

Rachel Libeskind

Selected Press

signs and symbols

New York, New York | www.signsandsymbols.art

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

JUN 21 THE DELICATE THINGS THAT GIRLS DO | SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

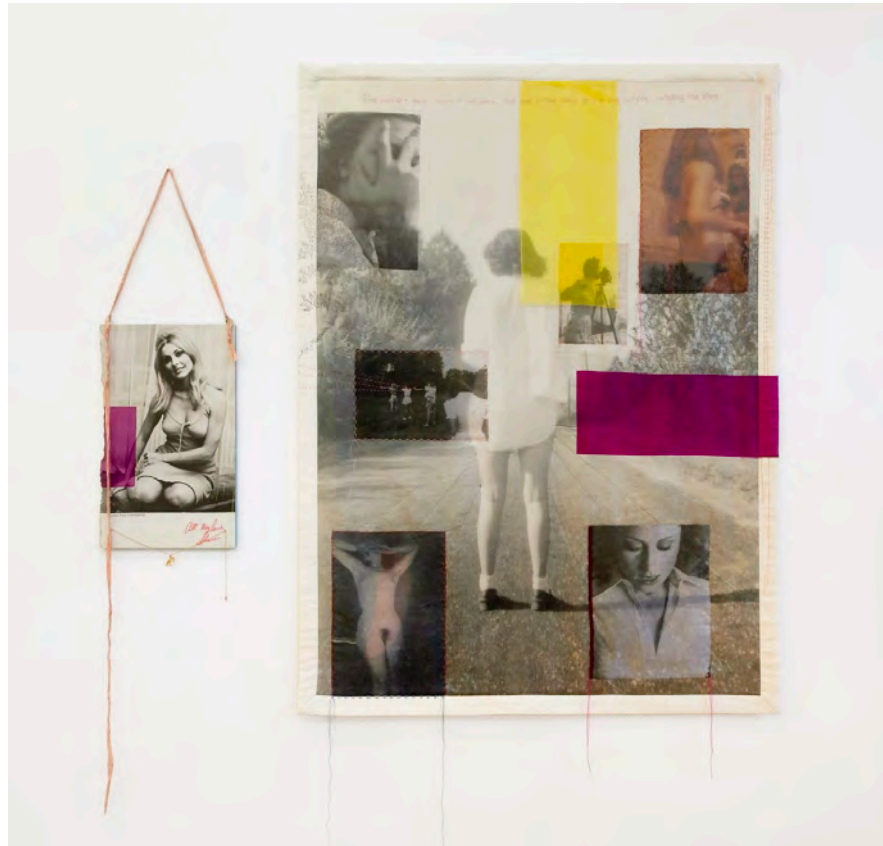
REVIEWS



Ann Weathersby, *Pretty girls, yes, very, all sugar and spice*, 2023, Kilnformed glass, shadow box, aluminum shelf and custom hardware, 29 x 19 x 3.25 inches (73.66 x 48.26 x 8.26 cm) framed; titled after Doris Lessing, *The Grandmothers*. © Ann Weathersby; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

Written by Simran Tuteja

Eleven female artists across many generations, nations and mediums of art were sent the same pastel pink poster called *The Delicate Things That Girls Do*, a part of Jenny Holzer's incisive series *Inflammatory Essays* (1979 - 1982) and they responded in the most artistic and eclectic ways. Curated by Bridget Casey and Mitra Khorasheh, *THE DELICATE THINGS THAT GIRLS DO* is an empowering group exhibition at Signs and Symbols on display starting June 15, 2023 through July 29, 2023. The exhibition features Rachael Catharine Anderson, Sarah Anderson, Shaqayeq Arabi, Annabel Daou, Ornella Fieres, Karen Finley, Jeewi Lee, Rachel Libeskind, Linder, Pola Sieverding and Ann Weathersby.



Ann Weathersby, *She wouldn't have known if she were the one in the story, or the one outside watching the story*, 2023, Pigment prints on silk; acrylic paint; silk, cotton, and linen; cotton and rayon threads; cotton batting, 57.75 x 42.5 inches (146.69 x 107.95 cm); *The story stops with the photograph*, 2023, Pigment print on cotton canvas; silk; cotton and rayon threads; MDF; acrylic paint; gilt varnish; brass hardware; locket and chain; silk ribbon, 20 x 12.25 inches (50.8 x 31.12 cm); titled after Marguerite Duras, *Le Navire Night*. © Ann Weathersby; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

For *She wouldn't have known if she were the one in the story, or the one outside watching the story*, 2023 Anne Weathersby chose a black and white portrait of a woman showing her back to the camera, wearing an oversized shirt while standing amongst nature. It is superimposed with various photographs of women both naked and dressed with yellow and magenta translucent color blocks. For another piece titled, *The story stops with the photograph*, 2023 Weatherby uses Sharon Tate as her subject. The artist chose pigment print on cotton, silk, linen and rayon threads to produce her work. Some of her other works on display include *I am unsealed, I am incandescent*, 2021-23 and *Pretty girls, yes, very, all sugar and spice*, 2023. Anne Weathersby's works are a mockery to the male gaze and patriarchy. In all four of her works, she continues to remind us how women are being watched and observed by the likes of misogynists and sexists even when women are just trying to be themselves. Women have been sexualized by men for as long as humans have existed and the artist skillfully manages to remind of the same. She uses the most distinct mediums to present her artwork.



Rachel Libeskind, *Free Girl I*, 2023, Printed color aid sheet, 12.6 x 9.5 inches (32 x 24 cm). © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

Rachel Libeskind uses Printed color aid sheets in artist frames for her work. Her subjects in *Naked girls enjoying a boat trip*, 2023 are two women rowing a boat and *Free Girl I*, 2023 is a topless woman jumping. Liberation comes to mind upon the first gaze at the two photographs. The subjects are performing actions that women are usually advised against hence bringing forward the feminist approach of the artist.



Pola Sieverding, *touche-touche #6*, 2023, Pigment print on paper, 24 x 16 inches (61 x 41 cm), Edition of 5, +2 AP. © Pola Sieverding; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

Pola Sieverding's *touche-touche #3*, *touche-touche #5* and *touche-touche #6* are simple yet aesthetic. The subjects are human forearms and depict two humans holding hands. The action of holding hands being performed in *touche-touche #3* appears to be more sturdy when juxtaposed with *touche-touche #5* and *touche-touche #6*. The action is delicately poised in the last two images. The ambiguity of the images leaves it up to the audience to determine the genders of the subjects while leaving them with the thought of how gender comes into play even while performing the simplest of actions.

Ornella Fieres' *Postcards to M/GAN2*, 2020 and Linder's *Untitled (Ballet Photomontage)*, 2006 manage to capture the delicateness of femininity even though the works are fourteen years apart.



Ornella Fieres, *Postcards to M / GAN2*, 2020 Acrylic photo print, framed, 31.5 x 31.5 inches (80 x 80 cm), Unique. © Ornella Fieres; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.



Rachel Libeskind, *Naked girls enjoying a boat trip*, 2023, Printed color aid sheet, 9.25 x 6.5 inches (23.5 x 16.5 cm). © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

One piece of art inspired eleven female artists to amaze the audience with their interpretation of it. Each artist presented their view on how women are supposed to behave according to the patriarchal society in the most exceptional way. Anne Weathersby, Rachel Libeskind, Ornella Fieres, Linder, and Pola Sieverding chose photography, photomontage and collages as artistic mediums to present their interpretation. *THE DELICATE THINGS THAT GIRLS DO* is an exciting group exhibition that astutely and creatively mocks the sexist world.

OBSERVER

ARTS

Five Things to Do in New York's Art Scene June 12-16

From live music to film screenings to Old Masters returning home, these are NYC's hottest art happenings that don't require an invite.

By [Dan Duray](#) · 06/12/23 11:02am

Welcome to Things to Do, our weekly roundup of happenings in the ever-buzzing New York art scene. Here, we present an expertly curated list of the best goings on that don't require an invite—but might require that you reserve a spot in advance. Be sure to check StubHub, SeatGeek and Craigslist for ticketed events that may have sold out. People in the art world are often double-booked and love secondary markets.

Wednesday June 14th and Thursday June 15th

'Party Girl' 4k Restoration Screening



'Party Girl.' 1995. USA. Directed by Daisy von Scherler Mayer. Courtesy of Photofest

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd St., various times

Though it's not about art explicitly, the new 4k restoration of 1995s cult classic *Party Girl* is screening at MoMA this week, and it's a must watch for those in or adjacent to the art world, where sometimes it's hard to know if the parties support the culture or vice versa. [Parker Posey](#) delivers her best non-Chrisopher Guest-directed performance in this love letter to a bygone downtown New York directed by Daisy von Scherler Mayer.

Wednesday June 14th and Friday June 16th

yunè pinku at the Sonic sphere



A rendering of audiences walking into Sonic Sphere in The Shed's McCourt space, 2023. Courtesy The Shed

The Shed, 545 West 30th Street, 10 p.m.

For the summer, The Shed at Hudson Yards has built a 65-foot-diameter spherical concert hall suspended in the air in the venue's 115-foot-tall McCourt. It's designed for "immersive, 3-D sound and light explorations of music by boundary-pushing artists." Things kick off this week with shows by yunè pinku, praised by *The Guardian* for her "rare ability to warp 30 years of rave culture into melodic new shapes, with hints of Radiohead, psych and hyperpop."

Thursday June 15th

Opening: "a signal urgent but breaking"



Phoebe Little. 'Like Salt on a Snail,' 2023. Oil on linen. 121.9 x 152.4 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

Perrotin gallery, 130 Orchard Street, 6-8 p.m.

If you've skipped Art Basel this week—and if you're reading this feature, odds are good that you have—you can still get a preview of the next big names in art at Perrotin's show of the Yale MFA Painting and Printmaking Class of 2023. These artists are sure to go on to great things, and the show's press release, written by one of the program's co-teachers, promises a strong unifying theme: "Emerging into a post-pandemic cultural landscape, the cohort reminds us of the profound lessons learned since 2020: to dig deep roots and hold as precious our immediate worlds; to value the exploration and expression of self, extracted from conventional routines and institutional systems; and to recognize the vital need to care intensely about those who navigate these precarious times with us."

Thursday June 15th

Opening: "THE DELICATE THINGS THAT GIRLS DO"

Vir Bonus Dicendi Peritus —
I hear *father* in the word
fodder—But only *other* in the word mother—
(I know the bottom; I am the
bottom) — A steady hand leads
me down — Tell me, is it winter ?
I am not
unfamiliar with this half-life — I am
sliding up and down a razor's edge —
I hear my
daughter's voice in the next room —
Tell all the truth but tell it pink —
I am here in an
observational capacity, Don't Mind
Me — I wait outside on a bench —
While mother hums an old union song —

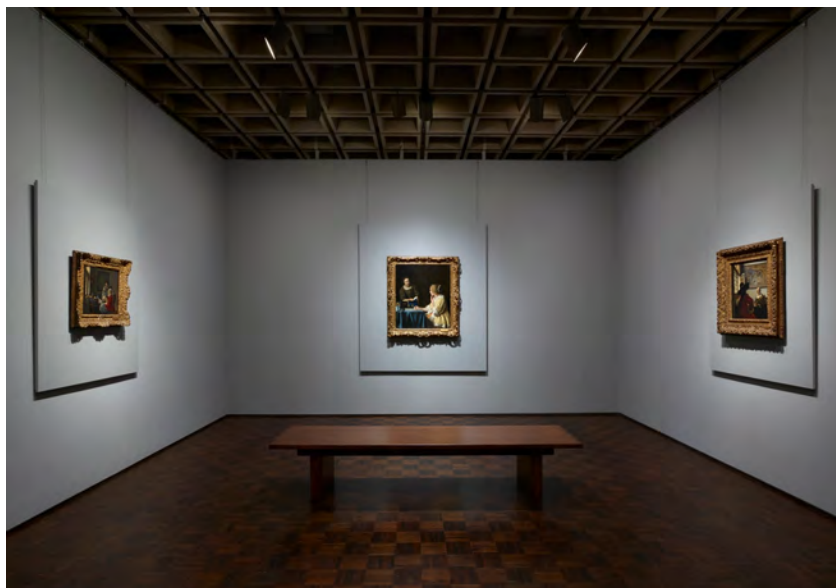
Rachel Libeskind, 'The good man, skilled in speaking,' 2023. Courtesy signs and symbols

signs and symbols gallery, 249 East Houston St., 6-8 p.m.

Taking its title from a Jenny Holzer piece, *Untitled (A Real Torture Would...)*, from *Inflammatory Essays*, 1979–1982, this all-female group exhibition features the work of Rachael Catharine Anderson, Sarah Anderson, Shaqayeq Arabi, Annabel Daou, Ornella Fieres, Karen Finley, Jeewi Lee, Rachel Libeskind, Linder, Pola Sieverding and Ann Weathersby. The show concerns what it means to be a woman and an artist at the same time. A REAL TORTURE WOULD BE TO BUILD A SPARKLING CAGE WITH 2-WAY MIRRORS AND STEEL BARS, the Holzer piece begins.

Thursday June 15th

Return of the Vermeers: New Insights on Three Masterworks



Three paintings by Vermeer (from left, 'Girl Interrupted at Her Music,' 'Mistress and Maid,' and 'Officer and Laughing Girl') as shown at Frick Madison by The Frick Collection. Photo: Joseph Coscia Jr.

Frick Madison, 945 Madison Avenue

There are only 35 works attributed to the Dutch Master Johannes Vermeer, and the recently closed landmark show at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam brought together 27 of them. Should you have missed that show, you can puff your chest with some local pride and visit the three Vermeers in the collection of the Frick when they are placed on view back home this week. Welcome back, *Officer and Laughing Girl*, *Girl Interrupted at Her Music*, and *Mistress and Maid*. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for its part, loaned *Young Woman with a Lute* and *Allegory of the Catholic Faith*, to be back on view soon.

Have an upcoming event that may be worth our readers' time? Drop me an email at artnews@observer.com.



NOVEMBER 2, 2022

ARTIST TO WATCH

RACHEL LIBESKIND



Portrait of Rachel Libeskind. Image courtesy of the artist. Photo by Ornella Fieres.

NB: Can you share your experience with art as a younger woman and how you arrived at what your practice is today?

RL: I am very lucky to have been raised in a very artistic family. As a child I was always encouraged to follow my dreams and was told that art was the best thing you could do with your life. I spent a lot of time making art, although as a child and young adult I was much more involved in acting and singing, and I did a lot of that professionally as a kid. At university I got a degree in French Literature; since I finished early

and had two more years left, I figured I would get another degree in visual studies. I had a great professor who suggested I should be an artist, so this is where I ended up. (I also graduated into a profound recession and watched the government and economics majors struggle to find work – being an artist made sense in that context).

I now realize that I've had great luck in terms of showing my work, selling my work, and being able to actually have a valuation of my work.



Rachel Libeskind. Image still from The Traveling Bag; Performance at MaryTwo in Lucerne, Switzerland on October 7th. (The remnants of the performance are on view now, as a part of their current exhibition Youth Hostel – curated by Kathy Battista). Image courtesy of the gallery and the artist. Photo by Sebastian Lendenmann.

NB: So can you speak on how the process of collage, installation, video and performance inform each other and how does your approach vary between them? How is a live performance different from other works?

RL: The way I think about it is that all of my work has a collage logic. That is to say, I allow myself to freely take and mix any element I want in whatever form I'm using it –that's the beauty of collage, that it's the most liberating form. A lot of artists are very specific, and I have been told many times in my life that I should narrow my practice, but I just can't. I am someone who's very multifarious, and I really believe that every idea I have that I want to transmute to work deserves its own form and deserves to be critically examined in whatever form it needs.

The performances are a little bit their own world, they serve to me as this connective tissue between my research and my studio practice. For me, performances are an opportunity to imprint people in a different type of way because it's the most ephemeral form of art. I think a lot about my performance

practice as an experience that someone has of me that they'll never have again. In this way performance is an incredibly unique and wonderful thing that I believe all artists, even people who have nothing to do with performance, should pursue.

NB: How do you describe the parallel between the personal experience and community engagement in your work? Are there certain projects that you feel are more personal than others?

RL: Yes. The performance work is always hyper personal because I'm there *as* the work, and I'm always telling a story. My studio practice and the work that gets shown in galleries and institutionally is personal because it's me making it, but there's a negotiation that happens with how much vulnerability is allowed to permeate into the presentation of work. Vulnerability and authenticity are, in my opinion, the key to what makes art "good", although this also can make things too heavy-handed at times.

