

HESSE FLATOW

Ianniello, Nicole. "Exclusive Q&A: Brooklyn Artist and Skidmore Graduate Lizzie Gill."
Saratoga Living. October 2, 2019. Online.



While riding the crowded subway to Borough Hall, then walking to [Lizzie Gill](#)'s art studio in Downtown Brooklyn, I felt a wave of nostalgia come over me, knowing that I'd soon be talking about Saratoga Springs. Although I'd spent most of my life in Manhattan, I'd grown up in Saratoga and was excited to speak with Gill, who had earned her degree in fine art from Skidmore College, a place I'd known well: I used to ride horses there. Speaking with Gill would bring me back, I hoped to a period in my life that felt very far away; I was interested in reconnecting with Saratoga vis-à-vis the artist and learning how she'd been inspired by my hometown.

Gill is a self-described mixed media artist, whose retro-modern collage art nods to the American experience through the use of mediums such as black-and-white 1950s advertisements integrated and juxtaposed with contemporary color schemes. When I arrived at her studio, it was everything

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I'd imagined: We talked about her gorgeous work—and our shared Saratoga roots.

Your works' titles are terrific. At what point do you come up with their names: before or after you finish them?

It's almost a simultaneous thing, which happens at the beginning of a piece. I'll be flipping through a vintage magazine, looking for a new subject, and a title will pop into my head when looking at an image—which provides the inspiration for the rest of the piece. The title is what makes me want to work with a certain image and tell a story.

What's the most interesting place you've found an item to include in one of your collage works?

My favorite place, which was very formative during my studio days at Skidmore, was the [now-closed] shop Reruns in Saratoga. It was in a basement on the corner of Phila Street and Broadway, and I'd be in there every week, looking through the old magazines, which the owner always replenished regularly. It was such a wonderful shop, with rooms of vintage clothes piled high, knickknacks and table-top treasures. He always had showtunes playing, and I'd spend hours poring over the stacks of 1950s magazines, looking for my next subject.

Saratoga Springs is a fun place to visit. What are some of your favorite hangouts there?

It really is a wonderful place! During my most recent trip to Saratoga, I stayed at the Brentwood Hotel, which I loved. The rooms are in a renovated stable, where you can hear the horses coming and going from the track. There's a cozy bar, where they serve classic cocktails and play vinyl records—you could definitely find me at a place like that nowadays. Back during school, though, it was all about Desperate Annie's!

In what ways do you feel Skidmore helped develop your life as an artist?

I really feel that Skidmore helped me become an entrepreneur, which is something that can be difficult for an artist to be, while sustaining a living as one.

In what city do you feel most creative?

Brooklyn, when I've landed back home after a long flight from either a good or bad trip.

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Amidst the instant gratification, swipe-right world we all inhabit, Lizzie Gill has found inspiration from the stillness of the past. Her work has a sense of tranquility that we often forget existed in the pre-smartphone era. I hope more people discover that feeling through her incredible, timely artwork.