



HIRO YAMAGATA INTERVIEW  
*FRAGMENTS OF PARADISE*  
LIFE STORIES

**Hiro Yamagata, Artist**  
**July 27, 2021**  
**Interviewed by Katie Davison**  
**Total Running Time: 1 hour, 19 minutes and 07 seconds**

START TC: 00:00:00:00

00:00:07:00

KATIE DAVISON:

To start off, if you could just tell me who you are and, and what what it is you do.

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Life Stories Presents  
Hiro Yamagata  
Artist

00:00:14:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Who am I? I'm nothing, not important. Being an artist, I think people call.. Or think about whether I'm an artist or not, or just what it is I do. So talking about art, or art philosophy or art theory or doing the art, that is not an artist. I don't know what I am doing, or what I do, I'm not sure, I don't know. But a body, morning wake up, and spontaneously hand moving but that's all. But I



never thought I am an artist or I want to be an artist, or I don't have any this kind of feeling.

00:01:02:00

KATIE DAVISON:

I remember when anybody used to ask Jonas who he was, he would say I'm a farmer.

00:01:07:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Jonas originally came from a farmer, he's a farmer, Semeniškiai. But talking about Jonas, I'm very honored you asked me to talk about him, because he's one of the two people, he's the one of it, the most impressed and also the memory of what he was talking about or how his body language and voice stick on my mind very strongly. Him and Allen Ginsberg, Allen and Gregory also. When I lived in LA, I went often to New York to see them, and I had quite an interesting time with them.

00:02:03:00

KATIE DAVISON:

Before we get into that, so you were born in Japan?

00:02:07:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yes, near the Kyoto Lake. A couple miles from Biwa. But I grew up in quite a countryside. Farmers. Wood. Timber business.



00:02:22:00

KATIE DAVISON:

When did you become interested in art?

00:02:26:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yea, when I was three years old. I had hand drawing spontaneously four years old, spontaneously hand moving. Like mother nature. And then started beginning little by little more drawing to paint or brushing. So I learned by myself, not like a special train, not like that. But classroom, class, when I was in junior high or high school, senior high, I had myself, not a good grade. Because of the boring, classes so boring so drawing in a text. Drawings were dirty. End of the semester, there all the drawing, you can't read it. That kind of a kid I was. When I was... kindergarten or in middle school, high school, I was a very country boy. Festival, once a year, there was the shrine festival, temple festival, I would enjoy the colorful, decorated fireworks otherwise all the dog, everything starlight. Everything in the country set dark quite like a rustic country I grew up in. So, then how I, you know, my father was telling me, a lot of people not like a teaching, not like, you know, not not that way. Just so by, you know, time by time that sometime you look, that stars look, take a look that, you know, like, you know, how many million years starred in, you know, the, you know, cosmology, so or iron or, you know, you know, Cassiopeia that the he mentioned me how many light years, 300,000 idea or he shone so that man's life. What? We are here now. I just, you know, just a second. Always short on secondly, we come to God that kind of, you know, lines. He mentioned a time so you don't learn from school this kind of thing. So, school system, the one with the, like a framed, just so stand out of the way to teach of



history or, you know, like a, you know, literature or mathematics, so. But, maybe my not maybe definitely my self within not fit for this system. Teaching in the way. Such a boring, such a, you know, sleepy nap or with the like, sleeping like they or drawing on the, you know, text. So boring. And then I thought I would the lowest grade, lowest score that, you know, score. So. And then in the summer holiday, I was doing the Bicycle Journey sketch drawings and then, you know, journal myself and a very few vocabulary because I'm not a great, you know, reader or, not writer. So but, you know, somehow I was doing it in my journal, traveling with Journal one month. Lots of journey. I did, traveling and then sketching. And then when I graduated high school and the teacher would recommend to the art university, and then I would go into, here, the university rating meter. I like scholar, so because I with a high grade of the art, only visual in high school, and then I would like a, you know, go contest, the school teacher, you know, putting them my works in the contest, whatever. And then winning, champion then. Yeah. But yeah. So they thought of me to go to this university. So university waiting a while. The waiting at that. But, I'm not interested to to go, we go to the I. Met many. You know professor who the teaching. You know he the class he the class, the class during the high school. So. But, for me, doesn't fit. Just so boring. Like a rebel. I would rebel to, you know, for doesn't fit and not, like, a bow. It's boring. And then, I guess. Are you sure this is kind of a power war? Power war or the competing each other? The power. The power to so I. Yeah, I'm not good for that. So I left and then university went to the, couple month and left and then started at Tokyo to go to, you know, go to the trash trash trucks to help working for trash tackle, road cleaning or, advertising company. I don't the floor cleaning floors or building, cleaning. Not more. Making me more happy to being in the than being in the university to learn. So. But, I wanted



to learn the techniques over, in lithograph or oil painting of the to what kind of oil to mix it or. So that's why I change my to went to the university to factory in a student to I would not like a qualified and then town called a city called my bara and then neither like, 20 miles from Kyoto. So when you needed to go to the city that went to Kyoto. Always so. And then food, mountains, rice, farms, everything around. So. All that time. I'm. I'm not sure now, but a very one way, traditional, one way conservative way to teach it. So when you get in a high grade, you have to go high grade. You go to the after graduate to Tokyo University, and they go to the high position with the Mitsubishi Corporation. Right. Chairman. This all one stroke, you know, structure they're looking for. But I were the rebel so didn't fit for this kind of, in a system to, you know, high school. The other people who got a high grade to go to Tokyo University, Toga University in the end of today, no Mitsubishi or, Sonia Toyota high position. Our senators. And after. But, I'm a total of that, way myself. My maybe selfish I I'm, I don't like at this kind of system. I don't my body not like a post. I avoid my body like I spontaneously avoid this and then didn't fit. So total rebel on a my childhood and then move to Tokyo myself. And also didn't fit for the system, which is the social system that didn't fit. So did it have any decent, you know, art, training or, you know, university? Not like a formal training I didn't have.

00:09:59:00

KATIE DAVISON:

When did you decide to leave home? And where did you go?

