

Interviewee Name: Emiko Artemis

Interviewer Name: Annie Rolfe

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Transcript

Annie: Well, Emiko, thank you so much for joining me today. We'll make a start. Can you tell us about yourself? So, what do you think we need to know about you? Um, and your background that's helped you to become the artist that you are today?

Emiko: Sure. Um, before I do any of that, can I just, um. I'd like to just acknowledge the lands that I work on, which is the, the Ramindjeri country of the Ngarrindjeri nation and I live in Ramong, which is Encounter Bay. Um, and yeah, I'm here because of the care and culture of those people that continue to care and have connections to this land. Um, and yeah, I, my name is Emiko and my pronouns are they them and I've forgotten your question.

Annie: That's fine. So just want to know about you and your background and what led you to be the artist you are today.

Emiko: Okay. Um, so I have to say, I think my background is very integral to me being the artist I am today. Um, so, um, uh, I've had a disability since I was born. Um, but also I gained a disability through my childhood, which was very dysfunctional. Um, and then that continued into my adulthood. Um, and by the time I was a teenager, um, my life was, I guess, pretty much a shambles. Um, and, um, I'd always wanted to be an artist, among other things. I wanted to be a truck driver at one stage and Jillaroo and but yeah, I did want to be an artist as well. Um, when I was a child, I got taken to a Peter Sharp exhibition and I saw his paintings that were just kind of so gruesome and hellish and I thought, Wow, get that and I want to do that. Um, yeah, I think his work kind of spoke to how I felt really. You know, my life was, wasn't that great and, you know, that's like, to me how art can say something which you can't put into words and I really connected with that. Um, and then when I was 16, um, I'd left, I'd left home and I'd come back and

things were not great and a friend of mine was doing an art course and she said, Well, why don't you do this? And I kind of had nothing else to do.

Emiko: And so I thought, Well, okay, I'll give it a go. And that really awakened into me, Ah, the idea that perhaps this was something that I could do and that maybe I could be good at. Um, and of course, you know, things happened and that all got put on hold and, you know, um, lots of, you know, this happened, that happened and hospitalisations and setbacks and this and that and it took me a long time to really come back to the idea of myself as an artist and I must say, though, throughout all the difficult periods that I went through, um, during those early years, I was always doing art, you know, always drawing, always kind of thinking creatively. It was just something I've always done. Um, but then in my late 20s, I decided to go back and train as an artist so I went to art school and I ended up continuing through to do a PhD. Um, and you know, my life has never been very straightforward and there's always been ups and downs and hurdles and obstacles and kind of stopping points and so on. Um, but throughout all that, I've always continued, um creating

Emiko: And as I've gotten older, my art has very much become wiser with me and kind of more nuanced and more able to speak about me, myself and how I see the world and I guess essentially what I'm coming around to saying is that my art is about that. It's very much in to out and it's how how I see the world, which is a little bit different and me expressing that through colour, through absurdity, through unusual things and through kind of staging in particular ways what I want to, what I wanted to kind of demonstrate, um, and, and also one of the main themes that has been completely throughout my artwork since I started training as an artist and took it very seriously, was this idea of covering, covering the body and wearing masks and of course that is very much my experience in the world, is very much about having these different kind of layers of protection of, of, of, of um, kind of putting on different masks to kind of go and to be able to go out and do things and, and this kind of this binding and unbinding. Um, and that's how I experience my life and myself is this process of binding and unbinding and that, that is, that's the central element throughout all my art.

Annie: Mm hmm. Okay. Yeah, that's interesting. You mentioned Peter Sharpe as being influential and doing that that initial art course. Have there been other people or events that have been influential in getting you where you are?

