturn's Return - 0:55:55](#)

[Sweeper - Emma - 1:05:49](#)

[Link - 1:06:00](#)

[A Cartography of Trespass - Jonathan - 1:07:07](#)

[Link - 1:18:47](#)

[Sweetness - Kamila Rina - 1:19:24](#)

[Sweeper - Emily and Jenny - 1:21:36](#)

[Link - 1:22:14](#)

[Name - Fenrir Cerebellion - 1:22:30](#)

[Conclusion - Allysse and Jonathan - 1:27:43](#)

Pre-transcript introduction

Queer Out Here

[Queer Out Here](#) is an audio zine that explores the outdoors from queer perspectives. We bring together stories and soundscapes from around the world to hear how queerness intersects with and influences people's experiences of outdoor spaces and activities. You can read more about the zine on the Queer Out Here website: <https://www.queerouther.com>

Issue 04 link

If you've somehow stumbled across this transcript and want to find the audio file, it's available here: <https://www.queerouther.com/listen/issue-04>

Content notes

The pieces in Queer Out Here talk about many things related to being queer and the outdoors. This issue contains explicit descriptions of sex, queerphobia, drug use and fear during risky activities. If you have specific anxieties or triggers, check this transcript or ask a trusted friend to listen and give you feedback.

Transcript

Opener - various contributors - 0:00:00

[A whoosh of sound dissolves into splashes, waves and muted music]

Cecilé: The river is alive . . .

Fenrir: The river is real loud!

Mike: Our spring bubbles from the roots.

[Light, reverby piano chord, sound of geese and water birds fades up]

Allysse: All so liquid and foreign -

[Muted, bubbling, underwater music comes to the foreground as the bird sounds continue]

Allysse: - so graceful and unexplainable.

Aaron: The strange things, the queer things . . .

[Heavy rain fades in]

Mags: Every flower, bird and leaf.

[Faint whistle]

Kamila: I'm looking up at the trees. They're stealthily watchful and calm.

[Louder whistle, jingling of a dog collar, bells and city sounds fade in, music disappears]

Sanne: But I tell it because now I can share my story in free space here, in open space. It was not so long ago that it was different.

[Sound of trickling water and birdcalls, city sounds fade down]

Aaron: They may not look the same, they may not act the same -

[Faint sound of voices, almost like singing, and a child laughing]

Chris: There's no judgement out here . . .

[Child squeals happily, guitar music begins, footsteps continue]

Carol: [Singing] Lying with my back on the sand, listening to the waves . . .

Cecilé: I am here and I am alive.

[Bird calls, footsteps fade, leaving echoes of muted underwater music, waves lapping and water trickling]

Introduction - Jonathan and Allysse - 0:00:45

[Sound of water in a small stream plays beneath the introduction]

Jonathan: This is Queer Out Here, an audio zine that explores the outdoors from queer perspectives. I'm Jonathan -

Allysse: - and I'm Allysse. Welcome to Issue 04. This issue takes us on a journey in and around water world, explore ideas of communities and spaces for queer people, and invites us to reflect on different perspectives of the outdoors. From monologues, poetry, music, sound art and interviews, we've received a fantastic selection of pieces and would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to send on in. From full pieces to sweepers, we love them all and hope you do too.

Jonathan: We have some fantastic cover art this issue from Ella. Her design was inspired by religious iconography and stained glass windows, and it is absolutely gorgeous! If the artwork doesn't show up on your feed, you can head over to our website to have a look - that's queerouther.com/listen - and you can find more of Ella's work on Instagram, too, where she is [@ellxamcd_art](https://www.instagram.com/ellxamcd_art)

Allysse: Before we start, a few housekeeping notes. The pieces in Queer Out Here talk about many things related to being queer and the outdoors. This issue contains explicit descriptions of sex, swearing, risky activities and environments, mention of drug use and queerphobia including misgendering. If you have specific anxieties or triggers, you may wish to ask a trusted friend to listen and give you feedback. You could also check the transcript for particular words - find it linked in the show notes on our website, queerouther.com

Jonathan: But for now, get ready to take your ears adventuring.

Both: Let's get queer out here!

Sweeper - Abby - 0:02:20

[Splashing sounds and faint voices in background]

Abby: Hello, I'm Abby. I'm paddling about in a river by a pub in Kent, and you're listening to Queer Out Here.

Link - 0:02:32

Allysse: From kayaking down a river, diving under the sea, and listening to the rain, the three tracks featured in this first section are all about water. We begin with a poem and field recording from Cecilé Rose. When we first set up Queer Out Here, we had discussed how nature can be a place that is not judgemental and where you can fully be yourself. And this is reflected in Cecilé's piece. She writes, "I've fallen in love with this river, I've fallen in love with myself on this river. So this is my love letter to the river and all that she's shown me".

River - Cecilé Rose - 0:03:03

[Splashes of water and birdsong fade up, sounds continue throughout]

Cecilé Rose: The River is alive
Her water flows down this winding path
Like veins
Pumping life through
Everyone she touches.

[Birds tweet and screech]

Fish leap high for their first meal of the day
Birds sing their morning heart song
A family of deer swim across
To reach a vineyard on the opposite bank

The river brings life to all,
Including me.

[Waterfowl honk in the distance]

Me,
A fat queer woman
Who's taught to stay small
And not take up space.

Who's very being is characterized as
Flawed
Lazy
Not to be seen
Or worthy of love.

The river, she makes me feel ALIVE.

[Sound of kayaking]

Paddling down,
My strong arms take me miles
Down her body of water.

The river doesn't restrict me
She offers her whole self.

I climb out of my kayak
And swim in her cool waters

My soft body floats
The current taking me with her

[Water splashing]

Becoming more present with each deliberate breath
I listen to her song -
The ancient scripture
The love letter
Nature's mantra and psalm
The battle cry in us all:

"I am here and I am alive."

[Background sound cuts]

Cecilé Rose: "I am here and I am alive."

[Background sounds fade up - birds honking and tweeting, the sound of wind and water.]

Link - 0:05:12

Allysse: This field recording was taken while kayaking down the Mokelumne River, on Plains Miwok land.

Jonathan: In our call for submissions for this issue, we said we wanted people to experiment with creating their pieces. One of the things I really like about Cecilé Rose's piece is the point where the background recording cuts, so all that we hear is the refrain: "I am here, and I am alive". And then this is balanced by the way the sounds of water, birds and her kayak linger at the end. Cecilé says she made her piece by taking field recordings while out on the water, recording her voice separately and then putting them together.

Allysse, your piece "I am Still Breathing" is up next, and while it also has a vocal track and the watery environmental sounds, you've taken quite a different approach to constructing it. Shall we listen to it first, then you can tell us about your process?

Allysse: Absolutely. But before you listen, grab the nearest pair of headphones and put them on. My piece was designed for headphones and it's just not the same on speakers.

I Am Still Breathing - Allysse Riordan - 0:06:09

[Whoosh of a wave crashing on the sand, deep burbling music, heartbeat. Fades into bird songs.]

Allysse: The sun is piercing through the thin veil of the curtains and I painfully force my eyes open. My mind is a blur of drowsiness and rising fears. In an hour I will go diving for the very first time in my life.

[Low frequency waves, heartbeat]

I dress mechanically, the fabric of my swimming costume feeling odd against my skin. I have not worn it for almost two years.

[Sounds of fabric and dressing. A car starts. Heartbeat.]

I can barely speak as we drive off, the knot in my stomach tightening with every bend of the road and my head slowly spinning. I want to get my feet on solid ground and draw in fresh air but I can't. I am trapped in this car and can only focus on my breathing to remain calm.

[Breathing]

I am still above ground.

[Car door opens and closes. Waves rolling on the sand at the seaside.]

We finally reach the beach and it is only with great effort that I do not rush out. The air feels warm in my lungs and for an instant I am relieved.

[Breathing overlays the waves]

But soon I am reminded that we are not here to unwind on the sand. I can feel the knot in my stomach tightening again as I carry my load down to the shore.

[Heartbeat. A wave crashing, seaside ambience]

My friend is beckoning me to the water and I cannot laugh anymore. The air has run out.

