

## **NEW YORK CITY TRANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

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### **INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

**LIX Z**

**Interviewer:** Aiofe Smith

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**Transcribed by** Joshua Chang (volunteer)

**NYC TOHP Interview Transcript #171**

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**Aoife Smith:** Hello, my name is Aoife Smith and I'll be having a conversation with Lix Z [Zacharoff] for the New York City Trans Oral Project in collaboration with the New York Public Library Community Oral History Project. It is an oral history project centered on the experience of trans-identifying people. It is July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and this is being recorded in downtown Manhattan. (Slight pause) Hi.

**Lix Z:** Hi.

**Smith:** Umm...

**Z:** Thank you so much for having me.

**Smith:** No, thank you so much for being here. It's great. Umm, did you end up coming to New York to live here?

**Z:** Umm, I moved here when I was 18. Umm, I got a scholarship when I was in high school to go to school here and I stayed here for about 5 years. And then I lived in Oakland for 3 years, and then I just moved back actually in December.

**Smith:** Cool, were there any like cool communities or organizations that you're involved with [inaudible] in like your first 5 years in New York?

**Z:** Oh my god, wow, really, I was really excited by everything that was happening at Blue Stocking. So it's a very like an appropriate place for me. That's where I learned about letter writing and black and pink. Also like, DIY spaces like at the Silent Barn and taking like workshops there. I remember hacking workshops and that was really amazing, shows and like seeing queer performers and queer bands. It was a really important place for me and when I was there.

**Smith:** Cool. You're in a band, right?

**Z:** Yeah I am in a band. I'm in a band called, Telepathic Children. We're like a devastating, gay, disco, punk band. We formed in Oakland, California after Pride 2018. We just recorded our first album called FTP Gay [Smith laughs] and we just had our first music video, and yeah. It's really funny, we just had our first band practice last year and then we went to a Trans Play Party after. We were just in the post pride, like desperate momentum for creativity and we were like flirting with other women, like just talking about our one song we just wrote one hour before the Trans-Play Party in San Francisco. Yeah...

**Smith:** That's so fun. How did you end up moving to- or why did you move to Oakland?

**Z:** It's kind of a wild journey. After I finished my undergrad, I actually went pretty straight into grad school. And I got into a PHD program in Providence, between Brown University and I dropped out after a year. And then I still like proposed a project to do over the summer in Berlin. And so I went to Berlin for the summer and I came back and I got like, kind of low-key kicked

out. So I came back to New York for a little bit and then there was a lot going on for me personally at the time, and then I just needed a break. And I went on to Oakland for three months and then I ended up staying for three years. I started working- I was working in education in New York and then when I moved to Oakland I started working full-time as a high school teacher in the Oakland public schools. And so once I started working in the school that I was working up there, I just felt very invested and dedicated to the community and staying there. And yeah.

**Smith:** Cool, did you want to talk about you know, like what it was like working as a high school teacher and also I think you said something about doing activism, that's really good to student representation stuff like that?

**Z:** Oh yeah totally. So, there's actually a lot happening right now around the Oakland public school system and teacher's unions. A lot of that is centered around teacher capacity and that reflects, actually a lot the pressures that are coming from the state and legal systems around like, documenting and supporting students with individualize education plans. Which basically says a student has a particular need and has- it's an extremely elaborate legal process to make sure the student is receiving all the accommodations they need so they are getting an equitable form of learning. So as a high school teacher when you, or a middle school teacher and you have a class of 30 kids and say- So my class has 20 students who have accommodations and that meant that in my lessons I had to submit something that was accommodating all the students, and also had particular accommodations that were specific to each child, and that was being documented. A lot of the work that I was interested in was investing, I was an art teacher so investing in my own development and creating art plans, and participating in the education system, so that way students that had a wide spectrum and expansive spectrum, like in creativity and needs to support their learning that I was needing all of that. I did a lot of work there. There's also a lot of disability justice representation in Oakland, and so it felt very expansive to collaborate with people in education and also people that were looking at other types of public spaces. So, there's a definite interest in that. Also, the school I worked at, I don't remember the exact percentage, but there was a large amount of students that were undocumented and there was a lot of support for immigration rates and also protection and workshops against ICE [Immigrations and Customs Enforcement]. And also the school is considered a safe site and there are many times I would stay after work to facilitate workshops and meetings, or do community support and outreach. There were also multiple times where I had to do things for families that were facing court and threats of deportation. There was a lot of different legal actions I had to do to ensure that students would stay in school. It's all, there's like, yeah...

