

ALL PRIDE'S ON ME

CELEBRATING PRIDE THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUTH: Comic Book Art by Hetrick-Martin Institute Members

Welcome to a unique celebration of Pride at City Hall, featuring six powerful pieces of comic book art created by young artists from the Hetrick-Martin Institute (HMI). Founded in 1979, HMI is the nation's oldest LGBTQIA+ youth organization, dedicated to serving queer and trans youth, primarily of color, between the ages of 13 and 24. Through a comprehensive package of direct services and referrals, HMI fosters healthy youth development and promotes excellence in delivering innovative programs that can serve as models for other organizations.

HMI ENSURES ALL LGBTQIA+ YOUTH HAVE ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESOURCES THROUGH THREE CHANNELS:

YOUTH MEMBERSHIP: Free and easy access to services for members.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Connecting non-members to services through community partnerships and outreach.

ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY BUILDING: Sharing best practices and elevating youth voices to support the well-being of all young people.



NYC Cultural Affairs

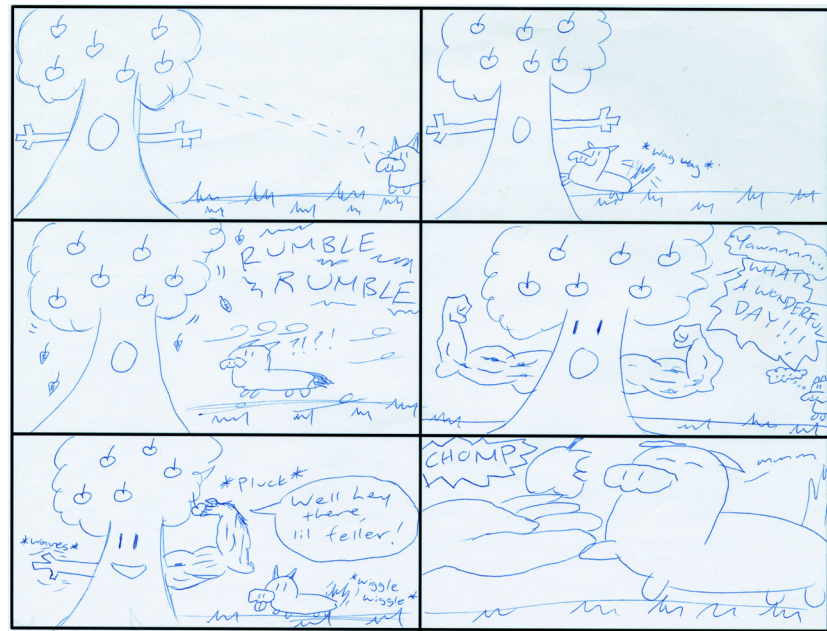
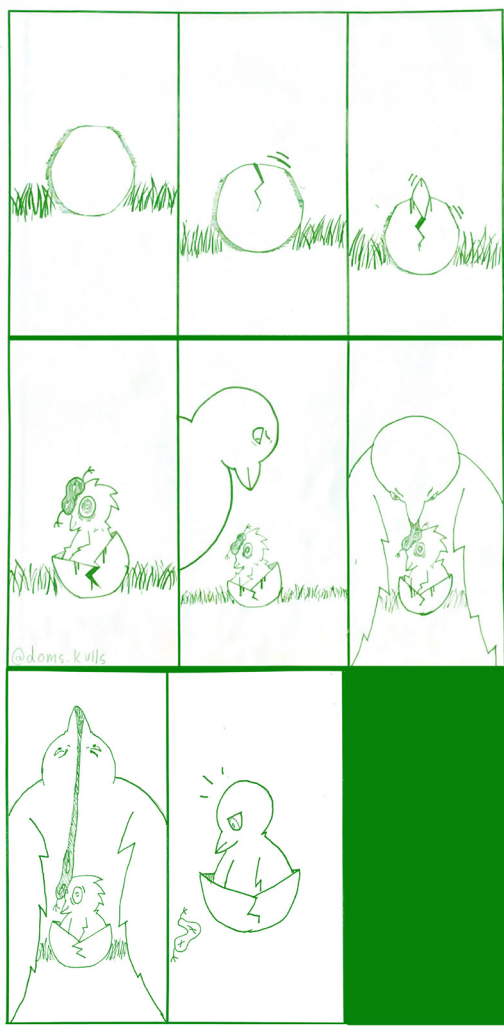
COMIC BOOK GROUP: A Creative Haven

This exhibit was curated by Jonathan Rheingold of iD8 Entertainment / Musinart and Bari Zahn, Esq. of Zahn Law Global, in collaboration with HMI's Comic Book Group, a drop-in space where members, aged 13 to 24, can explore the culture of comics. Youth were prompted to create any multi-panel comic about what Pride looks like with stories that illustrate what LGBTQIA+ expression means to them. The artists applied personal stories and adapted them into brief fictional narratives. Run by Teaching Artist illustrator Gianna Meola, these pictorial representations highlight gender expansive experience, mental health struggles, interpersonal support, as well as personal traumas and triumphs.