00:10:02:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:



19 year old I left. Just to get aboard a country lifestyle. So lucky for us. So we went to Tokyo. To myself, nobody. And I don't know anybody. And the bullet train started just a few years before bullet train began. So I went there then. Quite a journey, though I don't know anybody's to ask to art supply store or to hire. Like a cleaning at the toilet, cleaning the floor and then delivery to the, you know, studio or an artist or and then one of the graphic design studio, they hire me and then from then to the universal Art University, which I would not classified, but I would pretend I was one of the student, and I learned a lot of the techniques or what I had in the media print or, you know, lithograph or oil painting or I learned with a I was not a qualified, you know, student, but I pretended just a regular student. So, had a wonderful time then. So I learned that also, advertising company to for graphics. So how to do visual for I learned through them to the coding my own experience. Not like a particular, steady form of steady steady you know. Works. 1972 I would the chasing my girlfriend. It's not like a learning a French poetry, French philosophy, or like, like a art. Not that I didn't have any idea for that. And just a chasing girlfriend. And then she was in Milan through Paris, and that didn't work. So three weeks later, from Milan to. And then, Paris, you have to go through, Paris to Milan. And then that time. So I started to look around the city facade, and I started living to myself. And then, you know, no money. So I stayed, one of the pension and then the concierge make me to stay. The it called, like, a toilet or the shower room. They put a, like, a, like dogs mad, mad vice a little. I was staying, almost three weeks, and then I. Concierge gave me a little, little, like, a penny. So I bought, some little canvases for next door to gallery to, to sell it, and then that make me to live. So. And then everybody gallery to gallery to. They talk more, talks more to gallery. And they promoted me. I didn't ask, but they brought me to. And then, with the, almost living in



Paris and then but, I would not being the artist or want to be an artist, I didn't have any kind of this kind of feeling just so to living for bringing that, you know, kept painting a little painting gallery. They, they paid the cash so that, you know, day by day I was living and that met that time, Japanese friend, architect or, translator or, you know, you know, teaching the or the French, the culture, so on that so I met or that they lived together then or big apartment. So I would that, hanging around with them. And then Ginsburg, called free jazz a musician called Steve Lacy with the Sopranos, soprano saxophone players. Somehow one of a friend knew him. And then she had a contact, a very deep contact with the Ginsburg. So Allen Ginsburg came to Paris twice a year with the whoever, Peter Askey or Gregory Corso when he came that time, when I met at it was Brian guys in which the beat generation like a woman ball they they lived together and Brian the living in Paris. So Steve had a contact Brian guys in and then Steve invited us to Brian's house and I met, Gregory and the Ginsburg. So I was reading to the I read, you know, one of the Japan by myself. Like, I got to make way, I would that's how impressive that, you know, poetry or how translated. So I was the shock Ginsburg of the sitting out, and on the couch or whatever on the floor and the Gregory that like, got, you know, you know, how he that crazy walking around and that. So I were quite impressed. And then, Brian, we get hung around, we become more tight. And then when I moved to, Paris. Don't la la la la. Invited from Paris to. I like to live. So I was not living la to plan just a couple of weeks, but, I decided to move to, from Paris to L.A., and then I. Thought to contact the island to allow of course, the who remember because you know several times the why he came to Paris hung around so and then Alan met went off. Yeah. And then Alan which they everything that you know I go not planted myself moved to the I Tokyo just so by chance. Oh. Okay. I go today tomorrow to



Tokyo and the want to move to Paris. Not my purpose to learning or to study or to influence how it got in France. Like I, you know, and, Jack Prebble, you know, Jack Prebble that you know how I, you know, I got, power. I like, you know, the poetry, that I would I loved that, you know, of him with the poetry, but, not like a full line or like that. Just spontaneously moved to have his chasing girlfriend. But. Ella, author who I moved my publisher one or did I moved to L.A., so I don't have any own purpose. Like a day by day the way it is, I would. My life was not like a strong, conscious, a purpose to I want to do this, but doing the artworks people called, you know, put a level, put it in a, like a, position or job, whatever, divided. But a people called I paint told people in the call artists but, sculpture. Maggie. But I never thought I'm I even now I'm never feel like I'm artist, though I don't know what I'm doing that waited, like, incoherent, like upside down that that where my life and also I should do some one direction or one like a condition to condition. I should, but, maybe I am not good for that wall. Strong like a purpose or a conscious, more easygoing of the day by day. That way how I live, even now. So. But, like I mentioned that like, a I don't think I don't feel like a people who the mainstream that living are odd and on the capitalism and the collectors, curators, writers, critics or in both artists in the mainstream stars, I'm okay with people that enjoy yourself. That I personally more like a humble to the, you know, raise the Spanish onions and the dirty hand. That's more for me. The more enjoyable and the more important for me, especially this generation. You not have any privacy anymore. Like a, you know, you have a spy. Yeah, especially this online system. And but, like, I don't have any, like, all social media. I don't have that. So not important for me that also people do for using for business. But, I don't need this kind of like a more narrow where more like, uncomfortable and convenient life. I have very primitive life. I don't



know how many life I have, but, I enjoy, though I quite a big the content, that being there like that.

00:18:22:00

KATIE DAVISON:

Do you remember when you first read the beat poetry, what was different about it at the time?

00:18:30:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yeah, I think about This is America. That's I felt and also, you know, mostly coming from originally coming from San Francisco area. And then that time I like I mentioned, you know, very against time of and and socio I was very involved with the, you know this guy about long language, you know, like it was to you that I go up to potatoes that with only purpose the language to you, the butter. When you have that emotional thing, it's a beautiful sign of a well-known, phrase. You don't need the words, just a emotional part. It like, you see the, you know, music. You know what I was seeing the I hit the, some emotional thing to you. Word cannot explain. But a Zen author I grew up with which mentioned the Zen. Also like a word cannot cannot explain. So that kind of it. So I would, you know, more in that kind of area. I would, backgrounder from Zen, but reading, not necessarily Asian or, religion or like a basic human, like, we have nothing to talk about then, but the same thing. The socio also word for socio. You talk about a lot of, language, subject. So but, you know, I would when I get gotta, you know, be translated by Japanese. No English. Then, I would do such a powerful wow, I or the so, you know, America, this is all manga that I want. I went to Japan and also, you know, I'm



