

Imminent Domains - Kyla Jamieson...s a Verb - Transcript of Video

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SPEAKERS

Alessandra Naccarato, Kyla Jamieson

A Alessandra Naccarato 00:08

Hello and welcome to Imminent Domains: Conversations at the Crossroads of Art, Ecology and the Body. This is a companion podcast to Imminent Domains: Reckoning with the Anthropocene, an essay collection by myself, Alessandra Naccarato. And today, my guest is Kyla Jamieson. Hi Kyla, welcome. I am so thrilled to have you here today. And I wanted to just get started by introducing you a bit. Kyla Jamieson is a disabled poet who lives with a dynamic and invisible disability resulting from a brain injury. Her first book *Body Count* was a CBC best poetry book of the year in 2020, and was shortlisted for the Pat Lauder Memorial Award. Born and raised in Squamish and North Vancouver, Kyla now lives and relies on the traditional unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations, where she dreams of systemic change, care-full futures and disabled joy. Thank you so much for being here. I am a huge fan of your work, I really have just been so moved by your poetry and deeply admire the writing you've done about what it is to be in this world in this moment in these complex bodies we carry and the intimacy they form with the world and its complexity right now. And so, it's such a pleasure to sink into conversation today, and discover what this moment and our bodies in this moment of time have to bring to the table. And I want to start by just locating where I am and right now, I'm sitting very close to the place where I was born in what's known mostly as Toronto, Tkaronto. This is the traditional territories of many nations, including the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, the Mississaugas and the Mississaugas of the Credit, it's territory that's covered by the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, which is an agreement between the Anishnabeg and the Haudenosaunee and the Mississaugas of the Credit to share and protect this land and additional nations and people, Europeans and newcomers have been invited into that treaty in the spirit of peace and friendship and respect. And in this moment, as I'm sitting here on this land and watershed and ecosystem where I was born, I'm just really giving so much gratitude and thanks for those histories and the complexities of life and interdependence. And as a settler, what it is to be here in this exact moment and how can I show up with my words and my actions and really reflect, reflect that gratitude and awe and hope for improved relationship and just showing up.

How can I do that in this conversation? I don't know but I'm gonna see each day when I wake up. I'm so grateful to be here, there new deer in this neighborhood all of a sudden, it's really always changing. And yeah, thank you for being here with with me.

K

Kyla Jamieson 04:22

Thank you. Yeah, I'm also pretty close to where I grew up. So I grew up in Squamish and now I'm on the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh territory and have lived here for quite a long time. And I always say that I live and rely on this territory. Because I do feel like it has been such a huge support to me. Especially here, and this long, long seemingly never ending season of illness in my life, and I have often gone to the land or the water or the plants or the bees or the birds, for comfort of your and for healing. And I don't take any access that I have to things are granted, or the stewardship of those lives for granted. So I am grateful to be in a space now where, you know, we're thinking about these things and, and rooted in that gratitude. Yeah,

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Alessandra Naccarato 05:38

yeah. I'm being transported back a little bit to the time I spent on the unceded Coast Salish territories as well, a lot of that time navigating a lot of really intense chronic illness, where I just lay in fields or on shores and the only conversation I was having was with this, like current of the ocean or with these hawks overhead and really, like grounded or kinda save my life moment by moment. So I'm, I'm, I'm hearing you and just feeling that, that deep gratitude for all these landscapes and different ways this place has been stewarded. Yeah, so much gratitude. And I was rereading your incredible book Body Count this past week, with more and more underlining and titles to my friends. Because it captures so much of that experience of like, what it can feel like to, in my personal experience, suddenly be separated from the life that you knew and the relationship one has had with the world, to change for it to really suddenly, shockingly shift, and become perhaps something new altogether in a really kind of instantaneous way in which we're asked to reconfigure, re-understand like, reinterpret what it is to be a body, a human, in this world in this moment, and figure out in a whole new way what it is to be human, which is, I would say like one of the hardest things about disability. And in my experience, also, in some ways, one of the profound gifts that I've experienced is this re-shifting this remaking of, this world building like within and without, beyond the body and within the body. As we're getting started, I would love if you would share more about your work and your place in the world and this art making that you do, and world building, I might call it in your own words.

