

# Hidden Constellations

Mapped and Unmapped Queer Sapphic Space in NYC

*Note: The term 'sapphic' is used in this project to describe individuals who experience emotional, romantic, sensual, or sexual attraction to women or non-men. It intentionally includes people across diverse gender identities and orientations, such as nonbinary individuals and asexual people who feel romantic or emotional connections toward women or non-men.*





# What Story

## Data driven → Personal Narratives

Queer women's spaces are "hidden" in the mainstream narrative, but they are not really disappearing.

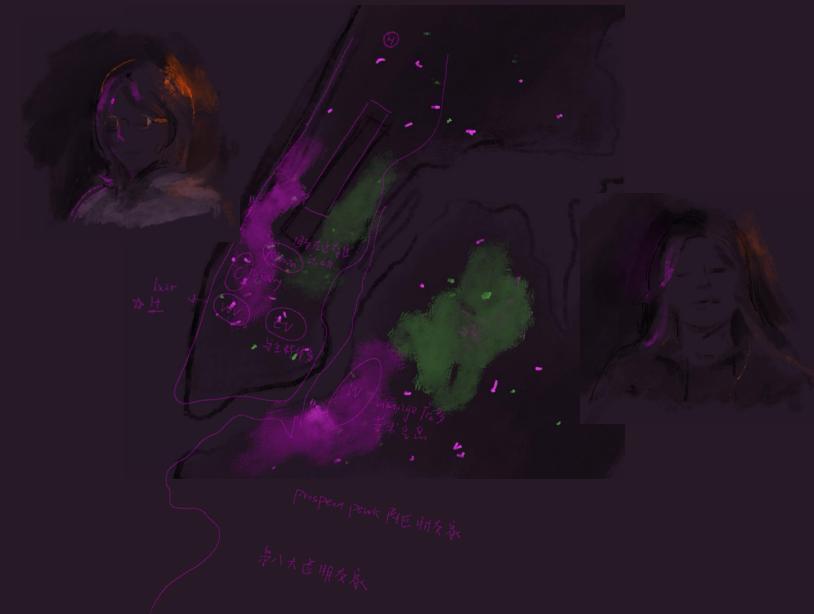
Through data analysis, interviews and map visualization, it is revealed the lack of queer women's spaces, but these spaces are surviving in more informal and resilient ways, such as pop-ups, club nights, and community organizations on social media.



Cishet

LGBTQ

Queer Women



Narrative Map

# Why Important

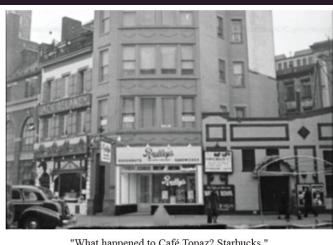
TOO MANY FRIENDS ASK ME TO DO THIS...

- Calling for more female-friendly and queer-friendly spaces
- Calling for attention to the visibility and cultural continuity of the queer women's community
- Reflecting on how to preserve the sense of belonging of queer women

MAPPING IS FOR NO MAPPING!

Mapping these spaces is an ongoing process— a pursuit of a future where such markings will no longer be necessary.

Imagine a Queer women-friendly city...



"What happened to Café Topaz? Starbucks."



"There are only two lesbian bars in Manhattan."



"An inclusive, community-driven hubs for connection and support."

# Why Now

TRUMP

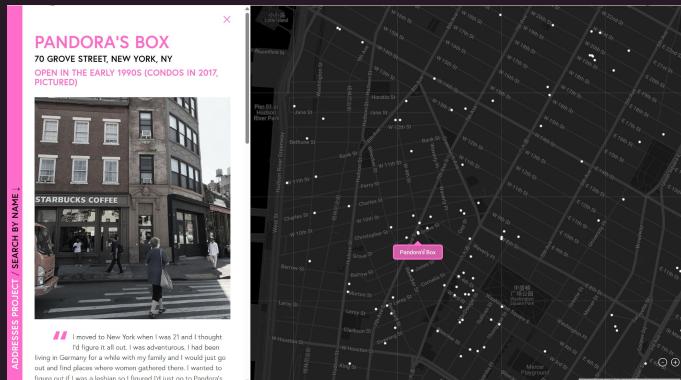


# What Sources

## Data

Previous dataset (multiple sources)

