

Danielle Marie New: My name is Danielle or Danny or Dan I think you mostly know me as Dan.

Blair Goldstein: Probably from the famous Dan yeah.

Danielle Marie New: And Hannah and I are both graduate students in the museum ology program at the University of Washington musicology the same thing as museum studies, I tend to not say music music geology because it bothers me.

Blair Goldstein: I don't like a made up word.

Danielle Marie New: I know I does, and it is yeah so we're both Grad students.

Danielle Marie New: i'm living in Seattle, and right now i'm really, really in love with contemporary art and just getting the opportunity to actually talk with.

Danielle Marie New: Artists i'm super excited about this whole interview process and all the interviews we've been doing, have been really heartfelt and like enriching for me, I guess.

Danielle Marie New: And yeah that's that's not all.

My notes.

Blair Goldstein: Okay um the Google home things started talking really loudly while you were explaining what's happening, but i'll just introduce myself yes.

Blair Goldstein: i'm Blair, I am an artist, I guess, this is something, unlike I used to like not be comfortable saying I was an artist, which was so stupid because I am and it's nice to like.

Blair Goldstein: feel like confident enough, I guess, in that part of myself to be able to say yes, I am an artist um.

Blair Goldstein: and

Blair Goldstein: Like honestly, a lot of it to come out of like this last year of like isolation and sort of being forced to.

Blair Goldstein: I don't know like make art or be said.

Blair Goldstein: That wasn't really an introduction I could say more about like my life.

My past.

Blair Goldstein: I went to skidmore college I wasn't going to be an art major but then I was like I want to take all of these classes, so it ended up happening and i'm so glad that it was like the happiest accident or like just faith, I guess, if that.

Blair Goldstein: exists sort of grabbed me to it um it's been really fun.

Hanna Corneliussen: that's amazing um i'll quickly go i'm Hannah as Danny said we're partners were.

Hanna Corneliussen: Second year thesis.

Hanna Corneliussen: I have an anthropology background, so I am particularly interested in this interview aspect and the idea of storytelling so.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah just excited to learn more about everybody and make connections, but um yeah so if you'd like to get started, our first question is we'd love to know a little bit more about your piece so like what are the main themes and how did these themes develop.

Blair Goldstein: i'm sitting looking at it right now, like across the room.

Blair Goldstein: And you know they're so these like paper chains.

Blair Goldstein: they're so like malleable.

Blair Goldstein: For me, and like.

Blair Goldstein: Like one day i'm making one and it's like the happiest most cheerful bright fun thing ever and i'm like loving twirling it around and then the next um.

Blair Goldstein: You know, it can totally change mood there are so many elements to them the color the size, the shape the length the.

Blair Goldstein: patterning like that can affect like how they feel while i'm making them and.

Blair Goldstein: How they feel when they're done and i'm looking at them, but for me.

Blair Goldstein: When i'm like this one i'm looking at now that's the one that's going to be in the show.

Blair Goldstein: there's never been.

Blair Goldstein: A process.

Blair Goldstein: For me that's like I don't know how to articulate this right like I do all sorts of stuff I paint I we die um.

Blair Goldstein: I guess that those are the main two, but like making these chains is.

Blair Goldstein: Such a.

Blair Goldstein: Like it really is everybody always says it's all about the process, but like for for me the chains really are.

Blair Goldstein: Like the most process oriented thing that I make and do they're definitely very therapeutic to make like tearing up paper um my friend, our dear friend, Caroline for me is like a sign of like NXP or something which I thought was really funny learning that cuz like they kind of do like.

Blair Goldstein: I don't know like if i'm in a mood or something and I start ripping them up like it just it's calming it's cleansing and then like the process of sewing them together, just like being still sitting on the couch having my beverage of choice it's just very their calming.

Blair Goldstein: But also like a lot of other things at once, I don't know how to.

Blair Goldstein: yeah, can you tell that I don't talk about my art that much.

Hanna Corneliussen: Well that's a wonderful my gosh.

