

Transcript – Yukti Agarwal, Class of 2024

Narrator: Yukti Agarwal

Interviewer: Mary Murphy, Nancy L. Buc '65 Pembroke Center Archivist

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Mary Murphy: Okay, good morning to all of our listeners out there in the world. My name is Mary Murphy and I am the Nancy L. Buc Pembroke Center Archivist at Brown University. This morning, I am interviewing another Brown affiliated woman, who will be introducing herself in just a moment. For the record, it is April 20, 2020. This is part of our COVID-19 series, where we are interviewing Brown students, staff, alums, about their personal experiences dealing with the global pandemic. Okay, so if you could please introduce yourself now.

Yukti Agarwal: Hi, I'm Yukti Agarwal. I'm in the Brown/RISD dual degree program. I am currently in my freshman year. I'm a rising sophomore, and I'm originally from Bombay, India.

Mary Murphy: And could you tell us where [1:00] you are today? Just for the record?

YA: So I'm in my room in Bombay, in Mumbai, all the way in India. Far away from Providence.

MM: Okay. Before I ask you to share about your experience during this time, this crazy time, I'd like to ask you to just tell us a little bit about your own family background, if you're comfortable, and what brought you to the dual degree program at Brown University.

YA: So, I had always had this deal with my parents, that as long as I get into the best university, to the best program, I can go abroad because I'm the first woman in my family to go abroad. A lot of, I think a large part of my family was never really invested in education. So they didn't really care too much about the quality of one's education, especially you're a girl, [2:00] because in India, females aren't really given education that easily. They're just considered to be just objects who are going to be married off and like they become someone else's responsibility by the end of it. Thankfully, my parents were very like open minded and very forward thinking and

for them education is probably the most important thing. Because my mom herself is, she's into the field of education. So I have this deal with my parents as I said, that if I get into the Brown/RISD dual degree, because I wanted to do medicine at Brown and art at RISD, I could come abroad. So yeah, that's what brings me to, to Providence and to the program.

MM: Did you look at any other programs besides Brown or were you really targeting that specific program?

YA: I did look at other programs, but it was mostly just like, RISD was my top choice because I don't think there's any [3:00] art school that matches RISD. And I really wanted to go to Brown because I've come from two institutions that are very liberal and very, they, they allow the student to guide, to make their own path. And I thought Brown was pretty much the best school for something like that because of the open curriculum and because, quite frankly, I've never been to a place as accepting as Brown. So Brown was my top choice. I'd never thought I would get into the program.

MM: So it sounds like just right off the bat, I don't know if you could respond to this at all, but do you, do you feel that you had beliefs or feelings towards feminism even as a high schooler? It sounds like maybe that played into a role into your education.

YA: It definitely did because I know that one of my most valued assets is my education. I've come from an all-girls school so I've been surrounded – and my school was [4:00] actually made during the British era when the British had colonized India, for Indian women, for Indian girls who weren't allowed to get an education in British institutions. So I think I've been always like raised in this ethos of, I don't know, empowerment for women, and especially empowerment for women to be educated. And like a few years back, I started this NGO with my grandmother to raise funds for Indian girls who didn't get education. They don't even get primary, a primary education unless their parents have an incentive to get them in education. So we did a bunch of projects to raise money for different sectors of society for the women, for the girls, in that, in those sectors to get an education. Like the doctors of Teek because who are usually sent away to bigger cities for sex [5:00] slavery. They're sold by their parents because they don't have enough

money. And just providing these people with, I don't know, at least an opportunity because I got this opportunity and that's why I'm here. And I think every single girl in my country deserves that opportunity. So yeah.

MM: And just one more question before we go into your experience with this pandemic. You said that you feel that Brown University has a welcoming, I don't want to paraphrase, but open minded. What does that mean to you?

