

X: I THINK THE WORLD WOULD BE A DARKER PLACE WITHOUT EXPRESSION AND WITHOUT ART. BECAUSE WITHOUT THAT RELEASE AND WITHOUT THAT JUST CREATIVE FLOW THAT ART PROVIDES EVERYTHING WOULD BE BOTTLED UP WITHIN PEOPLE AND IT WOULD JUST BE A MORE, FOR LACK OF A BETTER WORD, HOSTILE PLACE.

T: THAT WAS XAVIER SEARLE, A TRUMPET PLAYER. HE CONSIDERS HIMSELF AN ARTIST BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN PLAYING TRUMPET FOR SOME YEARS NOW AND USES IT AS A FORM OF EXPRESSION.

[FADE IN PLAYING]

C: THIS IS I AM, A PODCAST WHERE WE EXPLORE DIFFERENT SOCIAL IDENTITIES.

T: XAVIER IS AN ARTIST, MORE SPECIFICALLY OF THE MUSICAL SORT.

[FADE OUT TRUMPET PLAYING]

[FADE IN SYMPHONY]

X: IT CAN BE A REPRESENTATION OF THINGS PEOPLE THAT PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO ADMIT ABOUT THEMSELVES. FOR INSTANCE IF SOMEONE HAD A LARGE AMOUNT OF ISSUES AND THEY HEAR A PIECE WHERE A COMPOSER HAD A LOT OF ISSUES AS WELL THEY COULD CONNECT WITH IT AND IT WOULD RESONATE WITH THEM AND THEY COULD FEEL LESS ALONE. FIRST TIME I HEAR TCHAIK 5 IT WAS THE FRENCH HORN SOLO AT THE BEGIN OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT.

[BRING UP TCHAIK SYMPHONY]

I GUESS I CAN REALLY ONLY DESCRIBE IT AS TUNNEL VISION. IT WAS SORT OF UH- I JUST ZONED OUT AND THERE WAS ONLY THIS HORN SOLO AND THAT WAS ALL I KNEW IN THE ENTIRE WORLD UNTIL THE SOLO WAS OVER. AND IT WAS

SORT OF ONE OF THOSE MOMENTS WHERE I REALLY WANTED TO BE PART OF  
SOMETHING WHERE THERE ARE PLAYERS OF THAT CALIBER.

[BRING DOWN SYMPHONY]

T: WHAT DEFINED XAVIER AS AN ARTIST WAS HIS DEDICATION TO TRUMPET  
PLAYING.

C: HE'S BEEN PLAYING THE INSTRUMENT SINCE THE SIXTH GRADE BUT HE  
DIDN'T ALWAYS FEEL SO SERIOUS ABOUT IT.

X: WHEN I STARTED I WASN'T REALLY INTO IT AND DIDN'T REALLY CARE THAT  
MUCH. MY HAND COULDN'T FIT AROUND A BASSOON AND I WASN'T GOOD  
ENOUGH AT SAXOPHONE SO THEY MADE ME PLAY TRUMPET. IT WAS SORT OF  
JUST SOMETHING TO DO TO ONE FILL UP MY SCHEDULE AND I HEARD THAT  
BEING IN BAND WAS FUN.

[FADE UP MORE TRUMPET PLAYING]

NOW IT'S PRETTY MUCH THE ONLY THING I DO OR CARE ABOUT.

[BRING UP PLAYING]

[FADE DOWN]

I KEEP PLAYING TRUMPET BECAUSE IT'S PRETTY MUCH ALL THAT I AM  
SYMBOLIZED BY A PIECE OF METAL, AND BY AN IDEA THAT SURROUNDS THE  
TRUMPET. BECAUSE THERE ARE- THERE'S SO MUCH YOU CAN DO ON TRUMPET  
IT'S KIND OF A SPECTRUM OF THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO AND I REALLY LIKE  
THE FREEDOM THAT TRUMPET PROVIDES TO ME TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS  
MYSELF.

[PLAY FAST SCALES CLIP; LAUGHTER DURING INTERVIEW]

X: THAT'S THE SOUNDTRACK TO MY LIFE.

[FADE IN TRUMPET SOLO]

ON THE MOST BASIC LEVEL I SUPPOSE IT'S HELPED ME MAKE FRIENDS THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL BAND AND MARCHING BAND AND JAZZ BAND AND CONCERT BAND AND ORCHESTRA, THAT ONE DOESN'T HAVE BAND IN IT [SNAP] THOUGHT I WAS GONNA SAY BAND AGAIN. [LAUGH] BUT ON A DEEPER LEVEL IT'S REALLY GIVEN ME SOMEWHERE TO GO WHEN I DON'T REALLY HAVE SOMEWHERE ELSE TO TURN WITH MY OWN STRUGGLES AND WHATNOT. SO I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO JUST GET AWAY AND PLAY TRUMPET AND EVERYTHING ELSE GOES AWAY AND BY THE TIME I'M DONE PLAYING IT'S JUST SEEMINGLY BETTER.

[FADE UP TRUMPET]

T: PURSUING MUSIC SO SERIOUSLY HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN AN EASY THING FOR XAVIER.

[SLOW FADE OUT TRUMPET]

X: BECAUSE IT'S METAL AGAINST MY FACE THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH I CAN DO IN A DAY AND I DON'T NECESSARILY HAVE THE ENDURANCE THAT PROFESSIONALS WOULD. MY SOPHOMORE YEAR IN MARCHING BAND WE HAD ABOUT 125 SETS IN THE SHOW AND DURING SET 27 I WAS PLAYING A BLOCK OF CHORDS AND STARTED ON A RELATIVELY HIGH NOTE AND WE WERE AT THIS SHOW AND IT WAS COLD AND IT WAS RAINING IN DAYTON OHIO AND I HIT THIS NOTE AND MY LIP SPLIT DOWN THE MIDDLE, [BRING UP JAZZY PLAYING TONE THAT SOUNDS LIP-SPLITTY]

BECAUSE HOW COLD MY INSTRUMENT AND MY FACE HAD GOTTEN. SO THEN I  
COULDN'T PLAY FOR ALMOST A WEEK BECAUSE IT WAS RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE.

C: [LAUGH] WHAT MAKES THAT *WORTH* IT?

X: BECAUSE...MAKING MUSIC IS ALL THAT MATTERS TO ME. SO, THERE ARE  
GONNA BE MOMENTS OF DISCOMFORT BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M NOT  
GONNA PLAY BECAUSE MUSIC IS SORT OF MY...DRIVING FORCE IN LIFE.  
TRUMPET IS GOING TO BE SOMETHING I SUCCEED AT OR DIE TRYING.

[BRING UP FINAL TRUMPET FANFARE]

T: THIS HAS BEEN THEA NIKOLAOU.

C: AND CAROLINE HEYL.

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[TRUMPET MESS UP]

X: OH. I HATE MYSELF.