**The Creative Process with Kate Horowitz**

Hello and welcome to Down To Art. I'm your host Kristy Gordon and today I'm talking to poet essayist and science writer Kate Horowitz about the creative process. Kate's work has appeared in national publications including The Atlantic and Bitch Magazine, as well as on match match boxes and tarot cards and in anthologies about destruction inanimate objects in the occult. And me and Kate talk to each other pretty much every day.

We leave each other voice memos. She's definitely a part of my soul family and my mastermind. And so seeing the parallels between her creative process with her writing and my creative process with my painting has been really inspiring this last year. And she's currently working on a book and so I really wanted to have her as a guest for this first episode of the new podcast.

So welcome Kate. I'm so glad to have you here. Thank you so much. I'm so excited to be here. This is wonderful. Yeah. So yeah, it was almost a year ago, I think maybe it was just under a year ago, that we were talking about, you had this idea, you felt some creative juices starting to flow and you wanted to write a book and you were kind of just assessing like what the best way to do that is.

Could, could you take us a little bit back to that time and and where you were at when you were just starting to kind of have these creative juices start to flow? Sure. So I had been through a long fallow period for a number of reasons, including an injury where I had broken both of my wrists so I couldn't be writing or typing anything.

And I was having just the beginnings of the inklings of feelings that I was going to be able to start creatively writing again. And that was very exciting to me and a little frightening because I had this book project that I'd been thinking about for a few years and it felt like it was about the right time to begin, but I had no idea how to do that.

Life is very, very busy and I have a full-time job as well as my creative work. And it was really difficult for me to conceptualize how I could commit enough time to this project to do it while also having the creative energy while also living the rest of my life. Totally. I think that's like a problem that like so many people face and you know,

with the creative process having like multiple things going on in our lives and just trying to figure out how to fit it in. So I know we kind of talked about back then this idea of doing like 25 minutes a day. It sounds so little, right? Like it's like such a small amount of time and doing it for like a 21 day challenge and just how it sort of starts to build.

And even though it seems like a very small amount of time, how much it kind of adds up and we get quite a bit done and it's been amazing because over the last year you've almost completed your book proposal, which is a, a huge feat. So I was, yeah, just wondering if you could kind of talk to us a bit about how,

what it was like in the beginning when you kind of took on this project of doing 25 minutes a day of work on your, on your book every single day for, you know, initially for 21 days and it's lasted now almost a year. Yeah, absolutely. I was really excited. I remember coming to you and saying, I'm ready to start this,

I think, but I don't know how and I'm sure that there's some kind of secret that will let me just do this, but I don't know what it is. And you kind of said, well I have the secret. And the secret is that you do a little bit every day pretty much no matter what you just say, I'm going to choose an amount of time.

In your case you had recommended 25 minutes and I'm gonna sit down and I'm gonna do it whether I feel like it or not. And I love the number 25 because I thought that was, it's so, so much less intimidating even than 30 minutes. A half hour can start to seem like a lot, but 25 minutes it's, I'm sure it's a psychological trick,

but it just doesn't seem like that much. And so it was easy to say to myself a little scary, but it was easy to say to myself, okay, I can commit to sitting down for 25 minutes every day for 21 days to start and seeing how it goes. And I understand that on many of those days I'm not going to feel inspired.

I might not feel energetic, but there's probably something that I can do for 25 minutes every day and I'll see what happens. And I was kind of amazed at how rapidly it became an automatic part of my days. I got to a place where it was kind of like exercise or eating or bathing where I, if I didn't do it, it felt like something was missing.

And there were lots of days when I didn't feel like doing it. There are still lots of days when I don't feel like doing it, but the commitment to it and making it a habit, making it automatic has made it so much easier to move this project forward because I'm always sure that I'm going to be doing that. So it's been just a little bit at a time,

almost the entire proposal has been written. I'm in the very last stages now and it's really, really exciting. A year ago I didn't think that I could possibly do something like this, certainly not in as little as a year. Totally, yeah. Doing it like small pieces at a time and and making it become part of your routine. It's something that I used too to pull myself out of a block about six years ago and like it felt like I was ruining each painting for 25 minutes every single day.

