



old Lesbians

Aesthetica

audible 

2023 Listening Pitch

Dir. Meghan McDonough, 2023. 29m

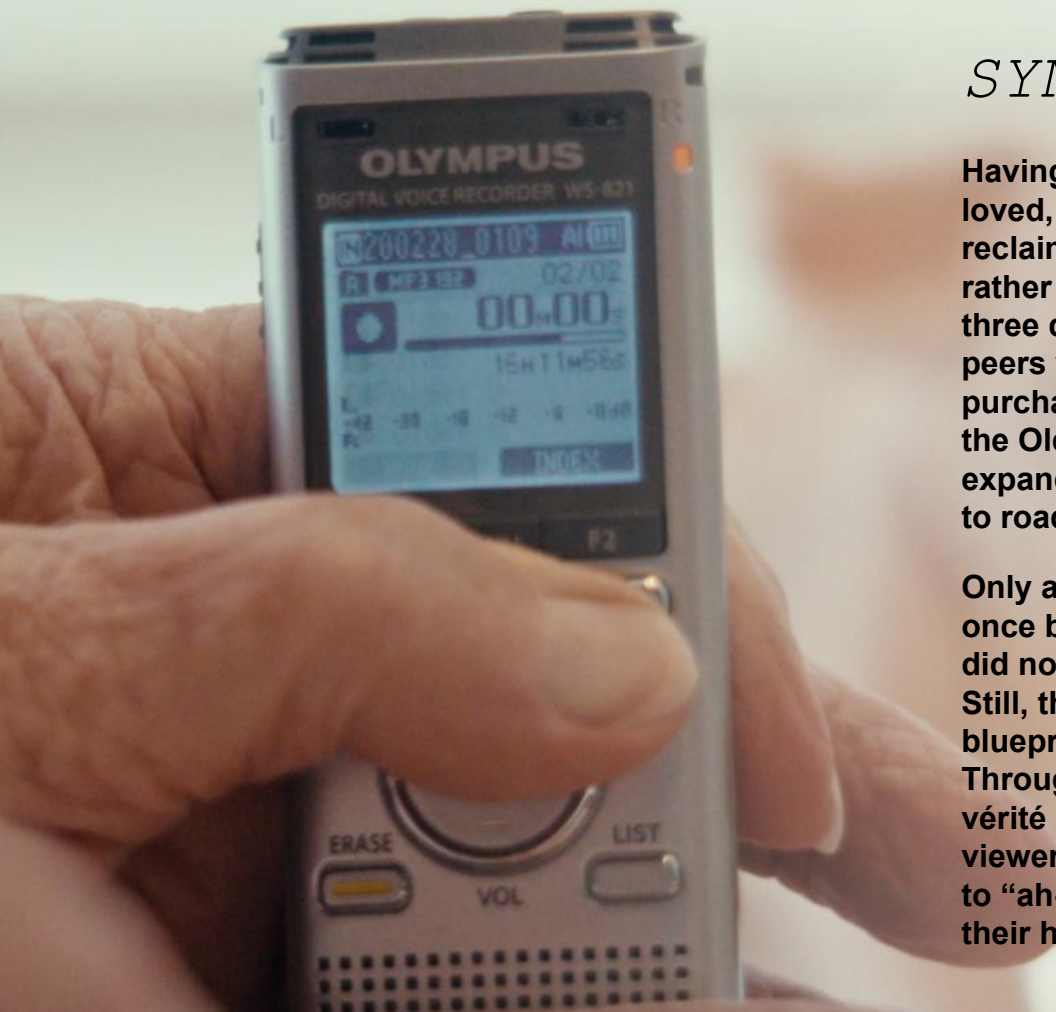
Okay, now comes the
lesbian part of it.

- mmk.

LOGLINE

For the last quarter century, retired schoolteacher Arden Eversmeyer journeyed from Houston across the country to record hundreds of oral "herstories" with a mostly invisible population that is rapidly disappearing. Old Lesbians honors Arden's legacy by animating the resilient, joyful voices she preserved in the Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project, from first crush to first love, from the closet to coming out, and finally from loss to connection. (2023, 29m)





SYNOPSIS

Having once lived in fear of losing her job for who she loved, Arden Eversmeyer recognized the importance of reclaiming the words “old” and “lesbian” with pride rather than shame. In 1998, after losing her partner of three decades and realizing that many of her Houston peers would die before telling their truth, Arden purchased a small audio recorder and began taping. As the Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project (OLOHP) expanded by word of mouth, Arden and others began to road-trip across the country to gather more.

