

IMAGEOUTTAKES

IMAGEOUT'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2021 / ISSUE 1



2020 Opening Night Little Theater popcorn pickup.



Archive Night aboard the Colonial Belle on the canal.



Closing Night at the ImageOut pop-up drive in at Village Gate Square.

Contact ImageOut:

Phone: 585-271-2640

Email: office@imageout.org

ImageOut Office: 274 North Goodman St.,
Suite A203, Rochester, NY 14607

**ImageOut's 29th Annual Film Festival
October 7-17, 2021**



Reflections On 2020

BY STEPHEN WEISENREDER // Chair, ImageOut Board Of Directors

Happy New Year ImageOut! Like everything else in 2020, ImageOut had to face new challenges and lots of uncertainty this past year. We spent the first few months of the year just like any other year: planning for the 2020 Festival and hosting in-person events. We crowded around the conference table in our office and gathered in each other's homes. We hosted a theater full of people for ImageOut Extra screenings of *Song Lang & And Then We Danced*. In early March, we crowded into Gallery Q for the opening of ImageOutArt's new exhibit, 20 Emerging. Two weeks later, everything changed.

Suddenly, we found ourselves looking for answers to a new set of questions. How do we deliver a world class film festival when we can't gather in movie theaters? How do we help Rochester's LGBTQ community stay connected at a time when so many people are feeling isolated? How can we do better in our response to discrimination and injustice in the world around us?

I'm proud of how we answered all of these questions. This past summer we pledged to be an active partner in the fight against racism, adopting a new anti-racist statement, which included several specific initiatives. We took the Festival online, delivering a full 40-film festival to your living rooms this October. Finally, we put together a bunch of virtual (and occasionally in-person) events to supplement the festival and to help us stay connected throughout the summer and fall. These included online film discussions; a drive-in presentation of *Ammonite*, starring Kate Winslet & Saoirse Ronan; and ReadOut!, a series of online readings of ImageOutWrite selections, read by the authors themselves. You can read more about our anti-racism work, ImageOutWrite and more in this newsletter.

2020 wasn't the year that we expected, but we innovated, found new ways to connect, and continued to tell the stories of LGBTQ people. Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, talents, and treasure to make 2020 a success.

ImageOutWrite Expanded Programming in 2020

BY BECKY WIGGINS // Editor, ImageOutWrite

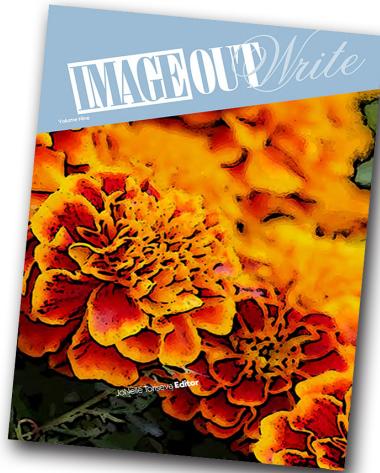
Thankfully, writers don't stop when adversity descends. They get to work.

Submissions for ImageOutWrite Volume 9 came pouring in during 2020, and the editing team developed innovative ways to manage and produce the volume remotely, and to create our first ever Ebook version of the journal.

Volume 9 is a vibrant collection of passionate and relevant LGBTQ stories and poems to inspire readers and bring the queer community together even in the midst of a pandemic. In addition to our print and electronic publications, this year ImageOutWrite also hosted four ReadOuts, livestreamed readings from authors previously published in the journal.

Hosted by the editors, and with great support from the board, we were able to provide 4 evenings of entertaining and thought-provoking literary arts. Participating authors, as well as viewers from around the world, found the experience to be moving, encouraging, and fun! We so appreciate our community's support in celebrating and sharing important and diverse LGBTQ voices.

Look for more ReadOuts in 2021, as well as our spring open call for Volume 10 submissions. With the energy and creativity this year required, we know that 2021 will be ImageOutWrite's best year yet!



Purchase the print version or download either a Mobi or EPUB file, depending on your preferred reading device at: <https://imageout-lgbt-film-festival.myshopify.com/>

An Update on ImageOut's Anti-Racism Work

BY JENNI WERNER // ImageOut Board Member

This past fall, ImageOut made a commitment to anti-racism. You can find the full statement on our website, at <http://www.imageout.org/framework.php>. We are joyfully committed to this work, and want to keep you updated. We acknowledge that our offices sit on the unceded and ancestral land of the Onondowaga, known in English as the Seneca people. We shared that acknowledgement on our festival site this fall, and will include in our website re-design (Want more information about land acknowledgements? Check out this blog post from Geva Theatre Center, with an expanded history and context: <https://gevajournal.wordpress.com/2020/10/14/whose-land-are-we-on/>).

ImageOut Board members have made personal donations to Rochester Black Pride, and we will be making an organizational donation in early 2021. We've created a board task force dedicated to examining our work through an anti-racist lens, and the board is scheduling anti-racism training in the coming months. We all look forward to investing this time in expanding our collective awareness, understanding, and evolving commitments. We welcome your feedback, and humbly ask that you hold us accountable as we continue to follow through on the commitments we have made. If you see ways that we can do better, please feel free to reach out to any board member.

