

**00:00:00 SEOSAMH**

Oh.

**00:00:01 RMJ**

What's up?

**00:00:002 SEOSAMH**

Oh, sorry.

**00:00:03 RMJ**

No, go for it.

**00:00:04 SEOSAMH**

I just didn't know, um. I, I took a lot of, I took a lot of notes. Do you have any time frame? Like should I make sure not to talk too much?

**00:00:16 RMJ**

No—So generally, um, I try, I'm trying to keep these around like an hour and a half, but if we go over a little bit, that's totally fine. Please don't feel like you have to do any sort of like, self-regulating or anything like that, it's totally whatever you want.

**00:00:30 CGJ**

We want you to talk as much as you would like, like absolutely don't feel like you have to edit what you say at all. Don't worry about it.

**00:00:32 RMJ**

Absolutely. Yeah.

**00:00:37 SEOSAMH**

OK. Yeah. It's not even as much as I would like, I feel like it's just going to happen like it's just. That's how it is.

**00:00:45 RMJ**

That is extremely exciting to me.

Um. All right. So, I want to go ahead and read the bio, your bio, then and then we can get started, um, so. Today we have with us Seosamh, AKA Joe, who is a butch trans painter, a

hypertext enthusiast and an author of dark, surreal and intimate worlds of denim, leather and gloss, among other projects. He and his partner...

**00:01:14 RMJ**

This is one I should've checked with you beforehand, Anka?

**00:01:17 SEOSAMH**

Yes.

**00:01:18 RMJ**

He and his partner Anka are proud co-authors of the ongoing sci-fi comic *Superpose*.

Um. Thank you so much for being here and I'm going to jump in with a question that kind of start us off with always, which is how would you describe your relationship to comics?

**00:01:40 SEOSAMH**

Um. I mean I. I've been reading them for a pretty long time since I was a kid. My dad was very passionate about that. It was it wasn't something that was ever like ohh this is immature or you know this, this isn't. This isn't real reading that actually happened when I started reading like, like BL manga, but. Um, yeah.

Do you, when you say relationship, is that sort of, does that include making them or just kind of like a, big, I don't know. Something bigger than that.

**00:02:17 RMJ**

However you want to talk about it. If you want to focus on making it, we can totally do that.

**00:02:22 SEOSAMH**

Um. Well, only because I, I, I can't. I can't do much else other than make them.

**00:02:30 RMJ**

(Laughing) Sure.

**00:02:32 SEOSAMH**

I. But no, it is, it is. I, I love to do it, I love I. I mean, I love art in general. I love studying it, I love, I love studying my like, inclination toward it and habits with it.

I love not thinking about it and just doing it. But with comics? Uh, Yeah, it's.

**00:02:59 SEOSAMH**

I find it's maybe the most effective way of communicating anything, at least for me personally, that can't be done any other way, like a pair, pairing of both pictures and texts means I, yeah, I get to, I get to write with my voice and also depict it.

Um. And, yeah, it's very it's important to me that I guess my presence in my work is, is also felt. Uh, by the viewer. Not, not like that's something I can control, but it's something that I. Yeah, it's something I just find very, um.

**00:03:43 SEOSAMH**

I'm not necessarily obsessive about it, but, but I guess I don't try to hide it.

Now something I felt pretty strongly about before this threat of AI, but my resolve about it has definitely like strengthened because of it.

00:04:00 RMJ

Mhmm.

**00:04:03 SEOSAMH**

But as I guess. I, I guess it's harder to answer like my relationship to comics as just like a, a concept other than that, yeah, it's had like a consistent presence in my life and, yeah, I started making them like pretty, pretty early on, um, like as a little kid.

And um, yeah, I would have loved to, have made like uh, like. I, I, I also studied film when I was in high school and I, I would love to be making movies but I can't and it will never happen like I would have loved to have made *Heat* or *Collateral*. But, but I have to do something else. So this is the something else that I get to do, yeah.

**00:04:55 SEOSAMH**

Um, I don't know it. It just feels, it feels natural. It's a natural pairing of, of things where I don't have to explain too much and, yeah, I have a sort of control I guess.

**00:05:11 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**00:05:13 SEOSAMH**

Filter, yeah. I hope that's like *an* answer.

**00:05:15 RMJ**

Oh absolutely. Um.

**00:05:20 CGJ**

Can I ask you a follow-up?

**00:05:22 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, please.

**00:05:23 CGJ**

Why do you feel like you can't make film?

**00:05:26 SEOSAMH**

Oh, it's only that I spent such a long time trying to make this kind of art, and I really enjoy it and I think I would be spreading myself really thin if I, if I. Yeah, kind of diverted my attention to that.

I, yeah, I actually was going to, mm, I was going to try to shoehorn this in somewhere, but I, I feel like... with film you can, I mean, obviously this like goes without saying, but with film you can do things and with comics you can do things that you can't do with each other and.

**00:06:05 SEOSAMH**

Um. But the thing that I do really enjoy about both is the control of time. And so I feel like with comics, I can satisfy that that interest. And so I'm not, yeah, not as um, yeah. Motivated to change, change course, I guess because both things really allow for that.

**00:06:28 RMJ**

Yeah. When you say control time, I'm curious, like how do you mean that in comics?

**00:06:34 SEOSAMH**

Mm! Boy, like the, the condensing and stretching of a moment and through what um the, the way that you can, I guess at least plan to have someone linger. Uh, inside of, inside of a moment for a given amount of time, depending on, yeah, like how, how much or a little... I mean, yeah. For example, yeah. Like, how much or and how little rendering something is given will slow and speed something up, or like the framing of it and where the eye is directed.

**00:07:16 SEOSAMH**

They're, yeah. And the, the size of panels. Or even like panels flowing into one another or, or being more like staccato with it.

**00:07:29 RMJ**

Mmhmm.

**00:07:30 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I. I guess that's what I mean. That feels like you can, I mean, you're really putting frames around moments, so. I think control of time is kind of like. I don't know. I, I'm not, I don't want to assume it's something that everybody thinks about, but I feel like that is kind of what's happening.

**00:07:54 RMJ**

Mmhmm.

**00:07:58 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, we're knowing, at least telling maybe. Like kind of expressing a, a more. Yeah, something narrative. Something like representational versus something abstract. Not that that can't also be done, but. Yeah. Does that make any sense?

**00:08:16 RMJ**

Yeah, absolutely.

I think I think I think that's a really smart way of thinking about it. I think, it reminds me of some other stuff I've read that I will share with you later.

And sort of continuing talking about your work, your work and I, I'm going to reference a lot your, your, your website and your artist statement on your website because I really think it's really, I think it's a fabulous artist statement so and, and, and you, your work mainly features trans men or trans masculine people in T4T relationship dynamics and I was wondering if we could like talk about why you focus on T4T in particular.

**00:08:58 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I, I will do my best.

Well. I guess it's, yeah. Should I? Should I focus on... OK. You brought up both trans men and masculine people and also T4T. So is there...

**00:09:18 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**00:09:21 SEOSAMH**

Should I treat these as separate or?

**00:09:24 RMJ**

Uh, if you, if you see them, it's again. It's like if, if those two concepts are like intertwined for you, then we can definitely talk about both, right?

**00:09:34 SEOSAMH**

OK, well. Um. Yes. Yeah. The focus on T4T feels... Um. I mean it, it. Yeah, it feels, um, indulgent in that it's both extremely natural and also kind of illicit in a way where you know. Certainly in history and, and in my own early beginnings of of transition like it was, uh, not encouraged. It was not even really considered as an option.

**00:10:22 SEOSAMH**

And. I think I, you know, on, on one hand, it's kind of, um, I'm trying to undo that. My, my own like, the fear that I used to have when I was younger and also doing this for, yeah, for, for other people to see, I mean, I share it. So it is for other people to see.

I think that it being T4T though, just as a baseline is also just not.

**00:11:04 SEOSAMH**

Hmm. Like even just that isn't quite enough for me. So like you'll notice that I don't draw too many thin people or, or, and I draw. I don't think I draw any like hairless people and.

**00:11:16 RMJ**

Right.