K

Kyla Jamieson 08:49

Yeah, I mean, I do think that I think about these different aspects of my identity, like whether it's disability, or whether it's bisexuality, or whether it's like my ancestry, I do think of it as a lens on the world. And I don't think of it so much as, like a statistic or you know data, or how people see me, but I really do conceptualize it as like, the way that I come to the world. And that's something that is not visible. And I think we live in such a visual culture that sometimes the things that aren't visible can go unnoticed or be unperceived or misperceived. Yeah, so, I think you know, when you sent me the questions, I was like, you know, maybe I should just

read like a poem to speak to like, because that phrasing are you know, like, I think what I do in the world, or how I am in the world, or like my art making, just the phrasing, like, in the world stood out to me, because for so long, I felt like I wasn't in the world. I was in a world you know, and that's also a tension for me where it's like, I don't want to disrespect the world, that I did create, and the world that I have inhabited. And at the same time, it was very isolating. And at the same time, it did connect me to a lot of other people who are in the same situation. So it's, it's complicated, but my experience this year has been very much an experience of like, re entering the world. Which, again, is so complicated, because I feel like all the years that I felt like I was exiled from the world, I felt like there were so many people who would say, like, maybe see you outside once, and be like, oh, yeah, you're in the world, you've, you've been in the world this whole time, you know, she's just kind of like that, like, she's just not super social. It's like, I'm literally just struggling to survive, and to stay alive, and to be able to be in the world in the way that some people assume that I was the whole time. But now this year has been on the other side of, you know, finally getting some of the care I needed. And finally living in a healthier environment and having access to different things, finally, feeling like I actually am in the world, whatever that means to me. And I don't know if I even have the right language for that. Like when I say the world, it's like, I still don't quite know what I mean. But it is this feeling of just wanting to the way that we can, like bathe ourselves in the language or ideas of a book, I feel like I'm bathing myself in just being in nature or meeting people or just seeing new stimuli that for so long, I wasn't able to access. And so that's kind of what I mean, when I talk about being in the world. So I just wanted to read a little poem that kind of speaks that experience. Um, and I just shared it as an Instagram caption the other day. Tell me again, how beautiful life can be. Sometimes I want to forget what I've learned from fear and fatigue, how to make a life smaller, whittle it down to a sliver and guard it. I want to fall in love and forget how love ends. I want to push my body without considering what effort has cost me. Let me forget just for 137 meters, just one length of this seaside pool, one drive up a winding highway in the midday sun, one moonlit night. I swim until I'm out of breath. I sleep the afternoon away, I wake to golden light, thirst, the slow shift into consciousness from dreamless sleep. I reach for water, I reach for something to hold on to, I reach for a future that feels like sunshine, like a cold river like a new story, a conversation that continues across ties and seasons and selves. A body that enters each day in awe, stunned by her own presence in the world. It's not really about getting shit done. And I'm not like, Oh yeah, I worked eight hours or something, you know, to me, and often, you know, when people are like, what do you do? Or what do you what's your role in the world? It's like, well, like I'm a poet, I'm a mentor, I'm like, you know, an advocate. And this and that. And I like those, that just doesn't excite me. But being able to want to touch the water and get to go do that is what is thrilling to me. And to me that's why being in the world means.

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Alessandra Naccarato 14:22

Thank you so much for naming that and sharing that piece and really just it's what's spoken so strongly to me about what you've been sharing over the past few years and my hope in the question I sent you was to capture that piece beyond what capitalism is asking us of like, what do you do? What do you do? Question of What is it we do with these one wild lives that we have to semi quote Mary Oliver

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Kyla Jamieson 15:10

Mary Oliver, We love her.

