

TRANSCRIPT- ARTIST CONVERSATION with Lewis deSoto

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00:04:04.710 --> 00:04:07.950

Josh Garrett-Davis: Okay. Welcome, everybody. I'm going to get us started here.

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00:04:10.020 --> 00:04:10.770

Josh Garrett-Davis: Welcome

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00:04:14.520 --> 00:04:22.290

Josh Garrett-Davis: I'm Josh Dr. Davis. I'm the gamble Associate Curator of Western history. Popular culture and firearms museum with the American West.

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00:04:23.310 --> 00:04:31.740

Josh Garrett-Davis: First I want to acknowledge that the museum sits on the homelands of the tongue of the Gabrielle Lino people and that they're the traditional caretakers of the land. The museum is on and

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00:04:32.370 --> 00:04:42.810

Josh Garrett-Davis: We continue to work with them and learn from them from their knowledge of this place and I next one to think very much are the Autry's generous donors and members for making this program happen.

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00:04:44.250 --> 00:04:51.870

Josh Garrett-Davis: So I'm honored with the with along with the Autry's Trustees and my fellow staff members to welcome you to the artists Autry artists conversations

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00:04:52.650 --> 00:05:02.160

Josh Garrett-Davis: With a look at some some pieces in our latest exhibition. When I remember I see red. So this exciting exhibition was organized by the Crocker Art Museum

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00:05:02.640 --> 00:05:17.940

Josh Garrett-Davis: With support from the United Auburn Indian community and this presentation at the Autry is made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, of course, any views findings or recommendations in the exhibition do not necessarily reflect those now.

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00:05:20.880 --> 00:05:23.070

Josh Garrett-Davis: So when I remember I see read

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00:05:24.990 --> 00:05:36.720

Josh Garrett-Davis: Explorers California seminal role as an artistic hub and source of inspiration for major talents stylistic movements and political themes prominent within Native American art today.

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00:05:39.060 --> 00:05:50.010

Josh Garrett-Davis: And with me is one of the artists who is whose work is a part of this exhibition is Louis de Soto welcome less he's coming in from his studio

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00:05:52.860 --> 00:05:57.420

Josh Garrett-Davis: And so the day the exhibition. When I remember I see red

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00:05:59.040 --> 00:06:10.950

Josh Garrett-Davis: Has a wide range of artists from across native California working in a lot of different media over a long period of time. And I mean, just as a personal note,

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00:06:11.550 --> 00:06:29.940

Josh Garrett-Davis: For myself, I have been at least partly studying or learning about Native American history for a couple of decades now, and my knowledge of California native history or I came to the archery was very minimal. I think there's a long ways to go in terms of

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00:06:31.260 --> 00:06:41.880

Josh Garrett-Davis: California Native people being visible. A both here in California and and beyond. But there have been some great

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00:06:43.170 --> 00:06:50.310

Josh Garrett-Davis: There's been some great progress made on that front. In the last decade or so, and with us. Hopefully this exhibition is part of

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00:06:51.930 --> 00:06:54.180

Josh Garrett-Davis: More, more progress in that direction.

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00:06:55.980 --> 00:06:56.490

Josh Garrett-Davis: So,

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00:06:57.750 --> 00:07:01.650

Josh Garrett-Davis: So with Lewis. I've been working with him for

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00:07:03.240 --> 00:07:23.490

Josh Garrett-Davis: A few years now on bringing a major sculpture of his Korea, which is a an art car pickup truck that's going to be featured prominently in our upcoming core gallery renovation imagined West's and that'll open in about a year and so

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00:07:24.600 --> 00:07:44.160

Josh Garrett-Davis: It's been a real pleasure to get to know us and even to get to visit him when we picked up the picked up the pickup pickup pickup and so we will be able to do more programming about that that project as we get closer to the to the day but today we're going to focus on the

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00:07:46.740 --> 00:07:50.910

Josh Garrett-Davis: The when I remember I see red and the context of that work.

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00:07:52.440 --> 00:07:56.400

Josh Garrett-Davis: So I'm not sure if we were able to get the images.

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00:07:58.080 --> 00:08:00.330

Josh Garrett-Davis: Ready. By now we can

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00:08:01.350 --> 00:08:07.020

Josh Garrett-Davis: But maybe first. It's just to give give a little bit more time Lewis.

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00:08:08.730 --> 00:08:13.500

Josh Garrett-Davis: How I know, I know you were able to see a version of this exhibition, a little bit and you're kind of familiar with some of the artists, but

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00:08:14.310 --> 00:08:25.980

Josh Garrett-Davis: How does your work speak to the sort of themes of the major thing sort of art political activism cultural revitalization that have happened in California in the past.

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00:08:27.120 --> 00:08:27.810

Josh Garrett-Davis: 50 years I

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00:08:28.830 --> 00:08:43.080

Lewis deSoto: Guess I think my work is a little bit more sneaky in that it it has a sort of innocent flavor to it and relationship to the kinds of media that I use in the end. And what it looks like.

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00:08:44.160 --> 00:08:57.870

Lewis deSoto: Initially, and then the the meanings are sort of the, I don't know, built into some of the reference points we might have for thinking about culture or the world of landscape.

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00:08:59.430 --> 00:09:11.070

Lewis deSoto: And history, obviously. So that is one of the differences that I can see. And actually when when the show first came up came about. I thought

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00:09:11.880 --> 00:09:24.480

Lewis deSoto: Is my work really sort of activist and then I realized that it can be seen that way in reference to decoding what the work is about, but it's not necessarily

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00:09:26.250 --> 00:09:27.930

Lewis deSoto: Saying it out front.

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00:09:28.980 --> 00:09:39.060

Lewis deSoto: It's really sort of unpacking some of the presuppositions that people in the culture have about let's say the landscape or about the history of

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00:09:40.440 --> 00:09:53.430

Lewis deSoto: Of the history of the United States, and even pre United States, the history of the new world, particularly interactions with the French and interactions with English

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00:09:55.050 --> 00:10:03.660

Lewis deSoto: Despite the interactions, a native people have had with the US Army, for example. So some of that goes back to that.

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00:10:05.010 --> 00:10:05.670

Lewis deSoto: And

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00:10:07.140 --> 00:10:13.500

Lewis deSoto: So it was interesting. Then I it allowed me to kind of see the work in a new light by the neighbors.

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00:10:14.670 --> 00:10:23.070

Lewis deSoto: I kept in them in the galleries and I could kind of see where the curators are coming from and relationship to decoding network, which

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00:10:24.540 --> 00:10:27.720

Lewis deSoto: helped me see it better. Actually, yeah. Yeah.

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00:10:28.080 --> 00:10:32.610

Josh Garrett-Davis: Well, it looks like we have a slides ready so we could bring up one image sort of

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00:10:32.970 --> 00:10:37.800

Josh Garrett-Davis: Sure important image from the gallery. Can you talk about this. And there's a lot to unpack here.

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00:10:38.490 --> 00:10:45.120

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, so this piece is called the restoration. It was done in 2005 and

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00:10:46.560 --> 00:11:00.450

Lewis deSoto: I had this flash that related to my interests in painting and photography because Vermeer, as you know, use the lens to

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00:11:01.920 --> 00:11:17.760

Lewis deSoto: To help create his images and as a photographer. I was very interested in that kind of tradition. But then I was looking at his at his images and I saw that they had a lot of commonalities and relationship to

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00:11:19.620 --> 00:11:30.000

Lewis deSoto: Some ology reference points that I wanted to follow up on. So if you were to actually take this image and divided into two. It's actually proportionally.

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00:11:30.450 --> 00:11:41.400

Lewis deSoto: The size of two Vermeer paintings at side by side and they impact, about three or four of his paintings and they get distributed throughout this particular photo.

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00:11:42.600 --> 00:11:44.460

Lewis deSoto: You can see the girl on the right.