Emiko: Yeah. Yeah, definitely. Um, when I went originally first to art school as a teenager, um, I was given, um, two books which were central into forming me. Um, one of them was Simone de Beauvoir's, *The Second Sex*, and the other one was the biography of Frida Kahlo and those two woke something in me, like it was like an epiphany of understanding. Um, Simone de Beauvoir's book, um, kind of highlighted to me what I had already experienced, which was the deep misogyny and sexism of, of society. Um, and I thought, yeah, it's not just me, you know, she's saying it, she's saying it so well, and I get it and this is important and I want to, I want to have this with me all the time. Um, so she awoke in me this sense that you can recognize something's bad and then you can do something about it and Frida Kahlo showed me that you can be yourself in all that that means and talk about that in your art and go forward and things don't have to hold you back. You know, she. I've just got goosebumps just talking about it. Just reading her book was like, wow. I mean, not only was I in love with her, she was incredible. Um, but her life and, you know, all that she did in her art, it just changed my world. Um, truly. Um, and then as I've gotten older, um Tracey Moffatt has been a huge, huge, um, not influence, but like a, like a, I guess, like, um, like a hero for me, you know, Um, the way that, again, she talks about social justice in her work. She brings her own experience into her work, and her work is so powerful, but so beautiful. Um, and she just, she, the way she tries all these different experiments, so these different techniques and she doesn't stand still.

Emiko: She's always, she's always doing something, something new and something different and she has all these kind of iterations of her, of her style and her work and it's like, Wow, this person is incredible and I'm in love with her. Um, and then I guess the other very groundbreaking breaking turning point for me, um, was going to the Arts Access Australia. Um, in Canberra, I think three years ago, I don't know, was before Covid so it was what, 2019 I think. Um, and I, I put in an application to have a scholarship to go there and I got it and all of a sudden I realized that, hang on who I am, you know, as somebody who's always been on the outside of society, like kind of knocking. "Hello? Hello, I'm here. Can I come in?" And just baffled as why that never worked. You know, doors always seem to be closed for me, and I couldn't understand what the map was. I had a map. You know, I went there and all of a sudden I thought, okay, I get this. Here are people I understand who understand me. Um, I can be me. I've finally learned what it meant to be me um, and that that was okay. That experience

of being completely myself, I'd never experienced fully that before. I'd had aspects of that, but never fully and that was groundbreaking for me. Um, and yeah, after going there, I couldn't ever turn back and be the person I was before. Yeah, that's like a before and an after. Um, yeah. So I guess those have been the pivotal, pivotal points in, in me, my progression.

Annie: Um, that's very interesting. So, um, what motivates your work today?

Emiko: Um. I guess what motivates my work? Well, I've bought I've continued with this experience of being myself and I've realized that there's no point me trying to make a make work that I think I should be making. Not that I have, but I've always had that, you know, the back of my mindset. Now I just make work that makes sense to me and is about me. And if people don't get it or don't like it, yeah, whatever. I can't help that. So, I don't try to I don't kind of try and change my work in order to fit this preconceived idea. I just do it so I've really embraced myself and who I am in my work, and my work still continues the same themes, but I think it does it in a more kind of evolved way. I suppose my work is very much central to, to who I am, and that means that as I evolve and grow, my work evolves and grows too. Um, and I've also moved into more embracing the performative side of my work. So my work's always been very performative, um, but I'm now kind of moving into that area more, wanting to embrace that more and I guess I'm embracing the more kind of multi-media aspect of my work because that's who I am. I'm just kind of a little bit of everything, a bit all over the place. So I guess it makes sense that my art is like that too. Um, and I've also moved into, um, into moving image, which I really love because there's just so much going on in moving image and I can do so much with it. Um, and I was finding that when I was working mainly in the 2D film field, it was just a bit too static for me. So, I'm really enjoying this new space, which is kind of shifting and changing and yeah, so open for opportunity and possibility.

Annie: Um, yeah, that's interesting. So, I know you're saying that your motivation now is different to, to what it was when, when you were first starting out. Can you describe the motivation that you had back then?

