

# Euphoria

by Josephine Baird, Sarah Lynne Bowman, and Kaya Toft Thejls



Euphoria is a nightclub that exists in its own pocket of reality.

One evening, you might come across its entrance in a quiet side-street. Maybe this time it manifests as a simple doorway opening warmly, yet subtly, from a wall you feel sure was vacant just moments ago.

As you walk inside, the “real” world slips off like an ill-fitting overcoat unfastened, and landing in a heap on the passed threshold. Inside you find a venue of sparkling delights and above all diversity of being.

Within the bounds of Euphoria you can explore, embody and express – perhaps in ways you couldn’t anywhere else...

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Euphoria is a nightclub in a pocket reality specially designed for gender exploration, expression, play and performance. Players can choose to enact characters similar or different to themselves -- characters who will be exploring different forms of gender expression in the temporary liminal

space of Euphoria. Players are welcome to share personal stories through the alibi of the character or invent entirely new ones.

This larp encourages performances of various types for the enjoyment of the group. Players are not required to perform, but are encouraged to express themselves in ways that feel comfortable. Players will be invited to bring and share items of clothing for others to wear, and to don new raiments and makeup during their time at Euphoria. They are especially encouraged to adorn themselves with clothes and accessories they would not normally wear.

Players may take photos of themselves, record audio clips, or write short texts throughout the larp, which they may share with the group if desired. They may not record others without their permission. The larp will feature bright lights, loud music, and potentially unorthodox behavior.

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**Note:** The designers have created this larp as part of a research project at Uppsala University on the use of role-playing for gender exploration and expression. For early runs of this larp, players will be invited to take part in a research study after the larp. Participation in the study is not required to play this larp.

**Number of players:** 8-20

**Time:** 4 hours

**Themes:** gender, expression, euphoria

**Facilitators:** At least two

## Facilitation Instructions

### Preparation Phase (pre-prep + approx. 1 hr on site)

**Note:** Can occur during the workshop, if time constrained.

#### **Necessary Items:**

Discord channel

Lights for ambiance

Microphone + speaker for microphone (and cables as needed)

Device with speakers to play music (and cables as needed)

Playlist on YouTube or Spotify (see songs below)

Name tag holders: can tape or plastic holder with pin or lanyard

Tape for printouts

Pens (at least 20 - preferable 50+ and different colours)

Paper

Face wipes for removing facepaint/makeup

Chairs for workshop/debrief (at least the possibility to get them for people who need them)

For the Muses:

Pens and paper (all but movement and song)

Clothes and accessories - especially hats, scarves, ties etc. (Muse of song)

Facepaint (Muse of spirituality)

Print-outs (see further down)

Script x 2 for facilitators

Names x 1

Prompts for connection phase x 4 (in A3 if possible)

Instructions + artwork for Muse's stations x1 (in A3 if possible/feasible with the space)

Character creation form x number of players + 2

QR code for discord x number of players + 2

Euphoria member certificate x number of players + 2

**Recommended Items:**

Painter's tape for sectioning space

Tables for each station

Window coverings (if the locations have windows that let in lots of daylight)

Projector to project the Discord on a wall

If you know how to use it: mixing desk, additional mic, monitor (for better sound)

9 differently coloured table cloths for stations

Costume for Mistris of Ceremonies and Siren of Songs (facilitator characters)

For the Muses:

Makeup, brushes, small mirrors etc. (Muse of spirituality)

Pillows/soft seating (Muse of Intimacy, Muse of Tragedy)

Moveable Curtain areas, screens, or tents for private Zones (Muse of Intimacy, Muse of Tragedy)

Yarn, fabric, scissors (Muse of History)

Objects for making adornments (Muse of Fantasy)

**What to do before the larp:**

Can/should be done well in advance:

1. Before the larp if possible, send out Instructions Email (see below)
2. Review the layout map.
3. Cut out the name cards from the table further down in this document. Players will choose names by taking one of the cards. Cut some blank cards as well.

4. Create a Discord server for the larp (see <https://youtu.be/b4dX9oYh-Co> as a guide on how to set up a Discord server).

Right before the larp:

1. Arrange the stations with necessary objects. If possible, color code the stations with different tablecloths. Each station should have printouts of the art and large descriptions of forms of expression for each Muse, as well as the materials needed for the stations activities (see need to have and nice to have lists above).
2. Cover windows as needed.
3. Hang up connection prompts (see printout at the end of the document) around the room.
4. Curtain off or provide tents for Haven's Zone and Phoenix' Zone (in addition to their stations).
5. Set up Siren of Song's station, preferably with loud speakers and a computer to play music.
6. Set up microphone/s with a speaker/s to be used on/near the stage.
7. Set up lights around the room for ambiance. Lights will be lower during the larp like a night-club space, but make sure players can see the signs.
8. Make sure Discord is open on Siren of Song's station. If possible, project Discord onto the wall opposite the stage (Threshold area).

**Instruction Email (send at least one week before the larp):**

Hello and thank you for signing up for Euphoria! In this larp, we will be exploring gender and expressing ourselves through various modes of expression, including singing, writing, giving speeches, telling stories, sharing secrets, etc. We will also be trying on different accessories and/or makeup face paint during the larp.

You have the option of sharing photos, audio files, videos, and pictures on our private Discord channel, which is confidential between members of this run of the larp. We recommend joining the Discord now to prepare for the larp. We also recommend keeping your phone charged to make sure you can use it throughout the larp for uploading purposes. Here is the link to the Discord:

*Insert link for the Discord server you've created for your run of the larp.*

Please be aware that this larp will feature music, applause, and potentially other loud noises. It will also feature low lighting. Players will be invited to sing, cheer, dance, and move their bodies around the room. Movement accommodations are possible if needed. Our goal is for you to express yourselves through your characters, whatever that looks like for you.

You will have the opportunity to opt out of any larp activities. This larp will not feature explicit sexuality, nudity, violence, or escalating conflict, although characters may express themselves regarding these topics in certain areas of the larp, e.g. sharing a story, etc.

We encourage you to bring clothes and accessories that you would be comfortable to wear, share, and/or trade. If you have something you wish to wear or makeup that takes a while to put on, please come to the larp with it already on, as we do not have much time for breaks.

Feel free to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

We look forward to joining you in Euphoria!

-- [Names of facilitators]

## Facilitator Characters

### **The Mistrix of Ceremonies:**

A guiding star but not a prescriptive one, the Mistrix of Ceremonies holds the space for the members of Euphoria to be brave, vulnerable, joyous, and curious. The Mistrix facilitates the phases of the event, being practically minded of logistics and space, working in tandem with the Siren of Songs to create the environment but also the culture of Euphoria. They welcome, connect with and assist members to Euphoria, guiding them through the club in order to facilitate their exploration and expressions. The Mistrix takes whatever shape they wish, but they are always unerringly kind and encouraging. The Mistrix enjoys a joke, but is also always sincere, in their comedy and empathy. They are flamboyant on the stage, enjoying the magic it possesses, but are most eager to see others taking the spotlight, and revel in the opportunity to introduce Euphorians to thunderous applause.