I step towards the water's edge, every movement becoming a conscious decision to move forward and not to listen to every inch of my body ordering me to turn back.

[Splashes]

My feet touch the sea and slowly its level rises around me. I am afraid.

[Waves close by, deep music, a bell rings once]

My feet can't touch the sand anymore. I feel my heartbeat accelerate but I ignore it.

[Accelerating heartbeat, breathing]

I am still breathing.

I put on my mask, bite into the mouth piece. I am still breathing.

[Echoing, audible breathing]

My friend looks at me and I understand we need to dive.

[Immense splash, followed by burbling music and increasingly anxious low frequency beats]

I follow him under water maintaining my eyes open and suddenly the world changes. It is all water around me and I cannot breathe. I want to rip off my mask and inhale a big gulp of air but I can't. I can't. I am underwater.

[Surfacing splash]

We resurface and I gasp. I did not expect my body to panic. I know I can breathe underwater.

We have oxygen bottles and I have been practising inhaling through the mouth piece. I know it works but it still takes me three attempts before I can take master my urge to rip off the mask.

[Splashes. Breathing.]

From then on a battle is taking place between my anxiety and the absolute wonder of the world being revealed to me.

[Breathing through a percolator. Sounds of the water flowing. Music]

It is flowing and I have no control over where the current takes me. I let myself drift away, my body spinning where it sees fit. I blindingly trust my friend to keep me safe while my eyes wander around this blue magnificent world. It is just like on TV, all so liquid and foreign, so graceful and unexplainable.

[Music gradually becomes more lyrical. Breathing and water sounds continue quietly.]

My friend leads me deeper and I become aware once more of the rising and falling of my chest, too fast. I try to ignore it but soon my ear starts to ache and I remember where I am.

[Heartbeat. Quickened breath.]

I ask to go up.

[Surface splash, the underwater music and low frequency sounds disappear. Everything sounds lighter now. Waves roll onto the beach.]

Back on the sand, I sit against a rock and watch my friend go back underwater. I do not know how he manages it but in that instant I do not care. I am safe. The sea has not swallowed me.

[Music quietly echoes.]

I watch the small waves break on the sand. They come and go peacefully.

My breathing relaxes and deepens. And I smile. I dived today, for the first time. I braved my fears and was rewarded with a liquid world I had never experienced before. It was a privilege. One I am grateful to have been granted, but one I am not ready to explore again. Not yet.

[Waves ripple and gently roll on the sand. Peaceful music fades out.]

Link - 0:13:19

Jonathan: I love this piece! It's such an immersive experience: those sounds (the heartbeat, the crashing waves, the muffled underwater music), it makes me feel like I'm there with you, in the sea, in your head, almost in your skin! But in fact, none of the sounds were recorded on your diving trip were they?

Allysse: Correct. None of the sounds were recorded at the time. This experience of diving happened a few years ago and I didn't have any recording equipment then. So to find the sounds, I used a website called Freesound.org. Freesound describe[s] itself as a collaborative database of audio released under Creative Common[s] licenses, so it's free for everyone to use. Instead of thinking about what sounds would match the text, I looked for what sounds would represent the feeling I had at the time. I browsed a lot. If you look at the show notes you can see just how many sounds I used, and I downloaded twice as many, and listened to even more. So it was a time consuming process to make the piece that way, but for me it's part of the fun.

Jonathan: That's so cool! I really hope that someone listening to this is inspired to create their own piece of sound art this way. The final piece in this watery section is from Mags - who has contributed to every issue of Queer Out Here so far. She also combines environmental sounds and her voice, but the rainstorm in this piece is entirely diegetic - this is a single recording, with no editing software in sight. The poem Mags reads is 'Rain' by the African American poet Raymond Garfield Dandridge.

Beauty in the Rain - Mags - 0:14:47

[Sound of soft rain for a while, before Mags reads "Rain" by Raymond Garfield Dandridge]

Mags: The clouds are shedding tears of joy,
They fall with rhythmic beat
Upon the earth, and soon destroy
Dust dunes and waves of heat.

Each falling drop enforcement bears
To river, lake and rill,
And sweet refreshment gladly shares
With wooded dell and hill.

Every flower, bud and leaf,
Each blossom, branch and tree
Distills the rain, 'tis my belief,
To feed the honey bee.

I pity every wretch I find
Who, frowning in disdain,
Is deaf and dumb and also blind
To beauty in the rain.

[Continuing sound of rain falling]

Sweeper - Ross - 0:15:57

[The sound of wind]

Ross: Hi, I'm Ross, out in the hills near Manchester. And you're listening to Queer Out Here.

Link - 0:16:05

Allysse: The next piece you'll hear is from Mike Parker. Mike is the author of several books, including Map Addict, which is a love letter to the Ordnance Survey -

Jonathan: That is a great book!

Allysse: - The Wild Rover, and Neighbours From Hell?. His new book, On the Red Hill, is a search for the queer rural, focusing especially on his friends and benefactors Reg and George, who met in 1949 and were together until their death a few weeks apart in 2011.

Jonathan: The book's subtitle "where four lives fell into place" is a good summary of the stories. Reg and George gradually moved from England to Wales, eventually ending up at Rhiw Goch which they run as a B&B for many years. Mike and Preds became friends with the older couple, and Reg and George ended up leaving Rhiw Goch to them. One of the things I love about this book is that it writes into existence a kind of queer family history - through the connections that the couples share (the anecdotes and photos, the art, the turns of phrase) but also through repetitions

of movement and place: the *going over* and *going into* of living in these rooms, turning this garden's soil, travelling these tracks, offering this kind of hospitality.

Allysse: Hospitality is something that Mike and Preds are carrying on to this day. To create this piece, I visited Mike in his home. We had spoken beforehand about the topics we might cover, but but on the evening of my arrival, we simply chatted about what we saw around us, and some of our outdoors and queer experiences. The spontaneity and themes of part of this chat paired well with the autumnal reading from Mike's book. In the end I left Wales with nearly three hours of recording. Mike was incredibly generous with his time and we would like to thank him again for it.

Autumn on the Red Hill - Mike Parker - 0:17:43

Right, well, I'm Mike Parker. I am a bit of a layabout, I'm an author, occasional broadcaster and living up in the hills of mid Wales with my boyfriend Preds and our dog and cat. Written quite a few books over the years and my latest one is a celebration and a search for the queer rural. It's a book called On the Red Hill.

[Sound of trickling stream and wind]

Last year I found, um, about four massive funguses called hen, hen of the woods. Never found them before and there were four - massive - one of them was about, um, oh god, it was about ten or eleven pounds, so what's that? About four kilos. Just enormous thing. I mean, I kinda, I- it made about, it made about six meals out of that. It was just beautiful, beautifully . . . And I've been up and down, I've been scouring this load of old oak trees - coz they always grow at the foot of old oaks, either dying oaks or, or just dead, but old, you need them to be pretty old, and there's a load of old oaks going along that old mill leat - and I've been checking them out every two or three days to see if I could find any and just nothing yet this year.

[Trickling stream fades out, and Mike begins to read from his new book]

Though the fields, coppices and tracks are dibbed with hazels and hawthorn, sycamore and willow, larch, elder, rowan, cherry and lime, four trees dominate our greenwood: ash and oak, beech and birch, and in those two couplings. The monster ash with its strobing leaves is just a few yards from its mythic twin, a mighty oak with a girth of seventeen feet. Both heave with life. Bees zip in and out of an old next in the trunk of the ash; badgers have dug a sett in the roots of the oak. Sheep snuggle up to both; birds and squirrels flit through their branches.

There are taller, beefier oaks in the fields and woods around, but this one is primus inter pares [Ed: first among equals]. To the west, away from the house, its outspread boughs command a deep grassy bowl below the drovers' track, a natural amphitheatre where we sledge in winter. From the houseward side of its trunk, our spring bubbles from the roots, once to slake thirst and grow vegetables, now to fill my swimming pond.

[Sounds of water splashing as Mike swims in his pond. He sighs. Faint sounds of wind in trees.]

