

5-3-2021

## Interview with Sanae Robinson

Sanae Robinson

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/auntiesewing\\_interviews](https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/auntiesewing_interviews)

---

This Interview is brought to you for free and open access by the Auntie Sewing Squad Oral History Archive at Digital Commons @ CSUMB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Auntie Sewing Squad Interviews by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CSUMB. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@csumb.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@csumb.edu).

**Interviewee:** Sanae Robinson

**Interviewers:** Zitlalli Macias, Josie Cruz

**Date:** 3 May 2021

**Location:** Zoom

**Collection:** Auntie Sewing Squad Oral History Archive, SBS 322: Asian American Women's History, Spring 2021

**Length:** 00:43:58

**Overseen by:** Dr. Chrissy Lau

**Bio:** Southern California native, Sanae Robinson, is a multiethnic, Japanese American creative director, art director, designer, and sewer, making masks for underprivileged communities, as a part of the Auntie Sewing Squad. Robinson's experience with sewing is lifelong and her involvement in politics and activism are something she has felt passionate about all throughout her life. This skill and passion inform Robinson's contribution and involvement in the Auntie Sewing Squad.

**Thematic Outline:** [0:00] Sanae Robinson describes the start of her journey within the Auntie Sewing Squad as an observer and then a joiner. [3:13] Robinson then talks about her mother's experience in the Japanese American Incarceration Camps and the impact that COVID-19 anti-Asian sentiment has had on Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. [11:08] She goes on to describe how the Auntie Sewing Squad brought her back to her sewing roots. [18:07] Robinson goes into detail about her life growing up, her experience as a multiethnic person in high school, and why she identifies more with her Japanese heritage. [25:31] She reflects on how the Japanese culture of crafting, as well as her father's business as a leather shoe repair shop, developed her skill of sewing. [35:54] Robinson concludes the interview by giving advice to multiethnic people who may struggle with their identity, as well as describing their passion and involvement in art and activism.

## Oral History Transcript

**Macias:** Hello, well, my name is Zitlalli Macias.

**Cruz:** My name is Josie Cruz.

**Macias:** We are on Zoom today conducting an interview with Sanae Robinson. The first question we would like to ask is, how did your journey with the Auntie Sewing Squad begin?

**Robinson:** [1:46] I was kind of a “hoverer”. I was in the group but not doing anything, I would just watch the posts and see what other people were doing. I wasn't being active yet. I actually had been with another sewing group prior to finding out about the Aunties. A friend of mine had suggested that I join because, early on in the pandemic, it was impossible to find supplies and so being that I was with this other group, I was kind of on my own. They gave me some fabric and then everything else I had to kind of find myself. And so my friend told me about the Aunties. And she's like, you can get all sorts of supplies. You don't have to go on this crazy scavenger hunt all the time to find elastic and whatever else. So, yeah, like I said, I watched from a distance. And then eventually I kind of raised my hand and said I wanted to participate and I started sewing.

**Macias:** [2:50] Oh, Okay, That's really cool. So how do you feel like this...actually let me [let] Josie take over the question.

**Cruz:** [3:04] Oh, I do have a question. It's not regarding to the question, it's just regarding to the zoom meeting, are we recording this Zitlalli?

**Macias:** [3:13] Yeah, I'm recording it.

**Cruz:** [3:16] OK. Just double checking. Yeah, I will go ahead and ask my question. I just need to pull up my questions, so my questions are a little bit different to Zitlalli's. My question kind of falls more on the personal background type of questions. So I did see that your mother got to experience, not in a good way, the internment camps. So, like my question to you was, did your mother's experience in an internment camp impact your views of equality within the United States?