**00:11:20 SEOSAMH**

And um, I, I am trying. Well. Like I, I don't think that I draw you know, fat people drawn like they're supposed to, like. They're humble and gracious about like any attention paid to them. It's it's, it's really more about, you know that that being.

Like it's not wrong to to indulge in any kind of like relationship or sex or, or anything, like it. It's, it's not like someone is lowering themselves like a fat person is beneath, like, you know their status I guess so, yeah, it, I guess, yeah. Like I've, I've. I've talked to another artist friend.

They're just like, an incredible, incredible comic artist. My friend Jules Valera. And we've talked a lot about fatness.

**00:12:20 RMJ**

Mm.

**00:12:23 SEOSAMH**

As its own sort of gender experience and equally, as much like a, a degendered experience.

Um. And I mean, I feel like I share more along, with people along that axis than I do, you know, with, with cis people also than I do with like more, I guess, I guess you say conventionally attractive people or like straight sized people.

Um. So. Yeah, I. And like in my, in, in my work I'll portray just like different kinds of scarring, but I. But I don't usually draw like people who are, who have had top surgery or.

I might, but it's kind of ambiguous like these could be augmentation or reduction scars.

**00:13:18 RMJ**

Hmm.

**00:13:21 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. So. Yeah. So having gone through what was at the time, mandatory gender therapy. Yeah, I was taught, you know, about passing for like, whatever, whatever, like fickle cultural norms and, and playing like a convincing role within that and, um. And ideally like a cis woman would like eventually become interested enough to humor me and that would be considered successful.

**00:13:59 RMJ**

Mmhmm.

**00:14:02 SEOSAMH**

So. Yeah, I. I really want to honor the things that I was really afraid of, of being and experiencing when I was a kid and trying to, you know, I tried to tamp those things down. And I mean to the detriment of like myself and any relationships that I was in and, and trying to, uh. Be like 100 different things at once.

And. Yeah, I. Eugh. Yeah, I, I don't want to, I don't want cis people to expect that they'll take precedent in anything that I do.

**00:14:52 RMJ**

Mm.

**00:14:54 SEOSAMH**

And it's not as if, like my, my life now like. I'm not like, yeah, like, abundantly like surrounded by like or, or, you know, like, there's there's not, like a ton of visible T4T relationships that I get to,

yeah. Just kind of like absorb and, and enjoy. Just, you know, like as a stranger or a friend. But I want to...

**00:15:29 SEOSAMH**

I don't know, but maybe because of that, the commitment feels even more important. And so I want to, yeah, show trans people, trans men, agender people bridging something together, bringing something intimately important with one another, regardless and because of differences and details of identity where no, no one and no aspect of a person is, is downplayed or made lesser or like, you know, in service of someone else.

Um, you know, to serve some, some image of like. A more just superior figure of any kind like. Like, I mean like equals, but sometimes those equals are also like. Yeah, it's like there's BDSM roles at play too, but.

**00:16:28 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**00:16:29 SEOSAMH**

That is like a, I mean that *is* play.

Yeah, I am. Yeah, I in some of. I don't know I, I don't know if this is like a... I don't know kind of an aside, but I had been. I have been told that like something that people really enjoy is like how like the, the men that I draw and body like a queer femininity. But I don't think about it that way?

**00:17:05 SEOSAMH**

I don't. I'm not trying to. I'm not like, yeah, I don't aim to portray or like, launder femininity, I guess. It's it. I have a hard time categorizing my own inclinations on, like, gendered terms like that. Um.

And. Yeah. So I, I want my work to look like me and I, I want to see myself in it. Otherwise, I I think I would feel quite bad if I didn't do that.

I mean, I remember, this is—I remember being on deviant art when I was a teenager, and I finally posted a picture of myself and one of my one of my, like friends that I've been talking to on there who hadn't seen me yet, like, was like, oh I expected someone skinnier like. I, I've like remembered this like since then.

**00:17:57 SEOSAMH**



Because it was just so. Like. Why would you, and also, oh no, like, I have done something to make someone like think that. (RMJ laughs)

I don't know, it's just like very alarming. And even though I, I mean, I didn't really change anything about how I was how or what I was drawing, but that sort of um, like that's not. That's not like an outlier as an experience and making work about, when depicting trans people was not encouraged at any point, like when I was in school or, or after so.

I don't know. I just like it.

**00:18:43 RMJ**

OK, that, I have like—so OK. Let me just gather my thoughts for a second. That was great.

**00:18:48 SEOSAMH**

Sorry! (laughs) Onslaught.

**00:18:48 RMJ**

No! Excellent. So many good, so many good things.

**00:18:50 CGJ**

That was awesome.

**00:18:53 RMJ**

So good. I really—the thing I want to pull out first I think is, you talked about you and your friend Jules, and like fatness is a sort of like, its own gender its own like, degendered experience. And I would love to pry into that like a tiny bit more um. Like, would you mind, like, maybe describing some of that framework for us?

**00:19:17 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I'm not. Uh. I'll try. Yeah, I don't know how smart I'll sound, but I can certainly.

**00:19:23 RMJ**

You don't have to.

**00:19:26 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. So both of us are. Um. I mean, yeah, we're we're, we're both some, some flavor of trans between us and, and, and also both butch and we, yeah, have sort of. Um.

Yeah, it's that. Man, yeah, I guess. I guess the reason why I I feel like I can include cis people when I say that like, yeah, I think I share more with cis and trans people who, yeah, just aren't

thin and don't benefit from like that sort of currency is like that, that is a. That is a good feeling to me to know that like. The way that we are experiencing the world and, and our own gender and and each other like.

**00:20:32 SEOSAMH**

It, it is different from other people. It is that's kind of non-negotiable. I think there's no, there's no real... There's no reliable setting in which that will be different.

**00:20:44 RMJ**

Mhmm.

**00:20:46 SEOSAMH**

And yeah, growing up. Like. Yeah, it, it, it wasn't. Um. Well, I guess it's hard to categorize because it does, because it does feel like its own thing. Like I, I think the way that I, I've been treated isn't strictly like, oh, you're being you're being punished for this, for reasons that belong to women or men.

Like the way that this is, um, from like medical, in a medical setting or, or. I mean, not exclusively, but like that. I at least struggle to think of a medical setting in which the treatment is especially different between genders.

**00:21:46 RMJ**

Sure, right—

**00:21:47 SEOSAMH**

*(Overlapped)* And, and, you know, oh, sorry.

**00:21:49 RMJ**

Oh, no, sorry. I didn't mean to. I was going to say, sort of like the, the fatness takes precedent over whatever, like assigned gender is.

**00:21:54 SEOSAMH**

Yes, yes, absolutely. And you know it's a, it is a big barrier to transition. It is a big like a cautionary point of you know you, you better not because you know you're going to gain weight. And you know, if you want to get surgery like, it's not like you can do that very easily you'll be turned away immediately or just bullied by like, whatever professional.

Um. And, yeah, I. Yeah.

**00:22:37 SEOSAMH**

I guess... I'm not. I don't know how to go into like extreme detail with it, but it does, it does. It does feel very true like just thinking about my own life. And trying to find a sense of, of, of gender within that. And you know, yeah, being degendered, being desexualized. And that also being considered like, oh, this is like, being fat is also like a sign of like, yeah like a weakness of character even.

And. Yeah, like you can't be trusted to—Clearly, you can't be trusted to, like, make your own choices, which is the thing that, you know that. Eugh. Like, that's something that crosses over into, into, transness and into like neurodivergence as well, or like, yeah, mental illness or whatever.

And I think that, that those things are interrelated is really important. In, in trying to conceptualize other my own and other peoples like, I mean just like lives in general. But, but like yeah, experiences of, of trying to be a person.

**00:24:07 RMJ**

Yeah, I mean to tip my own hand in a perhaps not academic way (*Seosamh laughs*) I think like, I'm also like a fat trans masculine person, right? And I feel like I've had the same sort of experience of, like, being fat puts you in a different gendered category from the start, like whether you end up transitioning or not.

**00:24:24 SEOSAMH**

Mhm, mhm. Yes. Yes.

**00:24:31 RMJ**

So I definitely think that's extremely real. And I, I had a question. We, we started talking about this a little bit in terms of like how you specifically draw trans men and trans masculine people, right?