Another important aspect is history, the central framework of my practice. History is collective, but the way in which we encounter it is personal. I'm interested in the different ways in which we all think about history, the ways in which we were all taught history, and the ways through which we all connect to our own histories. It is within those fault lines, where the personal comes up for me and for my audience.



Rachel Libeskind, Windows: She lives on (Face leaves), 2022. Scanned collage on stretcher bars, soft PVC, staples, printed foam and acrylic paint. 47.25" x 35.5" (120 x 90 cm). From the exhibition Transparent Things at Signs and Symbols. Image courtesy of the gallery and the artist.

NB: Your work often consists of image archives that reference history. Can you talk about this process and how the work evolves from the initial research towards a finalized work?

RL: The initial research is often a very long and slow process. It begins when I encounter an image and I think “what is this crazy photograph? I’ve never seen this” or “who took this? Where does it come from? Who are the subjects and why were they chosen?” And then for years I will slowly build research around it, meaning there’s often multiple concurrent research projects happening in the studio. Luckily I have brilliant people to help me with it.

What ends up happening during this process is that my specific interests or questions begin to coalesce and I decide how narrow or wide the archive for a specific project is: then I make a choice about the form the work is going to take. Once I know whether it’s going to be a video, an installation, a performance and/or some sort of collage, I begin to build the archive that belongs with, and informs, the work. In the end every work of mine has its own archive and that archive comprises a selection from multiple archives that exist digitally or in real life. When the work is done, the archive is closed and I usually make a book, a password encrypted website, or something that encases the archive.



Rachel Libeskind, Windows: Three Moons (detail), 2022. Scanned collage on stretcher bars, rip-stock, printed silicone, acrylic, superglue and staples. 53" x 53" (135 x 135 cm). From the exhibition Transparent Things at Signs and Symbols. Image courtesy of the gallery and the artist.

NB: Can you tell us about your most recent show, *Transparent Things* at Signs and Symbols and your new body of work *Windows*?

RL: My show at Signs and Symbols is a collection of 10 paintings (or as the director of the gallery calls them *assemblages*) that are made out of PVC, latex, silicone, paint, staples, linen, and paper. I basically wanted to work on a stretcher bar, to work on canvases, just because I really love Painting. I collect a lot of paintings myself but part of why I don't usually paint, and part of why I'm sort of a mad woman in terms of how many forms I like to use, is because I'm always grappling with this masculinity of painting. Perhaps

it's because I studied with Benjamin Buchloh that I had this idea of post-war 20th century painting: I love Richter, Kiefer, Newman, Rothko, and Pollock, and these are all incredible painters, but I've always felt under a kind of suffocating claustrophobia of that work as a woman.

Additionally, painting is so incredible because for thousands of years, before altars and frescos, screens and photographs, we've been making life-like marks on walls such as cave paintings. There is something deeply innate in that process and that encounter. In the Renaissance for example, the painting that lived in the home of a usually wealthy person was like a window, this other world or portal that you could transport yourself to, in the way that a screen is today. These works at Signs and Symbols are a meditation on that, both on my grappling with "what is painting?" and what can I get away with calling a painting and enshrining myself in the legacy of great male painters.



Installation view of STRIKE at Wild Palms (Düsseldorf, DE). Image courtesy of the gallery and the artist.

NB: Would you be able to share with us any upcoming exhibitions or projects that you're excited about in the future?

RL: Of course. I'll be doing a very exciting Christmas Nativity scene for Half Gallery Annex that will be up for a few weeks over the holidays, at the corner of East 4th and Avenue B. I'm not actually Christian, but I really love nativity scenes because there's no irony in them, and it's such a wonderfully direct opposition.

I'm also working on a project in Sicily about migration and diaspora. Sicily has such unbelievable, untouched, incredible churches and iconography that's around, and so many people who are taking over abandoned churches and making shows in them. This whole art scene I'm starting to discover there is amazing. Lastly, I am very excited for my first solo museum show in 18 months, at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University. I'll be going to Alabama in a few months to do more research in their archive and I'm really looking forward to it.



COLLECTOR DAILY RATING



ON VIEW

[Rachel Libeskind, Transparent Things](#)

September 7, 2022 - October 29, 2022

[Signs and Symbols](#)

249 East Houston Street

New York, NY 10002

OTHER LINKS

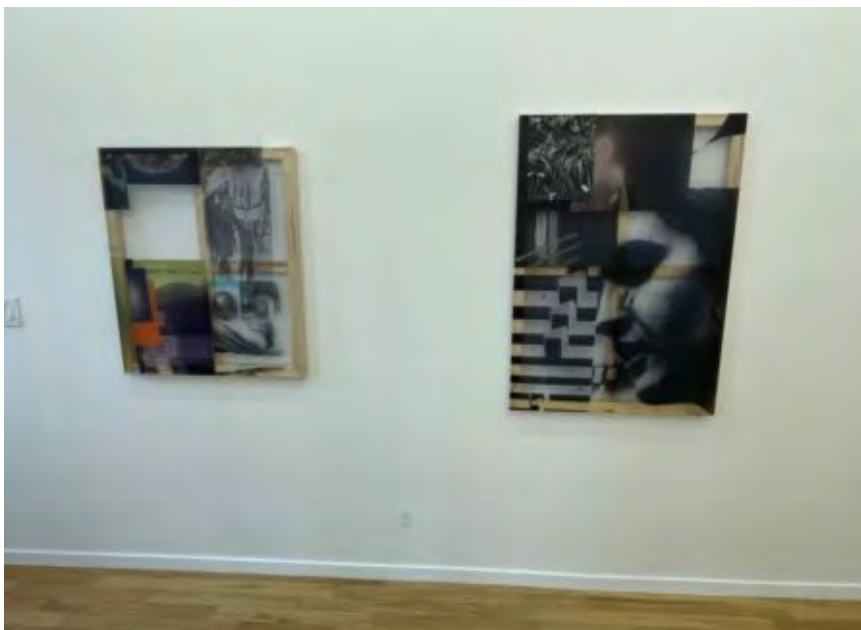
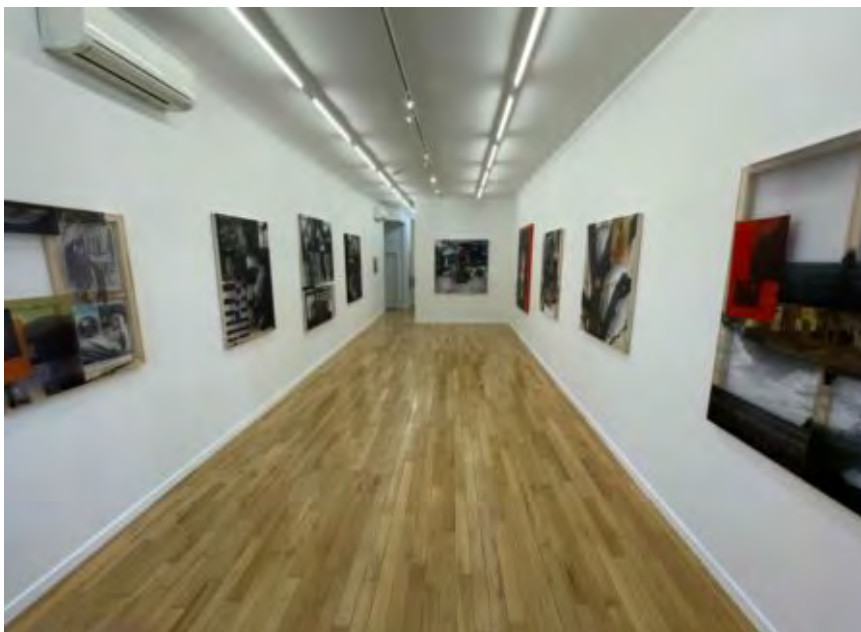
[Rachel Libeskind artist site](#)

[Rachel Libeskind - Instagram page](#)

Rachel Libeskind, Transparent Things @Signs and Symbols

By [Loring Knoblauch](#) / September 22, 2022

JTF (just the facts): A total of 10 photographic works, displayed unframed against white walls in the single room gallery space. All of the works are scanned collage on stretcher bars, soft PVC, and staples, some with additional painted silicone, acrylic paint, printed foam, and superglue. Physical sizes range from roughly 16x12 to 65x47 inches, and all of the works are unique. (Installation shots below.)







Comments/Context: When artists really dig into their chosen processes, actively testing the limits of what they can achieve, sometimes unexpected innovations emerge from the persistent experimentation that open up whole new white spaces for exploration. Rachel Libeskind has been working with image collage for many years now, initially mixing in elements of performance and installation, and more recently trying out new ways to present layered fragments of imagery. A few years ago, she was intermingling pictures of body parts, at first mostly gathering shards of faces, and then later mixing images of antiquities with pictures from 1970s-era men's magazines.

Flatness seems inherent to the structure of photo-collage, as images are appropriated, assembled, and reorganized in a single plane, generally in dialogue with each other – what sits “behind” or “underneath” their visual conversation typically isn’t the point, except as a substrate to hold everything together. But Libeskind’s new works upend this traditional collage logic, introducing transparency as a compositional variable. In her “Windows” series, the collages are initially composed on a flatbed scanner and printed out on various kinds of plastic sheeting; the resulting sheets are then stretched over wooden stretcher bars (like the kind that hold canvas for paintings), creating works that show through to the structure underneath in the areas that lack imagery or that are so light (like skies in landscapes, or areas of white in certain pictures) that they appear essentially clear. And while this might seem like a relatively straightforward incremental artistic progression, it’s actually more of a fault line, given Libeskind’s previous efforts, as the transparency (and partial visibility of the scaffold underneath) radically transforms the available compositional possibilities of the collages.

“Windows: Eve (and the tree)” shows off Libeskind’s newfound powers most elegantly. The central image in the collage is a dark tree form, the black trunk and branches reaching out from the center toward the corners; the white negative space behind the tree is left clear, making the wooden struts underneath visible and creating a complex connection between the natural curves of the tree and the hard edged geometries of the stretcher, both in wood. To this interplay, Libeskind has added a single yellow apple (hovering near the trunk in the collage) and a female nude printed on spongy mesh and attached to the front of the work, adding layers of additional physicality and transparency. Seen as one integrated artistic statement, the Biblical Eve and the apple story comes through with unique clarity, with the apple strangely seductive, the woman demurely humble (to the point of near invisibility), and the tree looming large and imposing against the framework underneath.



Libeskind adds more compositional complexity in another strong work, “Windows: A Day in the Life”. Here she integrates half a dozen disparate images, with obvious awareness for how contrasts of light and dark would be amplified by the transparency of her process. Robert Frank’s image of a blowing flag in Hoboken anchors the bottom of the work, with the flag strips and open windows creating pass through visual opportunities. In the area above, Libeskind links a dense swarm of birds, a toilet bowl, an off-kilter one-way street sign, and an upside down face, with the birds connecting to the tile on the floor of the bathroom, and the matched curves of the toilet seat and face then echoing a set of three dark eggs (or ovals of some kind). The look down into the toilet bowl is particularly effective given the transparent backing, as the picture creates the appearance of looking through the collage and down into the bowels of the plumbing, which is framed by the stretcher bars.

The wooden undercarriage provides a similar layer of interruption in “Windows: Elvis (Hound dog)”, where the cross form of the struts divides the rock star’s partially transparent face. A boldly striped image holds down the lower left of the composition, while the upper part gathers several images in unexpected tonalities and textures, including a man up on an electrical pole (but upside down and negative), a natural image of grasses, a ghostly man washed out by a flare of light, and the negative space between two curved objects (in reversed tones). Libeskind’s works don’t seem to have a rebus-like puzzle code to be unlocked, but instead pull our eye around the surface, following formal and structural links; the transparency effects both integrate these ideas, and use the bars to divide and frame certain fragments.

Most of the rest of the works on view find Libeskind testing out the further possibilities of her transparency discovery. She tries out a literal image of a window, aligning it with the stretcher bars underneath, and experimenting with bright overpainting to disrupt the blocks of the panes. She uses the emptiness of cloudy skies as another pass through element, connecting darker horizon lines and landscape forms. And she plays with visual metaphors of eyes and seeing, using the transparency to variously layer and obscure. Libeskind has also noticed that the visible edges of the stretchers create a strong framing device, which has led her to explore the spatial dynamics of empty edges and centers, pulling away from the edges to break from the bonds of strict rectangularity. The transparency similarly rebalances the sense of depth and thickness of the collages, giving different frontal attachments and physical additions more potential for jarring displacement.

Agglomerations of appropriated imagery (much of it photographic) have an undeniable connection back to Pop Art, but Libeskind’s compositions feel less about recontextualizing celebrity or consumer culture, instead opting for more formal and allegorical investigations. Mostly, this show feels reaching and exploratory, with the artist leveraging the key transparency breakthrough in a range of alternate directions, searching for what clicks. There’s certainly more to be found, so perhaps these early efforts will later be seen as a pivot point, where the collage road forked and a new path was taken.

Collector’s POV: The works in this show are priced between \$4000 and \$12000, based on size. Libeskind’s work has little secondary market history at this point, so gallery retail likely remains the best option for those collectors interested in following up.

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

SEP 29 EXHIBITION REVIEW: RACHEL LIBESKIND TRANSPARENT THINGS

REVIEWS



Rachel Libeskind_Windows- Landscape (Four Landscapes)

Written by Ema Kojić

Copy edited by Chloë Rain

Photo Edited by Yanting Chen

Artist Rachel Libeskind's second exhibition at the Signs and Symbols Art Gallery, *Transparent Things*, is open from September 7th to October 29th. The exhibition contains a showcase of Libeskind's newest collection of work: *Windows*.

Although she was born in Milan, Libeskind was raised in Berlin, Germany. She went on to earn an education in the United States, earning her Bachelor of Arts degree at Harvard University. Libeskind is a multidisciplinary artist, working in both New York and Berlin now.

Libeskind's multidisciplinary work often combines contrasting types of arts. She has united things like performance, video, collage, and installation. Her work has continuously been able to create its own meaning, unique from any other. The artist blends together unexpected themes, aesthetics, images, and ideas that produce a contrast that emphasizes spaces and nonuniformity within the piece.

Located on the Lower East Side, Signs and Symbols is a contemporary art gallery that has featured two of Libeskind's exhibitions so far. The *Transparent Things* exhibition is made of the artist's most recent work *Windows*.

The exhibition consists of a series of photo-assemblages from *Windows*. In each of these "windows," there is a collage of images, colors, and materials.

"Each work is a mirror, a window, a portal – a transparent thing, 'through which the past shines.'" - Rachel Libeskind, Berlin 2022.

In the piece *Windows: Landscape* seen above, Libeskind uses scanned collage on stretcher bars, soft PVC, staples, printed silicone, acrylic paint as well as superglue. This piece features clouds, fields, and a sudden contrast with a red rectangular image on the left side, as well as an image of houses in the middle towards the left side.



Rachel Libeskind_Windows- Man vs Tiger (Tigress)

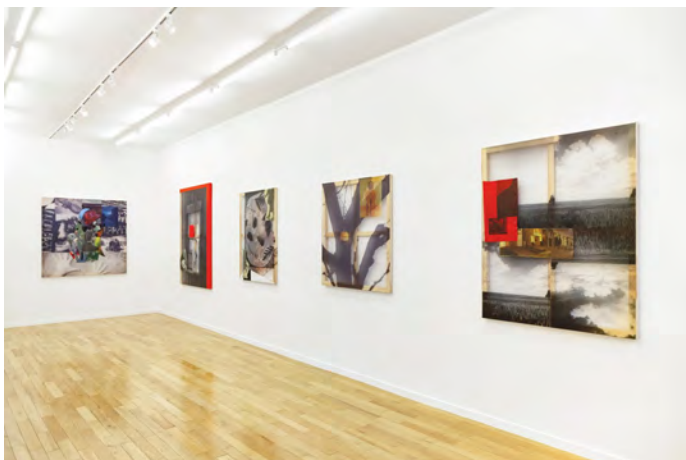
Libeskind's piece *Windows: Man vs. Tiger (Tigress)* features images that, when put together in a collage, create the tiger. There is an image of what seems to be the silhouette of a man next to a fire hydrant, carrying an umbrella. The contrast of the black and white in this upper right corner is vivid. In the top left corner, there is an image of grass between trees. She also uses similar materials on this piece; it consists of scanned collage on stretcher bars once again, soft PVC, staples, printed silicone and acrylic paint.



