

## Beyond Borders Season 2 Episode 6

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### KEY POINTS

- Podcast Introduction: This is Beyond Borders, a podcast from Listen and Be Heard Network, a project of Sound System Culture.
- Podcast Hosts: Martha Cinader, Judy Talaugon, and Hernán Rodríguez Sierra.
- Podcast Content: Discussions about various topics including social issues, global affairs, and listener interaction.
- Name Change Significance: Hernan explains the emotional and spiritual reasons behind going back to his birth name, emphasizing self-acceptance and shedding past trauma.
- Nickname Origin and Evolution: Hernan recounts how “Jay” became his nickname in eighth grade due to pronunciation difficulties and how it gained popularity in performing arts.
- Branding and Identity: Hernan discusses the implications of changing his name in the context of branding and business, acknowledging its impact on recognition and the importance of authenticity.
- Male Ego and its Impact: Discussion on the destructive nature of the male ego and its potential roots in species, power, or innate characteristics.
- Addressing the Issue: Exploring ways to address the negative impacts of the male ego, including open dialogue, self-reflection, and understanding its effects on different groups.
- Recognizing Intersectional Oppression: Emphasizing the need for men to recognize the interconnectedness of oppression and how it manifests differently based on race, gender, and socioeconomic status.
- Community Empowerment: Highlighting the strength and transformative power of communities, particularly in the context of Venezuela’s comunas.
- Language and Understanding: Emphasizing the importance of using accurate language and understanding different perspectives to address oppression effectively.
- Addressing Community Needs: Discussing the tangible benefits of communities and the need to offer support and resources to those facing economic challenges.
- Humanity and Empathy: Discussing the importance of basic human needs and empathy, using an anecdote about two young men from different backgrounds.
- Addressing Societal Issues: Highlighting the need to move beyond racial divisions and acknowledge the struggles of individuals from all backgrounds.
- Sexuality and Divinity: Exploring the complex relationship between sexuality, divinity, and societal perceptions, prompted by a poem and previous conversation.

- Honoring the Divine in Connection: Emphasizing the importance of honoring the divine nature of human connection and rejecting transactional views of relationships.
- Addressing Toxic Masculinity: A call to action for men to confront and dismantle toxic masculinity, including the commodification of masculinity and the need to embrace the feminine within.
- Rejecting Exploitation and Embracing Sustainability: A critique of patriarchal and capitalist systems that prioritize extraction and profit over sustainability and interconnectedness.
- Podcast Information: This is an episode of “Beyond Borders” by the Listen and Be Heard Network.
- Exploration of Societal Norms: Discussion about societal norms surrounding gender, sex, and the roles imposed on women.
- Questioning Traditional Beliefs: Challenging the notion that women need men and highlighting the contributions of women.
- Childhood Memories: Recollection of childhood friends and the tragedies they faced, highlighting societal issues.
- Impact of Violence and Abuse: Discussion on how violence and abuse, particularly against women and marginalized groups, are prevalent and often rooted in societal norms.
- Role of Trans Individuals in Community: Highlighting the role of trans individuals in providing support and acceptance within communities, challenging societal norms.
- Oppression and Empathy: Discussion about recognizing oppression in all its forms and the need for empathy and compassion.
- Art as a Catalyst for Growth: Art, particularly poetry, as a means of personal growth, self-reflection, and open dialogue.
- Impact of Martha’s Poetry: The speaker’s appreciation for Martha’s poetry, its ability to evoke honest emotions, and its role in fostering meaningful conversations.
- Personal Growth and Vulnerability: The speaker reflects on their personal journey of self-discovery and healing, particularly around confronting past trauma and embracing vulnerability.
- Importance of Community and Respect: The speaker emphasizes the value of community, respect, and love, drawing from their own experiences with family and the desire for a more inclusive world.
- Artistic Expression and Human Connection: The speaker connects their personal growth to their work in art, suggesting that art can be a powerful tool for exploring human emotions and fostering connection.
- Podcast Information: This is Beyond Borders, brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.
- Donation Information: Listeners can donate to support the program by visiting [listenandbeheard.net](http://listenandbeheard.net) or [soundsystemculture.world](http://soundsystemculture.world).
- Conversation Topic: Discussion about societal pressures and challenges faced by both men and women.
- Project Goal: To bring people together, listen to each other, and share their voices.

- Ricky Riccardi's Introduction: Director of research collections for the Louis Armstrong House Museum, Grammy winner, author, and supporter of the project.
- Featured Content: Afro-Colombian poets' voices from an international poetry festival in Havana, Cuba, highlighting the power of women's voices.
- Name Reclamation and Self-Determination: Jay's act of reclaiming his original name is a profound assertion of self-determination, rooted in indigenous principles of honoring one's origin story and identity.
- Challenging Assumptions and Recognizing Origins: The importance of recognizing and respecting diverse origins, challenging assumptions based on dominant cultural narratives.
- Women's Empowerment and Truth-Telling: Highlighting the parallel of women reclaiming their voices and truths, expressing their experiences in a patriarchal world.
- Family Background: The speaker has a large family with six siblings and divorced parents.
- Early Exposure to Social Injustice: The speaker read Malcolm X's autobiography as a child and felt empathy for the Black American experience.
- Cultural Identity: The speaker's mother is indigenous, their father is mixed race, and their grandfather was a white Spaniard.
- Family History: The speaker shares a personal story about their father's upbringing, highlighting the impact of compassion and the complexities of race and history.
- Musical Inspiration: The speaker explains the origin of a musical theme used in "Beyond Borders," connecting it to a childhood memory of their grandmother.
- Family History and Struggles: The speaker reflects on their family history, including the loss of their mother's parents, the influence of male dominance, and the challenges of maintaining a family.
- Appreciation for Father's Love: The speaker expresses deep admiration for their father's ability to keep the family together despite hardships.
- Introduction to Art and Compassion: The speaker describes meeting Martha, who introduced them to art and compassion, leading to a sense of happiness and connection.
- Appreciation for Team's Work: The speaker expresses gratitude and admiration for the team's hard work and success.
- Cultural Insights: The speaker shares insights about their Colombian heritage, particularly the respect for women's strength and beauty in Barranquilla.
- Personal Anecdote: The speaker recounts a personal story about their mother's spirituality and experiences with ancestors, highlighting the influence on their own openness to such beliefs.
- Father's Actions and Impact: The speaker recounts their father's visits to brothels and the impact it had on them, highlighting the emotional suppression they experienced.
- Healing and Understanding: The speaker emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the past without self-pity or self-righteousness, focusing on healing and learning from experiences.

