

LOCAL STORIES

## Meet Raymie Iadevaia: Artist

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We had the good fortune of connecting with Raymie Iadevaia and we've shared our conversation below.

**Hi Raymie, what habits do you feel helped you succeed?**

For me, when I think about the word and concept of success, it really boils down to something basic and foundational: the ability to make things every day. If I can make something or be in the studio for any amount of time, that is success for me. It's like what Van Gogh said to his brother Theo, "not a day without a line." I would like to think that the studio is a space where I don't have to think about financial success (maybe that's naive and foolish, but my studio is a space where I can practice foolishness and frivolity while also 'practicing imagination,' to use a Jane Bowles quote), and instead practice cultivating success through creative failure. One habit or practice that I started at the end of 2019 and that has carried me and focused me despite all the uncertainty of life during the pandemic has been to start the day off with a cup of coffee and drawing for the time it takes to finish the coffee. It has helped me stay in touch with my feelings, my body, my hands, my senses. I've been using it as a time and space to reflect, and to create a cavity without the news, without social media, and instead to listen to my surroundings, and myself: all my fears and hopes, and everything in between.





**Can you open up a bit about your work and career? We're big fans and we'd love for our community to learn more about your work.**

I make paintings and drawings that are amalgams of memories, observations, and imagined spaces. I feel that I shuffle a deck of cards when I paint or draw, sifting through flashes or glimpses of imagery that feels very familiar while also trying to explore strange and undiscovered places. Each day there is a new hand that's dealt. Some paintings have been using the same hand for weeks and months, other paintings I have to discard a lot to find a good hand to play. However, to extend the metaphor further, sometimes when I play that hand, I lose. The painting falls flat, and I have to scrape it off and start again. The palimpsest is a tool that I use to reshuffle and see what new combinations can be explored. My favorite paintings and drawings throughout art history that I find the most compelling and that I've always come back to, are the ones that are constantly shuffling and reshuffling my senses and my thoughts all at once. Nothing is static or standing still but everything is fluid and constantly in transit. I want my paintings to feel open and closed at the same time, open to new experiences, but closed and contained, sealed, like a snow globe or a ship in a bottle, or perhaps more apropos and maybe a risky cliché, like a corked message in a bottle cast out to sea, the painting lives and endures in the choppy waters while waiting to connect. When I'm able to get into a mode of pushing the painting far enough to not overwork it but also not leave it too soon, that's when I get really excited in the studio and when the work feels like it's at its most interesting. But those moments are far and few between, at least with the paintings. But every day I get closer. Drawing is a different matter; there is a feeling that things are slowly coming into light or resolution. Like a dimmer switch, where I can anticipate where the drawing is going before I get there, and then when I do get there new decisions can be made, like is it interesting? Or does it lead to another vantage point in this set of imagery? Or did this drawing lead to a dead end and now I have to back-track to the trail head of this composition, or this perspective, or this subject, etc. Right now, the biggest challenge that I'm slowly working through is to bridge my comfort zone of small paintings with large scale works. I have a big painting that has been in my studio since the beginning of the pandemic that is slowly developing in clarity. I think it's close to being resolved, but the fear of not knowing when it's done has been the most present challenge in my studio practice.





**If you had a friend visiting you, what are some of the local spots you'd want to take them around to?**

There is so much to see, eat, and explore in Los Angeles, but the places that I find the most inspiring are also the most unique to the city: The Griffith Observatory and by extension Griffith Park is the first place to visit. It's free, open to the public, and on a clear day you can see everything from the cosmic to the cosmopolitan. The domed architecture of the planetarium is spellbinding and gives me feelings of the otherworldly and the extraterrestrial. From the high views and lookouts of Griffith Park, the journey to the land's edge to contemplate the sparkly horizon of the Pacific would make for a great trip. Will Rogers State Beach is one of my favorites, its quaint and quietly nestled in between the large expanse of Malibu and the more dense spectacle of Santa Monica Pier. Descanso Gardens is another magical place as well as The Huntington Botanical Gardens. Both have their own inimitable charm, one on a smaller intimate scale, the latter more palatial. Getting lost in the succulent garden will make you feel like Alice in Wonderland meets Dr. Seuss. But find your way to the Japanese Garden, where the intensity of the bonsai trees will stir the imagination.

**The Shoutout series is all about recognizing that our success and where we are in life is at least somewhat thanks to the efforts, support, mentorship, love and encouragement of others. So is there someone that you want to dedicate your shoutout to?**

During this past year, especially during the last 9 months of this pandemic, I am full of gratitude for my wife, Laura Bouza, who has been a constant source of love and support and has been with me through all the self-doubt, the anxiety, as well as the successes and moments of realization, renewal, and growth.

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