

Danielle New: Okay, great well, thank you dawn for coming here today and speaking with us and first off I just like to know a little bit about your piece, if you would tell us about it.

Dawn Laurant: All right, my piece, and this show is titled in place.

Dawn Laurant: And it's an oil painting on board it's 16 inches Square and it is a very different piece, for me, in terms of technique and the approach the themes.

Dawn Laurant: I use a very limited palette it's reside palette black white and a little raw number, and I also had a very detailed design for this piece I knew exactly where I wanted to end up at the end.

Dawn Laurant: And that's real different from the way I usually approach my work, so I painted the board black and worked with white transfer paper onto the blackboard.

Dawn Laurant: So again, very detailed design and then I worked from top to bottom, which was also very different for me so that that process.

Dawn Laurant: was pretty unique and it took a few months to do it because it is a very detailed image, but in that process was very therapeutic I found so I I kind of enjoyed that.

Dawn Laurant: The themes being social and political and most of my other work doesn't necessarily isn't necessarily inspired that way, although much more since the you know coven and also black lives matter.

Dawn Laurant: I started creating this piece at the end of May, after the black lives matter protest here in Seattle.

Dawn Laurant: And I you know looked out up the sea of people wearing masks we're all afraid we don't know if the person next to us might have covered, but we want to be there in solidarity and those dual themes of isolation.

Dawn Laurant: And you know that fear, but the solidarity of being together is are the two themes prominent in place, and I wanted to create an image that was iconic of what we're going through.

Dawn Laurant: Last year we're still in it, but that dual you know we're isolated we're sheltering in place or mast, but we also come together to support what we believe in and there's a danger to that too, so I that's what you know was inspired or what inspired me for for this painting.

Danielle New: wow well, that obviously you know lines up so well with what Hannah and I as as curators you know the themes that we developed for the show so it's so wonderful that we're able to have you in it, and this piece.

Danielle New: I would also like to ask how you design the composition of the piece if it was taken from a photograph or from maybe an image in your memory of those protests.

Dawn Laurant: Yes, thank you, I.

Dawn Laurant: forgot to mention that because I took a lot of photographs, when I was at the protest, as did my son, and so I did a composite of photos that were basically from the Seattle protests and then.

Dawn Laurant: You know in photoshop I designed what I wanted was not something recognizable as far as a specific street or specific people, and so I took mass from various photos and I wanted those to be somewhat abstracted.

Dawn Laurant: And that goes back to the when we looking at the world right now we're experiencing the world it's familiar but it's out of focus it's a bit.

Dawn Laurant: abstracted right it's different, and it will be different going forward so looking at the world through kind of a different lens a little out of focus is the way I wanted to this pain to.

Dawn Laurant: To come across, and so I did use some photographs composited and filter and then transferred just a line drawing design to the to the board.

Dawn Laurant: And that's pretty much how I went about it so using some references of photos but pretty much from you know composited memory of the experience and from all the images that you know, we were all seeing during this time.

Danielle New: As is so powerful and I can definitely see that in the in the work.

Danielle New: I am also wondering how you help your art will impact viewers of the show or other.

Danielle New: Other shows that it has been involved in what ideas emotions and conversations might you want viewers to have.

Dawn Laurant: Well, I was hoping that.

Dawn Laurant: When viewers saw the painting, it would touch on both that feeling of isolation sheltering in place, I the title in place was because I.

Dawn Laurant: wanted that title to reflect that we are you know basically we're all alone, in the end, I mean we're together, but we have to, we have to be in our own skins and with.

Dawn Laurant: coated and with the protest as well we're coming together, but we had to stay part with with the masks.

Dawn Laurant: I wanted the viewers to feel those two feelings of the isolation, the fear the loss, you know we didn't know, especially in May.

Dawn Laurant: Cities were shutting down and we had no idea how soon or how long all of this would last and, of course, you know the blm movement is ongoing.

Dawn Laurant: But it was all kind of coming to a head so there's a lot of that.

Dawn Laurant: Again this dual themes in the painting that I was hoping viewers would take the time also to wander through the crowds because, as I.

Dawn Laurant: in the foreground the faces are a bit more defined, but then, as you go back in the crowds they become more abstract is so it really.

Dawn Laurant: is supposed to bring that feeling of looking at the world out of focus, you know we we we understand it, but we don't quite understand it and that's very much that feeling of especially late, you know late may or.

Dawn Laurant: The end part of last year, and so, but the strength in being together as a group was the other part of it that i'm hoping will come across.