**Smith:** Yeah, sounds like a lot.

**Z:** [laughter] I feel really grateful, everyone's amazing that was there at the school. I loved working in Oakland.

**Smith:** What about the queer/trans scene in Oakland? I know you talked a little bit about that yesterday and it sounded really awesome.

**Z:** Oh my god wow. Where do you even begin with my overflowing love and appreciation for the collaboration collectivity that takes place. I actually ended up staying in Oakland because I started living in a queer collective house. And building a living space together that was deeply invested in queer/trans opulent living. Just living together, creating meals and coming up with creative projects, and listening to each other- anything from dating to what meeting their going to for organizing. Or it was, there was a lot of living on anarchist principles that was really inspiring to me, so having that interpersonally allowed me, I think to really expand that and cultivate that care in a much wider sense. I'm honestly always in awe of how Oakland holds the community so strongly and communicates what people need and show up for each other. I have friends where we go to protest and we'll bike together and we'll check on everyone. There's so much community and care. It's also a place where I found my creativity and relationship to kink, because there's a lot of experimentation and it's really amazing, you can go to queer parties in the bay area and it's all queer people. I feel like in New York that doesn't exist to the same extent, like you can literally go to a party and it would just be queer people and I think, that is what creates the possibilities for [inaudible] and new forms of eroticism. It's definitely where I started to experimenting with my own non-binary form of desire, and kink ,and fetish. Also where I started designing leather and vinyl fetish wear and getting interested in deepening that practice so it was accessible for all bodies, genders, abilities and making sure my practices reflected that. Also music performance, I was in a incredible performance collaboration with Cat Mahatta and we did contortion, electronic music, and dance. It was about creating a space for, it was liberatory for queer opulence and queers could live in exaltation and exuberance. I feel like all the queer art that is produced in Oakland is about creating spaces for QTPOC [Queer and trans people of color], for people of all abilities for making sure that people are included and people are able to somewhat survive on their creation and participation in the community. It's incredible.

**Smith:** That sounds awesome. Yeah, could you say more on kink and you talked about public sex and stuff like that yesterday?

**Z:** Oh ok, so I definitely have a lot of exhibitionist tendencies. I want to frame this in that I deeply, deeply thank the people that make sure that there are queer anarchist spaces for the community and for gather. The UHaul party that happens every year at pride is the result of an enormous, in depth dedication from the community every single year. I want to say their names, but I'm sure whether or not I should on this recording, but there are many people that I can thank- you can come find me if you want to talk more about that [laughter]. But there's this UHaul party that happens every year at pride where this Uhaul is parked at the edge of Delores, and then there's always queer DJs and bands. And one of the things that happen every year is, there's public sex on top of the Uhaul. I feel like that happens in a way that is, so fuck you to policing and surveillance and it reroutes the architecture of the space and takes something corporate like pride, and makes it into this temporary autonomous zone of queer exuberance, and desire, and pleasure. And deeply interested in public sex in both the queer community context where it's like, "what a gift it is to have public sex and be in a queer space" and also rerouting places that actually sometimes risky or the risk for pleasure is high and

thinking through how to hack into the city or planet in a way that can create pleasure in that space. Yeah I love exhibitionism about sex. [laughter]

