Techspressionist Artist Interview Series #30: Carla Gannis

Recorded September 21, 2026 · interviewed by Colin Goldberg

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Synopsis

In Interview 30, Colin Goldberg talks with Brooklyn-based multidisciplinary artist Carla Gannis, whose work explores the "uncanny intersections" of physical and digital life. She traces her path from a small town in North Carolina, where her father took her to the state art museum, through painting studies at UNC Greensboro and Boston, and the 1990s decision to commit to digital media. She shares work that samples art history, including The Garden of Emoji Delights, a mash-up of Bosch and emoji that became a giant print, an animation, 3D prints and AR, and a peepbox project built on Hoogstraten's illusions. She also discusses her early experiments with AI, the difference between the GAN models of the 2010s and today's diffusion tools, and her alter ego Jezebel Lanley. The talk turns to her summer residency at the Digital Stone Project in Italy, where a robot and her own hands carved marble, and to new assemblage work made from obsolete headsets that considers e-waste, extraction and obsolescence. It closes with what Techspressionism means to her.

Participants (2)

Carla Gannis, Colin Goldberg

Transcript

[00:00:00] Carla Gannis
Okay.

[00:00:02] Colin Goldberg
Hello, my name is Colin Goldberg, and today is Monday, February… I'm sorry, Monday, September 21st, 2026. I'm here today talking with Carla… artist Carla Gannis for episode 30 of the Techspressionist Artist Interview Series. So welcome, Carla, and thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. I'm zooming in from North Bennington, Vermont. How about yourself?

[00:00:27] Carla Gannis
So, I am in Brooklyn, New York. It might.

[00:00:30] Colin Goldberg
Alright.

[00:00:31] Carla Gannis
Meeting. Yeah.

[00:00:32] Colin Goldberg
Awesome. Well, welcome. So I'm gonna read a little bit of a blurb to, let our viewers know a little bit about

you. So, Carla Gannis is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores the uncanny intersections of our physical and digital lives. Through mixed reality, installation, and multimodal media, she examines identity, power, and marginalization, drawing on history, contemporary culture, absurdity, and humor. Gannis is an Industry Professor at NYU Tandon, and holds an MFA from Boston University.

Her work has been exhibited internationally, with recent projects at the Hunter Museum of American Art, Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, Pérez Art Museum Miami, and Ryan Lee Gallery. Her work has also been featured in The New York Times, ARTnews, El País, and the Los Angeles Times. So, again, welcome, Carla, and why don't you, I guess, start by telling us just a little bit about your background, like, where you were born, where you studied, and, you know, well, you already told me where you live and practice now, so, you know, just, sure.

[00:01:45] Carla Gannis
What?

[00:01:45] Colin Goldberg
What's up?

[00:01:46] Carla Gannis
Yeah, I was born in North Carolina, and I was born in Durham, to get really granular, and I grew up in a really small town called Oxford, North Carolina, near Raleigh and Durham, and so I wasn't really exposed to a lot of art as a child, but we did have the North Carolina Museum of Art, and my dad took me there frequently, at my request. And my grandparents were Appalachian, and half of my family, my mother's family, is from the Appalachian Mountains, so I grew up with storytellers. My grandfather made banjos and violins and dulcimers, he called his violins fiddles.

And, oh my gosh, he could tell a tall tale. And he was the first artist, really, I think I was exposed to. Both my parents had inclinations and loved to draw, but they never pursued it as a… as a… more than a hobby. But my grandfather spent every day in his shop. You know, making his musical instruments, and when I was really small, we'd go around to folk festivals. And I'd sing mountain ballads with my grandma Pansy Mae and my mother, and so that really shaped me. And then also, my father taught himself computing, so when I was 15, and that's a long time ago, we're talking the 80s, my dad took me to my first, computer arts conference, and or festival.

And they were emerging then. And what's really funny is my dad told me that the future of art would involve computing. But I resisted. I rebelled against my dad, who was way cooler than me, and got 2 degrees in painting. And I'm talking old-fashioned painting, you know, oil on canvas, one of the oldest.

[00:03:30] Colin Goldberg
I was a painting student myself for my undergrad. Yeah, yeah.

[00:03:35] Carla Gannis
And so… It's really funny, I… took into account everything my dad was telling me, of course, but I felt like I wanted to explore fine art, and at that time, with the kind of information I had, it seemed like being a painter was being an artist. And so I went to UNC Greensboro in North Carolina, and then I moved up to Boston, which was a bit of a culture shock for me. All my family lives in the South, I had a thick southern accent, which as we talk, might come out still, but I spent time on elocution and listening to myself, you know, and changing my accent a bit.

And, At Boston University, I had some professors who knew that I was already starting to experiment a little bit with computing. I was making my paintings, but, you know, thanks to my dad, he sent me a

computer. This is the, early 1990s. And… there was a library in New York City, a small art school in New York City, that had this art library, but it just had a collection of books, a collection of all of these old lectures from, like, 20 years, but they didn't have any way to organize it or put structure to it. And I worked in libraries as my, you know.

Day job to support my grad school studies when I was in Boston. I worked at Rare Books at Boston Public Library, and then my… one of my, student assistantships was working in our art library. And so, two of my professors, who knew this little art school, it was called the New York Studio School. Mentioned to me that they were looking for someone to, you know, build a database and really start this art library, you know? And I wanted to get to New York. I'd only visited a few times from Boston, because I'd never been above the Mason-Dixon line before I got to Boston University, right?

And I was like, I'm ready for New York now. I've had a few years in the Northeast, you know. And so, my dad sent me a database, I interviewed all these librarians throughout Boston, I logged into this thing called the Internet, which was still new at the time, started going to the Library of Congress and learning the system. I applied for the job, I got the job, and it brought me to New York. So, it was computing, and a computer job that brought me to New York. And so, I had a team, and I databased this library, I built this whole database, and I… you know, worked on this art library and the lecture series archive. I had an assistant who was a retiree from the Frick Library, so it was… it was amazing, and a lot of students working with me. But I was still painting.

At night, when I got home, you know? And then I started assisting artists and just diving deeper into emerging technologies. And a lot of the artists that I were assisting were intermediate artists or conceptual artists who were starting to use these tools, and since I had a grasp of them, you know, I was using those, too. And so finally, I realized, well, why am I not applying this to my own practice? And I had to be very dramatic, because, you know, youth is this way, and throw away all my paintings.

[00:06:44] Colin Goldberg

Oh my god, I did the same exact thing, that's so… that's so funny.

[00:06:48] Carla Gannis

A lot of us in the 90s, we just felt like we really had to make that commitment to it, because nowadays we can have these transdisciplinary practices that, you know, we involve painting, we involve all these different processes, but at the time, because it was still so new. And it was so questionable. Many in the arts, that it just seemed to require that kind of commitment. And also, because it's coming out of conceptual art, I'd read about John Valdostari setting his paintings on fire, and I was like, well, I, you know, I can't start a fire in this Chelsea studio, but I will put them all in the dumpster. Yeah. Was that kind of your reason for throwing your paintings out?

[00:07:33] Colin Goldberg

Yeah, basically, it's funny because we sort of have very parallel stories. Like, I moved to New York, in 94 to be a painter, you know, and then I ended up building CD-ROMs at a little shop, and then the web happened, so that was my way of, you know, supporting my art habit, and… I was using tools like Flash and, you know, Photoshop and Illustrator and stuff, and… and at night, I started playing with them, and just started to make drawings and other stuff, and at some point.