A Alessandra Naccarato 15:12

We love her. This precious fact of being, you know, and the art and grace of a hand touching water and how that is the entire universe and can feel like a gift from the gods sometimes. So thank you for so beautifully. Reminding us of that. That's a real,

K Kyla Jamieson 15:52

which we know. Yeah, right. Nobody doesn't know that. But we forget it all the time. I think like everybody has looked at a sunset for a reason. Nobody doesn't know what awe is or what it can do to them. But, you know, the narrative and the paradigm of like our society right now, and like capitalist, like, settler society in particular, is just so disconnected from that, I think.

A Alessandra Naccarato 16:28

Yeah. Yeah. It's like this idea that only like, certain people can, like make art or only certain people can, like appreciate, or like be magical creatures, is something I also definitely want to, like push against and be like, no we are like, deeply gifted. As part of like, everyone's birthright to be able to be in this state of grace, you could call it, that is artmaking, that is like deep appreciation for this world. And that has,

K Kyla Jamieson 17:13

I also, sorry,

A Alessandra Naccarato 17:16

I was just gonna say that, that has less to do with the art that we create that can be like put in the world are bought and sold. And more to do with this attention to beauty and this devotion to paying attention to the web of creation were part of which, to some extent, disability, I think, the falling away of productivity that at times is required of us can remind us of the is-ness of the being with-ness that is potent and part of creative work.

K Kyla Jamieson 18:04

I love that word devotion. Like that devotion to to like what is or to like the beauty of the world because I often conceptualize art making as like a way of giving thanks for the beauty. And like the beauty of experiencing life, but I can't remember everything else that they were selling that you ended on. I was like, oh, that's like really profound. Just repeat yourself, just say that, yes. Oh, it's about disability. Yeah, just how disability and and it's, it's tricky. Like, when when we put it like that, it's like, wow, it sounds like super romantic. But it's, it's so painful. And it's so difficult. And it is profound to say, you know, experience that total disconnect from these other aspects of our identities that are valued in this world and to have to not do anything at all and sometimes, it's not, there's absolutely nothing beautiful about it. And that can be true for a long

time. And, and yet, it's both things. You know, but it certainly, you know, leads one to disinvest from, you know, many of these ideas that that will be been then acutely experienced as violence in one's body and that state. Like, I was talking to a friend the other day, who, she was sick and she needed to not work. And it was just so hard for her to give herself permission to not work. And you can only say, I don't know, I mean, I still fall back into that seat. But there really there is, I think, like you're alluding to, there is something on the other side of that, too, if you can give yourself permission, like there is something that we can learn on the other side of that conflict with ourselves and with like, the capitalism that lives in our lives. And I think it is like partly a different worldview and a different way of understanding ourselves in the world and our relationships with each other and with everything else.

A Alessandra Naccarato 20:41

Yeah, yeah. I think that brings me to the next question I have for you, which I'll start by, you know, sharing my experience what I've sort of what I've come to through, you know, 15 years of navigating these waters, really, so much of my daily life being this, this navigation, where I found I could say, meaningfulness, not like, Oh, good, great, here we are, we've gotten through this, but meaningfulness within the incredible challenges, is a sense that, like illness and injury, madness and disability, that these are entryways of interconnection with each other, and with the more than human world. And often, these experiences can like open a window of intimacy, they kind of move us beyond this linear and boxed in world and and break it open, they shatter the structures we're in and they do, I have experienced, create the possibility of a different level of interdependence and understanding with elements, with plants, with animals with insects that exist with us, within us around us. Not always, but I do believe that they that that potentiality is there, that these experiences are beyond and outside of systems of capitalism, and they exist in a different kind of dynamic. And that's, again, not me trying to put a positive spin on it, but rather to say that I do think that outside of individualism, capitalism, there's a larger story of interdependence, that is woven in our bodies, and in ecosystems, and those ecosystems are not having what you would call an able-bodied experience. Those, those ecosystems are deeply impacted by what is the systems on this planet. And likewise, we are facing toxins. We're facing super molds. We're facing all of these things,

K Kyla Jamieson 23:57

Oh my gods, the molds!

