

Ali's Wonky Tool

Duration • 4:49

SPEAKERS

Ali, Speaker 2, Speaker 3, Speaker 4

Ali 00:01

This is my wonky adjustable screwdriver. And it's something I've had for a long time. A friend actually gave me this one. And it, it captures my imagination, because, in my other life, as many of you know, as a sculptor, and some of the bigger projects I used to do in that other life, is that I often had to make tools, just for certain jobs, things for hard-to-reach places, tools that didn't exist, or I had to adjust existing tools.

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And this kind of almost became part of an art project as well, because it reminded me very much, first of all, because of it being a wonky screwdriver is, when I was probably... My start of my artistic career, when I was about three or four, and my dad, in his spare time, didn't have much, but he had a shed where he made lots of different things. And if he didn't have a tool or couldn't afford a tool, he would always adjust a tool and make a tool. So, everything kind of seemed possible to me at that time. And, yeah, just making things and adjusting things to make them work as well.

01:15

So, something that I kind of took into my, my life, creative life, as a sculptor. So, I often just used to...just to be able to just think that if I haven't got something, and even the creativity of having to adjust the tool to make something, I just love that kind of possibility of just not being stopped, actually, by not having the right tool. And this particular one was given to me by my friend, Dick, who...we used to have lots of conversations. When I was doing some bigger projects, he was an engineer, and, as an artist, we used to have these long coffee breaks and conversations about how engineering and how art is different and how it connects. And, so, lots of the things that I would kind of come to him with an idea, he just had that, kind of, the same creative attitude that he would also change things. He'd go away, then I'd get a call the next day to come to his studio space. And he'd kind of planned it out or he'd adjusted a tool, or he'd made something.

02:21

Cos many of the projects that I used to do involved thousands of things. I'm kind of a bit of a glutton for punishment, and I like making multiples of things. And, so, one of these projects was about 8,000 stems, which represented manufacture and he just, he found a way for me to produce something really quickly by just creating different kind of tools just to do that. So, yeah, I think it's... To me, it's... I like it cos it looks ridiculous. And someone has just created something just to get to a very awkward screw and missed something just there. And it just, it just represents to me just how you have to use creativity to get yourself out of a tight spot. That's it. Any questions?

Speaker 2 03:11

I really like that. That's a great story. There is always a way, that's the moral of the story, isn't it? Always a way to do it.

Ali 03:22

It is. It's kind of as funny as you were talking, I didn't really think about this, well, I did kind of think about it, David, because I was also diagnosed with dyslexia, just, again, only enough to just make it troublesome and in the last ten years. It's just the, um...my dad and actually lots of my friends obviously in the arts have a level of dyslexia. And it just made you realise how you build different strategies to cope with that, because you think in a different way or you see things in a different way. And it's... You never kind of quite fit into a normal learning pattern or situation so you, you find creative ways. It kind of represents that as well. You know, you kind of find your own way.

Speaker 3 04:06

Yeah, I was thinking that.

Ali 04:08

Mm.

Speaker 4 04:10

I was trying to work out what it was from the picture.

(LAUGHTER)

Ali 04:15

We had loads... Dick and I had loads, when he found this as well. So I've got lots of different tools in my studio now which I have either made myself or have adjusted but this is just the most ridiculous, cos I just quite like the fact that I never really found out what would have been that space, but it was obviously just to miss something just enough and using that bit as a kind of wonky... I'm thinking about doing an art piece about this eventually, cos I just like the idea of a set of tools that completely don't make sense, but they just do one job.