**00:24:35 SEOSAMH**

Mm.

**00:24:47 RMJ**

Um, which, I'm. I think like, is pretty markedly different right from how like a lot of people typically, let's say, do it?

**00:24:56 SEOSAMH**

Maybe. Maybe sometimes.

**00:25:57 RMJ**

In a good way. In a really good way. Um. But you know you were talking about how like you choose for instance, you don't really draw, you don't draw thin people, you don't really draw people, you never draw, people don't have body hair for instance, like that kind of thing.

And then you kind of mentioned that like in school, that wasn't like, drawing trans people wasn't really encouraged.

**00:25:16 SEOSAMH**

Oh yeah.

**00:25:18 RMJ**

And I'm curious, 'cause you went to art school, right?

**00:25:21 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. Yeah.

**00:25:22 RMJ**

How, like. How were you instructed in art school to draw, like, bodies in general? And how does that like square with how you wanted to?

**00:25:35 SEOSAMH**

Um. Eugh, man, well there is a kind of a dissonance to it because. Um. You know, we did, We did figure drawing and, you know, we'd have different models of different ages, different, different sizes, not like a huge variety, but definitely you know there there was some. And so being able to do that obviously is, is valued, but like being able to portray

Uh. Or not even being able to portray, just being able to convincingly draw the thing in front of you like that is rewarded, but, but it wasn't like anybody doing that was like, wow, this is awesome. I love doing this. Like that was um. There's a pretty big divide between what you had to do and what you wanted to do. The value of the person in front of you was not really...I didn't sense that people really considered that and like.

Like, or like, not the value, but also just like their own, like weird derision towards having to do this, like that wasn't really checked.

**00:26:57 RMJ**

Hmm.

**00:27:01 SEOSAMH**

And then in more illustration-based courses there was no, there was no incentive. There was no instruction to vary anything like that.

So that was also a pretty big divide between like. Here, this is like the drudgery of having to learn to draw like a person that is not thin and is maybe like, yeah, also old versus illustration, where you have to like... You will consistently be rewarded for drawing like a, yeah, just like a fucking like, Vetruvian, like just I don't know. Like this sort of stock type person with like, just like conventionally fit body, um. Like that being like, that is just the baseline. That is what's both expected and just not questioned.

I mean I, I remember like even um. A classmate being kind of prodded a bit because she did draw for an assignment like a a series of illustrations that I think did have some focus on body hair and like the teacher didn't exactly give her a hard time, but just like kept, kust kept asking questions like he didn't get it, like he didn't get why.

**00:28:36 SEOSAMH**

Like it had to mean something bigger than it, than it did, like it had to. It either had to be symbolic and in like a larger way or it had to like have some kind of like strictly personal reason.

**00:28:55 RMJ**

Mmm.

**00:28:58 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I. I mean I can count on one hand the amount of trans people that I drew in my assignments, even though I, I think by that time I was doing it out of, like outside of class but it was such a... I mean, I remember just feeling completely just fatigued by having done it, like it would just felt like it was not worth it based on having to answer questions about it.

Um. So it wasn't even that I didn't want to it just was so arduous.

And I, and I can only imagine that being probably the case for a lot of people who maybe do want, you know, it's, it's not like a sense of shame or anything like more complicated, but just being put through the ringer? Kind of.

Oh my God. Is that even what you asked me about?

**00:30:05 RMJ**

Yes! No, that was great, absolutely.

**00:30:09 SEOSAMH**

OK.

**00:30:13 RMJ**

Yeah. And then. I'm going to, hm. So the other thing we talked about was you, you mentioning that you don't want cis people to feel like they take precedence.

**00:30:25 SEOSAMH**

Mm, mhmm.

**00:30:26 RMJ**

And I'm curious if you feel like...Especially I'm thinking of like *Superpose*, which has a pretty decent audience, right? Like you guys kind of know who's reading it. Do you, do you ever feel like tension with your cis audience? Or are you just like completely not paying attention to that.

**00:30:46 SEOSAMH**

Um. Boy, I. There surely must be some, but I'm not.. mm. I don't actually really have a good grasp of, of like our readership, I think— *(Cat meows)* Oh, I'm sorry, my cat is here.

**00:31:08 SEOSAMH**

Uh. Yeah, I um. I think that's the sort of thing that I get like pretty, I would get pretty obsessive about if I gave myself like an inch.

**00:31:18 RMJ**

Gotcha.

**00:31:19 SEOSAMH**

But. No, it's, that is. I don't think that's exactly where the tension lies. I, there are, I've heard from some cis people about it, and they they've been like fairly decent I think, or at least are. curious about it, you know, and some people have even said like I, I, you know, I can't. I can't relate to the characters in this way, but like, so I—but they relate to them through other ways, which then makes them more, yeah, like open and receptive to the transness of the characters.

**00:31:57 RMJ**

Mmm.

**00:31:58 SEOSAMH**

Um, which I mean that's, I guess ideal. But, yeah, I don't know that that's, yeah. I wouldn't say that's a point of, of tension. I think the, I think the biggest tension is, is, comes from people who read it like it's episodic instead of, *(laughs)* instead of not like that. But no, I think it's good.

**00:32:26 RMJ**

Cool. Awesome. All right, um, then I'm going to go ahead and move on. So this is again sort of a broad question so we can parse out however we want to answer it, but, um. What... First of all, when you think of the phrase *trans representation*, how do you define it? And second of all, what's your relationship to that idea?

**00:32:54 SEOSAMH**

Huh. Um. Ooh, well. I have heard that there is good and bad (*RMJ laughs*) but um. I mean like it's... My relationship to it.

**00:33:20 RMJ**

Like is it something you care about at all, or do you not even like, you know what I mean?

**00:33:20 SEOSAMH**

OK. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, I OK, well, I do. I do, definitely care about it, but not as, I don't approach it like it's its own... Like that there's like a rubric for it. And it's actually uh, it can actually be kind of hard for me to set out to make something that is like about transness. I've said before, like. It can feel like staring into the sun like it is. It's such a, it is so big and it is so, um. Yeah, it's just it's. It can be so overwhelming that I feel like I need to sort of take, like, a longer way around and give myself the time to suss that out a bit more and see what I find as I and I try to develop like a story, yeah, from from other directions first.

**00:34:26 RMJ**

Mhmm.

**00:34:30 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I so I, I do care about trans representation in my, in my work, but I'm not trying to represent... like, a thing like, one thing. There's things I there's things that I associate with being trans that I am trying to represent. But I, I wouldn't. And. And I, and I also don't feel like weird if somebody, if somebody told me that like that's what my work is. Because like, that's true, it is trans representation but, um, in like a very literal way, but.

Yeah, I do get confused like about the nature of something being a good or, or, or bad version of that. Just cause that that seems like you know, that's so, such a sense of, of like distrust, I guess.

**00:35:37 RMJ**

Hmm! How so?

**00:35:40 SEOSAMH**

Ohh well I guess like. Someone. Someone deeming something, yeah, trustworthy or not, feels like an entirely subjective sort of, uh, review of it. I mean, unless you know, unless it's like. Yeah, like just by some confirmed asshole then like I don't. I don't know. Like, you know, like someone who's doing more harm than just making something that you don't agree with, like something that you don't see yourself in.

**00:36:13 RMJ**

Sure.

**00:36:18 SEOSAMH**

You know like, like. I think that has to, it has to scale fairly like that. Like.

**00:36:26 RMJ**

Gotcha.

**00:36:27 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. Oof. Yeah, I, I was definitely pretty burnt by earlier iterations on this where it was like. Oh, like, yeah, you can't, uh, can't show like trans guys enjoying like sex of any kind or, or, or like you know you have to be kind of timid and yeah, like deferential.

Like, I'd rather like, it's one of those things where it's like, yeah, I'd rather just be called a slur. Like, just do that. Like, like, at least that would be honest. And like, I don't know.

**00:37:20 SEOSAMH**

But I guess if I can turn it on my work, maybe, that um, the type of, yeah, I guess the things that I want to represent are just the things that feel honest to me.

**00:37:41 RMJ**

Mmm.