A Alessandra Naccarato 24:07

So I guess that's a big thing. What I read and see, and so appreciate in your writing is many different intimacies but one in particular that speaks so strongly in this was in your initial poem is this profound relationship with water, and water as the site of intimacy and healing and resilience and mystery. And I would love if you would speak to this kinship, as well as any other you know, of these elemental, or intimacies, kinships that are coming to mind right now. I would just love to hear how or if this resonates with you.

K Kyla Jamieson 25:01

I mean, the cover of my book too is like so watery, it was so perfect when the artist created that, because I think water has only become more present in my work over the years and like since my first book. And it's something I think, you know, there's so many reasons for that, like my mom kayaked when she was pregnant with me. My mom also loves water, like, if you see my mother and myself in water, you're like, Where'd the did the Otters come from? I didn't know they were around these parts, like we are just so joyful and so happy in the water. And I think also, you know, swimming was one of the first forms of physical activity that I could return to, after my concussion, there's something about being in the water that is so great for so many reasons, like for pain, and for like sensory issues, and just in so many different ways that that can be described clinically, but also are not, I think, fully encompassed by clinical language. And it's interesting to me, because the water is so dangerous also. And I have experienced that, you know, I've been held down surfing and felt like, I wasn't gonna get another breath, or I've been unsteady in a kayak after like, a long time, and going through all kinds of health issues. And not, you know, not feeling the way that I, as someone who started whitewater kayaking when she was eight years old, like I've usually for, you know, the overwhelming majority of my life felt pretty confident in a kayak on Earth. And I've had those moments where I didn't feel confident, and then that helps me understand that, you know, for some people, like water is super scary, or the river is super scary, or the ocean and super scary. And that is also fascinating to me. And I think that the water and bodies of water are just and the power that they have, like, you know, people drown. Like, there are floods, they wipe away highways, you know, dangerous things happen. And at the same time, it's so healing. It's so healing and it's so beautiful. And there's so much wisdom there. And I think that like complexity of water and the role that it can play in our lives, is just something that I keep coming back to. And I think that's maybe just part of like my own personal way of understanding the world. But it has played an incredibly important role in my life as a whole. And that also since my brain injury. And I don't know like I'll ever fully be able to analyze it either. Yeah.

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Alessandra Naccarato 28:50

I love that. Thank you for sharing that and to not analyze it, but to tell story through it and just know, the potentiality of it, and its profound impact on it. Us. I am someone who's terrified of the ocean and keeps moving the islands like I don't know why I spend so much time on islands you know, living by the ocean and rarely take my feet off the shore and there is something really powerful about being in relationship with something that is gentle, fierce, powerful beyond measure very much more powerful than human beings and This balance of like, we are in relationship with nature, we have like a level of choice in our lives in certain areas and other areas, we have to navigate not like negotiate with nature and with certain ways our lives go. And the ocean reminds me of that, and the way the ocean shows up in your work reminds me of that as well. And I really appreciate that weaving.

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Kyla Jamieson 30:42

I think I love thinking about, like seeing you on the shore, and just be like, ok, like, I'm here. But like, I'm not going further. And I think that that is so legitimate. And I think that, like seeing that as valid is, for me, like maybe more associated with like seeing the world through a disability lens, I mean like, you don't have like, just because you go to the ocean doesn't mean you have to go in the ocean. And yet, you can still want to go to the ocean. And that is fair. I mean, for

me, personally, I can't not put my head underwater. But if that is what you'll good for you, then I love that. And I've been thinking so much lately about desire, and things like that desire to put my head under water or that desire to put my hand in the ocean, or in the river. Because I feel like for so long with illness and with the severity of my disability, I was really cut off from desire, and from wanting and all I wanted was to be able to afford to live, or to be able to like get the care, to be able to work to be able to afford to live like it was very, very basic, very simple desire. And somehow it felt like wanting anything other than that was a threat to getting those basic needs met, which I don't think is true, but it's how it felt. And when I think about what water has done for me, and what rivers and oceans, and lakes, even lakes have done very over the past, you know, six or seven years, it's like, even that wanting anything and that desire for beauty or for something other than just survival alive in me. Which is probably why I felt like it was so necessary for my survival. But it's something I'm just starting to understand.