### **The Siren of Songs:**

With their finger on the pulse of the heartbeat of the universe, the Siren of Songs is a cosmic DJ, channeling the pure sound that calls forth various emotions and forms of expression. The Siren assists Euphorians with sharing any music, text, photos, or audio files they wish to upload to the Euphoria Portal, as well as running the practical technical aspects of the lighting and sound in space and the performances. When free, the Siren will also guide Euphorians to the different Muse stations, encouraging them to find a form of expression that can help them reveal their inner truths in the moment. The Siren can also provide moments of Witnessing and connection for Euphorians, ideally also directing them to others who can bring them deeper into this liminal ritual container.

If you have additional facilitators, they can enact Muse characters to help facilitate and steer play.

Variance to times and number of playable Muses depending on number of players (guiding)

<b>Times:</b>	<b>8 players</b>	<b>14 players</b>	<b>20 players</b>
Workshop	78 minutes	78 minutes	78 minutes
Break	10 minutes	10 minutes	10 minutes
Stage 1 - Exploration	30 minutes	30 minutes	30 minutes
Stage 2 - Expression	30 minutes	35-40 minutes	45 minutes
Stage 3 - Connection	30 minutes	30 minutes	30 minutes
Break	10 minutes	10 minutes	10 minutes
Debrief	30 minutes	35-40 minutes	45 minutes
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 hours 38 minutes</b>	<b>3 hours 48-58 minutes</b>	<b>4 hours 8 minutes</b>
<b>Number of playable Muses:</b>	4	6	9

# Workshop Phase (1 hr)

## **Stage 1: Explanation of Euphoria: (3 min)**

Facilitators: Greet the participants and read the game description at the top of this document out loud.

Then, say: “As players, you may opt out of any activity at any time, and the game also embeds this option as part of the fiction, as we will discuss later. If you need to leave the game, the door is always open. It would be kind to reach out to the facilitators later and let us know if you are okay if possible.”

## **Stage 2: Explanation of Research: (4 min)**

(Only for runs associated with Josephine Baird and Sarah Lynne Bowman’s research project):

Facilitators: We are sending around a signup form for your name and email if you are interested in learning more about participating in our research project. You can also choose to express interest via QR code, which is on this sheet. Participation would involve filling out a survey online after the session that will take approximately 20 minutes. You may also opt-in to a 30 minute interview. We will be available \_\_\_\_\_ (include times and dates) if you would like to participate directly after the larp.”

## **Stage 3: Explanation of Structure of Larp: (3 min)**

“There will be one (1) hour of workshopping, in which we will create characters and work with movement and vocalization to help practice different forms of expression. Then, we will have a 10 minute break. Then, the larp will start and will have three phases:

- 1) **Exploration:** Where you explore the space, adorn yourself, and try different forms of expression. This phase will be 30 minutes.
- 2) **Expression:** Where some of you will perform your expressions for the group. Others can continue to explore or express one-on-one. This phase will be [30 or 45 minutes depending on group size].
- 3) **Connection:** Where you will connect with others in the space with the help of some prompts to encourage deep discussion. This phase will be 30 minutes.”

We will conclude with a 30-45 minute debrief. (If relevant: At the end, we will provide additional information about participation in the research project).

## **Stage 4: Explanation of Discord (5 min)**



Facilitator: "In this larp, we will use a private social media server called Discord that only we will be able to access. In game, this is called the Euphoria Portal and it serves as a point of intersection between the pocket reality and this social reality. We are projecting the Discord channel on the screen. We encourage you to share your expressions on the Discord so we can celebrate each other and amplify your creative voices.

Here is the QR code to join the Discord.

You are not required to participate. All information on the Discord is confidential; do not share without the author's express permission. (Only for runs associated with Josephine Baird and Sarah Lynne Bowman's research project: Also, we will not use any of this information in our research project without explicit signed permission, which would happen further along in the research process, so no need to worry about that now.)

You are welcome to delete anything you upload after the larp, although some of you may wish to keep them visible to be able to return to memories of Euphoria."

### **Stage 5: Boundaries in Euphoria (5 min)**

Facilitator: "While this larp is about expression and exploration in ways that might feel very authentic, we do have some boundaries that we are setting as a baseline. This is not a larp about explicit sex, violence, or escalating conflict, so please do not simulate these things. It is not an erotic larp, a kink club, or a play party. There is no nudity outside of the changing areas for the larp, which are in the backstage area to the right of the stage, which is called Galaxy's Backstage Station. (More on this later).

However, you can share stories, poems, or other forms of expression about these themes. We have specific zones in the larp that are more private and where you can invite others to Witness you discussing these topics: Haven's Zone here to the right for intimacy and Phoenix's Zone here to the left for discussion of tragic events. Please give co-players clear content advisories ahead of time for this sort of content. As we mentioned before, participants can always say "no, thank you" to an invitation, which we will workshop soon.

Also, we want to make space for grief, anger, sadness, and other emotions in the larp. If you are Witnessing expressions of these emotions, please remain serious, or politely remove yourself from the interaction. That being said, as the larp is about seeking Euphoria, we want to try to return to joy throughout the larp. We recognize this is not always easy, but we are practicing together.

We will discuss safety mechanics in a bit, but first, we want to walk you through the character creation process."

### **Stage 6: Character Creation (15 min)**

Hand out one (1) pen and one (1) Character Creation Form to each player. Spread out the name cards on the floor or on a table.

Facilitator: "In Euphoria, you can play a character quite similar to yourself or wildly different. The things you express may be fictional or autobiographical. It's totally up to you.

Here are your character sheets. Don't worry about names or pronouns yet. The first part of the character creation form is for brainstorming three things to help you steer play: a) themes you would like to explore, which can change throughout the larp; b) ways that you personally enjoy expressing yourself; and c) your desires for types of connection you want to create with others (however you choose to define that).

Then, you will pick a genderqueer archetype that will be the starting point for your character, which you can feel free to adapt as you like. And then, you will choose a Muse that will serve as the starting inspiration for your character, which you can change throughout the larp as well. Save the name part for later."

So let's spend the next 10 minutes creating your character."

At 10 minutes: "Now, we have space in the larp for [4-9] of you to play a Muse. As you can see, Muses have particular themes attached to their forms of expression. They also have specific in-game responsibilities, in that they are meant to inspire others to express themselves based on these themes and in particular ways. They can also express themselves to model what that can look like. Would any of you like to play a Muse? You are welcome to change their description to fit your character better."

