
5 MINUTES

5 Minutes

2023-2024

EDITOR'S INTRO

5 Minutes captures dialogues between graduate students from the College of Design and the visiting artists and art professionals featured in the University of Oregon's Visiting Artist Lecture series. During these lectures, artists, curators, educators, and designers share insights into their backgrounds and current practices.

5 Minutes is a dynamic exploration of conversation, where the desire to deepen and extend engagement transforms five minutes into eight, seventeen, twenty-five. Within these exchanges, interests are shared, creative processes are revealed, and relationships are forged through thoughtful dialogue.

Launched in 2014 by Christopher Michlig and Wendy Heldmann, this edition marks the publication's 10th issue. Thanks to their unwavering support and contributions from the broader University of Oregon community, we have cultivated a physical archive of ideas and conversations.

Jens Pettersen

Alfredo Jaar in conversation with **Tatymn Snider**

Alfredo Jaar is an artist, architect, and filmmaker based in New York. His work has been shown extensively around the world. Over seventy-five monographic publications have been published about his work. A Guggenheim and MacArthur Fellow, he received the Hiroshima Art Prize in 2018 and the Hasselblad Award in 2020.

Tatum Snyder: You're obviously incredibly accomplished one all these sorts of international prestigious awards. And I'm sure you enjoy doing these projects that you're amazing at. But what do you enjoy doing that you're not good at?

Alfredo Jaar: I enjoy listening to music.

TS: You don't think you're very good music listener though you don't know—

AJ: that I'm not good at making music

TS: Oh, you're not good at making music.

AJ: I'm very good at listening and I'm a big listener of music. I listen to music all the time.

TS: Do you have any sort of artists or genre you've kind of been looking into?

AJ: I like a lot of music, different types of music, was really called by world music, it takes me to places I've never been. So I have a huge collection of contemporary African music, particularly music from Angola, Mozambique, a couple that it's using of Portuguese influence. For example, that's one of my collections. I also like a lot of piano. I like Keith Jarrett a lot. I have some favorites in the rock world. Pink Floyd. Oh, etc. I listen to some classical also.

TS: You kind of just touch everywhere, sort of like I guess your projects you work on you dabble in so many different areas of interest and mediums and whatnot. I wanted to ask where did your relationship with art begin because you work with so many different mediums. Was it like a person? Do you remember a specific moment or series of moments?

AJ: Well, I'm an architect that makes art so I never studied. So that gives me a huge advantage and disadvantage. The disadvantage that I don't know about art and the advantage is that I can invent it. So I've been learning as I go, but that process has given me an enormous amount of freedom. So that's why you describe correctly that I've used so many different mediums it's because I am not interested in particular mediums like most artists are. I'm interested in ideas and the ideas take precedence over over the medium so the artists will type will dictate to me what is the best medium to convey?

TS: Wow, a couple questions about that. What is your sort of favorite thing to comment on? I mean, you obviously have very highly politically motivated work and often times, it's works that are related to topics that are not you know, it's related to like, sort of injustice is being done around the world. You know, so cruelties, but I guess what's your sort of favorite thing or topic? Do you have one?

AJ: Well, I have so many topics. I'm really a very curious person. So I'm interested in medicine so I can be happy to have a conversation with you about food, travel, music, about architecture, about art about philosophy, but science about the broken planet, but I'm very curious and I enjoy conversations. Around many, many, many subjects.

TS: So with your different sort of explorations of many different subjects, whether casually but especially through your work, how do you say your voice differs when it's being? I guess you could say translate into different mediums or if it does at all,

AJ: I think it's the same voice. I think it's the same voice. I think it's the same spirit. I think now by now, people recognize the work of mine, even though I don't use the same medium. Yeah,

because there's some kind of spirit behind the way I work with ideas and we express them the politics of my work, the aesthetics of my work, the politics of my work. I hope that I'm recognizable, even though I don't have a signature, format or signature aesthetics.

TS: I definitely see that I enjoyed ongoing on your website, for example, and even though all of your projects are standalone on their own, it was very nice seeing them all sort of in conjunction in sort of visual conversation with each other. I want to talk a little bit more about your involvement with policing justice new exhibition and opening up in Portland. What is the phrase policing justice mean to you?

AJ: I think it's I was attracted to this exhibition because of the title. I think it's a very interesting title very challenging title, very muddy title. It is it is a title that is ambiguous also. And that can go in many different directions and that's what I like about that title. So I mean, that is not my answer. My answer is that that I think it's a very attractive and intriguing title that can be read in so many ways. It does. It is so good to learn. That I thought this is a very good title for an exhibition that is not going to be closed minded. But it's going to be open to different ideas around the idea of police and the idea of justice.

TS: Definitely. I'm really excited about seeing the different voices in conversation for this exhibition for you. What does the phrase to police justice I say I guess mean to you, whether regards to the idea of policing justice or police in the US or abroad. Does that mean?

AJ: I think I just said to the question isn't the same question you're asking?

TS: I guess, maybe not focusing on the title of the exhibition. But what does policing justice mean to you? Like, what does it mean to for one to police justice, whether culturally socially politically...

AJ: The first operation I do when I when I hear policy justice, I do a reversal of the words and I say, justice in policy. So that's what would be interesting for me. And I asked myself, he said, Justice Policy, how can we make justice by policy? And I think that is the difficult question. And that is a difficult answer in that. This is what we are focusing on. How do we find justice in the way policy is being done? And is there justice in the kind of policy that is being done? Most people would argue that No, but that's, but I'm not going to get into the answer. But basically, I'm interested in that reversal of that question.

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TS: Thank you, thanks for explaining that. I'm sorry to phrase that very poorly. I want to connect your works and the nature of your works in general in your commentary. I don't say they're just commentary, but a lot of them times they focus on a human beings and justice system to human beings. They're kind of the center of the focus. I kind of want to end this interview by asking what do you think human beings need that isn't discussed enough?

AJ: Ooh la la, well, we can go back to the previous question. We need justice and rich human being. Live in a just world. There will be full democracy there will be for freedom of speech, for freedom of movement. There will be full equality, and they will be for justice. Basically, I'm interested in reaching those goals which are which sounds so utopian in the States, but I think these are noble goals to be that we should try to achieve

TS: Well, thank you so much for your time with this and I'm really looking forward to your talk later on.

"I'm interested in reaching those goals which are which sounds so utopian in the States but I think these are noble goals to be that we should try to achieve"

Aurora Tang in conversation with **Christian Alvarado**

Aurora Tang is a curator and researcher based in Los Angeles. She has worked with the Center for Land Use Interpretation since 2009, and currently serves as its program director. As an independent curator, Aurora has organized recent exhibitions at the MAK Center for Art and Architecture, MOCA Tucson, and Armory Center for the Arts. She has also worked at non-profit art and research organizations including the Getty Research Institute, Getty Conservation Institute, and High Desert Test Sites, where she was managing director from 2011–15, and has taught at schools including Otis College of Art and Design and the University of Southern California. She is the recipient of an Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Curatorial Research Fellowship.

Christian Alvarado: I'm interested particularly in the plain air show that you did recently. If you feel like dropping any gems that will be I'm interested in plein air as a tradition, how it responds to landscape and the environment, the statement that you put in the show I loved. And I'm interested in, I think, starting at the basics, how do you define a guide or a map?

Aurora Tang: Yes, well, I think, I think anything that kind of gives some kind of direction or helps orient you or place you in place and I guess guides and maps can also be intentionally disorienting, also thinking of even, you know, I got dropped off here,

CA: it's very confusing.

AT: Well, the person who dropped me off was very kind, but saw things in the campus, because they went to school here. Oh, sure. And we walked over to the campus map and he said, Oh, Lawrence Hall is right there, that way. And it was actually ended up being the exact opposite. Of course it was so, I mean, it's it's, even if they're not disorienting, I think it asks something of the viewer or the user. And even though, you know, there could be maps or guides or instructions can be accurate, there's always that potential user failure or misinterpretation. I'm also interested in that kind of, you know, creating maps that are potentially intentionally disorienting, because disorientation can also be a really generative space, and I think one that increasingly we have. I feel like we have fewer and fewer opportunities for disorientation, at least being physically lost. I mean, I've been holding touching cell phone with my little map after the guy, that's what I get for not following my GPS. But, but there's something also really lovely about disorientation, and I think that kind of just being present in whatever physical place you are in is at the heart of this, that plein air exhibition, and a lot of the projects I'm involved in,

CA: I love how you're talking about this disorientation. I also see it as something important. A lot of the work in this show, specifically, and I'm sure in other bodies of work that you've curated and worked with this disorientation, this guide through non traditional means, it's been a very like important focus. When did you realize that this disorientation was important to you? Like, do you have a moment where you felt lost or confused and was like, maybe this is more helpful than me actually knowing where I'm going?

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AT: For starters, I don't have a successive direction, but I spend a lot of time in a range of different environments, just in my daily life. We're also in my work. A lot of projects bring me to different places I'm not familiar with, and I've come to it as someone who is not so good at following directions, just I've come to really appreciate the ability to, just like, follow your senses. And sometimes you don't have the luxury of getting lost, but or, you know, every condition and context is different, but I think there is something really wonderful. I mean, in art history classes, you learn about kind of the flaneur and you know this idea of wandering. And I mean, I just really love walking. Maybe it comes back to that I love walking, wandering different neighborhoods and just seeing what there is to see, and I think that's a lot easier to do, or the way you pay attention to your surroundings is a little bit different. When you are not so focused on following directions or following a map or trying to translate a map, there's a lot more responding. Right, exactly. And I think that's what's really exciting to me. And of course, it's not always practical.

CA: But I mean, sometimes it's not about being practical.

AT: And I also just love this idea of, you know, you just these chance encounters as well. Some of the most interesting buildings or public artworks or just kind of fixtures in the landscape, are things that I've accidentally stumbled upon and start noticing other patterns, and you know, your physical environment, and I think none of that would happen if I was so glued to my GPS. Smartphone.

CA: Do you ever play that game where it's like, you have to look at all the blues and go to where the blues are in your environment?

AT: I haven't done that one.

CA: It's a really chaotic and fun game. So if there's like a blue dumpster in the distance, you go towards the blue dumpster and then you go from there to the next blue thing that you see, in a way, it kind of reminds me of Maggie Nelson's Bluets. Also, sort of mapping guide around a concept, yeah. I wonder what your kind of what your blue or what your North Star is like. What direction do you go in when you need a direction?

AT: It changes. But I'm really drawn to, I will just say, I mean, buildings. I'm just really, you know, I love, I mean, I think I'll speak a bit about a project on residential architecture Los Angeles, where I live, and just, I'm very interested in just these, the everyday, maybe not spectacular, architecture that is all around us. And maybe it doesn't, it's not by a famous architect. It doesn't have some it's not a big tourist attraction. But just sometimes you maybe you heard this term vernacular architecture. It's just a fancy way of saying kind of like everyday, ordinary environments, yeah. And I love just noticing the variation in kind of those just things you'll pass. So I love campuses. Really love campuses, and, you know, and maybe there's something about campuses because they, they are

very leveling, you know, that kind of, it's very easy to get lost. But there also is a, sort of, tends to be this pedestrian culture that isn't in a lot of I mean, I live in Los Angeles, where everyone says nobody walks. But that's, that's only partially true, but, but, yeah, there's something about where perhaps certain people, at least, are getting permission to wander in college campus or any home campus. And as a kid, I loved, I loved campuses, I mean, from the community college close to our house, which I kind of treated as a park as a kid, and but also right visiting my mom's office campus. You know, she worked for Pacific Bell, and, you know, it was just in this office park. But I just, I've always been interested in campuses and, but, yeah, I guess public space and walking and, and also places, seeing how the, how I think a space was meant to be designed, or for a body or bodies to flow through. And how, sometimes it seems like bodies are following that, and sometimes not, you know, yeah, so the scripted and unscripted spaces that exist out there, and how, again, I guess this goes back to like, naps too. Is like, you can only suggest guide people.

CA: But people don't have to go. They don't have to go on that path. I love it when they break the path and I see someone, like, jumping over a fence or like, yeah, my mind translates that to Oh, that's not supposed to happen. But at the same time that's like, what you're supposed to be doing, yeah, go pop that turnstile.