getting no more no more Huggies. You know, Herbert Hankies had that original started and the Ginsberg's the following. The idea and the idea on the way he thought is. So I would quite, impressed, you know, one like, movement. But I know movement is like a word for resort, but, you know, like a, you know, like a dizem like an under burden or, movement. It always, you know, when you have a thumb happened among other people. And then when you started to keep like, under burden did, there's a vertical structure here. The leader, you come in, you out, you come out like that vertical structure. But, so I'm not interested in that kind of part after, you know, movement happen that I know, for example. But, be be generous and and nobody leaders. Nobody who the run everybody hold the gathering together. West coast, the East coast especially for a visual and the language of the in dialogs or words whatever and that all everybody have their own believe, whatever or believe. And they do here they are. They are like a Naropa Institute. And I could teaching or like the everybody had like go on way to live and then there's a something or the group, you know, moving or direction direction that the party the really fascinated to me. So like a no like one single, you know, policy to follow that instead of that so that the come from on the US can have come from that. And so that's why I was a quite a, you know, fascinated. And then I was going to make a movie to the, it called The Source, which the, I didn't want a title, director, but I was going to make movie by myself, but, I would involved my own work, involved with 40 other, you know, project going on. So I hired at, Chuck, I woke one. Who? The director. He's a film maker for, you know, actually, he made a documentary. Will host or, documentary, mostly. And then he. What if I introduced Allen to Chuck Workman? So. And then get real and say, let me host. So this movie and then I the talking about how started how be generation you know direction who is



involved with visual everything all and map you know interest through the movie.

00:22:50:00

KATIE DAVISON:

So Jonas, in one of his diaries, said that he introduced you to Allen.

00:22:57:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yeah. You know. It's so funny. First of all, I do know I met a prior, I think he he thought to a reason why, you know. Oh, when I was in, I kept a sort of contact, the, you know, Allen, when I moved to L.A.. And then I went to New York, and the Allen been a long time. Let's come to the my show. The very little, he the photographs show like 20 pieces on the hang on the little gallery and that was come over and the Jonas over there, and then Gregory's there. I'm there for one thing. Yeah, piece by piece. I don't have the paint. You know, the other lines on the bottom of photo. He would exchange this for the, you know, of three of us. He would, you know, explain to us and then let's go to lunch. So for us, we went to lunch to that's the first time I met the Jonas. I think the Jonas or the. I think that time probably, Jonas in the book, you know. You know, diary book. Well, the Japanese, translator, Akiko Kimura. So I knew her, went over the part, and I had one okay to page, so. But, I always thought that she would introduce me to Jonathan, but, that, exhibition times. That day was the first time I met a Jonas, and. Jonathan. You know, I heard the talking about Akiko. About Jonas. So I wanna die to meeting with Jonas, but a Jonas. Hi, Jonas. That time for Jonathan, the one probably. He thought he was going to introduce me to Alan, but, I knew Orlando was one of the living parts, so that



maybe misunderstand, but I, you know, first time I want him at a I have a he talks about the, you know, the quietly and the loud and then but I hear the strong passion. You can tell he eyes in the facial expression head down and then some thinking that thinking. And then. Yeah, I like that. Or he talk the other son like that. The way he talks. You have such a character and also, kind of little shy face, very attracted to me and, you know, first time and then most of the time for what I have a lunch and that I wanted Gregory to talk with the Jonas either a little more good listener and then listening what you know, and then we talk of the other, you know, all the, you know, the the photographs and the what's going on world. And the Jonas in the background, you know what he did? Going to make it. What kind of movie now he involved. So we talk about that. Go stand up, disappear. Come back. You know how, Gregory? You know, running around and then Greg Gregory, the gone, and then our later Gregory show up again. That's kind of time, but I, I had I never forget that lunch. We had, sandwich room in sandwich, and then Jonas had a little wine, I remember. So I think we were sitting a three hour there, about three hour talking. And then, when it came to New York again, hung around the the Jonas constantly. And the Jonas invite me lunch. Of course. He the house house in the like a long shape of the house. When you open the door, spread to the both side and the hold. I would the stinky that room is stinky on the on the. I mean so dirty. Everything is ceiling floor. You have to walk the floor like good like a crab I do it next step where you have to find a landing. That much? Everything. Films, all the books. And also I got all the, documents or everything of the spelling. That and the room with the phrase tinker to. But, that's the first impression. And they went several times. They invited me, and they also went at a lunch to lots of, time, you know, old time war he the active time and there anthology also. And then he John said do something here, do



something out here. So I would like to help both of hundred besides my work and I would going to Japanese. No, no I go dancing. No performing of you know drums I'm fascinated. This a musician, original background of 400 year background. I got drums on the drums and the war like that. I'm a fascinating musician, so I would going to bring him. And that, generates the plays. And then I would, you know, thinking about the screen, paper, rice paper and then candlelight on the bottom and then a couple lights and then stage side, a whole screen from like a, you know, you know, divided the audience on the back side on the silhouette of the performer would sound that, or rice paper, I not, you know, adding didn't stretch it that I think I want to wrinkle rice paper but, didn't have them because I funded for. I was going to 100, but, I would too much involved to my own works then. And then, I don't know, good, bad or, but I would I would talk about, Jonathan with a very excited to. So, didn't happen, but, Jonathan invited me many times. One of the night the name Jim Pike. I'm the niche with a to guide the perform the I've. Jonathan, please. So. Yeah, I with the I mean, I personally, I'm not crazy about this the artist, but, kind of like a show man like that. So I don't see the core. Deep core. I don't see over them how what they performed. So. But. Jonathan, dad, you know, lots of other, you know, other documentary showing to the whole, like, the collection, like a Chinese, you know, Holocaust Japanese. Unbelievable. Some collection. He showed me that, that archive, you know, also everything upside down. Unbelievable film. The, you know, film with the chip, they come out and they they are they are incredible. Like a horror for Jonathan. Wow. And also smell horrible stink of like a moist like a Osama. So this is the, you know, my place that first time he showed me the I will hopefully like this. Yeah I he the he the character or what. He died



00:29:37:00

KATIE DAVISON:

He had an incredible archive, I mean did he show you the material.

