Wetlands Magazine, Volume 2

Gender and Queer Studies Program, University of Puget Sound

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The staff of Wetlands Magazine would like to thank the Gender Studies Advisory Board, the Art Department, the Student Diversity Center, the Black Student Union’s Black Ice publication, Crosscurrents, WEB, VOX, ASUPS, Q&A, Beyond, NARAL Pro-Choice WA, Ruby Aliment, Chandler O’Leary of Anagram Press and Jessica Springs of Springtide Press, and thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of our first publication. Published with support from Campus Progress/Center for American Progress (Online at CampusProgress.org).
Dear reader,

This past year the Wetlands team has focused on solidifying our foundations and defining our goals for the future of the publication. Wetlands seeks to create a safe, open space for members of the University of Puget Sound community to explore the social, cultural, and political implications of gender and sexuality.

Our first issue, the “Virgin Volume,” was a success because of you; when we called for submissions, you responded with overwhelming enthusiasm. We could not have succeeded without the support we received from the campus community, including the Gender Studies board, ASUPS, students and faculty. The campus-wide excitement surrounding the creation of the “Virgin Volume” further encouraged our belief in the necessity of continuing our discussion of topics pertaining to gender and sexuality on campus.

We received constructive feedback about the “Virgin Volume” and we took the semester to reflect on these critiques. Through our blog we have been able to provide a forum for our staff to explore and expand on the ideas introduced last spring. We look forward to Spring ’13, when we will be back with a full submission-based volume.

This fall the community was eager to see what Wetlands would publish next, so we decided to produce a smaller, politically driven, informative issue. Our aim is to provide a framework for further critical inquiry through a more comprehensive understanding of political art, reproductive justice, rape culture, and marriage equality. We hope that individuals will see this issue as a jumping off point to continue questioning and challenging the cultural and institutional forces that work against progressive social politics.

Local artists Chandler O’Leary and Jessica Spring started their Dead Feminists series in 2008 to highlight influential feminist activists. Their work exemplifies the fusion of art and politics that Wetlands aims to create. We interviewed the duo about their latest print, focusing on the importance of voter participation and diversity in representation.

The fact that America’s Republican presidential nominee stated he would defund Planned Parenthood, and had a wingman who drafted a “personhood amendment,” leaves us concerned about the political climate of reproductive rights. Wetlands’ work on reproductive justice highlights the importance of viewing this issue within the framework of social justice and addressing the institutional forces chipping away at the reproductive rights of American individuals.

There is a significant lack of discussion on campus about structural forces contributing to sexual violence. Acknowledging the presence of sexual violence and the patterns that perpetuate it is vital to combating rape culture. Individuals and campus organizations have already brought attention to these issues, and many have developed useful strategies for fighting cultures of violence. In accordance with these steps, we compiled information about rape culture and resources for survivors of sexual violence in hopes of bringing this information to a broader audience. This volume strives to be yet another stepping-stone toward building a more aware, inclusive, and proactive community.

With the monumental legalization of same-sex marriage by popular vote in three states this election, marriage equality is now being recognized as a fundamental human right rather than a partisan wedge issue. However, the need for more progressive changes in language, media, and culture is as necessary as ever. Wetlands works to deconstruct the marriage equality debate in order to contribute to dialogues of hope and solidarity.

The goal of Wetlands Magazine is to initiate discussion and challenge pre-conceived notions about gender, identity, and sexuality. We cannot provide representation for every voice on campus, but we hope to catch and reflect some of the lost, underrepresented, and often marginalized opinions of students, faculty, and staff. Above all, Wetlands aims to inform, empower, and inspire critical discussion of issues at the heart of the personal and the political.

Sincerely,

Any, Ryan, Soraya, and Tosia
Local Artist: Chandler O’Leary and Jessica Spring’s Dead Feminists Series

Love Nest

End of the Line

Keep The Change

Love Nest

End of the Line

Keep The Change
Chandler O'Leary and Jessica Spring are the artists of the 2012 piece “Keep the Change.” O’Leary, of Anagram Press, and Spring, of Springtide Press, joined forces in 2008 when they created their first collaborative print for the presidential election. The broadside featured a quote from the famous feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton. They made only 44 prints, which quickly sold out. The unexpected success of their first piece inspired them to turn the project into a series, called the “Dead Feminists.” Each new print is inspired by current political and social issues, and feature influential deceased feminist figures with powerful quotes. O’Leary and Spring publish a new work every few months, all of which they make available on the “Dead Feminist” Etsy store. For the 2012 election they created “Keep the Change,” a piece featuring Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman elected to Congress and the first woman to run for the Democratic presidential nomination. Spring was kind enough to sit down with Wetlands to chat about the series.

