

ROSA AIELLO – *Seduction*  
May 9 – July 20, 2019

One new wall shows itself to be vulnerable, partial, and temporary, while the other new wall is a solid block.

The story is: the cardboard bent and tore when we carried it 12 blocks on the roof of a cab. We had tied it on with plastic string that cut into its sides. The cardboard also shows where the car antenna pressed into it, where it bent back in the wind when we drove too fast, where our hands held it up to mount it, where I pressed my greasy face to it, where we tried to screw it into the steel supports and it ripped.

Perpendicular is a wall that looks permanent and unaffected. It just is, and appears to have come into being long ago, nothing to do with hands that make traumas (which are stories). It is a mistake to think that such ahistorical production is possible. Like not thinking that people built this solid-looking wall in late April 2019, and it took five days. Not thinking that when she acts violently (physically, psychologically, emotionally) she may do so because she has been threatened, or is in a situation so precarious that she can't imagine any way to be with the violence other than to be in the cycle of reproducing it.

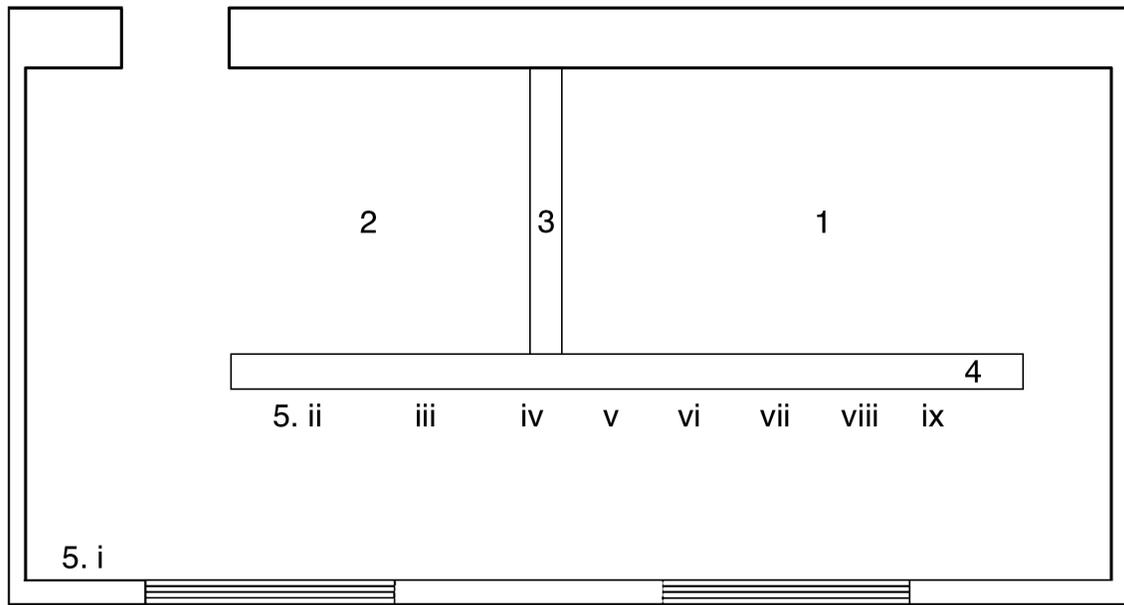
Mechanisms of seduction are formal. They may involve giving a lot at first and then withholding, holding up, suggesting, rewarding, deferring. Any way there is narrative to it. I used to think forms themselves could be "bad." But now I see that any sequence, corner, attachment, gap, detour, barrier, while it may serve forces that wish to exploit, manipulate, violate, and deceive, does not in essence do any of those things.

"Bad" or not depends on the particular sequence of events and the prevailing conditions that lead to the action or construction. The same person performing the same set of actions, but given a different name ("the coquette," "the victim"), will be perceived differently. Two different people performing the same set of actions may be punished differently. This is about how the story gets told, and about how people get treated according to structures of power that are historically rooted.

All of these works have followed from other works, or have existed in different contexts:

- *The Coquette* has been shown twice alongside a work called *The Prude*, both of which are adaptations of stories from Patricia Highsmith's *Little Tales of Misogyny*.
- *The Victim* is derived from working materials for an in-progress short film about the conditioning of girls through pain. This film project is collaboration with Mackenzie Davis.
- *Suspense* is related to a work called *Progression*, a photo series about how suburban architecture featured in Christine Blasey Ford's testimony and structured the sequence of events of her assault. I made *Progression* for *Joins* 2-person show with Patricia L. Boyd.

Rosa Aiello (b. 1987, Hamilton, Canada) is an artist and writer. Her works have been shown at various institutions and galleries, most recently, Cell Project Space, in London, The Southern Alberta Art Gallery, in Lethbridge, Bureau des Réalités, in Brussels, and Kunsthalle Zürich, in Zurich. Her video works are part of the public collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), and of the Centre George Pompidou (Paris). Her writing has been published in *Triple Canopy*, *CanadianArt*, *Art Papers*, and *F. R. David*, and she has recently published a book of short fiction with Publication Studio Guelph.



1. *The Coquette*, 2018  
 HD video, stereo sound  
 00:24:32

2. *The Victim*, configuration of 28, 2019  
 Digital print, pearl paper, double-sided tape  
 10 x 15 cm each

3. *Untitled (cardboard)*, 2019  
 Cardboard, metal studs  
 Dimensions variable

4. *Untitled (drywall)*, 2019  
 Drywall, metal studs  
 Dimensions variable

5. *Seduction (Coventry Hills)*, series of 9, 2019

- i. *Suspense I*
- ii. *Suspense II*
- iii. *Suspense III*
- iv. *Suspense IV*
- v. *Suspense V*
- vi. *Suspense VI*
- vii. *Suspense VII*
- viii. *Suspense VIII*
- ix. *Action*

Digital print, photo rag paper, acetate film, glue, aluminum frames  
 40 x 30 cm each