AT: It's really interesting how people kind of have molded and contained the physical environment to kind of control or suggest movement of people and bodies. And I guess that doesn't just do some humans, but also animals stuff, yeah. So, yeah,

CA: I think I want to do one more question before we totally wrap things up. And I love this conversation we're having about how we manipulate the environment or, i. Taken it in some kind of way. I'm wondering what you're observing through artists. Like, how are artists responding to this? Your Plein Air Show is like a very clear example of that. What were some of the things going in your mind when you were looking at people's studios or their artworks and selecting those words?

AT: Well, that project in particular, I couldn't, you know, have lists going all the time of, you know, I try to see a lot of art. I try to do regular studio visits. And kind of, just mentally and sometimes even on my phone, I have lists of, you know, reoccurring themes and things and one, you know, that really started like I was meeting with a couple artists who were literally doing planar painting, but kind of pushing it in certain ways. And so that's where that started. And then this concept for the show, I think it's really just about meeting with as many artists, seeing as much artwork as possible, I feel like that's part of a curator's job, and then almost creating this pile of information or artists or artworks, and then parsing through it. And when the opportunity to organize a show at MOCA, Tucson, which is more of a show renovated, came about just visiting the institution, also seeing where it was situated in the city, and what certain ideas were of that landscape, that place, and talking to some of the Call my colleagues at Tucson, you know, about how there were literal Sunday plein air painters

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not that far outside the museum, you know? And so that's kind of taking that as a point of departure, and then seeing how, how much you want to push, push that idea. Yeah,

CA: I have two favorite pieces in that show. One is by iris, and the other one is the photo of the butt.

AT: I thought, you know, it's, it's important to also be critical, push, push things a little bit and also have some joy and and and even fun, I think, I think those artists in the show exemplify that. And so it's been really fun to kind of live with that that work in the container of the plein air exhibition, and it actually travels. So it's, it's an iteration. Now, I'll talk about a little bit about how the shows. It's the same show, but of course, it's always different depending on the context, right, institution, the time, place. So yeah.

CA: I feel like we could keep talking forever, but I think we're going to end on that joyful note, yes. Thank you so much for this conversation, Aurora. I can't wait to see your lecture.

B. Wurtz in conversation with **Afsaneh Javadpour**

B. Wurtz has been the subject of over 52 solo exhibitions at prestigious venues including: Feature Inc. (1987, 1991, 1992, 2001, 2003, 2006, New York); Gallery 400 (2000, Chicago); White Flag Projects (2012, St. Louis); Kunstverein (2015, Freiburg, Germany); and the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (2015, Ridgefield, Connecticut). In 2015, the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, United Kingdom mounted a retrospective exhibition of the artist's work that traveled to La Casa Encendida, Madrid through 2016. In 2018, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles mounted a major solo exhibition of his work, This Has No Name. His work has also been included in over 174 group exhibitions, including: Pandora's Box: Joseph Cornell Unlocks the MCA Collection (2011, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago); Building Blocks: Contemporary Works from the Collection (2011, Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence); and Brand New: Art and Commodity in the 1980s (2018, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C.).

Afsaneh Javadpour: As far as I know, you are working with so many different mediums, music, videos, sculptures, all different things. So for me, the first one is, how do you approach the process of working with these multiple mediums, and what challenges have you encountered while working? And if yes, how do you overcome that?

B. Wurtz: That's a very interesting question. Now, you mentioned music. I only started music again in the last few years, after 40 years of not playing music, but it's something I did from a small child. I took piano lessons in like fourth grade as I started on the piano, and then as a teenager, I taught myself guitar, and then I when we moved to New York City in 1985 my wife and I from Los Angeles, I just thought I have so much to do to try to make my art and have day jobs. You know, being an artist is a crazy life, but those of us that want to make art, we just have to deal with that somehow. So I sold my guitar, but then a few years ago, my wife Ann wanted to give me one as an anniversary present. So that's how I got back into and then I started, I'd always made up songs, but I started writing lyrics. Now, what's interesting about the music is I keep thinking it's a very separate like a parallel track. It's not particularly connected to my visual art. I don't do music in conjunction with making visual art, they happen as two kinds of parallel paths. The art thing, again, I started as a small child doing drawings, like many of us did, started out with drawings, and then I made my dad have a workshop in the garage where he made furniture and toys for us and my sister and stuff. And he would give me little blocks of wood from the power saw, extra pieces, and I would glue them into little houses and draw doors and windows. So those were really my first sculptures. So it was the drawings, and then those were the beginnings of the sculptures.

AJ: And what else did you make? Videos?

BW: I have made some films and videos. Uh, those I thought, especially, you know, a lot of artists make video work. I didn't go too far down that road. I haven't made any videos lately, but that was something I did. I started CalArts, and it's the thing, the great thing about being in school, you want to try different stuff. So the videos definitely connected to the visual art, the music, just this parallel thing, although people have told me they think they see a connection with how I make those songs and how I make my art, which I think is interesting, someone makes that connection. So it is all me. I make it all Yeah,

AJ: I can see that connection too. I didn't know these things that you mentioned, but, for example, just putting the music aside, about videos and a sculpture, I totally can see the connection between the material. I'm going to ask this question, and I mentioned the bridge and relationship I can see between these two – going back to your installation and sculptures. Can you describe your creative process when selecting and assembling materials for your sculptures?

BW: Well, this is the material. Okay, we know I use a lot of wood, and I just told you that story about my first experiences with wood, so I clearly stuck with that.I really like to use wood. I like to use wire.

I use wire a lot. That might be from as a child, knowing about Alexander Calder's work, who I would count that as one of my forms, you know, the formative things I saw so that certainly we see where the wire might have come from. The found objects. I did make some things. I remember in high school I made these little kind of box things, a little Joseph Cornell ish, so I clearly knew about his work, but with different little objects and found things later, like in around 1970 or so, I started getting interested in conceptual art, very interested in it, and I made a drawing. It's often as drawing comes of a lot in my history. It's it's called three important things. It's from 1973 it's just ink on paper. It says, sleeping, eating, keeping warm. And I was thinking about the very basics of survival in the world and and thinking about that in relation to art, I started if I decided if I wanted to use found objects, and had to really narrow it down, because it was kind of overwhelming. And I thought, if I use things that are already kind of interesting, I can't really do anything with them, you know, like some kind of little funny thing you spy in a thrift store or something that's interesting. I decided

"We have to learn to accept what we can't control. I mean, I can't make that all go away. And so in a way, I think my work is kind of honestly about what's around us, not that I created those plastic bags or our consumer society or the wasteful America, American way of living, but, but I'm just kind of looking at it and presenting it, and if it and it can be, like you said, playful, maybe that's a positive thing instead of something always negative. You know, it is so hard to make a playful world, so hard."

I needed to use the most ordinary, overlooked things, because I could add to those formally. And so that's where I still, like I said, I still use a lot of the wood and the wire and this to make these structures, but the found objects, while Incorporated, I let them keep their identities. In other words, you see if it's a plastic bag, you see clearly it's a plastic bag or a shoelace or something, because I'm interested in what they are in the world, that humans invented those, and that they're part of our most basic existence. And to me that seemed like a really interesting subject for art life. You know, daily lifetime. Yeah, so by choosing them, how do you navigate the balance between spontaneity and intentionality in your artistic decision about choosing them or not? I really, well, that's a good question. I don't know. It's funny to think why I get a little inkling I want to make something. It's kind of almost beyond me. Don't you think that's what's interesting about being an artist. We just get these urges to do stuff. So if we take that urge and say, I have some, oh, because I like those net bags that oranges come in and stuff those plastic net bags. Well, that's a whole other thing about that. We're all being buried in plastic and poisoned by it now, but that's an interesting Well, let's not get sidetracked with that. Back to the question of how the pieces begin and what my process is. I think if I have an idea of something, I feel like using some object, like we've been describing the types of object. I just sort of play like, I feel art has a lot to do with play. Like a child playing on the floor, you know, which I used to do. I sort of play around formally, just thinking, well, what could be interesting to add to that? I don't know if that answers your question or not, but I feel there's very much this sense of wanting to play.

AJ: Thank you. Yes. Considering how the form of your sculpture goes, so for the last question I want to ask somehow about the content of the sculptures and all your works. How do you see your art intersecting with broader societal or cultural issues?

BW: Yes, you know, it's interesting. That's your next question. Because I thought when I was answering the last one, I thought, well, there's this whole thing about the formal qualities, which is what I was talking about, having fun playing with. But there is definitely content there and I never want to force content. I feel like it comes with its content. I feel like using mass produced objects from our culture is just like a picture of our life, our world. So to me, though, those things have the content, they bring it to the work and because I don't hide what all these things are. Now, the other thing about when I was talking about the plastic, when I first started using a plastic bag, I just thought of the most overlooked, ordinary thing, but I've but I've noticed when we talk about content, the content of my work can change, because we've come forward, and now we realize that We have this real crisis with plastic so it but it doesn't mean that the work changed, and it doesn't mean that I have that it's suddenly some about environmentalism, because I don't do that. I don't. My work is not about environmentalism, but you can't help but think about it, if you look at a plastic bag, and so I like the content to kind of come in, naturally, brought by the found objects. Does that make sense? Sure. Because yeah, you can see here I just wrote that environmental Yes, yes, exactly yes, because it, of course, it's there, but, but, but I'm thinking, well, but let's like do something about that, like, let's join

an organization, or let's do a protest. Or, let's you know, I sign petitions. I think they do some good. I sign petitions every day about the environment, a lot of them now about plastic, the plastic crisis. That's what I feel like I can do. I'm not saying, well, now my work now my works about the environment, because it only tangentially is and that's not going to solve the problem. Now, if somebody sees a plastic bag and they think, oh, you know, I should try to do something to think about this plastic crisis, then, then I'm, yeah, that would be great, but, but my work is not about environmentalism, because that often becomes, to me, when Something's about something, it becomes simplistic. We have to realize what artists and you are one of them, what artists give to the world. A world without art would be a sadder place and and some people are not interested in art, which is fine, but those that are people who make art. It's a gift to them riches their life, same with music, you know. So that's how I feel. What I can do maybe make someone happier if they like my sculpture, and if they and if it makes them think about environmentalism and they want to do something? Yes, yes, for sure, but by asking this, I didn't mean that they were exactly mentioning this. Because they're so playful, yeah, we can see so when they're playful in form, I think they're playful in context and all these things. So it doesn't let you just focus on something. Maybe you go with all the referring to the art histories also, for example, what consumer culture is worth in school? What will happen? What's the perspective of our environment in the future? What will happen? Next decade, next century, all these things, but exactly because of this form that all things are somehow Tangling together. So you make the mind go like that, not to focus on one spot, yeah. But if it, like I said, if it makes someone think about the environment, I'm happy, but, but it's not my job to solve the climate crisis. However, it doesn't mean I don't do what I can do. And it also, you know, we have to, that's the thing. We have to learn to accept what we can't control. I mean, I can't make that all go away. And so in a way, I think my work is kind of honestly about what's around us, not that I created those plastic bags or our consumer society or the wasteful America, American way of living, but, but I'm just kind of looking at it and presenting it, and if it and it can be, like you said, playful, maybe that's a positive thing instead of something always negative. You know, it is so hard to make a playful world, so hard.

Dionne Lee in conversation with **Afsaneh Javadpour**

Dionne Lee is a visual artist working in photography, collage, and video. Her work explores power and personal history in relation to the American landscape and interrogates historical narratives that exist within photographic representations of land and place. Lee received her MFA from California College of the Arts. She has exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Feria Material, Mexico City; Barbican Art Gallery, London; New Orleans Museum of Art; Aperture Foundation, New York; Silver Eye Center for Photography, Pittsburgh; Museum of Fine Arts Houston; and the San Francisco Arts Commission, among others. Lee was a 2022 Artist-in-Residence at the Chinati Foundation and a 2021–2023 Artist-in-Residence with Unseen California.

