**Q: Hello and welcome to Why This, a Nexus Arts podcast. Why This is a series of conversational interviews with arts workers from an eclectic variety of areas within the industry, and an eclectic range of career levels as well. We'll be talking with people who have reached great success as well as those who are just starting out. My name is Aaron Schuppan and I am the media manager here at Nexus Arts, an intercultural organization in Adelaide, South Australia. I also work in the film industries, and why this is a question I ask, aloud to myself at least once a month. Of all the paths to choose, why did I choose this one? The arts industry is a rocky road at the best of times, and I wanted to celebrate those who pursue it as their work. I know I'm not the only one who asks themselves why this. And in my role here at Nexus, I'm blessed to interact with artists from a wide variety of disciplines and backgrounds and have that conversation with them. And I wanted to share that with you, the listener. Now our first guest is Nelya Valamanesh. Nelya is an emerging writer and filmmaker amongst many other things that I'll let her lay out for herself. We had a great chat about her pathway that got her to where she is now, about the power of story to enable difficult conversations, the importance of representation, and just how great the movie Clueless is. She has great answers to some of my questions and even throws a couple back at me that stumped me and left me pondering for several days. And isn't that at the end of the day what great conversation is about? But enough from me, I hope you enjoy my conversation with Nelya Valamanesh. There's a little bit of language in this episode, but it is all within good context. Welcome Nelya. Thank you for being our test subject, our first guest on the podcast.**

P: Thank you. Happy to be here.

**Q: I guess could you introduce yourself to the listeners? You do a myriad of things, maybe tell us what you do with your life?**

P: I do lots of things, making films, so working on film sets, writing for film and television. I also DJ on the weekends here, filling up the dance floors. Yeah. I think – and work in festivals. I work in festivals as well doing front of house supervising and just a myriad of other things in the arts.

**Q: Great. It's a bit of a common story I think for people that work in the arts industry, that you do have a long resume of different skill sets and things that you do. Is this always been the case?**

P: Yes. It always has been the case. I have a really bad tendency not to say no to things. Like I totally forgot I also work in theatre, for example. That it really just takes up your whole realm, I guess. Like I'm so excited to just do lots of different projects and always change my surroundings and the people I'm around and learn new things and experience new things. So I guess that's my cross the bear.

**Q: I guess out of all of the things that you do, you must have one or two that stand out as the real passion.**

P: Yeah. I think I really want to tell stories. I want to tell stories from my perspective. Especially in a place like Australia, I feel like people like myself don't really get to be seen on television. Not only seen, but also work behind the scenes for the viewers at home. I am not a Caucasian white person. I'm actually Iranian Australian. And so as a child, I did look up in the TV and not really see many people that looked like myself. So that was one of the main reasons why I decided to get into film and actually go back into the film. Because a lot of people in the arts, they will have a time in their life where they all just go, "No, I'm done. I can't do this anymore. It's too hard." And get a regular 9 to 5 job. But that doesn't usually last that long. And that was definitely the case for me.

**Q: That's interesting. That was a question I wanted to ask you. I'll come back to what was going to be my first question, but there is always that struggle and the hard times that it is very, very hard anywhere in the world, but particularly in Australia, to break into the industries that you are pursuing. I guess what keeps you coming back?**

P: I guess like the main struggle is really like that support, you know? Whether it be financial, whether it be support of the people around you, the security. Like, I don't want to go down that whole stereotype of, "Oh, the parents want you to have like a regular job." But it's true. When it's not your parents, it's really your own internal mindset of thinking you're not good enough really. Because you see all this stuff being made and you're like, "Oh my God, I want to make stuff like that. Am I good enough?" And then you just sit there in front of your computer and you're like, "Okay. Now write." And then it just goes out of your head and you're just sitting there going, "Can I actually do this? Am I actually good enough?" So I think a lot of that has to do with your own perseverance. Why I stick with it is because when I have ideas, people I tell the ideas to usually say, "That's a fantastic idea and I really want to see it." And their minds don't change after a couple of months. And people – thankfully I've had a really good support group around me of friends that do work in the industry and don't work in the industry, both telling me that I can do it. And I think that's the best thing to have is that support group. And support financially like arts organizations giving you opportunities like Writers SA has given me some opportunities as well.

