

A (**POETRY**) Zine  
A (**THREAD**) Zine  
A (**MODEST**) Zine  
A (**ISOLATION**) Zine  
A (**ISSUE-TWO**) Zine  
A (**LIZ**) Zine  
A (**WITT**) Zine  
A (**SEAN**) Zine  
A (**WEST**) Zine  
A (**BRISBANE**) Zine

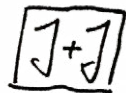
A () Zine, issue two, featuring art by Liz Witt  
and words by Sean West, put together by Jerath  
Head & Jonathan O'Brien, and published by  
pseudonaja.group.

**W**hen we first sat down with the idea to make a zine during quarantine, the whole country was in roughly the same boat. Quarantine meant staying home, and we figured staying home meant we'd all be missing each other, and we'd all be looking for things to do. And then we thought—just because we can't see people doesn't mean we can't make something together.

We reached out to some of our favourite Brisbane creatives, who are also some of our favourite people. We said—we don't have any money or particularly coherent ideas, but it'd sure be nice to work with you and put some of your work in front of the public during this time, and to maybe pair you up with someone else to make something that is each of you, and also its own thing, and also uniquely Brisbane.

As it turned out, the coronavirus lockdown meant different things to different people. In Queensland we were fortunate, many of the people involved in this zine particularly so—some found themselves busier than they thought they would, and others ended up busier than when lockdown began.

So this zine became a slow process. This was almost exclusively our fault. But everyone was patient, and didn't complain, and gave freely of their time and energy. Sean and Liz are both deep feelers and attentive artists, and it shows in how their works come together here. Each one hints at stories beyond the page, outside the frame—the greater narratives of worlds we can only glance. So look, and enjoy this parenthetical zine, this quaranzine, this two-of-eight zine. We enjoyed making it.



### **Porch Light**

*for Matt | inspired by a Shaun Tan short story*

Most nights we still leave  
the porch light on for you,  
to draw you home

in the middle of the night  
—some summer while we're all  
asleep upstairs. You'll leave

oily footprints on Mum's nice  
carpet, dive straight for left  
-overs in stuffed belly

of the fridge: beer-battered  
fish and starchy chips, one  
last slice of half-crushed

lemon and wet scabs of tartare  
sauce. You'll pick at the brown paper  
bag like a gull, pull apart calamari

rings as you sink to kitchen tiles  
behind counter. Maybe you won't care  
to nuke it in our microwave, leave

salt wherever your hands roam, clog  
sink with volcanic black sand, shed  
rusty fish hooks like lemon seeds

in our key bowl. I hear them rattle  
like bone chimes sometimes. Please  
don't forget to switch off the light

when you flutter up to the spare  
room. We wouldn't want to leave  
anybody else waiting.

*Acts of Service*  
Embroidery  
11 x 11cm





### Wish Chip

It was in your half-hearted treehouse  
where you taught me what a wish

chip was and how to make sure  
your wish always comes true. We gutted

silver packets of thin-cut chips inside  
out, dug for ones curled over

on themselves. These are special  
ones, you said. Why? I asked as I held

a fat one flat on my palm  
It's funny-looking, isn't it? Like a happy

accident, you said. You'll know when  
you bite down and hear that magic crunch

It will rattle in your skull as your wish  
comes true and dissolves on your tongue

You told me the key is to not let it touch  
the sides of your mouth when you tuck

it in past your teeth. If it does, your wish  
dies like an insect in your throat and will never

come true. Placed one on my tongue  
and listened for the magic. I can't tell

you what I wished for but I can still  
hear it caught dead in my throat.

*Words of Affirmation*  
Embroidery  
24 x 24cm





**Bottom Feeder**

*Wynnum-Manly Esplanade*

Do you remember his face  
like a fish hook snagged  
on a pinky? We couldn't blink

at him, the pufferfish who oozed  
poison onto her kitchen apron  
at every Christmas gathering

His metallic breath against  
her cheek, sharp as an oyster  
sliced into your foot on the jetty

Do you remember how he filled  
his belly with all the best seafood  
at every family reunion?

How we'd frown at his greedy  
guts guzzling brown prawn  
heads like a gull? We prayed