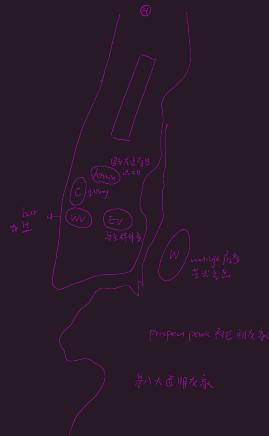
Addresses Project (Historic lesbian sites in NYC with years, interactive map, not able to download)  
The Lesbian Bar Project (sent email, no response)  
Lesbian Herstory Archives (sent email, no response)



## Interview

Audio Records + Cognitive Maps

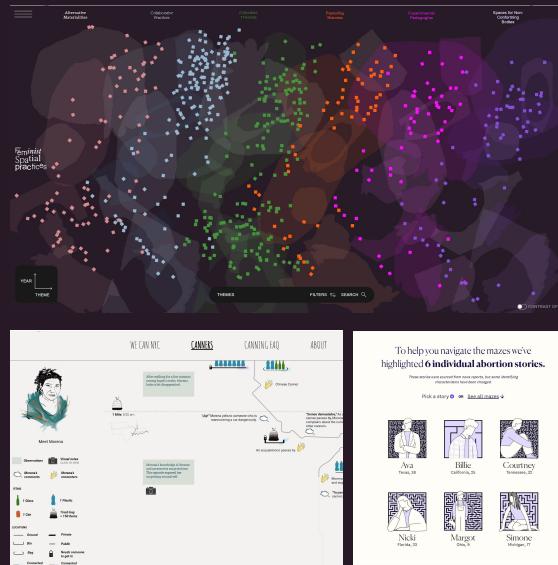
- Official queer women spaces
- Queer Women-Friendly Spaces
- Queer Women's Activity Spaces
- Implicit Queer Women's Spaces
- Why inclusive?/ why not?



## Visualization & Website

Canners.nyc (Interview → Map)

Feminist Spatial Practice (Color code, layers)  
The United States of Abortion Mazes  
(Storytelling, how to pack interviews)



