

CANVAS**REBEL**

Meet Margrethe Aanestad

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We were lucky to catch up with Margrethe Aanestad recently and have shared our conversation below.

Hi Margrethe, thanks for joining us today. Are you happier as a creative? Do you sometimes think about what it would be like to just have a regular job? Can you talk to us about how you think through these emotions?

I feel happier and as a whole individual, being creative as an artist. It is who I am. It is not possible for me to not make, to not be in those processes which feels so crucial and meaningful. I have experienced not making art, in a period over years earlier in my life, having other jobs. I was also over several years active on the cultural scene, but with other roles than *artist*. A time that genuinely proved this was wrong and unhealthy for me. So there is no way around not actually making. To be an artist is not something you choose and aim for as a job. I believe one is born with a genuine drive, curiosity and passion, a certain way of thinking through our artistic language, and will invest everything. It's like entrepreneurship, and it is obsession.

But yes, of course the thought of having a regular job has come to my mind, that happens. And the thought is solely related to the idea of financial stability. It sounds really great and uncomplicated to have steady income, predicability, paid health insurance – even paid holidays and work travels. But, I know myself really well, and the idea of having a regular job as a full time employed is a complete claustrophobic and depressing nightmare. It is hard, or I would say impossible, when you are an artist, to have a regular job without becoming a shadow of oneself. But, that is not the *regular job's* fault. We just don't fit in there. Things get complicated and feels constrained. I think I speak on behalf of more than myself, that the urge to be independent and free is so strong, despite the many unstable factors the every day life of an artist holds. It just is worth the lack of unpredictability, cause it is undeniably way more exhausting to care and invest full time and compromise for someone else's visions, goals or ideas. All though we of course value all those jobs in a larger perspective.

So to me, having a regular full time job as an employed is my biggest fear of all in life. I need to be my own boss in charge of my own calendar and schedule, all aspects. I need the flow.

Having that said, to be an artist often (normally) includes to have a mix of part-time engagements such as teaching art, and other regular jobs, to support our artistic careers and livelihood, but that is different. I like to have project-related jobs as a freelancer, that is

manageable for me because it gives a certain feeling of freedom. As long as it helps finance my life and my artistic career, it feels all right, and can be very rewarding. To carve out space for art-making, and admin-hours for art career in addition, is crucial. So days are always long and often overwhelmingly filled with many tasks – but having my own schedule each day, I love exactly that.