I mean there's another wood just over there, which is where I've been picking my chanterelles, which is a couple of fields away, which is very specifically, ah, an oak wood that was planted in the eighteenth century for the, the, the military. The oak from Montgomeryshire is famous for being very slow growing, so it produces very dense wood. And that was very, very valuable in, to the navy, you know, back in the day. So a lot of plantations were established in Montgomeryshire in the eighteenth century for the navy. And then, the one down here, by the time it kind of came to maturity technology had moved on and they were using other things, so it never really got used. [Sounds fade out and Mike continues to read]

With its military associations and manspreading canopy, it is inevitable that we perceive the oak as the alpha male of the wood, feet planted heftily in the soil as it keeps watch over the countryside. Equally inevitable after centuries of chauvinism is that ash is presented as its female counterfoil. King Oak and Queen Ash are everywhere from fairy stories to Wiccan rituals, and it's hard not to slip into such reductive thinking. Oakish George and ashen Reg fit the bill, though remember the twist: for all its vulnerability, ash is whip-smart, the chosen staff of Mabinogi magicians, the world tree of Norse mythology, and with an unsung punk androgyny.

[Corvids call faintly]

Even the most fervent ash devotee would struggle to claim that its autumn foliage is a highlight. The thin cluster of leaves is one of the last to arrive at the springtime party, and six months later is always first to go, slipping from view when no one is watching. The oak, meanwhile, hogs the hearth and ripples with pride, flexing its sunset colours for all to admire. There is oak in every direction: in woods and spinneys, along tracks, lanes and boundaries, standing sentinel in fields.

[Footsteps and nature sounds]

We'll go down into the next bit, which is sort of mainly birch trees, um . . . very good for foraging mushrooms. Ah, this year has been amazing year for chanterelles, I've been picking kilos and kilos of them for a month now. Um. And they're one of the easiest ones to find, and one of the nicest ones to find as well, so! But the chanterelles are beautiful mushrooms and they are like an egg yolk yellow, and really pretty. About a week ago I was picking loads, but they've all kind of dried up and gone really.

[Sheep bleat in the distance. Twittering birds continue to call and Mike reads...]

For the beech wood two fields away, its showstopper comes in early May when feathery leaves unfurl and in one day it catapults from gaunt austerity to elfin playground. It is a moment of exquisite transience, as the canopy quickly hardens into summer. The autumn show is low: a month-long swell of basso profundo in which the tinkling chimes of gold and russet become imperceptibly clearer every day. On the ground, a beech wood is forever autumn: little else is allowed to grow beneath its outstretched arms, so that the carpet of fallen leaves is permanent and only refreshed by November's bright new crop.

Given a choice for my final walk, like a condemned man's last supper, it would be to this beech wood. In there, I dissolve. It is where I dod yn ôl at fy nghoed - literally return to my trees, figuratively come to my senses. In autumn, the paramount sense is smell, that Proustian rush of nostalgia, whisking us to another place or time in a heartbeat. There are so many triggers: the first

whiff of wood smoke on damp air, an umami wallop of fungi in the woods, the tang of fast water after the dribbles of summer.

The smell of the beech wood, like the smell of the mountain river below my old house, is the one that brings me back home, and never more so than in autumn. I am instantly soothed by its brown and leathery bass notes that somehow hold a distant hint of rich tobacco smoke.

[Crackling fire fades up in the background]

In such fanciful moments, sat with my back square against one of the elephantine tree trunks, my hands idling on the mossy armrests of its roots, I am in a Chesterfield by the fire at my gentlemen's club.

[The fire fades into wind and creaky tree sounds]

Well, the thing about foraging, and this is the thing that actually is the most important element of it, is not just finding food - it's about refocusing your mind's eye. Because all too often, and this is the case for all of us, we go for a walk and, you know, there's something, we're chewing over our life, you know, our normal life, and sometimes it's all too easy to get to the end of a walk and realise that you've barely really interacted much with nature. You know, you might have done a little bit, "Oh that's a nice view" or whatever, but you haven't really done it on a profound way. And by really searching in the scrub and in the undergrowth, or in the bushes, in the hedges for - whether it's blackberries or rosehips or mushrooms or whatever - that just refocuses your mind's eye and changes your day, changes your walk.

[Trickling stream continues under Mike's reading]

Dropping through the wood in a series of little skips is the stream that begins its life up on Bryn-y-Brain, and that once constituted Rhiw Goch's boundary. The bulk of the beech wood sits on the far side. On our bank of the stream, the grace of the wood soon disintegrates into a scrubby mix of trees dominated by birch in assorted states of collapse. The scent here is lighter and more astringent - still the gentlemen's club, but in the watery sunbeams of the morning after.

This half of the wood has none of the imperial swagger of the beeches. Its charms reveal themselves only slowly, as you bump your way down to the river over rotting stumps and trickling sumps of moss and leaf mould. The birch trees huddle in what appears to be funereal communion, though look harder and you'll see elegant solidarity.

[A sheep bleats]

A quiet beauty, too, in the papery bark striped like toy tigers, the harlequin leaf mottle of autumn and the purple lacery of winter. The young trees stretch athletically in the morning chill, flexing their smooth and sinewy limbs. Their older brethren, racked by arthritic twists and bulges, look on admiringly, and with no trace of regret.

[The trickling stream fades out]

Link - 0:27:17

Allysse: From Wales to the USA and a piece from Aaron Calidris. Like Mike, Aaron lives in a rural area, but their experience is not recorded in the same way. While Mike is presenting a queer family history, Aaron is reflecting on being different and potentially unloved in the US Bible Belt. They write that there is a “yearning to be yourself and to also be safe” which “presents dilemmas at times”. Being different has opened their eyes to the unloved in nature. I enjoy how they draw parallels between being different and being attracted to difference and learning to better understand themselves and love better.

A Southern Queer Rambles - Aaron Calidris - 0:27:52

Aaron: To introduce myself, my name is Aaron, I'm a queer outdoorsperson and a amateur, ah, nature photographer. And my kind of emphasis and specialty and kind of focus is on drawing the lines between nature and being queer, and how I can use the kind of lessons and, ah, observations that I get from interacting with nature to better understand my identity. And I think it's something that's fairly universal, something that's not just me, it's something that we as, as queer people, we as humans in general, can learn from.

And so - I don't really have a, like, total game plan, so it's going to be a bit of a winging it kind of situation.

But I wanted to start off by saying that it's really important for me to be able to have a connection - even mostly digital - to other queer individuals in, who are also outdoorsy and who love nature and science or some kind of variation of that. Because for me, I live in the rural, ah, United States Gulf Coast region, and in the kind of heart of the Bible Belt, and so I experience, um, a lot of subtle, ah, homophobia and just some not OK attitudes and things that have been said a lot. And so, with me being maybe two hours away from a, a queer-friendly metropolitan area, I, um, have always found it super helpful to be able to reach out to my siblings and brothers and sisters and my other, ah, people of my tribe, and my, ah, my people in other areas and, and say: you are not alone, I am not alone, we are in this together and this is our bond.

And so, I tend to end up focussing a lot on the oddities and the, the strange things and the queer things, the carnivorous plants that defy what we as, as kind of a society think about what plants do. We don't think of them as eating insects, we don't think of them as, um, being abnormal. You know, I like to tell people that I love snakes and salamanders and creepy crawly things because I'm a member of the queer community. And they often look at me with a, just a raised eyebrow like, “I don't know what the hell you're talking about”. And so I explain it like this:

So many people are going to look at us as members of the queer community - especially those of us who are visibly out or, um, not hiding our identities or our sexualities - um, they're going to look at us and they're going to make judgements about us based on what they think about the queer community or the LGBT communitiy. And often that may be prejudice based on religious views or their trad- their values that they've been taught, and what they've been taught to think is correct. And so, here in, ah, my region I get that same thing, um, not only against me, but I also see it so

often against things that are less traditionally beautiful. So I see people who will just vehemently go out of their way to destroy every single snake they ever see because religion tells them that snakes are satanic, or have some sort of connection to Lucifer, even if that's not true. And so, I see this, I see these values and these beliefs being used to teach hate against things that have, are really just wanting to survive. And I empathise with that.