- **Mother's Strength and Influence:** The speaker praises their mother's strength, resilience, and positive influence, highlighting the lessons learned from her.
- **Father's Resilience:** The speaker's father managed to hold the family together despite facing significant challenges and trauma.
- **Grandmother's Strength:** The speaker's grandmother, described as strong and resembling Harriet Tubman, found humor in the grandfather's struggles.
- **Emotional Impact of a Gift:** The speaker gifted their father a blown-up picture of him, which brought him to tears.
- **Powerful Protective Energy:** Discussing a type of energy that transcends gender, often associated with love and protection, particularly towards daughters.
- **Critique of Masculinity:** Expressing the view that traditional notions of masculinity ("macho") are misleading and that this powerful energy is not exclusive to men.
- **Returning to One's Roots:** Reflecting on the idea of embracing one's original identity, symbolized by the name given at birth, as a form of empowerment.
- **Commodification of Identity:** Discussing the commodification of birth and the concept of self-determination in the digital age.
- **Authenticity in Digital Spaces:** Questioning the authenticity of online personas and emphasizing the importance of in-person connections and emotions.
- **Generosity of Sharing Knowledge:** Highlighting the value of sharing knowledge freely and encouraging support through donations to sustain the conversation.
- **Podcast Information:** Beyond Borders is brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.
- **Poem Title and Author:** Wailuku, written and read by Vanessa Lee Miller.
- **Poem Content:** The poem describes the journey of the Wailuku river, from its source to the sea, highlighting its power and beauty.
- **Wailuku's Nature:** A river known for its life-giving and life-taking power, embodying both creation and destruction.
- **Owailuku's Transformation:** Described as a once graceful trickle that has become a powerful and fearsome force.
- **The Story's Setting:** A stormy bay where the river Wailuku meets the sea, symbolizing the mingling of life and death.

## **SUMMARY**

The podcast "Beyond Borders," hosted by Martha Cinader and Judy Talaugon, explores global issues and invites listener interaction. This episode features a discussion on the impact of male ego and gender on societal problems, questioning if these issues are inherent or influenced by power structures. The conversation also touches on the role of women in perpetuating oppression and the need for men to recognize and address these issues.

The conversation highlights the importance of recognizing and addressing oppression beyond individual experiences, emphasizing the need for solidarity and understanding across different communities and experiences. It also touches on the transformative power of communities and the need to adapt language and approaches to effectively engage with them. Additionally, the discussion explores the often-overlooked significance of sex as a divine and transformative aspect of human connection.

The speaker argues that patriarchy, rooted in capitalism, perpetuates the exploitation of women's labor and the subjugation of the feminine. They criticize the commodification of teachings and the transactional nature of gender roles, emphasizing the need to dismantle these systems. The speaker also highlights the violence and abuse faced by women and the LGBTQ+ community, underscoring the urgency for change.

The speaker reflects on the importance of recognizing oppression in all its forms, emphasizing the need for compassion and empathy. They express gratitude for the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations about art and life, highlighting the transformative power of art and the importance of vulnerability and self-discovery. The speaker also acknowledges the challenges of navigating societal expectations and the impact of past trauma, emphasizing the need for personal growth and understanding.

The conversation explores the challenges faced by both men and women in society, emphasizing the importance of understanding and respecting diverse origins and experiences. It highlights the significance of reclaiming one's name and heritage as a means of empowerment and self-discovery. The discussion also touches upon the need to challenge assumptions and biases, particularly those rooted in white culture, and to create a more inclusive and equitable world.

The speaker reflects on their complex family history, highlighting their indigenous mother, mixed-race father, and the diverse backgrounds of their ancestors. They recount their father's upbringing, shaped by a German man who provided him with an education, and the influence of their black grandmother, Abuela Pabla. The speaker emphasizes the importance of compassion and empathy, transcending racial boundaries, as exemplified by the kindness shown to their father.

The speaker reflects on their mother's artistic nature and their father's ability to keep the family together despite his flaws. They share a personal story about their father's behavior in Barranquilla and how it affected them, ultimately leading them to question societal expectations of masculinity and strive for personal healing and understanding.

The speaker emphasizes the importance of compassion, art, and recognizing that everyone is doing their best.

The speaker reflects on their father's strength and the love that held their family together, despite facing trauma and societal challenges. They also discuss the commodification of birth and the importance of self-determination and asserting one's true identity, as exemplified by the concept of returning to one's "original garment" or name.

The podcast episode emphasizes the importance of authenticity and generosity in digital spaces. It highlights the value of free, community-driven conversations and encourages listeners to support the podcast through donations. The episode concludes with a poem about the Wailuku River, exploring its transformative journey and its connection to Hawaiian culture and mythology.

### **TRANSCRIPT of 58 min. podcast**

Beyond ego, beyond self-centered fear, beyond exceptionalism,  
beyond individualism, beyond headlines. This is Beyond Borders,  
brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.

Welcome back,  
my friends, to another episode of Beyond Borders. It's my...  
my privilege to be here with you today. I'm Martha Cinader,  
and I'm the executive producer of Beyond Borders and the Listen and Be Heard Network,  
which brings this program to you, which is a project of Sound System Culture,  
a newly formed not-for-profit here in New York City where this program is produced.  
Judy Talaugon is on the West Coast, my co-producer,  
co-host, and Hernán Rodríguez Sierra, also joining us today.  
And we're just talking about stuff, men and women,  
North and South, the state of the world. And we invite you to join us to listen in.  
And to be heard, too. You're always welcome to visit us at [listenandbeheard.net](http://listenandbeheard.net).