1. **What inspired you to create the series?**

The project started right before the last presidential election which coincided with Chandler’s arrival in Tacoma. I had found a quote by Elizabeth Cady Stanton about conservatives which called for an illustration of glasses inspired by a certain lady VP candidate. Chandler took up the challenge to draw them, but went much further and drew the whole quote. I was thrilled and once we set out to print we realized it would be easy enough to make it two color. The prints sold fast, and the series was born.

We have some rules for the series—the women we feature have to be dead, and we really avoid quotes that are simply focusing on how women can do what men can. We make a real effort to find a variety of voices and races, and to pull together a mix of famous, infamous, and should-be-known women. The project has continued for four years because there is still so much to say, and people want to listen.

2. **More broadly, what purpose can art serve politically?**

There’s a long tradition of artists acting as mirrors to what’s going on in society, but more than that, we’re literally using the power of the press to try to incite change (or at least greater knowledge). Broadsides (posters) were arguably the first form of mass communication. They’re sort of the great-great grandpappy of the modern poster. The democratization of printing hundreds of years ago led to inexpensive books being produced, which in turn allowed for a greater percentage of the population becoming literate. Early printers and writers at that time took advantage of this to disseminate information quickly (Martin Luther was one of those early adopters of the broadside, and you know what trouble he caused to the establishment!) to as many people as possible, even to advertise the typefaces they had available for customers. Today the media of mass communication have moved on, but the broadside is still a device employed by printers—it’s evolved into an art form that still uses text as its main conceptual and design tool. Our series hearkens back to the original purpose of the broadside: this idea of posters as rabble-rousers. And putting our images online has mirrored the original democratization of early printing. We’re still creating a physical object, but by “posting bills” online (instead of on a tree or in the town square) and through people sharing our work through things like social media, we’re causing the word to spread in a way that parallels what those early printers were doing.

3. **Why did you choose Shirley Chisholm?**

Shirley was an obvious choice because she was both a woman and an African-American candidate with so many parallels to the latest election. When you look at her election in 1972, it doesn’t feel like much has changed at all from war to civil rights issues. When we watched the documentary “Unbought and Unbossed” it was really inspiring, and we were able to glean the quote we ended up using on the broadside.

4. **What is the significance of the quote you chose for the piece?**

Shirley’s quote, “The one thing you’ve got going: your one vote” seemed like a fitting choice for the broadside, just reminding people of the importance of voting. So many people took their right to vote seriously despite efforts in key states like Ohio and Florida to hinder voter turnout. With the election behind us—and the realization that the votes of women and people of color controlled the outcome—it’s incredibly appropriate.

5. **What was the high and low of the last election for you, and what are you looking forward to with the outcomes?**

High points: The power of women in this election, both in terms of the outcome, and the newest senators ready to get us moving forward again.

Low point: Critical issues like the war and the environment being ignored and the notion of “legitimate rape.”
REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE: ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE CARE AND ABORTION FOR ALL

WHY PRO-LIFE IS REALLY ANTI-CHOICE

Although abortion has only been legal in the U.S. since the 1973 ruling in Roe v. Wade, people have been inducing abortions and using birth-control for over 4,000 years. From early condom prototypes (lemon halves as cervical caps, for example) to modern technologies like the NuvaRing, reproductive choice continues to be an innate human need. Anti-choice advocates most commonly claim that abortion is immoral, something which the government can prohibit in hopes of returning to a fabricated set of “traditional values.” But the fact is that abortion has existed for thousands of years and will continue to, whether or not it remains legal. Worldwide access to safe and legal abortions remains crucial to preserving women’s autonomy, health, and dignity.

