

Nina Katchadourian

ART SY

17 Artists Share the Films That Influenced Them

By Scott Indrisek
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Clip from Kevin MacDonald's *Touching the Void* (2003) via YouTube.

This September, a survey of the artist's career will open at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, including a great deal of inventive photographic and video work made in a very impromptu "studio": onboard airlines during domestic or international trips. She cites this 2003 documentary as being especially important to her. "As an extension of my long-standing obsession with true shipwreck accounts, I've also gotten interested in mountaineering disaster stories," Katchadourian explains.

“Even though it’s narrated by the survivors themselves, this unforgettable film is one of the most nerve-wracking I’ve ever seen. As the story goes on, you can’t believe things can get worse—and they always do. There are some terrible mistakes: After falling off a cliff in a storm, roped together, the guy on the upper part of the rope eventually cuts the rope because he decides the guy on the lower part of the rope must be dead. He isn’t. Without revealing too much, I’ll disclose that one of the most mundane things imaginable ends up saving his life: a pop song that he hates and just can’t get out of his head. I find a lot of hope in the idea that something deeply annoying could come along in a different context and be life-saving.”