And so I, I love the - I, I gave a talk once at a, at a local church about loving the unlovable and how being queer helped me appreciate the things that most people don't ever love. Because I realise that they may not look the same, they may not act the same, they may be doing things that I don't understand, but that doesn't mean that they're not worthy of love and compassion. And so I feel like, honestly, like, that's one of the main things that I draw from nature is being not only able to better love, um, nature and animals and wildlife and things that may seem undesirable, but to also better love myself and to better love my other queer people and my community.

Sweeper - Martha - 0:34:02

[Distant traffic, footsteps crunching in leaves, background voices, a bit of wind distortion]

Martha: Hello, um. This is Martha. I'm walking home right now, these are the sounds of my walk home. And this is Queer Out Here.

[Birdcalls, sounds fade out]

Link - 0:34:31

Jonathan: The next section of this issue is loosely based around seeking, finding - and sometimes missing - or constructing and making visible queer existences, networks and histories. We start in Amsterdam where Sara Espi talks to Sanne Pols about Sanne's queer walking tour of the city. Sara writes that she "was fascinated by the idea of [Sanne's LGBTour], and how she creates new queer geographies of the city in these intimate tellings."

The LGBTour in Amsterdam - Sara Espi and Sanne Pols - 0:34:59

[Busy city sounds - people talking, wheels passing, the sound of bells]

Sara Espi: I'm sitting here with Sanne Pols on Dam Square. Sanne started the LGBTour of Amsterdam, which weaves together queer history of the city and personal stories and introduces new visitors to Amsterdam. Sanne, could you, like, describe a little bit of where we are now and why this is the beginning point of your tour?

Sanne Pols: Yeah, absolutely. So, we're sitting now on Dam Square, and actually Dam Square is, I always say to the people on my tour it's like, looks like two parts but it's one, but in the sixteen hundreds there was water in between. But Dam Square, we're sitting now in front of the royal palace [a bell begins to ring slowly] and at the right of us we see a giant phallus symbol, I would say -

Sara: Yeah, enormous!

Sanne: Yeah, very enormous, and of course it's a memorial monument, um, and it's from white, I don't know if it's marble, but it's white. And also behind it is this wall, and at this wall both sides are like a white bench. And this became my favourite place in the city for the, er, since the last year, and it's quite funny because this specific area, also the street here at the left, Dam Street, is I think the most hated area for Amsterdam cyclists.

Sara: It's true! [They both laugh]

Sanne: Yes, and for me became my, my favourite. I love sitting here, not only the start of my tour but also in my free time - I love being here because everything, the whole identity of the city comes together here, I think. All these crossroads.

Sara: I think you're the only Amsterdamer I've met who's ever wanted to sit here

[They laugh]

Sanne: I don't know that it counts that I did- wasn't born here, but I think, um, eighty percent, you can say that?

[They talk over each other, making the words hard to discern.]

Sanne: So, I always start here my tour, my LGBTour, because . . . um, my tour is not per se very heavy on topic - but it can be, because we talk about queer politics and these personal stories. But the monument remembers the victims of the Second World War, ah, and I always start with this story because maybe, yes, you know that Hitler and the Nazis were not only against Jewish people but also a whole bunch of people, ah, an also gay men and lesbian women. And I don't tell that to the people to, like, educate them or inform them, but I tell it because now I can share my story in free space here, in open space, and it was not so long ago it was different. And also a lot of people on my tour are not free in the country where they're from, so it's for my awareness at the first point to remember that it's not this ending point in [unclear] story of history, but it's this thing that is, ah, we still have to be aware of it. And, and I hope always to connect with the community and, and work for this freedom.

Sara: And what kind of countries to people come from?

Sanne: Ah, can be very different, but top [?] from every country. A lot from, um, northern America, United States, some few from southern America, um, then of course Europe, but let me think . . . Eastern Europe more, yeah, ah, Germany sometimes, a lot from UK - yeah, most from UK, I think. And then from the Netherlands sometimes as well. Then . . . yeah, in Asia: Singapore, Korea a lot -

South Korea a lot - China, Japan sometimes, ah . . . Also I had a few of the United [Arab] Emirates, yeah.

Sara: OK, wow! Wide mixture.

Sanne: Yeah. And it was very special because there were a couple of guys and they were always secret in the country where they're, they were from, and now they were, like, so happy they could walk hand in hand here. So super happy. But they also were very happy because they went to the coffee shop!

Sara: [Laughs]

Sanne: I didn't know that and then I gave them this glitter shot, which I always do, it was my second tour, and they threw up in the middle of my personal story!

[They laugh and talk over each other, someone approaches]

Sara: Somebody has just requested a, a photo in front of the phallic statue, so Sanne is nipping off to take it quickly. It's a photo, a group of young guys wearing beanies, looking very ecstatic to be in Amsterdam. [Background sounds] When you're sitting here you also get to see all different people taking selfies.

Sanne: . . . literally always happens, always, I could earn money with it

Sara: [Laughs] You're doing a good service! Yeah, you should just put a hat and a little sign . . .

[They both laugh]

Sanne: Selfie taker!

Sara: Ja! . . . You're very professional, even with cushions to sit on, otherwise it would be much too cold.

Sanne: It's too cold. I actually don't bring it very often, but I thought of it last time, I couldn't sit for very long on it, and then I don't want to leave this place [laughs] so what can I do?

[Background sounds]

Sanne: Yes, so, um, maybe it's, what I always find important is also the story why I actually started this tour.

Sara: I was curious about that.

Sanne: Yeah. And I didn't, also didn't really think it through, but anyway. I started it, mm, well now I'm, I'm 36 and I live now ten years in Amsterdam, so it means I moved here when I was 27. And at that point in my life I was, ah, living in, ah, south of Holland in Brabant. Um. Very different from this city. Also the culture is v- very different, but also the accent. They talk with a soft 'G'. So would be, ah . . .

Sara: Same as my girlfriend [?]

Sanne: Yeah, would be very different, yeah. Um, but I just finished my studies, journalism, over there, and I just broke up with my boyfriend who I lived with for four years, um, because he didn't support, actually, me wanting to go to university. For me, that was the reason. And so I moved to Amsterdam, yeah, and wanted to study religion studies. I was very interested in that from outside perspective, to learn about it. So I, ah, started at the university, to Vrije Universiteit, and was at the faculty of, um, together with theology, um, and I met this girl there from the student association. And I totally, I immediately want to, ah, work with the student association, be- because I didn't knew anyone here. And this girl I found so, I found her so annoying, but after like a few -

Sara: What about her?

Sanne: I don't know. She did, she did some, I don't know, I found her annoying, when she said something it was, it was really stuck in my head always, and I found that super annoying. And she said, like, she was so, ah, not nice to me or something, super direct. I don't know. And also I, I got shy from her and I'm not used to that. I think I found that really annoying. And now I know also why, because a few months later I found out I was totally in love with her.

Sara: Ah ha!

Sanne: Yeah. Luckily she also fell in love with me

[Talking over each other]

Sanne: . . . very shy and I was not comfortable with it. And we got into a relationship and it was of course very new to me, because I always thought I was totally straight - and I really thought a lot of it? I said to my friends, "Statistically one of us has to be gay, but I'm not the one because I thought of it a lot," and, like that. But going back to my tour. When I walked here with my first girlfriend, hand in hand on the street, ah, that was so different because with the boyfriend no one would look around, wouldn't say anything positive, not say anything negative. And with her, people could give a thumbs up, but also negative reactions. And because it was this super hard cut [?] suddenly for me, I saw it so clearly how different outside world reacted to me. I started sharing personal stories in all my work as a trainer or host in diversity theme, and then this storytelling when I do it in the theatre, I, I love it, I really feel comfortable. But I 100% miss making the connection with the people, and want to hear what they think and what their stories are. And so, and then last year I thought, why not share my personal stories in public space and meet all these LGBTs and allies who visit the city every day? Yeah, and do a pink route with my favourite spots and some queer history? So that's how I started it. (That was really long...)

Sara: No, amazing, that's perfect. Well, there's so much more that we could talk about

Sanne: Yeah.

Sara: But we'll leave it there for now. Thank you.

