

A person, like music, is an aesthetic reality; for every moment of his life, he is at once rest and motion, sameness and change.

Eli Siegel

Born in 1975 in Suffern, New York, Margaret Salmon lives and works between Kent, London, and New York.

She creates filmic portraits that weave together poetry and ethnography. Focusing on individuals in their everyday habitats, her films capture the minutiae of daily life and infuse them with gentle grandeur, touching upon universal human themes. Inspired by classic non-fiction and propaganda film, Salmon portrays the common struggle of ordinary people and intersects them with archetypal figures and great literary dramas. Adapting techniques drawn from various cinematic movements, such as Cinema Vérité, the European Avant Garde and Italian Neo-Realism, Salmon's orchestrations of sound and image introduce a formal lyricism into the tradition of realist film. While focusing on singular individuals, Salmon's "time-based portraits" leap from the particular to the universal, betraying the existential weight that bears down upon their repetitive, everyday actions. Achieving an atmosphere of intimacy through her ability to work without crew and the usual trappings of contemporary film production, Salmon moves in close to her subjects without ever becoming over-sentimental.

The five films presented at Office Baroque connect aspects of everyday life. They build on each other to create a journey that is a visual dialogue on our environment, human material, the rawness of isolation and the way we see ourselves. They journey from back garden to the center of an electronic square, meandering through formal and emotional ties with the patience and spontaneity of film. The films are about looking, seeing, being seen and finally, disappearing.

The title of *Everything that rises must converge* (2010), is a reference to a work by the French philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: "Remain true to yourself, but move ever upward toward greater consciousness and greater love! At the summit you will find yourselves united with all those who, from every direction, have made the same ascent. For everything that rises must converge". The film is both a study of two different types of film, positive (Kodachrome) and negative (Fuji negative) as it is a study of two characters/sisters. Salmon filmed two sisters, one sister on each screen and film type, respectively (Kodachrome on one side, Fuji on the other). It's an abstract play on color and movement, film and human material.

The Enemies of the Rose (2010) is made in Margaret Salmon's garden in Kent, UK. The dramatic, yet symbolic title is taken from a guide by the National Rose Society of England. The book describes the many pests and diseases that can affect a rose. The footage follows a progression through the garden, from day to night. It presents a poetic sketch of the minute narratives, movements and relationships within this supposedly domesticated space. The work looks at color and form, performance and abstraction within everyday activities and organisms.

In Rooms - East New Orleans (2008) Salmon visits a family in their house in East New Orleans and documents their living situation as they returned three years after the catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina. The film describes a fragment of a day in the public rooms, the spaces of the interior that are used together. We see the functioning of the rooms in the lives of the family members with one empty room as a reminder of the tragedy as a whole in their narrative. Salmon constructs a house by placing the monitors in a grid. The grid, as a recurrent theme in abstract art, is used by Salmon to present the interaction of colors, the relation between form and content and the architecture of the family.

Times Square (2010) is a film in the tradition of New York street photography. People coming to this mythical place to witness the spectacle of bright lights and signs are filmed while they are in the electronic bubble. The film deals with the quality of light and glowing colors, particular to Times Square, while following the interactions and responses of members of the crowd to this spectacle of light and image. It is a reflection on image making and public posturing, an observational account of tourists gleaning mementos from the pulsing square.

Man in Truck (2010) is based on an interview with an officer who retells a story Margaret Salmon heard at dinner 9 years ago. She uses non-actors to recreate the narrative. The event, which is recreated, is the removal of an obese man who was stuck in a van for over a week and couldn't get out, he survives by using drive-thru windows for food, money and gas as he passes through the bleak winter landscape of NY State. Salmon merges the officer's memory and thoughts about the event with cinematic language & fictional storytelling. The abstract score is composed of the rhythms of noises from the truck.

The title of the show is a quote taken from a poem by Eli Siegel, the founder of Aesthetic Realism. The deepest desire of every person, according to Siegel, is to like the world on an honest or accurate basis.

Margaret Salmon won the first Max Mara Art Prize for Women in 2006. Her work was shown at the

Venice Biennale in 2007 and the Berlin Biennale in 2010 and was featured in individual exhibitions at Witte de With in Rotterdam and Whitechapel Gallery in London among others.

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