

1 TREATMENT



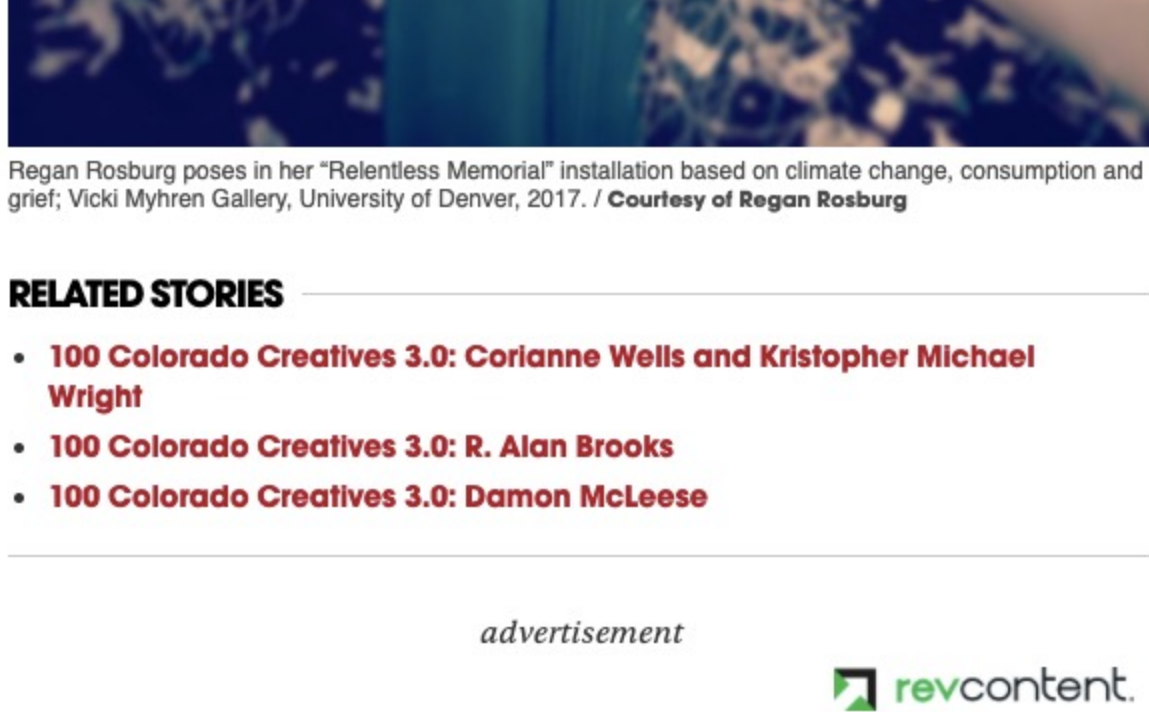
Regan Rosburg, detail of "Vanitas V," mixed-media 3-D resin painting. / William Havu Gallery

100 Colorado Creatives 3.0: Regan Rosburg

SUSAN FROYD | JUNE 22, 2017 | 6:50AM

#1: **Regan Rosburg**

Regan Rosburg could be a poster child for everything current and good about the regional art community: She's a woman artist who's been active here for a long while, a maker, a naturalist and an activist, deeply involved with both the artistic process and the state of the world around us. She makes art with depth, beauty and commitment, and touches on all of these qualities in her answers to the 100CC questionnaire.

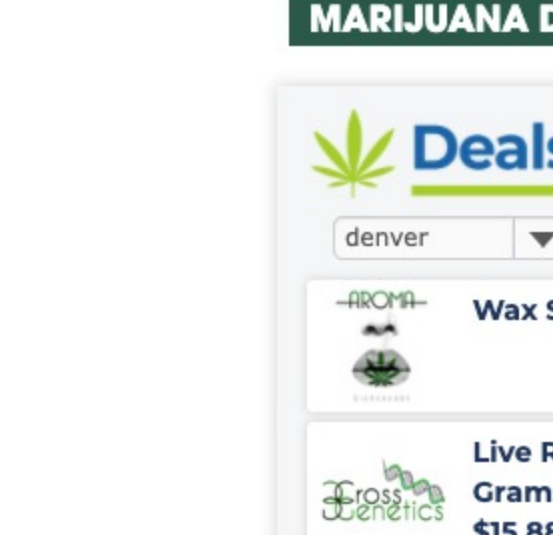
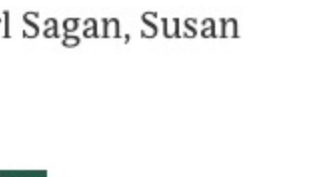


Regan Rosburg poses in her "Relentless Memorial" installation based on climate change, consumption and grief; Vicki Myhren Gallery, University of Denver, 2017. / Courtesy of Regan Rosburg

