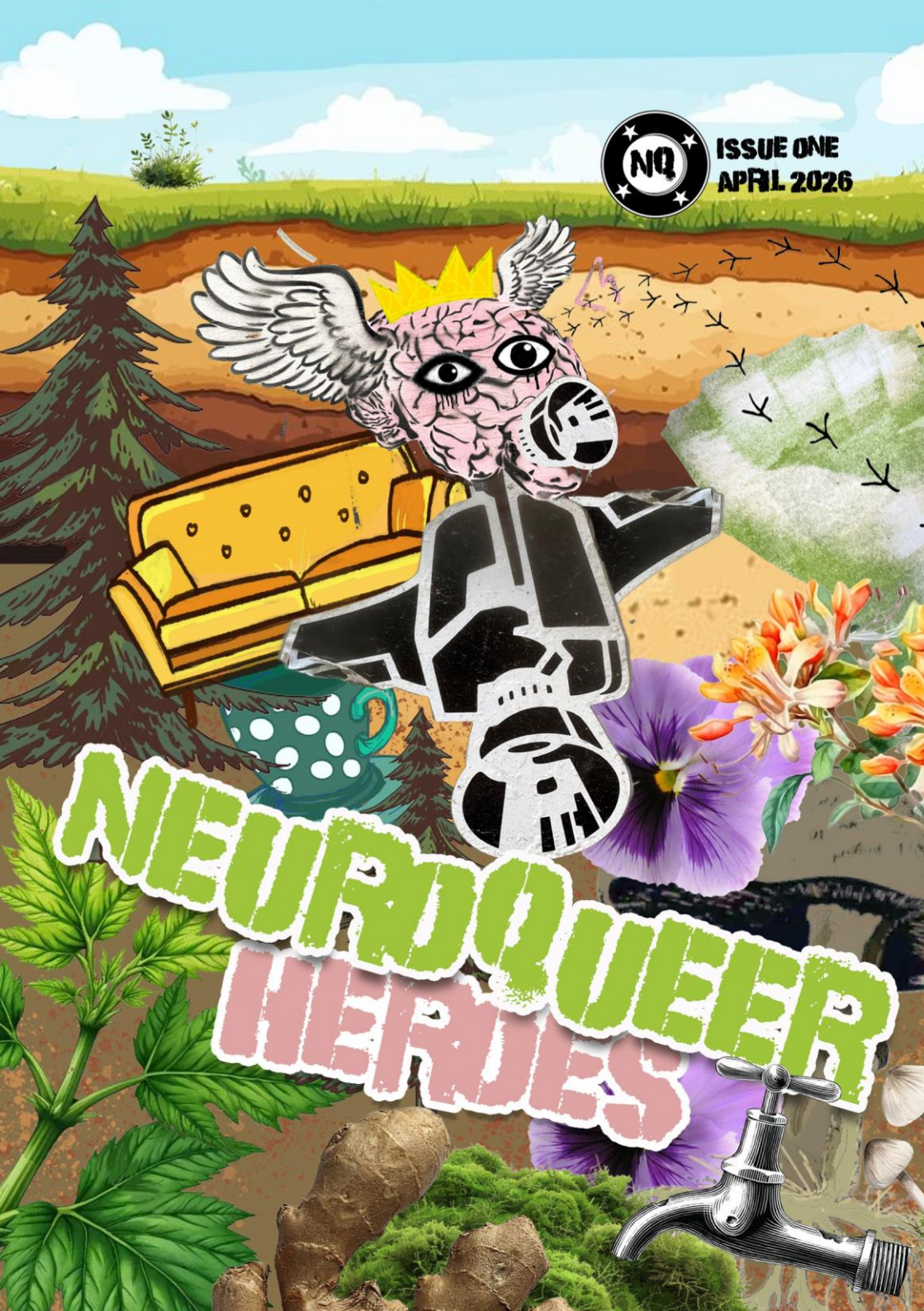




ISSUE ONE
APRIL 2026



NEWIRADO WEEER HEROES

Neuroqueer Heroes Poetry Zine

Image ID Front Cover: The front cover of the zine, it is a colourful collage of images. The background is a natural image of the sky, grass and then the stratigraphic profile of layers of mud and rocks below. In the centre of the image is a cartoon brain with eyes, wings and a crown. They are holding a megaphone and a film camera. they are surrounded by a mixture of natural and manmade imagery. They are surrounded by a pine tree, pansy, nettle, ginger, moss, and other flowers. They are also surrounded by a tap, a sofa, and a spotty mug.

