

**Carolee Schneemann Oral History Interview: Kathy Brew**

Kathy Brew is an artist, writer, curator, and educator based in New York City. Brew has been involved in a diverse range of independent, experimental film and video projects, including the documentary *Design is One: Leila & Massimo Vignelli*, co-directed with Brew's late husband and collaborator, Roberto Guerra. Brew was the recipient of the 2018 Fulbright U.S. Scholar grant for her work on a film and photography portfolio *Following the Thread* (2021), which highlights the work of indigenous weaving communities in Peru. Her writing has been published in the *Brooklyn Rail*, *Women, Art, & Technology*, and *Documentary* magazine, among others, and she has served as a guest curator at the Museum of Modern Art's film department and the Lincoln Center New York Film Festival, among others. Brew first met Schneemann in 1991 in San Francisco, introduced by performance artist Linda Montano. The two maintained a close friendship over the following decades, sharing what they called "the goddess connection."

**Interview conducted by Rachel Helm****January 18, 2024****New York, NY**

Rachel Helm: Tell me a little bit about yourself, about the work that you do, and what brought you to New York City. Just a bit about who you are.

Kathy Brew: Sure. I was actually born in New York City. I grew up here until I was six and then [moved] an hour north. Went to college in Vermont and lived in the city for four years after college. I was married to my college boyfriend, and we were both like, "If we don't ever live somewhere else, we won't." He had a job that could be transferred. We checked out the Northwest and liked the Bay Area, so we moved out there. I thought it was going to be a two-year experiment, and I ended up staying for 14 years.

My whole career has been—I'm a hybrid. I've been working in media and contemporary art my whole life. I've worked in public television, I've worked on independent productions of other people's, of my own, but meanwhile I've also been a channeler of other people's work. I ran a very unusual artist-in-residency program in San Francisco called the Capp Street Project, where artists made site-specific installations in a very unique house, way back, '85 to '87.

Then I ran an art and technology initiative back here for the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and was channeling artists' new media work back in the late '90s and early '00s, before galleries and museums were showing it. I've always been paying attention to the progression of media and contemporary art, and where they intersect with other people's work. My own [work] isn't so much in the new media end; it's more in the independent filmmaking end.

But, of course, I knew who Carolee Schneemann was even before I moved out to California. I first met her—she doesn't remember meeting me then—but there used to be an event called New Music America, and when I was working as the managing director of a

performance space in San Francisco, I got to go to New Music America in Miami, and Carolee was performing there. [She] had a big entourage of people around her, and I think I introduced myself to her, and that was that. But while I was living in San Francisco—I think it was 1991—[I met her through] Linda Montano [performance artist], do you know Linda? Who, you know, was a friend and neighbor and colleague of Carolee's.

RH: Oh yeah.

KB: Her amazing show that was at the Dorsky [*Linda Montano: The Art/Life Hospital* at the Dorsky Museum of Art, SUNY New Paltz, NY, 2018] dealt a lot with Linda's whole career and life, and even death. [At one point] Linda was lying in a coffin. Carolee saw that show and went and looked in while Linda was there and said, "I'm next."

RH: Oh my gosh.

KB: And she died soon thereafter. And of course, Carolee had a really interesting show there some years earlier that Brian Wallace had curated [*Within and Beyond the Premises* at the Dorsky Museum, 2010]. The reason I'm digressing—Linda, I knew from years ago, because Linda had been a visiting artist at the San Francisco Art Institute, and I had worked there before I was the project director at Capp Street Project. I was the director of PR and publications [at SFAI]. I wrote about Linda's work, *Seven Years of Living Art*, when she made a transition from yellow to green, and it was in a Bay Area magazine.

Carolee was going to be a visiting artist at the Art Institute for a semester, and I guess she asked Linda, "Oh, who are some people that I should know?" Not hoity-toity art-world power people, but people from the tribe. Linda referred her to me, so she got in touch when she moved out there, and that's where we really bonded and became close friends. That was 1991. We spent quite a bit of time doing things together out there, going up to Marin County and the beaches. We had a friend, Dean Rolston, who used to have a gallery [56 Bleecker Gallery] here. [He] had moved out there because he was living and dying with AIDS. We spent quite a bit of time together out there.

