



Gail Borden Public Library

Celebrating the Rainbow

# **LGBTQ+ARTISTS SHOWCASE**



**June 2022**

**Curated by Kathryn Eli**

# CURATOR'S NOTE

## Out & Proud in Elgin

As an Elgin native, alumni, local artist, and out and proud BQ, I was honored to curate this year's LGBTQ+ Artists Showcase for the first ever Pride Month Exhibition "Celebrating the Rainbow" at Gail Borden Public Library.

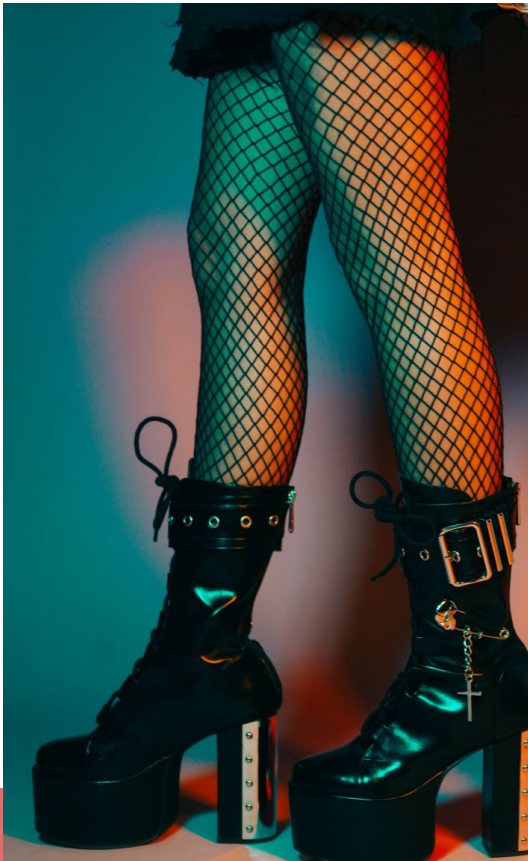
This select showcase features 4 local artists that identify within the LGBTQ+ community; Justin D. Sheehan, Adrian Mesino Illustration, Sage Look, and myself, Kathryn Eli. Though I do consider myself lucky to have experienced support & acceptance coming out as a young queer person in 2002, there was also stark rejection and painful dismissals. LGBTQ+ awareness, rights, and representation has evolved greatly in the past 20 years, and it feels very special to me to bring these talented artists together and proudly display their work on an LGBTQ+ platform in the public library of our hometown in 2022.

Some of the artists featured are students, some are working professional artists, and Adrian is both! And all of us have more to show on our paths as artists. In this booklet you will learn more about the artwork on view, the artists featured, and where you can continue to follow their work!

Thank you for the support, Happy Pride Month!

Proudly,

*Kathryn Eli*



"Opposites Attract (detail)"  
Sage Look, pg 17



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**Justin Sheehan - Poloroid sx70**

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**Adrian Mesino Illustration - The Book of Flowers**

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**Kathryn Eli - High Priestess Tarot Series**

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**Sage Look - Queer Lens**



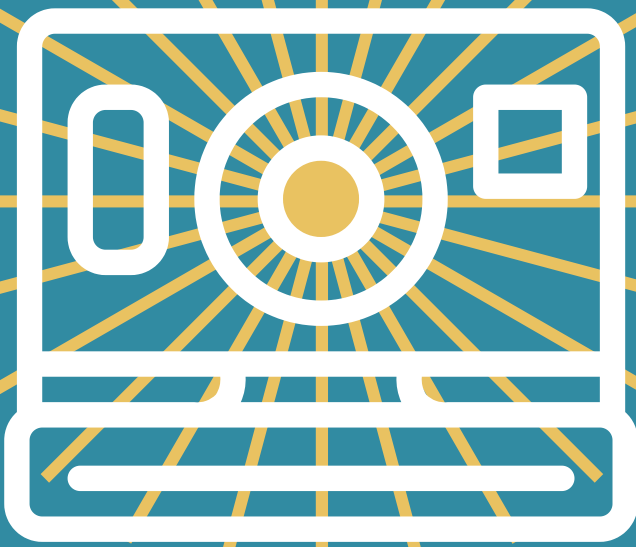
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"Untitled (Cutlass)"  
Polaroid SX-70