Only about half of the interviewees are still alive. Many once believed they were alone in what they felt; they did not have examples in the media nor vocabulary. Still, they carved out lives for themselves with no blueprint in a patriarchal and heteronormative society. Through archival footage and audio, animation, and vérité scenes in the present day, *Old Lesbians* takes viewers inside these women’s lives— from beginnings to “ah-ha” moments to coming out and proudly living their hard-earned herstories.



Handwritten signatures and messages on the t-shirt:

- Top left: *Patricia Brimada Schwartz*
- Top center: *AVENGERS JAMES! -162*
- Top right: *Thank you @-Deborah C99*
- Center: **THE AVENGERS THE LESBIAN**
- Bottom left: *That you are being wonderful - Lyn NY*
- Bottom center: *Love you from away*
- Bottom right: *Wine Love Hanne 4/15*
- Other visible text: *AVENGERS JAMES! -162*, *Thank you @-Deborah C99*, *HADAR NYC*, *Wine Love Hanne 4/15*, *That you are being wonderful - Lyn NY*, *Love you from away*, *Patricia Brimada Schwartz*, *AVENGERS JAMES! -162*, *Thank you @-Deborah C99*, *HADAR NYC*, *Wine Love Hanne 4/15*, *That you are being wonderful - Lyn NY*, *Love you from away*



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As a queer woman, I connect deeply with Arden Eversmeyer's drive to preserve our community's life stories through the Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project (OLOHP). I'm especially motivated by OLOHP's stated mission, to "remind us all of the relative freedom we now enjoy because of the women who were strong enough to live their lives and love whom they wanted in a hostile society." At the same time, I aim to center the joy, liberation, and sense of humor embedded in each recording. Their words have made me laugh, cry, and everything in between.

My background in journalism has trained me to tell others' stories with diligence and care. I view this documentary as a joint creation— one that Arden started when she began collecting stories, that her participants and interviewers expanded, and that I am showcasing through film. Ultimately, I hope that this film will lead to more intergenerational queer spaces that connect older and younger members of the community and our allies.

TEAM



MEGHAN MCDONOUGH - Director/Editor - Meghan is a filmmaker and journalist who creates documentaries to better understand our world. She won Aesthetica/Audible's Listening Pitch in 2023 to fund her documentary short *Old Lesbians*. "A Question of Sex," her documentary series for Scientific American about how gender biases skew science, won a 2023 Telly Award and was nominated for the 2023 GLAAD Media Awards. Meghan was selected for the Atlantic Media Editorial Fellowship, and her work has since appeared in Quartz, NBC, Thomson Reuters Foundation, FiveThirtyEight, The New Yorker, The Washington Post, The Guardian, and Atlas Obscura, and has been supported by the Pulitzer Center and the Economic Hardship Reporting Project. [Website](#)



RENGIM MUTEVELLIOGLU - Creative Director/Cinematographer - Rengim Mutevellioglu is a Turkish portrait and documentary photographer based in Brooklyn. Mutevellioglu studied Visual Arts and received her BFA from Sorbonne University in Paris. Her latest solo photo exhibit received national recognition in Venezuela, where it was held at the Museum of National Art. She currently works as a freelance photographer in New York, collaborating with media organizations such as The New York Times, Reuters, The Washington Post and The Guardian. [Website](#)

TEAM

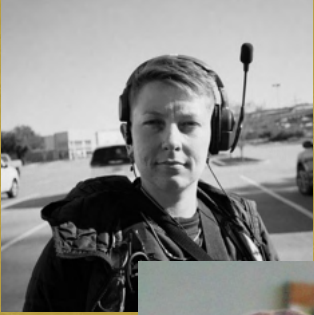


MARCIE LACERTE - Art Director/Animator - Marcie LaCerte is a mixed Chinese-American animator and director based in New York City. Her work has been recognized by The New Yorker, Vimeo Staff Picks, Ottawa International Animation Festival, GLAS, AFI Docs, and more. Her clients include Vox, PBS, NPR, Quartz, Giphy, and Scientific American. In her free time, she enjoys listening to podcasts, designing HTML-only websites for friends, and talking about Shrek. [Website](#)