Send in your audio files or fill out a comment form,

and we'll be happy to hear from you and interact with you.

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out who's... on this show and also the Listen and Be Heard Hour.

Or if you like video, you can also go to the Listen and Be Heard YouTube channel,

where you will find the unedited videos such as today's,

which ran on more like an hour and a half. But in this podcast,

you will get a shortened version of the conversation. How are you,

Hernan? Pretty good, Hernan. I'm trying to get used to that, Hernan.

Me too. I'm remembering to call you Hernan. You guys are doing better than me. Even my son and

nobody calls me. Whatever. Whatever, dude. You're going through a phase. You're going through a

phase again. It's more than a phase, right? Why are you going back to your birth name,

Hernan? I think it has to do with... emotional and spiritual truth to myself.

I guess that's why I think people go back. It isn't because of trying to be anything, but just trying to accept myself good and bad because there was all this trauma attached to what I thought I

was trying to be. Well, what were you trying to be? Jay was a nickname, right? And it became a

nickname in eighth grade or so, because people couldn't say her none. And then when I got to

performing arts, Jay became easy for people to say. I was tired of people saying Hernan, and I felt

like I belonged. Oh, wow, they gave me a nickname. I thought it was cool. And I stuck with it. It

goes on like that, and it's not a real attachment to the original.

Right. Garment, right? That you were given. Yeah. Yeah. And so actually a lot, a lot of us do with

the work that we're doing with Martha, exploring like humanity in ourselves.

And so I said, well, let me, it's a scary thing to kind of, this whole thing of branding. We're thinking about business. Right. Because you've been professional since you were a child.

Yeah. And now you're changing your name. So that's a big deal. It's like getting divorced.

Yeah,

but the truth is, who was I married to? I mean, the truth is, it didn't make a difference in one way. Maybe people remembered me. If people want to hire you, they're going to call you, whatever.

But I had to learn that now. I just think that it wasn't like I made a gazillion dollars because my

name is Jay. Some people know, but they know my playing. Oh, you mean Jay is Hernan, and whatever

that means. But I think it's owning who I am, and it's part of that.

thinking about my ancestors and stuff like this, but I was thinking about all of the issues that

the species, you know, has done. And male, the male... Men.

Men, yeah. Like the male of us, like the destruction that it's caused and why.

I think it would be interesting to talk about what can men do to make things better, coming from a

perspective of just like, I'm a good person. And that's good,

but the male ego... gender has caused a lot of pain. Is it based on species?

Is it based on power? Is it something that's innate? Can we get through it?

If we talk about it more, do we evolve? Are all men like this? Do I struggle with that?

How do women play into it? Are women just as guilty at some point? Not at all like...

percentage wise, but when I'm thinking of everything that's happening now in our world and the

things that the ugliness that we see with our president and the people that are attached to him

defending him who are women and then people, women who are defending genocide based on religion.

So there's something spiritual throwing off and we're using every aspect of segregating ourselves

from humanity, whether you're black, whether you're white. The idea that White feminists need to

recognize the general oppression in the struggle of women that extends to other people.

So if we talk about men and women, men need to do the same thing.

You're asking, what can men do? They have to recognize the general oppression of people and how

that structure affects us in various ways, whether it's because you're a child,

or you're a woman, or you're a man who gets beat down in the same way by patriarchy,

but with different rules for him than for her, right? So if a man is saying,

well, I'm not like that, that's a lot like a white woman saying, I'm not like that.

And not recognizing that there's this oppression happening that goes beyond an indigenous woman who

lives in what's now called Mexico. You have different issues you're dealing with than a white woman

who has, say, a financial job in New York, right? That's just reality.

And if this woman can't recognize in New York... the oppression that,

say, indigenous men down south are faced with,

then she can't even really understand what her sister down there is going through. Right?

May I? Yes, please. All right. So there's tons of language here, and I'm not going to track it.

I want to say this, because someone just got back from Venezuela, and one of the things that is

already in function, already in function, it's comunas. All these communities.

Communas. We don't have that here.

Communas. Communas. Say that, my brother. No, comunidades, but comunas is a small,

a quicker version of saying it. There you go. Communities. Very slang-based.

Communas. That's the consideration up in the North. We need, I need my brother to help with this

dialogue because if we don't, we're going to get the language wrong. Number two, that is...

deprived. That is rich. To have this many communities and a central community to speak of the

revolution right now and displace what kind of leadership is happening. To address, we don't do

that here. And that the woman who is facing economic hassles up here in the north is in fact not

the privileged one. She's deprived because no solid, like Hernan asked,

What is the tangible? What can we offer the community? What can they do? So there it is.

And we need to really remember what a community, what a colectivo is.

I love what you said. Yes, comunidad.

They're solid, they're ancient, they're real, they're transformative.

So there you go. And we need those adaptations. That's our poverty,

right? It occurs that people are saying, oh, the Lower East Side, or you grew up in this rough neighborhood, or you were in a favela in Brazil, or how did you survive? Guess what?

The people who are outside who are not part of that community, they're coming from this missionary,

white kind of, or whatever that is. approach, assuming that it's dangerous and horrible.

But meanwhile, within the community, everybody's looking out for each other.

And you need sugar, like very simple little things that those basic humanity things,

we're understating them. I mean, we're acting like they don't exist. Yesterday, there was a young

Latino man, well-dressed, and he seemed to have coming from a rough place. And there was this

white cat who had broken feet. And he smelled not great. He was a young white person, about the same age. And he was like, I need a dollar, blah, blah, blah. And the young Latino, strong, indigenous-looking kid was like, man, he was totally from the Bronx.

He's like, man, you stink. What's wrong with you? And it wasn't like he was violent, but he was

kind of checking him. And he didn't do anything, but he was just upset.