Contents

Forward - About the course and the zine and us as a group of Neuroqueers.

What is Neuroqueering?

Some other poems and images

How the Crown was created

The Crown of Sonnets

Neuroqueerness, nature and queer
ecology

The Film

Acknowledgements

Forward

Welcome to our Neuroqueer Heroes
zine. The poems, images and film
you are about to see were created
during a series of poetry workshops
held at Open Eye Gallery in
Liverpool. They were part of Jay

Farley's Writer in Residence funded
by Creative Future.

Who are the NEUROQUEER
HEROES responsible for this work?
Kaitlin Schaal, Emyr Bamford, Sam
Prior, Sam Keall, Jay Farley,
Amanda Ralph, Carrie Habb, Alixir
Turnbull-Crane, Marie Hanafin,
Garnett 'Ratte' Frost, Alfie Beacall,
Moon Rice, Meave Devine, Tom
Mouldsdale

What is Neuroqueering

Coined by Dr. Nick Walker in 2008, Neuroqueering is a multi-layered concept that combines neurodivergence with queer identity and activism.

As an Identity: It describes the inseparable intersection of being neurodivergent (e.g., Autistic or ADHD) and LGBTQIA+. It highlights how a brain that processes "social rules" differently

often naturally rejects traditional norms of gender and sexuality.

As a Verb (Action): To

"neuroqueer" is to actively subvert "neuronormativity." This involves unmasking (rejecting the pressure to act "normal"), challenging the idea of a "right" way for a brain to function, and intentionally designing spaces to accommodate diverse

communication and sensory needs.

As a Political & Creative Tool:

It views "non-normal" thinking as a vital strength for solving global issues like climate change. It is rooted in intersectionality, positioning itself as a form of resistance against capitalism, racism, and colonialism by

advocating for a culture where everyone's unique needs are met. Ultimately, neuroqueering is about embracing cognitive and stylistic diversity to create a more inclusive, collaborative, and resilient society.

FOR MORE DETAILED VERSION
OF THIS EXPLANATION AND AN
ACCESSIBLE VERSION OF THE
ZINE SCAN THE QR CODE

BELOW TO SEE THE ZINE
WEBSITE.



OR FOLLOW THIS LINK:

<https://jayfarley.info/nqzine>

Other Poems

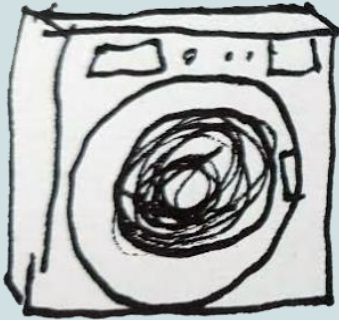
There is damage

Then there is damage

is damage

is damage

fill ~~fill~~ find a way



Sam Keall

Image Description:

A short poem written in scrawling handwriting, it says

There is damage then there is
damage

is damage

is damage

Fill find a way

Sam Keall

The writing is written around a
quick, scribbly drawing of a
washing machine.

Neuroqueer Born Acrostic

By Marie Hanafin

Need like dying embers thirsty
for flickers of fuel
Ending to begin
Unrelenting, unbreaking,
unfeeling
Run, your time is almost
Out - the gazelle's eyes wrinkle
Quiet, frost deafens
Understand?
Exhume the feeling
Enter the unknown
Run, you're just
Beginning to find the flame
Open the doors
Reinhabit your carcass skin,

Necromancer.

