

# So It Goes

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# Gallery Lejeune

SO IT GOES





Gallery Lejeune is opposite a quiet, sprawling, very green park in Peckham Rye. It sits on the second story of a brick apartment building, down a hallway and past a living room, kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and office. The gallery is a small room in the back of curator Rose Lejeune's flat. Today, its walls are glittering with holographic paper and larger-than-life painted figures.

The gallery is, in other words, very domestic. When Rose moved to Rye Court last winter with her partner, their second bedroom – about the size of a child's room – seemed a luxury. For Rose, who has been a curator for the past 10 years, using the space to showcase art was only natural. The gallery, she decided, would deal with impermanent, context-specific, or performative works.

Gallery Lejeune opened in May 2015 with [Florence Peake's](#) "Hall of the Swell." The piece was borne from a conversation between Rose and Florence after one of the artist's performative works. In 2014, Florence took part in an installation at the Hayward Gallery in which pairs of dancers moved together ("sort of vibrating," Rose explains) at a specific point of physical contact. Post-show, Florence felt that the photographs didn't truly convey the experience; they were too static. So Florence and Rose began to wonder: How might an experience like that – something so intense, fleeting – be successfully translated into a different art form?

The gallery was the perfect space to explore that question, and the outcome was a "modern fresco" – Florence

painted pairs of dancers directly onto all four walls of the gallery in golds, blues, browns, pinks and reds. The figures tumble and topple and morph together, while the paint-strokes themselves are streaks of movement, swift and long. The shiny holographic paper layered underneath creates its own sort of dance; it shimmers and shifts according to the spectator's point-of-view.



The first exhibit certainly embodies the gallery's ethos. For Rose, art should start with an idea and then organically grow into something material – she's interested in working with artists who don't fit neatly into one category, i.e. "Painter" or "Photographer." Art should

be fluid; it should involve many conversations and creative attempts to answer those initial questions.

The domestic space causes the art to function in a very particular way as well. I'm reminded, constantly, that I'm standing in a converted bedroom. (The morning light is streaming through a well-sized window, and a single light bulb hangs from the center of the ceiling. The floors in the gallery, like the rest of the flat, are hardwood.) For Rose, the gallery's domesticity mirrors its private aspect – viewings are made by appointment only. But where “private” conveys an elite exclusivity, the real aim is to create an intimate space.

Rose's approach is “curating as bringing together,” she tells me. Through a series of events associated with each exhibit, she hopes to introduce artists, collectors, family, and friends. Her living room (flanked by shelves of thick art books, a tan leather couch, and a Navajo-print rug) functions as a salon-type space for the events. So far, she's held three for Florence's work: a dinner, a cocktail hour, and a Q&A with Jonah Westerman, a Tate Postdoctoral Research Associate. There's something very special, she says, about inviting people over for a drink, or dinner, or tea, just to sit and chat about the work. It turns a historically anonymous space into a convivial one.

Rose gets half-a-dozen or so visitors a week, mostly friends of friends or people who've attended previous events. She's okay with the modest number – for now, showing the gallery is a matter of inviting someone into her home, and that's about as personal a gesture as it gets.