YA: I think Brown is a place where everybody is a somebody. I don't think anyone in Brown is out of place, no matter who you are, where you come from, how you hold yourself, present yourself. And I think that's very rare in many institutions, because I know that in my school, [6:00] I used to, like no matter who you are, you are somebody and I know that Brown is the exact same that way. I don't think I've ever felt this need to conform to being someone who I'm not at Brown. And I know a lot of my friends who are at other schools, schools that are considered to be as good as Brown, like Ivy League's, like Yale and Harvard, feel like that, often conforming to the norms of society. I never felt that at Brown, especially because I think the network of peers, and professors, and administrators, and pretty much everyone at Brown, has been so, they're so welcoming as you put it, like, I don't know. Everyone has been, they've accepted me for who I am. Which is something I feel like it's, it's amazing to feel that way.

MM: That's great. So can you tell us, so you're in your, where are we now? You're in your sophomore year? [7:00]

YA: I'm a rising sophomore, so I, I'm just finishing my freshman year.

MM: Freshman year. Okay. All right. So what a time to be coming to the States to go to college. I'm going to start off with just a basic first question about your first memory being on campus. And then I'd like you to compare that to your first memory hearing about COVID-19.

YA: Okay. I have at least two distinct memories in my head, to be honest. My first memories, I'm going to say two memories from my first memories on campus. My first was the night I got

to Providence. I was extremely overwhelmed. I had just completed a 30 hour journey on a flight and then, then a car ride. Yes?

MM: Can I ask you a question? Had you been to the states before?

YA: I had. I've been to the states very often and for many summer programs. In fact I have come to the RISD summer program just a year [8:00] back. So I was familiar with Providence, but I was very overwhelmed with the dual degree because I was, I still have this doubt in my head whether I'm good enough for the program because there's such few people. So I feel like this is the doubt all of us have like, do I deserve to be here? So yeah, when I got here the first night, I was very tired and we, we had like this dinner, you know, with all of the deans and like the Dean of the College of RISD and Brown and like all of these important people, and like all the 15 dual degree students, and everyone was talking and I was so overwhelmed that I left the room, a sit down formal dinner, you know, and started crying outside of the building because I was just like, "I can't be in the program. I'm so scared. I'm so scared." And then two days later, I was at Brown in the IMP program loving it. We just finished the scavenger hunt and my team won and we won this [9:00] mug which said, "IMP cha cha cha." So that's my first memory on campus – crying and then two days later, I couldn't imagine not being here. And it was fun. It was the weather was so nice. Like we were sitting on Main Green the whole day and it was probably the best day. Like, if at that point I, someone had told me that like, I would be here in Bombay right now, I wouldn't have believed it.

And the first time I heard about COVID was, I think in Jan, my, I have a friend who is very paranoid about diseases and germs, and extremely paranoid. She stays right next to me, she used to stay right next to me, right next door. And she came out and we have this sitting, like this lounge, a common area, and she was telling me about COVID and she was like, "It's going to come to the US. We're all going to be doomed. It's going to be so scary. [10:00] We need to be so cautious, cautious." And like that day we all got like disinfecting wipes and like cleaned our common area and our rooms. And this was in Jan, when the CDC and everyone was saying that US had like very low risk. I think there were like three cases in the US at that time and like most were in the West Coast. We got super paranoid. I was paranoid for like a week. I remember that day when we cleaned the lounge and everything, I couldn't sleep at all. So I went for class the

next day completely without any sleep, or completely sleep deprived. And I think after a week, it kind of simmered down. I just felt like, this is all just a hoax. I'm just like, you know, I'm taking all of the world's burdens on myself. It's not, nothing's going to happen, we're going to be fine. We're going to be safe. And a few months later, I mean, I could never have imagined this would have happened. I think at that – Sorry – I think at that time my biggest worry was a couple of my friends had family in [11:00] China, and it was exploding in China at the time, so all of my prayers, which is directed towards them hoping that they are okay because it just didn't seem like something that would come to me, it seemed so far away.

MM: So can you tell me had you traveled back home after the first semester?

YA: Yeah.

MM: Okay.

YA: I went back a few weeks.

