



# Our Hen House Podcast: Transcript for Episode 651, Interview with Linnea Ryshke

**Jasmin Singer:** Welcome to Our Hen House, Linnea.

**Linnea Ryshke:** Hello!

**Jasmin:** I'm excited to talk to you. I was telling you before that, I think my favorite interviews are with creative types and with artists and poets and writers, and you are a poet and many other things too. So welcome, welcome, welcome. I can't wait to talk about your book *Kindling*, which is based in your time working at an organic meat farm.

Wow. So how did that come about and what did you hope to learn from the experience?

**Linnea:** So I've been vegan for quite a time and an artist since I was two. So the intersection of art and my passion for animal advocacy has been sort of a center of my life for a time. But there came a point where I felt like I needed more of an embodied experience to...not only...I mean, I had been drawing hens and cows and pigs for so long but it was...I'd never really met them before. Um, besides those field trips that you take when you're in elementary school, that kind of a thing. But I had this, like, what would it be like to be in that kind of situation with them? So my intention was actually to go to a sanctuary, that was my first thought, but I just, through various circumstances, ended up at this farm and without really knowing what I was going to encounter. My intention was to be as, as open and as porous to the experience as much as possible. So I didn't...I knew it was gonna be uncomfortable, but I didn't quite know to what extent.

So that happened in 2019, which the book came from, but it's, it's been like a really pivotal point that has changed my art practice since then, so.

**Jasmin:** Wow. So. What was it like there? Like, what was your day to day life? Like if you're okay sharing that.

**Linnea:** So the, the poems themselves kind of narrate the experience from kind of the quote/unquote mundane encounters and actions during the day.

So basically I was there as kind of like a work stay situation. So I fed and gave water to the animals in the morning. And so, you know yeah, that took up the morning and then the afternoon would be more specific sort of tasks, but that kind of act of care for animals who were to be ultimately killed was...that was the crux of what was so discomfoting for me. And so that repetition of task and of care, um, kind of centered the experience.

**Jasmin:** Well, you have spoken about the psychological tension between empathy and apathy and care and harm that is present in these poems. Can you explain that?

**Linnea:** So the unintended point of this book was to be as honest as possible.

So I didn't intend on any of this to come up, but what happened in doing that those tasks was the way in which became culpable and complicit in the system itself. So of course it was the system being not at all the context of a factory farm situation, but of a single family, small farm that we associate with those, of course, those images of idyllic kind of situations.

So the embodied experience of care that easily flipped into harm in the way in which...I talk about that in the poems of when animals would try to escape and I would try to get them back in the cage that I would hurt them, or...it was so interesting to me how the stress of the situation, even though, you know, they, they weren't in those tiny battery cage situations of course, but they were still very stressed because they had no control and that stress, partly through empathy and partly just in being the role of the worker, kind of became...In my own actions, like kind of drove my own actions, which was very uncomfortable for me. So I tried to be as honest about that in the book, just to also hopefully be a lens with which...because I think there can be this sense of like higher than thou in veganism.

And I really wanted to be like this was my honest and genuine response and it was horrible. And I hated myself for it, you know, but I think that was important to be honest about.

**Jasmin:** Wow. There is a lot there. I have so many more questions, but I'm wondering if you would mind sharing one or two of your poems before we go further into the questions?

**Linnea:** Yeah, let's see. I'm gonna read the, the poem called *Foreign Matter*. So it's related to what I was just speaking about so I'll go ahead. So, One:

Turned around            saw I failed  
To secure                the latch  
Four young ducks  
Leapt out               my heart                pulsed to  
                        the rapid      beating of  
Their wings             my hands  
Reached far                               from my body  
                        to enclose                them in a  
                        grip                           lighter than a  
                        choke hold                harder than a  
                                 caress                       my palms  
                        sang, as if with                an access  
                        swelling,                       white blood  
                                 cells struggling  
                        to remember  
                                 tenderness.