But five minutes isn't that long, like for torture, you know, like to just sit there to yourself feeling like you're ruining it. But then sitting back at the end, I would often be like, wow, it's actually getting a bit better. I'm surprised, you know, one of, yeah. One of the things that I was reflecting back on because I was remembering those early conversations that we had,

was that you and I had been talking about how historically we had both been people who worked, who sat down to do the creative work when we felt moved to do it, when we felt inspired. And as a consequence, if we weren't feeling inspired, we weren't working. And what we were observing was that people who did sit down to do the work,

whether or not they were inspired, were gaining skills and competencies and in some cases surpassing us. Not because they were naturally more talented, but because they were persistent and that that persistence was something that we could get for ourselves. We could become persistent and therefore improve just by doing it, even when we didn't feel like doing it. I really saw that too around me.

I was seeing people who were just like painting consistently. And I, I knew that they had sort of started out with maybe a little bit less natural ability, but they'd worked so hard that they were like creating entire bodies of ambitious work and, and I was like not painting that much cuz I was waiting for inspiration to hit me. And, and it made me really realize how if we do just sit down and do the work every day,

we're totally gonna get better. Like it's gonna, you know, it's really gonna be, it's gonna be better if we do it. So, so yeah, that really motivated me and and it was interesting when I talked to you about that cuz you had heard about that too, even from one of your professors. So this is like a thing out there that people have noticed.

Absolutely. I, one of my, one of the most generous things an instructor has ever said in any class I've ever taken was, there are people out there who are not as good as you at writing, but what they are is determined and persistent and confident, or at least they act like they are. And so they continue to push to put their work out there,

they continue to push to create work for that reason. They will be published more than you will be or they will succeed outwardly more than you are not because they're better writers than you, but because they keep going. And my instructor at that time said, I will tell you right now, I am one of those people, A lot of this, my students in this room today are probably better writers than me,

but I have been extremely persistent and that is why I'm here. Hmm, totally. And like that actually was a piece that really motivated me as I was kind of starting to do the 25 minutes every single day for first 21 days and now about six years just yeah, really realizing that that voice in our head that tells us that we're not good enough or that whatever,

like we don't have to listen to it and if we just keep painting anyways, or in your case writing, like we're totally gonna get better and we see it all around us in in the people that do do that, you know, consistent work. So. So have you had any experiences in this process that you've been been working through where there's this loud voice in your head and you know,

but the consistency of 25 minutes a day helped you get through that? What, what's your process been like with that? Absolutely. I, I am a little embarrassed and actually it's quite timely to say that it happened as recently as this past week. I was chugging along and perhaps it's because the end of the project is in sight, but I was just slammed by this tidal wave of you are terrible and you can't do this.

And I knew in like the every deepest fiber of my being that it was true that I, not only should I not bother with this book proposal, but I definitely shouldn't bother writing a book and the material that I have for it isn't good enough and I'm not going to be able to create enough good enough material and I shouldn't even bother and I shouldn't even try and I should probably quit writing and all of this.

I I really believed it, it really seemed true to me. It was, it's always very convincing. And so I was having these thoughts and they were extremely convincing and I had a bit of a tantrum internally and I was feeling really ready to give up. And then at the same time, it was the time of night where I usually sit down to do my 25 minutes and I had this little turn in me and I realized,

okay, that's fine. Maybe I am a terrible writer. Maybe I should never write this book. Maybe I should quit writing. But I said I was gonna do 25 minutes on this book proposal tonight and I said I was gonna finish this book proposal, so I'm gonna sit down tonight and I'm gonna write 25 minutes even if it's terrible and even if I should quit writing,

I'm not gonna quit on this 25 minutes. And I sat down and I did it and I set the bar really, really low for myself. So I sat down and I set the bar really low for myself and I, I typed for 25 minutes and I came up with some material that was actually totally decent and usable and that spell broke. I'm not totally convinced that I shouldn't quit.

I think that maybe I can't write, maybe I shouldn't try, but I showed up and I did the work even when it felt pointless and hopeless. And what this showed me was that those feelings of inadequacy, those terrible voices telling me that I'm the worst writer ever and that I should give up those voices don't have to stop me from writing. I don't,

I can still believe them and continue writing. I can agree that I should quit writing and carry on writing. Mm. They don't have to be incompatible sitting down to work on this was kind of a way of almost dodging around them and recognizing that they were an obstacle in the road and not trying to go through them just cutting around the side and saying,

you know, you're right but I'm just gonna, just gonna take care of this anyway. I love that approach. That's kind of like wi with other things that I can think of that maybe I wanna do something and I know it's not a good idea and I'm like, well I can do it tomorrow, I just won't do it today. Yeah. And and it actually brings to mind Elizabeth Gilbert's like idea of the creative genius as this like external force.

