

# Groundswell Institute: Ecovillage and Retreat Center

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## Headline slider text:

- Groundswell Retreat Center & Ecovillage: A sustaining space for the LGBTQ community and their allies
- Experience transformative programs: Learn about Groundswell's groundbreaking queer and environmental programs
- Rent our facilities: Groundswell's beautiful & rustic retreat center facilities are available for rental to outside groups or individuals.
- Explore the community: Groundswell is also an intentional community and ecovillage. Find out more about our shared values and living.

## Blog Posts

### On home page

## A Change is Gonna Come

March 12, 2018gadmin

Hi All,

You may have noticed we have been a bit quiet lately. This is because we are working hard to take our work in new directions to better serve our communities. Part of that new direction is that we will no longer be managing the retreat center in Yorkville. We decided that work was detracting from our ability to create unique programs that serve LGBTQ\* communities and individuals. Now, we will be focusing all our efforts on the retreats and conferences that you've come to love these last few years, such as TRANScend, Muse, Lavender Leadership, and Xrysalis. Plus, we will be bringing them to you in a greater variety of venues, including some in the SF Bay area itself.

We will have more news soon about upcoming dates and places for these programs. For now, you can save the date for TRANScend, our retreat for transgender and gender-nonconforming folks, which will be coming up October 5 – 7 at Saratoga Springs in northern California, a larger and more accessible venue.

And, as a special treat, we are publishing our website content for the first time, for your reading pleasure. Please understand, this is just for you to personally read and be inspired by – it is not available for reproduction or redistribution. All rights are reserved by Groundswell Institute. You can download the published content here.

## **Our New Spa Brings You Rejuvenating Relaxation**

**April 22, 2017gadmin**

**Our beautiful new spa and surrounding sun/forest deck are complete! This is our first big new addition to our retreat center facilities and we're really proud of how it has turned out. Soaking in our heated spring water, you can hear our creeks year-round, take in the stars or woods, and truly bask in the healing powers of nature and hot water.**

**The spa complex will be open to all attendees of Groundswell Institute's programs. Now, you get to come learn about activism and art, or celebrate with community and queens, or develop wellness practices, AND spend the evenings soaking and socializing. The spa complex is also part of renting our facilities, for those groups or individuals who might be interested.**

**Special thanks to Shane, Thor, and many volunteers for all their artisan carpentry, to our hot tub donors who funded the initial work, and to William Stewart and the Groundswell Community for funding the rest.**

## **Through the Looking Glass to Last Year's Muse**

**February 14, 2017gadmin**

**Muse-lgbt-queer-arts-retreat-workshopIt's the beginning of spring and in the mornings the fog lays low and heavy across the redwoods. A group of queer artists are gathered on the dining hall deck, coffee in hand, as Rik Lee demonstrates how to create little plaster trolls from some casts he has brought. Inside, Thor and Joe lead a guided discussion on how to talk about impact as artists, looking glamorous in their wigs and lashes. Some listen and take notes while others take it in while they knit or weave. It's March 2016 and it's our second annual Muse, a retreat for queer creatives.**

**Muse-lgbt-queer-arts-retreat-weavingMuse is our first big event of the year, with more than 60 people attending last year. We created it to build a space for LGBTQ\* artists of all types to come together, share art, grow skills, and be inspired. Art has the potential to inspire all of us towards a better world, and we feel by helping queer artists grow**

stronger we can help them create a larger impact in the world. And, it's been a smashing success. People leave Muse feeling a renewed excitement for their art, with new ideas brewing, and access to new friends and resources.

**Muse-lgbt-queer-arts-retreat-screenprint-workshop** Every year we organize an incredibly diverse series of workshops and projects for attendees to engage. We pick a theme and ask that some of the workshops incorporate the theme into their teachings. In 2016, our theme was "Inspire" and we had a lot of work focused on getting your creative juices flowing: these ranged from "Inspiration and Your Inner Critic" to "The Why of What We Do". But, we also have a lot of great activities that are completely unrelated to the theme: like "Photography of the Nude", "Butoh and the Primal Queer", or "Introduction to Screen-printing". Every year, the workshops vary wildly, so that no two Muses will ever be the same.

**Muse-lgbt-queer-arts-retreat-cabaret** We also hold the Queeriosities Cabaret and an Art Salon each year. These act as venues to show off your art to the rest of the group. The cabaret is a space to perform poetry, drag, dance, fashion, or fierceness of any type. We set up a small stage and theater in the dining hall, though on dry years we will move down to the campfire amphitheater. The following night we hold the Art Salon, always named after LGBTQ\* artists we wish to honor. In 2016 it was the Gertrude Stein and Oscar Wilde Art Salon – this year is the Audre Lorde and James Baldwin Art Salon. We set up a wondrous gallery of all the art people bring to share or have made throughout the weekend and then throw quite the party to celebrate all that we are creating.

**Muse-lgbt-queer-arts-retreat-salon** Leaving is a sad affair each year, though we're buoyed by knowing the friendships we've built during the weekend are only going to continue to grow. After all, Muse is just the beginning of the warm season, and just one of the first of many programs at Groundswell for the year. There will be lots more learning, loving, laughing, and creating to come.

Muse takes place this year on March 3rd – 5th and the theme is "Revolution". We'll be studying the power of art to create social and political change, and some of the ways different arts like theater, film, or poetry work to create that change. We've got workshops ranging from guerrilla filmmaking to burlesque dancing, and with such a poignant theme it's bound to be a powerful year. There are still plenty of spaces and scholarships left, so consider coming out to Muse for some inspiration and rejuvenation.

## **Unite and Fight: a Call for Action**

**November 10, 2016gadmin**

**These past 36 hours, nearly everybody I speak to is in shock. We didn't think we would be here again – our rights and safety now in a state of regression after so many years of progress. This is true not just for queer communities, but also for women, for immigrants, for people of color, for disabled people, for indigenous people, for the sick, and for all who are other. The consequences of this election will be felt for decades to come.**

**And, what is the lesson from this all? We must unite more and fight harder. We let our communities become fractured by petty politics. We let our community organizations be taken over by conservative corporatists. We let ourselves become complacent by the advancement of a few civil rights, while the rights of the many continued to be trampled. Too many of us have lost sight of our grassroots, rebellious history and how essential it was for gaining those few rights in the first place.**

**Now, we need to right our course, to unite and fight with all our strength the tide of bigotry and violence that has already begun. It's time to put aside petty differences and petty entertainments, to turn off the screens and take to the streets. We will not be forced back into closets and shuttered bars. We will be louder and prouder than ever before.**

**In just over a week we will host Lavender, our queer leadership retreat. We are reformulating some of the programs to focus on what we as communities can do in response. We want you there. We need new leaders and veteran organizers; those who politicize and those who make art. Money is not an issue – we have scholarships available for all who need them. We just want you there. Our communities need us all to show up more than ever.**

**Lavender will be just one of many actions and programs Groundswell Institute will be taking to strengthen our communities and create a bastion for queer culture and leadership. We are committed to being in the front lines with you all in the years to come. And, whether you make it to Lavender or any of our programs, the important thing to is to make it to something. Be more engaged. Give more to your communities. Stand up taller for the oppressed, including yourself. Love each other more. We have to hold strong and hold tight for the long haul ahead. Together we can arrive more powerful than ever on the other side.**

**In Love and Solidarity,**

**Kyle DeVries**

**Executive Director, Groundswell Institute**

**The Queer Menagerie: A Glimpse into the Livestock Internship**

**October 6, 2016gadmin**

**As I reflect on my five months here at Groundswell, it is clear to me that this was a place that I had been calling for both consciously and unconsciously for most of my life. After working on and off in the South Bay since 2009 on a 1600-acre farm and wilderness preserve called Hidden Villa, I found myself craving queer spaces that integrated farming, community, and social activism. Groundswell seemed to be that place, a perfect fusion of both farming and intentional queer space.**

**Since arriving here, my role at Groundswell has been as the livestock apprentice under the mentorship of DoubleSnake. Daily chores include milking the five dairy goats and feeding the menagerie of animals: pigs, chickens, alpacas, rabbits, and sheep. Larger tasks range from building new structures for the livestock and animal maintenance to cheese-making and other fermented food projects. The internship has increased my awareness of farming issues such as the rising costs of feed, water access, and preventive veterinary care, as well as a more intuitive understanding of animals and their needs here at Groundswell.**

**The livestock internship for me has been a two-fold experience, with animals being one key aspect, and community involvement being the other. Living here at Groundswell has created a unique environment for me to explore different modes of intimacy and connectedness, and has provided a catalyst for deeper knowledge of self. The synthesis of the two is really why I was first drawn to Groundswell. It continues to challenge my ability to navigate communal spaces while creating the space to have difficult conversations across differences.**

**The apprenticeship has provided me the opportunity to deepen my connection with queer people, find confidence in myself, and learn more tools to be impactful in the community at large. It has fostered a greater understanding of what it means to be both queer and a farmer. In particular, it has given me the opportunity to find abilities I didn't believe I had and to discover things that were once outside my skill set. Even in five**

months, these experiences have radically shifted how I feel in my body. It is the loving comradery I have found here that enables me to feel supported, seen, and valued.

This is especially true in a world that seeks to police our bodies, tear us down, and define what constitutes humanness. For me, the greatest gift of Groundswell has been the opportunity to see queers thrive, stand in their power, and revel in their queerness. This holds the key to dismantling the oppressive threads that hold us as queer and trans people in bondage and keep us all from full liberation. Groundswell provides a place to feel safe, to deepen our connections to queer community, to foster solidarity, and to find resources so that we can engage with the larger world with an increased sense of confidence and the ability to be better change-makers.

### **Queer Heroes for Cabin Names Revealed**

**May 9, 2016**admin

osh-tischFollowing a month and a half community submission process and some voting, we have chosen the nine queer heroes that our cabins will be renamed after. Each cabin will then get a plaque, telling that person's story to all of our visitors. We specifically chose queer heroes that are lesser known, so even history buffs are likely to encounter some new names.

We are working with some esteemed queer history experts to create truly accurate herstories to be shared. In the meantime, here are these all too brief descriptions. Most of these heroes were lifelong activists; please take some time to poke around on the internet and learn even more about these inspirational individuals.

~ Paula Gunn Allen, a queer Native American poet, novelist, and lesbian activist who helped draw attention to the powerful and essential role women played in native cultures.

~ Kiyoshi Kuromiya, a queer Japanese American born in a U.S. internment camp who fought for social justice his whole life, including by the side of Martin Luther King, Jr.

~ Marsha P. Johnson, a queer African American and transgender activist who was essential in the start of the Stonewall Riots and continued community organizing all the way through AIDS and ACT UP.

~ Sylvia Rivera, A queer Latina American and transgender activist who was a founding member of the Gay Liberation Front and worked alongside Marsha during the Stonewall Riots and in STAR, the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries.

~ Marie Equi, a white American lesbian doctor who became involved with the very early struggles for access to birth control and abortion, as well as labor and anarchist struggles.

~ Osh-Tisch, a Native American warrior, poet, artist, and tribal leader, who was one of the last in a revered position of the Crow Tribe that today might be identified as queer.

~ Domingos Rodrigues, born in 1595 in Lisbon as the son of a black slave and a white slave owner, Domingos was a slave and a gender variant dancer who was tried and executed by the inquisition.