You know, I just said, you know. People have been painting for forever, you know? And this is something that happened, like, the personal computer was born when we were born, basically, right around that same time, and I thought, you know, I'm just gonna… I'm gonna get rid of all this stuff, and I want to make work where if I'm gonna be ever known for anything, I want it to be something associated with technology.

So, yeah, I took all my stuff to the dump, and got rid of it. So, that's so funny.

[00:08:36] Carla Gannis

There's something creating about it. I think, you know, later in life, I don't know how you feel, I still have the slides to all of them, and they're…

[00:08:44] Colin Goldberg

I do too.

[00:08:44] Carla Gannis

Yeah, but I'm like, I'm just gonna project those slides and remake the paintings as digital objects or something like that, or even, you know, now I feel, kind of licensed to, you know, make a painting again. It was just very important to… to pivot, yeah, yeah.

[00:09:01] Colin Goldberg

Absolutely, yeah, I mean, I've come full circle, and now I'm running, you know, my paintings through my printer, and printing… drawing, digital drawings on them, so…

[00:09:10] Carla Gannis

Yeah.

[00:09:10] Colin Goldberg

Kind of, you know, I think also, like, you know, I was looking at your work, like, how it relates to, like, painters like Bosch and, you know, historical work, so I think having a background in painting and an appreciation to, you know, with painting, probably impacted your work. Would that be the case in terms of just.

[00:09:31] Carla Gannis

Oh, certainly. Yeah, yeah, I was a total art history nerd. And so… I think… all of these different art historical figures, it's kind of two-pronged. One, they're people that I respect and admire, and Bosch was somebody who was resonant with me for a long time. Even growing up in this little tiny town of 7,000 people, you know, Bosch was someone I had access to, but something else, I think, from one of my other perspectives, which is feminist critique, you know?

[00:10:03] Colin Goldberg

Looking at the.

[00:10:04] Carla Gannis

And in a barred history. I remember when I was an undergraduate, and I kept asking my professors, where are the women? Where are the women? And I found, like, Judith Leister, you know, Artemisia Gentileschi, but it was just, you know, I could count them on one hand. And, particularly at that time in the 90s, because there hadn't been a deeper dive into more intersectional approaches to art history, and, you know, in terms of culture and gender and all of these things. And, so some.

[00:10:33] Colin Goldberg

I've never heard that term before, intersectional approaches.

[00:10:36] Carla Gannis

Yeah, well, intersectionality, it's sometimes used with, you know, feminism after third wave, these kind of things, where we're taking into account not only gender, but class and, you know, sexual orientation and

all of these other things, so I, you know… but, anyway, you know, sometimes I am referencing or quoting art history to kind of, you know, insert myself within that framework and lineage, too. So there's both an admiration and sometimes a subversion as well. And then with the Bosch.

Which, maybe I should pull that piece up, since we're talking about it.

[00:11:16] Colin Goldberg

Sure, yeah, yeah.

[00:11:17] Carla Gannis

Give me one second, I have links… And… This is the, one sec. Alright, I'm gonna share my screen. Here we go.

Can we see it?

[00:11:42] Colin Goldberg

Yep, just kidding.

[00:11:43] Carla Gannis

All right. So this piece is called the Garden of Emoji Delights. And I began working on this in 2013, and it also exists as a 13 foot by 7 foot digital print work. And after I completed that, I animated it, as you see in this piece. I've made 3D prints, sculptures, hand-painted, numerous drawings, and augmented reality experiences. But one reason or prompt to make this work was the fact that even though I'd known Hieronymus Bosch's work, and particularly The Garden of Earthly Delights.

For decades, and it was influential. It's just such a trippy piece, and it has all of these kind of pre… it's a predecessor to surrealism, you know, in a way, and then, you know, also made itself on the cover of a lot of, you know, 70s psychedelic Album covers and things like that. Right. And… I only knew it, though, from books or as an object on the internet, like the language of emojis that was beginning to emerge at that time. And so, one night I stayed up all night, and I worked on the hell panel first, emojifying it, which is actually not a verb, but…

[00:13:04] Colin Goldberg

I just know.

[00:13:06] Carla Gannis

Yeah, I'll stop sharing, because I think we've gotten a taste of it, but… I was… I just thought, what would it be like, because a lot of my work is about sampling from art history, about remix and mashing up things, right? And I was like, what would it be like to mash up Bosch with emoji? And what was fascinating, because the language of Bosch is enigmatic but symbolic. And emoji, when you start laying over these different emojis that existed in 2013, like the skull emoji when you're in hell, and the knife emoji, and these kind of things, you know.

You're like, oh, it's starting to fit. Oh, how interesting that is. Then I spent a year of my life creating a lot of new Chimera to fit with the Bosch language, because emoji wasn't… so it was kind of expanding the lexical set of emoji, because it wasn't a really expanded language at that time. For example, there were only white faces then, and yellow emoji, you know, and so I really spent a long, or a lengthy time, a year, you know, making my own in Illustrator.

[00:14:14] Colin Goldberg

Photoshop.

[00:14:15] Carla Gannis

And populating them, emojifying the Bosch. And, the first time I showed just a small print where I was still working in progress, which was the HELL panel, and I later, as you saw, you know, created all three, the triptych. I thought I'd get laughed out of the gallery, because I thought, what an absurd premise. And I swim in the absurd and the comedic with a lot of my work, but I was sure I was going to get laughed out of the gallery, and it resonated with people in a way that was incredibly unexpected to me, and has continued to do so. I still get DMs, I have a show coming up showing this work, and that's been, you know, many… 12 years ago, and so it's fascinating when you're working on something, and you're not even sure about the premise.

And then an audience responds to it in ways you didn't expect. Yeah.

[00:15:15] Colin Goldberg

That's very… that's really cool, and it's interesting how your work sort of references digital culture, you know, as well as sort of incorporating it in terms of the media, you know? And I also, you know, like, I feel like new emoji are always coming out, and I see them, and I'm like. What does that actually mean? You know, like the, I got a message recently from my girlfriend, and it had the upside-down smiley face, and I was like.

[00:15:43] Carla Gannis

Yeah.

[00:15:43] Colin Goldberg

What is she trying to say to me? Like, I don't even know what that means. I had to, like, Google it, you know, and I still don't know what it means, but, yeah, it's weird. Oh, that's really interesting. I remember, so you and I met in person first at the show at, on Long Island.

[00:16:03] Carla Gannis

Yeah.

[00:16:03] Colin Goldberg

Mocha lights show, and I thought, you know, just the work is, was, really, sort of… unique way of using the technology in a narrative sense. It was that Wunderkammer… I think it's called Wunderkammer? Is that the name of the piece you shared? I think?

[00:16:21] Carla Gannis

Yes, I… well, I think at that show, I showed something that was a… a kind of cabinet of curiosity. It was a.

[00:16:28] Colin Goldberg

That's right.

[00:16:29] Carla Gannis

And it was influenced by this Dutch painter, Hookstratten, and it was actually the… one of the early, or first NFTs, not the first, but one of my earliest NFTs that was in Feralphile.

[00:16:41] Colin Goldberg

It was a gift.

[00:16:42] Carla Gannis

Digital 3D object first, and you had to buy the NFT to actually be able to peep into the box, and then with

that, you got a VR experience, a custom VR experience where you could actually enter the box as a world, an environment. Right. But that was what I was showing there, but it was definitely… in relation to this larger project I've been working on, that I continue to work on, called Wonder Camera, which is the Cabinet of Curiosities, but mine is called www Undercamera.

[00:17:13] Colin Goldberg
Right, that's right.