**Q: Can you tell us a bit about what's been going on with you and your career in the last year or so? There's been some big things for you.**

P: Yes. It's been pretty big. I've worked – I finally cracked the ceiling, I guess for myself, like my own personal ceiling of just being a writer in your room. Because a lot of the times I've kept being told, "Oh, just make it – just make it low budget. Just make it." And I'm like, "Well, I don't have the skills or the people around me that I can make it." And also low-key I was like, "I don't want to make it low budget because I feel like in my head this is a bigger thing." And I didn't want to give it that low budget look.

**Q: Is this a particular project? Can you tell us about this publicly or is this - - -**

P: Well, yes, I can. It's called Five Rules to Being a Fuckgurl. Actually, it's only called Rules to Being a Fuckgurl now because it's six episodes

**Q: Okay. There's more than five rules, I'm sure.**

P: It's changed. Yeah. It's changed. It's just Rules now. So it's a web series. The idea came to me about four years ago after realizing that myself and some of my friends that I lived with actually, we kept being in these boring relationships where we felt a bit drained. And that they — like our partner's careers were going further and we were just stuck supporting and being in these relationships where we didn't feel like we could pursue our careers. And so I was just like, "You know what? You can be selfish and just go, you know what, I'm going to be stay single." And we made a bet that we're going to stay single for a whole year. And that turned into something that brought out a lot of funny anecdotes about relationships, dating, like the weird things that happen. Especially like for myself being a woman of colour, a lot of people that I would go on dates with would assume that I wanted a relationship or I wanted it to go further because of cultural stereotypes. And it was just really funny. It was like being a single person that didn't want to be in a relationship and how did that look like for women and women of colour and just women in general really. Because we're always put in this box of, "Oh, that girl's always going to try and trap you." Like we always want a relationship, we want to settle down, we want to get married and have kids. And it's like, "You know what? No, I want to have a secure career first before I even think about that if I want that. So yeah. And we just made jokes about the interactions we had with men in general. And then also throughout that, I started questioning my own sexuality. Because I was like, "Why am I having these lame relationships?" And it's like, "Maybe it's because I don't just like men."

**Q: There you go.**

P: So that came out as well. So it is a little bit of a personal thing, but also I felt like a lot of other people related to it. And so Fuckgurls was born.

**Q: It's really — that kind of relates back to what you were saying about growing up and looking for, I guess, representation, people that looked or sounded or felt like yourself. Can we go back to part of why this is? Was there a falling in love with this world moment or was it gradual? How did you find this path?**

P: I really found the path in art through music really. As a kid I was really drawn to rock music, punk. The metal core scene was a big thing in Adelaide when I was growing up. And when I was in year 12 doing music, I had the chance to do an independent study for my course to get my grade. And I came up to my music teacher and was like, "I want to do it on the punk scene in Adelaide and what it looks like now versus the 90s." And my teacher was like, "Why don't you do something about Iranian culture, like Iranian music?" And I was like, "What the fuck? Would you be saying this to anyone else?" But then I was like, "You know what? She might have a point." I don't know much about Iranian music. I grew up here, I listened to it and it was more like an eye-roll moment when my dad put music on. I'd be like, "Oh, this stuff," like, "Don't want to hear this. I want to hear no effects." Which is really funny now because I reckon I would probably prefer the opposite now. So yeah. I made a film, a documentary about Iranian music in Adelaide and if there was people making Persian music, and what it looked like, who they were, what they do and that kind of thing. And I was quite fascinated with the whole idea of editing and putting together a direct – like and directing and creating a piece of art, which is film. And from there I fell in love with making films. But not only that, I really wanted to be a music producer, so I wanted to be like Timberland. So instead of going straight into film school, I actually went to Radio Adelaide and had my own radio show about young voices from different cultures, like non-Anglo backgrounds. And I really decided that I wanted to work in sound and film. So that's really where it started in music and in film. So it makes sense that I'm a DJ as well as a writer now.

**Q: Yeah. I think there's a bit of a – there's a false idea in all arts industries is that people can be one thing in that world. A writer is a writer, a painter is a painter. I think even like within the visual arts, the perception that someone is one very specific aspect of all those things. But the truth is like most people I talk to do have multiple things that they do to fulfil those needs. And they all – they're all part of the one form of expression or communicating to an audience.**

P: It's all storytelling.

**Q: It's all storytelling, right?**

P: Yeah. So went to MAPS as lots of people do in Adelaide. And - - -

**Q: Can you tell us what MAPS is for people that don't know?**

P: MAPS is a - - -

**Q: It's a bit of a hidden secret. People don't really know.**

P: Is it?

