Trans Heroes Coloring Book
Illustrations by the wonderful, amazingly talented
Emmett Stone 😊

If you’d like to share your work online, please be sure to @_homegrownstone on insta and @sagatucson on insta/fb or email us to share :) thank you!

~June Edition~
Devin Michael Lowe is a Black, first generation Jamaican-American, and queer man of transgender experience. He’s from Houston, Texas, but is currently based in NYC where he is an actor, media producer, and founder and CEO of the Black Trans Travel Fund (BTTF). BTTF compels car rides for Black trans women in NYC and NJ so they are able to travel safely and free of harassment. Devin dreams that one day BTTF will grow into a national and international resource. As for Devin’s media experience, he is the Executive Producer for “Redefining Masculinity,” a documentary currently in production, which centers Black trans masculine folks. He was also an actor and associate producer for “The Garden Left Behind” (2019), which is a movie about an undocumented trans Latina. And it won the Audience award at the SXSW Film Festival! You can watch it with an Amazon Prime account or it’s $2 on YouTube.

Devin was also the host for “Trans-masculine & Healthy,” which is a 2 episode web-series he launched in partnership with Callen-Lorde and the New York City Department of Health (http://callen-lorde.org/transhealth/). In these 2 episodes he interviews 13 trans masculine people about gender identity, support, sexual orientation and changes some experienced once starting T, and how they feel about the term “passing.” On the topic of “passing,” one of the interviewees, Tiq Milan, points out: “Passing has a legacy that is rooted in the racial history of this country. Passing happened when like light skinned, light eyed Black folks would pass for white in order to keep themselves safe from systemic discrimination...” “Passing” is a very contested subject in the trans community and I am glad that, to me, it feels like many trans folks/communities are moving away from, critiquing, and rejecting the concept of “passing.” However, that is not to invalidate or ignore the real fact that “passing,” whether that’s what you’re trying to do or not, oftentimes provides temporary safety in this white cishet world.

Devin also has a ton of experience facilitating trans masculine support groups, which focus on self-care, political education, and redefining & centering healthy masculinity. In fact, he is currently facilitating Black Trans Media’s virtual support spaces for Black trans people across the country. He is also their Community Media Organizer. To learn more about Devin you can go to his website devinmichaellowe.com and follow him on insta @DevinMichaelLowe!
Dean Spade is a white trans man born in 1977. He is a writer, community organizer, and law professor at the Seattle University School of Law. He also directed a one hour documentary titled *Pinkwashing Exposed: Seattle Fights Back!* (2015), which can be watched for free online, along with other videos, articles, interviews, book chapters, and syllabi all on his website http://www.deanspade.net/. Dean’s two published books are *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics and the Limits of Law* (2011) and *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the next)* (2020). In an interview by Natalie Oswin for *Society and Space* about *Normal Life*, Dean argues:

“It is a mistake for trans activists to focus our resources and attention on winning inclusion in legal equality frameworks, such as anti-discrimination laws and hate crimes laws, that will not provide relief from the life-shortening conditions trans populations are facing. [...] Instead of focusing on what the law says about trans people [...] we should be focused on what systems of law and administration do to trans people [...] our interventions should aim to dismantle harmful, violent systems such as criminal punishment and immigration enforcement.”

Dean’s writing and activism continues to center the systemic violence experienced by TQ BIPOC from institutions such as the police, detention centers, and military and tackles that with a mutual aid and abolitionist framework. Within that, he sees law reform as a tactic to move closer towards liberation, but not a goal of liberation. And part of critically utilizing law reform is asking oneself who benefits from the proposed law reform? Is it just middle/upper class and/or white TQs? Or will it actually bring about some material change for working class and/or BIPOC and/or undocumented TQs? Overall, the history of law reform movements is a history of co-opting grassroots organizers demanding for real change, enforcing the false “good citizen” - “criminal” binary, and trusting in a system that is inherently racist, classist, trans/queerphobic, ableist, etc… Dean’s work breaks all of this down in multiple formats.
Gia Love is a Black trans woman born in 1990 in New York City, specifically the south Bronx. As she declares on one of her insta posts: “A goddess is a black trans women from the South Bronx” (10/7/20)!