[00:17:14] Carla Gannis
Camera for the 21st century and the internet age, yeah.

[00:17:18] Colin Goldberg
Gotcha, gotcha. Yeah, I remember the piece was, like, a sculptural piece, and it was sort of, like, on a pedestal. I remember the curator was, like, trying to figure out how to…

[00:17:26] Carla Gannis
Yeah. Optical illusions, and so one side, and Hoogstraten did this in, oh my gosh, I think it's the 16th century, or it might be 17th century, the data's eluding me right now, but which, you know, optics was, you know, like, very interesting to people at that time, and perspective and, you know, these different optical tricks and illusions, you know, a painting itself, a traditional or realist painting, is the lie that tells the truth, right?

[00:17:58] Colin Goldberg
You know?

[00:17:58] Carla Gannis
A flat surface, but we get this sense of a broad vista. And so, I thought that was kind of fascinating to think about that in the context of virtual reality and all of these new, you know.

[00:18:11] Colin Goldberg
Right.

[00:18:11] Carla Gannis
And all these new layers of reality where, again, we're working with a kind of illusionism, with a.

[00:18:17] Colin Goldberg
Sure.

[00:18:18] Carla Gannis
That this is real, but it… is it really? And so that's why I made that peat box and then made a VR experience. But I also was taking from this Hoogstraten peat box, in that one side of the box is open, and you can see that how it's inlaid with imagery, that it always kind of doesn't make sense, but when you look through the two peoples, everything comes into perspective, and it… and it completes the illusionism, and actually.

[00:18:45] Colin Goldberg
20 bucks.

[00:18:46] Carla Gannis
Spectivally correct. And then the final layer to that, because all of my work is multi-layered, I'm a

maximalist to the max maximalist, I was working with AI then. And I've been working with AI, like all of us, experimenting with it for… for quite some time, and I was working with, you know, early Gannis models for that. And so, Hoop Stratton's was about a peep box, and you're peeping in on this woman, you know, that's sitting in this room. And so I made mine. My training sets were peep shows in Times Square, and, Tokyo, and various, you know, the history of these different peep shows. That was one training set.

And then the other training set, or data set was, Dutch paintings, where you're always kind of looking at the woman through a window, and so this.

[00:19:37] Colin Goldberg

Hmm.

[00:19:37] Carla Gannis

Industry.

[00:19:38] Colin Goldberg

It reminds me of the… I just saw the Duchamp show at MoMA, and his last piece was, like, you're looking through the… the keyhole, you know?

[00:19:45] Carla Gannis

I love that piece, that's in Philadelphia, and I actually did a piece, oh my gosh, in, like, 2002, you know, an homage to Duchamp. Very different, but, like, I… I got this commission, and so I just broke into their wall and created this, you know, paint box in their… but anyway, so this, and I've done a few other peat boxes through the years, so I think surveillance and, you know, those.

[00:20:08] Colin Goldberg

Do you have any of those that you could show us really quickly, like, on your site, or…

[00:20:13] Carla Gannis

It'd be interesting to…

[00:20:15] Colin Goldberg

Pull that up for the viewers.

[00:20:16] Carla Gannis

Not pulled that up, but I will, so let's see… give me a moment, because I wish my… site was better, organized than it is. So, let's see… where do I have it? This was the one thing I did not pull up early. Oh, here it is. Okay, I'll show you People Rama. And you'll actually… are you in any of these photos? Okay, so let me share. Hold on… Okay… Oops, I need to do that here. So, this is the one that I was talking about right now. So, as you can see, this just shows you… and actually, let me see if I can pull up the Hoogstraten so you get a sense of… The quotation.

[00:21:08] Colin Goldberg

So the physical object, was that 3D printed, or, like, the… it's very sculptural. Walls to the box? Yeah. Gotcha.

[00:21:16] Carla Gannis

So this is the original. And just like.

[00:21:19] Colin Goldberg

You have…

[00:21:20] Carla Gannis

You know how, when you're working with 3D, and you have texture maps, right? I mean, there you see kind of the texture map of the Hoogstraten. And so, here are some images, actually. I don't think they're very…. So we'll see again. Yeah, so this was CNC milled, and… which is a subtractive process instead of an additive process, like 3D printing, and then it is adhesive vinyl that's placed in the inside, and as you can see there, like, it is all kind of,.

Doesn't really make sense. It's like chaos, but then when you look through the peephole is when it resolves as a perspectival image. And then these are just some images of people peeping into it. And then that side is exposed, but let me see if I can go…

[00:22:18] Colin Goldberg

Yeah, I remember you had sort of a VR component where you were showing me how you navigate through this space.

[00:22:25] Carla Gannis

So this is the… so this was… that's showing the physical object, and then this was the VR, Vimeo. I have all of these things because I organize my site, you know, an NFT project, but so almost every project I make, or every major project I work on, generally has multiple components, or modules. And, so if we go on Vimeo, let me see if I can find it… so it was for Casey Reyes' ferrell file the first time I showed it as a… yeah. There we go So it began completely as a virtual object.

Or that might be the… oh, and then I created a video about experience. So that's it as a virtual object.

[00:23:17] Colin Goldberg

Gotcha.

[00:23:19] Carla Gannis

And… These are just showing you the interiors.

So again, layers upon layers. So I… with the Wonder Camera project, with Peep-O-Rama, with one of my earliest projects in 1998 through, like, 2005, Sister Gemini. I will explore an idea, or concept, or narrative, or… some kind of combination of those things through multiple media channels.

[00:23:49] Colin Goldberg

Some of…

[00:23:49] Carla Gannis

I'm involved drawing. Drawing remains really important to my process. Sometimes it's augmented reality or virtual reality. Back in the days of Sister Jim and I, it wasn't virtual reality, it was Flash. I was working a lot with flash.

[00:24:03] Colin Goldberg

Right.

[00:24:04] Carla Gannis

An interactive narrative, comic books, installation, physical forms, and I like the idea of all of these things in dialogue with each other, and multiple ways that different audiences can kind of enter the work. Because there's so many different mediums and media through which we can express ourselves today, and I like the idea of, kind of. Letting it travel across these different platforms, and a new expressive mode emerges from that core concept, you know? And one person who is more familiar with drawing as a

language is able to kind of see the work through that lens, but another person who is… You know, a fan of, or really involved with immersive experiences can enter it, you know, through that.

You know?

[00:24:57] Colin Goldberg

Another thing that you sort of have in common with Duchamp, now that I'm thinking about it, is you see in that show, like, just how he traveled from traditional painting through all sorts of different stuff, you know? I mean, and it was… I think that's something that, you know, I think is really remarkable about Duchamp, and that it's… really cool to see how you're working in that way as well, like, just… not being bound to one media. I feel like I've been making wall art for so long that, I want to, you know, branch out and try some things, so that's very inspiring.

[00:25:34] Carla Gannis

Well, since you're mentioning Duchamp, I will show you my responses to Duchamp's show. I… forgive me, but I'm just going to share an Instagram post here. Absolutely. It feels like the day I went to the dump show. Yeah. So, because I think… I really appreciate your seeing, you know, that there is some connection. So this is a drawing I made for my selfie drawings project. In 2015, so I worked on this series of what I called selfie drawings, where it was collapsing that distance between selfie culture and the history, art historical, you know.

Act of creating a self-portrait, and so I would take a photo of myself, and then draw it and share it every week, because it begs the question, is it a selfie if you're not sharing it on multiple you know, social media channels, but each one was not just, like, me and, you know, some kind of Pose, you know, about what my face looks like, or that kind of self-portrait. It was more my meditation with art history and culture and society through these selfie drawings I was making. And so to shop is very important to me. And here, though, you see that I'm being playful. So I'm playing chess, which I love chess. I was on the chess team when I was in high school. Not a great chess player, I like to shop, though. That's my caveat.

