

# GLADSTONE GALLERY

**Rachel Rose**

*Enclosure*

530 West 21st Street

New York

January 14 – February 26, 2022

The law locks up the man or woman  
Who steals the goose from off the common  
But leaves the greater villain loose  
Who steals the common from off the goose.

The law demands that we atone  
When we take things we do not own  
But leaves the lords and ladies fine  
Who take things that are yours and mine.

The poor and wretched don't escape  
If they conspire the law to break;  
This must be so but they endure  
Those who conspire to make the law.

The law locks up the man or woman  
Who steals the goose from off the common  
And geese will still a common lack  
Till they go and steal it back.

- 17<sup>th</sup>-century folk poem

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce the New York premier of *Enclosure*, a film and installation by Rachel Rose originally co-commissioned by Luma Foundation and Park Avenue Armory. Unfolding against an agrarian community on the verge of obsolescence, *Enclosure* addresses the catastrophic psycho-social and ecological disturbances triggered by the advent of capitalism and industrialization. This monumental project also includes a new publication and a suite of gravures by the artist. For this installation, the gallery will present a selection of paintings on loan from the Yale Center for British Art that inspired Rose's vision for this expansive body of work.

Set in rural 17<sup>th</sup>-century England at the beginning of the Enclosure Acts, a series of legal maneuvers that seized communally used farmlands and privatized property ownership, *Enclosure* follows a fictional group of purloining travelers who call themselves the Famlee. Led by an alchemist leader, Jaccko, the group scheme to attain land through the transfer of fraudulent paper currency, manipulating unsuspecting farmers into forfeiting their autonomy. The most valuable member of The Famlee is Recent, a teenage girl trained to learn the behaviors, rituals, and shibboleths of the community in order to exploit their anxieties. Recent's meaning within the film is exaggerated by our contemporary understanding of the relationship between capitalism and gendered division of labor; accomplice to Jaccko's trickery, the girl becomes co-conspirator in her own entrapment.

As the feudal farmers within Rose's film become more vulnerable, forests are burned in resistance, people are torn from their homes, and animals are slaughtered. The compounding chaos wrought by disenfranchisement, displacement, and ecological destruction is met by the specter of a nebulous orb that shadows the village with a promise of cosmic doom. Traveling through the atmosphere, the orb leaves inky trails in its wake, reflecting the alchemic notion of the relationship between metals and planets. At this moment in human history, belief in occult and magical forces was collective, and the concept of a coincidence did not exist. Rose's depiction of the reshaped landscape directly influences an altered state of mind, and how our environment can condition our actions. The trials and tribulations of the characters set against these medieval scenes transport viewers into a historical and fantastical dimension of reality that reverberates still today.

This expansive film continues upon the artist's singular approach to filmmaking, which seamlessly merges abstracted forms and images with cinematographic and aural precision. Like all of Rose's projects, a period of rigorous research guided the direction of this carefully crafted narrative, resulting in a powerful visual experience that tells a gripping story of madness, history, and cunning that teeters between reality and magical realism.

Alongside the film, Rose offers a multitude of works that span painting and sculpture, continuing upon the historical and material-based research that comprises this intricate narrative. The *Colores* works, a series of new paintings by Rose, take the landscapes that inspired *Enclosure* as a jumping off point. Photographs of 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-

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century paintings, from Samuel Palmer to Gainsborough, are complicated by the application of paint matched to exact hues within the original paintings. In a technique developed by the artist, pigments, clear mediums, oils, metallic dusts and latex combine to suggest a process of alchemical manipulation, proposing surfaces that are vulnerable to both chance and invention.

Accompanying these new paintings, Rose presents *Loops*, a series of hybridized sculptural forms comprised of rock and glass. Here, the artist juxtaposes the ways in which these two materials form in drastically different ways, while also highlighting their connectedness. Hot blown glass takes shape and then sets instantaneously, while rocks form over thousands of years. Rock pulverizes over time into sand, glass is composed solely of sand. The subtext of this convergence calls forth moments of radical shift, as though we are witnessing something in the state of “becoming.” Just as the orb in Rose’s film portends a world balanced on the precipice on change, the *Loops* memorialize moments of transformation.

Courtney J. Martin, Paul Mellon Director, Yale Center for British Art, notes, “Rachel is an exceptional artist able to productively understand the historic tether of the moment in which she is living. *Enclosure* gives texture to the way in which the dyad of the industrial revolution and the privatization of common land frame twenty-first century concerns about ecology, gender, health, and worker’s rights. Lending a group of nineteenth-century paintings from the YCBA to this show proves the sustainability of art to speak over and through time, and underscores the ability of all artists to be in a shared conversation about art’s enduring message.”

Rachel Rose was born in 1986 and currently lives and works in New York. Rose has been the subject of many exhibitions at institutions including Pond Society Shanghai; Lafayette Anticipations, Paris; Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany; LUMA Foundation, Arles, France; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Italy; Kunsthaus Bregenz, Germany; Museu Serralves, Porto; The Aspen Art Museum, Colorado; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Serpentine Gallery, London; and Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy. She is the recipient of the Future Fields Award and the Frieze Artist Award.

For further information and press inquiries, please contact [press@gladstonegallery.com](mailto:press@gladstonegallery.com)  
New York gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–6pm  
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10am–6pm and Saturday, 12pm–6pm