



## QUEER COMIC CONVERSATIONS

A web comic project by the Goethe-Institut New Zealand

What are the joys and challenges queer and trans people experience in today's world? What role do support systems and safe places play? And what ways are there to connect and celebrate queer people? In the comic series "Queer Comic Conversations", comic artists Anna Heger and Sam Orchard share different aspects of their lives each month – be it in Germany or New Zealand.

In this six part comic series "Queer Comic Conversations", artists Anna Heger (Munich, Germany) and Sam Orchard (Wellington, New Zealand) meet monthly beyond restraints of time or space, to chat about queer and trans life. They meet in different locations, such as Pride marches, parks, community centres, bars and more. During their conversations, they cover queer topics such as chosen families and support systems as well as non-gendered pronouns in both the German and the English language. Anna and Sam also talk about trans people's experiences of hatred and violence, while mourning those who have lost their lives because of it. Throughout their "Queer Comic Conversations", Anna and Sam recommend a variety of queer art and provide further information and resources for readers to explore.

The collaborative comic project "Queer Comic Conversations" raises awareness of relevant contemporary issues regarding queer culture as well as rights of and discrimination against queer and trans people. The series stretches from July to December 2020; every month, a new episode will be released on the [Goethe-Institut website](https://www.goethe.de). The first installment coincides with Munich Pride which runs 4-12 July 2020.

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## THE ARTISTS

**Anna Heger** is an author for graphic storytelling, comic journalism and visual explanations. Anna is nonbinary, on the trans masculine spectrum and uses they pronouns. They focus on stories and knowledge from and for their intersecting communities. Anna is currently working on a book of autobiographical graphic short stories. They live in Munich and were born in the east of Berlin before the wall came down.

Back in 2009, they started creating a set of alternative German grammar to complete he and she with the pronoun xier, that does not indicate gender. Having studied several languages in their life time helped immensely in detangling their mother tongue's grammar. Xier, xieser and more are continually improved and already used by translators.

**Sam Orchard** writes comics, essays and children's books, creates animated videos, podcasts and resources with the aim of celebrating difference. His ongoing web comic "Rooster Tails" has been running for over ten years. Written from his life as a queer transgender man, the comic explores themes of mental health, fat embodiment, nerd culture, trans lives, and caring for a food-obsessed cat.

Sam is also the author of "Family Portraits", a series of short comic stories that amplify the stories of intersectional identities within Aotearoa's rainbow communities. Sam's comics and resources about sexuality, sex and gender have been used internationally by SOGI advocates. Sam is currently working on his first full length graphic novel.

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