MM: Okay, so then you had, you were able to travel back from India, back to the States. And that's when you start hearing us news.

YA: Yes. And in fact, when, so I came back on second of Jan to Providence, because RISD has a compulsory winter session. So we were like, I had to be on campus, Brown wasn't there at the time, and then when Brown came back, I remember that's when everyone started getting worried about COVID coming to the US. So I think for a good two and a half weeks, I didn't go to Brown [12:00] campus at all. I just stayed on RISD campus because I was scared that Brown had people who come from other places and could have potentially brought the disease with them. But like everyone at RISD was safe because we'd already been there for three weeks.

MM: Oh! That makes sense.

YA: And this was the case with most RISD students. Like no one, all the diversity students do,

we just won't go into Brown.

MM: Oh, wow. Okay, that's so fascinating. And so your dorm is actually on the RISD campus?

YA: This last year, I mean, my freshmen, year I was on RISD campus. Next year, I will be at Littlefield.

MM: Oh, okay. That's so interesting. I think that will be interesting to our listeners to understand how that works, that you go back and forth between the campuses, which are separated, just for our listeners who don't know, 100 years from now, the campuses are literally on a hill separated by a few blocks distance, but there are different buildings. Okay. So you're studying [13:00] art, but then I, did you say you're studying pre-med at Brown.

YA: So I'm aiming to finish a few pre-med requirements.

MM: Okay. Okay. So it is you're in the sciences potentially.

YA: At the moment.

MM: Okay.

YA: I'm flighty so I might be switching.

MM: Okay. Okay. So can you tell us just in about your academic experience, were your professors talking to you about COVID-19?

YA: At the moment not really. I think it all started, like professors started talking about it much later only when schools were issuing notices and precautions. Before that, I feel like the professors didn't really care too much, especially at RISD. I think at Brown it's different. All of my professors were really lenient. At Brown they're very understanding, but at RISD we have like a no absent, [14:00] absenteeism policy. So if you're absent for even one class in a semester,

you can fail the class. So I know that like I was sick, I think like my sixth week of being here. And I was extremely concerned that like, I could have potentially gotten coronavirus because I was a very paranoid person. So I went to health, to public, to health, the health services and they told me that, “you might have the flu, so like, stay indoors.” And I emailed some of my professors, but they all told me, “if you don’t come to class, we’re going to have to make you fail the class.”

MM: What?

YA: My RISD professors, not my Brown professors. Yeah.

MM: That is super –

YA: It wasn’t my professors who told me this, but another authority within the department.

MM: Yeah, yeah. Wow. So you come to the point where this is coming up in the news and Brown and RISD are suddenly talking about having to close down campus. That’s Can you remember what [15:00] that was like?

YA: I remember it so vividly.

MM: Tell us, paint us that picture.

YA: It was, it was extremely strange at RISD especially because we got an email saying if you’re sick, stay at home, which I had never heard of on RISD campus. So that was a huge relief that if people are sick, they’re going stay indoors and not bring it to class and spread it around. But when the school started emailing, I started getting a little paranoid. Up until then I had just gotten myself to kind of stop thinking about it because I was getting, I was getting paranoid and panicky and sort of just taking precautions, which I think is very perilous sometimes. So I started getting a little concerned when the schools, like when both the schools started sending us emails and other schools started shutting down. I think that was the biggest source of fear. [16:00] When

