

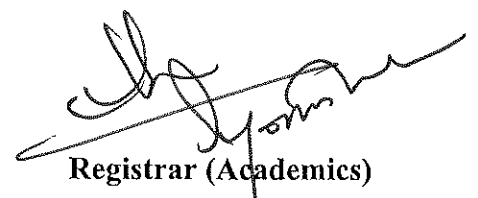
Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Anjitha Tom, Registration Number: 2070532, PhD Scholar at the Department of English and Cultural Studies, School of Humanities and Performing Arts, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Thursday, 11 June 2026 at 10.30 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Queering Embodied Frames: A Study of Select American Queer Graphic Memoirs**
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 04 June 2026


Registrar (Academics)

ABSTRACT

This thesis critically examines the representation of non-normative genders and sexualities in contemporary queer graphic memoirs set in the United States, focusing on *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe, *I'm a Wild Seed* by Sharon Lee De La Cruz, and *Spellbound* by Bishakh Som. Through a close analysis of visual and verbal narrative strategies, the study explores how these works negotiate the complexities of queer embodiment, fluid sexualities, and intersectional identities. Drawing on queer theory, feminist thought, and comics studies, the thesis highlights how the graphic memoir form enables nuanced articulations of identity that resist fixed binaries and dominant cultural scripts. Foregrounding the interplay between form and content, this research analyses how the selected texts queer the genre of memoir itself—through strategies such as visual metaphor, embodied imagery, substitutive doubling, and chromatic narration, among others, which reconfigure narrative structure, voice, and self-representation beyond realist and linear conventions. These formal strategies allow the authors to challenge genre conventions and expand the possibilities of life writing beyond conventional modes of representation. The study further situates these memoirs within broader socio-historical contexts, attending to how racial, gendered, and diasporic experiences shape each narrative's aesthetic, political, and affective dimensions.

The thesis argues that the graphic memoir medium facilitates a layered and embodied mode of queer representation that disrupts normative frameworks of gender and sexuality, while offering space to resist dominant cultural narratives and to reimagine identity through context-specific, intersectional experiences. In doing so, it positions queer graphic memoirs as critical interventions into dominant narratives of gender, sexuality, and identity in contemporary U.S. culture.

Keywords: queer graphic memoirs; gender and sexuality; intersectionality; visual-verbal narration; feminist theory; queer theory; embodiment; comics studies; genre critique

Publications:

1. **Tom, Anjitha.** "Exploring Transness Through the Graphic Memoir: Bishakh Som on Crafting *Spellbound*: A Graphic Memoir." *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, 2024 2.
2. **Tom, Anjitha.** "Review of *I'm a Wild Seed* by Sharon Lee De La Cruz." *The Journal of Popular Culture* (Wiley), 2024 3.
3. **Tom, Anjitha.** "Review of *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe." *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 2023
4. **Tom, Anjitha.** "Comic Elements as a System of Queer Expression: A Close Analysis of *Gender Queer: A Memoir*." *Literary Voice*, 2024