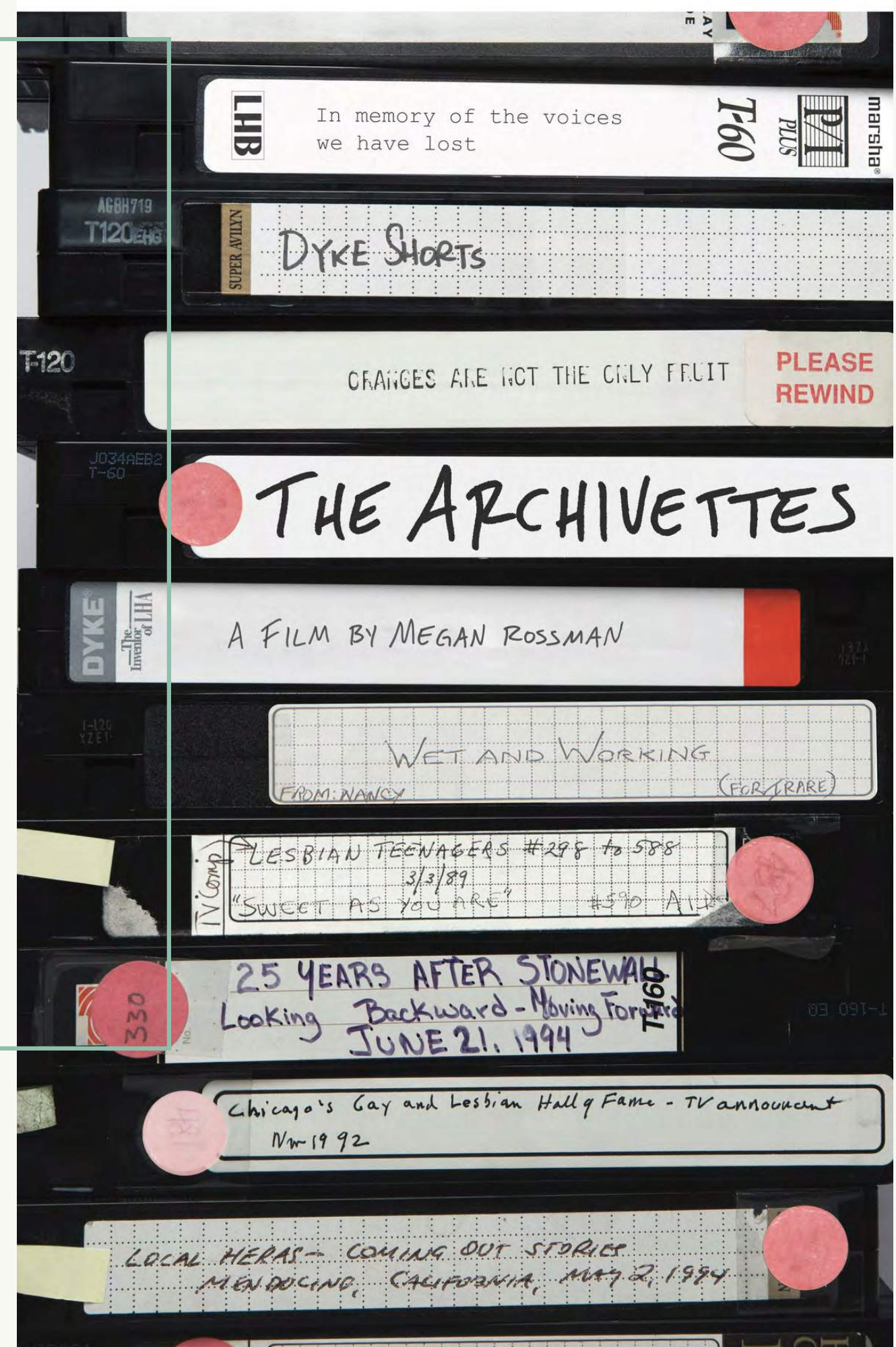


THE ARCHIVETTES

A 2018 DOCUMENTARY



The Lesbian Herstory Archives is home to the world's largest collection of materials by and about lesbians and their communities. They are located on Park Slope in Brooklyn.



DIRECTED BY

MEGAN ROSSMAN

RUN TIME

61 minutes

COMPOSED BY

Lori Scacco

PRODUCED BY

Caroline Que

STARRING

Deborah Edel, Paula Grant, Maxine Wolfe, Shawn(ta) Smith-Cruz, Colette Montoya-Sloan

Press Contact

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Synopsis



“Our history was disappearing as quickly as we were making it.”

With that realization, Deborah Edel and Joan Nestle co-founded the Lesbian Herstory Archives, the world’s largest collection of materials by and about lesbians. For more than 40 years, through many of the major milestones in LGBTQIA+ history, the all-volunteer organization has literally rescued history from the trash. Now the co-founders are in their mid-70s, and the group faces a number of challenges: A transfer of leadership. The rise of digital technology. A renewed call to activism in a politically charged moment.