Columbia shut down and Harvard shut down and all of these smaller colleges also started shutting down, I think Brown and RISD were like one of the last colleges to send us an official email. So I remember on 12th of March, I think by then most colleges had shut down. It was a Wednesday I woke up and when for like my studio class, like it was a normal day didn't seem strange at all. And during lunch, in fact, I was talking to some of my friends and we were talking about like, how it was another friend of ours' birthday on Saturday, so we were going to like ring in her birthday and like we, we had ordered a cake and everything. And then at 12pm on 12th of March we got an email from India, from the Government of India that stated that they're shutting down borders. So for anyone who has, who's not an Indian citizen, but is an overseas citizen of India had to come back to India within the next day [17:00] or else they couldn't come in – Yeah, one day. 13th March was the last day you could enter the country. And if you didn't, you have to leave. Like you couldn't come back in through the open borders again. And obviously, all borders are shut down now. So one of my closest friends is an overseas citizen, she has an American passport when she stays in India and when like we, when we saw that we all got so scared because school still hadn't announced that they're shutting down or whether they're staying open. And, yeah, and it was extremely scary at that point. So I finished class on all my classes, they got over by like, 6pm. And then I called my parents. It was like 4am for them, I think. And my dad was awake because he had also seen this notice, and he was, I'm not an overseas citizen, but I knew that they were shutting down borders for citizens within a week. So I had to think fast because I still had a week, [18:00] I still had a week of school left before spring break.

MM: Oh.

YA: Yeah. So at that point, we, we were just panicking on the call. I remember my dad told me, “Do you want to like, you know, do you think you can stay for some time? Like, do you think it's okay? Like, do think three months is a really long time to stay in the US?” And I lost my mind. I was just like, “I cannot stay here.” This was the first time I have cursed in front of my parents. I was so I was so shaken. I was like, “I cannot fucking stay here. Get me home.” Because I, I'm very family oriented. I had to come back to my family at a time like this. It was very, like scary to be alone in a new place without my friends and my family. So I, I said that on

the phone and my dad was like, “Okay, this is serious.”

MM: Yeah.

YA: He’s like, “Okay, when do you want to come back?” I was like, “I have a week of school left. I’ll come back after that.” [19:00] He was like, “No, if you’re coming back, you come back before this weekend,” and this was a Wednesday. So I was like, “Oh, okay, but I have school.” He’s like, “Forget school, like, it doesn’t matter. Just got home.” So this was all at 6pm our time. And I think by like, 12pm, 12am, like, within the next six hours, he booked my flight, he booked a cab. We had like all of these discussions, do I want to fly out of Boston, do I want to fly out of New York? Or how am I going to get to these places? What precautions do I have to take at the airport? On the on the plane? How am I going to pack up my whole room and like how am I going to put it for storage? All of this.

MM: How did you do that?

YA: So I’m not exaggerating when I say 12th of March until 15th of March when I left were the longest like few days of my life. I have never, like I’ve never seen like two days stretch out into the speed that seemed like more than a week because I’m also someone who [20:00] hoards a lot. So my room was full of so many things that I just never needed and like never used, but they were just there. So I was, and I didn’t have cartons or like anything. I didn’t know how to start packing. I’ve never done this before. To be very honest, I sound spoiled, but in India, we have a lot of staff who works for us like most people in India do because of the amount of economic disparity that’s there in the country. So I have never in my life, like folded my clothes.

MM: Okay.

YA: Yeah, because it’s just, any Indian who you talk to who’s abroad, they have never like cleaned their own house, made their own bed, done their own laundry. They’re just not things that we’re used to doing since we’re a child. So when I had to pack up my whole room by myself it was so daunting because even when I came here, my parents came with me and like helped me

do everything. In fact, I [21:00] was just at orientation the whole day. They set up my whole room for me. And I think in that sense, I'm very dependable on them and the people around me. So packing everything up was extremely hard. At like, 12 when my flights were booked, I went to see my friend who's another OCI member, actually, by this time, so the thing is, the school still hadn't told us whether they're shutting down, but I emailed a few of my professors and asked them if they knew anything, and most of my professors emailed me back saying that we're definitely going online. We just don't know how long that will last for. And I emailed another Dean, who I have been able to develop a personal relationship with and she told me, "We're shutting down. Don't worry, just go back home."

MM: Yeah.

YA: Yeah. And that was my saving grace. I told all of my Indian friends, because we had to leave within the next few days, [22:00] that, "just go home like don't think about it just go home." And, in fact, I am so thankful to Brown because they emailed us, the Dean of, I think International Students, or International, OISS, emailed us saying that, "I know India has passed this declaration. If you need to leave within the next 24 hours, just tell us we'll deal with like telling all of your professors and like anything you might need – if your I-20s aren't signed, just come to us, we'll sign it right away, just please leave if you need to."