I would always keep coming back to New York because I'm from here. I'd be here for the holidays, or I'd be here for something work-related, and so I would often visit Carolee in the loft a block away from here where I now live and be there for some parties and this and that. And so we stayed in touch cross-country. One funny thing flashing back, Maryanne Amacher, who was another artist who lived in the Hudson Valley in Kingston, was one of the artists I worked with at Capp Street. Very eccentric, unusual, amazing sound artist who won the Golden Nica [Award in the Digital Music category at Prix Ars Electronica in 2005]. She was also a recipient of the DAAD grant in Berlin. Very amazing woman. One time I was visiting Maryanne up in Kingston [NY], and she found out from Richard Teitelbaum [electronic music composer] that Carolee was having a party and asked if we could come, and Carolee said no. I loved teasing her after we became friends that she didn't let me in.

RH: Oh, that's too much.

KB: But that changed a lot. Then I was invited to move back to New York in the '90s for a job to be the gallery director of a commercial art gallery. I'd never done that. I'd always worked in nonprofit arts, but I'd never sold art. I mean, I knew collectors and people, but that wasn't my milieu. This guy Vrej Baghoomian, who's no longer alive, had been Basquiat's dealer when Basquiat died, called me up out of the blue and said, "I hear you've

been working with artists more for the 21st century. Maryanne Amacher and James Lee Byars [conceptual artist and mystic] have talked a lot about you. I'm looking for a new director. I'm in LA. If you'd like, I'll fly up to San Francisco." Long story short, he did hire me to come back to try to get a gallery started up again in Soho. It's before all the migration to Chelsea. ... I did not come with rose-colored glasses. I talked to people and heard things like: "Watch your back." "He's not returning work to artists." "He borrowed money at the wrong time." "The art market crashed." But I just wanted to come back to NY.

I put my stuff in storage, left my car with my ex-husband, sublet my place and came back very quickly. I sublet other artists' apartments. While I was looking, I stayed in Pat Oleszko's [artist] loft while she was away. I stayed in Joan Jonas's [video and performance artist] loft while she was teaching at CalArts. But then right before Christmas—I moved back in September—the job crashed. It was just as well—that fall [was] FIAC, the big art festival in Paris, he went over for that. The cover article of a newspaper that no longer exists, the *New York Observer* ... was "The Artful Dodger, Vrej Baghoomian." He was being accused of selling fake Basquiats. And in fact, I believe he was, because a little bit later we had to go up to one of the two auction houses, either Sotheby's or Christie's. I had to get the paddle for him. Again, this wasn't really my milieu. We walk in and they're like, "Oh, Mr. Baghoomian, please come with us." And I thought, "Well, he's either getting the red-carpet treatment or they're going to put him in the slammer." The Basquiat estate had filed a restraining order against him. He was not allowed to bid on any Basquiats. In fact, I think he was involved with counterfeits.

A little flashback, when I came back for the week before I fully decided to move here, he and I drove up to New Paltz and met with Carolee. I was trying to also connect him to other artists. He was trying to do some stuff up in the Hudson Valley too.

Then this guy Roger Boyce told me about this place [referring to her loft]. Next thing I know—how great!—I'm a block away from where Carolee lives. She's my cup of sugar neighbor, as were a few other people who she introduced me to. Larry Miller and Sara Seagull [artists and archivists], who now live up very close to her [home in New Paltz]. They became very close friends, thanks to Carolee. There was a big Fluxus connection, Larry from the later era of Fluxus artists and with the Emily Harvey Gallery and all of that. So, then I had my little neighborhood here with my pals.