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Alessandra Naccarato 33:02

Yeah, that's so beautiful. And like much of your writing, and much of what you post speaks deeply to the heart of what I've been living and navigating. And I've also been sitting with this question, or almost revelation of, oh, like, I think I have space for joy and pleasure and desire, and it's necessary and worthy. And all of this next level of experience that is really fascinating, almost after an extended period of time where one is really focused or one needs to be focused on basic things like walking or rising from bed or drinking water, you know,

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Kyla Jamieson 34:11

eating three meals a day,

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Alessandra Naccarato 34:17

so, and it's so beautiful to return to beauty and desire in new ways is something I'm encountering. And uncovering this piece of like disability not only being the separation or the like I truly think it's taught me how to love in a whole new way like that those who showed up and knew what this was already all about, I was like, Oh, I see this is how it can be like this is how we can show up for each other, exactly as we are.

K

Kyla Jamieson 35:21

Which is how we're chill with the ocean being. Everybody loves the ocean, the ocean just does wherever the f..k it wants. And that's the thing is when you're talking about the parallels between like disability and nature and ecology, it's like, how the heck is everybody okay with the bird making a sound whenever it wants to and not making them sound, whatever it doesn't want to, but me needing to lay down because my body is tired of standing is an inconvenience. It just seems like a joke to me. Because we know how to make peace with not being able to control things. And yet, we are still fighting so hard against the idea that we can't control our bodies. And I think that's the thing is like, and people talk about this with climate solutions, which is also maybe a controversial term, like climate solutions. But, you know, there's always a lot to unpack in the language that we tend to use. But I think, sometimes I wonder if maybe

we already know everything we need to know, we're just not looking in the right places. And I think about that, with say even something as straightforward or complex as like, my own experience with illness, or someone else's experience with illness, maybe someone's caretaker already has all of the data that is needed to diagnose them. But the doctor doesn't you know, maybe we're just looking to the wrong authority. And maybe the body has already told us everything that we need to know about what it needs to feel good.

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Alessandra Naccarato 37:18

So I would love to chat more about love and joy. So much to be said. And I wanted to start with a recent quote from you that I connected with so deeply, and I felt like it really reflected where joy and love and resilience have been showing up in my life. And I'm gonna start with just a selection of the quotes from what you recently said. And this is from A Beginner's Guide to Falling in Love with Oneself Again. "I'm living alone for the first time in my life, staying up late or going to bed early, dancing topless in the kitchen, taking salted baths, I've started to think of disability, not in terms of the social or medical models, but in terms of the presence or absence of care, and support and love. Have I been writing the story of a sick woman? Or was it only ever the story of a woman who was not loved or held the way she needed to be? Disability as the friction between the love we deserve and the love that is offered. I'm in love with my life, the way that maybe only people who've felt like ghosts in their own bodies can be." So I'd love for us to drop into pieces of that quote, but also just move around in this space where love and joy exist resides wakes up. I think sometimes we only have space to talk about restriction and separation and pain and disability and it can also be this simultaneously dialectically place that leads us toward a true and liberating kind of love and joy. And I would love to open up this space for us to chat about those pieces.

