

PROGRAMMANUS



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RADIO POPREEL

Irish rap, Australian street art and Antiguan literature

PAMELA:

Today in *Radio Popreel*, Australian street art, Irish rap music and literature from Antigua.

This is *Chandelier* by Sia.

Jason Wing is a Sydney-based artist, and he's a graphic designer, street artist and sculptor. He believes that the understanding of history and of our current sociopolitical reality is important.

JASON:

I feel it's my responsibility to re-educate Australians and international people about the strength of Aboriginal people, and also to highlight the international injustices and crimes that are committed against Aboriginal people, so...I have a responsibility to...to tell modern-day stories about my people.

Well, the most important thing for me to get across is just telling the truth. So, for instance, one of my recent art works, I...I created a bust of Captain Cook. And I put a balaclava over his face and I called it *Australia was Stolen by Armed Robbery*. And growing up as a child in Australia, I was taught that Australia was discovered by Captain Cook, and that this was the history of Australia, which is not true. Aboriginal people have been here for over, you know, 100 000 years, so...

PAMELA:

How did it feel to be there in the classroom, being Aboriginal yourself and being told that Australia was discovered?

JASON:

I just knew that it wasn't true, and it scared me that this was what was being taught in our schools, and raising the next generation of people believing a colonized view of Australia. And it was really scary.

The elders are getting really tired. They've been fighting really hard, and so they have to hand it over to our generation and we have to teach the younger generation and... Aboriginal culture is all about community learning, and shared learning and sharing knowledge, like any community.

street art
gatukonst

graphic designer
grafisk formgivare
current
nuvarande
sociopolitical
sociopolitisk
re-educate
omskola
Aboriginal people
ursprungsbefolkning
to highlight
att belysa
injustice
orättvisa
to commit
att begå
recent
här: senaste
bust
byst
balaclava
balaklava, skidmask
armed robbery
väpnat rån

to raise
att uppfostra
colonialized
koloniserad

elders
äldre

community
samhälle



Well, my main focus is to expose the international crimes against Aboriginal people. And these are crimes that are recognized by the United Nations. However, our government has suspended and amended the Racial Discrimination Act, which allows racial discrimination to happen. These injustices need to stop and everybody needs to play their part to...to correct these international crimes, which are still happening today. This is...these crimes are not just in the past. They're happening right now, under international standards.

It's happening through gentrification, it's happening through passive racism, it's happening through poverty. It's also happening through dependency. So a lot of these things need to change and we need everybody to contribute, Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people. But there's actually...there's nothing for Aboriginal people to reconcile. It's up to the wider audience to be educated first, and to act on it. Not just to speak about it, but to actually do something about it. And that's what I do through my art, which I can communicate through a wide audience.

I feel that a sense of community can be applied to the entire world. However, I feel we live in a very...egocentric world, like it's "me, me, me", money, status. And so I feel we should actually return back to those traditional values and customs, as in communal sharing, communal wealth... Sustainability of the land and water... Shared knowledge, shared stories. And that's...that's how you build a community. And I feel as humans, we could all learn something from that. And, you know, not taking more than what you need, because we know that that doesn't work. So it's important to, you know, acknowledge and respect the past and try to apply it as best you can, in...living in this modern world.

Well, my advice to young artists is to...to start with like self-portraits. You know, actually investigate and explore yourself, and what makes you you, whether it's your cultural background or... You know, just explore who you are. It's always great to start with yourself.

But really, the main thing is just to... The definition of an artist is somebody who makes art, so just keep making. And you know, pick say your best ten images. Put them up on a web page or a blog, get involved with local art galleries, go to openings, mix with friends. Go to art school, that would be a great place to start. However, some of the best artists I know have rejected art school, so it's not always a guarantee. But if you keep making work and just work hard and...it will pay off, it's fun. Always try and make your next work better than your last work, and then that's how you develop and... Yeah, just to practice and keep making art.

to expose
att avslöja
to suspend
att upphäva
to amend
att ändra
Racial Discrimination act

Lagen mot rasdiskriminering

injustice

orättvisa

gentrification

gentrifiering

poverty

fattigdom

to depend on

att vara beroende av

to contribute

att bidra

to reconcile

att försona

wide audience

bred public

to apply

här: att gälla

egocentric

självcentrerad

value

värdering

custom

vana

communal

gemensam

sustainability

hållbarhet

to acknowledge

att erkänna

advice

råd

to investigate

att undersöka

to explore

att utforska

to involve with

att involvera, beblanda sig

med

to reject

att förkasta, välja bort



PAMELA:

This is the Irish rapper Temper-Mental MissElayneous.