**00:37:43 SEOSAMH**

Even things that you know are, are outside of my scope, but that are real, like I don't want to shy away from that like I want to learn about and research them, but one thing is uh. Yeah, the the point at which *Superpose* begins is in in the lives of, of the characters, the parents or family characters are, are, I mean, it's like in media res. They're reacting to their kids after they've been, they've been trans for, like they've come out a while ago, or they've exhibited behaviors for a long time.



**00:38:30 SEOSAMH**

And so I want to show like this, I hate using this word, but like the liminal space of, of, of seeing or, or being someone in... Whether, whether indistinct or, or clockable. But you've been like this for a long time, and, and no one calls you the right thing even if you try to come out to them like that, that door is closed. But you also can't leave them either.

Um. Like if I can use my character, or our character Royal for example, his, his parents are tired of his shit but it's, and like it's not an issue that comes up every single day, there's more issues between them, but it is a constant background noise.

**00:39:12 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**00:39:13 SEOSAMH**

And they're, they feel extremely entitled to his body and him and, and want him both gone and trapped.

And, um. And then, yeah, there's another part. There's a part and *Superpose* where our other main character, Raphael, explains that no one knows he's trans unless it's a medical necessity. And this isn't because he passes.

For him, there is no traditional disclosing or, um, even like coming out if no one sees him as a man to begin with.

**00:39:49 RMJ**

Mm.

**00:39:50 SEOSAMH**

He doesn't get to do that, that stereotypical reveal to anybody, because there's nothing to reveal. It's very vulnerable opening yourself up to being evaluated like that.

For him, there is, yeah, more racialized and, and classist bent to this also. And being fat has a lot to do with it too.

**00:40:10 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**00:40:13 SEOSAMH**

Especially thinking about being evaluated like, I mean if. Like if, if you, if you express having a goal of some kind, you're going to be held to that by other people.

**00:40:27 RMJ**

Right.

**00:40:29 SEOSAMH**

And... So those are the, those are the kinds of things I, I care about representing, but, but it's not like. When I think about them, there's like a flashing neon sign of like, this is trans representation like this is trans representation. This is the thing you're doing.

**00:40:49 RMJ**

Mhmm.

**00:40:50 SEOSAMH**

It's just, I don't. I wouldn't know how to do something else. Um. And I think yeah, like, these sorts of... Viewing these things as though there is like a universality to it. Um, and, and trying to write with that in mind like, oh God, I have to make it so everybody understands this. Everybody sees this as, uh, like one thing, something we all get. I think that's like a quality associated with work that is considered like targeted more towards younger people or, or even considered like immature.

**00:41:40 SEOSAMH**

But it is something I find occurring in mature work too. This sort of like, yeah, but with more mature work it's like an almost removed or cynical sense of winking at the audience. Kind of presuming that we've all had the same conversations and in the same places with the same people for the same reasons and with the same conclusions. And that's not something I feel comfortable asserting.

So. I don't know. Is that. Yeah.

**00:42:19 RMJ**

Yeah! Absolutely.

**00:42:19 SEOSAMH**

God, I feel like I'm just like monologuing.

**00:42:22 RMJ**

No, that's what I want. I want the monologue, I want—

**00:42:24 CGJ**

Yeah. I mean, honestly, we're the ones who are tricking you into monologue. *(laughing)*

**00:42:28 RMJ**

*(laughing)* Right, that's the goal.

**00:42:31 SEOSAMH**

I didn't realize I was trapped. That's great. *(laughing)*

**00:42:34 RMJ**

I mean, you can technically log off whenever, but.

**00:42:37 SEOSAMH**

No, never.

**00:42:40 RMJ**

Um. Yeah, and I think. Ooh, trying to decide...I kind of want to jump ahead a little bit in my questions, because we've, we've talked a little bit about this and already and I, I, one of the things that I like have here is that like, I'm really interested by your, the sense of like historical specificity in your work.

Like *Superpose*, right, is like partially in this like alternate 1980s. And you talk about like, you know, even in the bio, right, you talk about like denim, leather gloss and these sort of like...Not that these things are exclusively this, but I, I feel like there is some sort of historical association with like, 80s and 90s queer subcultures, right? And like I, I kind of like, have, like, Mapplethorpe BDSM photography as an example but there's like a whole bunch, right?

**00:43:30 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. Oh my God.

**00:43:31 RMJ**

And even, like, even like cruising, not that people don't still cruise, but the idea of like physically cruising, I feel like it's very... Kind of like 80s, nineties, right?

So I'm curious, like, how do you see yourself, or do you see yourself in conversation with those like subcultures? Am I like way off base, like?

**00:43:52 SEOSAMH**

Oh no, not at all. I'm honored by the, the, yeah, Mapplethorpe reference.

Yeah. I would say I, I'm no expert, but I do definitely feel in conversation with that. I mean, you, you kind of. I think making any work set any time you do have to look at what, what led, what built this, um.

**00:44:32 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I. Well, oh, OK. There's so many ways I could come at this. Um. Yeah, I. I've read a lot of UM, I think yeah, I appreciate this early, early 90s, but uh, Jacob Hale's writing on butch and and like, I guess, FTM leather culture, which was often written in direct response to TERFs who, like, yeah, pushed him and people like him out of, out of feminist spaces, when they did, sort of. Uh. Were no longer comfortable being called exclusively women, even though you know they're still heavily involved in in these scenes and even helped like sort of construct them.

**00:45:27 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, and yeah, I love like Tom Bianchi's, like, Fire Island photography, and that, you know being all like gay hook up cruising culture. And um, oh God, what is... how do you pronounce this... Is it Pierre et Gilles? I think I, maybe, is how you pronounce it. They're a pair of photographers who did these like, still maybe still do these like, elaborate like mix of, yeah photography and then collage and set, set pieces.

Just like very beautiful, very. Very homosexual.

**00:46:26 SEOSAMH**

And uh, I actually made an entire website in homage to early trans presence online. That were like, found, I, I researched and, and uncovered like all of these old like self-made Geocities, Angel Fire websites and. There's an emphasis on trans men and butches, but it's by no means exclusive, like on my, on my thing that I made, I mean.

The... The Internet, but especially like late 90s, early 2000s Internet was and is very much a space with like its own topology to me. And the space that I, I do try to keep alive by crafting like deranged bespoke websites. And I. I wasn't intentionally seeking other trans boys like when I was a kid, but it would happen where I'd stumble on to like, yeah, a gender ambiguous person trying to make sense of themselves.

**00:47:38 SEOSAMH**

Alongside, like some painstaking text transcription of like, an untranslated yaoi manga, like, and that was what I was trying to find, but then I'd end up, yeah, like kind of reading someone's diary.

And uh. Yeah, I mean I, yeah. So that's, I guess that's one example where like, I, because I feel in conversation with that, it, that leads me to be in conversation with earlier [?] of the trans

Internet, where you know there were BBS boards based on like trying to give each other advice on like how to dress, how to get hormones, like lots of like, yeah, sex and, and fetish talk and. Trying. Yeah. Arrange meet ups with people.

**00:48:40 SEOSAMH**

And. It, I mean, that's just like a a digital example, but I can. Yeah, definitely, uh. Yeah.

I guess I don't want, hm. Well, one thing is that I do feel like time does run at a different clip for poor people as far as trends in, you know anything like.

**00:49:02 RMJ**

Hmm.

**00:49:09 SEOSAMH**

The fashion language just behavior like anything, and I think it's really important to be mindful of like. I mean for one like you said that these things do still happen and there are people who do sort of live in a, in what we consider a more like. Doing more like, yeah, classic, classic bits.

And. And yeah, like. Trends in style and whatever, like that we associate with like the 80s or usually those of like the very late 80s and part of the like commodification of just like things in our lives involves demarcating these things in order to sell them.

**00:50:03 SEOSAMH**

But I grew up extremely rural and extremely cut off from other people. And. I, I didn't. Yeah. I didn't even really have reliable Internet access until I was an adult.

**00:50:17 RMJ**

Mmm.

**00:50:19 SEOSAMH**

And so I, I wasn't keeping up with any sort of trends. And I knew, I knew that things were happening, or I suspected that things were happening beyond me and my small town that I couldn't reach but, longing for this thing only went so far when there was, like, no alternative.

