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Your Roots are Showing (English)

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Your Roots are Showing

Daniel Gallardo and Martín Pech

YOUR



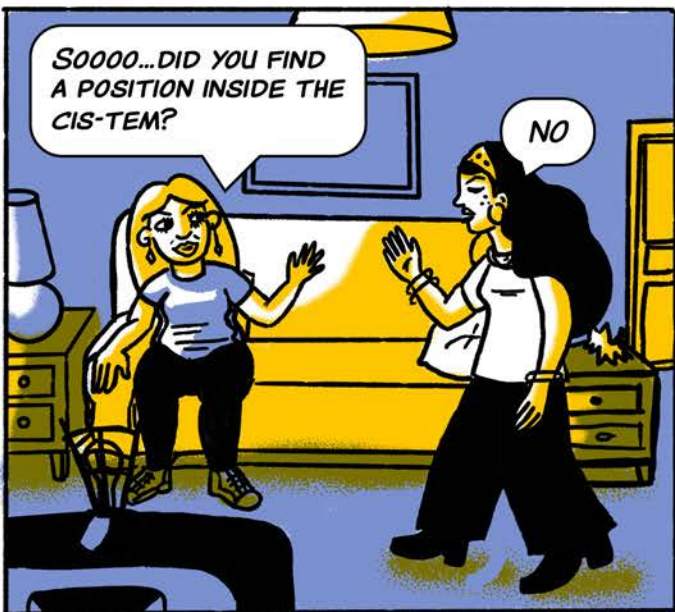
ROOTS
ARE SHOWING

= BY DANIEL GALLARDO =
ART BY: MARTÍN PECH

MEXICO CITY CIRCA 2008



AFTER INTERVIEWING ONCE AGAIN FOR A TEACHING POSITION, I'M ANNOYED, TIRED, AND DEVASTATED. I HAVEN'T BEEN HIRED, AND I KNOW IT'S BECAUSE I'M A TRANS FEMME EDUCATOR.





I DARED TO DREAM OF BREAKING DOWN THE RIGID GENDER BINARIES ENTRENCHED WITHIN MEXICO'S SCHOOL SYSTEM THAT MAKE US FEEL LIKE OUTSIDERS - NOT FINDING A JOB THIS TIME MADE ME FEEL LIKE I WILL NEVER BELONG IN SCHOOLS.

I AM DETERMINED TO BECOME A TEACHER, EVEN IF DRASTIC MEASURES NEED TO BE TAKEN.



...ARE YOU JOKING?!! THAT IS A CRAZY IDEA! HOW WILL YOU EVEN?... IT WILL DESTROY YOU.

NO -- WE'RE ALL BORN NAKED, AND THE REST IS DRAG





I DECIDED TO EMBARK ON A DARING MISSION TO TRANS(FORM) THE AILING EDUCATION SYSTEM FROM WITHIN. I BEGAN TO CAMOUFLAGE MY TRANSITION SO I COULD FIND A TEACHING JOB.



TO BEGIN INFILTRATING THAT DECAYING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE, I KNEW I NEEDED TO ADOPT THE IDEALS, APPEARANCE, AND BEHAVIORS OF THOSE IN POWER.



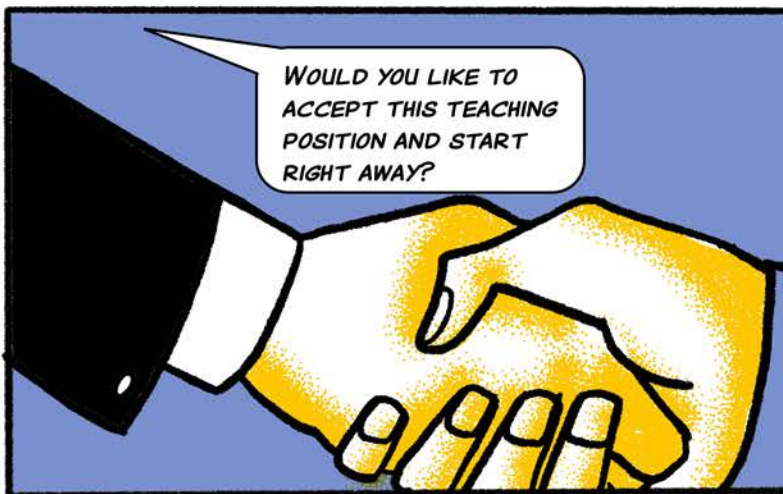
I ASSUMED THE GUISE OF A MACHO MAN - THE ONE THE CIS-TEM EXPECTED ME TO BE. I DRESSED IN PROFESSIONAL MALE ATTIRE, SPORTING A SUIT WITH A MATCHING TIE AND MY HE/HIM PRONOUNN TAG.



MEXICAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ALSO SEEM TO PRIVILEGE BLONDENESS! THEIR MISGUIDED PURSUIT OF UNATTAINABLE WHITE PURITY AND OBSESSION WITH EUROPEAN AESTHETICS FORCED ME TO RETOUCH MY DARK ROOTS.



AFTER GOING TO THE FIRST INTERVIEW IN ONE OF THE TOP-RATED SCHOOLS IN MEXICO, I WATCHED HE/HIM GET THE JOB ON THE SPOT.





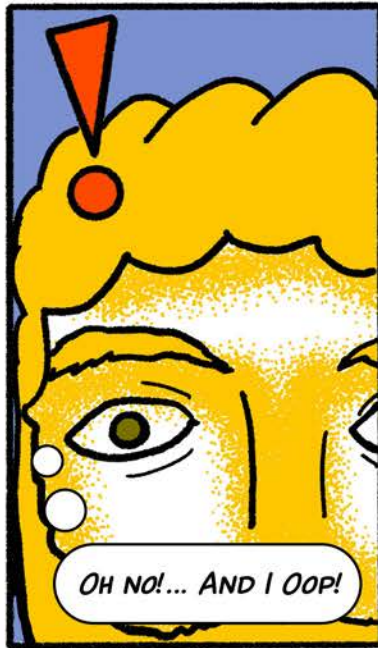
EVERY DAY WAS A DELICATE DANCE OF DISGUISE FOR ME, CONCEALING MYSELF BENEATH THE FACADE OF A CIS-NORMATIVE MALE EDUCATOR.



GOOD MORNING, MR.



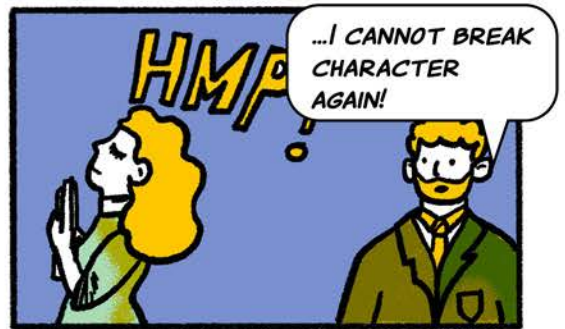
HEY GIRRRRRRL!...



OH NO!... AND I OOP!