Perhaps he empathized. I'm just trying to figure that out. And then the guy left. He looked like he

could probably get a job, but he was obviously struggling whether it's mental illness. And I just

thought, wow, man, look at this turnaround. I was like, wow, there's another person hurting. This

guy's Latino. He's probably off of seeing all the white stuff. I personally think we have to get beyond this thing. And that that young man will probably feel better if you say,

hey, what happens if that guy in my... way of thinking said hey man you stink but here man have a

dollar or you know he didn't get violent so maybe that's as good as you get i just thought about

the we have to give each other the awareness on a daily basis but men need a lot of lessons i was

very struck by martha's poem i was just working on it and we were we've been we've been recording

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. But you said something very powerful at the end. No, I'm not going to

freaking make love to you or give you sex. What does that word mean?

Instinctually, sex, what does it mean? What does it value besides? Well, I think you're hitting at

something because you go back to lines talking about what's divine.

And Judy and I talked about that in our last episode. Okay,  
so sex is like a dirty secret most of the time.

We're not supposed to even talk about it, let alone actually give it the honor it's due,  
which is that it's actually a divine.

It's part of divine creation, right? And it's a pathway to our souls.

So if we don't honor that. We need to honor that. And if we don't...

Because if we discredit it, if we use it, it's like a drug. You could use it and then  
completely...

If you think you're going to take someone out to dinner and then they owe you, like it's a  
transaction. Yeah, that's what we're talking about. Yes. I mean, after a human being...

If you think that it's something that... I got over. Right? Men have this thing.

Maybe women do it. Maybe women and men have this. I just got laid. I'm really moved by  
that poem

because it made me, again, I have to look at the ugly things. I think all of us have to look. I  
mean, I'm going to speak to me as a man. I'm trying to stay as a man. I love that question.

And that question, I'm going to squish it a bit because I'm going back to Hernan's official  
question. What do we do with the men? What about these guys? What about men?

What about the cis-born men? What about that mentality? What about that power? What  
about this,

you guys? Well, men have the feminine within, right? Whatever happens,

because this is what I see coming. Whatever happens, we need to stop monetizing on  
teaching and

loving and sharing wisdom. We need to stop having man weekends and charging all y'all a  
thousand

bucks to come and pray with us and learn to be men again. No, we need to stop that.

You just said it. It's transactional. Up here in the North, man, we've got a deal. We've got a  
gig.

We've got a grift. Stop it. That's the whole thing, though. Like, patriarchy is kind of based on capitalism, which is based on extraction and thinking that we can own,

that we can own the earth. We can't own the earth. And we can't keep producing and keep having more

and more and more and more. There's always a winter. The cycles come and go. You can't keep.

It's imposing something. unreal on reality and forcing us all into that lie which is that women

somehow owe their free labor to this system and therefore that renders women in this subservient

class and without that service it would all fall apart and that's what needs to happen

And we have to break down, I guess, because we're living in those politicized aspects of what sex

is, gender, right? And it's dividing. All of a sudden, it's an issue.

Not that it acted like it's never existed before. When you have two-spirited people, when you

have... All of a sudden, it's a thing that we're trying to control. And meanwhile,

but sex... The ability to have sex male or women still functions the same.

We do it for the same reasons, to feel not alone, like whatever it falls into.

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Please visit our archives at [listenandbeheard.net](http://listenandbeheard.net).

My name is Martha Cinader. And I'm joined by Judy Talaugon and Hernan Rodriguez Sierra.

We've been doing some exploring. on the weekends and leaving the tape recorder on.

And this is a little something that we came up with.

reality. The blood replaced at the altar by wine and sex is not a divine reaching.

No, the teaching is a commodity and women see that we be the receivers of misogyny because they

need us to even be.

I don't see why that's a problem but it is. So we try not to disrupt the lie that we need.

That women need men. Because we don't. And why should we carry on with this creating of men when

they can't even remember where they came from?

Men come from women.

Maybe neither one created earth. But a man never gave birth to any single thing.

And yet men would have us believe that we owe them anything.

Anything at all. Without the honor we're due. So no,

I don't feel like having sex.

What kind of community does not accept its gay brothers and sisters in whatever way that accepts

itself? There you go. Carlos Peleo, I remember. He was one of my first friends when I was an immigrant when I first arrived. Carlos Peleo. I remember his name. Crazy? When I was three or four

years old and I played with him in this tenement building. And we were friends. And there was a guy

named Tirso, and Tirso was a really macho Dominican kid. And Tirso ended up being,

I guess, gay or bi or something, but he was killed by a cop. He was stabbed by a cop who he started, I guess, doing tricks with. This is what I heard later on. I mean, I wasn't around it because music took me into this other place. Carlos Palais dies of AIDS, right?

I find out later. Very beautiful young man. And by the way, I didn't have to learn hate or understand. I was like, oh, that was a friend of mine. I didn't, I don't know, my parents, somebody

did something, right? Because I wasn't going to go there. I never thought that he deserved it or

that Tearsow deserved. I was like, oh my God, that young kid, Tearsow, I used to play football

with, was stabbed? Because he was probably drugged out and the cop maybe abused him.

Again, sex was used. Sex could be a gift. yet it was used and abused to control and we all have

those childhood memories right i remember young girls i knew who were found in a ditch and left

there dead those are things that happen to girls on a regular basis right and i think we all have

memories like that i'm just saying those types of things that brutality that violence whether it's

like gender I think that the main element of it is that it's still directed at that feminine.

The need is still for slavery. At auntie's table or uncle's table,

sometimes in the village, in the community, it is actually a trans uncle.