And yes, [there were] many times in the loft for parties and events and great people. It was great for Carolee that she had upstate and downstate. She worked it out to have somebody sublet [the loft] on the days she wasn't here. It was fully her place and she found people that would accept how the loft was and they could be there on the days she wasn't here. She had a real regimen of being here and not being here. She always wanted to be back upstate, but she knew she had to be here for certain things or wanted to be.

RH: You moved into this place in 1995. Carolee had been in the loft already then for probably 30 years, right?

KB: Ages.

RH: I was thinking as I walked over here how different this neighborhood must be, even in the time period that you've been here.

KB: So different. This was the Bermuda Triangle for food when I moved here. It was pretty Bermuda Triangle-ish. All these high-rises weren't there. There was an incredible flea market that was a parking lot during the week that [opened] every weekend. It's so changed. The block that Larry and Sara [lived on], the footprint of Larry and Sara's loft ... They, unlike me,

were protected by the loft law for artists. They got bought out. That is now a Moxy Hotel. And now my parking garage is right across from Carolee's old place.

[Carolee] had some stairs that were more [like] a little mountain, but not like the huge Soho lofts. There were lovely events there, gatherings. Roberto Guerra [documentary filmmaker and Brew's partner] moved in with me in ... Let's see, we met in '96, I think '98 he moved in here with me. He was a filmmaker and he used to work in 16mm, but then I corrupted him to digital video and we were making things on commission and our own stuff. This is to answer one question you have here that I see down the line, we weren't thinking we were going to make a film, per se, about Carolee, even though we are documentarians. Maybe part of it is just, who was going to fund it? As Roberto used to say, "Hey, we have the equipment, it's just our time." We would just go over and film with her there. Or if she was doing something for Simon Watson's Downtown Arts Festival—*I Ching Apple Pie*, it happened to be—that's one of the tapes that's in EAI now that Roberto shot.

I have a huge archive of stuff that we shot, that Roberto shot. After he died, cameras got smaller. I'm not an official cinematographer, but I've been around so many shooters, including him. I can shoot fairly well, so I continued shooting with her. I went to, not the opening [of Schneemann's 2015–16 retrospective *Kinetic Painting*] at Salzburg, but I went in February of [2016]. In fact, I had my birthday with Carolee and the curator, Sabine Breitwieser. I traveled with Carolee. She was in a wheelchair. I filmed the show. I filmed her talk. I did some filming up in New Paltz with her, filmed the PS1 show. And again, I don't have funding for it, but it's my time. I've had more intention to get going on it sooner, but I haven't yet. I made three short little pieces right after she and Barbara Hammer [filmmaker] died, because there were a couple of events [honoring them]. I don't know if you've ever seen them, but I'm happy to send them to you.

RH: I would love to see them.

KB: One other thing that I did put together—Victoria [Vesna, video and digital artist] and I were up visiting her one time, and Victoria wanted to go over some history with her. Carolee was so happy that PPOW was going to give La Niña the show *Tooth and Paw* [a 2019 exhibition of artworks by Schneemann's partner cat La Niña, alongside correspondence and documentation from Schneemann and her friends], that of course was much more than La Niña. Carolee came out with her glassine notebook as the curator of La Niña's work and was telling us all about the show. I got that on camera.

RH: Oh, wonderful.

KB: Before the show, I got in touch with Wendy [Olsoff] and Penny [Pilkington, co-founders of PPOW Gallery] and said, "Look, this isn't about my ego or narcissism, but I have cut together this clip of Carolee talking about La Niña's art as the curator. Would you like to put it on a flat screen while the show is running?" And they did.

RH: Oh, then I must have seen it. I'll have to revisit. That was such a fun show.

KB: It was. So there we segue to cats, and Carolee's love of cats and my love of cats. I know her history with her cats and *Infinity Kisses*. Bob Riley bought it for SFMoMA, which was a big coup and I was living out there then. I would hear about Treasure, Vesper, the cats, before I knew her.