Well I guess, I think you told me that maybe it was the way the ancient Greeks conceived of the idea, but I first heard of her talking about it and how it's like we show up and do the work, but you know, if this creative genius shows up then it's, you know, then it's good. But I didn't like love, she sort of says in one of her talks like,

let the record show that I showed up and did my work and if it's like total crap, then the creative genius didn't show up and it's its fault. I just love that. Yeah, Yeah. You can show up even if the genius doesn't and that's what you can be proud of. Exactly. And then we often surprise ourself, you know, and we're like,

oh, it's actually not as bad as I thought. Or, or sometimes it's, but then we move past that. Actually it makes me think about the middle phase of with my paintings too. Like, and I know the creative process with writing is so similar, like I start out with a idea for a painting and the initial brush strokes are so exciting and I look at it and I'm like,

I'm a genius, this is great or whatever. And then I work on it and work on it and it hits that middle phase and that's when suddenly I'm like, the whole painting sucks. I'm a terrible artist. Like I'll never figure this out. And just like, yeah, showing up every day and just plugging away on it in some little way is what eventually like helps me kind of turn,

turn that corner into like, you know, suddenly I've made, this had just happened last week, like suddenly I've made some good changes on a painting that's in the middle phase and it's starting to look decent again. And you know, I can see that I probably will eventually figure it out and, and resolve it, but, but when it's in that middle phase it's like,

it's so hard. Like it's just so convincing that it's not good and that I'm not good and just the whole like whole thing. Do you find that with your work too? Like do you see different phases where this voice gets loud? Absolutely. It's, it's ridiculous because it's like clockwork. The cycle is so predictable and yet every time I fall for it every single time.

And I think that's probably what happened this week. I'm working on revising an essay that is very important to me and it's very delicate subject matter and I care about it very much and I want it to be terrific. And so I'm in the middle phase with it right now. And so right on schedule this voice shows up and says you're terrible and you should quit.

And I think, you know, that's probably true. I never thought about it that way before. And but I think if you just keep remembering that it is a middle phase and that these are always cycles and that this is how it works, it takes some of the power out of it, it's still, it's still very easy to believe that part of the cycle and to buy into those voices and those messages.

But if you just keep going you can get to the other side of it again, even if you believe what those voices are saying. Yeah. And I just wanted to share some of the, the best creative advice that I've, I've gotten in the last few weeks and yes, I, I've gotten, you know, we've all heard this advice a million different ways,

a million times over, but it's been especially useful for me as I'm in this middle phase with this particular essay in these revisions. It was one day when I was in this despair and I got, I found it in two different places, two different people saying basically the same thing, which is if you're frustrated because you feel like you can't write something good right now,

write something terrible, just write the worst thing you can think of, make it as bad as it can possibly be and then just keep going and you can throw that trash out or you can walk away and look at it tomorrow and maybe it's not trash, but you'll be writing and you'll be working. And even if what you write today is trash is still helping you get to tomorrow and it is still improving your writing and it's still moving you forward and it'll show you that you can write even if it's not up to your ridiculous standards today.

Totally. And it's so freeing too, you might end up writing something really good that's really authentic to you cuz you've given up the idea of writing something good. That's exactly what happened. I sat down and I said, I am going to sit down for 25 minutes and write 25 minutes of trash. And that's what I did. And then I looked at it about an hour later and I thought,

hmm, maybe I didn't succeed. I don't think this is trash. So it definitely works. I think perfectionism is of course a double-edged sword, but it can just prevent us from even starting. Yeah, there's a story that I tell sometimes when I was in kindergarten, my teacher approached my mother and she said, you know, Kate doesn't have any standards at all.

She doesn't even do her work, she doesn't even try to draw the pictures the other children are drawing. And my mother said, Kate is so afraid of doing it wrong that she can't even choose a crayon. And I still feel that way so often, but I think if you just choose a crayon, maybe the ugliest color you can find and start drawing things will happen.