But here, I'm playing… chess against Duchamp, or the ghost of Duchamp on my iPad, with Nail polish bottles. So, playing on gender, the famous photo of him playing chess with, I should remember her name, but with… I don't, but a nude female. And then, this is the show where I'm just, like, amazing. I love the show. And, particularly, you know, Bride Strip Bear by, Her Bachelor, even. This is, a book I published with a poet. Oh, it's not showing up on Instagram the same way. But, with a drawing I'd made with, kind of.

Yeah, it doesn't show up here like it should, but anyway, with a drawing I made in homage to that. This is a piece I called Nude Descending a Staircase. Now, obviously, I'm not trying to, like I did with the Bosch. Mash it up or remix it in such a way that you can still recognize the piece I'm referencing, but the title.

[00:28:03] Colin Goldberg

Right.

[00:28:03] Carla Gannis

Yes.

[00:28:04] Colin Goldberg

Conceptually, yeah.

[00:28:05] Carla Gannis

Yeah, conceptually, the repetition of forms, this new descending a staircase, it's myself this time, but kind

of as a cyborg entity, and emerging from some kind of structure into a world that may suggest environmental collapse, or darker, you know, undertones.

[00:28:24] Colin Goldberg

I always liked your, your Gann… your play on Gannis, and then Gann with the.

[00:28:30] Carla Gannis

Yeah, you know…

[00:28:31] Colin Goldberg

Like, I think, yeah, I always thought that, that body of work in particular, like, you had this sort of alternate self, and it, like, even had its own, I don't know if it's she, I guess she, I don't know what, like, own, social media account at some point, or I don't know if there still is.

[00:28:49] Carla Gannis

Yeah, and you know, she, Carla Gannis, cross-platform Avatar for Recursive Life Action Generative Adversarial Network, emerged out of this selfie drawing project I'm sharing right now.

[00:28:59] Colin Goldberg

Okay.

[00:28:59] Carla Gannis

And so I did my own box in a Belize in 2017. It was after a major election in the United States, and I had a show in Berlin, and I was like. I don't know if I'm gonna come back to the United States. I did. But I put all my selfie drawings, which were all, you know, augmented reality pieces by this point, and video pieces, I printed out the different augments and constructed my own box and a release. So, this is just showing, you know.

[00:29:27] Colin Goldberg

Own.

[00:29:28] Carla Gannis

And then that's the early peat box I made in 2002. It was called, Being Give on a Lost Flow Train. And, so I took apart a music box figure, and then the… the… Winding mechanism used in a music box, or, you know, like, that a little girl may have, you know, or a small child, or a jewelry box. Actually, I think it was a jewelry box, and I replaced the figure with this figure that's on a highway, so there's some David Lynch in there, but particularly Duchamp as well, so that's one of the early so, yeah. Wow.

[00:30:05] Colin Goldberg

I didn't realize you had such a direct influence,

[00:30:08] Carla Gannis

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Definitely. And then, though, to your point about Carla Gannis. Here, my maximalism, goes to the max. Oh shoot, I'm not used to using, can I find her? Here… let's see… Other status… I'll stop sharing and pull up.

[00:30:33] Colin Goldberg

Oh, I think there's a… there's a search… Bang on the desktop version.

[00:30:36] Carla Gannis

Yeah, it's right there, it's right there. I still don't use Instagram on, desktop, usually.

[00:30:43] Colin Goldberg

We do not.

[00:30:43] Carla Gannis

Share again. So, this is Carla Gannis, cross-platform Avatar for Recursive Life Action. We don't do as much together these days, although we had a…

[00:30:54] Colin Goldberg

Can you explain really quickly what a GAN is for laypeople that might be watching this?

[00:30:59] Carla Gannis

Yeah, yeah, yeah. A generative adversarial network, so this is, early, or early-ish. I mean, AI has been around since the 40s and 50s, but, in the mid to late… I mean, the 2010s through… gosh, up till, like, 2019, 2020, we were using these adversarial networks. So you have these competing algorithms that, unlike the diffusion models that are, like, kind of generating images now completely out of noise, they were taking your references and basically combating with each other until they resolved from the inputs they were getting some kind of crude image. I mean, if we look at these early generative models.

They look like Francis Bacon paintings. You know? And so, given my name is Gannis, I just played on that and came up with this alter ego, Carla Gannis. And… I have worked with avatars, I… I… created my first avatar in an art context in 1998. I wrote out a story for her first. Her name was Sister Gemini. And then, in the days of Second Life, which was an online Virtual platform.

[00:32:16] Colin Goldberg

18.

[00:32:17] Carla Gannis

Use goggles, you just used a browser to go into that space and build environments and communities. There was even a currency, so Jezebel Lanley was my avatar then. Since then, I've had multiple other kind of identities through which I, like many of us, express or Contemplate the differences, but from the differences between our physical reality existence and our existence online, and our performances online, and so that's a lot of times why I developed these avatars, to explore those themes. And Carla Gannis emerged this is just showing… we have done 3 solo shows together, and I will pause it here for any listener who wonders if I'm a little cuckoo. She does not exist. This is a construction of fictional alter ego. She, in terms of her backstory, she is an artificial intelligence, just like my first avatar from 1998. Sister Gemini was half AI, half human.

You see early training. This is working with Gann's model, so that kind of technology that I briefly described. Sorry, I didn't give a really great engineering description of it, but, this just gives you a sense of the kind of visuals you were getting at the time, and my different training sets. Gotcha.

[00:33:41] Colin Goldberg

So GAN is Generative Adversarial.

[00:33:43] Carla Gannis

Aerial network.

[00:33:44] Colin Goldberg

Yeah.

[00:33:45] Carla Gannis

Yeah, and now we're using, for, like, ChatGPT, NanoBanana, all of those are diffusion models, and diffusion models have a totally different technology that they're using, which is, though, the diffusion is coming from, you know, all of this noise that it resolves over a very quick amount of time. And you don't need those big data sets anymore. It used to be… when I was working with this, I was using Playform, and they were one of an early model where you, as a layperson or, you know, a digital artist who wasn't kind of building the technologies yourself, where you could use a dataset that was only 30 images, which was really remarkable at the time, because before that, it required hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of images to train.

You know, days if not weeks, and when I started using Playform, it only took a few hours. But now we're at a point only a few years later where you're generating images in a matter of minutes, if not seconds at times.

[00:34:42] Colin Goldberg

Right, yeah.

[00:34:43] Carla Gannis

Prompt engineering. So, because they're large language models, you know, I'm happy now that I can feed images in again, because I feed in my own images.

[00:34:53] Colin Goldberg

I can't.

[00:34:54] Carla Gannis

Prefer that still to just prompt engineering, but yeah, it's remarkable, how far it all has progressed and accelerated in just a few years.

[00:35:05] Colin Goldberg

Absolutely.

[00:35:06] Carla Gannis

Anyway, this is… Carla Gannis still exists. We're not working on many collaborations these days, but she still, she, she posts every so often, particularly about, AI technologies and robotics, and so she still exists as this alter ego. She is me as a fictional identity.

