**Asher Jay**  ([00:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xRZPD4de6Bsic1EMKBz9JraA-U8vpY3w6vHxB0mrGev7E1rAgxijDq84gpgHJ-b4KHK--loKAVzQlVqjzd2s0o47FBs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=0.19)): Perfect, I've got my tea.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([00:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=S5DUMNUWMz2OxXGY8HHu52p4VxVL6x4M1GR3moU_jfSoepscfSbQyL4vspQX_1NdgjE3v9JKXc5YboV8PIcjTwvPM6U&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2.77)): The Women Mind the Water podcast engages artists in conversation about their work and explores their connection with the ocean. Through these stories, Women Mind the Water hopes to inspire and encourage action to protect the ocean and her creatures. Today, I am speaking with **Asher Jay** , who is a visual artist with a passion for the planet and the diversity of her creatures. Asher holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Fashion Design from Parsons School of Design. She has created work for such well-known names as Prada, Adidas, Mission Blue, and WildAid.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([00:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=kzI3k45Du1BGq8p-IAgIxLeslZc4ihcUk-1l0ls_mLa1bQLbKpZ6pfwYxI_4CBdih_HxzTzgyGxkHIXcXCXYleZUhRs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=40.25)): In 2012, Asher was named a United Nations Women Design Star, and in 2014, she was designated an Emerging Explorer by National Geographic. Asher has two permanent exhibits at the National Geographic Encounter in Times Square. One is a soundscape installation inspired by Sting's song, Message in a Bottle. It consists of 365 decorated plastic bottles, intended to make an ocean of [inaudible 00:01:11]. Welcome, Asher, thank you for being here today. I am pleased that you are able to join me and grateful to Dr. Wallace J. Nichols of Blue Mind fame for introducing us. Asher-

**Asher Jay**  ([01:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=EvDI0ogGNEcOVv1kNfGGe6XmTIlF8phJ9_bqCltGe87VVjEFN01xlSNmePt0Vh7JeyLrQv3MxClI_16k77ZL1rb6dag&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=84.32)): Real pleasure to be here.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([01:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=HQ5j9upz3AwTDQ3d9gN2XnAXXqGge6YWnY8u3jFA_ufsFHdOPCX4GD8_YjqpWFVCVxFdl-2UH8h-ZlQWKWcHEsUmcwU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=86.17)): Thank you for saying so. Asher, what inspired you to become an artist?

**Asher Jay**  ([01:31](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3Icsc7dwkfnqsTqvnl23JBDWJZ_kKjqNwjjigyptGKdmnPo08BqX_22czCsFYWOqzLtvn74HUZ_wskndYU9f7MpRd28&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=91.81)): I think when I was younger, I always saw visual media as an immediately responsive way to connect to life and the world around, and I was just a very tactile, sensorily oriented little tot, and whatever I could get my hands into or on was what I gravitated towards. Whether it was playing in the mud and sculpting the outdoors, just raw earth, and I was one of those fortunate kids that actually got to have an outdoor lifestyle growing up. I got to play in the mud, touch the earth, which I think a lot of children these days are deprived of, because they get behind their screens. Because of that, I realized that everything around me could be connected with in a very personal, hands-on way, and I could change the way things looked by touching them and sculpting them and moving them around.

**Asher Jay**  ([02:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=XIvUBBi50YqVQyVmUgYhCRYqpx6vm6s-4N2HQK71cDveBam3IeIEb9j-Q63jlOfddxKCVWW_n3V6FINjk1wTwgyJ7go&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=146.62)): That's what brought me into the creative expression space, because the Earth does that daily, whether it's reverse sculpting through lands, or whether it's the ocean moving silt around the ocean floor, or the carnes moving the way that we scatter ourselves on its surface, everything is always moving and shaping itself and the things around it, and I figured the best way to be a part of that schematic of life, that flow of being, was to create and participate. And so I began creating with initially, literally just mud in the backyard, I used to doodle a lot on sand and in the sand pit.