It is someone who cross dresses. It is someone who will take that person who's been shunned,

made a humiliation out of themselves. take them in when the rest of the village doesn't want

anything to do with this person who takes them in but the auntie or the uncle who's tran who's bi

who's out and the community sees them as so and loves them that's why we have that no and i'm

saying that we are a very rich and it's cultural it's deep and how about if it's a cisgender person

okay and it's compassionate come open my door is open i'm just saying even even if they're not gay

or i'm just saying i want those people who quote unquote think they're normal yeah just to look

within themselves to find the compassion to feel empathy because that is what i i feel at least for

me my biggest challenge that's the oppression has been that referring to right like we have to

recognize oppression In all its forms, because that in itself is sort of this patriarchal thing

that's, which I don't even want to call it male, but it's because it's been imposed on men, right? It's been imposed on men. And so a lot of men are in this kind of like under the veil of not

understanding that they're also oppressed by this. Martha, I mean, I definitely feel, I mean, I think your poem. and my relationship with you and Judy and this time of my life as an

artist and being able to have these conversations in a public forum, which this is, has been something that I think has to be had by so many people because I'm beginning to evolve and grow in

a way that I didn't expect and to be free to have this. has been partly because of you, Martha. I mean, being able to discuss a poem and not just listen to the poem and go, oh, I'm going

to write music to it, which I can easily do, or like we created that and just talk about that and

ignore the depth, which is why every time I hear your poems, Martha, as my friend and as a colleague and just a friend, man, serious artist, I'm moved. I actually have to listen to the stuff. I have to listen to the stuff. And I might not like what I hear. I always tell Martha,

I was like, damn, that was scary. Martha's like, what are you talking about? I was like, because

what? I could be honest with Martha. Because I'm actually not afraid to feel her art and feel her

expression. What is it about art? Does art have to sit on the wall? I want art to kind of move my

ass back to blow my mind. And I think what we're doing right now...

poems on the radio, discussions on the... I believe that what we have here is something very deep.

Let's get down to how do we make things better. I don't want to be toxic, but I have to remember

that that's a big divide for me, that I want to live in a place where I respect my sisters and

brothers, and I respect... I have sisters. I have sisters who I love dearly, and my sisters and sisters, and they're feminine. as could be.

They let their beautiful feminine, that is gorgeous. I fell in love with that. They're protective of me and love me for all my mistakes. And I was like, man, talk about a community.

I grew up with a very loving family. We don't have money, nobody, nobody. And there's no like,

hey, Jay, you better call me or I feel like you don't love me. No, when we see each other. it's like what's up like a conversation continues i went to my therapist recently and i realized that i

was molested right as a child and i mean i remember it but as a male as a cisgender male it was

like a rite of passage i was like maybe seven or eight i guess my rewiring got Or weird.

But in my mind, I accepted that. And my therapist, after who I've been seeing for 20-something

years, asked me, how come I never heard this, Jay? Erlan, right? And I'm like, I thought I told you

that. And he's Latino. And I was expecting him to go, oh, we'll let that go. He's like, no, no, no, no, no. He goes, man, we got to do some work on this. And it just blew my mind.

And my initial reaction was like, oh. All this time, I'm 58 years old,

all this time I was like, oh, well, that's acceptance. I'm a man, I'm supposed to. And all of a sudden feeling this weak, I'm still having trouble just accepting the vulnerability of that moment.

This has been an ongoing thing as a human being, just as a human being. So for me to be able to

work on that as I try to be a better human being, not just a man, in the world of art.

Because for me to use whatever looks, saxophone, oh man, composer, all these fantasies of like

being, oh man, I'm the dude. No, how about just being a great human being and seeing that as

weakness? Because anytime I was kind of warm or nice to the wrong person, I couldn't tell the

difference. And also trying to be equal and the trauma of life that we all have. I'm not white.

I'm not. So I said, well, how can I get past? I feel I'm from New York. I grew up here. I relate to

my white brothers and sisters, but I don't have the same opportunity. I'm really touched by some of

the things you said. There's all these conversations we have about how many women have experienced

whatever at an early age, the things that happen, the things that men do.

What you're describing, I think maybe in a lot of ways what men can do is get in touch with what

happened to them. Because this is equally oppressive all around.

I mean, it's got to be hard, I think, to be a man, honestly.

It's got to be kind of hard.

This is Beyond Borders, brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.

My name is Martha Cinader, and I've been joined in this first half hour by Judy Talaugon and Hernan

Ramiro Rodriguez Sierra, and the conversation will continue.

What do you think? Is it hard being you, or do you think it's harder to be somebody else?

I don't know. It's all a little confusing, isn't it, this world that we live in?

But we can get through it together. And if you would like to help us,

support us in bringing this conversation to you that you are always welcome to join in any way that

you find valuable, then please consider donating to...

of producing this program, and you'll find out how to do that by visiting us at [listenandbeheard](http://listenandbeheard)

.net or our sponsoring organization, Sound System Culture,

which is at [soundsystemculture.world](http://soundsystemculture.world).

Please stick around and listen to the sounds, and Judy and Hernan and I will be back.

In a minute or two.

We all have a voice, and so it all depends on how we use it. So not only do we use the voices,

but we also listen to other voices. That's what we do here. We put people together, we bring musicians together, we bring communities together, and we listen and we be heard. We listen and we

be heard. This is important work, and we're all a part of it. Tell them who you are. My name is

Ricky Riccardi. I'm the director of research collections for the Louis Armstrong House Museum.

Grammy winner, author, and anything that can be done to spread this great project, I'm all in,

I'm all in.

Okay, listen and be heard, for to be heard is to listen.

in the literary circuits. Women are taking their role since we had been denied.

We have to open the space, so that the new generations, the current and the new generations,

they don't have to drop themselves every time with difficulties for being black,

for being poor. And then it's an absolute dream to be in La Habana, to be in Cuba,

to have met with women similar to me. Canto el murmullo de las olas y las melodías del coral.

Es poesía lo que respiro. Soy poesía negra del mar.

The voices of some Afro-Colombian poets at an international poetry festival in Havana, Cuba. Some of the very interesting things that Hernán has come up with in the internet.

archives of the world for us here at the Listen and Be Heard Network,

where we did play these before on a previous episode,

I think sometime during season three of the Listen and Be Heard Hour.

And I love to bring back some of these things, especially... When they stick in my memory, like that one did, just the fierceness of the voices of the women who I don't understand completely

in Spanish. I understood some of it, most of it, all of the feeling of it.