**Smith:** So cool, can I ask about your fetish wear stuff and the work you do there?

**Z:** Yeah sure. So for the past- actually my first time ever selling harnesses was at QTZFest [Queer/Trans Zinefest] in Providence, Rhode Island 3 year ago. That was the first time I started making harnesses and they were actually, I feel so bad they were not even pullable. You could not really really use them, they were just, they were... I was still developing construction techniques and I spent the year after that thinking through, "what are the limits of the body and what can I construct that explores that limit, like where the body begins and ends?". So all my construction has greatly developed to be something that is strong and engages with the dynamics either between someone fucking themselves, or maybe intimately moving with another person, or group of people. And so, what I'm working on really right now is creating, now that I have a lot of the strength checking is creating leather, vinyl wear that is, not only custom, but maybe even adjustable- definitely adjustable, definitely expansive so it's the full spectrum, the expansive spectrum of sizes, genders and abilities. And being someone is non-binary, I think what's missing from- I work in latex too, especially latex and in leather is that there is this, there is still an intense gender binary in these products or in this wear and so I try to think expansively in that direction. I think what's amazing about it right now is that there's such an incredible community of leather workers, such an incredible community of king and fetish artists and participation that in a lot of conversation happens in Instagram, so people can in real-time talk about what they need or what they see and want to change. What they like about something or what makes them feel powerful and I think having, actually access to that type of very vast network of people across many different places or across media we can share techniques and share how we make things it's more and more inclusive and more and more expansive.

**Smith:** Are there any physical spaces like that around here in New York?

**Z:** Ooh, to be honest I don't know as much for New York. In Oakland, I feel like I could go to any leather store, or there's a lot. Basically, I'm speaking a lot from my Oakland experience, there was so much DIY vending where we could talk. My friend Maya Songbird, she had this chokerfest and everyone that did leather and vinyl came and we just talked all day in this DIY space in Oakland about how to make this type of thing, or do this type leather technique, or do this type construction technique and that was really cool. I feel like the DIY vending is definitely a space where people can get together and talk about what they make and why. There was an all gender clothing swap and the person that organized it had a bunch of leather workers bring their work and that was also amazing because people would swap clothes and I love being adjacent to anti-capitalist forms of exchange like that. Because leather is such an expensive material that thinking through of cost of labor, cost of material, and how to create something sustainable and accessible for everyone and create something that's sliding scale. Having conversation with people and being in spaces that are invested in queers and trans people, and not burners or not ravers. You know it's like thinking about where is the body, what is

pleasurable, and what does it feel like, and how is it successful. It's not an aesthetic, it's a practice and its way of expressing desire in life.

**Smith:** That's rad. What brought you back to New York?

**Z:** I actually was going to deepen my practice in leatherwear and latex in a program and I ended up to defer the program and I probably won't be able to do it. Now I get to really enjoy this new crystallization of my work and practice. And I go between the Bay and New York actually quite a lot, because I still have practices in both places. I'm kind of doing a little bit of the, I want to say bi-costal is glamorous, but I'm really broke [laughter]. But I'm trying to balance out those projects.

**Smith:** You talked about punk?

**Z:** Punk, I think, so I've always in been inspired punk music and hearing about queer bands and tours. And I feel like one of the things that I really am inspired about and seeing friends and community collaboration, is this deep in-community engagement and participation around teaching yourself new skills, sharing skills, and making it so there's new processes, and people are supported in that. I think a lot of times there is this capitalist track of "where did you go to school, what did you major in, what are you doing with your degree now?" The emphasis on the job, and this formalized training we constantly exposed to and hierarchized by is toxic. I think all the learning and unlearning that I, that feels important to me happened in DIY and punk spaces. And I'm really grateful for that and try to participate and bring as much of collaboration as that I possibly can to these spaces. My band recently went on tour in March, and so I was really excited to go through the west coast. And we went in a camper, which was really fun and met a bunch of other bands and just learned a lot about other cities, how they book shows with their queer communities look like, how they show up for each other. And I think that's the kind of amazing thing the punk circuit is having this intense vast network of people who are interested in participating in community and politics this way. And keeping in touch and making sure queer and trans like opulence and resistance is as expansive as wide as possible constantly.