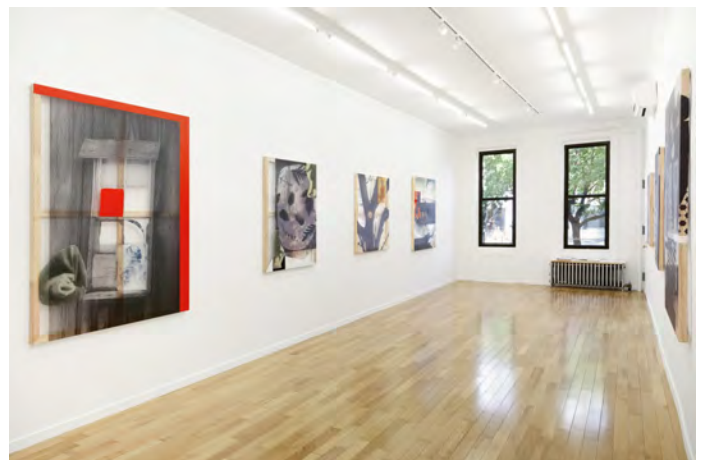
Rachel Libeskind_Windows- Milk Drop

In another piece within the *Windows* collection, *Milk Drop*, Libeskind has a large expanded image of a liquid dropping on a surface. This image even captures the second of splashing when this substance dropped. On the top half of the piece, the artist shows a pattern-like image of milk. Libeskind used scanned collage on stretcher bars, soft PVC and staples to construct this piece.

Libeskind is able to use the contrast and unpredictability that her artwork brings to create this exhibition. Her collection of work fits together beautifully and brings forth a sense of darkness in these seemingly regular aspects of daily life. Rachel Libeskind's collection *Windows* highlights a polarity in the emptiness white spaces in these images create.



Transparent Things installed 3



Transparent Things installed 6

The New York Times

ART REVIEW

On Governors Island, Art Interventions Are Everywhere

NADA House hosts 66 galleries, nonprofits and artist-run spaces arrayed in and around stately officers' residences. Expect the refreshingly unfamiliar.



A painting by Matthew Kirk, presented by Fierman, New York, features a field of drifting hieroglyphs and marks, some of which reflect the artist's Native American background. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

By Roberta Smith

May 6, 2021 Updated 3:37 p.m. ET

If you want respite from the moneyed, big-name glamour of some of your larger art fairs, you can, in one little trip, leave it all behind; see some relatively untrammelled parts of New York and also revisit the way that many things in the art world begin — that is, in a D.I.Y., grass-roots situation, when people take things into their own hands. If you want V.I.P. services at this event, you'll have to bring your own; snacks and fluids are recommended and of course sensible shoes. The V.I.P. lounge is a huge greensward graced by tall, regal trees.

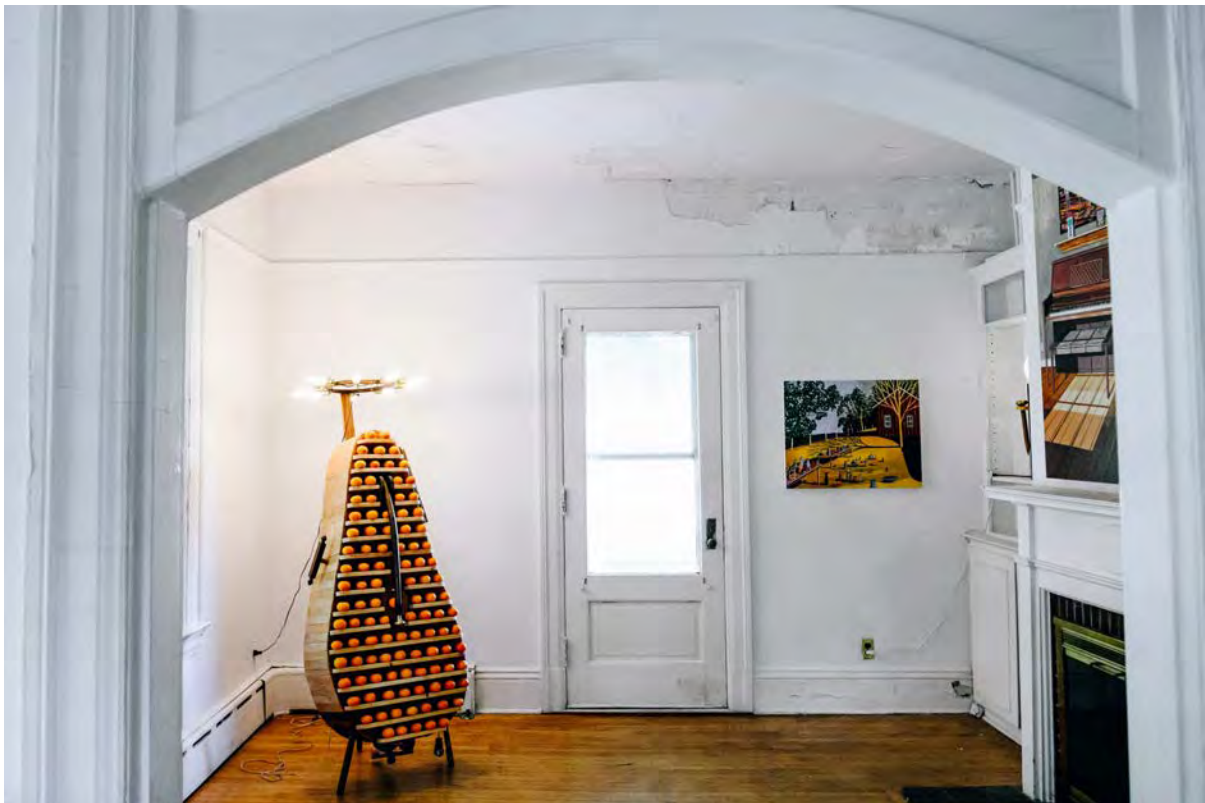
I refer to “NADA House 2021,” which opens Saturday on Governors Island in New York Harbor and runs through Aug. 1. It is not an art fair, technically, but it remains a lively, confab of art, artists, dealers and such organized by the New Art Dealers Alliance or NADA. To get there requires a short ferry ride from Lower Manhattan or Brooklyn. (The Brooklyn ferry runs only on weekends right now.) An eight-minute walk — past Castle Williams, a circular red sandstone fortification from the early 19th century — brings you to Colonels Row, a string of stately brick officers' residences. “NADA House 21” occupies five of them side by side, from 403 to 405 Colonels Row.

NADA was founded in 2002 by younger, mostly New York dealers, looking for mutual support and an art fair to call their own. In 2019 it staged a Gallery Open to coincide with Fair Week and its first “NADA House” show on Governors Island. Covid-19 caused the cancellation of the second Governors Island outing.

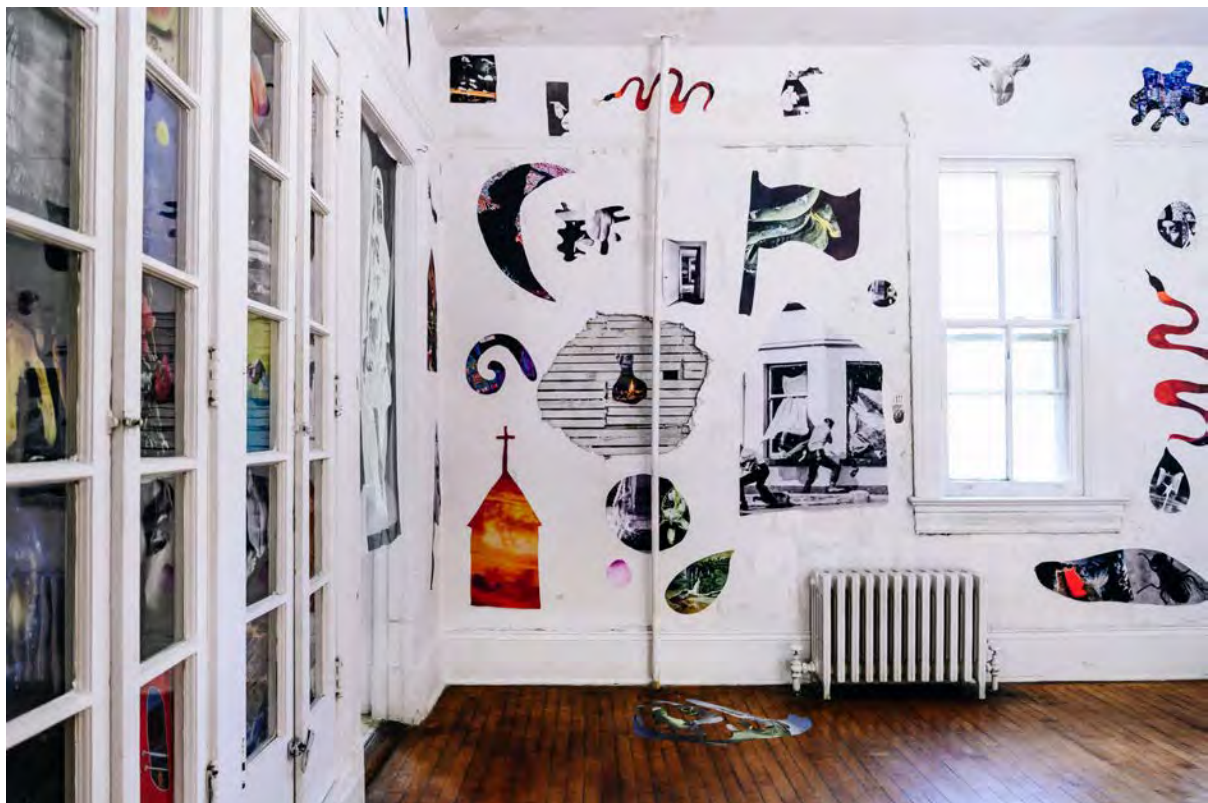
The current “NADA House 2021,” is offering work by more than 100 artists from 66 galleries, curators and artist-run or alternative spaces from the United States and around the world. (Many of the names here may be pleasantly unfamiliar.)

It was still a work in progress when I visited twice this week, with rooms waiting for dealers or artists to show up. What is already there to see is enough to compel me to return to see what finally lands.

The art is everywhere, in front halls, kitchens and pantries, in rooms once used for living, dining and sleeping. A collective that calls itself Turn On has decorated all the light switches. These quirky interventions, which crop up frequently, are always a welcome sight.



At NADA House on Governors Island, a wood sculpture by Colby Bird at the presentation by Halsey McKay Gallery seems to have stepped out of a painting by Magritte. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

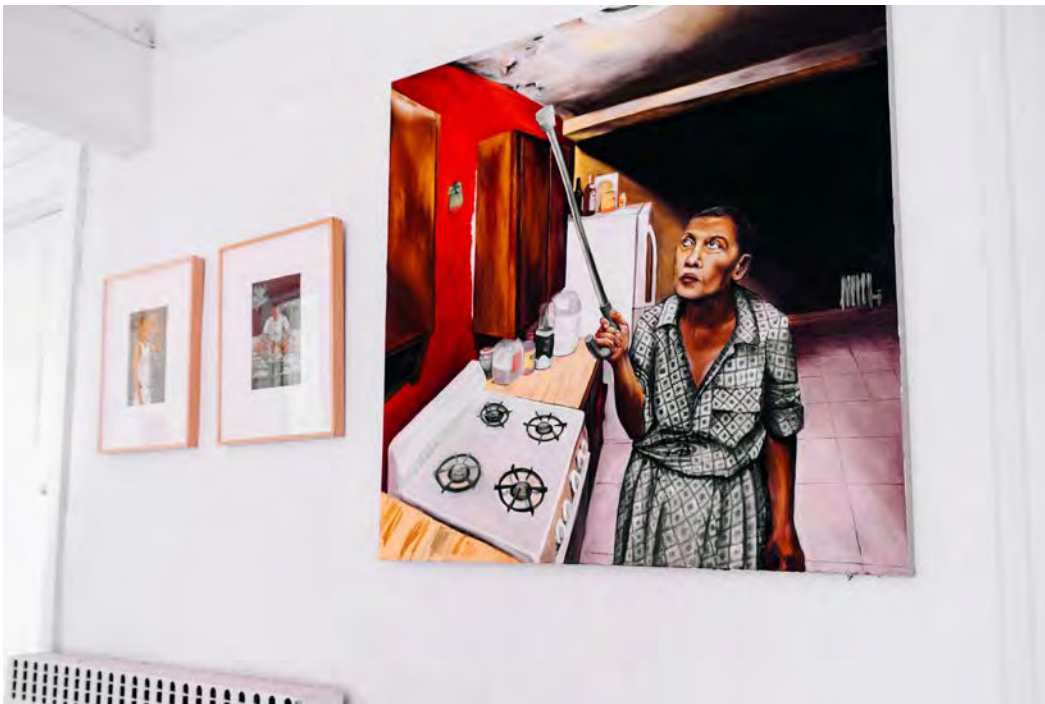


Rachel Libeskind's "Archive Fever," from "The Secret Life of Photographs," at NADA House, presented by Signs and Symbols. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

Before you reach the houses, you may come across "Luna," by Bill Saylor (of Magenta Plains gallery), an engaging outdoor sculpture that cleverly accommodates his improvisational painting style with a panoply of graffiti-like phantasms on five thick, white panels that converge like an eccentric kiosk.

On the porch of 405A, a big painting by Matthew Kirk (Fierman) may attract you with its field of drifting hieroglyphs and marks, some of which reflect Kirk's Native American background. The canvas, which is two-sided, is raw and unstretched and held aloft by a wood support on a base of bricks, cinder blocks, grass and a snail.

As you approach House 403, you'll hear "Isla a Isla" (Island to Island), six short pieces by sound artists and composers presented by Embajada, a gallery in San Juan, P.R., starting with a percussion piece by Eduardo F. Rosario that sounds like a well-tempered wind chime.



Shellyne Rodriguez's "La Doña Raises Her Cane," presented by EFA Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

Just inside House 403, are woodsy paintings by Henry Glavin and wood sculptures by Colby Bird, including one that seems to have stepped out of a painting by Magritte (Halsey McKay).

The upstairs landing is dominated by the muscular realism of Shellyne Rodriguez's "La Doña Raises Her Cane" (EFA Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop). In a feat of 3-D trompe l'oeil, Pablo Gómez Uribe (Proxyco) has turned a small room into a workshop with a chaotic pile of bricks and an orderly line of bisected ones, meticulously made of sheets of wood. All are palpably weightless, even the sledge hammers covering one wall. In another room, the veteran artist Ken Grimes gives a full sense of his illustrational style and his obsession with science-fiction and things extraterrestrial, paying homage to figures like Carl Sagan and Arthur Clarke (Ricco/Maresca).



Work by Ken Grimes, presented by Ricco/Maresca Gallery. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

At 404A, a cloak room furnished by works in wood by Quintin Rivera Toro includes a bench, available for use, titled "This Almond Tree Will Save Our Country" (Zawahra Alejandro). Textiles speak loudest here. Kira Dominguez Hultgren (Eleanor Harwood Gallery) has nearly overwhelmed one room with riveting textiles. The monumental "No Dogs Allowed," a fan-shaped structure of cord and thread nominates this artist as the heir to Sheila Hicks.

Across the hall, Josie Love Roebuck (Latchkey Gallery) does similarly riveting things with embroidery, patchwork and paint that yield big wall hangings. "Magnificently Willful" celebrates her hair, its long strands cascading from the painting onto the floor like a curtain. Nikholis Planck (Magenta Plains) has lined part of the hallway with intriguing little paintings — executed on egg-size ovoids. Upstairs, Michelle Rosenberg (Situations) has converted a closet into a magical wonderland of discarded brushes wittily refurbished with colorful bristles.