Afsaneh Javadpour: Your darkroom practice involves disrupting and challenging traditional photography processes, such as drawing directly on prints and creating painterly abstractions. What drives you to push the boundaries of photography in this way, and what do you hope to convey through these interventions

Dionne Lee: Well, I think the initial urge to do that, I think the original urge to do that came from like, a frustration I was having with the medium, actually, where I felt like I was making images but they weren't doing exactly what I wanted them to do, or expressing the meaning I wanted them to express. And I also was thinking a lot about how land is depicted and interested in, like, what we consider to be representation of a landscape, so, like drawing and stuff, came from this sort of realizing that the photograph, the actual camera, as a tool for capturing the reality of a place, had its shortcomings, where I just felt Like there was another layer of reality that's more emotive, more personal, less rigid, you know. So I'm thinking about, like, how do I show the expression of a landscape? And to me, that's like, not always possible through a camera. You gotta draw or cut it up or, you know, that's the short answer.

AJ: The themes of survival and resilience seems central to your work, particularly in a contents of climate change and migration, how do you explain these themes visually, and what conversations or reflections do you hope to spark into your audiences regarding humanity's ongoing struggles?

DL: I think for me, it's really important to honestly be able to just hold all those uncomfortable feelings of, like, fear of the future, questioning my own ability, or our species ability to survive. Should we be surviving, or do we just need to disappear? But really, it's about like holding all those things together. Like, I'm not trying to convey an answer. You know, I'm trying to, honestly, I think for myself, and I guess, you know, I hope that this is what a viewer would take away from my work, but is to just think about our individual capacities, to hold all those feelings at once, and the feeling of like, well, I don't know what to do about any of it. Or you feel so powerless, you know what I mean, or you do little things that you think could be helping the earth or whatever. But in the end, it's like it feels pointless, almost sometimes, but trying to, like, not fall, or just accepting that you fall into that sometimes, but that that's not, you know, that's a temporary kind of space to be in. So I hope this gets paraphrased, but I think, yeah, I think it's like, I'm not even trying to make much of a claim or statement about, like, how we relate to the earth, but more just can we recognize, can we, like, look at ourselves in this really, like, dire time, like we're on this tipping point it feels like, and to me, I'm like, what does it feel to just, how does it really feel to just sit on the edge and, like, waver on that tipping point, you know, versus, I don't know, just like jumping off that got dark real fast. You can just, you know, be worth that. But really,

AJ: How do you feel that as a woman, and as a black woman in America about these fragmented things that we are suffering from. I mean, we are, because as a woman, I can feel those exact things, and how do you find these themes, or, for example, the theme of identity, heritage, from the view of women in this situation.

DL: Well, there's two parts to that. I mean, one is a really, just like practical thing, I will make work out in the wilderness by myself often. And so there's like, safety thoughts of like, what it means to be a woman, a black woman, alone in the middle of the woods, like my camera and, you know. So there's that element that's, like, very real, and I think the most like the immediate feeling that I feel in relation to my work. But on the other hand, I think a lot about my interest in me relating to place comes from a real sense of displacement. And I think, you know, Diaspora people for whatever reason have to move or migrate, or whether it's a forced migration, like, you know, for me and my ancestry, it's like through slavery. So it's like, there wasn't this, you're, you're forcefully being put, moved somewhere else. You know, I think that I just, and this is not a complete, full thing, but I have this feeling of, I think I'm searching for some sense of place, placefulness, or placeness And what, and I'm going to talk about this in the talk a little bit at the end. But what's come up for me really recently was a real, lived experience of being somewhere that was like ancient land of O, ancient ruin in America and the Southwest, and feeling so deeply sad there, because I realized I had nowhere like that for my own like people that I can say This is like my, like, where my you know, of course, I can go back a few generations in this country, but there's just something about this, just being so old, just feeling like to have that connection to a land available for some people, is so remarkable and special. And I think it's just like a true sadness is where all of the work comes from. I'm just trying to feel those feelings.

"I think for me, it's really important to honestly be able to just hold all those uncomfortable feelings of, like, fear of the future, questioning my own ability, or our species ability to survive. Should we be surviving, or do we just need to disappear?"

Gracelee Lawrence in conversation with **Ellen O'Shea**

Gracelee Lawrence's sculptures, relying equally on digital fabrication and hand augmentation, examine the relationship between food, the body, and technology at an exaggerated scale. A physical origin point is isolated and translated to digital space, often influenced by what is found in our ever more real and familiar internet world. As the barriers between digital and physical spaces dissolve, our perception of reality also shifts, and the compartmentalization encouraged in digital space leads to a new world less and less concerned with the human touch, yet Lawrence's work dips into both territories with equal aplomb.

Ellen O'Shea: So do you have any rituals in your practice or like ways in which you kind of drop into the creative mindset?

Gracelee Lawrence: Music is a really important part of my studio time. And extremely loud music is the most important part between, yeah, really setting the tone, using sound. The sound has the ability to completely shift the feeling of the space. And I listen to a lot of, I mean, I listen, I kind of listen to everything, but I listen to a lot of techno specifically, yeah, that's something that's really good for me, because there's a there's a repetition and an ability to feel movement, but within structure, and I can think really well over techno, which, yeah, you know, depending on who you are, you do or don't believe me, but yeah, for me, it's a really useful tool in switching from my work life, from my home life, from another phase of being into this world where I'm creating the parameters and so controlling the sound is an important part of that. Same with light, but that is less nuanced. It's more like, I like my studio to be really bright, being able to see things really well, and then having the sound input is super important to me.

EO: What specific techno Do you listen to?

GL: I listen to a lot of NTS, a streaming radio station, and my favorite thing is to listen to DJ sets. So they're either, like, pre recorded from a club, or it's a DJ who's in the booth right then I'm in that goes along with kind of how I think about technology in general, that it's an amazing tool, but I really prefer it to be siphoned through human hands, yeah? And so a lot of the music that I'm listening to is electronic music, or music that's been heavily processed, but it's being chosen by a person, yeah, who's sitting behind the computer. And that's super meaningful to me on a lot of different levels, and one is because I really look to music and music esthetics as an important like tastemaking touchstone for me as a person and in my practice, and so it's a way for me to bring that into the world that I'm making. And it ranges. I mean, there's no real specific type, but DJs like Moxie, like Shanti Celeste, like, there are a bunch of different people that I like to listen to. Listen to. And it also is nice to be surprised, because usually every hour, it changes over to another DJ so hear something new. And it could be anything, right? I mean, absolutely anything. Sometimes it's yeah, something I really didn't expect, And I love that, and I love bringing that chance into that world?

EO: Do you find chance playing a part in your work practice all the time?

GL: Yeah, constantly, yeah, yeah, same, yeah. I think that's that's something else that often is not associated with digital fabrication, but it truly is, especially how I think about it. It's much more related to ceramics or casting than most people think, yeah, kind of like leaving it up to the machine for that, like output. There's chance there's a lot of through the processing programs, through the machines themselves. There are aspects that are outside of my control.

EO: so your work does kind of walk the line between the physical and digital realm. What are your thoughts on tha gap as it kind of slowly closes? Is that

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something you're like concerned about, or is something where you're embracing.

GL: I mean, that space is, is exactly where my work exists. So,I mean, I have concerns about that on the kind of personal and societal level, but what, what I'm trying to do is observe it and process it and transit that into my work, because it's inevitable, right? So I try my best to to not pass judgment on it, but instead observe it and I. Place it within the context of how my work behaves, right? I mean, it is difficult to live in that middle space. Yeah, most people in the world are, so that's a lot of what my work is trying to touch on and look towards

EO: Okay. Last question, what have you been reading or watching lately?

GL: I actually, I talk about this in my lecture. I usually have like five or six books that are in rotation, and one that I'm particularly excited about right now is fruits of Borneo, which is a quite a thick book, actually, that catalogs and assesses over 200 fruits that are specific to the island of Borneo. It's a really beautiful book, bizarre. That's how happy it exists, and talks about the kind of socio-biological implications of deforestation and colonialism and borders and the ease of processing and gathering specific fruits and like How, how all of that relates to an ecology, right? And those points of research are really important in my process. And then I'm reading a bunch of other fiction books to look up the exact titles. But yeah, that's that's the time that sounds like a very fun book, yeah. Also, curating digital art is something else that I'm reading right now that's cool. Big and thick, but it feels like the kind of thing where you can, like, pop in for an essay here and there.

Jesse Harrod in conversation with **Parisa Garazhian**

Jesse Harrod is an artist whose practice explores embodiment, gender, and sexual identity. Working with multiple media forms and materials, Harrod's work builds on herstories of 1970s feminist art to offer queer imaginations of the body, from the abject and the grotesque to the humorous. Her practice most centrally contributes to a broader collective effort to redefine the meaning of queer aesthetic form. Harrod's work has been exhibited in numerous exhibitions throughout the United States and internationally. Harrod is represented by Fleisher Ollman Gallery in Philadelphia.

Parisa Garazhian: I searched about your works, you have lots of sculptures that are installed outdoors, and your medium is something that can't last forever, my question is did you make these pieces with the thought that collectors and museums can collect them, or are you against collecting art?

Jesse Harrod: That's a really great question, and it is something that im struggle with it a lot. Outdoor pieces that I made out of rope are temporary so, they don't survive outside. They survived for maybe 3 months but then started to look really terrible. So, I like the idea of impermanent, and they can't survive the conditions to me that feel important as a political gesture. Cause the idea that I make something that stands on the land forever feels like a kinda dominant that I'm not feel comfortable with, I don't think anything is that important and precious forever. That being said I'm over the last couple of years I've been working with brass and materials that can survive elements, and that work I started making that work with the question in mind Do I want to stay outside? And I'm not very sure that I'm that I wanted to. But I was curious to work with different materials that had the capacity to stay outside and exist for however long, but I still struggle with the political implication of it, being to implement outdoor pieces.

PG: I have that problem too with my sculpture and if rain comes...

JH: its gone!

PG: Yeah! But I always want many years later people in the future to see me as

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an artist and say oh here was someone named Parisa... you didn't get that feeling of having a print in this world as an artist?

JH: I go back and forth with that, I think certainly we want to be remembered, I think for some people their legacies are carried on with their children or to the family... I don't have kids, and I'm not gonna have kids. So, I think for some people that is the way their legacy is continuous and maybe it is continuous in my work doesn't go outside my painting. My drawings are inside pieces but also like maybe it doesn't matter! Maybe someone new who comes along and does something far more interesting and it is just a memory, I've two minds about it. It a difficult ... there is a way you want to be around forever and there is a way that feels kinda like not egotistical but self-important and I'm not really sure I don't know if I have a clear answer for it but it's something that I think about a lot

PG: yeah me too You know like when I die like what happens to the work that I haven't sold that is in my studio? like, who will take care of that? and, where does it go and so it's certainly something to think about a lot and I don't really have an answer to it yet So, I have another question for example some people told me, Parisa you're always planning ahead for your project, and they mentioned that because of this approach, you will miss your chance to explore or experience and things like that. If I guess it right in your work the process is a little slower than other artists, I'm not sure if I'm saying it right or wrong, but I want to ask you how you approach your projects. How do you approach your new ideas? Do you agree with these critics which I mentioned or you are against those critics?

JH: I mean we were just talking about that, I mean I think sometimes, where artists are beginning... I think in undergrad in America at least and in Canada they push students to have a plan, and see it through, and commit to an idea. And I think sometimes when you are new at making art, and I don't that the case for you, for some folks the having a plan and see it through provides some kind of system or structure that can be helpful. And allows for like dates, and budgeting and you know the kinds of things like similarly to you know you write an assay you decide what is the topic of my assay? And then here is my opening paragraph. You know there is a way that schools teach young people to do that in all sorts like in science class you have a hypothesis and then you prove that hypothesis and so it's a very common way of teaching people as an as an artist I don't find that super helpful I think that it took me a long time. that I the material has a life of its own, and has a mind of its own in a sense and then I bring my desires and interests and skill and what have you and then we are in conversation together and so I might have an idea of like well these are the colors I want to work with it this is roughly the scale I want to work at I want it to do A, B, and C , but then once I start working on it and usually I'll have a drawing and I'll do a series of different kinds of tests first but then once I get in there with the materials it it becomes a conversation and I'm responding to the materials and the materials are responding to my manipulation of that so, it becomes this kind of dance that we're doing together and if I look at my sketchbook where I have my original idea and then I look at the

finished work nine times out of 10 they don't look at all the same and and that's where the joy is is that's an also the struggle is is that is getting from the beginning of this project to figuring it out in the end and and that kind of communication or dance with the materials is what is most interesting to me about making is is seeing what unfolds and in that process you learn something new every time I make something I learn something new and then whatever I learned I'm like I'm going to I'm going to use that in the next day and the second that I am not learning something new then I'll stop making.