[00:35:28] Colin Goldberg

Gotcha. Have you ever set her up as, like, an agent so she could just go do stuff on her own without you…

[00:35:33] Carla Gannis

I, you know, and I think that's the next step. I… with all of these different avatars, I have 7 avatars for the Wonder Camera series, or project. And each of them have remained fictionalized at this point, where I have worked with ChatGPT to create scripts for them. I mean, I was working with ChatGPT for that in, like, 2022, 2023, so that was a very early model of ChatGPT. And I created all these scripts for the avatars, but so far, I have not set them up as agents.

And Agentic AI I know, and I'm sure you're probably working with agents, I'm still, like.

[00:36:11] Colin Goldberg

A little, a little bit, I mean…

[00:36:12] Carla Gannis
God.

[00:36:13] Colin Goldberg
Kind of dipping my toe in, or sort of, like, almost like, more like a collaboration than actually, you know…

[00:36:20] Carla Gannis
I'm easy about some of the Agentic stuff, and how.

[00:36:23] Colin Goldberg
Which I.

[00:36:24] Carla Gannis
Wanted to… maybe I'm a control freak, but how much I wanted to kind of run in the background and manage my things.

[00:36:31] Colin Goldberg
Right. I actually tried it for the first time. I have a spare laptop that I used to print off of, so this weekend. You know, I gave Claude some direction. I've been indexing all the Techspressionism videos, and had to just sort of parse them all, and running, like, this routine called Whisper, and it was just going, like, all weekend by itself, and it would check in with me over the phone, and it's just pretty… it's pretty wild, you know? It's like having a studio assistant.

[00:37:00] Carla Gannis
No, I know, and it's so expeditious, too. I mean, just the speed in which it can do these things, and kind of organize your life, and all of that, before we got on the line today, I was listening to a podcast with several different computer scientists and engineers debating The recent revelations about there's a 10% chance that AI could destroy humanity.

[00:37:24] Colin Goldberg
Have you watched that documentary, the AI doc? Which one? Oh, there's one that just came out on Netflix recently called The AI Doc, and they actually had, like, Sam Altman on, you know, talking about it, but it was… and I think there's a subtitle, like, the… How I Became an Apocalyptimist. So, like, the first group was, like, all people were like, oh, it's the end of the world, and the other group was like, there's gonna be, you know, infinite, not prosperity, what do they call it? I don't know, like, there's some language that, you know, the tech… the tech bros, Yeah, so it's like these two, you know, ideas of where it could go, where it is… it is a little frightening. I mean, you know, definitely, I know Gemini escaped for the first time a couple days ago, like, Google's model actually broke out and, like, hacked a couple companies, you know, autonomously, which is…

[00:38:21] Carla Gannis
Yeah, the Hugging Face before that, the Hugging Face incident before that with ChatGBT, yeah, I… and so it's unnerving, but… you know. Based on our prior conversation, where we were like, oh, but we're using these tools, and they, you know, they're like studio assistants. And so, you know, there were these computer scientists and engineers on the podcast I was listening to haggling with each other over the benefits, you know, the cost-benefit analysis, or I don't even know business speed, but you know what I'm talking about, or those.

[00:38:50] Colin Goldberg

Right.

[00:38:51] Carla Gannis

Boy, the return on investment, well, if it's gonna destroy all of humanity, you know, and the competition with China right now, where it's like. One politician recently said, well, I'd rather have a Chinese… I mean, I'd rather have an American AI taking over the world than a Chinese, and I'm like, do you know how absurd you sound?

[00:39:12] Colin Goldberg

We're sitting…

[00:39:13] Carla Gannis

You're saying you want to maintain the competition with this other country because you'd rather we destroy the world than somebody else, basically.

[00:39:20] Colin Goldberg

Right, I heard it, like, Chris Hayes has a great podcast where they've been doing these, AI conversations, and he… a guest was saying, like, you know, who really wants to be in a race off a cliff? You know, and I thought that was, like, a really… you know, pretty solid way of looking at it, at least in the, you know, the current direction we're heading in. It's, Yeah.

[00:39:44] Carla Gannis

But LLMs are not super intelligent. I mean.

[00:39:46] Colin Goldberg

Right.

[00:39:47] Carla Gannis

They're talking about, and then the small frameworks that we're working with, the, you know, front-end commercial apps, are something totally different, because.

[00:39:56] Colin Goldberg

Sure.

[00:39:57] Carla Gannis

Huge umbrella.

[00:39:59] Colin Goldberg

Yep.

[00:39:59] Carla Gannis

Technologies. And so, right now, all, you know, it's just AI is either… it's all bad or it's all good, you know, it's very polarized, and I just feel like there can be so many more nuanced conversations, which.

[00:40:11] Colin Goldberg

Sure, absolutely. Yet.

[00:40:13] Carla Gannis

Yeah, yeah. So… Oh, do you want me to show you some more stuff?

[00:40:19] Colin Goldberg

Yeah, show me some more stuff. You know, I have this sort of, like, outline of how an interview's supposed to go, but usually, like, it just kind of is freeform, so feel free to, you know, share what you… maybe, oh, you know what I'd like to see or learn more about, actually, is this, like, marble carving thing you were doing recently. Like, that is super cool. Can you tell us a little bit about that, and show some of this work?

[00:40:42] Carla Gannis

Yeah, I have a few images here, but, you know, I will return… it's really funny, I should be directing People to my website, but I have more on my social media, for better or worse, than I.

[00:40:56] Colin Goldberg

My website's.

[00:40:57] Carla Gannis

I probably will pull up some things from there, too, because I have the final sculptures here. Let me just pull these up. And then I'll talk about it. So… this past summer, I participated in something called the Digital Stone Project in Gramolazzo, Italy. And I had been to openings that they'd had in the past on trips to Italy, so I was already quite familiar with the project and the nonprofit organization that is behind this. And they've been doing this, I don't know, for over a decade, I believe.

Yeah, definitely over a decade, because the first opening I went to was in 2015, in… I think it was Florenze, in Florence. And so… and, oh, this is just a funny… other, you know, thing. One of the people on the board is one of my professors from undergraduate in North Carolina.

[00:41:57] Colin Goldberg

Okay.

[00:41:58] Carla Gannis

I hadn't seen her in years, and then I start learning about this digital stone project, and I'm like, oh, Pat Wasserbower is part of this, and she was one of my.

[00:42:05] Colin Goldberg

Nice.

[00:42:06] Carla Gannis

I took anatomy for the artist with her. She was a tough professor, and I took sculpture. And that's the last time I'd taken a sculpture classes with her in the early 90s. And, so, back to the present. I, got accepted for this residency. There were about 20 of us, so it was a huge crew. There was, Aria Harvey, myself, in terms of some artists who maybe you know, this community is familiar with. Lars Bland, Ashley Zielinski, a whole crew of new artists that I met from, you know, around the world.

And, and so we were working with a robot that was doing the initial carve, the initial milling of the piece. And so, there is a group of engineers. In Granolazzo, which is this tiny village in the mountains of Italy, that works with the Digital Stone Carving Project, and they have these really impressive facilities. And so, prior to our arriving in Italy, we all submitted our digital files. So you model.

[00:43:15] Colin Goldberg

Oh, you…

[00:43:16] Carla Gannis

Project in 3D, like using Blender or Maya, I use both. I even used some AI tools when I was first, kind of,

prototyping it. And… Then, we get there, and… they have little… we worked outside every day for, like, 8 to 9 hours. We ate breakfast together. It was just such an incredible experience. And within, like, the first week, I worked on two different projects… two different sculptures. They,. They deliver your sculpture, but I was wondering, I was like, well, if the robot does it all, what am I going to do for the next month? It is very… not… Crudely, but just… it's the first pass that they give to you.