Choose 4-9 volunteers based on the size of the larp and bring them to one side of the room. Then, state: "Muses already have assigned names, but the rest of you can now choose either a name here or create your own on these blank cards. Choose pronouns for your character as well, and write them on your name tag. Note that you are welcome to change your name and pronouns throughout the larp. Please be mindful of each other's pronouns during the larp. If you don't know another character's pronoun, use 'they/them' as a default or avoid using pronouns when talking about them."

Then, ask volunteers which Muses they would like to play. "You will have more instructions at the beginning of the larp about your responsibilities and starting position."

### **Stage 7: Name Game Exercise (5 min)**

Facilitator: "Let's gather in a circle, standing if possible, or sitting if needed. We are about to play a modified version of the name game. You will say your character's name and attach a gesture. We will all then repeat the name and gesture. You will then share one way your character enjoys expressing themselves. For example, "My name is the Siren of Songs [gestures as if singing]. Everyone, please repeat. I enjoy expressing myself through singing."

### **Stage 8: Moving in the World (5 min)**

Facilitator: “Now, we will do a brief walking and greeting exercise that integrates gender expression as you define it. We will be giving you some prompts, which you can choose to embody how you define it, or you can move in the world another way. The goal of this exercise is practicing different forms of gender expression.

Start by walking around the world as you normally would. Just walk. Now, walk as if you have no gender. What is it like to walk with no gender? Exchange eye contact with others as you walk. Give them a greeting. Continue to walk. Now, walk expressing masculinity, however you decide to define that in this moment. Exchange eye contact and say hello to others in a masculine way. Now, walk expressing femininity, however you decide to define that in this moment. Exchange eye contact with others and say hello in a feminine way. Now, walk around in a gender fluid way, however you define that. Exchange eye contact and greet someone in a gender fluid way.

Now, return back to walking the way you normally do and return to the circle.”

### **Stage 9: Safety (15 minutes)**

“Now, we’re going to have a brief safety workshop. The most important thing is that if you at any moment need to leave an activity, you are welcome to do so. In Euphoria, we even have an in-game way to do this. You can say, ‘This is marvelous, but the Muses are calling me.’ Everyone say that out loud. Or you can say it in a short way by saying, ‘Marvelous.’ This can be used both if there is content you don’t wish to interact with, but also if you would simply like to engage with something else at that moment.

Off-game, you can also raise your hand to your forehead and use the Lookdown and walk away. You don’t need to say anything at all. Let’s all practice the Lookdown. Put a hand over your forehead and take one step backwards. If you need support from one of us, please feel free to approach the Mistrix of Ceremonies [gesture to that person] or the Siren of Songs [gesture to that person].

If you need to leave the larp, the Door is Always Open and you can always leave. However, we do hope you will contact one of the facilitators later to let us know if you are okay or need additional support.

The other important thing is that consent is paramount. In the fiction, we say ‘Euphorians love consent.’ At any given moment, one of you might be Expressing and others might be Witnessing. It’s great to ask people ahead of time if they would like to Witness your expression. If they say no, it’s not personal. Perhaps they have another experience they would like to have or emotion they would like to be feeling, and that’s perfectly fine.

Let's all practice saying that, 'Euphorians love consent.' Now, we're going to practice saying 'No, thank you.' One of you will invite the other one to listen to them sing. The other person will say, "No, thank you." And the first person will respond with 'Thank you.' We like to thank people for stating their boundaries.

Now, you will switch, and the other person will ask, "Would you like to hear my sad poem about depression?" and the other person will say 'No, thank you,' to which the first person responds, 'Thank you.'

If you do say yes to an invitation to Witness or Connect with one another, you can then calibrate what that will look like by having a brief discussion. You can do this in character or off character, whatever feels most comfortable for you. It may be good to step to the side for longer calibrations to indicate to others that you are not available for role-play in that moment.

Remember that for scenes where you are Expressing deep intimacy as a performance or with each other, use Haven's Zone to the right. When expressing pain, grief, or anger, use Phoenix' zone to the left. Remember this larp does not feature sexual content, nudity, violence, or escalating conflict between characters, but your characters can express themselves about these topics, for example, writing an erotic poem and reading it aloud or singing a sad song or telling a story about abuse from that character's past.

We will be using Brake to put the Brakes on the intensity of the scene. So everyone practice saying 'Brake' [gesturing gently pushing hands in front]. We also use Cut, where you can cut the scene around you for any reason and stop what is happening. Everyone practice saying 'Cut' [gesturing bringing the side of one side of the hand onto another flat hand].

We will now establish the baseline comfort level of the group in terms of touch. Everyone close your eyes. Remember that you still should ask before touching someone and they can always say no.

Raise your hand if you are comfortable with shaking hands. Keep your hand raised if you are comfortable with hugging. Keep your hand raised if you are comfortable with holding hands. Keep your hand raised if you are comfortable with cuddling. Keep your hand raised if you are comfortable with kissing.

*If at any point any player drops their hand, the last degree of touch everyone is comfortable with becomes the baseline.*

Okay, \_\_\_\_\_ is now the baseline of comfort in the game.

Any questions?

Great, let's all put your character sheets and your personal items along this far wall [gesture to the wall opposite to the stage and furthest away from it. This will also be the starting location of the larp for most of you.]”

### **Stage 10: Ecstatic Dance Exercise (13 minutes)**

“Next, we are going to get back into our bodies for an ecstatic dance exercise. If you have never done ecstatic dance -- don't worry. It is all about free, authentic expression of movement, however you define that in the moment. If you do not feel able to dance, you can simply move in place however you like, or stand still. It's up to you. If you wish to dance with someone else, exchange eye contact with that person and ask, 'Would you like to dance?' They can say yes, or 'No, thank you,' just as we practiced before. You can also just be in your own world by closing your eyes and moving your body, which signals to others you would like to dance alone.

You will move in whatever way feels good for you. You are also welcome to let out sounds if that feels good for you. So for example, I may be feeling really energized and shake my body like this [shakes body] and let out a little moan [moans] to bring that energy to the surface. The important thing here is you are allowing that energy to rise to the surface, so you can feel more open expressing yourself. Some people choose to sit and meditate instead, which is also totally fine. But please do not sit and watch others, as this ecstatic dance is not a performance for an external audience, just like larp.

The exercise will feature phases that take you on a journey with different types of energy being expressed through your body. Just express yourself in whatever way feels natural in that moment.

Let's begin.

*Turn on music for ecstatic dance exercise. Remind them of the changing phases at xx xx xx*

Now, everyone return back to the circle and sit down.”

### **Stage 11: Stating Your Intention (5 min)**

“We are almost done workshoping and ready to play the larp. First, we ask you to share one word each that describes what theme or emotion you would like to explore in this larp. We will go around the room. Take your time and state your word when you feel ready, or say 'pass.'”

