

Interview 539 - Anon. - 23 minutes (3 hr. transcription)

(In all transcripts I have edited out ums, likes, ahhs and stutters from both the interviewer and interviewee unless it was deemed they added to the context of the response.)

Alex: When did you view the exhibition?

Anon: So it was yesterday. Do you actually want the date?

Alex: No, that's fine.

Anon: I don't actually know what yesterday is.

Alex: And have you seen it since then?

Anon: Mm-hm. I saw it today.

Alex: For how long do you think you were at the exhibition each time?

Anon: So I think yesterday we must have spent about 15-20 minutes. I think it is really an estimate. And I think today was about 10 minutes.

Alex: Did you view the exhibition with anyone?

Anon: Nope just myself.

Alex: Have you had any conversations about the exhibition with anyone?

Anon: No I haven't. Not yet.

Alex: Do you remember what order you viewed the exhibition in each time?

Anon: Mm-hm. So the first time was the order that you recommended while highlighting different pieces and the way you go through it. And when I came back myself I picked my favourite bits, so I picked the bits I know I liked best.

Alex: Which parts were that?

Anon: So it was the bit by the entrance (wild child) above the atrium gallery sign and then all the bits around that corner (rose to xray) and then the bit opposite Starbucks of the people who are getting their coffee can see (graphic medicine wall) and then I looked at my least favourite bit as I went out.

Alex: And which parts were that?

Anon: So that was the far end by the tv that kind of corner all the way around and back out (tv to tied up).

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Alex: Can you describe your experience viewing it?

Anon: I think I found myself being drawn to certain pieces more than others. I really, I sort of liked the traditional more cartoon based ones. And I felt like they were quite serious and they were trying to tell people you a message.

Alex: And so those were the ones you had said you thought were more your favourites?

Anon: Not necessarily. Cause I think, the ones I was really drawn to were a certain style but I can see that the ones I didn't like they were still trying to give you a message but in a different way. And it was quite odd because when I use to do drawings the ones I didn't really like as much were the way I would draw and the way I would convey emotion so I thought that was quite interesting I wasn't drawn to these. But it is very much my style.

Alex: Do you know what works these are?

Anon: I think you told me but I can't remember all of them.

Alex: I have a catalogue here.

Anon: Oh you have a catalogue – ah yeah. So I can actually point through which ones they were. So what did you want me to reference, oh yeah, I could have shown you the layout as well, what did you want me to reference the ones that I liked?

Alex: Yeah the ones you liked and...

Anon: Yeah cause I took pictures of those as well. I don't think...pictures might be easier for the ones that I liked. Cause I went around and took pictures of them (takes out phone to show me). So I think this one here with the four panels (last wall of wild child). I thought it was really clever. Would you like to know why I like it?

Alex: Yeah...

Anon: I just like the fact they have used a lot of darkness with very little going on. And they have really contrast it at the end with that last white panel. I think that is really clever. And that they are using hand symbols, gestures to representation some kind of communication. I thought that was really cool. (laugh)

I like this one because the comic is slowly becoming a bit unorthodox (wild child – with disintegrating panels) and I think that is really clever. Cause I think, is it kinda show that she is unsettled through the fact that it is not following the traditional format. I thought that that was really clever. And again I like that fact that there are loads of colour in this one.

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I didn't like this one (Marshland). I like the idea of it because again it is something that I would do but I don't like that the head is a weird shape. It really bothers me. It really annoys me. Like I look at it and it just makes me think its just too big.

I really like this one (Panic zine). The little three panels right at the end. I think it is the colour. And also the way they are conveying the message as well. I think a lot of people could relate to that.

Alex: And what specifically about how they are conveying it?

Anon: I think the fact that people feel, when they feel anxious about how they, how it can come across. And how it makes them feel. Cause this one I have actually thought about a lot. I wonder how many people do feel this way and don't talk about it. Yeah this one was on my mind actually. Cause I was thinking about it last night and actually there is probably a lot of insight in that one. That a lot of people probably feel this way. So potentially I think this one could be quite relatable. In my view.

I liked this one (journey to wellness). You said it was more traditional kind of health one I think because it is quite cartoon style and it is quite sweet. I look at it and think, "oh yeah, that is really nice," and it is just a nice way of getting information across.

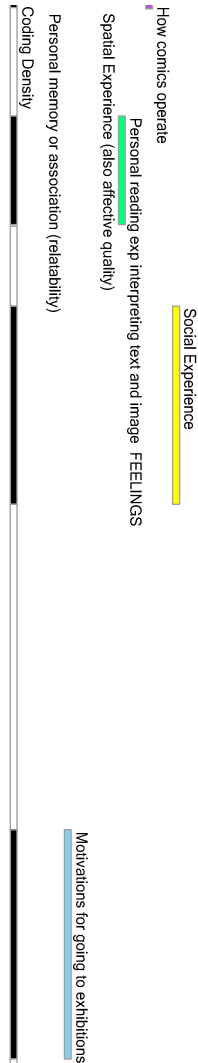
Similar to before (believe this is wild child again from observation notes), I like the idea that they have used squares in a different way. I think that is really clever.