STEVIE BORRELLO - Producer - Stevie is a producer, writer, and third-generation New Yorker. She has produced documentary films and series for HBO, The New Yorker, and Vice TV. Stevie is passionate about discovering and producing stories on underrepresented topics, as well as partnering with and nourishing talent in a diverse array of directors. [Website](#)

TEAM



CASSIE COKER - Cinematographer - Raised in Texas, Cassie is a queer cinematographer mesmerized by the process of storytelling within the documentary world. She is inspired by the humble leaders in her life who constantly challenge her to visually explore the natural world and celebrate introspection of everyday life. She has worked on a wide range of projects, from music videos and indie shorts to nationally acclaimed Netflix shows. Within any project, she values embracing empathy to capture intentional and authentic stories. [IMDb](#)



DANI NUNES - Animator - Dani is a creative who brings stories to life through animation, illustration, and art direction. She was born and raised in Lisbon and currently resides in the UK. With a degree in Fine Art, Dani specializes in character design and animation. Beyond the studio, she is passionate about nature, loves spending time with animals and enjoys surfing. Her work is driven by the desire to transform beautiful ideas into captivating visuals. [Website](#)



TORI ABREU DOS SANTOS - Sound Design/Composer - Tori Abreu dos Santos (they/them) is a queer Brazilian-American composer and sound artist born and raised in Los Angeles and currently residing in Brooklyn, NY. They obtained a Bachelor of Arts from Bennington College in 2022 with concentrations in music, sound practices and sociology. Their work centers around the investigation of music composition and sound in interaction with multimedia. [Website](#)

OLD LESBIANS



BARB KUCHARCZYK is an Air Force veteran who served more than two decades in the military, including under the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. In 1990, Kucharczyk testified before a House Armed Services Subcommittee about opening Combat-coded career fields to women in all Service Branches. Barb was stationed in a number of states as well as overseas in Okinawa, Korea, and Germany. She now resides in Sumter, South Carolina. She is a South Carolina Ambassador for the Military Women’s Memorial, and volunteers for a range of organizations including the Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project (OLOHP) and local museums.



GAYE ADEGBALOLA, Blues Music Award winner and a founding member of Saffire - The Uppity Blues Women (1984-2009), plays guitar, harmonica and is a composer. She has recorded 10 CDs on Alligator Records and has toured widely throughout the U.S. and internationally. A former Virginia State Teacher of the Year and long time activist, she continues to provide a voice for those who have been marginalized by society. Gaye was interviewed for OLOHP in 2015 and five of her songs, including “Queer Blues,” are featured in *Old Lesbians*. She resides in Fredericksburg, Virginia.



EDIE DALY is a writer and activist who splits her time between Gulfport “Dykeport,” Florida and Northampton “Lesbianville,” Massachusetts. In her memoir Old Lesbian Memory Quilt, she recounts formative experiences in her birth family, her youth, her marriage to a man, raising three children as a single parent, her activism and, at age 60, finding love with Jackie Mirkin and joyfully beginning a shared life. She has conducted several interviews for OLOHP.

Contact oldlesbiansfilm@gmail.com for speaking engagements.

ASSETS

[Trailer](#)

[Poster](#)

[Stills](#)

[Website QR code](#)



LINKS

[Website](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[Instagram](#)

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PRESS



'Old Lesbians' documentary highlights the importance of recording 'herstory'



Embracing Generational Legacies: A Film Review of Old Lesbians

FESTIVALS



COMMUNITY SCREENINGS

Faulkner Morgan Archive - *Lexington, KY*

The Center & American LGBTQ+ Museum -
New York, NY

The OUTWORDS Archive - *Virtual*

Sapphic Circle - Women's Studies Online - *Virtual*

BLAST (Bi, Lesbian and Straight Together)
Women of the Palm Beaches -
West Palm Beach, FL

Qaareva - *Helsinki, Finland*

Cambridgeshire Libraries - *Cambridge, UK*

Project ORE - *New York, NY*

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change - *Virtual*

Dyke+ ArtHaus - *Philadelphia, PA*

El Rio - *San Francisco, CA*



California State Capitol - *Sacramento, CA*

Los Angeles LGBT Center - *Los Angeles, CA*

Alabama Youth Activist Alliance - *Montevallo, AL*

Amherst College - *Amherst, MA*

Smith College - *Northampton, MA*

Swarthmore College - *Swarthmore, PA*

Texas Woman's University - *Denton, TX*

University of Houston - *Houston, TX*

Lafayette College - *Easton, PA*

Association of Canadian Archivists McGill -
Montreal, Canada

Sewanee: The University of the South - *Sewanee, TN*

West Milford High School - *West Milford, NJ*

SUPPORT

Funded by
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Commissioned by
Guardian Documentaries