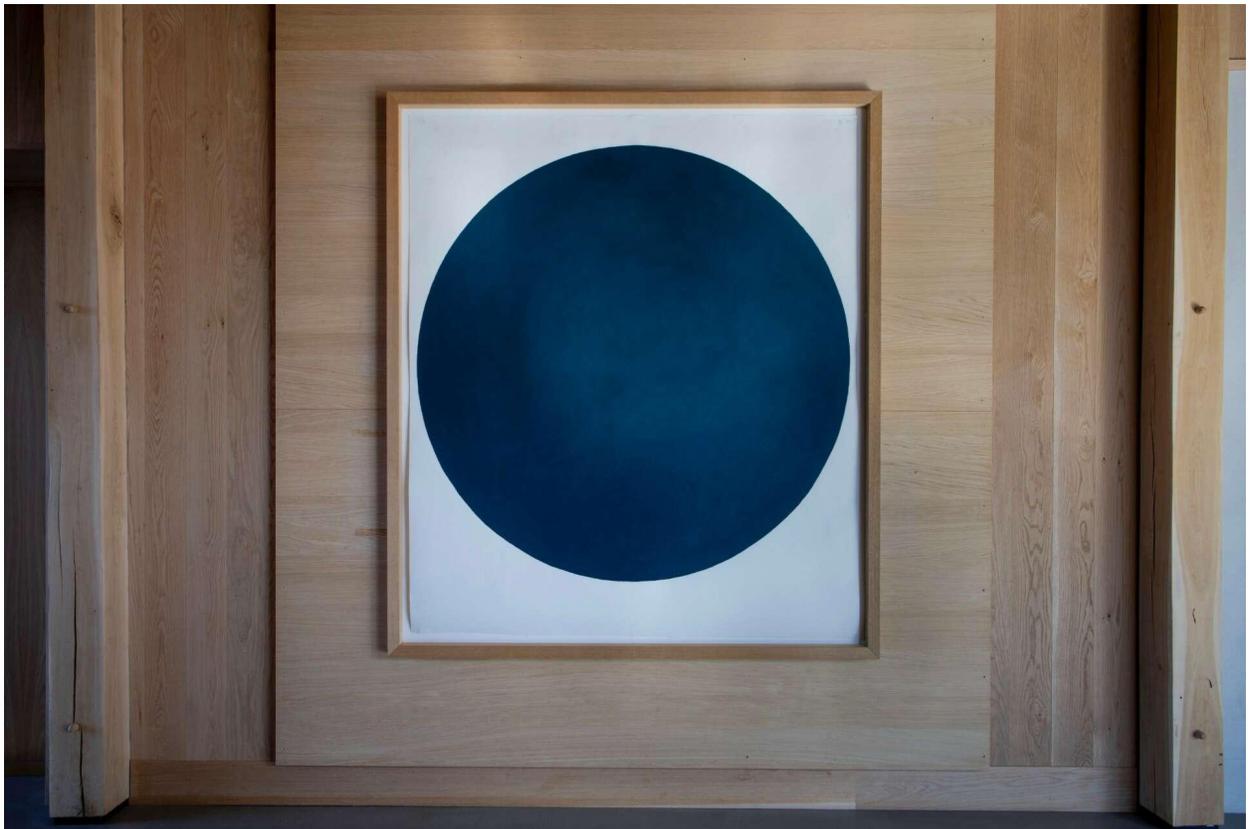




As always, we appreciate you sharing your insights and we've got a few more questions for you, but before we get to all of that can you take a minute to introduce yourself and give our readers some of your back background and context?

I am a visual artist born and raised on the countryside just outside the town Stavanger, on the West Coast of Norway. In my practice I work in drawing, painting and sculpture, exploring various materials in an abstract manner. My work is presented in various contexts and spaces, such as galleries, public realm, private and public commissions etc. For many years now I have split my time working and living in both New York City and Stavanger. I felt born an artist, and since I was young I always felt attraction and belonging to creative energy, and people who are artists and makers. For high school I applied to a school with mainly drawing, sculpture, art history and other creative subjects. I was in heaven. Since, the path has been long with some detours, but I am very focused and thrive in the contemporary art field, all though it is a tough business. I don't know where else to be. My current exhibition is Yi gallery in Sunset Park in Brooklyn, NY, that opened March 18., where I show recent and earlier works. I am very grateful for this opportunity, and also all other previous, current and upcoming projects.

And yes, I believe my work sets me aside from others, just because of my own language, focus and expression. I am an independent artist – and I think all individual artists are set aside from others. We are all working on unique and nerdy lifelong, lonely projects that feel personal and that develops, change and varies – and take weird sidekicks along the way. All though, we are finding ourselves connected other artists. I like to think of it as belonging to a family-tree; we have artist-relatives that we connect with more than others, from old to recent art history, and in our contemporary world, based on what we individually are creating and obsessed by. Via, across, through and despite the obvious or unobvious – not necessarily being linear- it is kind of a beautiful chaos.





In your view, what can society do to best support artists, creatives and a thriving creative ecosystem?

Invest in art! You do not have to be a famous and professional collector to do so, and you don't have to buy expensive pieces. Buy art that suits your pocket, buy from the heart, and buy art before a pair of jeans or that sofa. Surround yourself, immerse! Then you will notice how great it is to be around art.







For you, what's the most rewarding aspect of being a creative?

Moments when I feel my heart beat a bit faster and I just know that the art speaks with me, but it is hard to express in words, what exactly that is. It's when you know art is powerful and nothing can replace it, it's transcendental. It can be happening while experiencing another artists else's work, or while making my own and experiencing a magic moment.

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