Dawn Laurant: People did come out, they did stand in place, they are still standing and I thought it was interesting your my title and your title of your show you know they really do work together quite well and.

Dawn Laurant: and reflect those themes that we you know we've been talking about.

Danielle New: Absolutely, I totally agree.

Danielle New: I absolutely agree with that.

Danielle New: Just switching gears a little bit, but not really since we've been discussing the pandemic a lot, and these pastor events, but it has been about 12 months since COPA has has.

Danielle New: arrived, I suppose, and so i'm wondering if you can tell us a little bit about your past year, what you've been up to and how how these past 12 months have impacted you.

Danielle New: well.

Dawn Laurant: it's been challenging of.

Dawn Laurant: course for me, as well as all of us, you know, we have our our challenges of sheltering in place of being separated from our family and our friends and.

Dawn Laurant: All the activities that we love going to museums, I think, oh, you know I can't wait until we can do that it's starting to happen again, but.

Dawn Laurant: i'm I have two elderly parents who aren't doing that well they they haven't contracted covert, thank goodness, but I haven't been able to see them for a year and a half they're in different states.

Dawn Laurant: And that's been very difficult so on a human level, you know we have I have experienced that sense of isolation and the challenge of being separated.

Dawn Laurant: The balance to, that is, we were forced to slow down, and in doing so it allowed us to be more reflective and I would say again on a human level being.

Dawn Laurant: being forced to slow down and re prioritize you also realize what's important in life.

Dawn Laurant: And so we've all found ways to stay connected, which has been really great it's not the same as seeing someone in person, but.

Dawn Laurant: You know we've learned new tools we found new ways, and I think those are hopefully a lot of the positives that will bring forward.

Dawn Laurant: When we do you know when we are allowed to go back out and we're in the new, whatever the new normal is, and so I think there's been challenges but.

Dawn Laurant: You know, really those challenges have forced us to look for the opportunities to you know prioritize and to figure out what do we want it, how do we want to what do we want our new world to look like, so I think that's positive.

Dawn Laurant: and on an artistic level, you know originally last year, or were initially I was creating a lot of work that had to do with the pandemic had little viruses floating and cityscapes and you know, and of course the planning in place and a few other smaller ones that were about.

Dawn Laurant: The blm movement, and then I went into kind of a hibernation mode and i've heard this from other artists that you know you kind of first you respond, then you hibernate and.

Dawn Laurant: What happened next was I started to work differently than I had before, and I I started abstract and i've been primarily working.

Dawn Laurant: With abstract you know images and an abstraction for the last six months, I guess, and i've i've really enjoyed it so for me going in in in inward.

Dawn Laurant: cause that different direction in in my work, and so I think, for you know lessons for what to take from this is, I i'm a very happy introvert.

Dawn Laurant: I actually liked being home i'd like to having that slow down schedule and pace, but also needing the structure, you have defined structure for yourself and that's been a challenge you know to do that.

Dawn Laurant: So I think we'll have you know a lot of good, positive things will come out even though, given the challenges and you know a lot of the last that we've experienced and and the unknown right.

Danielle New: Absolutely and and you touched on so much with this response I do want to i'm curious a little bit about your artistic shift to abstraction could you just tell us a little bit more about that or your feelings towards it.

Dawn Laurant: Yes, so I I started to.

Dawn Laurant: You know when you're well in the slowing down in the reflecting I started reflecting on.

Dawn Laurant: Life and what was important for me and I thought about history, and then I started thinking about layers.

Dawn Laurant: artifact layers I did archaeology and so I really enjoyed that that process of discovering, you know as you chip away at the sediment and layers there's these wonderful things that starting merging so.

Dawn Laurant: I thought well that's that's what i'm going to that's what i'm going to work on and i've been working on what i'm calling the artifacts series for last six months and.

Dawn Laurant: it's mixed media, some of them are mixed media, but I create an under mana mana print on the canvas and then I cover that with paper, and then I start to reveal layers through paint and different techniques and so i'm adding but i'm also subtracting and I think that's been a little bit.

Dawn Laurant: Well, surprising and it's I don't know what i'm you know I don't know which way i'm going, but I i'm finding it to be very.

Dawn Laurant: Very fun and i'm enjoying you know the abstraction because i'm not really worried too much about what it's going to look like I do miss more representational work, because with abstraction you don't have anything to hang your hat on you kind of and it's.

Dawn Laurant: You probably heard this from people before but it's a lot harder than you think it is.