Um. And. Yeah, my um. Yeah, I, I did. I did gravitate toward...I don't know. This sounds weird. Nah, it's normal. Never mind. But like my, my, my mom's family in particular was very poor and full of, like, working tough, rugged people, men and women who, you know, had, like, big perms or, like, luscious mullets, or like cropped regular haircuts or whatever and their, like.

**00:51:29 SEOSAMH**

Their, their leather boots and, and timberlands and jeans weren't really dissimilar from that in, in the queer depictions I was seeing. Like I remember watching *My Own Private Idaho* for the first time and like. These, it, I mean it blended right into what felt very normal to me.

There wasn't a big divide in how I conceptualized myself, the people around me and then also, yeah, the like these like. I mean, like, yeah, like, like urchins wearing, yeah, like leather and denim like. Obviously, like, there are important differences there, but in terms of kind of like formulating a sense of self like it was. It was... it made it more comfortable, I think.

#### **00:52:34 SEOSAMH**

And yeah, like I, I was also, um. I was also very into the goth and industrial scene and that was like, oh, like I'm immediately seeing like like bondage and like fetish material and like, like drug use and, and hook up like sort of cultures like happening.

Just, like. Even among people who weren't doing that, it wasn't like that was a foreign idea, like that. That could just happen. So I mean like, I don't want to give that like a, you know, consider that like, oh, this good or bad to have like exposure to that. I, I think at least for me largely good. Um, but. Yeah, I guess just everything seemed to kind of flow into itself and there wasn't, there wasn't like. Um.

Even though I couldn't readily access it, knowing that it could be happening anywhere and I just hadn't found it yet, I guess was comforting, maybe.

#### **00:53:57 SEOSAMH**

And like the, the concept of, of rural queerness versus like city queerness. And that being like, you might, you might just be the freak in your town and that is. That is a whole life.

There isn't necessarily something missing. You are a key part of a community. Yeah, like that, I mean, like, yeah, like going to, like, the DMV and, like, seeing, like, the one other trans person who surely must live by me, like, that's, that in itself feels like we are linked somehow.

Yeah. Oh my God. Is that anything?

#### **00:54:48 RMJ**

Yes! Absolutely. Yeah, it's great. Um.

#### **00:54:56 SEOSAMH**

I just, I don't know, like in terms of looking at the past, I don't want it to seem like... There's so much media that kind of valorizes like an imaginary thing.

To sort of like, uh. Yeah, like comfort the present and I'm not really interested in that. I think. I think nostalgia is pretty torturous, for one.

**00:55:17 RMJ**

Right.

**00:55:25 SEOSAMH**

But oh. I guess just one small example. In *Superpose* we, uh, one of our characters has endometriosis and at the time in the '80s there, there was a medication that you could, I mean, try to get, but it was taken off the market because it had masculinizing effects.

Uh. And, to... Like, I mean you can fast forward from that point to now like, like what are the effects of, what did this, having this and then taking it away like that is in itself a history that leads to now, like that's not. That's not nothing.

**00:56:14 RMJ**

Right.

**00:56:16 SEOSAMH**

And for someone like Royal, the one who's taking it, like that, that is, that was a lifesaving thing on multiple levels. Yeah. So that that is, I think to me, even just as a tiny example like I, I feel also in conversation with that, like with every, every aspect of this history.

**00:56:42 RMJ**

Yeah, I love that. I'm going to switch gears a tiny bit.

**00:56:50 SEOSAMH**

Yeah.

**00:56:51 RMJ**

And lead us sort of back towards comics more broadly. This is the thing I'm start—I think I'm just asking everyone at this point.

**00:56:59 SEOSAMH**

Hmm.

**00:57:00 RMJ**

Which is, how do you personally define the idea of “comics community”? And then like within that, or I guess outside of that, “trans comics community”?

**00:57:13 SEOSAMH**

Mm.

**00:57:16 RMJ**

And the answer can be like, I don't think there is one that's fine, I just, you know. *(laughs)*

**00:57:20 SEOSAMH**

OK, OK, that's good to know because yeah, like I, I. That's such a. Eugh. It feels almost...flimsy, I guess. Like the act of making comics is not enough to me.

**00:57:34 RMJ**

Hmm.

**00:57:43 SEOSAMH**

As a, as like I guess a shared experience for a like, I have no expectation of like, people showing up for one another in a way that goes beyond like the the parameters of friendship, I guess like in the form of community.

**00:58:01 RMJ**

Right.

**00:58:03 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I... I don't. I don't know. I, I at least if there is one, I don't feel like maybe I am in it?

If yeah. Yeah. *(laughs)*

**00:58:22 RMJ**

No, that's totally I, I think this sort of like dovetails into like do you like? You... I know you have. I know you have gone to comic shows in the past because I have met you at one.

**00:58:36 SEOSAMH**

Yes. Yes. *(laughs)*

**00:58:38 RMJ**

*(laughs)* Um. So what is your, like. What is your relationship to like comic/zine fests?

**00:58:48 SEOSAMH**



Hmm. Well, I really enjoyed going to them. I would love to do it again someday. Yeah, I, uh. Hmm.

**00:59:03 SEOSAMH**

Oh well, sorry if I can just go back..

**00:59:06 RMJ**

Yeah, totally.

**00:59:07 SEOSAMH**

When you, when you um, asked about uh. Yeah, the comics community. Was it, sorry. Was there... there's comics community and trans comics community? They're just–

**00:59:21 RMJ**

*(overlapping)* Yeah, but it, either or, both, neither, you know?

**00:59:26 SEOSAMH**

OK. OK, cause yeah, I, I guess like you know it's one of those things where it's like I'm definitely part of this, but I don't. I don't feel that as an action, like as a verb.

**00:59:35 RMJ**

Mm.

**00:59:37 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, sorry, anyway.

**00:59:38 RMJ**

No, that's good.

**00:59:40 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I uh. I am not. Hmm. At least now and in the you know, past uh, past few years, I don't feel especially safe going to any sort of conventions or shows. Um, I, I have applied to MICE and did apply to um. What is it called, the Queer Trans Zine Fest in Rhode Island, but I, I didn't get in so I didn't go. It feels like I can't really, monetarily, I would be able to justify and then.

**01:00:23 SEOSAMH**

In a public health way, I am just not willing to do that, it feels...

**01:00:26 RMJ**

Totally.

**01:00:28 SEOSAMH**

It feels weird to like showcase our labor in a setting that can disable us? So until there's, like, a guaranteed certainty that both the show itself and the people attending are prioritizing this, I, yeah, I can't do that, even though, like, it's one of my favorite things to do. I miss it. I like. I loved it. It's one of those settings that just for no reason, I feel completely comfortable and like, I don't know, I just had such a wonderful time. So I hope that uh, hope I'll be able to.

**01:01:09 RMJ**

Yeah.

**01:01:09 SEOSAMH**

But you know. Need some other stuff to happen.

**01:01:11 CGJ**

*(overlapped)* My, um. My studio helps organize the QZT Fest, the Queer and Trans Zine Fest. And it is outdoors and we require masking.

**01:01:22 SEOSAMH**

Oh, that's great.

**01:01:24 CGJ**

But I'm going to make a note to make sure that you get in this year, if you wanna apply.

**01:01:30 SEOSAMH**

Oh my God, I. I hope I'm not like strong arming you.

**01:01:35 RMJ**

Not at all.

**01:01:35 CGJ**

No, I, it's, it is, I think it's, it's, like thinking about the philosophy and the theory behind showcasing our work, QTZ is tries very hard to... it pays people to table rather than the other way around.

**01:01:53 SEOSAMH**

Oh. I had no idea.

**01:01:53 CGJ**

Yeah.

**01:01:56 SEOSAMH**

It's pretty incredible.

**01:01:58 CGJ**

Yeah, because it.

**01:01:58 SEOSAMH**

Wow.

**01:01:59 CGJ**

Yeah. I feel like philosophically it, it's trying to, we are trying so much more to be community based and be accessible because that's who we're trying to showcase.

**01:02:11 SEOSAMH**

Right, right. Yeah, of course. That's amazing. And so, did you say your studio, are you, is there like, a coalition that does this or are you kind of driving it?

**01:02:23 CGJ**

Oh, so I'm actually not specifically—my studio, there's a group of people in the studio who, like, I've spent all day today with them before I came here.

