

LAMusArt  
**LIVE!**

# Who Cares

ft. Cat Mahatta

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5 STUDY GUIDE





# WHO CARES

## CAT MAHATTA

Cat Mahatta is an ever-evolving music magician, producer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and dancer. Born in the South to Punjabi and Irish parents, raised in the Midwest, and cultivated in Europe and on the West Coast, her ethereal sound belongs everywhere but comes from nowhere in particular. After a classical vocal education, she played with many indie, soul, punk, and hiphop groups in Portland and Oakland. This solo synth-pop and performance art project started in 2016 as a commission from artist Dana Dart-McLean. Since then, she has been featured on two Practical Records compilations, Energies and Open Source.

Her first short music film "Spacegrime" was included in the 2018 Failed Films Festival at the Pskaufman Gallery in DTLA. She's performed and collaborated on immersive experiences at Berkeley Art Museum, Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, Portland Art Museum, Portland Museum of Modern Art, Et Al Etc. Gallery, Gospel Flats Farmstand Gallery and the Getty Center. Her music videos "Doll" and "Hymn 2 Dudes" have been featured in the Queer Trans Music Blog, Get In Her Ears, and Kajal Magazine. They are available on YouTube along with live performances and "Spacegrime". Her music is available on all streaming platforms.

**FOR MORE, VISIT:**

[www.LAMusArt.org](http://www.LAMusArt.org)

# PROGRAM

BARELY  
GONE WITH THE WIND  
WHO CARES?  
BEAST  
YOU - PRODUCED BY  
FENOMENAL J  
NEON SEA  
DOLL  
HYMN 2 DUDES



Get inspired with this specially curated Spotify playlist just for our LAMusArt Live fans!

SCAN FOR TUNES!



# INSTRUMENTS

## Synthesizer



A synthesizer is an electronic musical instrument that generates and modifies sounds usually accompanied with a digital computer. Musicians use the keys on the synthesizer to create waveforms on a computer which can then be altered in intensity, duration, frequency, and timbre to create whatever sound is desired. These sounds surpass the range and versatility of conventional musical instruments.

<https://www.britannica.com/art/music-synthesizer>

Also known as a surpeti, a shruti box is a small wooden instrument predominantly used in Indian classical music. Shruti boxes have one or two bellows that push air through tuned metal reeds. Performers control the reeds by opening and closing small flaps to either mute a tone, or let it resonate. This instrument is mainly used to create drones as a backdrop for soloists. However, they can also be played rhythmically.

<https://flypaper.soundfly.com/tips/what-the-heck-is-a-shruti-box/>

## Shruti Box



The VoiceLive Touch is a vocal effects processor, which is a digital device that allows vocalists to add effects to their voice as they are performing. There is a range of effects such as, echo, voice doubling, and reverb. The device connects through XLR cables to take input through the microphone and runs it through the processor allowing the finished product to be relayed through the speakers.

<https://www.mspot.com/what-does-a-vocal-processor-do/>

## VoiceLive Touch Vocal Processor





# ON HER MUSIC AND MESSAGE, AN INTERVIEW WITH CAT

By Leslie Swadener

This interview has been abridged for our guide. The full transcript is available at [LAMusArt.org](http://LAMusArt.org).

**You've been performing for awhile and in so many different spaces, can you share your most memorable performance?**

Yes, the first time I performed with my long time collaborator, Lix Z, doing contortion was at a PRIDE party on a yacht called Princess Cruise. It was on Sunday of the San Francisco Bay Area PRIDE in 2017. It was the most fun, wild, extravagant experience that I had had as a musician up to that point.

**What are some of the inspirations that have contributed to your creative process?**

I've had profound fortune finding myself surrounded by visual artists and them just blowing my mind with their expansive thoughts and their really creative interactions with the world. The experience of interacting with Dana's art, sort of like I was trying to describe creating a whole experience for my audience, that's what they do for their visual art. Collaborating with Lix Z, a teacher too, but they teach visual art so having that influence, rock camp and the community around that and also the queer punk scene in the Bay Area.

