



2019 Monster Drawing Rally - part 4

SPEAKERS

Seth Richardson, Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood, Holly Miller, Allison Heaton, August Mitchell, Emma Ganger-Spivak

S Seth Richardson 00:05

This is the Portland Art Museum Podcast, the channel between the Museum and you. Our goal is to amplify community voices through conversations and personal stories. And we're here to facilitate respectful dialogue, debate and the free exchange of ideas. To participate, submit your idea at pam.to/podcastidea. We invite you to connect with art through your own experience, voice and personal journey. relevant links and transcripts for each episode are available at portlandartmuseum.org/podcast. I'm Seth Richardson, head of volunteer services at the Portland Art Museum. This year the Museum celebrated Monster Drawing Rally for the fifth time inviting a record 100 local artists of all ages to make as much art as they can in an hour. Each piece is then sold for a flat rate of \$35 as a fundraiser for free youth programs here at the Portland Art Museum. In addition to raising money, MDR is a beloved community event where art lovers come together to listen to music, eat good food, and witness the vibrancy of Portland's art scene in action. The Monster Drawing Rally is truly one of the highlights of the Year for our volunteers. At MDR, we have about two dozen volunteers who provide information to visitors, assist the artists, sell the art and so much more. My role at this event is to assign volunteers to their positions, make sure they all have the training that they need, and to provide them with ongoing guidance and support throughout the evening. We wouldn't be able to have MDR without our volunteers who bring an incredible amount of energy and enthusiasm to this fun community event. For the first time ever this year, the Portland Art Museum Podcast had an outdoor podcasting studio in the Museum courtyard during the event, the podcast

studio was a place where anyone could sit down and talk about who they are, their relationship to MDR and what art means to them. One of our volunteers Steve lent a big helping hand in the podcast studio during the first half of the Monster Drawing Rally. The person conducting the interviews is Emma Ganger-Spivak, a student intern here at the Museum who along with ongoing projects and learning and community partnerships department has been assisting with the production of this Podcast this summer. Her efforts spearheading this series represents the culmination of her podcasting work. What you are about to hear is the fourth episode in the series we are producing from those interviews. In an effort to intervene as little as possible. We decided to organize the interviews into random groupings so that the interviewees can speak entirely for themselves. First up, a local art student with a passion for character design, who stopped by MDR on a whim and now hopes to return as a participating artist in the future.



Allison Heaton 03:00

My name is Allison Heaton. I'm an artist at PNCA currently a junior. I am an art student at PNCA Yes.



Emma Ganger-Spivak 03:10

Cool. And so what are you doing here today?



Allison Heaton 03:12

I am visiting. I saw that you guys were doing an art event. And I was like, that would be super cool to check out be involved in. I was actually going to sign up so I can participate in the next event, hopefully, hopefully. Yeah, awesome. You should definitely come back next year. It'll be super fun. But this is your first time at monster drawing rally today. Yes, it is. Yeah. Cool. So could you describe for our listeners, what the atmosphere is like? It's very upbeat, wonderfully supportive. It's super cool to go around and just watch like super normal people who are artists who would go like be like, Oh, wow. So this is how people do it and being able to, like, walk around and see how other people do their progresses is super awesome. And it's a really good way to improve love art and other people's lives. Because I feel like it's such a art is one thing. It's this mysterious thing. It's not that mysterious. It's just you know. So that's it. I think about it.



Emma Ganger-Spivak 04:13

You talked about involving art and other people's lives. But I'd love to hear a little bit more about the role that art plays in your life. I know you're an art student. Maybe you could

talk a little bit about what you do.

A Allison Heaton 04:24

Yeah, I'm a character design artists, mostly for tabletop games and video games. I'm currently working on some character design stuff for hopefully Wizards of the Coast if I can get there someday. And it's, you know, that whole thing is, it's my whole life. So designing characters watching people writing stories, that's a that's what I do. And hopefully I can do it for a living someday. Once I get there.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 04:50

That's awesome. Um, do you have a favorite artists, local or otherwise?

A Allison Heaton 04:55

Oh, gosh, um, or multiple? Yeah, one of my favorite artists. His name is Chuck Lukacs. And he he's also a artist for Wizards of the Coast. He draws cards for a Magic: the Gathering makes art for D&D books. Just an incredible Illustrator. He lives here in Portland. I would die for him. He's one of my teachers. He's brilliant. Yeah. And also my mom. I love my mom. She's an artist as well. So

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 05:26

is that part of how you got into making it?