We will now go on a 10 minute break. Please return wearing anything you have brought that you would like to start the larp wearing. There will be opportunities to swap out some articles of clothing like hats and scarves if you feel comfortable doing so. Otherwise, you will just continue to wear what you are wearing. If you have brought any articles of clothing or accessories to lend out, please put it in Galaxy's corner during the break. We recommend bringing your cell phones

with you so you can take photos of yourself and your expression during the larp to upload to the Euphoria Portal.

Your 10 minutes start now.”

## Break (10 min)

*During the break, the Siren of Songs will lower the lights and prepare the playlist. Playlist is available on YouTube here: [\(1022\) Euphoria - YouTube](#)*

*You are also welcome to make a Spotify playlist with these songs. Either way, make sure your account does not play advertisements between songs.*

## Larp Phase (1 hr 45 min)

### **Stage 1: Exploration (30 min)**

*The Mistrix of Ceremonies will read the following prompts before the Siren of Songs starts the music. Then, they will guide players through The Procession (see description further down).*

*Ideally, the Euphoria Portal/Discord channel will be projected onto the wall, so that characters can see their expression reflected back at them and share it with the group.*

Welcome to Euphoria! You are invited to explore, express, and connect.

We will begin the ceremonies with Exploration. During this phase, you will explore what it means to be a Euphorian: inquiring within yourselves and between each other about the multitude of ways in which gender can be expressed.

Muses will start at their respective stations, inviting others to engage in ways specific to their realm of expression. Muses love to express themselves, but they love to inspire others to express themselves even more and witness them. If you are playing a Muse, please gather by the stage where I will guide you [gesture to the stage].

Euphorians will attend various stations of interest in a state of exploration, practicing expressing yourselves in various ways indicated at each station (or inventing new ways that are thematically connected). Exploration can take place in isolation, between two people, or in groups. The guidance for types of expression are just suggestions, you can express yourself however you see fit based on the theme of the Muse. If there is no Muse present, you're welcome to invent how you experience that Muse and how they inspire you.

You can upload recordings of your expression if desired into the Euphoria Portal: a nexus point between this dimension and the mundane world (i.e. the Discord channel). If you prefer, you can keep your expression private. Euphorians love consent.

During this phase, I encourage you to make sure you visit Fable, Indigo, and Galaxy's stations to adorn yourself with clothing and makeup should you wish. You can also use your own makeup in the space if you prefer.

Most Euphorians will have 5 minutes to introduce themselves outside the portal [gestures to the wall opposite the stage] while we brief the Muses inside Euphoria. Remember to bring your phones if you wish.

Siren of Songs, let the music play!"

**Facilitator to the Muses:** "Muses, your goal is to help steer expression and connection. You each have your own stations with guidance on how to proceed. Some of you have props as well. You can move from your stations to interact with others if desired, but please return to your stations to assist if Euphorians show interest in that particular form of expression. As Muses, you are welcome to practice new forms of expression as well, but consider your character an expert at one default form of expression. You can play the character however you wish, but try to embody the energy described on the character sheet in some way.

[Indicate where each Muse's station is] Make sure to review the forms of expression at your station. Consider how you might invite others to express themselves in these ways, or come up with others as you see fit. You might want to glance at the other stations for ideas as well. Any questions?"

*After Muses are at their station, the Mistris of Ceremonies will stand on the stage.*

Euphorians, welcome! Soon, we will begin the Procession! Please line up in two lines. You will enter Euphoria walking side by side, then when you reach the stage, the left line will turn left, and the right line will turn right. You will then begin to explore the stations there. Make sure to read the instructions for ideas for expression at each station. Explore the space and if unsure how to proceed, let the Muses or one of us guide you. Begin!"

## Stage 2: Expression (30-45 min depending on group size)

*The Mistris of Ceremonies will establish where the ritual expression place will be in the room and invite characters to join them there. Then, they will read the following.*

*Between expressions, the music will play, and Euphorians are encouraged to continue to explore forms of expression. Encourage muses to express themselves and be present to support Euphorians who are unsure how to proceed.*

Euphorians, you will now take the stage when inspired one by one or in groups, expressing yourself for the group, who become your Witnessers. You may express something you have already expressed on the stage, or something new. If you need special music, please see the Siren of Songs.

Remember that Euphorians always respond with support, encouragement, and if appropriate, ecstatic applause. Also, Euphorians can always decline the invitation to Witness one another. Euphorians love consent!

You can also move around the room and create new expressions during this time and upload them to the Euphoria Portal (if you wish).

If you wish to express yourself on stage, approach me, the Mistrix of Ceremonies, and let me know how. When we are ready, I will hand you the mic, and you will say:

“Euphorians! I am \_\_\_\_\_! Watch me \_\_\_\_\_.”  
                                    name                                      form of expression

Muses please consider volunteering to express yourselves to inspire others to do the same.

You are also welcome to change your name or pronouns in this phase or the next. You may choose a name from the pile, or you may invent your own and write in a new name. If you introduce yourself as a new name, you will say “I am \_\_\_\_\_” with a name and a gesture, like before. Others around you should respond, “Hello, \_\_\_\_\_” and use your new name and the gesture.

### Stage 3: Connection

*The Mistrix of Ceremonies indicates the next phase by reading aloud:*

We now enter the phase of connection, although of course hopefully you have been connecting this whole time.

You will initiate Connection with one or more other people at a time. You can invite another Euphorian to Connect by saying, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Would you like to connect?” The other person may decline by saying “no, thank you.” In Euphoria, a “no, thank you” is cause for celebration, as we love it when people express their boundaries. Reply with a “thank you.”

When connecting, take turns being the Expresser, or the Witnesser. While the Expresser is sharing, the Witnesser(s) should maintain sustained attention on the Expressor and listen quietly (unless invited by the Expresser to do otherwise, such as to applaud). Muses should prioritize being Witnessers as much as possible, but can say “no, thank you” as well of course.



In addition to Connecting, you can also share your Expression from the last phase with one or several other people if you did not get the chance. You can invite others to mutually express yourselves together, e.g. singing or dancing with one another.

To Connect, we recommend responding to one or more of these prompts either one-by-one or in a circle. [*Point to prompts on walls*]. Your response can be short or prolonged:

“What is alive in me right now is \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Euphoria to me is \_\_\_\_\_.”

“In this realm, we can be anything. I chose to be \_\_\_\_\_.”

“I claim the space to express myself in \_\_\_\_\_ way.”

“You can support me in my journey by \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Would you like to co-create with me? It would look like \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Would you like to Express with me? It would look like \_\_\_\_\_.”

“I used to be \_\_\_\_\_. Right now, I am \_\_\_\_\_.”

“I would like to become \_\_\_\_\_.”

“In my perfect world, \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Together, what can we imagine we can become?”

“Together, what can we imagine we can build?”