Mixed media by Josie Love Roebuck on Governors Island, with LatchKey Gallery. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times



Installation by Michelle Rosenberg at NADA House, from Situations. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

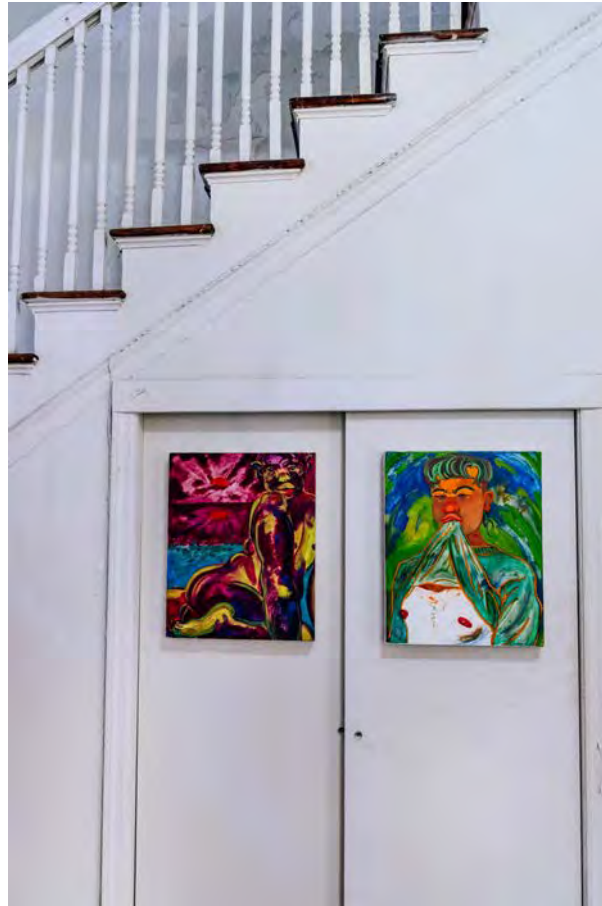


The "Swimming Room" with balls of chalk, by Ana Bidart with Josée Bienvenu Gallery. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

At 404B, the front hall, a gauntlet of the vigorous sign-like paintings of the outsider artist Willie Jinks (Shrine) exudes a creative freedom beside which much around it pales. Ana Bidart's "Swimming Room" has covered the floor with a plastic board of vivid blue, leaving substantial balls of chalk for visitors to draw with (Josée Bienvenu Gallery). Two cryptic videos are recommended: The poetic "Halo Nevus" by the Welsh-Gambian artist Tako Taal alternates mysterious narrative scenes

with close-ups of flooding water, accompanied by mesmerizing music (Patricia Fleming Gallery). Evan Mast's "Landscape #2, is a 9-minute panning shot of the streets and alleys of Taiwan, whose concentration on parked, shrouded motorbikes that does in fact conjure mountains (Brackett Creek Exhibitions).

In the front hall at 405A, the paintings of Ricardo Partida (Baby Blue Gallery, Chicago) exude a seductive glow — magenta and turquoise here, orange and dark yellow there. Their subject is usually a languid young man in flirtatious, traditionally female poses. They update German Expressionism and share their forthright manner with the work of Jonathan Lyndon Chase but are not yet as original.



Paintings by Ricardo Partida at the NADA exhibition on Governors Island. Presented by Baby Blue Gallery, Chicago. Nina Westervelt for The New York Times

In the dining room, the artist Rachel Libeskind (Signs and Symbols Gallery) has dotted every surface of a large room with cutout images for "Archive Fever." It's an airy walk-in collage, immersive and buoyant, like a Joan Miró painting reimagined by Hannah Hoch.

At 405B, Johann Herr (Geary) creates a meditation on banana republics in Latin America and their propping up by the United States. It features striking tropical wallpaper centered on portraits of Latin American dictators; a colorful rug, replete with guns, greenbacks, and the Chiquita Banana logo and a remarkably readable poster that grimly traces the 1954 coup that ended Guatemala's first democratic government.

"NADA House 2021" shows an organization evolving into a hybrid of exhibition and art fair. It remains a vital clearinghouse, reminding us how much the larger art fairs leave out, exposing grass roots everywhere.

NADA House 2021

Saturday through Aug. 1, Governors Island, 403-405 Colonels Row; 212 594 0883; newartdealers.org. Open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. For ferry schedules and details about getting to the island: govisland.com/visit-the-island.

ARTFORUM

REVIEWS

Rachel Libeskind SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

In her classic 1975 video *Semiotics of the Kitchen*, Martha Rosler inhabits a character she has described as “an anti-Julia Child” who “replaces the domesticated ‘meaning’ of tools with a lexicon of rage and frustration.” Reciting a deadpan domestic abecedarium—*apron, bowl, chopper, dish*—as she stares into the camera and proffers the inventoried items to her audience from behind a countertop, Rosler reappropriates the setting and accoutrements of food preparation to stage a personal rebellion against the drudgery of that odiously limiting category of gendered labor, “women’s work.” Rachel Libeskind’s similarly modest video *What Happens in the Kitchen?*, 2020—online for roughly two weeks in late June as part of programming presented by the Lower East Side gallery signs and symbols—undoubtedly shares certain critical impulses with its forty-five-year-old antecedent. But unlike Rosler’s brand of undistilled indignation, Libeskind’s work engages with the idea that the kitchen (and the cook) might, without contradiction, also be productively figured as a symbol of female introspection, creativity, desire, and kinship.

Libeskind’s eight-minute piece consists of an edited collection of short video clips depicting women cooking and eating during the pandemic. Shot by friends of the artist at her request, the footage is accompanied by a string of fragmented quotes drawn from (but not specifically attributed to) twenty female writers, artists, and scholars from vastly disparate backgrounds and perspectives, all spoken by computer voices and reiterated in captions at the bottom of the screen. The first words in the video (“I like to write down what happened even when nothing has happened”), heard as a woman sharpens a knife, turn out to be those of Chantal Akerman, whose indelible masterpiece *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* is arguably cinema’s single greatest meditation on the murderously stultifying repetitions of domesticity. Released the same year as Rosler’s video, the roughly three-and-a-half-hour-long work bores in on the routines of a single mother in Brussels, played by Deplhine Seyrig, who spends long stretches of time in her kitchen making meals for herself and her son in a kind of affectual fugue state. But a bit of detective work revealed that the passage quoted is not from that film but rather from Akerman’s less well-known 2013 memoir *My Mother Laughs*, a sort of companion text to her melancholy final film about the two women’s relationship, *No Home Movie* (2015).



This discovery was only the first of many epiphanies produced by my attempts to track down the provenance of the various bits of language woven into the artist’s video. The core of Libeskind’s deceptively straightforward project lies in this ancillary spectatorial research—a ramifying exercise that has the potential to lead viewers into entire dazzling oeuvres as they attempt to trace small unfamiliar snippets.

As the scene moves from kitchen to kitchen and from locked-down friend to locked-down friend, we see our own private household activities reiterated—melon cut, parsley juiced, vanilla extract measured out, rhubarb washed, meatballs mixed, standing water scooped from a sink and poured over window boxes full of flowers—while hearing bits from Audre Lorde’s 1977 text “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action,” Claudia Rankine’s *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014), Laura Mulvey’s 1996 essay collection *Fetishism and Curiosity*, Gwendolyn Brooks’s 1987 poem “Truth,” and Simone Weil’s *Gravity and Grace* (1952). A blender is turned on as a few phrases from Zora Neale Hurston’s memoir, *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942) play in the background; flour is sifted over lines out of Sylvia Plath’s 1962 poem “Elm.” Taken together, the brief passages form a sort of stealth syllabus, a library of concepts and language that spreads and lingers long after the short bare-bones video has ended. Through her semiotics of the kitchen, Libeskind aims to satisfy a different but equally fundamental form of hunger, one for ideas, and provides sustenance not just for the stomach but also for the spirit.

—Jeffrey Kastner

Rachel Libeskind,
*What Happens in
the Kitchen?*, 2020,
video, color, sound,
7 minutes 54 seconds.

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

SEP 24 EXHIBITION REVIEW: ATHENIAN SALT AT SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

FEATURES



Exhibition View © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York

By Chloe Tai

In an intimate, white-and-red-brick-walled setting, the viewer is asked to take a close look at Rachel Libeskind's montages that appropriate both historical and modern art to reveal the impreciseness of gender. Athenian Salt is a photography exhibition at signs and symbols, the first physical location for the typically nomadic, contemporary art space.

Upon entering the gallery, one is instantly greeted by collages of anonymous bodies from Playboy magazines pasted onto the heads of ancient statues. With little room to move, the photographs become the intense focus of the observer.

Each decrepit statue harkens back to a time when beauty was exclusively smooth, porcelain-carved heads. Even with the added images from Playboy, the bodies are still the epitome of societal perfection, not the archetypal bodies one sees on the streets. However, it is precisely by combining these different elements of the classical, baroque, and late 20th-century softcore pornographic bodies that Libeskind is able to create real people.

Upon entering the gallery, one is instantly greeted by collages of anonymous bodies from Playboy magazines pasted onto the heads of ancient statues. With little room to move, the photographs become the intense focus of the observer.

Each decrepit statue harkens back to a time when beauty was exclusively smooth, porcelain-carved heads. Even with the added images from Playboy, the bodies are still the epitome of societal perfection, not the archetypal bodies one sees on the streets. However, it is precisely by combining these different elements of the classical, baroque, and late 20th-century softcore pornographic bodies that Libeskind is able to create real people.



Athenian Oracles, 2020 © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York



Scriptorium II, 2020 © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York

In a tongue-in-cheek approach, Libeskind redefines the meaning of the woman's body. Using typical street directions, she identifies to the observer that the body is not a road to use, but rather closed for safety. The humor of her work hinders the less-observant viewer from understanding the genuine complexity in possessing a woman's body. How easy it is for society to co-opt the human form for its personal gain, ignoring the person beneath.

And yet, it is precisely this obliviousness that allows Libeskind to draw from the ephemera present all around us and create beauty from it. She sees the beauty where others are unappreciative. In one of her pieces, there is an incomplete stone statue whose eye is replaced with a light green eye taken from a magazine. The past and present are intertwined in this piece. The statue is not the focus, as it is pasted onto the side of the frame, but rather the eye is, placed front and center. Although the eyes are mismatched, the artwork begs the question, "Is she no longer beautiful with her flaws?"

This juxtaposition of modern beauty with that of the ancient reflects Libeskind's belief that beauty trends and fads come and go, but more often than not repeat themselves. Libeskind seeks to break that mold by disrupting the timeline of art.



Divided Pavement, 2020 © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York



Erechteion, 2020 © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York

While in quarantine, Libeskind spent countless hours devoted to her craft and to pouring over thousands of photographs and pieces. An eyebrow here and a leg there, her studio was covered with these disparate elements, all in various steps of the process, from enlargement to scanning to inversion.

Libeskind spoke in an interview with *Metal Magazine* about her love for Federico Fellini's *Book of dreams*, which vividly displays a sketched world with figures of cartoonish proportions living in a realistic setting. Her own work reflects the sketches and commentary of this book, representing the intersection between poetry, literature, art, and photography.

She mentions that her love for the combined elements of words and art has made its way into a number of her pieces. Her background comes from opera and has been influenced by the likes of Laurie Anderson and Carolee Schneemann, both artists who were similarly able to adapt their more performative pieces to still, print art.



Merging Traffic, 2020 © Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York

Libeskind developed this exhibit while in the throes of the pandemic. Not only has this been a time of great self-reflection for everyone, but also the beginning of a new era from which human rights activists hope to reclaim the justice they deserve. It is only fitting that this work is released now when the human body has become so contested.

To view more of Rachel Libeskind's work [click here](#).

ADMINISTRATOR



© Jen Denike

PHOTOGRAPHY

signs and symbols postcard project

DI FRANCESCA MARANI

27 APRILE 2020

A very special initiative created by a young contemporary art space in New York to navigate through this difficult time



In this period of forced isolation we discovered ourselves musicians, painters, writers... but above all we enjoyed every artistic expression. If our spirits will come out intact from this quarantine it will also be thanks to those artists, curators and gallery owners who have always believed in the "power of art" to enrich the search for meaning that accompanies our lives. But how is the artistic community reacting to this unprecedented crisis? And how are the youngest and most experimental galleries surviving?

We spoke with **Mitra Khorasheh**, director of signs and symbols, a contemporary art space grounded in performance, based in New York.

How would you describe signs and symbols?

signs and symbols is a contemporary art space focused on performance and time-based media — but signs and symbols encompasses much more than that. We have always referred to ourselves as a collective, because we truly are a community/family. Our physical gallery space serves as a curatorial platform and multi-disciplinary incubator bringing together diverse artistic voices to stimulate dialogue and creative connection. Our program highlights the live arts — every exhibition has a live performance element, dance, sound etc. In order to sustain our program and support what we do, we do everything we can to thrive and survive in normal times. We maintain low overhead costs, we install almost everything by ourselves with our artists, and we balance our ephemeral and less sellable projects with more commercially viable exhibitions. This endeavor is truly a labor of love for the art, and a commitment to the artists we represent.

What are the challenges that you are facing as director of a startup gallery?

Every gallery is struggling right now, but we are particularly young, small and ambitious. We will celebrate our 2nd birthday this April 29th, and we are a team of just two people — myself and Bridget Casey.

Now, while our physical space is closed indefinitely due to COVID19, we and our artists face a completely unexpected and unprecedented financial challenge. Our programs hinge on the LIVE experience, from intimate and participatory performances to site-specific installations and project residencies. Many of the main pillars of our program are simply impossible during social distancing. We have also had to place our exhibition program on hold, a carefully planned and balanced schedule that is crucial to our financial security. As a young gallery, we do not have deep reserves to keep us afloat while we cannot operate at our storefront space.

We also do not qualify for the majority of small business loans and COVID19 assistance programs, given the fluctuating nature and structure of our business model. Our landlord is unwilling to negotiate rent. Most of our clients do not have the resources or stability to collect artworks in this market. We don't know when New York will ease social distancing mandates, so while we are indefinitely closed, we must tackle two distinct challenges: translating our program to the online realm, and surviving financially.

We are navigating this difficult situation together with our artists, with whom I am in constant daily communication. We don't have a definitive solution, but we do have each other and we are doing the best we can to survive this pandemic together.

Tony Orrico performing
Supporting a continued
gesture towards expanding
sanctuary at signs and
symbols



What kind of initiatives did you create in order to face this unprecedented crisis?

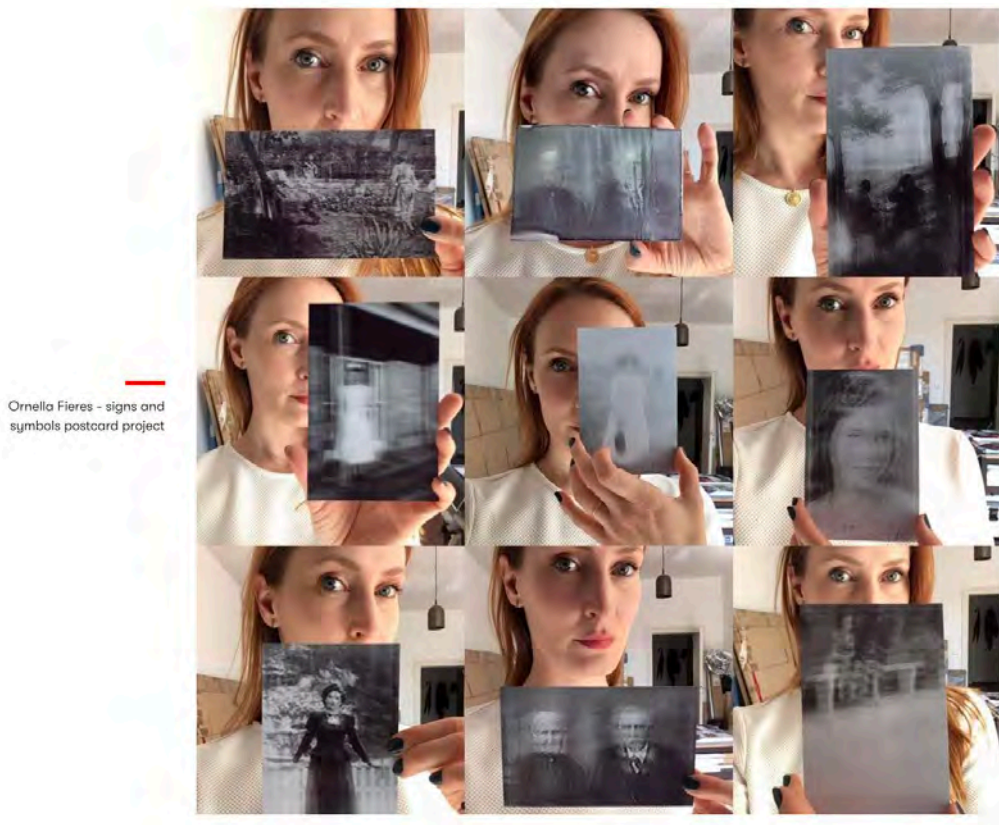
We believe that it is our responsibility as a gallery to continue championing our artists, and we firmly believe that art plays a vital role in guiding individuals and society through such uncertain times.