To fast forward in time again, this is the funny cat story of our shared kittens. Carolee helped Andy [her studio manager] find a place to live in Stone Ridge [NY], but the

caveat was no pets. But right after Christmas of that year, I guess it was 2015, January, maybe. You know, how all the Christmas trees are on the street corners in New York?

RH: Yeah, yeah.

KB: Well, he found a cat in an abandoned tree on the street corner and brought it up to Stone Ridge where he wasn't supposed to have any pets. Then he was talking to a friend in Brooklyn and said, "Hey, have you ever had it when your cat is on your lap and leaking on you?" And the person said "No." The next thing he knew the cat was breaking water and giving birth to seven kittens.

RH: Oh, wow.

KB: He's not supposed to have any and now he's got eight. He was a great cat whisperer. I've had cats on and off my whole life. My last cat had died and because Roberto and I were doing some travel and stuff, and he wasn't as much of a pet person, so we hadn't gotten another one. But after he died, I realized I really wanted a cat again. Anyway, Carolee and Andy were about to get into a cat fight. She was so adamant she wanted a kitten but Andy said, "You're going to get one. You just have to wait till they're ready to be weaned." And I overheard this.

I said, "You know what? I'd like one too." [Andy] said, "Well, I have one picked out for you." He actually delivered [the cat], who I now call Lily, in May of 2015. It was literally the day before Roberto's birthday, a year after Roberto died. I felt there was, and this is a little woo-woo, but it's also how Carolee and I connected with some more esoteric thinking. It felt very synchronous.

And I have to say, I've had other cats that I've loved, but Lily is the most amazing cat I've ever had. She's now living full-time in my boyfriend's house in New Jersey, because I spend [time] back and forth, and it was getting to be too much to bring her back and forth.

I had Lily, and Carolee had El Niño. We would be talking, her upstate to me here, talking about art and what was going on [with] her health and our cats and wishing that we could meet guys. And soon it was time to have our cats fixed. I took Lily to go get spayed, and Carolee took El Niño to the vet and said, "Doctor, El Niño's balls don't seem to be coming down." The vet said, "Well, I hate to tell you, but El Niño is La Niña." ... There's Miss Cat Lady, who didn't know that she had a female cat!

RH: That's too funny. That's such a great story. ... I'm so curious what Lily's personality is like.

KB: Well, Lily's a love. She'll jump up on my lap and be at my computer. She'll come right on the table with the laptop there. She comes and spoons with me in bed. That's where I feel like she came in with some energy from Roberto, because he used to say in the morning, "Oh, let's have morning hugs." She's that kind of cat. She's very into people. She's like a dog cat.

RH: I love a dog cat. I'm glad to hear that because La Niña, she is such an incredible cat and was like a partner to Carolee, but she ...

KB: A little more aloof.

RH: Aloof and really just for Carolee. She didn't have room for anyone else. When Carolee still had the loft, was she carting cats back and forth between here and New Paltz?

KB: No.

RH: She didn't have them typically at the loft? They would be upstate?

KB: Yeah.

RH: Did she drive [down] here?

KB: No, she took the bus. Again, she always would want to go back sooner, but she'd be, "I've got to go to this opening or this." And sometimes she would [say] "Oops, got to go. Cause I got to get that nine [o'clock] bus back." She would go back late at night sometimes.

No, I don't really remember ever seeing the cats in the loft. There were enough people up there [to catsit in New Paltz]. And I know when she'd be away for a length of time, she'd have some other friends go and stay there. Like M.M. Serra [filmmaker and former executive director of the Film-Makers' Coop] used to go stay there. Initially, my first summer back here, before I even had my car back, she invited me to go and be there when she was going away. I remember one summer night sitting on the porch and [watching a] light show with all the fireflies.

RH: Were you in the house by yourself?

KB: Yeah.

RH: What was that like?