The art groups at HMI provide a space for these stories, uplifting the bravery our youth members exhibit daily. In a world that often imposes a need for queer youth to be closed off and invisible, HMI champions their authentic identities, providing platforms for them to be seen and heard, including this collaboration with the **Office of the Mayor of New York City** and the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs at City Hall**.

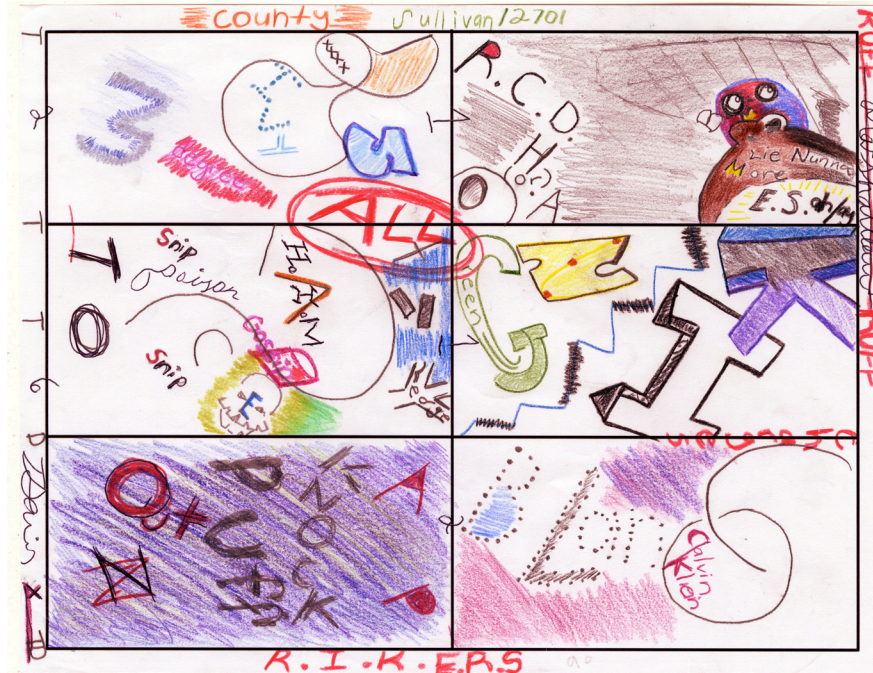
DOMINICK VILLEGA HERNANDEZ

"story of hatching about generational trauma and societal standards."



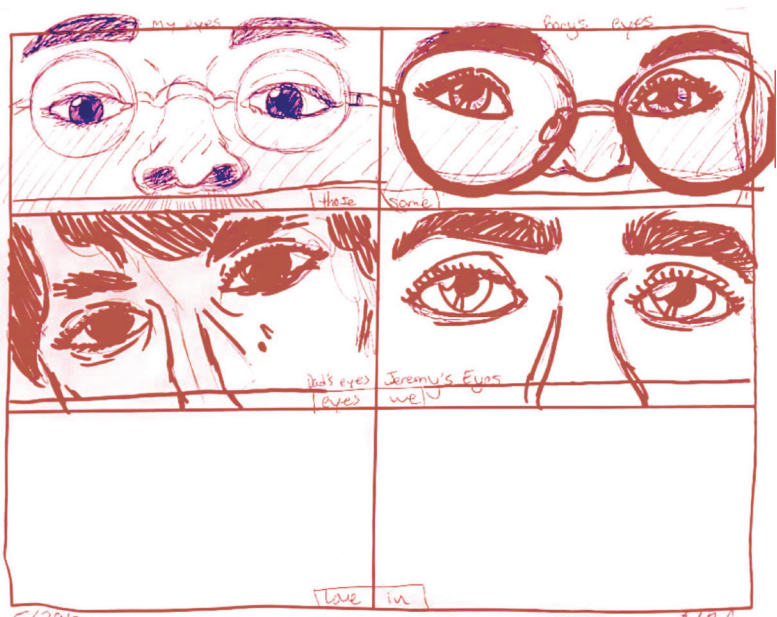
AMES YU

This collaboration between youth member Ames Yu and counseling team member Bree speaks on the nature of asking for what you need. The dog asks for an apple and the tree, which has an abundance of them, happily shares with the dog. Many queer spaces have deeply rooted community elements where older members share with younger ones that have less.