~ Gloria Evangelina Anzaldua, a queer Latina American who was a prominent scholar on Chicana cultural theory, feminist theory, and queer theory.

~ Magnus Hirschfeld, a queer Jewish German physician and sexologist who is considered one of the earliest advocates for gay and transgender rights, the books of his Institute for Sexual Research were the first major book burn by the Nazis.

We honor you all and the many other queer heroes who have helped us come so far.  
Thank you.

**Some More Queer Heroes for Us to Honor**

April 21, 2016gadmin

**\*\*\*Our cabin naming project stops taking submission at the end of the day TOMORROW Friday April 22nd. Please get yours in so your queer heroes can be honored\*\*\***

Tomorrow is the last day we are taking submissions for the Queer Heroes cabin naming project, so we wanted to share a couple more of the inspiring queer heroes who have been shared with us so far. Just as a reminder: some of these amazing heroes will be memorialized by having Groundswell's cabins named after them, with plaques sharing

their stories. We want you to let us know about all the lesser known LGBTQ heroes that should be celebrated by our community. Please help us share the stories of these leaders by telling us about your queer heroes through this simple form.

**Gloria Anzaldua** Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa was an American scholar of queer theory, Chicana cultural theory and feminist theory. She wrote about her experience as a Chicana lesbian growing up in Texas and about her struggle to assimilate to a world full of binaries. Writing was her life and she won many awards for her brilliant works: National Endowment for the Arts Fiction Award, Lesbian Rights Award, and the Sappho Award of Distinction. Once she said, “A woman who writes has power, and a woman with power is feared”. She died in 2004 from complications with diabetes. We honor you Gloria.

**kiyoshi kuromiya** Kiyoshi Kuromiya was born in a Japanese internment camp in Wyoming. He became a committed civil rights and anti-war activist, fighting the good fight his whole life. He helped found the Gay Liberation Front in Philadelphia and acted as an openly gay delegate to the Black Panther convention that endorsed gay rights. Kiyoshi was also an assistant to Martin Luther King Jr. and took care of his children immediately following the assassination. During the eighties he was part of ACT-UP and helped facilitate distribution of AIDS medication to many people. He also fought indecency laws and bans on medical marijuana all the way to the Supreme Court. He died in 2000 from complications with AIDS. We honor you Kiyoshi.

## Queer Heroes Cabin Naming Project

April 5, 2016 gadmin

**Cabins at Groundswell by Kegan Marling** We have decided to rename our cabins in honor of our dead queer heroes, and we want your help to do it. Our goal is to rename the cabins after lesser-known LGBTQ heroes and share their stories with all those who visit Groundswell (thousands a year). We will take submissions until April 22nd and then Groundswell’s staff and board will rename the cabins and place plaques honoring their story on the outside of the cabin for all to read. You can submit a queer hero to be considered for this project through this quick form.

In addition to renaming our cabins and all that, we also will be sharing some of these herstories online through our website and social media. There are a lot of important LGBTQ heroes who have helped our community get this far, and a lot of them are not well know. We want to help share their important stories with our community.



**Marsha P Johnson**We have already been getting some truly fabulous heroes shared with us. One of them is Marsha P. Johnson, renowned transgender activist and revolutionary drag queen. Born in 1945, Marsha became one of the most famed drag queens in New York City. Her and fellow revolutionary Sylvia Rivera started STAR, Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries, and are widely credited with being the first to confront the police brutality facing the queer community, helping start the Stonewall Riots and then leading community action. Marsha was well known for her generosity and helped many young drag queens get food, clothing, and shelter. She was also part of Hot Peaches, a radical drag troupe that has been compared to the Cockettes. Her work as an organizer and activist continued into the 1980's as a marshall for ACT UP. Sadly, Marsha's life was ended abruptly in 1992 by an apparent homicide. Her fierceness remains a beacon of inspiration to all queer people. We honor you Marsha.

**Marie\_Equi\_(1872-1952)**Marie Equi, born in 1872, was a lesbian medical doctor who was devoted to the care of the poor, provided access to birth control at a time when it was illegal, and was involved with the labor and anarchist movements. As a doctor, Marie had the varied career of both being awarded a medal by the army for her service as a volunteer during the aftermath of the 1906 San Francisco fire and of providing illegal abortions (though she, unlike many of her colleagues, got to keep her medical license). In romantic relationships with other women since high school, Marie would go on to raise a child with her partner Harriett Speckart in an early example of same-sex families, and had numerous other lesbian relationships throughout the years. During a protest of work conditions at a cannery with mostly women workers, Marie was beaten by a police officer after protesting the violent treatment of a pregnant woman. The event radicalized her and she worked for socialist and anarchist movements until her death at 80 years of age. A fellow activist friend described Marie as "a woman of passion and conviction (and) a real friend of the have-nots of this world." We honor you Marie.

Help us share the stories of more important queer heroes of our past. All it takes is 5 minutes of time with this simple form. Thank you.

**An Inspiring Treat for Queer Creatives**

February 15, 2016gadmin

Groundswell Institute is a place for queers to come and be MUSE: Inspire 2016 Queer Creative Retreatinspired. Whether this be inspiration to seek community, creativity, or connection with nature, we hope that to be a space for these explorations. With MUSE, our annual retreat for queer creatives, we will delve deep with our theme "Inspire."

What gets you all artistically hot and bothered?

**Who helped inspire your queer artistry?**

**Where do you go to seek inspiration?**

**MUSE is a one-of-a-kind retreat for queer creatives of all types. No matter what your art or skill level you are welcome.**

**Last years MUSE was a big success for us, beginning our very first year of programming with a beautiful burst of creative energy. This year we're turning the volume up a few notches. The days will consist of skillshares and workshops alongside shared group activities and free time for work on solo projects or play. At night, we eat like queens, revel in our artistry, and celebrate the creative spirit.**

**We will be featuring a wide range of those active in the arts community as presenters for the workshops, dialogues, and demonstrations. Our program will be divided in to three different "Artist" tracks: Solo, Collaborative, and Thriving. So whether you'd prefer to work on new solo skills, collaborating with other artists, or on taking your artistic pursuits to the next level, we have you covered. Full schedule to come soon!**

**We also have a couple other ways that you can plug in to MUSE as a participant with our nighttime events. The Queeriosities Cabaret and the Gertrude & Oscar Art Salon will offer you space to present your work and just have some fun with your fellow creatives. The Cabaret takes place Friday evening and is an open variety show for all to showcase their performative talents, while the Saturday evening Salon is a place for the displaying of more stationary pieces. So bring all those lovely pieces you've been hiding away and Inspire us; whether it be with a drag number, fashion, painting, or a musical piece we want to see what you've got.**

**Head over to the event page to get the latest updates and register and check out our Facebook to RSVP and share what's been inspiring you lately.**

## A look back to the West Coast Communities Conference

December 3, 2015gadmin

We will be working up a series of posts reflecting back on our first year of programs and gatherings here at Groundswell. We decided that we would start not at the beginning, but rather at the end of the year, with our most recent original program, the West Coast Communities Conference. This gathering was unique for us, in that it was both more workshop focused and also our only program not focused on the LGBTQ community (though plenty of the community was there).

The West Coast Communities Conference was modeled after the Communities Conference that takes place in Virginia, at a commune called Twin Oaks. It's been going strong for decades, so we thought we would create a West Coast companion that could serve the fertile network of communities out here. To strengthen the connection between the events and truly share resources, we partnered with the Fellowship for Intentional Communities, which manages Communities magazine and the East Coast conference.

We formed an organizing team early in the year with members from Groundswell, the FIC, and organizers from other intentional communities, then we began recruiting workshop presenters. In the end, we got quite a diverse group of presenters, coming in to teach and learn from all over the country. The gathering featured over 20 different workshops focused on the skills that are needed for community and cooperative living (read the full schedule here). There were also plenaries, open space sessions, and plenty of time for socializing and connection.

One of the great aspects of the West Coast Communities Conference was its gender and age diversity. There were several families and it was one of our first times with children on the land – attendees ranged from 2 to 82 years old. It was also a great mix of the straight and LGBTQ community, with only about a quarter of attendees identifying as queer as opposed to our usual 99%.

For a lot of the people there it was their first time immersed in LGBTQ culture and community, and you could see our liberation spread. By the end of the second day both 8 year-old children and 50-year old adults had gussied themselves up in our drag closet, appearing in dinner circle adorned with glamorous gowns and wigs.

Beyond its success as an intersection of communities, the conference succeeded at its core goals of skills and movement building for the intentional communities network. People seeking community found them, and vice versa. Powerful relationships were formed between leaders of different projects. People's belief in community was awakened and energized. One of our co-organizers, and an organizer of the East Coast conference, even went as far as to call it the "best conference ever". Certainly, the enthusiasm expressed for the conference has only left us excited to keep hosting events that help build the intentional communities movement.

# Main Groundswell Pages

## About Groundswell

Be rejuvenated by nature and community. Be celebrated for your authentic self. Be inspired to create change in the world.

Groundswell Community & Retreat Center is dedicated to helping LGBTQ people lead healthier, more fulfilled lives and giving them the tools to create positive change in the world. We produce more than a dozen unique programs each year, ranging from leadership conferences to artists' retreats, and all geared towards strengthening LGBTQ individuals and communities. Our nonprofit retreat center is partnered with a residential LGBTQ community and farm located right across the creek.

Just 2 hours north of the SF Bay and lying in the Anderson Valley at the intersection of redwoods, oaks, and madrones, Groundswell is over 200 acres of pristine Northern California beauty. A year round creek splits the land between the retreat center and ecovillage, and provides refreshing swimming holes throughout the summer. Steep redwood forests give way to rolling oak hillsides, and a grove of incense cedars crests the land. A quarter-acre spring-fed pond rests uphill from the main camp which has been the site of many summer pond parties. Our retreat center features 10 cabins with sleeping for more than 70, a dining hall with attached commercial kitchen, bathhouse, firepit with amphitheater, indoor event spaces, and a very large hot tub. The facilities are available for rent to other organizations and individuals.

LGBTQ people are three times more likely to face depression or other mental health issues. Groundswell helps people heal the damage done by an often violent society by teaching them to celebrate their authentic selves. Through a mixture of workshops, retreats, skillshares, dances, collaborative projects, theatrics, and classes, our programs grow individuals' skills, knowledge, and confidence.

There are lots of opportunities to get involved with Groundswell, including our events, monthly work parties, or even renting our facilities for your own transformational event. Feel free to contact us with any inquiries you might have.

## Groundswell's Values

Groundswell Institute is proud to be based in values that are rooted in respect for diverse individuals, communities, and ecosystems. We incorporate these values into our programs through both content and how we interact with guests.

### Queer Community

We build stronger LGBTQ\* communities rooted in compassion, mutual respect, and celebrating our authentic queer selves.

### Creativity

We design innovative programs that facilitate creative expression and help people broaden their perspectives and possibilities.

### Multiculturalism

We value and engage the perspectives and experiences of diverse communities and individuals.

### Accessibility

We work to make programs accessible to all who need them, no matter their economic means or physical abilities.

### Leadership

We help empower emerging and established leaders in communities, giving them the tools and opportunities to grow their impact.

### Intersectionality

We believe the work of building an equal world for LGBTQ\* people is tied into the work of social justice movements for all.

### Ecology

We model sustainable practices and help people have a deeper connection to nature and each other.