**Q: I think so.**

P: Oh, okay. I guess for me I grew around — grew up knowing people that went to it, so it wasn't so much. But it's like a technical school really. So it's like a film – actually started as a radio and film school actually. But it's a technical school in Adelaide where people learn about film by doing it really, it's all hands on. You just make a shit ton of short films during the year. And it's like a sink or swim situation.

**Q: Yeah. I was always quite envious. I went to university to study film and I had friends that were at MAPS and they just seemed to be making things. Just learning on the job. Whereas the university system taught us a lot of theory first and it was hard to get our hands on the tools, but you guys were just out there shooting and shooting and shooting.**

P: But we were out there shooting a lot of shit.

**Q: It's the best way to learn.**

P: Is it?

**Q: It teaches you to fail too, which I think is the crucial thing.**

P: It is true. We failed a lot. But it was really good. I did learn a lot about the way the industry works and I did get experience on sets during that time, but I found myself wanting more of like the whys and the aspects of film that we didn't really go into like the writing and why do we choose these films? What is the market like that? That like marketability of film making and the process of getting money to make films. And also just like I really did pray for that theory, because the way humans tick is really interesting. And I feel like that was one thing of someone that went to uni and studied film probably got a little bit more of than say someone that went to MAPS. So I think they both have their place.

**Q: For sure. That's interesting talking about the way people tick. That's what the writing process is all about.**

P: Totally.

**Q: Mine is kind of figuring that out. I don't want to lead you too much, but is that - - -**

P: Yeah, after MAPS.

**Q: - - - what led you towards writing it?**

P: So after MAPS, I worked on a couple of films, and then I sat in it and I was like, "You know what? I keep getting put in these art department roles and it's not really what I wanted to do." I didn't really find it enjoyable enough. And when I came up with my own ideas and I was like, "I really want to write this," no one wanted to do it with me. This is – people was like, "Oh, I don't really relate to this story." Because a lot of the stuff I would talk about was being brown and in Australia. And so I didn't really find my clique and I think that's really important in film and any arts really is like finding that clique that you connect with. Not saying that the people around me weren't [00:15:37].

**Q: Do you mean clique as in QUA, as in your collaborators?**

P: Yeah. Like my collaborators. I didn't find my collaborators at MAPS, so I was still bit alone in what I wanted to do. So I fell off the wagon, I guess creatively and just got a 9 to 5 job at a place in the city and yeah. And then I remember the OscarsSoWhite thing came out and I'd quit that 9 to 5 job because I was so bored, which doesn't surprise me at all. And I was like, "No. Screw this and going back to uni." And I went to uni and literally did English and creative writing course with a lot of sociology subjects and anthropology subjects.

**Q: That's a good combination.**

P: Yeah. So I really wanted to – wanted to talk about like oral history of the common people. Do you know what I mean? Not to sound like I'm not a part of the common people, I'm definitely a part of them, but I also wanted to tell those stories that don't really get seen. And one thing that I really found interesting when I was studying this was the fact that in history we only really have the written knowledge from the higher up, those elite. We don't know back in the Middle Ages what the local chump person was doing. The people farming, not even the farmers, the people that are just making stuff or just hanging out. I don't know.

**Q: Yeah. We definitely have the kings and queens versions of history.**

P: Yeah. We don't have the regular peeps. And that was really a moment when I was like, you know what, if you look at TV and film from any era, we only see the society that was ruling. And in a way, if you look at Home and Away, and Neighbours and the way people see Australia, they're seeing that Australia from the ruling class. Not saying that they're kings and queens, but they are the class that have the most power, the most privilege, and we don't really see the others. So that's really – I was like, that's pretty interesting

**Q: That sounds almost like a mission statement for your work somewhat.**

P: Oh, I need to change my bio.

**Q: Well, I've been – I've been tying a few threads you've been getting at together in my head. And we spoke about the fear or the blockage that happens when you sit down and you're staring at the blank page and you're thinking, "I'm not good enough." And I find I work in a bunch of different mediums as well and trying to create from that negative mindset is just – essentially it's impossible. But finding a switch up and finding I guess that mission statement for what it is you're trying to get at, but you're also thinking about the audience as well. And suddenly it's not as - - -**

P: It's not that it's easy.

**Q: It's what?**

P: It's not that easy anymore. When you're thinking about the audience, I feel like – because you think of so many people, but really that in itself is a block. I've been – like the amount of times I've been told, "Oh, well, what if we need for a large marker audience?" But really the things that you see on TV that really connect to you are the niche. The ones that you think that are only going to reach one person, usually there is a lot more than that one person. You just don't see them.