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00:11:46.050 --> 00:11:54.570

Lewis deSoto: She's represented another painting of a woman playing a kind of pro piano piece Pirtle piano

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00:11:55.650 --> 00:12:03.990

Lewis deSoto: Is his paintings had old masters paintings. So I have actually a back. There's a Gerhard Richter that I own.

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00:12:05.010 --> 00:12:10.590

Lewis deSoto: The floor is the same patterns, the floor of his paintings, there's usually somebody

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00:12:11.100 --> 00:12:27.120

Lewis deSoto: Or there's usually a chandelier, and the images. So there's this person taking a chandelier down, there's usually a map. There's usually a mirror, there's usually some sort of cloth or tapestry. So you see that on the left, and I'm sort of to take the place of

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00:12:28.620 --> 00:12:41.160

Lewis deSoto: Kind of the Girl with a Pearl Earring I have this car, which is a 1964 Grand Prix. It's a Pontiac Grand Prix. And we also have this mechanic.

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00:12:43.470 --> 00:12:45.450

Lewis deSoto: Whose name checks his hands on it.

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00:12:46.650 --> 00:12:52.380

Lewis deSoto: Sort of working on the car with a manual down below and jack holding it up.

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00:12:53.940 --> 00:13:03.570

Lewis deSoto: But the idea of the restoration is that this Pontiac is named after chief Pontiac and he is the chief that

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00:13:04.800 --> 00:13:17.010

Lewis deSoto: Led the revolt against the English at Fort Detrick law, which was actually founded by a man named Cadillac so forth Detroit named by Cadillac.

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00:13:17.850 --> 00:13:29.400

Lewis deSoto: Taken over by the English and then the, the date of folks burned before to the ground and the idea of the restoration is that somehow

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00:13:30.180 --> 00:13:45.210

Lewis deSoto: We are now starting to put back together these stories of this particular act am Hearst was the general who was in command of work day to LA and

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00:13:45.930 --> 00:13:58.920

Lewis deSoto: He was also the general that commanded his troops to leave smallpox written blankets with a Native Villages as gifts and then he would in a famous letter said we would

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00:13:59.550 --> 00:14:10.920

Lewis deSoto: Return. In a few months and then burn the villages down because everyone would be dead. So I'm sort of the first case of biological warfare and the history of North America.

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00:14:12.180 --> 00:14:14.730

Lewis deSoto: On the left side you'll see the sort of tapestry.

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00:14:15.810 --> 00:14:23.790

Lewis deSoto: But it's, if you look at it really carefully, you'll notice that it's actually a tapestry of Martin Luther King

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00:14:24.540 --> 00:14:40.080

Lewis deSoto: One of his walks during the Civil Rights Act of 1964 so refers to this idea of going to terminus, you know, continuously with the 1964 Pontiac. We have the struggles that were occurring.

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00:14:41.280 --> 00:14:54.660

Lewis deSoto: In for civil rights in America. So I'm within all those little details sort of formulates this on tablo have evolved of have this idea of the restoration of

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00:14:55.680 --> 00:14:59.220

Lewis deSoto: Our history, in a sense, and the Pontiac

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00:15:00.900 --> 00:15:03.240

Lewis deSoto: Which I bought expressly for this photo.

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00:15:04.680 --> 00:15:11.160

Lewis deSoto: was restored by myself. And then I really sold it later after the photograph was finished.

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00:15:14.220 --> 00:15:24.600

Josh Garrett-Davis: And did you I having visited your has I saw that you still have this pattern on the floor. Did you do the floor pattern for this for this photo.

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00:15:24.750 --> 00:15:30.180

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, yeah. The floor pattern was created for yep for the

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00:15:32.460 --> 00:15:39.930

Lewis deSoto: In reference to that. And you can see on the left side of this image you can see that the



the the piece is actually a light box.

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00:15:40.620 --> 00:15:51.450

Lewis deSoto: And the idea is that you know the balance of light between the light on the outside of the light box. The light being emitted from the light box. Is it a kind of uncanny reality.

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00:15:51.900 --> 00:15:52.440

Josh Garrett-Davis: And that

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00:15:52.470 --> 00:16:09.060

Lewis deSoto: wouldn't occur if it was just a print. And that's one of the things interesting things about Vermeer's paintings, is that they seem to a middle light on their own. And a lot of it has to do with the way he used tarnishes to reflect light and create says feeling of depth.

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00:16:11.400 --> 00:16:23.070

Josh Garrett-Davis: And again, lights and all those sort of detailed readings, it does remind me of when you take a tour of the museum where there is a Vermeer or or other sort of

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00:16:24.900 --> 00:16:28.680

Josh Garrett-Davis: Pieces, but there's so much symbolism in every detail.

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00:16:29.970 --> 00:16:35.760

Josh Garrett-Davis: And the luminous and as you as you say here, and I want to encourage everyone to

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00:16:37.500 --> 00:16:45.480

Josh Garrett-Davis: To use the Q AMP a function at the bottom of the of your zoom window and you can add in questions at any time. And I'll try to keep an eye on that and

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00:16:46.620 --> 00:16:51.000

Josh Garrett-Davis: And fold those into our conversation as we go. I meant to say that earlier.

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00:16:52.320 --> 00:16:58.830

Josh Garrett-Davis: In it, in fact, we have a question related to Vermeer is is the choice of

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00:17:01.200 --> 00:17:12.930

Josh Garrett-Davis: I don't know appropriating the vocabulary or this sort of things related to Vermeer, is that a political act in itself in a certain way and talking about this exhibition

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00:17:13.170 --> 00:17:23.280

Lewis deSoto: I think is more personal reference point. Because when I was a kid, we had a World Book Encyclopedia, and there was two.

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00:17:24.870 --> 00:17:34.980

Lewis deSoto: Things I kept going back to I kept going to the painting section painting, which was in the in the world book. It was one of the few sections that had color panels in it.

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00:17:35.010 --> 00:17:47.220

Lewis deSoto: To look at it and then there was, of course, some very beautiful reproductions of Vermeer's and then I, you know, go to the Vermeer section of the World Book Encyclopedia. And look at that.

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00:17:48.060 --> 00:17:59.340

Lewis deSoto: And then when I was studying the history of photography and history of art, you know, it had to be noted that in a way, he was kind of like an early photographer, so

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00:18:00.450 --> 00:18:04.860

Lewis deSoto: We think of Vermeer's is having a kind of modern vision to it.

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00:18:05.340 --> 00:18:05.610

Josh Garrett-Davis: And

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00:18:05.850 --> 00:18:22.620

Lewis deSoto: A lot of it has to do with the idea that we're looking at naturalistic perspective that relates to how we think about the world now that we see things through the eye of photography. So it's not necessarily political but it also

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00:18:23.910 --> 00:18:33.690

Lewis deSoto: It, it, it, it's aged from a time when Europe was in the height of its colonialism.

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00:18:35.310 --> 00:18:43.470

Lewis deSoto: And was reaching out to Asia and into the New World, and there was a lot of inventions foods.

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00:18:44.250 --> 00:18:56.940

Lewis deSoto: reference points from the new world that we're starting to become part of European culture at this time. So it's more like a kind of history link in a way, if you think want to think about it that way.

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00:18:58.200 --> 00:19:01.410

Josh Garrett-Davis: Yeah, and it's a, I guess that sort of notion I

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00:19:03.240 --> 00:19:14.370

Josh Garrett-Davis: There, there's some sort of anthropologists that have written about how the ways that native people have been kind of frozen in the past three apology, I think they in the term was like whoa evil is like

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00:19:14.910 --> 00:19:31.770

Josh Garrett-Davis: occurring simultaneously as Co evil co evilness right there and and both in the 17th century Native people were very much kept swept up in the modern world, as in Pontiac but also in the era of the civil rights movement or the era of that.

