

Hanna Corneliussen: awesome so thanks again for joining us today, we were wondering if first off you could tell us a little bit about your pieces that are going to be in the show So what are the main themes and how and why did these themes develop.

rieslaptop: Well Okay, so I was never very good at drawing as a child, and yet I have turned out to be really involved in portraiture primarily of people who have died, but not exclusively.

rieslaptop: Ever since thurgood Marshall died in 1993 when I was inspired to actually make a chair commemorating thurgood Marshall, and so I kind of.

rieslaptop: unintentionally have done a lot of that and when a covert pandemic started and the quarantine started.

rieslaptop: And one of the very first things I noticed was all the people who were dying who and how they were being treated by the media in terms of recognition.

rieslaptop: And I have been really involved in music all my life i'm not a musician, but I have been a collector and.

rieslaptop: More recently, a DJ, and so I really pay attention to the music world, and when I started seeing all these obituaries and I had to dig to find some of them.

rieslaptop: Have musicians, who have died, I felt like it was the perfect thing for me to do to do a series of.

rieslaptop: portraits about these musicians when I first started out, I really had no idea what I was getting into, but that is what i've been doing for a year now and.

rieslaptop: it's an endless project I don't know if I will stop at some point or not, but so i'm just showing a couple of the over 70 that i've done so far and I would imagine, I will stop before 100 or more.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah I think it's so amazing and astounding how many there are, and I think it's so wonderful that you have chosen to deep dive into this and showcase these stories and these people so.

Hanna Corneliussen: i'm so kind of switching gears a little bit, so this is the exhibition has a dual theme want to standing still and feeling frozen in time and the other of resiliency and emerging standing still So what are your reflections on this theme, as it relates to your work.

rieslaptop: Well, part of what i've always done as part of my artwork is public art pieces and pieces that bridge the gap between art and craft in metal.

rieslaptop: And during the pandemic that work pretty much dried up, so I was, like many people really isolated and quarantine now luckily I live in a very beautiful place on a farm.

rieslaptop: But I still have the same kind of psychological things going on, and so I decided that this project would be a way for me to.

rieslaptop: focus my attention on something real as in making a series it had you know clear parameters and goals, but also to focus my attention.

rieslaptop: out in the world on what's going on in the world to try and you know, keep your sanity and keep your perspective as a human being, rather than just you know being.

rieslaptop: narcissistic, and so this project was credit for that, because it combined both being able to focus and have have a sense of purpose and get get through each day.

rieslaptop: With looking at the world seeing how the world is being affected by all this, and so, for me it was it was psychologically, you know very healthy to do this, as well as being a really interesting project further I got into it, the more I got interested in doing.

Hanna Corneliusen: yeah that's so like unique how you say, are you using it almost as like a coping mechanism in a way.

Hanna Corneliusen: With everything that's going on but you're also utilizing it to connects with the world everything that's going on.

Hanna Corneliusen: And I think that's wonderful because my personal like first response was instant distractions right.

rieslaptop: want to go i've done my share of doom scrolling and web web surfing pressure.

Hanna Corneliusen: right but yeah that's that's just wonderful so kind of leading into this next question, how do you hope that these pieces will impact the viewers, what kind of ideas emotions and conversations, do you hope that this will provoke.

rieslaptop: Well, I think, for all of us, the day safety response to this pandemic is to say.

rieslaptop: It doesn't apply to me and i'm going to pull into my little shell.

rieslaptop: And pet my cat and learn to cook and do different things like that, and the thing that's really amazing to me about this project because i've gotten into it more and more is to see the incredible range of people who have been affected by coven.

rieslaptop: Globally, and every age every kind of person every everything you can possibly imagine is encompassed in this this group.

rieslaptop: And so to me it's really important to get out of your own kind of personal worry hall and think you know how did this affect the world and how lucky I am.

rieslaptop: You know how lucky we all mostly I mean, I know, five or six people who have actually died, but in general, I consider myself to be extremely lucky.

rieslaptop: entitled, you know, and I have you know, I have a living, you know I have living I have food i'm fine.

rieslaptop: But I think it's really impactful when you see the range of how many people that you kind of zoned out are dialed under for your own personal psychological reasons, and I think that everyone that i've shown any group of these to really get inspired.

rieslaptop: and saddened and exhilarated at the same time.

rieslaptop: You know, because it's really exciting and healthy healthy healthy and happy to see this incredible range of people that have done this incredible range of amazing things.

rieslaptop: And the same time they're all dead, and you know it was because of the failure of us as a people on the planet, you know to manage.

rieslaptop: You know this kind of thing is is manageable and we didn't do it so to me it's it's a really interesting.

rieslaptop: The emotional and psychological effects of seeing this work are really interesting and they seem pretty universal someone can always pick out an individual, they can relate to, they also can always appreciate the really widescreen so that's what I what I hope for.

Hanna Corneliussen: You were touching on all these how everybody has different experiences, you know, during this past year, so I was wondering if you could tell us a little bit about your past year, we know we're coming up on the 12th 13th month mark.