00:29:42:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yeah. Yeah, a couple of leaders, right. Each time the show me that, you know, you know, it's like a small one is going to show me that. Okay. And then some more screen that you were showing, but, yeah. Especially impressive. I mean, large China, Japanese, the Chinese, the Chinese dragon nun, queen of the a river to the horror holocaust, you know, dead body there that he got out from, of local filmmaker to collect that. Yeah. I don't I'm very impressed to me that but he had so many variety and also he the own film to the, you know, capture and like rewards or like a, like a, you know, who dollars. They got a lot of new friends and, he the first person in the history of the, our god people called Avant-Garde, this word, the everything word for resolved. But, he doesn't think that he got Vanguard, that just he wanted to what he wanted to do. He wanted to make his own way to movie. But people created a vanguard, that world. But, he didn't think like that to himself. Would want to register or, you know, like a register or, refugee doing his, you know, past. You remind me, like Eli vital in the past, like Eli I saw, you know, book or the night. Some life experience. I mean, not the same, you know, in a time on the same place. But they escaped from, like, Jonas escaped them from, you know, Lithuania to, you know, not caught him and then, you know, got Vienna to the didn't get to Vienna, going to Vienna. Nazi caught him and then, and up to the Denmark and then, you know, his end of the, you know, the lot of information that he sent before then, but, like, roaming in Europe or like, Eli, Eli voice out of the



book would remain very similar, you know, but, did a different a the why the Toto, you know, experience what Eli's voice or how he escaped. But I hit Jonas had a more literature or more like a condition of the people or how, that more literature way how he found, that little bit nuance of the different that I feel, I think.

00:32:04:00

KATIE DAVISON:

Did you like the diaries, I had nowhere to go? Do you like it?

00:32:09:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yeah. Day by day. You know diary, though, so. He that he showed to the he, the living, the evidence proof being here this word so that way an old long terms you know dire like a like a record record or, prove or evidence that way, you know, over or to view of, of that diary. So, translated by Akiko EU, I think book and that read, you know, the original, not not the final chapter. He wrote all of the Fania, but, translate the English. But, Akiko translated quite well. Quite well to that. You know, a well, a expression. So I would, you know, quite, because a nobody does. Nobody did like he he the diary and all. Did, you know, diary, but a total different subject. Different, you know, their lifestyle or different value. So. But, quite a rag, a raw, very raw, you know, experience day by day. What the. What's next? What next? That I can go, like, a whole, like a being came this word now all he the extent like evidence tattoo I have but so this is like a personal, nobo like, not like a created a fiction nonfiction novel like that. And through, dialogs or from film, like a, you know, documentary of



the the film or the quite a, you know, so many different variety of the some.  
He made a.

00:33:46:00

KATIE DAVISON:

I wonder if you could tell me a little bit about you know, nobody's really told us much about Allen Ginsberg, how he was like, what's his personality?

00:33:54:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Allen. Yeah. Allen, who had a just a one word, who had a big heart. So Allen, Jonas and I like the most I got an influence. So I admire. But a beyond that I have, so remained in my mind all conversation time. Spend it. And then this is the last, last time we know when he came to LA. Before that, when he came, they twice he had to the reading poetry the my k about the pickleball while he the with the you know with the playing the you know called the little little I got many like all gone. Well the he the reading or he reading for Gregory's poetry or he the, you know, new poetry or old on pull out and then. One of the knight or the Gregory. I'm about to pick him up there aboard Allen, and then Gregory, and then Oscar Jernigan, concerned with the scientists, retire and departed for Alan. Always when he come, to L.A., I pick him up, drop him off, Oscar the house, and then ready for evening to go to McCabe, to the, for the reading and, in music, like, instrument, shop. So. And then. A bunch of young people there, you know. And then. You know. When I. When I went to the island. The island, the always I come over, we go to lunch. I introduce Peter Alvarez, the author, and then, mostly Gregory together. So we are three of us. When I went to the New York theater and then man who had, Island who,



when he came to the tower, recorded reading up about to read it, I would, you know, driving a shofar for island. And then one of the night. Timothy. Larry, this is one thing with a lot of of the other house, they can we get each other. I drove and then the two young boys that and the heat going to die. Two month big Kanter the island sitting on the floor in that lobby. So Tim tell me you already have that. You already, dying. You already announced the dying the couple month. Who cared that that our fact that he's a Timothy. You know how he talks the young boy there and then what he would going to the after he die, he, you know, cremated the, you know, him and the ash to the space to Nassau. He gave it to the cops out to Nassau to send to the hospital. And that's he he the next action to the wallet island, to the. So how are you feeling that they are dying now and then? Who cares that he that that way he talks a very quiet, like, erotic oral conversation. Then after that in to couple three or later around the time. Com and then, one night I came back from, from Alex to my house, and then 2:00 morning, a ring in the phone. I don't know the Turks who called, I answer. Hello? The alarm. The voice went down. You know, here he heard that the island. So I'm going to die in a few for a minute. In the hour, I'm going to die. So, you know, you did. For me. There's a nice, just I want to say, bye goodbye. And. And then he said that you did great for us. And then low voice and that. Take care of that, Greg Gregory. So Gregory I would renting then Gregory the apartment that you know, I'm not rich, but I know although the bottom line is the renting of the constantly. So you did a good for so take care of the Gregory. I mean after one had gone Gregory had you he the counting of you. So, don't think of don't do don't go that don't talk about that. And then and then two days later, you're gone. And then I got a notice and I went to the funeral that the Jonas was there. And then Jonas saw the, I don't know, he had the only camera he thought he. The hide. I have no idea. Quite