*At the end of this phase, the music will be turned down. The Mistris will gather everyone in a circle. The Mistris will guide each person to share 1 sentence for their character’s epilogue in the 3rd person. This name and action could be something you plan to continue to explore in daily life, or something totally separate:*

“After experiencing Euphoria, \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_.”  
character name                      future actions, expressions, modes of being

“Now, we will have a 10 minute break, then return for a debrief around the circle.”

## Break (10 min)

## Debrief (30-45 minutes depending on group size)

Facilitator: "Thank you to all of you for playing *Euphoria!* We will now spend the next [30-45 minutes] debriefing. Meanwhile, if you wish to remove any makeup, here are some face wipes to pass around. If you want to keep your makeup on, you can always find us to get face wipes later today."

*For a group of 8, keep everyone in the big group.*

*For larger groups, break up into groups of 3. Ask for a volunteer from each group who will guide facilitation and make sure everyone has a chance to answer the question. That player will raise their hand to indicate to the facilitator that the group is done answering the question. They may speak quietly amongst themselves until all groups are ready for the next question. Ask each of the following questions in turn, skipping later ones if needed for time.*

How did it feel to be a Euphorian?

What about this experience would you like to take with you? They can be multiple things.

What about this experience would you like to leave behind? They can be multiple things.

What would be helpful for you to move forward throughout this weekend?

*[hand out membership certificate and pens]*

You have now completed *Euphoria!* That means you are an official member and can invite others at any time. Here is your membership certificate. Feel free to write any names, pronouns, and takeaways you would like to bring with you."

*Facilitators:* "Remember that sometimes we may have strong emotions or new insights that occur after the larp. This is totally normal and it's great to process these things. We will keep the Discord open for connection and debriefing after the larp. Remember not to share anything from the Discord without that person's explicit permission.

We also invite you to pair up with someone from the larp. This person will be your debrief buddy for the duration of the event or longer as needed. If you want to continue to debrief after the event, we recommend exchanging Discord names, emails, or adding one another on Facebook, whatever you prefer. If you don't wish to participate in future debriefing due to time constraints, take one step back to indicate this, no problem. Everyone else pair up now."

## Research Participation (5 min)

(Only for runs associated with Josephine Baird and Sarah Lynne Bowman's research project)

"Some final information about the research project. We will pass around the interest form again now for those who would like to add their information. This research is meant to evaluate larp as a medium for gender expression and exploration. Participants will respond to a 10-20 minute survey and may also opt in to a 30 minute interview. We will ask you questions about your experiences with gender in general, in this larp, and in others. You will receive more information over email [or here at the event] if you decide to participate."

Thank you so much for playing and have a wonderful rest of your day!"

## Inspirations

- Authentic Relating Games
- Drag and queer performance shows around the world
- *Cards for Connection* by Games for Humanity
- Ecstatic Dance
- *Just a Little Lovin'* by Tor Kjetil Edland and Hanne Grasmø
- *New World Magischola* by Learn Larp LLC.
- *Mage: The Ascension* by White Wolf Publishing
- Karaoke
- *Slayer Cake* by Evan Torner and Kat Jones
- Club Wotever
- Queerest of the Queer clubs and events
- Transfabulous
- "Living Room" art project by Dr J
- Greek mythology

## Bios

**Josephine Baird** is a Lecturer at the Uppsala University Department of Game Design and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Vienna. Her work spans the intersection of games, identity, gender, and sexualities. Her research and recent publications present the theoretical and methodological basis for her thesis that role-playing games might provide an opportunity for people to explore their gender subjectivity. Her current research concludes with the design of a live action role-playing game that puts this theory into practice. She is a founding member of The Transformative Play Initiative, and helped organize The Transformative Play Initiative Seminar 2022 in Gotland, Sweden. She is a game designer/consultant, writer, actor, public-speaker, and co-host of the podcast *It Is Complicated*. More information at [josephinebaird.com](http://josephinebaird.com)

**Sarah Lynne Bowman** is a scholar, game designer, and event organizer. She is an Associate Professor at the Department of Game Design at Uppsala University Campus Gotland and a founding member of the Transformative Play Initiative research group. Bowman is also Adjunct Faculty in Humanities, Peace & Conflict Studies, and Global Studies at Austin Community College. McFarland Press published her dissertation as *The Functions of Role-playing Games: How Participants Create Community, Solve Problems, and Explore Identity* (2010). Bowman has edited for *The Wyrld Con Companion Book* (2012-2015), the *International Journal of Role-playing* (2016-), and *Nordiclarp.org* (2015-). She co-organized the *Living Games Conference* (2014, 2016, 2018), the *Role-playing and Simulation in Education Conference* (2016, 2018); and the *Transformative Play Initiative Seminar* (2022). More info at <http://www.sarahlynnebowman.com>

**Kaya Toft Thejls** is a Master's student at the Centre for Gender Research at Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden. They have a bachelor's degree in education science from Aarhus University in Copenhagen, Denmark. They have experience with game design, event organising and teaching. Most recently they have co-organized the *Transformative Play Initiative Seminar* (2022). Their interests are often situated in crossroads between gender studies, education and role-play. They are currently working on their Master's thesis on gender exploration in larp.

Names to print out and cut out

**Kai**

Pronouns:

**Rowan**

Pronouns:

**Sage**

Pronouns:

**Zephyr**

Pronouns:

**Azriel**

Pronouns:

**Koda**

Pronouns:

**Artemis**

Pronouns:

**Aster**

Pronouns:

**Valentine**

Pronouns:

**Robin**

Pronouns:

**Lux**

Pronouns:

**Basil**

Pronouns:

**Salem**

Pronouns:

**Ever**

Pronouns:

**Lark**

Pronouns:

**Raven**

Pronouns:

**Cedar**

Pronouns:

**Nova**

Pronouns:

**Juniper**

Pronouns:

**Echo**

Pronouns:

**Storm**

Pronouns:

**Demi**

Pronouns:

**Zuri**

Pronouns:

**Urban**

Pronouns:

**Onyx**

Pronouns:

**Ray**

Pronouns:

**Winter**

Pronouns:

**Azure**

Pronouns:

**Sol**

Pronouns:

**Arbor**

Pronouns:

**Vale**

Pronouns:

**Jazz**

Pronouns:

**Crimson**

Pronouns:

**Cyan**

Pronouns:

**Cobalt**

Pronouns:

**Jay**

Pronouns:

**Riot**

Pronouns:

**Justice**

Pronouns:

**Teal**

Pronouns:

**Tundra**

Pronouns:

**Fable**

**Muse of Fantasy**

Pronouns:

**Quill**

**Muse of History**

Pronouns:

**Haven**

**Muse of Intimacy**

Pronouns:

**Galaxy**

**Muse of Song**

Pronouns:

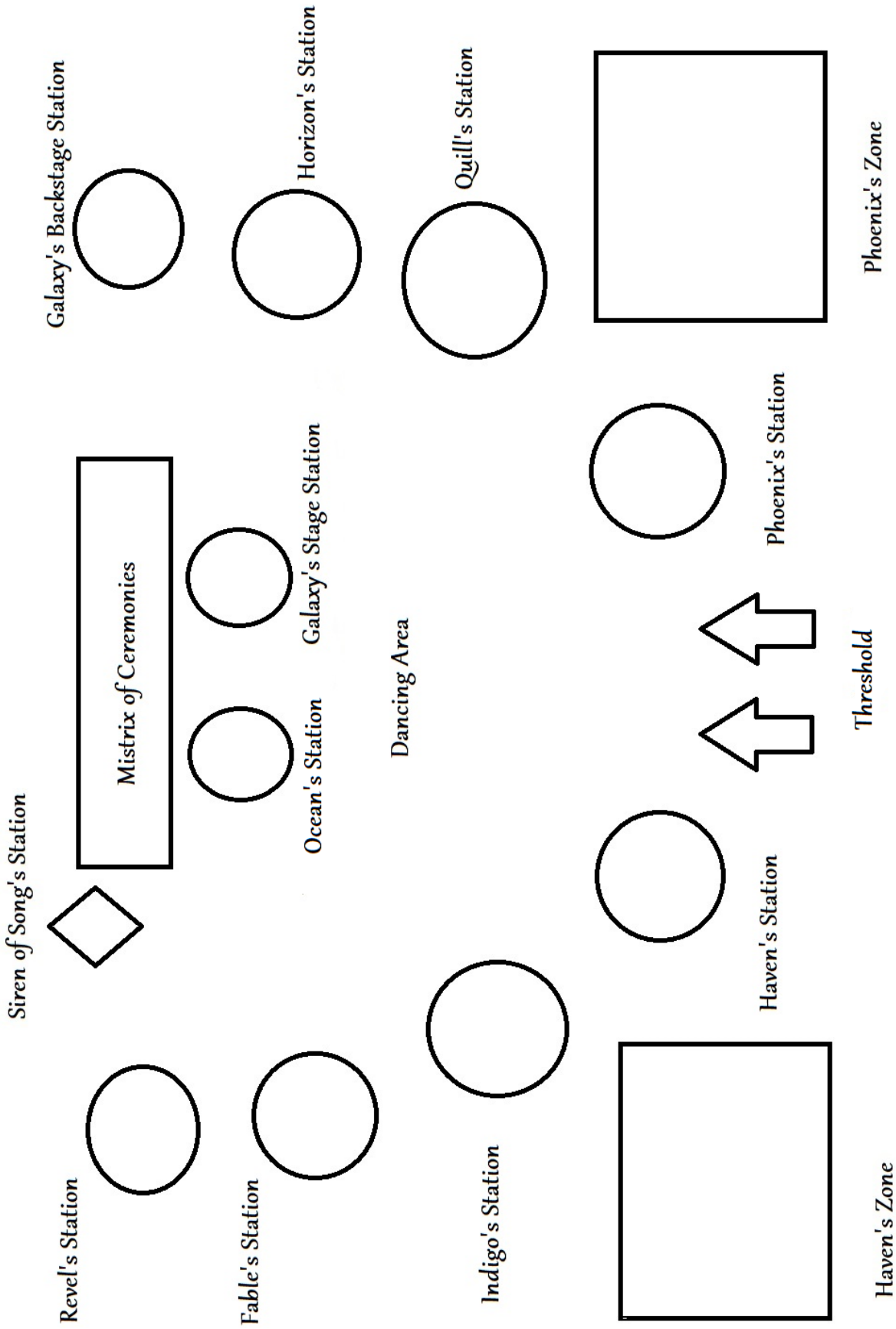


<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Indigo</b> <b>Muse of Spirituality</b></p> <p>Pronouns:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ocean</b> <b>Muse of Movement</b></p> <p>Pronouns:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Revel</b> <b>Muse of Comedy</b></p> <p>Pronouns:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Horizon</b> <b>Muse of Change</b></p> <p>Pronouns:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Phoenix</b> <b>Muse of Tragedy</b></p> <p>Pronouns:</p>	

**Playlist:**

You can use our YouTube playlist, but double check that the links all work for timing purposes. You can also load these songs on Spotify. Link here: [\(1022\) Euphoria - YouTube](#)

All songs will be included in a later draft of this script.



# Euphoria Character Creation Form

## Themes for Exploration

Describe in a few words or phrases what themes you would like to explore in this larp. To brainstorm, you may consider the following questions:

- What excites you about Euphoria?
- Are there aspects of yourself you always wanted to express?
- What types of gender expression would you be interested in exploring?
- Do you have any fears or concerns entering this space?

## Modes of Expression

List as many ways possible that you enjoy expressing yourself the most, whether alone or with others. To brainstorm:

- Think of times when you expressed yourself that felt fantastic.
- Think of activities you enjoyed with others, if relevant, where expression was a major component.
- Think of ways in which you always wished you could express yourself, but have not yet.
- Think of ways in which others express themselves that you have always admired.

**Examples:** song, dance, writing, confiding in someone, giving a speech

## Desires for Connection

Brainstorm various ways in which you can imagine connecting with others in the larp. Note that explicit sexuality, nudity, violence, or escalating conflict are outside the scope of *Euphoria*.

## The Genderqueer Archetypes

Each Euphorian starts the larp with a genderqueer archetype that most aligns with how they wish to express in that moment. Please choose one archetype for now. Note that the following descriptions are meant as inspiration, not to overly define this archetype. You can shift into other archetypes throughout the larp if desired. Mix and match as you see fit.

**The Bear:** Whether large or small, hairy or smooth, the gruff but kind Bear expresses through a masculine supportiveness for themselves, but especially for others. A keen seeker of community and family, this muse builds houses and spaces, open to all.

**The Butch:** Whether in a refined suit, leather jacket and jeans, or any other garment The Butch finds joy, comfort and ease in their masculinity/ties. The Butch's masculinities may be soft, incorporating other gender expressions or more traditional in old-school expressions from a particular time and place.

**The Dandy:** With an appreciation of elegance and style, The Dandy expresses their feminine masculinity/ties perhaps in appearance but most certainly in action and sensibility. Ever courteous, witty and dapper, this muse always wants you in on the joke.

**The Diva:** Passionate and wild, The Diva celebrates their femininity/ties loudly and proudly and with the confidence to take up space for themselves and others. Whether on stage or in everyday life, the diva expresses their extravagance with joy and fierceness.

**The Elder:** The Elder expresses themselves but also their group through the perspective learned by experience. Within them resides their communities' stories, cultures and collective knowledge, which The Elder shares freely with all.

**The Fae:** Existing within their spirituality and powerful magic, The Fae dances across the boundaries of tradition. Choosing that which suits their sense of being, combining to find their new norms. Expressing freely and divinely this muse communes with those around them.