MissElayneous:

When I was seventeen, I was homeless and basically living out of my bodhrán case. Yeah, I just maintained being an artist, writing, scribbling and also functioning as a homeless person doing the survival thing.

Someone asked me, was it social or financial or... It was a mixture of everything. It was financial in the sense that...the state of affairs of the country and that. So when I lost that lovely warm bed and that comfort, again as I said, keeping present was key for me to stay positive. So I had to get back on my street smarts, so I call that "street intellect" coupled with wisdom, you know. But I'm also strong, you know what I mean? Spirited and physically as well. I know how to fight as well if I have to. You know, I can verbally fight. I wouldn't use... Because I'm a boxer, too, I don't use boxing in the street or anything like that.

And I'm a straight-edged person. I don't drink alcohol or use drugs, straight-edge punk and... Yeah, I use that as my armor. That's my psychic armor. And of course people won't come near me, because I have tattoos as well, so... That's a bit of a...that's a bit of a repellent, you know. So I call that psychic armor. So having the real psychic armor is having the knowledge of yourself and who you are and your limitations and boundaries. And also the sense to walk away and be aware of your street environment, so... It's kind of a little bit like that, but a lot...many other people aren't as fortunate as me and they wouldn't survive as well as I did. And they might have fallen into addiction or prostitution or...God knows what else, you know what I mean?

I stayed in a few hostels, but I used to get up in the morning and jog. I'd play my bodhrán and I'd write, you know. I'd make my good food, vegan food for myself, keep myself healthy.

PAMELA:

So you weren't afraid of the streets at night? You were friends with the streets or...?

MissElayneous:

Yeah, that's a lovely way of putting it. I was definitely friends with the street, and I still am, and it taught me manners. And then when I got a bit of prestige and people started recognizing me and saying "Oh, you're that rapper. Oh, MissElayneous!" Paradoxically, that would feel great, but also it was a reminder that I had very little privacy. I had nowhere really to call...to lay my hat. Wherever you lay your hat is your home.

*Ashes to ashes, face to face,
Does your rhythm synchronize with my heart's pace?
May have a spare key, but only one to unleash*

temper

Humör

mental

Själslig

temperamental

Temperamentsfull

bodhrán

an Irish drum

to maintain

Här: att hålla vid liv

to scribble

att klottra, kladda

state of affairs

Läge

street smart

Gatusmart, att kunna

gatans lag

coupled with

hopkopplat med

verbally

verbal

straight-edge

En livsstil där man väljer

bort tobak, droger,

alkohol och kött.

armor

rustning

repellent

motbjudande

boundary

gräns

fortunate

tursam

addiction

beroende

hostel

vandrarhem

manners

heder, hyfs, vanor

prestige

prestige

paradoxically

paradoxalt

reminder

påminnelse

privacy

privatliv

to synchronize

att synkronisera, stämma

överens



Freed the Wu Tang heart, but released in one piece?

I think the reason why the Irish people understand hip hop and the language of hip hop in terms of it being a cultural movement... The African-American culture, the black art movement that express themselves through hip hop, through rapping. I had to listen to that for a long time to understand a lot of the terminology, just like any language, just like Shakespeare. I had to do it the same way with Shakespeare, absolutely the same way. It's not just about the music. It's a whole movement. It's making a statement, visually, sonically, intellectually, on every level.