**01:02:31 SEOSAMH**

Oh okay. Yeah. Right.

**01:02:36 CGJ**

It's called, we are Queer Archive Work/Binch Press, so there's a group of like 35 of us.

**01:02:43 SEOSAMH**

Wow.

**01:02:42 CGJ**

And there's a few of us who do QTZ, it's down the street from our studio and stuff like that so.

**01:02:49 SEOSAMH**

Oh. That's so wonderful.

**01:02:49 CGJ**

In the future, an aside. *(laughs)*

**01:02:54 SEOSAMH**

Wow. Well, thank you very much, but also no pressure please.

**01:02:59 CGJ**

I don't, I don't, I think. Who knows the way, I wasn't in the jurying process this time, who knows the way the choices are made, you know.

**01:03:05 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, of course. I mean, yeah, certainly, certainly not offended at all, I mean like.

**01:03:13 RMJ**

We should... Listen. Big group reunion at Queer Trans Zine Fest, in my opinion.

**01:03:19 SEOSAMH**

Ah!

**01:03:20 RMJ**

It's the way to do it.

**01:03:23 SEOSAMH**

Oh, please, I would love that.

**01:03:25 RMJ**

Yeah. And I, I think you do raise a lot of, cause like you know I'm, I'm asking a lot of people about comic and zine fests cause that's like a thing I'm really interested in is like, that physical space.

**01:03:32 SEOSAMH**

Mhmm.

**01:03:40 RMJ**

But it is definitely like. Interesting to be writing about it in sort of a post...as in like, not that it's over, but just like that you know, it exists now, post COVID world of, and like.

Those sorts of. You know, there's a way in which shows have always been a little inaccessible, right? Cause like it is very physically laborious.

**01:03:59 SEOSAMH**

Yes. Yes.

**01:03:59 RMJ**

But like now there's like this added level of like, even for people who maybe could have accessed it before, there's even more like, barriers.

**01:04:09 SEOSAMH**

100% yes, yes.

**01:04:10 RMJ**

And I think that is definitely something that's like important to keep kind of flagged in the conversation.

**01:04:16 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I mean I, I loved going to, um, I loved being inside of FlameCon, but I did not like being inside of New York City and paying to be there inside of New York City. Like I think there were already like plenty of barriers to being able to attend these things before, before COVID.

**01:04:31 RMJ**

Right.

**01:04:41 SEOSAMH**

It's just like kind of boggles my mind that the shows have... Shows are not outside and not like courteous have continued and everybody gets sick every single time.

**01:04:48 RMJ**

Right.

**01:04:54 SEOSAMH**

And that's just permissible, I guess.

**01:04:57 RMJ**

Mhmm.

**01:05:00 SEOSAMH**

But I don't mean to say yeah, that like, there weren't plenty of. I mean, like, even people I know couldn't attend, couldn't attend um. I forget what, but does that have a very hard time getting around in a place where I think it was mostly stairs. No elevators.

**01:05:14 RMJ**

Right. Yeah, there's definitely. I think it is like the, it's interesting how the like. The national, how it reflects the sort of like national attitude also around COVID, right, that it was like, well, we had two years where nothing happened and now it's completely safe. And no one has to mask. And you're like, well, actually, we should probably still be doing that.

**01:05:35 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, actually I think I will, I think I will do that? Oh god yeah. It's not good. Grim.

**01:05:45 RMJ**

Grim. OK, I. Let's see where, do we want to go. So I actually I'm gonna, I'm gonna. I wanna ask you about. I feel like I'm curious what your thoughts are about like, trans..

**01:06:04 RMJ**

Like. Other trans.. like when I, mm how do I phrase this, like. Transness in comics, right? So not necessarily like your own work, but like other people's work about transness like.. Do you, what do you think, do you notice any like trends or things like that? Like is there anything that like sticks out to you or do you feel like it's pretty like different everywhere?

**01:06:29 SEOSAMH**

Hmm. Yeah, that's. Uh. Oh my God, cat. *(Cat meows loudly)* Hi.

**01:06:41 RMJ**

Aww.

**01:06:43 CAT**

*(Continues to meow loudly.)*

**01:06:45 CGJ**

We're really hearing that one.

**01:06:47 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. I'm sorry. She's screaming.

**01:06:49 RMJ**

She has an answer! She wants to participate.

**01:06:51 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. You wanna talk? *(Cat meows)*. Okay.

**01:06:58 SEOSAMH**

I, I'm sure there must be, like with anything, there must be trends. But I, I think I am sort of like outside of this to some degree. Like I mostly am very confused when I hear that there are trends happening in like trans comics. *(RMJ laughs)*

Just like the amount of, the amount of trans people and the amount of trans people making like, just completely bizarre work like, is, is something that's never gone away. It's just.

Um. I mean, yeah, like it's hard to, it's hard to find if you're not looking for it, and even if you are, it's we don't really have like functional sort of... circles or, or web rings I guess. Even though, thankfully, people are trying to bring those back, which I am very happy about.

**01:07:55 RMJ**

Mhmm.

**01:07:56 SEOSAMH**

But, from what I understand, like there is sort of a pressure, at least within, like traditional publishing, where the types of like...there might be a handful, I suppose of, of trans people working on like. Just yeah, like titles, but they may not have anything to do with, like, they may not be by, like, written by a trans person or have anything to do with that.

**01:08:24 SEOSAMH**

Um. And. Then otherwise, like if you are, I mean like you can basically write a memoir or you can do nothing.

**01:08:34 RMJ**

Right.

**01:08:34 SEOSAMH**

Um, and even those it's like, I think those get to be like sort of more honest and, and mature and that's good. But I think. I think measuring what's happening by, uh. By either what we see in, yeah, like in, in, in traditional publishing only or, or like.

Extremely like scene-based, like zine circles or something, like measuring trends by that like. I'm not really sure what to...

**01:09:19 SEOSAMH**

How to like grade these things I guess, right.

**01:09:21 RMJ**

Sure.

**01:09:24 SEOSAMH**

But uh, oh yeah, there was something that I want to say, um. Sorry, just a second.

**01:09:33 RMJ**

No worries. I realize I'm like jumping around.

**01:09:36 SEOSAMH**

No, no, no, it's good. It's good. I just remember I made a note about this. Yeah. For directions like I, I do think that the work is going to keep happening, but only so long as like, there are the resources to support it.

**01:09:59 RMJ**

Mhmm.

**01:09:59 SEOSAMH**

So. I have no doubt that there is like completely like, original, strange like, new perspectives that are or, or could be made, but like I think the real trend is that there is... We are in dire circumstances and that work can't.

If that work is going to exist, needs to be rewarded, it needs to be supported. It isn't enough to just sort of like discover it, and feel satisfied in having discovered it, and then do nothing with that.

**01:10:43 SEOSAMH**

I, um. Yeah, like. Sorry, I'm pausing so much. Um.

**01:10:49 RMJ**

Not at all.

**01:10:53 SEOSAMH**

Like the authors need to, need to be able to flourish, like when we look at these things from sort of like a, a removed standpoint of, oh, this is like, really interesting work I'm really like. I



feel important because I saw it, like that, I think that happens a lot with any media, but definitely with comics also. And maybe that's dying out. I'm not sure. I just kind of associate that with like. I guess comics as a thing, I remember like... There was that. Oh god, it's so shameful that I can't remember, but there was some like, article about, yeah, like a trans guy comic artist who had... what was it?

**01:11:48 SEOSAMH**

I forget what, but he was, made comics about, I think, struggling with like dissociative identity disorder and there was like a, a big write up on that and it's like I don't... What is. So what do you do then with this? Like what? What from? From where does this person get to go like?

**01:12:07 RMJ**

Hmm.

**01:12:08 SEOSAMH**

Is it enough that you just found their work and thought it was like curious, or is there something more meaningful, especially now that you've like, aired their personal business to the public, like what happens then?

**01:12:25 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**01:12:25 SEOSAMH**

I mean like, this was like, you know, this was some years ago, but I don't want to also. Alo I don't want to presume that like this has never happened since.

**01:12:34 RMJ**

Sure.