A Allison Heaton 05:30

Not really it was definitely an influence. But I got into my into art on my own terms pretty much just kind of grew into it. I never thought I'd like want to make a career out of it one day until like, my very last month, Senior High School. And I was like, okay, screw it. I guess I'm going to get some gonna go to art college. Because I got a scholarship on accident. I'm totally here for it, though.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 05:58

You mentioned earlier, being really inspired by one of your, your professors at the PNCA? Can you talk a little bit about your experience with the art scene in Portland in general? Are there things you like? Are there things you'd like to see more of?

A Allison Heaton 06:11
Um, you know what, I'm really happy with what I do see, because you have a we have a huge variety of people here in Portland. Both from the LGBTQ+ community, I love seeing that art specifically because it's a voice that people can have. And it's a huge part of my life, obviously. So I love seeing that. I love being able to walk out in the street and just seeing like, looking into shop windows and being able to see people's are there. It's such a it's so involved here in Portland. And I think that's brilliant.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 06:48
No, I think that's all my questions. So unless you have any last minute.

A Allison Heaton 06:53
I don't Um, I don't think I do. I just think this is a great idea. And I'm really excited to listen to this podcast. It's like a awesome opportunity. Thank you so much.

S Seth Richardson 07:04
Next, a poet shares the multitude of places they find inspiration, as well as their passion for Portland's slam poetry scene.

A August Mitchell 07:11
All right, my name is August Mitchell. And I'm here at the Monster Drawing Rally as an avid art enthusiast.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 07:19
so is this your first time at the event today?

A August Mitchell 07:21
It is it is and I'm very excited to be here.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 07:24
Can you just talk a little bit about what you see?

- A August Mitchell 07:28
Yeah, so I've seen a lot of huge range of people making art here today, which I think is really exciting, especially the age range. Because a lot of the time you don't see young artists getting the attention that they deserve, and especially encouraging an artist to grow and move forwards and our society is one that likes to put down the cultivation of arts quite a bit. And so being able to be in an area where it is cultivating and nourishing to the arts is super cool, especially for the impressionable people.
- E Emma Ganger-Spivak 07:54
Yeah, that's awesome. Do you make art yourself?
- A August Mitchell 07:57
I write poetry. So yes. And No.
- E Emma Ganger-Spivak 08:00
That totally cats.
- A August Mitchell 08:01
Okay, cool. Yeah, I write poetry.
- E Emma Ganger-Spivak 08:03
Do you want to talk a little bit about that? Are there particular themes that you tend to gravitate towards or inspirations of yours?
- A August Mitchell 08:11
Can I get really philosophical with it for a second?
- E Emma Ganger-Spivak 08:13
go for it.
- A August Mitchell 08:13

So in my opinion, for me, my poetry is everything, and everything is my poetry. My inspiration is the world and myself. Because when the birds fly in the sky, that's movement, that's poetry. If it moves or changes in any way, there's meaning to it. And there's meaning that we give to it and being able to write that down and dictate that it's what art is, and being able to visually represent it and your own perceptions of it. So that's really how it interacts with my life is that it's, it's everything around me all the time.

E

Emma Ganger-Spivak 08:44

Well, that's hard to follow with another question. Do you have any favorite poets and inspire you?

A

August Mitchell 08:50

Yeah, I do. Actually, TS Eliot. He's long past RIP TS Eliot. But his poetry is still very relevant today. I actually have one of his poems tattooed here on my arm - the last line, The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock. Still human voices wake us and we drown to pull about divinity into mundanity. He says he's measured out his life and coffee spoons. And so it's way of saying that everything small in my life is divine.

E

Emma Ganger-Spivak 09:21

Do you have much experience with the Portland art scene or the Portland literary scene? Perhaps? That's something you want to talk about?

A

August Mitchell 09:28

Yeah, I'd actually I can I can I plug a little quick. So I go to the Portland poetry slam at Tiny's Coffee in northeast Portland every Sunday night at 5:30. We have an open mic, we have a featured poet. And then we have a huge slam that happens where all the poets not all but whoever wants to compete. And we're able to kind of see each other and grow and riff off of each other.

E

Emma Ganger-Spivak 09:51

Is that event that an event that you've been going to for a while?