The influence on Irish culture in terms of music, literature, saints and scholars has a lot to do with oppression. And I think that's why jazz and hip hop as movements speak to the Irish people, speaks to the Irish spirit. The drum, the rhythms, the jigs, the reels, the stylist, the characteristics of Irish cultural music I think...prompt revolution, and that's based on...it harks back to cultural oppression. You know, essentially it's about freedom. Ballads tell stories. Irish ballads were a way of educating folks on what was happening in terms of oppression and war and violence against the Irish spirit and the Irish as a nation.

*Ashes to ashes, face to face,
Does your rhythm synchronize with my heart's pace?
May have a spare key, but only one to unleash
Freed the Wu Tang heart, but released in one piece?*

Four qualities parallel to the four elements of hip hop. You've got your rapping, you've got your breakdancing, you've got your turntablism or your music and you've got your graffiti.

Graffiti for me relates to affinity, and a sense of belonging, a sense of affiliation with your peers and a sense of where you come from, so background.

B-boying or breakdancing, that's control of the body. You have to be able to hold your own weight in order to be a successful breakdancer. So it's holding the body, so that's very symbolic, very validating to be able to hold your own weight, both symbolically and literally.

And with regard to music and turntablism, again the 4/4 beat. Follows the rhythm of the heart, so I call myself a biological metronome, you know. So there's a very artistic way.

And then that leads me to rapping. So the lyrical aspect, the verbal expression. How do we express how we feel? Well, we can do it that no one is exempt, no one is excluded from those elements, no matter what limitations you may have.

I'm a bedroom MC. You know, I have my own... I have Ableton, my recording program, and I record my own stuff now. I used to just go

to release
att frigöra

to express oneself
att uttrycka sig
terminology
terminologi

to make a statement
att uttala sig

scholar
lärdd person
oppression
förtryck
jig
en dansstil
reel
en dansstil
prompt
omgående, snabb
to hark back
att återvända

unleash
släppa loss

turntable
skivtallrik

affinity
samhörighet, släktskap
peers
jämlikar

to validate
att bekräfta

metronome
metronom

lyrical
lyrisk
exempt
undantagen
excluded
exkluderad



to other people's houses and record and do demos in the beginning. And now I'm releasing an album, so you know what I mean, from Ballymun to the Bronx. Pretty good going, you know, not bad at all!

PAMELA:

Radio Popreel meets the Antiguan writer Joanne C. Hillhouse in her back garden, under the palm trees. Her book *Musical Youth* is about music, discovery and love. Zahara meets Shaka.

JOANNE:

She didn't know his name, he didn't know hers, and wouldn't if she had anything to say about it, with his forwardness, jumping right in and chatting her up like they were long-time friends. He didn't seem to mind her silence, picking up both sides of the conversation when she didn't answer right away.

"So, you play guitar."

"Yeah, me like music too, nuh."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah..."

"Me like hip hop mostly."

"Yeah, yeah, me like Bob Marley though, he min wicked pon the guitar, right?"

She almost answered then. Bob Marley's *Redemption Song* was the first thing she'd learned to play on her own, no hand guiding hers, no chords to follow; the first song she'd taught herself, playing along with it on the radio, fiddling with it from memory. When she'd mastered it, she'd felt so proud of herself she'd almost auditioned for the school pageant, the winner of which got to represent first her class in the school's Talented Teen-Best of Forms then, if victorious, her school in the Teen Splash at Carnival.

BOB MARLEY:

*Emancipate yourself from mental slavery
None but ourselves can free our minds
Have no fear for atomic energy...*

JOANNE:

Like, English language, that's what we grow up learning, and that's what we're taught and that's what we read, and we know the standard and... We know how to speak Antiguan, we know how to speak Caribbean, but often we don't know how to write it, and so I just tend to write it how I hear it. I know there's some coding for it now, but I tend to write it how I hear it, and I think that's why people can read it. So I'm not overcomplicating it, how the characters speak is how it comes through. How it sounds to me is how I hope it will sound to the reader. And it's giving them, you know, a little bit of Antigua, you know.

forwardness

framåtanda

to chat someone up

att flirta med

redemption

inlösen, återköp

chord

ackord

to fiddle with

att rota omkring

pageant

parad, tävling

victorious

segerrik

to emancipate

att frigöra

coding

allmänna regler, oskrivna

lagar

to overcomplicate

att göra mer komplicerat

än det är



PAMELA;

Where does it come from, that in the Caribbean you don't say "ask", you say "aks" and so on?

