

If you would like to co-sign our open letter to show solidarity with Palestine and the Kinship Market, please email us with your name and any good faith comments at: KinshipMarket@gmail.com

tânisi • Xin chào • Hello Saskatoon Community,

We write to you in response to recent events where the Kinship Market: “Cheers for Queers” Pop Up had changed venues and why we made this decision.

Kinship Market is a collaboration of artists and makers living in Treaty Six Territory. We host pop-up markets that enable economic resilience for historically under-represented peoples. We are *intentionally anti-oppressive* and showcase marginalized artists, promote mutual aid, and foster community care through meaningful actions. This includes wearing masks to protect vulnerable community members and their families, and prioritizing IBPOC, queer vendors, and vendors with disabilities.

Our previous venue, managed by Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS), insisted we retract our pro-Palestinian and anti-genocide stance to keep our event in their space. SODS staff asked us to remove an Instagram post dated April 25th, 2024, which states, “NOT GAY AS IN HAPPY, BUT QUEER AS IN FREE PALESTINE,” and create a new post stating “the event is open to all and everyone is welcome,” including “community members who identify with Zionism,” as our initial post may “potentially cause discomfort.” These statements were made to us by the SODS Director and frontline worker we were in contact with.

Kinship Market disagrees with the conflation of anti-Zionism with anti-Judaism (as do many scholars, activists, and members of Jewish communities worldwide), and we have always emphasized both publicly and privately that Jewish people are wholeheartedly welcome at all our events. Israel is not representative of all Jewish people, just as Zionism is not representative of all Jewish people.

As Two Spirit Plains Cree and Queer Vietnamese members of this community, we chose the name “Kinship Market” to reflect our belief that we are all part of a larger kinship network, which includes both Palestinian and Jewish peoples. **In that spirit, oppressive ideologies and genocidal rhetoric associated with zionism are not welcome.** It is disheartening that the SODS Board of Directors and CEO do not agree with these values, despite referencing them in their own policies and value statements.

We requested direct communication from the SODS Board of Directors and CEO regarding their concerns, which had been made during a telephone call. The Kinship Market team then convened for over two hours to draft a request seeking specific details and evidence related to the potential cancellation of our rental agreement. However, before we could formally submit our request, we received an email stating their support for individuals who “identify with Zionism”, implying our pro-Palestinian and anti-genocidal stance does not “align with Saskatoon Open Door Society’s inclusive values.”

Despite our long-held relationship with SODS, they have decided to back Zionist accusations of non-inclusivity, which made the event space legitimately unsafe for our pro-Palestinian

community. As a direct response to their Zionist stance, we requested a full refund and cancellation of the rental, which they agreed to. While we ask for our community's support, we do not encourage people to contact SODS or WBH frontline staff, as they do not have a say in this matter. **We share this message to show our community that it is possible to persevere and uphold our values despite obstacles, and we hope our actions demonstrate what each of us is capable of doing.**

This response by SODS reflects an ugly truth: safe spaces for marginalized peoples are expected to be compromised for the feelings and ideologies of oppressors. We believe that we need to rally our support for Palestine and Palestinian peoples, and we encourage everyone to do the same. For the past 75 years, the colonizer state of Israel has perpetrated settler violence, resulting in mass displacement, apartheid, ethnic cleansing, arbitrary detainment, and other well-documented human rights abuses.

We invite SODS and other organizations that claim inclusivity to consider who you serve. Who are you protecting and appeasing in your 'inclusive' spaces? We understand that taking a stance may "potentially cause discomfort", but it is the responsibility of communities to hold each other accountable.

To our community: we thank you for your steadfast support. Now more than ever, we ask that you show up for our vendors and event on June 29th. We understand that making such a statement may impact those we hoped to uplift. We humbly express gratitude to every vendor who has chosen to join our event, bringing their unique spirit, and to all who continue to walk with us toward our mission for a better way forward.