**Block Schedule By Kaitlin
Schaal**

School day: gym class: free play. \ I am \ the rat
seeing \ the labrador. \ I have no \ friends here.
Who do \ I talk to? My people \ where are my
people? /// I hold my hand \ down in class \ my
words will tumble \ storm-swollen river gorge \
over a landscape of thought. \ I would love to share
\ but \ I cannot gather \ sheaves of sentences \ in
time. \ My people \ what words do \ they reap? ///
New school: new class: new \ friends? I sit next to
\ a boy and \ he hops one \ chair over \ “have to
leave \ a gap” \ he is talking to \ another boy. \ My
people \ he is not my \ people. /// Band class
nerds: lunchtime library hall passes: reading
together. \ Birthday party and \ two hours watching
\ her friends \ they ask me \ to play but \
“no” is the fastest \ answer. \ I have too many \
questions and \ ... \ *brain thick \ thoughts
stiff honey and \ ... * I don’t believe in their
patience. \ There is a \ snake
in \ my blood. \ I breathe with \
twenty percent of \ my lungs.

Image Description

The poem is in one block and broken up by many slashes and back slashes, there are gaps and ellipses to create pauses and rhythm in the poem. A plain text version is below -

School day: gym class: free
play. I am the rat seeing the
labrador. I have no friends
here. Who do I talk to? My
people where are my people?
I hold my hand down in class
my words will tumble storm-

swollen river gorge over a landscape of thought. I would love to share but I cannot gather sheaves of sentences in time. My people what words do they reap? New school: new class: new friends? I sit next to a boy and he hops one chair over “have to leave a gap” he is talking to another boy. My people he is not my people. Band class nerds: lunchtime library hall passes: reading together. Birthday party and two hours watching

her friends they ask me to play
but “no” is the fastest answer.
I have too many questions
and ... brain thick
thoughts stiff honey and ...
I don't believe in their
patience.
There is a snake in my blood.
I breathe with twenty percent
of my lungs.

How the NEUROQUEER HEROES Crown was created.

A crown of sonnets, is composed of 15 sonnets using Iambic pentameter and 14 lines. They are linked by the repetition of the final line of one sonnet repeated as the initial line of the next. The last (master) sonnet consists of all the repeated lines of the previous 14 sonnets, in the same order in which they appeared.

Ours is a collaborative crown,
working with 14 neuroqueer people
with distinctly different neuroqueer
experiences each creating their own
sonnet.

This form is perfect to be really
personal and specific in each
sonnet. Whilst the joining of the
sonnets in the
repeating/connecting lines and the
master sonnet links them, overlaps,
and weaves them together. So all
together it was a great way of
unifying them and describing a joint

experience whilst still being true to the multitudes of our experience.

Did we stick strictly to the rules of the Crown? No, we're Neuroqueers! We couldn't even if we tried.

Instead we leaned into our different ways of working and let a natural flow guide us. We evolved the Crown and this poem is the result. You'll also notice our anthotypes sit behind our poems.

NEUROQUEER HEROES

CROWN OF SONNETS

melted sunlight / turmeric couch.

your legs / my back. your book / my
scalp.

your hand / my arm - resting.

noon's raindrops - mardi gras beads
on -

the windows - overlook the horse field.

eyes closed, i smell you,

the same as your hair pillowed out in
the morning.

i never find you where i left you, but
you are still there.

Love won't vanish if I look away.
and you are here, in this cabin, in this
moment of peace that
we fought for. (you don't get to your
thirties without scars.)
now, your hand on my arm squeezes -
true as forest breath, leaves shaking

The forest breathes, leaves shaking
Roots stretching out under earth
Roots stretching, growing
Soil grounding, speeding
Mycelium synapses, beneath our feet
Connecting us invisibly,
Crossing borders,
Above the trees starlings soar
Swooping, shifting, morphing,
Shedding unnatural uprootings struggle and strain
(lighter now, moss underfoot, cushioned)
Moving to a land where we're all free
When they reach it they will celebrate
And tell the mushrooms to spread the word
Murmurations begin the journey

Image Description

The sonnet text twists and turns and flows around similar to the roots of mycelium, the words grow bigger and smaller, warp and shift up and down like they are reaching out for nutrients or other mycelium to connect to. The text of the sonnet reads

The forest breathes, leaves shaking

Roots stretching out under earth

Soil grounding, growing

Mycelium synapses speeding

Connecting us invisibly,
beneath our feet
Crossing borders,
Above the trees starlings soar
Swooping, shifting, morphing,
Shedding unnatural uprootings
struggle and strain
(lighter now, moss underfoot,
cushioned)
Moving to a land where we're
all free
When they reach it they will
celebrate
And tell the mushrooms to
spread the word

Murmurations begin the
journey.