**Robinson:** [3:56] That's a good question. I don't know if I thought of it in a broad spectrum. I thought of it more about being a Californian and how that it seemed really unfair to a group of people, very [much] an overreaction to a situation. And my mother, unlike a lot of her generation, was very open about the experience. A lot of her generation chose not to talk about it. So, people my age don't really know a lot about what their family experienced because it was just like [they] don't talk about it. My mother did. She was amazing because she didn't hold a

huge resentment towards the experience or the country, but it was not a good experience. She was one of the people that got plucked out of a nice life. She was independent and working, making a good living and she was pulled into this camp situation and tried really hard to get out. She had family in the Midwest. And the idea was that if you had family to go be with east of the Rockies, you were allowed to leave. And she was a squeaky wheel. So she kept trying to get out. But yeah, I think as a child, I didn't really think about it as how unfair it was to the Japanese, but I didn't think of it kind of, like I said, in a grander way probably until 9/11, when people started reacting to Muslims in the way that people reacted to the Japanese/Asian because it wasn't, you know, in the 40s, people didn't just try to target Japanese. Like, if you were Asian, you were Japanese. So I felt like that was happening again. And it really scared me that knowing that the camps, a lot of them still exist, they weren't like bulldozed or anything. They're still there in various states of disrepair. But it just felt like that could happen again.

**Cruz:** [6:30] OK. Thank you.

**Robinson:** [6:31] Sure.

**Macias:** [6:32] So if it sounds like a lot of what happened back then, is like happening again because of, like, COVID-19 and how it affects Asian American people and how, like you said, if you were Asian you were Japanese. And so you just like to lump these people into groups and create their own prejudices. So did you want to follow up, Josie?

**Cruz:** [7:18] I just think that history is kind of repeating itself with, like the whole COVID-19 and it's quite sad because it's like a cycle or a I feel like it always comes back eventually and I feel like that's something that shouldn't be happening anymore. So you consider yourself a multiethnic person, I believe. I'm not quite sure. But so this is one of my questions so I don't really want to get into it right now because I have other questions that are kind of related to that coming up. But um, how did you feel about like, you know, like you're, since you are half Asian? How did you feel about your people or your community being like a target because of this virus and people stigmatizing them because of this virus?

**Robinson:** [8:13] Well, obviously, it's upsetting. I feel that, like you are saying, we keep doing this as a country, as a group of people. And it's frustrating that society hasn't grown up. It's like, as we become more mixed and more people [become] more integrated. You would think that we would be more open minded, I was trying to say bigger minded but that's not the right word, haha. And instead, it just seems like we're stuck in the past, like this keeps happening. And it's so small minded. It's so racist, I mean, just to lump a group of people together. And this isn't even something that the common person did. It's like I understand feeling angry or whatever at what happened in China. But that wasn't your everyday person and it certainly wasn't anybody here that did it just because they're Chinese. And then you just have to have that feeling that you want

to attack an Asian person just because they're Asian and this thing is happening to us. It's like it's mind boggling. And you see your politicians fueling it. And it's very upsetting. I mean, personally, being a multi ethnic person, I've had people say, oh, how do you feel? Are you afraid? And it's like, that's the thing. I feel very much all of my pieces, but I don't look it, so I don't feel like I'm a target of anything, be it Black Lives or Asian. People don't know how to read me. And so I don't want to say I'm safe, but, I just don't feel like I'm a target. But it's my people that are targeted. And so I still feel it. On the other side. And this might get into something that you might be asking me later, so I apologize, but I also feel that as much as I kind of skate by not being a target, I also don't feel like I can join in and be an advocate for my Asian people or my Black people because I don't look the part. So it's kind of a weird place to be — neither a target nor a credible ally.

**Cruz:** [11:06] It's a hard position to be in.

**Robinson:** [11:08] That's all what it is. It's interesting.

**Cruz:** [11:11] Thank you very much, Zitlalli, would you like to continue with your questions?

**Macias:** [11:16] Yeah, just to, like, continue from what we were talking about. How do you feel like this experience that you have as a multiethnic person like, how do you feel like it affects your experience within the Auntie Sewing Squad?