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Kyla Jamieson 39:59

It's so interesting, because I feel that my current experience of self love, and of love in general and of being in love with the world is not what I was experiencing when I was having the most difficulty with my health. And so it feels it feels complex. I don't know, if illness is like actually a gateway to that sense of love, or if it's only possible outside of the absolute intensity of that. And I, I honestly hope that I never have to live the answer to that question. I really hope that I never experience illness as severely as, as I had, or have and as I did last year. But I, I do think that I know, like you said, that you feel like you learned how to love differently from your experiences with disability. And I, I do think that I mean, it makes it so clear to us how vulnerable we are. And it also can remind us day in and day out moment to moment, second to second, how little we can take for granted. And it can also connect us to other people with disabilities who are so capable of witnessing and understanding the difficulty that we live through in a way that is just so profound that it gives me goosebumps talking about it. Because there's so much that people who haven't lived it just don't understand. And I think people sometimes don't understand how, how desperate it can be and how lonely it can be. And it's people who do understand that that know how to show up for each other in that space. But I also, yeah, I don't know, the joy that I felt this year could have coexisted with some of the bouts of illness that I've been through. I know that some of the joy that I feel is the joy of feeling some relief from that. And I'm also on the other side now of your relationship where it didn't feel like disability meant disconnect and disability meant brokenness or it meant difficulty or it meant you know certain things. Whereas now I'm so free to live my own understanding of

disability. And for it to mean a different worldview and for it to mean a deeper understanding of other people and their suffering and or it can mean joy when it can. But I also am just very cognizant of the potentiality for someone like me who's experiencing a very different version of disability than I experienced before, to say, oh, this is the story of disability now, or live this joyful version of disability. And for so long, I was the person who was so compromised and struggling so much that I could not speak to my truth. And that's part of my work now is to speak back to that truth that I couldn't express before. As much as it's so complex, like I love you being like let's talk about like, love and joy because love is something that I've been thinking about so much and that I've been kind of like redefining for myself, I think for maybe at least four months that I've had this quote on a post it note next to my bed from Saretta Morgan's book, it's like, "I want to wait every morning into love where love is the question of how I can help you get free, where that means whatever it needs to mean." Like that's the only love that I'm interested in. And in terms of where we learn that love, yeah, it's disability community, I didn't learn that love from like, a friend at school, you know, not that I couldn't have, but that's not where I learned it, and, and yeah, I think that the disability community is, is so incredible in terms of love as a verb, like love as action and love is the ways that we show up for each other. And that is something that I feel like everybody that's not part of that culture could really learn from. Because I also see... And it's complicated for me as someone who, you know, it's not only been my brain injury, but it's also been like other injuries and like, you know, kind of unlikely circumstances and living in a building that was thick with black mold and like, you know, it's like, okay, well, what is that slumlord has cared to actually repair the roof? What if that Uber driver, who got in an accident with me in the car had care to drive a little more cautiously? What if you know, I think, my experience of the disability like you said, like if each of ours is so unique, and mine is not just oh, there was one freak accident. And there there, there's only you know, these five particular things that could improve my symptoms, it's, it's so much bigger than that. It's so complex, it's such a web, and there's so many places where just a little bit more care, a little bit more love as a verb, a little bit more "justice is what love looks like in public," to quote Cornel West, a little more policy, a little more, you know, just that just something being a little bit different, could have a profound chain reaction. And that I think is something that you know, is probably not going to be relatable for everyone with a disability, because there's so much variation. By when you felt the consequences of those little absences of care so acutely, it becomes incredibly important to you.

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Alessandra Naccarato 47:42

Yeah. It makes me think of how, you know, everything in an ecosystem has its different role, like not everyone can play every single, if everything was doing the same thing in an ecosystem, the ecosystem wouldn't function. And so we don't need everyone to do the same act of care, everyone to show up in the same way. And we don't all have the same needs. But that's the beautiful thing about doing the little pieces of care, doing what we can and it being imperfect, and still trying, when and where and how we can and with that love as a verb. So I, I really appreciate everything you just shared it's really moving.