## Our Land

Located in Northern California, on the southern tip of the Anderson Valley, Rancheria Creek runs along Highway 128, dividing the land between redwood forest and oak-studded hillside. More than a quarter mile of the year-round creek runs through Groundswell, quartz glistening among the river-rocks. Up the steep forest slopes, seasonal creeks line the way to our quarter acre pond, spring-fed, which provides space for respite and reflection. Near the center and the peak of the property stands Grandfather Cedar, overlooking the farm, creek, forests, hills. Acting as the physical and spiritual center of the land, this incense cedar strides among its many seedlings, settled in serpentine rock.

Less than 40 acres of Groundswell's land is easily accessible or developed – the majority, over 140 acres, remains deep redwood forest, the province of deer and other woodland creatures. It is our goal to keep it so. We seek to steward this beautiful Northern California land, creating and maintaining only in balance with the natural systems that were here well before ourselves.

## Our Retreat Center Facilities

Groundswell Institute operates the beautiful and rustic retreat center facilities on the land. Ideal for groups of up to one hundred, our camp runs alongside our year round creek and two seasonal creeks. A private, quarter acre pond is available to groups for swimming, and there are over 140 acres of redwood forest to explore. For those looking for an affordable escape into the woods, our retreat center campus is an ideal option.

some like it hot lgbt spa weekend Until recently, Groundswell's facilities were used as a youth camp every summer. That camp infrastructure is still in place and forms the basis of our plans to transform Groundswell Institute into an inspiring retreat center for environmental education and cultural resilience. In the meanwhile, our facilities remain rustic, highly functional, and in a constant process of renewal.

Groundswell's facilities are available for rent to outside groups or individuals. We invite you to contact us with your interest and questions. Below are some more details about Groundswell Institute's campground.

Cabins – There are 9 cabins on the site with the ability to sleep 72 people. All are fitted with bunk beds and contain power outlets.

Standard Cabins – There are seven standard cabins, each of which has 4 bunk beds (can fit 8 adults).

Doubles Cabins – There are two cabins with doubled up bunks that can each fit 2 adults easily and 3 cozily.

**\*\*We have an 5 additional beds (4 twin, 1 double) that are available only to those with special needs.\*\***

Campgrounds – lots of flat areas close in to the rest of the facilities that are perfect for camping during most of the year.

Large Group Spa & Sundeck – we recently added a beautiful hot tub with surrounding redwood deck off of our bathhouse to help you truly relax in nature day and night.

Commercial Kitchen – fully equipped with service for 100 and features a convection oven, 2 pizza ovens, full range and griddle, walk-in refrigerator and more.

**\*\*Additionally, we have a smokehouse adjacent to the kitchen equipped with one large charcoal grill.\*\***

Dining Hall – our dining hall can seat up to 75 inside and an additional 80+ on adjoining deck outside with chairs and table for up to 100 guests. Adjoining living room with comfortable couches and plenty of space to relax.

Bathhouse – contains 10 standing showers and 9 toilet stalls in the style of a summer camp.

Modocker's Boutique – This space houses our extensive drag collection. This is a mainstay of Groundswell and is an exuberantly fun social space.

Tidrik Lodge – This is a large, versatile event space. Half is fully indoors, with the other half being partially open air.

Fire pit with amphitheater seating and stage

¼-acre pond with 3 canoes and a floating dock. This very private swimming pond can be clothing optional depending on your groups preferences.

Swimming hole at Rancheria Creek set among glistening boulders, this natural pool provides a spot for refreshing dips in the summertime.

## Donate to Groundswell

Groundswell Institute's groundbreaking LGBTQ\* programs have already been making waves throughout California and beyond. We are helping queer people build community, leadership, and personal health at a time when these are needed more than ever. And, we're making sure our services are open to the individuals and communities who need them most. But, we can't do it alone: we need your support so we can keep serving more queer people and giving scholarships to all who need them.

Can you make a donation today to help us grow Groundswell Institute's programs?

We work hard to make sure our programs are accessible to all, no matter what they can pay. This ambitious scholarship program has allowed us to serve Northern California's incredibly diverse LGBTQ\* communities with a focus on those that are traditionally neglected. People who have never had access to spaces of beauty and safety in nature have found a home here, and it has changed their lives.

We're a young nonprofit at just over 2 years old, but in that short time we've accomplished a lot. In just these first 2 years we:

- Gave over \$50,000 in program scholarships to more than 500 low income LGBTQ\* individuals.
- Created more than a dozen unique programs that have helped over 3,000 queer people lead healthier, more fulfilled lives, and gave them the tools to create positive change in their communities.
- Helped underserved LGBTQ\* communities develop safe and celebratory gatherings at Groundswell Institute while also building leadership within those communities through programs such as TRANScend and Xrysalis.
- Created vital intersections between queer changemakers at our leadership, organizing, and creativity conferences, enabling them to expand their networks and access new resources.
- Built anti-oppression education into most of our programs, helping further break down racism, sexism, ableism and other frameworks of oppression within LGBTQ\* communities.

Donate today!

Will you help us advance our important mission by making a donation today?

With your support, we can keep providing unique spaces and services that allow queer people to heal from the world and celebrate our authentic selves. Together, we can steward Groundswell Institute into an organization that will change thousands of LGBTQ\* lives over the years to come.

## Get Involved

Come to our work weekends to experience the land while helping us transform our facilities

Groundswell is a seedling project with lots of vision for growth. In order to cultivate that growth we need lots of helping hands. We hold regular work weekends where we invite our extended communities to join us on the land for a weekend of projects and play. Typical work includes landscaping, gardening, forest management, and sustainable



living projects such as chicken coops and cob benches. We like to end each day of work with community dinner and social time. If you're interested in joining us for one of our work weekends, please e-mail us at [volunteer@groundswell.institute](mailto:volunteer@groundswell.institute).

## Our Programs

Groundswell Institute is excited to announce our 2017 programs. This year we have 20 unique programs, each designed to serve LGBTQ communities in different ways. Whether it's arts retreats, leadership conferences, eco-skillshares, or community celebrations, there are lots of ways to participate and let Groundswell help you lead a healthier, more fulfilled, and more impactful life. Registration and full event pages for all programs will be coming soon.

### 2017 Groundswell Programs

Wellness Weekends – 1/27 – 1/29, 4/14 – 4/16

Groundswell is starting a series of Wellness Weekends that will give you everyday tools to improve your health: physically, mentally, and emotionally. Each weekend will have a different LGBTQ health expert focused on teaching wellness practices. The first will focus on stress- and anxiety-reducing skills and is being led by Dr. Sam Zoranovich. Participants will also be invited to enjoy the land and its many gorgeous features.

Queer Forestry Camp – 2/17 – 2/19

Spend a weekend in the woods learning and practicing sustainable forestry skills. Topics range from forest ecosystems and management to felling and crafting with trees. We will also be spending some time reconnecting with nature and its healing properties. People with all skill levels of forestry are welcome. MUSE: Inspire 2016 Queer Creative Retreat

MUSE: Queer Creatives Retreat – 3/3 – 3/5

This will be our third MUSE, a retreat for LGBTQ creatives of all types. MUSE is a mix of skillshares, workshops, and group art projects that aid artists in exploring and expressing their creative voice. We will also be bringing back our popular workshop track focused on the skills one needs to thrive as an artist. This is a co-created program and we are still looking for workshop presenters / activity leads.

Some Like It Hot Spa Weekends – 3/18 – 3/19, 6/10 – 6/11, 9/9 – 9/10

From sacred hot springs to the roman baths, hot water has played a healing role in people's lives for many millennia. Groundswell invites you to rejuvenate in our own healing waters, at our new spring-fed spa. Come spend a weekend soaking, hiking, and enjoying nourishing food. We won't have any official programming during these weekends, just lots of relaxation.

#### Beltane Gathering – 4/28 – 5/2

In the sun we'll gather once more to celebrate and dance and weave our community together. Beltane is a time for reflection on where you are, where you want to be, and how you move yourself forward with intent. The weekend will feature the main events, with campfire dancing, maypole and creek rituals, as well as the legendary Miss Mayhole Talent Extravaganza. Guests are invited to stay until May 2nd for more woodland delights and community connection.

#### Bayard Rustin Bootcamp for Community Organizing – 5/12 – 5/14

Bayard Rustin was a key architect of the civil rights movement, a passionate supporter of nonviolent resistance, and a gay man. This program, both in his memory and for our futures, will be a series of workshops and activities that will teach the fundamentals of nonviolent resistance and community organizing. We will be focusing on time-honored tactics that helped historic communities and movements realize social change.

#### Into the Woods – 5/26 – 5/29

The Haus of Towers and Groundswell are teaming up for a weekend of reveling in the beauty of our queerness. Your favorite SF parties are calling you into the woods, with Dick @ Nite, Sir/Ma'am, Slumbersexual AND Ladies Who Brunch. It's going to be nonstop genderqueer fabulousity which ALL will be invited to join in on. Bring your own gorgeous looks or find something outrageous in our drag closet. Pond parties, dance parties, slumber parties – it's going to be quite the weekend.

#### Nature=Nurture: Eco-camp – 6/16 – 6/18

It's common wisdom, and now scientific fact, that nature is a nurturing force in our lives, helping us lead healthier, less-stressed lives. And, in these days, it's ever more important that we nurture nature. All weekend we will be teaching regenerative ecology skills and how to work with the woods in ways that benefit both you and nature. The program will culminate with a group natural building project. This is a co-created program and we are still looking for workshop presenters / activity leads. (Date changed 2/3/17)

### Forth Queerly – 6/30 – 7/4

Summer is in high heat so why not come to Groundswell for a weekend of pond parties and campfire dancing. We have a special pond dock “swimwear” drag show, great music all weekend, and some performance treats, too. There will also be workshops and discussion groups exploring how we go Forth Queerly into the world and act as fierce beacons for those who do not yet have the freedom to.

### Queer It Yourself – 7/21 – 7/23

Q.I.Y. is a makers festival for LGBTQ crafters and creators of all sorts. Previous years have included workshops ranging from screenprints to resin casting to felt animals to marketing your crafts. Group projects and craft areas will be happening all weekend and people are encouraged to bring projects of their own to work on. The program culminates in a large-scale collaborative sculpture project that invites all to co-create a work of art with found materials. This is a co-created program and we are still looking for workshop presenters / activity leads.

### XRYSALIS – 8/11 – 8/13

A unique program by and for LGBTQ people of color, XRYSALIS creates a truly safe space for those communities to come together, explore their common experiences, and deepen connections to their selves and their communities. To get a glimpse into what happened the first year of this program check out this feature article about it from the Guardian. There is an organizing team that plans this event – please get in touch if you are interested in being involved.

### Convergence: LGBTQ Healers Retreat – (cancelled)

Too often, the healers in our communities don't have the opportunity to heal and grow themselves. We're hoping to change this with a weekend of learning, sharing, and regenerating by and for LGBTQ healers of all kinds. Whether you are a body worker or social worker, there will be workshops to help you deepen your practice and your passion for healing. This program is being co-created with Embodiment Arts Collective, a community-based wellness space in San Francisco where holistic and sex-positive wellness practitioners collaborate to care for their clients' mind, body and spirit. (Date changed 3/30/17)

### Self Care Is Sexy Retreat – 9/29 – 10/1

Rarely do we spend enough time and energy on self care. So, Groundswell is creating a program dedicated to teaching people simple skills and practices that will help with

care for the mind, body, and spirit. We will be bringing in teachers of many different modalities to give simple classes and lead wellness group activities, like yoga and massage. Our goal is for all participants to come away with increased skills and awareness around self care.