This is Beyond Borders. I'm Martha Cinader, and we're going to go back now to a conversation

between myself and Judy Talaugon. And Hernan Ramiro Rodriguez Sierra.

Judy and I started talking before you came on. We were talking. about the southern hemisphere and

oh okay and the old trade routes we make all these assumptions that tend to veer towards white

culture that i i do that unintentionally sometimes and it's partially based on our our total education like that we all get right and so But,

and that's why you got this nickname, Jay, because you got tired of hearing Ernon or whatever it

was you said, right? And so. Or Hernan or whatever. Hernan, that's what you said.

There's no sound in it. Right.

So this thing of you changing your name, I think it's like really profound.

And it's. part of maybe the answer of what men can do right now because you're going you're digging

into your origins and the reasons why you've done the things you've done and I think a lot of women

are doing the same thing and coming up with poems like men come from women there I mean women are

expressing themselves in all kinds of ways right now about just seeing the truth of our experience

as women in this world right and but so you are doing the same by claiming your name and so i just

want to like go back to that for a minute in the southern hemisphere and what that all has to do

with like what does old trade routes actually have to do with you reclaiming your name as well.

And like all of us, recognizing more of our origins and respecting the origins.

To want to learn about others' origins as well and not make assumptions.

Judy?

What came from the South, I don't know how to say it in Spanish, but is to assert Mr.

over here with his original name, to assert self-determination. And to do that,

to do that, you have to have an origin story, right? Self-determination.

That means you come from someplace. You come from someplace and you're going to assert your

original self, who you have become, who you are, what you represent,

past and future. That's very indigenized. principles. And it's not a perfect story,

right? It's not the Brady Bunch over here. It's your story. That's the point. It's your story,

right? I swear to you, man.

I'm like, wow, six kids. Perfect. These are two divorced. That was a big thing. Two divorced

parents that put together his family. I was like, oh, wow. For me and my family, we're six.

So my brother and sister used to laugh. Oh, there's six of us. Three girls and three boys.

That's

like us. I said, yeah, but we're Latino. Parents are divorced. They should be divorced, but I don't

know. But they stuck together. But anyway, it's interesting what you said, Marta, because I also

have been thinking about that, about, well, in the terms of what I understand from Malcolm X,

from the Black American experience up in the North, who I related to. And I remember my brother-in

-law giving me, burying me a wounded knee. I was like 10 or 11, and I'm going, wow, man, I still

have that book. And I was like, wow, I just know there's a lot of pain here. I was a kid. I just didn't understand what I related to. All I did is I read it, and I was like, man, this is, wow. I just, it just opened up empathy. I didn't know what it was. All I knew was that, oh, wow, there's a

part of me in this. I wasn't sure if I related where I was American Indian. All I know is that, man, whoever, whatever human being you treated like this. It's fucked up. And you look at what the

horror, the trail of tears. And so I'm very early on. And of course,

I put that in the back of my mind later on. And here I am, years later, thinking, reflecting to that. But I had to think about what that means to me. My mother being indigenous, looking very

indigenous. My father being mixed. My grandfather was Latino.

I was Spanish. My grandfather was a white Spanish guy. a first-generation Colombian, a mayor of some town. So I'm told this is, I've never, I think I have memories of him. They announced my father's family at all, didn't even acknowledge. Even he had two kids with my

grandmother, who was a black woman, Bantu roots, who he obviously abused,

had children with, had two families. The other day when I was walking to Harlem, I saw pencils on

the floor. And I saw paper, notebooks, and the thought popped into me.

Wow, what would my father think? Look, Dad, my grandfather refused to give my father pencil and

pens. Literally, my father was like, I don't want to sell fish. Can you give me an education?

And my grandfather, the jerk that he was, refused to give him, go back to work, he said to my

father. They were hard to find, pencils on the floor and a notebook,

just paper to write on. And who ended up educating my father? My aunt Paulina, a black woman, who fell in love with a German man. The German man took my father, gave him an education, and my aunt Paulina said, I'll marry you and be with you if I can take my

little brother with you. And so my father was taken off the street and brought up.

This man, Mr. Kinderman, ends up being put in a concentration camp because he was German.

And during World War II, anybody who was German in South America was considered, who knows, the

politics of male dominance, right? He was put, and he dies there, and she dies as well.

My father comes to America, raises us here. I came here when I was three years old. All these

stories get passed on. So we realize that's beyond color. Somebody was compassionate. I don't know

what Mr. Kinderman's background was. He might have been Nazi. He might have been caught up. I have

no clue. I have no clue. All I know is that there's all of these races and these women were

attached to this whole thing. There's a black woman, Abuela Pabla, who, by the way,

that part of our theme for Beyond Borders is a thing that I remember her singing to me. Amen,

amen, amen. That is something that my grandmother... It's something that stayed in my mind.

That's what I remember of my grandmother. That's why I made that. So it's a coincidence that that

theme, because my brother, it was really funny when I played it to my brother. My brother, my oldest brother, said, oh, my God, that's Abuela Pabla. Oh, Jay, that's amazing that I put that

chant, because she used to sing these rhythms. And this is, she's not a musician. She's not.

That's what I remember of her. And my grandmother, I have a picture of her,  
man. She looked like she was running the Underground Railroad from South America, man.  
She was  
like, no joke, man. No joke, no, she's smart. I said, so she must have been this beautiful  
black  
woman. And my mother was an orphan. By the time she was seven,  
her parents had passed away. Uncles took over the male dominance. My mother never saw  
anything that  
the parents had left because whatever wealth my... on her side were to give, were not going  
to be  
given to them, they were given to the male. So again, that male thing, and here I am,  
and my mom was very artistic, and the fact that my father found some sort of compassion  
and love  
enough to keep the family together, here, is beyond me. I could never do anything as good  
as that.

Right, right. Here I am, and I'm struggling just keeping a family together here.