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Kyla Jamieson 48:40

It reminds me of, you know, the introduction, I just got to listen to for your book. Like I can't pick up a shovel to dig the trench at the front of the fire. But I can share these ideas and this meaning and this story. And I think that is an act of hope, like the belief that that could be a

useful contribution is a belief in a future where the change we need is possible.

A Alessandra Naccarato 49:17

Yeah. Yeah. There's a role for each of us, right? There has to be, there's something so vital. Like there's such an important gift each of us has to offer that is so specific and particular to us, that is so true to what our bodies can do. And that's profoundly beautiful.

K Kyla Jamieson 49:49

To just think of it in that kind of, like cosmic perspective. Right, where it's like, well, if what you think your role has to be is at odds with your body, that can't be what your role is meant to be. But in activism and organizing, it is so normalized to be at odds with your body. And how is it a surprise that hasn't yielded the change that we need? Just a question that I ponder.

A Alessandra Naccarato 50:37

Yeah, that's striking, right? Because that's the same conditions as capitalism. It's the same conditions as the system that it's aiming to transform. In both we are like, at odds with what the body like wants and needs. And I often find the same is true of creative work. The same is true of writing a book and what is hoped for and expected of us. And the reality is, and I really faced this and in writing *Imminent Domains*, and having a brain injury in the middle of it. And so I've been thinking about this: how we create is part of what we create. That is true of our poetry, it's true of our government meetings, it's true of our policies, it's true of our activism. Our bodies are part of what we create.

K Kyla Jamieson 51:45

I've been thinking about this question, too, because I've been thinking and asking, is it what I do that matters? Or is it how I do it? And kind of my conclusion was that, how you do it becomes part of what you do. Like exactly what you just said. And it's it's so funny, because I've been thinking about and like lately, other very, like non creative related, like aspects of my life, you could say, but, you know, I think that question of like, you know, having like trying to make a living in this world, and everything is morally complex. And there's this idea that, well, it's too complicated so just give up, or who are you kidding? Or everyone's a hypocrite, or whatever. But I think that idea that I wrote the power of how we do things is so powerful, because it's always possible to shift that a little bit towards, you know, gentleness or integrity or, because we're people doing things with other people. And it's possible for us to show up a little bit differently.

A Alessandra Naccarato 53:18

And what a gift when we do. To speak what it is to be in the world in this way? How do we do that? In a way that sustains and nourishes ourselves, and in turn the world, right? Like if we write a book where we are nourished, wouldn't that be more nourishing for our readers? I don't

know. But I would like to find out.

K

Kyla Jamieson 53:47

I mean, these are the questions that it's so beautiful to live the answers to, as Rilke would say, like, and they're not easy to answer. But it makes me think about how also, reading can be an embodied practice. I felt that so much listening to the audio recording of your introduction to Imminent Domains. Just the way that I felt like your language and your ideas like, moving in me, and through me, and moving me. It's so, it's so profound. It's so incredible, like, it still stuns me that we can speak sound or sign sign, and people can receive those. And there can be some kind of transmission from one brain to another. Like whenever people think that language can be precise, or you know that there's one way to interpret it or why an understanding of something, it kind of boggles my mind, I still truly feel like language isn't your goal. And I feel like poetry in certain ways, is kind of like a celebration of that miracle. And I often feel that what poets do, is like always rooted in love. Because that love of language is always present. Just that joy and delight in language, which is so beautiful even when the poem is hard, or the poem is ugly or the poem is you know about it's certainly difficult. It's, I'm like, isn't every poem a love poem in some way? In that way? I think about love a lot lately, clearly. Just go for my little walks and think about every poem being a love poem.

A

Alessandra Naccarato 56:09

That's perfect.

K

Kyla Jamieson 56:12

Did you want me to read a poem?

A

Alessandra Naccarato 56:15

That is exactly what I was just going to ask.