We wanted our online program to stay true to our curatorial vision and reflect our commitment to performance and time-based media. In response, we have organized a series of online solo video exhibitions, featuring Jen DeNike, Ornella Fieres, Broomberg & Chanarin, Tony Orrico, Michelle Handleman and Rachel Libeskind. We felt that these video works were always intended to be shown on a screen, so showing them online wouldn't compromise their integrity. We are also regularly livestreaming performances on our Instagram @signssymbols, including Annabel Daou's nightly durational performance *I will worry for you (from today until tomorrow)*.

In response to our current financial crisis, with our artists help we have launched a carefully curated online shop featuring some very special initiatives by our artists which will help us cover our rent and allow our artists to continue producing work, every dollar helps during this time and brings us closer to the ability of providing future exhibition and performance space for our artists.

One very special initiative on our online shop by our artists, is our signs and symbols postcard project (follow along on Instagram #signsandsymbolspostcardproject). For \$35, our artists are creating unique postcard size artworks. For every postcard purchase, we select an artist that we think would speak to the recipient. One of our artists then creates an original 4 x 6 inch (10.16 x 15.24 cm) work on paper, with whatever materials they happen to have on hand during this time in quarantine. Some of our artists have access to their studios while others don't... Once the postcard is complete, the artists directly mail it to their collector, from wherever in the world they are located, as an offering of hope and connection.

On their way to the post office, the artist will send us a selfie with the artwork before they mail it off, and we'll share this photo update to our Instagram @signssymbols. We have also tried to assign an artist who is geographically as close as possible to purchasers. Once the postcard arrives, it belongs to you completely. You are welcome to frame it, display it, photograph it or tuck it into a drawer as a memento of these times. We encourage people to post it on social media with the tag #signsandsymbolspostcardproject. Each postcard will have a return address of the artist who is mailing it to you (not the gallery's address). This is a direct exchange between you and the artist we have selected for you — once you receive your small artwork, the exchange can end there, although we welcome you to reply to the artist and strike up a socially-distanced exchange. If you choose to reply, it could be the genesis or foundation of a potentially ongoing exchange.



We are excited to launch this postcard project and explore its many possibilities. We plan to offer these postcards size works on our website through the global lockdown, as an opportunity for interpersonal connection via mail, and we may continue it even afterwards as it truly aligns with our belief in community and participation. We wanted it to be at a low price that everyone could afford and have something by our artists whom they otherwise may not have been able to afford. Our artists have shown us such love and generosity during these difficult times.

Snail mail is often overlooked these days, but right now it is one of the only ways to tangibly communicate with others. And since many borders have closed and art shipping services have been suspended, it's also one of the only ways to receive art during the global lockdown.

Some other special initiatives by our artists include:

A unique drawing by Tony Orrico, who is offering instructions to conduct your own at-home performance that yields 7 memories, specific to this moment in your life. Tony will hand draw a small tessellation of your memories in the manner of his ongoing series (*Textile*) and ship the drawing to your door; to mark this time, this effort, and your kind support.

Rachel Libeskind's special edition *hand scan*, released specifically for signs and symbols' online shop. *hand scan* exists purely in the digital realm — you can use it as a screensaver on your phone or computer. You may also translate it into the physical realm by printing at your own discretion (the file is formatted to be printed at 8.5 x 11 inches). You will receive a high resolution jpg file of Libeskind's digital artwork along with a certificate of authenticity for your edition. We know that, in these uncertain times, many of our clients and supporters cannot commit to collecting artworks. Others simply don't have remaining wall space. At the same time, every dollar contributes to maintaining our exhibition and performance space for our artists post-coronavirus. This digital edition is one of our special initiatives that will allow us to support our program and our artists during this time.



Rachel Libeskind_hand
scan, Digital Print, 2020

We are also offering a virtual performance / ephemeral experience by a signs and symbols performance artist. Truly ephemeral — this one-on-one, virtual performance experience is made specifically for the purchaser by a signs and symbols artist. This will be a new, unique work. The selected artist(s) will be a surprise, and we will contact you to set up a date and time for your virtual experience. As we adapt our program to virtual spaces, these private performances are one of our special initiatives that will allow us to support our program and our artists during this time.

Finally what is coming up soon (and very exciting!) – we will be releasing a few Special Editions of work by our artists for our shop. We will soon be releasing a special edition of 20 of a new photograph by Jen DeNike from her new series “Visions of the Daughters”. Notably – since I was close to Ulay for many years and his practice informs and anchors the curatorial mission of signs and symbols, we are working closely with Ulay Foundation to release a Special Edition of Ulay’s work as an official collaboration in support of the gallery, Ulay Foundation, Bowery Mission and also in memory of Ulay who recently passed away (March 2, 2020) for our special initiatives. Ulay did a Polaroid project with the Bowery Mission in the 90s, his connection to that place feels particularly fitting for this since he was a supporter of the Mission and that it was a subject of his. More importantly, Ulay not only inspired the curatorial vision of signs and symbols, but also encouraged me to open a performance gallery. I am grateful to the Ulay Foundation for their support of signs and symbols during this difficult time.

Who can contribute and how?

Anyone can purchase a postcard! We started this project mainly for friends and family, but people from all over the world have since participated — Australia, Germany, Canada, Sweden, and others, including some countries most affected by coronavirus like Italy. It's amazing to see the far reach of our humble gallery in New York, and it's beautiful to see these new relationships forged across countries and cultures.

We encourage people to write back to their artist and strike up a socially-distanced exchange. We are excited and inspired by the possibility of fostering interpersonal connection even while we cannot gather together.

Beyond supporting the gallery and our artists, we are donating 10% of all sales to Bowery Mission, an organization that continues to serve the homeless and the hungry during this pandemic. Our gallery is located just a few blocks away in the Lower East Side, and it felt important to us to give back to our neighborhood.

Do you feel that the artistic community is effectively supported in this uncertain time?

We have received an outpouring of love and generosity over the past few weeks, and we have been so touched by our artists' unflinching support. I don't know how we would do this without their determination and encouragement.

We have witnessed support for one another within the arts community, particularly from the New Art Dealers Alliance and its member galleries. We will need support outside of our industry in order to fully recover from this crisis — currently, New York has not passed commercial or residential rent relief, and many arts institutions do not qualify for small business loans and COVID-19 assistance programs.

What are your hopes for the future?

We can't wait to return to our space and resume our exhibition program. Our 2020 schedule had intended to include solo exhibitions of Zander Blom, Drew Conrad, Tony Orrico and Ornella Fieres, and we do plan to pick up where we left off once we can safely re-open the gallery.

Of course we can't predict what the future holds, no one can... we are all in trouble more or less. I am just so grateful for the love and support of my artists. I am touched by our community and feel the collective stronger than ever. We are navigating this one day at a time as a collective, we were always close but this has defiantly brought the family of artists closer than ever before. We are leaning on each other for support, and we will fight together to ensure we survive as a gallery. It is in times like this that you really realize the value of community, and the communities ability to sustain together. We need art to guide us, our heroes and idols to guide us, for me that is our artists, my signs and symbols collective.

The response to our postcard project has been incredible so far, and I look forward to the day in a few years from now when we will sit together with our artists over bottles of wine and look back at this moment and remember how we saved the gallery through a pandemic with \$35 postcards.

CORONAVIRUS

ART

CONTEMPORARY

PERFORMANCE

Vogue Consiglia



Rachel Libeskind, *Desire to Collect*, 2019, collage on Japanese paper with fabric hardener and acrylic airbrush pigment, 33 x 24".

Rachel Libeskind and Carmen Winant

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

102 Forsyth Street

June 2–July 28, 2019

The announcement for [Rachel Libeskind](#) and [Carmen Winant](#)'s show tells us that the artists “practice feminism and motherhood,” as if these were optional items on a menu of exercise regimens. Yet both of them do attempt to grapple with the historic packaging and narrativization of women's bodies and psyches.

Winant's memorable installation at the Museum of Modern Art last year, *My Birth*, 2018, required the viewer to pass through a long hallway plastered with pictures of newborns, pregnancies, and women in labor.

Here, her collages focus on found material about “embodied treatments”—such as dance or scream therapy, marketed to wealthy, white, middle-aged women—which are chaotically assembled but neatly framed. Jostling for attention are cutout images and handwriting in graphite, ink, charcoal, and crayon. The aesthetic calls to mind the torn pages of a searching teenager's diary (*Target Practice* [all works 2019] includes the headings “COMMUNICATION” and “FEELING”) or sketchbook notes from an aspiring art student (“Remember: no one likes to be seen or looked at in unflattering ways!” scolds *Hologram for living*). Often combining reclined nude subjects and snippets of reassuring instructions, the matter for her compositions could have come from guides to shooting portraits or sex manuals for beginners.

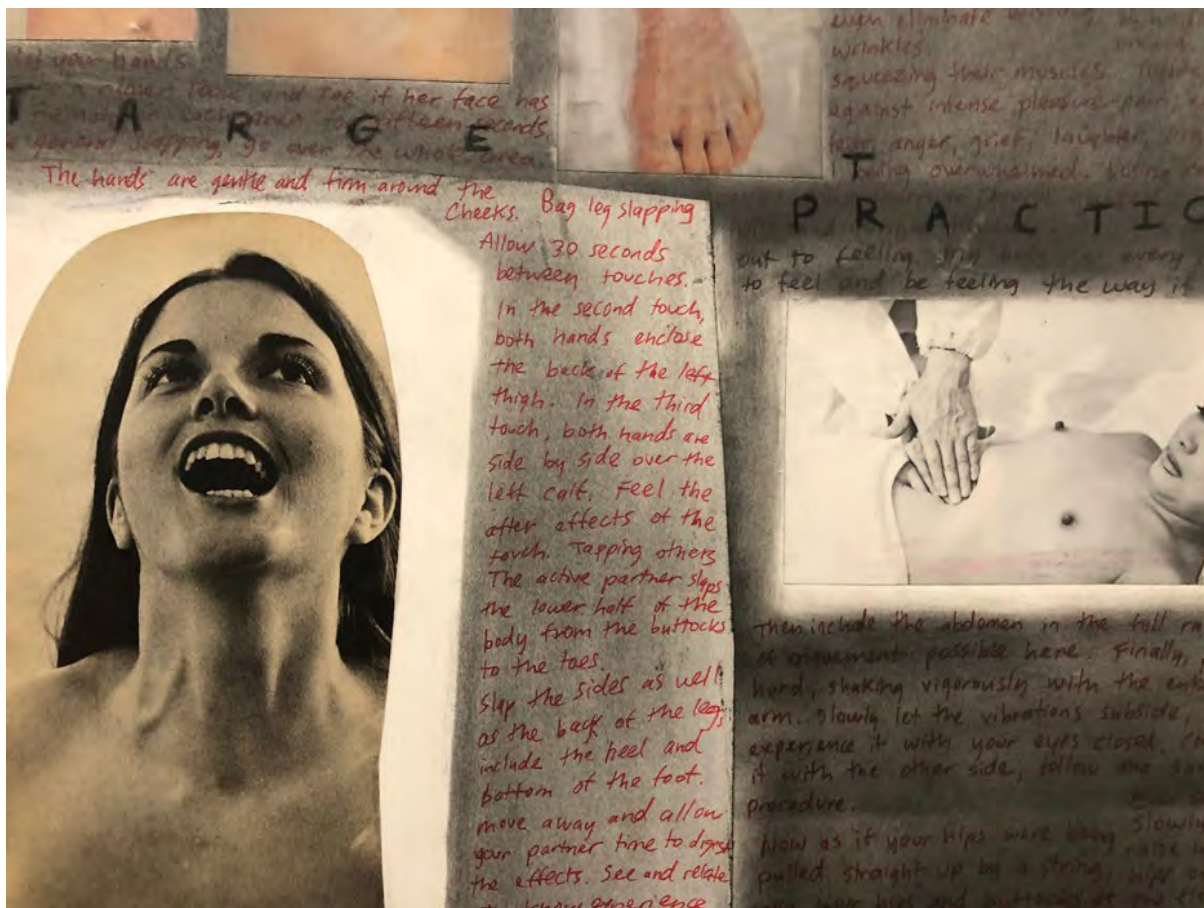
The images in Libeskind's collages were taken from an unnamed vintage board game whose pieces included men's and women's faces sliced into separate features. *Desire to Collect*, with its comparative columns of lip, nose, and eye shapes, introduces the dark tinge of a eugenics study. The other works are rather hallucinatory, full of psychedelic airbrushing and asymmetrical compositions. More playful than Winant's pieces, they also lend an undeniable air of paranoia to the show. Together, the artists attempt to reassemble so many fragmented bodies, to relieve some of their pain—but this work is never complete.

— Mira Dayal

AnOther

Collages Exploring What Womanhood Means Today

ART & PHOTOGRAPHY / IN PICTURES



Carmen Winant, Target Practice, 2019 (detail) © Carmen Winant; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

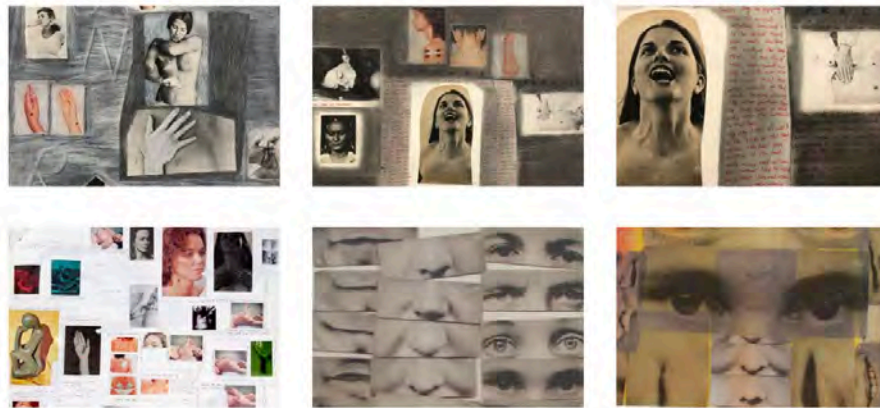
New collages by Rachel Libeskind and Carmen Winant are on show in New York, exploring a dialogue between the two artists' feminist viewpoints and explorations of the female body

JUNE 04, 2019

TEXT Belle Hutton

Collage is an important medium for artists **Rachel Libeskind** and **Carmen Winant**. Though it is just one facet of their oeuvres – Winant is a writer and artist, her work often straddling the realms of photography and photo-montage, and Libeskind works in performance art, painting and sculpture – collage is employed by both to study womanhood.

A freshly opened exhibition in New York, lengthily titled *sensation-sensitivity-creativity-productivity-communication*, shines a light on this aspect of their work, showing how each uses collage as a tool for “social disturbance”. Created from a feminist viewpoint (“feminism is a filter through which I live my life,” Winant told Sophie Bew in *AnOther Magazine A/W18*), their art stems from an interest in the female experience – both individual and universal, historic and contemporary.



GALLERY / 10 IMAGES

sensation-sensitivity-creativity-productivity-communication

Like previous work by Winant, her three new collages centre on found imagery depicting women engaging in a particular activity. Last year saw the Ohio-based artist exhibit *Lesbian Lands*, a piece that focused on the first female-owned commune in the US, created in 1976 by the Oregon Women’s Land Trust; *Looking Forward to Being Attacked* brought together images of women practicing self-defence; and 2018’s *My Birth*, which has become one of Winant’s most recognised works, saw her paste over 2,000 photographs of women in childbirth on two walls of New York’s MoMA. For *sensation-sensitivity-creativity-productivity-communication*, Winant’s interest is in images of healing processes – specifically therapeutic treatments, like dance therapy, contact therapy, and scream therapy. Overlaid with her own illustrations and handwritten text, the resulting images question if and how we can view the notion of healing and restoring. The text reads as lyrical, descriptive and carefully instructive at once: “The hands are gentle and firm around the cheeks... Allow 30 seconds between touches. In the second touch, both hands enclose the back of the left thigh,” goes a small section.