GOOD MORNING, MISS

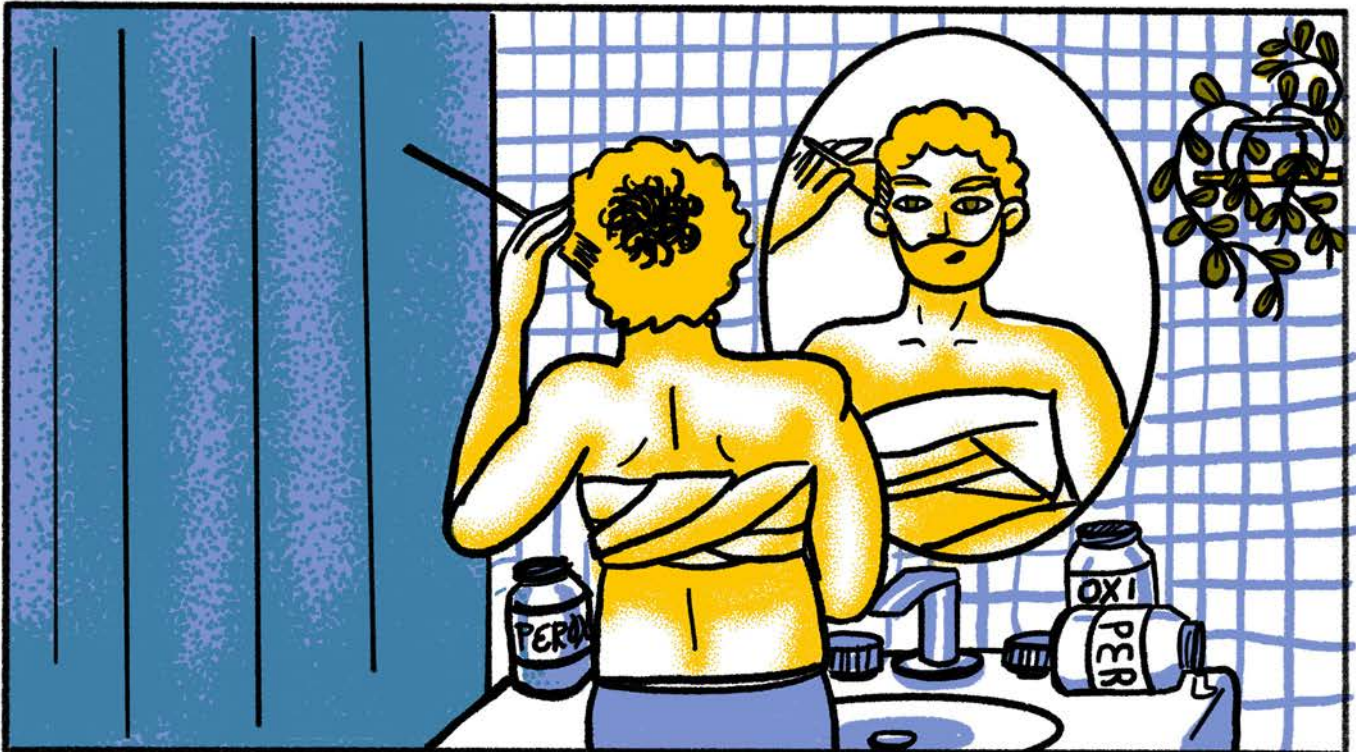


...I CANNOT BREAK CHARACTER AGAIN!

HMP

ALTHOUGH I CONTINUED TO PLAY THE CIS-MALE ROLE FOR MANY YEARS, I HAD NOT MANAGED TO CHANGE ANYTHING

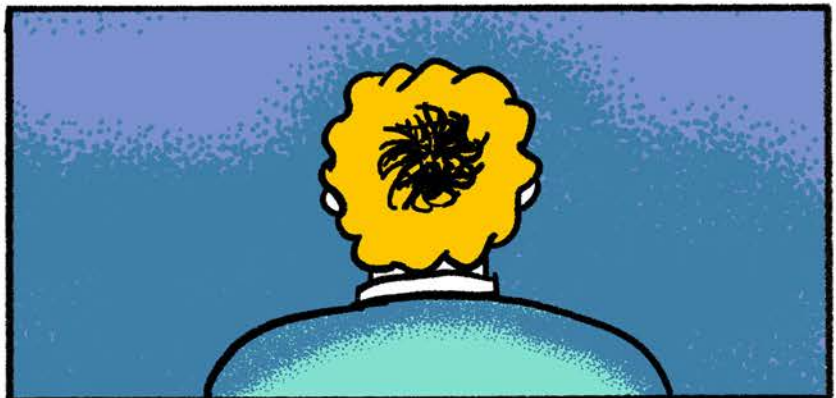




THE STRUGGLE BECAME PARTICULARLY CHALLENGING WHEN ONE DAY I RAN OUT OF BLONDE HAIR DYE AND FORGOT TO RETOUCH MY ROOTS!



GOOD MORNING, MR.



MY DARK CURLY ROOTS BEGAN TO SHOW - THREATENING THE CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED ILLUSION.



GOOD MORNING, MISS.



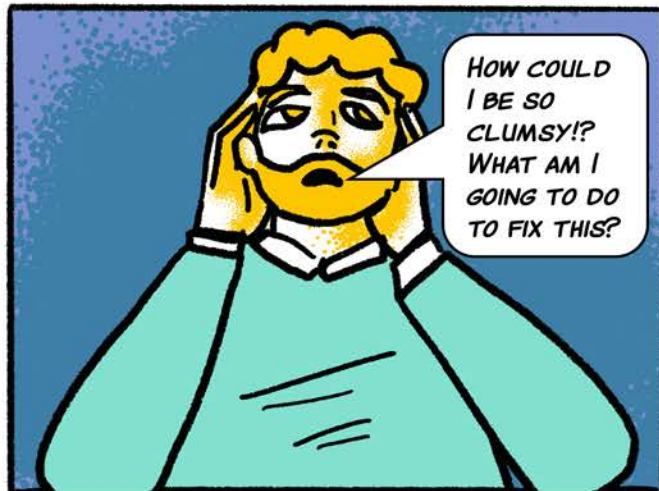
I THOUGHT YOU WERE A NATURAL BLONDE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IN THIS ELITE SCHOOL.