**Asher Jay**  ([03:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=li07kQcd3AlS8BxoGmeu3jNbvV-IvfoBJOQCI6N3uhq_d1w43PSm1MBorwkYo6JsO_EKTlL58kfKpbLmpn5ceyq7xrI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=187.09)): As I grew up, I realized I could play with crayons and other materials that my mother availed me and I realized there was something I was very good at instinctually and inherently, and I took a lot of Zen pleasure in it. It makes me feel very present and meditative and mindful and quiet. It gives me some tranquility that I don't acquire through any other way of output. So, I think creativity has always been my way of meditation and connection to life.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([03:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=YAwMz-LTBUNm6a7I_WaluYIX1Dzog-kEAguOOuoyv7YsEGc2DgT4WWWw5vyiAuDkVTFh248_In072cXNrfwt8onPdLk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=221.05)): I can strongly relate to what you're saying about the changes that are constantly going on, and playing in the mud, because I live in Maine and I live on a cove, and it's very tidal. When I first moved here and people were saying "your Cove is tidal." What they meant was, you get mud twice a day. And the mud changes all the time and we have people who come to clam, and so it's almost like they're building sand castles. So I can really relate to what you're saying.

**Asher Jay**  ([04:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=b6DDI-cjhhnHyWgnAaKzyGJrLhAkxJ8tszapjUNppqV7PYRgL-EsAgcF5JIXPsn-kchBIXxtcuvvv_-kjVkoq2rsWpI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=256.94)): Yeah (affirmative). If you don't look at it as a negative, nature is always dynamic and expressive, and sometimes it can be torrential and explosive and extreme and disastrous to our way of doing things. It can be disruptive. But other times it can be something that allows for co-creation or moments of true connection where you meet halfway. I think we are the ones that put labels on it, but if you don't put labels on it, it's all part of the experience of just being on this fragile, highly volatile, highly emulative experience and biosphere that is constantly creating and putting things out there and changing the way things are. So it's, it's a very dynamic state.

**Asher Jay**  ([04:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=FaMtyyBkF1ZZsxDSj9ip2abKILWicfIa6CH0B_9NQxBDcXo02KwonNmF0PVxrvM7ac_VOb1veUabRW6TtRNCJoTZXgs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=299.63)): I think we like a certain continuity and consistency, which nature is not about. It's about raw, unfiltered, unabandoned expression, and that can go any which way. I think we are very about being systematic and stable and we curate our lawns and put everything into a state of landscaping. And, that's just a way of us saying, this is how much we want to express our dominion, and that's not really what real creation's about. Real creation is a lot more raw and unfettered.

**Asher Jay**  ([05:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wW4p77pDYOx31UzQAj3b91CUS3QWN0CFP_AfE846AWaSj41zIC99__3os58TAclJyLeSmZncWNAdf75HagzfAYY9O-M&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=330.55)): I think if you're truly trying to be creative in that state, it's very organic and it's what comes through you. It's not just what comes out of you based on what you've thought, because it's not as rational. It's more intuitive, and it's more in the flow state. That's why I seldom take credit for anything I've created. Because when I am creating, I almost get them as visions. I only see the finished piece and then it just flows through me. So I almost feel like it's been given to me to translate, and it's not something I've come up with from my own mind space. I think it's the act of co-creation. I don't like being the one to say that I solely thought of it because I think it comes through you.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([06:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=iQq3UtFNFFUnrgAgdgXFgUeJcXuDOdcMPu9XnghEsU7hiSl0qHqUQSxXOTRzobR-ZOObQUYkgXRfL7MGUNc_E_iuMB4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=374.68)): I like that idea of co-creation.

**Asher Jay**  ([06:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=VVFQEVQFJEWXYpsxkUv7TWDMO9jPn7kBHpNRe6gEfZSKzpfxLGaJqCsd6XpCRRfI9TeG3Rjb1aW_uzwXmocD6FasMsw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=377.27)): Yeah (affirmative).

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([06:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=T06csbuoG38gghW4J-9nTFoooPIS5ecojp3oWlgf3IFDIPmMxgrymOW_aiUN74Kb9B65YsLT_0pBmU4mTERwy-BshZg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=379)): It seems you were driven to tell stories with powerful messages. What experiences in your life have motivated you to tell such stories?

**Asher Jay**  ([06:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=BxJCZw745I6BDocXYye4czIeRek-sDfS-wKRTqjEoDDJmHpD2nTjfU93Mj6SAll5UM43me2cUz9QS84YW9vvJ_VxCyM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=388.72)): I've always been very passionate about wildlife and nature. It's been a part of every single thing I've done since I was born. I think the first book I was introduced to was a coffee table book about deep sea creatures. I was captivated by the black double page spreads with deep sea alien looking beings that I couldn't believe I shared the same space with, that I was living in this ecosystem that would also have these other living things that look so different from me and had such different ways of interacting with its immediate environment and contacts. I've always had this great fascination for things that were different and then finding points of similarity and connection with them. And from that young age, from the first time I saw that coffee table book, I've always wanted to speak out for them, share that fascination and magic with others, and find ways to preserve that magic so the next generation can also be born to connect with and know of these beings that you can share time and space with.