**Jasmin:** Oh, wow. That's there's a lot. Did you wanna continue to the next?

**Linnea:** Yeah. Well, I'm just gonna read the...so the poem has four parts. Yeah. And I'll read the last part as well. So, Four:

It happened slowly:

when I closed the door on a wing

when my foot shoved one back in

when I pinned one to the ground

laying the water dish down

when I recoiled at their open mouths

when my lips lapped up fish soup

when my tongue remembered

the ease of swallowing

strips of a stranger's body

The foreign matter

became my own.

So I talk about the earlier poem, *Foreign Matter*, I had this like, allergic reaction so that was kind of, sort of what that was related to, but just how all of this became my embody... Like my body and my actions became part of it. So.

**Jasmin:** Wow. Yeah. There are a lot of things I'm feeling listening to that.

I just closed my eyes and took it in and I could see it and I feel like I could smell it. And that is really. I wanna say beautiful, but also just really tragic. And I cannot imagine what that was like for you to be there. I mean, I have so many questions.

How did you feel about the people at the farm?

**Linnea:** It's really interesting to me cuz I've also since being at the farm, been at other situations where the animal is exploited and I'm connecting with the humans that are doing that work. And they're nice people, the people at the farm, they were very kind to me and are nice people, you know?

So it's interesting. Like I had no, although this work, I would not call it undercover work at all because it wasn't my intention wasn't necessarily to pinpoint them and say, you are doing wrong. You specifically, this farm, but it's more just like the - How do we understand that conflict between this environment that necessitates a kind of violence and yet people who love their dog very much and, you know, have children that they care for.

And, you know, it's like, how do we reconcile all of these tensions that I have within me too? So I very much. That was a conflict for sure.

**Jasmin:** Yeah. I would imagine that there was a lot of dichotomies going on for you. I feel it in just those poems. You've spoken of the ethics of making an image, ie the process of being like, as important in making the work as the final art piece itself. Can you explain that?

**Linnea:** Yeah. So I have various sort of examples of that. But for me, it's like, there are a lot of artists who work with animals in their subject matter. And I think there's a spectrum of whether it's respectful and not, and, and for me, because I feel so much sensitivity towards the animals that I'm representing, that I want to be as considerate in the process of doing so.

So for instance, I guess this is, this is separate from the book, but just the example that came to mind. So I did this series of works, going to the zoo near my home for every weekend for a year and a half. And I was always aware of not wanting to take images of the animals, because that was part of the way in which I felt they were exploited.

And also to draw them in a way that they themselves were either showing or not showing themselves. So for instance, I have this painting of a gorilla with his back to the viewer, because that was the way in which he showed himself to me. And so I guess that's an example of which I can go into more specific details maybe with other pieces.

But I also, a lot of my work involves ritual or some sort of like repetition. So, it might just be an image, but there's kind of a process with which that image was made. So one work that's mentioned in the book that the book is sort of set up as

sort of poetry and photography in the first part. And the second part being kind of an artist statement of sorts and images of work.

So one of the works that is shown is called *Remains*. And it's a drawing that I made, of drawing an individual hen for 47 days. 47 days being at that point in 2018, the kind of average lifespan of a broiler hen. And so I did this kind of ritual of drawing this hen every day over the same panel of the same surface.

And I sort of did the drawing and covered the surface over with a layer of like thin paint and sanded the surface down. And I collected kind of this, the dust from sanding and made this urn for the kind of metaphorical ash in a way to go along with the painting. But I, what was so interesting to me in doing that work was that, you know, we think “47 days, like, wow,” that's, you know, I mean, it's a minuscule amount to what a healthy lifespan would be, but it felt when I was doing it, it's like, “wow, this feels like such a long time to endure what I know they endure.” So physically feeling that and doing the work, I didn't really hadn't considered that quite the same way and kind of witnessing it through imagination, but I, yeah, so, things like that.

**Jasmin:** Yeah. Wow. What an amazing idea too with the sort of dust and just sort of letting it represent the body of this being.

These poems are obviously full of pain. Can you talk about the importance of holding grief and discomfort in your work?