Rachel Libeskind, Tenacity of Purpose, 2019
© Rachel Libeskind; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

Libeskind, who was born in Milan, raised in Berlin and is now based in New York, has looked to the natural world, and specifically rocks, to form her new works. Among new collages, three small rock-like sculptures, painted in kaleidoscopic colours, are also on show. The found imagery in her collages are cards showing sections of anonymous faces that were used as pieces of a board game from the 1950s, the aim of which was to create an entire face from these individual features.

The work plays with proportion: lining up mouths and noses underneath giant pairs of eyes, and layering these facial features over bright, rock-shaped backgrounds. A dialogue between natural shapes and contrived faces, Libeskind's working process also offered a contrast, as she created the collages on super-light paper itself reinforced with fabric hardener. In her wider practice, Libeskind's work moves fluidly between techniques and media. "There is something to be said for the female ability to push boundaries in what media is and what mediums are," she has previously said. "Historically, paintings are a very male thing. I think in some ways, either consciously or unconsciously, I'm responding to that."



Carmen Winant, Hunger, 2019

© Carmen Winant; Courtesy of the artist and signs and symbols, New York.

The works by Libeskind and Winant featured in *sensation-sensitivity-creativity-productivity-communication* offer thoughts on identity, and how bodies are literally, figuratively, and willingly touched, torn and spliced. They make for poignant viewing in light of recent restrictions placed on women and their reproductive rights in the artists' country; work like this with a feminist agenda feels particularly valuable. "I see so much progressive work, activist work and intellectual work existing across all platforms and I think it's really amazing," Winant said in *AnOther Magazine A/W18*. "I guess I do wonder about the trendiness of feminism... I feel as though it always needs to be a radical force. I feel optimistic about it but I also feel really troubled."

sensation-sensitivity-creativity-productivity-communication is at *Signs and Symbols, New York*, until July 14, 2019.



Look at Rachel Libeskind

— Art



January 19, 2018

Rachel Libeskind seems to do it all. *office* spoke with the artist at her studio, an airy Red Hook space full of half-fleshed out ideas, the result of a brain that moves too fast to keep up with itself. Windowsills and shelves are stuffed with books on theory and yellowing magazines, odd little trinkets mingle with pieces of garbage found on the street, the abandoned cardboard box a Katy Perry blowup doll came in is more of a treasure than the product itself.

A silicone ice cream cone melts on a coffee table the visitor is afraid to set a drink on. In her hands, braille hymns are immortalized in concrete, delicate lacy handkerchiefs are imprinted with embroidery — upon closer inspection, you see that the misleadingly dainty letters spell out the signatures of famous world dictators, Trump included.

Interview by Nancy Tang

Performance photos by Bridget Holyk Casey

Media courtesy of Rachel Libeskind

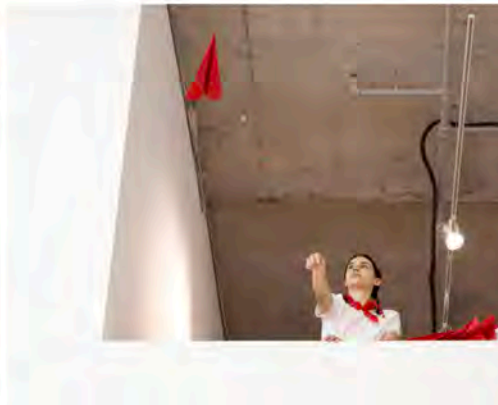
There are the pieces Libeskind knits together in her postmodern bricolage — archival photos are flexible as silkscreens. Warped by the fabric, famous faces stare at the viewer — and what can one do but stare back? Libeskind wants you to look. Despite the serious, personal and political nature of many of these works, they can also be shockingly humorous. She tells me I'm allowed to laugh.

A recent installation and performance called "The Day The Father Died," curated by Mitra Khorasheh at tANJA gRUNERT highlights Libeskind's flexibility. She deftly weaves together her practices, people mill about inspecting the paintings and projections on the wall, anticipating the performance to come.

When the time comes, Libeskind's bare feet slap on concrete as she explains the Soviet Union over a recording of theatrical sobbing. She asks the crowd, "Why would authoritarian rulers love to use the idea of crying little girls? I have no idea."



But then she goes on to explain, she does indeed have an idea. She has surrounded herself with an idea of these girls, dressed in neat white tennis skirts and red scarves, thin shapely legs marching about, performing acts of grief in braided pigtails. One plays the violin, one cleans the floor with a tangle of mops, one drops rose petals down an aisle, one makes paper airplanes and throws them from the top of the stairs, one brushes the top of my head with a sheaf of golden wheat, all while the artist herself throws bottles of ink at portraits of Stalin pinned to the clean white walls. Where factories once mass-produced posters like this, Libeskind has made these herself. The act is an homage to her grandmother, a Holocaust survivor, and her very real act of defiance against tyranny.



Do you feel a responsibility to be political in art? Does it add to the sense of urgency to produce?

To be an artist in a capitalist world is an implicitly radical act, which inherently rejects the societal categorization that capitalism rests upon. Personally, it is not my imperative to always make work which is overtly political. The politics of my existence and the topics I choose to investigate are in many ways political enough. To make work that asks people to look at the world they inhabit, or the history they represent, is political. I feel a sense of urgency to produce work that really shakes people out of their comfortable positions in society.



You mentioned the way painting is in a different realm outside other forms of art, why do you choose to engage with both painting and these other mediums? What was the process of learning these different methods of creating, how much was taught in school vs figured out along the way?

Of all of the mediums I use, painting is the only one I "learned" in school. I choose to engage with all the mediums I can because I don't want to limit myself. New mediums mean new techniques, which means new ways of conveying new ideas. My work is informed by the many mediums I like to play around with. To me, providing viewers with different forms that all speak to a single topic is a way to access more people, and more parts of them. Video is a fluid, familiar language we all now speak and understand. Video gives the viewer an immediate entrance into my visual world, and (hopefully) serves as a key for people to look back to when they feel confused or perhaps lost in my strange world they have entered. The paintings serve a similar purpose, paintings themselves are windows into another world — whether you are a well-versed consumer of art, or someone with little exposure to contemporary work, paintings are accessible as a form and give viewers a negotiating ground to examine some of the signs and symbols in the greater work.



What led to you to engage with performance art? When I think of performance art, I tend to picture this feminine/feminist trajectory, with artists like Marina Abramovic, Laurie Anderson and Carolee Schneemann. How much do you think you align/depart from this tradition?

Performing has an immediacy for the artist that no other form offers. It is flexible and immediate and strange, and forces the artist performing to confront their own selves as makers and as narrators for a larger story. Performing for me also gives me another vehicle to share my ideas — another context to explore how people react or feel about different topics, visual cues and symbols. Women are always performing in society. To be "a woman" is not a biological distinction, but rather a performative one. The way we are conditioned to dress, to smile, to cover our mouths when we laugh too hard, to walk, to strut, to bat our eyelashes, to kneel, to be modest, to be sexy, to be desirable, to be easy-going, and so on and so forth. Our lives as women are full of a constant, shifting performance. I think that is why women show up as performance artists, ready to go, having trained their entire lives in the performance of self.

Check out some more of Rachel's recent work, from her show at NYC's [New Release Gallery](#) in October 2017, below.

ARTREPORT

Artist Rachel Libeskind's new performance examines the legacy of Stalin

The artist Rachel Libeskind will be presenting the world premiere of *The Day The Father Died*; her latest performance and installation featuring video, sound, poetry sculptural elements, work on paper and paintings, which will take place on Wednesday, November 29th at 524 West 19th Street in Chelsea, from 6:30-8:30pm.



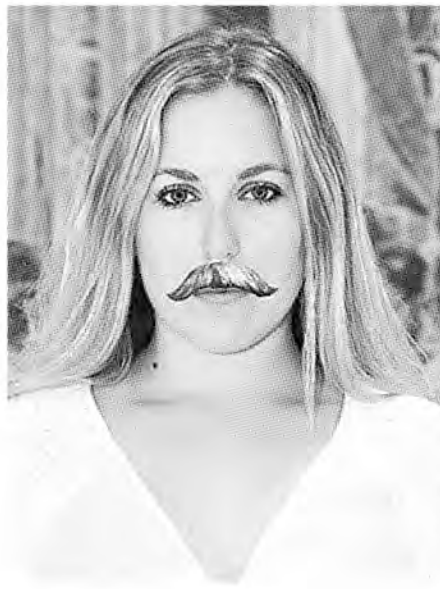
From the same artist who did the original piece titled “*The Travelling Bag*” and the revival of “*Cowboy Mouth*”, Libeskind once again proves she isn't afraid in using the body as a vehicle for personal exploration. Through this performance, Libeskind will combine imagery and poetry, while utilizing a direct performative action and playful irreverence in process and application of image, text, paint, and ink on canvas.





Curated by [Mitra Khorasheh](#) within Tanja Grunert gallery, *The Day the Father Died* will explore the death of the Soviet leader and dictator Stalin. By investigating the uncertain relationship between authority and social reality, the performance will seek to frame this moment in history from a female perspective in present time. Through a personal journey which explores Libeskind's past in relation to her grandparents but also to her present, we will be invited in a historical and autobiographical journey, exploring both the death of this historical figure and Libeskind's

attitude in dealing with death as a symbol for this iconic figure. This performance serves as a commentary on the infantilization of society under an authoritarian father-leader paradigm, and as Libeskind's father recalls the confusing day when Stalin's death arrived — delayed through moans and weeps but whispering triumphs that the Vozhd had finally died. "And you have sent a black snowstorm over Moscow" ...



Snowstorm or blizzard, New York should be ready to experience the world premiere of this performance and decide for themselves what death means for this historical figure who attracts all sorts of commentaries, ambivalence being at the core of it all.

- Juliana Steiner, November 23, 2017

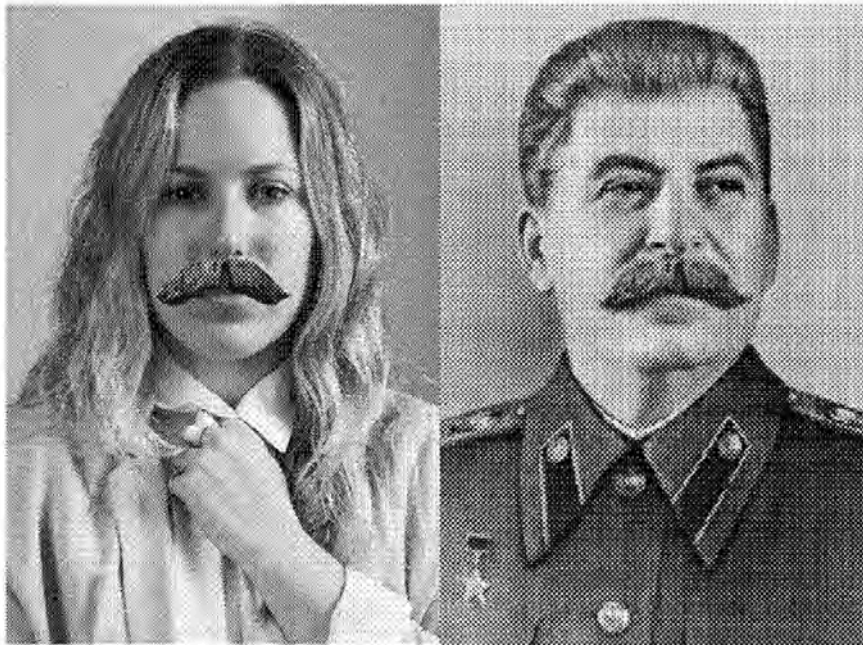
Art World

Editors' Picks: 18 Things to See in New York This Week

Artist talks with Michelle Obama portraitist Amy Sherald and Devan Shimoyama are among this week's highlights.

Sarah Cascone, November 27, 2017

Wednesday, November 29–Sunday, December 3



Rachel Libeskind's *The Day the Father Died*. Courtesy of the artist.

11. "Rachel Libeskind: The Day the Father Died" at Khorasheh + Grunert

Brooklyn artist Rachel Libeskind's new performance and installation piece centers on the death of one of the 20th century's greatest villains, Josef Stalin. Libeskind traces her own lineage to the Gulag, where her Polish Jewish parents met, to explore the dictator's fraught and complex legacy.

Location: Khorasheh + Grunert, 524 West 19th Street

Price: Free

Time: Performance/premiere, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

—Caroline Goldstein

Relative Values: The World Trade Center architect Daniel Libeskind and his daughter, Rachel

The World Trade Center architect Daniel Libeskind, 70, and his daughter, Rachel, 27, an artist, talk about the Holocaust, strict rules at the dinner table and why there is no such thing as boredom

Gabriel Pogrand

January 8 2017, 12:01am,
The Sunday Times



Rachel and Daniel at the family home in Manhattan

Share



Save



Rachel

Growing up in 1990s Berlin, I felt I was living under the cloud of history. My grandparents were Polish Holocaust survivors and our house was five blocks away from Hitler's bunker. And Dad always made sure I was aware of the history surrounding us. He'd point to a building and say: "That's where the Final Solution was plotted." It was intense. It was unavoidable.

Dad won his first competition the year I was born. It was to design the Jewish Museum in Berlin. It took 12 years to complete and I basically grew up in his studio. I'd go in and out after school and just keep myself busy. Best of all, I loved making things — I loved destroying things too!

Boredom in our house was unacceptable. According to Dad, it didn't exist, life was too interesting. If I was bored, it meant I wasn't working my brain hard enough. I can remember visiting galleries with him and him saying: "You need to count to 100 in front of each painting." I'd then sit down and he'd say: "You must stand up in order to think properly."

We moved to New York when Dad won the competition to design the master plan for Ground Zero. I was 14 and my parents let me decide which school I would go to, but they were sceptical when I chose the only school in the city that didn't use a grade system. Dad wanted me to go to the UN school, so I could continue using my German. Mom wanted me to go to a Jewish high school. In the end, they accepted my decision.

Studying at a "hippie school", I developed a love of art, which actually meant I became much closer to Dad. But we didn't speak about everything ... We never spoke about boys or who I was dating. Feelings in general were off the table, and that would frustrate me, but it was probably a reflection of Dad's own upbringing.

“

After the war, Dad's father returned home to Poland, where he found the rest of his family had perished

Dad's parents were both Polish, but when the Nazis invaded, they fled to the Soviet Union. His father was taken to a camp in the Volga, his mother to a gulag in Siberia. They met in

Samarkand and, after the war was over, returned to his dad's hometown, Lodz, where he discovered the rest of his family had perished . My father grew up in that town, a town where he was beaten up for being Jewish.

Towards the end of high school I wanted to go to Harvard, but I didn't tell my parents I'd applied. I knew Dad was opposed to that kind of uber-competitive, Waspy Ivy League world. Also, they probably wouldn't have wanted me to apply in case I failed. But I got in and it was a big shock. My family actually thought I was lying.

It was while I was at Harvard that I started doing art, and it was one of my teachers who recommended I switch from French literature to art. I told him I didn't want to live in Dad's shadow and, thankfully, he told me that wasn't a good enough reason. In the end, I switched and have been doing art ever since.

Dad is my most honest critic and he can be devastating. When I get criticism from him, I feel the full force of his authoritative opinion. When I get praise, it just feels like another guy's opinion.

Earlier this year, I got married to Adam, who first met Dad at his 65th birthday. We all got hammered at a restaurant in New York and by 3am we were smoking cigars with the chef. Our wedding was in Rome and, as a present, Dad commissioned the avant garde composer Jörg Widmann to write a piece of music for us. Jörg flew in his sister Carolin to perform it.

These days, Dad has softened and I'm closer to him than ever. Most people think he's a bit crazy, and it's true, he's kind of nuts. But I just hope people see, as much as I do, what a beautiful and thoughtful person he is underneath.



In 1991 in Berlin, in front of a model of the Jewish Museum

Daniel

You could say that I parented by benign neglect. When Rachel was born, I'd just won a competition to design my first building — the Jewish Museum in Berlin — and I was working flat out. My wife, Nina, worked alongside me. We didn't have a baby-sitter or a nanny, so it meant Rachel just spent a lot of time with us at work.

Moving to Berlin wasn't easy. Both my parents and Nina's parents were Polish Holocaust survivors, and when we told them, they could not understand how we could live anywhere in Germany ...they almost disowned us. To be frank, if we were out with Rachel and people looked at our little Jewish girl, even I'd sometimes feel a shiver running down my spine.

But it was a time of enormous change. The Berlin Wall had just come down and a new generation of architects and artists was emerging and, as we moved from one city to another, Rachel became many things — a Berliner, an Italian, a quintessential New Yorker, a Jew. And what I love about her is that she's always embraced all those cultures.

