



**ALEX ROULETTE**  
INTERVIEW BY EMILY HUNTER

*Alex Roulette graduated from Maryland Institute College of Art this past spring, where he studied painting and graphic design. Now working as an artist and designer, Alex is pursuing his artistic ambitions in New York. His work has been shown in Baltimore, Washington, DC, and Santa Fe, and recently was published on the cover of *New American Paintings*.*

**Your paintings have the feeling of snapshots. Do you paint from photographs?**

Yes, I mostly use photos that I have taken, and recently I've been integrating found images. My photos are set up and planned. Once I take the photos, I then use Photoshop to edit and sometimes combine different images. I like this process because it gives me a lot of control while allowing me to visualize the final painting.

**Who are the people in your paintings?**

All of them are friends or people I know through friends.

**There is something completely American about your work—it's young, free, and**



**full of wide-open spaces and possibilities for adventure and trouble making. What is your reaction to that, and do you think you would create this work if you lived somewhere else?**

My recent paintings were inspired by the time I spent on the road with my friends. I spent a month traveling around America taking photos. When I got back I started working on paintings about my travels and experience. Scenes from various films, mostly road movies, also influenced me.

The work would look different if I didn't live in such a diverse country. Before I started traveling I mostly made paintings of interior spaces. After going on the road, my perspective of my country changed. I was taken by the beauty and openness of the west. The trip left a big imprint on me and changed how I wanted to work.

**Describe your studio.**

It's very clean. I have small tables around my easel, which hold my brushes and my computer. I paint from references on the computer screen as opposed to using print-outs.



What is a typical day for you?

I paint at night most of the time and do any other work I have during the day. Each time I sit down and paint I try to set small goals for what I need to get done. I try not to get up very much until I reach that goal.

What are you reading at the moment? What are you listening to? Are there artists who are influencing your current work?

I don't get many chances to read so instead I listen to audio books while I paint. They help keep me focused. The last book I read was *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz; I thought it was really excellent.

I've been listening to so many different things lately. I've been really into an older band called Comet Gain.

The artists that influence me the most at the moment are Robert Bechtle, Tim Gardner, Gregory Crewdson, and film maker Wim Wenders—in particular his film *Paris, Texas*.

What path do you see your painting taking in the future?

I'm continuing with similar themes and using many photos I took last summer. Traveling has proven to be very influential in my work so I'm going to continue by going on some small trips this summer and photographing new references. In my new paintings I'm going to push the use of light. I also want to set up certain rules for how I use color and experiment with limiting my color palette. ■