PG: that's nice, I have another question for me when I'm at developing a project I ask myself lots of questions to set the boundaries to set some walls around my project maybe to know how far I can go or to just know my limits. I want to know do you have some kind of limits for the colors, size, or for things that you definitely don't want in your art? or are there some kind of symbols or some kind of things that if an audience looks at the work they will say yeah I know this artist. Do you have those kinds of things?

JH: it really depends, like sometimes I will create limitations for myself as an exercise as a way to challenge myself I'll say you can home and work with these three others or it has to be this big or it can't be bigger than this and I'll set limitations not as a test but if I do a lot of commissions for people and so if I'm working on something for an institution or a space where there are the where there's sites specificity where it can't get bigger than this or it has to be the next size then you have to work within those constraints or I'm working on a commission right now where it has to be ADA accessible so that if someone is using someone is using a stick to navigate space that they're not going to bump into the board so there are things like that where I'm having to consider accessibility a different wayThings like that where I'm having to consider accessibility in a different way cause it's not a gallery space, so, just depends on the project.

PG: So you have some flexibility area, and you have some firm area in your project

JH: It depends on where the work is going to end, that you know, and but if it's like so the commissions are very separate and have all sorts of limitations on them particularly if their site-specific but if I'm making work that's going to go into a gallery or Museum then it's free range but I do I usually do start with some kind of limitations but I often ignore them

PG: And how does your personal life influence the way you make work?
Jesse Harrod: oh it's everything, yeah they're completely interconnected I think I think anyone who says that they're not is lying but, I mean yeah I think that I make I sort of the way I describe it in my head is I enter the world through making like when I it's the only way I know how to be in the world is by me so they're totally interconnected, and as a queer person and as someone who has disabilities all of all of who I am in my lived experience 100% informs my heart practice and what is happening in society around me what's happening with my loved ones what's happening in my environment everything on a day-to-day basis informs This informs what I'm doing in the studio they're they can't be separate I can't cut parts of myself off.

"...if I look at my sketchbook where I have my original idea and then I look at the finished work nine times out of 10 they don't look at all the same and and that's where the joy is is that's an also the struggle is is that is getting from the beginning of this project to figuring it out in the end"

Julian Watts in conversation with **Yalda Eskandari**

Julian Watts combines traditional woodcarving techniques with an experimental sculptural approach to explore the formal and conceptual intersections between the human body, the landscape, and the functional objects that we interact with every day. This approach has continued to evolve, expanding to incorporate an entire ecosystem of abstract, biomorphic wood and bronze works, ranging from bowls to furniture to large-scale, purely sculptural pieces. Watts' organic, open-ended approach to woodcarving embraces a space of playful ambiguity, where the viewer is free to find poetic and unexpected associations between the body, the landscape, and the overlooked objects that we live with, revealing new and unexpected ways of seeing the world around us.

Yalda Eskandari: Do you think that, honestly, speaking, having academic experience contributed to your artistic journey?

Julian Watts: Just I can say very confidently, 100% it really did. Yeah, that time that I had in the sculpture program with Tanaz and Amanda, it was such a hugely important time for me, like just exploring and like opening my eyes to different ways of making work and all of the kind of potential with material and ways of thinking. it set, kind of set, like a foundation for me that I feel like is still very much what is kind of like guiding me in a huge way, absolutely.

YE: Yeah. So have you had any experiences with material and sculpture?

JW: I mean, before this, academic studies, yeah, yeah, yeah, I was always interested in art and sculpture. My dad was a sculptor, so I was sort of grew up with this sort of like art, you know, but, but it was very much my time here that kind of broadened things for me, just learning about more contemporary practices and sort of pushing material boundaries, yeah, and then it very much sort of Yeah, like, set a foundation for me moving on from art school, where I worked more in, like craft and more like I worked at a furniture shop for a little while, sort of outside of the art world. So I really believe that that sort of contrast between, like fine art, rigorous academic background, and then just making and building functional furniture, those two elements really had a huge influence on me.

YE: So your dad being a sculptor is interesting.

JW: I mean, it was interesting, because while, you know, he was a sculptor, and he he really, I grew up, you know, in a studio, messing around and learning, there was definitely a sense that he, it's not like he wanted me to become a sculptor. In fact, there was sort of a feeling of, do not follow this path. But it sort of was sort of inevitable in a lot of ways. And, you know, our work was completely different. His was really like earthy and like, kind of like textured, mossy, earthy assemblages, kind of things. And mine, at least, what I was making in school was very like slimy, pink, grotesque bodily work. So, yeah, and then when, when I sort of as it evolved, yeah, I was just interested in TRACE ways that, you know, his work sort of influenced mine. And then it diverged. It came together.

YE: Since you mentioned grotesque, It's that I'm looking at, you know, a sculpture, rather than like I'm looking at a living creatures with skin, and I don't know, and somehow, maybe this is my Interpretation, it is like, erotic, you know, creatures or something like that.

JW: Well, that's sort of the big question. Is it true, or is it something that I, you know, that's something that the viewer like is sort of, kind of making their own connections, you know? But no, definitely. I from the very beginning, when I started carving, for instance, like spoons and bowls out of wood, I immediately started to try to think of them as these, like intimate, living bodily objects, and kind of that sort of affected the way I approached carving, like the craft of wood carving too. I I really embraced this, sort of like lumpy, irregular surfaces that I like obsessively hand sanded until they were like so. Super, you know, smooth and kind of uncannily like flesh, like, and then, and yeah, I would always try to keep this very like beautiful, sensuous, smooth surface that really, like draws you in, but then sort of have these details that were sort of like shocking or grotesque, or like, you know, sort of like, even, like funny and crass and kind of like, and so there'd be this constant, like, push and pull where you're drawn in by these, like soft shapes, but then sort of face forced to, like face these uncomfortable, you know, associations, and never really allowing anything To become too explicit, or, you know, clear, always leaving this space of ambiguity for the viewer to have to, kind of, like, make the connections in their own mind, and in doing so, kind of have this uncomfortable, introspective experience with the work where they're like, Oh, is it, as you said, like, is this just me, or Is this everybody seeing this?

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YE: Okay, tell me more about what is your process. I mean, do you first decide that what which material is good for your work, or you are going to use, or you choose material according to your concept?

JW: It's sort of a little bit of both. Really. The way it kind of works is that I start, a lot of my work starts from, sort of like observation and collection of like, kind

of natural objects from nature and sort of like seed pods and flowers and things like that. I draw a lot of inspiration from, and then I do a ton of drawing. Drawing is, like a huge part of my work. No, no. Like technical design drawings that I work from, but more just like abstract, sort of, like almost hypnotic, sort of, like doodles, really, a lot of that kind of work. And then through that process is where I kind of start to find the shapes that I'm going to try to, like, draw out of the wood. And so I'll take those sort of shapes, and then that's when I start looking at the wood around me in my shop that I've accumulated, or going out and sourcing for nature, like pieces of wood that kind of fit those shapes. But then during that process, when it actually becomes, starts taking shape in physical wood. It always changes and evolves. And sometimes the wood sort of has a completely different idea of what the final piece is going to turn out. And so it actually completely changes, and I start following a different path. But overall, it usually kind of starts with that idea of, like, abstract drawing being translated into, like, some sort of shape that's being translated into wood. But sometimes it is just purely a piece of wood that I find, and I'm like, I'm gonna start with this piece of wood. So it kind of depends, yeah, yes. So sometimes you want to have control on your material. And Santa's is like that, yeah, your material, yeah, the control. And for me, that, yeah, super important, that like feeling of like resistance that the material has, like, I've tried working with clay, like hand sculpting me and clay, and I have so much trouble with it, because it's the softness and the the, you know, easy quotes, easiness of like to sculpt something, it just sort of my, I just my, my ideas just become, like, lumped into this blob. It just all falls apart. But when I have this living material, like wood that has all this history of growth or decay, or, you know, all this, this sort of hard, solid material to it. I feel like it really, it really adds to the piece it kind of takes on a whole new presence.

"But when I have this living material, like wood that has all this history of growth or decay, or, you know, all this, this sort of hard, solid material to it. I feel like it really, it really adds to the piece it kind of takes on a whole new presence."

YE: Is it right that sometimes maybe scale can be challenging as well?

JW: Definitely. That's a huge, a huge kind of new, you know, my work started from a very small with my current, you know, work started from a very small, sort of intimate scale of, like carving, whittling, small wooden objects. And so for me, there was this really, like, hand. Hand held, hand touched, tactile quality. And as the works got bigger and bigger, it's become, yeah, much more of a complicated process to keep that sort of like hand touched feeling to it, especially with some huge pieces that require sanding. You know, I'll have people come and help me sand sometimes, and then I just get so, like, I need to be like, the one who's like, kind of touching every single part of the surface. And then, for instance, I recently did this large scale public bronze project in a plaza that was a whole other that was just on a level that, yeah, yeah, it's a whole other

YE: Do you want to give a tip to younger generation? Is it something that they should follow in this beginning of their journey as an emerging artist?

JW: Yeah, I mean, I would say one piece of advice, and I can only say this because it's what I did, and it's the path that I took. But you know, while I was in art school, I was just kind of obsessively making, experimenting and just playing in this way that was very free and open, and just just going completely wild at my studio every night, just just in a kind of explosive way. And then when I graduated, all of that just became completely unavailable and sort of impossible. And it was so hard in the real world, like, you know, my world become came so much smaller in terms of what I was able to do. And so for me, it was turning to like a craft, like wood carving, or, you know, I've been encouraging, if you have interest in, like, metal or ceramic, just to kind of take that energy and that sort of educational background and put it towards something that has this sort of like material skill set that can be very like empowering and kind of liberating in this way where you all of a sudden have this whole new skill and material that you kind of can focus on.

Kahlil Robert Irving in conversation with **Christian Alvarado**

Kahlil Robert Irving (b. 1992, San Diego, CA) is an artist currently living and working in the USA. He attended the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Art, Washington University in St. Louis (MFA Fellow, 2017); and the Kansas City Art Institute (BFA, Art History and Ceramics/Sculpture, 2015). His work has been exhibited at the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas; the Arizona State University Art Museum, Phoenix; and the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Rhode Island, among others.

Christian Alvarado: We are recording at, Hey neighbor, this is Khalil Robert Irving. Did I get that right?

Kahlil Robert Irving: Yep, Robert.

CA: It's a fun little name. People call you Bobby?

KRI: Nope. My grandfather's name is Robert. So it's, it's my inherited name, it's my giving it's my family name, Irving's my slave name.

CA: Khalil, I was looking at your work, and I was interested in the materials that you used and the way that these articles have talked about it. I'm interested in the way that you are merging like, kind of these found materials, these more commonplace materials. How do you come up with that material language?

KRI: It's a material language because it's, it's all made by me in the studio, and nothing's found. So everything that you see is fabricated.

CA: So what is all of the common looking material? Are you making materials from scratch? Is it from reference? There's a process to it, right?

KRI: Yeah, there. It's a it's a mix between slip casting and just hand hand forming. But for the most part, it's all it's all sculpted in a way.

CA: Why is it important to you?

KRI: Are making facsimiles important to me? Because objects can hold like it's a way to make. It's a way to represent or re represent. It's a way to give text three dimensions. It relates to concrete poetry. Concrete poetry being like this, more expressive kind of, like, diaristic kind of like no. Concrete poetry is a is a practice of making Poetry Out of words or out of text that is made in form on the paper. There's a really great book published by primary information of women in concrete poetry, and the text just takes a kind of more more diverse form on the paper, outside of just being able to be read from left to right, top to bottom and page turning, whereas the poem is can be read across the page, each poem can be read differently, described on the writer's kind of plan or prescriptive directions.

CA: Feels like it's given like an extra dimension. I can see how that applies to sculpture, but I'm still curious about this idea or distance that facsimile offers to the work material.

KRI: It's really rooted in the history of ceramic production and industrial manufacturing, and how European companies appropriated Asian ceramics as a way to have a proximity to proprietorship despite understanding the knowledge and the cultural meaning behind why Asian folks made high fired white ceramic objects. And so when I think about trade and violence in trade, in inertly being someone who born to ancestors who were enslaved, distant relatives who were enslaved in the United States, this kind of violence that occurred on a manufacturing in a much larger than human scale, similar to the enslavement trade Throughout the 15th

to 19th century, late early 20th century, colonialization holds these structures, and ceramic is able to kind of operate and be placed within it. And so my sculptures are using technologies or techniques of the ceramic manufacturing, but taking it and putting information from the current moment.