Totally. I love that. What other tips have you kind of thought of recently as far as understanding your creative process? I think one of the surprising lessons of this past year, of this 25 minutes a day process has been learning to be more flexible and realistic with myself. I say that I do 25 minutes a day, I do 25 minutes a day most days.

And one of the difficult things has been letting myself not do it some days and understanding realistically that life happens. Sometimes you're traveling, sometimes you're sick, sometimes you're injured, sometimes you're just so burned out that you can't do it. Sometimes you're at a wedding or something. I mean, not during the pandemic, but you know, life happens and it has been really difficult and challenging in a really good way for me to learn to let go of this idea that when I say I'm going to do something,

I have to do it no matter what exactly the way I said I would do it originally. And that I can't change or update my plans as reality changes. My timeline for this book proposal has shifted several times throughout the year and that's been really difficult for me to accept. But these are timelines that I have set for myself. Nobody is waiting on anything from me.

It's up to me to realize that I can be gentler with myself and be more realistic about what's possible and get better results and have a happier life. Yeah, totally. And actually I was remembering when you sort of started this like, so you also, you're doing 25 minutes a day most days and you started with the 21 minute minute day challenge and then you also kind of looked to the future and set bigger goals like on different dates.

So it's kind of like you had the big goals in mind and then you broke it down to the very smallest steps so that you just had it all laid out like your whole entire year basically, which I thought was really smart but also in a realistic way. And like you're saying, you're allowing it to be, you know, you don't have to be a perfectionist about it,

you can let it change a little bit, but I know you're really trying to stick to those, you know, initial goals that you set out for yourself. Yeah. Can you talk a little bit more about that, like about how you kind of broke the big picture goals into some smaller steps and things like that? Sure. I am definitely somebody who gets overwhelmed by the thought of a long project or a very long deadline,

but I love daily to-do lists and little tasks and checking things off. Very satisfying. And so it's so satisfying. It is just so, it is. I live by lists and so I realized that this project would not be achievable for me if I thought about it as I will write a book proposal by the end of this year. I heard a great meditation talk recently in which the teacher was saying,

nobody can be mindful for 10 minutes. Nobody can be mindful for five minutes or two minutes. The only time you can be mindful is in this moment. And I've been applying that to just about everything I can think of because I think that's just so true. And so for me, I can't write a book proposal today. I can't write an entire book proposal this month.

Totally. I can write a book proposal in a year, but more importantly I can make progress on one small part of it today and that will move me toward my end goal. And so one of the first things that I did was I started doing some research to find out what a book proposal entails. I made a list of all of the pieces that would be required and then I looked at a calendar for the rest of the year and I laid out rough estimates of how long I thought each one would take.

And then I created a calendar for myself, a very generous calendar that had a lot of time in it for days when I might not be able to work or if part of the proposal was taking longer than I expected. And so I've got, I started a calendar with all of the parts of the proposal on it that would get me from where I was to the end of the year in a way that I hoped and I think has proven to be true,

would not destroy my life in the process. Yeah, I I really love that because it's like you could tell that if you just take each of the little steps along the way and just focus on each day, you already could, you already knew you had a plan like that. It would eventually come together into the end goal without being totally overwhelmed and being like,

oh my God, I have a list of 200 things to do today. Exactly. And the end is in sight now. And there are many days, especially in this middle phase of the revising this particular essay where I think, I don't wanna do this, but I know I'm going to because I've made it this far. And because this 25 minutes a day practice is just so mundane and functional and supportive.

There's no mystery to it. There's no, I wonder if I'm going to be able to have the genius ideas to get this done. It's just, no, I'm gonna sit down tonight and work on it and then, you know, by the end of it it'll be done. Yeah. And I, and I was thinking back to like when we first started talking and I know we were,

we were kind of talking about the creative genius as kind of like a fairy that kind of lives outside of ourselves and, and ideas just come to us and it sort of, it seems, it's like it really seems like this is how it is. Like sometimes an idea will just come to us and it's almost like this idea is floating around in the world looking for someone to like birth it.

Because I, we were talking about how like I had had the experience when I was in my thesis year at the New York Academy of Art working on this series of work and I was like trying to figure out how to do it. I was still trying to figure out what my creative process actually looked like and I was trying to do what I thought you were supposed to do to like make studies and do like sketches and work it all out going into the finished painting.