When abortions are performed in safe and legal medical facilities they pose little to no threat to women’s health, especially within the first trimester, which is when 88% of abortions take place. Antiquated notions of female subordination continue to inform politicians, most of whom are male and have no medical understanding of comprehensive sex education, to push anti-choice legislation and put female autonomy secondary to their expected role as childbearers. These politicians fail to acknowledge the medical practicality and necessity of abortion procedures, and maintain a closed-minded anti-choice agenda. In 2011 alone, 27 anti-choice measures were enacted across the U.S. From mandating women to wait 24-hours before obtaining abortions and forcing them to have trans-vaginal ultrasounds, to “personhood amendments” that reduce women to mere vehicles for childbearing, these restrictions have been instated to prevent women from making decisions about their own bodies and lives.

Despite the fact that 1 in 3 American women will have an abortion in her lifetime, access to abortion is being undermined by a culture that refuses to accept abortion as a basic medical procedure. 87% of all U.S. counties and 97% of all rural U.S. counties lack abortion providers. Women in these areas, especially low income women, do not have access to proper medical care facilities with comprehensive information on all viable reproductive choices. Many hospitals (including local facilities such as Tacoma General, Group Health, and Allenmore) do not provide abortion services and may refuse to provide medically accurate information on the procedure.

The denial of comprehensive information about reproductive rights extends beyond the world of healthcare and into our schools. America’s teen pregnancy rate remains the highest in the developed world, but our government continues to fund abstinence-only education, despite numerous studies that have proven the ineffective and dangerous nature of the curriculum.

Throughout this article, we will refer to people opposed to the continued legalization of abortion as “anti-choice” rather than “pro-life,” because we find the term “pro-life” divisive and misleading. The pro-choice position is not “anti”-life in any way. Rather, we believe that an attention to the needs of the individuals who are affected by legislation on reproductive rights is the most important aspect of the debate about abortion. The pro-life movement argues for an agenda that demonstrates no concern for the lives of women and the children many of them already have. We use the term anti-choice when discussing the “pro-life” movement to place emphasis on the way the group seeks to strip power and autonomy from women.

The purpose of this article is not to tell every woman who faces an unintended pregnancy to go out and seek an abortion. Rather, we believe all women need to have the resources to make informed, autonomous decisions regarding their futures. But this access simply does not exist in America today, nor does it exist globally, where 47,000 women die every year from unsafe abortions. Such a high rate of fatality from a simple procedure that could be prevented through medical and legal accessibility is a global health epidemic that must be taken seriously.

Many feel complacent about the current politics of reproductive rights, believing abortion will remain protected by Roe v. Wade. The past few years and this fall’s election prove that reproductive rights are being unprecedentedly chipped away at the state level, and these efforts have serious consequences for women and the future of gender equality in the U.S. Women should not have to depend on the outcome of a political election to determine whether or not they have access to a full range of reproductive choices.
Q: What is an LSPC?
A: LSPCs, also known as crisis pregnancy centers (CPC), pose as family planning and women’s clinics that offer full pregnancy care and abortion services. In reality they are fake clinics that do not provide comprehensive services, but rather are dedicated to opposing abortion by using fear, deception and guilt to shame women into rejecting abortion.

Q: Are there any LSPCs in the University of Puget Sound area?
A: Yes. The group “Care Net,” is an LSPC located on 6th Ave.

Q: What services do they offer?
A: They provide pregnancy tests, and sometimes ultrasounds and counseling. However, the “counselor” is usually a volunteer with no medical training. They prolong the results of a pregnancy test to make women anxious, and thus more vulnerable, making women more likely to seek comprehensive reproductive care from a medical provider.

Q: Why do LSPCs get away with masquerading as abortion clinics?
A: Unfortunately, the centers are legal because women “voluntarily submit” to their practices. Fortunately, there is proposed legislation that would regulate LSPCs.

Q: How can we stop LSPCs?
A: Make sure you go to a legitimate health center, like Planned Parenthood, that provides comprehensive reproductive services.

Do not be fooled by ads for “free pregnancy tests” that LSPCs circulate. Educate yourself and others about the dangers these fake clinics pose.