CA: The resulting work, to me, feels deeply rooted in like a history of abstraction too.

KRI: Well. I mean, I studied art, right? But I studied in ceramics. So it's like I studied in ceramics and talked to white folks during the day and listened from this perspective of the US ceramic pottery movement, and at night, I listened to people who were more referential to the ideas that I had. So there's this kind of. Little dual direction and where I've gathered or found home or place in art.

CA: Do you feel like that abstraction is a place to negotiate that for you, where you get to?

KRI: I guess, kind of borrow or steal ideas from these different places of influence to melt them together. Well, I don't know if that's if it's borrowing or stealing. I really, more or less go at it from the scientific method, where there's a I have a point and I'm trying to find or have other things that either prove my point or counterpoints to what I'm saying. So in a lot of ways, in the end, in the beginning, middle or end, it's all about proving my point. And sometimes I want it to be the point to be legible, and sometimes I don't really care too much for the point to be legible, but I think that, in itself, is the inherent, inherent issue, or the problematic of the of that of the abstraction that you're asking about.

CA: Does your point change from project to project, or do you find yourself working with an overarching sort of idea?

KRI: I think it's both. I can't necessarily always communicate or delineate which one is which, because in that that's my that's the kind of that's the kind of space that I can exist in as the as the maker. I think of it when I remember when I was a kid and I learned about what third person omniscient meant. Well, third person omniscient is somebody who knows the story and knows all the intimate details of the story, almost like God. And so then I don't have to necessarily speak to why, the how, the who, what, where, why, when and how as a kind of lyrical or narrative based story, I can know those details and kind of just keep moving. So from time to time, I just, I kind of get to a point where I just do what I gotta do.I don't know if it's like I don't know if it's always that linear.

CA: When you're looking at artwork, traveling around, going to shows and all that stuff, what is it something that you want to see more of? What is something that you What is something that you've seen recently that kind of sticks with you? What are you thinking about when you make your work now, so many questions at the same time. I know.

KRI: What is something that stuck with me? What am I thinking about now I usually I'm working on four or five projects at the same time. So it's kind of hard to

“And so when I think about trade and violence in trade, in inertly being someone who born to ancestors who were enslaved, distant relatives who were enslaved in the United States, this kind of violence that occurred on a manufacturing in a much larger than human scale, similar to the enslavement trade throughout the 15th to 19th century, late early 20th century, colonialization holds these structures, and ceramic is able to kind of operate and be placed within it. And so my sculptures are using technologies or techniques of the ceramic manufacturing, but taking it and putting information from the current moment.”

spend so much time talking about that in itself, but something that I’ve seen recently is, or I’ve been I’ve seen mostly just pictures. I haven’t seen much else but Africa and Byzantium, curated by Dr Andrea Achi at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is an exhibition that I’m really excited to see, and it’s going to open soon at the Cleveland Museum of Art. What am I working on next? I’m working on a proposal for the monuments exhibition that opens at the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, and I’m one of a handful of artists making new commissions for the exhibition. We started painting in my studio, which has been a lot of fun and really hard, because I’m thinking about the paintings as objects, not necessarily just as paintings, even though that they even though they are paintings, they’re not just images, they’re objects. And how do you take that further? I recently went to the Cathedral Basilica in St Louis, and it was interesting to see how many different techniques and tools were used to fabricate the different styles and examples of historical Cathedral, a historical cathedral could hold all in one kind of a big mess. What was your other question?

CA: I’m thinking about who you’re excited to talk to and meet next because it seems like you’ve had a lot of conversations. You’re well researched. You’ve been studying this for a while. I’m wondering, like, what is that next thing that’s interesting to you that you want to know more about, that you feel like you don’t know enough about. What are you curious about?

KRI: I want to learn about Silvers that were manufactured or made by enslaved people. I want to learn about 18th century. I want to learn about historical Silvers that were hand formed by labor, laborers that we don’t know their names of, but made amazing objects.

Leslie Jones in conversation with **Afsaneh Javadpour**

Leslie Jones was Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Los An geles County Museum of Art from 2005-2023, where she organized numerous exhibitions including Coded: Art Enters the Computer Age, 1952-1982 (2023), Ed Moses: Drawings from the 1960s and ‘70s and Drawing in L.A.: the 1960s and ‘70s (both 2015),Drawing Surrealism (2012), and John Baldessari: Pure Beauty (2010). Jones writes regularly on the subject of modern and contemporary drawings and prints. Recent publications include: “Marks, Slowed Down: The Intaglio Prints of Julie Mehretu” (Julie Mehretu, Whitney and LACMA, 2019), and Allen Ruppersberg Drawing (Christine Burgin, 2014). Jones previously worked at The Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York. She participated in the Whitney Museum’s Independent Study Program in 1993–94 and received her PhD from New York University’s Institute of Fine Arts in 2003 with a dissertation on the ink drawings of Henri Michaux.

Afsaneh Javadpour: Your work of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art has involved curating exhibitions that span a wide range of styles and periods, from the exhibition called coded to the to the other exhibitions called drawings realism. How do you approach the process of curating these kind of exhibitions and dealing with these such diverse artistic movements?

Leslie Jones: Well, all of my exhibitions come from my personal interests,mostly in drawing, but also printmaking. The drawing surrealism show was just born out of the realization that although drawing was so central to the surrealist movement. You know, it all started with automatic drawing, basically Breton's notion of automatic, of automatism. And there were also the exquisite cadavers, these sort of, these drawings that were collaborative, like multiple artists would work on at the same time, and I realized that drawing was so central to the movement, but an exhibition about surrealist drawing had never been done. You know, the exhibitions had focused on Dali and Moreau and all these very important surrealist artists, but no one had really took a look at the processes of drawing and all the innovations that were made during the surrealist movement. In addition to automatic drawing, there was fotage and collage and fumage, all these different processes that were meant to tap into the unconscious mind, right? Because that's what Surrealism was about. It was bypassing, how to bypass the rational mind and tap into something deeper and more psychological. So that was just an interesting like I noticed within the literature and in the art history that that topic hadn't been addressed. So that's why I decided I would present, present that exhibition, but it was an International Exhibition included artists not just from France and Belgium, but also the United States, Latin America, even Japan, where surrealism had an impact. It was really a global art movement. So that was also important for me to represent. Then, with coded I mean, that's a very different kind of exhibition. It's, you know, deals with art made in the computer age, in the mid 20th century. But again, it wasn't really, it was about the drawing that I was I was that drew my interest. We received a gift of computer drawings by an artist named Frederick Hammersley. I had never seen anything like them before, and that sort of sparked my interest in looking more deeply into computer made art in the 60s, which to me, seemed very early for digital art, and a lot of it was drawing. It were plotter drawings and drawings made on what are called line printers, or impact printers. So I was fascinated by this work, and then, like I said, I just went down the proverbial rabbit hole and discovered this whole world of art and artists working with computers in the 60s and 70s that I'd never heard of, but I thought were making really interesting work on paper. So again, I felt that was an area of art history that had been overlooked. So it was a very important for me to represent it, to present it to the public and say, these are artists who are active at the same time as minimal artists like Don Judd or conceptual artists like Sol Lewitt or op artists like Bridget Riley, who are doing formally similar work, but who are completely overlooked in the in the history books. So I feel like a lot of my projects come from that place of wanting to to share the work of artists who've been overlooked by art history.

AJ: And as you were talking, I just found that this diversity, it's not just about so the movement you were looking to so many different kind of artists and different countries, different methods, collage, format and something like that. What about challenges or opportunities that you can have in this kind of way of looking to curatorial exhibition?

LJ: By looking, I'm sorry, by looking at the process, by focusing on process?
AJ: Not process at the end of this cohesive, you know, I can see the diversity, and, of course, I can see the cohesive what's the challenges to reach these kind of things, and maybe the opportunities that you can have after that?

LJ: Well, a big challenge I actually had with coded was sort of a resistance to computer made art, like there's a stigma about digital art, even more so in the 60s and 70s than there is today. There's just a lot of skepticism about art made with a machine, right? And so there was some of the criticism about the exhibition was that they didn't feel like maybe the art held up to what was made by Sol LeWitt or Donald Judd, or, you know, these artists who these big names in art history. But for me, it's not so much about is this artist better than this artist, but that it's a part of the history, and that I find, I found in my my my practice as the curator of works on paper, that works on paper, by their very nature, are small and intimate.

"...but that it's a part of the history, and that I find, I found in my my my practice as the curator of works on paper, that works on paper, by their very nature, are small and intimate. They're not going to hold up on a wall like a painting or a large sculpture, but what they do is they add texture. They connect the dots between other things that going on in art history at the time, because works on paper are where artists experiment. Right?"

They're not going to hold up on a wall like a painting or a large sculpture, but what they do is they add texture. They connect the dots between other things that going on in art history at the time, because works on paper are where artists experiment. Right? That's the sort of initial output of an idea. Is usually a drawing, right? And so that's where you see, I think artists at their most vulnerable in a way, but also at their most creative and open. So to me, the highly finished works of art that you might find on museum walls are great, but it's in the works on paper where you see, you know, you have more of a connection with the artists and their process of discovery and experimentation.

AJ: Yeah, I see you are emphasizing on some traditional mediums in art, drawing and printmaking. And I wanted to say that as a role that you have as a role of your as a curator of this museum, and exactly focusing on these different really mediums and different exhibitions that you have. How do you see the relationship between art and computer? Now, exactly. I mean by art and computer as two different terms.

LJ: Well, yeah, today, it's very different than it was in the 60s and 70s. Today, I doubt there are any artists who don't use a computer to some in some way, you know, not necessarily making art, but maybe for research or for capturing imagery, for taking notes or doing you know, there's then they might use them to manipulate images that they then transfer to painting or drawing or whatever medium they're working so I think art and computer today, their computer is just another tool, right, like a paintbrush or A pencil, right? It's just another tool for an artist. I think the problem more lies with when the idea of generative art, when people assume that the computer is making the art, you know that it's just spitting out the art, and the artist is not all involved. And there is a lot of that, you know, a lot of artists are just programmers. You know, not just programmers, they are programmers. In addition to being artists, and their work is maybe having a more difficult time being accepted, although that's changing, you know, with nfts and everything that's going on there is, I think, a greater, a growing acceptance, I should say, of art that lives on a screen, right for decades. Like, like, you wouldn't think of art only existing on a screen or in a screen, right? It had to be output in some way. Had to be, you know, printed on canvas or on paper, or made into a sculpture. Like the idea that it, that it could just exist in this virtual realm was, until very recently, I think, and I think it's still coming to be not accepted.

AJ: Yes, it's so surprisingly and. Rapidly, I think that we were facing to the changes, and for many of artists who were working with, of course, traditional way of working art, with paint, exactly with some kind of the other mediums or the other material, is so scary somehow, that how What do you mean? We can go to the some non places called Metaverse, to go to the gallery, see the artwork.

LJ: Yeah, that I'm still for me, the jury is still out on experiencing art that way. I mean, I could see it, you know, by looking on your phone or on your computer screen. Maybe that's one way. But yeah, actually, whatever taking on an avatar, like stepping into a virtual realm, that's, I guess, if it's digital art, then, yeah, that makes sense. But there's still no way. You know, you can't experience any other art that way, like if it's a scan of a drawing or the scan of a painting, I'm sorry, no, you have to see that in person.

AJ: And as a quick last question, I wanted to ask you, what do you think about the challenges or again, opportunities that artists faced in this dynamic landscape with computers, for example, if the kind of two general group of the artists, the one who worked with traditional mediums and now they want turn into the computer in art and started to do that, or started to have some experiences on that. Or the artist who exactly just did emerge artists and started to work. What do you see? What challenges they can be, because you have so many experiences to deal with these kind of artists.