**Smith:** How have you found the punk scene in New York since you've come back?

**Z:** Oh my god amazing! I'm always learning more about it. I think what's really amazing about New York is that there's- I'm currently reading *Time is the Thing a Body Move Through* and I also been reading actually a lot of, just I think what's holding, something I keep thinking about in this book is how New York is a place that people talk about what it was, and they can configure who they want to be through learning about that past. And so I think learning about that history of punk in New York and the history of DIY in New York and witnessing part of it, like, silent barn closed down. I feel so lucky that I got to witness it before the real estate capitalist empire shut it down. I think that every time I learn about new bands, meet new queers that are doing music or art or resistance or organizing, that I get learn more about that way [inaudible] participates and in the ways, I want to continue to show up in the skills I want to sharpen in order to do that incisively as possible.

**Smith:** Are there any specific places you like to go or hang out that are those type of spaces?

**Z:** A place I like to hang out in New York. I go to Happy Fun Hideaway a lot. I'm a big fan of night life and gay bars. I've always been attached to this idea of infinite night, because I think night is when pleasure and collectivity get to fully aggregate and blossom and it's just an incredible geyser of activity. And I even think about when my band first debuted, *Telepathic Children*, we threw this rave that was a fashion show, it had a catwalk, it had electronic musicians that have never performed before. And part of it was this newness of us debuting, our friends doing things that were new, and just being very there for each other. And this intense feeling of party came from the momentum of everyone more, even more sincerely being who they are and expressing that and I think that night life, and especially here in New York where there's such a beautiful history of revolution and resistance that I think about often. I'm sure everyone is thinking about right now with the 50th anniversary of Stone Wall. But I'm constantly drawn to the gay bar and the gay club and performances and poetry readings and non-binary fashion shows. All that.

**Smith:** How do you find the environment in gay bars because I know that interesting points?

**Z:** In New York, there's queereoke at the Metro and I have to say there some of the most incredible talent I've ever seen and I'm constantly awestruck when I go there. I go see lots of drag and I'm drawn to non-binary drag. I don't like it when straight people are in gay bars. And...

**Smith:** I have to agree.

**Z:** Yeah so when that happens I'm always, I get real riled up. There's one gay bar in the Bay area called The Stud, that is literally queer-utopia. One time at pride we had a mischievous gay booth of impact play and talking about kinks you're into. And it's one of those things where everyone was somehow connected to everyone you know. We didn't really, not every knew each other and we were all threaded by this deep, just care and community and moving through kinks, and impact, and talking about what we like to do with our time. It was just really and that could happen at places where they're queer centered and it's also a co-op.

**Smith:** I love co-ops. Oh yeah, I meant to ask are you teaching in New York or planning on doing so?

**Z:** Yeah, right now I'm an assistant educator at Socrates Sculpture Park. So I teach across six different high schools in Long Island City, both in school and at the park at Socrates Sculpture Park. And we just did a bunch of inflatable sculptures that were just these wildly massive inflatables that we did at the park. And part of- honestly, I carry the gay bar with me whenever I teach, because I just think of performance and exuberance and the students always make costumes at the, at our... I teach with another artist and we always facilitate these performances, and costume making, and interaction with the sculpture that is very alive and I think a lot of the gay bar actually in that. And when I taught middle school and high school in California I definitely was like be, this is a gay bar in my mind. [laughter]

**Smith:** So when you're being an educator are you, or have you been openly out as non-binary and trans like this to students that you working with?