Emiko: When I was first starting out, I think a lot of my work was about kind of a lot of it was blurry and, and had a lot of movement um, and involved a lot of covering, a whole

body covering um, and I think I didn't quite know how to articulate or articulate it at the time, but I knew my work was about me and about how I experienced the world and perceived the world, but I couldn't quite tell you exactly how and I remember I was having this this show at Wollongong Gallery, Gallery called Local Current. Um, and I'd, I'd put in this work which was involved in be kind of with this massive kind of head covering on me and I suddenly realized that my work was about creating boundaries. Um, so this boundary between myself and the world, and that was because for so long, particularly in my formative years, there wasn't any boundaries, you know, for things that have happened to me. I didn't have the ability to form boundaries from my, my own self to the outside world and I realized that my work was about exploring that, you know, what does that mean when you have no boundaries? Were you, you haven't kind of naturally grown them. Um, and so I think my work really was, was really much about that, about how you, how you, how you operate in a world where your boundaries are not natural and how does that change the, the way the world is perceived and, and kind of and, and moved through.

Annie: Mm hmm. That's interesting. I'm just wondering, it sounds like a lot of your work is solo. Um, do you collaborate with others or have you in the past?

Emiko: Um, I have. So, um, because of, um, because of my disabilities and I'm not just talking one. There's a number. Um, it does make, um, interpersonal relationships relations incredibly challenging for me. Um, it doesn't come naturally to me. So, one, I never, I never learned them, but also because of my, um, one of my disabilities, they don't come naturally anyway. So, um, you know, having any kind of interpersonal relation, relational connection is really have to kind of. It feels like I've got to read an encyclopedia before I go out for the day just to get prepared. Um, and I just, you know, it's a lifetime journey and I'm still working on it, but I still have to work and it still baffles me, complete perplexes me and so I think that is one of the reasons that I do do a lot of solo work. Um, but it's not that I don't like to collaborate, it's just that I don't quite know how to do it so when I have collaborated, it's when there's been structures in place that I've been able to follow to allow me to do that collaboration and without those structures in place, it's pretty much impossible for me. Um, and the times where I have collaborated without those structures has been when I've, I've asked friends of mine who already know me and I have a lot of comfort already, um, to kind of step into

costumes and be, be players in my, in my setups. Um, and that's really, that's something that I can do without too much trouble, although it is quite difficult.

Emiko: But I can do that because my friends know me and they get me and, and there's that safety already. Um, but otherwise, yeah, I mean, like, I know that something I've noticed with the art field at the moment is it's, there's a lot more, um, kind of gatekeepers that than there were before in the sense that so much of the art world today is about curating. Um, so curators pick for their shows and I'm not saying that's bad. That just is how it is and it's also very much about collaboration. I get that too. Um, because it gets you out of that kind of that silo mentality, which isn't healthy, but for someone like me that's like all of a sudden these two big barriers have come up. So in order to kind of, to enter into that, you've really got to be you've got to be stepping out into the world a lot more than I'm able to. Um, and I live, I live regionally and then, as I've already explained, I have these kind of barriers to these interpersonal relations and so it's just there's like all of a sudden there's like, Oh, I've got another hurdle to get over. Not that I can't do my very best, you know, to navigate this territory, but yeah, it is another difficulty. Um, so yeah, the answer to the question, I do collaborate, but it is very hard.

Annie: Yeah. So just talking about, you know, the barriers of, of gatekeepers and, and living regionally, I'm just wondering where you are presenting your work and whether it's where you want to present, um, whether there are other places?