A

August Mitchell 09:55

I've only been in Portland for two months. But since I got here, the first thing I did is I was

like, Where's an open mic? And hunted one down found this one I've been going pretty much every Sunday since I got here. So eight weeks.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 10:06
You can tell me if I've asked you this question before, but I know this is your first time here. And sounds like you came here kind of randomly, could you just describe the atmosphere?


A August Mitchell 10:16
The atmosphere I would describe as bubbly and popping. It's a constant flow of things being created and put into the air and people talking and chattering and sharing and then watching the art go up and disappear as people buy it. It's a constant flow and movement that's super positive and bubbly.


S Seth Richardson 10:35
Another person skilled in the literary arts, our next interviewee is a copywriter and art enthusiast who explains what it is about MDR that has compelled her to come three years in a row simply to watch.


H Holly Miller 10:48
I'm Holly Miller, and I am a copywriter from Vancouver, Washington, I will show a big time art enthusiast I go to a lot of events and we like to look at art


E Emma Ganger-Spivak 11:00
That's awesome. Um, could you explain for our listeners, and also for me what you do?

H Holly Miller 11:06
Um, well by day I'm an adult home caregiver, so I take care of people in their homes. And by night, I do copywriting which is basically writing and advertising. So I help people promote their businesses and I work on like their website like websites and flyers and print ads, and pretty much whatever they need. And if I can incorporate it into what I do, then I make it work.


 Emma Ganger-Spivak 11:35
And you mentioned also that you're an art enthusiast. Is this your first time here?


 Holly Miller 11:39
Oh, no, this is my third year in a row showing up.


 Emma Ganger-Spivak 11:43
And you've been coming just to observe the event?


 Holly Miller 11:46
Yeah.


 Emma Ganger-Spivak 11:46
Do you collect art as well?

 Holly Miller 11:49
A little bit here and there, but not like an avid collector or anything.

 Emma Ganger-Spivak 11:52
Have you bought the art here before?

 Holly Miller 11:55
No, actually, I don't believe I have.

 Emma Ganger-Spivak 11:57
Well, I would love to know what it is about the event that keeps drawing you back.

 12:02
And like the community connection, it's kind of nice that all the different artists can come together and they get the chance to promote their work while raising money for these

programs in the area. So I really kind of like that double win because they get the chance to, to hear here's what I do you like my work, check out more of my stuff at the same time that you guys have already been raising money for kids. So it's a — I also want to throw in and has a pretty good soundtrack. So

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 12:33
that's important. Do you make visual art at all?

H Holly Miller 12:39
A little bit. I go to the Vancouver drink and draw group a lot. I've gotten to know the people who are there. And we we just kind of collaborate and sit around and draw and it's it's fun. It's a nice social event. So gets it get my creativity flow out too. So

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 13:00
do you have favorite artist?

H Holly Miller 13:02
visual? audio? or like what kind of artists

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 13:04
totally up to you.,

H Holly Miller 13:09
listen to a lot of music, probably mostly indie, or listen to a lot of oldies like 60s music. I don't know that I could pick one of the all time I am really into Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros right now, I've listened to most of their older albums more so than their newer ones. But I'd have to say currently at this time is that but I also like the Eagles and Third Eye Blind and you know, those are kind of the timeless, like, top ranked ones. For me. Visual Art. I really like Andy Warhol, I think I liked his work in advertising.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 13:43
Can you talk a little bit about the role that art plays in your life, as an art enthusiast, as a music enthusiast, just what it means to you.

H Holly Miller 13:51
It's just sort of everywhere, you know, I could be sitting at work working on something and I'll put on either like music or an audio book or something like if I'm if I'm working on something at home or you know, getting getting something printed out or done. And it's, it's sort of an everyday part of my life that I often think about, it's almost an escape in a way from things that are weighing me down. So it's nice to just plug in and either put on music or pull up, even pull up like I use the Google arts and culture app a lot. And not just for the painting selfies. A lot of people use it for that. But I like to look at the historical stuff and the different art Italy and was just, I kind of liked it. It's just like a sidekick of my lifestyle you know,

S Seth Richardson 14:41
in the final interview for this episode, an MDR artist shares how she adapts her style to be suited to the fast pace of the event, as well as her hopes for the Portland arts community.

R Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 14:54
Hi, I'm Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood, and I'm a participating artists in this year's Monster Drawing Rally. And I'm really excited to be here.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 15:03
So is this this your first year participating in this event as an artist?

R Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 15:07
It is my first year. This is something I've been wanting to do for a while and it's fun that I get to do it.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 15:14
How did you? How did you decide that you wanted to sign up?

R Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 15:18
A lot of my favorite artists I have been seen participating in this event over the past few

years. So it's kind of caught my eye.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 15:26
So have you have you done your round yet? so far? Are you still waiting?

R Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 15:29
I did it. Yeah, I did the seven to 8pm slot

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 15:33
Can you just talk a little bit about the experience of making art in front of all these people?

R Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 15:37
Sure. You definitely feel on when you go up there and sit down and start drawing. But you get over it. And then you just kind of get in the zone and do your thing. So yeah, it was nervous at first, but then it was fun.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 15:52
Cool. Do you have a particular medium that you tend to use or certain kind of subject matter that you gravitate towards?

R Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 15:59
I like to paint in oils. So for this type of event, I really enjoy using inks and watercolor. So I can still kind of have that painterly feeling as I draw.

E Emma Ganger-Spivak 16:11
Did you come into the event today with a strategy? like did you want to get a bunch of works done or just spend your time on one?

R Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 16:18
Well, I was hoping to at least get a few done. So I made three tonight. So I was happy with that. And I wanted it to be expressive and extemporaneous I didn't want to plan. Yeah, so I

wanted to see what came out.

E

Emma Ganger-Spivak 16:42

Okay, so here's the million dollar question. As an artist, how do you know how to value your work? Is that something that you decide? Is that something that galleries decide institutions? I think that's a question that comes up a lot today, because we're selling the art for a flat work. So it'd be great to hear something about,

R

Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 16:59

I think valuing, your art can be very difficult at first when you're new to doing this, or even if you haven't had very many sales in the beginning. So I think it's a combination of seeing how you stack up to, you know, artists that are somewhat like you and what their work is selling for and what it's selling for and galleries and just kind of paying attention to that. And once people start buying your work, you use that as your baseline. So it takes a lot of time and trial and error. You know?

E

Emma Ganger-Spivak 17:28

How does this event differ from the way that you normally market or sell your work?

R

Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 17:33

I think this event is definitely more livelier and full of more people than my typical marketing strategies, but I like that it includes people, I think that art has to include community for it to really have the impact that I would want it to, you know, have So, you know, I'd rather not be in my studio by myself. I like that this is a type of event that gets people involved, artists or not.

E

Emma Ganger-Spivak 18:00

Well, you mentioned community in your last answer. As a local artist, I'm curious to know if in your experience of the Portland art scene, there are more types of events that you'd like to see or kinds of art kinds of art making.

R

Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 18:14

I'd like to see more figurative artwork and more. You know, yeah, more figurative work. More portraiture, more figurative work. You know, I like that type of thing a lot. So, but I

love the scene already. It's not like I want to change it per se, but I'd like to see more of that. Yeah.



Emma Ganger-Spivak 18:33

Well, I guess my last question is just going to be how did you become an artist?



Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 18:37

Um, well, I loved drawing as a kid and I just never stopped doing it when everyone else got tired of doing it. And it was my escape. I grew up in a boring little Central Valley town in California, and there wasn't a lot to do and I wasn't a jock or you know, wasn't a jock. So that's what you did when you live there. And I wasn't. So that's how I spent my free time and it's kind of how I, you know, had fun, so it never went away.



Emma Ganger-Spivak 19:03

That's great. Thank you. We're just at 4 minutes now, so your timing is perfect.



Roxanne Zuniga Blackwood 19:07

Thank you for having me.



Seth Richardson 19:11

Thank you for listening to the Portland Art Museum Podcast. For more information about the free youth programs that Monster Drawing Rally raises money to support, visit portlandartmuseum.org/learn. This episode is the fourth in an ongoing series produced from the interviews we gathered in the Monster Drawing Rally podcast studio. Make sure to subscribe to the Portland Art Museum Podcast, so you'll be sure to catch the next episode, in which you'll hear more of the many voices of Portland's arts community. This episode was produced by Jon Richardson and Emma Ganger-Spivak. Thank you to Blick Art Materials for sponsoring this event and Mark Orton for providing the interstitial music. Finally, thank you, the listener