

Terra Wilcoxson Builds Creative Support

QuArt founder Terra Wilcoxson works in many different media including drawing, photo transfer, fabrics and installation art. She is passionate about creative collaboration. "I was looking for a group that could help to build creative support within the queer community, but I couldn't find one, so I just decided to start it," she says.

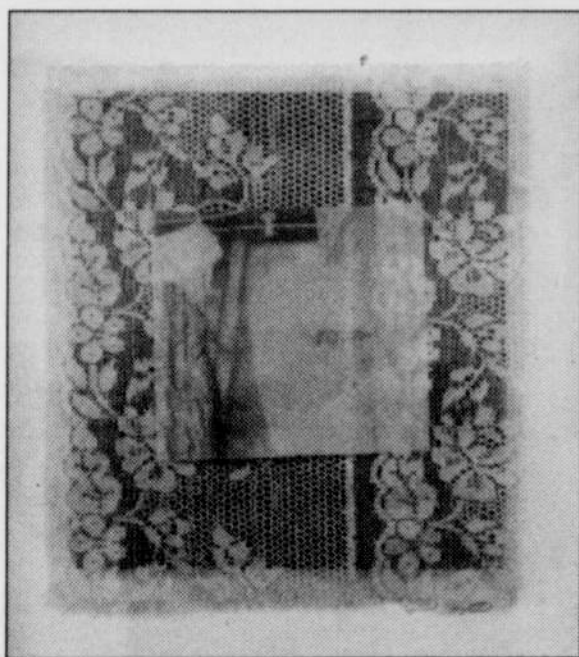
Wilcoxson wrote a mission statement and posted an ad on Craigslist last fall, drawing in a diverse group of artists. The collective has been showing monthly, usually with a theme such as miniatures, Valentine's Day and the color yellow. QuArt accepts members regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

"'Queer' to me means I'm part of a really large, collective group of individuals with many different communities inside of that," Wilcoxson says, "and I think we're getting better and better and communicating and supporting each other, and to me that's really exciting."

In addition to her work with QuArt, Wilcoxson works 40 hours a week as a social worker. She does case management and advocacy for teen parents on welfare. Somehow, she still finds time to volunteer at the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center, garden and work on her own personal artwork.

Her work in the miniature show at Cup and Saucer Northeast through May 24 is a series of six pieces titled "Antagonism and Femininity." Each 4-inch square of graphite incorporates glass and human hair. Wilcoxson says this work is in line with her interest in exploring gender identity, personal history and storytelling through her art. This series specifically addresses femininity's role in cultural influences and icons.

"When I think of artwork, it's about anything that seduces me, grabs hold of me," she says. "Obviously, my gender expression, me as a queer person is involved. It evolves as I personally evolve."



Jamie Winterhawke Likes Disturbing Imagery

Jamie Winterhawke was drawn in by QuArt's ad on Craigslist. She has been a collective member for the past six months, and her work has appeared in almost every show.

"I went to one of the meetings, and I found the people to be just like me," she says. "It's nice to be around like-minded queer artists, not that being queer has much to do with my art making."

A California native, Winterhawke moved to Portland last year after completing her master's degree. She is seeking a job teaching art. Before pursuing her passion for art full time, she went to mortuary school and earned her funeral director's license.

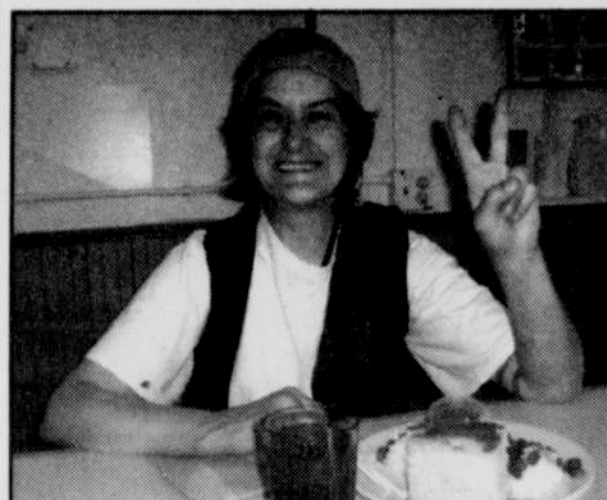
"I did embalm my share of bodies in school," she says, explaining how this experience influenced her as an artist. "I like disturbing imagery. I like to deal with subject matter that's not dealt with or seen much."

Winterhawke's piece for the upcoming City Hall art show will be a departure from the macabre. She is interviewing lesbians about what Gay Pride means to them for a short film that will appear in the exhibit. "My hope for that film was to show that lesbians are mothers, auto mechanics, waitresses, eclectic and diverse; we're not just a stereotype," she says.



As someone who came out in the 1970s, Winterhawke says she is slightly uneasy about identifying herself as queer. "I know that reclaiming a derogatory word is supposed to lessen its power, but I'm still not all that comfortable with it because I've heard it in the past used in a negative context towards myself and other people," she says.

She is learning to embrace the word in its new inclusive context. "To me, it encompasses lesbians, gay males, transgendered people, bisexuals and heterosexuals who are gay-friendly, people who are on the fringes of the majority, leading non-traditional lifestyles," she says. 10



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