Emiko: Yeah, I guess. Probably this isn't you know, a lot of artists would find, find this visual artist particularly it's always you know, it's, it's, it's not easy to find ways avenues to present your work. There's a lot of us wanting to present our work and there's only a small amount of venues to present your work but saying that I've so far been able to you know to get my work out in places that feel right to me. Um, the places that I really like to work in are regional spaces. I really love regional galleries. Um, Wollongong that was a great place to be because that's a regional gallery, but it's just so big and beautiful. Um, at the start of the turnover of the year, so the end of this year til actually the start of next year, um, I'll be in Mildura Regional Gallery and I'm so excited, excited about that. So I love these regional spaces because there's just a different energy to the city spaces. Um, saying that I have had my work in Melbourne. Um, and I do like, I like Melbourne because it's just so big and varied. Um, so I really look far and wide to

present my work, but I don't just kind of like go for anything. I kind of think about what my work is and where, where would fit. Um, and you know, where what I'm doing would fit in a particular way. So, yeah, I guess I've, generally, I find I'm able to present my work in the places that I'm happy with. Um, but it's definitely, there's, you know, there's not a smooth, a smooth road. There's, you know, it's a lot of work, work and time and thought that's put into that and you know, I'll get rejections and that's always like, oh, but you know, it is the nature of the game.

Annie: So when you do present your work, what do you think um spectators think of your work?

Emiko: Well, I'll have to accept people think it's really weird and they give me a bit of time to understand this, that people just think it's a bit weird. I have a bit of social blindness so I'm not very good at reading people's cues. Luckily, as my kids have gotten older they've been able to like give me some, some gentle truths which is weird.

Annie: So is it important to you what spectators think?

Emiko: Um, yes and no. I think when I say it's weird, it's. It's. It's not. It's not completely impenetrable. It's just unusual. Um, but I couldn't, I couldn't do it any other way, you know? I'm just. I'm not. It's just who I am. This is what I do. I enjoy doing work which is a bit ambiguous in its meaning because that allows people to bring their own meaning to the space and that is really important to me so it's not so important that people kind of get my work, but it's important that they are able to make a connection in with my work and usually when I do my work, I like to have an opportunity to talk about my work, whether that's in my artist statement or I like to write a little essay that goes with my work or might be in an artist talk, because I think sometimes people, particularly if they're, um, they're not used to kind of engaging in that visual arts contemporary context. They're just, they just might be so kind of perplexed by it that they need a way in. Um, and so sometimes I'd like to be able to give people this way into my work and say, Well, this is why I'm doing this and this is what motivates me, blah, blah blah, blah. Um, so yeah, it is important, but it's not. It's definitely not what I'm thinking about when I'm making the work.

Annie: Okay. So do you think that people in the past, like when you, when you started out as an artist, were aware of your work or, um, work of disability artists in this visual art area?

Emiko: So say that again.

Annie: So in the past when spectators came, um, do you think there were, um was an awareness of your work and of disability art in general?

Emiko: No, I don't think so. Not like there is today. I think that's definitely that's something that is happening in the recent in the recent past. Not when I first started. Yeah. Yeah.

Annie: Okay. So why why do you think that's changed?

Emiko: I think there's a few a few reasons. I think one of them is just this general awareness. Recently we've had in the last, you know, few years, maybe even decade, maybe about the real and proper need for diversity. You know, this is beyond just talking about it. This is just actually saying as a society, you know, for our culture, we actually need to do diversity and we're not doing it and we need to do it. Otherwise, you know, society is going to go to shit. I don't know that as far as it went but you know, that's where extrapolate it to if you don't have that and I think that that kind of awareness has come through, you know, just this kind of this shift, global shift that's happened, you know, maybe as we've evolved, you know, as, as people have been, you know, people have been silenced in the past, have found ways, you know, to have a voice and that's come through activism. You know, for those people who've got up and and, you know, and and fought and and and, you know made made got that visibility. Um, and that's kind of that's been part of that change. Um and I think I do have to think, say that I think the NDIS is part of that too. And you know, like I think that the NDIS has got so many faults, but at its heart, even though I don't know if it does it, but at its heart, whether it was conscious or not, you know, it has this, this idea of self-determination.