The Archivettes is a documentary film that explores how this group came together to combat lesbian invisibility and create “a place that says yes.”



Director's Statement

THE FIRST TIME I ENTERED THE LESBIAN HERSTORY ARCHIVES, I FELT LIKE I WAS COMING HOME.

I HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF LESBIAN HISTORY BEFORE GOING THERE AND HAVE FOUND MYSELF AND MY OWN HISTORY IN THESE ARCHIVES. IT WAS THIS FEELING THAT INSPIRED ME TO MAKE THREE SHORT FILMS ABOUT THE ARCHIVES: *A LIFETIME OF MAKING CHANGE*, *LOVE LETTER RESCUE SQUAD*, AND *A BRIEF HERSTORY*.

WITH EACH SHORT FILM I MADE ABOUT THIS GROUP OF WOMEN — WHO CALL THEMSELVES “ARCHIVETTES,” A PLAY ON “ARCHIVISTS” — I GAINED A FULLER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF THEIR STORY. THIS POTENTIAL, COUPLED WITH MY PERSONAL GOAL TO CREATE A FEATURE-LENGTH FILM, LED TO *THE ARCHIVETTES*.

AS PRESIDENT TRUMP AND HIS ADMINISTRATION WORK TO DISMANTLE LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS AND OTHER PROTECTIONS, THERE IS A SENSE OF URGENCY TO UNDERSTAND PAST STRUGGLES OF THE MOVEMENT. *THE ARCHIVETTES* EXPLORES THE HISTORY OF THE ARCHIVE, AND THROUGH THAT, THE PERSONAL AND POLITICAL STRUGGLES OF THE WOMEN INVOLVED IN IT.

EVERYONE WHO WORKED ON THIS FILM IDENTIFIES AS FEMALE OR GENDER-QUEER AND ALMOST EVERYONE IDENTIFIES ON THE LGBTQIA+ SPECTRUM. AS A LESBIAN MYSELF, I WANTED TO EMPLOY OTHER QUEER WOMEN BECAUSE I KNEW THAT THEY WOULD UNDERSTAND THE SUBJECT MATTER AND TREAT IT WITH CARE, AND THAT AS WOMEN, WE ARE LARGELY UNDEREMPLOYED IN OUR INDUSTRY.

WHILE THE YOUNGER GENERATION’S VOICES AND VISION ARE VALUABLE, THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THIS PROJECT FOR ME HAS BEEN CAPTURING THE FOUNDING GENERATION’S STORIES BEFORE THEY ARE NO LONGER HERE TO TELL THEM. THE WOMEN WHO BEGAN THE ARCHIVES ARE NOW IN THEIR 70S AND 80S, FACING THEIR FINAL PERIOD OF INVOLVEMENT.

ONE SUBJECT I INTERVIEWED LATER HAD A STROKE, AND SHE HAS STRUGGLED TO REGAIN HER MEMORY. I’M VERY GRATEFUL TO HAVE PRESERVED A RECORD OF HER MEMORIES BEFORE THIS EVENT OCCURRED. IF NOTHING ELSE, THIS FILM SERVES AS AN ARCHIVE ITSELF, OF THE WOMEN WHO BUILT THE LESBIAN HERSTORY ARCHIVES, WHAT IT STANDS FOR AND WHAT IT ACCOMPLISHED.

MEGAN ROSSMAN

2

welcome
to the
Lesbian Herstory
Archives



Cast & Crew

Megan Rossman: Director



Megan Rossman is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and assistant professor and chair of communication at Purchase College.

Rossman's films have screened at festivals including DOC NYC and Outfest. Her film *Love Letter Rescue Squad* won best student documentary in the Emerging Filmmakers Showcase at the Cannes Film Festival American Pavilion in 2017. She has also worked as a multimedia journalist at The Washington Post and as the director of video at Teach For America.

In 2011, she won a regional Emmy for her video *Unfinished Business: Earth Day, 40 Years Later*. In 2009, Rossman collaborated on "A Mother's Risk," which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in international reporting.



Lori Scacco: Composer

Lori Scacco is a composer, producer, and sound collagist based in New York City. Using micro-sound, melody, acoustic resonance and digital processing, she creates liminal, elemental music through synthesis.

Her scores and site-specific installations span the worlds of art, film, classical dance, and performance. Select collaborations have been presented by Harvestworks, the Joyce Theater, the Miller Theatre, the New York Choreographic Institute, the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, and the Wexner Center for the Arts.

Caroline Que is a senior editor at The New York Times, where she focuses on communication and workflow. She previously worked at Yahoo, where she led a video initiative, and The Washington Post.



