



Rose Troche. YouTube video still.

Troche, Rose (b. 1964)

by Patricia Juliana Smith

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In the early 1990s, when Rose Troche began her professional filmmaking career with her then-partner Guinevere Turner, invisibility in the arts and media was one of the primary social issues affecting lesbians.

Thanks to *Go Fish* (1994), Troche's first feature film, in which Turner played one of the lead roles, lesbians have become more visible, not as women tortured by their sexuality, as they have traditionally been portrayed, but as individuals for whom female homosexuality is comfortable and, indeed, normal.

Rose Troche was born in Chicago in 1964 to Puerto Rican parents, and grew up on the city's north side. While in her teens, she moved with her family to the suburbs, and there, while working part-time in a movie theater, she developed an interest in film. She studied at the University of Illinois, Chicago, where she was an undergraduate major in art history and later a graduate film student.

While in film school, she made several short films, including *Let's Go Back to My Apartment and Have Sex* (1990) and *This War Is Not Over* (1991). While making her *Gabriella* series of short films (1991-1993), Troche met Turner, and they began to plot a film based in part on their own experiences and those of their friends in the Chicago lesbian community. In this manner, the lesbian romantic comedy *Go Fish*, originally titled "Ely and Max," began.

While she was making the film, Troche was also teaching high school. A truly independent film, *Go Fish* was made on an incredibly low budget, financed by Troche and Turner themselves; and during times when the cash ran out, filming stopped altogether--until the project was rescued by funding from generous producers.

The quirky girl-meets-girl story was premiered at the 1994 Sundance Film Festival, where it was met with considerable acclaim, and it was subsequently distributed by the Samuel Goldwyn Company as a feature film.

By 1993, however, Troche and Turner had ended their relationship, and Troche thereafter moved to New York, where she wrote several scripts.

In 1997, Troche met British producer Dorothy Berwin, who, along with her partner Ceci Dempsey, asked Troche to direct *Bedrooms and Hallways* (1998), a sex-farce that explores the romantic complications among a diverse group of characters--gay, straight, and undecided.

Troche moved to London to work on the film, which, unlike *Go Fish*, was backed by a major studio and completed quickly. It won the Audience Award at the 1998 London Film Festival.

Troche remained in England until 1999, when she returned to the United States to direct *The Safety of Objects* (2001), which she adapted from the short stories of A. M. Homes. Starring Glenn Close, it examines four days in the lives of several suburban families and the events that affect their lives during that space of

time.

Troche has also directed episodes of the cable television series *Six Feet Under* and *The L Word*, for which she has also written.

Troche has also been active in teaching, as an adjunct faculty member at the New School in its film studies program and as a visiting lecturer at New York University and Columbia University.

Bibliography

Official Site of Rose Troche, www.rosetroche.com.

About the Author

Patricia Juliana Smith is Associate Professor of English at Hofstra University. With Corinne Blackmer, she has edited a collection of essays, *En Travesti: Women, Gender Subversion, Opera*. She is also author of *Lesbian Panic: Homoeroticism in Modern British Women's Fiction* and editor of *The Queer Sixties* and *The Gay and Lesbian Book of Quotations*. She serves on the editorial advisory board of www.glbtc.com.