This is Prayer Wheel for William. You worked alongside men riding the fish wheel down the  
thickest

of tides of summer, your boy hands hurrying, hurrying,

baskets tossing, splashing salmon onto the... wrath.

Your cut-up, wind-burned hands that loved the violin smelling of fish and the wood smoke.

Tall and awkward Indian boy, arms too long, hair always falling into your blackberry eyes.

Drifting with the river, turning with the fish wheel. My prayers of you are turning,

turning. Thanks to Judy Talaugon for reading the poetry of Mary Tall Mountain.

This is Beyond Borders, and I'm Martha Cinader, joined by Judy Talaugon and Hernan  
Ramiro Rodriguez

-Sierra. We're going to return now to the conversation.

And I'm seeing my 18-year-old son, and happy just to be here. But all of this coming back to

Martha, who's also been through all this... in her life and she's found compassion in art we have

this compassion in art but and then she introduces me to you and then i'm like how does that work

if that isn't spirit healing i don't know what else let me stay out of the way out of that thing and me just trying to be a better human being in the form of a man as you can call it that is beyond me and uh anyway i'm just really grateful i like that i like i like you've been

Kicking ass, Martha. You guys are kicking ass. And by the way,

there's a metriarchal thing in South America, in Colombia, in the Southern Hemisphere. I was told

last time I was there that women in Barranquilla are the pinnacle reason. There's a thing about in

my culture, at least in Barranquilla, that I understand that women are respected for their beauty

and femininity, but their strength. Somehow or another, my mom wasn't like loud. She had to put up

with all this I don't know. She was very spiritual. She told me stories of being visited by ancestors. He was very in touch with her spirit, I think, at a very young age. After losing her mom

and dad at a very young age, 7, 8, she was open, and she opened herself up to a lot of s\*\*\*. And

she could tell he saw things. But she, by the way, she didn't monetize any of that.

She didn't even talk about it to us. She talked about it to me. Not everybody in the family got to

be talked to about the things she saw. She told me. I saw that. And then she also told me about an

uncle that she had that was a magician. I was going to say, Oracle. I have no clue. That's it.

I just remember that. I just remember these things. And so, which makes sense why I'm not afraid to

look at those things. But she put up with a lot of pain. My father wasn't always a perfect man.

I mean, I had an experience with my father. I'll tell you this, this is how music connects my lifetime. I go to Barranquilla, the place of my birth, to play with Chucho Valdez, the great piano

player back in 98, 99. I'm invited finally to this place where I was born.

My uncle, who's a musician, he's screaming, ah, that's my nephew. I was told this after the fact.

My father goes out after I finish playing with these artists and musicians. He takes them out to

our whorehouse. And I'm told the next day, I mean, oh man, your father was a trip. And I'm going,

what? And they're like, oh man, he took us to this. I knew my father had frequented these houses of

ill repute. And my father did that. And I could not identify the hurt.

I acted like that wasn't anything. Because I am a man. I'm supposed to act like, oh, of course.

And so I remember... with Fred Wesley, as of recently, like two years ago, I was in Austria, and one of the professors, he goes, oh, Jay, man, so wonderful to see you. Man, I have to tell you,

man, one of the things I regret was going with your father. He remembered that. And I was sitting

there going, wow, I had forgotten about that. And so, again, this is not to be better than,

or this is not even questioning my father or my mother, but just for me to see the world as it is.

and understanding, okay, what is good of this that I can keep? What am I going to fall into self

-pity about? What am I going to be self-righteous about? Am I better? No, I'm not better than

anybody or anything. How can I heal myself? The reason I'm saying this stuff is not for self-pity

or poor Jay or Hernan. It's more like so that people, I hope people can identify with the whole

story that there's no, there's no, nobody has to hold on to prisoners or hold on to nightmares and

that everybody just did the best they could. And that's pretty damn good. My mother still put up

with all that . Not my poor mother, because my mother doesn't need no such. She's like, please,

keep yourself pity to yourself. I got this. I'm very happy with my life here with my children.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, of course. And my sisters and brothers love my mother. My God, what a spiritual

saint she is. Strongest. And I'll take all those strong things from her that I hope, I think I'm part, I think that I've actually learned more from my mother than my father. My father did always

say I was sorry. I did learn how to say I was sorry. And I learned to kind of hopefully live, not just say you're sorry, but try to live in a better way. In a better way. That's all I can

remember. My father just like, I want to make sure that I can hold the family together. All I can

do is what I can do. My father might have been an alcoholic. I don't know. I don't think so. He

seemed to live his way. I don't know. There's a lot of giant mysteries I'm not here to deal with of

him.

That's all. All I know is that he did somehow or another hold it together. Or something held us

together. Isn't that something, though? That above it all, this man did something that I

personally, what you said, I can't do it either. I cannot do what that man did. I would have fallen

apart. I would have not made it past whatever. Whatever his spirit led him to be that.

The trauma of being denied by another man, a white man, Carlos.

There was one last story. My oldest brother says, oh, man, Carlos Ortega walked up to the neighborhood to visit to see how your father was doing. Carlos Ortega was my white grandfather,

the Spanish guy. And my grandmother was living with us, it seems, and she was laughing because she

goes, oh, look at him now, because he was having trouble walking. And my grandmother was a black

woman, strong. She was laughing. I'm just, look at him. Look at how he walks. That's hilarious.

He can barely walk. Look at him. And she was strong as an ox, laughing.

She was like Harriet Tubman. She looks like Harriet Tubman. When I saw a picture, I'll show you.

Actually, I'll find a picture and send it for this episode. The only picture I had, and I remember

when my father's, it was my father's birthday, I took that picture and blew it up and gave to him.

He cried. he cried like a baby when i gave it to him he said oh my god he looked he saw like he saw

a ghost i had blown up a picture of that i found this is when my father started kind of losing it

but the love that was given to him and my brother-in-law who's a cuban santero he took care of my

mother and father to the very end and my father threatened his life you hurt my daughter i'll kill

you this kind of like Love. It wasn't violence.