**Linnea:** That's become kind of a guiding principle for me is wherever the discomfort lies, like go there and not for the sake of some kind of like endurance, you know, principle, but more just like, I think we know that in our own personal lives. And it's like, wherever the tension is, wherever we don't... there's like a standstill or a paralysis or something, two things or multiple things are coming together. And they there's this tension between them. Like, I think that there can be heat there and there can be generative energy towards something else.

And I...sometimes like, what, what could that be? But I tend to be like...at the farm, like he told me, he said, you know, “I'm slaughtering today. Like, do you wanna...” he like asked me if I wanted to participate. I didn't do anything. But he asked me if I wanted to see. And I was like, “no, but I, but I should,” you know? “No, but I will,” you know? So, I mean, this whole time at the farm was like, “I don't wanna be here, but I need to be here.”

And so I have done that in other circumstances since. Partly to...I feel like the work has been more honest, but I also think that I'm trying to embody that because I think as a whole society, we need to know how to navigate spaces of discomfort more.

**Jasmin:** I would love to hear another one or two, if you don't mind.

**Linnea:** Yeah, sure. So yeah, related to what we were just saying of discomfort. So this poem is called *Normal*

every morning.

every morning, i knew.

i knew to look for

dead bodies in cages.

Rabbit, lying

stuck stiff as a plastic doll.

Chick, drowned

in her water bowl.

Quail, flattened

with upturned feet.

Young Duck, furred

with her first feathers.

Chick, matted

down in the wood chips.

i told myself: no shovel or glove.

i told myself: my skin must meet theirs.

i told myself: reach in and reach out

toward the stillness of their bodies

that sent shocks up my arms.

**Jasmin:** Wow. Is there more context about that one that you wanna share?

**Linnea:** Well, you know, death is very normal at a farm, so a lot of times those bodies are taken away quickly or yeah, just like a shovel or glove to take them out. But when I could, I wanted to be as present to that individual as possible.

And like, most of us have had that experience of like a dead body. Like there's so much like you don't want, like there's something physical going on. Like I don't wanna touch it, but, and like that stillness is so. Anyway, it's just, uh, yeah, it's really, it's very hard.

So for me, the pain and the suffering is so important to feel empathetically. And at the same time, like I have this poem called *Touch*. And the last two poems are kind of about that. The empathy that is also of their joy and their connectedness with one another. So I think, you know what you were saying, like beauty and pain.

Like I, you know, we are...I, for me, like my art, that's where that resonance is. It's like this strange overlap that can happen between the two, that's almost irreconcilable and I think has to do with, you know, mortality and, and that shared mortality with other beings.

**Jasmin:** So mm-hmm yeah, that makes sense. You have said that "Through image making, I do not intend to capture the animal subject, but tactilely feel my way toward them and evoke their elusive presence."



Can you explain that process in the context of a specific example?

**Linnea:** Yeah, so that language is oftentimes used in photography, uh, so much as like capturing an image. And, but I do think that quality is very much within painting too. If you see of paintings of animals, you know, from still lifes and things like that, it's like these hyper rendered photo realist kind of paintings.

Basically the animal is used as a learning tool or as like, "I can, I can paint this," this kind of like mastery through skill. And so through the quality of the image, so a lot of times the images of animals that I paint or draw are, are like barely there. There's kind of like this ephemerality or this like appearing and disappearing simultaneously. So they're rarely like still and single and captured in that way. Just because I think that that way in which like matter and spirit are kind of intertwined of like, kind of having that be the feeling of the painting rather than this kind of like objectness of the animal.

**Jasmin:** Mm-hmm I have some more specific questions, but first taking a big step back. What do you feel is the role of art and art making in animal advocacy?

**Linnea:** It has such a diverse range, I think. So for me, I don't necessarily consider myself or my work as like activist artwork though I think that's very necessary.

So I think from the spectrum of like images and graphics to more like kind of gallery work, I guess you could say, so there's such a spectrum. I guess that's visual art. Of course that's not including dance and song and all of that, but I think in general, art at its best has this capacity to bypass logic and reason and rational thinking, which is so dominant to touch us in the most tender part of our being. And I hope for that with my work, you know, I aspire to that and I think art at its best does that. And I think that's so necessary more than ever in these times to be able to access that part of ourselves. You know, one thing I love about art so much is that, of course it's sold as a commodity and there's big art markets, but at the same time, like it's so non utilitarian it's so unnecessary.