MM: Wow.

YA: And that was so helpful because RISD, no one from RISD sent us an email like that. And none of my friends at RISD knew what to do, my Indian friends. So them sending me that email was so helpful because you just, when you're doing, making all these plans, you need to like make sure you're doing this for some reason and like the schools won't like I don't want to get chucked out of [23:00] –

MM: Yeah.

YA: Right? Yeah.

MM: Can I go back and ask you a question? So you're in your room, trying to figure out how, how you're going to do this. How you're going to pack this this stuff, how are you, if you're going to ship it or store it. Do you think that that was a feminist moment for you? Where you, or was it like a moment of empowerment where you're like, I am going to do this. I'm going to figure this out.

YA: Yeah, it definitely was, especially when I was talking to my parents, because my parents were like, "Yukti, do you want to fly out on Sunday or Monday, you know, because you're going to take a lot of days to pack?" And I was like, "No, I'm going fly out on Saturday. There's like, no question. I can pack my room in two days. Like, that's more than enough time. I can do it." And all of my, and my roommate was a huge help. Because that day I was on the phone till 4am in my room crying on my bed. And she was just like, "Are you fine? I hope you're fine." And then she helped me [24:00] so much. All of my friends helped me so much. And it was this moment of solidarity amongst all of us. In terms of having a feminist moment, I feel like this whole, this whole time was such a, it just showed me that I can go through these things alone. I can deal with these things, and I don't need someone to constantly help me to back me up, which is something I've never felt before because I've always depended on someone in my life. Like, I was having this conversation with my parents maybe a month or two before this happened. And I was telling my mom was like, "You know, you'll be, I'll come to the US when you need to pack up, to help you pack your room in May and we should be like, you know, store everything and then I'll come help you set up in Littlefield next year." And I was like, "Yeah, mom. Thanks. Like, I need that, you know, I can't pack up by myself." But then actually doing it myself was such a moment of empowerment. Like, [25:00] I knew that these are things I can do, even though I think I can't do them.

MM: I think that's really wonderful. I mean, I feel like we're living, this is just such a difficult time, but there are these little tiny silver linings –

YA: Yeah.

MM: That are coming out of this time. So can you tell me, I think it's important, about that travel

experience? And then what it's like being back home now in India? I think that's a really important perspective for us to have.

YA: Yes, so when, so traveling was probably the scariest part. When I did like pack everything up somehow, in fact, this one Brown undergraduate, I approached her and asked her if she could store some of my things, and she stored 12 cartons of mine. Yeah. And they were like the XL cartons. They were huge. And she and her husband [26:00] came to my dorm, helped me get all of the things down into their car, and they took two rounds to put all of my things in their basement. I just thought I should mention that.

MM: Yeah! That's wonderful.

YA: Yeah, that was still like, I think in times like this, the way we all come together, we could never do this in other times. It's only like calamities like this that truly bring us all together. So the travel, I finished packing, and I like did all of the things I have to do. And then I was leaving at around 4am on Saturday, like Saturday morning. And I have never traveled so efficiently in my life. I had like, I had like marked out, I, some of my friends gave me like a few masks that they had like if they could spare one or two. So I had like four masks with me and I like planned – and I was traveling from New York so I had to take a cab to New York, and I was really scared because New York was affected pretty badly by then. So [27:00] I was like not touching anything. I had like my disinfectant wipes. I was cleaning, like before sitting on the flight, on the flight seat, I cleaned every single surface I could see. I didn't touch a single thing on the flight. I didn't eat any of the food there. I was always wearing gloves and I took like my old blankets and then threw them in the flight. It was the most like, foolproof travel I've ever had. I don't think I touched anything that wasn't cleaned by me myself. And I, in fact, found out that someone on my slide I did have COVID that day. Yeah, but I don't think that got it. Because I know a lot of like, I read this article the other day about how many people have had the disease and not even known they have it. So I don't think I had it. And we don't have enough testing centers in my city to even like see if that's true or not. But I haven't lived my house [28:00] since I got here.