Link - 0:44:20

Allysse: Queer histories are not always visible in traditional paper based archives. Often they are passed on orally, like Sanne is doing with her tour, making visible what would otherwise easily be missed. Other forms of recording of queer communities and their stories are networks of friends and acquaintances. In the next piece, Carol Prior finds herself in a “burgeoning lesbian culture” in the USA in the late 1980s. Her form of documenting what she experienced and saw was through the medium of music. The tape she recorded back then has now been digitised and some of those stories are shared with us.

American Lesbian Odyssey - Carol Prior - 0:44:54

Carol: Ah, my name's Carol Prior and I'm a singer-songwriter and choir leader in, based in Hastings in East Sussex.

[Jaunty acoustic guitar strumming fades up beneath voice]

So the three songs that you, um, managed to get off that tape before it got chewed up, they were all written while I was staying at a place called The Pagoda in Florida, which was a lesbian guest house type thing.

[Guitar fades out]

And I, in 1987, I had the money made from a film that I'd made for Channel 4, coincidentally about being a lesbian. With that money I was able to go travelling under the pretext of looking for an agent, actually, for what I did, coz somebody said maybe I, the sort of stuff I did would go down well in America.

So off I went. And basically, I didn't find an agent, but I discovered this incredible lesbian scene in the States in 1987.

[Guitar fingerpicking begins, light hand drumming, and Carol sings]

Carol [singing]: *Lying with my back on the sand, listening to the waves
Lying with my back on the sand, nothing much to say
Watching the pelicans fly out on a long, long, long, long line
Nothing else to do with my time...*

[The music fades down, but continues under Carol speaking, fading up in the pauses]

I met the musicians that I told you earlier, ha, Sandi and Sheila Fey, they were partners. And they were in this, um, they had this band that played occasionally - possibly just to, you know, lesbian festivals - but they were called Connie Lingus and the Damp Panty Band [laughter]. And I still to this day think it's just out- it's, it's so outrageous! I mean... But won- you know, wonderful, because, um, yeah - we were far ahead of our time, let's just say that!

Ah, I wonder where those girls are now, they were, they were just fun. And we, we ended up jamming, so the music that you will hear it was a result of a jam.

. . . Eyes that twinkle so blue, blue as the skies . . .

In terms of how those songs evolved, I stayed at the Pagoda, it was the place I stayed the longest. And the beach had, um, these four wheel drive trucks, blokes in four wheel drive - and they were, I have to say they were blokes - driving up this beach and it was a hu- very, very long beach, and so they used to come out to play in their trucks and churn up the sand. And you, you'd be lying there, you know, with your top off and, um, and then this, this truck would be coming and you, and you know, you wouldn't be able to relax and bang goes your peace and quiet, etcetera, etcetera. So, I was so incensed, I wrote that song Pagoda Paradise about that.

*. . . Lying with my back on the sand
Watching the trucks cruising by
Fat tyre marks on the sand and wondering why
Why the boys have to park on the beach
When there's plenty of parking within easy reach
Nothing could be more horrider
Than to drive on the beach in Florida . . .*

And it makes you think, what's changed? You know, the environment is still being churned up. And I know now that the mess we're in is not just down to men, of course it's not, um, but, but you know, um, still overwhelmingly it's the patriarchy, I suppose. But we've all got our part to play, but yeah. I realise I was an environmentalist back then and I didn't even know it.

*. . . Boys will be boys, they like to have their way
But women will be women and we're having our say
We say, "Beach boys, take your trucks away
And leave the dolphins at their play" . . .*

[This song fades out as Carol moves to another topic]

Kari-Lee Drumm was the ten year old daughter of my friend Chris Drumm. I was, I babysat her one afternoon and I, and I was thinking, "Oh god, what are we gonna talk about?!" [Laughter] And I thought, "No you don't talk with kids, you don't, you know, you do things with them!" So I said, let's talk about, you know, what it's like being here, coz I'm a tra- I'm a visitor and you're the daughter of someone who lives there. So shall we put down - you know, I write songs, so shall we kind of put down our thoughts? And so some of those words I, I actually lifted from - so really technically speaking the song is part, is inspired by Kari- Kari-Lee probably has even some of the actual things she said, like she had 62 flea bites. [Laughter]

[A second song begins]

*Oh, Kari, don't ever marry
Oh, Kari, it was nice meeting you*

*You made me feel special just for breathing
Getting to know you now that you're leaving
Well, isn't that always the way . . .*

[The song fades down but continues beneath Carol's voice]

I wrote this song and I must say I love that song. Every time I hear it I think, I wish somebody had written a song about me when I was 10!

*. . . I hope you never
Forget your summer
at the Pagoda
Kari-Lee Drumm
Watching dolphins
Out in the ocean
Staying with Ginger
Oh, what a commotion! . . .*

It's like a perfect memory bubble.

. . . Well, I know that you like me . . .

You know you can never prick the bubble. It's like, it, exists - and that's why this whole thing about me saying to you, I've got these songs that came out of that summer - and some of them are about the environment, or one of them in particular - it just felt . . . Yeah, I'm so glad to be able to still have that music of that time, because it puts me right back there.

*. . . If only I'd known a place like the Pagoda
Instead of waiting til I was much older.
Oh, Kari-Lee, I'm sorry that the fleas
Came and bit you, you've got 62 bites
Try not to scratch them, it'll only make things worse
They'll only bleed - and I am no nurse.*

[A third song begins, an introduction of acoustic guitar]

Ah yeah. And then the last song was just basically me, um, going on and on about the kind of, ah, the summer I was having which was - I met women and I, I, ah, well you're, you're young and you're kind of travelling, so you have [very quiet voice] more than one girlfriend on the go [quiet laughter].

*Here I am, feel like making love
Ooh, love so sweet
Love so rough
Ooh, sweet darling, I'm longing for your touch . . .*

That's one such memory. Another would be, I guess it would be dancing naked, semi-naked under the stars at night at Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, eight thousand lesbians on the land.

Women in their thousands turned up to these things - you know, everyone backstage, everyone on stage, all the crew, just women. There was nothing to compare it to, having left this country, so I did feel like I'd walked into a kind of parallel universe, um, that was the safest place you could be as a woman.

[Hand drum solo leads into a new verse of the song]

*. . . Here I am, kissing your lips
Your neck and your shoulders
Your breasts and your hips
Ooh, darling never knew love could be like this
Could be like this . . .*

It was so hot that summer. I went around with a, um - there was no dress code as such, so you weren't required to take your clothes off, but a lot of women obviously did because it was hot. Um, So yeah, there was a band playing, somebody was playing on the main stage and I, I had, had - for the sake of dec-, for the sake of some sort of decency, but mostly so you didn't get ants crawling up your back passage, I used to have a scarf [laughter] tied around my waist, and so you could pull it down, to sit on, right?

. . . Here I am . . .

So there I am, I'm out in the middle of the night, um, and I am dancing, I'm dancing in the dark. And then I, then I hear somebody who's nearby and we call to each other, and you know above our heads is just the sky and the stars and the music. And, and it's beautifully warm in a way it never is, hardly ever is here.

[Drumming]

And there I am, dancing, you know, almost as naked as the day I was born. And, and I feel so free. And I feel so good. And I feel like this is how life should be.

[Drumming and guitar with light scat vocals - "ba ba da", etc - fade out to the end of the piece]

Link - 0:54:42

Jonathan: I was really honoured that Carol asked my partner and I to help her digitise her cassette and play a part in keeping this miniature queer music archive alive. The film that Carol mentions at the start is available to rent for £1 on the BFI website, and we'll link to it in the show notes as well. One thing that did surprise me was Carol's description of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival as such a special place. I'd only ever heard it mentioned in terms of its trans exclusionary policies. But, when I thought about it, I realised of course it must have been a great event, otherwise trans people wouldn't have wanted to attend! It was interesting to hear a different perspective - and while it obviously doesn't negate the transphobia that trans women in particular experienced around the festival, talking to Carol left me with a richer understanding of that history.

There's a connection here with our next piece, from Chris Harnois, who amongst other things talks about the struggle to find, create or fit into a community as a non-binary person. Chris finds that sometimes even other queer people misgender them. As quite a few of our previous non-binary, genderqueer and trans contributors have mentioned, perhaps that's one reason to spend time outdoors - the trees, rocks, rivers and animals don't misgender anyone. Chris' piece was recorded on ancestral Nlaka'pamux land.