#### Where the Wild Queers Are – 10/6 – 10/9

Come out to Where the Wild Queers Are for a weekend of dancing and delights as Groundswell brings out some great DJs and performers for a celebration of queer culture. Swim in the pond, go for a hike, and soak in our hot tub during the day, then shake your booty all night long. DJs soon to be announced.

#### TRANScend – 10/13 – 10/15

TRANScend is a gathering for trans and gender non-conforming folks to come together, heal, and celebrate the ways in which we experience our diverse genders. We will create a space for deep connection to self and each other, to rise up as a community, and to foster a world where we can openly live our authentic lives. There is an organizing team that plans this event – please get in touch with lead organizer Spring if you are interested in being involved.

#### Halloween Gathering – 10/27 – 10/31

It is only because of our ancestors, the honored dead who fought to get us here, that we are able to live and love as freely as we do. Let's live, love, and laugh in their honor with a weekend of community revelry and ritual. We will have the Ghastly Talent Show on Saturday, followed by our Dead Diva dance party. Sunday will be focused on ritually honoring our dead beloved, both those we knew personally and those we didn't. Guests are welcome to stay on through Halloween day.

#### Lavender: LGBTQ Leadership Conference – 11/17 – 11/19

Leadership takes many forms: you might head an arts collective, lead a nonprofit, run a small business, or be engaged with civics. One thing that is common of nearly all leaders, though, is a need for connection to others with similar passions and a desire to grow their skills. In addition, LGBTQ leaders face unique opportunities and challenges. Join us for a weekend that explores those topics while building on individual's capacities for leadership. There is an organizing team that plans this event – please get in touch if you are interested in being involved.

## Wellness Weekends

Introduction to Rocket Yoga

w/ Deontre Martin

Friday April 14th to Sunday April 16th 2017

Register Now!

lgbt-gay-queer-yoga-wellness-weekend-1 Groundswell is starting a series of Wellness Weekends that will give you tools to improve your health: physically, mentally, and emotionally. Each weekend will host a different LGBTQ health expert focused on teaching wellness practices that you can incorporate into your daily life.

Yoga has been helping people lead healthier lives for more than 5,000 years. In addition to the more obvious effects of increased flexibility and muscle tone, it also improves respiration, cardiovascular health, and overall vitality. Groundswell Institute has created a weekend of clothing-optional yoga classes that will help people improve their access to these health benefits, whether they are yoga enthusiasts or brand new to the practice. Coupled with nature hikes and soaking in the new hot tub, you are sure to leave feeling renewed and ready for the world.

deontre-yoga-lgbt-wellness-weekend Our teacher, Deontre Martin, focuses on a style of vinyasa yoga derived from the first/second/third series of ashtanaga yoga. The practice, called "the rocket", was created by a yogi from the SF Bay area, Larry Shultz, who would regularly tour with the Grateful Dead. Bob Weir, of the Dead, is said to have named the rocket practice because it "get's you there faster, man". This practice is fast-paced and meant to build heat and offer physical challenges, but is also sequenced so that it's accessible to beginners and all body types.

In addition to multiple daily yoga sessions, all food and lodging in one of our bunk cabins is included with lgbt-gay-queer-yoga-wellness-weekend-2 registration. We will also give some guided tours of our forests and farm during free time. If the weather is clear, we'll hold a campfire at night and relax in our expansive, clothing-optional spa. Or, if it rains, we will do some guided meditations in the dining hall.

There is a carpool page setup, so please post your available seats or ride needs. We also have partial and full scholarships available if the registration fee is beyond your means. It's important to us that finances not be a barrier to our programs and we only ask that you pay what you can afford. Let's create more wellness in our lives.

Register below.

Main Topics for Intro to Rocket Yoga

BREATH: ujjayi breathing, pranayama, breathing meditation

BANDHAS: the three locks, how they shape breathing, energetic understanding of the bandhas

DRISTHI: one pointed focus, mirror meditation exercise, asana as breathing meditation

deontre-yoga-lgbt-gay-queer-wellness-weekendAbout the Teacher

Deontre (E-RYT 200) has been enjoying the benefits of the yogic practice for nearly ten years. In 2007, he trained with Amber Gean of Yoga Ah in Cincinnati, Ohio as an apprentice for the studio's very first 200-hour yoga teacher training. That year of practice and devotion to the studio were challenging and also fundamental in Deontre's understanding of asana and its affect on life off of the mat. Recently, Deontre was featured in *Queering Yoga*, a documentary by Ewan Duarte about stories of personal transformation and healing through the asana practice (view it here). Deontre hopes that in each class practitioners will connect pure breath with genuine movement to find their personal flow while also connecting to a community of people doing the same.

Schedule

Friday

7:00 – 9:00 PM      Arrival

9:00 PM      Opening session

Saturday

7:00 AM      Open Yoga Session

8:00 AM      Breakfast

10:00 AM      Yoga Class #1

1:00 PM      Lunch

2:00 – 6:00 PM      Free/Nature Time

6:00 PM      Yoga Class #2

8:00 PM      Dinner

Sunday

7:00 AM      Open Yoga Session

8:00 AM      Breakfast

10:00 AM      Yoga Class #3  
1:00 PM        Lunch  
4:00 PM        Yoga Class #4 and Closing Session

\*\*\* Groundswell events are only open to adults. You must be over 18 to attend\*\*\*

If you are registering for multiple people, PLEASE make sure to give their name(s) and e-mail(s) as well as yours. It's very important for us to get registration information out to every one.

We have a carpool page!

## Queer Forestry Camp

Friday February 17th to Sunday February 19th 2017

Do you like to cut down trees? Skip and jump? Press wild flowers? Put on dandy clothing and hang under the stars? Yes? Well, come and join our Forestry Camp at Groundswell because you're a queer lumberjack and that's more than O.K., that's fantabulosa.

As queers we are so often told that we are "unnatural." Whether it be our gender presentation, sexualities, or just how we act, we are told that we are outside of nature. This makes it especially important we come back to wild spaces to remember that we are natural, beautiful parts of the earth. At Queer Forestry Camp we will work and play in the woods during the day, getting to intimately know the trees. At night we will gather around the campfire and talk about our relationship to the natural world, getting to more intimately know each other. Through different activities, both educational and social, we will create deeper connections to nature, to each other, and to ourselves.

Queer Forestry Camp will explore the forest at Groundswell and its relationship to the watershed of the land. Our forest was heavily logged in the 1950s, like most forests in the U.S. Our hope is that one day we be able to manage our forest such that it will produce a moderate amount of lumber while it regains its old-growth stature. A healthy old-growth forest has resilience and strength. It not only holds water to recharge the aquifer but it can create rain. It also is highly resistance to damaging forest fires. Additionally an old-growth forest releases water with very little silt which is needed in order for the salmon to reclaim their historic breeding grounds.

Join us to learn how the forests can be managed in ways that are healthy for both the woods and people. Forests were once managed by the local communities/tribes that inhabited the area. People acted as friends to the forests, helping maintain their health while utilizing the resources they provided. This is what we aim to get back to. This Queer Forestry will help participants learn ecological assessment, carbon sequestration methods, and restoration forestry.

We will be utilizing hand tools such as axes, saws and draw knives, as well as working with goats to demonstrate how grazers can be an integral part forest management. This will be a hands-on event and will present some physical challenges. Workshops will engage a range of skills and abilities, so people of all experience levels are encouraged to join in. Everyone will be encouraged to only participate with respect to their individual physical capacity. Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have questions.

This event is no one turned away for lack of funds, so we do have scholarship options available for those who can't afford the registration fee.

Register below.

Queer Forestry Camp 2017 Schedule:

Friday

7 -8 PM Dinner

8:30-9:30 PM Brainstorm/Discussion "Why do we tend the Forest?"

Saturday

7:30-8:30 AM Breakfast

8:30-9 AM Checkin/Introductions

9 AM-Noon Working around the Stream of Consciousness with Tom Shaver

Noon-1:30 PM Lunch

1:30-2:00 PM Science, Nature and Heteronormativity Discussion with Erik Eckhert

2-5 PM Slow it, Spread It, and Sink it; Erosion mediation with Tom Shaver

6-7 PM Dinner

8-9:30 PM The Mx Tree Pageant



Sunday

7:30-8:30 AM Breakfast

8:30-9 AM Best of Yesterday Review

9 AM-Noon Felling a tree, limbing and debarking with DoubleSnake

Noon-1:30 PM Lunch

1:30-2:00 PM Forestry without Capitalism: Could it be a Queer Art

Discussion with DoubleSnake

2-5 PM Burn Baby Burn — Biochar and Ash Whooping with DoubleSnake

6-7 PM Dinner

Worried about how to get here? We have a carpool page!

## MUSE: Revolution

Friday March 3rd to Sunday March 5th 2017

### WOMEN WISDOM

The strong women told the faggots that there are two important things to remember about the coming revolutions. The first is that we will get our asses kicked. The second is that we will win."

The Faggots & Their Friends Between Revolutions by Larry Mitchell

Now, more than ever, the world needs the perspective of queer artists. To quote Nina Simone, "an artist's duty, as far as I'm concerned, is to reflect the times." Those of us who still feel safe putting our queerness out in the world, help all those with less of a voice to keep hope, and to find their own strength and resilience in these frightening times. We must reclaim our role as a political force to be reckoned with, just as in the days of Stonewall or Act Up.

In its third year, MUSE is a one-of-a-kind retreat for queer creatives of all types and all skill levels. Days consist of skillshares and workshops alongside shared group activities and free time for work on solo projects or play. At night, we eat like queens, revel in our

artistry, and celebrate the creative spirit. Set in a transformative natural setting, MUSE is a perfect opportunity to spark new ideas, work on a long-term project, or just connect with other passionate, artsy queers.

With a socially and politically turbulent year behind us and uncertain waters ahead, it felt appropriate to theme this year's MUSE "Revolution." Societal change and art have gone hand-in-hand throughout history, especially for LGBTQ communities. From the iconic feminist Rosie the Riveter opening doors for lesbians to Felix Gonzalez Torres' works focusing on the AIDS epidemic to the recent influx of trans actors into the entertainment industry, art has been central to our liberation and our struggles.

MUSE: Revolution is a place to focus on art and ask ourselves how we can help spread queerness throughout the world and keep our revolution going. This is a space for action and participation. Coming to this retreat, don't expect to just sit back and absorb. You will be asked to co-create this space. This may mean leading a workshop, cooking up a beautiful meal, or sharing your art at the show or salon. Think about your contributions.

Register Below!

Playshops, Projects, Show, and Salon

Just like last year's MUSE, we have three tracks for participants to choose from: Learn, Act Up, and Thrive. Learn will be focused on arts skills and projects, Act Up about creating social and political change through art, and Thrive on how to succeed as an artist. View the full program and schedule of MUSE: Revolution now!

MUSE: Revolution program

Schedule of events

There are also two amazing events you should know and plan for. These are the Queeriosities Cabaret and the Audre Lorde and James Baldwin Arts Salon.