TRISONI DAVIS

A nontraditional and abstract comic that speaks on the artist's previous experiences dealing with trauma and their feelings around it. The artist asks you to experience each individual panel as a separate feeling, and then together as a whole cascade of emotions at the same time.



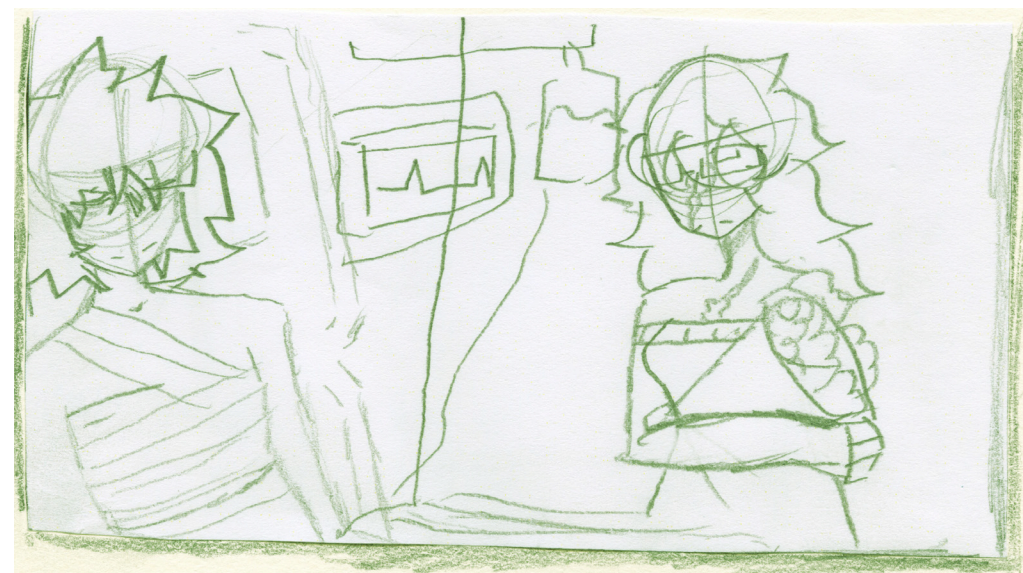
AXEL WILLOW SARA ARANHA

"I noticed how me & my father's partners have a similar physical composition. The dirty blondish brownish hair, teal eyes, pale skin,, even personality. I find beauty in this since my dad and his boyfriend are Queer & AMAB and my partner & I are Queer and AFAB. I am a very introspective person and I believe that despite us looking very different we believe we found our twin flames. I want to celebrate that."



ALAN ACOSTA

"This robot is named River. She came out to her best friend about being transgender and he supported her.. But due to her excitement, she overheated and blew up. She's okay though.. Later on in life she was more open with everyone! She's omni (women leaning) and transgender."



ONYX AGUSTIN CHUQUI

This panel is depicting a friend bringing flowers to another friend who is recovering from top surgery. It speaks on support felt within the queer community, as well as a wish for broader accessibility for gender affirming care.

Diverse Perspectives and Functions of the Artwork

The artworks in this exhibit represent a variety of perspectives and serve different functions for each artist. Some pieces were created in collaboration with therapists as a way to connect and engage in meaningful activity. Others use their artwork to express stories they might not feel comfortable discussing verbally, allowing their voices to be heard through illustration. Additionally, some artists chose an abstract approach, using comic book styles to convey pure emotion and invite interpretation.

Looking Ahead: A Pilot for Future Expansion

This exhibit serves as a pilot for what will become an expanded program, offering a behind-the-scenes look at the incredible work emerging from HMI. This is just the beginning—expect a much larger rollout in the future. We extend our deepest gratitude to the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and The Office of the Mayor for providing City Hall as a space for these young artists to have their work seen, and creating a platform for them to share their voices.

About Hetrick-Martin Institute (HMI)

HMI has been at the forefront of providing a supportive community for queer and trans youth, particularly those who face economic challenges and belong to communities of color, for 45 years. As we navigate a critical moment with increasing mental health struggles among LGBTQIA+ youth and rising anti-LGBTQ legislation, HMI focuses on improving and expanding their services to make a significant difference in the lives of LGBTQIA+ youth nationwide.



DONATE NOW!

"By offering a wide range of resources and programs, such as Comic Book Group, HMI helps LGBTQIA+ youth thrive and feel empowered in their own identities. Many of these individuals are young people who often find themselves navigating systems that aren't designed with them in mind, leading to potential harm."

—HMI Counselor / Art Therapist, Leesa Tabrizi



Musinart