**The
Guardian**
DOCUMENTARIES

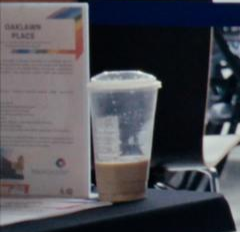
Aesthetica Film Festival and Audible have teamed up for [The Listening Pitch 2023](#). Filmmakers were invited to submit proposals for a documentary based on the theme of how hearing new stories can change our lives.

Founded in 2011, Aesthetica is a BAFTA and BIFA qualifying international film festival which takes place annually in York, UK, at the beginning of November. It is a celebration of independent film from around the world, and an outlet for supporting and championing filmmaking.

Audible is the leading producer and provider of audio storytelling.

Guardian News & Media (GNM) is a global news organisation renowned for its agenda-setting journalism. [Guardian Documentaries](#) is an expression of that core editorial purpose and ethos. We curate and commission independent film-makers from around the world and are committed to telling contemporary stories with unique artistic vision. Guardian Documentaries have won critical acclaim, including an Oscar in 2021 for [Colette](#) and a 2022 BAFTA Film Award for [The Black Cop](#). Guardian Documentaries play at film festivals around the world, garnering further recognition at festivals such as Cannes, Tribeca, Sheffield DocFest, CPH:DOX and IDFA.

coalition
for aging **lgbt**



FULL CREDITS

Directed & Edited by

Meghan McDonough

Cinematography by

Cassie Coker
Rengim Mutevellioglu

Art Director

Marcie LaCerte

Creative Director

Rengim Mutevellioglu

Producer

Stevie Borrello

Animation

Marcie LaCerte
Dani Nunes

Additional Animation Design

Rengim Mutevellioglu

Additional Animation

Meghan McDonough

Sound Design & Foley

Tori Abreu dos Santos

Production Counsel

Matthew Rogers

Research Assistants

Cassidy Duncan
Helena Ravix
Sheridan Cole

Composer

Tori Abreu dos Santos

Re-recording Mixer

Sam Beneitone
Tori Abreu dos Santos

Digital Intermediate Services provided by

Sodalite Color

Colorist

Tam Le

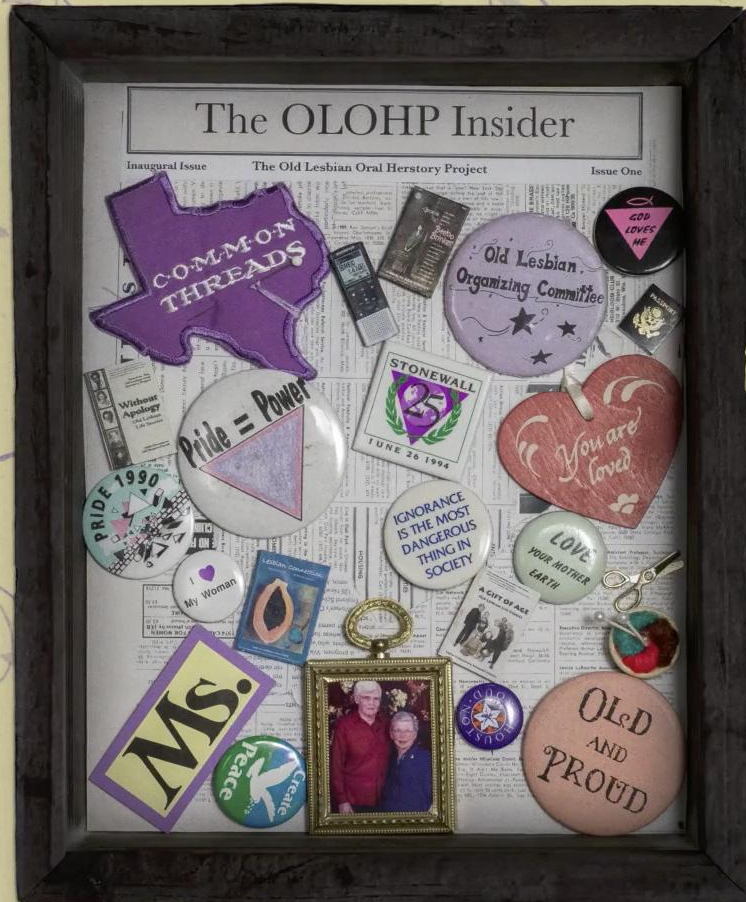
DI Coordinator

John Daniels-Riveros

Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project Voices (In order of appearance)

