

October Prompt -

Kaleidoscope Book Club

Theme: Queer Myth Retellings

Dive into legends, folklore, and mythology retold through a queer lens. Read retellings of fairy tales, ancient myths, folk stories, or legendary epics that center LGBTQIA+ characters or reimagine classic tales with queer identities at the heart of the story. Books should center LGBTQIA+ characters or be written by authors from the community. Fiction, fantasy, or magical realism are welcome. Books from any category—adult, young adult, juvenile—are welcome.

The below titles are all available in print or other physical formats via our catalog - either at your local library or through consortium sharing. Some titles may also be available through our E-book services, Hoopla and Libby. Please note for any given title, we cannot guarantee immediate availability - some may already be checked out or have a waitlist. Happy reading!

Fiction

The Affair of the Mysterious Letter by Alexis Hall

Sherlock Holmes reimaged in a magical Victorian-style world, with a gender-swapped detective duo at its center. [Literary classic (Sherlock Holmes), fantasy mystery, Adult] (F/F romance).

As I Descended by Robin Talley

Two girls at an elite boarding school plot to win a scholarship, and a ghostly power turns their scheme deadly. [Literary classic (Macbeth), Gothic thriller, YA] (F/F romance).

Ash by Malinda Lo

Grieving Ash is caught between a fairy lover and the King's Huntress, Kaisa, in this Cinderella reimagining. [Cinderella, fairy tale fantasy, YA] (F/F romance, queer author).

Autobiography of Red by Anne Carson

A novel in verse about Geryon, a winged red monster-boy, and his love affair with Herakles. [Greek myth (Geryon), poetry/novel-in-verse, Adult] (M/M love story, coming-of-age).

A Blade So Black by L. L. McKinney

Alice, a Black teen in Atlanta, fights nightmares in a dark Wonderland. [Literary classic (Alice in Wonderland), urban fantasy, YA] (queer retelling per DBRL list †).

Blanca & Roja by Anna-Marie McLemore

Two sisters in a family cursed to have one daughter taken by swans each generation. [Swan Princess / Snow White and Rose Red, magical realism, YA] (queer representation, nonbinary author).

Cinderella Is Dead by Kalynn Bayron

Two hundred years after Cinderella, girls must attend a ball where men choose wives. Sophia escapes and hides in Cinderella's tomb, where she meets Constance. [Cinderella, dystopian fairy tale fantasy, YA] (F/F romance, queer Black author).

A Clash of Steel: A Treasure Island Remix by C. B. Lee

A swashbuckling pirate adventure that reworks Treasure Island. [Literary classic (Treasure Island), adventure, YA] (queer retelling).

Dark and Deepest Red by Anna-Marie McLemore

A magical-realist story that moves between the 1518 Strasbourg dancing plague and a modern girl in red shoes. [The Red Shoes, magical realism, YA] (queer characters, nonbinary author).

The Darkest Part of the Forest by Holly Black

Hazel and her brother Ben grew up near a glass coffin holding a sleeping faerie prince. When the prince wakes, Hazel has to face the secrets of the forest. [Faerie folklore, YA] (queer characters).

Darling by K. Ancrum

A YA reimaging of Peter Pan. [Peter Pan, YA] (queer retelling).

Dragon Pearl by Yoon Ha Lee

Min, a fox spirit, leaves her home planet to find her missing brother in a space-opera take on Korean myth. [Korean mythology, sci-fi, Juvenile/Middle Grade] (queer retelling; nonbinary author).

Girl, Serpent, Thorn by Melissa Bashardoust

Soraya, a princess whose touch is poisonous, wants to be free of her curse. [Persian folklore/Shahnameh, Sleeping Beauty and Rapunzel threads, YA] (queer protagonist).

Girls Made of Snow and Glass by Melissa Bashardoust

Mina and her stepdaughter Lynet are drawn into a rivalry shaped by mirrors, beauty and a heart of glass. [Snow White, YA] (sapphic rep, queer characters).

The Grimrose Girls by Laura Pohl

When a classmate dies at a prestigious academy, four girls named for fairy tales investigate

and find the stories are real. [Fairy tale mashup, dark academia mystery, YA] (queer girls, F/F romance).

His Hideous Heart: Thirteen of Edgar Allan Poe's Most Unsettling Tales Reimagined
edited by Dahlia Adler

YA authors reimagine thirteen Poe stories. [Literary classic (Poe), horror anthology, YA] (queer characters and contributors).

Hungerstone by Kat Dunn

Lenore, trapped in a stifling Victorian marriage, is drawn to the enigmatic Carmilla and a hunger she can't name. [Carmilla/vampire folklore, gothic horror, Adult] (F/F romance).

The King of Infinite Space by Lyndsay Faye

A contemporary retelling of Hamlet. [Literary classic (Hamlet), contemporary, Adult, queer retelling).

Legendborn by Tracy Deonn

Bree Matthews, a Black teen, finds a secret society descended from King Arthur's knights. [Arthurian legend, urban fantasy, YA] (queer retelling).

Love in the Time of Global Warming by Francesca Lia Block

A post-disaster Los Angeles teen journeys through a land of monsters, an Odyssey for a new age. [The Odyssey, dystopian fantasy, YA] (queer retelling).

The Magic Fish by Trung Le Nguyen

Tiến uses fairy tales to talk with his Vietnamese immigrant mother as he works up to coming out. [Grimm and Vietnamese folk tales, graphic novel, YA] (gay protagonist, queer author).