Emiko: Um, I think that's, that's the heart of the NDIS that, you know, we, so much of disability services in the past were just really bad, you know, I mean, I experienced

them as a teenager being institutionalised. They were terrible places, They were really terrible places. There was a lot of, a lot of abuse, a lot of horrible things happened and they, you know, I experienced that closing down of major institutions. and even though it didn't happen in the best way, a lot of people, (you know, were put out without any supports) had to happen because they were terrible places. Um, and, and I think, you know, what we learnt from that is that people might think that they've got good reasons to do disability, but they're generally the wrong reasons because they're not disabled people. Um, you know, the only people that can properly speak to something is the people who know it and that's us, the disabled people. Um, and so I think the NDIS came into that, that awareness that just if you're disabled, that doesn't have to mean anything apart from you might need a little bit of extra support because society is not doing it for you. Um, and that's where we're at now. And this is a new thing.

Annie: That's interesting. So do you think, um, the visibility of your work, do you think people are aware of your work now or is there still more to do?

Emiko: Definitely more to do. Yeah, I think there's always more to do for me because I want as many people to see my work as possible. Um, because I do believe that I have something important to say. It's nothing groundbreaking, but it's important. And it's important because I'm one of those voices that haven't had a platform to speak in the past, and we need these voices out there to be a part of our diverse society, which is fantastic. Um, so yeah, um, I think, I think definitely more people know about my work than before for certain and it is out there in more places and it is more visible. Um, and I think sometimes not that people know me as, as, you know, when they see my work, they say, oh, that's Emiko, they're a disabled artist. It's, it's more that I'm able to say I'm an artist and I'm disabled or I'm in the disability arts field or when I've, you know, applying for a grant or an application, I can tick that box that says disability and I love that. I love that. Um, because that means that's one of those little gates has just come open a little bit, you know, which is fantastic. Um, and so yeah, I think that my art, you can't disconnect that from who I am and you can't take away my disability from who I am.

Annie: Mm hmm. That's interesting because, um, one of the questions is about how you identify. Um, so, yeah, just but I will ask first, um, what do you think the public would

say are the key milestones or big major happenings in the history of disability arts in Australia?

Emiko: Yeah, that's a really hard one um because I think, I think for the public and I'm talking like the general public. Yeah, I think it would be, well, I think it would just be like a gradual awakening, you know? I wouldn't say there would be key milestones. I think it would be like, Oh, hang on, I can see this now and I didn't before or have a bit of an understanding about this now, and I don't think I did before. I think it's like this kind of this evolution where, you know, the general public are starting to see things a little bit differently, a little bit more maturely and a little bit more, you know, compassionately and with more understanding.

Annie: Yeah, and um, what about you? What do you think are the key milestones?

Emiko: Um, well, my key milestones, I guess they're very personal.

Annie: Okay.

Emiko: Uh, one of them is, um, Larissa McFarlane's mural in Melbourne. Uh, to me, you know, that is a huge milestone, um, because, well, she's an incredible person. Um, and just the way that she's taken these heroes of the disability field and, you know, created this amazing mural out of them, you know, and it's smack bang in the centre of Melbourne, and it just looks incredible and, you know, it's, it's just fantastic. So to me, that's, that's a huge milestone. Um, you know, that we are able to, you know, just cherish, embrace and shout to the world our heroes. Um, and then, um, I guess another milestone would be um I don't know if they're milestones because, well, I think Tutti arts, that's been there for a while um, but to me, an arts organisation like that, Restless dance theatre there, that's another one both in Adelaide. Um, arts organisations that are, you know, disability disability led, um, you know the, the, the members of that organisation propel that in the direction that they want it to go. Um, and they make incredible work and to me that's, that's a milestone that we're able to have these places and they're a valued part of our cultural, our cultural conversation happening in, in Adelaide, in South Australia, but also beyond that, they're doing important stuff.

Annie: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Um, and you were talking before, it's not exactly disability art, but the NDIS has had some influence in in the way.

Emiko: Yeah, definitely.

Annie: It's to be self-sufficient and.