Arden Eversmeyer
Arminta "Skip" Neal
Barb Kucharczyk
Ann Bannon Weldy
Christine Pattee
Jean Wilson
Virginia "Ginny" Borders
Merril Mushroom
Violet Nessler
Gaye Adegbalola
Jean Grossholtz
Mandy Carter
Harriet Marks-Nelson
Virginia "Gini" Morton
Joanna Russ
Charlotte Avery
Sue Parker "Rainbow" Williams
Mary Beth Brindley

Jewelle Gomez
Ocie Perry
Morgan Ahern
Joyce Pierson
Laura Gold
Vivian Larsen
Bobbie Knowles
Jean Eden
Elizabeth "Deedy" Breed
Cynthia Kelley
Edith Daly
Elaine Weber
Elisabeth "Betsy" McConnell
Lillian Faderman
Jackie Mirkin
Mickey Clifton
Arden Kate



Music

“Big Ovaries, Baby” (Instrumental)

Written and performed by Gaye Adegbalola

Courtesy of Hot Toddy Music

“Liarrhea” (Instrumental)

Written and performed by Gaye Adegbalola

Courtesy of Hot Toddy Music

“Winona” (Instrumental)

Written and performed by Gaye Adegbalola

Courtesy of Hot Toddy Music

“Queer Blues”

Written and performed by Gaye Adegbalola

Courtesy of Hot Toddy Music

“Is It Still Good To Ya?”

Written and performed by Gaye Adegbalola

Courtesy of Hot Toddy Music

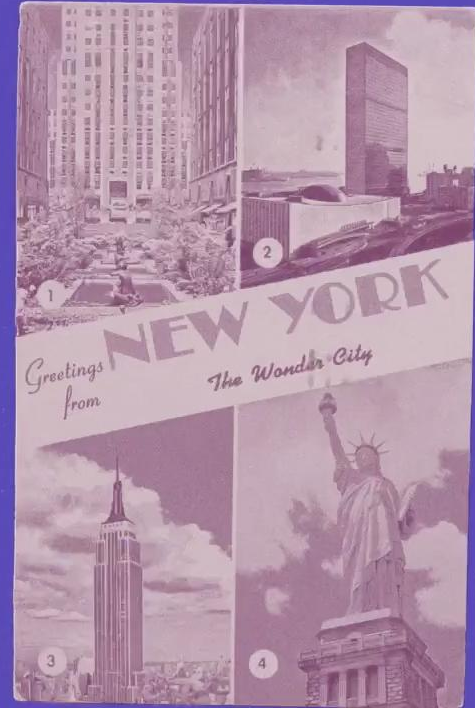
Supported by

Aesthetica

Audible

Executive Producers for the Guardian

Lindsay Poulton and Jess Gormley



Additional Footage Courtesy of

The Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project

The Estate of Arden Eversmeyer

Edie Daly

JD Doyle Archives

OutSmart Magazine

Su Friedrich

Janet Baus

Clifton R. Witt

Lilli M. Vincenz

Gaye Adegbalola

Marc Norberg

Suzanne Moe

Mike Flugennock

Julie Crowe

David Coon

Noel Cavazos

Library of Congress

Prelinger Archives

Public Domain Review

Vintage Collage Creator 710+ PNG

Hand Cut Collage Vol. 3

Creative Market

Special Thanks

Margaret Purcell

Barb Kucharczyk

Sara Fernandez

The Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College

Kelly Anderson

The Arts at Amherst Initiative

Pooja Rangan

Edie Daly

Invisible Histories Project

Lillian Faderman

Mandy Carter

Wa Sappakijjanon

Preeti Varathan

To learn more about the **Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project**, visit **www.olohp.org**

Dedicated to

Arden Eversmeyer, who devoted her third and final act to keeping herstory alive.



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CONTACT

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oldlesbiansfilm@gmail.com
oldlesbiansfilm.com

Liberation of Paris 1944

AMERICAN ARTS

Old Lesbian
Oral Herstory
Project



When You Have
Than You M



Build A Lo

Jennifer B

LEGENDARY.