And the same kinda with this one in that the way the panels are used and put together is really, I just like it, I think it is really cool. Difference with shading and especially with this one were things don't quite line up (wild child with mom). It just makes them feel like separate things. I quite like that.

And the last one I took a picture of was this one. Now I like the concept but not how they have done it. Now I like the fact that you have lots of different panels that you can move but I don't like what they have put on them. For me personally I just fell I would prefer lots of colour and very pictorial with a few words I don't, this is very text and wordy and for me that doesn't really...I kind of get lost in the words. You know – just for me. I look at that and I just... I don't tend to read things that much when I look at art I prefer to see it not read it.

Alex: And you said right there that you got lost in the words – specifically how are you using that word 'lost'?

Anon: So just in the way I suppose in the way your eye is drawn. You know when you look at a picture. People don't often feel lost, at least I don't when I look at pictures I kind of know what I am looking at. Whereas with that I am lost in the sense of what am I looking at? What do I read first? And where am I reading it and how



does it all kind of fit together? And the structure seems to bother me more because it is written. If that makes sense.

Alex: Was there specific works that, cause you had mentioned that you just went and looked at the ones you didn't like as much, where those some of those works as you were leaving today? Or were those other works?

Anon: It was mostly the other works. I did take a picture of one that I kind of, with the head, that was one that I wasn't sure about just because of the shape of the head. But again I like the style but not how they have done it. The others were the one that I really didn't take...that didn't interest me that much (picked up catalogue) were these ones. So this one (). And these two (). Its weird because I think I should have liked them because I looked at what they were about, because this one was about inner voices (skull) and I thought I can really understand where they are going with that idea and I think it was really clever but I just didn't appreciate it. I don't know I felt like it didn't work for me as an image even though I could get what they were trying to do. And the same with this one.

Alex: Ah, so even though you interpreted it you didn't necessarily...was it the aesthetic you were responding to?

Anon: I think so. I don't know. Cause these are the ones that are similar to my aesthetics when I use to draw things. I use to be quite abstract lots of scratchy lines. I use to do that a lot. Takes mouths off if I wanted to show something. I'd often remove mouths and things like that, scrub things out, so that's why I am surprised I don't like it. Because it is kind of similar to what I, if I was drawing what I would do. So I thought that was quite interesting.

Alex: Why were you interested in viewing the exhibition?

Anon: I like art. I really like looking at art because, if there is always an opportunity to go to a museum I will always go and particularly looking at art because I find I am really drawn to certain pieces. And certain things. And I think I am always interested in looking and seeing what its about.

Alex: So when viewing all of these things, because you have talked a lot about the aesthetic you were responding to and a bit of the story, but was there any else that came to mind when you were viewing the exhibition?

Anon: I suppose I could see the emotional stuff behind it, particularly the one with the spider. Cause I really, I really dislike spiders. As much as I try and like them so because it was a spider it (Cummings) instantly got my attention and I could see like, yeah to me that was very emotional. But, I suppose I could see that they were really trying to convey a message but I got more of an emotional message in all of them rather than maybe a physical one, because I knew some of them were about physically, I mean the anxiety one with the spider (Cummings) you can...they got

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like a picture of somebody with anxiety physically but I saw anxiety and thought emotional.

Alex: And, in what others ways did you see this emotional side of the other works?

Anon: Ah, with the darkness. I think the light and the dark is a very good way of portraying emotion. And also with the unorthodox kind of framing and the fact that it got a little bit wonky where it started to disappear. That to me was also emotional.

Alex: And what descriptors of emotion came to mind?

Anon: so I thought it was more negative emotion. I think they represent, I think the darkness represents distress and a lot of negative emotion and I think that a lot of the sort of designs where it became less orthodox and more twisted was probably more anger, distress so again negative emotion...lets pick an example (flipping through catalogue)...and sadness. I think this one is sadness (wild child).

This one I don't think is emotional, with all the different blocks. I didn't get emotions from it (body becomes a place).

Alex: Did you do any drawing as a part of it?

Anon: I didn't get time but I think I would've wanted to if I had time. I think it would have been, I think I probably would have tried to recreate the stuff I was drawn to rather than, something a bit new, rather than doing what I would normally do. And I probably would have copied some of the things I really liked about the shading and the use of boxes.

Alex: So you talked about kinda that there was the emotional, and not necessarily the physical there for you so you might have covered my next question, but since the overall themes in the exhibition were spatial anxiety and anxiety in general how did you experience that at the exhibition?