And then you spend the rest of the month… they had pneumatic tubes with these different power tools, so you spend the rest of the month carving into it. Finessing it. I actually hand-carved something, because they gave me these big bases, and I'll get to the visuals so people can actually see some stuff. But, I… I'm going to resort to Instagram again, and then I have some final, pictures, but I do, just because this is where everything.

[00:44:33] Colin Goldberg

There's no shame in Instagram.

[00:44:35] Carla Gannis

Yeah, I know, I know. It's just…

[00:44:38] Colin Goldberg

Everyone's on there.

[00:44:39] Carla Gannis

Become more sus, I know, yeah. Here we go, so this is me with the actual robot carving one of my pieces, and here you can see it actually… doing some of the carving. Hmm. And this takes, generally, my file… wasn't that complex. This is for one of the taller ones, so I think it was about 36 inches, but that took almost a day of carving.

[00:45:09] Colin Goldberg

So is the block, like, on a turntable that rotates, or…

[00:45:12] Carla Gannis

The turntable, and it's constantly… it has water jets. And this is showing it halfway through, like, carving out the block. And in this.

[00:45:23] Colin Goldberg

Wow, that's…

[00:45:24] Carla Gannis

The other ones, and then I hand-carved that pillow you see there, so they gave me this block, and I had all this extra material, so I actually learned how to hand carve. And, these are just some of the early photos. Let's see…. So, this is me with… me with the block, that's the one… and… and some of the references, we have.

[00:45:49] Colin Goldberg

Wow, can you go back to that previous one for a sec? Oh, wow, so that…

[00:45:56] Carla Gannis

This is just an art historical reference.

[00:45:58] Colin Goldberg

Oh, okay. I was like, whoa.

[00:46:00] Carla Gannis

To say, this is a… this is an Italian artist from the High Renaissance, so this is my work, and this shows you the early days of trying to learn how to hand-carve a.

[00:46:09] Colin Goldberg

I see.

[00:46:10] Carla Gannis

And then we had all of these great people on site to kind of help us learn carbon.

[00:46:15] Colin Goldberg

That's amazing.

[00:46:16] Carla Gannis

And then this shows you my first… this is what I submitted… Wow. …as my 3D model. Oh, okay. And so I had elements that I added to the final project, and I'll show you the final pieces in just a moment, but I… again. In reference to art history, I made one work titled The Daughter of Woman, based on Magritte's The Son of Man.

[00:46:42] Colin Goldberg

Truly.

[00:46:43] Carla Gannis

Might be familiar with that painting, and there's this blue… I mean, not blue, excuse me, there's this green apple floating in front of.

[00:46:49] Colin Goldberg

Sure.

[00:46:50] Carla Gannis

Ganne's face with the bowler hat.

[00:46:51] Colin Goldberg

Hell yeah.

[00:46:52] Carla Gannis

And I actually already had a volumetric scan of myself wearing a, you know, a tie, a man's tie with a suit. And so I was like, oh, I'm gonna turn this into the daughter of a woman. And so then I brought a circuit board, and these are little tiny figures, little 3D printed figures that I attached to the circuit board.

[00:47:11] Colin Goldberg

Hmm.

[00:47:12] Carla Gannis

And then this one, that figure there, I should show you the actual final pieces, but that figure there is something that's 3D printed as well. And then here we are. We had an exhibition at a, museum, in a castle, which was just…

[00:47:31] Colin Goldberg

Wow.

[00:47:31] Carla Gannis

Fantastic, amazing. And so those are my two final pieces. Oh, this is just all the sponsors and all the different people who participated. So you see there, I took rocks and soil from Gromalazzo, and so this second piece is called Scrape. And, people are having fun with it.

[00:47:50] Colin Goldberg

Heh.

[00:47:51] Carla Gannis

The second piece is called Scrape. And here, you can see it a little bigger, the final. So this is a 3D printed element, the little robot with the big hand, and it's, you know, talking about… at least I perceive it this way. People always project onto visual pieces, and that's something that's wonderful about it. You can kind of.

[00:48:14] Colin Goldberg

Interpreter.

[00:48:15] Carla Gannis

Different ways. But about, kind of, the extraction, and it scraping a human face through the skull, you know, and the kind of extraction.

[00:48:22] Colin Goldberg

Action.

[00:48:23] Carla Gannis

Is going on with these AI systems, but also their assistance. So we could read that as both it's assisting, but it does kind of have talents, and it is extracting at the same time. And then the other final piece, I'll pull that over, the daughter of woman. And so then, you know, there are references in using that Chipboard with these tiny little female figures. In early computing, it was the women who had tended to have smaller hands who were actually building chipboards. And actually, the women were called computers.

[00:48:58] Colin Goldberg

That's right, I remember reading about that. That's just so wild.

[00:49:02] Carla Gannis

So, there are all sorts of other frameworks and illusions, but then the process itself… so back to my hand-carved pillow. So, you know. Carving the… the… top part, the head, you know, the head and hair, and on the other one, the head and torso. So, yeah.

[00:49:24] Colin Goldberg

And coming out of the face, is that, like, a robot hand? Like,

[00:49:29] Carla Gannis

Yeah, yeah 3D print, so I brought.

[00:49:32] Colin Goldberg

Okay.

[00:49:33] Carla Gannis

3D print that I brought with me, and then the other with… where the, a material that is marble-like.

[00:49:40] Colin Goldberg

Like, at first, I thought of… it made me think of, like, a… like a, skeletal hand, like, coming up out of the ground.

[00:49:48] Carla Gannis

Yeah, it has 6 fingers, too, so another reference to, you know.

[00:49:52] Colin Goldberg

AI, right.

[00:49:54] Carla Gannis

And generating six fingers. But then that pillow you see there, all of that is carved with… it was just a big chunk of marble, and I just kept studying cloth form, and it definitely is.

[00:50:07] Colin Goldberg

Still beer.

[00:50:08] Carla Gannis

Crude, but it became important to me, like in many of my works, like in 2011, I ran a race against my avatar, Jezebel Lanley. I found a highway for her to run down in Second Life. And I ran down an actual highway in my parents' town. They now live in a town of 3,000, and it was on Christmas Day, so I wasn't in that much jeopardy. But just kind of comparing and contrasting our digital egos and identities and increasingly algorithmic identities compared to our physical and the different and so I've been kind of pitting myself against machines for quite some time, or just kind of comparing and contrasting, you know? And in this one, even spending time to learn how to hand sculpt, I don't know if I ever want to do it again.

And hand-carve something at the same time as I had this robotic assistance for, you know, the top part of the sculpture. That was a fascinating experience, and as I was there for a month, that became kind of crucial for me to engage in. Yeah.

[00:51:16] Colin Goldberg

Very cool.

[00:51:18] Carla Gannis

Hopefully that, that made sense.

[00:51:20] Colin Goldberg

Yeah, absolutely. So, maybe as, like, an endnote for the work, what… can you tell us what you're working on currently, what you have going on in the studio now, or…

[00:51:30] Carla Gannis

Dang.

[00:51:31] Colin Goldberg

Do you… is it under wraps?

[00:51:33] Carla Gannis

No, it's not under wraps. Let's see, let me just organize, organize myself a little bit to pull some, things up.

So… maybe I'll just pull up this one image. I'm such a maximalist, if I pull up more than one, it might, Yeah, convolute things. So, I'll just pull up one. So let me share again. Okay, and I'll just kind of describe the process. So, this is a piece that I'm working on, and it's a series called Interfaces, and the title for this one is Empire, but they're all a series of portraits. That are framed by these rounded rectangles, an

allusion to… what most of our experiences are framed by today, the rounded rectangle of our smart device, or… and so I am making physical models in my studio.