Hanna Corneliussen: i'm so in relation to our exhibit it has a dual theme want to standing still and feeling frozen in time and the second of resiliency emerging from struggle still standing So what are your reflections on this theme, as it relates to your work and the process.

Blair Goldstein: i'm.

Hanna Corneliussen: Sorry, good question.

Blair Goldstein: i'm thinking.

Blair Goldstein: I think.

Blair Goldstein: When I wrote about this piece for the submission.

Blair Goldstein: I talked a lot about.

Blair Goldstein: The motion of the chance, like when they are finished, which again is like.

Blair Goldstein: I sort of like i'm.

Blair Goldstein: More entranced by them when i'm like in the process of making them and then, when they're done.

Blair Goldstein: i'm like i'm a little more removed from them, I guess, but.

Blair Goldstein: Okay Blair.

Blair Goldstein: This is a hard question.

Blair Goldstein: Can you say it again i'm sorry.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah so our exhibit has a dual theme one a standing still and feeling frozen in time and the second of resiliency and emerging from stuck struggles still standing So what are your reflections on this theme, as it relates to your work.

Blair Goldstein: When I.

Blair Goldstein: Am like in my element, making something i'm pretty much always by myself.

Blair Goldstein: um.

Blair Goldstein: which was obviously something that was happening, a lot more than I would have liked your most people have liked, about a year ago.

Blair Goldstein: and

Blair Goldstein: To have something to do something for my hands to do something for my mind to do, besides like soak.

Blair Goldstein: um.

Blair Goldstein: was so.

Blair Goldstein: Important and again, like, I think it started feeling more and more like.

Blair Goldstein: an artist like who I am I guess because of it, but, but then it was funny because, like.

Blair Goldstein: I usually think of being alone or being by myself is such a negative thing like don't want to be.

Blair Goldstein: Without connection without.

Blair Goldstein: friends and laughter and I don't know all that so.

Blair Goldstein: Using making and being creative as a way to I don't know if distract is the right word.

Blair Goldstein: But as a way to sort of find comfort.

Blair Goldstein: In being by myself.

Blair Goldstein: um.

Blair Goldstein: was really.

Blair Goldstein: Through the pandemic was really.

Blair Goldstein: eye opening, I guess, or just like liberating almost like yeah I can.

Blair Goldstein: do things by myself, I don't mean.

Blair Goldstein: i'm a man or my friends even.

Blair Goldstein: Like zoom is cool but.

Blair Goldstein: I had my paper chance and like I gotta.

Blair Goldstein: it's also like making them painting them it's like a very active fast like sometimes violent almost process of like covering them completely, which was so like i'll be obviously felt like very cathartic and fun and then it really slows down with.

Blair Goldstein: Like the arranging picking the colors.

Blair Goldstein: And sewing them and that, like those themes of like.

Blair Goldstein: The active and then the calmer like slowing down definitely.

Blair Goldstein: Like it resonates with like the tumultuous emotions of pandemic life.

Blair Goldstein: sentence or question.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah totally so you talk about like how this process was so comforting and healing for you during this time um, how do you hope that this will impact your viewers like what kind of ideas and emotions and conversations, do you hope that this will.

Hanna Corneliussen: kind of provoke.

Blair Goldstein: hmm I love hearing what people have to say they always surprise me, or like show me.

Blair Goldstein: or I look at something that came from me in a way that I never would have you know what do I hope it's like almost feel like I hope that they.

Blair Goldstein: Like I can't pick a specific.

Blair Goldstein: thing or a topic that i'm hoping for people to like respond to, because what I love so much it's like the.

Blair Goldstein: rawness I guess like people's genuine like sometimes silly reactions.

Blair Goldstein: One time there was.

Blair Goldstein: This mom who had a little baby.

Blair Goldstein: With some chains that I had in the show and the baby was like doing that cute baby head tilt thing and like pinching them and, like that was just.

Blair Goldstein: Like the ultimate gratification I just I don't know.

Blair Goldstein: I hope that they.

Blair Goldstein: Hard question again.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah.

Blair Goldstein: I hope that they can I don't know like it sounds simple but, just like.