**Z:** In Oakland I ran the GSA [Gay Straight Alliance], which is really funny, because when it started, there were parents phone calls that were like, "we don't want our kids like all hanging out together in a gay club". And so, it actually got shut down and then the principal was "OK" like month later, "you can start it back up again, but you have to let the kids choose the name. It can't be called the GSA". And so the kids renamed it TTR – Taste The Rainbow, which is even gayer than gay [laughter]. So I was facilitating TTR [taste the rainbow] and in that, that was the space where I talked a lot about being nonbinary and also, I'm always in the process of my own transness and my own nonbinary gender and constantly expanding that. And I love the change. I love relating people in new ways and I'm like, and that's what I tell my students too is that there's isn't this fixed point in being nonbinary or trans that you're trying to get to. Some people it's true, but some people it's not. It's just not a fixed point, I feel that way for myself. And in that process of relation and change to other people connecting to people over the ways that were engaging in the process of our bodies and genders is an important part. So, I talked a lot about that with the students that were in the club. It's kind of funny though, because I feel with some of the middle students- there's one kid I remember one day that literally put up a placard on his desk, that was after the meme, "there are two genders, change my mind". Then I was like "oh honey", we're going to have to- I was like, "come to a GSA [Gay Straight Alliance], meeting and asked the other students if they'd be okay if he joined, talked to him about, like he can talk to his peers about being nonbinary and trans, because apparently, he felt a way and he can start unlearning now.

**Smith:** How are your general attractions or specific attractions as a trans educator with students and also your coworkers, because I know those can affect you, like a huge amount?

**Z:** I honestly think with my coworkers there some I can be as open with as possible. There's one day I literally went to Aunt Charlie's. I went to a drag performance and the next day, well my windows got smashed and I drove to work and I was like, "oh my god and I can tell my coworkers this is my life?" And there are other people where I'm just there to talk about their babies and breeding and dogs and I'm just- there are certain ways that I need to, that I think about my energy and how I want to best communicate and use my energy in that way. And there's just some coworkers where I'm just, actually you're not gonna see me for me and I don't need to spend my energy on this and I rather spend my energy, especially working in school where there's actually 100's of people that need your energy. It's not worth sitting with my coworkers and continuing to explain they/them and pronouns. I'm just like, I know I'm done, I can just rebound my energy. So, it's draining sometimes because oh I just, will it make me feel recognize for my work you saying my pronouns not constantly calling me miss or whatever. There's also, there's also this opulence and exuberance that exists when a collective of students or coworkers, or just really intimately meet together to talk about unraveling it in a bigger way and that collaboration is everything.



**Smith:** You just said that, you know when people call you miss... What do you have your students call you? That's something I've thought about for like you know gender neutral, like I don't know maybe, I'll just get a doctorate and then people will have to call me doctor, that's gender neutral [laughter].

**Z:** That's really funny. I mean there were definitely kids that, I think education socializes kids to see non-binary, to see very binary genders in mister and miss people. So there were definitely students that see me and call me miss. A lot of my students that call me Zack, because my full last name, government, is Zacharoff, and that gets printed on their schedules no matter what I say or do. And so they all call me Zack, which is really funny because no one else calls me Zack, but the middle school and high school students, which is really funny. Now at Socrates they all call me Lix and it's much easier outside the school system. And I don't work full time at any of the schools I teach so it's much easier to come in and be like, I'm Lix and this is what I'm being called and there's no network of principals, and parents, and others coworkers that are all looking at some government document with my legal name on it and asserting that's what I need to be called you know, so it's a good relief.

**Smith:** Yeah, that is nice. You also said you're a writer.

**Z:** Oh yeah. So, right now I'm working on a non-binary, sci-fi, slutcore novel. The premise is that there's a character named M and it's set vaguely in the future post-capitalism, but it's also kind of weird and nostalgic for capitalism. One of the parts it's in this abandoned mall and there's other parts in underground clubs. The premise is that M is able to download activations for their body in very quick and satisfying ways. So in thinking that they want their clavicle extended or a second row of teeth and just thinking about modifications of the body that aren't necessarily always attached to the thinking of gender, but enact the gender that non-binary, I'm reflecting upon myself kind of, envision. So, M is able to download these activations in their bodies like extend their finger two inches, whatever they want. And then whenever they do this activation part of, they lose a memory attached to their body. So the book kind of navigates, if you could modify your body at any point, what would happen? And also, what memories are attached to the body? how does the body hold memory? These are two things I think about a lot in my non-binary identity. And over the course of the book, M starts to meet this analog, this kind of hologram that actually holds all their memories that their losing in their activations. And it becomes this erotic encounter that moves from their community and friends and also with this analog, this version of them and their memories, and it talks about how also memory and desire intertwine. And it's a lusty smutty, but also celebration of, I don't know fucking yourself and fucking who you are and all your iterations. And so, it's a really fun novel to write, it's slow though. Very inspired by a lot of queer fiction, like "Sketchtasy" by Mattilda Bernstein, Sycamore, and "Paul Takes the Form of a Mortal Girl", by Andrea Lawlor. So definitely holding that inspiration with me as I'm writing.