**Asher Jay**  ([07:36](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=W77_8pde1x3uawdKRO7COunJkY_z7U6QfvNnvKzVVkYMQdyTDOBXcXf4iVLkNxvMxcxDPjoUT1NUfX-rPtTG4rhc050&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=456.27)): I think it's a rare privilege that we often take for granted and can be out of sight, out of mind about, but it is something that if we don't make conscious effort to protect, we'll stand to lose forever.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([07:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=khjs7is_dI_4BZ3IRc_enxLmqL-R1USjPtQet2fAbuOx_lRNdbt36qzQsEo0Pa4-59aBeqRXQYA4_IfRwXLSRtsUojA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=470.06)): Sometimes powerful messages have negative reactions. So I'm wondering, have you experienced resistance to your artwork? For example, have you ever encountered a problem with displaying them in a public setting?

**Asher Jay**  ([08:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=7a1xpe2pbYCLp8q1OYmFvrNu6Ub3f08Ffzl6Fwy1EU5KUTXdaluzPDixPexH5BbtJQUeSMJm-zLeRTGc89_uuSg1vEc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=486.28)): Yes. I think there's always going to be mixed opinions about anything you put out there, and that's the beauty of humanity. We're a very complex species and can seldom find consensus on anything that comes from the mind. That's why I think emotion is a greater way to connect to a larger audience.

**Asher Jay**  ([08:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=17yR7TrLjExeWwaImHAtytreHpsv45c7Y23wZMzWnKF_rUCTnGIZj2YuC5IDxMJcQO8JpAaaGirUlPiDU6rnhUxJSsY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=502.72)): I also think sensorial input allows for less conclusive messages and therefore everybody can get a little bit of something from the content that you're putting out. So, I really find that art is more of a fostering, bridging medium conduit than say, a story that's written up, or looking at data and statistics that have been visualized. Because even with that, in a way, it's conclusive to many minds. And the minute you feed a conclusion to somebody, they're resistant to it based on what they previously know, and that can be disinformation. They might know something true, totally false, but if they believe that to be true within themselves, they will fight you every step of the way in assimilating this new input that challenges what they believe to be true within themselves. So if you're challenging thought patterns and people have come to align those thought patterns as a sense of self, as an identity, then what you're challenging is not just what they're thinking, but who they inherently are, and that results in a lot of friction.

**Asher Jay**  ([09:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=A0xNmAfE5sTbg4QMkddsb9tkL9iWXNGZRwyfLov-lKxDkUo0d1_GHJGOa6yMMczJFwZAkonTdHGvBiLtrXqpmygAiGQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=566.47)): I've always been mindful to create works that allow people to step in at their own pace in their own way based on what they previously know. I'm often looking at people who are not in the know and trying to reach them in a language and at a space that is comfortable, welcoming, and accepting of their current state of what we could qualify as ignorance, but it is a current state of not knowing what it is that you're trying to enlighten them about. So if you are really mindful and inclusive in your approach, then I think people are less likely to fight you tooth and nail about it. I've seen that far more so now moving from Manhattan, New York City, to Montana, where it's a completely different demographic than what I was raised in and used to. [crosstalk 00:10:13]

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([10:15](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=O6uAYNUX50nJH1C_HRBY7QI1By7IbqLUTAEW0dw4YcOZagrKhjEtTNk7OBNXDzWBmq_rE2gTcO1EoI6A1D9TJhC7p9E&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=615.41)): I bet. Yeah (affirmative). So, what are your steps in selecting a message and the medium as an artist to bring that message to life?