The 'cabaret' has a celebrated history of queer sanctuary and visibility, art, sexuality, and political discourse that challenges mainstream ideologies and acts as space for refuge and jubilation. On Friday night's Queeriosities Cabaret we invite performers to reflect on the history and future of 'cabaret' as a host for political discussion around not only mainstream politics, but the artist's role in our highly-politicized society. Whether you share your writings, visual art and media, favorite protest songs or original music, or

artistic and drag performance, we challenge participants to bring your own personal flavor of Revolution! Contact Mike Korcek at [mikekorcek@icloud.com](mailto:mikekorcek@icloud.com) if you'd like to sign up or simply sign up when you arrive and check in at Muse.

On Saturday night the Audre Lorde and James Baldwin Arts Salon will be an opportunity for all artists in attendance to show their work in an unconventional gallery-like setting. This year, to fit the theme, we're asking for a focus on politically oriented art works. Note from the Curator: I am looking for work that makes people uncomfortable, makes them think, and gets them out of their bubble; including me! If I see a sample of your work or read your proposal and it makes me squirm, that is perfect. If you are interested in helping or showing, please contact salon organizer Dean Disaster at [deanna.leitner@gmail.com](mailto:deanna.leitner@gmail.com).

This event is no one turned away for lack of funds, so we do have scholarship options available for those who can't afford the registration fee.

\*\*\* Groundswell events are only open to adults. You must be over 18 to attend\*\*\*

If you are registering for multiple people, PLEASE make sure to give their name(s) and e-mail(s) as well as yours. It's very important for us to get registration information out to every one.

We also have a carpool page!

## Groundswell Spa Weekends

Upcoming Spa Weekends:

Friday September 8th to Sunday September 10th

&

Friday Sept. 15th to Sunday Sept. 17th

some like it hot lgbt spa weekend Across the globe, hot spring water has been considered healing by innumerable cultures and before history began. Groundswell invites you to come and soak in our own hot spring water. No, we don't have hot springs on the land, but our new commercial spa does a great job of heating our cold spring water to where your muscles un-knot and your whole being relaxes. In between soaks, meet some new friends or a new lover, go for hikes in the redwoods, meet the animals on our farm, and dine on dishes both delicious and nutritious. healing-waters-queer-hot-tub-2

Register below.

Hydrotherapy has been used by many societies, from Babylonians to Native Americans to Romans to Russians. Proven health effects include increased bloodflow, relaxed muscles, lower blood pressure, less anxiety, deeper sleep, body cleansing, weight loss, and more. Spas also create space for social connections – sitting in a circle, relaxed, talking with that handsome stranger across the tub just seems easier. And who can deny the powerful connection spas and bathhouses have to LGBTQ\* culture, especially gay men's culture?

groundswell lgbt retreat center northern california Groundswell hopes to recreate the atmosphere and history of some of these spaces with our new spa complex. The hot tub is 8 feet wide and 14 feet long, able to fit plenty of people, complete with a wrap-around deck and outdoor shower, all ADA-compliant. The whole area is clothing optional, as is most of the retreat center.

In addition to lodging and access to the spa, registration also includes brunch Saturday and Sunday and dinner on Saturday, as well as treats throughout the weekend. Lodging in one of our shared cabins is available and therehealing-waters-queer-hot-tub-1 is also plenty of tent camping areas for those who prefer some privacy. A limited number of partial and full scholarships are available to those who cannot afford registration.

Look forward to soaking with you!

## Beltane 2017: Sowing Our Futures

Friday April 28th to Tuesday May 2nd 2017

"The seed is a household object but at the same time it is a revolutionary symbol."

-Ai Weiwei

This Beltane we invite all queer people to join together in sowing seeds and spells of intention for the future harvest. As we dig in to sow our futures and the new lives we're invoking, we find the seeds of potential in all of us and water them. We bind ourselves with love and community for the harvest; celebrating, loving and healing together. As the winter ends, new potential unfurls for our year and new futures begin to take shape.

This year's traditional Beltane falls on a Monday. But we're hardly traditional, so we'll dance the Maypole on Sunday, weaving ourselves into each other and the world around us. Through a ritual that lovingly and laughingly queers the rites of our many heritages, we will plant our intentions for the year to come. Together, we will sow our futures.

Register below.

Saturday night, Witch's night, will be a night of Pageantry to decide who will be crowned Miss Mayhole. The May Queen, or Miss Mayhole, represents community service and celebration. She's the queen who epitomizes "glitter done" for the community, and looks good doing it. Last year, Snowflake Towers raised the bar on this new tradition, and we have a lot to expect from this year's competition, which will feature a special "So, You Think You Can Cast?" segment. Bring your spells, your talents, and those lqqs. If you would like to compete for the title or help with this year's show please email Mike Korcek at [mikekorcek@icloud.com](mailto:mikekorcek@icloud.com).

Saturday afternoon we will be hosting another creekside fantasy tea kiki. Put on those ladies who lunch hats (and not much else, if you're inclined), and come down by the waters for some decadence and delights. And, our first night together, Friday, will feature a campfire jamboree, open to all musicians and other talents, and ending with a drum circle. If you'd like to perform or help set up please email Harmony at [harmonydavid@me.com](mailto:harmonydavid@me.com).

Of course there will also be heart circles, skill shares, group projects, hiking, swimming, and whatever else people would like to bring. We will be putting together a schedule ahead of time, so let us know if you would like to offer an activity! Just e-mail us at [events@groundswell.institute](mailto:events@groundswell.institute) and tell us about it.

beltane-maypole-dance-groundswellLike all our gatherings, we expect everybody who comes to participate and help co-create the event. What might you have to offer the community? There are ample opportunities to help out with cooking, organizing activities, greeting people, cleaning, or even just entertaining. We also highly encourage a gifting culture: think of something that might be fun to bring and share with some of the other attendees.

Registration is limited to 150 attendees so please make sure and register as soon as you are able – we expect Beltane to fill up quickly because of its popularity. Registration includes delicious/nutritious meals, cabin lodging for the first 70 who request it, and access to our spa and the rest of the land. We have full and partial scholarships for those who need them – you can apply for them using this form unfortunately at this time we are out of spaces for scholarship registrations.

Sowing our futures together, the seeds of our potential will be watered, nurtured, loved. May they grow beautiful and abundant.

## Bayard Rustin Bootcamp for Community Organizing

Friday May 12th to Sunday May 14th

Battle racism. Change hearts and minds. Create collective power.

“We need in every community a group of angelic troublemakers.” – Bayard Rustin

There is no denying it: these are scary times. Undocumented immigrants fear being torn from their homes and deported; transgender people fear increased violence and the loss of rights gained in recent years; people of color fear an increasingly militarized police force that disproportionately commits violence against their communities. In order for our collective power to conquer the sources of our fear, we need an intersectional movement that works nonviolently towards justice for all. And, that's where us angelic troublemakers come in.

Bayard Rustin was a black socialist and key architect of the civil rights movement who lived openly as a gay man in the 1950's. He was a powerful proponent of nonviolent resistance and the tools that would shape a movement and lead it to many successes. These grassroots, nonviolent strategies built a broad movement for civil rights – one that opponents could not easily demonize or ignore. Groundswell believes these tools and tactics to be an essential part of building the intersectional movement for justice that is so needed right now. That is why we will be holding a weekend-long program, the Bayard Rustin Bootcamp for Community Organizing, that honors Mr. Rustin in both name and teachings.

The Bayard Bootcamp will have three main trainings: one focused on anti-racism, one on effective political engagement, and another on community organizing. We are working to bring in expert individuals and organizations to lead these classes and really dive deep. By the end of the weekend you will have gained new skills that will aid you

in your own social change work back home. You'll also have a chance to connect with others working for a more just world while rejuvenating in the beauty of nature.

"The real radical is that person who has a vision of equality and is willing to do those things that will bring reality closer to that vision." – Bayard Rustin

Intersectionality helps us see that LGBTQ people are truly everywhere: that means many of us are directly impacted by racism, poverty, anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant hostility, sexism, and the lack of accommodation for those of us with disabilities. Engaging homophobia is vitally important, but it is only one battle in the work to make sure all queers can enjoy freedom and dignity. Allyship is essential as we work to build movement that intersects our many, varied struggles. Let's honor Mr. Rustin by not only growing our own ability to create change but also by shining bright as queers who work towards justice for all.

Registration to the Bayard Bootcamp includes lodging, nourishing meals, and access to Groundswell's beautiful land (including our new hot tub). We have partial and full scholarships available to all who need one – it's important to us that money not be an issue in attending this program.

"If we desire a society without discrimination, then we must not discriminate against anyone in the building process of building this society. If we desire a society that is democratic, then democracy must become a means as well as an end." – Bayard Rustin

## Into the Woods

Let's go deep, DEEP together... deep Into the Woods. Join us for Groundswell Institute's Into the Woods, a sexy and fabulosity-filled weekend retreat with the most scrumptious queerdos and queens you've ever met. It'll be a weekend full of love, laughs, and LOADS... of fun. So, don't miss it!

Register below.

The woods are calling you, beckoning you into the Mendocino wild. The drag queens, faeries, and queerdos call your name, whispering of the sweet, sensuous delights you'll

find in the forest. They speak of parties and performances, of revelry and revolution. They call you Into the Woods for a celebration of social, creative, and sexual discovery.

HAUS of Towers and Groundswell Institute are collaborating to combine immense queer creativity into an event that will leave you feeling fed in all the ways, and still so hungry for more. Some of your favorite city parties will be coming out to Groundswell for the holiday weekend. We're talking daytime pond parties featuring "Reading is FUNDamental", "Netflix and Chill" cuddle cinema, and DickATnite bringing you mouthwatering performances and another all-night dance party. Yoga, hikes, and other activities round out the weekend to make sure you get some relaxation in between all that dancing.

See a full list of all the parties and activities below.

Registration includes all festivities and frivolities, as well as lodging, food, and access to the full retreat center and spa. There are bunk beds in our rustic cabins available to the first 70 who request them, and ample camping spots for those who prefer sleeping outdoors. We'll be providing brunch and dinner each day, promised to be almost as mouthwatering as those attending. And, you'll be able to enjoy our large group spa and ample forest hiking on our 180 acres all Memorial Day weekend. There are partial and full scholarships available for those who need them – you can apply for them here.

Register for Into the Woods!

### Nature=Nurture: Eco-camp

Friday June 16th to Sunday June 18th 2017

gathering-materials-nature=nurture-eco-campEnjoy building with cob, regenerative ecology, finding critters in the woods, wildcrafting, or learning about sustainable agriculture? We are premiering a program full of eco-skillshares and earthy group projects, Nature=Nurture. Basking in the rejuvenative powers of the forest, we'll learn skills that allow us to work towards a symbiotic relationship with the wild wherever we are. The weekend will be focused on experiential learning – so be ready to get down and dirty.

Nature has been proven to nurture us: physically, mentally, and spiritually. Yet, too often this relationship is one-sided and we don't nurture nature back. How can we live in such a way as to enjoy the bounties of the wild while also healing the earth from past human



harm? This question forms the heart of this program, and at Nature=Nurture, we'll explore the ways we can be part of the solution, not the problem.

In addition to the daily workshops, group projects, and skillshares, we will be hosting different social scenes each night. On Friday, meet other attendees and begin to dive deep with the opening games and discussions. Then, Saturday night, we hold the Wiles of the Wild variety show, where all can feature their talents and inner freaks of nature. Both evenings will be centered around the campfire, though our nearby spa will be open playing-with-flowers-promo-for-nature=nurture-eco-camp into the night as well.