Caroline Que: Executive Producer

DEBORAH EDEL

Deborah Edel is one of the founders of the Lesbian Herstory Archives and also serves as the organization's treasurer and a member of the coordinating committee. Deborah is a licensed clinical social worker and recently volunteered at a legal clinic in Tucson, fighting for the rights of border crossers threatened with deportation.

PAULA GRANT

Paula Grant is a lifelong activist for human rights, civil rights, lesbian and gay rights, and women's rights and is presently retired, having worked for 40 years in public social services. Paula is a Coordinator at the Lesbian Herstory Archives and has volunteered with LHA since 1979.

MAXINE WOLFE

Maxine Wolfe is an Archives coordinator and has been a volunteer at the Archives since 1984. A longtime activist and political organizer and a Professor Emerita of Psychology at CUNY Graduate School, Maxine is one of the founders of the Lesbian Avengers and co-founded the NY and National ACT UP Women's Committees.

ABOUT THE CAST

SHAWN(TA) SMITH-CRUZ

Shawn(ta) Smith-Cruz is an archivist at the Lesbian Herstory Archives, and Assistant Professor and Head of Reference at the Graduate Center Library, CUNY. Shawn has a BS in Queer Women's Studies from the CUNY Baccalaureate Program, an MFA in Creative Writing/Fiction, and an MLS with a focus on Archiving and Records Management from Queens College.

Her writing is featured in journals and anthologies such as *Informed Agitation: Library and Information Skills in Social Justice Movements and Beyond* (2014), *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* (2013), *Out Behind the Desk: Workplace Issues for LGBTQ Librarians* (2011), *Films for the Feminist Classroom* (2010), and others. She is also a Zinster, disseminating her Zine, *Black Lesbians in the 70's and Before : An at Home Tour* at the Lesbian Herstory Archives. As a reference librarian at the CUNY Graduate Center, Shawn is the LGBTQ studies liaison where she gets to promote a queer library collection.

COLETTE MONTOYA-SLOAN

Colette Montoya-Sloan is a librarian at Adelphi University's Manhattan Center and CUNY's Guttman Community College.

Colette is a fellow at the Indigenous Digital Archive, a project of the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Her recent article, "Visual Representations, Liminal Identities, and Archival Homes: Giulia Nazzaro & Colette Montoya-Sloan in Conversation," appeared in *Hemisphere: Visual Cultures of the Americas*.

She is a coordinator of the Lesbian Herstory Archives, where she coordinates the Spoken Word Project. Colette is a member of the Pueblo of Isleta tribe of American Indians and a descendant of the San Felipe Pueblo.

Cast Photos

MAXINE WOLFE



PAULA GRANT



COLETTE MONTTOYA
SLOAN



Cast Photos

DEBORAH EDEL



SHAWN(TA) SMITH-
CRUZ



THE ARCHIVETTES



The Archivettes Credits

FEATURING (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

Melissa Saks
Colette Montoya-Sloan
Ellie Ferris-O'Neill
Deborah Edel
Paula Grant
Red Washburn
Elvis Bakaitis
Morgan Gwenwald
Stevie Jones

Giulia Nazzaro
Jennifer Sloan
Judith Schwarz
Maxine Wolfe
Illaria Dana
Allison Elliott
P. Lindsay Theobald
Joan Nestle
Stahimili Paulette Mapp

Shawn(ta) Smith-Cruz
Saskia Scheffer
Eva Kollisch
Naomi Replansky
Polly Thistlethwaite
Ashley-Luisa
Santangelo
Teddy Minucci

**ARCHIVAL
FOOTAGE BY:**

Lesbian Herstory
Archives
National Archives
Sara Yager
Manuela Soares
Polly Thistlethwaite
Jean Carlomusto
Catherine Gund
DIVA TV
UCLA Film &
Television Archive

COLOR BY:

Marika Litz

**ARCHIVAL
PHOTOS BY:**

Morgan Gwenwald
Saskia Scheffer

**CHIEF SOUND
RECORDIST:**

Zoya Baker

**DIRECTOR OF
PHOTOGRAPHY:**

Megan Rossman

COMPOSER:

Lori Scacco

**ADDITIONAL
SOUND**

RECORDING BY:

Samantha Farinella
Fernanda Faya
Amanda Katz
Caroline Que
Kaija Siirala

ANIMATION BY:

Pamela Guest

**TRANSCRIPTION
AND FACT
CHECKING BY:**

Daniele de Groot

**STILL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY:**

Prisca Edwards

**GRAPHIC AND
WEB DESIGN BY:**

Sara Duell

SOUND MIXING BY:

Samantha Giovinco

**FUNDING
PROVIDED BY:**

Princess Grace
Foundation-USA



Behind the Scenes



RETURN
OF
THE
Lavender
MENACE

IN
MEMORY
OF THE
VOICES
WE HAVE
LOST
LESBIAN
HERSTORY
ARCHIVES

stop bigotry!
stop homophobia!
stop hate!
resist

WE'RE
STRONGER
TOGETHER