I'm very lucky that I've been surrounded by different kinds of inspiration throughout my life. Growing up in Indianapolis there's nothing better to do than join show choir or play sports. I grew up with some of the best singers I know, to this day, people who went on tour with Neil Young, and K.D. Lang. Some went to Broadway and put out records. We were lucky to be public school kids getting that music education. I have carried that 1000% throughout my whole life.

Continue reading at next page >

In the 18th and 19th centuries, philosophers such as, Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill, put forward the idea that human rights should be given to women. Years later in the early 20th century, many women began protesting for their right to vote in a democracy, these women were called the Suffragettes. They staged many protests and eventually received the right to vote. This is not the end, however, as feminists continue to make moves towards making all of society equal for all women.



<https://kids.kiddle.co/Feminism>

# ≡ EQUALITY ≡

## TERMS

- Patriarchy: System of society in which men hold the power and women are excluded from it
- Queer: A word used to describe sexual and gender identities that are not heterosexual or cisgender
- Non-Binary: Gender identity that does not fit within the traditional gender binary, male or female
- Cisgender (cis): Gender identity that aligns with sex assigned at birth
- Transgender: Gender identity that differs from sex assigned at birth

SCAN FOR TUNES!





**Would you be willing to walk me through what your writing process looks like?**

Most of the songs that I have finished started with a synth track and a beat. I'll either use the 80s drum machine or a digital version of an MPC, which is a type of drum machine. I'll find a synth sound I'm obsessed with and throw an arpeggiator on it, or come up with some chords. For some, I just laid down a whole track with the beat and the synth part into A section, B section, bridge, whatever you want to call it. Some of my songs aren't verse, chorus form, they're more like A section, B section, C section and they don't come back. Then, I'll write lyrics and melody on top of that. I also wrote a song to the beat with no synth. I rearranged the beat based on how I wanted it to fit the vocals. Then I put the beat down and came up with synth stuff.

Sometimes, I'll have a friend come over and say, for example, "play whatever you want for 5 minutes." They'd play some random stuff and I would record everything. Listening to how they were playing, what key they were playing in, what their mood seemed to be, I would record them on separate tracks and give them prompts. There would be like 25-30 tracks of them making noises and I'd hear a squeak that I liked or some kind of harmony and tell them to play that for 30 seconds or whatever. Just whatever pops into my brain, but making them stay in one key. After they leave, weeks, months later, I would listen to it and cut it up, just like a found poem and put things together in different ways. Like put two things that are sort of dissonant and put them on top of each other and obviously it sounds cool like a sort of sound collage. That's how music should be, it should be able to have its own life and evolve the way humans evolve.

**What do you hope to do next with your artistry?**

Next, I want to make another music video that has some more experimental lighting. I'm inspired by abstract artists, like James Turrell or Yayoi Kusama or friends of mine. I really like abstract video work. My favorite film maker is Jordan Belson who is an analog animator. I have a friend, Space Noodles, who does animation and virtual reality experiences so we've talked about a couple of different collaborations where we can incorporate some more experimental and abstract visual ideas in with my sonic ideas.

That would go both ways, I want to create more animated, virtual experiences or experimental abstract video experiences for my songs that I'm gonna release. I've also, for Space Noodles, done some production like I did all of the sound for his animation reel. I want to do more soundscapes for VR experiences or for people's short films. I've done soundtrack short film stuff a little bit, but I wanna do more of that. Visual artists and music artists inspire me from both directions so I want them to come in from both sides and for it to come out of me in both directions. So that those sources of inspiration can be expressed and continue to inspire each other, through me and I'm creating this kind of art feedback loop.

**What is the message that you hope the audience takes away from this performance?**

I hope that watching this performance, especially for students, encourages them to feel like they have the agency to make anything they can envision by themselves. I remember feeling this kind of, when I was in bands and the band would break up or someone would move away, someone would go on your, impotence, not being able to make music constantly because it was dependent on other people. It's been liberating and opens up doors to different realms of possibilities when you are your own self content creation engine.