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00:19:32.790 --> 00:19:36.000

Josh Garrett-Davis: Car being created it fascinating about

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00:19:37.170 --> 00:19:54.540

Josh Garrett-Davis: That car and the civil rights movement and Martin Luther King and potentially the the physicians in in Washington. I think we're in 1964 they in the beginnings of what would be called the red power of man, which is fascinating. Yeah.

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00:19:56.400 --> 00:19:58.800

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, so the idea, it's sort of, it's a link

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00:19:58.800 --> 00:20:10.590

Lewis deSoto: To colonialism in a way it's also link to how we see the world now feels familiar to us. And then it's also a displacement, like, you know, there's a woman with

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00:20:11.610 --> 00:20:32.340

Lewis deSoto: Early, you know, European dress on. But then there's a modern automobile in there, but it was, it doesn't look modern anymore because it's from the 16th, the kind of classicism that we associate with like mid 60s automobile design that we don't. I think with current automobiles, so

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00:20:33.390 --> 00:20:35.850

Lewis deSoto: You know, it just carries along a lot of

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00:20:37.890 --> 00:20:43.140

Lewis deSoto: Reference Points to it that are not completely on the surface of the

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00:20:44.370 --> 00:20:46.620

Lewis deSoto: Piece itself that are sort of embedded in it.

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00:20:47.820 --> 00:20:55.380

Josh Garrett-Davis: When, when did you do you remember first getting to see a real Vermeer after, after seeing it in the World Book Encyclopedia

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00:20:55.980 --> 00:21:01.050

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, I think it was, um, I think I saw real Vermeer at the Huntington gardens.

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00:21:01.860 --> 00:21:02.820

Josh Garrett-Davis: Oh, yeah.

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00:21:03.120 --> 00:21:15.720

Lewis deSoto: And then I remember also and that trip was the first trip I ever took out of town and the car. I think I must have been 17 or something like that. So I drove my car to Pasadena, and

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00:21:16.470 --> 00:21:24.900

Lewis deSoto: Went to the northern Simon museum and saw the for the first time, like a real Impressionist painting which blew my mind.

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00:21:25.800 --> 00:21:28.110

Josh Garrett-Davis: So, so you grew up in San Bernardino.

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00:21:28.470 --> 00:21:28.860

Lewis deSoto: Right.

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00:21:28.980 --> 00:21:32.130

Josh Garrett-Davis: Right have come in toward the metropolis.

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00:21:32.640 --> 00:21:34.230

Lewis deSoto: Right. Yeah. It was a big adventure.

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00:21:35.400 --> 00:21:38.400

Josh Garrett-Davis: Right. And we were already knowing you were

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00:21:38.700 --> 00:21:39.750

Josh Garrett-Davis: Wanting to be an artist.

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00:21:40.530 --> 00:21:48.960

Lewis deSoto: I um, I would just attracted to it. I was, I was always painting and drawing and writing. I think at the time.

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00:21:50.010 --> 00:21:53.100

Lewis deSoto: That I went to the museum. I thought I was going to be a writer of some sort.

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00:21:57.720 --> 00:21:58.350

Josh Garrett-Davis: And when

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00:21:59.820 --> 00:22:08.640

Josh Garrett-Davis: Your work is really unique in thinking about Native American subject matter in this so sneaky, as you said, so subtle um

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00:22:10.830 --> 00:22:18.150

Josh Garrett-Davis: How do you sort of brush are at this is sort of related to a question here of like is is have you been confronted, someone asked if

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00:22:19.800 --> 00:22:24.840

Josh Garrett-Davis: With the notion that your work isn't native enough or that it's not front and center in some way.

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00:22:26.370 --> 00:22:29.370

Josh Garrett-Davis: And not for is that sneaking it. How does that sort of sneaking this

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00:22:29.850 --> 00:22:30.780

Encountered

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00:22:32.010 --> 00:22:43.050

Lewis deSoto: I'm a, I'm a native person that was born in the suburbs of San Bernardino. And I relied on stories from my aunt and my father.

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00:22:43.560 --> 00:22:54.540

Lewis deSoto: About you know the indeed canyons growing up in Palm Springs and you know going to family events like picnics and birthday parties and stuff like that and

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00:22:55.140 --> 00:23:13.200

Lewis deSoto: And, you know, hearing native words for the first time. But, you know, and in the long run. I'm, you know, a little boy riding his bike THROUGH AMERICA suburbia. So those are the that's. Those are the landmarks that I have in my own experience and

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00:23:14.400 --> 00:23:31.350

Lewis deSoto: The imposter syndrome was is, you know, a strong and a lot of us in reference to this issue, you know, being not native enough. And in fact, that the herd museum right now I have a sculpture and inflatable sculpture myself.

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00:23:33.000 --> 00:23:45.990

Lewis deSoto: As a, as a scoop them to all those of you know who's who comes are there kind of racist. The Halls, kind of like an Jim. I'm a cookie jar. So if you want to think of it that way. I'm

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00:23:46.590 --> 00:23:57.120

Lewis deSoto: And I'm wearing various things that relate to my history, like, you know, King Crimson t shirt and holding a, you know, I have a camera around my neck.

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00:23:57.660 --> 00:24:15.660

Lewis deSoto: And I'm also wearing a US Army blanket. It has the the the smallpox virus on it and it's kind of a mix of metaphors that relates to this kind of feeling of not being enough of either one thing or the other.

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00:24:18.450 --> 00:24:21.030

Josh Garrett-Davis: And yet it's so powerful, I think, to bring

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00:24:21.840 --> 00:24:23.880

Josh Garrett-Davis: artistic way to or like just

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00:24:24.240 --> 00:24:33.030

Josh Garrett-Davis: To the, you know, to the traditional Vermeer, or things like that to these everyday or kind of tongue in cheek sometimes

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00:24:34.050 --> 00:24:42.390

Josh Garrett-Davis: subject matters, but that there. They can be that profound and treated with that much care. I mean that that photograph you showed us

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00:24:43.620 --> 00:24:54.180

Josh Garrett-Davis: In must have required huge amounts of time to construct what you know is just an image from on the negative. Right, right.

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00:24:54.240 --> 00:24:57.330

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, it was a I had to redesign the whole garage.

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00:24:58.590 --> 00:25:02.850

Lewis deSoto: So it had to remain a garage at the same time, and had to sort of evoke

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00:25:03.900 --> 00:25:08.490

Lewis deSoto: Some things like the cabinets or this light blue cabinets which match the car.

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00:25:09.660 --> 00:25:15.240

Lewis deSoto: You know the flooring and then all the stuff that you put on the walls, all the stuff had to be kind of

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00:25:16.290 --> 00:25:21.210

Lewis deSoto: Integrated into it and still it'd be a working garage, so that people didn't think

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00:25:22.770 --> 00:25:30.870

Lewis deSoto: It was some sort of art gallery, they are looking at okay and and it's kind of funny, because when the photograph was taken.

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00:25:31.650 --> 00:25:38.400

Lewis deSoto: A the garage is open and people could drive by and a lot of people were just sort of walking by and looking

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00:25:39.180 --> 00:25:53.070

Lewis deSoto: At the setup and the photographer and I was helping me photograph of with a four by five camera was I was sort of art directing it and then she was taking the images for me and it looked like quite a spectacle to the neighborhood.

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00:25:55.560 --> 00:25:55.860

Josh Garrett-Davis: Yeah.



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00:25:58.710 --> 00:26:00.090

Josh Garrett-Davis: That's, that's fantastic.

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00:26:01.440 --> 00:26:05.640

Josh Garrett-Davis: Maybe we can turn to the other images that are in the

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00:26:07.050 --> 00:26:11.700

Josh Garrett-Davis: Well, only one from this series is in exhibition, but maybe we can talk about the series.