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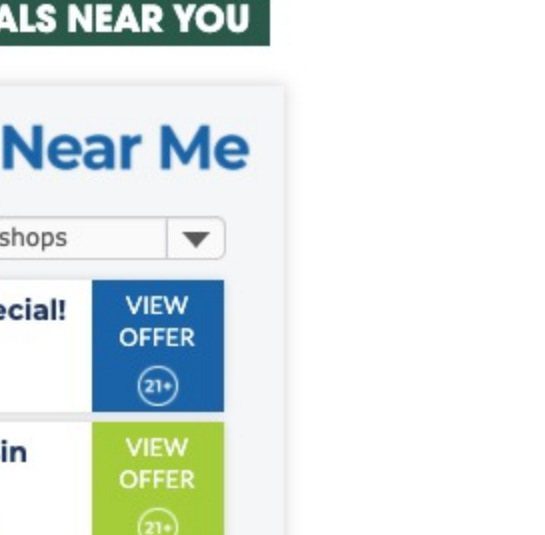
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Westword: If you could collaborate with anyone in history, who would it be, and why?

Regan Rosburg: I can give you my top three: Carl Sagan, Susan Sontag and Ai Wei Wei.

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The screenshot shows a mobile app interface with a search bar set to 'denver' and a 'shops' dropdown. Three deals are listed: 'Wax Special!' with a 'VIEW OFFER' button, 'Live Resin Grams \$15.88!' with a 'VIEW OFFER' button, and '3 pre-rolls for \$15' with a 'VIEW OFFER' button. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Get deal alerts', 'View all deals', and 'Get the App'.

First, **Carl Sagan** for his unwavering and far-seeing reverence for our planet. I respect his authentic presentation of the important, evolved, brilliant interconnectedness of our planet through his writing and shows like *Cosmos*. This overarching vision of his also made him a crucial, influential voice against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

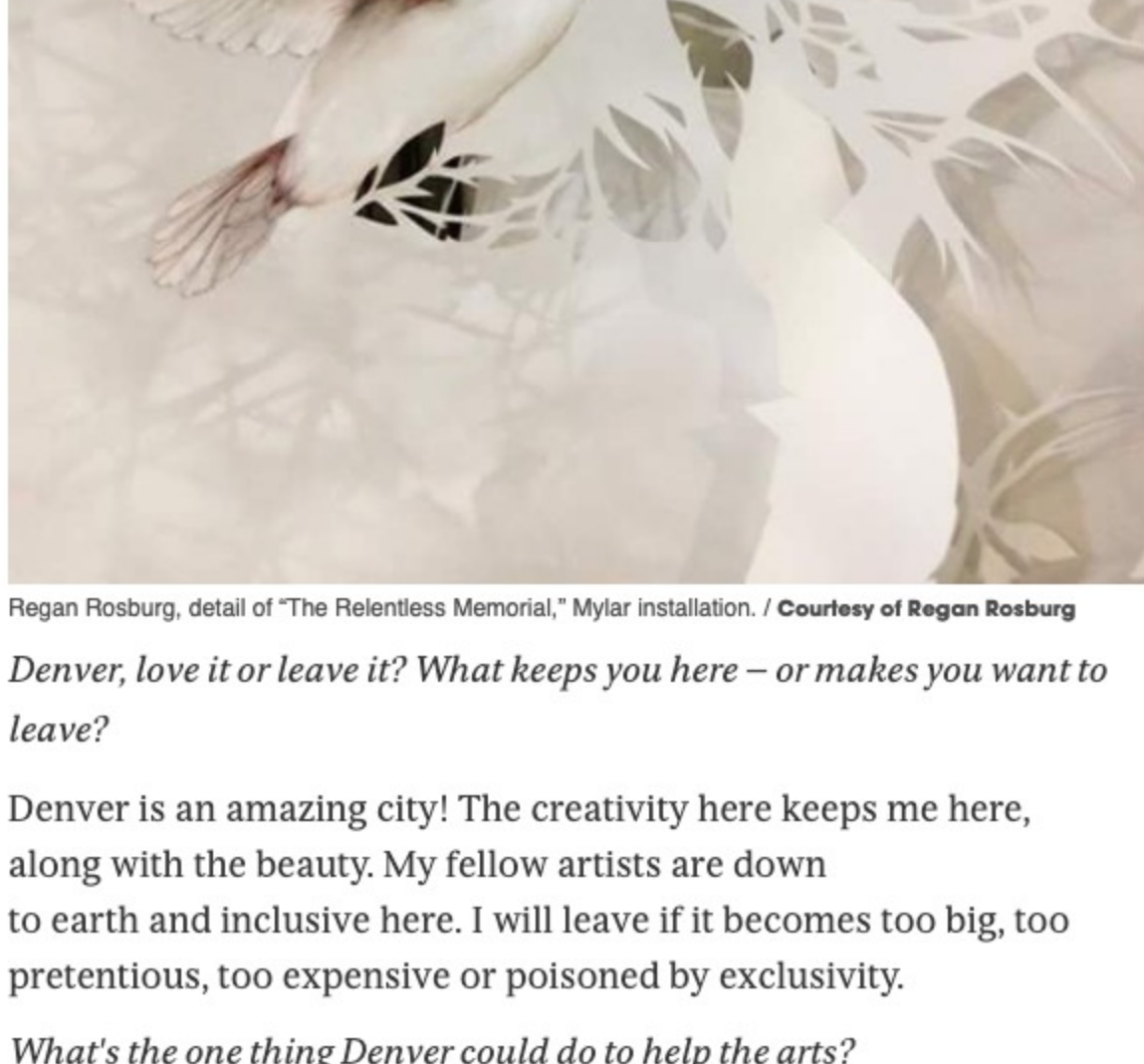
Second, I would love to pick the brain of **Susan Sontag**. Her book *Regarding the Pain of Others* has been something I refer to repeatedly; her perspective on how humans relate to the pain of others through photography is more important in this day of rapid and unending image input. I would love to collaborate on a way to interrupt the commonplace digestion of violence by using art.