In our free time, we'd always travel to different cities to visit cathedrals, galleries, architectural sites, but I never encouraged her to be an artist, she just took it all in. She also has a natural talent.

Rachel is our youngest — we also have two sons, and when they were growing up, we had rules at the dinner table that Nina and I didn't talk about work and the children didn't talk about school. This was so we could talk about philosophy, theology, science, world events... and get out of the compulsion to be too self-absorbed.

To be honest, I was negative at first about Rachel becoming an artist. I thought it would be too difficult. I was also worried about the kind of life she'd have. I actually wanted to be an artist myself, but my mother, in her Hasidic wisdom, told me to become an architect instead. She thought I might be too poor to buy a pencil if I was an artist, but I'd always be able to draw if I became an architect.

The fact Rachel persisted and became an artist had nothing to do with me, but I'm so glad she did. I love her work, it's so inventive. I'm an honest critic and I can be harsh, but I think she's brilliant.

I've learnt so much from Rachel's openness to the world. As Shakespeare says in one of his sonnets: "Keep my drooping eyelids open wide, Looking on darkness which the blind do see." That's her, and when she walks into a room, it lights up. That's just the kind of person she is.

THE DESIGNS OF DANIEL
LIBESKIND

- ◆ Jewish Museum Berlin, completed 1999
- ◆ Imperial War Museum North, Manchester, completed 2001
- ◆ World Trade Center master plan, New York, under construction
- ◆ Crystals at City Center, Las Vegas, completed 2009
- ◆ Reflections at Keppel Bay, Singapore, completed 2011
- ◆ L Tower, Toronto, completed 2016

Rachel Libeskind's work can be seen at continiartuk.com



The July group show has become an art-world standby, but it remains a nimble platform for galleries eager to introduce new artists during the summer slowdown. This season, Artsy traversed group exhibitions across New York, on the lookout for exciting work made by young artists who haven't yet had their big breaks.

Below, we highlight 15 creatives whose work spans mediums and interests—from a photographer challenging racial profiling, the issue at the crux of the Black Lives Matter movement, to a painter who channels a passion for the magical worlds of Super Mario 64 into dreamy canvases. While some of the artists have mounted smaller solo presentations in the past, we expect their standout displays in this summer's group shows to launch their careers to new heights.

Rachel Libeskind

b. 1989, Milan. Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

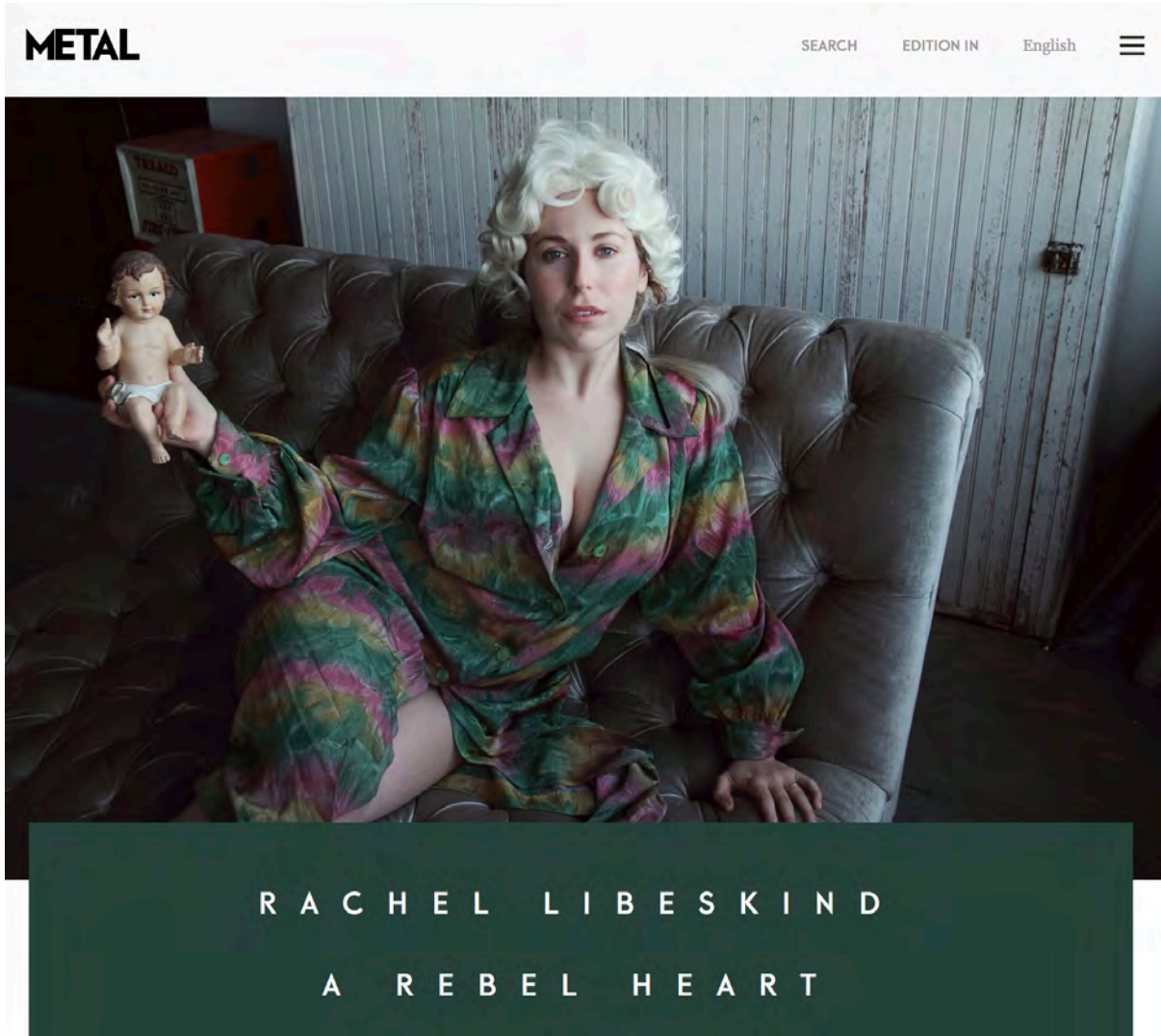
On view at:

“Summer Reading” at Fortnight Institute, 60 East 4th Street, Jun. 23–Aug. 11
“MINERVA,” Cuevas Tilleard Projects, 142 Henry Street, Jun. 8–Jul. 10.



Portrait of Rachel Libeskind in her studio, July 2016. Photo by Vera Compoj.

For Libeskind’s July 6th performance at Cuevas Tilleard Projects, the artist assumed the role of a sprightly art historian specializing in paintings that feature Christ’s foreskin (“the holy prepuce”). Reproductions of the masterpieces being discussed, printed on tapestries at Walmart, surrounded her as she questioned why the Catholic church has attempted to hide these works—and underplay their savior’s circumcision. The answer, she reveals: to cover up Christ’s Jewish beginnings. Across her multimedia practice, Libeskind excels at this sort of cheeky social criticism, drawing provocative lines between historical and contemporary pain points surrounding religion, identity, and gender.



She calls herself a citizen of the world and travels with her suitcases from one place to another. She is obsessed with objects and transforms them into pieces of art. **Rachel Libeskind** is a young artist, trying to change the masculine dominance in the art industry by delivering powerful messages to the society through paintings, performance and interesting collages.

Who is Rachel Libeskind?

Rachel Libeskind is first an artist and second a woman. That's actually not my idea; I stole it from Louise Bourgeois, who is my favorite artist of all time, who always said that she is first an artist and second a woman in terms of the feminist movement. Rachel Libeskind is a citizen of the world because I don't actually have any really strong tie to any specific national identity. I have three passports and I lived in five cities in my life. I am not from anywhere, I am a 21st century identity in that way. Rachel is obsessed with the end of the world which is called the study of eschatology. She is very sensitive and also very strong, somewhere between those two things.

How did you decide to become an artist?

I had a childhood where I was exposed to huge amount of art in special ways. At that time when I was a kid, I didn't really appreciate it, because I was not allowed to watch television or get bored, it was not an option to be bored ever. If I said to my parents I am bored they would say "go read a book or go draw a drawing". So from a very young age I filled my time constantly with drawings and with installations that I used to make with my dolls. As I became older I rejected a path of an artist because my father is a very well-known architect and I was very concerned as a teenager that I would always be in his shadow. But actually I have to thank my professor from Harvard University, who helped me change my mind. I took a painting class in my second year just for fun and the professor told me "You are really good at painting, why are you not pursuing a carrier as an artist?" I told him I didn't want to spend my whole life in the shadow of my father and he said it was not a good enough reason. Actually that was the first time anybody ever said that to me and that was the moment when I thought you are right, that's not good enough reason and that was I think the moment I switched my path. I graduated from the University six years ago. Nevertheless, I went to Harvard —a school which promises the great future and a best job in the world— the economy in US was so bad, that after the graduation we were all unemployed. So I said perfect, this is a great opportunity to work by myself since I can't get a job anywhere else. (laughs)



How does your 'starchitect' father, Daniel Libeskind, influence your work? Do you often get criticized?

My father is the only person who is completely honest with me about my work. I mean he is the only person I have that kind of relationship with, where I know that when he criticizes me or likes what I did, he is telling 100% of the truth and that is a very special thing, what you can't get from other people. It is really hard to recreate that relationship. Our style and our aesthetics are very, very different. Like completely different worlds but what we are interested in is very overlapped so we share a lot, we spend a lot of time on the phone, talking about books, about ideas, about music. My

dad is an incredible genius of music in my opinion and he keeps on feeding me with those external sources like literature and music, even though I am a grown up. I have witnessed how difficult his career has been, as being an architect is much harder than being an artist, because you are constantly at the mercy of not only critics but also city planners, engineers and local governments. When I was a child, we used to live in Berlin for the building of the Jewish museum that took 13 years to build. I mean that's crazy if you realize how long that is, so maybe that's why I did not become an architect myself. My dad is an architect but he is definitely an artist to me.

You make interesting collages using old photo albums, pictures from Life magazine and old newspapers. How did you come up with the idea of making collages?

For me making collages is like sketching. The pieces I make always begin with the object I find. My work is more kind of anthropological, it's never about me wanting to paint a figure, me wanting to paint a landscape or me wanting to tell a story about my life. Specifically, it always begins first with an object that I find, that is mostly ephemeral, and kind of magical because these objects put themselves in the world and then I discover them. There is something to me that is deeply tragic about the incredible output we made until very recently, until everything happened on the screens, there was so much waste of aesthetic, there was so much effort put in the advertising, magazines and photography. There is so much ephemera, and beautiful material that exists in the world that is totally forgotten and unappreciated. This is always where my interest begins. The collage is a very powerful tool where two or three unrelated images are put together and reconstruct their original meaning. That is why I call it sketching, because it is always like a first step to me in figuring out what the project is about, what I am trying to say. It is also quite political because of the act of choosing where I might put an image from 1980s porn magazine next to 1930s children's book on Mussolini, next to East German vacuum cleaner add. I am making things up and am creating unexpected connections between aesthetic, history, culture and the society.

Tell me about your exhibition *The Wild West*. What was it about?

It was a show that I did in the gallery which is now closed. The title *The Wild West* was like a play on a fetishized American term that refers to a period in American history, when invaders murdered native people of this country, before America was coast to coast. It refers to the period of the 19th century when the settlers were invited to come and take as much land as they could, which is obviously a sort of American brand of imperialism. But it's not only that, *The Wild West* was also about my life. In one year I will be 28, meaning that I'll have spent 14 years in Europe and 14 years in America. Having grown up in Berlin which is really East and then having moved to New York which is really West as a teenager, was sort of a strange experience. It was a whole new world for me. In Berlin, I was in the closet, I did not want people to know I was Jewish, I did not want to be discussed, I didn't want to reveal my identity because I felt very vulnerable as a child, it was something that I did not want to go through. And when I moved to America it was the opposite, you have so much more cultural capital in New York City if you are Jewish, you are immediately instilled in the cultural society here without having to do anything. America has much shorter memory of the history than Europe, which allows American culture to always move forward and pretend that it does not know anything, which is very rare in the scope of European bureaucracy. So *The Wild West* was all about the levels and privileges of westerners.

"I think women were not taken seriously as artists for a long time because they were not taken seriously in doing anything."

Where did your performative art start from?

Before going to the University, I actually studied Opera for about 15 years, I thought for a long time that singing was what I wanted to do with my life. I played the piano, I played the French horn and I was performing a lot. Later, I sort of put it all away, and decided I did not want to be an Opera singer and that I would not look at it again. Almost three years ago, I was invited on a festival di Spoleto in Italy to perform. I thought it was a joke but when I arrived there, I came up with this whole installation with suitcases and sounds. I had to perform in this beautiful 13th century old castle in Umbria and I thought: "Shit, how did I get myself in here?" There was no way out, I had to push myself, but as soon as I started performing, the old knowledge, the art of working with the audience, and many years of my childhood that I had spent by the piano, instead of playing football or hanging out with my friends, all of a sudden made sense and came back to me. There I realized that performance is a very important part of my life, an immediate form of art you can't deny. The perception and the opinion of the audience is happening right there in front of you and that's a very special thing to me. As an artist I always want my work to touch people and I want my work to be engaging. The exciting thing about performance is that you have powers when you perform and you can get your ideas across in a very efficient way. The performance I did in Spoleto is called *Travelling bag* and it is about suitcases, movement, immigration, emigration, exile, travel, holiday, materials, objects, ownership and the way we treat the things around us, that in some case represents who we are.

Apart from painting and performing you also work on books. How different is it? What's your favorite book?

I love books, they are the most secret objects to civilization. The first book I wrote and illustrated is called *The Kinder Kalendar* 1933, a book of poetry and drawings. Currently, I am having a show up in New York at the center for Jewish history which is like a crazy achieve, where I represent my books made from concrete. I am obsessed with books and am constantly working on them. The reason I love books is that they are kind of crossover objects between poetry, literature, art and information. Books are one of the ancient human objects and I am fascinated by. My favorite kind of books are medieval manuscripts where the information happens in the margins, which are used for commentary. For example, in the Jewish Bible the text is written in the middle of the page and then over centuries the commentary would be written around, in the margins. I appreciate these kind of details. The book I really love, is Federico Fellini's *Book of dreams*, which is full of incredible, magical images. I consider this book as one of the best in the world.



What do you think about the women's role in the art industry nowadays?

Everybody who has an access to the information knows that women have been totally left out of the art world and art market for a very long time. I think women were not taken seriously as artists for a long time because they were not taken seriously in doing anything. When you are a female artist you have to be double as good and you have to work twice as hard to be in the same league as the men around you. When you look at the statistics of the museums around the world and even the most progressive and interesting museums in New York City or in London, where there is expected a deeper understanding of feminism and history, you still have a very low percentage of works made by women. For me in America, in 2016, this issue is more about race, there are not enough black female artists and that bothers me. We have a lot of work to do, inclusion is very important and especially in New York, where things become exclusive real quick. I should say that I am lucky, having graduated from Harvard University, because when you are a woman and when you are an artist, people expect you to be pretty stupid, people don't want to listen to an artist, and definitely to female artists, so Harvard is something that I can put on the table and get the attention I need. Overall, I don't want to make work about being a woman, I want to make work about the experience of the humanity and that transcends whether you have a penis or a vagina.

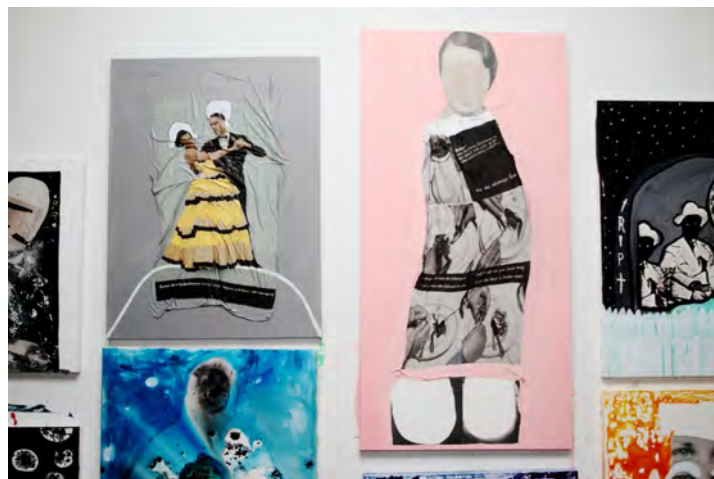
How does New York influence your work and where is your studio located?