It gives me a lot of freedom in my ability to share my art with people. Anybody who doesn't make art, I hope they get an experience that having radical hope for a freer, fairer future can be beautiful and pleasant, joyful to engage in. It's not always like a harsh experience. It can feel loving and joyful to want to rearrange the whole system.

**What is a piece of advice you could offer to artists pursuing a similar path?**

I want people to connect with as many people as they can, especially people that they trust to have their back and have similar ideals. The more of us that are in the fray together, the more possible all of our success is. That kind of idea goes both ways. I want them to connect to as many people as possible and be a source of support and encouragement and to truly be uplifting each other so that we can end, forever, this competitive, capitalist, version of this industry in society.

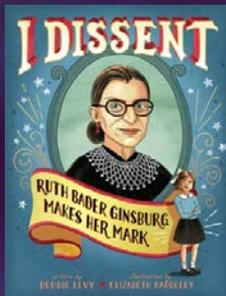
Find organizations or studios or labels in your community that will give you tangible support. Do a lot of research, absorb every piece of advice, education, I mean we have access to everything. Educate yourself, and learn about music business. Learn about licensing, publishing, royalties, protect yourself from being exploited. Also, to really not think about what other people think, ever, in your creative process.

When you're releasing music, I think it's valuable to reflect on how it will affect different communities and to look at the messaging in your music and your ideals and make sure everything is in alignment, but in the actual conception and creation process, let yourself flow. Don't edit anything until all of the ideas are out in the open so that you can see, hear and feel them.

Read the full transcript at [LAMusArt.org](https://LAMusArt.org) >

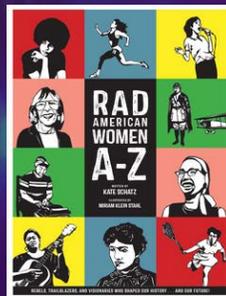
# GREAT READS

for inquiring minds



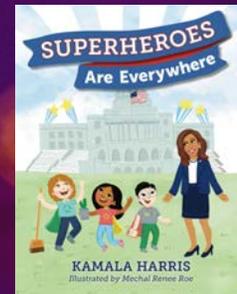
## I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes her Mark

Written by Debbie Levy



## Rad American Women A-Z: Rebels, Trailblazers, and Visionaries who Shaped Our History . . . and Our Future!

Written by Kate Schatz



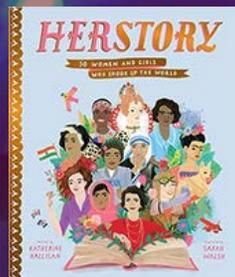
## Superheroes are Everywhere!