KB: It was special. I mean, the house has an aura to it, clearly, as you know. But another funny story. Roberto, in the early part of our relationship, one of the times she was going away, she said, "Oh, why don't you and Roberto come up here?" And he wasn't so much Mr. Country Boy. I'm a hybrid. I'm a city person and I love nature. I went to school in Vermont and I used to go camping down logging roads in California, not organized campgrounds. He's more beach boy, not woodsman. It was a little before tax time, so I think he had to bring some work to do. He was wearing a long feather coat and we couldn't figure out the heat in the house. It was cold and he [said], "I don't know why people want to come to the country." The next day, I guess it was warmer, we took a walk in the back tracks [referring to former railroad that is now a walking path near Schneemann's home] and got up into the Shawangunk Mountains and saw some wild turkeys. [He said], "Well, I guess I wouldn't have seen those on the roof of my building on Mercer Street." No. And of course, she loved winter. She loved the cold. She loved the snow.

RH: ... I think it's so interesting that that was Carolee's favorite time of year, that she was so attracted and energized by it. Yeah, that house is very cold. You couldn't figure out the heat because there wasn't enough of it.

KB: We didn't even figure out where the thermostat was.

RH: When I was doing some reading, I saw Carolee talking about you and Victoria [Vesna] and Mike Bidlo [artist] all being in California together. She said, “Oh, my witches are all together.” Do you remember that? Is that something that she would say?

KB: Well, Mike lived here [in NYC].

RH: Maybe it was just you and Victoria.

KB: Victoria was living in Southern California. I met Victoria in 1992, and we were both working on a project—or I got invited to go down and join a project that she was involved in. It was for an organization called SIGGRAPH. It was some kind of computer art thing. Right away, we connected and we found out we both knew Carolee. We called it the goddess connection. Bidlo also refers to Carolee as the goddess. And, you know, to us, she was a goddess. So Bidlo wasn’t part of the California thing. The California thing with the witches is me and Victoria.

Back to the goddess. The research that she was doing on the symbols definitely entered her artwork and lectures and writing. We definitely talked about that.

RH: Yeah.

KB: And I didn’t know she called us her witches.

RH: I can’t remember exactly her phrasing, but she was just like, “Oh, how wonderful to hear.” She wasn’t there ... but [she thought it was] wonderful that her witches had all gathered in California in her absence. I was wondering if that was maybe a private joke—or just private between Carolee and herself, I suppose.

KB: I did work with Carolee on some projects, like *Plague Column* [1995]. ... I moved in here in 1995, so it’s certainly before I knew Roberto. Carolee already knew about her health. Both of us being doctors’ daughters, she was coming over here and we were testing giving vitamin B shots on oranges before giving them to her. Very early on, she found out about the Gerson diet [alternative cancer therapy] and was doing that. I think one time she came over here to do one of her coffee enemas or something. I was very much a confidante. You know, I’m chatty Kathy, but I’m very discreet with people’s private information. Carolee knew that. Some people are high maintenance when it comes to other people’s health and it becomes more pressure on the person. I dealt with that with Roberto’s illness with some people who were just too high maintenance. It was [more] about them. ... And of course, for Carolee too, just protecting her own persona in the world and not having that be gossip about what was going on with her health.

Very early on I knew what was going on with her health in a big way. *Plague Column* was definitely one piece that I worked with her on. I forget the guy who helped us edit some of the footage, because there was footage from when she was in Mexico, they’re cutting down a tree or something. ... You’ve heard I’ve been to Springtown many times, and when she was there, too, I’d be there. Some of the memories ... swimming in the pond with her.

RH: The pond on the property?

KB: Yeah.

RH: I know it's different now because Carolee told me I could swim in there and I'm looking at it going, "I don't believe I can." She said some development behind her property ... changed that pond.

KB: I can't remember what year, but yes, I remember being there one time. When she was starting to get more frail and she had a wet suit and [I was] sort of assisting her down the little slope getting in there. She loved it.

RH: Do you remember when she sold her loft? ... I was just curious if she sold it after 9/11, before or after.

KB: I can't remember now either. She was still in the loft after 9/11 because the piece she made about 9/11—I think was on the walls [referring to *Terminal Velocity*, 2001–05].