**Asher Jay**  ([10:23](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=i7TuuuoTPDNf8foOn3alyiBg9hRWOEI6CeSiXCmwFSCoa_Xrtjx5jXQrEfSqVZFC3yReEpGb1jZzw1vBBU5GPimWlHM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=623.27)): I think it starts with looking at the issue that you are passionate about; your personal orientation to it if the problem can be articulated in the simplest most cohesive way. And once that design problem has been framed, within that lies the answer. So it already drafts the solutions that you want to visualize, or get people to visualize, by looking at the problem set very, very starkly. And then of course, what is the cultural context, or the society into which you're interjecting that message. It has to be expressed in a way through motifs, through colors, in a way that is conducive to that particular demographic and that cultural context, that milieu. That's something I calibrate for extensively. For instance, in China, when I did a whole campaign on Blood Ivory and Rhino Horn, I had to make sure I chose the right shade of red. If I chose the wrong shade of red, it would actually suggest prosperity, like, go kill more rhinos, go kill more elephants, as opposed to saying, don't do this. So I think it matters how you, what elements and motifs you use to communicate your core message.

**Asher Jay**  ([11:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Wh8HMg_iq8fSF4VBDW-2YdZMsuAOJywOfcjSxlQ7-6v-9NetX2UAabfObnm5-JackXyXOY0qai6g5Qa8Mh9JxBhXr_w&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=694.56)): And then finally, I would say, embed emotional triggers. Because people are emotional creatures, they come to you because they can, not because they thought things through and the data added up and they got the numbers. That's seldom the real reason why we care passionately. That passion comes from feeling, not from thinking. I always urge people to feel more and think less and come from that heart space.

**Asher Jay**  ([12:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=LJLiAQjL40obbnARsD3oJ3DJs4RTdOCxRO4yEmefdi_c4-NybLpgOD7Stl7NKbwQ-ExApndp9ZIM1TOo8ACAATC-Al0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=720)): How do you get someone who's never put their foot in the ocean to feel the magnanimity and the graciousness with which the ocean engulfs and embraces your body when you start walking into it? You can't bring that alive for someone that has never experienced that, unless you show them through feeling. It's not a thought that makes you feel that level of suspension and immersion in something so much larger than you.

**Asher Jay**  ([12:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=fE3QNrsRdl5otBuUl6oCnUp4VoUPMnYYSh6mdRRMt6yBmIcWpv-dIeHlsCLczDoog6DRx7xwU2iUG2VV1kLrw8lCtZE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=742.51)): I think you bring things alive by sharing the experiential quality by immersing them in the emotional state of being with that living, breathing thing. And the ocean is living and breathing. We might think of it as just a water resource, but it's not. It's not something you can just completely extract from because it not only sustains all of this life, but it's also constantly changing its own chemistry and state of being. I think we don't really "get" ocean when we think of it as just a body of water that we can go and recreate.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([12:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=sXmfpAId5f2QJLGwp3aIB8Y-7Dhs0dwPBVXVsf_jcD0r4r0SV9X-cxoiQAFGtck__V_YxIrNz8RACu0lPdMg6ca0u-0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=779.53)): Wow. I really feel your passion. Can you tell me a story about a particular piece of artwork that reflects on the ocean? And when you're discussing that work, can you describe it for those who are listening to an audio only version of the podcast?

**Asher Jay**  ([13:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=y1G36wbSIDwKBXeHCkxJLASZyCii99DTrmT9exWBAV22tCz9Uan3qsipUQ8M9sVGAb15POi3CYgdDDj4-U5kmW2Ejrk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=796.57)): Sure. I created this particular work on the Whale Shark, and I think it's called Fallen Night Sky. I don't remember the titles of my own work because I don't remember things for sport, but that's just my brain. But, I'll tell you this: when I created that work, it was the first encounter I had with a Whale Shark. I couldn't believe the size of its mouth. It's a filter feeder, and when it was swimming toward me and it opened and gulped, all the phytoplankton, suspending the water column, it was awe-inspiring because you can see this creature coming at you. But it's so mindful of you, but it's doing its own thing. It just needs the space to be a Whale Shark. Every time you're dancing in the water with it and moving around it, you're actually creating that space for it to just be, and you're not infringing upon that.

**Asher Jay**  ([14:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=yM5z4PW3CWhAbnPxQPU6L1C10NQDQQo6qJsL4pvv0NHybqNU2iTDYEzd3fuSWZHU-2Bj0zeuw4982KjjQWrj7FKgIKs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=851.4)): I think when we do it in an unsustainable way, which I also saw on that trip, with ecotourism, there were too many boats on the water. Some of the propellers were cutting these whale sharks. The worst part of it was to see the microfilaments and the oil slicks and the debris from the boat and the litter in the water column that the Whale Shark was also consuming every time it opened its colossal mouth. I wanted to bring all that alive in a work, so I did a composite where I pieced together from all the debris I collected along the shores, where the Whale Sharks are residents to, in the water. I collected everything from the shoreline and created this composite image of a Whale Shark to show that what you eat is how you are. Its state of life is compromised when it's sieving out plastic debris and phytoplankton as its primary diet.