It's of course there's craft that's used for a purpose, but it's just like an image that you...or it's a painting that you see, there's no real function to it. And yet at the same time, we know during times of...obviously now...during times of war, during times of turmoil and unrest, like art is so necessary.

So it has this, this sort of duality of being excess, but also so vital for our own spiritual endurance and...

**Jasmin:** Hmm. I could not have...I've never heard a better answer to that question. I could never have articulated it that way, but all of that resonates deeply with me. Why do you resist the term activist art to describe your work?

**Linnea:** I guess it's not that I resist it, necessarily. It's just, I definitely am an activist myself as a person, but I think my...it's mostly because I think of like, when I think of that term, I think of like this kind of like forward moving definitive, very strong, forced kind of will.

And though I feel that very much, I think my art is more...like as it's becoming more so, and again I don't know if I have it right. but this kind of quiet, reflective space of like still space. And I've tried a lot of tactics of more straightforward, more like kind of illustrative in a sense, images. And I think those have for sure, a role, but the responses in my art that I've gotten that when the images are more like that, people tend to get more defensive.

And if they're a little bit more open and subtle, like they kind of haunt people a little more. So I don't mean to resist that term, I just think that my art functions a little bit differently.

**Jasmin:** And at the same time, I must assume that you want to have these poems read, not just by animal rights vegans, but by people who might be led to think about animals in a new way because of them.

How does that come about?

**Linnea:** I'm figuring it out. You know, it's like, it's a big question. I mean, in some ways that is the potential of art that I think is great. Is that a lot and people who come to art spaces are the widest mix of people. Hopefully, you know? I mean, it can be an elitist group, but in the kind of spaces that I'm interested in, it's a diverse range of people who oftentimes are not vegan.

And that's...many times people who see my work are not vegan, but I, you know, I've gotten that so many times it's like, "oh, so, so you want me to be vegan now?" You know, people will say that it's like, "I mean, yeah?" But not, I don't mean that, like to say that is my goal but at the same time, it's like I actually do believe that more and more as I keep making work is that- Yes, that is what I want. But at the same time, it translates to an even broader way of being in the world that can't help but happen to be vegan. But it's like, "how else do I live differently?"

**Jasmin:** Right. And you've said that, and I'm quoting you, "Connection, the kind that nourishes the marrow, does not know the bounds of species. I do not risk hyperbole to say that all humans know this truth."

I think that most of our listeners understand that sense of connection very well and perhaps include it among the fundamental joys of their life. So another big question for you, how do so many humans manage to forget it so completely?

**Linnea:** I think it's, it's almost for me, less of a forgetting. It's just this like strange morphing that like, we all have that core, but it just turns and kind of becomes this strange monster of something else. Like I even just experienced that recently, that something that came from a love for this individual, it just turned to like, "how does that possibly look like love to you?" You know? So I think...but at the same time, I have these instances where, you know, I'll see someone like if I'm on a walk, kind of being curious about the same bird that I am, or...I feel like I have those moments where it's clear that people...I really do believe that people have this core capacity and curiosity and kindness towards other creatures. It's just human, you know, human domination and human exceptionalism is so...it's like the first thing we learn, basically, you know? So it just suppresses that so much.

But I really do believe that it's still there. It's just morphed into these strange forms. And also, quite honestly, like I have friends or people I know who...we know know people like this, like, "oh, I just don't wanna see that." You know, if it's like a video of a slaughter house or these undercover videos, like "I just, I can't see it. I don't wanna see it." But like, saying the fact that you actually know that it would be really hurtful to...there's empathy there. It's just, it's almost too much to hold. And so I think for me, that's when uncomfortability comes back where it's just like, can we be...Can we hold that tension? Like we care and yet we can't. For a lot of people it's like, "how do I act in a way that I care?" So...

**Jasmin:** Yeah. Well, and yet you have gone the opposite direction. You like went right in. And I just, I...I'm not even sure how to articulate this question, but like, are you okay?