RH: Okay. That would make sense then. I was wondering if she'd been in the city when that was happening.

KB: You know, it's all, that's all a little fuzzy to me in terms of specificity of dates. Yeah, I wouldn't want to be the authority on that.

RH: No, that's okay.

KB: But *Interior Scroll—The Cave*. [That was] the redoing of *Interior Scroll* in the cave up there [referring to a filmed performance at the Widow Jane Mine in Rosendale, NY, 1995]. I wasn't there in the cave. I just did the voice.

RH: Just the voiceover [for the film].

KB: In the city, yeah. But it was fun to be part of, definitely.

RH: I live in Rosendale, which is where that cave is. It's right down the street from my house. I am always hoping I'll run into somebody who was there. ... Everybody knows Carolee. They all were in yoga with her. That's the most common story. "She was in my yoga class," but I can't find anybody who was at the cave.

KB: [We had] lots of conversations around aging, health, and cancer. And being doctors' daughters. But she was very guarded and I was vigilant about being guarded also.

I [told] you some of the things I've shot over the years and what I need to do. I'll be honest. I had a residency at the Emily Harvey Foundation in Venice for the month of September and proposed that I was going to work on my Carolee archive and one other archive of footage for a project. Before I got there, I realized I've got to do something connected to Venice. I can just sit here and do that.

RH: Fair enough.

KB: I just submitted my final report and it's going to turn into an article for *The Brooklyn Rail*, a letter from Venice of everything that I did. I brought the hard drives with me. Then what I realized is Premiere, which is the program that you edit on these days, where I had done these short pieces from some of the footage, it must have been updated or something and the media wasn't linked. So I really couldn't have worked on it anyway. And I realized,



you know what? This is where I miss Roberto, besides missing him. He was more the tech dude. I do have a former student who isn't just out of college, who teaches it. I'm going to try to hire her to work with me to really start to try to put it together.

And George Gittoes. I don't know if that's a name that's ...

RH: Yeah, the name is familiar to me.

KB: They [Schneemann and Gittoes] were friends. He's an artist and filmmaker who lives in Sydney. But he and his partner have come to New York a few times and I met them. It was sort of through David Ross, who chairs a department that I taught in until just recently. [He] is a longtime friend of George's. I met him through David, but we found out we had the Carolee connection. And they [said], "Oh, yes, you still have to make a film about her." ... Unfortunately, we were never fully thinking that we were making a feature documentary about her. We were just catching different things in her life because we could. We were neighbors and she's gone now. And, you know, I can't think about how I could make a full blown doc on her. ... What I am thinking is, especially because of people's different ways of looking at things and attention spans, I'm thinking a goal for me for this year is to really put some focus to the footage because it's like ... sculpting in time. You have to start to look at it and play with it. My idea is to make individual discreet filmlets like I did those three short things. I did something for the National Coalition Against Censorship when she was honored posthumously.

RH: Oh, yes. I remember that happening.

KB: They played that there. I made the thing that I said about La Niña. And I made one other short thing about her talking about coming to New York and working on *Fuses*. These are short little things, but I thought I could make little filmlets and they could almost be thematic, like, "OK, here's Carolee and cats or here's Carolee..." I won't know until I really dig into it. But yeah, and I'm just thinking, make little filmlets and maybe have a website and have them be [shared].

RH: When was the last time you were [at Schneemann's home in New Paltz]? Do you recall?

KB: I would have gone up the day she was dying, but then we're said, "Oh, we'll go tomorrow." And then she died. But we went up the day after, Joyce Burstein [artist] and I. ... She actually wanted to be buried right on the property. I'll never forget, because on her birthday of the fall before she died, she called me up or I called her to play harmonica like I do for friends. She said, "Oh, Brew, I'm so happy. I found a green burial place right down the road on Springtown Road. I've got my plot."

RH: Yeah. I remember because that was on her birthday. That place is very lovely too.