**01:12:35 SEOSAMH**

And um. Yeah, I. I guess I just worry that like, the... That we'll see. That the trends will be easier to track because we'll be seeing less work, um. That there will be, that there won't be as much like, I guess, yeah, visible things to choose from because we will be iced out of making it.

I mean like this is something that Anka and I worry about too. And. Yeah, like.

I guess basically like, getting away from the idea of just like, like consuming someone's work as being like a, a praxis sort of thing. Like that, you know, we can't, we can't do that. It's like. Oh my God, I mean, this is like terrible. But it's like when that uh. It's like when um.

**01:13:43 SEOSAMH**

No, never mind. I was gonna say it's like when General Soleimani was assassinated and the Iranians were like, Americans have no heroes. They just like Spiderman and SpongeBob. And like, that's true. It's like brutal.

**01:13:55 RMJ**

*(laughing)* That's true!

**01:13:57 SEOSAMH**

Like they have no heroes, all their heroes are fictional, like. That's true! It's, it's right!

**01:14:04 RMJ**

Honestly, even the real ones are fictionalized, so.

**01:14:07 SEOSAMH**

Like yes, yes, like. There has to, yeah. There, we have to, I guess, yeah. Like, there's a lot of things, obviously at play here in terms of like, creating like support systems for people but.

I want to see more trans work by people. I think we have a, a very wide pool, um, to pick from, but for maybe a limited amount of time.

And then like. I mean, there, there, there, there's so much from the past too, that like I, I don't that I don't know about. Like, people have never stopped making art.

**01:14:43 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**01:14:49 SEOSAMH**

And. I don't know I. I don't know anything about trends. Let me just say that. So that's it.

**01:14:58 RMJ**

That is an extremely—I do think you know a lot about trends actually, but I like. I like the way you framed it.

**01:15:07 SEOSAMH**

Oh, I don't know I don't know.

**01:15:08 RMJ**

I think it's great. But honestly, since we're talking about it like, what is your favorite comic about transness? And this can be, you know, comics by trans people or if there's, like, a comic that's about transness, that's not like by a trans person, also acceptable.

**01:15:28 SEOSAMH**

Um. Boy, well I. I don't know if I have like a, a set, you know, like all-time favorite. Just because I, like. People do churn it out.

**01:15:37 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**01:15:44 SEOSAMH**

Oh God. Plus like anything I liked when I was younger, I'm sure I, I don't know. Either invented it like. Oh, that's what this is about. And also there's probably so many that I can't remember like. Oof, like as a kid, I was reading a lot of indie comics, but I don't think companies that exist anymore.

Anyway. Recently I read, um. Uh. Yeah, I read Otava's *Second Safest Mountain*. Which was like, really just magnificent. Yeah, I, I was um. Yeah.

The things I want to say about it, I feel like are like the things that I really like about it. I feel like are maybe spoilers about it and I know it's getting a, a hard cover soon, so I don't want. I don't want to.

**01:16:46 RMJ**

Ooh.

**01:16:49 SEOSAMH**

But. Yeah, I was. Mm. OK, I I think it um. It, it doesn't have. When I talked earlier about like, yeah, like the sort of, um. The sort of sense of winking at an audience and, and being sort of dry and cynical about, about like, transness, it being, that almost in itself being a form of universality like oh, we all get this.

This, this is like a comic for adults and it does not. It doesn't do that, like, it, it is sort of speaking in the form of, like. This is a. This is a, a message to be read. But there is also like a narrative, like a message for the reader to understand, but it is done... The way it's woven as a story is like just. Yeah, very moving and it's also beautiful. Yeah, I I just ate it up. I loved it. And I also read *I am of Two Hearts* by Val Wise and. Um. And.

That also is like, they're, they're both very dreamy stories, I feel like. And. Yeah, that that one has like a, like that too. It's like not, it's not didactic. And there's like a profundity to, like the, the sadness that it portrays.

**01:18:31 SEOSAMH**

And yeah, again, like, it's also just gorgeous. Yeah, I, I was, yeah, I was surprised by, not that I had any reason to be surprised, but I guess I was like more so amazed, I think, at, at what they were able to accomplish. Like they're not, they're not like long epics.

They're like, you know, I think maybe *Second Safest Mountain* is like 100 pages and I don't remember what it is for *I am of Two Hearts*, but they capture like, yeah, an arc in like a very dreamy kind of way, while also, yeah, like, it's very brutally human.

Yeah. Um, trying to think I don't want to miss any. Ah. No, I think that's good. Those are at least top of mind right now.

**01:19:33 RMJ**

I haven't heard of either of them, so I'm excited to check them out.

**01:19:36 SEOSAMH**

Oh, you must, must—

**01:19:36 CGJ**

*(overlapping)* I think you would recognize them, Remus.

**01:19:41 RMJ**

(laughs) OK?

**01:19:43 CGJ**

You, you know Otava, they did *Letters for Lucardo*.

**01:19:47 RMJ**

*Ohh.* Oh! Yeah, yeah, yeah. OK, yes, yeah.

**01:19:53 CGJ**

And then Val Wise is...I don't know their other work.

**01:19:58 SEOSAMH**

Um, they, I mean. They make a, a lot. They turn out a lot of comics. I think for their Patreon they do like. A ton.

**01:20:09 CGJ**

Yeah, this one you're talking about was on the Short Box.

**01:20:12 SEOSAMH**

Yes. Yeah.

**01:20:13 RMJ**

Oh, oh oh. OK. OK. I'm like so bad at recognizing names.

**01:20:16 CGJ**

And they're they're a fat, a fat artist as well.

**01:20:20 SEOSAMH**

Yes, yeah.

**01:20:20 CGJ**

And it's like a big part of the story that they do.

**01:20:24 RMJ**

Dreamy. OK.

**01:20:27 SEOSAMH**

I think the one other thing I would say is my, I have my friend Jules Ruiz does literally like, like folding [sic] zines and did a couple that I that I definitely recommend, one is called  *Losing It*  and it's about like transition related hair loss like, which, you know being a much maligned thing and it's approached with like so much affection and depictions of just like. Yeah, very like, real, has a lot of physicality to it.

And then he also did one called  *Outside* , which is about um. Yeah, like. I think it's, I forget if it's just trans men or trans people in general. But it's all, yeah, like cruising, public sex type, yeah. So yeah.

**01:21:24 RMJ**

Awesome. That rules.

**01:21:30 SEOSAMH**

And of course *The Pervert* by Michelle Perez and Remy Boydell. I think that's having, uh, well, I think it's had and having and will have a moment. It's kind of an eternal work, I think. Yeah.

**01:21:43 RMJ**

Absolutely. Yeah.

01:21:46 SEOSAMH

Yeah. That one's, so. Just raw, but yeah, sorry to go on and on. That's a couple of them.

**01:21:53 RMJ**

No, that's great. That's a great list. I have one question that I skipped earlier and now I'm going to circle back to it if that's cool with you.

**01:22:02 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. No, that's fine. As long as you want me to keep talking.

**01:22:05 RMJ**

Yeah, I, I'll leave it up to, I feel like I skipped this because I feel like we've talked about it like, a lot already.

**01:22:13 SEOSAMH**

Okay.

**01:22:14 RMJ**

So if you don't want to, like, go any deeper, that's totally fine. But, um, I did have. How would you describe the politics of your own work, and how did those politics relate to, to transness?

**01:22:25 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. So I actually wanted to know what that meant like.

**01:22:34 RMJ**

Well, I—

**01:22:35 SEOSAMH**

Well, I guess, like, you know, do you mean like in an, like, individually like, within a given work or the. That politics that, like, drive the work or like the politics of work, like what? I don't know.

**01:22:52 RMJ**

Interesting. I think...I am thinking about the politics that drives the word which, like I said, I think we've talked has like come up pretty like throughout the whole conversation so.

**01:23:05 SEOSAMH**

Right, right. OK. But no, I think I can. Hopefully I can be kind of concise with it.

**01:23:13 RMJ**

You don't have to be.