LK Yeah, well, I mean one challenge, like queer arts are already talking about, is that the acceptance of it, the public and critical acceptance of artists working in the in the in the digital medium, another challenge for them would be, I think, to avoid the temptation to make it into something that is not like I could see. There would be, maybe pressure by dealers, for example, to want to materialize their digital production by printing it out, you know, and making additions. Which is, which is fine if that's the artist's intent, but if it really is meant to exist in the digital realm on a screen, then I would avoid that temptation to want to make it a work on paper, or to want to make it a painting or giclee, or what have you that that there is something about, I think, and, you know, people may argue with me about the purity of working in a medium, like an artist chooses a medium for a reason, like, Why? Why do you want to know, express your your idea using digital means, there must be a reason behind it, right that expresses most clearly what you have or want to say, or you choose drawing you know, because that suits what you're trying to achieve artistically. So just you know to stay true to those choices that you make as a creative and not be tempted to to make things digital or make things material, just based on what the market or other people might think.

Motomichi Nakamura in conversation with **Kate Montgomery**

Motomichi Nakamura is a Japanese-born, award-winning Projection Artist and Animator based in Croton On Hudson, NY. His work is known for the use of black, white, and red, and he creates monsters with minimalistic graphic elements inspired by Cryptozoology and Mythology. He has exhibited globally in numerous museums and galleries including the New Museum in New York, Moscow Contemporary Art Center Winzavod, MARCO in Monterrey Mexico, Olympia Park Munich, and Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris. His animated films have been screened at Sundance Film Festival, Onedotzero Festival, and Edinburgh International Film Festival, and his recent film Okami won in The Leeds International Film Festival. His clients include EA, MTV, USA Networks, and Sony, and he has produced music videos for artists including Nicola Cruz and the Swedish band, The Knife.

Kate Montgomery: Great. Well, yeah, thank you so much for putting the time aside to do this. Really appreciate it. So I have a million questions for you. So as grad students, a lot of us are aspiring artists. So we're artists kind of beginning. So yeah, I guess I was wondering, how did your career begin? Did you have a straight line from being a young person into becoming an artist, or did you take any side steps on the way?

Motomichi Nakamura: I actually couldn't decide whether I want to study psychology or art. And then I grew up in Japan, so then when I came to the States, I mean, for the university. So first two years, I couldn't decide. I went to community college before I transferred to art school. But then I decided to go with art. So I studied communication design, which is equivalent of graphic design. I went to Parsons school design. It became part of the new school, but, and then I switched to illustration, because I just thought that the graphic design was too limited. So after graduating, I became web designer, and I was quite committed as a graphic designer. But there are certain moments where, you know, I just didn't know what to do. But then I think the main thing that I decided to become an artist was that I was starting to get better in the graphic design in a sense that the I think it is being commercial designer requires quite a bit of discipline, in a way that you can be very flexible. You have to be reflective of your style. So I was, I started off doing the entertainment kind of clients, which was kind of fun, but then like, I worked as a web designer in the beginning, so you have to design for like, like Chase or something like that, like technology company. And then just like, you know, the clients are kind of like random, and I knew I was trying to get rid of it, and then so because of that, I and I got, I got a position as a creative director, so I didn't have to do this. So I started working with other designers, and I see how they do, it's like, oh, you know, I don't think I have much of a future. Because as you actually work on the visual thing, you started to find your visual language so you can specialize in it, but in a commercial setting this is different. We have to be really, like, flexible, and you have to provide the best quality of design to any clients you've assigned to. And I just like, No, I just couldn't. I just decided to say, and I'll just bet on this.

KM: I totally understand that, because I imagine, yeah, as a graphic designer, web designer, or working in the commercial world, you're always tied to the client's desires and wins, and maybe working for yourself seems more rewarding, especially once you've already kind of done the work to become successful. Do you still oscillate between those two areas of making?

MN: Actually, no, like, I don't, I mean, I think I would like to actually get one commercial clients, but most of the job that I get is, even though it's a commercial, the clients actually want me to to do what I do, but then they'll find a way. They already have this idea of how they want to use my work for that. So it's, it is. I mean, some projects are commercial, but it's pretty much like my work, right?

KM: That's exciting. So I did have some questions about your experiences of community college, because I also was a community college student. I started my grad path. I'm wondering how did you experience Community College differently from going to, you know, like an art school?

MN: Yes to me, Well, I think I went to this community college. It's about like an hour something, from New York City. So it is kind of under heavy influence of New York City, but at the same time I personally like that space. You know, it's more space. And once you move to once I started one of the persons, I was, like, amazed how small the space is, yeah, and it's like, at the same time that the being in art school, or, like, being in a specialized department. So it was, it was great. But it's not so much about the teachers, in a way. And then, like, in my case, the person was not really what I would call, like a school, in a way. I think it's kind of very school, like, it doesn't become like this, so, I mean, but it's moving to that, like, I didn't read. I mean, I'm glad that I went to college, though, and I think it's somewhere like I really focused on more of this, like drawings and paintings, and then I didn't really need that kind of distraction you get in the city.

KM: Yeah, and I see you still live more in a village that is in proximity to, a big city, so I imagine that way you get the best of both worlds.

MK: Well, I mean, we, I moved to, like, suburb, like, about, like, an hour outside the city. So it's very like, feels like a great countryside. Yes. I mean, at least in that area, like lot of people actually work in the city or do something with the company in the city. So it's kind of your mind is kind of like that, yeah.

KM: I hear you. Um, so yeah, I definitely had a question about how you're in the environment that you lives in affects the work that you make, because seeing so much of your work, you're kind of creating projection mapping on the outside of large buildings. And I was wondering how the that kind of environment compares to maybe making projections that map the interior of a building, and then where you find the most freedom in those two types of making.

MN: So they, I did this series of outdoor projection mapping for the end of the pandemic. And then actually, just because the funny thing was that there, yeah, so funny thing is this company called Montana colors. It's a spray paint company. They reached out to me. They're based in Barcelona. And then the guy who reached out to me was someone that I did some collaboration work, like, 10 years prior to that. So when there is some Brazilian guy that, I guess he moved to Barcelona, and then he saw me as if kind of retold, like, like last year or something, it's okay. How you doing? Like, go back to different email. Come to see his email. But anyway. And then he goes, Yeah. So the only way to do this, the only way to do this is virtually the residency then and then they basically have this funding they support, like, street artists. So I was like, Yeah, but I mean, you know what I do, because I don't usually spray paint, and then, oh, it's okay. It's okay. Because, and then inside, she really moved to this the outside. But I didn't tell them. And I was like, should I tell them? Because I thought, like, they might, kind of, they might have wanted to see something in Brooklyn. So, you know, I just telling exactly, you know, I'm actually in suburb now and then, like, okay, yeah, do whatever you want. So I

started in the position there, and he was, like, quite eye opening, because I was like, I said I was, I only have done projection buildings or and then being out there, it's a whole different, the feeling of it, and then so I really decided to take advantage of it. I decided to just come up with, sort of like, the setup of the equipment that I can be very mobile, so that actually free this sort of restriction. Like, let's say lot of people do, you've seen this projection mapping where they do on a bicycle, but I wanted to go even further to the point where I just wanted to be extremely mobile. So I came up with this, like, much smaller one to live a bigger one. And then I think the thing in nature is, is, I mean, it is first time I did, I thought it was surreal because, I mean, so basically the projector is, is nothing so special about it. It just, basically, once you project this, it becomes like a screen, yes? So it's kind of like almost falsely taking out something from your computer screen, and then force. It's like a virtual reality, yeah, without, without the headset. So the thing you started seeing this, like images, like projected onto this random nature stuff is, like, this is quite, you know, like, strange. And it's like, I like it. So that was like, quite. And also that being sounded by nature, and some of the mosquitoes, or, you know, the animals or whatever, but it's, it's definitely, you know, the is kind of gives, you, I don't know, sense of being part of the outside. So was like, in the city is kind of different. I mean, like there was a license curse going by, and then somehow that, you know you're outside, but then nature is really far from there. But when you have to stand on the ground, you know what, like water is there, or like animals, or like you really feel it, that, that you're so. Sort of like this. It feels kind of adventurous.

KM: Yeah, I read a story about Kurt Vonnegut, the writer, and he had mentioned that one of the best feelings he had as a creative person was looking back at something that he'd made and kind of getting this feeling that he could not believe he made it, like he was so proud. And I wonder how often you get that feeling in your work, or, How do you know when a work is good or finished?

MN: I think it's it's okay, as could say, as it may sound, when it's finished, you know, when you let it, like when you finish it, and then you know it's done. That. I think that the reason for that is that, like when you publish your work or whatever, let it go knowing that you didn't do, you didn't put 100% 100% and then, like, if you look at it, it's kind of painful, yeah, because it's like, oh my god, you know, it's like, and then, like, you don't even want to include it on your list of stuff you've done. It's not good or bad. It just kind of have some kind of like regret in a way. So I think it's somewhere that even though, like, it came out bad after you look at it for, like, years after, but when you really put 100% in it, it just is. It's good to see. I think that's that I know, like I did, because they have works that I... You know, sometimes, like, I don't know is, Oh, quite lack of discipline, but, yeah, sometimes, just like, you can sometimes you get so confused you don't know. Like, sometimes, like, sometimes when you actually let other people critique your work, that could happen. So critique is important at the same time. Sometimes I'm not sure, like, after what point that you actually need to comment for other people, because it's kind of art, is kind of like self searching in a way, yeah, and then you only know that it's because it's inside of you. So letting other people like tell you

what to do is it's kind of, I'm not sure how realistic that is. I mean, yeah.

KM: That's a very interesting point, because as grad students, we have a lot of input from different mentors and advisors throughout the three years. And I think a lot of navigating the first year for me is kind of learning what information or advice to take on and what doesn't really align with what I think my brain is. And it's weird kind of trying to develop that confidence to kind of really know yourself. Yeah, your practice when you're emerging was that a struggle that you also experienced?

MN: I think, especially when in school, when you're starting out, yeah, I think that so like the feeling of uncertainty is for the difficult part. Like, as you produce more work. And then you sort of like, narrow down things, in a way, so you have, sort of like something that you can kind of bounce back and post it somewhere, like, judge what you do. But so you need more experience, in a way. But I think it's critique is always a bit of a sensitive I mean, the difficult area that you know up to what point you should listen. And, yeah, and also, like other things, when people ask for suggestion, most of the time, people know what they want to hear. That's what people ask that question. And it's like, you know, sometimes when they ask me questions, like, I mean, why do you ask me? Because, you mean, because if I say what he or she's not expecting to hear and they, I'm sure another person is going to ask me again. So it's like no point to you know, you should do what you think is right.
Kate Montgomery: I wonder, how does that change? Then, when your work is in the public sphere and people are writing maybe reviews of your work, or just when you have a like, maybe a universal audience who co review, or people come up to see your work in person, like, how do I feel about it? Or, yeah, do you ever receive feedback that no that kind of gets under your skin?

"But I think it's critique is always a bit of a sensitive I mean, the difficult area that you know up to what point you should listen. And, yeah, and also, like other things, when people ask for suggestion, most of the time, people know what they want to hear."