**Q: I mean, I always – whenever I'm arguing a case with a producer, it's the – all the movies that we consider the classics now are the ones that no one wanted to make at the time. They said, "There's no audience for Goodfellas." "Casablanca, no one's going to want to watch this." That's interesting that you said that because actually I was gearing to go the other way in that, when I think about the audience, suddenly it takes the attention off of myself in the process and I feel somewhat more of in service of the project. It just – I guess it stops me looking at myself because I guess that's the big inhibitor for me. And I guess, I mean, there's like a – you talk about audience in terms of marketplace, more like audience in terms of like who is that kid that's potentially going to see this or read this or listen to this piece of music one day that's going to be touched by it. I think about them as I'm going about it. An imaginary audience or a – you know.**

P: If you think about it like your favourite films, do they have any resonance with your own life or your own identity?

**Q: I mean, there's definitely a few films that or books that I've always connected with where the protagonist is going through emotional things that I can relate to. Maybe that's the privilege of being a white man is that I see my – I see people that look like me all the time. And so I don't know, I might be totally putting my foot in my mouth, but I might be freer to see aspects of myself in work that's not as – what am I trying to say – that's not as – I'm not sure.**

P: Maybe. I guess - - -

**Q: That's a really interesting question that I'm not smart enough to answer right now.**

P: Yeah. I think it's one of those things that you have to think about. Because when I grew up, my favourite film was Clueless. And I just loved the vernacular. I loved the empowerment that they had about their style, who they were as young women.

**Q: Well, see there's nothing on the surface there for us to relate to suit the uber-rich - - -**

P: Right. Exactly.

**Q: - - - teenagers.**

P: Living in Cali, you know.

**Q: But their struggles are relatable and universal. They're growing up. They're finding themselves.**

P: They're falling in love with their step-brothers. No. That is not my life. But I just remember saying that. There's this one bit in Clueless at the start where she's like showing all the clicks and there's the Persian mafia and you can't hang out with them unless you've got a Mercedes or a BMW. And I was like, "That's hilarious." Because that to me is relatable. But that was the only bit really. None of it else. None of it is relatable, but emotions, you can put that in anything. We watched movies about Milo and Otis, like dogs and cats. But saying that I feel like television is a different world.

**Q: Well, I wanted to ask, so you – television is where you want to work. Why that medium?**

P: It's more of a stable career really. You can do multiple series – seasons. I guess for me TV has been more of you can really get deeper into just conversation and the world of the characters.

**Q: It feels like more novel-like than a stand-alone movie or a piece of theatre.**

P: Movies seem very like up in this fairyland, where they live in this little box and you can't really see them outside of the box. Whereas with TV shows, they have to figure out so many different things constantly. But I think mostly it's because I love TV. I just grew up with a TV in front of my face as a kid babysitting me as I think a lot of 90s kids did and 80s kids actually. Just kids all the time. And it's just the TVs are smaller now. I don't know, I guess it's just – it just relates to me, resonates with me. Also one of my idols, the people that – the people that I was like, "Oh my God, if she can do it, I can do it." Nahnatchka Khan who's a showrunner in the US, who's actually Iranian born and - - -

**Q: Can you – what has she done as the work of art?**

P: She's done Fresh Off the Boat. She's done – what's that? Don't Trust the Bitch at Apartment 23.

**Q: Oh yeah.**

P: She created the whole thing. She actually wrote Dawson Creek, like Dawson's – James Van Der Beek. She wrote James Van Der Beek's character in there, not thinking that he would actually play it. And then he loved it. He loved the irony of it. So he came and became a part of the show. But she started off at Nickelodeon doing kids shows. She did Pepper Ann which was like a really cool eco-warrior cartoon girl who had a single mom and younger sibling, but you don't actually know their gender, the whole show which I think's really cool.

**Q: Wow. Especially I imagine for the era too.**

P: Yeah, I know.

**Q: It's what we took in the '90s. That's really interesting.**

P: And so she just started off interning there and green lighting these shows and she became the show runner. And then she went on to make her own show and then brought all of her mates that she'd met on and started this amazing career of making shows that really resonate with her. And even she made that Always Be My Maybe movie, which was the first movie she'd ever made. It was the Asian love story.