"Untitled (Pocket)"  
Polaroid SX-70



**Justin D. Sheehan, he/him**  
**Elgin, IL**



## Artist Statement

“As someone with ADHD, I have a hard time remembering things and holding onto memories. Photography is a way I document things that are happening in my life, and contain them as memories. I was drawn to the use of a Polaroid camera for this because that’s what Polaroids were made for—to instantly produce snapshot objects to enjoy and share. Without the management of traditional camera settings, or the option of taking multiple shots quickly, there is a rawness to the image created in the Polaroid photo that is inherently nostalgic. This has been a really refreshing way to shoot, and it has helped me to slow down in framing my shot, seeking to capture (and appreciate) the random and bizarre frames within the adventures of my life.”

## Artist Bio

Justin Sheehan is a multidisciplinary artist from Elgin, IL. Starting as an oil painter in high school, he moved on to photography, videography, and graphic design at Elgin Community College in 2012. He is currently a marketing professional, working as an in-house graphic designer, photographer, and videographer. In his spare time, Justin spends time on ventures with friends, being sure his 1970s era SX-70 Polaroid camera with him.

Follow Justin’s work on Instagram @gunter96







"Untitled (Shower)"  
Polaroid SX-70



"Untitled Triptych"  
Polaroid SX-70





"June"  
Watercolor Illustration  
20 x 32 in



**Adrian Mesino, he/they**  
**Elgin, IL**

## Artist Statement

“My series titled “The Book of Flowers” is a collection that I began in 2017 serving as a reflection of my relationship to the natural world as a vivid visual experience through watercolor illustration. “The Book of Flowers” is a dedicated study of the shapes and colors found in nature. The use of a restrictive color palette (8 individual watercolor paints) shows the range of colors found in a single paint, similar to the Illinois foliage which shifts color dramatically through the year. This restriction makes sure that all mixtures of colors are harmonious and the colors are consistent thought-out the series. In combination, these paints create the neutral greens, warm reddish-browns, and bright yellows in the recognizable analogous color palette reminiscent of the Midwest autumns which bring similar palettes to our trees.”



## Artist Bio

Adrian Mesino of Adrian Mesino Illustration is an artist and illustrator from Elgin, IL, currently enrolled as a Senior at RMCAD School of Illustration to graduate in Fall '22. While they are concentrating on their craft in watercolor and gouache, they also work creatively and formally in digital illustration and design. Mesino works locally in Marketing, Freelance Illustration, and contributes to the local art community as an artist and instructor. More about Adrian Mesino Illustration can be found at [adrianmesinoillustration.com](http://adrianmesinoillustration.com)

For commission and collaboration inquiries  
email [adrianmesinocastrejon@gmail.com](mailto:adrianmesinocastrejon@gmail.com)

Prints of AMI work are available at  
Side Street Studio Arts Made Shop in Downtown Elgin

Follow Adrian's work on Instagram  
[@adrianmesinoillustration](https://www.instagram.com/adrianmesinoillustration)







Loudspeaker and a Meditation Song  
Watercolor Illustration  
11 x 15 in



Untitled Small Leaf Composition  
Watercolor Illustration  
8x8 in





"II. The High Priestex"  
acrylic and gold leaf  
8 x 10 in



**Kathryn Eli, she/they**  
**Elgin, IL**

## Artist Statement

“The use of continuous-line blossomed in my work as allegorical to spiritual divinity and universal energy- that which flows through and connects all things. Stylistically, I use a continuous line design as a structure to engage in slowed down, meditative brushwork. Reduced to super-flat, and simplified elements- abstracted figures are completely engulfed by arrangements of mosaic shapes or patterned linework that create illusions of movement and depth. The High Priestess Tarot Series is a continuation of that theme, focusing on the core concepts of tarot archetypes. My use of gender neutral titles for these archetypal figures is to reframe our understanding of masculine and feminine energy not as mutually exclusive, but as a working pair that exists within all of us individually.”