My journey first began in
cloisters new
Where expectation bent to
gods unknown,
Illus'ry 'common sense' was
held as true,
And followed unwrit rules like
sacred tome.

My natural ways rejected,
deemed as wyrd.
Opinions others hold became
my guide,
But learning led to revelations
queered

And destinies unclear as roads
divide.

I walk in new horizons for
myself
And call to find the deities
within.

Reconnect with my own
nature's wealth,
And bare compassion t'wards
my stranger kin.

For 'there, but for the grace of
gods, go I'

'Till Ragnarok renew or Fates
defy.

Beat up at the bus, Gay trope

One to live out / Talk about

At 28 though?

Pain = rage, nothing's changed

has it ?? new horizons

felt the shame, first blow landed

felt their fear, humiliated, neutered, abandoned

baby boy, more lost than love, living it out, same as us

felt them rush into body, force into bones, with all his might

And never have i been as big as the understanding rushing back through his arm

Consuming, unyielding, alien / familiar, terrifying, effortless truly calm

gather our bleeding children, take us home.

Vultures and victims

How strong we are, How strong we are.

Image Description

The poem descends downwards in sharp lines, the words are sideways and the poem is at a 90 degree angle reaching down towards the bottom of the page.

The poem reads

Beat up at the bus, Gay trope

One to live out /Talk about

At 28 though?

Pain = rage, nothing's changed

has it ?? new horizons

felt the shame, first blow landed

felt their fear, humiliated,

neutered, abandoned

baby boy, more lost than love,
living it out, same as us
felt them rush into body, force into
bones, with all his might
And never have i been as big as
the understanding rushing back
through his arm
Consuming, unyielding, alien /
familiar, terrifying, effortless truly
calm
gather our bleeding children, take
us home.
Vultures and victims
How strong we are, How strong we
are.

How strong

we are\ *Are we strong?*

We are /seedy\ weeded, worried and woke

Self medicated multi tasking ticking meltdowns

Pattern recognition\ Peado\ groomer\ toilet looming\

harmless loser\click bait\access requirement anti

heroes/ or

Gender fucking time travelers blown on the wind/ landing

decades after we were ~~assigned~~ ~~wronged~~ born

Up at dandelion with the sparrows/ pollinating

freedom/ one binder at a time/ rewilding our

Bones /We are nettles rising/ We are

daisy chained back to earth/We are

horsetail rising/ We are nature

defending itself

Image Description

The poem descends down in short, fiery sentences. Multiple slashes break up the poem and add to the quick snappy rhythm. The phrase “assigned wronged” is crossed through and silent.

The poem reads

How strong we are. Are we
strong?

We are seedy, weeded, worried
and woke

Self medicated multi tasking
ticking meltdowns

Pattern recognition Peado
groomer toilet looming harmless
looser
click bait access requirement
anti heroes or
Gender fucking time travelers
blown on the wind
Landing decades after we were
assigned wronged born
Up at dandelion with the
sparrows
Pollinating freedom one binder at
a time
rewilding our bones
We are nettles rising

We are daisy chained back to
earth

We are horsetail rising

We Are nature defending itself

Nature defending inflammatory propetry guru
Undercover agency- you know how to spice things up
Gnarly exterior- cut-vibtant/stringy interior specialist
You are a contradiction-my fiery antioxidant friend
Secretly Spreading undetected/hardy perennial...
Ninja style
A constant unearthing
You roam curiously subterranean-but all above board
Horizontal yet adventurous -covering new ground... always reaching
Brave even though your armour is wafer thin
Sometimes you stem upwards to the light-even flowering
What an unexpected but magnificent sight -Retreat
Wrapped tight so as not to let the spicy aroma out-
Like a crystallied pupa waiting for the fiesta

always reaching
for parts
unknown

Image Description

The poem is in one constant
sonnet of 14 lines, on the 9th line

the words at the end of the line
begin to warp and float and
stretch into a circle reaching
down and around stretching out
to the last line of the sonnet.