Malice by Heather Walter

Sleeping Beauty from the villain's side: Alyce, the Dark Grace, is drawn to Princess Aurora, who can only be saved by true love's kiss. [Sleeping Beauty, dark fantasy, Adult] (F/F romance).

The Merry Spinster: Tales of Everyday Horror by Daniel M. Lavery

Dark, funny retellings of classic fairy tales and children's stories with a sharp genderqueer eye. [Fairy tale anthology, horror/short stories, Adult] (queer and trans themes, trans author).

The Midnight Girls by Alicia Jasinska

A dark fantasy drawn from Polish folklore. In a snow-cloaked kingdom, two rival servants—one who desperately wants to win the approval of the Red Jaga and the other who hopes to escape the Black Jaga—compete for the pure heart of a prince, only to discover they might be falling for each other instead. [Polish folklore, YA fantasy] (queer retelling).

Miranda in Milan by Katharine Duckett

Miranda, newly home from the island, finds life at Milan's court stifling and meets a servant, Dorothea. [Literary classic (The Tempest), historical fantasy novella, Adult] (F/F romance).

The Mirror Season by Anna-Marie McLemore

After a traumatic night, two teens form a bond through magic and pan dulce in a magical-realist Snow Queen story. [Snow Queen, magical realism, YA] (queer characters, nonbinary author; content note: sexual assault).

Naamah by Sarah Blake

A novel in verse retelling the story of Noah's wife, Naamah, on the ark. [Biblical myth, novel in verse, Adult] (queer retelling).

No Man of Woman Born by Ana Mardoll

A short story collection that retells classic myths with gender-diverse characters. [Myth anthology, short stories, Adult] (trans and gender-nonconforming characters).

Once & Future by A. R. Capetta and Cori McCarthy

In a far-future sci-fi spin on the legend, Ari, a gender-flipped King Arthur reborn, teams up with Merlin, who is aging backwards. [Arthurian legend, sci-fi/fantasy, YA] (queer lead, queer cast).

The One Hundred Nights of Hero: A Graphic Novel by Isabel Greenberg

Hero uses storytelling to stall a man who wants to seduce her lover, in a graphic novel framed by the Arabian Nights. [The Arabian Nights, graphic novel, Adult/YA] (F/F love story).

Orpheus Girl by Brynne Rebele-Henry

Raya is sent to a conversion camp, and the Orpheus and Eurydice myth threads through her story. [Greek myth (Orpheus), YA, verse-inflected] (F/F, conversion therapy themes).

The Palace of Eros by Caro De Robertis

Psyche is tied to a rock as a sacrifice to a "monstrous husband." Instead she is whisked away by Eros, recast here as a nonbinary, genderqueer goddess, and the two fall in love in a hidden palace. [Greek myth (Eros and Psyche), Adult] (queer romance, genderqueer deity, queer author).

Ruinsong by Julia Ember

A gifted singer is forced to use her magic as a weapon under a tyrannical regime, and a rekindled bond with her childhood friend may change that. [Literary classic (The Phantom of the Opera), YA fantasy] (F/F romance).

The Salt Grows Heavy by Cassandra Khaw

A mermaid flees her marriage in a bloody aftermath and travels with a plague doctor through a ruined, horrifying fairy-tale landscape. [Little Mermaid, horror novella, Adult] (queer author, queer themes).

Scavenge the Stars by Tara Sim

Amaya, a debt-bound deckhand, plots revenge on the man who ruined her life in a space-pirate Count of Monte Cristo. [Literary classic (The Count of Monte Cristo), sci-fi adventure] (queer retelling).

She's Too Pretty to Burn by Wendy Heard

In 1990s Los Angeles, a photographer is drawn to a magnetic girl who seems untouched by time. [Literary classic (The Picture of Dorian Gray), thriller, YA] (F/F romance).

Silver in the Wood by Emily Tesh

A hermit who is the Greenwood's guardian meets a handsome stranger who stirs up the forest's old magic. [Green Man/English folklore, fantasy novella, Adult] (M/M romance)

Sometime After Midnight by L. Philips

Teen music prodigy Nate flees a connection with Cameron, the heir to a record label, leaving behind only a photo of his Sharpied Chuck Taylors, and the internet goes hunting for the "Cinderella." [Cinderella, contemporary romcom, YA] (M/M romance).

The Song of Achilles by Madeline Miller

Patroclus narrates his lifelong bond and love with Achilles, from boyhood through the Trojan War. [Greek myth (The Iliad), historical fantasy, Adult] (M/M romance).

A Spindle Splintered by Alix E. Harrow

Zinnia Gray, in her twenty-first year, finds a Sleeping Beauty spindle that opens portals to other versions of the tale and meets another princess trapped in her story. [Sleeping Beauty, portal fantasy novella, Adult] (queer protagonist, F/F).

Summer in the City of Roses by Michelle Ruiz Keil

Teen siblings in 1990s Portland, drawn from the Sister and Brother fairy tale. [Fairy tale/myth blend, magical realism, YA] (queer retelling per DBRL list †).

These Feathered Flames by Alexandra Overy

Twin royals Izaveta and Asya are pulled into a struggle over the throne and a Firebird's power. [Firebird, Slavic folklore, YA] (queer retelling, queer author).

Wilder Girls by Rory Power

Girls at an island boarding school are quarantined as a mysterious disease, the Tox, ravages them. [Literary classic (Lord of the Flies), horror, YA] (F/F romance).