**The Femme:** With or without make-up or flowing garments, The Femme revels in their femininity/ties, expressing their fluid softer movements and sensibilities, with wit, power and joy. Whether extravagant high-femme, or subtle low-femme, The Femme, is always authentically themselves no matter how they express.

**The Shapeshifter:** To explore, experiment, or express, The Shapeshifter morphs at a whim of desire, necessity or longing. The Shapeshifter molds their external to the internal, to match their self/ves according to the moment.

**The Undefinable:** The Undefinable eschews categorisation, enjoying instead the liminal of the above, about, below, between, under or over. They may move, or remain outside, the margins

but they are always their very own being - forming meaning by joyously creating or exploding definitions.

### **Notes/Revisions:**

## The Muses

Each Euphorian begins with an initial Muse that inspires them. The Muses give guidance on how Euphorians might express themselves during the larp in terms of activities and forms of communication. Characters can remain inspired by their default Muse and use their form of expression, or they can explore expressions inspired by other Muses throughout the game. If elements of the Muse's description are not inspirational, focus on the elements your character can find most connecting.

**Fable, the Muse of Fantasy:** Fable calls forth imaginings of the endless possibilities that have yet to be dreamed into existence. Euphorians inspired by Fable often find their minds drawn toward the realms of fantasy and the unconscious. They weave together inspiration drawn from these fanciful meanderings into quixotic tales, whether epic, surreal, or idyllic in proportion.

**Examples of expression:** Fictional narratives, epic poetry, visual art, myth, adornment

**Quill, the Muse of History:** Quill beckons forward the recounting of factual events from the hallowed halls of personal and collective history. Euphorians inspired by Quill carry forth narrative accounts from these annals, acting as the bearers of culture. They engage with others by educating and illuminating with vibrant stories that would often otherwise remain untold, overlooked, or misunderstood.

**Examples of expression:** Factual storytelling, tracing genealogies, quiltmaking, performance art, textiles

**Haven, the Muse of Intimacy:** Haven evokes the expressions of closeness, intimacy, and desire. Euphorians inspired by Haven feel moved to connect with others with unprecedented depth, disclosing their innermost secrets with vulnerability, passion, and tenderness. Whether intimacy manifests for Euphorians as physical, intellectual, emotional, or spiritual, Haven cradles these moments in a warm, protective embrace.

**Examples of expression:** Contact improv, erotic poetry, slow dancing, sharing secrets, platonic touch

**Galaxy, the Muse of Song:** Galaxy summons the light of a thousand suns, showered in sparks of electric expression. Euphorians inspired by Galaxy feel the song of the universe coursing through their bodies, becoming willing conduits of the sonic frequencies of pure starlight.

Whether through voice, wind, horn, or percussion, Euphorians transmit this cosmic intelligence with every pulsating note, instruments of rapture bathed in astonishing glamour.

**Examples of expression:** Modeling, singing, playing instruments, posing, fashion design

**Phoenix, the Muse of Tragedy:** Cathartic tears spill forth after contact with Phoenix, searing the soul with the exquisite agony of the full range of the human experience. Euphorians inspired by Phoenix uncover what has been hidden, share what has been shamed, and love where love has been absent. From water to fire, the blazing flames of transformation burn away what no longer serves to make way for the dazzling feathers of triumphant rebirth.

**Examples of expression:** Grieving, roaring, composing memoirs, revealing pain, making declarations

**Indigo, the Muse of Spirituality:** Indigo invites the deep descent: resting back, dropping in, and sinking down into one's deepest truths. Euphorians inspired by Indigo discover their inner oracular knowing, grounded in their body on this plane, while blasting off to astral realms to discover what wisdom can be received from receptive, surrendered ecstasy.

**Examples of expression:** Makeup, adornment, ecstatic dance, guided group meditation, mystical revelations

**Ocean, the Muse of Movement:** It begins like a droplet in the approaching tide, the smallest awakening from Ocean's delicate droplets of nourishment. Euphorians inspired by Ocean then begin to move, whether gently like a still pond, insistent like a rushing river, or tremendous like a swelling sea rising to the crescendo of a wave of healing bodily expression.

**Examples of expression:** Deep breathing, yoga, dance, sensual movement, massage

**Revel, the Muse of Comedy:** Wherever a chuckle, a guffaw, or cacophonous laughter erupts, Revel can be found nearby. Euphorians inspired by Revel are reality alchemists, turning the raw, brutal, taboo, even boring stuff of life and alchemizing it into comic gold. Revel sharpens the art of wit, but never to harm Euphorians, for none can feel true joy if even one is cut down to size.

**Examples of expression:** Cabaret acts, standup comedy, grandiose jest, witty banter, whimsical movements

**Horizon, the Muse of Change:** The impassioned advocate, the persuasive orator, the smoldering provocateur, the outrageous iconoclast, the unrelenting activist... each of these unique individuals heeded the call of Horizon. Euphorians inspired by Horizon propel society into the future: the firebrands, the ringleaders, the changemakers, and truthspeakers.

**Examples of expression:** Rousing speeches, organizing, catwalking, proclamations, community building

## Your Initial Muse:

How this Muse inspires you in terms of expression or activities:

Name Your Euphorian. Choose a slip of paper with a name or create your own. You can change your name throughout the larp if you like:

---

Choose pronouns for your Euphorian. You can change your pronouns throughout the larp if you like:

---



“What is alive in me right now is \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Euphoria to me is \_\_\_\_\_.”

“In this realm, we can be anything. I chose to be \_\_\_\_\_.”

“I claim the space to express myself in \_\_\_\_\_ way.”

“You can support me in my journey by \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Would you like to co-create with me? It would look like \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Would you like to express with me? It would look like \_\_\_\_\_.”

“I used to be \_\_\_\_\_. Right now, I am \_\_\_\_\_.”

“I would like to become \_\_\_\_\_.”

“In my perfect world, \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Together, what can we imagine we can become?”

“Together, what can we imagine we can build?”

## **Fable, the Muse of Fantasy**

**Examples of expression:** Fictional narratives, epic poetry, visual art, myth, adornment

**Mechanic:** Fable grants you the ability to adorn yourself with an item that magically transforms you into what you want others to see. Write on your nametag any updates to your appearance. Describe yourself when you meet people.

Write a fanciful story.

Compose an epic poem about Euphoria.

Improvise a shared journey with someone to a faraway land.

Imagine an alternative history about your version of utopia.

Adorn yourself with an object that magically alters your appearance.

Draw a surreal picture.



*Fable*

## **Quill, the Muse of History**

**Examples of expression:** Factual storytelling, tracing genealogies, quilting, performance art, textiles

Recount a story about your life.

Describe the history of your community.

Braid or knit something together to make an accessory.

Physically perform a story from the past through interpretive dance.

Share the textures of different fabrics with others.

Record your story with audio, video, or writing.