I mean, like the reason people can't go in or see, "I don't wanna see it," that whole thing is because like, sometimes people think that they're only capable of so much trauma and you went like right in, like where do you put it? How do you go about your days?

**Linnea:** Yeah. Since then I've had experiences similarly and to be honest, my relations with other animals are partly what keeps me somewhat sane, just cuz I think for me, like what keeps me doing my work is not only my intense heartbreak over all of this, but also just like my equally intense admiration for all the non-human animal life that...and just non-human life in general being...I mean, I spent some time recently just sitting at the base of this mountain and just like being with a mountain, which I know sounds strange, but it felt as connected to...you know, there was a sentience there that I felt connected to.

So I think for me, it's like, having those moments of connectedness are so healing for me. I just try to increase my capacity to hold these things just because someone,...you know, there's so many of us who do that. You know, people in all different...photojournalist and undercover agents and all of those people, who it's like someone has to be there to hold it.

**Jasmin:** I wanna go back to something you said earlier, you said that many of your works involve an active ritual. What do you mean by that?

**Linnea:** So I guess another example that I can give, that's not in the book, but a somewhat recent work that's on my website are what I called *Bone-Stones: Relics of Our Wreckage*.

So they're these sort of...an explanation to say exactly what they are. But basically I, for most of us who live in big cities know that, um, chicken bones are very common to see on the sidewalks. So I began to collect them. And collected them from like a restaurant near my home too. And I basically cremated them and through this sort of, this process and...turned them into these stones. So, um, yeah, that was one poem that I was gonna suggest I would share with your flock for the extra material. But I have a poem that sort of describes the process with which I did that. So it became so like the object itself, um, is one thing, but the process, I was very important to me and very difficult for me to do.

And especially in the context of actually the physical matter of an animal, like an animal body that I was manipulating in some way. So like, how do I understand that? But so something like that was very process oriented in a way.

**Jasmin:** Mm-hmm I spoke with another artist, uh, Linda Brandt, who had put together something called *The Monument to Animals We Do Not Mourn*. And she also spoke about how she used found bones from animals in her art. And she joined us on a flock call once and we discussed it. And we sort of discussed

whether there's any kind of exploitation in that inherently or because it's found we're using it to like, make a point.

I mean, there's no answer. I'm just curious about your take on that.

**Linnea:** Yeah. Well, I think in some ways, like the poem that I wrote kind of deals with that more directly. So I definitely understand that for sure. You know, I felt, a tension there myself, but for me it was partly...I guess number one to say, I've thought since then, like I would never sell these works. For some, you know, like they're inherently a body that I've, that I've changed into a different form, but like, I would never add to the commercialized aspect of that.

But also just thinking about these bones as what is left of them. And as more and more research and understanding is shown that memory is not just...the brain is not just the locus of memory it's like the body can hold all that as well. And so it felt like in the effort of cremating them, you know...I mean, cremation itself, like what I did of course was not through the same means, but in my oven basically, and then ground them down.

So that's not a, that's a violent act in and of itself, but. It felt like, because it was coming from a place of care that my orientation was always there. And the form that it took, like, I kind of wanted it to...I even say that in the poem, like they, the actual objects really do look like stones.

Like it was surprising to me what they turned out to look like. And so this kind of like autonomy of matter, like I was kind of surprised myself...like that as an artist I really...So I love working with material as opposed to, you know, in a virtual space, because there is this agency that material has. It doesn't want to do what you want it to do, oftentimes. And so it was even more like, "wow, this is the remains of another's body that is moving and drying in this way." Like it wasn't all in my control. So don't know if it was the right thing, but I felt because I was orienting myself towards a certain kind of care and respect that I hoped that that translated in the work

**Jasmin:** well, it's interesting because I also, everyone passes chicken bones on the street and I think that it's like, "Ugh," you know, for a vegan, it's it can be really traumatic, especially if our dogs start to go towards them, it's like, "come on, let's not, you're vegan!"

