

GLADSTONE GALLERY

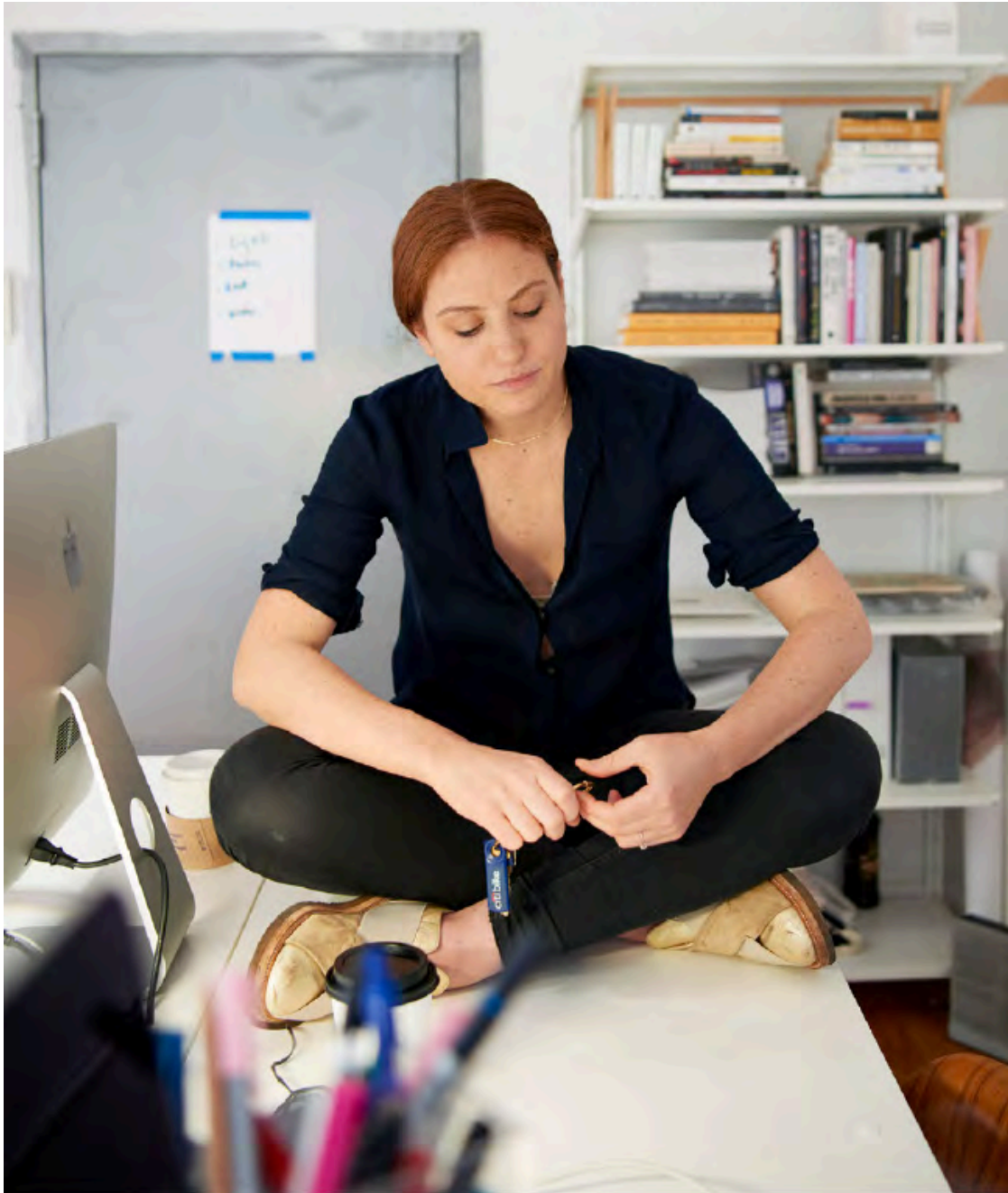
Anna Tome, "Painting Pictures," *Muse Magazine*, June 21, 2017

MUSE

Rachel Rose

Painting Pictures

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Anna Tome in conversation with Rachel Rose

New York based artist Rachel Rose makes video installations that exquisitely fuse history to time, nature to place, sound to image. Their incisive editing, heavily processed sound clips, and deeply considered installations not only embody the content of the work, but also experiment with the sensorial processes by which we absorb perceive fictional images and sounds, exploring new territories in filmmaking. With a uniquely elegant melding of pure feeling and esoteric research, Rose's work is equally narrative, beguiling, and transcendent.

AT: Your process is unique—you usually spend one year on a work, is that right?