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**Reflections**

Washington State remains a leader in legislating pro-choice initiatives. Since ’91, when WA implemented Initiative 120 (the Reproductive Privacy Act (RPA)), progressive agents in our state consistently defend and spread access to abortion. RPA states: “The state may not deny or interfere with a woman’s right to choose to have an abortion prior to viability of the fetus, or to protect her life or health.” Although the promises of the RPA apply to all of Washington’s female residents, 56% of Washington counties have no abortion provider, disproportionately harming young and low-income women who lack resources for traveling to far away services.

The attack on abortion is captured through the propaganda of LSPCs and the myths spread by other anti-choice leaders that obscure and demonize the procedure. However, information about abortion is available at CHWS and abortion procedures themselves are available here in Tacoma at Planned Parenthood, All Women’s Health and Cedar River Clinic. Washington’s Take Charge Program provides reproductive care to individuals without insurance or whose plans do not include contraception—offering all birth control methods, emergency contraception (the morning after pill), and testing for STIs.

Reproductive justice does not just affect women: By expanding the definition of “reproductive rights” into part of a broader framework of social justice we take into account the socioeconomic inequalities which influence access to care. We need to challenge the mentality that reproductive politics is only a women’s issue by reconstructing the norms so that everyone has equal responsibility to protect and fight for autonomy.
In the past few months leading up to the general election, the rape defenders of the world (e.g., Representatives Akin, Rivard, etc.) were on their game; they stayed super offensive, extremely ignorant, and overwhelmingly normative. The problem with politicians’ triggering statements is not an issue of partisanship. It is an overall cultural attitude towards violence and the victims of sexual violence, who are predominantly women. Academics have described this attitude and its implications as “rape culture.” Yes, select members of the GOP participate with glee, but rape culture extends far beyond the mouth of Paul Ryan and far beyond the bodies of women.

Rape culture is easily understood as a culture of violence wherein sexual violence against women and other sexual minorities is accepted as inevitable. Think of the “broken windows theory” of criminology: a clean, organized social environment sends the message that the area is monitored and that violation of the organization will not be tolerated. On the other hand, an environment that goes unmaintained (broken windows, litter) sends the message that the area is not protected and one can engage in criminal behavior with no risk of detection. Now, let’s apply this lens to rape culture. When I tell you that we are all participants in rape culture, a culture that perpetuates sexual violence by accepting it as normal, you might say, “but I’ve never raped anyone.” But when the bigger picture is taken into account you will start to see the pervasive images of sexual violence against women in the media (think of Kanye West’s “Monster” video), the language we use to describe the way women look (how many times did you say “slut” on Halloween?), the way rape is trivialized by our elected officials, how victims are blamed for their own assaults, and how rapists are excused by social norms and attitudes (“boys-will-be-boys”). Still not convinced we live in a culture that accepts sexual violence as normal? How many prison rape jokes have you heard in your life?

One deeply upsetting reality is that this understanding of “rape culture” has existed since the 1970s. We have had the tools to address rape for years, but a Department of Justice-funded trend analysis of rape studies from 2007 shows that incidents of rape have actually increased in the last 15 years.

As a university, our students have an increased risk of experiencing sexual violence than the general population. Conservative estimates say 1 in 4 college women will experience rape or attempted rape each academic year. Now that is a public health crisis. So when we wonder why are the numbers so high and why have they increased we need to address the ways we sustain a culture of violence, a rape culture.

It begins with our cultural tendency to teach women how not to get raped. Don’t drink too much, don’t wear short skirts, don’t walk home alone at night. The dangerous lesson learned from this messaging is that the men committing these crimes are not responsible for them (yes, I know it’s hard to hear, but men disproportionately commit acts of sexual violence. If we are going to talk about combatting these rates we need to be honest about who commits the crimes). The “oops, I accidentally raped you” excuse is bullshit. And yet we still see this attitude in lenient university policies. The very existence of mediation hearings in sexual misconduct processes supports the idea that rape happens because of simple misunderstandings.

One of the many myths that perpetuates rape culture on college campuses is the notion that a man commits...
rape just once; that it was a mistake. These policies and the attitudes they communicate allow rapists to commit such violent crimes over and over again. Because most studies on rapists have been done on prison populations and most sexual assaults are not prosecuted, the data on rapists is not completely representative of the cultural reality.

