



The Queer & Joyful Worldmaking Lab (JOY Lab) is a public-facing art production and exhibition space--a space for 2SLGBTQIA+ intergenerational worldbuilding and knowledge translation for children, youth, families, and school workers, and a mode of investigating the ways that gender-based violence might be resisted and solidarities may be built through participatory approaches to art production, knowledge creation, exhibition, and archiving. Under the direction of Dr. Casey Burkholder, Canada Research Chair in Social Justice in Youth and Child Studies, Department of Education, Concordia University, the lab was established in 2024. The JOY Lab engages in undergraduate and graduate training, as well as public outreach by working with school boards, and community groups to create artworks, solidarities, and advise on policy to preserve the rights of sexual and gender minorities inside and outside of schools in the wake of the 1 Million March 4 Children—which advocated for the elimination of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) curriculum, removing gender neutral washrooms from school spaces, and refusing to recognize young people’s stated gender identities. The JOY Lab studies queer joy as a resistive measure to growing transphobic and queerphobic policies, discourses, and practices, inside and outside of school spaces. The space is intentionally designed with accessibility in mind, for queer and trans children, families, adults, and school workers, insofar as it is an intergenerational space, one that enables deep study, analysis, and collaboration in community and social justice. In this way, the JOY Lab’s regular operations centres collective gathering, art production, media making, and analysis that highlights questions of 2SLGBTQIA+ representation, resistance, queer joy, and the ongoing project of social justice, inside and outside of schools. Since the Lab’s initiatives revolve around fostering knowledge creation and collaborative efforts to educate the general public about the capacity of queer joy in countering gender-based violence across the lifespan, the creation of public-facing exhibitions and participatory archives are the forefront of the JOY Lab. The Lab seeks to introduce novel perspectives on the themes of 2SLBTQIA+ solidarity-building and collective resistance to gender-based violence through the creation and exhibition of artistic works. More information can be found by emailing casey.burkholder@concordia.ca.