



Artists' Moving
Image Network



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Ollie Dook Interview Transcript

Voice: Ollie Dook, FLAMIN Fellowship artist 2020-2021

00:06

My practice largely revolves around an attempt to decode our ongoing relationship to images. And this is a relationship I feel reveals a certain insight into a human condition. I think our interaction with images, be it our consumption, production or dissemination of images, really provides a reflection of how humans see the world and see each other within it. My work will take form, therefore, through a process of mining images as somewhat cultural artefacts. And when mine these items, I will then re-articulate them within my own processes. So this often includes digital reproductions, be it in 2D animation or 2D stills, but also largely in CGI. These reformulated images then populate my idiosyncratic world in order to create links between things that would otherwise seem disconnected in order to highlight an idea that was pushed onto me through absorbing those images in the first place. So that's a really ongoing thread throughout lots of my individual projects, but within those individual projects, the work will try to focus more on a more specific theme, be it the human animal relationship, our relationship to truth and fiction through conspiracy, or, more recently, our relationship to memory.

02:05

The project I applied to FLAMIN with is something I've been thinking about for a long time actually. It's a project that is hoping to explore our relationship to memory, and specifically how that relationship is informed or mediated through a certain type of image or technology. This project was something that I began thinking about in response to my dad's condition of Dementia, which was something developing in the last five to ten years really. So, over a period of time, I began to think slightly differently about the way in which I related to memory and the way others related to memory. And it was around this time that I discovered an archive of S-VHS tapes, well, I say discovered, I knew they existed, but I began thinking about them in a slightly different way. And this archive was somewhat precariously stored in a family's storage box somewhere in the house. I began thinking about how these tapes were slowly eroding with time and I had this urge to preserve these tapes, much in the way I would have an urge to preserve my dad's memory. And this was sort of the spark that blossomed into this more conceptual work about how we deal with memory, and specifically the loss of memory.

03:40

The FLAMIN Fellowship has been a really great experience, actually. I think it's somewhat hard to disconnect it from the elephant in the room, which is doing this Fellowship during the year of the pandemic has meant that it has really defined the process. But it's really

brought into focus, for me anyway, the importance of a community of other artists and a support network. So for me having those monthly sessions has been a really great lifeline at this point in time, where you're not necessarily speaking to so many people and having such interesting conversations, not only about your work but about other people's work and about the world in a wider context. So in that sense, the FLAMIN Fellowship has been a real saving grace.

04:42

I think development is really important. And in many ways, this process of the FLAMIN Fellowship has enlightened me a bit more to the importance of a development stage. Often, in my experience, I've had commissioning processes where I've had a chance to have financial backing to produce a project. But whilst that's a fantastic opportunity, and one I'm immensely grateful for, with it comes a certain amount of pressure that by a certain deadline, you need to know where the project's going but I really have seen the benefit of not necessarily having that pressure, because it allows you to almost mentally make the work and then tear it down again, and then rebuild it, and then tear it down again. And within that process, the work becomes tighter, and it becomes clearer to you and therefore to the person that experiences that work. And hopefully makes it a more successful piece of artwork really.

05:50

My advice to anyone that would be applying to FLAMIN would be to really try and think about what the project is that they're applying with. Think about why it is they want to make it and why it is they can't make it. Because I think what the FLAMIN Fellowship offers more than anything else is a chance to develop a work that you're not necessarily making due to lack of financial support or opportunity, but because you need time to just develop it. And actually you need time to talk it over and have advice. Maybe you feel slightly scared to make that work by yourself. So try and apply with a work that is something that you're otherwise nervous to make, because I think really this opportunity will help you do that and help you take that next step.