KB: It is. Victoria and I tried to go find it. One of the times when I was visiting her in Rhinebeck. She splits her time between Rhinebeck and LA still. We couldn't find it, but it was in the fall with all the leaves.

RH: It's hard to find. ... There are still oyster shells. Somebody, I don't remember who had done this, but a friend of Carolee's ... had planted a little ginger [plant] in a circle.

KB: Lillian Ball, who's a friend of ours and with Carolee. She was married to David Reed. She's no longer [married], but he was a friend also of Carolee's because they would often be at the loft parties. She now does a lot with landscape and plants and ecological art things. I think she stopped by and planted something. It might be Lillian. ... I'm going to ask her. ... Unfortunately, I did not travel to Venice in 2017 [when Schneemann was awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale]. I'm really bummed about that. And I'm also really bummed I didn't make it to the Barbican [for Schneemann's retrospective *Body Politics*, London, 2021–22]. But I did make it to Salzburg and I did shoot the PS1 retrospective and installation. Sometimes you can't make it all.

RH: I saw the show at PS1 and that was just before I started working for Carolee. ... One of the things that she was telling me with the closing of that PS1 show, she said she feels like a lot of artists feel like this, [as if] the bigger opportunities you have and the bigger presentations you have, coming off of it, there's a darkness to it.

KB: Oh, it's postpartum, yeah.

RH: She [said], "That's the last thing I'm going to do at this scale."

KB: But, you know, the beauty is in it. I'll tell you one thing also about her, which I used to admonish her about this. She had valid reasons. She wasn't recognized the same way as the guys. But in the later years, when things were starting to turn, way before winning the Golden Lion, when she would be making public presentations, she would still kind of kvetch about that. I would take her aside and say, "Valid feelings, but you don't have to put that out there publicly right now. You know, it's not serving you anymore."

One other thing that I felt very sad about her—and it's maybe because she was such a babe and a gorgeous young woman—that she was not happy with aging. I remember sitting in a focus group with people trying to sell some kind of special water ... anti-aging. It's like, wait. It's the wrong attitude. It should be pro-aging. What's the alternative?

RH: Yeah, really.

KB: Celebrate that you have achieved all of this and have this level of wisdom, and you're getting some of that recognition before you're a dead artist. At least she did get that.

Carolee was very attuned to some paranormal and psychic phenomena. There were certain postcards ... I have a whole file. I didn't even pull it out before we met, things from her notes and the synchronicity of this or that. We both tapped into that sensibility. So maybe that's why we were the witches.

RH: That's something about the house too. ... That house is the only place where I allow myself to think, "Wait a minute." A sound or a movement or anything that happens has a power inside of that space that I feel expands past Carolee's presence in the house. It expands past the house. She really found something out in those woods. I tell you, it's a very special place.

KB: It is.

RH: I really love your place.

KB: Oh, thanks. It's very wonderful. My boyfriend wants to bring his granddaughter here. He thinks she's going to go wild. Said, "You should make a film of this."

RH: How old is his granddaughter?

KB: Twelve, I think. It's funny too, because as I said, I've felt like, oh, a little bit lesser, you know? Some people have their chichi Tribeca—but, whatever. There's an artist named Paul Kaiser, who I showed a collaboration he did with Ken Jacobs. I don't know if you've ever heard of him. He's an *éminence grise* older experimental filmmaker. It was a collaboration that Paul did with him. I showed it at this Doc Fortnight film series that I was a guest curator for at MoMA for four years. They were just elated because it was more new media and digital, but it was coming from source material. It was nonfiction. I've been to Ken and Flo's [Flo Jacobs, filmmaker] loft once some years ago when I was the co-director of the Margaret Mead Film Festival. But Paul said, "Oh, they invited me down for coffee and bagels. You'll have to come." They're probably ... in their 80s, if not older. They live in a five floor walk-up in Tribeca. Their loft makes mine look like a chichi Tribeca loft.