Blair Goldstein: And also, I don't mean this to sound like aren't they beautiful I make beautiful things, but like just.

Blair Goldstein: appreciating the the beauty, the stillness of like I talked about how they like spin and twirl and just like it really is like.

Blair Goldstein: For me, at least.

Blair Goldstein: Just something to like look at and my mind can focus on that and not necessarily be like did it did it did it.

Blair Goldstein: So yeah a little stillness maybe I hope to inspire.

Hanna Corneliussen: I love that I personally need that with everything that's going on.

Blair Goldstein: So this is like the challenge of our generation.

Hanna Corneliussen: Totally.

Hanna Corneliussen: um so we've been talking a lot about your work, but can you tell us a little bit about your past year, like what have you been up to Nice and like how have these last.

Hanna Corneliussen: 12 impacted you now that we're hitting the year mark.

yeah.

Blair Goldstein: It was crazy last week I think um I mean obviously lots of krim milestones passing these.

Blair Goldstein: days, but a week ago march 13 was the last day that I.

Blair Goldstein: did my job in person.

Blair Goldstein: And you know now i'm unemployed and.

Blair Goldstein: I don't say that i'm homeless like I could go back to my dad's place I have so many good friends, I could go be with you know, but I don't currently have like my own mailing address either, which is obviously a huge change, you know, a year ago I was.

Blair Goldstein: On americorps volunteer.

Blair Goldstein: working as a teacher in an after school program in Boston.

Blair Goldstein: The program which ran from like 3pm to 8pm for kids in South Boston i'm from all different schools was based in an old Convent um so I was living and working there at the bottom two floors were like the school and the top two floors for housing for the teachers um and there were.

Blair Goldstein: gosh that was.

Blair Goldstein: My first year of it, so there were three teachers and then the program director my boss, who was a year older than me also lived there is like very fun youth, the like really cool first job out of college.

Blair Goldstein: Very like chill and low key but also like we were doing meaningful work, and it was it was fulfilling to like be helping these seven graders get through their math homework, even though, like.

Blair Goldstein: I don't know if it was like eye opening because I didn't realize, I wanted to be a teacher work with kids.

Blair Goldstein: And I do so, I was having a great time doing that occasional distress, because you know, one of them would like bully me or something and I would cry but then I love my job.

Blair Goldstein: And the building itself that content like there was a full Chapel stained glass windows crystal door novices built in the 1920s, it was so cool.

Blair Goldstein: But also slightly to crap it and i'm my bosses were cool with it, giving me the artistic freedom to do whatever improvements I wanted, which was so cool and I don't know that i'll ever find another opportunity like that to like be painting murals in a space for children so cool.

Blair Goldstein: And on the last day the last Friday was it the program was called perfectly empirically pride, is where way chiller, then the rest of the days it was sort of a free for all, and there were always less students um and I remember that Friday morning it was like.

Blair Goldstein: The Friday before like they called school.

Blair Goldstein: So, like.

Blair Goldstein: We knew America new by the end, but like still hadn't taken action.

Blair Goldstein: um.

Blair Goldstein: And I remember the kids coming in a few of them and that morning I had gone down to the kitchen to make breakfast and I was just staring at this ugly bit of wall.

Blair Goldstein: That I like it was like you could see it through a doorway from like very far away, it was an important wall that wasn't i'm very well kept and I wanted to paint something on it.

Blair Goldstein: And so I started drawing these like tomatoes tomatoes on the wall and then I like.

Blair Goldstein: picked the blocked and pick the girls are from school and walk back to Paris like we always did and I asked them do you guys want to paint on the wall today because I kind of knew in the back of my head like.

Blair Goldstein: you're not going to be here on Monday.

Blair Goldstein: But I also like you know at the beginning, everyone was like two weeks, three weeks, remember that phase.

Blair Goldstein: Of like.

yeah.

Blair Goldstein: So you know, obviously I didn't think I was never going to see them again, which ended up being the case.

Blair Goldstein: which was really.

Blair Goldstein: it's really hard so.

Blair Goldstein: I sent them all postcards but they probably thought it was lame.