**Linnea:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jasmin:** But now I feel like when I pass one I'm going to think about this conversation. So I feel like that already shifted me in a way. I don't know how, but like, it sort of takes a little edge of the trauma away to know that there can be this bigger framework for it. Like we're all in this together.

This is not just what I'm looking at in front of me, but it's an entire individual and there are ways of respecting them and honoring them as we go about the difficult nature of our activism or our art. I can't really articulate it, but that's the power of the arts, as you mentioned, and so I appreciate that.

And speaking of which you obviously work with a very wide variety of materials and mediums as an artist, and I'm fascinated by that, does the type of subject influence these choices? Like, how do you say that's gonna be this... that's gonna be a poem. That's gonna be a drawing. Like, what is that like?

**Linnea:** I feel like they, they feed each other very much.

So it feels like oftentimes, it's hard to treat them separately, cuz I, I mean, honestly, that's how a lot of artists are operating much more these days. Like I'm a painter/sculpture, you know, or a sculptor/videographer, so like this multimedia approach I think is very much of the time. But I think for me, each function very differently like objects have like this kind of weight and bodily presence to them and images have this kind of like, window-ness, you know, that we have associated with kind of looking into something or this space with which we can enter into, through vision. And writing has this way of, for me...I mean, I love poetry so much. I'm just...I'm not a poet at all. I mean, I wrote it, but I'm not trained in poetry. But I really, I just the textures of the words and the rhythms and like, I think poetry for me, is just a wonderful way to use language in a new way.

So in *Kindling* it's much more...I would say my poems are pretty direct and narrative. But since then I've been exploring kind of other forms, but I feel like because they each can do their own thing and so when they're relating to each other, I think it creates a larger experience and context.

**Jasmin:** I agree with that.

I find it perplexing to hear you say that you're not a poet. Like I very much see you as a poet. It's interesting to me that you said that.

**Linnea:** I think it's just because I'm trained as an artist and I'm not trained as a writer. So it's like, it's one of those things, like, I don't wanna say I'm from New

York, even though I feel like I'm from New York, you know, like...these people are actually poets I'm, I'm just kinda like...I write poetry.

**Jasmin:** Okay. All right. Well, so do you have another one you could read to us that you were not going to read to the flock? Cause I know you're planning on some bonus content for the flock, which is exciting. So flock, ready? It's coming Tuesday. We're excited about that.

**Linnea:** Yeah. Hmm. Yeah, maybe I'll read just a couple from a poem called *Resistance*. So number one:

She pride apart

the wooden beams

sutured together

by the bees' hive.

*They're supposed to*

*build straight*

*but they always*

*build diagonally.*

She broke apart

the hive until

the bees thudded

against her suited body.

She brought the pieces

into the house

and closed the door

tightly.

*If I don't,*

*they will come*

*and try to take*

*it back.*

So I should have said actually, beforehand that I include in the poems some of the dialogue from the farmers. And so...Anyway, the two of the stanzas there are italicized to be what I've heard them say. So, and then I'll read the last two, actually. So number two:

The sky hacked up thunderous roars

as the barbecue began.

Strapped and pierced,

a whole pig carcass twisted

atop a smoldering coal bed.

Her thigh muscles sizzled black,

chest cavity glistened.



In dark orange drips

her flesh ran

like rain.

Number three:

Seven gone.

Through the sliver of space

between the gate and door or

through holes we could not see,

the quails found the cracks,

like persistent shoots

that muscle through dark thresholds.

*Stupid quails*

stupid (adj): marked by a lack of intelligence; lacking ordinary  
quickness and keenness of mind.

So that poem has again, that kind of italicized language. And then I, at the bottom, I write the definition of stupid.

So it's, so for me one of my favorite books is called *Fear of the Animal Planet*, which is stories of animal resistance. So just these are very instances of individuals in captivity resisting...but I was just picking up on that at the farm, like these very small ways in which the animal does not do what we want the animal to do, you know?

So, um, that like the cog and the machine that does not work as we want it to. So those instances for me are so telling of obviously the agency, the will, the autonomy, the want to be not in those situations.

**Jasmin:** Yeah. You make me think of pigeons, like who escaped the food system. They were brought here by the Dutch and escaped the food system. I, they are like my...I love them. Yeah. So much. Yeah. They are so badass.