**Q: Yeah. With the incredible Keanu Reeves Cameo.**

P: Yeah. I think that's a little bit of a thing that she does is showing up. Because in Fresh Off the Boat she has DMX playing himself as well and some other amazing actors. I've recently re-watched it all because my partner's watching it for the first time. And the last episode, Steve Urkel, the guy that played Steve was in it, but his name in the show is Kareem. And that's Steve Urkel's – this is really going back Steve Urkel - - -

**Q: Was that Steve Urkel's cool alter ego?**

P: Cool alter ego was called Kareem. And it was at Kareem's car lot or something. And I was like, "Oh my God, there's so many under layers here." I was trying to explain it to my girlfriend who's in her 20s and she's just like, "I don't get any of this." I'm sitting here fangirling. But I really enjoy that. So I was like, "Well, you know, they're doing in America, we're next really. Australia has to change really."

**Q: That's great. So there's a role model that I guess you look to for inspiration. Is there anybody else?**

P: Well, I could say Desiree Akhavan because she's also Iranian queer creative, who's made that Appropriate Behaviour, that was the name of the show. That was the name of the show and then the Bisexual, which was a TV show that was on Stan.

**Q: Those have been on my watch list on Stan for so long, and I've yet to press play. You've just – you've just told me what I'm watching next.**

P: It's funny because they are in these different worlds, whereas Desiree's kind of humour is very dry and uncomfortable, which I really love. But I also love the kind of campy sitcomy vibes as well. So I'm not sure. I feel like Rules to Being a Fuckgurl is definitely going to be in the more dry, uncomfortable humour way.

**Q: Yeah. I was going to ask about I guess the tone of the work you want to do. That's - - -**

P: Yeah. But also you've got like Master of None, which is in the middle. You've got that kind of funny way.

**Q: A lot of heart in that show, a lot warmth and sort of sentimental.**

P: So yeah. So I feel like I'll probably go more to the drier humour because of the content. I feel like when you're talking about sex, you can't be too cutesy about it. Because that's just not funny. Awkward sex is funnier than passionate sex, which I guess says something about what we think's funny as humans. And Desiree actually did – I watched an interview, a Q and A with her after Appropriate Behaviour screening at the Mercury. And she says that she was very fascinated with the idea of movies always cut to the fire scene. Like when there's a sex scene, they'll start the making out and then they'll drift over to the fire, and then they'll cut out and then all of a sudden they've had sex and you don't really see the weird, awkwardness that happens sometimes.

**Q: Yeah. You just – you just see all the – I guess the nice bits of it.**

P: So when she said that, I was like, "That's kind of funny." Especially when you're talking about first times having sex with people, I think it's uncomfortable sometimes and it's hilarious. And weird shit happens and I thought, "Why don't we talk about this stuff? Why don't we show it on TV?" So I really like that kind of crassness, especially from a woman of colour. Especially from like a culture that traditionally we're a bit more taboo about sex and stuff like that. I think it's really important. I remember telling my dad the first episode idea I had about going to this guy's house. I literally said exactly what happened in it and including the sex scenes and stuff. And my dad was just like, "That's hilarious." And I was just like, "Yeah, see if I say it – if it happened to me, it would be awkward. Right?" But if I say my character is – the character and the story, this and that, you can break down this barrier with your parents about talking about sex. It's really funny.

**Q: That's really interesting. The bandwidth of – of fictionalizing something that really happened. I think that's what – that's why stories are so powerful. They give us all a safe space to experience things and to explore different emotions. Whether it's a horror film, it's a safe place to feel scared or - - -**

P: Yeah. Especially with when it comes to families as well. Like fast forwarding through certain scenes as a kid with the VHS [00:30:31].

**Q: Oh, my dad covered my eyes through it.**

P: Oh really?

**Q: He did it to me once at the cinema and all the girls from my school were behind me and my dad leaned over to cover my eyes. I just – I died right there in that chair. I can relate.**

P: I remember the first time we got a DVD player and we tried – my mom tried to fast forward through a sex scene on a DVD player and it didn't – it just made them fuck really fast. My innocence was gone and that's how I became a fuck girl, nah. It's just really funny the way that we try and cover like a – but when you are an adult, why do we still do that with our parents?

**Q: Well, I guess is that something that - - -**

P: Is that my goal?

**Q: Yeah. Are you looking to prompt conversations with your work or is it more important to you simply to be entertaining?**

P: Both really. I've definitely wanted to be entertaining because who wants to watch something that's not entertaining? I guess for me it's less about the family and it's more about that person that's going through it. Like finding themselves and really finding their power. I think even though it's about sex, the show on the outside, it's actually more about empowerment and knowing your worth and knowing that you're allowed to enjoy things without people telling you otherwise. So I think there's more power in things that we think are taboo.