Written by Vice President Kamala Harris



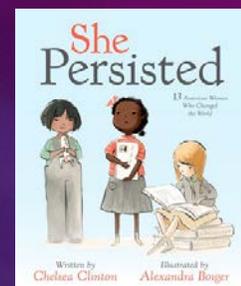
## A is for Awesome

Written by Eva Chen



## Herstory: 50 Women and Girls who Shook Up the World

Written by Katherine Halligan



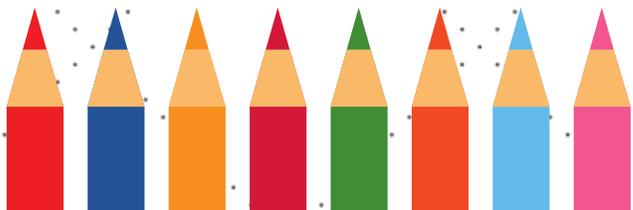
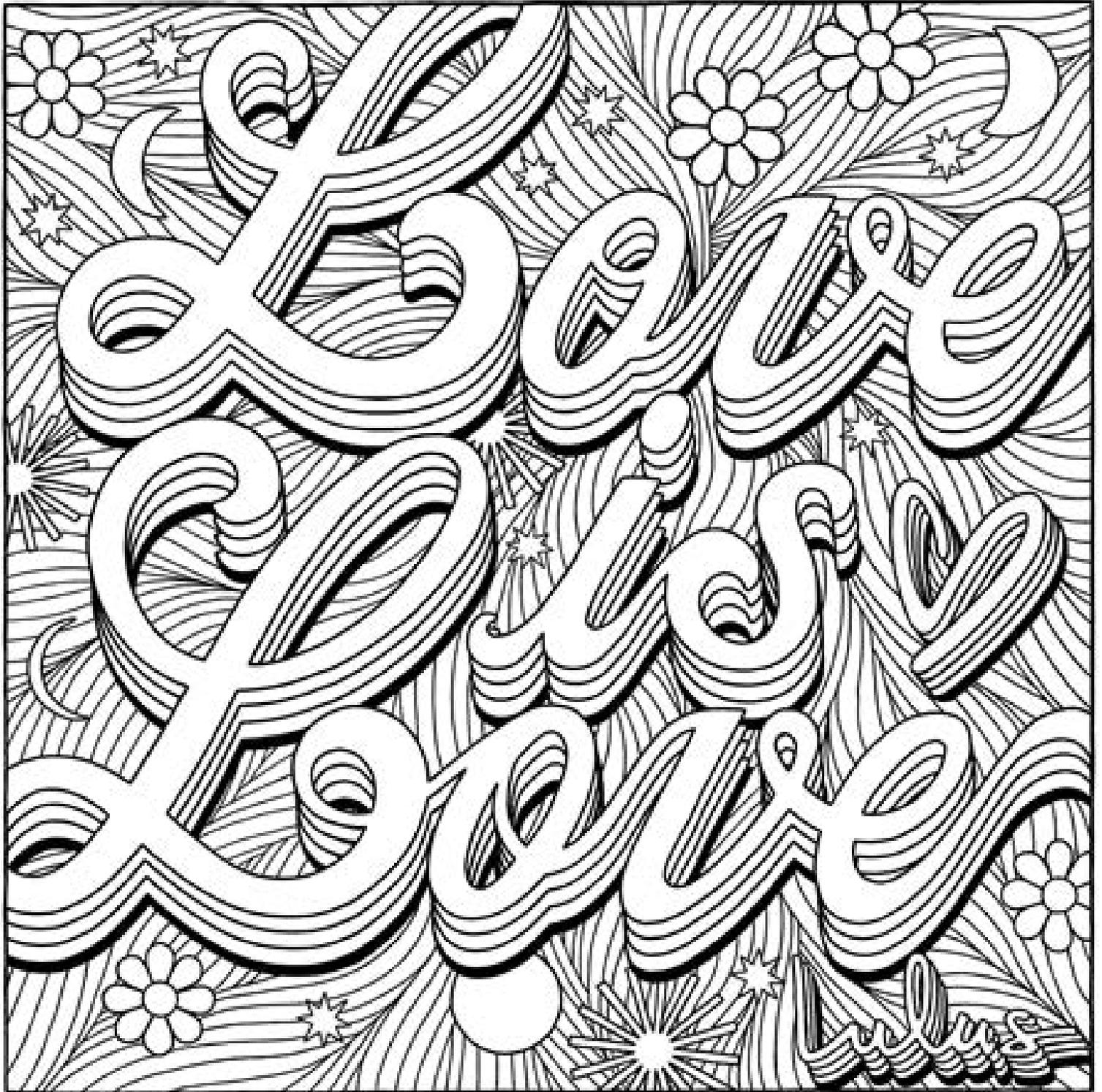
## She Persisted

Written by Chelsea Clinton

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<https://lacountylibrary.org/east-los-angeles-library/>

# COLORING PAGE





# LAMusArt

Los Angeles Music and Art School

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The Los Angeles Music and Art School (LAMusArt) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization whose mission is to offer the community of East Los Angeles, primarily its K-12 population, with equitable and affordable access to multidisciplinary arts education programs.

The services we provide as a cornerstone of arts education are integral to the community's cultural identity. Since its founding in 1945 by Ms. Pearle Irene Odell, LAMusArt has served over 100,000 students, employed over 200 Teaching Artists, and provided over 2,000,000 lessons.

We believe affordable and accessible arts education programs work to benefit the students and the community by expanding one's world outlook, sharpening one's creative skills, and contributing to one's social, behavioral, and academic development.





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SEASON OF PERFORMANCES

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