## Narrative & Writing

Articles

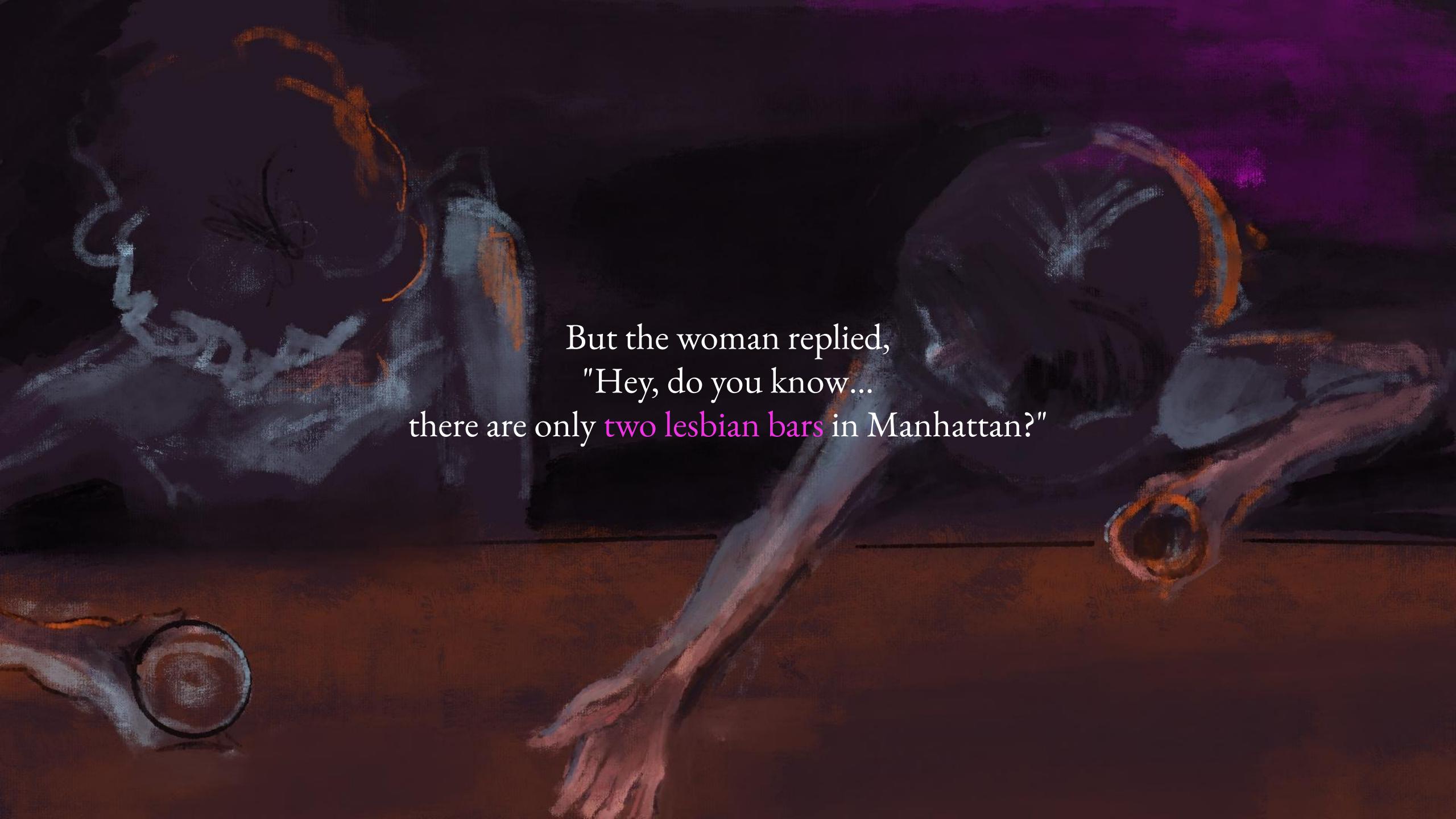
Oswin, N. (2008). Critical geographies and the uses of sexuality: deconstructing queer space. *Progress in Human Geography*, 32(1), 89-103.

Interviews

Constellating Queer Spaces (2018)

# Hidden Constellations

Mapped and Unmapped Queer Women Space in NYC

The background of the image is a dark, textured painting. It features several organic, flowing shapes in shades of black, grey, and purple. These shapes resemble stylized leaves or perhaps the petals of a flower. Interspersed among these darker forms are bright, glowing highlights in orange, yellow, and white, which create a sense of depth and light within the dark space.

But the woman replied,  
"Hey, do you know...  
there are only **two** lesbian bars in Manhattan?"

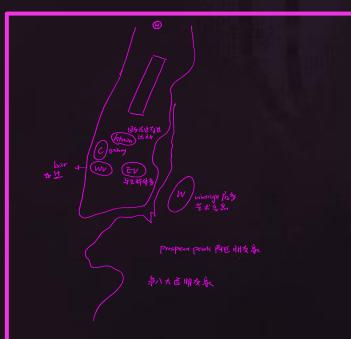
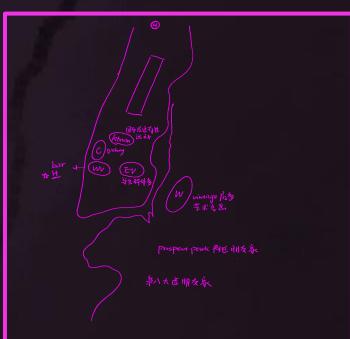
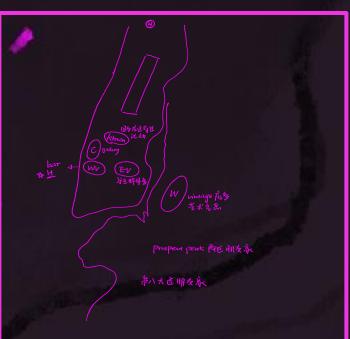
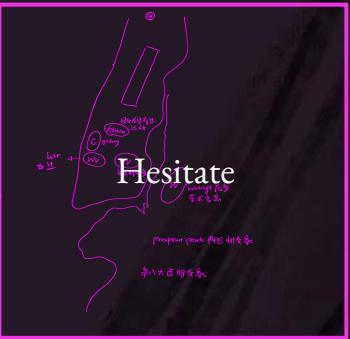
This means official lesbian bars man, if she wants to go to an inclusive, safe, gaze-free social space,  
she only has these options.