The poem reads

Nature defending inflammatory
property guru

Undercover agency- you know
how to spice things up

Gnarly exterior- cut-
vibrant/stringy interior specialist

You are a contradiction-my fiery
antioxidant friend

Secretly Spreading

undetected/hardy perennial...

Ninja style

A constant unearthing

You roam curiously subterranean-
but all above board

Horizontal yet adventurous -

covering new ground... always
reaching for parts unknown

Brave even though your armour is
wafer thin

Sometimes you stem upwards to
the light-even flowering

What an unexpected but
magnificent sight -Retreat

Wrapped tight so as not to let the
spicy aroma out-

Like a crystallised pupa waiting
for the fiesta

Like a crystallised pupa waiting
for the fiesta

I am the grassy path,
scented flowers

I am fragrance of honeysuckle

I am bees buzzing in coloured
blossoms

I am squirrels running
leaping from one tree to another
fighting for nuts

I'm dark green ivy,
stretching up walls

across the roof, entwined I am
a small bird flying towards my
mini forest

landing on my swaying branches
I am Pine Trees Growing

Pine trees growing
Bent from Adam's side
Mahogany brittlewood's bark
Seeds press hard underground
When rain comes
Or clouds fall down from the sky
Needles catch life droplets
Sewn into hostile soil
Time flows through
Rings on branching years
Sands too quick
To hear axes swing
Earth thicker than paper
Paper thicker than water

Thick water - Clog ged Spig got
I sputter, spettle, sprain-
ing tidal tongue crashes
In gulfs, words that rip
Caustic like teeth shirted in
bile.

'You're a little odd aren't you?'
Language is languish - please
Dig/ the shivered boot/ out of
my hoarse/ mouth
Chronically set on devil's
advocacy.

All paper entrails and oiled
hoards
This carrion library reeks

Of shortcut wood.
But there's hope the ink can
read me
Paint worlds from scattered
thoughts and set them free.

Plain text version

Thick water – Clogged Spigot
I sputter, spettle, sprain
ing tidal tongue crashes
In gulfs, words that rip
Caustic like teeth shirted in bile.
'You're a little odd aren't you?'
Language is languish - please
Dig. the shivered boot. out of my
hoarse. mouth
Chronically set on devil's advocacy.

All paper entrails and oiled hoards
This carrion library reeks
Of shortcut wood.
But there's hope the ink can read
me
Paint worlds from scattered
thoughts and set them free.

You paint new worlds onto your
eyes

Sharing dinosaurs and snow angels
across the glass

Rewilding the street with seasonal
surprises

Acrylic creatures sneaking through
tall grass

When storms flood the darker
corners of my mind

The concrete path, cracks, its
strength leached by pain

It can be difficult to see the world
as safe, beautiful or kind

Yesterday your eyes were closed
and plain

Waiting, watching, no blooms in
sight

Beige curtains smother your
creative soul

Have you moved, changed your
mind, or had a fight?

Without your stories the street isn't
whole

Then lavender, daffodils, pansies
begin to peek up

Blooming out of smiling rainbow
pots, and a polka dot teacup

Blooming like smiling rainbow polka dots
The flowers are set to bloom again and again...
The pretty purple pansies say I know how you feel.
But to compare our blooms is impossible,
The little red flowers sparkle on the streets
like the blood pooling in my mouth.
Punch purple blooms, set to flower across your face in a few days.
Now just a painful stab in your eye and a hillbilly broken glass smile.
How people around me enjoy the colour show,
broke to yellow to green to painful purple
With each pansy planted a bruise alike
A hate crime greeted with flowers
Pansies for pansies.
I spot you near the bridge and fear the cars passing

Image Description

The poem grows upwards, and with each line the words descend up, with the poem at a 90 degree angle.

The poem reads

Blooming like smiling rainbow
polka dots

The flowers are set to bloom
again and again...

The pretty purple pansies say I
know how you feel.