Dawn Laurant: But i've been enjoying it and because it, it does for me, the theme of the archaeology and history.

Dawn Laurant: Is and traveling and understanding ourselves through looking at our past, I think all those themes are very relevant to what you know we've been going through these last you know 12 months or more so yeah.

Danielle New: it's been wonderful.

that's.

Danielle New: Great I can move on to just one of our last questions here is there is there, something you hope others can take away from these past 12 months of a pandemic times.

Dawn Laurant: I hope that we, as we look at what we've you know we've we've all lost.

Dawn Laurant: Through the last year and a half, but I think we've all gained as well and, and you know some of those I think with being challenged as we've been it does call on our strengths and sometimes we don't even know we have those.

Dawn Laurant: For me, as a as an individual, and also as an artist, I think the last year has made me stronger and more resilient.

Dawn Laurant: Which is part of what I really appreciate about the theme of your show is that you know, we are still standing we are more resilient.

Dawn Laurant: Because of those challenges we didn't ask for that to happen, you know, sometimes we grow and we don't ask for the reasons but.

Dawn Laurant: Life pushes you off the cliff and you have to jump and you have to figure out, you know i'm going to land somewhere and where is it going to be and and.

Dawn Laurant: So that is what i'm hoping, is that you know people appreciate the strengths that we've all learned that we have new tools new ways of dealing with it.

Dawn Laurant: And, and that we can sort of bring some of those good things forward with us, we are just talking about you know different museums and program programs that are now online.

Dawn Laurant: And we think we didn't do that before but there's some some good things that come from that as well.

Dawn Laurant: Like hearing artists interviews where we can really hear in depth what what is inspired.

Dawn Laurant: A certain artwork so i'd say that's that's pretty much what I, I hope that people can you know appreciate the strengths and that we all.

Dawn Laurant: Have gotten through or will are getting through and, hopefully, you know we'll continue to to create this community with each other, because we're artists, we.

Dawn Laurant: You know, we had to figure out how do we still connect to each other, how do we still create and get our workout and it's been incredible what's happened, you know with the arts Community just as an example.

Dawn Laurant: Of course, you know our our health and our first responders everybody's risen to the occasion.

Dawn Laurant: there's so many acts of courage and and strength that we've seen and and I am really excited to see.

Dawn Laurant: What art is going to be created, you know, out of this, because this is going to keep happening for the next who knows how long as.

Dawn Laurant: Artists and writers and musicians are all processing still you know still kind of new I think it's going to be very exciting to see what what comes next you know artistically and creatively for everybody.

Danielle New: Yes, I thank you so much for that reflection and i'm also so excited to see what what comes next our artists all about that reflection and communication about the times.

Danielle New: So I completely agree.

Dawn Laurant: And it does take time to sink in you know, I do have a lot of artists friends that still feel like I can't get anything done I don't know.

Dawn Laurant: But it's going to happen that's where everyone's hibernation time and that time for reflection is different and and it's here you kind of go through those cycles right those creative cycles.

Dawn Laurant: But I think we're yeah we're going to see some pretty exciting work coming out of of all of this.

Dawn Laurant: So that's that's great to look forward to.

Danielle New: Well, thank you so much for joining us today is there anything you'd like to add, before we wrap up anything about your piece, or about the show.

Dawn Laurant: Well, I hope to see the show I, or do we know for seeing it in person, are we going to be able to have a in person viewing when your show opens.

Danielle New: Right, so the museum is currently open, I know you know, in the past there's been openings and closures, with the different you know changing guidelines but Mona is is it's doors are open.

Danielle New: we're not quite sure about any sort of in person opening event like how you would normally have like a reception or something like that, but we will absolutely keep you updated and I definitely foresee.

Danielle New: It being open during the summer, when the show is up so.

Dawn Laurant: Well, we have that to look forward to and and i'll have some works, hopefully coming up that and enhancing gallery in Seattle.

Dawn Laurant: Towards the end of the year, and you can follow me on instagram at dawn Laurent, and so I hope that we can all stay connected i've.

Dawn Laurant: Added you to my instagram and and looked at the fellow artists in the show so i'm very honored to be part of the show and and look forward to seeing all the work up together.

Danielle New: Fantastic and and we want to thank you again for your participation in this show and we're so excited to have such a wide array of Pacific Northwest artists represented so.

Dawn Laurant: Well, thank you for your work well.

Danielle New: Thank you i'm going to go ahead and stop this recording here.