I remember we interviewed Brendan Gill for a piece that we did when PS1 reopened in the late '90s and his office was chaos. Some people are Susie Homemaker and ... some people just, you know, you make it work. A different aesthetic.

RH: That's something that I grew up [with]... a house filled with stuff, objects, and things. You know, "This was great grandma so-and-so's and this is the thing I found on the street." I really get spaces like that. I'm like that.

KB: Carolee's house, her loft was like that. ... Special place. Very special. Special woman. Amazing. Soul sister. Mentor, teacher. Miss her a lot.

RH: I can only imagine. Something that I feel has come up in a lot of these conversations, and I think this is something that's very unique to Carolee, she was really socially gifted in a way that I feel is kind of uncommon for people, especially in the arts which is, by necessity in so many ways ... you have to be really self-involved and advocate for yourself. I don't mean that to be detrimental at all.

KB: No, I hear you.

RH: But, Carolee ... I saw it with all different people, everybody who was friendly with her were close friends and she could talk about anything to anybody and really listen and be present for people in a way that I thought was really impressive.

KB: You're right. And she was brilliant too. I mean, her rigor and research and writing, but not in a self-important way. ... so down-home and down to earth. Empathic.

RH: Completely. Her language is really inventive, but [also] really accessible. ... I can't read, well, scholarly stuff.

KB: I'm not coming out of the theory academic world. I'm coming out of working with artists and practice. And lives and lived art. It's so much. The amount of thinking and research she did into what she was investigating and passionate about and the crossover to the social issues, but in this aesthetic, only [in] a Carolee style. That released some of her anger towards some of these things, frustration and activism, but in a very unique way.

RH: Her artwork was so political. I could understand the frustration with *Interior Scroll* and *Meat Joy* being sort of like these roadblocks in front of [her], where [she's] back here with this massive [body of] work.

KB: Let me show you one last thing because when I was in Venice and I did all these different things. I went to the Venice Film Festival, I went to a floating cinema festival, I went to a media art history conference. I was in a film by another resident artist. I made studio visits with eight ceramic artists because I started doing ceramics again in the pandemic. I wanted to do something with my hands.

One of the shows I went to was at this kind of a high-end collector [project space] by [Francois] Pinault. I don't know where he's from, maybe France, and he has two spaces. There were two great shows. One was at the Palazzo Grassi. It was mostly a photo show from ... a collection of historical photos. There were [four] artists, contemporary artists, and they called it *Chronorama Redux*. Those artists could do something working off of the collection and do more contemporary work. ... All of a sudden, I walk into this one room, and there's the setup of a film studio. This woman had set up a photo studio shoot. She was replicating photos from the collection, and some of her own. Her project was called *Repose*.

Two very uncanny things. One was, I met this artist on an airplane to New Orleans. The one and only time I went to New Orleans [was for] a friend's 60th birthday party. This young woman and her boyfriend or husband were on the same [flight]. Sometimes you sit next to people and really hit it off and we got into this lengthy chat. They lived in the LA area. I was out there one other time, a friend had a dinner party for me. I invited them, they came. This name is not a usual name: Tarrah Krajnak. On top of it, she's originally from Peru and that's where Roberto was from. She was one of the contemporary artists doing this redux. She was using some of the photos from the collection, but she had some of her own. One of the reposes that she did ... was of *Interior Scroll*. There's the photo of Carolee and then there's the photo of [Tarrah] doing it. ... I cite it in my article for the *Brooklyn Rail*.

I Googled her, and she's getting a lot of attention. She moved up to Oregon, teaching, but she's had some international shows. I decided to write to her. I found her email online. The day that I wrote to her, I found that there's a foundation here called Penumbra that shows photographers, and she was in a show that had just opened there. Talk about woo woo. Yeah, doo doo doo doo [hums *Twilight Zone* theme]. But there was the Carolee photo and then [Tarrah], not naked, clothed, but with the same gesture, among other recreations or repositings. ... And even just the irony that I said for my proposal that I was going to work on my Carolee footage. ... As you can see, "the goddess" is still with me.