RR: The year is a way to get the time and space that it really takes to learn something new. Right now, I'm focused on a series of events in the sixteenth century. Once I feel wrapped in learning, I'm able to think about why an art-work should even be made or where it could come from. Then there are a few months—in the case of the other works, and especially with the work I'm doing now—of working with a specific site and learning what technology I might want to employ (a particular camera, a way of editing, making sound). Then there is the actual filming. Then there is the processing of the footage, looking back at the original impetus of the work, struggling with the material itself. So that takes one year.

AT: Installation is also crucial to your work.

RR: I think of it as a set of conditions that go with a video—formal, material extensions of the underlying principle of the work—and how to adapt these to the specificity of the site. In the case of *Everything and More* (2015), I wanted to underscore the oscillation between a projected state and a grounded, physical state. I placed the semi-transparent screen against windows. Projected color falls on the screen as opaque, while the absence of color produces transparency.

AT: How do you approach the darker, more disastrous narratives in your work? In *A Minute Ago* (2014) there is a You-Tube clip of a Siberian ice storm. But your handling of the found footage feels starkly different from the depictions of catastrophe in Hollywood films.

RR: We often see catastrophe within an edit, so I looked at films about physical disaster. *I Am Legend*, *Day After Tomorrow*... I found it striking how the before and after of a disaster was always continuous. For example, someone walks down the street, and all of a sudden a crater opens up right in front of them. The appearance of this crater in a film would appear as uncut and continuous, but at a micro-level, the shot is in fact composited, cut up and re-composed at every second. And while not visually similar, I thought how odd and uncannily similar the material construction of the blockbuster catastrophe is to how we emotionally experience catastrophe in real life.

AT: In the real life footage of the Siberian ice storm... the screams of people enhance the drama. What role does sound play for you?

RR: Walter Murch, the film and sound editor, is a hero of mine. Walter developed something we see and experience in film all the time now—an inversion of the sound inside and the sound outside as it punctuates action. In the 70s when he was editing sound like this in films like *The Conversation* or *Apocalypse Now*, he was thinking about how you could inflect a scene with sounds that don't belong in the scene realistically or perceptively. But they could belong in the scene prospectively from the point of view of the argument that the director is making.

For example, as we're on the phone right now, I've heard two ambulances go by through your end. Each time an ambulance goes by, I wonder, "Where is Anna? Is she in New York? Is she outside on the street? Is she inside? Are we near one another?" Suddenly, I think about the whole context of where you are. Two sounds evoke that. Without the sound of the ambulance through the phone, my perception of where you are or could be is flatter, I wonder less. Walter Murch worked with this—using sound to expand, contract, extract, or inflect a landscape or a character.

AT: So you're examining sound as a fictional structure. When you're editing a video or creating a storyboard, are you hearing fictional sounds in your head?

RR: The comic artist Scott McCloud was an inspiration when I was working on *Lake Valley* (2016). He's technically a comic theorist because his comics are about how comics are made. In *Making Comics*, he writes about how perspective can suggest sound. For example, let's say you're storyboarding out a scene of

two people sitting inside a car, talking, in the fall. You might want to express that they are inside, or that it's windy, or that leaves are fall-ing. To do this, you could create a series of images that first depict the two people in the car having a conversation. But if you wanted to express that the wind was blowing around the outside of the car, you could then show images of trees with rustling branches. And to show that the wind is strong and loud, an image a leaf fallen on the pavement. And then to show this is close up, and loud from inside the car, an aerial shot of the car enveloped by trees. So after looking at this sequence of images without sound, they would add up to create a specific, imagined sound—the muffle of whooshing trees muting a conversation. This is something I thought about much in *Lake Valley* (2016), because it's animation—everything is made up. How do you use different perspectives to suggest a sound without using that exact sound simultaneously? How can you occupy two spaces at once?

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Top: Rachel Ross, still from *Everything and More* [detail], 2015. Bottom: Rachel Ross, still from *Lake Valley* [detail], 2016.



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Top: Rachel Ross, still from *Living and More* (detail), 2018. Bottom: Rachel Ross, still from *Pirouette in Paradise* (detail), 2018.



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Rachel Rose (b. 1990) is among the foremost artists working with and in video today, as her work actively records the medium's very conditions. Her films straddle and collapse multiple categories as once found and original footage collides into poetic compositions which explore spaces between real and artificial, interior and exterior, dead and alive. Rose draws from and assembles a long history of cinematic invention, as she foregrounds a usage of noted technical strategies and editing techniques in her practice, investigating topics such as cryogenics, the American Revolutionary War, modernist architecture, or the sensory experience of walking in our spaces. Rose's body of work pinpoints what it is that makes and keeps us human, along with the ways we seek to alter, enhance, and escape that designation. Having exhibited internationally from The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York to Serpentine Sackler Gallery, London, and recently the Venice Biennale, Rachel's forthcoming solo exhibitions include: *Gain Rose's aspires* (2017), *Forde one Serchio De Ribaudo*, Italy (2018); Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia (2018).

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