And I had done like a ton of studies, I now realize that's actually not how my creative process works and I actually need to just start on the finished painting and work it out there. But, and I take all these photos, but I just couldn't really like figure it out. But I'd done tons of preparatory work and then I kind of like gave up on it and about like six months later I opened up a magazine and saw an article about this artist who'd done this like multifier complex composition.

And it was the weirdest thing because it looked like exactly like my paintings, like it almost looked like he had used the same photo reference that I had used, like even the same models. Like it was uncanny and there's no way he had seen my, my work. Like nobody had seen it. He, there's no way he had. But I really feel like the idea left me because I gave up on it and it floated over to him and he had the confidence to see it all the way through to the end.

And it just shows that it was a good idea and I should have just like followed it through and figured it out. And so I know when we were first talking we were kind of talking about that and you said you kind of have seen that kind of thing before too. And, and the truth is that's a real fear for you, that you have this idea,

you feel it, it's like coming through you and you wanna kind of get it done before like, you know, before you know, while it's still, you know, your idea and it's still waiting around for you to finish it off or whatever. I don't think it jumps from one person to the other before you finish. I think it gives you a chance to finish it before you know,

I left the idea and then I think it moved on to the other person. But, but yeah. What, what do you think about all of that? Do you have, what kind of thoughts do you have on this netter? I, oh gosh, many, many thoughts. I think, I think for, I absolutely have experienced the thing where many times where it feels as though the idea just arrives and you know,

it's not coming from within me and I just have to be ready to receive it. And this is something that I've been talking about with some writer friends recently. I don't believe in manifesting per se, but I do believe in setting and creating intentions and, but in doing so, we end up reorganizing our lives to become receptive to these things when they are available.

And so I think part of what makes this 25 minutes a day practice so perfect for that is I am at my desk, I am sitting down, if the genius visits me, I will be ready and there's a little chair for them there and they can just have a seat and tell me what they're thinking and I can just, right, right, right,

right, right. If I'm not at my desk, then they can just walk on by or flip on by or whatever it is, however they travel. And so I think a lot of, you know, it's very boring, but I think a lot of create the, the magic of creativity is making space for it to show up and just being receptive when it's around.

I totally believe that. Like I really agree and I think that that is part of what the power of the 25 minutes a day is, is it's like we're ready, ready and willing and, and also like, so I'll, I figured out a bit more about my creative process and like how it works and I find that really like sometimes a spark of inspiration will come out of nowhere when I'm on a walk or in the shower or something.

But most of the time the sparks of inspiration come like when I'm working as it turns Out. Mm. So especially, especially sparks of inspiration related to like, you know, refining a painting, like fixing a problem in a painting or, you know, that that often comes when I'm actually like working or at least engaged in it in a daily, you know,

in a daily way. Yeah. Yeah. I think when we step away from it, sometimes it's really useful to step away from it and sometimes when we step away from it, we get so far away that it's not sort of running in the background in our brains and we can lose touch with it. But when we're staying in touch with it every day,

when it's running in the background for us, when we're showering, when we're out for a walk, even if we're not actively thinking about it, it's moving around in there then I think the everything we do in those moments counts as creating, it's all moving Yeah. Our us toward the final product. The words on the page and the paint on the canvas.

That's exactly right. And I really like, like the way you put that, that it's still kind of moving around in the background of our brain. Like that's, and sometimes that's the best place for it to be. If it's like too loud in the foreground, I'm like freaking out about it and I don't get the answers. But when I just let it sit back a little bit,

I sort of suddenly figure it out. Yeah, Absolutely. And I, I bef you had mentioned to me before when we've been talking about our process and, and getting stuck in things in previous conversations that you had found that sometimes you sit down to work and that is when the genius visits you and I, I have to tell you, I was a little skeptical.

I was actually skeptical. I thought, well maybe that's true for her, but that's not true for me. That's not a thing that happens. It either happens or it doesn't. And me sitting down isn't gonna change anything, huh. But of course you were right, of course. You know, I sat down and I did the work and sometimes the flow just began and if I had not been at my desk,

I might not have noticed that that was happening. I might not have been ready for it. And so being there was a big part of letting the creativity happen. Yeah, totally. And like also I feel like with the 25 minutes a day thing, I've been sort of forced to figure out what my process actually is like. Like I think it's really different for everyone and I think it takes a long time for us to figure out.