\*There are only 27 official lesbian bars in US



And more lesbian bars are disappearing...

There were more than 200 lesbian bars in the U.S. in the 1980s, but now there are fewer than 30.



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There were more than 200 lesbian bars in the U.S. in the 1980s, but now there are fewer than 30.





However, queer women's spaces are not limited to bars.  
This is the intersection with issues of gender, sexuality, and  
community.

Queer women's spaces are usually fragmented and fleeting;  
— like Constellations in the sky.

# Exploring Their Story



Kloe  
She/they  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year in NYC

“A gathering of women and non-binary people in my friend’s living room”



Jean  
She/her  
5<sup>th</sup> Year in NYC

“There are really few bars, so I also meet people in sports spaces and bookstores.”



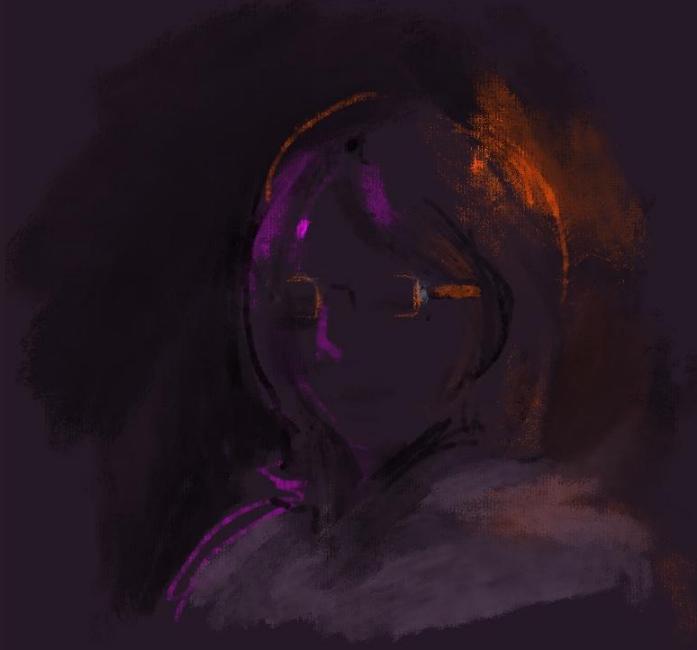
Name  
Pronoun  
Year

“...”