professional. He had the camera on, you know, the hand, but the walking on, he never go to the front or the back side, back side of the aisle. And for know Jonathan walking on the walking on the shooting of the cloud up the, you know, Robert Thurman or Lou Reed, they all sitting there and, and also front of the, front aisle or the, one the a bunch of people were there and then, Jonathan walking on the shooting people, the wizard, you know, for now and then he I think that he you must have a he he came to the house to shooting our dead bodies that I'm sure that he did. He did all around the house shooting at everything. I think that he did it. So so that and we talked after the interview, not with the chanting and that Tibetan Buddhist in the chanting. And then, further grasp on that, too. And we talk of the, you know, couple conversation. Philip Glass about that. Jonathan, after we left Fernando open over and then I talked to Jonathan the how you I kept him much of the same here and the so that that's the one and we have a drink and then went over some drink and then talking about all around memory, Jonathan talking a lot and then what he did, what he would, he had a gut or like a soul for to living this or he left to the people he the sold here that we talk about the hero Jonathan talking about now you're talking about the Jonathan story though the. So I have a lot of, you know, memory of him. But most of the, you know, my impression over him with. Quiet, quiet, man. The way he talks and the humble. Not showing to you. Not on the stage. Not like that. Always. Low key. That way, when he talk about the some certain subject, he talks scream and I yell. Yeah, I like that. But I normally very quiet, soft voice. And then that one, the quiet me, the quiet, fascinated about the way he was. And then. So Alan, the journalist, the, I knew kind of these guys hung around together. So, I got, I want to talk about a question about, back to the island. What is the island? He had. Yeah. Big hot. The I mentioned quite a everything okay for island?



Wherever you do. Everything okay? Around the way he think. That way. He forgave it to everybody. Wherever. That way he talks.

00:41:13:00

KATIE DAVISON:

Did he ever talk to you about Jonas?

00:41:15:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Jonas, yea. Yeah. After one of them went to lunch, I went to New York and I met. I saw the island office, and we talk about Jonathan. Often we talk about, you know, not like, you know, just some he picture the, what he's doing now and what he the you doing? It's the no film editing now. The old film editing in our process. Now, what about, he. Alan, admire respect. Jonathan, who had a, like a deep soul from, you know, man from come from Lithuania. Not like or not like a jazzer, you know, like a philosopher or, you know, not like that much more deeper and that way, Jonas, you know, act, you know, on that thing that he made. So I don't was quite a, respect to Jonas. Something special, man. More than special something, man who never forget around him that. Kind of that, you know, there's a bunch of poetry poets there, but, Jonas is something special for Alan. That's the way that I figured out Joe Dante, the some of the big generational group there. And they're all hanging around the information, giving information, talk of the hugging, gathering together. But, generally they're not, Beat Generation Guy, but that's a different perspective, Allen, to how Jonas, how he got to Jonas to the, minor heard how he got to because I don't know, b generation, poet. I got, Jonas to that, you know, thode or, he the



got. I don't think I got. Only Allen got a very well about, Jonas John and how he lived.

00:42:57:00

KATIE DAVISON:

There seems to be like a improvisational style or in all of their poetry and the way Jonas sort of filmed, can you explain that?

00:43:10:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

That talking about a very similar seminar, which I'm going to talk about, talking about that in probably the, it probably this is or the meaning, which is that, before I talk with Jonas, my most favorite piano player, musician all over the musician there. I was there once in the play. You know him? He the one, genius beyond just that old double fat, because of the, like, for example, very well-known phrase. Isaac Stern mentioned the my life. It, practice in the toilet, practice, hallway or, you know, in the in the living room. Practice in my life. All my life, people practice on the stage. The vacation. That makes sense. So that's kind of, you know, Isaac stand phrase for a bit was the not like that level practice or, the rehearsal. Not that level. More like a genius. Not a level is a more like a chemistry, like a barometer. No one play in the classical Richter or the Michelangelo or whoever, you know, play, like a half of it. No one can play like that. I was in the history and all the future. There are lots of copy, like I would say, the on March the 11th, meaning the kids, Jarrett or Chikara, they do like a play, but, nothing like a better ones, because, that much influence. So but I want see the for me like a like god like talking about the music. I'm a really familiar about the music world, but, I listen to so many,



musicians, but, Weiss and Berg, the play, the jazz, but, I think, no one can play that. That ones Improvisation not talking about the improvisation. No one thought that's the one fit to the Jonas because of the film, you know, from he had a knock, you know, structure. I'm going to make this movie for that way. I'm going to make it doesn't matter day by day, like a tiger eating, you know, cookie eating the lunch like the same in the film. Me the on hey the hand and the improvise. The everything should have everything like evidence. So that way he turned. He lived, in high school. Special high school to die. He reported the old whatever hitting the situation theme. Everything proved by the in the screen. I mean from film. So. Like I improvised them everything. That's very similar. I like Bill Evans, the Jonas of the film. Like the very I same area category. That's what I picture of I of him which the fascinated of to be the I cannot tell how good or not not that level more chemistry like a Jonas and I know especially in the film, I did not film with not sharp vision like all the little moving a, you know, like moving a camera or something, or in some sitting in the hours that I filmed all that going to watch all get a lot of information from Jonas. Yeah, I think it definitely him and, Woody Allen also. Or how film editing, how process. From part one they know of in the movie first send our other and that kind of, cut or the other Jonas is a lot that I feel. Jonas, the that you mentioned of quite a while. I never knew you mentioned about the improvisation that. What a meaning. I am fascinated with, especially music and the genres of home that I'm more so fascinated a part of the Jonas. And also that are no conditions or directions to make that way, to make movie that way. Don't have it. Just all day by day they recorded of feeling so, like, you know, I think, you know, that was similar, though not like a being an artist or not to make it being the state on the, you know, Main Street, like the mainstream, you know, like, like a what do you think? What do you



feel day by day? Second, second that to the more important for me what you do resolved or process or court. I don't care that you know Jonas in the like that Jonas the film the I mean and also and some power of the you know, take away. Yeah. So I don't you hear the strong stand a strong, strong way to see stand. So he he had a, total improvisation in the, like a second by second or a day by day, like, that part of the most of for me, the fascinated part of him.

00:48:06:00

KATIE DAVISON:

He often said, "I'm not a filmmaker, I just film."