I... I BEG YOUR PARDON?



YOUR ROOTS ARE SHOWING!

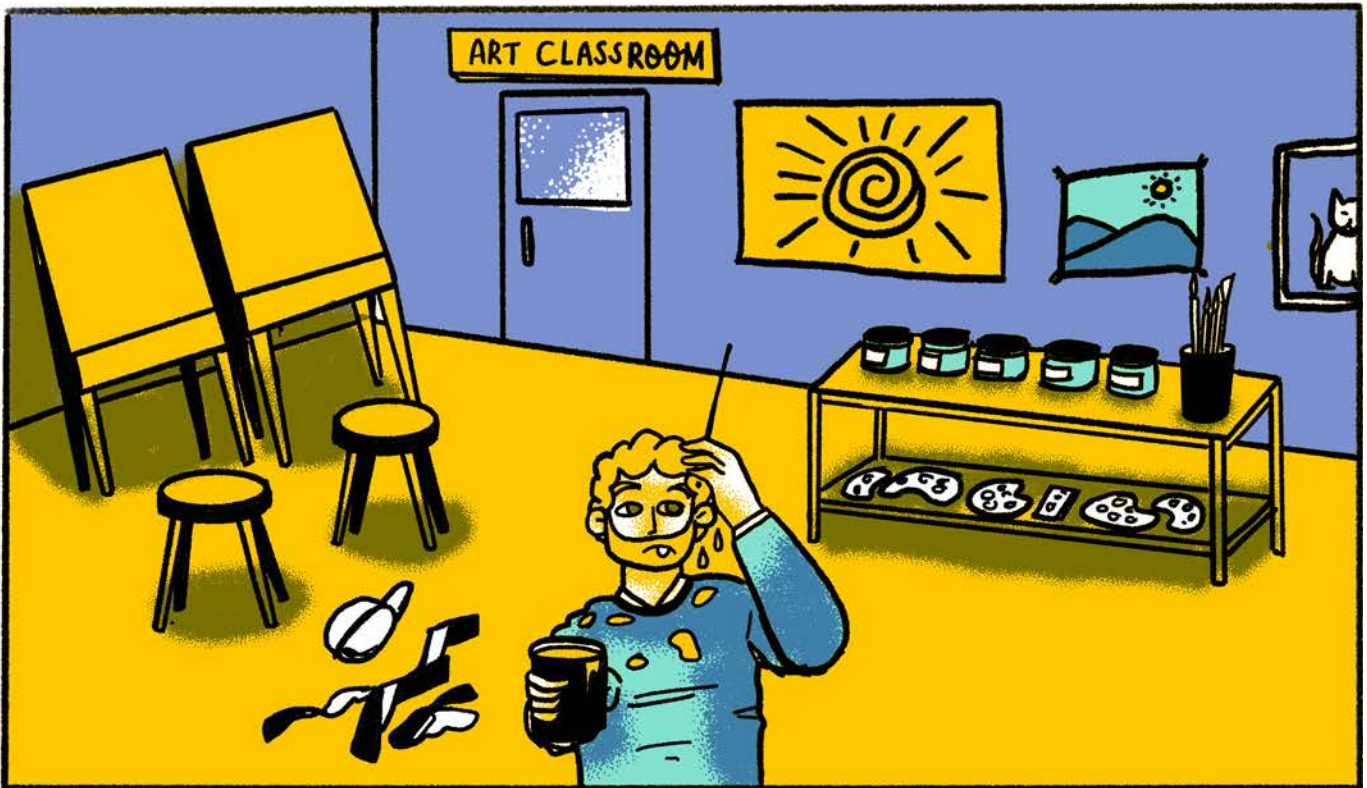


HOW COULD I BE SO CLUMSY!?!
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO TO FIX THIS?