The flesh ran like rain is a line that's sticking in my head. It's so provocative and powerfully said and...I just wonder how important is our willingness to see animals to our thriving, or even surviving, both on an individual level and on a societal level.

Like her flesh ran like rain to me, we're not talking about *Silence of the Lambs* here. We're talking about what's going on all the time. 24/7. So what do you think, how important is our willingness to see animals? When it comes to our ability to thrive as people, in our lives?

**Linnea:** You mean like kind of going back to “how do we hold that discomfort?”

Or like, how do we keep...

**Jasmin:** Yeah...I...just exactly, sorry. I know it's a bit of a strange question, but I am wondering like...so many people around us don't see the animals. Are we having some kind of deeper existence because we do? Or are we just suffering because we do?

**Linnea:** Yeah. Well, for me, I've noticed that more recently my capacity... which I don't think it's mine...It's just like what my experience of empathy is both my curse and my gift, you know? Like in the sense of, I think empathy, if we really cultivate it, is tragic. It's horrible to be...that sense of connectedness is with suffering, but it has this immense wonder and joy to it as well.

You know? So like I've noticed that for me with...for instance there's swallows that recently came...migrated, you know, a sign of spring that the swallows are here and I could spend hours just watching them. Just in the sense of like, empathetically just wondering like, "wow, how are you moving that way?"

You know, just this kind of wonder and a lot of people can't do that, you know? And I think that it's hard to even know what that is, but I think it's like the patience and just stillness that empathy...you just have to wait, like it's this like embodied experience that I think we don't quite know how to do.

And it's difficult forms and it's wonderful forms.

**Jasmin:** Yes. That's well said.

So I'm just curious about your own personal awakening to animals. I mean, you have this profound sense of them, of the animal world and of the divisions and connections between humans and non-humans. When did this start?

**Linnea:** Yeah. So we always have those like Genesis stories for those of us who are passionate about this. So I was lucky enough to have someone when I was in high school, who actually was an artist and was vegan and oriented me towards these questions. So that was part of it.

But I also, it was a time when I was becoming much more aware of environmental issues. And also just into doing yoga, actually in high school and just like being much more in tune to my body in a new way. So for me, those three kind of fed this new sense of understanding of, "wow. There's so much, I did not understand and, and have been completely ignorant too."

But I was also kind of, at that point, my art was having much more of an activist lens to it. So it was my art as well as with this newfound kind of mission of mind that it really began. And that was quite early on so I feel I'm one of...I feel like for most of us in this field that it's like, this is my life and this is what I will be doing until I cannot.

Because it's that important and especially now, you know, it does scare me a little bit. Just how there's so much violence happening, just within the human sphere, that I think this issue can become even more marginalized in some ways. So I think it's so important to keep including it. Like, "no, this is important because it's so connected" because of course there's so much, obviously you have written a lot about that, of like so much interconnection between all these issues.

So this is not marginal. This is not, “we'll get to it when we can.” This is important now.

**Jasmin:** Totally. Well, I'm really looking forward to you sharing some more of the poems with the flock for the flock bonus content. I cannot believe that 50 minutes have gone by, because I feel like I could ask you a thousand more questions.

I'm officially a big fan of your work. I'm really moved by your book and really inspired by your work. So can you tell our listeners how they can follow your work and get a copy of your book?

**Linnea:** My website is not my name at all, which makes it slightly confusing. But it's [www.reembodimentproject.com](http://www.reembodimentproject.com). So it's reembodiment project.com.

My book is published through Lantern Publishing and Media, so you can find it on their website. And I do have an Instagram. I don't really use it. but I do have one. Um...

**Jasmin:** What is it?

**Linnea:** It's my name. So Linnea underscore Ryshke.

**Jasmin:** Well, we'll link to all that in the show notes as well for people who are interested in getting a copy and following you. Linnea, thank you so much for spending your morning with me today and for all that you're doing and this incredible piece of art that you've created.

**Linnea:** Yes. Thank you so much. This was a pleasure.