JOANNE:

Where did the...wow... I think our language, like so much else about us, is a testament to the adaptability and the creativity of our people. In Antigua, in the Caribbean as a whole, we're people who came from other places, for the most part. We came from Africa as, you know, enslaved, captured from our own country and brought here.

And if you consider what it must have been like, apart from the extreme brutality of chattel slavery. Having to adapt, you're talking about people from different tribes, having to find the language that they can speak to each other and understand the people who are dominating them as well. And so, out of that comes what I think is this pepper pot of language.

And when I say in all areas, the whole life... Because you take the food, you take the language, different customs and so on, you realize that things adapted and recreated from these different influences, primarily the African influence. To some degree, because we were colonized, the...depending on which country you go to, English or French or Dutch or whatever.

And so to me, we survived, and we did more than survive. And that's why I'm just so amazed by the people that came before me. Because I don't think I'm half as strong, half as creative as they had to be in order to not just survive, but make a life, to sustain their spirit. To keep something of themselves and to pass something on to their children, something like hope and possibility. So all of that, to me is wrapped up in the language, and I use it because it is a part of me, just as they're part of me.

As I said, I grew up on calypso. That is the folk music of the people. When I was growing up, beyond the media and the formal institutions, the calypso was where you went to get the news, and to tell it to you straight. And I think that's something that's at the back of my mind or has influenced me as a writer.

When I was growing up, I didn't know any writers from here, from Antigua. The writers from here that I knew, and I have great respect for them, were the calypso writers, people like Shelly Tobitt and Marcus Christopher. Because when I was coming up, calypso was the literature that I would hear, that had some relevance to my community. The other literature that we read was mostly from America or from Britain.

In the Caribbean, we don't have spring, summer, winter, fall, or fall, winter, however it goes. We have carnival season, we have

testament
vittnesmål
adaptability
förmåga att anpassa sig
enslaved
förslavade

chattel
ägodel
tribe
stam

custom
vana, sed
recreated
återskapat

amazed
häpen, hänförd

to influence
att påverka

carnival
karneval



hurricane season, Christmas season... Carnival season begins when you start hearing the calypso songs on the radio.

When I said they're the folk music of the people, it's you know...the roots of calypso is *benna*, which comes up from the way the sort of grassroots people would be able to express themselves. And calypso kind of matured that idea, that idea of what is the common man's experience? What are his concerns, what are his frustrations, what are his...his hopes?

I think, I think it's essential that we document our lives, I really do. We come from an oral tradition, and I respect that tradition. As I said, it has influenced me, but I think we need to document more of our stories, our lives, so that when our kids look back, they know who we were, they know who they are because of those stories, and I think it's important.

Part of our challenge, I think, as formerly colonized people dealing with sort of this neo-colonial world...or post-colonial world, I guess, depending on how you look at it, is...so much of what you've been given, of your history, has been given and written by someone else. And it's not the full picture. It doesn't... It's another's perspective on what has come before, and so it's essential that we document how we see ourselves.

BOB MARLEY:

*Emancipate yourself from mental slavery
None but ourselves can free our minds
Have no fear for atomic energy
'Cause none of them can stop the time
How long shall they kill our prophets
While we stand aside and look?
Yes, some say it's just a part of it
We've got to fulfill de book*

*Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom?
'Cause all I ever have
Redemption songs
All I ever have
Redemption songs
These songs of freedom*

PAMELA:

The sound was engineered by Joakim Davidsson. My name is Pamela Taivassalo Wikholm and I produced the program. You have been listening to *Radio Popreel*.

hurricane
orkan

grassroots
gräsrötter
to mature
att mogna
concerns
bekymmer
essential
väsentligt, absolut
nödvändigt

post-colonial
efterkolonial