**Asher Jay**  ([15:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=uBwzO-8AYp6afZPdyKDiqS0fDR5V7OjT06ihlMa7WsMW9FC4gS4I8UsnqOHL7bU7-Gavc61w1ZqKgdQfNVXhIP68gGs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=904.19)): That is something we should be morally conscious of and should be stewards at the helm, steering the ship very differently than we are at present. It was a way for me to make people more mindful of their littering, their garbage footprint, and packaging footprint on a daily basis, and the fact that what you do in a geographical location far removed from maybe Isla Mujeres or Holbox can still have impact on those Whale Sharks living in that area.

**Asher Jay**  ([15:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Y2MBRdASoWE_WEjCy5qXTAaC8mNsEZwBIdfqn8MmuXF7Xz885r1mUP7aWIEiFiCA_w4MmvmV_yUdh2EtAnNhcCe0Vlo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=933.47)): I urge both tourists and individuals living everywhere to be super conscious of what they take into their households and where they put their wallets, because what you spend your money on is [inaudible 00:15:44] showing up for the world around you as a consumer.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([15:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NsotZblPvFWkw7JB75h0btMpehgRNa9UKLQvY3Dp-CnJgiog6AQ3mhFvW-NDARDYZFmn695X8AxVZFr2kctPOI_mPT4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=948.19)): How is your art an expression of you and your view of your world?

**Asher Jay**  ([15:53](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RFUGDu6KAKgI3qDMDtFPxKjwm_6hE_Of76MwjwlBxP4ctPl_rDyv846Dumc50xsy0n3HG1QMME4d6Te7KkH5ieiOeX4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=953.64)): My art is a way for me to show that I am receptive to what the world wants me to convey to whoever is receptive in that moment, to the way in which it's asking to be conveyed, if that makes sense. I know what comes through me in a moment is meant to come through me for a specific audience, and it goes out of me to reach that audience in the language at which they will definitely receive that message. So it always translates because again, it's not coming just from me where I go home and I think, "Oh, now I'm going to go create a Whale Shark work." I'm just doing my thing. I could just be living my life and then all of a sudden I get obsessed. It'll just hit me like a ten ton brick in the head and it's all I can think about, it's occupied my whole existence until all I see is this Whale Shark that's being suspended and I have to create it.

**Asher Jay**  ([16:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3lbagX6xMDMWM_hK5-2fcZdjaR274oTgu1TSgnLtWxoy5EScY4ldQLBs8tMOGh3NzltdJ-gBwt-bpRf3oC9psIA1N70&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1005.54)): If it doesn't come out of me, then it's almost like being selfish and withholding of what is being asked of me in that moment if that feeling makes sense- sometimes I speak artist and it can just be lost in translation. I feel like it's humbling because something bigger is being asked of you. How can you not give that of yourself? When I go out in nature, I'm receiving so much, I'm so fostered. I feel so expanded. I reclaimed so much of my being, especially when I'm in the ocean. I cannot explain the magic of diving. If I could just have fins and a gill, I would be underwater all the time. I resent The Little Mermaid for giving up her fins for her feet, stupidest decision ever. If I could rewrite that story, I would put her back in the water and give her the freedom she should've had instead of being an under-aged [inaudible 00:17:37].

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([17:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=riUakc6jJbZLTWIwv6IDeW0K-M7MBZ3gBpgjuueslMFTKD4Y8Ry92d89d6c-t-EXWbUC2uFKPdVZOi8sS2awa8zS--4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1057.76)): All right. So you would give The Little Mermaid the advice to keep her fins. What advice-

