

LIZ RODDA

Liz Rodda's series *Heat Loss*, as presented in *If I Had a Hammer*, builds off the artist's long-standing exploration of the relationships between bodily presence and the economy of image circulation online and through mass-media broadcast channels. Using source material culled from both public and private archives such as YouTube and Shutterstock, the artist juxtaposes found video, photos, audio, and text with A/V made and recorded in her studio so that the intended meaning of the content-maker becomes layered with the vocabulary of the digital age, capitalist desire, and affect-driven marketing.

Her process begins with a series of online searches that rely on broad keywords to spur thousands of results that illustrate the ways in which meaning is inscribed within media for the purpose of reaching as many people as possible. The content that is offered to Rodda during these searches varies greatly in regard to its intended audience and use-case scenarios. Incredibly mundane images and videos tagged with the keyword "zoom test," for example, may lead to an instructional video for the Zoom meeting platform, or, as we see in the exhibition, to a video of someone testing their new digital camera. A search for "freedom" results in a diverse range of media, ranging from educational videos focusing on the American Civil War to a somewhat absurd car commercial produced by the automotive manufacturer Audi AG and titled "Freedom in Motion." From this source material, the artist selects images, videos, and audio files that demonstrate a transfer of information and ideology using either the presence of a person to

elicit an emotional response from the viewer or the absence of bodies to exploit a viewer's sense and need of interpersonal connection.

This dichotomy between absence and presence is often represented explicitly in *Heat Loss* (2017–), as in Rodda's aluminum prints and in the video *Turn Your Face Toward the Sun* (2016), wherein the visual content contains traces of human activity—a glass of whiskey on ice, a sunken handprint left on a memory foam mattress. For the artist, these traces create the occasion for asking questions about why and how the digital imagescape and those who benefit from digital circulation exploit corporeality and subjectivity. The traces of people in these images inspire a sense of connection with the image-maker and the subjects who left behind the evidence of their presence. They create the occasion for viewing an image that is saturated with desire—a desire either to know who this trace belongs to or to fill in the bodily omission with a projection of themselves.

The title *Heat Loss* is not only a nod to those moments captured in photographs wherein the transfer of a body is marked by a left-behind trace but also a reference to the circulation of fleshy energy that fuels interpersonal connection. Away from the keyboard, connections are forged through proximity, presence, and touch. The technosphere, in contrast, provokes interpersonal connection through the immediacy of information, delivered via a vast web of servers, unconscious computer protocols, mechanized algorithms, and screens, all of which require and give off endless amounts

of heat. The artist explains why she has brought together this oppositional relationship, stating, "[In *Heat Loss*,] I am thinking about the Internet as a kind of body with wants and impulses and the potential to diffuse them elsewhere."

Rodda's work is exemplary for its ability to demonstrate the imagescape's interconnectedness with contemporary social, cultural, and economic movements. Through simple gestures, including juxtaposition and recontextualization, she highlights the precarious nature of establishing context, asking us to consider the mechanisms that support the dissemination of information as well as how that dissemination informs our understanding of our place within the social sphere of this digital age.

FOLLOWING TWO PAGES

Liz Rodda

Zoom Test (still), 2017

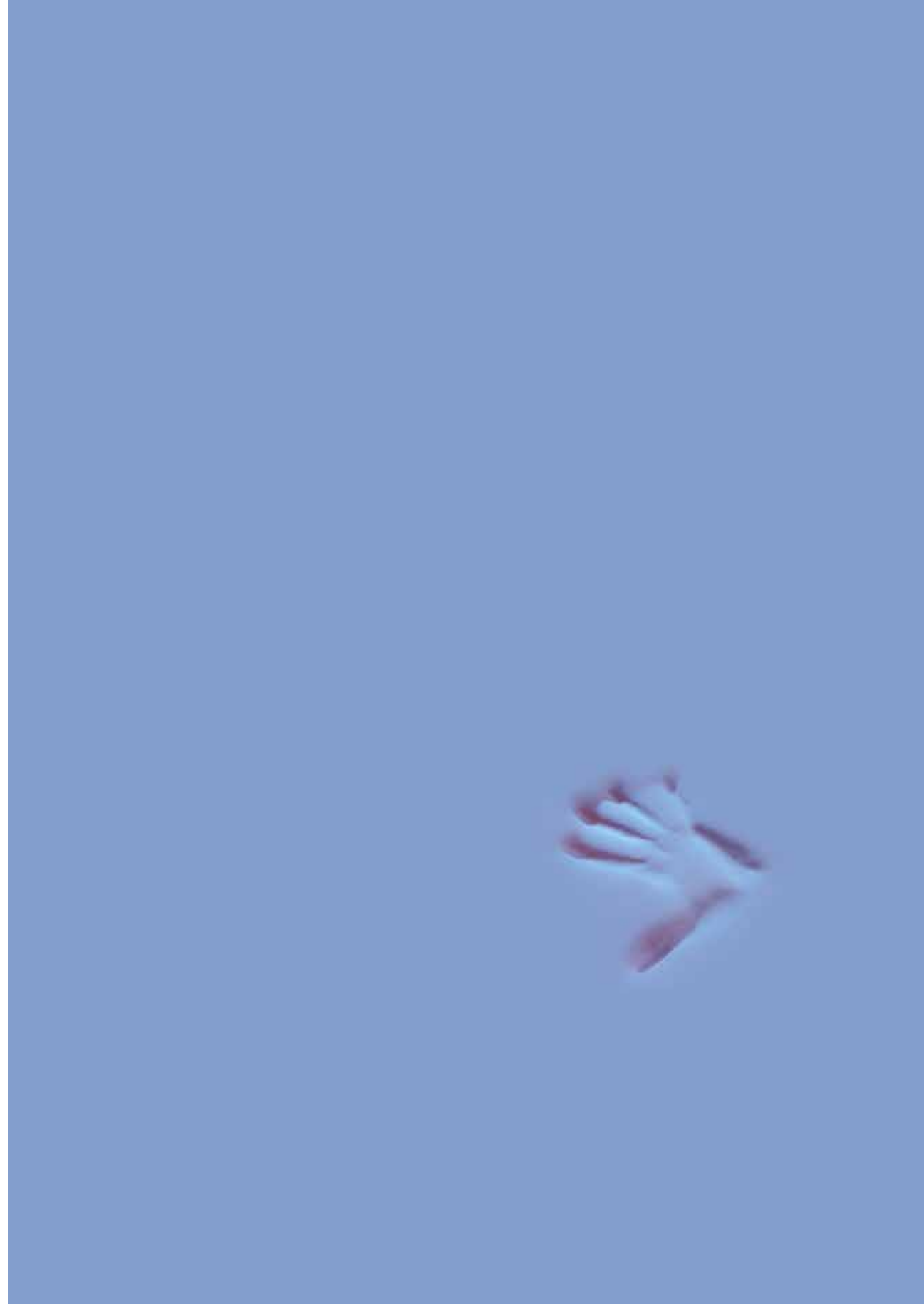
From the series *Heat Loss*, 2017–
Found video, found audio, 5:26 minutes