**Robinson:** [11:34] I think because originally it was very Asian-based, how it started, I think that might have helped me gravitate towards it. I, for whatever reason, I always have identified more with the Asian part of me. So it felt like I found my people. Yeah. And it's such an inclusive, wonderful group that I never felt like I wouldn't belong. I felt like all of the people, the communities that we helped, were very widespread. I mean, it's like almost anybody that you felt a pull towards helping, somebody eventually would offer an opportunity to help those people, whether it be the Native Americans or a healthcare organization or a school group or migrants or, I mean, it was like everything, you could help all the different people and I loved that part about it, too.

**Macias:** [12:52] So going off of that, what do you feel the Auntie Sewing Squad means to you?

**Robinson:** [13:04] It means a lot of different things. First of all, it was a way to be relevant, I mean, be plugged into a mission. When I first started sewing, it came out of a place of feeling helpless. Our government wasn't doing enough. I felt I couldn't do anything and so the idea that I could make something and make a difference, it appealed to me. It was a very fulfilling mission. It connected me back to my sewing roots. My mother was a really good seamstress, not by profession, but she was an amazing maker. And I originally went to school for fashion design

and I always sewed, I mean, from when I was a kid. I was sewing my own doll clothes because my parents refused to buy any clothes for my Barbies. So if I didn't want them naked I had to make clothes for them, which was a really kind of a funny beginning [with] little armholes cut out, they just had little sleeveless outfits. But gradually I got better at it. And like I said, I went to fashion design school and I sewed all the time for the first half of my life. Then I moved to New York, which probably coincided with being less interested in sewing. It also was a space issue where I didn't really have the room to have a sewing room and all that. So then fast forward like 20 years later, I had just, I mean, it's a strange coincidence, but just the year before, the summer before in 2019, I had had my industrial sewing machine serviced and it was just sitting there. I just tested it and said, yeah, great, it runs great. And I didn't do anything with it until this project came up and I sat down and started sewing and it was like it brought me back to a happy place. It was like a place that was so comfortable and comforting to me in a time when there was so much angst and turmoil that it really was a good thing to do. I mean, I wasn't working, so it was something to occupy my time, but also I could sit there for hours and do that and just feel good, so there's that and then, um, what else the group means. The group that I was with before I was like sewing in a bubble, it was just me doing it. Some mysterious person would come and pick [masks] up on my porch and disperse them where they were needed. I felt good about it. But I never met anybody and I didn't know anybody else who was sewing. I just would have a couple interactions with the people that were running the group. But when I started working with the Aunties, I mean, it is such a huge social media presence. It's like people interact all the time. It's no matter how you're feeling personally or emotionally, there's somebody there for you. But also, if you have a question about something or you were having trouble [with] technique, there was always somebody to help out. And so it just felt like this immediately, like a family, a community of like-minded people. And I don't always sew, I also occasionally would do a little errands because it's nice to get out and do something. And I wasn't meeting people, per say. But I volunteered to drive things from place to place for people that were being even more careful than I and wouldn't even venture out of their homes. So that was another thing that I could do for people, for the Aunties. And, yeah, I mean, they're just so caring and such a great group of people. And it's just I really don't know how I would've made it through the year without that connection.

**Macias:** [17:29] I love that so much that it feels like a supportive, like, safe community.

**Robinson:** [17:36] I mean, it's amazing we've talked about what happens when this is all, resolved [and] we're not making masks anymore. And it's like, oh, clearly we're going to find something, we've veered off and done like fleece hats for the Navajo and a lot of other really needy people during the winter time. So there's a way to just sort of move with the need of the day.

**Macias:** [18:07] That's so amazing. I'm so glad. Josie, did you want to go with one of your questions?

**Cruz:** [18:14] Yes. I'll go ahead and follow up with the second question. So I also did see that you grew up in the L.A. area. So my question about that was did growing up in L.A. ever make you question your Japanese culture? Or did it make you appreciate it even more?

