

Ruth Sergel | Bio

Ruth Sergel makes big projects that harnesses technical prowess for community engagement and social transformation.

Chalk is an annual community commemoration of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. Begun in 2004, each year on the March 25 anniversary of the fire, participants fan out across the city to inscribe in chalk the names and ages of the victims in front of their former homes. Ruth is the founder of the Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition which united over 250 partners nationwide to create the March 2011 centennial commemoration and was supported by grants from 21st Century ILGWU Heritage Fund (2011), New York State Council on the Humanities (2011), New York University Community Fund (2011, 2010), Sparkplug Foundation (2010) and the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America (2010).

Voices of 9.11 (2002-2003 | 2011) recorded over 550 video testimonies in New York, Shanksville, PA and inside the Pentagon. With absolutely no restrictions placed on what could or could not be said inside a private video booth, Voices of 9.11 represents a true people's archive. Voices of 9.11 has been exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the New York Historical Society and the Theatre de la Ville (Paris). For the ten year anniversary the entire collection was posted online and can be seen at: www.hereisnewyorkv911.org.

Ruth's award-winning films have screened at New Directors/New Films (Museum of Modern Art), Tribeca Film Festival, Clermont-Ferrand, Boston Museum of Fine Art, Exploratorium, National Museum for Women in the Arts, Anthology Film Archives and aired on PBS and IFC. The films were created through an intensive workshop process with communities whose input as actors and advisors shaped the heart of the work and with the generous support of the Jerome Foundation (2003) and the New York State Council on the Arts (2003). Ruth was the 2005 winner IFP Project Involve/Kodak Award.

Ruth's interactive documentaries have been exhibited in the US and Europe. Magic Box was created with the support of the Experimental Television Center (2010) and exhibited at the Shift Festival (Basel, Switzerland, 2010) and 3LD Art and Technology Center (2009). Alchemy of Light an interactive installation with live performers was supported by the New York State Council on the Arts (2009), the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Swing Space (2010) and MCAF Fund (2008). Additional works include Ethel, a live interactive performance with 89 year-old Ethel Greenbaum and AI created with AI Carlo a painter and homeless Vietnam Vet. Development of these projects has been supported by residencies at Squeaky Wheel (2009), Digital Performance Institute (2008), Here Arts Center (2007-2008) and CESTA (Czech Republic, 2006). Video collaborations include Troika Ranch, 3LD and LOSS (Italy). Ruth was the Resident Researcher in Video at the Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP) at NYU (2008 – 2009).

Bridging arts and humanities Ruth was a visiting fellow in Public Humanities at the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage at Brown University (2010) and has presented her work at the National Council on Public History (2011), Gotham Center for New York City History (2011/2010/2009), Here Arts Center's Culture Mart (2009), MediaLab Prado (Madrid, 2008), Prelude Festival (2008), National Oral History Association (2006), Tribeca Film Festival (2004) and the IFP Film Market (2004) among others.

Ruth's work has been covered extensively in the press including the New York Times, NY Daily News, National Public Radio, CNN, Huffington Post and the BBC. In March 2011 she was profiled by the New York Times: In Tragedy a Mission to Remember, by Steven Greenhouse: <http://nyti.ms/r1HYHz>

Ruth is a graduate of Swarthmore College with a masters degree from New York University/Tisch School of the Arts Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP) with the support of a Tisch School of the Arts fellowship and a GSO Award. She is a retired member of IATSE 600 (Cinematographers Guild). In 2011 Ruth was honored to be invited to the White House as a member of the Community Leaders Briefing Series.

For more on Ruth's work please visit: www.streetpictures.org



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