*Quill*

## **Haven, the Muse of Intimacy**

**Examples of expression:** Contact improv, erotic poetry, slow dancing, sharing secrets, platonic touch

Invite someone to move their body in sync with yours.

Compose an erotic poem.

Invite someone to slow dance with you.

Tell someone a secret that is vulnerable for you to disclose.

Invite someone to hold hands or cuddle.



*Haven*

## **Galaxy, the Muse of Song**

**Examples of expression:** Modeling, singing, playing instruments, posing, fashion design

Model clothing for others giving your best poses.

Sing an exuberant song with or without musical accompaniment.

Tap a rhythm with your hands.

Put on a fashion show.

Invite people to a singalong or lipsync of music you all know.





## **Phoenix, the Muse of Tragedy**

**Examples of expression:** Grieving, roaring, composing memoirs, revealing pain, making declarations

Grieve a loss or a challenging past situation.

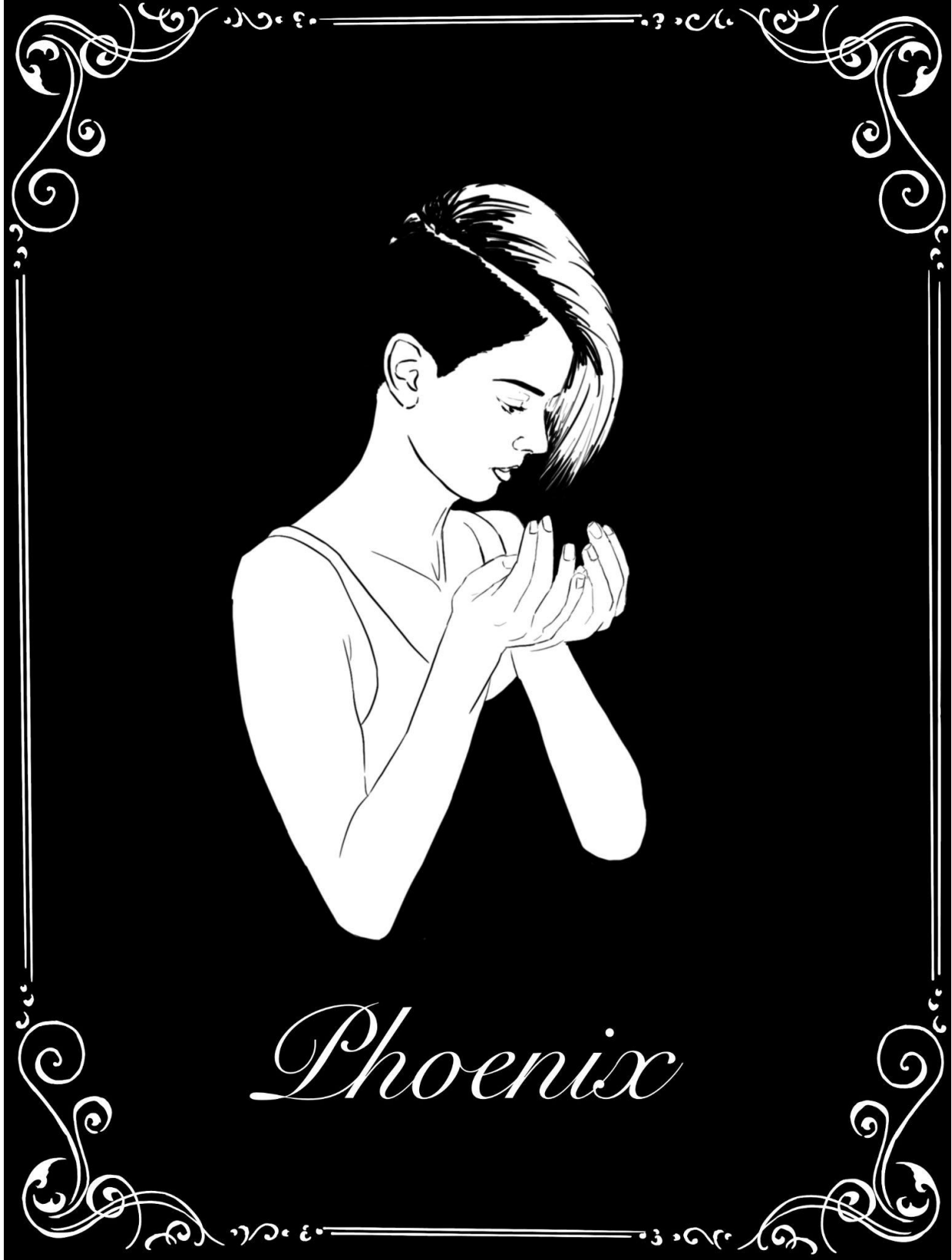
Invite someone to let out a loud roar of emotion with you.

Compose a memoir of a painful event from your past.

Share a past hurt with someone else.

Declare your needs.

State behaviors you will no longer allow in your life.



*Phoenix*

## **Indigo, the Muse of Spirituality**

**Examples of expression:** Makeup, adornment, ecstatic dance, guided group meditation, mystical revelations

Paint your face in a way that reveals your inner creative essence.

Imbue an accessory with special meaning and adorn yourself with it.

Dance in a way that feels freeing to your soul.

Guide others through a meditation to explore their inner landscape.

Share a mystical revelation you had in Euphoria or elsewhere.



*Indingo*

## **Ocean, the Muse of Movement**

**Examples of expression:** Deep breathing, yoga, dance, sensual movement, massage

Engage in slow deep belly breaths alone or with others.

Guide someone through a few yoga postures.

Perform a dance to the current song for others.

Move your body in a way that feels sensual and liberating.

Invite someone to receive a platonic massage.



## **Revel, the Muse of Comedy**

**Examples of expression:** Cabaret acts, standup comedy, grandiose jest, witty banter, whimsical movements

Perform a cabaret act.

Give a standup comedy routine without insulting any Euphorians.

Deliver a campy performance.

Engage in good-natured playful witty banter with others.

Move your body in a whimsical, grandiose, or amusing way.





*Revel*

## **Horizon, the Muse of Change**

**Examples of expression:** Rousing speeches, organizing, catwalking, proclamations, community building

Give a rousing speech declaring what justice for all could look like in the future.

Organize others to take part in a shared activity with a common theme.

Saunter on the catwalk, blazing the trail for others to follow.

Make bombastic proclamations about yourself or others with their consent.

Invite a meandering Euphorian to join an activity.



*Horizon*

**A spare card should you need one to swap out or  
include:**



Membership Certificate (print for the number of participants plus two for any adjustments/errors)



\_\_\_\_\_

## Lifetime Member of Euphoria



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pronouns: \_\_\_\_\_

*What I want to take away with me from Euphoria:*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



*Your membership grants you the power to invite others to Euphoria at any time.*



\_\_\_\_\_