This is a community created event, so we are seeking people to help lead activities throughout the program. Do you want to lead a workshop on making tinctures, or maybe a cob oven project, or a plant identification hike? We want to work with you to make your activity into a fabulous reality. Read our full call for presenters [here](#).

Registration includes all meals, programming, and lodging (bunk beds in cabins are available for the first 70 who want them and there are plenty of camping spots). We take pride in making food both delicious and nutritious, and are happy to work with people's dietary needs. You will also have access to our 180 acres of forests and creek, as well as our clothing-optional spa. There are partial and full scholarships available for those who need them – you can apply for them [here](#).

Let's nurture with nature and nurture the nature around us all.

All ready & excited?! Register below.

### Workshop & Activities

#### Healing from the Wild w/ Hunt Scarritt

Join the wildness without to the wildness within. Come join an intimate group which will meet and hike up to Grandfather Cedar. Sit in the healing circle and draw from her strength. Meditate, move, share stories with a partner and participate in a ritual of our own creation.

#### Herbal Medicine Chest & Herb Walk w/ Mitcho Thompson

This workshop will be a wandering glance at Mother Earth's Medicine Chest. We shall roam and meet the various plants on the land that teach, help, and heal. Along the way we shall speak to wild crafting and stewardship. At the end we will discuss and

learn how make use of what we bring back with us as teas, essences, tinctures and more.

#### Mindfulness Based Eco-Therapy w/ Rob "Robriel" Wolf

This beginner level session will introduce participants to the basics of Mindfulness Based Eco-Therapy, followed by a brief facilitated EcoTherapy session as a group. At the culmination of the group session, if they so desire, the participants will be offered the tools necessary to continue to use both mindfulness practices and EcoTherapy in their lives in an ongoing and self directed manner.

#### Notice the Details w/ James Hobson

I'd like to take people on a slow, detail oriented nature walk. Those who are interested in photography or drawing, please bring your equipment. I know a bit about the botany of the area, if anyone cares to share their knowledge of the geology, birds, insects or history of the area, that would be lovely. This will be an exploration of beauty in the small details.

#### Portable Shrines to the Wild Mind w/ Rob "Robriel" Wolf

In this workshop participants are encouraged to engage nature directly to find raw materials and meaningful touchstones with which to build a small portable shrine. These small shrines serve as reminder and grounding locus for the energy that exists in the human spirit when we are fully present in the untamed spaces and places of wilderness.

#### Sensory Explorations in Nature w/ Natan Daskal

This workshop will center around an exploration of our sensual experience of the land at Groundswell and is an opportunity to put our attention into the felt sensations of our bodies in physical contact with land, air, water, and life.

#### Soul and Soil, Tender Toil w/ Ami Puri & Vanessa Raditz

Through meditation we will ground and let ourselves be with, deeply, an eroding, animal impacted area at Groundswell. Using restorative agriculture practices, we will encourage soil stabilization, help protect the site from further damage, and prepare for a fall planting.

#### Wildcrafting Smudge Bundles w/ Rob Thoms

In this workshop, we will wander through the meadows, creeks, and forests of Groundswell, gathering fragrant materials to use for incense / smudge sticks (cedar and mugwort; perhaps others). We'll discuss sustainable harvesting practices and how they are utilized by those who tend the wild, and also conjure properties and personalities for these plants.

Worried about how to get here? We have a carpool page!

## Forth Queerly 2017

Friday June 30th to Tuesday July 4th 2017

It's time to celebrate our freedom and independence by being as fabulously queer as we can possibly be! This fourth of July weekend we invite y'all to go Forth Queerly as we revel in our authentic selves. As usual, there will be pond parties, fierce and feisty performances, decadent feasting, healing heart circles, and lots of sensual and sexy space. Plus, we're bringing back our popular Lit Qween Light Show, and upping the production levels and performances all around. It's going to be four full days of play, party, and pleasure.

Register Below.

Forth Queerly is a celebratory program that invites you to think about how you bring your queerness into the world. This year we are going Vintage Edition! That means we'll be visiting decades-old cultures and queers that have helped us grow into this beautiful community. Friday, we'll be holding the Black Cat Cafe variety show in honor of that historic venue and the Grand Mere Empress of San Francisco, José Sarria. Then, we'll dance to old-time swing and jazz for our Fierce Flappers dance party, where we all embody those fashionable women dedicated to enjoying themselves and rebelling against conventional standards of behavior.

There will be many pond parties, with naked and scantily clad bodies basking in the sunshine, the water, and each other. We'll be playing oldies of many different decades and genres and serving up special treats like slushies and frozen fruit (fruit for fruit!). On Sunday, dinner will be brought up to the pond so the rest of the night can continue up there. The Lit Qween Light Show comes once dark has arrived with light and music interwoven into a wondrous and illuminating performances. Then, disco dancing until dawn!

On Monday, we'll focus on serving our own and each other's bodies. There will be a relaxing touch ritual in the morning and rejuvenating spa dates by the hot tub in the afternoon. Of course, there will still be more dancing, swimming, and making out at the pond. After dinner, we'll dance around the campfire and end the day with a midnight fire-spinning performance. On Tuesday, we'll brunch, cleanup, get some last splashes in, and end with a connecting closing circle.

We ask all who come to our events to truly be participants, not just attendees. This means we want your help as a volunteer in the kitchen, greeting people, or setting and cleaning up the various party scenes. It also means we want you to think of special ways you can contribute. Maybe you want to collect blackberries and make pies. Maybe you want to share mead you've been brewing. Maybe you want to hold a sound healing session. We welcome all these things and more. Let your creativity run wild, and if you need support from Groundswell just send us an e-mail.

forth-queerly-groundswell-lgbt-retreat-center2Registration includes all four days of revelry and love, with delicious meals, access to the spa and retreat center, and lodging (70 cabin bunks available first come first served and lots of camping spots). It's sliding scale and all revenue supports the important work Groundswell is doing for queer communities. Plus, there are scholarships available for those who need them – just apply [here](#).

Summer is here, with all the heat and sweat you could want (and more). The pond and the creek are here to cool you down, while the spa and parties wait to heat you back up again. Connection and community awaits, along with the usual dancing and debauchery. You will definitely delight in going Forth Queerly this year.

## Queer It Yourself

Friday July 21st to Sunday July 23rd 2017

We queers are builders of our own identities, families, and paths forward in life. Our makers festival, Queer It Yourself, is a chance for you to indulge in your creative spirit as you join other LGBTQ\* makers for a weekend of crafting and building. There will be sculpting, carving, cooking, confecting, brewing, sewing, felting, and concocting of all kinds. It's going to be an event packed full of natural beauty, sun soaked days, queer creativity, and people getting sweaty while they make fantastical creations. Plus, in addition to workshops and skillshares, group projects and craft areas will be happening all weekend so you can even bring your own projects to work on.

Groundswell is a space for exploration of yourself and of avenues in life. Maybe you've never been a maker but have always wanted to? This weekend is perfect place to pursue that passion. We'll be hosting workshops on a variety of interesting skills: previous years have included workshops ranging from screenprints to resin casting to felt animals to marketing your crafts. We'll be posting the full schedule in the weeks leading up to the event, so stay tuned.

Register Below

QIY 2017 Workshops

Beer Brewing Basics Bonanza w/ Spring Collins & Kyle DeVries

Come learn the basics of brewing beer, from hefeweizens to pale ales. We'll go through the whole process of brewing, crafting a new batch, and then do some tastings of home made brews from the community. There will be demos and discussions of different techniques and recipes. We'll even talk some about making your own mead!

Cut Up the Patriarchy Collage Workshop w/ Dean Disaster

Come create 3D collage while we discuss how to create new media from the old into positive stories about marginalized people. Materials provided: magazines and newspapers, foam, blank paper, scissors, glue and ModPodge. Materials needed: X-Acto knives or precision blades, magazines and newspapers or images that you want to destroy, collage materials you love to use, willingness to participate in hard discussions about male gaze and white privilege including the white gay male gaze onto women's bodies and fashion.

Drag 101 w/ Grace Towers

Drag queen basics. We will cover makeup, body, performance, persona, fashion etc. I'll be doing my face in front of everyone with a projection so that it's visible. Those performing in the variety show should feel free to join as well. Those that are interested in painting their face will need to bring their own materials.

Felting for Faeries w/ Rob "Robriel" Wolf

This workshop will introduce participants to the fun world of stabbing tumbleweaves of wool with sharp pointy needles until they magically create tiny sculptures. Topics will include the basics of how needle felting works, an introduction to different types of materials and how to design and plan the construction of a small felted work of art.

### How to be Clothes Minded w/ Mateo

Clothing swap meets styling course. Bring/Swap/Style. This will be a, "Master Class" in how to make something out of found, sourced or swapped materials, participants will be encouraged to bring an idea for a performance lewk, whether it will be something used for performing at the gathering, or elsewhere. With a few DragLab tools, (i.e. hot glue gun, spray paint, a sewing kit, glitter, etc.) we'll concoct a fully realized look, and leave the Modocker Boutique in better shape!

### It's Hammer Time: Intro to Blacksmithing w/ Thor Young

Ever wanted to learn how to forge metal into new shapes and sculptures? We're bringing out the anvils and gonna make it glow! Come learn the basics of blacksmithing and work on some simple projects, like handmade knives.

### Making our own Ink and Pens w/ Mitcho Thompson

Making your own ink is not only fun, but can make your works of writing more powerful about in intention and energy. In this workshop we will go forth into the woods to gather materials with which to make our own inks in a rainbow of colors! These inks will be perfect to use with the goose feather quill ink pens we shall make and use, just as the greatest literary mages in the past.

### Straw into Gold w/ Christina "Bam Bam" Kossa

We will talk a little bit about the science of spinning – what holds a thread together. I will give a demonstration and you will get some hands on use of a drop spindle and a modern spinning wheel. I will have on hand the materials for creating your own drop spindle, there will be some fiber to spin with, or we can start foraging the bounty of Groundswell for something to spin.

Queer It Yourself will culminate in a large-scale collaborative sculpture project that invites all to co-create a work of art with found materials. Together, we will build a statue in the woods, made of natural materials and inspired by shared vision. Rather than destroying this sculpture at the end of the event we will let it stand and decay. Eventually we hope to create a series of decomposing works of art in the woods – testaments to the beauty of group creative power and the natural world.

Registration includes all activities, delicious meals, lodging (70 cabin beds and plenty of camping spots), and access to the whole retreat center including our large group spa

and swimming pond. There are also scholarships available for any who might need them – apply for them here. We look forward to crafting and creating with you soon!

## **XRYVALIS: a gathering for QTIPoC communities**

Friday August 11th to Sunday August 13th 2017

There's really no such thing as the voiceless

There are only the deliberately silenced or

The preferably unheard

-Arundhati Roy

Step into XRYVALIS

Fri. 8/11 – Sun. 8/13, 2017 @ Groundswell Institute

XRYVALIS is an annual event in nature celebrating and connecting Queer, Transgender, and Intersex People of Color (QTIPoC). XRYVALIS is where the creators of culture, the young or just young at heart, the unseen, the gifted, the creative come together and empower one another through fashion, art, activism, food, and connection. This ambitious and necessary event is in its second year and is a continued commitment to fulfill our vision: collective engagement, self-celebration, community building, and, most importantly, collective healing and restoration.