Hanna Corneliussen: anniversary of of of everything, so what have you been up to how have these last 12 months impacted you on a personal level or on an artistic level.

rieslaptop: Well, normally my wife and I have been living on this farm for 25 years and we have.

rieslaptop: Extensive studio space we have our own little world so it's not uncommon for me.

rieslaptop: To go two or three days without venturing out into the greater world, so in that sense, you know, I was kind of able to.

rieslaptop: not have as much social contact because it's somewhat related to my normal life, but I think everybody really felt it.

rieslaptop: And the longer it went on, you know, the more we felt it and, like I said I was really lucky to have this disability to work here at home and to put my energy into that.

rieslaptop: At one point, in December, we finally did go down to California for a little while and see the sun and still being very isolated in and really concerned about safety, but that was after 10 months of.

rieslaptop: Nazi many know i'm lucky that also we live, about two miles from a little town of Edison, which is about 150 people, and I know, almost all of them.

rieslaptop: And so we were able to have a little bit of controlled social interaction without freaking out over crowds you know it's like that I gotta admit I didn't go to Seattle, for months, but.

rieslaptop: So, so my Community helped me through it and you know my my lifelong ability to focus on sort of personal projects, you know that's what art really yes.

Hanna Corneliussen: that's so wonderful um is there anything that you learned about yourself as a person, this year.

rieslaptop: Well, I think you know i'm in a funny stage i'm in the opposite in from puberty because i'm an old person.

rieslaptop: And so i've been kind of reflecting a lot over the last couple years, one of the things that helped me get through this year was that I got when I social security.

rieslaptop: And so that's changed your life you're you are hopefully learning more about yourself all the time I wouldn't say that the pandemic per se taught me more about myself, but I think the the amount of time.

rieslaptop: spent more alone made me think more about you know goals and projects, and you know, history and what's important, so I would say indirectly.

rieslaptop: i've thankfully did not have to confront you know the really horrible things that you know people like frontline workers get on a daily basis, so I had a much more sort of gradual process of thinking about myself.

Hanna Corneliussen: that's a wonderful I love, how you.

Hanna Corneliussen: categorize this time to is like a period of reflection, I think that's a good perspective.

rieslaptop: Well, I think it would have been crazy not to, and I have friends who didn't you know just tried to blot it out one way, but that was what worked for me.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah so um.

Hanna Corneliussen: Is there something that you hope everyone can take away from this past year's events, if anything.

rieslaptop: Well, I mean on a on a macro level on a global level, I hope we can take away that we can do better, and that we should take care of each other better.

rieslaptop: Because so much of what happened.

rieslaptop: With so sadly due to you know selfishness on a big scale, so I mean that was the main thing but.

rieslaptop: In a tiny way the project that i'm working on has it has a connection to that, in the sense that it's talking about what we've lost.

rieslaptop: You know I New York Times actually has a whole section of their events that are called it's called those we've lost and.

rieslaptop: To me it's like more than just the people, because the, especially when i'm thinking about these musicians.

rieslaptop: You start listening to you know some of the musicians I know who they are, and I have even owned.

rieslaptop: records of this, but others i've never heard of before, and when you start exploring you start realizing that there's an entire lifetime connect and each one of these people.

rieslaptop: which, in turn, with music is this network with all these other people and places and times and events and so to me.

rieslaptop: that's that's been really important is the idea of how much the world is interconnected and how this is like one little way of viewing that and that to me would also be the big lesson of the pandemic is how much we are interconnected how much more we should be.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah I think that's so beautiful and true like at the end of the day, we're all human and we all have the same basic needs right and this basically shows that too.

yeah.

Hanna Corneliussen: it's wonderful well Thank you so much is there anything else you'd like to add, before we end here, how can folks access your work.

rieslaptop: and give a well i'm I am easily findable on the Internet, I have never up to date website that is recently me calm.

rieslaptop: But I have a instagram called reese board auto board auto means embroider in Spanish, and that is about a or 90% focused on my embroidery projects so that's always a really easy way just ri s and you'll find me.

rieslaptop: In terms of this project, I am going to start thinking about trying to find places to exhibit it because I really wanted to be seen.

rieslaptop: All together, and so this this next spring and early summer is when i'm going to be starting to reach out to museums and places like that, where I could really.

rieslaptop: sprawl because, just to see 100 pieces, you need you need the room, because I would really like to get this out in the world, and I probably will do a little book of it.

rieslaptop: Just a you know, a blurb kind of self published book because it's also nice to have something you can hold the hand where you can see them all so that's my my thoughts about about getting people to see it.

Hanna Corneliussen: was wonderful well if you have any dates or anything like that, let us know, we would love to see it.

rieslaptop: And I gotta say i'm really happy that you guys are doing the show here, and I think it's really great always to see a younger curators with a fresh eye, and you know because curation can sometimes get a little bogged down in its own past, so I encourage you guys.

Hanna Corneliussen: Thank you so much we're just so honored to have you here and to have our other artists that are on board we're just we're so excited about this.

rieslaptop: Yes, no i'm i'm excited about the show be great and it's it'll be a really good show for people as they're just starting to go back out into the world which is you know what's going to happen in the summer.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah yeah yeah well, thank you again so much i'm going to i'm going to click and recording here.

Hanna Corneliussen: There we go.