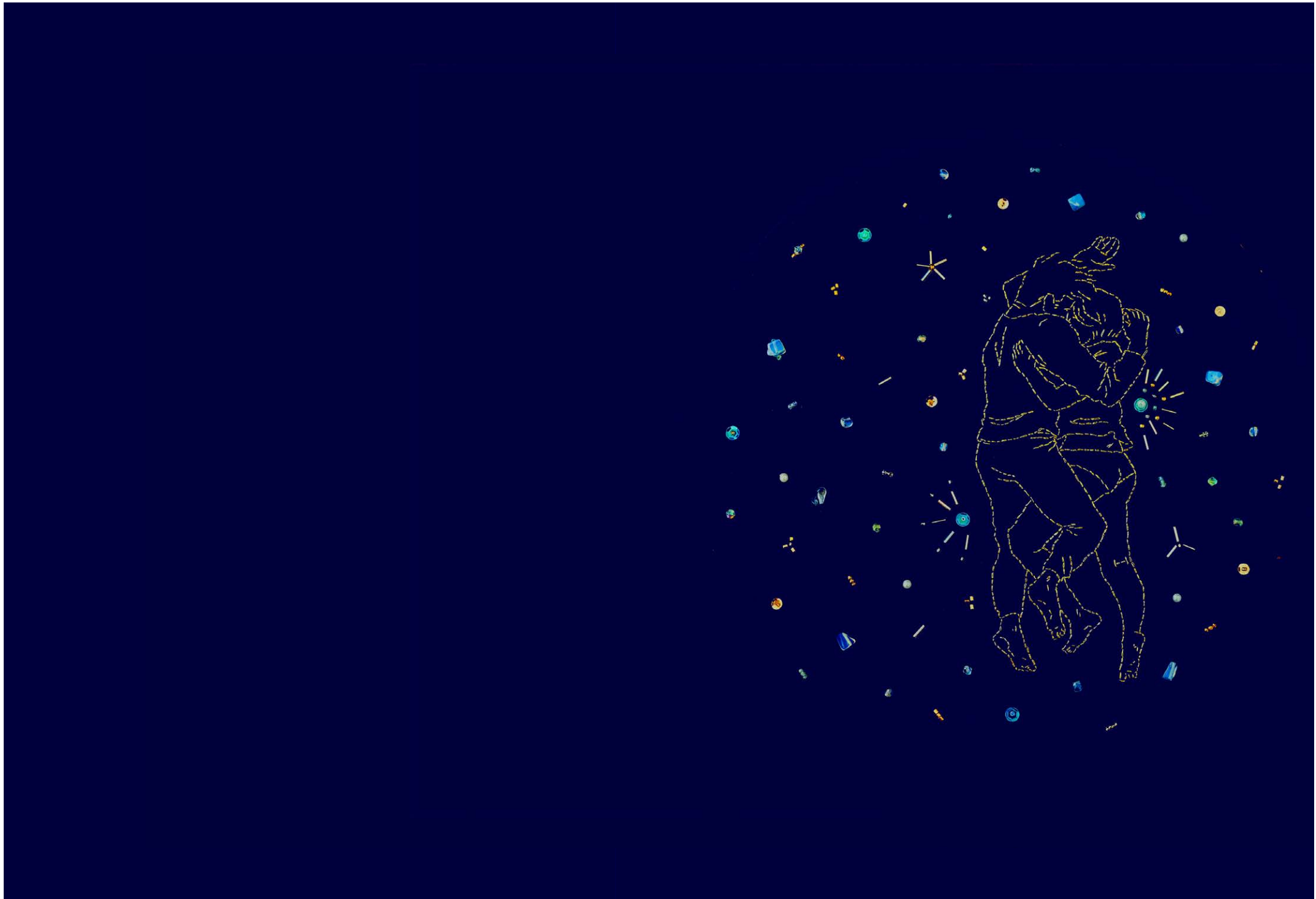
for him to slither back down  
to the ocean floor, trade places  
with a man who didn't binge

all the best seafood, who lugged  
it home in a bucket, split it open  
and shared it with his family

whose face was not a fish hook  
but an open palm.

*Quality Time*  
Embroidery  
24 x 24cm

*Physical Touch*  
Embroidery  
24 x 24cm  
(over the page)





( a p s e u d o n a j a p r o j e c t )

**E**lizabeth Witt is most certainly not three raccoons in a trench coat. Her series “Some Sparkling Feeling” is a reflection of the evolution of intimacy during the lockdown. When she is not working as a storyboard artist she enjoys mentally drafting the pulp romance novel she’ll never actually get around to writing, and singing to her pet turtle. Liz is available for commission and her full portfolio can be found at [witte.xyz](http://witte.xyz).

**S**ean West is a Meanjin-based poet, arts producer and workshop facilitator. He has been shortlisted for the 2020 and 2019 Thomas Shapcott Poetry Prize. His work appears or is forthcoming with *Red Room Poetry*, *Antithesis Journal*, *Authora Australis* and *Bareknuckle Poet*. He also interns for Ruckus Slam Brisbane and is the founding editor of *Blue Bottle Journal*. Find more of him and his work at [www.callmemariah.com](http://www.callmemariah.com) or check out BB at [www.bluebottlejournal.com](http://www.bluebottlejournal.com).

**P**seudonaja is a small independent literary group based in Brisbane. A () Zine is their first project. More details, including financial breakdowns and digital versions of this publication, can be found online at [pseudonaja.group](http://pseudonaja.group). You can reach out to the collective at [pseudonaja.group@gmail.com](mailto:pseudonaja.group@gmail.com).

The traditional owners of the lands on which Brisbane sits—and where this zine was made—are the Yugara and Turrbal people, and their sovereignty was never ceded.



**AND LISTENED  
FOR THE MAGIC.**

*pseudonaja.group*