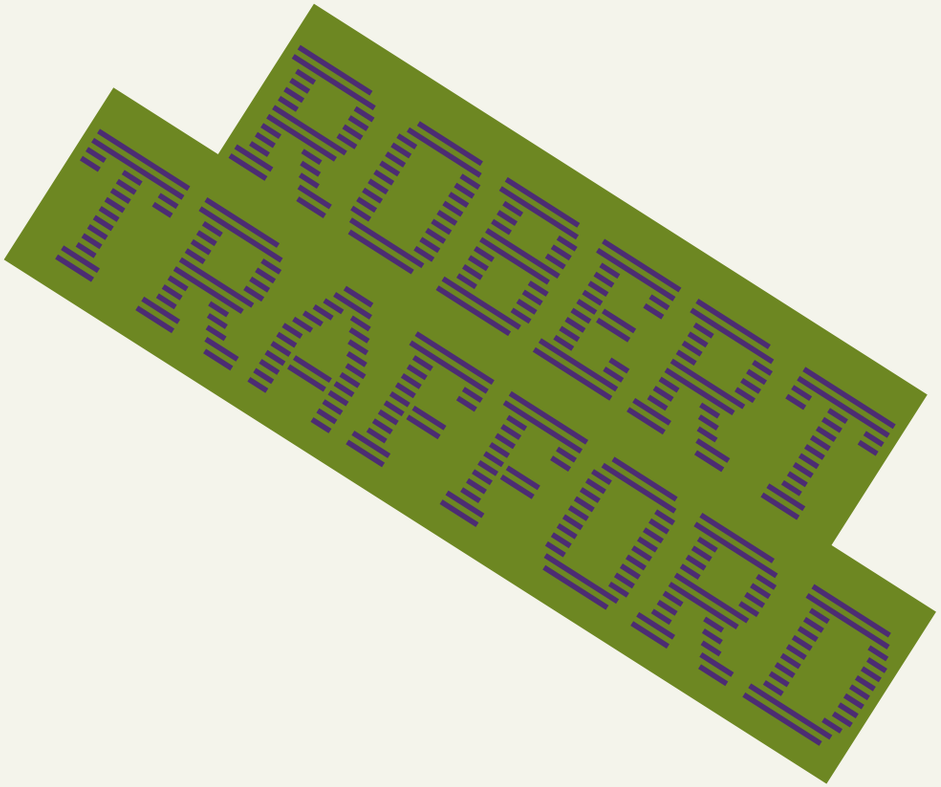
MN: Like when people text me or email me, it's normally that because they like it, yes, but they're Yeah. There are like, numerous occasions where I've been told in my face that he or she didn't like it. But you know, this is, this is kind of about the concept of Buddhism or the Zen is, that is when it's when whatever you hear is absolutely false. You shouldn't be offended. So, meaning, if you're offended. Many there is some truth to it, right? So I thought I was such a good you know, like teaching us again is like, why, and then surprisingly, like, what people said, and many times that, you know, the wisdom can be really silly, but the same time it's worth listening, but I've been told in my face, like the couple instance where I'm so is that I did a I used to do a lot of video performance, and then right after the performance, some guy came up to me and he told me my face that he liked the musician or the music, but he didn't think my graphic, the video was a good enough. That's brutal.

KM: How do you respond to that?

MN: Turns out he was a good friend of the DJ, and the DJ was kind of freaking out, because we had, like, you know, work together and stuff, and then, but, but the thing, he gave me some explanation, and which in somewhere, I thought, Yeah, it's true. There's certain thing that maybe there's things that I think I could have done in the way. So he did make some good points. So he kind of stayed with me, and then I was not like, mad at him. Like, I mean, I think also you can tell that when people tell you something, that they are just saying that out of just honesty, or they have some kind of meaning behind it. So when they say out of honesty, like, I mean, nobody just, you know, like, you would just take it, yeah. And then they can just, and if you ask why, and it will just go, you know, and then they will just give you the explanation, and that's it. And you don't have to say, you know, like, I'll, you know, take that into consideration. Or you just have to hear it, yeah.

KM: I definitely hear what you mean, yeah. Sometimes a comment will stay with and you're like, why can't I let this go?

"There are like, numerous occasions where I've been told in my face that he or she didn't like it. But you know, this is, this is kind of about the concept of Buddhism or the Zen is, that is when it's when whatever you hear is absolutely false. You shouldn't be offended. So, meaning, if you're offended. Many there is some truth to it, right?"



Robert Trafford in conversation with **Michelle Fieser**

Robert Trafford is a journalist by training and an assistant director with Forensic Architecture, a human rights research agency based at Goldsmiths, University of London, with whom he has worked since 2017. There, he leads investigative research projects, writes and edits for exhibitions and publications, and supports other team members to bring investigations to publication and to think about how their research can be activated across a range of forums in pursuit of accountability. His work with Forensic Architecture has covered the extrajudicial killing of civilians by Cameroon's special forces, chemical weapons attacks by the Assad regime, and counter-protest violence by US police. He has jointly led investigations into the 2020 right-wing terror attack in Hanau, Germany, the 2011 killing of Mark Duggan by London's police, and the agency's acclaimed TRIPLE-CHASER investigation, which premiered at the 2019 Whitney Biennial in New York.

Michelle Fieser: So forensic architecture uses a wide range of technologies and presentation methods to show results of research, like reenactments models, mapping overlays and in the case of Policing, Justice, a whole video installation. So how do you consider storytelling when you have different goals in mind for the research? Like exhibition installations versus like legal processes.

Robert Trafford: I guess it's not always a linear process. It's not like we begin with only the story, the data, the facts, and then we sort of look out at a given set of options. Which way to go, right? It's the, you know, we talk a lot about building publics for our evidence as much as building our evidence. Art galleries are obviously wonderful places to do that. Publics come to us and they do come hear our stories and they do stay for some time. They take notes. So really so, you know, they talk to one another. It's a great place for building publics. But I guess what I mean by the non-linearity is that it might be that at the same time as the story comes to us, we also have the gallery coming to us. We might also see that there's an opportunity to. So I think it's like, you know, here in Portland, for example, we were, we were already in touch with the curators of Policing Justice when, an investigative reporter, who we also have worked with in the past, is also kind of working on Portland came to us with the story, so we begin to connect these things up. So, while a lot of our methodologies are obviously digital research methodologies, we're also, you know, we also consider part of our practice has that, that piecing together that's seeing how different components across a sort of uneven landscape can be fit together. But so we're not, we're not only thinking about, here's our story, the story is done. How do we, how do we share it? But like the sharing might even come first. You know, we have this opportunity in the gallery. The next place. What can we do? That's exactly what we're working on in Germany right now. We've been invited to exhibit in Stuttgart. We have some work from elsewhere in Germany that we want to show and we want to try and connect that now with the local police.

MF: So, it sounds like a very organic kind of growth into a project.

RT: absolutely. It's very organic.

MF: How do the projects, like the end product of the projects, differ with things that are self-initiated by forensic architecture versus like requested?

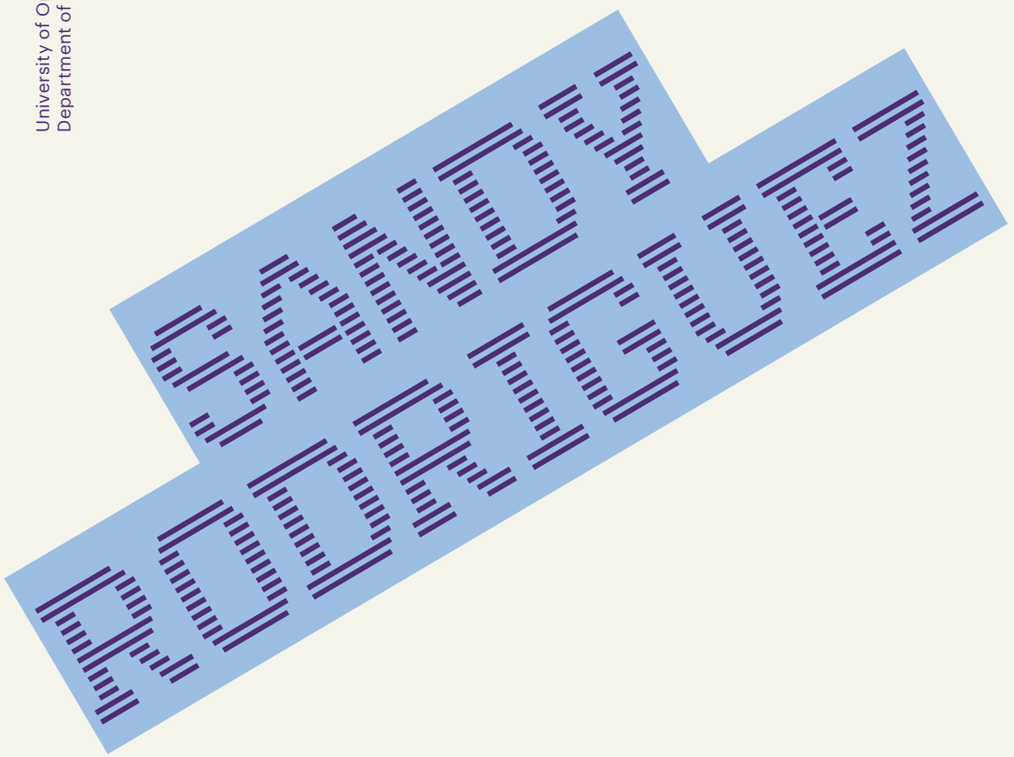
RT: That's a good question. So wherever possible, we like our work to be at the invitation of the people that we're working with and the people whose stories we're supporting them to tell. Ideally, those would be, if you look in the police and justice exhibition, perhaps you can see a good example of that between the two works that we've, that we, the two video works anyway, that we're sharing. Because the one, Teargas Tuesday in downtown Portland is a very technical work. It's quite dry. It's, it's methodological. That we've done there is experimented with the digital research technology to see if we can answer a certain kind of question for an advocacy context around here. As people say, well, how is it that we can kind of advocate around tear gas, if we can barely grab hold of it. So, we exploring digital research methodologies to try to, try

"So wherever possible, we like our work to be at the invitation of the people that we're working with and the people whose stories we're supporting them to tell"

and make it more tangible and quantify it. What you see in the case of the June Knightly film where the invitation came to us through this reporter directly from a group of, you know, very secretive and very traumatized individuals who were survivors and witnesses to this attack. They learned to, came to trust us and say because of our position in the university system, because of the work that they've seen elsewhere, but you can see that that works as a much more human texture. It's really all their voices and what we've done there. What you, what we try and do in every case is develop methodologies in house and put them in the hands of people whose stories could be augmented by them. And I think what you see in the exhibition is an example of that is maybe both ends of that spectrum when you see where we, we do that in house, maybe without the context to put it into and then we kind of throw it out there and we say we can use this and then, on the other hand, we say we, we've been invited into this story, and now we're going to choose from this set of technologies that we have in order to help them tell that story most effectively.

MF: OK, maybe I don't know if this might be one of the quicker ones. How does the, the type of data you receive from research change like the product that you make?

RT: Yeah, fundamentally. I mean, it really depends what kind of material it is. You know, again, some of our self-directed projects, what we're doing is we're going out onto social media and looking for evidence ourselves bringing that down and we're trying to then, maybe it's for us to go back to try and connect with activists on the ground around that issue as we've established what it is that we can, we can do with the evidence that's available. But again, in the film related to the murder of Knightly. There we have an individual coming to us through this reporter with the most remarkable, shocking video footage. You know, she was wearing a helmet camera at the moment that she was shot, looking directly down the barrel of this gun, that, there an entirely different question is opened up right? These are not like evidential questions, right, these are aesthetic strategies. What can you, what's, what's the sensitive and gentle way both to her and to her allies these other witnesses and survivors, and also to the audiences, to, to carry that material which we just felt as soon as we saw it, people need to understand this. People need to see this, this, this is what communicates that. How do you do that in a way which isn't retraumatizing or detraumatizing?



Sandy Rodriguez in conversation with **Harper Loeb**

Sandy Rodriguez (b. 1975, National City, CA) is a Los Angeles-based Chicana artist and researcher. Her ongoing series Codex Rodriguez-Mondragón is a collection of maps and paintings about the intersections of history, social memory, contemporary politics, and cultural production. Her works are in the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, AR; Amon Carter Museum, TX; The Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Garden, CA; and the Denver Art Museum, CO. She was awarded the 2023 Jacob Lawrence Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the 2023 Hermitage Greenfield Prize, the Caltech-Huntington Art + Research Residency, the Creative Capital Award, and the Migrations Initiative from Mellon Foundation's Just Futures Initiative and Global Cornell. Rodriguez and her work have been featured in BBC News: In The Studio, Hyperallergic, LA Weekly, Los Angeles Times, New York Times, Spectrum News 1, and others.

Harper Loeb: Okay, great. So I was doing some research. And two things that struck me about your work is that it communicates a deep sense of place and history. So I was curious to hear what sense of place means to you

Sandy Rodriguez: Unpack that a little bit more for me.

HL: It appears in your work that you're really connected to place, whether that's through maps or botanical studies, or sourcing local materials to create your work. So how does that sense of place connect you to your work, and how do you communicate that to your viewer?

SR: So there's a site specificity to each map that I create. Whereas my field study begin in California and along the US Mexico border in 2017, since then, I have done field study in 10 western states. And so when I'm visiting those 10 western states, it's off-grid camping. So I am no Wi Fi, no running water, working with a couple of friends, getting to know the plants and the fauna, really connecting with place to get on a kind of a cycle of sunrise sunset, and then go much deeper in terms of my research to understand who's land I'm on, what the history of that place has been, what are the narratives that are currently kind of important or loaded to kind of tell from those places. And I think that place, you know, is about a connection with a specific region. When I'm doing this work in the Northeast or the Southeast, it's a very steep learning curve.