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00:26:13.110 --> 00:26:14.760

Josh Garrett-Davis: Power series that you've been working on.

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00:26:15.210 --> 00:26:18.630

Lewis deSoto: Yeah. Okay, so I've been working on this series of

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00:26:20.250 --> 00:26:36.720

Lewis deSoto: panoramas called power and panoramas relate to our number one, I should say the panoramas are made in a kind of very peculiar fashion. I stand in one place and I photograph using

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00:26:37.230 --> 00:26:50.610

Lewis deSoto: telephoto lens on my camera and I basically scan left from left to right, going up and down sort of zigzagging back and forth, and then they're assembled in

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00:26:52.500 --> 00:27:02.280

Lewis deSoto: Software are then created to put together and make prints of the ideas that when you if you take 100

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00:27:03.000 --> 00:27:18.570

Lewis deSoto: Really small pictures and package them together, you get a very, very highly detailed image that you can't get with a single frame which allows me to backup in a sense of photograph things that are really far away, but it'll really allows you to

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00:27:19.830 --> 00:27:21.900

Lewis deSoto: Get really close to those details.

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00:27:22.440 --> 00:27:24.060

Josh Garrett-Davis: Like scale do print them out.

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00:27:24.540 --> 00:27:25.860

Lewis deSoto: Of their printed

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00:27:27.090 --> 00:27:31.350

Lewis deSoto: They're 20 inches high and then they can be up to

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00:27:32.580 --> 00:27:34.200

Lewis deSoto: Maybe 12 feet long.

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00:27:35.370 --> 00:27:51.540

Lewis deSoto: So I'm the screen is sort of cut off the ends of some of these images. So you can actually see the whole thing. But, you know, it gives you an idea, and the idea of power itself refers back to this.

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00:27:52.950 --> 00:27:57.600

Lewis deSoto: Idea of how we think about energy

210

00:27:59.430 --> 00:28:05.280

Lewis deSoto: Energy for the modern world is like electricity oil.

211

00:28:07.350 --> 00:28:14.400

Lewis deSoto: Natural gas nuclear power, and we think about how powers.

212

00:28:15.990 --> 00:28:16.860

Lewis deSoto: How would you call it.

213

00:28:18.510 --> 00:28:26.640

Lewis deSoto: Spoken about in indigenous cultures power is sort of part of everything part of the fabric of

214

00:28:28.230 --> 00:28:38.040

Lewis deSoto: Our entire reality. So the power that we share as living beings is the same power that we share with rocks or animals.

215

00:28:39.060 --> 00:28:42.060

Lewis deSoto: Or, you know, other kinds of elements that we might

216

00:28:43.110 --> 00:29:01.500

Lewis deSoto: Find inside the earth or above the earth so you know when power, etc. We think about those ideas of power and then translate it back to the ID been integrated with this notion of power. So the top image over switching

217

00:29:01.740 --> 00:29:02.250

Josh Garrett-Davis: Okay.

218

00:29:02.550 --> 00:29:10.020

Lewis deSoto: Can we go back to that. Yeah, there we go. So the top image is I'm from Los Angeles that's taken a Kenneth on

219

00:29:11.040 --> 00:29:23.580

Lewis deSoto: Recreation Area looking west toward the ocean and in the distance, are not only neighborhoods, but oil derricks and oil tanks storage, the Los Angeles was

220

00:29:24.330 --> 00:29:43.110

Lewis deSoto: rife with all kinds of, and still is, with all kinds of means of production of pulling oil out of these lands which you said are under the care of the tongva and, you know, that's sort of the case here in reference to that so

221

00:29:44.220 --> 00:29:52.470

Lewis deSoto: I always put the name of the the caretaker people with the title of the piece, but I don't

really explain

222

00:29:53.700 --> 00:30:07.290

Lewis deSoto: You know what is actually being extracted or put together here. The middle picture Gemma levy people area John Joshua Tree and those are solar panels.

223

00:30:08.280 --> 00:30:24.060

Lewis deSoto: That stretch all the way off into the distance from left to right and way out to the area. And then below Chumash image of the Channel Islands, and you can see that oil derricks way out in the in the distance. Second crude out of the ocean floor.

224

00:30:26.010 --> 00:30:36.510

Lewis deSoto: So anything go the next one. Now, and we can talk about those. Yeah. So above there. That's the water Canyon area Palm Springs, a huge area of

225

00:30:37.740 --> 00:30:39.540

Lewis deSoto: Of production of energy.

226

00:30:41.190 --> 00:30:42.150

Lewis deSoto: We have people

227

00:30:43.260 --> 00:30:54.030

Lewis deSoto: And below here on the cell in an area where this is out rancheros Seiko which was a power plant that was out by

228

00:30:55.080 --> 00:31:12.690

Lewis deSoto: Eastern South southeast of Sacramento and there's a cooling tower. That's still intact but ironically, now it's a park, and then is surrounded by vineyards. So I have a idyllic setting for this remnant of a nuclear power plant.

229

00:31:15.870 --> 00:31:17.700

Josh Garrett-Davis: And yes, this

230

00:31:18.930 --> 00:31:30.660

Josh Garrett-Davis: You kind of it's sometimes very small right that the oil derricks or this this power plant are tiny parts of your image right that embedded in a bigger landscape.

231

00:31:31.170 --> 00:31:40.200

Lewis deSoto: I think it's important to instead of like look at the buildings or look at the the machine. It's kind of like a portrait.

232

00:31:42.150 --> 00:31:47.700

Lewis deSoto: But rather to look at all the surrounding areas and integrate them into the land so

233

00:31:48.720 --> 00:32:02.160

Lewis deSoto: I try to push back on this feeling of like saying, I'm going to take a portrait of a building and that's going to somehow linked to this notion of power, rather than the understand that.

234

00:32:03.540 --> 00:32:14.010

Lewis deSoto: The power is everywhere. And there's some focal points out, but they're in the distance and we're, you know, we're we're occupying that power.

235

00:32:15.120 --> 00:32:16.680

Lewis deSoto: Even if we don't you know like

236

00:32:19.080 --> 00:32:20.550

Lewis deSoto: We don't drink the oil or

237

00:32:21.960 --> 00:32:22.380

Lewis deSoto: You know,

238

00:32:24.060 --> 00:32:32.130

Lewis deSoto: That kind of thing. We're not consuming it sort of literally as a body, but seeing the power being generated from a distance.

239

00:32:35.820 --> 00:32:41.610

Josh Garrett-Davis: And when you talk about the sort of that the subtle ness that you have the messages in your

240

00:32:42.960 --> 00:32:56.280

Josh Garrett-Davis: Work, it seems like and in the you mentioning this sort of sneaky. It reminds me of the project recent project, you were talking about. And I don't have an image here, but of this of the book that you have recently published

241

00:32:57.480 --> 00:33:05.580

Josh Garrett-Davis: And that it reminds me of the the figure of coyote and the trickster idea.

242

00:33:06.870 --> 00:33:12.240

Josh Garrett-Davis: And so you, you have a book you one of your recent most recent works, right, is this

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00:33:12.720 --> 00:33:21.330

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, it's called the books called tired of eternity. And it's a book extensively written by coyote and it's a science fiction book.

244

00:33:22.110 --> 00:33:46.170

Lewis deSoto: About how people were brought to the Earth from another planet and coyote is like a crew member It was basically designed to be immortal and as watched the development of humanity since he's landed the ship and there are many ships and landed all over the earth to seed the

245

00:33:47.250 --> 00:33:48.810

Lewis deSoto: Seed the universe with people.

246

00:33:49.860 --> 00:33:51.210

Lewis deSoto: And in terms of a

247

00:33:52.440 --> 00:33:59.070

Lewis deSoto: Mythologies to there's this this reference point to people being brought to Earth.