Blair Goldstein: um but so that last day I just remember sitting painting tomatoes on the walls, with the girls and.

Blair Goldstein: We should um that the kids were not allowed to pass the second floor super off limits, I remember one time this boy trying to get a rise out of us like put his foot, unlike the step up to the third floor you're like all right.

Blair Goldstein: let's but we on.

Blair Goldstein: That day we took the girls up to our like little fifth floor penthouse type little hangout room that I painted a mural in my first mural ever.

Blair Goldstein: And it has like a view of the city and they were so excited they pass the second floor and it's just a really like happy innocent fun day I used to have days like that all the time, and I really took them for granted.

Blair Goldstein: Because then yeah thanks went virtual and for.

Blair Goldstein: about six six months seven months I was doing online Tutoring and homework help and teaching online test prep classes.

Blair Goldstein: um and it was like pretty soul sucking um.

Blair Goldstein: And like I obviously love the kids that I was working with, but you know, the level of removal on zoom and then also just seeing like.

Blair Goldstein: What it wasn't this way with all of the students i'm like some actually were thriving in the online school situation, but a lot of them were not it and it was really pretty heartbreaking to.

Blair Goldstein: Like not be able to do more.

Blair Goldstein: Because you know the kids who are coming to perfectly are coming to perfectly because their parents are working after school their parents like.

Blair Goldstein: don't have the resources to be able to help them through their assignments and stuff um and then you know, like when everything went online that just like.

Blair Goldstein: got 10 times more important for like I don't know the home space if that's where kids are doing their work to like be.

Blair Goldstein: I don't know what and supportive academic environment yeah so I definitely.

Blair Goldstein: Like it was hard to watch.

Blair Goldstein: Some of my students like sort of falter and not want to learn anymore, or as much as they had before.

Blair Goldstein: and not be able to do like because it wasn't just homework, we would do we would do like after academic classes, there was enrichment class time I taught a craft class and I taught.

Blair Goldstein: Self care with miss Blair we do like face masks and i'd make them right like love letters to themselves and stuff.

Blair Goldstein: And you know we weren't doing any of that anymore, we weren't cooking dinner and eating together, there was like a big.

Blair Goldstein: strain on the Community aspect of what we did.

Blair Goldstein: um and you know.

Blair Goldstein: I was very uncertain obviously like when my first year was ending was July.

Blair Goldstein: I was like I guess i'll just stay here I didn't want to move I didn't you know, like it would be hard to get a job and that real school or like apply to Grad school miss the deadline so I signed on her second year.

Blair Goldstein: And then we ran out of money um it was a little more complicated than that we wanted to open up as like a.

Blair Goldstein: Like a site for virtual learning so parents could send their kids to us from nine to three or whatever the school day was, and we would basically like supervise their online learning, which also didn't sound like super fun, but at least we'd be in person with the kids.

Blair Goldstein: And we were having all these meetings about all the precautions we were going to take all the like, what are we, how are we going to handle water, what about bathrooms all this stuff getting down to the nitty gritty and.

Blair Goldstein: Then.

Blair Goldstein: We found out.

Blair Goldstein: That we didn't have a license to be operated so like I know I always sort of wondered because we served dinner to the kids every night and there was no like paperwork up on the walls like you know how kitchens that serve food to people are supposed to have.

Blair Goldstein: So that had crossed my mind, but like I didn't realize we like have never had a building inspection anything like that.

Blair Goldstein: I don't know how we got away with it or apparently got away with it, because it was like a historical building I don't know, but like there was bad ventilation, there was no fire escape there was all these all these like building issues, probably a lot of lead paint.

Blair Goldstein: i'm definitely a fun place to have my first job, but like.

Blair Goldstein: You know the city in the State had all these guidelines for places that we're trying to do what we were trying to do, and we realized oh yeah there's no way we're going to pass any like building inspection, the executive director who is this great old bostonian man he called me Blair.

Blair Goldstein: and

Blair Goldstein: He was like I have every confidence that we would be fine like the staff is fine, our safety protocols are fine i'm like our it's just the building and we didn't have enough money to do the renovations that would have been necessary so.