So like for me, I kind of mentioned how I realized in my thesis here in my, at the New York Academy of Art that I don't really work like a lot of people do. I can't really do it. I can't figure out an idea where I like am supposed to make all these sketches and studies and work it all out in studies and then do the final painting for me.

I need to like maybe do a quick thumbnail sketch and then just move on to the final painting and sort of work it out in the final painting. Which means that a lot of the time I'm moving things around light, crazy things are changing all over the place on my final painting. And that's just what it looks like for me. And then, and then I look at art in between and I look at,

you know, art from all different eras and kind of get inspiration from, from art. And so it's like I finally figured out what my creative process was is like, but that's part of why I don't think I could do the painting back when I was in my thesis cuz I didn't know what my creative process was like. But by kind of laboring away 25 minutes a day every day,

you're sort of forced to kind of eventually figure it out in a slow way, in a gradual, gentle way that's not overwhelming. So I guess I'm wondering what, you know, what if, if anything you've discovered about how your creative process actually works, how you get inspiration, how you move through ideas, you know, I don't know how, I guess,

and for a writer too, I'm just curious about that. I, I've been thinking about it while you've been talking and I think the only thing I can say for sure is that it's constantly changing to fit the circumstances or how I'm feeling or what's going on for me. And a big mistake that I've made before is expecting it to always work the same way.

And so if I sit down to work on a project and I apply the same structure to it or I have the same expectations for myself of how it's gonna go or what order I'm gonna work in or what I'm going to need to do to make it happen, I'm often frustrated and disappointed. And I think that a lot of this for me has been learning to listen to myself.

And sometimes what a poem or an SA needs is to sit in a drawer for six months and sometimes what it needs is for me to go at it with a chisel and a hammer. Sometimes it just needs to get tossed into the fire. But it's do, it's always changing and I think that each piece has its own needs and any moment on any day the way that I'm going to be able to work,

the way that I'm going to work, that's gonna be most supportive for me, most exciting for me, the way that's going to provide me with the most inspiration and possibility is just constantly changing. And so that is the kind of another, another layer of work in this process is just figuring out what's going to work for me and what my process is going to be and how I can do it in a way that's not going to frustrate me by holding myself to standards or expectations or a process that worked for me before but might not be the one now.

Yeah. So it's really like all about learning to like listen to yourself and I guess just kind of follow the intuition where it's pulling you. So yeah, I guess I'm wondering like what's next for you with, with this project and just where you're kind of moving with it all now. That is a big question and an exciting one and a scary one.

It is partly because I try to focus on what's in front of me, but of course I'm always thinking about what this is going to lead to. So my, my goal and what I know I'm going to achieve is finishing this book proposal by the end of the year, at which point I am going to buy myself a cake and balloons. Yeah.

Cause I've definitely earned them. Oh my god, I'm gonna buy you a cake in bloom. Thank you. I'll take all of it. I, I I, this has really been quite a, quite a process and I'm really proud of myself and yeah, when I sat down, I think this is another thing that's good to talk about is when,

when I sat down to start on this, I had a really useful insight which is I am not going to gauge success for myself as whether or not this book gets published. Whether or not this book is a bestseller, whether or not this book proposal finds me an agent. The only success that I have control over is whether or not I write this book proposal and I'm gonna do that and that's gonna be success.

And so when I do that, which is going to be soon, which is blowing my mind a little bit, then I think I'm going to lay out whatever the next success will be for me. And the next stage in publishing a book for me would be finding an agent as with the other goals that I was talking about that is out of my control.

But what I can do is work really hard to find an agent. And so I will set a goal for myself of querying a certain number of agents, trying to connect with a certain number of people for a certain amount of time. And that's going to be the next success for me is doing what I said I would do is honoring this commitment that I'm making to myself.

Which can be really hard sometimes. A lot of the time it's really hard. But I think that it is a way of showing up for myself to do for myself what I said I would do to demonstrate belief in this project, even if I don't actually have it all the time. But to put in the work to say I believe in myself, I believe that I can do this,

I believe this is worthwhile and I'm going to keep trying A hundred percent. And I'm always kind of saying that with the art to the artist I work with my, in my art mentoring program, like to kind of the, our success, our check mark cuz you and I are both all about the check marks on our list, our check mark like comes from the moment we like send in the application to an art show or you know,

submit our work to a show that we're afraid to submit to or, or you know, sit down and paint for whatever amount of time we've committed to doing or in your case, right. But it's like we've done the thing that we have to do and it's so scary a lot of the time and it's like we really care about this stuff as artists.