**Robinson:** [18:35] Well, growing up in L.A. I guess it's its own experience because it is kind of naturally integrated. I've always lived in an area of the city that has been integrated, the schools that I went to as well. I mean, so ethnically, I'm half Japanese, my father was African American and white. I actually thought I was part Native American, but thanks to 23andMe, that myth has been dispelled. So I'm still heartbroken about that. I was very proud to be a Four Winds child. But that's not the case. So if I stumble over what my mix is, that's why. It's very new to me. It's only been like a couple months, knowing my mixture. But my father's family was all in Baltimore and Virginia and that area. So he [was] like the only person of his family that came west. And consequently, I didn't get a lot of the maybe the "Black experience" because I didn't have that part of his family around me. And I don't know, maybe it's because my mother was Japanese, that was more of the culture that I got, or maybe it's a stronger culture. I'm not sure. I haven't really figured out why it is, but I always identified more with that part of me. And my mother, she was second generation and she wanted to, I guess, continue some of the things that were culturally Japanese and let me experience them. So she enrolled me in Japanese language school and in a Japanese dance class, so I was always around a lot of Japanese people and got some of the culture by that exposure. When I was a teenager, I went to Japan. So I identified more with that. My mother also teased me about being more Japanese than her. So, I mean, the first time I went to Japan, it just felt like... I'm home.

**Macias:** [21:12] Really? That's so lovely I love that.

**Robinson:** [21:18] I actually went and lived in Japan for about six months when I was in my 20s.

**Cruz:** [21:23] Oh yeah. That's so cool. So you would identify more with, well, more in touch with your Japanese culture?

**Robinson:** [21:35] More in touch with the Japanese culture. I think in high school it became more apparent, that well, I guess partly, the high school that I went to, like I said, was very integrated, but not by busing. It just was like the natural makeup of the school was very mixed. But strangely enough, it's like it self-segregated itself, so like during recess or whatever they called it in high school, but during breaks and lunchtime and all that or after school, it's like people just gravitated to their own kind. And I don't mean just ethnically, but also interest wise. So it was like the Hispanics all were together. The Asians were together. The jocks were all

together. The druggies were all together. Everybody just split up. And I remember trying to fit in. It's like, okay, let's see if the Asian group, maybe I can belong to that. And it was like clearly that wasn't going to happen. And going into the Black group and they're like, no, you're pretending, you're not Black. I'm like, well, teach me some stuff. I'm not pretending anything. I'm just me.

**Cruz:** [22:55] Willing to learn.

**Robinson:** [22:58] Yeah, right c'mon! Help me. What do I do? But, yeah, so we ended up being like the band of misfits. Like there were a few of us that just didn't fit into any of the cliques. And that's where I ended up. So I didn't really get that from school or peers. I really got more of the cultural knowledge from my mother and the people that she exposed me to.

**Cruz:** [23:26] I feel like that's something that we could relate really to as second-generation children just because wherever we go, like my parents are from Mexico, whenever I go to Mexico, I'm not Mexican enough. But whenever I'm here, I'm not an American enough so that's just like, so where do I go? Like I'm in the middle. Well, I feel like that's something we could definitely relate to [with] other people as well.

**Robinson:** [23:50] Well, my mother, like I said, was second generation. She was born in the Bay Area and then she moved down to Los Angeles [with] her whole family. Her father died when she was like fifteen or so and her mother decided to take the family back to Japan. So my mother got to experience exactly that. She was the 'other' here and chastised or made fun of or whatever. And then when she went to Japan, she was an American. So she was like...

**Cruz:** Yeah.

**Robinson:** I don't belong anywhere. I've actually been lucky when I was in Japan. It's like people don't usually see the Japanese in me, like, look at me. But in Japan, my experience was different than that. People would just like, they would see it. They would just start talking to me in Japanese. And it was like, this is cool. And when they ask, it wasn't like, tell me all your mixture, because that's what I got a lot growing up with, if I said I'm half Japanese and I used to say I'm half everything else because I was like such a mixture. And in Japan, it sufficed to say I'm half Japanese and half American.