To investigate the violence that goes undetected Dr. David Lisak set out to study the men who get away with rape. Over a 20-year period, asking some 2,000 college men questions like, “Have you ever had sexual intercourse with someone, even though they did not want to, because they were too intoxicated to resist your sexual advances” and “Have you ever had sexual intercourse with an adult when they didn’t want to because you used physical force if they didn’t cooperate?” and came away with unsettling results. This now-famous study found that 1 in 16 men answered “yes” to these or similar questions and that, on college campuses, repeat offenders account for 9 out of every 10 rapes, making it clear that rape does not happen because of a simple miscommunication.

Fortunately for us, the University of Puget Sound leads the nation in its approach to sexual assault. The implementation of the Green Dot philosophy has brought about bystander trainings and healthy sexuality and sexual safety resources. Unfortunately for us, these advances are not enough. In 2011 there were 2 reported cases of forcible sexual assaults on our campus, though national studies tell is nearly 50% of sexual assaults go unreported.

The culture has done a fantastic job of teaching victims of sexual violence how to blame themselves, and that rape allegations ruin lives of otherwise good people, making understandable how sexual violence goes unreported. A huge culture shift in our approach to sexual violence is necessary in order to create a society in which violence is unacceptable.

**Resources for Survivors of Sexual Violence**

**NATIONAL**

- **RAINN** (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network) is the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, responsible for the creation of the National Sexual Abuse Hotline (1.800.656.HOPE), as well as the National Sexual Assault Online Hotline(www.online.rainn.org). Both are confidential. www.rainn.org

- **Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs** provides general information about resources, education, prevention, and training. www.ws-cap.org

- **1 in 6** is a national organization serving men with histories of childhood sexual abuse as well as their loved ones. 1 in 6 has partnered with RAINN to create their own hotline, as well as online counseling. www.1in6.org

**ON CAMPUS**

- **CHWS Counseling**
- **University Chaplain**
- **SIRGE Coordinator**
- **Res Life Staff**
- **Security**
- **Harassment Reporting Officers** (see URL below) http://www.pugetsound.edu/about/offices--services/human-resources/policies/campus-policies/campus-policy-prohibiting-hara/harassment-reporting-officers/

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“We need to OCCUPYRAPE in every school, park, radio, TV station, household, office, factory, refugee camp, military base, back room, night club, alleyway, courtroom, UN office. We need people to truly try and imagine -- once and for all -- what it feels like to have your body invaded, your mind splintered, your soul shattered. We need to let our rage and our compassion connect us so we can change the paradigm of global rape.”

- Written by Eve Ensler and performed in the 2012 Vagina Monologues
On November 6th 2012, Washington made history by becoming one of the first three states, along with Maine and Maryland, to approve marriage equality legislation by popular vote. Our state is a hopeful example of the nation’s growing commitment to equality. But there are still many obstacles to overcome on national, statewide, community and individual levels.

For residents of WA and the Puget Sound community, supporting progressive measures to promote queer rights can seem obvious. But not one of the three states that passed marriage equality did so with a vote of larger than three percent, reflecting that many people still don’t see why marriage equality is significant to the human rights movement.

Although the results in WA and other states weren’t won by landsides, they still are monumental victories in a long battle for recognition and equality for the queer community. The Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffen stated in a video message following the election, “Years from now we’ll remember this Election Day as the most important and the most historic in the history of the LGBT movement.”

However, if we are ever going to collectively and effectively create a culture that rejects discrimination, then we must think beyond just law.

It is no mistake that the passage of these measures took place during a time of cultural overhaul of positive, though often stereotypical, images of gays and lesbians in popular culture. Projects like Dan Savage’s “It Gets Better” are responses to high rates of queer youth suicide. Television shows such as Modern Family and Glee have been trailblazers in disseminating positive representations of queer people.

We also need to understand the term “traditional marriage” is baseless. Marriage has always been in flux, it no longer grants husbands legal ownership of wives, interracial marriage is common, and marital rape has been completely illegal in the U.S. since 1993. The institution of marriage has been defined by expanding inclusivity and has remained a vehicle for civil, political, and economic rights. These rights are only available to queer people in nine states, and eleven countries worldwide.