00:48:09:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yea, exactly. Like a film with a dialogue, language and a poetry, like written. Typical. He would say the, the film with, he the only person started beginning of the total involved with the film by, you know, that generation to now, now people got a lot of influence. But, he the original person to to involve the with the, like, even one second film or two second I footage. He the one in France, the the people Jonas don't have any strong, you know, each theme or tamer or whatever or to like a kind of pathos or he I thought like a pleasure or a goal. Variety divided. He doesn't do that. He doesn't care about that part. And also talking about the more like a, result, like a card process. The result? He doesn't think like that just so day by day, you know, I go, you know, footage to the keeper, in I go. Wherever he go here, the older the camera. So, like you are feeling or you are a second by second or, what you felt to think that, you know, put it all through film. So, like, more like a not a language, expression. More like a more raw. Because you are, you know, like you are, you know, the



captured, raw the second of a second the photography. Then I capture the and I skip a, skip a thumb theme or whatever is selected. But, film with that. Yeah. I mean, I mean second by second, moving. I thought that way, I, I think it's very, quite a, you know. How I said that for me is like. In a more than interesting Quadriga. Fascinated. Although, how he was doing the how he fell out of Holland, how he showed to the, you know, whatever even like the making, omelet he video, he making the video, you know, like, Sunnyside. You make video, but, most of people don't care. That kind of affogato. But a photograph of the capture of the something done on the hit that take photo or painting or something different, you know, a theme or different imagination or whatever. Different a third way, not only painting like a conceptual artwork that I thought lots of language. There are conceptual artworks, a lot to talk about. But, you know, I don't have any words. Just of footage, footage, footage. That's the one. I am very attracted over him, though. No one does like, he he was doing, so that, I miss that. Especially, this kind of man who is the front of me, that conversation with lunch or dinner or, he the house or, you know, anthology spend together, walk on the sidewalk together. And the camera, the always there here. They're shooting there. I'm really kind of what, unique guy, you know, beginning and then getting to know him. How, that way, I thought. But, time by time, getting to know him, I'm really, like, impressed of him. The what he doing in the life of divided, I mean second by second to the shooting of film. So now you see the whole film in Romania to how he live. You know, how what you he felt this area subject, you know, he doesn't care in any, you know, certain policy or certain things to do. Jesse capital. Footage. Yeah. So that's. No one did like he does. I personally, I got, he live with John out a little bit. Same type of, you know, lifestyle, not style that way. Live like a humble and, no, not like a focus of the title materials and also



not much language to, you know, dialogs and then like, I always, make, I have a journal and then like a things connected should be with the silence. That kind of. In a word, I live for the, in a journalist attempting along the, you know, a lot of the dialog with so many, vocabulary all on that. But I, and although I remember hitting the hour and capture the genre to the total different, way he live, the way he's subject of the for, from some from films. And then Gregory is a very intelligent about, Gregory and Jonas always. I went to New York hanging around, you know, three of them. And that I had a great time with. Jonathan. Always kind. Warm. Yeah. Always the. And the quiet talk over the. And then he was the last county or the. He was a jogging in, walking around. I know, I know, or the sidewalk and the jogging running on the parking park that he was telling the, I'm great shape now that he said.

00:53:50:00

KATIE DAVISON:

His film, The Light Show, that he did, do you remember that?

00:53:54:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

When he was in LA? I took a I got invited a little tiny little party, lawn party. I took him, I was with him and he of the camera was shooting. And then in the Brentwood, that one or, I never had a house. And then people they are they didn't know he was the he was the, you know, total different type of people. Like a more like a business be this, like a, you know, ordinary conversation. So, Jonathan, I or the Jonathan Jonathan, you know, get the use of the wave. I so he the getting footage of the shooting, the shooting and the people who couple people who didn't like shooting a film, who brought this guy. Who?



This guy. They who are they yelling with the. Kick him out. You should get him. Oh. Here. Hero board. Oh, okay. Okay. So. So the. Jonathan. Jonathan. Please. I'll turn off that switch that I am from. Oh, okay. Okay. And he, he put the hiding in the under the church. And a few minutes later he started shooting. The the other face. So that's the, the one the he the diary diary or, you know, check on what I think of the film. So even though, you know, you know, long party, but he never blew the camera to the, you know, shooting it so that to the so people uncomfortable and then they, they kicked us out. So that's that happened to Jonathan. I was laughing and laughing after we laughed together, but and then he came the light, a light in the, in the Malibu with my studio or, outside of the L.A. River. He the shooting a video of the, you know, the shooting in my studio, I that I, I think that that time or the dance. How about did a speech for me, 20 to 100 people came so many different museum curator and, and people came, but, I was the. I would like a cleaning toilet that time and that I was kind of like a butler then, so that all the other my poo. And that's just for me. The later the installation people there one shoulder here come to here this io this room that they were doing like that but I would not watch. You know, I don't like to go to the opening myself at reception. I don't like it myself because, they have had major artists in their, their, their opening. But, I don't like myself to go because, I talk bullshit and the other artist talk the bullshit to other visitors viewers so that I don't want to be like this at all. One of the. I had a show in London and then London Times there to that, you know, and then, Toby, you know, you will be here now. He will be tomorrow. Tonight you'll be here. I mean, I don't go, I don't totally I don't go alone. No time to waiting for you. That interview he get. So I didn't show up. They he get so mad. But, I don't like it myself, you know, talk about all the theory I wanted to artist. I wanted to to this artist award change



or to the influence. The subway people or art, of course, or stories. But I don't like to talk with my work, so I don't go to the reception. And also, you know, I have, none my own things of the show. I don't show the, you know, the commercial painting I did all through the dealers, but, since 1984 to then never show to none. And a, 80%, almost 80% never show other people, painting works even now. So my idea is like a, you know, most of the artists like you do the same thing, you know, most generous. And to me, the very similar idea I talk about, you know, Mozart in general, like most I did, I don't care that show. I don't wanted to show it to them. But that's not true. When you do action to do something, activity at home, then go to you or a dialog even, you talk with the people, you don't talk with the glass or the like. You talk, you expected you like or not. You have some condition. They are conversation. The artworks are the. When you make an action to show and make artworks mean, you want to show to the people that do it. But I'm also artist. Looks cool. I don't care about I don't want show. That's not true, but I my way. I don't, you know, for example, I don't show other people because of the not for things to do for showing it because when you for example, like when you are sword masters, when they have a practice in the wood, when they have a serious practice in the woods, they don't show to the, you know, the your own war, the US, you know, that practice. They don't know what to show. And also here that I haven't going to have a duo. Please come at the artist like exception. Come at a duel. You never tell the people like that. So that way I that where I live. So maybe I burned many paintings and, so much burned. I know 2 or 3000 burned because. Not like a deep frost of a cause. Just a big a small, a big space to have to financial reason to small space. So no place to put it. So let's burn. So we had we burned. I know that desire to though Schaefer came in of modify. I thought we have a tender budget around