The annual retreat is held on 200 acres of beautiful forested land, which includes a large pond for swimming, a small farm, and half a mile of year-round creek for wading. Over the course of 3 days, we will engage in empowerment workshops, healing exercises, networking exchanges, drag and talent shows, and moonlight dances. The XRYVALIS dream is to channel all of our creative and loving forces in unison to celebrate our unique identities in a world actively trying to erase us.

This year we would like to introduce to you XRYVALIS: INTERSECTIONS. We pride ourselves on curating innovative and creative approaches to building our collective and this year we are stepping to the plate. XRYVALIS will be operating from what we call a Transformative Intersectional Empowerment and Leadership perspective. What this means is that we are committed to centering voices of those who are often silenced or held back in our community. If we continue to do what we have always done, the results we be what they have always been. The XRYVALIS vision is to turn that framework on its head so that we can enter a new era of collective community: For Us By Us.

Registration is now open! Groundswell works hard to make sure anybody can go to their programs, no matter their economic status. There are partial and full scholarships available for all who need them and the application is super simple. Sleeping arrangements include cabins (first come first served) and camp sites. Groundswell is equipped with public and private working showers, a commercial kitchen, large group hot tub, and extensive indoor and outdoor gathering spaces. Carpool is also available and we will be working to get some group shuttles going.

Please find a brief description of a few of our program offerings below

#### XRYVALIS Mindfulness/Yoga Retreat and Natural Healing

There will be Yoga Retreat portion to help relax and rejuvenate your spirit. Folks are encouraged to explore Groundswell's beautiful 200 acres of nature, individually or as a group, to reconnect with those parts of us robbed of clean air, water, and the sounds of our sisterly species.

#### XRYVALIS Presents: GLEAUX

"We will never fade, we will shine and light the shade

We'll just illuminate, show are color ray

So lets just GLEAUX away, In the night they will see you illuminate" -Dawn

A DIY Strip Club experience that will have you glowing all night long!



Let's celebrate our all of the shapes and sizes of our bodies in all their glory and call on our ancestors under the stars! Bring yourself and bring them LQQKS, or pull from our extensive drag and costume cabin!

Let the community know your talent(s). This is a free-form variety show for any and all that want to share their skills or performance passions. As QTIPoC we often move through the world unseen, or forced to suppress our inner magic. XRYVALIS wants you to claim your spot in the universe and let your magic shine! All levels of experience welcomed and encouraged; the XRYVALIS community is here to nurture and support your growth. Let us know you want to perform ahead of time or just sign up at the gathering.

XRYVALIS Leadership Incubator and Network

Get connected to queer folks of color who are doing the important community organizing work, from building collectives and intentional communities to leading protest movements. Network, learn, and get inspired by the powerful work our community is creating.

### Self Care Is Sexy Retreat

Friday September 29th to Sunday October 1st 2017

Self-care-is-sexy-lgbt-wellness-retreat-3Caring for our selves – our body, mind, and spirit – has never been more important as we face continued harm from a world which would like nothing more than to eliminate or assimilate us. That's why Groundswell Institute is convening Self Care is Sexy, a retreat focused on teaching practical self-care skills that help us all with the stresses and harms we face as LGBTQ\* people. We're bringing together a wide range of queer health practitioners who will lead activities and workshops that teach wellness techniques that can be worked into your everyday life, from meditation to massage and beyond. We want you to walk away from this weekend way more ready than ever to face the challenges of the world.

Too often, self care is considered a luxury, available only to those who can afford hours of free time a day or the cost of a private trainer. This just isn't true – the ability to improve our physical, mental, and emotional health lies within our grasp. It doesn't take relentless commitment or resources, it only takes a bit more effort most days to lift our lives up and give us the resilience we need. A bit more effort for our selves, our relationships, and our communities, and, before long, we will be able to take on the world.

Workshops and activities will teach a broad range of wellness practices, and each day will have lots of options to choose from: breathwork to yoga, massaging touch to sexual touch, healing through nature to healing through each other. At night, we will gather around the campfire and soak in the hot tub, connecting and creating community – another essential piece of self-care. All of this is set at Groundswell Institute's beautiful, nature-centered retreat center, with time for hikes and connection to the wild also offered.

Registration includes all workshops and activities, nutritious and hot meals day-round, lodging (in one of our cabin bunks or in your own tent), and full access to the retreat center. There are also partial and full scholarships available for any who need them – we don't want money to be a barrier to access to this important program.

With the ever increasing stresses we face from the world around us, self care has never been more important. Besides, as Mama Ru reminds us, "If you don't love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love somebody else?". Finding time and energy for self care may very well be the most important, and first step in caring for our communities as a whole.

### Where the Wild Queers Are 2017

There's a rumbling deep in your body – you can feel it in your heart and groin – saying it's time to head into the redwoods again, to dance and desire and delight with all the creatures of the wilds. It's time to feature your feral fashion, get dirty and sweaty, and let your inner beast out to play. It's time for Where the Wild Queers Are, three days of celebrating our primal queer nature.

We'll start Friday night with a campfire dance party to get your body grooving under the stars and settling into the countryside. Of course, our huge hot tub will be available for soaking too, as it will be all weekend. In the morning (and every morning), enjoy a scrumptious brunch prepared by our resident culinary witch, Sprite (as are all the meals). Then we'll be exploring some of the nearby swimming holes with one of our legendary Creek-Kikis, a great time to luxuriate in the joys of both fabulous drag and nudity in nature.

Saturday night we head deeper into the woods for our Qreatures of the Wild party at our dance lodge. Come dressed up or down as any animal or fantastical beast – there will be special prizes for those that are especially fierce and/or flamboyant. We have

some fantabulosa DJs coming up from the SF Bay area who are excited to keep you bumping and grinding like creatures in heat all night long. We'll also be bringing in artists to help us transform the dance lodge into a fantasy forest unlike any you've seen before, and designing a play jungle that will seduce you into sexy, sweaty times with your fellow beasts.

After brunch on Sunday, we'll become water critters and celebrate the inner otter by sunning, swimming, and dancing at the pond. Then, after a night-time feast, we'll host the Primal Pansies party at the dance lodge. Another night of dancing awaits, along with scintillating kink and BDSM demonstrations in the play jungle. In the morning, we will have a light massage circle to help our muscles unwind from the nights of exertion, and one last brunch as we bid you farewell.

Registration for Where the Wild Queers Are includes lodging (in one of our bunk cabins or in your own tent), all meals and snacks, and access to the full retreat center lands and spa. There is a page setup to facilitate carpooling (below) as well as partial or full scholarships available to those who can't afford regular registration, so it's easy for you to be able to join in. We ask that all attendees also act as participants by volunteering throughout the event, with cooking, cleaning, decorating, and helping greet. Like all of our programs, Where the Wild Queers Are is an act of community co-creation.

## TRANScend

Friday October 13th to Sunday October 15th 2017

### TRANScend: A Retreat for Trans and Genderqueer Folks

This one-of-a-kind three-day gathering is created for and by trans and genderqueer people. We are creating a container to share our experiences, find common ground, and raise our collective voices. This is especially important in the Trump-era: the threats are real. Our trans sisters of color are being murdered, undocumented queers deported, suicide is at an all time high in our community, and trans youth unable to use bathrooms that correspond with their gender. We will pull from and build upon the rich history of work that has been done, and solidify new actions. We also believe that self-care is highly important, so there will also be plenty of time to relax, rejuvenate, and dance under the stars.

TRANScend is a gathering specifically designed for trans and genderqueer people to teach each other, self-organize, and create paths of resilience, resistance, and social justice in this current administration. Through workshops we will empower each other and focus on the needs of our community, including sessions that focus on mental and physical health as well as leadership. We'll balance all our day-time work Saturday with an equal (or greater) amount of play at night.

Saturday night after dinner we will feature the first annual, "TRANScendent Talent Show, where anyone is welcome to bring their songs, poetry, drag, and/or performance art to share with the community. The evening will climax with a group dance party around the campfire w/beatz by the one and only Jasmine Infiniti!

Sunday will be an open space for the community to share resources through self led workshops and the afternoon will feature our beautifully big pond. The whole day will be centered on healing and we will have an acupuncturist and massage therapist on hand to sooth you as well as our large communal hot tub.

Registration includes food, lodging, all activities, and access to our gorgeous retreat center including the large group hot tub. We have cabin spaces available for the first 70 who want them and then plenty of camping spaces (and extra tents for those who need them). We cook delicious, nutritious meals all weekend and make sure to provide options for all sorts of diets. We now have a wait list for Scholarships, but please feel free to still apply! It's just a quick 5-minute application here.

We have secured a shuttle bus through our friends at FLUX to help with transport to and from the SF Bay area. This will be available as a free option to the first 40 people who sign up (link below). We also have a carpool page setup for people to share rides on and for those whose needs aren't met by the shuttle bus (link below). In other words, we're making sure it's mighty easy to get here for this important program.

Workshop details and Presenter Bios

\*Click on pictures for bios and workshop descriptions

Eb. Brown:

#FreedomWork: Holding Our Power As TGNC Folks Of Color

Spirit:

#FreedomWork: Holding Our Power As TGNC Folks Of Color

Abeni Jones:

How to take care of each other: Community Care in Times of Crisis

Mo'Nique "Duchess Monroe" Campbell:

"You are Royalty"

B/T

Body Euphoria

June Moon:

The Remedy: Afrosonic Liberation Sessions

Riley Del Rey:

How to Flip a Coin: Negotiating Wages in Sex Work

Violet Martinez:

TRUTH Project: Storytelling models for trans and gender nonconforming youth

Healing Section

\*Click on pictures for bios and workshop descriptions

Paolo Flores Chico

Acupuncturist

Toni Cannon

Massage Therapy

## Halloween 2017

Season of the Witch

Friday October 27th to Tuesday October 31st 2017

Calling in all the witches, the heathens and hedonists, the faeries and satyrs, the wood nymphs and tricksters! It's time to sashay out to Groundswell for a weekend full of ritualized play and playful ritual as we celebrate and honor our ancestors, the spirits, and the fabulous communities they have made possible. We'll do so through feasts and fetes, rituals of remembrance, carousing around campfires, devilish drag, lust and love, weirding in the woods, and rites of revolution. The days are growing darker, so let's gather with our friends and chosen family for joy and heat.

This year we are calling in the season of the witch – our season! We are all powerful witches (or magical beings of other types) and have the ability to forge our own destiny and create change in our lives and the world. Let's work together to keep creating that beautiful future we wish were the present. The dark times of the year can be some of the hardest, and only by holding each other can we emerge stronger and ready for the hard work of the year(s) ahead.

Of course, the spirits and tricksters will also be visiting, so you can expect all sorts of shenanigans. We'll be reviving our Ghastly Talent Show for Friday night, an open cabaret for all to showcase talents that are mesmerizing, horrifying, or both. Our haunted dance floor and wicked delights lounge will also be back with even more tricks and treats for our Saturday night dance party. Throughout the weekend, fantastic food will be heavily featured with a Feasts of Fall fete on Saturday and a Diner Divas Brunch planned for Sunday. Get ready for some mouthwatering dishes being dished by mouthwatering babes in delicious drag.