And finally, **Ai Wei Wei**. I respect how his artworks are always unflinching and smart, and how he has risked everything for the greater good. His work is not all about him. Instead, his works pull back the membrane on humanity to reveal its beauty, complexity, irony, injustice and gruesomeness. His artworks have influenced governments, given voices to the voiceless and shifted the collective psychology of different cultures. I find his works and art practice to be invaluable.

Who in the world is interesting to you right now, and why?

The artist and filmmaker **Chris Jordan**. Chris's work straddles the fine line between beauty and horror, and creates a space to hold both. In fact, beauty is his Trojan horse. He utilizes it to deliver the complex and difficult reality of our time; he shows how our choices impact our world.

Like the work of Ai Wei Wei, Chris's work is so honest and thoughtfully done that it has given me hope. I have never seen anyone work harder that it has given me hope. Furthermore, I truly believe that works like his newest film, *Albatross*, will help usher in not only a shift in perception, but also worldwide changes at the top governmental levels. He has taught me that if artists hold tight enough to their vision, they can be some of the most powerful guides and trusted voices of the people.



Regan Rosburg, detail of "Vanitas IV," mixed-media 3-D resin painting. / William Havu Gallery

What's one art trend you want to see die this year?

I don't know how to say this without sounding like a jerk, but here goes: There's art, and then there's stuff. I dislike "art" that lacks consideration, or any of the following: craftsmanship, thought, hours of failure, hours of practice, hours of staring and years of digging of failure to the artist's internal questions. In the words of **J. Henry Fair**, "Art that is beautiful but not meaningful is decoration. Art that is meaningful without beauty is pedantic." That said, I cast a wide net for what I think is beautiful, because to me, beauty and thoughtfulness are inseparable.

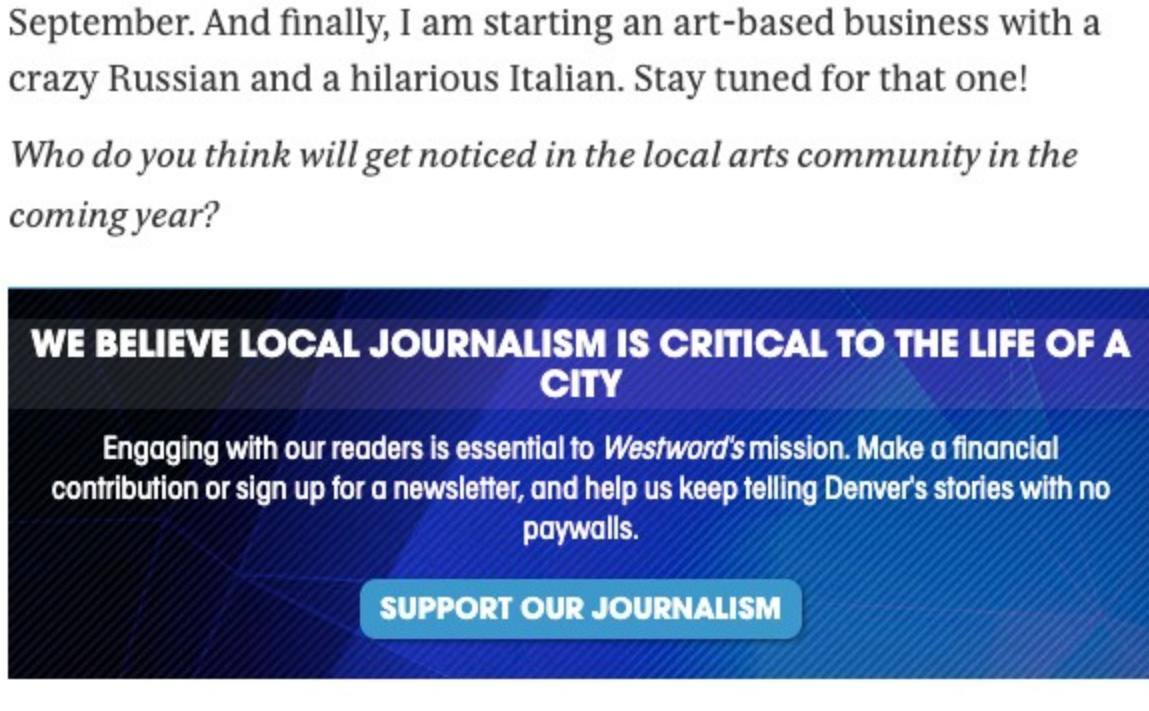
Also, in this age of instantaneousness, the title of "artist" gets tossed around too loosely. To me, artists struggle. It's not part-time. It's your life – your whole life, even while you sleep. It takes a long time to earn it that title...and it should.