New York is the greatest city in the world and also the hardest place to live in, because nothing stops here. As an artist, it is very important for me to have a balance between super busy, constantly moving environment and finding a quiet space to curve out my thoughts and inspiration. New York is an electric place. There are so many incredible museums, amazing shows, talks, installations, performances that stimulate you all the time but you cannot go see every fucking show, it could make you crazy and obsessed with the art world in a way that is toxic, so you have to be careful. NYC is the greatest art buffet in the world but it comes at a price. As an artist you have to try to filter stuff, not to be overstimulated, over exaggerated. My studio is located on the frontier of the new neighborhood, right on the edge of the city. It looks over the Marcy Project that is a low income housing project which was a center of crack epidemic in 1980s and is also famous for Jay-z, who comes from this neighborhood. It's not dangerous to live here anymore as it's now gentrified and many artists have moved here because it's cheap.

Are you working on any new project we should look forward to?

In fact I am. I am working on a project that has to do again with the suitcases, I am planning to install suitcases as a public art in Europe. I am also working on a new much longer performance piece that is more like a theatre play and has to do with nationalism and identity. I am returning to painting, which I have not done for two years and I am making a book about the US election, Donald Trump and women. I have lots of things to do, 2017 will be an interesting year.





Words
Nino Gabisonia

Photos
Pola Esther

<http://www.theprotagonistmagazine.com/art-1/the-circumcision-of-christ-and-modern-oblivion-by-rachel-libeskind?rq=rachel%20libeskind>

THE PROTAGONIST MAGAZINE

FASHION STAGE & SCREEN ART PLACES NEWS ABOUT STOCKISTS

The Circumcision of Christ and Modern Oblivion by Rachel Libeskind

Written by Wanda De Rosa



Rachel Libeskind at Contini Art UK on the night of her exhibition opening

Despite gaining notoriety through performance, Rachel Libeskind has rapidly emerged as a multidisciplinary artist. Youngest daughter of the architect Daniel Libeskind, starting from an itinerant eclectic upbringing between Milan, Berlin and New York, Rachel's work reflects her extensive curiosity of both historical subjects and contemporary media. Eternally fascinated by religious relics and medieval depictions of Christians rituals and after years of research her interest comes to surface shaped as a multifaceted visually powerful exhibition. The Circumcision of Christ and Modern Oblivion is her first exhibition in the UK showing digitally printed tapestries with renaissance paintings of one of the most controversial events of the life of Christ.

Bypassing the religious matter, the subject analysed is clearly mundane rather than spiritual; it openly bridges both Jewish and Christians beliefs in order to create an impact for those just discovering this relatively unknown aspect of Christ's life.

One of the core points of the display is to channel the viewers attention towards a modern replica of ancient artistic depictions of Christ's circumcision. Using contemporary and "ready-made" media like WalMart's custom tapestry prints and fake roman nails bought on ebay to hang them, isn't really a reference to mass production: "Personally I don't really care that they [the prints] were made at WalMart but when some people find out, they think it's like a great joke on the American mass market." Libeskind reveals this in conversation with Contini Art exhibition curator Diego Giolitti, then adding "I left on those little American tags that they come with which say, "Made in the USA"... I've continued to push this idea and even used eBay to source the nails that I want to hang the tapestries with." From Libeskind's past experience and artistic approach, it becomes clear that the "mass market joke" is only a further interpretation given to a work based mainly on exploiting ordinary modern tools in order to re-tell an ancient story. With collages having been one of her first expressive media, Libeskind's choice for tapestry results in a natural evolution of her early artistic approach into something that a wider public may appreciate in multiple forms: "This work is not necessarily wall bound- so if somebody wanted to have it draped on an object, they could have it like that. If somebody wanted to have it as a blanket or something like that, they could also have it that way, even though that's somewhat absurd." Rachel herself uses the word "absurd" to describe the way in which her art may find a place in daily life, yet it somehow also reflects the atmosphere and the kind of attention her tapestries draw from their audience.

The Circumcision of Christ and Modern Oblivion can be seen at Contini Art UK, 105 New Bond Street, until 31st of October 2016.



The Circumcision of Christ (Anonymous), 2016

Tapestry made by digital loom,

One of a kind,

157x127 cm, 60x50 in

For more information visit www.rachellibeskind.com and www.continartuk.com

Events and Parties

Patti Smith's Play Is Staged by Art World's Next Generation at Historic Chelsea Hotel

Eileen Kinsella, June 13, 2015



David Andrew Laws and Annie Fox performing "Cowboy Mouth" at the Chelsea Hotel. Photo: Lana Birkin.

Last night at the legendary Chelsea Hotel, dozens of guests, including artnet News, were treated to a traditional Spanish tapas dinner at neighborhood staple El Quijote followed by a performance of Patti Smith and Sam Shepard's play "Cowboy Mouth," produced by James Danner (see Norman Seef Shares His Most Famous Works in Patti Smith-Inspired Show).

The short, surreal play, which Smith and Shepard penned while holed up at the hotel, during their torrid love affair in the 1970s, fittingly took place in a cavernous ground floor space, a mere stone's throw from the room in which it was written, and where the two are said to have passed a typewriter back and forth to collaborate.



Artist Rachel Libeskind performing The Traveling Bag.
Photo: Lana Barkin

Multidisciplinary artist Rachel Libeskind (and daughter of famed architect Daniel), who also served as art director for the production, delivered a wordless but intriguing performance piece *The Traveling Bag*, immediately preceding the play.

Both her performance piece and the play will be repeated nightly through June 20, followed by a changing line-up of musical performances.

The three-part evening event is the brainchild of Amanda Hameline and Rebecca Feinberg, founders of Young Artists at the Chelsea, a group of artists from numerous disciplines—theater, music, dance, visual and performance art — working to create together and influence each other. "Cowboy Mouth" marked its inaugural production (artnet Worldwide is a sponsor).

Feinberg and Hameline said the idea for the group was born over glasses of whiskey at Hameline's kitchen table in Brooklyn one evening this past fall, while they were both lamenting the lack of a solid post-collegiate artist community.



The poster for "Cowboy Mouth" at the Chelsea Hotel.
Photo: Eileen Kinsella

Feinberg had just finished reading Smith's memoir *Just Kids* and was inspired by the Smith's recap of her life and her circle of friends and lovers, most notably the photographer Robert Mapplethorpe. A copy of the book was in each guest's goodie bag. Smith also has a new memoir coming out titled *The M Train* (see Patti Smith's *The Resilience of the Dreamer Celebrates the Rockaways*).

Also in attendance last night was photographer Edward Mapplethorpe, brother of the late artist Robert Mapplethorpe.

The play's associate producer and sound designer, Lillith Glimcher, who attended Harvard with Feinberg and Hameline, was in attendance with her father Marc, director of Pace Gallery, and his fiancé Fairfax Dorn, co-founder and artistic director of Marfa. turned up for the dinner and performance, as did his parents Arne and Milly Glimcher, making dinner feel like a family affair—one that we happily crashed.

10 Things to Do in New York's Art World Before June 12

By [Paul Laster](#) • 06/08/15 5:40pm



Rachel Libeskind to perform at the Hotel Chelsea. (Courtesy: Hotel Chelsea)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

Performance: *Cowboy Mouth: Young Artists at the Hotel Chelsea*

Way back in 1971, Sam Shepard and Patti Smith were lovers, and collaborators, penning the piece *Cowboy Mouth* from Smith's hotel room at the legendary Chelsea. It's performed here as the center of a 10-day festival of art and music featuring almost impossibly good-looking young artists and musicians. A piece by Rachel Libeskind entitled *The Traveling Bag* is another highlight of the fest. This opening night is invitation-only, and the 11th is a \$275-per-ticket benefit, but \$40 tickets for *Cowboy Mouth* are available throughout the run.

Hotel Chelsea Storefront Gallery, 222 West 23rd Street, New York, 8 p.m.

The New York Times

FASHION & STYLE

Rachel Libeskind: A Performance Artist Blossoms

Up Next

By CAROLINE TELL OCT 9, 2015



Rachel Libeskind's work has evolved from fine art to performance.

Credit Peter Pabón for The New York Times

Age 26

Hometown Born in Milan, spent her childhood in Berlin and her high school years in TriBeCa.

Now Lives In Brooklyn Heights in a recently renovated one-bedroom apartment. She also keeps a work studio in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Claim to Fame Ms. Libeskind is the youngest child of the architect Daniel Libeskind and is coming into her own as a performance artist who has shown throughout Paris, London, Rome and New York. Her medium includes operas, multimedia installations and provocative collages. Being the daughter of a starchitect has its privileges. "I tagged along with my parents and got to see cities and projects that my dad was really involved in," said Ms. Libeskind, who

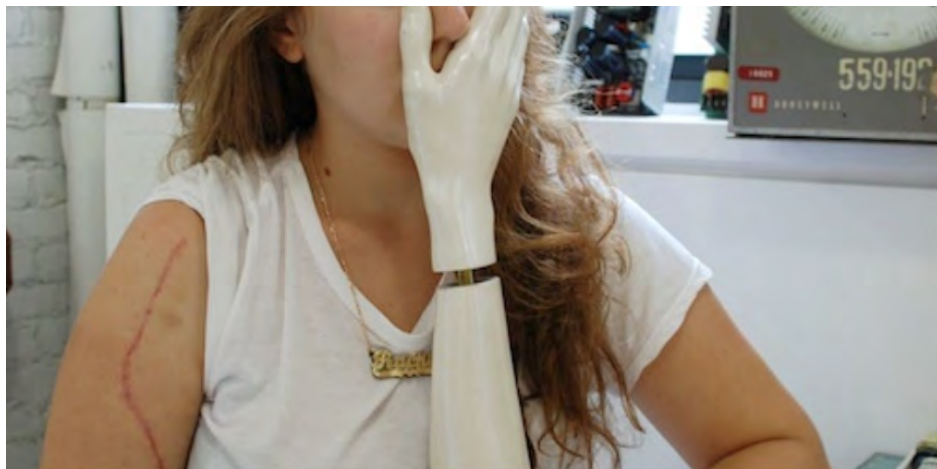
speaks five languages and holds passports from the United States, Canada and Poland. "My parents would plop me down and say, 'We'll be back in six hours, enjoy.' "

Big Break Last June, Ms. Libeskind performed an original work titled "The Traveling Bag" at the Chelsea Hotel as part of a much-discussed revival of "Cowboy Mouth," a 1971 play by Patti Smith and Sam Shepard. In "The Traveling Bag," Ms. Libeskind is in her bedroom packing and unpacking her suitcase. She examines items and places them back in their spots, then takes some out and packs them again. "It's a performance work that uses the vessel of the suitcase and the action of packing and unpacking to deal with issues of migration, movement and the past," she said.

Latest Project Ms. Libeskind is creating a multichannel video installation to serve as the backdrop for “American Gothic,” a four-part opera that weaves together four stories of American identity. The opera runs Oct. 21 to 23 at Pioneer Works in Brooklyn.

Next Thing Beginning Nov. 20, Ms. Libeskind will present a book titled “Shipwrecks” at Seaport Studios, alongside a small installation. The piece examines ship routes in New York Harbor. “Slaves and sugar are the main topics,” she said.

Female Artists Ms. Libeskind’s work has evolved from fine art to performance, inspired by such artists as Marina Abramovic, Carolee Schneemann and Laurie Anderson. “If you look at big performance artists, they are women,” she said. “There is something to be said for the female ability to push boundaries in what media is and what mediums are. Historically, paintings are a very male thing. I think in some ways, either consciously or unconsciously, I’m responding to that.”



ARTIST RACHEL LIBESKIND SHOCKS AND AWES

Mary Logan Bikoff
10/18/12 at 08:30AM

f Share ✉ t y +



While you may not have heard of Rachel Libeskind, you most likely know her father, Daniel Libeskind, the architect behind the ever-rising Ground Zero site downtown. But Rachel, an ambitious, intense and feisty artist, is embarking on a career that looks like she'll be known in her own right. At her way-downtown studio near Trinity Church, where, incidentally, her father has a studio as well, we recently found her eyeball-deep in collage material, books, magazines, reclaimed junk and paint. She is excited.

"I like to think that my process is just experimentation," she says. "That's my favorite thing about art, is experimenting. It's like an adventure every day when you've decided to do something new, and like 99 percent of the time you fail but one percent of the time you make something really great."

Libeskind is a multimedia artist, who works on canvas and paper, as well as wood, found objects, moss, toothpaste and photos, all of which take up large amounts of space in her sun-filled workshop. She begins telling me right away about some of her artistic breakthroughs -- a recent skiing accident in Switzerland that badly injured her right arm and left her howling in a huge expanse of snow to ponder her life's purpose, and her undergraduate thesis from Harvard (she graduated last year), which was a series of paintings made with toothpaste on a scanner.



Already Libeskind has a lot of projects on the horizon and under her belt. In the spring, she exhibited at the young Chelsea post-postmodern gallery Hansel and Gretel Picture Garden, and she was a part of a group show in East London in May. From October 15 to 21, her works will be in Paris at a salon at Galerie Z'Archer as a part of a program that introduces emerging New York artists to Paris and vice versa. She's also gearing up for a residency at the esteemed Watermill Center on Long Island, where she, along with Hansel and Gretel Picture Garden and the Street Corner Society, will produce a haunted hayride experience called NightScapes. It's an adaptation of Elie Wiesel's Night, in which the artists subject the audience to discourse between the American fall horror tradition and the Holocaust. It also involves pagan rites, satanic rituals, the rural landscape and bones.

"The idea is actually pretty radical," she says. The open house on November 11th, as well as an event on Halloween, will most likely not be for the faint of heart.

But then, none of Libeskind's work is. It is bold, daring, often explicit, challenging and controversial. She has a whole body of work exploring the topic of Christ's foreskin. In college, she produced an unconventional version of Hamlet that elicited boos from the audience for its irreverence. And then there's the Holocaust hayride... She certainly doesn't shy from conflict, but at the same time, her attitude is not at all contentious. Libeskind has a lot of loves. She loves the scanner. She loves Gerhard Richter. She loves America. She loves Europe.

"I love the world. I'm a world-loving person," she says.

Libeskind, who is Jewish, grew up in Berlin, until she moved to New York just before high school, when she started at St. Ann's, the elite Brooklyn private school for freedom-loving, arty academics. In Berlin, her father was working on the provocative Jewish Museum Berlin. Her grandparents were Holocaust survivors. These things alone are reason enough to understand her fascination with the Jewish experience, but then, she is just as enamored with Christian iconography -- not just Christ's foreskin but also medieval crosses and Catholic symbology. Right now, though, she's focusing on a "Jewish project." She recently came across a family tree that includes 33 rabbis and had an awakening to her rabbinical family history. She points to some sketches on the wall, the beginning of what will be 33 portraits of them all. If it works out, she hopes to exhibit it in the spring.

Other favored topics include technology, historical pop culture, Americana, sex, gender, race. But it's all ultimately about Libeskind herself. It's what she's intensely interested in, what she devotes tons of time to researching. Her studio includes shelves of books on these topics, a mini library. She collects junk upstate and makes it into mobiles or reformed totem poles. It is piled neatly around her studio. But more than anything, she is a "digital hoarder."

"My Internet footprint is probably a super dirty footprint," she laughs. "I just scour the Internet, just on blogs on like...breast implants or something bizarre like that. I have no fear. I love the Internet for that reason." She collects more than a thousand images online a month -- lots of nudes, lots of Nazis, but plenty of other stuff too -- and some will become pieces of a narrative in her artwork.

Libeskind likes to "maintain a healthy distance from the quote unquote art world." She doesn't want to be classified or reduced. Her work has been referred to as post-postmodern, the definition of which may imply a shift away from irony in art, but she shies at any sort of label like that.

"I'm a little more fluid. I think a lot of people look at my work and think, 'S&M and Bugs Bunny--are you being ironic?' And I'm like, 'Sure, if you want me to be.'" She smiles and shrugs. "The meaning is in the eye of the beholder, not in my brain."

Rachel Libeskind's NightScapes can be viewed at the Watermill Center on November 11. She also is part of an exhibition at Gallery ZÃ¼rcher, Paris, from October 15 to 21.

Portraits of the artist by Lana Barkin. Artwork images courtesy of the artist.

