

MIT List Visual Arts Center  
20 Ames Street, Building E15  
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[listart.mit.edu](http://listart.mit.edu)

## [ LIST PROJECTS ]

### Rose Salane

April 23 – May 26, 2019



330.98 W63  
917.292 C38  
001.43 D557  
001.43 C818  
920.069 L678

In 2001, as everybody knows, the Twin Towers of New York City were flattened. When those buildings fell, their three dimensions collapsed down to two, and the same thing happened to all the history inside them. Thousands of employees, countless cups of coffee, every workplace affair, every billable hour: flat. The city's memorial to our lost towers now takes the form of a hole into which water pours, as if each drop might represent a detail lost to history's abyss.

In this exhibition, Rose Salane gives us a selective reconstruction of the Port Authority Library which once resided on the 55th floor of Tower 1. After the library was shuttered by budget cuts in 1995, its contents moved to the tower's sub-basement level 4. After *that* afterlife was ended by violence, the only part of the library which survived was its data. Preserved on six floppy disks, entrusted to the care of a few librarians, the index survived.

In 2018 Salane met one of those custodians, Carol Paszamant, and thus she came into contact with the abstracted, digital-only, posthumous record of the Port Authority Library collection. In the center of the gallery you see library shelves standing upright. They are reminiscent of obelisks or Stonehenge, sacred objects which humans have positioned to thrust upwards, towards the sky, in search of connection. They resist the physical flattening done to the towers. They resist our modern tendency to reduce all information down to the smallest physical size possible. They are monuments to the dead, both human and nonhuman.

On the shelves sit little voices from the past, trying to solve problems which outlived their authors: *Aftershock: Helping People Through Corporate Change. Manage People, Not Personnel: Driving Fear Out of the Workplace. Combating Air Terrorism*. The titles mark history. Around the shelves are frames which act like magnifying glasses trained upon fragments from the archive. Salane's exhibition defies the dimensions through which we ordinarily experience knowledge. There are no simple axes of time, space, self, other, past, or future here. Instead, Salane selects vectors, like a brand (Esso) or a human being (Carol) or a format (the medical pill), and coaxes them out from their old positions in the Dewey Decimal System, offering new life to the residents of this deceased library.

A library is a database, governed by an index which the reader consults before retrieving the item they desire. You behave like a machine performing a search operation, but you are driven by the most human of desires—the desire to *know*. But there are in-between spaces. They exist between the book and the index; the event and the analysis; the art and the gallery. History is not a chasm, Salane's work says, but instead a Byzantine and ever-mutable system of interconnected passages, accessible via doors which open at the very slightest pressure.

Josephine Livingstone

## ABOUT THE ESSAYIST

Livingstone is a writer and critic based in Brooklyn, New York, where they currently work as culture staff writer at *The New Republic*.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Rose Salane (b. 1992, Queens, New York) lives and works in New York.

*List Projects: Rose Salane* is organized by Yuri Stone, Assistant Curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center.

The artist would like to thank Eric Darton, Carol Paszamant, Anthony Robins, and Deborah Rodi for sharing their individual experiences of this archive and offering their invaluable insights.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

### Artweek | Curator Conversations Friday, April 26, 12:30 PM

Join Assistant Curator Yuri Stone and Curatorial Assistant Selby Nimrod for a talk on the exhibition *List Projects: Rose Salane*.

### All programs are free and open to the general public. RSVPs are required.

For more information about these events and to RSVP: [listart.mit.edu/events-programs](http://listart.mit.edu/events-programs).



## SPONSORS

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## MEMBERSHIP

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