Name  
Pronoun  
Year

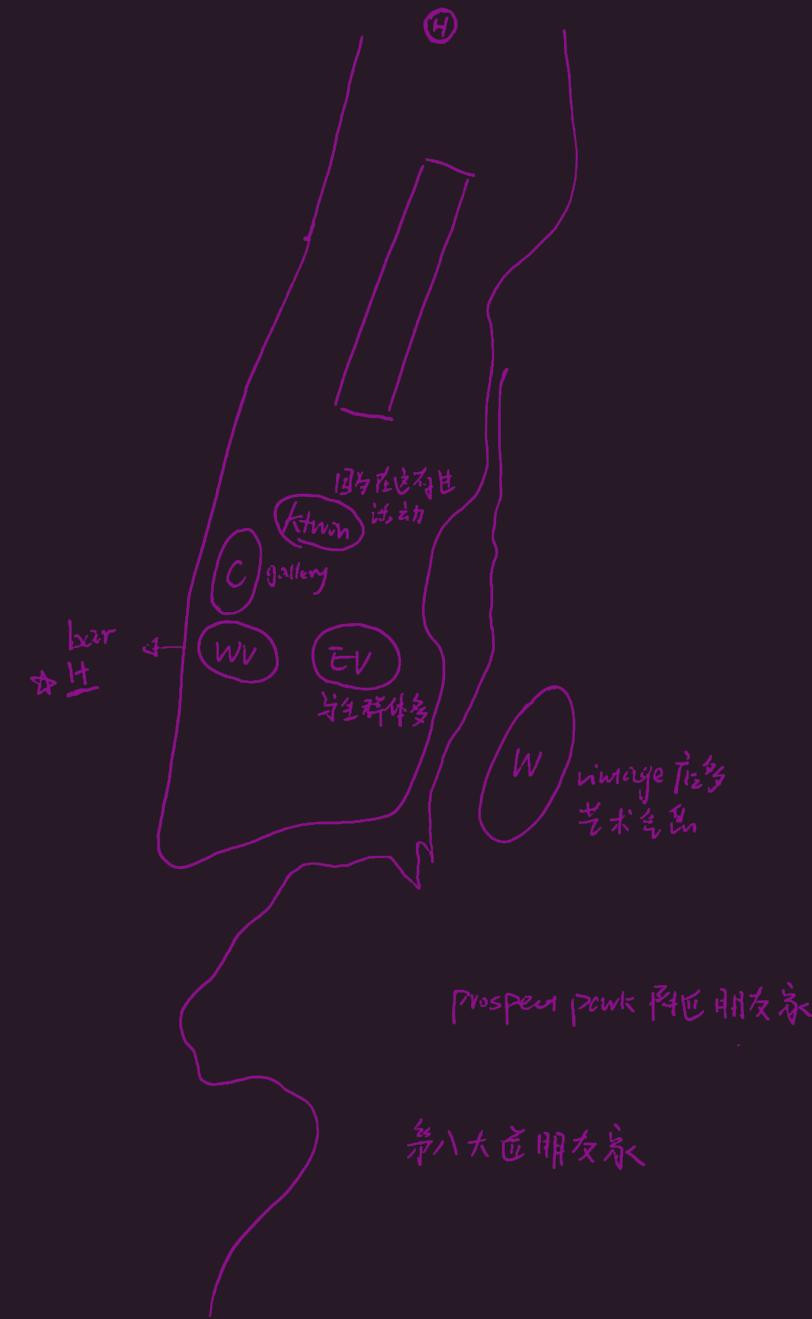
“....”



Kloe  
She/they  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year in NYC



Kloe is an active member of a women and non-binary community.





Jean  
She/her

5th Year in NYC

Jean works at a lesbian space and is currently exploring amateur drag king performance. She is also active in the lesbian community on social media and has noticed that even within the community, many people are still unaware that these spaces exist.

‘Bushwick is super lesbian!’

### Nightlife

Queer Graden  
House of Yes  
Market Hotel

### Restaurant

Maite

### POP-UP

Lex (social media platform)  
The Wood (every Wednesday)  
Futch

### Sports

Big Apple Recreational Sports  
Rugby/Soccer/Basketball/Softball

## MAPPING IS FOR NO MAPPING

Imagine a Queer women-friendly city...





Jean



Klöé



Jesse



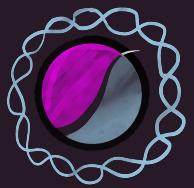
Alex



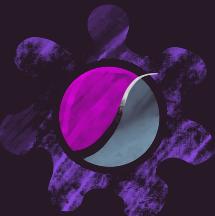
Julia



Tati



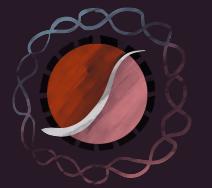
J



Esha



Zao



Morgan