Chris Harnois - Storms and Saturn's Return - 0:55:55

Chris: Right now I'm up at Snowy Lakes in the North Cascades. It's a bit of a spotty kind of day, started spitting a little rain on and off, clouds keep drifting back and forth over the lake basin. The valley beyond is - huh, no, looks like it's covered completely in mist and then it might be just raining over there.

[Rustling - probably of clothes, tent, sleeping gear.]

So, decided to take a rest and lay in my tent for a while before cooking dinner.

This trail was interesting, for a bit, it was my first solo backpacking trip for this year after, oh, a fun, failed attempt at Upper Lena Lake where it started raining, or it had been raining, and I was just lonely, so I decided to turn around. This is twice the distance and not very reasonable to turn around now. And I'm just in a much better place at this point in the summer.

Getting outside this year has been interesting. So there's this concept in astrology called Saturn's Return, it happens about every 29.5 years. And the premise is that Saturn is the ruler of structures and foundations, and so when he comes back, turns your life on its head. And so, this year I've been really, really feeling it. [Rustling as Chris moves in their tent.] It's been quite, quite the challenge. Last year was, almost felt too easy, where it's just, "I'm gonna commit to this outdoors goal I have of 600 miles on the trail, and climb Mount Adams, and go through the Enchantments." [Deep breath] Then this year it was so amorphous: "Oh, I wanna do Ranier and a Class 2 or Class 3 scramble, and comparable mileage, I guess? But also I have all these other substantive goals?" And so something, something had to give. I mean, almost 300 miles and 100,000 foot vertical isn't bad for August. It just feels so . . . less in, by comparison. But I'm trying to be kind and accepting to myself in shifting my energy away from any sort of regret to . . . positive vision work and setting an intention to . . . just, overall, create the life that I want.

[Rustling]

Looks like the weather's shifting a little bit more. The rain's getting darker across the valley, it might be heading, blowing into the basin. [More atmosphere]

Getting outside - I guess going back to the topic of, ha, of the zine itself - is, has been everything to someone with bipolar disorder and identifying as a non-binary individual. There's no judgement out here and cares and disruption to life just kind of fall away. [Rustling, zipper noise] Just gonna close the rain fly, it's getting a little extra spitty. [Movement] Some of my friends have made fun of me for the way I hike. "Chris, you're a closeted trail runner!" [laughs] which is kinda funny, coz I do wanna

try trail running now. But the faster I would hike the further I could get out of my head . . . And so, when I compare last year, when I had such, such a feeling of completeness being outside and committing to that goal, and this year it just feels like I'm fumbling through. It's hard. It's hard to know that even that foundation is shifting.

But another thing I've found changing this year is my intention to build community that's around outdoors and music and yoga . . . just finding these connections that share, share all of these wonderful, wonderful things in my life. And so, that in and of itself has almost been a goal. Coz I used to have, you know, a main hiking bestie, unfortunately her time is short this year, and gone from hiking every weekend together to [faint sound of other voices in the background] maybe seeing each other once a month. And so it's felt a lot lonelier to try and get outside, and especially because I haven't been that great at planning - she was always up for picking things last minute, but other folks, especially when it comes to more difficult mountains and longer backpacking trips, folks who are into that tend to book their weekends out quite far in advance. For next year, I'll have to set aside the time to plan extensively. Especially if I wanna climb Tahoma or Mount Rainier. [Rustling] Um, still envisioning that it could happen this year, I just think it's probably more realistic that it'll happen next year. But hey, there's still a couple of weekends where it's possible . . .

Gonna open the rainfly. [Zipper noise] Of course there's another sunburst. This weather's been so spotty. [Faint outdoors sounds]

And I've been getting misgendered so often lately - even with community, community I've started building, which has been frustrating. It's really tiring to have to, like, [voice implies air quotes] defend my identity. Especially outside of work, when it's, where I'm supposed to be having fun and instead I . . . probably partially dissociate because of, just, just, the misgendering and the, the mild dysphoria that comes with that - or even heavy dysphoria, I guess. Ugh.

Excuse me! I ate, like, 800 calories of plantain chips and Oreos - it was amazing.

[Rustling]

Ah, it's something, so, queer folks, finding more of those gender-literate people is something I have to set my, my intention setting, envisioning goals and such. Which I'm excited about.

Thinking this trail sort of could kind of sum up where I'm at right now. It's exciting and it's beautiful at first and then we round and it's on the PCT and we're, I rounded this section and suddenly there's a cliff face, but the trail was still relatively flat. Curved across another pass and the trail's hugging the side of another cliff, and there are several washouts and full exposure and just a sheer rock wall on one side and . . . nothing on the other. And, considering the last person I'd seen was probably two miles back, and, was, was, little . . . it put my heart in my throat. Which is not something I've experienced on the trail in a while.

[Atmospheric sounds, crinkling of gear]

And that's where this year's put me with the rest of my life, [Chris laughs as they say] it's put my heart in my throat, consistently. And I knew, even last year I could feel that I was putting off all this processing and setting, and handling all these other life goals and issues - because I wanted to

achieve all that hiking stuff. And . . . well, here I am and it's eight months into 2019 and things are looking up and turning around, and it's exciting and scary.

I was debating playing my flute on this recording, but [sounds of voices in the background] there's some folks pretty close to my tent and I'd almost feel weird that there was just a flute-playing tent.

Well, let's hope for a good, good sunset. Maybe this time finally I'll get up for a sunrise on a backpacking trip. We'll see, though. Alright [sniff] . . . here's to fun time outside!

Sweeper - Emma - 1:05:49

[Background sounds of traffic, air, bells]

Emma: Hi, I'm Emma and I'm escaping a stuffy library for a brisk walk around the harbour and some fresh air during my lunch hour! And you are listening to Queer Out Here.

Link - 1:06:00

Allysse: In our fourth section, Jonathan and Kamila reflect on the idea of trespass and things we're not meant to do outdoors. In Jonathan's piece "A Cartography of Trespass", he addresses ideas about space, trespass and queerness and how they can relate to one another. I love how his thoughts, the spaces he explores, and the memories he shares intermingle to create a layered piece that is worth listening to multiple times. This is an abridged version of Jonathan's piece. I can only recommend you check out the full length version once you're finished listening to Queer Out Here.

Jonathan: Oh, thank you! I'll link to it in the show notes. I do want to emphasise that this is just one way of looking at trespass, and other people in other places will have very different experiences - some will be much less positive. I'd be interested to hear those perspectives, so if you do have a response perhaps you could make a piece for the next issue! And, speaking of trespass, some of the field recordings I use here were taken on Woiwurrung and GunaiKurnai country, specifically the country of the Wurundjeri, Boonwurrung and Krowathunkaloong people. Sovereignty was never ceded, this always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

A Cartography of Trespass - Jonathan - 1:07:07

[Sound of rain on windows, footsteps in grass]

Jonathan: I've been thinking a lot about trespass. About being, as queer people, in places we're not expected to be, places we're not welcome, [Jonathan's voice doubles up to say:] places we're not allowed.

[Rain fades out, narration from field recording takes over. Field recording narration indicated by italics]

There's a sign here at the edge of the woods, on an old barbed wire fence. Private, keep out. Danger, shooting in progress . . . Let's get into the woods.

[Footsteps continue under the narration]

Down the path . . .

. . . and there's a tree here . . .

. . . a big hornbeam has fallen . . .

. . . It fell over I don't know how long ago . . .

. . . I don't know how long ago . . .

. . . years ago.

[Slow, atmospheric music begins - reverby piano chords and faint synthetic notes and chimes]

When I go into the woods, I feel a bit nervous. Because of the sign. Because I'm trespassing. But when I sit on this tree, I feel like it is part of my world, and I'm part of the tree's world, and of course we should be here together.

[Music]

And anyway, I quite like trespassing - climbing gates and jumping fences [sound of a gate opening], wandering unmarked paths, sleeping in fields and woods.

