

pronounced "zeen"

ZINE (n):

A zine is a self-published, non-commercial print-work that is typically produced in small, limited batches. Zines are created and bound in many DIY ways, but traditionally editions are easily reproduced—often by crafting an original “master flat,” and then photocopying, folding, and stapling the pages into simple pamphlets. Zines may also be sewn, taped, glued—or even exist in unbound and other non-folio formats. The main rule is that there are no rules!

People who create zines [“zinesters”] are likely to be more motivated by self-expression and artistic passion than they are by profit: zines are usually inexpensive and sometimes distributed for free or in trade for other zines, goods, and services.

Zines can touch on a variety of topics from music and art, to politics, sexuality, humor and personal memoir. Their content may be written, drawn, printed, collaged, or any other form of combining words and imagery—a zine’s structure may be narrative, journalistic, comic-like, or completely abstract.

Why zines matter:

Culturally and historically, zines have served as a powerful outlet for content considered to be too niche, risqué, or outside of the mainstream, in terms of more traditional/commercial forms of publication. A zine can be produced with the simplest of tools, and easily distributed low-to-the ground, outside capitalistic or potentially oppressive systems: amongst friends; in local gathering places or homes; at fests designed to celebrate them!

Essentially, zines can be a little hard to define—but that’s what makes them great: they’re a glorious mash-up of art, letters, story and emotion; just like the brains, hands and hearts of those who produce them. Their small, simple format belies their unique ability to speak creatively [and loudly] for even the softest voices. (And ain’t that worth celebrating.)