But to compare our blooms is
impossible,

The little red flowers sparkle on
the streets
like the blood pooling in my
mouth.

Punch purple blooms, set to
flower across your face in a few
days.

Now just a painful stab in your
eye and a hillbilly broken glass
smile.

How people around me enjoy the
colour show,
broke to yellow to green to
painful purple

With each pansy planted a bruise
alike

A hate crime greeted with flowers

Pansies for pansies.

I spot you near the bridge and

fear the cars passing

I see you watch the cars pass by
Near the bridge where folks
come to die

I have my own bridge I left to
stand¹

When loss led me by the hand
I see you grow slant out the wall
How your green leaves fold and
fall

I bow to a new way to feel
Step out of the death reel
I see you claim brick for loam
No deep roots have you for home
I no need for walls but doors
Breathe in my bloom once more

I see you turn to ghost in light²
My dead weed fixed love in sight

¹I left to stand - ²an anothotype

If you have weed sight
Would you liken me to lichen?
Symbiotic rock clinging concrete
coverage
At the end of long dirt road
Sandy carpark by the sea
Or maybe more mossy, soft water
soaked
Oak lingerer, shady grove lover
A bed for pixies in the fairy glade
Press your face into me
Much maligned and overlooked
pigment
Hardy and frail

Sustained on sunlight and dew
droplets

You can find me wherever you
care to look

From the gutter to the mountain
tops

let me be mountaintop moss or Estuarine mud please?
So Little Egrets can tattoo me with their feet,
I can be that beige algal foam
So that happy-fast dogs can bound through me
and fling me to the wind for my flakey distractedness
Then please I can be a Flounder conventionally
Sucking up fat Lugs, please? ^{not} ^{being} ^{adult}
And for my pasty-slicing-Gull-beak of ^{not} ^{being}
Let me cop out into a raft of Blue-Grey Springtails,
My naivety dancing the dreams of a rock pool.
Just please throw me Into the dynamics of a Coast,
shifting in sand and shell and silt,
degrading sea walls with my laziness.
Let me be anywhere at once, and never gone

Image Description

The poem is one block paragraph, in the 8th line the words begin to get turned in all different directions, forming a sort of rectangle of words. Until the 9th line when the poem returns to a block paragraph.

The poem reads

let me be mountaintop moss or
Estuarine mud please?

So Little Egrets can tattoo me
with their feet,

I can be that beige algal foam

So that happy-fast dogs can
bound through me
and fling me to the wind for my
flakey distractedness

Then please I can be a Flounder
sucking up fat Lugs, please?

And for my pasty-slicing-Gull-
beak of not being conventionally
adult.

Let me cop out into a raft of
Blue-Grey Springtails,
My naivety dancing the dreams of
a rock pool.

Just please throw me Into the
dynamics of a Coast,

shifting in sand and shell and silt,
degrading sea walls with my
laziness.

Let me be anywhere at once, and
never gone

Love won't vanish if we look away.

Roots stretch out under earth

walk in new horizons

How strong we are, How strong

we are.

Nature defending itself

crystallised pupa waiting for the

fiesta

We are the grassy path,

Sewn into hostile soil

But there's hope the ink can read

us

paint new worlds onto eyes

flowers set to bloom again and

again...

I see us grow slant
From the gutter to the mountain
tops
Let us be anywhere at once, and
never gone

Credits to the Crown

The writers of the sonnets in
sonnet order:

Kaitlin Schaal, Emyr Bamford, Sam
Prior, Sam Keall, Jay Farley,
Amanda Ralph, Carrie Habb, Alixir
Turnbull-Crane, Marie Hanafin,
Garnett 'Ratte' Frost, Alfie Beacall,
Moon Rice, Meave Devine, Tom
Moulsdale

WE CREATED ANTHOTYPES



Top: Tom Mouldale

Anthotype in progress

Image Description – a White hand holds a glass pane with two dark green leafy plants resting on the glass, through the glass thick white paper with small green and orange squares painted on it can be seen. On the green squares a sun print of the same leafy plant has been made.