248

00:34:00.000 --> 00:34:16.890

Lewis deSoto: from another planet by a powerful being who brought them to this planet because their planet had gotten overgrown with people. There's too many people and even in Korea mythologies, there's this argument treating the brothers as they're inventing people inventing the world.

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00:34:18.060 --> 00:34:27.360

Lewis deSoto: One argues against a mortality, because of the problem with reproduction and filling up the world with too many people

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00:34:27.720 --> 00:34:30.840

Lewis deSoto: And so it's sort of like it's a long distance view.

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00:34:31.350 --> 00:34:34.050

Lewis deSoto: Of what could happen, which I think is very interesting.

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00:34:36.360 --> 00:34:37.110

Josh Garrett-Davis: And it's sort of

253

00:34:38.760 --> 00:34:42.300

Josh Garrett-Davis: The, the design is a sort of cheeky

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00:34:43.860 --> 00:34:51.750

Josh Garrett-Davis: Cover the fonts and are sort of this, I don't know, I, it looks like maybe a self help book from the 1990s, or a sci fi. I'm not sure what

255

00:34:54.300 --> 00:34:56.610

Lewis deSoto: Auto biography, but also in between.

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00:34:56.700 --> 00:34:58.110

Lewis deSoto: Chapters I worked with a

257

00:34:59.610 --> 00:35:07.950

Lewis deSoto: Nuclear nuclear physicist, but a theoretical physicist from UC Berkeley who provided me with all the source material for

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00:35:10.260 --> 00:35:23.610

Lewis deSoto: It basically the math, the math mathematical methodologies to faster than light travel to going back in time to time travel to the relationship power and energy.

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00:35:24.060 --> 00:35:37.770

Lewis deSoto: All those kinds of things are like the supplements in the book I help you understand where Coyote is coming from in relationship to these sort of cheeky stories that are written about him and his adventures.

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00:35:40.890 --> 00:35:44.520

Josh Garrett-Davis: And to sort of circle back to to when I remember I see read

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00:35:45.750 --> 00:35:46.170

Josh Garrett-Davis: It.

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00:35:46.350 --> 00:35:54.600

Josh Garrett-Davis: There's a couple of other artists in that in that exhibition that seem to have a similar sensibility in terms of that they approach.

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00:35:55.800 --> 00:36:10.470

Josh Garrett-Davis: One was, as James Luna was featured in and video he has a video in the exhibition with the Beach Boys song in my room playing as he kind of partakes in a sweat lodge are built and kind of partakes in a sweat lodge in

264

00:36:12.210 --> 00:36:17.160

Josh Garrett-Davis: His but his work spanned many media sort of similar to yours.

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00:36:18.270 --> 00:36:22.110

Josh Garrett-Davis: What was your sort of relationship to him and his work well.

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00:36:22.140 --> 00:36:31.650

Lewis deSoto: I'm James and I met probably in the early 90s and realize that we had a lot of stuff in



common, including

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00:36:32.970 --> 00:36:38.340

Lewis deSoto: Some sort of distant family members that there might have been some sort of cross over there too and

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00:36:39.630 --> 00:36:43.920

Lewis deSoto: We, we work in a very many different ways but

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00:36:45.480 --> 00:37:00.000

Lewis deSoto: He was mostly doing performance work and I was mostly doing like installation work. And so we did do a project in San Diego that combined our work together into kind of like a a bachelor apartment.

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00:37:01.170 --> 00:37:21.300

Lewis deSoto: It was called dream house, and it was basically just like a slick apartment with, you know, leather leather sofas and on the TV was playing our performances and videos of the installations and it was just like a way of allowing people to sit around and relax and

271

00:37:22.380 --> 00:37:26.940

Lewis deSoto: There was willow river willow on the walls. So there's a distinct smell.

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00:37:28.140 --> 00:37:32.040

Lewis deSoto: To just sort of look at our work and then kind of

273

00:37:33.390 --> 00:37:39.240

Lewis deSoto: Look around, see some of the funny jokes that were there, like on the table was a bowl and it was full of corn nuts.

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00:37:39.870 --> 00:37:53.940

Lewis deSoto: You know, which is a corn is from New World, and is now like a snack food that everyone can eat, you know, and we just sort of did that together and then over a period of time, we would just, you know, we'd see each other and we compare notes and

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00:37:56.160 --> 00:37:56.940

Lewis deSoto: Hang out a little bit.

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00:37:59.490 --> 00:38:02.940

Josh Garrett-Davis: And another artist that came to mind was Gerald Clark.

277

00:38:04.680 --> 00:38:06.480

Josh Garrett-Davis: And his. He has

278

00:38:07.710 --> 00:38:15.270

Josh Garrett-Davis: This large scale basket made of crushed aluminum cans mounted to a satellite dish that are that's in the exhibition

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00:38:16.800 --> 00:38:19.590

Josh Garrett-Davis: But there is a similar sort of, I think, sense of humor.

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00:38:21.300 --> 00:38:23.220

Josh Garrett-Davis: But an engagement with history and

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00:38:24.660 --> 00:38:29.250

Josh Garrett-Davis: And so on. What, what, what kind of how long have you know in general, then what what

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00:38:30.180 --> 00:38:32.430

Lewis deSoto: Journals, as long as I as I knew, James, but

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00:38:32.700 --> 00:38:42.030

Lewis deSoto: We were put in to few shows together and got to know each other that way. And then this recently in March, before the lockdown.

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00:38:43.410 --> 00:38:49.590

Lewis deSoto: Gerald interviewed me at the Palm Springs Art Museum for the sort of book to our

interview.

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00:38:50.820 --> 00:39:13.500

Lewis deSoto: For tired of eternity, where I play, Coyote, and he was the host of this show called deep canyon conversations, which is, you know, you can see it on my website or go to Vimeo and take a look at of Charles a great, great TV host and he could have a show a weekly show at least

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00:39:14.280 --> 00:39:14.940

Josh Garrett-Davis: Be wonderful

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00:39:15.000 --> 00:39:16.650

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, it'll be really fun.

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00:39:18.750 --> 00:39:21.090

Josh Garrett-Davis: Yeah. Well, I was able to watch that and I

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00:39:22.530 --> 00:39:25.290

Josh Garrett-Davis: quite enjoyed your, your banter and

290

00:39:25.320 --> 00:39:27.420

Josh Garrett-Davis: Sort of playing playing coyote.

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00:39:30.000 --> 00:39:34.020

Josh Garrett-Davis: In as a as a memoir, a touring a book tour memoirist

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00:39:36.090 --> 00:39:36.780

Lewis deSoto: That was fun.

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00:39:37.350 --> 00:39:37.620

Yeah.

294

00:39:39.450 --> 00:39:41.490

I see what color question here.

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00:39:45.930 --> 00:39:55.110

Josh Garrett-Davis: There's a sort of more general question about the when I remember I see red exhibition. What does it mean to have this particular exhibition at the artery.

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00:39:56.490 --> 00:39:57.090

Josh Garrett-Davis: And I can

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00:39:58.230 --> 00:40:09.060

Josh Garrett-Davis: Attempt to feel that, and I welcome your comments to Lewis as someone who's visited the outreach and and see and also has seen native California art from a long

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00:40:09.630 --> 00:40:22.110

Josh Garrett-Davis: Long time. But as I said before, I think it is sort of that that visibility for for native California stories and within major California Museum in major California city.

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00:40:24.540 --> 00:40:30.840

Josh Garrett-Davis: To bring these artists into conversation and and one of the other things that

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00:40:31.950 --> 00:40:35.640

Josh Garrett-Davis: It's a kind of a bonus piece of the exhibition

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00:40:36.660 --> 00:40:56.430

Josh Garrett-Davis: Is that we were able to borrow from Marshall McKay a logbook from the occupation of Alcatraz, which started in November of 1969 and ran through the beginning of 1971 and so it's everybody who visited the island during that occupation of, you know, a year and a half.