Gia is a model and trans activist that is noted for being the star of the Teddy Award-winning documentary *Kiki* (2016). *Kiki* follows seven trans and queer youth of color over 4 years, including Gia, to document their lived experiences in the NYC Kiki scene, and how they utilize that community to continue the legacy of organizing against trans/queerphobia and racism, providing HIV and STI prevention services for at-risk trans and queer youth, and addressing houselessness. To be honest, I have not watched *Kiki* yet, so am curious how the film portrays the lives of these TQ BIPOC in comparison to *Paris Is Burning*, a documentary from 1990 also directed by a white woman… Have y’all seen it? What do y’all think?

Anyways, Gia has also done work with the Black Trans Femmes in the Arts Collective (BTFA) and was their Director of Community Engagement. In fact, she starred in a short film released by The Angelito Collective in partnership with BTFA. You can find it on YouTube under “The Angelito Collective Presents: Toxic.” In 2020 Gia also founded and launched her first Celebration of Black Trans Women Cookout, which does exactly as the title says :) Gia currently works with “the Trans Equity Consulting team as a consultant to provide capacity-building support and equity for trans folks across industries.”

Gia was also a sex worker for many years. She became a sex worker not because she didn’t have access to employment, but because she wanted to gain more agency. She was done being nonconsensually objectified, tokenized for grants, and having her talents be unacknowledged in her previous 10 year job as a public health worker. I learned this when I found Gia’s GoFundMe to raise money for her return to college. There’s a video posted there explaining more of her story, and one of the things that I love that she says when asked why she wants to return to college is that she doesn’t need a PhD, but she wants to contribute to the academic world! She wants to make sure that Black trans women are being represented and heard in academia because academia needs Black trans women. Some of her dream jobs are to be on the *View* or to do journalism for tennis because she loves tennis! <3
Cristina Ortiz Rodríguez, aka La Veneno, was a Spanish trans woman born on March 19th, 1964 in the small town of Adra, Spain. At age 13, she ran away from home with one of her sisters to San Pedro de Alcántara. Then at age 27 she moved to Madrid where she participated on a TV show called “Vivan los novios,” in which the prize was a trip to Bangkok, Thailand. In Bangkok Cristina attended a “lady boy” show, which is when she came to the realization that she’s trans. Back in Madrid she started to socially transition, but as is the experience of many TGNC folks today, Cristina was fired by her transphobic employers… She then went on to find sex work at El Parque del Oeste, where she found her trans fam including her bestie, the amazing Paca!

A couple years later a news reporter named Faela Saiz basically chased Veneno down (and her friends) to bring her on to the late night talk show called Esta noche cruzamos el Mississippi. Veneno’s appearance had such high ratings that the show host Pepe Navarro contracted her own program. During her time as a media personality, Veneno also released two singles (Veneno pa’ tu piel and El rap de La Veneno) and modeled for fashion designers. Veneno quickly rose to fame and was one of the first trans women to become widely known in Spain - a trans icon! You can get more of a glimpse into Cristina’s dynamic personality and complex life on the HBO Max series Veneno, based on the book ¡Digo! Ni puta ni santa: Las memorias de La Veneno, by trans journalist Valeria Vegas.

I highly recommend this biopic TV series. I feel like it tells such a nuanced story of Cristina’s life: her incredible accomplishments, her shittyness towards loved ones, her boundless dreams, the life threats she faced, the people who loved and hated her (sometimes simultaneously), the impact she had/has on TGNC folks specifically in Spain. The title of Valeria’s book is spot on for how the biopic portrays her. Content warning though, it is a very intense series and contains a lot of graphic content of the physical and sexual abuse Cristina experienced from many different perpetrators in her life from family, to strangers, to relationships, to her time in a men’s prison. If you do watch, please be gentle with yourself and take breaks when needed.

Rest in power Cristina La Veneno!