**Asher Jay**  ([17:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=_Y_tvzb4oz3FZ1NJ9uR5WKYHp6DsMd9ojzSDLNuJB6TqFl3rKX9qn1eZmZNXZPuTdn9gaFMZB65NHC-YSvg2c2NFKSc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1065.02)): [crosstalk 00:17:45] Best advice of my life. But I think it's just a matter of when my work comes out of me, it's because I care so extensively and it brings out so much in me that is positive that I have to give back. I think that is a moral responsibility of every storyteller and creator out there, to give back, because when you're out in nature and you're inspired to take a photograph when you're taking an excerpt or video, that clip comes from a spontaneous moment that is being orchestrated by life. And it is therefore your responsibility to ensure the perpetuity of that life. To not give back means you're amputating the chain of paying it forward. And if nature's giving to you, how can you not give back to nature? It may not be to the exact same ecosystem, it may not be to the specific animals that you're captured, but it should be to the larger context that protects and preserves that being for another day. So as an artist, that's been my value system, integrity, and moral responsibilities to always find ways to give back to that which has fostered me.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([18:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=u7YyvjoK0Sl7pObm6mSfj7dz7JAj1l9P4neu5BJpD_t11MQpiKu3aFGXQBGl-fphpimBTDgjHMf2-wlm83snlU6mjJo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1129.69)): So what advice would you give to others to wish to express their passion for the environment?

**Asher Jay**  ([18:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=GbkerC3MJRvAYqoH6qvv3wRmcNSHW2emSW4V8PUyya0GxiAOrMABScJb48pQcVwqjBYl12JZhF5yrlZ4QQnKkq-U5DA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1136.83)): It's never too early to start. You can start right now, so don't hold off for another minute, for another day, for a better moment, for a time when things are more conducive, to earn more money so then you can give back more to charity, stop procrastinating. Start now. Because things that are waiting for you to show up. Things are waiting for your voice to speak up for them because their voice is being eclipsed. I think it is our responsibility to be conscious of that risk, that burden we bear, the cross we bear from having the colossal footprint that we have on this planet.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([19:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=43ka05n9MeTrzZ2eWBdWC5EOfwPyeSsCDQN2oxG7Yyj3rfjEG8Wjwm22rMZz7CsgEJUfQJLAAePKIBNsdEAaw6CokvY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1172.71)): So Asher, I don't think you would do what you do if you didn't think that art had the power to move people, but do you think that art can move a person to engage with the world in a more positive way?

**Asher Jay**  ([19:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=kyIv-5IvAxiGUu2sW1PQ4f1-tV4SkJcE3X2TkUP_dstmT-cxJe0eM0rHgZ7lq8sgEgPPt6w0Kg9wqX_eK3Uw8WMWQCg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1188.14)): Absolutely. It's a weapon of mass construction. I think it allows for people to come together, it allows for people to see and personalize it to their own context, to internalize it in a way that they could have never expressed within themselves. It's almost like you give them the building blocks to create that context or sentence within themselves through which they can say, "Hey, I care." It's a way of empowering how they can show up. My art is actually used a lot in protests and demonstrations and things like that for actual campaigning. So I've seen my work being printed on placards and posters and banners, and being carried by seven year old kids, or being tattooed onto a person's back because that's how deeply they identify with the content and the layout and the visual expression of something.

**Asher Jay**  ([20:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ANzQJKUxe7Qs7fziYuUfte6HWSdSn0ex9urKX8d5rjGI5zdVch4Igl0Iatg2pOHDbZx3XQTWBaCbTi8ga6XX2XcrdG0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1241.75)): I think art is deeply personal. I think it's very intimate. It's a conscious language that can deployed intentionally to allow people to feel a true moment of connection to life at large, to feel a part of instead of apart from life on earth.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([20:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=XBDG0UCG64wYxR3lNEWP0yKAUiL33JQAXxZO8O8YjPiFoFD7PlXnut9dBOOCU_Adq17PTydOdnsG4Fz0iMJveWNw03k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1256.68)): Alright, let's talk afterwards. I'll do the outtake and we'll go from there. Thanks.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([21:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=sDgvXfiIEntFceJZvzH-P002Sp6POY_gXPz7gFCim0NJFgEBwEQewUP3uu2kqFGYZ5VCzGnZ8LjhU55ohcnhbNC7jEA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1263.58)): I'd like to remind our listeners that I've been Speaking with Asher Jay in the Women Mind the Water podcast series. This series can be viewed on WomenMindtheWater.com. An audio only version of this podcast is available on the Women Mind the Water website, iTunes, and Spotify. Women Mind the Water is grateful to Jane Rice for her song, Women of Water. All rights for Water Mind the Water name and logo belong to Pam Terrace Olson.

**Pam Ferris-Olson**  ([21:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=zU01mDzma6T9mbfxUu5Zbf1V43rtl29g7S9Qo2clXKg5Ra80-47ZwR2Yti3U53_Gi1TdfG1zv9axcGWfGoWrCsTJjZ4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1293.2)): This is Pam Terrace Olson. Thank you for listening.