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00:40:57.660 --> 00:40:59.220

Josh Garrett-Davis: signed in, and

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00:41:00.990 --> 00:41:08.550

Josh Garrett-Davis: It's wonderful to have that on display. And then I think we were able to photograph

every page two, so people can explore it online.

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00:41:09.780 --> 00:41:13.920

Josh Garrett-Davis: And that. So we're basically in the middle of the 50th anniversary of that event.

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00:41:15.000 --> 00:41:20.100

Josh Garrett-Davis: Which has been really important to commemorate around the state. And I'm glad we were able to finally

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00:41:21.270 --> 00:41:29.700

Josh Garrett-Davis: Join in that conversation to a major event in California. History US History of the occupation of Alcatraz.

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00:41:31.710 --> 00:41:33.960

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, we talked about the sort of

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00:41:34.440 --> 00:41:39.330

Lewis deSoto: reoccupy the re occupation or the de occupation of of

309

00:41:42.210 --> 00:41:59.880

Lewis deSoto: Of American land, you know, by kind of repopulating it with Native people and. And the fact is that that the majority of Native people don't live on reservations. They live in the cities they live in the suburbs. They live in rural areas and

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00:42:01.140 --> 00:42:05.550

Lewis deSoto: There dispersed throughout state and

311

00:42:06.720 --> 00:42:08.100

Lewis deSoto: I think a lot of people just think

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00:42:09.240 --> 00:42:23.610

Lewis deSoto: You know, it's still kind of up popular notion that there's hardly anyone left and nobody's talking about these things. So I think that that shows important for that reason and and just bringing up

this more contemporary

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00:42:24.750 --> 00:42:25.680

Lewis deSoto: Circle event.

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00:42:27.150 --> 00:42:29.790

Lewis deSoto: You know, is up there with

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00:42:30.930 --> 00:42:37.140

Lewis deSoto: The, the, the early 80s decision by the Supreme Court to allow and you in gaming.

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00:42:37.200 --> 00:42:43.200

Lewis deSoto: For instance, allowed Native people to start determining you know their own

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00:42:44.490 --> 00:42:47.730

Lewis deSoto: Financial fates, so

318

00:42:48.900 --> 00:42:50.760

Lewis deSoto: All of those things need to be

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00:42:51.930 --> 00:42:56.070

Lewis deSoto: Displayed and brought out and given context, which I think is very important.

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00:42:58.170 --> 00:42:59.700

Josh Garrett-Davis: In Alcatraz has this

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00:43:01.530 --> 00:43:06.990

Josh Garrett-Davis: Is an example of what you're talking about in that so, so many of the people who organized it were from

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00:43:08.220 --> 00:43:11.220

Josh Garrett-Davis: Tribes all around the country and they had their, you know,

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00:43:12.270 --> 00:43:22.050

Josh Garrett-Davis: The Bay Area had been one of the major centers for the Federal relocation program in the 50s and prior to that, even the just people moving for war industry jobs.

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00:43:23.370 --> 00:43:26.730

Josh Garrett-Davis: In the, in the Bay Area, as well as here in LA and

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00:43:28.440 --> 00:43:33.450

Josh Garrett-Davis: And but that they were interacting also with native California people who've been here all along.

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00:43:34.500 --> 00:43:45.420

Josh Garrett-Davis: And I should mention that that Marshall McKay. Who's, who's lending us this artifact is a member of our Board of Trustees at the Australia and I'm remember that yesterday he nation up in Northern California and

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00:43:46.950 --> 00:43:47.280

It's

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00:43:48.810 --> 00:43:51.630

Josh Garrett-Davis: And former tribal chairman and so on, up there.

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00:43:52.740 --> 00:44:14.220

Josh Garrett-Davis: And so he in his we previous to this we exhibited it in the exhibition about his mother Mabel McKay. And you know the connection of this this Weaver, who was born in 1907 and helped maintain and enrich that basket weaving traditions and another traditions in need of California life.

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00:44:15.240 --> 00:44:36.180

Josh Garrett-Davis: That she was interacting with Dennis banks and members of aim, you know, who were from think Dennis banks is Ojibwe from Minnesota. And so it's that sort of Diaspora, or the complicated ness of native history and especially in the 20th century, but for centuries before to is

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00:44:36.870 --> 00:44:37.590

Josh Garrett-Davis: Really important.

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00:44:40.050 --> 00:44:43.320

Josh Garrett-Davis: This someone asks do you do custom car work for people

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00:44:45.540 --> 00:44:46.500

Josh Garrett-Davis: Restoration.

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00:44:48.600 --> 00:44:49.020

Lewis deSoto: Well,

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00:44:51.120 --> 00:45:04.710

Lewis deSoto: I kind of do actually do it for people. I love times I find interesting cars that are in need of restoration or a need of, you know, help and I

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00:45:05.970 --> 00:45:20.970

Lewis deSoto: repair them and then I resell them and move on to another one. Just as a side thing fact I just some I just had a big truck come pick up a car that's going to Florida yesterday. Oh, yeah.

337

00:45:21.510 --> 00:45:23.940

Josh Garrett-Davis: So excited just you like to

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00:45:24.990 --> 00:45:34.230

Josh Garrett-Davis: Work with what's the, what does it do for you, besides probably making a little money. What is what's that activity satisfy for you.

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00:45:34.860 --> 00:45:35.730

Lewis deSoto: calms me down.

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00:45:36.150 --> 00:45:36.480

Yeah.



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00:45:38.550 --> 00:45:52.620

Lewis deSoto: calms me down gives me something to think about. That's not you know me strategizing about doing new work or. It also allows me just to think about other things and let my mind float. No.

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00:45:54.450 --> 00:45:56.040

Josh Garrett-Davis: It's, it's not screen time

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00:45:56.850 --> 00:45:57.990

Lewis deSoto: Not screen time

344

00:46:01.710 --> 00:46:04.080

Josh Garrett-Davis: Well that's, that's great. I'm glad that we got that.

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00:46:08.310 --> 00:46:09.870

Josh Garrett-Davis: So have a sort of

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00:46:12.060 --> 00:46:12.390

Josh Garrett-Davis: Am

347

00:46:14.010 --> 00:46:22.530

Josh Garrett-Davis: Okay, so here's a question. So it says, Could you talk a little more about how your work, either in the power of panorama series or or in pieces like Korea.

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00:46:23.220 --> 00:46:34.800

Josh Garrett-Davis: Achieves integration across a false divide of traditional and modern, are there certain mediums that lend themselves more readily to this kind of interrogation in terms of socio economic class.

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00:46:35.940 --> 00:46:46.170

Lewis deSoto: That's a good question. I pick. Yeah. Because, you know, if you want to be an artist. You want to be a sculptor than you know your your

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00:46:47.040 --> 00:47:07.140

Lewis deSoto: Sometimes your statuses are revealed and what kind of materials, you can use like if you can do bronze casting at will, you know, you have some pockets some deep pockets to do that. So, um, and then if you think about like art povera where you know you're assembling

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00:47:09.720 --> 00:47:19.500

Lewis deSoto: Common materials to create a kind of dialogue with those materials into an artwork that that sort of suggests a different way of thinking about

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00:47:20.940 --> 00:47:33.660

Lewis deSoto: Where artists come from relationship to that, you know, think about, you know, people carving marble opposed to someone making a pile of sticks or I think of inner like James Luna using

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00:47:37.110 --> 00:47:46.830

Lewis deSoto: You know cans of beans and cheap tequila as part of his you know material of right so

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00:47:48.900 --> 00:47:58.710

Lewis deSoto: I think that, you know, for me, like using cars is that's part of the fabric of my, you know, middle class existence and

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00:48:00.270 --> 00:48:06.930

Lewis deSoto: It's something that my hands are familiar with and my eyes are familiar with them, but I understand the history of so

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00:48:07.890 --> 00:48:15.510

Lewis deSoto: That's, you know where my interests lie and I worked with I've worked with photography for a very long time since the 70s.