We call upon our greater community of support to visit us in person, share this message of solidarity with Palestine, and continue caring for each other by standing up against injustices in your own life and in the world, even when it feels scary. There is power in our collective voices.

To those who often feel unheard and unseen in the world—whether Palestinian, Jewish, Indigenous, Queer, Neurodivergent, or anyone in search of belonging—we see you, we stand with you, and we extend a heartfelt welcome to our pop-ups to find community and like-minded people. Kinship Market will continue to establish a safe and supported space for marginalized individuals, affirming our commitment to anti-oppressive practices. The *Cheers for Queers* pop-up will be at White Buffalo Youth Lodge (located at 602 20th St W, Saskatoon, SK) Saturday June 29th from 11 AM to 6 PM.

We look forward to visiting and being in community with you all.

têniki • Cám ơn • Thank you

The Kinship Market Collective:

-Diane L, Organizer

-Honey C, Organizer

-Teri R, Community Partner

-Shalen P, Community Partner

-Vada B, Community Partner

-Ashely M, Vendor

-Tea L, Vendor:

“As a student who studied Judaism in my undergrad and masters, there was one thing that stood out to me, which was the spelling of "anti-Semitism." I was taught that it's more appropriate to use "antisemitism" since the hyphen emphasizes a shared "Semitic" language/race, which doesn't exist. For more context, I found this quote on the Jewish Virtual Library:

"The [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/anti-semitism-or-antisemitism) expressed a similar concern “that the hyphenated spelling allows for the possibility of something called ‘Semitism,’ which not only legitimizes a form of pseudo-scientific racial classification that was thoroughly discredited by association with [Nazi](#) ideology, but also divides the term, stripping it from its meaning of opposition and hatred toward Jews.” The IHRA also noted that “in German, French, Spanish and many other languages, the term was never hyphenated.”

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/anti-semitism-or-antisemitism>

-Moe P, Vendor

-Heidi F, Vendor

-Lindsea H, Vendor

-Avni G, Vendor

-Alexandra L, Vendor

-Nicole B, Vendor

-Amber U, Vendor

-Katelyn H, Vendor

-Samantha M, Vendor

-Malia R., Vendor.

“Zionism is racist and genocidal. As someone who advocates for anti-oppression, pairing all Jewish people with the word “zionist” is antisemitic. Not all zionists are Jewish and not all Jewish people are zionists. However, all zionists support ethnic cleansing and genocide, which poses an even greater threat to the public than saying we want a safe space away from zionists.”

-Mai S, Vendor:

“It is our responsibility as human beings to care for one another, and yet through white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism - we’ve willfully forgotten that. What is happening to the Palestinian people is a genocide at the hands of Israel, and if that statement upsets you, I implore you to put your pride aside and genuinely educate yourself on the matter. Gaza, An Inquest Into Its Martyrdom by Norman G. Finkelstein (University of California Press, 2018) is a great place to start.”

-Ruby S, Community Member:

“To demand that an anti-oppressive network of people allow Zionists at their event is to demonstrate a decidedly ignorant take on what Zionism really is: racist, violent, and destructive. As we’ve seen time and again, Zionists not only represent danger for Palestinians but for anyone who dares to question them or stand up against them. By including Zionists in your spaces you are alienating and making unsafe a large part of your community. Free Palestine.”

- Kelsi B, Community Member
- Liliane G, Community Member
- Cristelle B, Community Member
- Esther R, Community Member
- Allyson R, Community Member
- Samantha W, Community Member
- Cleo N, Community Member
- Erica H, Community Member
- Laura C, Community Member
- Lindsay S, Community Member
- Michelle T, Community Member and Volunteer
- Sydney T, Community Member
- Eden P, Community Member
- Darla R, Community Member
- Jessie S, Community Member
- Kirsten S, Community Member
- Nicole H, Community Member
- Stephanie L, Community Member

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