**Smith:** Can I ask what your history is with body modification and stuff like that?

**Z:** I think I... So a lot of my own body modification, I've been completely invested for a long time in doing that through kink, through masturbation, through videoing myself fucking myself,

through expressing fetishes. I remember that there was a time even 5 years ago, where I was cruising online dating and in this way that is not necessarily the best place to learn about fetishes and kinks, and to explore them with other people. And I was just completely connected to remapping my censorial index. There was a lot of time where I felt I had literally no control over the way that people read me, or I felt I could present, or the way I could modify my body like, just due to access to healthcare and funds. And so I was like, ok if I can't do this all the time visually for myself or the way I physically am, then the way I can do that is this surgical censorial index. Where I can constantly hack into the way I perceive and feel my own self sexually to myself and the way I relate to others that is more caring, more intimate, more expansive. And a lot of that does include relationships to pain or, relationships to power dynamics, or to feelings of stillness or movement. But that's also where to go back to public sex, that is huge for me, because that's hacking into architecture, it's breaking out of the private space, and thinking through how does everything relate to queer, resistance, opulence, and pleasure constantly.

**Smith:** That's so cool. You really like public sex. Are you- I don't know if I asked this but, are you in any anarchist groups or organization in the city.

**Z:** In New York, I feel like I'm slowly becoming more and more involved. I feel like a lot of my involvement is based in Oakland and expansive across the United States. And so yeah, always looking for ways to continue to participate and help out organizations.

**Smith:** Moving back to writing, you said you did journalism. How was that?

**Z:** I feel like I haven't necessarily developed a large array of journalism to even talk about it, it's a very, it's like a very baby moment. And now actually, I'm looking more to write articles and I think the way I think about writing and journalism now is, with the closure of DIY spaces and DIY venues, and how do we continue to share skills with each other? How do we hold history of stories that often aren't told in mainstream media? How do we exalt our community of artists, and popstars, and bands? That and love. When I think about the pitches I do now for journalism, a lot of them are centered actually on interviews and archival projects and ways of amplifying the voices of the incredible people that I have the deep fortune of knowing and collaborating and working with. So that's what I think about journalism now, otherwise I'm just kind of... I think when I was 18 I was not really sure of the direction I was interested in at that time.

**Smith:** What kind of archival projects are you doing?

**Z:** Right now, I'm learning a lot about I think other archival projects. I have experience doing some archival projects when I was in Berlin, going to Zine libraries and I was really interested in surveillance culture that summer. And so, I was reading a lot about just kind of the ways that the surveillance culture in the United States is prefigured by a lot of fascist surveillance. So I was kind of trying to unravel what that looked like in Berlin and trying to understand DIY underground punk, antifascist movements, especially for queer and trans people. And so I spent a lot of time Zine libraries and I think that Zine libraries... Oh my god, there are people

with Zine archives in their own houses and I always go through those. And so self-publication is kind of what I'm most interested in researching. But as of right now I can't say that I necessarily have a very full speed ahead type project. We're doing some the pleasure research and have also the pleasure witness talk with you, and also some friends' incredible archival projects that I'm really excited about.

**Smith:** Are there any specific archives or collections you're looking at?

**Z:** Friend's houses. In Oakland, there's really incredible libraries that commemorate and hold memories for people.

**Smith:** I meant to follow up on Berlin. Is there a good queer/trans scene when you were there? I know you were only there for a summer...