It's really important to us. We can't try and convince ourselves later that we don't really care. Like it really matters to us and it's really scary to take these steps, but that's what stops people a lot of the time is just how, how scary it is cuz we really do care so much and that's why yeah, just making that be the success is like so,

and it's so motivating too. Like I literally check it off, which for me is a big deal to put a check mark on a piece of paper. And so I, that's like one that I've already achieved the thing when I've like done done the thing. So I just love that that's what you're doing and it is huge that you've almost like completed this book proposal and the next step will be to have an agent to find to,

you know, put all the work into looking for an agent. Just like working on what you can control. And it's so exciting for me to watch you doing this because I know you've had this idea for like a few years and, and you're just like totally taking the steps every single day and it's all coming together and it's so exciting for me to watch.

So Thank you. I, it's really exciting for me too and scary and it just alternates between exciting and scary most of the Time. Oh, that reminds me of another thing, the idea that like the sensation of fear and excitement are actually fairly similar. So we can sort of like try and be like, I'm not super scared of this, I'm just really excited.

It's a good framing of it. Yeah, yeah, it helps. So can you tell us a little bit about what the book that you're writing is about? Yeah, absolutely. So my book is called Abomination, A Memoir in Seven Monsters. And it's a hybrid collection of poems and creative nonfiction. A lot of it is pretty experimental and the book uses monster archetypes as a lens to reflect the ways that I and people like me have felt othered and different abominable,

even just generally less than the book touches on disability, neuro divergence, chronic illness, queerness, and trauma. And it uses a lot, a very wide variety of different references including film like horror movies, fine art, surrealist paintings for example, and sculptures, low brow pop culture literature and science and medicine because I'm also a science writer and I do love writing about those things,

but I've also got experience as someone who's living in a disabled and chronically ill body. So the science and medicine elements felt especially important to include. This book has been brewing in me as you know, for a really long time and I am so excited to be finally putting it on the page. Some of the poems in this book have been published already and you can find links to those on my website now.

Man, I just like love it so much I can't wait to read it. And I mean, I just can totally relate like to the feeling of like feeling like an outsider and you know, trying to fit in and, but also it's interesting because it sounds, it's like what you're like referencing, like I would love to, I'll probably be like reading it and looking for kind of,

I'll get inspiration in the middle, come into my paintings. It just seems like we're actually working with similar themes in our work in a certain way. So I'm just like so excited to read it. I think it's A brilliant, thank you. Yeah, Thank you. Yeah, I agree. I think we are often kind of, I think one of the wonderful things about our friendship is we've often found ourselves in very similar places,

whether that's creatively or in life and it's been wonderful to kind of bounce off each other with ideas or support and all of that. But I think, yeah, I think you're absolutely right. There's a lot in here that I think will be very Christie Christie focused. So Yeah, I'm like totally sure there is, and it, it's just neat when there's the like across di different disciplines,

you know, to sort of see different ways of kind of working with similar themes. That's interesting to me. That was like part of why I've just been so struck by getting to know you and your process, like how it's interesting for me to see the, the similarities like in like the art of writing, you know, to the art of painting.

Absolutely. I, that's been surprising for me as well is just to hear how similar it can be and the same, how we can get stuck in the same places and the field and in the actual creative work and fine art is such a inspiration for me and such a rich field that I draw from so often. So I'm really excited to have a bunch of work in this book about paintings and sculptures and things like that.

Oh, I can't wait to read it. It just sounds so amazing. And I was wondering where can people find you if they wanna check out your website or your social media? Where, where can people find you? Absolutely. So I am on the internet@katehorowitz.net. Kate horowitz one word.net on Twitter. I am at delight underscore monger at Delight monger. And on Instagram I am at Kate underscore writing that is Kate's writing.

Little difficult to say that out loud, but I think people can figure it out. And I'll put the, I'll put those in the description of this podcast as well. Well it's been so good to talk to you, Kate. Thank you so much for chatting and sharing about your creative process with us. Oh, thank you so much for having me, Kristy. And I will talk to you soon. I am sure. Definitely. Talk to you soon. Bye.