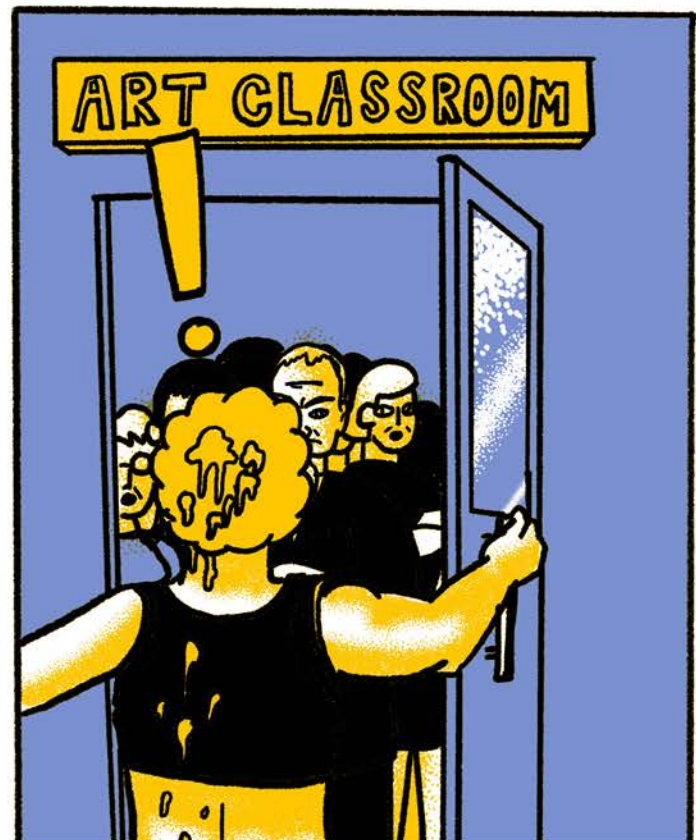
I RAN TO THE BATHROOM AND NOTICED THAT MY DARK ROOTS HAD GROWN OUT MORE THAN USUAL ALL AROUND THE BACK OF MY HEAD.



I TRIED TO COVER THEM SOMEHOW, BUT NOTHING WAS WORKING, AND MY ROOTS WERE STILL SHOWING.



I RAN TO THE ART SUPPLIES ROOM, GRABBED YELLOW PAINT IN DESPERATION, AND STARTED TO COVER MY ROOTS, BUT THAT DIDN'T WORK EITHER.



AS SOON AS I OPENED THE DOOR, I REALIZED THAT EVERYONE WAS WAITING OUTSIDE . . . WAITING TO WATCH THE WITCH BURN AT THE STAKE

DESPITE EVERY EFFORT TO CONCEAL MY ROOTS AND BE PART OF THE CIS-TEM, I KNEW ONE DAY THEY WOULD FIND OUT WHO I WAS AND VIEW ME AS A THREAT TO THE STUDENTS.

I TOLD YOU SOMETHING WAS OFF WITH HIM. WHAT TYPE OF MAN WOULD PAINT HIS HAIR?

HE ALWAYS SEEMED VERY EFFEMINATE TO ME. I CAN'T BELIEVE WE LET HIM BE AROUND THE STUDENTS ALL THESE YEARS.

YOU ARE FIRED! YOU HAVE TRICKED US INTO BELIEVING YOU ARE SOMETHING YOU ARE NOT.

I JUST ASK THAT YOU PACK UP YOUR BELONGINGS. PLEASE LEAVE QUIETLY AND DON'T MAKE A SCENE.

ABSOLUTELY.





LATER...
 NOW THAT I HAD BEEN OUTED, I FOUND MYSELF IN THE RANKS OF THE UNEMPLOYED AGAIN.



WHAT AM I GONNA DO...CRISTINA?!
 STOP PRACTICING THE CHOREO OF THE GAYEST ANTHEM - YOU KNOW IT ALREADY.



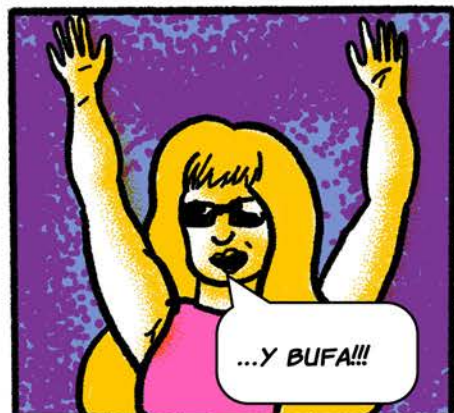
!!!ABRE...!



...CIERRA...



...ACARICIA...



...Y BUFA!!!