**Cruz:** [25:06] Oh okay.

**Robinson:** [25:07] So simple. Haha.

**Cruz:** [25:12] Do you want to go ahead and take it Zitlalli for your following question?



**Macias:** [25:15] Sure. So just going on from that, how has your cultural experience growing up influenced your sewing and your work?

**Robinson:** [25:31] I think, and I don't know if it's cultural or or personality, it's hard to know the difference because both of my parents were very crafty. They were always making, and I think generally speaking, I feel like Japanese as a culture, it very much promotes that. It's like from a young age, children are taught to paint or whatever it is. It's like trying to to to cultivate that. Whereas Americans, I don't feel really do that. It's like it's only if you sort of accidentally show somebody that you can paint will they start fostering that in you, right? So I feel like part of its cultural, but I can't really say for sure if that's what drew me to the mask making project or being involved.

**Macias:** [26:33] OK. So I know you're kind of touched on your sewing experience and stuff like that, but I just wanted to know a little bit more about your sewing experience, like whether it be like in college or just throughout your life.

**Robinson:** [26:53] Well, like I said I always could sew. I mean, it started off hand sewing doll clothes and whatever. But my mother was a sewer, so she taught me very early on how to sew on a machine. My father actually had a shoe repair shop and did a lot of leather work and they had a leather sewing machine. So I actually had really bad experience with the sewing machine and somehow managed not to let that scar me. I sewed my finger with a leather machine and lucky to, not like, react to it, just left my finger in the machine and called for some help. But I mean, I can imagine like that could make you not want to do that ever again. I still was fascinated with the process. So I didn't let that scare me away. I used to sew on my mom's domestic home sewing machine until I was in school and design school where I basically like made outfits or clothing every night. It's like I sewed all the time. And I would sew so fast that the home machine would, like, start migrating across the room because I was sewing so fast, eventually I bought an industrial machine that could stand that going fast and not budge... Yeah, I've always sewn.

**Macias:** [28:20] Josie, did you wanna go ahead?

**Cruz:** [28:22] Oh, yeah. I'm sorry. I know we touched on a little bit on this topic already, And you kind of spoke about it a little bit while your experience in high school and like the division, like, you know, like I want to say the, well, I don't want to say it was like segregated, but like, you know, like when everybody broke up into, like, their own groups in high school, do you feel that, like, as an multi-ethnic person, did you feel like you were caught up in the middle? Like, as if you were never fully Japanese, but you weren't also fully American? Like, any experiences. Like I said, we already kind of talked about this with your high school experience.

**Robinson:** [29:06] Well. I have to say that that segregation wasn't racist. Like there was nothing scary or negative about it. It's just it felt like people finding their people and I understood it. I wanted to fit in somewhere. I don't feel like I ever had a very bad experience in that age group. Yeah, it was a sort of frustrating that I couldn't, I guess, looking back on it, if I would have made more of a stand, maybe I could have broken in. But I think it wasn't my way to just go, "Let me in, I'm supposed to be here!"

**Cruz:** [29:56] Do you feel like you had any experiences after high school? I want to say, like, in the real world, in the work force or like in general because I do know that you moved around a lot, so I feel like every state is different when it comes to multiethnic people like you. So do you feel like do you have any experiences that might have made you feel like, well, I don't feel like I'm fully Japanese but then again I don't feel like I'm fully American?