Remembering the dead is part of the core essence of Halloween, going back to the Celtic holiday of Samhain and before. Grief can be a transformative force in life, for good and bad, so we create space to channel our grief for our lost loved ones in a positive direction. Throughout the gathering we will hold rituals, some short, some more elaborate, to honor our beloved dead and what we have lost this year. These will include building an ancestors' altar in the dining hall, so please bring sacred objects to add to this collaborative commemoration.

Registration includes all activities, food, and lodging – plus, there are plentiful scholarship spots for those who need them. Don't let money be a barrier. We also have a carpool page setup to ease group rides – please post open seats if you have them.

And, if you have ideas for activities or want to be involved with some of the interactive stations at the wicked delights lounge just e-mail us!

## Lavender: Queer Leadership Retreat

A Retreat for Queer Leaders of All Kinds

November 18 – 21 2016

Being a leader in the queer community can sometimes take a lot out of you. It's essential and challenging and often thankless work. That's why it's important for us community organizers, arts focalizers, care providers, event producers, esoteric historians, and political activists to come together to help each other grow and thrive.

### Rejuvenate and Be Inspired

Lavender, our queer leadership retreat, is a weekend of rejuvenation and inspiration for queer leaders of all kinds and all levels of experience. It's a time to relax in nature with your peers, learn some skills, and create relationships with others who are building stronger queer communities. It's a moment to step back from your busy life to look at where you have been and where you want to go.

During the day, we will learn and explore through workshops, guided activities, and group discussions. At night, we will play and celebrate through dance, performance, and connection. We are still finalizing details of the presenters and nighttime play activities, but will get these added soon.

### Lavender Leadership

We chose the word lavender for this retreat as an honoring of queer leaders of the past and of the plant that brings healing and inspiration. We want this retreat to look at the lessons of our past, to learn from our leaders who came before us. We also want it to be a space for us to look at how we can heal and support each other. It's important that we, as leaders, take care of ourselves as well as we take care of others.

### **Full Lavender Leadership 2016 Program**

Welcome to Groundswell Institute and Community

Groundswell is an unique project that explores the intersection of community, ecology, and queer paradigms.

Consisting of a non-profit retreat center and a developing residential ecovillage, Groundswell nurtures the cooperative ecology and culture that are essential for a sustainable future.

The non-profit Groundswell Institute creates visionary queer consciousness-raising and environmental programs, while also renting out the facilities to like-minded groups or individuals to gather for transformation.

The residential ecovillage lives across the creek from the retreat center, helping steward the land, maintaining permaculture-based agricultural systems, and helping provide the people power to run the nonprofit. Together, the Institute and community work to create sustainable natural and human ecologies that invite people in to create a more conscious, connected, and cooperative culture.

Lavender

Queer Leadership Retreat

Lavender is a weekend of healing and empowerment for queer leaders of all kinds and all levels of experience. It's a time to learn skills and create relationships with others who are building stronger queer communities. In these uncertain times we need to focus on what we as communities can do in response to right our course, to unite and fight with all our strength the tide of bigotry and violence that has already begun. Together we can arrive more powerful than ever on the other side.

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Special Events

Qore Queericulum

What Next? Futures of queer movements and communities

The movement for equality and justice was just dealt a huge blow, one we will be feeling for years to come. What are the next steps we need



to take in our communities? What shape do queer movements need to take to meet this new reality? What challenges and opportunities lie in store as we move forward? Guided discussions and activities help us explore these topics and more. SAT 4:15pm in the Dining Hall

Unite and Fight: Building stronger networks of queer leaders & planning next steps

Whatever comes next, one thing is for sure: we must support each other more now than ever before. We'll talk about the tools and resources available to us, the ones we need to create, and how we can best use them to achieve our collective goals. At the end, we will talk about concrete next steps, how we can continue the work of the retreat, and how we continue to grow our communities. SUN 2:30pm in the Dining Hall

Grief Ritual

Those before me said "Don't Mourn, Organize!" Today I am saying "Mourn, Heal, Organize." This is a ritual to fully mourn the hurt, the hate, the pain we are all experiencing. This will be a place for our tears, our yells, our wounds, our ritual sacred objects. This will be a time to grieve - to pour out our emotions and to be held. This will also be a place for our laughter, our stories, our memories, and our hope. Part of the grief experience is both tears and laughter. All forms of expression are welcome at this ritual. Ritual to be facilitated by Priestess Ariel archer of joy, light, liberation, and magic. SAT 6:30pm in Tidrik Lodge

Workshops

Saturday Workshops

Envisioning Our Herstory w/ Aleta Alston Toure

Envisioning Our Herstory, Actualizing Our Humanity creates sanctuary in solidarity with Orlando Pulse massacre despite Florida's resistance to address the serious issues of inter sectional oppressions that need immediate

action and cultural competency support through homophobia, state violence and racial discrimination. We envision that our frontlines will inspire a power of love where we can heal, captive fierceness and liberation. Come explore the Free Marissa Now (FMN) movement, an Lavender: Queer Leadership Retreat 4 alliance of organizations and activists that freed Marissa Alexander. We will describe components of the documentary project composed of storytelling, freedom songs, dance and artwork chronicling the #blackwomenslivesmatter movement. People's Movement Assembly processes that document the ways we participated in the FMN mobilizing campaign, which was the impetus for the #blackwomenslivesmatter. Although Marissa was the poster child for this struggle, the campaign highlighted a larger resistance against white supremacy, domestic violence and patriarchy. We as black lesbian organizers refuse to no longer be pushed out, overpoliced and pulled under the bus we are human. WS 1: 11:15am in the Dining Hall

Out Beyond The Binary There is a Field of Lavender I Will

Meet You There w/ Ariel Vegosen

Standing on the shoulders of giants I give praise to all those that created fairy space, gay men's space, women only space, and dyke space and I honor the need for those spaces in the time they were created. I honor now this new time we are ushering in. The time of separation has ended. Now is the time to step beyond the concept of binary. To see the girlboy in me and in you! If you recognize that gender is not a binary or are curious about this concept or want to create spaces were all genders are genuinely included then this is the workshop for you. Are you tired of looking around a queer event and seeing that we are replicating the patriarchy and systems that no longer serve us? Then this workshop is for you! Are you triggered by the way I wrote this description - then

this workshop is also for you. Let's get real about what scares us about talking about gender, let's find out how to be more welcoming and inclusive, let's do the work to make our radical queer spaces radical when it comes to gender too. This workshop will be facilitated by Ariel (your lovingly gender queer faggot beyond binary labels extraordinaire). WS 1: 11:15am in the Living Room

Creative Problem Solving w/ B/T Craig

I will facilitate Decentering, an expressive arts process that can help us find a new perspective on a problem, identify concrete next steps, and connect with each other in the process. This workshop will be experiential and interactive. WS 2: 2:30pm in the Annex

The Decorated Queen w/ Jason Patten

An artistic workshop including a discussion of "Queens" past and present, a discussion about the characteristics that help each of us endure

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through activism work, a guided visualization for participants to reflect on their own attributes that make them strong, attributes they wish to develop more, and then visual symbols of these things they wish to embody. This will segue into a visual arts project including Queen playing cards and myriad elements of decoration and embellishment for participants to create an art piece of their more embodied, empowered self.

WS 2: 2:30pm in the Living Room

Words Matter: Winning Hearts & Minds with Effective Communication in Social Media and Life w/ Digger Keith

Communication skills for understanding and being understood can change hearts and minds. Such strategies empower us to have effective conversations with those we don't agree with, and can convert people to our cause. We'll particularly focus on social media, but these skills are useful for all forms of communication. WS 2: 2:30pm in the Dining Hall

## Sunday Workshops

### Activating in Hard Times: Shining Our Queer Gifts in the Bleakness w/ Ariel Vegosen

This election has brought many things to the surface: fear, anger, hatred, racism, sexism, and queer-phobia (LGBTQ-phobia). It might seem like the time to run, hide, or escape to another country but I believe we need to activate more than ever! So join this workshop to talk strategy, people power, and how best we can shine our queer gifts into this hardship. We as queers on the front-line have years of activism, wisdom, love, and magic to pour into the movement at this time. Let's collaborate and get serious about uping our game. This workshop will be facilitated by Ariel and all of your voices, knowledge, and skills - let's empower each other and shine our light into this challenge. WS 3: 9:30am in the Dining Hall

### Anti Assimilationism w/ Glendon Anna Conda Hyde

Modern Neoliberal policies are removing the gayness and replacing it with assimilation based rights such as military and marriage. By accepting heteronormative behavior as "rights" we are doing ourselves, and others, a disservice. This will explore Linguistic, Cultural, Archeological, and Biological theory of Anthropology to advocate for cultural preservation.

WS 3: 9:30am in the Annex

### Lavender: Queer Leadership Retreat 6

#### Body Love w/ B/T Craig

Let's take some time to lovingly re-connect with ourselves and each other so we'll be rested and strong when we take on the world. First I will guide us in looking inward to connect with ourselves and notice our needs. Then we will have an opportunity to ask for and receive nurturing from each other to address those needs. After all, "If you can't love yourself, how the hell you gonna love somebody else." - RuPaul WS 3:

9:30am in the Living Room

QueerCircleDance: The Hula Hoop as Gateway into Healing  
through Intentional Movement and Creative Self-Expression  
w/ Benjamin Berry

Modern hoop dance has served many as a tool for achieving self-confidence, embodiment, empowerment, and mindfulness; a gateway into dance and a multigenerational source of play. It is familiar enough to evoke a willingness to try, yet mystifying enough to deeply resonate with colorful and eccentric people. In this session, participants will introduce themselves and discuss their experience with movement and the psychological "flow state," as well as its potential for healing and personal growth. Following this will be a brief beginner's lesson and guided play session with adult-sized hula hoops, allowing attendants to explore the benefits for themselves. The program will conclude with a closing circle where all can share their experience and brainstorm ideas for how to encourage more members of the queer community to explore movement and dance. WS 4: 11:15am in the Dining Hall

Skulking in the Shadows: The Realities of Being LGBTQ  
Around the Globe in a Pre- and Post-Trumpian World w/  
John David Dupree

Being gay in small-town U.S. in the 50s is very much what it's like to be LGBTQ in the developing world in the 21st Century. Coping with the legal/social/psychological impact of the near-universal rejection of LGBTQ affects people worldwide with a PTSD-like syndrome. The 76-78 countries (depending on which source one relies on) where being LGBTQ is still "criminal" currently provide for penalties ranging from prison time to execution (at certain points in history also including required neuro-consulsive therapy and/or castration of males). Before we can help our brothers and sisters in such repressive cultures, we may need to take stock of our

own internalized homophobia and an upcoming administration that has already begun demonizing us. This will begin with discussing any vestiges remaining of our own self-loathing. As time permits, we may

begin the discussion of how we might use that increased self-awareness to help others - at home and abroad - struggling with the same issues of self-esteem. If we don't think of ourselves as "worth saving", we're in no position to help anybody else. WS 4: 11:15am in the Annex

The "Why" of What We Do: Articulating the Impact of Your Work w/ Thor Young

A common challenge activists and leaders face when discussing their work, is finding a way to measure and articulate impact. Having the skills to identify and discuss impact enables a person to gain confidence and support of grant makers, donors, and decision makers in the world.

What do we mean when we say impact? In this session we will define it and work with participants to create a structure for discussing their work. WS 4: 11:15am in the Living Room