**Q: I can't wait. I will be first in line to watch this show when it comes out.**

P: Thank you.

**Q: I guess bringing it back to why this, that was quite a windy road, I suppose that - - -**

P: It's how my brain works.

**Q: Well no, I don't mean the conversation, but I'm going back to your trajectory from high school to here, bit of this and a bit of that, this medium, that medium, this medium, that medium. Is there anything that you would say to your younger self from where you are now?**

P: You're allowed to not be nice to people. You're allowed to not be nice to that person that makes you feel uncomfortable. I feel like in any industry, that doesn't matter if it's film or like arts or just like your random hospitality job, which most of us have. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable, you don't need to work with them. You don't need to pander to their needs because you feel like it's going to take you further. Because really it probably isn't and probably put you in a worse position.

**Q: It's a real thing, isn't it? Particularly in the arts, which feels very reputation based. I mean, I'm sure every industry operates on gossip and people's reputations and stuff, but that just suck it up because if you do a good job on this one, you might get recommended for the next one and you can go down a path of personal compromise pretty quickly I think.**

P: Hundred percent. I think that's really – I feel like we're all still learning that even now, because it's all about favours and who's above you. And there's this weird hierarchy that I feel like we shouldn't – we shouldn't give people respect if they're not going to give it back to you, really. Like, what's the point? What's the point if – if they don't respect you, they're not going to listen to you at the end of the day. They're not going to give you that opportunity. So only the people that you can see actually care about what you say and actually are giving you the time of day. They're the ones that actually are going to support you. So you don't have to be nice to those people.

**Q: Good advice for life in general, I think.**

P: Exactly. You kind of said - - -

**Q: Save your energy.**

P: Yeah. Save it.

**Q: Look, my hope is that there's people listening to this right now who are thinking about picking up pen for the first time or picking up a record and doing whatever you DJs do. I don't know. I have no idea.**

P: I don't. I don't use records, but good for you if you want to do that. Very expensive.

**Q: I mean, what would you say to someone who keeps sitting down at that blank page and maybe getting up and procrastinating or whatever?**

P: Don't kick yourself for procrastinating. It's never too late, I guess. And also give yourself five minutes, just sit down for five minutes and just write whatever. It doesn't need to make sense. It doesn't need to do anything. Or find some music. Just make it a little playlist on Spotify or whatever. Just five minutes of that and you'll find that you'll find a groove. But don't pressure yourself. I think that's the main thing where we forget is like we pressure ourselves, "Oh, okay, this is the time. I'm putting aside an hour. I'm going to forget about everything." And then you just sit there and you're like, "Oh, shit." So just give yourself five minutes.

**Q: I'm going to try that later today.**

P: Yeah. Me too. Let's see how we go.

**Q: This has been great. This has been great. I think we can wrap up. I guess a question about, I guess your hopes for the future, where you hope to get to next and maybe any thoughts about the future of the medium that you are working in?**

P: What's up next for me is, just hopefully this year my goal is to make my web series or at least one of the episodes that I've got the funding for. And then once that's done, I want to try and produce a song. That's like my two goals.

**Q: All right. Back to where we started. Back to music.**

P: I really want to – I'm like, "I can do that." I listen to music and I'm like, "Oh yeah"

**Q: Easy, anyone can do it. Right?**

P: Yeah. And then I don't know. I don't really want to put too much on myself because you never know what opportunities come up. And as much as you should probably say no to some things, it's actually quite good to say yes to a lot because life's a really cool journey and I never thought I'd be where I am right now. So just taking it one day at a time really.

**Q: Perfect. Thanks Nelya. Thanks for coming on our show.**

P: Thank you for having me Aaron.

**Q: And there we have Episode 1 of Why This. I hope you enjoyed my chat with Nelya. We have a string of excellent guests coming up for you and look forward to bringing you those conversations and following episodes. For up-to-date information on everything that's happening at Nexus Arts, please visit www.nexusarts.org.au. Thanks to Art South Australia's Recovery Fund, we are once again presenting our visual arts exhibitions online in 2021. Head to nexusartsgallery.com to experience the work of all our amazing artists. We're also thrilled to be partnering with Spark Brewery and Rose Kentish Wines this year. Come in and taste their wares at Nexus Arts Venue and be sure to seek out these amazing local, socially responsible labels wherever you choose to have a drink. Talk to you next time.**

**END OF RECORDING: (37.31)**