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00:48:16.080 --> 00:48:33.630

Lewis deSoto: And to me, photography was a real revelation just being able to record things and then stylized them as pictures and reflect back of them as memories or memories of places or describe places.

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00:48:35.070 --> 00:48:45.870

Lewis deSoto: Was very liberating because I thought I started out as a painter and realize that as a painter. I was in the studio looking at a rectangle, kind of like looking at a screen, right.

359

00:48:46.350 --> 00:48:59.370

Lewis deSoto: So looking at this screen or this rectangle all day long, making marks where I could go out in the world and and basically inspect the world and discover the world seem more important to me.

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00:49:02.070 --> 00:49:02.790

Lewis deSoto: The question but

361

00:49:03.210 --> 00:49:10.950

Josh Garrett-Davis: No, I think it's a bit. Have you seen that change over the course of your career, especially this issue of sort of class and materials and things

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00:49:13.080 --> 00:49:27.570

Josh Garrett-Davis: In terms of the prestige of an artist working with cars, rather than marble or bronze or something like that. Have you seen a change in your career and how that is received.

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00:49:29.040 --> 00:49:30.360

Lewis deSoto: Um,

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00:49:32.940 --> 00:49:34.470

Lewis deSoto: I'm not sure how to answer that, but

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00:49:35.490 --> 00:49:52.740

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, it's a, you know, part of it has to do with, you know, the fact that I was a professor of art and I have a salary and I can invest some of that salary and making art. When I didn't have that privilege that would wouldn't be no available to me.

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00:49:57.390 --> 00:50:03.210

Josh Garrett-Davis: That I have a couple of questions related to the pandemic. First off, just from an

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00:50:04.920 --> 00:50:09.360

Josh Garrett-Davis: Quick museum perspective. Someone's asking how to see the exhibition

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00:50:10.620 --> 00:50:26.550

Josh Garrett-Davis: Either if you know depending on how long the museum is delayed in opening and or if somebody is living outside of Los Angeles. We are going to have a very extensive website. It's more than we've done in exhibitions in the past so

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00:50:27.630 --> 00:50:42.720

Josh Garrett-Davis: relatively soon. This will be up online where people can explore in much more detail than than usual, the exhibition without having to set foot or being able to set foot in the museum. Hopefully, we will be able to set foot in the museum really really soon. But

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00:50:43.860 --> 00:50:47.400

Josh Garrett-Davis: In the meantime, there's that. But then, from your side, Louis.

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00:50:48.480 --> 00:50:57.870

Josh Garrett-Davis: Has the pandemic affected your art practice in any way so far, or and or what do you look forward to most when we're able to have more in person visits and travel

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00:50:58.800 --> 00:51:06.570

Lewis deSoto: Well, uh, the, the power of series was really sort of a byproduct of travel. So you know I research sites and went out to them and

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00:51:07.530 --> 00:51:15.660

Lewis deSoto: You know, I would stay in a hotel and drive further out and go investigate things so I haven't been able to really do that. It's not safe.

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00:51:16.260 --> 00:51:33.390

Lewis deSoto: For me, particular as a person, as some respiratory issues. So I've been actually just using a lot more time to archive past work and and get it organized. So that's, that's one of the things I've had been doing and

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00:51:35.880 --> 00:51:44.190

Lewis deSoto: You don't have been going to shows and I haven't been going to museums. Also, I think that there's a the the

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00:51:45.390 --> 00:51:57.810

Lewis deSoto: I don't know how I would put it the the sort of byproduct of that is a sort of liberation from feeling the pressure of having to make work for shows

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00:51:58.380 --> 00:52:09.960

Lewis deSoto: So, and a lot of ways, it's let me dream about other things and just think about you know what the next show is our next museum or gallery exhibition will be

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00:52:11.100 --> 00:52:14.280

Lewis deSoto: And that's it's actually been kind of nice.

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00:52:17.040 --> 00:52:23.670

Lewis deSoto: And I don't you know I'm not that frustrated with the situation actually except

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00:52:24.780 --> 00:52:32.550

Lewis deSoto: You know, the ability to visit friends and just be other places is not not as conducive to being happy.

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00:52:34.590 --> 00:52:39.690

Lewis deSoto: As, as I did before, but it's certainly allow me to concentrate on doing other things.

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00:52:41.880 --> 00:52:49.470

Josh Garrett-Davis: That's an important perspective, a reminder, actually for all of us, I think, to look for opportunities in limitations.

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00:52:49.710 --> 00:52:52.530

Lewis deSoto: And this is not going to last forever. Although feels like it.

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00:52:53.700 --> 00:52:59.010

Lewis deSoto: You know in the in the history of the universe is barely a tick on the clock.

385

00:53:01.260 --> 00:53:01.860

My mind.

386

00:53:03.030 --> 00:53:04.620

Josh Garrett-Davis: As coyote would remind us

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00:53:08.880 --> 00:53:13.320

Josh Garrett-Davis: And well, it seems to me also books might be a format that

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00:53:14.640 --> 00:53:20.070

Josh Garrett-Davis: Are possible to create now to and relatively easy but but but you had already

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00:53:21.270 --> 00:53:23.190

Josh Garrett-Davis: Almost finished that by the time on this.

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00:53:23.280 --> 00:53:37.590

Lewis deSoto: I had finished it. Actually, that's what's happened right now is that the the act of distributing at or sharing it with others are doing readings with things like that's that's been severely restricted. So it's kind of like a

391

00:53:38.940 --> 00:53:40.710

Lewis deSoto: conspiracy against me.

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00:53:41.970 --> 00:53:44.280

Josh Garrett-Davis: Or against your story you're trying to tell

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00:53:44.640 --> 00:53:53.340

Lewis deSoto: Yes, somebody's trying to block it. That's sort of Gerald and I had this sort of funny gag about the last interview is that

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00:53:53.910 --> 00:54:09.300

Lewis deSoto: We had done another interview about the the book that didn't at the time exist, actually. And we were saying, you know, the book being blocked by nefarious forces that didn't want the world to know that we were from another planet.

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00:54:12.930 --> 00:54:13.350

Josh Garrett-Davis: Well,

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00:54:14.670 --> 00:54:17.790

Josh Garrett-Davis: That's not the only conspiracy theory out bag is

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00:54:18.720 --> 00:54:20.010

Lewis deSoto: Just not as far finished.

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00:54:25.710 --> 00:54:27.930

Josh Garrett-Davis: And see if there's any others.

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00:54:30.270 --> 00:54:37.530

Josh Garrett-Davis: Someone did says it say thank you for sharing your views about the pandemic and being an artist who it's meaningful to her as an artist to hear that.

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00:54:39.000 --> 00:54:49.260

Josh Garrett-Davis: I think the idea of archiving. I think it's like we do a que me late so much in and kind of don't get a chance to sort of really go back through and

401

00:54:50.190 --> 00:55:02.760

Lewis deSoto: Yeah, we're organized, you know, just get it. So, where you can find it because we're sort of time as artists to produce. But we're not really taught on how to curate, and preserve, which I think is a problem.

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00:55:03.120 --> 00:55:06.900

Josh Garrett-Davis: Is that what those cabinets behind you are part of

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00:55:07.380 --> 00:55:14.370

Lewis deSoto: Oh yeah, well those are those have been different number of years. But yes, you know, just even like knowing what drawer to look in

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00:55:16.140 --> 00:55:18.900

Lewis deSoto: Is important. So, you know, create spreadsheets and

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00:55:19.380 --> 00:55:29.970

Lewis deSoto: And boxes that have numbers on them and being able to say, Oh yeah, that's in my storage space. And that's in the drawer and that's in a box and all that stuff's important to know

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00:55:30.450 --> 00:55:30.870

Okay.