a water and the sheriff can I got to take it. Took a smoke. Came out the command to fire their throat. But, that way, you know, like, not with, like, Jonah said, artist. He does some, but, the perfect reward of what he does that would fit for him. But I, I'm like, myself with, incoherent, like, upside down. I don't know what I'm what I'm doing. And then, of course, you know, oh, I forgot I was the artist that people called that kind of, you know, where I live with, so, but, so mainstream. And I enjoy stars or, you know, characters, you know, kept. I didn't put on numbers higher. Fine, though. Fine with me. But I'm not me to fit. To not. I don't feel any value, but, also medium itself to the heart of this Barnard. Please count it up. Many people band here. Van Gogh painting a such kind of a life start started life. Said here that like that and that they show to the the rooms are the artist Rembrandt room or just Jackson rooms like that one way they organize a well but a double meaning it you got it of the for myself of the, like, if you make something or you do in the world have the one connect one person you've connected or got it for the. Or whatever you do. I think the miracle. That way, if you got a one person to get it, you get it or the connected with you to your image, whatever music or whatever, it doesn't matter. People who make it, you know, like I think that very miracle. So that way, I think it's so not necessary to be the not arrogant, stuck up, not that kind of religion to the you do for yourself that where I live. For Jonas, the very similar. He does? He does? He doesn't care to just go to the on the on the whatever water. I mean, in various, you know, area. Welcome to that area. He live there that I mentally. So that's a more like a, like a bonded like a, you know, quite a connect a well, don't you know, would like a more, more bonded or bonded or if we are sitting here and then. No talk, no need to talk. Don't do anything. Don't need to do anything. Just being here and the he, the, you know, charisma or whatever cold or whatever cold I know I feel what



he wanted do what he being there in the people. So because of this the lack of all conversation together with the John also the, you know, and the overall pie, the pilot or the words or the conversation, what, you know, reaction or the thing that happened, the situation hitting to him so that the that and time by time, no. And don't need a word just so you know and things to talk with it just a, you know, just a domestic just so, you know, our own things together. But, but, you know, your heart is like you to really deeply connected, you know, respected each other. That where I thought that, or or like, there is another word and then so and then, you know, other way, other way to so, you know, don't need to need it to the people. What? No. What do you do? Just a narrow few people connected. That's enough. And although impossible to, for example, this person, this person, me to offer that way for me to understand, to get a very, you know, word, prepare the dialogs or systems or low moral principles or manners or this way we live. So this is the one we have, people or the like, stage or whatever I called on the phone or, you know, prepare the word people live about. Another word. Who the more different area, who live a different feeling felt or something touching on something or involved to the through your way that, you know, cannot explain what is, one word to or how. But. Do I need to say? Don't need to talk with that. Just being there with the near you. And then time by times with him, I get a more I got getting over him. What he the focus on the special he the film with the one telling me to the, you know, like, the diary actually you not diary though more diary that day by day, but I he he the mind heard the second by second. So film not like a day lead his stuff more like second by second. The intense talking about the ones about same area, same like mentally same area. I haven't. And the journals are much more very similar. The why the sound, why the visual and the very similar. I consider how the the two of them.



01:04:56:00

KATIE DAVISON:

Do you remember the last time you talked to him?

01:04:59:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yeah. You know, he was the, last time of the he was come over New York and, who showed to the film and what I'm adding and then. And then. And I was going to bring it in to introduce to the musician jeopardy! No. Performer. Musician. I was going to invite him to go with together to join us. That's the one we are talking about. I'm going to do it on the stage that I, you know, wrinkle, rice paper, thin paper, hold six, hold screened, and then all that. Great. And then candlelight. The candlelight. That's great. Let's do, let's do that. We are talking about the, march to September. We are talking about the March April and that we're going to make of the September, October, that, holiday season. And that time we were planning to do that, did that last conversation. And then, I came to the living into LA, and then I got a phone call from Moana to communicate about. I share the some other, how Jonah's doing. Yeah. He, the, you know, in a very busy today, the. He looking for you to come to New York that June. I was saying, they hear that some old things to the LA and the went back. That's the last conversation I would going to join us to, to Jonathan place, to the on the stage today that the last conversation on that.

01:06:20:00

KATIE DAVISON:



What did you think when he when he passed away.

01:06:23:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

I would I didn't go to. No. And then and notice I got a but. Well, I know that you like, treasure. Not treasure. But. Man who left in my heart very deeply. So, not, sad sorrow. The way, not God's, like a structure. Organic structure. Stop to function. That's the way, you know the time come to go. So my time come later. But I'm not, like, fascinated. Like he the life, right? That's why I feel so lost. But. The time come that I thought. But, he had all his life, you know, whatever color, passion, whatever words. I don't care all the words, but, I have a very strong, not only message who exists on my mind, who he was. Yeah. And then, Ginsburg also different way to the, you know, he there are a lot of vocabulary dialogs, but a different person that he, he had a big heart. Jonas had. Yeah, of course, a big heart he had. But, Jonas has. Yeah. All right, so the improvised improvised headline act that way. I see. oh. I'm not like, I don't think he'll like, some main, some structure direction, like a, you know, like a cartoon which, jazz bars should be that way, that the, you know, psychologist to that reaction chord process and the result and then another call, it is not a one direction to the, you know, I go very rational way to the philosophy, but a totally different and more like a, more like a free, not a free organic, organic rock, a structure. Yeah. Not a structure, but more like a. Unknown. How he feels, how he live, how he want to do. Unknown to today. Fascinated for me. That's why. Like a kind of then it also structure to but the talks but the, the system of the structure. So that's why the but, the, the idea one of the slice of the, the idea remind him of the said the life size and then. My. Hey, the one for, the way I was. I'm living the Jonah. See, the, reaction,



unknown to, life, the way he live. I love that I really most, attracted a part of him. And also no to unlimited affection to the people. I mean, you know, the kind and the sweet to the people, and then and the he doesn't count himself to, you know, for for anything. He there. When you when you when you, he when you are, not need to be asked. Looks like he looks like it's something uncomfortable and convenient. He there to drag that. So I see a lot of this kind of, you know, of what he would do. So, I don't know how, say about him, but, the way he they was the. How he died. Not that how he lived. The more for me that I got a lot to, you know. And it stimulated to my life.