Emiko: Yeah, it shifted the territory, definitely. Um, you know where I live, there's, um, I don't know. I don't want to kind of, um there's just this, just some older organizations that two are running the old way and it's like it doesn't help anyone. It doesn't have to be like that, you know? And and I hope that, you know, as the NDIS and what it's meant to do, which is bring self-determination, starts to do more of what it's meant to do, then it will start to even influence little rural places like mine.

Annie: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. That's good. Um, I'm just wondering if you think that your art is political?

Emiko: I think, I think it's not inherently political. I mean, sorry, that's not right. It's not I don't mean it to be political, but I think it can't not be political. Like, um, you know, the whole thing, the personal is political. I strongly feel that if you are in like, a minority group or a group that hasn't always had an equal platform to speak, then everything you do is political and it can't not be. It's just the nature of it so in that sense, yes, my art is political and maybe just for me getting up there and saying, yeah, I'm I'm an artist with a disability or I'm a disability artist, um, that's political. Yeah. It's just who I am but just saying that becomes like a political thing. Yeah.

Annie: So do you think art should be political and how we define success? Or is it about aesthetic quality and, and appeal to the mainstream audience?

Emiko: Um I, I have a problem. First with the idea of success. Um, so I think, um, I think art is just so caught up in these old ideas of, you know, of genius, you know, the art genius like, you know, I'm not to say that, you know, the famous artists that we have looked to in our art history aren't amazing artists, but, um, you know, that's, that doesn't necessarily mean that it's, like, successful or, or good or has an inherent value above something else. Um, I, I really believe that all art that's created you can create art and it

can never leave your home and that's fine, but you can also create art and, and put it into a public venue and for me, um, my art is part of a process where I make it and create it and then having it out in the public conversation is that that part of that, that process and until I've done that, it's not complete. Um, and we got him, we got him. What I was saying now, um.

Annie: So you were talking about how art is not about success but whether, whether art, um, you know, is appeals to the mainstream audience as an aesthetic quality or whether, whether it's about, you know, changing how people think and feel and. Yeah.

Emiko: Yeah, yeah. So I think, I think, um, that I'd like to move away from the idea of success, um, and, and value in art and I know, you know, how do you do that? And maybe success is, you know, is your art viable? I mean, that's a very kind of easy way of kind of working out success if you can keep doing it because it's viable. Um, but it's so much more complex and complicated than that. Um, and, um, and I've forgotten the second part of the question. I'm so sorry.

Annie: That's okay. I keep complicating it.

Emiko: Um, so it's just me. I'm going off and I'm so sorry.

Annie: No, it's just about that difference of, of whether it's aesthetic quality or whether it's about changing how people think.

Emiko: Yes. Sorry. Now I'm fully on the track. Um, yeah. And like, I think I don't want to change the way people think of my art. Um, and, um, I don't, I don't want to, um, go somewhere and do art and be told how I should think either. Um, I like art. That kind of, um, makes me think through, through subtle ways. Um, you know, maybe through, I don't know, for whatever, but it's subtle. I like, I like subtlety and that's a personal thing. Um, it's a very personal thing and other people, you know, would like something else but I think because that's how I like my art and that's what speaks to me very, very strongly. I want to do that in my own art. So I really like to make art that is a bit ambiguous. Um, so I don't want to make, I don't want to change the way people think, but I do want to have people have conversations. Um, I want people to look at my art and think, oh, well, I wonder why that's like that, or that made me think of that and I

really, you know, that makes sense to me. I vibe with that. That's, that's what I want to have happen in my art.

Annie: Um. Yeah, that's, that's interesting. I just, I just want to circle back to, um, how you identify. You were talking before a little bit about identifying as a disabled artist. Is, is that how you identify or do you identify as an artist first with a disability? Um.