**Robinson:** [30:25] Well, not later in life I actually felt that earlier in life because like I said, I went to a Japanese language school to learn the language on Saturdays and the first year or so that I was there it was like this wonderful experience. It's like it was so fun and interesting. And it was a great experience. And then maybe at like eight or ten, I'm not exactly sure how old I was, most of the kids, I know these language schools are different now because there's so many of us, right, mixed kids, but then it wasn't. Then it was mostly for Japanese kids, both their parents or Japanese and wanted to make sure that they learned how to read and write, and they didn't lose their language, right, but at home, they spoke the language, so they were very familiar with it. For me, it was like a whole new place because obviously my mom didn't speak it because my dad didn't and it was a foreign language. But all of a sudden the kids in the school decided they shouldn't talk to me, they shouldn't be my friend because I wasn't Japanese. And there was one other kid in the class that was in the school that was half, I actually think she was half Japanese and half Mexican. But her cousin was full Japanese and was also in the school. So she was OK because her cousin was OK. So that was all right. So I was just the one that they never would talk to when it was bizarre because there was one girl that lived down the street from me and she would talk to me and play with me and come to my house like all during the week, but on Saturdays, like she didn't know me. So that was like the worst experience that I had. Um, luckily in my Japanese dance group, I didn't have that. Otherwise, I mean, I would've been turned off to Japanese if that had happened in both places. But, no, I feel like later in life, and I've heard other mixed, mixed people say this, that all of a sudden there was like a moment in your, in your life that you went from being like "the weird other, can't quite categorize you" to being "exotic".

**Cruz:** [32:54] Yes.

**Robinson:** [32:56] And I mean, to the extreme that like a guy in my school that never would have looked at me the summer after high school all of a sudden was like, "who are you?" It's

like, what happened? I didn't change, I'm like exactly the same person. But suddenly maybe because they're out in the world, they're realizing that this is not weird, this is actually kind of interesting this person that doesn't fit in anywhere.

**Cruz:** [33:23] And I feel like a lot of that has come with social media because I feel like, not that its anything bad right, I don't have anything against it, but I feel like in social media, being multiracial or multiethnic is just like something, I don't want to say a trend, but it's just very much like, wow, like what are you? Like, it's a question that is often brought up so many times and I feel like it's glorified at this point, which, it's not a bad thing and it's quite good that multiracial kids are being accepted because that's not something that would have happened years back. That was something that was seen as a bad thing, so we've come a long way. And I feel like multiracial people are cool because like you said, it's considered to be exotic, but it's really cool just seeing like all these cultures come together and, being able to say, like, well, I'm also this, but I'm also like this out of my culture. So I just think it's pretty cool that you have two different worlds that you could choose from.

**Robinson:** [34:28] Well, I think that maybe the pendulum can swing from it being like this weird thing, to being like this exotic, like, curiosity, to then swinging back somewhere in the middle. And it's just like an accepted like, oh, you're, this is this other group of people that are...

**Cruz:** [34:45] a little bit of everything.

**Robinson:** [34:47] Yeah, it could also be from, celebrities, like, Tiger Woods before he became famous. I don't know, I can give, especially in the sports world, but, it's like it was not an oddity, but to say, oh my god, this guy's Black and Thai, this is weird. I mean, we start noticing it and other people around you and yeah.

**Cruz:** [35:14] Thank you very much.

**Robinson:** [35:16] It's who I am.

**Cruz:** [35:22] Yes, thank you for answering that question. I feel like we touched a lot on it, but I feel like one way or another, we kind of, came back to it.

**Robinson:** [35:28] No, that's fine, like I mean, come back to things that we didn't quite... I don't mind.

**Cruz:** [35:33] Do you want to go ahead and take the next one Zitlalli?

**Macias:** [35:38} Sure. I just wanted to let everyone know that we have hit the uh, 30 minutes. But if we wanted you to just, um, try to wrap it up and ask that, like, final concluding questions.

**Robinson:** [35:50] I'm okay on time if, however you want to do it.

**Macias:** [35:54] OK. Well, there's so many things that came up while we were having that conversation, but I wanted to ask, what advice would you give to somebody that also deals with that kind of like, internal struggle about your culture and like racial ambiguity and, you know, multi-ethnic struggle?

