

Welcome to your toolkit for a Femme Day of Action!

This is also available online here: <http://www.heelsonwheelsroadshow.com/toolkit/>

This was developed in collaboration with the Beyond Visibility NYC event Organizers, so some of it will be specific to the events happening there. Please feel welcome to change, add, modify and do what works in your town! Also, we made all the links "not hot" so you can access the URLs most easily. ;)

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1. Call to Celebrate, Illuminate, & Instigate Femmes: Jan 15-21, 2012!

January 15 - 21, 2012 femmes across the lands are invited to create and participate in local events during a Femme Week of Action!

The purpose of this Call to Action is to invite self-defined queer folks on femme/inine spectrums to get together to share and generate ideas and information about their work [femme-related and otherwise]; to spark conversations, build alliances, celebrate each other, have fun -- and instigate the January launch of the Calls for Performers and Workshop Proposals for the 2012 Femme Conference [femme2012.com], taking place in Baltimore Aug 17-19, 2012.

There is a Femme Week of Action toolkit available here [<http://www.heelsonwheelsroadshow.com/toolkit/>] with tons of topics, ideas, vision, and event suggestions.

You're invited to create event[s] that suit the many communities of femmes and femme/inine spectrum folks in your city/town/etc., that allow groups to talk to each other, ask to ally with each other, celebrate and share with each other. The organizers in NYC offer our work for inspiration, and encourage each community to adjust as needed. This toolkit is intended to help make your organizing easier, and not to restrict your ideas or needs. If something else works better -- do it!

Events are already in the works:

- January 15, 2012 - NYC
- January 20, 2012 - SF

Planning an event? Announce it on the Femme Collective Facebook page [<http://www.facebook.com/groups/femmeconference/>] and/or email us at femmecollectivemedia@gmail.com -- we'll let folks on our email list and facebook know about your event via announcements in early and mid January; and we're working on setting up pages to host *your* livestreaming!!!

Not going to a January event and want to support the Femme 2012 Conference? Attend in August, submit proposals, help your friends/allies get to the conference, or donate! We're all-volunteer and every \$ helps:

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=R6QFUT7EWJDAU

This toolkit is a product of collaboration between the Femme Conference, the Heels on Wheels Glitter Roadshow, and a dozen of the Beyond Visibility NYC event organizers.

VISION

Beyond Visibility: Illuminating and Aligning Femmes in NYC will be a day-long event for queer folks on a self-identified femme/inine spectrum to come together in conversation, coalition, and celebration of *all* the parts of ourselves and our many communities. We aim to illuminate the cultural, political and artistic work of all participating individuals and groups; to create and hold space to ally with and learn from each other; and discuss ways to align organizing to ensure that femme communities grow as generative, intersectional sites of gender justice.

SAMPLE TITLES

- Beyond Visibility: Illuminating and Aligning Femmes [NYC is using this]
- Beyond Visibility: Celebrating Queer Femme/inine Folks
- Queer Visible: Illuminating and Aligning Femme Work in [your city name]
- Femme Coalition: Illuminating and Aligning Political, Cultural and Art Works by Femmes in [your city name]
- Illuminating Femme: Celebrating and Aligning Work by Queer Femmes in [your city name]
- Day of Femme Coalition: Celebrating, Illuminating and Aligning Queer Femme/inine Folks

3. EVENT IDEAS

- Skillshare
- Potluck
- House Party
- Theme Party

- Dance Party
- Dance Performance
- Roundtable Discussion
- Teach-In
- Femme Icons Party
- Salon-Artistic or otherwise, hosted in someone home or community space
- Book Club Night
- Movie Night/Film Screening
- Music Night-Punk Show, HipHop, Jazz, Funk, Acoustic, Folk-whatever your pleasure!
- Literary Event-Reading, Poetry, Spoken Word, MCs, Open Mic
- Multi-Media Performance Art Extravaganza!
- Gallery Show, Home-Made Gallery Show at your friend's house
- Garden Party, BBQ (if you live someplace warm!)
- Craft Night
- DIY Spa Night-make your own masks and scrubs!
- Slumber Party
- Sex Party

Additional Ideas to create an awesome event!:

- - Partner with local groups/organizations
- - Use social media, such as fb, etc.
- - Make announcements at other events
- - Find out what groups have weekly or monthly newsletters
- - Have a goal to make the spaces accessible to people based on size, age, and ability...
- - Invite people you don't know to participate
- -- safer-spaces team
- -- photo shoot/booth!
- -- zine-making table
- -- literature table
- -- documentation station [blog, video]
- -- including livestreaming! (can be shared via Femme Conference website)
- -- handbag swap
- -- skill salon: cat eye eyeliner, tiny nail art, fixing things...
- -- snacks/brunch

Sample Schedule for the Day [NYC's event]:

12-2p – Skillshare Snack Salon!

Show off your skills! Bring some delicious snacks and learn about changing a bike tire, tiny nail art, create Intersectionality Mural, and much more!

2:30-4 -- Roundtable Discussion

Participate in a co-facilitated community “temperature check” where we reflect on the resources we have and create action for moving forward.

4-5p -- Break-Out Groups

Continue engaging in self-selected smaller groups based on topics such as Safety, Pride & Shame, Truth-telling, Health and others TBA.

5-6:30p Dinner Break

Grab some food or bring your own and visit the documentation table for zine making, photo shoots, and blogging!

7p -- Literary Event & Open Mic

Join us for an incredible line-up of performers in an all-ages, sober-friendly space.

10p -- Cabaret & Dance Party

Celebrate gender justice with a wild revue of femme/inine performers and DJs as we dance the night away!

4. Outreach & Sample Invitation Email

INVITING THE HOST/ESS COMMITTEE

SUBJ: {name} I want your input & talents for Femme event in January

I'm writing to request your input, ideas, and hopefully leadership and participation in a one-day femme event [DATE], 2012. The vision is to instigate one day of coalition-building conversation and action across the globe that is femme-led, intersectional, and local-issue driven. For [YOUR CITY], we're thinking of including [YOUR IDEAS]. We are partnering with the Femme Conference to co-promote their upcoming call for submissions, and plan partnership with other organizations as well.

We invite you to get involved on a level that works for you: this could be as an organizer (curating the events, attend two meetings), assisting with promotion (blog/fb and emailing), suggesting discussion topics/workshop facilitators/performers, or as a participant at the event. We also invite you to forward this invitation to other folks on the femme spectrum (this is broad and self-defined) who you think may be interested.

The rest of this email is longish, and contains further details, event ideas, and descriptions of roles, if you're interested in being part of the organizing. Please reply by [DATE] if you would like to be involved -- our first meeting is on [DATE] (we know it's the "holidays" so if you are interested but can't attend please get in touch.)

Can I have permission to be an ally to you, and what is your interest level? Looking forward to working with you!

[NAME]

We then included information under the following subheadings:

VISION FOR EVENT

LOGISTICS
ASKS FOR YOU
YOUR POSSIBLE ROLES
IDEAS SO FAR

PEOPLE TO OUTREACH TO

Individuals
Organizations [nonprofs, arts orgs, activist groups]
Performers / Performance events
Facilitators
Host/esses

5. A FEW DISCUSSION TOPICS AND IDEAS

NYC is having a discussion as part of our event, and creating an intentional safer-space to bring up issues. This is part of the brainstorming from the NYC Group of topics people said they wanted. Feel free to use this as inspiration, we are very excited to see what comes up in your communities!:

STRUCTURE IDEAS

- Idea: Begin with "Community Audit/Temperature Check"-Technique where facilitator asks, What do we have?, What do we want to build for?, How do we prioritize our organizing work?-People liked this because it is a way to reflect on resources, as well as create action for moving forward, and takes into account many of us are already organizing in some way.
- People wanted an event that highlights and celebrates the work femmes are already doing-bc we do SO much, and brings people together
- Goal for coalition building
- An event that is positive & celebratory w/out ignoring issues that need to be dealt with
- A focus on intersectionality: class, race, gender, sexuality, size, ability...

