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Nasty

Paulina Kobylar
Roger Williams University

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My original inspiration for this art project was based on memories from the last Presidential Election in November of 2016. Flashbacks of waking up to the recent news as a gay woman not only left me fearing for my own life but also left me fearing for my sisters and brothers. Some of whom fall victim to oppressions much worse than I. All the vulgar and offensive phrases that President Donald Trump was documented to have said kept replaying over and over in my mind. This led to a place where soon all I had down on paper was his face and a very prominent biological female body part. As I continued, his facial expression only became angrier. My artistic marks were full of rage. I wanted to include aspects of my own feelings about what has been going on in this country, along with our President's take on social justice issues, such as the belittling of women, negligence of gun violence, attitudes toward racial tensions, and outright cruelty in regard to the LGBTQ+ community. Hence, I ended up with a body (one that has covered our country), a representational firearm made of LGBTQ+ symbolic colors, and a drawing that was purposefully polarized to be black and white. Though I had an original artistic vision in mind, I did not realize it would develop into an intersectionally representative image once finished.

There are numerous ways to combat institutionalized oppression, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and violence. One way just so happens to be through the art. This piece explores identity groups who are discriminated against every day, which President Trump has only emphasized through his actions and words. It questions why the history of our country has divided people by the color of their skin,

why powerful men can say what they please about the female body, why heterosexuality is the only sexual orientation, why people should fall on either side of a gender binary, and why violence has continually been used to target certain identities in this country. This piece speaks to underline the intersectionality of institutionalized systems of oppression and how just one part cannot be included without another.

What allows a wealthy, white, cisgender, heterosexual man to belittle, degrade and outwardly offend all those who do not neatly fit into his own conceptions of who we all should be? That question cannot always be effectively answered through spoken and written words. Visual art that symbolizes social justice issues is an alternative solution worth seeking. Art is one of the most powerful ways I know how to speak.