Thank You for Your Feedback

BY MICHELE THORNTON // ImageOut Board Member

This year we had over 200 responses to our annual community feedback survey. A huge congratulations are in order for the survey drawing winner who will receive a full festival pass for this year's event! We appreciate all of your feedback and insight. Our board is just now beginning to digest everything you've shared with us. We are preparing to move forward with the planning phase for the 2021 festival, and your comments will help guide that process. Given that 2020 was such an unusual year – we are eager to digest all of the key takeaways. Look for a summary of our survey findings to be released later this Spring.

Special NYSCA Support for the 2020 Online Festival

BY PAUL ALLEN // ImageOut Board Member

Arts organizations across the world have struggled through the pandemic to remain connected with audiences and to continue to produce high quality and relevant programming. In our state, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) took an early leadership role in the Spring of 2020, creating The Forward Fund to specifically support the Electronic Media & Film portfolio, which includes ImageOut.

By reframing the pandemic as “a moment of opportunity to envision a more humane relationship with technology and the potential of public engagement online”, NYSCA officials assembled financial resources as well as peer-to-peer support networks to help organizations adapt to the dramatic changes required of them. ImageOut volunteers attended virtual meetings to learn from organizations across the state what strategies had

worked for them, while contributing our own success stories, such as the Read Out series featuring past ImageOut Write authors.

When the board decided in the late summer to go ‘all online’ for the 2020 Festival, underwriting support from the Forward Fund helped us pivot to the Eventive platform and connect our carefully curated films to as wide an audience as possible. Encouraged by the board, Programming Director, Michael Gamilla, committed to making the 2020 Festival equal in scope to past in-person festivals. We screened 27 narrative and 7 documentary feature films, 42 short films, as well as two web-series (an innovative format that would be actually be more difficult to screen in a theater setting). To connect filmmakers with our audience we produced 17 live and pre-recorded Q&As during the festival period, and hosted four open community

discussions. While ticket revenue was dramatically reduced in 2020, we were encouraged by the positive feedback from our patrons who did attend online, as well as by the much broader reach within and beyond our region that the online platform allowed.

We discovered, along with other Forward Fund organizations, that the biggest challenge for a volunteer-run organization in 2020 was the concentration of volunteer activity into fewer hands. Part of the magic of ImageOut is our fluid connection between patrons and our many volunteers, which was severely tested by social distancing requirements. Finding new ways for volunteers to meaningfully contribute to online program delivery is arguably the most important issue for the longer-term health of ImageOut coming out of 2020.

As we hopefully return to in-person screenings in 2021, we celebrate what was accomplished in 2020 despite the odds.

ImageOut is Accepting Board Member Applications

Do you love LGBTQ cinema, the ImageOut Festival, and are interested in getting more involved?

ImageOut is accepting Board Member applications for a 2 year appointment right now! We are excited to bring new energy to our work together for this community. If you are interested in applying, please email office@imageout.org for an application.

Volunteering With ImageOut

After a very challenging year we are looking forward to Festival 2021 - October 7-17. We can always find something for an eager volunteer to do, and we can use your specialized skills to help make our committees more effective.

The Publications/Web Committee is looking for volunteers who have experience with designing and programming responsive design websites. The Development Committee is looking for help with relationship management, fundraising, and grant writing. And the ImageOutWrite Committee is looking for team members with writing and editing skills.

Not Sure Where You Might Fit In?

You can see a complete listing with descriptions of the ImageOut committees as well as sign up online at www.imageout.org/volunteer.php or call the ImageOut office at 585-271-2640 to discuss which committee might be the best fit for you.



ImageOut Volunteers at the 2020 Spirit Room “Cocktails To Go” curbside pickup.

Top Ten Reasons to Become a Member in 2021

BY PAMELA DAYTON //
ImageOut Office Coordinator

1. You love movies.
2. The membership card – it's a wallet-sized love note from us to you.
3. You get to see your name on the big screen.
4. Early access to ticket sales and priority admission to in-person Festival films.
5. Free Tickets starting at the Gaffer Level – \$75/year or \$6.25/month.
6. Exclusive Marquee Society Event Invitations starting at the Celebrity Level – \$250/year or \$21/month.
7. ImageOutWrite – we publish a world class literary journal featuring LGBTQ authors from around the world.
8. Representation Matters – our Festival focuses on our stories.
9. You believe in our mission: to present LGBT arts and cultural experiences showcasing films, other creative works and artists to promote awareness, foster dialogue and build community.
10. You value investing in a local LGBT organization that is fiscally responsible, has transparent operations, and prioritizes antiracism in the office, the boardroom, and on the screen.

To renew or begin your membership, contact the ImageOut Office today. We are able to set up installment plans that work for you. Please reach out with questions or special requests at office@imageout.org or 585-271-2640. Our heartfelt gratitude to you as you invest and support ImageOut and strengthen our LGBTQ community.

MEMBERSHIP BY MAIL

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL _____ AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

My check, payable to ImageOut, is enclosed.

or

Please charge my membership to my credit card:

VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER

NAME ON CARD _____

CARD NUMBER _____ CSC CODE _____ EXP DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

You have my/our permission to publish my name as an ImageOut member in all ImageOut media.

I prefer my/our membership to remain anonymous.

Please contact me, I would like to pay for my membership in installments.



ImageOut Board Members and Volunteers at the 2020 Member Box Lunch Pick-Up at The Little.

Residential New and Old Work Specialists

Serving the Rochester Community for over 25 years

Ellenwood  **ELECTRIC**

“We Do It Without Shorts”

654-8642

Licensed • Fully Insured • Free Quotes