TOPICS

- Femme sex workers
- Intentional space for talking about size, fatness, body loving, and fashion,
- Intentional space to talk about race/racism,
- Intentional space to talk about healthy relationships
- Femme/Femme partnerships and navigating them accordingly
- Trans femme identities on the queer spectrum and dismantling the narrative attached
- Trans femme social exclusion from queer and femme spaces(ie feeling uninvolved, resented or tokenized for being trans and identifying as femme)
- Exploration of butch/femme relationship-see some thoughtful conversation around this
- How do you put together a proposal? i.e. for the femme conference
- something around being a "lazy femme".
- "femmes and sex" like about topping and bottoming and blow jobs, still think this is an area of misconceptions so maybe good to explode those.

- talk about partnering with people who are/have transitioned
- health and wellness, include physical and mental-how do we take care of ourselves and each other?
- femmes and aging
- bringing some of the transnational FOC online conversations into a face-to-face discussion
- a conscious refutation of society's compulsory notions of femme competition and the cultural expression/exploitation of femme vs. femme (i.e. cattiness, "frenemies", etc). I feel like the very real idea that there is cultural pressure for femmes to compete for romantic attention (even in queer culture) gets ignored/denied all too easily.
- mentoring, an important idea that encapsulates a lot of ideas including connections across generational lines and how to ally
- Include "gratitude circle" at some point, as a way to appreciate each other

BREAK OUT GROUP IDEAS: "Pride & Shame," "Safety," "Truth-Telling," etc.

These ideas came out of a discussion about typical break out groups on "Class," "Race," "Size," "Ability" etc. as counter-productive to the reality of intersectionality many of us experience.

People talked about not wanting to segment yourself while pretending to talk about intersectionality. People felt these topics break from traditionally negative constructs, and hold the space that identities build and generate. People also expressed-if these sorts of topics are chosen-it would be necessary to present them with intentional language around the ideas that we're not asking you to choose btw race/class/size/ability, but asking you to include consciousness about all of these, bring multiple identities to each of these conversations, and it's not an effort at erasure, but really honoring that we carry our differences.

Visual Representation around Intersectionality

- -First time you realized you were femme-place to write about this or create a visual representation
- -other visual arts in the spaces?
- -A visual representation of people's multiple communities created on the day of

6. Funds & Fundraising

Support Femmes! Turn your Femme Call to Action event into a fundraiser for the Conference or for folks in your community to attend!

It takes early donations from femmes and allies like you to make the Femme Conference happen. Asking attendees of your local Femme Call to Action event to make a donation to the conference is a great way to support femme and queer communities by making the Femme Conference a reality! No event (or donation!) is too small!

Donations should be collected by the event organizer(s) and sent with contact information to conference co-chair, Jen Valles / 5545 N. Glenwood, Apt. 3, Chicago, IL 60640. All checks must be made out to Femme Conference LLC.

Unfortunately, donations to the Femme Conference are currently not tax-deductible. We are

always in search of fiscal sponsors that would change this for our generous donors. If you have suggestions for potential sponsors or have questions about organizing donations, please contact fundraising@femme2012.com

Not having an event, but still want to support the Femme Conference? Great! We're thrilled to have your support! Please visit our PayPal page now to process your donation online. It's as easy as a few clicks of your mouse! [ADD LINK]

What else can I do with the money we raise?

While the Femme Conference relies largely on its community and network to meet our financial needs, we also acknowledge that some femmes and allies need their immediate community's support to be able to access the conference. Alternatives to fundraising for the conference include starting a registration or travel fund! Help femme folks in your town make the registration fee for the conference or help cover their travel costs to Baltimore! You might even consider donating unused air miles for folks who will be flying into Baltimore.

The Femme Conference also provides financial aid and scholarships to individuals faced with financial limitations or who belong to communities with experience of systemic marginalization. For more information on these programs, please visit our website in January when details will be available.

7. Thanks

This toolkit is a product of collaboration between the Femme 2012 Conference, the Heels on Wheels Glitter Roadshow [heelsonwheelsroadshow.com], and a dozen of the Beyond Visibility NYC event organizers. Special thanks to Heather Ács for her work on this!

8. Contact

Femme Conference: femmeconferencemedia@gmail.com

NYC Event/Heels on Wheels: heelsonwheelsroadshow@gmail.com