Blair Goldstein: In October, I found out, you know you have like seven weeks to figure out what you where you're going to go um.

Blair Goldstein: and

Blair Goldstein: I was sort of.

Blair Goldstein: there's other people here I don't know what they're doing now it's been um anyways I was very torn um i'm from nebraska I grew up in nebraska so like going back home is always an option didn't seem like the best option.

Blair Goldstein: And then I had the idea.

Blair Goldstein: One of my best friends that I grew up with an omaha.

Blair Goldstein: At the very beginning of the pandemic I think she left for Oregon like a week before lockdown actually.

Blair Goldstein: But she got stuck out there and then she ended up buying a van and doing.

Blair Goldstein: It.

Blair Goldstein: And I was like stuck in Boston Tutoring Kids Online all day like seriously wednesday's were like six sessions in a row, and one of them was two hours, so it was seven.

Blair Goldstein: hours of zooming straight, you know, like everyone's doing this, so it's not just like for me, but it's not that's no way to spend your day i'm horrible and I was like so jealous of her, she was seeing all this beautiful stuff and like.

Blair Goldstein: Was by herself in this fan like she wasn't on file eating or didn't seem to be violating any of the like safety measures per social distancing and stuff so I was just like man, I want to do that and then.

Blair Goldstein: It was like the world also wanted me to do it so yeah I decided in October, while I was still living in the Convent I will.

Blair Goldstein: consolidate all my crap.

Blair Goldstein: put some of it in my car get a bed in there, somehow, and I will go see the sights.

Blair Goldstein: And yeah now, I have a car, but I am still working on low organization of everything, everything is still a little bit everywhere, but um i've had.

Blair Goldstein: A lot of help from family who I stopped and stayed with in South Carolina and i've just seen i've been to places that you know I never would have gone to and i've driven thousands of miles by myself, which feels really bad.

Blair Goldstein: i'm.

Blair Goldstein: Just like never something I thought it would do, and definitely not something that ever would have happened if not for the fandom so in a way, I mean i've also been really, really, really, really fortunate, not to.

Blair Goldstein: have had any loved ones.

Blair Goldstein: Like everybody who has had it thankfully recovered so maybe it's a little selfish to say like i've had a great pandemic but that's not true, but it definitely like scooped me up and then spat me back out somewhere where i'm happier if that makes sense.

Hanna Corneliussen: yeah it sounds like you pivoted a lot, you know you made the best out of you know harder situation um did you learn anything about yourself this past year, like as an individual around I like an artistic level.

Blair Goldstein: Oh yeah yeah yeah I need to make art um I was messing around for like during college, I was an art major I was also a psychology major and, like in hindsight sort of wish that i'd had the guts to just be an art major.

Blair Goldstein: And maybe dedicated a little bit more time to the studio.

Blair Goldstein: um and then like my first summer out.

Blair Goldstein: I was really lucky, I had a studio space and then I.

Blair Goldstein: I went like once a week like not enough for what an incredible space, I had for for free for that summer.

Blair Goldstein: um you know it's just like not taking my practice very seriously, I think I was still in the phase of like not really wanting to be an artist fully not sure about what I was going to do it all.

Blair Goldstein: And then.

Blair Goldstein: The pandemic kids and I can't work with the kids anymore doing online stuff and.

Blair Goldstein: I remember it being like such a hit a big.

Blair Goldstein: point of contention, but like for America, you have to do 1700 hours of service to get your the incentive for doing America or the award that incentive was the work itself but or the you know, but you get an education award you get.

Blair Goldstein: Like \$6,000 put towards tuition or supplies for school or whatever, but to get that you have to get your 1700 hours and the pandemic it and they.

Blair Goldstein: didn't adjust that requirement at all, even though a lot of volunteers workplaces were like drastically shifted I remember that being like we were so pissed.

Blair Goldstein: That they didn't cut us any slack and so we had to you know find ways to make up like we still need to be getting eight nine hours a day.

