



REVIEWS JAN. 25, 2016



Rachel Rose

LONDON,
at Serpentine Sackler

by Federico Florian

View of Rachel Rose's
HD video installation *A
Minute Ago*, 2014,
8¾ minutes, at the
Serpentine Sackler.



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For her solo show “Palisades,” New York-based Rachel Rose, who is currently exhibiting a video installation at the Whitney Museum, turned the Serpentine Sackler Gallery into an immersive environment dominated by constant visual and auditory stimuli. A blue carpet marked a path around the perimeter of the space, punctuated by clusters of speakers standing like sober, modernist sculptures. Sounds of wind gusts, human yawns and sighs, and various cracklings and rumbles played from the speakers. At the center of the space were projections of two videos by Rose, *Palisades in Palisades* and *A Minute Ago* (both 2014).

The first one, lasting nine and a half minutes, shows a young woman standing on the banks of the Hudson River at the Palisades Interstate Park in New Jersey. The camera—a drone—gradually approaches her, as if pushed gently by the same wind that we hear from the speakers, penetrating the fabric of her clothes and her skin. Suddenly, details of a painting representing the Revolutionary War battle of Fort Lee, which took place on the Palisades, alternate with shots of the landscape, close-ups of the park’s maps and images of a raging sea. The camera lens infiltrates the body of an ox depicted on the battle canvas and appears to enter into pulsing, real viscera, which then unexpectedly take the shape of an orange plastic bag—shown in the next shot to be on the ground in the park, near the woman standing on the cliff.

The artist edited the work in such a way that apparently unrelated images swiftly follow and sometimes overlay one another. The montage seems to reproduce the workings of the mind, in which flashes of memories, images of the world presently before us, and thoughts of the future form a random, messy landscape. The location of the Palisades is here experienced through the subjective point of view of the female protagonist; after watching the video, one has the feeling of knowing the place emotionally. Topographical data are replaced by psychogeographical clues, and recurring shots of the park



and cliff provoke a sense of déjà vu.

Rose (b. 1986) trained as a painter and treats moving images like layers of paint. In *A Minute Ago*, roughly nine minutes long, she offers three visual/narrative layers: footage of a hailstorm in Siberia, taken from YouTube; video of Philip Johnson's Glass House in Connecticut; and an interview of Johnson, whose silhouette she has blurred and laid over some of the Glass House footage, his figure wandering through the frames like a ghostly apparition. This exploration of the material of glass and the forces of nature, the artist explained in a video screened in the Serpentine bookshop, originated from a biographical episode: a moment when a sudden gust of wind blew outside the windows of a café she was in, and the people around her became visibly afraid.

The feeling conveyed by the two videos is that of something fragmented, constantly interrupted. The sounds coming from the speakers around the gallery perimeter—all of them recorded during the shooting of *Palisades in Palisades*—naturally merged with the moving images, producing a hermetic, somewhat mysterious atmosphere and helping to bring coherence to the streams of image fragments.

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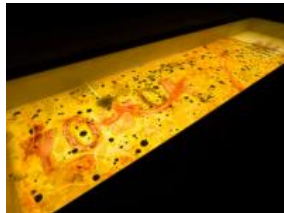


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