[Australian bush bird calls begin, the music continues]

I think I've always enjoyed going off track, finding things - places, paths, objects - that other people might not know about. Finding spaces that feel intimate, not because they're shut off or locked up like a room, but because they are open only to the sky, [narration and music fades down as footsteps fade up] to the trees, the grasses, the animals, the smell, the rain . . .

[Footsteps]

It rained earlier today, so it's a little bit slippery. Little bit muddy . . .

When I was a kid I'd sometimes cut through the bush instead of taking the road . . .

. . . Let's go and look at these / little banks of white flowers / wood anemones . . .

. . . Or go on adventures with my sister following the creek rainforest down to the river.

. . . *Wonder if there's a way to get down there? . . .*

[Sounds of a city begin to fade in - the murmur of many voices, background hum of traffic, bikes passing by]

And when I moved to the city, I'd choose alleyways and back lanes, walk through public gardens and across private parking lots when I could, follow dirt paths along creeks and drains.

[City sounds]

I was trying to find those cracks in the cityscape, trying to find something below the hard surface, something beyond what I was meant to see, and smell, and hear, and feel.

[City sounds fade out, footstep sounds continue, as the following snippets appear blended into each other, panned right, left, centre.]

I think I might try to cut across country, see what I can see . . . I'm just gonna go through here . . . I can see the road through all these spindly tree trunks . . . wild garlic . . . anemones . . . ah, there are bluebells here as well . . . it's probably whoever owns this wood . . . Ah! . . . I didn't even know this was here . . . looks like quite a good place to come and sleep out one day . . . rabbit path . . . fox path down here . . . hope nobody comes along . . . just have to practice my best innocent face . . .

I practiced my best innocent face and a surprised, "Oh, I didn't realise!" [music begins again, with atonal variations] in case the landowner appeared.

Ha, it's so funny how I'm so confused about where I am . . .

My fear annoyed me.

. . . in relation to what I know.

The whole idea that I shouldn't be there, that I didn't belong there, annoyed me.

. . . Hopefully they don't come and tell me off . . . It's getting a bit cold [sniff]

I think we have an instinctual need to explore the place we live . . .

. . . might rain again . . .

. . . and I was metres from my front door.

[Music and footsteps continue]

Following faint paths that might have been night roads of wild animals, or the tracks of dogs let off the lead, I headed deeper. Down the hill, into the woods, towards the stream I was sure must be there. And then, yes! [Running water sounds] It appeared below me, and it was - oh wow, it was so pretty.

That's - oh, wow, it's so pretty!

[Water continues and music fades away, English birds call in the trees, slow and crunchy footsteps]

There's a really big fallen tree here with a dry patch underneath. Think I might sit here for a little bit. [Crunching sounds, sigh] Perfect.

[Water sounds continue, a little further away and a bit more gurgly]

To be honest, I wasn't thinking so much about queerness and trespass as I sat there. I was listening. I was feeling the ground under me. I was smelling dampness on the leaves. Just being, in place.

[Water and bird sounds continue]

But now I am thinking about queerness and trespass. Physical. Metaphorical.

[A slightly muffled, reverby and echoey combination of voices repeats in sequence, almost tuneful]

My own memories.

[Sounds of small children playing in water, laughing and squealing]

The first time I made a choice to kiss a boy, we swam towards each other through the eye-cringing chlorinated water of the outdoor pool, touched lips, laughed huge blue bubbles and stood up, rubbing our faces and blowing drips from our noses. I was about six years old.

[The voices fade down, a train horn echoes, the sound of water rippling and splashing]

And I remember sitting under a bridge by a river with a girl I'd had a crush on for months, and who I'd finally kiss a year later, getting stoned. I saw the city lights smudge and blur into the sky, watched her breathe out, giddy with teenage proximity.

[Trams trundle past, screeching on the tracks, a cyclist crosses close by, a tram dings]

And with a lover, breaking in to explore the red brick rubble and ruins near the city baths, scratching my legs, being blindfolded and spun around - and then, the scarf slipped off, told to look up, further up, past the whirling skyscrapers to the stars and the spaces between them.

[A wonga pigeon hoots across a valley, city sounds fade down, other Australian birds call in the distance]

And having sex, or trying to, with my partner - on a lumpy hillside covered in knotted kikuyu, uncomfortable and laughing as a wombat wandered past, indifferent.

[The pigeon fades out, the kids squeal and laugh again]

These jewel-box memories of relationships are pinned in place - they are memories of being in places we were not meant to be, being with people we were not meant to be with, doing things we weren't meant to do.

[The music begins up again]

Charting a map of my queer history, I see it is also a cartography of trespass. And it's a map of solidarity and shared experience - because how many other queers have a memory of holding a lover's hand at a bus stop despite the sideways glances?

Voice 1 [echoes and reverbs]: Kissing under a lamppost.

Jonathan: Sneaking a kiss behind a tree -

Voice 2 [echoing and repeating]: We cuddled here for hours.

Jonathan: - out of sight of the family picnic rugs?

Voice 3 [we realise these are the muffled voices from before]: Where the kiss was our own.

Jonathan: Bodies squeezed into the shadows of a doorway.

Voice 1: Years ago, we fucked.

Jonathan: Skinny dipping free from unfriendly cis eyes.

Voice 4 [Jonathan, echoey]: Breaking into the pool and being chased . . .

Jonathan: The sun beating down on exposed skin at a carnival.

Voice 2: We cuddled here for hours, I didn't even notice my legs being squashed by the sun.

Voices [repeating]: Kissing under a lamppost. We cuddled here for hours. Where the kiss was our own.

[Other voices say things beneath the narration, not always decipherable]

Jonathan: I imagine these ephemeral moments building up, layer upon layer, exposure over exposure, creating a palimpsest of queer experience.

Voice 1: An all girls summer camp. We laugh at that now, because none of us are girls any more . . .

Jonathan: Of queer space that exists through time, if not through material signals.

Voice 1: . . . holding hands at campfire, sneaking down to the beach at sunset. Young and innocent and awkward puppy crushes. But it felt right.

Jonathan: There's an online version of this, [Queering the Map](#), where queer folk drop markers into a world map, pinning their memories to particular places.

Voice 3: We stripped down to our undergarments and took a swim in this private reservoir. A few people came so we quickly got out. On the way back I asked if I could kiss you, and we did, under the trees, privately, where the kiss was our own.

Jonathan: The developers say - [the following is layered, with pitched-up and pitched-down versions of Jonathan's voice] "Queering the Map is a community-generated mapping project that geo-locates queer moments, memories and histories in relation to physical space ... The intent ... is to collectively document the spaces that hold queer memory, from park benches to parking garages, to mark moments of queerness wherever they occur."

Voice 1: I remember us kissing on the beach, in a country where it was illegal to be gay . . .

Voice 3: Had a three-way hook up with two men from my hostel here in the bushes. We did not get caught, but I wish we'd gotten a room!

Voice 4 [Jonathan]: We had sex here, in public space, because there were adults at home and we were afraid to get caught . . .

Voice 2 [with pitch-shifted layers]: I hurt you here when I let you get close to me . . .

Voice 3 [with pitch-shifted layers]: Time with some loved queer family . . .

Voice 2: . . . I'm still sorry I left.

Voice 3: . . . swimming naked under the moonlight . . .

Voice 1: My first time . . .

Voice 3: . . . being OK in my own skin.

Voice 1: . . . middle of the night, in the jungle . . .

Jonathan: The pins are a mix of love letters -

Voice 1: . . . but it was fun!

Jonathan: Queer melancholia -

Voice 4 [repeating]: I miss you . . .

Jonathan: Dirty scenes -

Voice 3: Lying naked with my boyfriend on the deserted beach . . .

Jonathan: Joyful anecdotes -

Voice 1 [repeating]: That night was exhilarating!

Jonathan: Expressions of solidarity -

Voice 2 [repeating]: She told me never to have sex on a beach.

Jonathan: Experiences of violence and oppression -

Voices: Illegal to be gay . . . chased by the security guard . . .

Jonathan: Descriptions longed-for futures.

Voice 4: We went in the middle of the week, when nobody was there . . . it was quiet, and it was beautiful . . . [repeating, echoes] just like you . . . I miss you . . . I miss you . . .