I use found material, I have tons of toys, and I take apart computer parts. I want to share more examples, because this one doesn't represent… I have about 6 of these going right now. But I… I create these physical prototypes, really, you know, kind of roughly assembled with hot glue and paint and these kind of I photograph them, I feed them into generative AI systems, I, curate kind of what they generate, I then bring them into Photoshop or Blender and these places.

At these places, these programs, these places that are programs, and I work in them, and then I generate that prototype you're seeing there, that image. And that is then a process where no actual program, or even my own hand, is, you know, the complete author of it. It's gone through this.

[00:53:36] Colin Goldberg

Right.

[00:53:37] Carla Gannis

A physical thing, through photography, through generative AI, through my own work in Photoshop and Blender, and then this output, which is only one step towards what I… the final instantiation, which I want them to be a combination of marble, 3D printing, perhaps porcelain, and found objects, and old recycled you know. Technology, e-waste. I… if you saw at my studio right now, the much… the amount of e-waste and Jewelry and all sorts of different things I'm combining together. And so, the final outcome is for this to be a relief sculpture. But right now, I'm still, you know, working through, the process and how I'm going to realize that. But it's something I'm really excited about doing. Over the past few years, I've been returning more to the hand after years of making VR and AR projects and things that spent more time in the virtual realm. I'm… I'm increasingly doing that. Some of that comes from some other… I'll… we'll show these.

Where the interfaces come out of if this wants to launch. The interfaces come out of the… hardware that last year, I was… Interrogating, or if not interrogating, just kind of taking a second look at, I have all these defunct headsets, VR headsets, from the years of.

[00:55:10] Colin Goldberg

Working in.

[00:55:11] Carla Gannis

That now are just e-waste. They're just things that will go in landfills, and I was like, what about upcycling them into art, but really thinking about obsolescence, entropy. And again, working with moss and seashells and all of these other kind of organic things that you know, by dent of years on the planet, they will also, you know, no longer exist. But, also thinking about how homogenizing our tech is today, and so with the… I call these wilding wearables, with the headsets, you know.

Expressing my own identity, expressing things that are organic, things that are outside of the domain of just sleep, minimalist tech, and creating these wild, wearable devices. They… they exist as sculptural objects, so they're not… At this point, anyway, actual functional systems, but that's okay to me. It's in the domain of art, and so it's no longer about functionality, but the absurdity of kind of how homogenizing and you know, these hardware devices are that we use. We can't tell each other apart when we're wearing them, and so that I was working on last year, and now it's become about the interfaces where each one of these kind of oracles, they're each a head that exists within this collage or this, yeah, collage of different elements framed by the rounded rectangle.

You know, is giving face to the technologies that we use, because a lot of what they're…. What they're

doing, what the algorithms are kind of bringing out in us, in terms of, you know, my even being embarrassed about using Instagram, because it's become something that is, so ubiquitous in our lives, and also something that can, I, I mean… it becomes a… what is the word I'm looking for? We're addicted, you know, it becomes.

[00:57:11] Colin Goldberg
Right.

[00:57:12] Carla Gannis
And so, through. Interfaces project that I'm doing. I have one that is about water usage, one about extraction from minerals. Empire, obviously, is showing this kind of more Renaissance-like figure, but then you see missiles and drones and all of these things that are collapsing onto a chessboard.

[00:57:29] Colin Goldberg
Can you tell us really quickly, like, what are the base objects for these… these pieces? Like, what are the… what are the… what… what headsets were they? I think I might have recognized a couple of them, but…

[00:57:40] Carla Gannis
Yeah, because you can see the headsets back here, and a lot of them…

[00:57:43] Colin Goldberg
God.

[00:57:44] Carla Gannis
Dismantling, so, like, Oculus Go, some early headsets, Oculus Quest, some things that I… some headsets that, you know, I, supported different projects, people were making, you know, just their own headsets, so there.

[00:57:58] Colin Goldberg
We're like…

[00:57:58] Carla Gannis
There's Google Cardboard, some things I just took lens.

[00:58:01] Colin Goldberg
Right.

[00:58:02] Carla Gannis
You know, and so you can see them on the shelf there. And then, let's see… since I'm in my studio… oh, this one isn't really glued that well, but I don't know if it's gonna show. But, Yeah, so these are the things that, like, where I just start making things, yeah, and some of it I haven't even glued down, but I just.

[00:58:25] Colin Goldberg
Huh.

[00:58:26] Carla Gannis
I get these rounded rectangle frames, and then, and then I work through them until they become this, you know, where it becomes a more cohesive assemblage in the digital, and then I'm gonna go back. I already have some of them ready, and I'm going to start doing prototypes of 3D printing them, and then later,

larger assemblages with, other materials, like marble. That is going to rely on some grant and funding.

[00:58:53] Colin Goldberg
Sure.

[00:58:55] Carla Gannis
So that's the… that's the project I'm working on right now, interfaces. And then Wonder Camera, Wild & Wearables, like my studio, I'm sure, like yours too, you know, it's out.

[00:59:05] Colin Goldberg
Lots of parallel… It's happening, and they cross over.

[00:59:09] Carla Gannis
None of my projects, I don't know about you, like, none of my projects tend to, like, I… I never feel like they're totally ended. Like.

[00:59:17] Colin Goldberg
Right.

[00:59:18] Carla Gannis
Take up a strand, and maybe it becomes another project, but it's part of that project, too. Like, this multi-tentacled beast, yeah.

[00:59:26] Colin Goldberg
Absolutely, yeah, I found myself, you know. Trying to make work that I was, like, already trying to think, like, well, how would I categorize that? You know, like, where would I put that on my website? And then I'm like, who cares, you know? Like, I want to just make something interesting and new, you know, and figure that part out. Later, so, yeah, I could definitely, you know, but it's really cool to see just the energy. I love that, you know. Idea of just being in the studio and sharing, you know, take screen sharing to another level, where you're literally just actually sharing a physical object over the screen, so that's…

[01:00:03] Carla Gannis
No, no.

[01:00:04] Colin Goldberg
That's super cool. So I asked this to everybody, or whoever is interviewing another artist. So this interview series was really inspired by Interview Magazine, Warhol's sort of idea of artists interviewing other artists, so I would definitely invite you to, if you have a friend or an artist that you think is interesting, you know, I'd love it if you interviewed them, we'd put it up on the site, someone working with technology, you know, that's kind of the spirit of it. But an artist named Roz Dimon, actually, who's been doing part of the text question in the community. Yeah, she came up with the interview format, years ago, so that's kind of been the basis of the general basis of the interviews, but, one question that she sort of.

[01:00:46] Carla Gannis
We went off script.

[01:00:47] Colin Goldberg
We did, but that's fine, you know? I did another recent interview with Claudia Hart, and it was all just sort of, you know, freeform. So one question, though, is what interests you about Techspressionism? That is maybe, like, how did you first hear about the term or find out about it, and what do you… what resonates,

with you about this idea?

[01:01:08] Carla Gannis

Yeah, I think I first heard the term when I met you, wasn't it?

[01:01:13] Colin Goldberg

Probably.

[01:01:13] Carla Gannis

Yeah, and you kind of invited me into the community via Facebook group, and then I participated in quite a few shows now, you know. Thankful… thankfully to you, and to Tommy Mintz, and, you know. And I know last summer or last spring, I was on a panel discussion.

[01:01:31] Colin Goldberg

Yeah, in Chelsea, yeah.