'THE SONG "DIME QUE ME AMAS" BY MEXICAN GIRL GROUP JEANS BECAME A PRIDE ANTHEM FOR THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY IN MEXICO RESULTING IN THIS VIRAL CHOREOGRAPHY CREATED BY THE GAYS IN THE 2000'S.

CRISTINA CONVINCED ME TO GO BACK TO PERFORMING AT CLUBS AS MY DRAG PERSONA. SHE TOLD ME THAT THE DRAG SCENE HAD TRANS(FORMED) SINCE I LEFT.



GIRL! YOU NEED TO MEET HAUS ANTIFA! THEY ARE THE FIERCEST PERFORMERS RIGHT NOW AND ARE CHANGING THE GAME!!



AS I ENTERED THE CLUB, ASTEROID ANTIFA WAS PERFORMING A FIERCE ANTI-CAPITALIST LIP SYNC THAT MADE ME TREMBLE.



EVERYONE GIVE A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR ASTEROID ANTIFAAA!!!



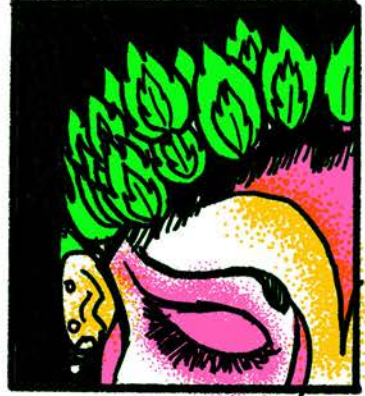
LET'S DECOLONIZE WHAT WE WERE TAUGHT. WITH OUR BLACK HAIR...



²ALEBRIJES ARE BRIGHTLY, WHIMSICAL CREATURES DREAMT FROM MEXICAN FOLK ART, TYPICALLY CRAFTED USING PARTS FROM DIFFERENT ANIMALS TO FORM A NEW VIBRANT MAGICAL BEING.



AFTER MONTHS OF COLLECTIVE CONSPIRING AGAINST THE CIS-TEM, ASTEROID TOOK ME UNDER THEIR WING TO EXPERIMENT WITH BEING A DRAG CREATURE WHO EMERGED FROM THE LAND AND WAS LETTING HER ROOTS GROW.



BY EMBRACING MY ROOTS, I WAS ABLE TO MUTATE MY DRAG PERSONA INTO A MISANTHROPIC META-HUMAN BOTANIST WHO HAS A SUPERNATURAL BOND WITH PLANTS AND WHOSE TOXIC TOUCH ANNIHILATES CAPITALISTIC INSTITUTIONS.



PERIOD.

WELCOME TO HAUS ANTIFA, MY CHILD.

ASTEROID CONFIDED THAT THEIR DREAM WAS TO CREATE AN ANTIFA LABORATORY FOR 2S/LGBTQ+ YOUTH WHERE THEY LEARN TO TRANS(CEND) THE DOMINANT BINARY NARRATIVE THROUGH ART, PERFORMANCE, AND EMBODIED KINSHIP.



UNABLE TO CONFORM TO THE CIS-TEM ANY LONGER, WE DECIDE TO EMBRACE BEING DRAG EDUCATORS OUTSIDE CAPITALIST INSTITUTIONS, FINDING STRENGTH IN BOTH OUR ROOTS AND ABILITY TO TRANS(FORM).



TOGETHER WE BEGAN TO CULTIVATE TRANS(FORMATIVE) LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ROOTED IN KINSHIP, DIVERSITY, AND IMAGINATION, WHERE 2S/LGBTQ+ YOUTH REVEL IN EACH OTHER'S UNAPOLOGETIC QUEERNESS.



BECOMING KIN WITH THOSE WHO NO LONGER WANT TO BE CONFINED WITHIN THE OPPRESSIVE WALLS OF THE CIS-TEM AND ARE LOOKING FOR A PLACE WHERE THEY FIND A SENSE OF BELONGING. A PLACE OF FABULOUSNESS WHERE 2S/LGBTQ+ YOUTH IMAGINE ALTERNATIVES THROUGH PLAYFUL PRACTICES AND LEARN ABOUT DECOLONIZING, ANTI-RACIST, AND DISABILITY JUSTICE APPROACHES.