It was love. And so you have to respect love. Yeah. That's real macho. It's not macho. That's like

a woman. A woman will say, I will kill you. You touch my daughter. I will.

It's beyond love and light, man. And that's beyond, if that's male energy, no, that's not male energy. That's some powerful spirit energy that belongs as much to a woman.

Maybe I think women are more in touch with that than men are. I think men are full of shit. Honestly, if that isn't... Don't call it macho. Call that energy. Life force.

Martha, you, are you kidding me? Please be on my side. I'm going to f\*\*\*ing go around my food and

shut the hell up. Judy, we've been talking for like an hour here.

I love it. But I need you to light up all this, Judy. I'm so sorry. I'm sorry, Martha. I'll shut up. Don't apologize. But I want to hear this through Judy's lens now.

I'll be quiet. Please go for it. I've got to say, philosophically,

Anand raised it today. And it has been on my mind.

Why am I getting this peripheral attack from cis-born males?

I'm getting this weird energy, but I looked forward to whatever I can moment with Anand today

because I knew I would get ideas. And the idea is that... the impulse was in me as well to go to my

stay with my original garment my original name given all right that oftentimes even i you were

nicknamed and so come back to the original garment not to be too biblical but what we were given at

birth okay that that mama mom named you that and that came from some place that yeah we don't have

consent after you're born nobody's going to give you mom permission to do anything with you freely

anymore this country is yeah this okay And the surveillance on mom.

So you've got to really know that. Okay. And I wanted to say that today.

And I want to say that is not. Right. Like even birth is commodified. Oh, it's commodified.

We said that doctors are cops. They have a, they can make the call who lives, who stays and who

votes. Okay. And, and, and how they're going to, how they're going to go into life. So you holding

on to your original garment, your original name, is an assertion. And we go with the self-determination and the assertion at this time in the globe. We're all pushing forward, huh? Pushing

forward. This is who I am. This is who I am. Hernan also hit another thing.

Martha hit it the other day. There's these apps, and they talk authentic self.

How the hell are you going to be authentic on digital environment? when we need to be looking at

each other's pupils in their eyes and just the tears or just the emotions that we might draw from

one another. We need to have a presence. And this fake sort of manufactured presence duped us.

So let's just say exactly what we did today. Sharing is a generosity. So that's what I want to say.

This show has always been a wonderful gift to the community. I get to speak.

I'm an auntie that, I am definitely the auntie that says, get off my lawn.

So I had a chance to say that today. Thank you, Hernan. I got to reflect on a man who was very

beautiful at one point, but he commodified, he monetized on an old wisdom set,

a beautiful space that came through struggle, manufactured it over there,

dropped it like a hot cake. and now sells man weekends. So I'm saying,

please, people, no more. Incredible. No more. We have this for free.

I mean, we will put up a QR code, but for free.

We will take donations. Yes, we will. But only to keep bringing this conversation to you, which is being offered freely.

I want to thank you both so much for giving of your souls freely and being here today with me.

And I will say, as I say often, we are the network.

And I want to thank everybody for allowing us to be heard and for listening.

Thank you so much. Thank you, too. Beyond Borders is brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.

A project of sound system culture. We're thinking of Hawaii and the people who live there as we

wrap up this episode. And we're going to leave you with a poem written and read by Vanessa Lee

Miller back in Season 2 of the Listen and Be Heard Hour.

This is called Wailuku. Wailuku. The raging kahawai,  
the river. Her kaholo, her long, sinuous journey begins as a watery,  
pencil-thin line, a mere trickle, mauka, way up high,  
looking towards Nalani on Mauna Kea. Her awana is a graceful journey iho,  
downslope, towards rainy hilo. Ai, hilo i ka ua kanilehua.

As she continues to iho, journey downslope, a magical transformation ensues.

From her embodiment of a graceful, delicate trickle, she widens,  
becoming voluptuous. She's now a raging beast, plunging turbulently downward,  
full of enna enna, capable of arbitrarily grasping in her watery fist a young...

reckless life and smuggling it into one of her many deep cavernous pockets in her slimy Anna.

She'll stash it there it's hers until the pale lifeless form struggles through a multitude of tempestuous undercurrents to surface somewhere evil downslope.

But during the course of her journey she leaves a trail of dazzling performances. After week upon

week of infinite drops of rain from Nālani, awestruck Malihini call these wonders Pi'i Honua Camp

Cascades, Boiling Pots, Rainbow Falls. Old Hawaii calls them Puakana,  
Kuakanini, Pe'e Pe'e, Wai'a Nui Nui. She weaves ever so gracefully,  
skirting around sacred, smooth boulders, leaving her mossy footprints of slippery limu.  
She continues to awanna. In the wee hours of the morning, from my hamakua-facing  
bedroom window,  
I hear her raging, bellowing sounds drowning out the lonely,  
searching calls of the small, scaly river creatures of the night.  
Searching in blind range, she leaves no boulder. No jagged rock,  
no slimy pebble unturned. River Mo'o waits, watching her every move,  
hearing her belches and snorts and eerie releases. He,  
shaking out the raindrops from his mane of writhing eels, belts out a wicked laugh.  
Get plenty time, he says. Slowly, sharpening his battle-ready claws against the skull  
boulder,  
he waits patiently for the right moon. Owailuku,  
you watery, undulating wahine ali'i, once a graceful trickle from Na'lani,  
you've morphed into a skull crusher, you stone carver, you mo'o slayer,  
so bloodthirsty for the fearless, sweet weed-scented swimmer.  
Or was it the claw of the mo'o, of the rain-drenched cave of goddess Hina,  
that dragged the young baga into the murky depths? Upon reaching her deep,  
dark, limu-laden green mouth, maka'ola nakila, she forcefully surrenders,  
her full, swollen self plunging once more into the wide,  
stormy bay. Both river and sea currents, Reluctantly mingle.  
She truly is what old Hawaii called her. Destructive waters. Wailuku,  
the river. Life-giving. Life-grasping. Ruthless.  
Kahawai.  
Beyond Borders is brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.