**Robinson:** [36:28] Hm. I have to think about that. I mean, I've experienced it on a purely cosmetic area where I was in like an airport restroom or something and the little girl said something about my hair and I looked at her and it was like, oh, clearly she's like one of-- I call them people from my planet--so it's like you're from my planet, and I said, OK, wait a minute, 'don't ever brush your hair when it's dry. You've got curls like me, I can tell, you just need to not--' haha... But anyway, that's a superficial kind of advice. But I felt like it could help her. But because I struggled a lot with my hair as a young person. I guess the advice would be to learn as much as you can about all the pieces that you are. I think even in a home where, like mine, where I grew up with both my parents, but, there was still one that I knew more about than the other and I think if I would go back and do it again, it would be like, expose me to more of your stuff, it's like tell me about your food, about your music, there's a lot to learn, I think. Yeah. Embracing it, not being embarrassed about one part of you over the other, because I know there are people that did that. They would kind of hide part of themselves because they thought one was better than the other. And I think that just hurts yourself. It's like self-love to love all that you are. And if your people are from other countries, like if you can afford or somehow go to that place, if it's do a summer abroad or wherever your people are from, I think it's really interesting, it's really good for you to know why. Sometimes it's why you do the things you do, and you don't even realize something that your grandma did or your mother did and you don't even realize that it's a cultural thing.

**Macias:** [39:01] Thank you.

**Robinson:** [39:07] Sure. Don't know if that was deep enough or...

**Cruz:**[39:11] So for my last question, I did see that you're an artist. So I wanted to ask, did you ever envision yourself becoming a minor, as she said it, artist-activist for both of your communities?

**Robinson:** [39:26] Right? Right. I did see that. I got to glance at all the questions that I forgot that was one of 'em. I decided I wanted it to be a surprise so I didn't really read through it. Yeah,

so I feel like that's a really interesting thing that's happened in my life, like late in life, while I didn't even consider myself an artist until, well, now it's been a few years, but still I was like, in my late 50s and that's like I decided I'll teach myself about the paint and I didn't know I could do it. The first paintings that I did were garbage. I mean, it was like, I don't know how to do this and then quickly, I found myself. I found my way. And I felt like, oh, my god, I can do this and that with that confidence. It allowed me to explore more subject matter. And like I said, I did a painting a day at the beginning, and it was supposed to be just for a month but because I felt so good about how far I'd come in a month that I couldn't stop. And so every day I would do a painting. And at a certain point in time, it was like, I don't know what to paint. I painted flowers. I painted that sunset 15 times, I'm like, what am I going to do? And then I started going, well, what's going on in the news? There was a volcano that erupted and somewhere in Colombia or wherever it was just like I painted that and there's a fire in Alhambra and I painted that and whatever was happening and then unfortunately, it coincided with with a lot of the BLM stuff that started to be in the news and it was Michael Ferguson, I mean, Michael Brown, sorry, IN Ferguson who got shot and I was so affected by it that I wanted to paint not just what I was seeing, but, the emotion that went with it. And that painting ended up going into a... Somebody saw it and they asked if it could be in a show and it just sort of snowballed and I ended up finding, or being part of a group of artist activists, like that's what these people did. They [did] printmaking and paintings and sculptures and whatever but it was all with this purpose, which felt really great. It's like I'm not just painting pretty things. I'm making people aware of things, trying to have a message and what I was doing and I mean, part of this to me was, there's a couple of messages. One is, I feel like people should try different things. It's like I could have gone my entire life and not known I could paint because I had never done it. It's like, pick up a musical instrument, try it out. Don't just try it and then say, I can't do this, but really, like, practice at something and see where it takes you. Like I said, I've always been involved, and politics is very important to me. I volunteered for presidential campaigns before I could even vote. I mean, I just was always, like, wanting to make a difference. And I've worked for a lot of different campaigns. So it just kind of all came together as something that, that I was good at, that could deliver a message, could go out in the world and be bigger than just me. I don't know if that answered your question, that's where that question took me.

**Cruz:** [43:12] It really did answer it. Thank you very much.

**Macias:** [43:20] Well, thank you so much for your time and the great things that you had to share with us. Thank you so much.

**Robinson:** [43:28] I hope I helped you in your project and feel free to, if you think of something that you want to know more about. I'm happy to oblige. Thank you.

**Cruz:** [43:42] Thank you. Thank you.

**Macias:** [43:42] Thank you. Bye bye.