THE DRAG LABORATORY HAS BECOME A MOBILE TROOP THAT TRAVELS TO DIVERSE AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES, LOOKING FOR 2SILBGTQ+ YOUTH WHO FEEL ISOLATED. WE INVITE THEM TO JOIN A PLACE OF LIBERATION, EMPOWERMENT, AND JOY.



WE ARE ON A QUEST TO FIND KIN WHO WANT TO JOIN OUR COMMUNITY OF QUEERDOS TO FOSTER GATHERINGS OF MUTUAL AID AND CARE.

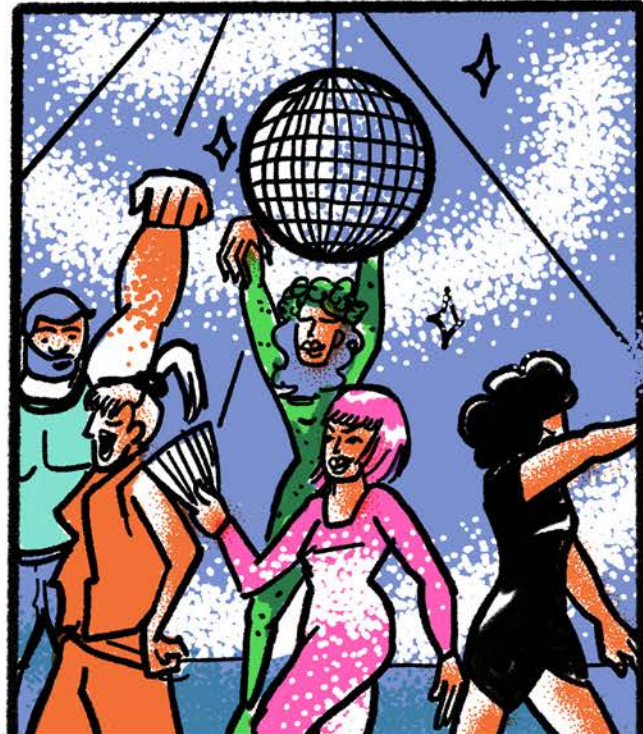


LAND IS, THEREFORE WE ARE.

USING STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACHES TO EDUCATION, WE CONTINUE TO CULTIVATE TRANS(FORMATIVE) LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THROUGH THE ART OF DRAG WHERE WE IMAGINE OURSELVES RADICALLY DIFFERENTLY.



BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2S/LGBTQ+ YOUTH TO FORM A WEB OF CO-RESISTANCE TO FIGHT FOR ALL THE OPPRESSED... FEARLESSLY AND UNAPOLOGETICALLY... WE ARE WORKING TO TRANS(FORM) A CIS-TEM THAT HAS NEVER WORKED FOR US.



WE ARE CULTIVATING A PLACE OF HEALING WHERE WE FIND UNIQUE WAYS OF EXPRESSING OUR FREEDOM AND BE UNABASHEDLY OURSELVES. A PLACE THAT UNFOLDS WHEN WE EMBRACE OUR ROOTS TO TRANS(CEND) BOUNDARIES AND FOSTER A MORE COMPASSIONATE HUMANITY.



THIS IS A STORY OF TRANS(FORMATION)...

This is a story of TRANS-former

TODAY, ALTHOUGH I DON'T WORK IN A SCHOOL, I AM INVITED TO CLASSES TO READ TO CHILDREN. I ALWAYS TRY TO TAKE THEM ON NATURE WALKS AND SHOW THEM THEIR ROOTS.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Daniel Gallardo (they/them) is a nonbinary Mestizx from Mexico and public scholar at the University of British Columbia whose doctoral research supports educators in recognizing the relationships between sexuality, gender, racialization, and settler colonialism. Daniel works in educational leadership and curriculum with a passion and commitment to decolonizing Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) education and Indigenous resurgence. They collaborate with community organizations to develop curricular practices that positively affect the well-being of those who regularly experience gender-based violence. Daniel also gives life to Gaia Lacandona, a drag mutant who drags up trans and queer youth and creates a space for them to imagine otherwise.



Martín Pech was born in 1991. He is an illustrator and graphic designer who works in digital and physical mediums. He has worked in the fields of editorial design, branding, and digital product design. He also dedicates himself to being an illustrator for different clients such as visual artists, publishers, companies from different industries, and friends. He firmly believes that the image is a powerful medium to spread any message, which begins in the collective memory and dies in oblivion. Fortunately, few images actually die: one image works between the space of the past history of many others and the future possibility of those to come.