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00:55:33.780 --> 00:55:39.930

Josh Garrett-Davis: Yeah, well, we'll look forward to the time when we can have you do a reading or

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00:55:40.470 --> 00:55:43.410

Lewis deSoto: Maybe, maybe. GERALD. And I can do an interview.

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00:55:43.950 --> 00:55:49.650

Josh Garrett-Davis: And we can do an interview at the at the otter, it's, it's nice to fantasize about those

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00:55:50.880 --> 00:56:10.020

Josh Garrett-Davis: The future times and I'm very much looking forward, just to share a little bit more with this audience if they don't know about the the sculpture, Korea, which we've recently moved on site at the auction. We have a few

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00:56:11.610 --> 00:56:20.010

Josh Garrett-Davis: Things to consult with with you. Louis about in terms of getting it ready for the gallery figuring out how to display it and

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00:56:21.870 --> 00:56:41.130

Josh Garrett-Davis: Then it's going to be one of the anchors of of the museum really but of this



exhibition about popular culture and how that how stories of storytelling about parts of the American West are represented in many different medium and media, including sculpture and

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00:56:42.150 --> 00:56:44.490

Josh Garrett-Davis: film and TV and so on.

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00:56:46.380 --> 00:56:46.860

Josh Garrett-Davis: So,

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00:56:48.690 --> 00:56:50.550

Josh Garrett-Davis: At some point, hopefully in the next

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00:56:51.870 --> 00:56:52.470

Lewis deSoto: Millennia

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00:56:52.650 --> 00:56:57.060

Josh Garrett-Davis: You might yeah we will be we will have be able to have you down.

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00:56:58.740 --> 00:56:59.430

would be lovely.

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00:57:01.410 --> 00:57:01.860

Josh Garrett-Davis: And

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00:57:04.980 --> 00:57:08.190

Josh Garrett-Davis: And and then it's one more question that came up here as

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00:57:08.460 --> 00:57:15.870

Josh Garrett-Davis: You speak to the ways or route your work and this and then we're we're down to our last few minutes. Um, can you speak to your work is rooted in California, specifically

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00:57:17.400 --> 00:57:30.150

Lewis deSoto: As well, you know, being born here and living here except for a small period of time when I lived in Washington State. And, you know, having a part time

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00:57:31.530 --> 00:57:32.940

Lewis deSoto: studio in New York City.

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00:57:34.590 --> 00:57:46.770

Lewis deSoto: I think that this, it could have been just instilled from my father. But, you know, my father was like this observer of everything around him and he you know he would point out

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00:57:47.700 --> 00:57:59.970

Lewis deSoto: Landmarks everywhere, whether their personal landmarks or they were just, you know, parts of a mountain that he knew the name of or wanted to reference something as a memory so

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00:58:00.810 --> 00:58:12.090

Lewis deSoto: Spent a lot of time with him in the car driving through Palm Springs and pointing out, like, that's where they lived when they were when when his mother was a housekeeper for a

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00:58:13.110 --> 00:58:28.500

Lewis deSoto: Rich Los Angeles person or the the the Adobe house they lived in in one of the canyons, or where he actually was born in the sub a reservation.

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00:58:29.220 --> 00:58:42.690

Lewis deSoto: And the story that my mom told about how there was a terrible flood there and that my father was held aloft by my grandmother over head as they tried to

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00:58:43.260 --> 00:58:54.000

Lewis deSoto: Get through the mud in the water to get out of the reservation, where it was flooding, all that kind of stuff. It became part and parcel of like my landscape photography

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00:58:55.050 --> 00:59:01.500

Lewis deSoto: Thinking about the layers of history that are there a lot of its visible to others, but it's visible to me.

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00:59:02.580 --> 00:59:03.060

Lewis deSoto: So,

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00:59:04.620 --> 00:59:05.670

Lewis deSoto: And I think that

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00:59:07.350 --> 00:59:20.580

Lewis deSoto: Part of the thing that sort of guided me to move to Napa. After you know teaching a San Francisco State is that it felt, in a sense, kind of like San Bernardino Valley did felt when I was a kid.

434

00:59:21.780 --> 00:59:25.560

Lewis deSoto: Basically a predominantly agricultural

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00:59:27.810 --> 00:59:45.180

Lewis deSoto: agricultural society with, you know, sort of urban ism mixed in with it. And when I when I, we were looking around for a place to live. I go, it's hot here. People have swimming pools and there's palm trees. I think I can. I think I can. I can live here.

436

00:59:47.160 --> 00:59:48.990

Lewis deSoto: Some of that sort of baked into that.

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00:59:54.330 --> 00:59:56.940

Josh Garrett-Davis: That's, that's a wonderful that's wonderful sort of

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00:59:58.740 --> 01:00:02.190

Josh Garrett-Davis: Image to leave us, it is, it isn't quite smoky or you are

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01:00:02.640 --> 01:00:09.300

Lewis deSoto: It is very dangerous to walk outside right now and I'll actually I'll read you the index.

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01:00:10.980 --> 01:00:12.390

Lewis deSoto: Let's see what it is.

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01:00:17.250 --> 01:00:18.030

Lewis deSoto: Very bad.

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01:00:18.390 --> 01:00:19.470

Josh Garrett-Davis: Oh my gosh it's red.

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01:00:19.770 --> 01:00:25.980

Lewis deSoto: It's red. Well, purple is really bad but 176 is terribly unhealthy for everyone.

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01:00:28.530 --> 01:00:34.020

Lewis deSoto: So we're not going outside today, but it's supposed to let up a little bit in the next 12 hours.

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01:00:35.130 --> 01:00:42.570

Lewis deSoto: So the fires are sort of weighing down a little bit up north in the canyons and mountainous areas above mouse and Lena

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01:00:44.910 --> 01:00:47.550

Lewis deSoto: But again, this, this feels familiar to me.

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01:00:48.810 --> 01:00:57.960

Lewis deSoto: Southern California, watching the panorama fire burn where there was everywhere you look 360 degrees there was fire in the mountains and

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01:00:58.740 --> 01:01:16.950

Lewis deSoto: You know, just all of the days. I remember smelling smoke and seeing plumes of smoke coming out from somewhere in Southern California and I kind of remember the joke of the the the seasons of Southern California was a

449

01:01:18.180 --> 01:01:19.770

Lewis deSoto: Spring smog.

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01:01:20.280 --> 01:01:21.630

Lewis deSoto: Fire and mud.

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01:01:23.340 --> 01:01:28.410

Lewis deSoto: Were the four seasons that we recognized in Southern California.

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01:01:30.210 --> 01:01:31.350

Josh Garrett-Davis: Oh, there you go, well,

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01:01:32.940 --> 01:01:48.180

Josh Garrett-Davis: I'm wishing you clearer clearer skies soon and really grateful expressing gratitude again for joining us. Thank you so much. And thank you to all of you who were able to join in and listen and ask questions and

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01:01:49.980 --> 01:01:55.230

Josh Garrett-Davis: The next one of the in this conversation series JOIN US ON SATURDAY OCTOBER 17 with

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01:01:55.980 --> 01:02:10.290

Josh Garrett-Davis: Simon on Chippewa artists summer Peters and Joe horse capture the outreach vice president of native collections ahmanson curator of Native American history and culture will be in conversation again that's October 17. Thank you, Mr. Soto

456

01:02:10.440 --> 01:02:11.820

Josh Garrett-Davis: Thank you, all of you and

457

01:02:12.330 --> 01:02:14.850

Josh Garrett-Davis: We'll look forward to talking in the future.