[Voices fade down, while water and bird sounds fade up, bringing us back to the woods]

Jonathan: Every pin is a claim of space. "I woz ere." We - queer people - are here.

[Running water and birdsong]

Jonathan: I'm thinking: how does this end? How do I bring all this together: the trespass, the memories, the map?

[Other water sounds blend in, children's laughter, layering the background sounds]

But perhaps I'll let this piece exist without a neat, coherent narrative.

[City murmurs and tram sounds appear in the ambient mix]

Goodness knows that, as queers, we often don't get to have that. Learn to not need it. Learn to question its use.

[Australian birds fade in, along with the gate sound from earlier]

What is a resolution anyway, apart from an attempt to close off narrative options? A locked gate - to climb? A no trespassing sign - to ignore?

[The tapping of rain and typing blends into the background]

Perhaps we don't need our explorations and our trespasses to have structure. Perhaps we just need to be . . .

[All sounds cut]

Here.

Link - 1:18:47

Jonathan: A big thank you to everyone who helped me with this piece - to Queering the Map for OK-ing my use of the pins, to Stephanie, Jess and Dan for reading them and to Emily, Jenny and Sara-Jane for the additional field recordings.

Allysse: Following on from Jonathan, Kamila Rina shares a poem about another kind of trespass. In their piece they describe “having sex in a hammock, in nature, surrounded by gorgeous trees - but still close to various other people also enjoying the nature”. Their poem contains an explicit description of sex and is also a celebration of the joyful and grounding energy of the trees.

Sweetness - Kamila Rina - 1:19:24

Kamila Rina: Sweetness, by Kamila Rina. This piece has a content warning for descriptions of sex.

A feminine voice asks if you have a cigarette
you could spare. I close my legs, trapping
your palm between them, putting my own hand over
top as camouflage, hold my breath. You say no,

lightly, your hand held still inside me under
the soft-toothed cotton, my body paused while
they walk away. You look over the blue fabric
to check who else is near, then sweep that hand,

decisively, beckoningly. I make my gasps quiet,
move very economically; all I can see are the thick
green leaves above. When my curved eyelashes
start fluttering down, my gasps closer together,

I unbuckle, unbutton, push down with my thumbs.
You look around again, casually, though maybe not
fooling anyone, and slide down, your face beside
the line of my hip now. I tilt towards you. Your tongue

dips down, the fluttering comes faster, then
the gasps, the uncontrollable jerks of my hips,
while I'm trying to be quiet, safe, your hand still
moving inside me, gentle and relentless. I'm

looking up at the trees, they're stealthily watchful and
calm, while my hands spasmodically open
and close by my hips, my eyelids come
down, climb back up, my mouth staccato

inhales as softly as I can. When the pinwheels
explode in my eyes, white light filling my vision
for a few seconds, I press my lips closed
after the first moan, fist my hands, flex my toes,

make eye contact with the trees, perceptive, protective,
opulent, and endure the rush.
I keep my hips as steady as I can, push at your
shoulder when I must. You hold me tight

for a while, and when I've rearranged my clothes,
we sit up slowly, gently wipe your mouth, smile,
eventually read poetry out loud together while my right
hand opens your buttons and strokes.

Sweeper - Emily and Jenny - 1:21:36

[Birds tweeting in the foreground and calling in the background, faint sound of a breeze in leaves]

Emily: This is Emily.

Jenny: And this is Jenny.

Emily: And you're listening to Queer Out Here. We're on Yorta Yorta country, on the banks of the Murray River in Victoria, looking out over water embracing trees on a floodplain, covered in flies and surrounded by birds.

[They both laugh quietly, birdsong fades out]

Link - 1:22:14

Jonathan: Emily and Jenny have taken us back to the river and to our final piece from Fenrir Cerebellion - another repeat contributor to Queer Out Here. In this piece, Fenrir and their dog friend Sisko make two visits to the Seymour River on the lands of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation.

Name - Fenrir Cerebellion - 1:22:30

[Footsteps on a dirt path. Faint birds in background. Occasional jingle from a dog's name tag.]

[The sound changes, with a river in background]

Fenrir: So this is the, uh, Seymour River. Some years back there was a huge rockslide, a chunk of the mountain face dropped into the river, and uh interrupted the Coho salmon flow. Since then there's been a project of blasting the boulders so that they're broken up enough to flow downstream. Um, and, in the least negative impact way possible. And it's been working really well! Um. According to all their signs!

[High-low-high whistle. Footsteps on a dirt path. After a second high-low-high whistle, a dog races past with her nametag jingling.]

[The sound changes to rainfall, footsteps on a dirt path]

Fenrir: So, I'm at the same place as I was in the other recording. Um. Out with my dog, on this trail along Seymour River. Um, ah, well, it gets to Seymour River. Um, I just got over the crest of a little hill and I'm beginning [dog races past] my descent down to the river. It's October now, the last recording was several months ago. And, um, ah . . . so, it is grey. There's mist among the tops of the very tall trees. Ah, 'cause, you know, it's raining. Trail's a little wet, it's not too bad until I get to maybe some of the more bouldery rock sections.

But since it's raining here, that means it's been raining at higher eleva- [dog races past] that's my dog, ah [laugh] - it's been raining at higher elevations, and so the river is real loud and the thing you hear right now is not the river. It's a tributary. So I'm just going to record a bit as I get close to it, and I guess once I'm down there I'll pop this back on so you can hear how loud the river is.

But otherwise, that's uh- this is my routine hike [dog races past] - which has been great. Um. I have a very anxious dog, who does not do well in the city. And so does great on the trail, off-leash.

Um, I'm also just someone who grew up in the mountains so, as much as I moved to the city to get access to medical transition resources, uh, I didn't mean to return, um, after taking a trip that was a "congrats I completed the thing, I'm going to bike to Montreal". So I've been accidentally living in the city for another three years. Ah. And every day is just, I grow deeper in my cynicism about the city and how I want to leave. So, having these trails a short distance away to hike on is awesome. Um, yeah.

[Loud river flow. Quiet, high-low-high whistle followed by a consistent dog name tag jingling. River grows louder and closer until its sounds are distinct.]

Conclusion - Allysse and Jonathan - 1:27:43

[Sounds of a small stream trickling]

Allysse: And so we leave Issue 04 as we began: at the river. Thank you so much to all the people who have contributed in some way to this issue - everyone who made or featured in a piece, Ross, Martha, Emily, Jenny, Abby and Emma for the sweepers, and Ella for our wonderful cover art. If you've enjoyed any of the pieces you've heard, please get in touch with us or the creators. You can find links to everyone's online profiles in the show notes on our website - queerouthere.com.

[Background stream noises get echoey]

Jonathan: And thanks to you for finding us and listening all the way through. We'd love it if you could have a think about who you might want to hear from in future issues. We're especially interested in hearing from folks who are underrepresented in more mainstream queer and outdoors media - Indigenous people, people of colour, folks with disabilities, people with experiences of poverty or homelessness, queer families . . . generally, folk whose voices and creations aren't amplified nearly enough in this world. So if that's you or someone you know, please get in touch.

Allysse: We're also keen to hear different kinds of stories. Did you know that we haven't yet had any piece about team sports or gardening? We haven't featured any audio from political protests or street festivals. And we haven't heard what the outdoors sounds like anywhere in Asia - and that's a big place! So get out there, hit record, and take our ears adventuring! We'll be open for submissions again in Spring 2020 - or Autumn 2020 if you're in the Southern Hemisphere.

[Stream noise gradually morphs into a twanging kind of music]

Jonathan: Finally, just a reminder that you can sign up to our very occasional newsletter by visiting our website - queerouthere.com. You can also find us on Twitter and Facebook - and SoundCloud, where we release all our sweepers and previews (but not the full issues, because we are too cheap to pay for a premium subscription!). We also release our previews with a sneak peek of our cover art on Vimeo and YouTube. So, come and find us!

Allysse: And that's it for Issue 04. So, from me, Allysse-

Jonathan: And me, Jonathan -

Both: Goodbye!

[Echoes of the twangy music. Trickling stream slowly fades out.]