**Bottom: Daffodil Anthotype
by Moon Rice**

Image Description – a sun anotype print of a daffodil on white textured paper, orange petals and a deep orange centre have been printed on the paper with a light textured green stem dangling gently off from the centre. The daffodil has been printed on a very pale green wash of spinach dye.

NEUROQUEERNESS AND NATURE

Neuroqueerness exists everywhere in nature including spinach, penguins, mushrooms, clownfish, elephants and bees! In fact when we look for it, it exists in all of nature. It's just that we have previously been presented with a picture of nature often shaped by privileged, white, public school-educated men, which

have historically distorted our understanding of nature and reinforced their own beliefs and systems. When we look at nature free of a capitalism lens, it teaches us that everything is interconnected like a web and although it has elements of hierarchy and competitiveness, they often sit within collaborative systems. For example symbiosis and mutualism, like bees pollinating flowers while collecting nectar, where both

species benefit. Or Mycelium and Funga keeping forests alive and forests keeping the planet alive. We are part of that web of life and we need to treat it, and ourselves with respect and equity.

Neurodiversity and queerness represent what scientists call “variance,” a natural and beneficial diversity found in all walks of life. Variance strengthens species and ecosystems by enabling

adaptation and resilience. We need us.

Neuroqueering allows us to decolonise, decoding our bodies and minds, and through the lens of queer ecology it is like rewilding.

WE ARE HOPE: Our existence (Neuroqueer(ing) People) is nature defending itself.

The beauty of Neuroqueering is we can do it **NOW** in our everyday lives, shoulder to shoulder. We don't have to wait

to elect anyone or overthrow
capitalism, we can just start
TODAY :)



Anthotype by Garnett 'Ratte' Frost

Image Description – An anthotype print, on a wash of pale brown background there is a large green plant. It has three large leaves artistically placed around a thick stem leading up to four big yellow petals and two small darker petals. The plant is striking and central to the page, there are swirls of green and orange in the background from the

spinach and turmeric in the wash.

WE ALSO MADE A FILM:

The film and the poem is a ritual. Using a spell circle created at our local nature reserve of Bidston Hill, under the beautiful full moon of March the poem and the film formed a powerful spell. A ritual dedicated to reconnect with nature, rewild our minds, bodies and souls and break the curse of capitalism. We

planted the poem in the rich red earth alongside Sonnet Sigils; seeds ready to grow into an enriched and brighter future.

Alixir Turnbull-Crane

Sigil - a symbolic representation of the witches' or practitioners' desired outcome.



QR code for the film.

Link Here:

[https://vimeo.com/firsttake/nq
crown](https://vimeo.com/firsttake/nq
crown)

Acknowledgements

I'd like to give a special thanks to Creative Future and in particular Matt Freidman who is just an amazing person.

Creative Future support and champion underrepresented

voices and are one of the best cultural organisations in the country. They funded my residency and have given me the confidence to grow as a writer, THANK YOU.

Secondly, Open Eye Gallery who provided the location and local support in Liverpool.

Sarah Fisher, Susanah Fletcher, Sorcha Boyle and Maria Gullina for being awesome. Open Eye is platforming, curating, programming, and supporting

amazing artists and art.

Challenging what a gallery space is and can do in the best inclusive and radical ways.

Check them out! Thanks to First Take who supported the making of the film. They make amazing social good/justice films and digital art with underrepresented communities.

Finally thanks to Paul Hamlyn Foundation for funding First Take to explore and bring

Neuroqueering to a wider
community.

Jay Farley

This accessible zine was made
by Emyr who would like to
acknowledge that it was made
with the limited tools available
to them and that while they are
disabled themselves and made
every effort to make this zine
as accessible as they could
they are aware that there will
be gaps in their knowledge
when it comes to accessibility

and welcomes feedback on how to make this zine more accessible to more people!

Image ID Back cover – a papier mâché mask of a face is in the middle of the image. Their eyes are closed and from the bottom of the page a tree grows up and over their face, the branches cover their lower face and nose and obscure parts of their face. The branches are filled with red and green leaves which fall down and line the bottom of the page. The sky is a light blue and also covers the top half of the papier mâché face as well as the rest of the sky