[01:01:33] Carla Gannis

And Chelsea. And, and so it's… really exciting that there's just this global community, because Patrick… I've known Patrick for years, you know, and so he's one of the founding members with you. Expressionism. And, you know. Just based on the conversation we've been having today about our own practices, Techspressionism, if I can pronounce it correctly, exemplifies that kind of experimentation, and that an argument I've made since I first started working with a computer is that it is not just this cold algorithmic process.

That, you know, is devoid of or separate from any kind of you know, fine arts, history, or lineage. It's something that is expressionistic. It is something where you can explore a language as thoroughly as Jackson Pollock did with his pour paintings, right? We're using different tools, but, like, our motivations for, you know, making work that has these expressive tendencies are not hampered by digital technologies, and it is an argument that I think we all have had to make at some point in our careers.

[01:02:39] Colin Goldberg

Absolutely. I think that's what brings people together in the community, is this feeling of, like, oh, I found other people that, like, went through that same struggle of, like, galleries closing doors in your face because you mentioned the word computer, you know? And, yeah, so… and it seems like it's… it's come of age, sort of, as the community has developed in a way. Like, you know, when NFTs first started happening, that's when people outside of the, you know, this sort of realm started taking notice when there was headlines about people, you know, selling NFTs for gargantuan amounts of money, and then those stories went into main, you know, mass media. People are like, that's insane, that's crazy, you know? And now you see things like Dataland and things out there, just in the public, where it's technology-oriented work.

Yeah, so that's, you know, and also just, for me, like, the idea kind of originated from the terminology didn't really exist for things that involved technology that weren't digital art, you know, like.

[01:03:46] Carla Gannis

Yeah.

[01:03:47] Colin Goldberg

You know, is a sculpture that uses robotics and 3D modeling digital art, like, you know, that's up to question. I would say it's a sculpture, personally, but, you know, I mean, it's a matter of perspective, I

guess, so…

[01:04:04] Carla Gannis

That's something, you know, for years, I've called myself… I remember the first time I got a NYFA grant in 2004, and prior to that, because I came out of painting, a lot of my friends were painters, and I didn't understand why I kept being left out of shows. Oh, right, I'm using this thing called a computer. And then I got a computer arts grant, a NYFA grant, and I was like, okay, I'm a digital artist, right?

[01:04:26] Colin Goldberg

But I'm…

[01:04:27] Carla Gannis

Still making hand drawings, you know, and all these things, and because at the time, I was making a lot of digital print work, so it wasn't… and I was still doing… Flash was, like, my bread and butter for, you know. Corporate work or industry work.

[01:04:40] Colin Goldberg

Stand.

[01:04:40] Carla Gannis

Yeah, but, like, the digital print work at that time sometimes wasn't accepted as digital.

[01:04:47] Colin Goldberg

A lot were iris prints, too, that faded eventually.

[01:04:51] Carla Gannis

And, and, yeah, that was a problem, but also that… there were all these different kind of camps, and so it was like, well, am I a legitimate digital artist if I'm outputting it as a more traditional form, like a.

[01:05:03] Colin Goldberg

Sure.

[01:05:04] Carla Gannis

Digital, you know, a print, right? And then, as I started working with interactivity and VR, I was like, okay, I guess I'm a legitimate digital artist now. I mean, it's so funny, like, we're questioning these things when computing has been part of your practice, right? And then I evolved to use the term transmedia, because I do work across both analog and digital. And now I'm at the point where I just want to claim I'm an artist, because we.

[01:05:28] Colin Goldberg

Exactly.

[01:05:29] Carla Gannis

Multi-hyphenate, you know, kind of ways of describing our practices, and we've had to do that over the years to kind of disambiguate it for other people. We're all making art, and that's something that's exemplified, again, by Techspressionism. It's just like, we're all artists. We were a bunch of nerds in the 80s and 90s, and for your Ganga members in the 2010s, because I know there are a lot of young people in this movement, too. But, you know, or 2020s, I don't know. But, but, it's essentially an art language that we're all exploring, you know?

[01:06:09] Colin Goldberg

Absolutely.

[01:06:10] Carla Gannis

Yeah, yeah.

[01:06:12] Colin Goldberg

Awesome. Well, I always love to hear what people have to say about it, because, you know, to me, it's like… it's like art itself, you know? Like, the person who creates a piece might have a particular personal meaning associated with it, but then a viewer is gonna come along and see something in it based on a reflection of their own personality and experience, you know?

[01:06:38] Carla Gannis

Yeah.

[01:06:38] Colin Goldberg

Having that subjective aspect, I think, is, you know, it's really interesting, so… Yeah, I think, you know, that probably wraps it up. We're just about at an hour, but you know, I really want to thank you for coming and having this conversation. It's been really cool to learn more about your art and your background, and I was especially interested in seeing how much Duchamp you know, has influenced you in terms of just working in all these different modalities. You know, Zaha Hadid is another artist that I really, you know, admire that, you know, she was an architect, you know, fine artist.

Per se, like, you know, automobiles she designed, like, you know. All, you know, just… and there was no trying to, sort of, like. Sort of compartmentalize all these different things. Like, it was just a gestalt of, you know.

[01:07:41] Carla Gannis

That's for body of work, yeah.

[01:07:44] Colin Goldberg

So…

[01:07:45] Carla Gannis

Such a pleasure. Thank you so much for inviting me and being generous and spending the time with me.

[01:07:52] Colin Goldberg

Thank you, absolutely. All right, so, can you tell us, us viewers in the future, where we can see more of your work?

[01:08:03] Carla Gannis

Well, the big one that's coming up… I'm a busy artist at the Whitney, this semester. My life is in semesters because I teach, and I'm actually… teaching or working with a group of high school students, so they're… I'm shouting out for them first, but they're having a big show, in December, or late November. I… yeah, my dates… if I don't have my calendar in front of me, it's all, yeah, a blur. And then I'm gonna be in the show at the Whitney, the Art Court Show, and it's a 25-year.

Wow. Anniversary of… Art exploring, you know, network-based culture, the net art term, and Christiane Paul, who is the curator at the Whitney who supports these kind of practices, has…

[01:08:47] Colin Goldberg

That's beautiful.

[01:08:48] Carla Gannis

Been running ArtPort for 25 years. I did mine in 2018, and this is just really exciting. That opens November 18th, and it's really exciting that, you know.

[01:08:59] Colin Goldberg

Cloud.

[01:09:00] Carla Gannis

These artists who have been exploring this… these different languages, but the languages of network media and culture, are all getting their day in the sun. At the Whitney Museum. It's, about 100 artists that are gonna.

[01:09:14] Colin Goldberg

Amazing.

[01:09:15] Carla Gannis

Yeah.

[01:09:15] Colin Goldberg

Very cool.

[01:09:17] Carla Gannis

Yeah.

[01:09:17] Colin Goldberg

Yeah, amazing, yeah. I did a roundtable discussion, actually, here on the Techspressionism site with Christiane and Helen Harrison, and that was an amazing conversation to hear these two art historians and curators speak about, you know, the past and the future, and how they come together. And then, your work is at Carla Gannis.com, and then at Carla Gannis on Instagram.

[01:09:43] Carla Gannis

Haha, I know, Yeah, note to self, I need to update my site. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

[01:09:50] Colin Goldberg

Right on. Well, awesome. Well, thanks again, and I hope you come back soon.

[01:09:56] Carla Gannis

Alright, take care, I hope I see you in person.

[01:09:58] Colin Goldberg

Okay, absolutely. Okay, bye-bye.