HL: Yeah, for sure. Your work involves a lot of history. And with that, I'm sure it also involves a lot of research. How do you balance being off the grid, which is a type of research in and of itself, while also doing all of this historical, archival research?

SR: All of the exhibitions and objects take a couple of years. This is not a quick or digital kind of output. There is as much time doing field study research as there is in special collections as there is cross referencing various disciplines to be able to tell a story of a place that collapses time in history pulls forward narratives of resistance that can be told through looking at past cycles of time.

HL: I'm sure it's a big undertaking to collapse these many different types of history, like colonial history, environmental history, histories that kind of aren't spoken about as often as other types of histories, into one single visual image or series of images. Is that more of an iterative process for you? Is it sort of expansive, where you have this idea, and you just start from one point, and it grows from there?

SR: I usually begin with the contemporary moment and try to understand how the hell we got here.

HL: Can't understand where we are now without understanding where we come from, yeah. Is there any particular history that stood out to you the most when you're doing your work?

SR:I think every place and every map kind of has its own way that it manifests, because there's certainly a lot of field study sketches, certainly a lot of research that goes into it, but its actual form is revealed later, and throughout a very slow process of spending time with the research.

HL: So it seems like the form comes through later through the research.
Sandy Rodriguez: Oh yeah. It's the last thing.

HL: Interesting. So what's an example of that form "coming through," what was that "a-ha" moment for you where you're like, "This is the form that this should take?"

SR: So for the first map, there were three regions that I explored very intensely - three deserts in California. And I came back with dozens and dozens and dozens of field study sketches. And at the same time, I was doing kind of colonial period research on the history of the Americas and the history of image making and color production. And then it became obvious that I needed to make a map of the state of California, done in colorants from each bioregion, painted with those materials to tell this narrative kind of journey, right? That also included the contemporary sites of immigration detention centers. So it's a natural history, a colonial history, and a contemporary kind of moment. And you are dialoguing with the material.
Harper Loeb: Do you feel that way when you're out in the field or more so in the post-processing stage?

SR: Like a year and a half later.

HL: It seems like a really long process of just becoming really rooted in where you're at and what you're working on, which I think is beautiful.

SR: Thank you.

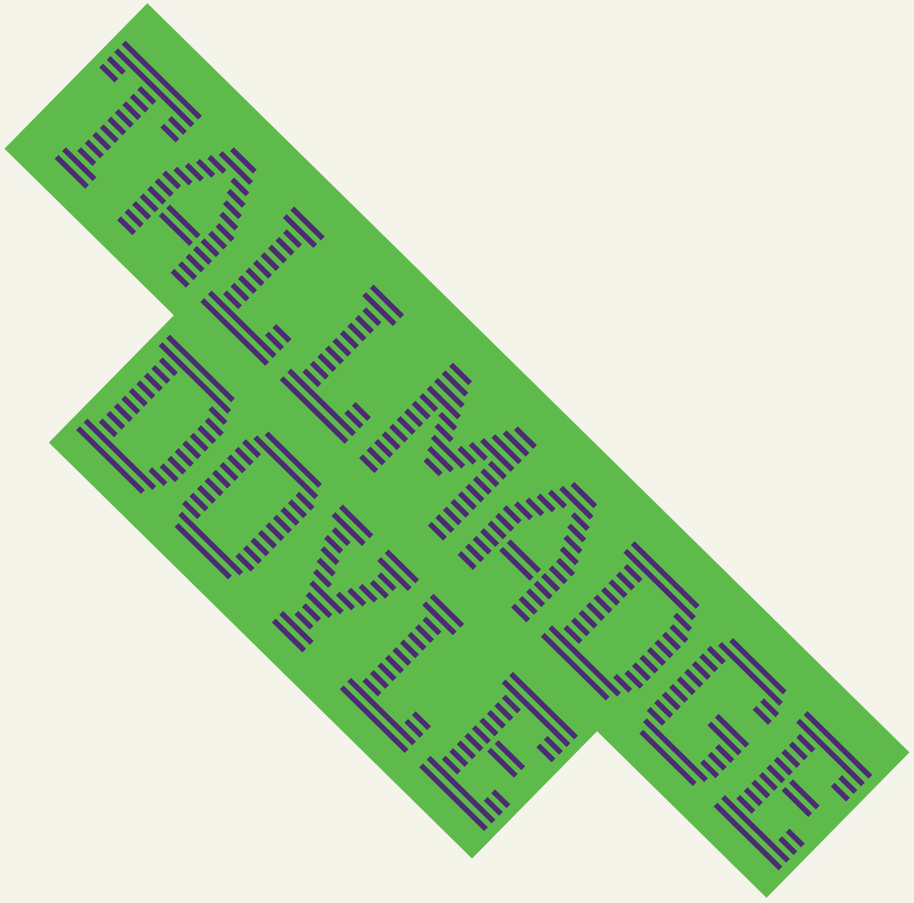
HL: It's a great way to live, a great way to make art.

SR: Yeah, when you can make time to do it.

HL: Absolutely. Well, thank you so much for sharing about this.

SR: Oh, absolutely.

"...a lot of field study sketches, certainly a lot of research that goes into it, but its actual form is revealed later, and throughout a very slow process of spending time with the research."



Tallmadge Doyle in conversation with **Christian Alvarado**

Tallmadge Doyle is an artist whose current printmaking and painting practice integrates intricate ecosystems of microscopic ocean life forms with the expansive telescopic view of our solar system. These natural realms, dissimilar in scope yet sometimes indistinguishable in form, overlap and intertwine. The resulting images serve as playgrounds for new visual realities where color is ethereal, vivid, and brilliant, where light is unpredictable, and form vibrates, allowing access into the abundance and immensity of what is often unseen. Doyle grew up in New York and attended The Cleveland Art Institute for undergraduate studies. In 1990, she came to Oregon to attend the MFA program at the University of Oregon, focusing on printmaking and painting. Doyle's work has been exhibited in numerous exhibitions throughout the United States and internationally. She is represented by the Seattle Art Museum Gallery and Davidson Gallery in Seattle, Augen Gallery in Portland, and the Karin Clarke Gallery in Eugene. She is a member of the Los Angeles Printmaking Society, the Boston Printmakers, and Seattle Print Arts, as well as the Southern Graphics Council International.

Christian Alvarado: Thank you so much for your studio visit with me. How was your talk earlier with the bfas and the undergraduates?

Tallmadge Doyle: Yeah, it was really fun to be with them. Yeah, actually, they asked really good questions, and I got to talk about my work, yeah, printmaking, and about how wonderful printmaking is the community, the big international community of printmakers and and I really enjoyed our individual interviews too. Very much. It was it was fun.

CA: What was it like coming back to the UO and like seeing the different work that you'd seen from the bfas. How does it compare for when you were here? What do you feel like has changed about you in that time, too? What was your mindset coming in here? What were you looking at? And how has that changed

dents were all really receptive. And, you know, for BFA students, they were pretty articulate, and they asked really good questions. And when I asked them to explain their work to me, they they were, they were better than I expected, that they were, and we talked a lot about, I talked with the printmakers a lot about experimentation and process and how the process would lead them to answering questions as well as learning and see

CA: What sort of questions did they ask you about your work that kind of stuck with you?

TD: Yeah, so, so one of one of them asked me about mapping in my work, and mapping is something that I love, and I'm interested in why people look at maps and why people like maps. And I was telling them that one of the reason I love maps is because I have a really bad sense of direction, so I need maps, but

"And I was telling them that one of the reason I love maps is because I have a really bad sense of direction, so I need maps, but also how maps sort of encapsulate in this abstract form and help us the world that help us find our way?"

TD: Well, I hadn't been here for a long time, so it was I felt like I didn't know what I was getting into. Yeah, the stu-

also how maps sort of encapsulate in this abstract form and help us the world that help us find our way? Yeah, and I always

need help finding my way. So I like maps, and I love the organization of maps. And within my own work, I like using maps. And you know that mechanical human made line that contrasts the very organic forms, so I like, I like that contrast a lot. I like seeing that in your work too. I'm very attracted to that.

CA: I also really appreciate mapping. I'm glad you caught on to that. I really appreciate it. I really, I love, like, cosmologies and understanding ways that people understand the world. Like, how do you what's your logic? What is your personal logic? You know, yes, when you're making your work this, like, abstract, spatial, colorful, do you feel like there's a searching? Do you feel like you're pulling something out of a void? Can you give me like a metaphor or an imagery to attach it to? Like, are you looking through space? Are you conjuring space? What's happening there?

TD: Conjuring? I like that word. I feel like it's I'm always experimenting, you know, especially all those smaller pieces in the show. Let me really feel for the freedom to experiment that I wouldn't have felt if I was working on a three by six foot piece of work. And I feel like it just kind of organically forms, and I work on many things at once. And so that also frees me up, you know, work on, you know, 10 things in one day, some days, and have, like. 30 things going on in the studio, and when I'm when I can't see it anymore, I don't know what to do. I just put it aside, and then I start working on something else. See, Am I answering your question?

CA: Sounds like you work really fast, and like things kind of talk to each other in the studio.

TD: Yes, yes, right, right? And if it's not talking to me, I just put it in a drawer. I put it away so I don't have to see it for a while. Yeah? And then I'll go, Oh, I know what to do. What to do with this piece. I'm gonna take this out. And it's amazing how that works. Like, I just need to freshen up all the time. Yeah, yeah. I think when you have, when anyone has, like, a bunch of smaller pieces that have a lot of variation in them. To me, I always think that person definitely has a favorite in that group that they made, if they can remember it, or maybe they have a favorite gesture or a favorite shape or doodle that they like to make that becomes the rest of the work.

CA: Do you have that sort of thing, like an attachment to an amoeba form or a star bursting in the sky, or is it the grid in the background? Like, what is your favorite part?

TD: That one's our that is a hard one. I mean, I do have certain favorites that I actually picked out to put in my lecture tomorrow. But I every single small piece I worked on, I put, I didn't edit out anything. I put them all in, and some of them feel almost unfinished, which I really like, because I have a compulsion to finish things, and I like them unfinished. So I just that was another thing working small. I could just felt the freedom just leave them in the group as being sort of a resting place in the the but I started, I did a lot of the plankton pieces so that those plankton pieces in the for lack of a better word right now, or phrase, the outer space pieces. And I really enjoyed how work those work together. You know, everything's adrift, you know, the title and drifting. So nothing is, you know, sort of anchored down. And I really like that. I really, I did a lot of those plankton pieces, and then I started work-

ing on the outer space, the more black and white. And I just really fell in love with working in black and white. Yeah, again. And so that's why I was really excited to see your black paper. So, you know, there's certain ones that I would pick out, but I really, I had those certain ones have printed maps, and I I printed those on very digitally printed maps. I print on really thick printmaking paper that's very absorbent. It really takes paint really well, and so those are sort of interspersed through. They're nautical maps.

CA: I'm thinking about, like, the relationship, the relationship between the sea and the sky is something I think about constantly, yeah, I think there's a poetry to it, a rhyme. What was that moment when you were like, Oh, the sea and the sky are connected. Those two things are the same thing. Okay, what is that? What did that feel like to you? What was that?

TD: So I was working on the first drawings in these in this series, and I'm working on these ocean life forums and and I started drawing celestial maps that I 50 or 12 years ago, I did a series called celestial mapping, which you see in the lecture tomorrow, and that I it was a very unconscious thing, which I love. I just took the mapping of the celestial maps. I just started drawing them, and I was like, oh, okay, you know, she's sort of like, really in the zone one day and during the pandemic, yeah, just drawing. And I'm like, oh, okay, I'm gonna, I'm gonna go with this. It just really felt right and surprisingly wonderful to do that, to connect those two places. And I think in my self consciousness I had connected them before, but this was the first time that it actually appeared right before me, and that was a really wonderful thing.

" I work on many things at once. And so that also frees me up, you know, work on, you know, 10 things in one day, some days, and have, like. 30 things going on in the studio, and when I'm when I can't see it anymore, I don't know what to do. I just put it aside, and then I start working on something else"

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