Emiko: No, no. Yeah. Yeah. I'm myself as a disabled person and an artist are both connected. Um, it definitely artist doesn't come before it because I can't take my art out of who I am. It's just comes from me and because of that. If I wasn't who I was, my art would be something completely different. Maybe I wouldn't even be an artist. Um, so, yeah, yeah, it's definitely, definitely. It's very much about who I am and how I identify and also, I think it's very important and I guess this is me being political is very important for me to put that out there. Um, you know, yes, I have a disability and you know, I'm happily will talk about not happily, but I will talk about, you know, trauma. You know, I've been homeless and things like that because I think this kind of stuff, you know, sometimes as a society, we just want to look at the, you know, the nice, happy things and that's not what it is. You know, we need to be, you know, be mature and have adult talks about this kind of stuff and, you know, people need to know that there's, you know, disabled people out there doing doing stuff and that's just how it is, you know, and it's good. Um, and so, yeah, it's important for me to identify as somebody with a disability, so, you know. Um, so yeah, that's all I've said.

Annie: Identifying as a disabled artist with pride?

Emiko: Definitely. Absolutely. Yeah. It's fantastic thing. Fantastic. Um, I wouldn't change, um, my disabilities for anything. I really wouldn't. Um, it gives me an absolutely unique way of looking at the world, and I love that and I'm so happy and grateful that I'm an artist and I'm able to bring that unique way of viewing into the viewing the world, into other people's lives through my art. Um, you know, I love that we are going towards, towards a diverse society. You know, the voice referendum. I love that that's happening because it means that we are recognising that people in this society have been silenced and we don't want to have it happen anymore. You know, why would we not want to give as many people as possible the platform to be able to speak? You know, that's only good. That's what a good society is. It's diverse. So yeah, I'm so grateful that I'm part of

this diverse voice. It's fantastic. I'm queer, non-binary. They're my other identifications and I love it. Wear them with pride.

Annie: That's excellent. Yeah. So do you think there's a commonality or a consistency in how, um, artists who the public would identify as disabled think about these things? Or is it very individual?

Emiko: Um. No, I think, think with anything that's new if I was going to generalize and you're talking to like the general public, a lot of people really are just getting on with their lives and don't kind of look outside of their circle and so what they're what they're learning about something that they don't know before is, you know, from know mainstream guess and that brings a commonality. Yeah. Um, so in that sense there I think there is that commonality but I think once people start to kind of step outside that a little bit and do their own, own kind of looking and researching, then that becomes an individual thing so I think it's both.

Annie: Yeah and what about other artists and the way that they identify? Do you think there are differences? Um, you know, with artists who identify as First nations or um, LGBTIQA+, you know, how do they, how do you think other artists would think about identity?

Emiko: Um. I don't understand what you mean. Like, you mean how.

Annie: You talked about the general public and you've talked about your own identity, but when you think about other artists with disabilities, um, do you think there are differences in the way that, um, they identify or in the way that they think about identifying?

Emiko: Yeah, I would say so, yeah. Yeah. Definitely I think it is very much a personal thing. But I think there's also the, there's the political aspect of it as well. Um, I think you have your own personal decisions, but sometimes you might want to identify, you know, in a particular way because, um, you know, you want to get a particular point across. Um, yeah so I would say that it's a bit of both, but I would suspect it's a very personal thing. Yeah Um, and there's just also the whole thing of the power in numbers as well.

Annie: Yeah, it's interesting to see how artists are identifying and you're right, it tends to tie in many times with, um, politics, politics of art and yeah, that's right. The change that people want to see.

Emiko: Yeah, yeah and that's, um, going back to what I was saying, that, you know, when you've been in a voice that's been silenced, um, that everything you do is political because you're pushing up against something and you're creating a space, a social and cultural space that wasn't there before.

Annie: Yeah. Yeah. So is there something we haven't asked about that we should?

Emiko: Um. I don't, don't think so, don't know.

Annie: No final thoughts or. Um.

Emiko: No, I don't think so. Um, yeah, I'll probably have one when I, you know, when we finish, I think. Oh, I forgot to say.

Annie: Not a problem at all. Well, thank you. Thank you for your wisdom and yeah your thoughts. It's, it's great to hear.

Emiko: Thank you so much. Yeah, It's been a pleasure.