So when I got here to India my dad came to like pick me up and at the airport we like sanitized all of my bags with like disinfecting wipes threw away most of the things that I had, I

changed my clothes, threw those clothes away, and we got home. And the moment I got home, I was put in my room with my like suitcases and I was in minimal contact with everyone for two weeks that was like – yeah. Because I actually live with seven people at home. So it's me, my parents, my grandparents, and my great-grandparents.

MM: Oh wow.

YA: They're old, yeah. And my great grandmother has a respiratory disorder. So if she gets it, it'll be pretty critical. So I just wasn't like, in contact with anyone this whole time. And after my two weeks got over, when I could actually go out, that very day [29:00] there was, the Prime Minister of our country, addressed the entire country and put us on an official lockdown. So I had no way of like, I haven't left my house since I got here like March 15th. So it's like almost a month now, I think more than a month. Yeah.

MM: Yes. And can you go out into a, do you have a yard space or any kind of outdoor?

YA: I stay in an apartment because in Mumbai we mostly just have apartments. So I have like a garden area and my building and a terrace area, but a lot of other people come in there. And I'm not going mainly because I don't want to expose myself to anyone else. And also, I just, I know that I've traveled and I still just don't want to like get, be in contact with people because the travel is a very, it's very scary. Like, I don't know if I have it. I don't think I do. I've showed no symptoms, but I'm still skeptical that if there [30:00] is, like if I have like an asymptomatic gestation of it, it could go to someone else. So I'm just not in contact with anyone. It's like way past the time, but I just don't want to. Yeah.

MM: So I want to switch just, just a couple more questions because I don't want to take up too, too much of your time. But I do think it's important if we get some recorded experiences about, about online learning. So now you've been Brown and RISD have made this transition to online learning and I think they're trying to really, I think people would be interested to know how that's going for you. If you feel like it's successful, if you feel like it's not working very well, tell us about that experience as a student.

YA: So for me personally I've been a little, I haven't enjoyed online learning as much for many reasons. But I think everyone might say that [31:00] because it is in some ways a downgrade to what we had about, obviously. So I, one of my, I think there's one class of mine that truly lives up to what I had earlier. It's a Brown class with a professor called Rick Moody. It's a comic book class. It's very interesting. It's basically I think the biggest issue with that class is that it runs from 2am until 5am my time. And my professor, yeah, my professor has, has offered to record it for me, but it's a discussion based class and I really enjoy it so I didn't want to just view a recording. So because of that my entire sleep schedule, like I live US time now. I just woke up a few hours back. And I'm going to be awake till like 7am my time. And because of that, I've hardly seen the sunlight in the last few weeks. Yeah, [32:00] I've really not seen sunlight I just see the sun rise, and like the boats show up, and then I go to sleep.

MM: Oh wow.

YA: Yeah, it's a little strange that way. But that class I think lives up to the experience although obviously in-person classes are way better, but it's not as bad as RISD studios because we usually have a double studios three times a week. But, we now have like, maybe an hour of class like some of my classes are just half an hour, twenty minutes. And I think that's a big downgrade from like eight hours of studio a week, or like with your professor doing work and getting like a constant upgraded feedback on the work that you're doing. Because I have been corresponding with my teachers via email and zoom meetings, but it's not this constant like back and forth of advice and improvement, it's very like one directional. Do something, send it to them, they give me their feedback, and then I'll be like eh, I don't think I want to like [33:00] improve on it. I've already done it. Which wasn't the case in studio. Yeah. And another class of mine, a Brown class, again in the Literary Department, Literary Arts Department is just not holding classes, which we just have like homework that we submit. That kind of upsets me because our classes were a lot of fun. They were like workshop based, so we would workshop each other's work and like discuss readings. Yeah, so I'm a little upset about that, too.