We live in a time ripe for cultural change. The idea of combating systemic hate and fighting for queer rights is becoming less intimidating in the wake of the movement’s major victories. It now seems unimaginable for an anti-queer politician to be taken seriously by the public. In 2004 an election platform promoting an anti-queer agenda carried political currency for politicians; today this is far less frequently the case.

The quotes below capture some of the opinions of the queer community. LGBT activists do not have a united position on marriage equality. Some groups see the institution as exclusive and heteronormative, while others argue it’s an important step regardless of its antiquated foundations.

“The gay marriage debate can feel exclusive to trans people. For instance, [...] if a trans guy were to be with a woman, that’s a straight marriage, but because of all the bureaucratic hoops that you have to jump through just to be recognized as your own actual gender in a legal way, you’re a little screwed either way.” - Khai Ayers, ‘15

“I want my civil liberties, in whatever structural form those come in. There’s not a lot about marriage as an institution that is particularly liberating, but if it gets me those rights then it is my duty to support it.” - Professor Suzanne Holland

“I absolutely agree that fighting for the rights for same-sex marriage is going too far. I would outlaw marriage for everyone, including heterosexuals, and grant access to a civil partnership union across the board.” -Julie Bindel, The Guardian
Washington state’s marriage equality referendum, R-74, caused a great deal of conflict and controversy. Even with its approval, some citizens are left ignorant of the larger political and social implications of marriage equality as a civil rights issue.

America was founded on the ideal of separation of church and state. However, this past election the Catholic Church was the “top fundraiser of discrimination,” according to the Human Rights Campaign. The Church raised over 2 million dollars in this election alone. When religious institutions begin to hold significant political power, pushing legislation that is informed by their scripture, a threat is posed to all of our freedoms. Referendum 74 respects religious rights, explicitly stating that the measure would, “...preserve the right of clergy or religious organizations to refuse to perform, recognize, or accommodate any marriage ceremony.” R-74 gives accepting religious institutions the opportunity to perform same-sex marriage ceremonies. But no organization will be forced by state law to compromise their individual belief system and marry same-sex couples.

The recognition of civil marriage for same-sex couples has a significant impact on the healthcare industry. Group Health, a Seattle-based healthcare provider, said in light of the referendum that, “creating a welcoming environment for all our patients is an important aspect of creating equal access to care.” Awarding same-sex couples the right to marry ensures them visitation rights, leave benefits, access to health insurance and pension, automatic will rights, and more.

Beyond the issue of health care, a reduction in stress and stigmatization of lifestyle will improve the quality of life for the queer community in Washington. As greater progress is made to de-stigmatize non-heterosexual identities, issues prevalent in the community such as depression, self-harm, and suicide will be addressed more broadly, and hopefully reduced.

Marriage equality is more than a moral or human rights issue; it’s also practical for strengthening our state’s economy. The economic climate of other states who have passed marriage equality bills illustrate this reality. In an article from CNN, Blake Ellis writes, “New York City collected $16 million in tax revenue from same-sex marriages over the past year.” If marriage equality is federally recognized it could generate “an estimated $1 billion per year for the federal budget.”

It is clear that the issue of queer rights extends beyond the queer community and affects our society as a whole on multiple levels. The passing of Referendum 74 does not simply give queer individuals the right to marry; it is a monumental step in recognizing all Americans as equal citizens, setting an example for the rest of our nation.

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**Eleven countries** in the world recognize and perform same-sex marriages. While in the United States, only eleven states have legalized same-sex marriage.

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**2001**

The year The Netherlands became the first country to legalize same-sex marriage.

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**1,138**

The number of federal benefits and responsibilities marriage offers

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**2004**

The year that Massachusetts became the first U.S. state to legalize same-sex marriage.

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Argentina  Belgium  Canada  Denmark  Iceland  Netherlands  Norway  Portugal  Spain  South Africa  Sweden
Artist Statement: The raised fist symbolizes solidarity and has been historically adopted by marginalized groups in causes of resistance. As Wetlands Magazine strives for inclusivity, the fist inside of the interlocking gender symbols for female, male, and non-binary represents our dedication to social and political equality.