**Z:** Yeah there really was. I would say probably, it may be different since I was there. I did really feel like it was there weren't as many trans and gays in queer spaces when I was there. I kept kind of looking for that and I didn't necessarily feel like I saw that a lot of the time. There definitely was a very vibrant queer community and I think what's very special about Berlin and again I'm speaking from years ago, was that they had this feeling that people were passing through in a very committed and engaged way. And there was also- neighborhoods are so community focused like there are protests, if a grocery store that was owned by a family that lived there was closing down, and they'd be like, no you can't close down a grocery store, it's literally been here and these people live here. And for neighbors and cities to be so focused on protecting who lives there with such steadfast commitment to me was awe-inspiring. And so queer community was very inspiring there and also just the dedication to neighborhoods. And when I was living in New York at the time, I never saw anything like that in a place that is rapidly gentrified constantly.

**Smith:** Let's talk about pride event. I know you said it just happened. You're in California's Bay Pride?

**Z:** This year yeah. I feel like the past 4 years, Yeah I've been in it.

**Smith:** How was that experience?

**Z:** Bay Area Pride. It literally gets better every year. I, Telepathic children played an amazing show this year at this, I keep calling it an anarchist popper's party, because the flyers had three poppers with the three empty flat arrows down to the left. And it was a free pride party and it was kind of a DIY punk show and that was so fun just to have a band formed post pride last year to play this show at pride this year. And to get to witness each other being, they're incredible, [inaudible] incredible. And I already talked about the [inaudible], the desire and mischief. The U-Haul party actually got shut down this year, because the cops came down and said if you set up these speakers, [inaudible] will get arrested. So, someone went to the garage and, of a house on Deloris Park and asked to use the garage and the person said yes. And so, everyone DJ'd and bands played and people gathered outside this garage on the sidewalk. I just thought about

how amazing it was that people were there to protect each other, even though they are risking a lot to play in the garage after the cops threatening to shut down the party just hours before. And the cops ended up shutting down that party later that day. And it was- the police presence was actually deeply disturbing, and really fucked up. And pride this year was horrific, cops out of pride. But otherwise, the idea of temporary autonomous, the queer anarchy, the party, the infinite night is very much part of Bay area pride and why I love it so much. There was- 2 years ago, Cat and I performed on a gay yacht and cruise in San Francisco. And I was contorting in a mesh pocket and that was the first time we started collaborating, that was our first show on that yacht. And so that's another project actually that formed out of pride. It's very exuberant.

**Smith:** Is Cat one of your friends?

**Z:** Yeah Cat Mahatta is, their music project and they do this [inaudible] which is a major fuck you to the patriarchy, to white supremacy and there's this amazing music video for it. I recommend it deeply, and as another cancer suddenly arising and has some of the most beautiful electronic music, and has also taught me the subtleties and intimacies of friendship and how that crystalizes and flowers around creating spaces for queer and collective resistance.

**Smith:** How's your relationship with policing and cops, because I know that's not great?

**Z:** Oh I'm [inaudible] A.C.A.B [All Cops are Bastards] forever [laughter].

**Smith:** Oh definitely. Have you had any interactions or anything that stands out that you want to share?

**Z:** To be honest, I wouldn't feel comfortable sharing that in this interview space.

**Smith:** Totally fine. I wanted to ask you about your activism in New York and in Oakland like, what you're currently working on or interested in.

**Z:** I mean prison abolition and ways I could, develop anything against police violence and the way that police continue to mass murder people of color in the united states. Organizing around that and my main focus right now is organizing against ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and illusions of borders we have here. That centers the focus of my activism right now.

**Smith:** Yeah, were you thinking of going forward or is there anything in particular you're looking forward to doing?

**Z:** Continuing to develop forms of collective and expressive resistance through performance of organizing, through letter writing, through communication, through communicating across all our distances geographically to continue to strengthen and build resistance together, and protect those that are incarcerated and abolish the prisons that they are in [laughter]..

**Smith:** Is there anything else you'd like to add or other subjects you'd like to touch on?

**Z:** No, that was really thorough. Thank you. F.T.P. A.C.A.B. [All Cops are Bastards] [laughter]!

**Smith:** Thank you so much.

**Z:** Thank you