MM: So and have you experienced any symptoms of cyber sickness at all? Motion sickness due to the Zoom technology? Have you experienced any of that?

YA: I have been getting extremely frustrated with Zoom because I think the app keeps shutting again and again, and I have horrible Wi Fi connection for some reason. So I'm always seeing like glitchey images and I think the worst [34:00] obviously, is the cyber sickness. My eyes pain so much when I go to sleep, and when I wake up because I'm always in front of a screen and, and I don't know, I just am sick of my laptop like, I'm always either seeing my laptop screen, my desktop screen, my iPad screen, my phone screen, I'm always seeing some screen. I miss like, I'm not even like, you know, working, like I'm not writing assignments on paper anymore, I'm typing them out. And yeah, I'm just really tired of seeing a screen. I just want to see a person.

MM: Yes, yeah. Me too. So, as we roll up into, I'm going to ask just two more questions. So as we prepare for next semester, will you stick with this? Will you just continue if something happens and it continues to be online? [35:00]

YA: You, the video kind of dropped in the middle. Could you repeat that?

MM: Oh, okay. If Brown has to do this online learning in the fall, how will you feel about that?

YA: Oh, so actually, I spoke to my advisor about this just a few days ago, my dual degree advisor about how I'm going to do this, because I'm thinking I might take a gap semester if I can because I am not enjoying online learning as much. But I know that it will – I'm anyway graduating a year later than I should have been, because it's a five-year program, not a four-year program. And I don't think I'm ready to graduate six years after I finish high school. If I take a gap year, so I am thinking about probably like, I have Brown classes and RISD classes each semester, so only taking Brown classes next semester, in case we are online, and even if it's a hybrid of being online and in person as Christina [36:00] Paxson's email had mentioned, I think it was in the *Brown Daily Herald*, not an email. Yeah. So I think I might consider only taking Brown classes because I think the interface is a little easier, at least in comparison to studio classes that we have at RISD.

MM: That makes sense. Okay. So my last question for you, because I don't want to take too

much time, is an open question. I want to make sure that you have time to share whatever you feel is important for the record for people looking back 100 years from now and listening to this interview from wherever in the world. What, if I have not asked a question that you wanted me to ask, and you want to share something, for the record, now is the time. So you can share whatever you'd like to have recorded.

YA: I think it's just one thing. Everyone, like all of my friends and people on social media, I think people around the world, have been talking about how quarantine [37:00] is boring and like, restrictive and, you know, I don't know, there's been a lot of criticism about quarantine. But I think like one thing to remember is that we are never going to get a time like this again. I think this is a very important time because we all get to spend time with the people around us and like true quality time which we've never done before. So sometimes I think it's important to like kind of sit your phone down, shut your laptop, and spend time with the people around you. Because I have realized that I'm playing way more board games than I have like the last few years of my life now. I'm doing a lot more art. I started like learning an instrument by myself. Yeah, like I think this is a very important time to just, like to give yourself time.

And for anyone who's seeing it like a hundred years from now, I think the only thing I want to say is that like [38:00] everyone's going through a lot at this time, but we all are going to rise from it. And this is some like, even a hundred years from now there will be people who experience what we are experiencing now on a daily basis. I know there are places in Kashmir, for example, has been in a lockdown for the last year. And like the people in that place have been experiencing what I've been experiencing for a month, and like constantly criticizing on my Instagram page and my Facebook feed. And like I keep saying, "Oh, you know, I want to go to that restaurant, but it's shut," but like people in like Yemen don't even get food. So there are people who are dealing with the issues we're dealing with right now. They've always been dealing with it. And even like a hundred years from now, when no one is dealing with this on such a large level, there will be people in more local cases that are dealing with things like this. And I think it's important to remember that, like while we live [39:00] our lives.

MM: Well, I want to thank you so much for joining me today from so far away, and I'm so far away from you, but it was just lovely to chat like this. So thank you very much and I'm going to

stop the recording now.

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