Courtesy of the artist





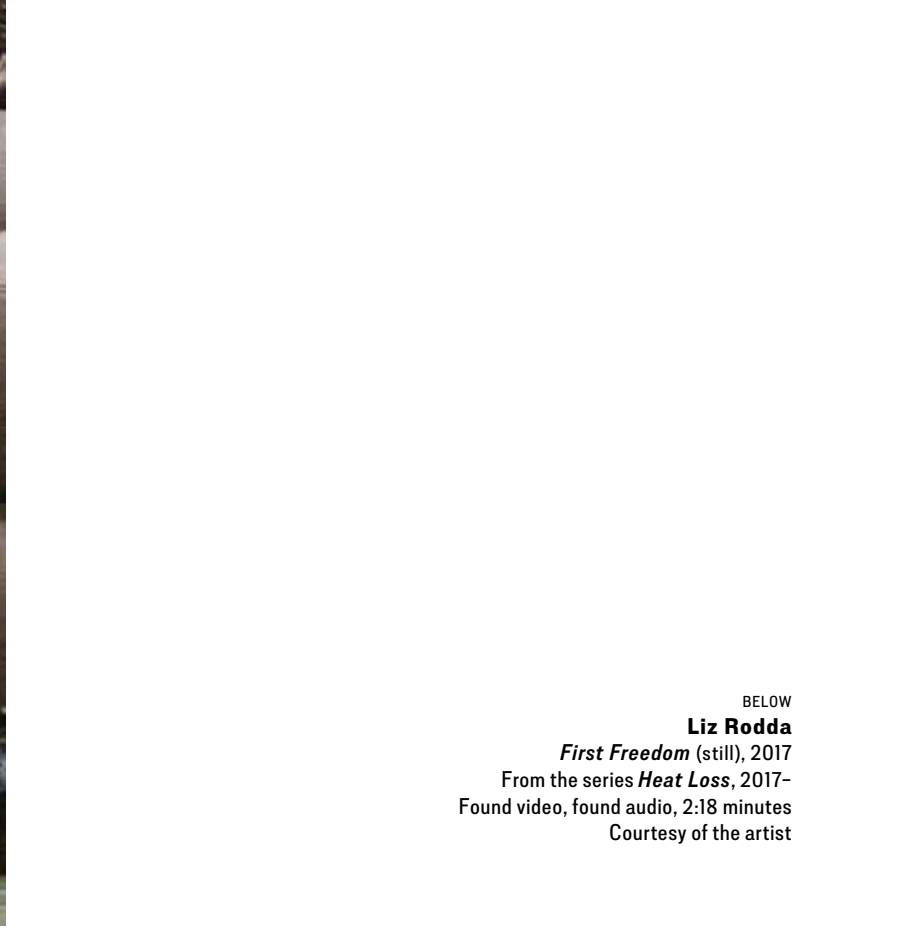
ABOVE
Liz Rodda
Print (beige), 2017
From the series *Heat Loss, 2017-*
Aluminum print
Courtesy of the artist



OPPOSITE
Liz Rodda
Print (blue), 2017
From the series *Heat Loss, 2017-*
Aluminum print
Courtesy of the artist



ABOVE
Liz Rodda
Turn Your Face Toward the Sun (still), 2016
From the series *Heat Loss*, 2017-
Found video, found audio, 5:42 minutes
Courtesy of the artist



BELOW
Liz Rodda
First Freedom (still), 2017
From the series *Heat Loss*, 2017-
Found video, found audio, 2:18 minutes
Courtesy of the artist



LE
AD
HAMMER