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Yale professor Neil Goldberg launches podcast

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The second season of a podcast "SHE'S A TALKER," which is created by the Yale School of Art critic and artist Neil Goldberg, is set to launch this Friday.

In "SHE'S A TALKER," Goldberg converses with New Yorkers involved in the arts. His guests range from artists and writers to performers, and past guests include cartoonist Roz Chast, comedian Naomi Ekperigin and writer Jia Tolentino.

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"I have been making visual art professionally since the early 90s," Goldberg said. "I love it, but the folks you are in dialogue with are rather constrained, as only so many people go to museums and art galleries. The podcast felt like a really exciting opportunity to reach audiences I haven't reached before."

Goldberg has been jotting down passing observations, actions and ideas on paper for years. He described these notes as "cards," and said he currently possesses thousands of them. Initially, Goldberg used these cards in solo performances, using the observations to inspire impromptu monologues. He later consulted them for his series of experimental talk shows and drew from them to incite conversations among visitors during his visual art exhibitions.

Goldberg began working on "SHE'S A TALKER" last spring. He called the podcast the "culminating iteration" of his use of the cards.

Goldberg was inspired to start a podcast because he loves conversation and free association. He uses his cards as prompts to begin conversations with his guests. He said there is a "delight in tangents," as the card is a starting point that eventually drops away, leaving the two conversationalists in "unexpected territory."

Goldberg added that he enjoys the "disembodied" nature of the podcast. "It's like a message in a bottle — you're just putting something out there," he said.

According to Goldberg, the podcast takes seriously the notion that "you only go around once" — that life is short, beautiful and hard. The podcast is real and unpretentious about the conditions of being alive, and it approaches these topics with a humor that is simultaneously dark and funny.

Goldberg also said that he is not afraid to look at challenging cultural issues and works hard to bring in a wide array of voices.

Devon Guinn, producer of "SHE'S A TALKER," said that the podcast is "really cool" because Goldberg features LGBTQ voices and people of color without focusing conversations on their underrepresentation.

Annie Lanzilotto, a poet and performer and Goldberg's first guest, said that the way he thinks is unique, brilliant and inspiring. She said that he is deeply insightful and in "a lane all by himself."

Lanzilotto called the podcast "brilliant" and a "fun format," and said that her experience recording with Goldberg was both wonderful and disarming.

"It's not like he was asking me questions about anything normal, like my life or work," Lanzilotto said. "Instead of one person asking another person a question, it's two people looking at a thought on a card and then reacting to it in the moment — it's very playful."

In season two of "SHE'S A TALKER," Goldberg plans to bring in an element of user engagement. He said that he feels gratified when people's experience of the world is broadened, transformed, deepened and enriched by listening to his work. Goldberg noted that several listeners wrote personal responses to cards mentioned in the show, and he wishes to incorporate these responses directly into the podcast.

Goldberg also plans to expand the range of guests to include both well-known New Yorkers and people whose line of work may not bring the same kind of acclaim. Some guests include Caroline Martin, co-star and co-creator of Netflix's new sketch show "Astronomy Club;" Jacques Servin, co-founder of the activist group The Yes Men; Alicia Svigals, a renowned klezmer violinist; and Andy Hawkes ART '15, a sculptor who has turned to baking as an art form.

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"SHE'S A TALKER" is available on all platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Stitcher, RadioPublic and Overcast.