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MODERN LUXURY PHILADELPHIA STYLE

ART ADVENTURES: RACHEL ROSE NEW WORK AT PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

By Alexander Mason Hankin | May 14, 2018 | [Lifestyle](#)

"If you are choosing to make art, it should connect with something deep within yourself. It should be a way you can find out more about other people and other experiences."



Image © 2018 Rachel Rose.

We had the great pleasure of speaking with contemporary video artist, Rachel Rose, about her new exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art entitled *Wil-o-Wisp*.

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Rose's new work is a joint commission by the PMA and the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin, Italy. Set in 17th century Agrarian England, the piece follows the life of a woman named Elspeth Blake. Throughout the exhibit issues of persecution, witchcraft, and social upheaval are tangled in the fate of Blake.

The video took over two years to make and was shot on location at the Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts using real actors. Rose uses her own creative magic to edit the sound and light. She weaves in musical scores with flames and ghostly images to amplify Blake's tale. The video is projected on an eighteen-foot screen and the walls are covered in layers of scrim. This staging allows the viewer to be transported into the rural 17th century world. It is important for the viewer to move around in the gallery to feel as if they are walking through time. We also recommend watching a second time from the back of the screen, which creates an even more eerie atmosphere.



Image © 2018 Rachel Rose. Image courtesy of Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2018. Photo by Tim Tiebout

In showcasing Rose's work, the PMA shows its commitment to supporting emerging artists and being a leader for contemporary art in Philadelphia. Rose, who has previously shown at the Whitney Museum in New York and the Serpentine Gallery in London, says of being at the Museum of Art, "I've been coming [to Philadelphia] since I was in graduate school. I saw *Dancing around the Bride* four times in 2012, so for me [being here] feels very

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significant, and I feel very proud to be showing here. This particular place has shaped me a lot, so I feel very honored.”

Rose also shared a little bit about her processes, stating that all of her works start off as a feeling. For *Wil-o-Wisp*, the feeling of coincidence was what lead her to exploring the subject matter of her final piece. It's clear from both speaking to Rose and viewing her work, that she truly puts her passion into her art. While only 31, she is a leader in her medium. She says "making art should be an excuse for empathy and deepening your perspective of yourself.”