Anon: Ah...(intrigued tone). I could feel the anxiety but not the spatial part. But that might be because the way the art gallery is placed. It's a very open space so it is just the artwork that is communicating space. I think whether, if it had been more obvious in the environment.

Alex: And that space in particular, how was the experience of viewing an exhibition like this in that open space?

Anon: I think it was interesting because it kinda had different levels of privacy to it. I think it felt very open in the main kind of area. It felt kind of that you weren't really in your own space, if that made sense,...let me get the map out...is it in the beginning (flipping through catalogue). So yeah as you sort of look on here I kinda felt like it was quite open. I felt like there was more privacy here (graphic medicine). And I

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don't know if it was because it was dark and because Starbucks wasn't open but it really felt quite private.

Alex: Do you think that had any bearing on your experience viewing it?

Anon: Yeah I think so. I think it might make me feel a bit more comfortable to view them. If you know, like on a level you can connect with them in a different way. Because you don't feel, you don't really have to worry about what's around you.

Alex: Is that specifically, or is that in reference to the whole exhibition or the gm wall?

Anon: I think it is the whole exhibition. I think, if I go to museums I prefer them when they are really quite. Its always, its weird thing I have noticed, I prefer them to be less people, so I wonder if it is more a general preference.

Alex: And, what was your impression of the use of comics in the exhibition?

Anon: I thought it was quite nice. I wouldn't have known that they were all kind of similar comic based cause some were more traditionally comics like than others. But I think they did a nice job of telling a story. I think I followed the comics through with the story more than the other pictures.

Alex: And would you say, since you said you frequently go to museums, when you are going to a different museum, let's say paintings or photography or sculpture, how do you view those works? Do you look for a story...do you go for the material...how do you view other works?

Anon: Hmm...okay. I think I tend to, I really like sort of the historical artwork, you know some of the very traditional sculptures of like the people and the gods. I love those. So anything like that I would seek out. Which tends to be very symmetrical, very sort of smooth finish, so they would be my favourite things. Unless I, I don't look at a lot of abstract art that much, I will look at it, kind of experience it, but I won't seek it out. If it is there I will look at it but not find it. if that makes sense. I don't go out of my way for it.

Alex: And what is it about the historical stuff that you are drawn to?

Anon: I am not too sure but I think it's the way they are made they just look very. Its almost like a version of perfection I wonder. It, I don't know, I just think it is the way they are finished and they kind of, they are very active aren't they, they show you a look of emotions, they show you maybe sometimes morals in there and there is quite a lot of things embedded in them and they are quite easy to interpret I think.

Alex: And, I just have one more question for you and that was overall what is your impression of the exhibition?

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Anon: So if I kind of had to sum it up? Umm.. I would...it seems very black and white. If I had to sum it up as with what comes to my head it seems very black and white. I don't know like, I feel bad because I feel like there is probably more to it than that.

Alex: And is that in reference to the colour or also the concepts?

Anon: Also the concepts I think.

Alex: Could you elaborate on that?

Anon: I just think it was. I suppose it was showing a very absolute view of something. There wasn't really much space for mixed emotion. I think it was very kind of like light – dark, like happy emotion – sad emotion (hands to either side). I didn't feel like there was a lot of mixed emotions or mixed experiences. And it was very focused. I think you could tell it had a very specific, I couldn't tell it was about anxiety and space but you could tell there was a specific message. But I didn't know what that was.

Alex: I think that is all the questions I have for you, but was there anything about your experience that you wanted to add that I didn't get at?

Anon: Um well I think you spoke about it being about health and it is interesting that I wouldn't have necessarily known it was about health if you hadn't have told me.

Alex: And...did the...description of the exhibition being about anxiety come after the discussion of health or where you aware of that beforehand?

Anon: No it was after as well.

Alex: I am going to sit and think about that one for a bit because that is a really interesting comment...was there anything else you wanted to add?

Anon: Ah, did I mention anything about colour? Because I am very drawn to colour.

Alex: I don't... you could elaborate a little bit more on that.

Anon: Yeah cause I don't really know why but I really love lots and lots of colours so I think that is something else I really seek out in museums and in art. If it is really colourful cause all the pictures that I like, there were a couple of mono-tone ones, but the more colourful they are the better. And I don't know why but I have always very much drawn to colour. So I think maybe that kind of might have played a part in why I might have liked some pieces more than others. And there wasn't a lot of colour but with anxiety you wouldn't necessarily have depicted anxiety as a colourful emotion so I think the monotone worked well for anxiety.

Alex: Well I think that is all I have for you...

Anon: Yeah I think that's all my comments.

Alex: Wonderful!

[End]

Alex: Addition to 539... (relevant comment after end)

Anon: So there is this exhibition I went to in a museum about the Vietnam War and it had some really emotionally driven powerful stuff but with a lot of colour and a lot of the way they used objects as well so I thought that might be relevant for your health and things like that. I don't know. Just a thought.

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