**01:23:13 SEOSAMH**

Or at least more so than with other things. I think yeah, there's maybe like a couple key things, which is that um. Yeah. My, my. I guess interest in aesthetics and, and artistic interests don't overtake my politics, like I'm not. I am ready and willing to like, adjust and and, and sacrifice things and or avoid doing like things if they if they don't feel in keeping with me or, or portray people who are like completely different in that, in that sense, like I don't, I don't cut things out because like I said before, I, I do want to portray things that feel honest both to me and just life in general.

But I guess more what I mean is like... My friend Sloane Leong had a critique recently where like, I think, she said that maybe independent artists need to reckon with their reliance on little acrylic stands and synthetic fabrics to make ends meet during a plastic pollution and a climate crisis. Like maybe they don't deserve to keep making their art if their art is dependent on perpetuating these things.

**01:24:48 RMJ**

Hmm.

**01:24:49 SEOSAMH**

That's kind of what I mean like.

**1:24:51 RMJ**

Right.

**01:24:52 SEOSAMH**

I, I've always really loved like fake plastic silk flowers with like the fake little water droplets. And I have like, shrines to like kitschy pink things in my house. And if I could recycle them all tomorrow with no landfill byproduct and no resulting microplastic shit filtering into the ocean like. Me, me, as a person, like I wouldn't be less of who I am and I, I don't rely on them as like a substantive like, part of myself, I guess so.

**01:25:32 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**01:25:37 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, like I. In in our, in our work in like a. I guess in like a making sense, uh. You know, like I, I, I try to avoid plastic and buying as much as and buying new things as much as possible like I, I buy like second-hand things and we switch to biodegradable packing materials and everything we make and send to our patrons is paper based. We used to make things that were more ,that had more plastic. And we've just stopped.

All of the like the cool leather shit I have is, is, is, is real and sustainably sourced because that's more ethically viable to me than, than like the long term impact of pleather like. So that's that I guess is more about like the, both the emotional and like the what goes into physical art and such.

**01:26:36 SEOSAMH**

But in terms of something more intangible like. I guess, yeah. Um. Honesty and like multiplicity, plurality of experiences and. Um. That's definitely like a, a driving force and something I'm just interested in doing and showing. And using art to, um, yeah, like encourage that out of myself and explore that. Like I'm teaching, like art is a way of teaching myself not to defer and appease and, and do what's, I guess, I don't know. Like it's a safe place to work out things I am less comfortable with so that I can become more comfortable with it, or at least more, I guess educated and, and confident, I guess.

And like sci-fi and cyberpunk are impossible to divorce from politics.

**01:27:52 RMJ**

Right.

**01:27:53 SEOSAMH**

So. I... Yeah. There's like, you know there, there, there's. That crosses over into, I guess, being the politics, like within the work itself, but it. It is also outside of it.

**01:28:11 RMJ**

Yeah.

**01:28:12 SEOSAMH**

It is in me, yeah.



**01:28:13 RMJ**

Absolutely.

**01:28:17 SEOSAMH**

Now, what can I say? Yeah, I don't know I, I guess I consider myself a, like, a communist, so that like kind of affects how I even think about doing the work and what it's purpose is. But I also don't like, I guess, use it to sort of box in the, the types of stories I make, if that makes sense.

**01:28:41 RMJ**

Mm-hmm.

**01:28:46 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, like. I don't know. I guess that's it, maybe?

**01:28:52 RMJ**

Oh. Yeah, I think that was beautifully put. OK. So thank you so much—OK, we do have one secret extra question, but it's not a hard one. It's just how we end every episode of the podcast.

Which is what have you been reading lately?

**01:29:12 SEOSAMH**

Like in general?

**01:29:14 RMJ**

Yeah, it can be anything. Doesn't even have to be a book. *(laughs)*

**01:29:19 SEOSAMH**

*(laughs)* Shampoo bottles? No, I guess. Let's see. Well, I've been keeping up with the new installment of *Jojo's Bizarre Adventure*. Love never dies. I will love it forever for the rest of my life. And yeah, I, Anka and I have, like, like brain trust summits where we just like sit across from each other and discuss it, um. And, ah, let's see, I...Oh my God, there's definitely something else.

Oh. The, the Táin, it's, I mean it's Irish myth, the Táin book. Because Anka got a translation of it and I've been meaning to read it and, oh my God, I mean like that. That's the story you can make, force trans it if you want, pretty easy.

Yeah, I think those those at least have an outsized, take up an outsized portion of my brain. But there surely must be more. I mean, like I, I reread parts of *Chainsaw Man*, like every week.

**01:30:50 RMJ**

Nice.

**01:30:57 SEOSAMH**

Yeah. Oh God, I'm forgetting like so many things but.

**01:31:00 RMJ**

That's OK. You named—

**01:31:00 CGJ**

*(overlapping)* You named three things, that's pretty good.

**01:31:03 RMJ**

*(overlapping)* That's a lot of things to be reading.

**01:31:05 SEOSAMH**

I guess! I'm just, I don't know. I, I reread things a lot, so it's it feels like I'm lying, saying one of them counts, but yeah, I'm going to like, re-rewatch *Heat* tonight. I think so. I love to tread retread territory, so yeah, but yeah.

**01:31:28 CGJ**

Did you say *eat*?

**01:31:31 SEOSAMH**

*Heat.*

**01:31:05 CGJ**

Oh, *Heat*! Okay.

**01:31:32 RMJ**

The Michael — *(laughing, unintelligible)*

**01:31:34 SEOSAMH**

Yeah, I'm gonna eat too, I think.

**01:31:38 RMJ**

Hopefully.

**01:31:39 CGJ**

I was like, *Eat*, I don't know that one.

**01:31:43 SEOSAMH**

That'll be my version of it, so it'll be very different.

**01:31:48 CGJ**

I love it.

**01:31:49 RMJ**

The *Dungeon Meshi* Michael McMann [sic] crossover we never knew we needed.

**01:31:55 SEOSAMH**

Yes. Uh, beautiful.

**01:31:59 RMJ**

Beautiful. OK.

**01:32:04 RMJ**

So this is interesting because last time I forgot that we were let me just, Cathy, what are you reading? Let's just do all of us.

**01:32:11 SEOSAMH**

Yes, please.

**01:32:12 CGJ**

Oh no, we can't. We can, we can say—I was not prepared.

**01:32:15 RMJ**

Okay. Well, we don't have to. I just feel like I, now I don't know which way to do it.

**01:32:18 CGJ**

Oh, no, I think, I think we just say goodbye.

**01:32:24 RMJ**

Okay (laughing)

**01:32:24 SEOSAMH**

Okay.

**01:32:24 CGJ**

I mean—

**01:32:25 SEOSAMH**

I've kept you here a while, so that makes sense.

**01:32:27 RMJ**

Not at all.

**01:32:27 CGJ**

No, I love it!

**01:32:29 RMJ**

It's great. Thank you. Genuinely. Thank you so much. This is awesome.

**01:32:33 SEOSAMH**

No, no, thank you. I, I haven't done this in a while.

**01:32:34 CGJ**

Me and remus, yeah. We have to record the intros and I just didn't want to make you listen to it. That's all we have to do. We just have to say hi. So I'm trying, we're trying to spare you.

**01:32:43 RMJ**

From the intro. *(still laughing)*

**01:32:51 SEOSAMH**

Oh thank you. I would hate to hear your pleasant voices.

**01:32:57 CGJ**

Thank you so much, this is amazing.

**01:33:59 RMJ**

Yeah. Thank you so much.

**01:33:00 SEOSAMH**

Oh, no, thank you much for having me. It's truly an honor and it's so wonderful to see and hear both of you again.

**01:33:06 RMJ**

Yeah.

**01:33:07 SEOSAMH**

And it will happen again.

**01:33:08 RMJ**

It will happen. We will make it happen.

**01:33:11 SEOSAMH**

This is a threat. This is an expressed threat.

01:33:14 CGJ

I love it.

**01:33:17 RMJ**

OK. Well, enjoy the rest of your night. Enjoy *Heat*. We will—

**01:33:23 CGJ**

Enjoy *Heat*.

**01:33:24 SEOSAMH**

Enjoy *Heat*.

**01:33:25 RMJ**

Enjoy eat.

**01:33:26 CGJ**

Enjoy eat and enjoy *Heat*.

**01:33:30 SEOSAMH**

Bye bye.

**01:33:31 CGJ**

Bye.