What's your day job?

I am an adjunct professor at Metro State University. I also have been known to sling drinks, tell jokes and give private painting lessons.

A mystery patron offers you unlimited funds for life. What will you do with it?

I would run eco-art residencies around the world. Along with using these residencies as an educational platform, I would also create intense installation works that engage people on a psychological and physical level related to climate change, pollution and biophilia. I want the work that I do to leave the gallery and enter the "square," or public space. I love making paintings, but I desperately want to align my materials, process and ethical compass in new ways.



Regan Rosburg, "The Relentless Memorial," Mylar installation. / Courtesy of Regan Rosburg

Denver, love it or leave it? What keeps you here – or makes you want to leave?

Denver is an amazing city! The creativity here keeps me here, along with the beauty. My fellow artists are down to earth and inclusive here. I will leave if it becomes too big, too pretentious, too expensive or poisoned by exclusivity.

What's the one thing Denver could do to help the arts?

Aside from more affordable art housing, I would like to see more opportunities and examples of critical artistic discourse here. I feel like both of those things are expanding, and that makes me happy.

Who is your favorite Colorado Creative?

I have an art crush on both **Molly Bounds** and **Suchitra Mattai**. These women work hard, think hard, and have unlimited creativity. Their dedication is awe-inspiring, and it keeps me going.

Regan Rosburg, "The Relentless Memorial," Mylar installation. / Courtesy of Regan Rosburg

What's on your agenda in the coming year?

Next year, I have a lot on my plate. I am joining William Havu Gallery as of this month, and am excited about that. I am curating a major exhibition/symposium with 21 artists (USA and Canada) in September, during the Biennial of the Americas. The theme of the exhibition is based on a paper I wrote, which will be published in the *International Journal of Civic Engagement and Social Change* this summer. Given enough time and resources, I would like to continue to do more research and expand upon the themes behind that paper. I am also collaborating with Hi Tec Plastics on a huge installation with recycled plastic for September. And finally, I am starting an art-based business with a crazy Russian and a hilarious Italian. Stay tuned for that one!

Who do you think will get noticed in the local arts community in the coming year?

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Because I see them and talk to them all the time, I pick **Lewis Neeff** and **Lori Owicz**, who are both in the Temple.

Lewis works in a variety of materials, and his process is extremely involved, down to the tiniest detail. He will spend hours on the computer making drawings for a sculpture that he may attempt to make ten times, but he always stays positive and learns from each trial. Also, he is like a sponge of information, with each answer leading to more questions.

Lori works in found metals and plastics that she retrieves from alleys and dumpsters. Her dedication to small details and craftsmanship is inspiring, and I have watched her navigate the artistic valley between whether materials or process guide the work. Both Lori and Lewis exemplify the frenetic, obsessive artistic process that results in a fascinating finished piece.

See works by Regan Rosburg and five other women artists in **Fabricating Nature**, opening with a reception from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, June 23, at **William Havu Gallery**, and running through August 5. Learn more about **Regan Rosburg and her work online**.

Susan Froyd started writing for *Westword* as the "Thrills" editor in 1992 and never quite left the fold. These days she still freelances for the paper in addition to walking her dogs, enjoying cheap ethnic food and reading voraciously. Sometimes she writes poetry.

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