Blair Goldstein: i'm not gonna be on zoom for eight nine hours a day, so I started thinking about the building more like you know we didn't know that.

Blair Goldstein: kids were never going to set foot in it again, so I was just like thinking about the kids thinking about how we could improve the space with the resources that we did have you know they went.

Blair Goldstein: A lot but, like, I really got into my.

Blair Goldstein: Design brain, which, like it was it was a blessing, because I really hadn't been using it as much as.

Blair Goldstein: I would have liked, and it sort of.

Blair Goldstein: Like set me on the right path, I think I started painting more I like in my own studio.

Blair Goldstein: which was in the Convent it was great I had a whole wall that's awesome so I.

Blair Goldstein: zoom and do math with the bell and then I go paint in the kitchen and then I do with Nadia doing English and then go walk around paste literally I would do so much pacing and thinking like Oh, this could be purple this we should do this and.

Blair Goldstein: It was great it was.

Blair Goldstein: It just like woke me up a little bit.

Blair Goldstein: gave me a lot of projects, I love projects, I love starting projects.

Blair Goldstein: Not that creative finishing.

Hanna Corneliussen: that's wonderful that's such a great answer.

Hanna Corneliussen: I can tell you're such a reflective and perceptive person just by listening to you.

Hanna Corneliussen: Is there something that you hope everybody can take away from this past year's events or from a situation similar to yours.

Blair Goldstein: it's hard because.

Blair Goldstein: Like.

Blair Goldstein: There are so many things that had to align for me to be able to do what i'm doing and I know that.

Blair Goldstein: All of these circumstances aligning is like.

Blair Goldstein: Probably not the case for a lot of people who have had to like.

Blair Goldstein: suck it up yeah you lost your job, what are you going to do you still have to pay your rent you still have to you can't go move in with your parents you can't like rely on.

Blair Goldstein: government money just.

Blair Goldstein: So I don't know I want to be cautious, I guess, with my answer, and like sensitive to that, but.

Blair Goldstein: I think the biggest takeaway.

Blair Goldstein: That I had.

Blair Goldstein: So far, I guess is.

Blair Goldstein: Like you just can't do it, you just gotta.

Blair Goldstein: Like if you if you're like stuck in a situation and just thinking about how much you want to do something else, like you just have to.

Blair Goldstein: And again, like.

Blair Goldstein: So circumstances but.

Blair Goldstein: Like if it's something that you really, really, really, really want and something that you're meant to do also on more of like a divine level I don't know then it'll happen you'll make it happen.

Blair Goldstein: Just trust the process I guess.

Blair Goldstein: it's terrifying.

Blair Goldstein: I was terrified I didn't like I thought I was gonna go move in with.

Blair Goldstein: My friends, Caroline and rowan and that would be that.

Blair Goldstein: And I would doordash.

Blair Goldstein: But I really wanted to.

Blair Goldstein: Not so it's like I don't know.

Blair Goldstein: either.

Blair Goldstein: and keep six feet apart.

Hanna Corneliussen: I want that, as a quote on our.

Hanna Corneliussen: thing just jump but keep six feet apart.

Blair Goldstein: yeah alright heard it's three feet now like it's got changed.

Hanna Corneliussen: Right oh man well um is there anything else that you'd like to add, before we end on our last question here, how can folks access your work.

Blair Goldstein: Well, this is something that I really need to get on, I do not have a website.

Blair Goldstein: I don't know that I have enough like quality.

Blair Goldstein: imagery of my work anyways to have a website right now it's instagram it's like how to access, but also in serum sucks so.

Blair Goldstein: I really need to make a website it um I just got business cards, they say player Goldstein visual artists, it feels very real.

Blair Goldstein: Right now it's instagram at E underscore more underscore color all lowercase I begrudgingly say.

Blair Goldstein: yeah you to make.

Hanna Corneliussen: awesome well, thank you again so much for your time today we really appreciate it for so excited.

Blair Goldstein: I hope it wasn't too nonsensical.

Danielle Marie New: No, no, and i'm going to stop the interview now just so we can.

Because.

Hanna Corneliussen: Right now.