01:10:38:00

KATIE DAVISON:

He seemed really free like free in the true sense of the word.

01:10:42:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

Yeah. Flexible. Very flexible. You know, words, code. You know, for example, like, talking about the first free or like, concept, you know, like a consciousness or these words either always meaning and also when you turn to the, you know, a word, words you make us, you know, concrete or framed and then also word the always meaning of the result to the words. For talking about the free. Also, I do use the phone for easy, but talk about free. The he doesn't when he live. He doesn't think of the he the free the way he want. Wait. Is he. They are everywhere. Everywhere. He there. But he doesn't think about a free either. Should it be a, like free should like the same thing? You know, music play very similar. Or the betterment, Jonas. Right. I won't, he doesn't think of the. He does the improvization. Well, you know, he does.



Sitting on the piano automatically the hand moved. And then he had, for our viewer or listener to listen. improvisation was quite free or flexible. We do like, like a, you know, viewer, but, when they're making them, when they play or just the way it is and the play or, you know, shooting, you know, I'm the footage, improvise the everything. That's more so my my favorite part over him. That's not my, conditioned. Should it be the framed or should have a, you know, like a stage or like a framed or, not on the frame to, like a position eyes or, direction or, like a recognition. Recognize doesn't care. Gesture footage, but not in recognition. Not like a diary that's seconded by seg. On to footage. Would the all the evidence would you? The where he went, how he where he went, how we talk, the way he talks or even like on the dirt here, the shooting. So all you know everything of the evidence he came this war and then you know one of the then theory then lines we. Where we came from and that he had temporary. He had temporary part of the times. And where we go, we don't know. But at least he was longer than he had here. He took us all evidence. Him himself. The. I don't want you to not need to rest in a sudden subject or a movie. Sergeant. Subject of the documentary. So what kind of a movie or writing a book thought, you know, even general. Not like this. Not like a. Don't you? Just so. No words for sure. It should. So that one for me that I quite a attractive part of fascinated of him what he did very much and remind me that there was some, how he play, how he did on the footage. Very similar. I yeah, that way I think.

01:13:49:00

KATIE DAVISON:

Jonas has quite a big following in Japan. Are you aware of it? Did you ever go with him?



01:13:54:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

He. He invited me. He told me. Let's go to Japan. Here. Japanese Museum invited a he. The photographs, how? They showed me them. Contemporary. Had I showed the Japanese the photo. Another medium kind of, photograph medium here that show that he had a show there and then Jonathan photograph slice and then Jonathan, let's go to Japan. Let's go to Japan. But, we never been there because of the, I would the total we know, being that with Jonathan in New York and then I also I with the total involved with what things to do and then so I would involve the, that time automobile painting on an automobile. So you UCLA, the college, the USC, the college kids, and, you know, Art central college kids, a 24, a kid painting on the car that one told him of. So I have to be constantly, not every day, but, also, I owned, started, my own way. Started the research of the the physics then. So that's why, you know, life or delays us spending physically more time then. But, not that the reason if we want to go, we went together, but I didn't. I haven't, but, Jonas of the, I think Jonas or the not. I think he got a influence about gen Japanese Lego. Like, esthetic beauty, like a tiny essay like that. Jonas knew that. And then, it very esthetic, you know, beauty that Jonas love it. Very simple. And then everything that I very simple that way in our method like that that that he he were the fascinated with the Japanese, the esthetic.

01:15:41:00

KATIE DAVISON:

On the phone you told us that he was stubborn.

01:15:44:00

HIRO YAMAGATA:

You know, Allen said that, you know, for example, like, the the thing that milk you, you the sugar, the putting more sugar. Put it in. Yeah. No, put on more sugar. Oh. Like that kind of. Well, he decided like, this kind of, you know, thing. A thing of the always. He wanted. What he want. He never listened what people are telling him. So that's a part of someone. But also power, people who show power or put you down with power, he was against that. He was very stubborn, stand himself. so that, you know, power, political power or, you know, like a society, the power or, you know, business or a position. He he doesn't care. I just know he cannot stand it. So he stand to just avoid or stand from it to the what? He he the shop opinion shop. I knew his idea already. He that concrete you know he the idea. So he showed to they you know some things to a word to show to the, you know, I mean from in the bottom, soul to, you know, you show to the, people. But, that part is stubborn. So stubborn that, you know, I see that like that. I see, you know, guy who they knew one of the guy. Who? The writer. I'm a journalist, talking about politics. And then he never back off. He the old a push to the what? The idea, you know, not not either temporary. He had a bottom heart. A lot of, you know, the way he lived. He put out all the words to show to that. I mean, and then and, just a writer, backed off that one, you know, John, us of the way. Yeah. So, you know, not respect or influence, in fact. No, I mean, influential, not that kind of thing. The more like, not respectable, not like a more, more organic thing to in the how I see of him. Yeah, I admire respect not like that kind of things more deeply like, oh, I don't know. More organic connection that I felt over the very rare I got like a. Like. Yeah. Very rare to the people to connect the with the people deeply connected the understood each other or that way, that way



expression. But, connected, I think very, rare to me in my life. Not many people, like a few people need to have a have a lot of people to have this kind of people. Not like that. But, spontaneously, he the one of the him and Allen. So I miss the two of them so badly, though, this is come up in the the image or the a memory come up once I have.

END TC: 01:19:07:00