## Artist Bio

Kathryn Eli is an Elgin native, working in Chicago and the Elgin area since 2014 as a freelance muralist, chalk artist, and window painter for local business and residential clients. An EHS and ECC alumni, Eli earned a BFA in Studio Art-Drawing and Painting from SIUE in 2011, and continued their passion studies in Art History, Psychology, and later in Astrology, Tarot, and Theurgy. Original Paintings, Fine Art Prints, and more information about Eli's work can be found at [kathryneli.com](http://kathryneli.com)

For painting acquisition or mural commission,  
email [kathryneli147@gmail.com](mailto:kathryneli147@gmail.com)

Follow Eli's work on Instagram @[kathryn.eli.art](https://www.instagram.com/kathryn.eli.art)







"III. The Emprex"  
acrylic and goldleaf  
8 x10 in





"I. The Alchemist"  
acrylic and gold leaf  
8 x 10 in

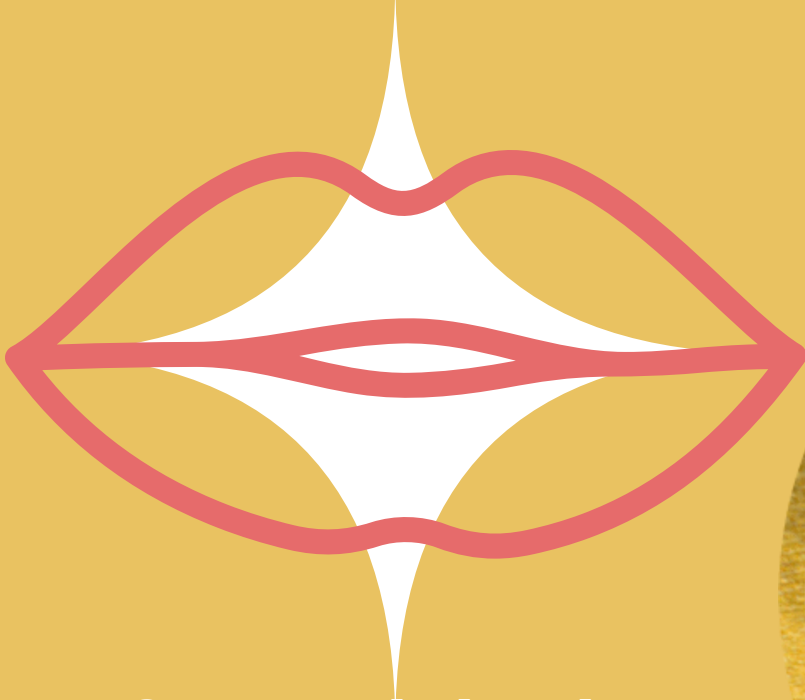


"VIII. Strength"  
acrylic and gold leaf  
8 x 10 in



"Meredith & Xia"  
Digital Photograph





**Sage Look, he/they**  
**South Elgin, IL**

### **Artist Statement**

“As a proud member of the LGBTQ+ Community, my work in photography primarily focuses on the positive representation of young queer culture. My recent studio work has an emphasis on bold fashion and makeup, where vibrant lighting and strange poses create images as unique as the characters themselves. The work I do as a photographer advocates, celebrates, and encourages the LGBTQ+ Community to proudly take up space.”

### **Artist Bio**

Sage Look is a portrait and fashion photographer from South Elgin, Illinois. Look has been taking pictures ever since they were young and has always wanted to grow up to become an artist. They are currently pursuing that dream as a full-time student studying Photography and minoring in Gender Studies at the Savannah College of Art and Design. Look earned placement in a work/study program in SCAD’s photography department helping students make amazing art. When they aren’t working on their photography, Look is the President of SCAD’s Queers and Allies, a LGBTQ+ education, advocacy, and support group for students. More about Sage Look’s work can be found at <https://www.asagelook.com>

Follow Sage’s work on Instagram @asagelook





"Bizarre"  
Digital Photograph





"Opposites Attract"  
Digital Photograph