K

Kyla Jamieson 56:19

Yeah. I'll read a poem. It's a super short poem. And I picked it partly because we're talking about water. Okay, so it's called "Self Image So Far", Like the allegory of the cave, but a girl seeing only her shadow on the bottom of the outdoor pool. Never the pattern of the light rippling across her back. And I just went for a swim in the pool. That I described and like the first thing that I read today, and it's like Kits school, it's 137 meters long, it's part saltwater. It's next to the ocean, I was just swimming. And I just love I love like the light pattern. And the way that that shifts and you can go underwater with your goggles on, in my case, or your eyes open if you're brave and not goggles, and you can see the light moving over people's bodies, and people moving through the water and through the light, and I could just go sit in the water and just look at the light pattern all day. Um, and I just went for a swim and I was like laying on the deck and just like wrote that poem. Just in one sitting. I mean its short enough. But it's just that,

you know, that way of like seeing oneself differently and realizing, you know what, how 've been seeing yourself and what I've been focusing on. Yeah. And I think the water probably gave me that idea. You know, like, the water is like, listen, you've been you've been seeing it one way. But there's another way. Just consider it. That's all I'm saying.

A Alessandra Naccarato 58:38

I love that so much. And I love that poem so much. And as we head towards the end of this, I have one more question for you, which I'm posing to everyone I speak with. And that's to ask you, what do you think is possible? What world do you think is possible to exist between us?

K Kyla Jamieson 59:11

I personally feel that one of the challenges we're collectively facing is a lack of imagination. And that we can live into a world that we can't imagine and that we can't dream and that we're disconnected from dreaming. And when I think about this, it's like my imagination is also limited. And I can't see ten steps ahead I can see one step ahead or maybe two and my life right now is in in such kind of chaos so much is uncertain, and I just keep describing it to people as like, when some of the boulders are sticking out of the water at the edge of the river, you can kind of walk a path and you just step from like one dry boulder to the next, or you just step to like the next warm dry rock. And I'm like, when I think about this question, I'm like just a little bit more, I'm like what's possible, just just a little bit more tenderness, just a little bit more willingness to do what you do with your writing, which is to look at things. And that's how writers and poets especially are also scientists, like the way that we observe things just more willingness to sit with difficulty, or to show up for each other or soften, or, but I think we're also, I don't know, maybe this is just from my own bias, but I feel like, you know, with over stimulation, and and when technology and with television and everything, it's so easy for us to be numb. And it's so tempting for us to be numb. And so I would even say just a little bit more feeling is possible, and like, see where that takes us, like, see once you're on that dry rock, like what you can see from there. And I think one of the things that I've been asking of myself this year, is can I become more capable of perceiving what's already possible? You know, just because I, when I do look back at my life, and I look back at the ways that things have been difficult, it wasn't always because it wasn't possible for things to shift. But it was because that wasn't clear to me. For many, many reasons that were all valid reasons. But I think that would be, you know, my hope for us in terms of what is possible, because I do think that a lot is already possible, and that it's like, really like, right there. And that so much can change so quickly. And I keep saying this, but like, that's what we saw with the pandemic. You know, all of a sudden, the deadlines that were always set in stone were changed. And the rules that were always the rules to capital T capital R, were different. And I'm just like, I truly struggle to understand how it is that we have all collectively witnessed that, and yet continue to in so many ways, believe that the status quo is how it has to be, especially with how much the status quo has shifted, like back and forth. And so I think also one of the things that we need is just people to be willing and able to question that. I don't know, I truly, I'm like I'm so hopeful, and yet, I also truly don't know how we have language. But I do think so much and so much is possible.

A Alessandra Naccarato 1:03:56

Thank you so much. I'm holding that vision with you. And I agree so much is possible. And we as we go away from here, I will also be thinking: how do I open myself up to what is possible right now? What a profound place to land. And I'm so grateful for you being here today and joining me in conversation. I think your work and your art making is a real gift to the world. And I'm so grateful to have your words on this recording and just out there supporting so many people and helping us feel seen and known and cared for.



Kyla Jamieson 1:04:52

Thank you so much. I'm so happy we could do this.