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Participants:
HAILE NOTTAGE
KOURTNEY BROWN
ISSAC DUNCAN III
SHAWANDA MASON
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Preface

The following conversation was hosted at Stove Works. Consent was given by the participants to have their conversation recorded and transcribed.

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START OF RECORDING

KOURTNEY BROWN: You gotta , you gotta go there in sections.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. And a...[Inaudible 00:00:04]. [Chuckles]

KB: Let's see how many do y'all have. I have three blank ones. Here we go--.

[Crosstalk]

SPEAKER 2: Oh wow. [Laughs]

HAILE NOTTAGE: Three blank ones?

SM: Oh my god.

KB: I would, I will present the...[Chuckling]

[Laughter]

ISSAC DUNCAN III: Trade you one. Trade you one.

HN: Yeah. Me-well I'll just trade you one.

KB: Trade me one. Aight.

HN: Yeah.

[Pause]

ID: There in the Schomberg.

KB: I love the Schomberg.

SPEAKER 2: Oh yeah. Yeah I do too. [Pause] The murals--;

KB: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: The Ann Douglass murals? They're so beautiful.

KB: Yeah.

HN: Oh wait, now I have two blank ones. [Laughs]

SHAWANDA MASON: [Laughing]

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Pause]

SM: Trade one?

HN: That's why they make it, like 'Whoa.' I guess, yeah they do have...

SM: [Laughing]

[Pause]

HN: Nice. [Inaudible - 00:00:46-00:00:48]

v Great. Here we go.

[Pause]

ID: Alright, what we putin' in the pot?

[Laughter]

HN: Hey-Ha-she gone.

SM: [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: You got a [Inaudible - 00:00:57-00:01:00]?

ID: Alright, um, first question. *What kinds of public art do you find valuable here?*

SPEAKER 2: Here, in Chattanooga?

[Crosstalk]

HN: Oh here, oh. Mm. In Chattan...er, I guess uh. This, like you say...

ID: It says here in a...It's not specific...

HN: Here, like, I don't, like, isn't...

SM: [Laughing]

[Laughter]

HN: [Laughing] I'll answer any questions. Right? Okay.

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Pause]

SM: I find public oh-uh, uh well—I tend to gravitate towards public art that also like teaches something. Especially since I [Inaudible - 00:01:30] learning non-profit, I'm always like, 'How did we get here? What was the sculptor, what was the artist thinking?' And so I tend to gravitate towards public art that also, like, I can learn something. Um, so yeah, 'cause I'm-I'm also just noticing, 'How did, how did we get here?'

HN: Yeah.

[Pause]

KB: I think I've been a part of certain ah, public art projects that bring um, just various different artists together. And I think that collaboration aspect of it is a...I think with...I think that's the essence of it for me. Um, creating relationships and communicating. All those things, um definitely bring me closer. Um, but a second layer of that is also knowing artists that are putting these murals up or doing some type of work—I mean, take Seven, for instance; he's not in the room anymore, but I mean, his art is everywhere; and to know him personally is like really tight. You know?

SPEAKER 2: Right.

KB: Um, so definitely seeing of-like-minded people doing what they love? Um, I really appreciate that.

[Pause]

ID: I think--piggybacking on what you said--yeah, if it educates, uh furthers a message, documents, history, culture, something along those magnitudes, I-I think that's highly valuable. Art that does-conveys those messages is highly valuable. Mhmm.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

KB: The-the-the art critic in me, and the art purist in me, [Clears throat]--not that I'm better than anybody--but bananas duct tape to a wall, to me, has no value. I'm, I'm just being honest. Like, that kind of public art has no value. But a mural or sculpture, y'know, performance piece, dance piece, you know that's conveying a message or history, culture, something th-highly valuable. Highly valuable. Especially for future generations to see.

SPEAKER 2: So after I saw that piece in Miami, I came home and duck-taped a sweet potato--,

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: And made it cultural. Um--,

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: But I haven't been able to sell it for a hundred thousand.

[Laughter]

HN: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah, so...

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: But I just-to me, I love like what you said, because if it-if it speaks to the culture, then I'll-I'm into it. But I'm also fascinated by um, public art in the process. Like how people made it, and getting close and seeing how it's constructed. Um, but one thing about our city too, is lately there have been lots of opportunities for people brand new to the public art arena to, to be able to get into work, and make works, and express themselves. So I do like that about Chattanooga.

[Pause]

KB: It's enough room for everybody. Mhmm.

ID: And I think, I think along the same lines of, here I'm real interested to see how, you know people are coming in, and bringing in their knowledge, and bringing their creativity. I've been in the Art World, thirty-plus years. And, so within that, it's like, 'Okay,

I have spent all the time.' But what I'm interested in now, is what's happening here. It's just, y'know the new, um opportunities. And also organizations have slightly changing their focuses, so it's good to be seeing the changes of opportunities that are totally new. You know?

KB: Absolutely.

HN: I think it might be a combination of everything you guys said, I think um, [Pause] more I guess low-key-more low-key community spaces represent art like these...Like hear their story um, that highlight artists in the area. That's a-become my favorites. Because it's-they're always rotating first and like...The second, like you can walk in seeing this...Eh-it's not just this idea of like, 'Somebody, somewhere thought this was a great idea--somebody in our community--', [Pause] This has a meaning to them, you know?

SM: Right.

HN: Um. So I've been attracted to like something saying, 'Oh there's a lot of space for that.' And they're a close knit community--,

KB: Yeah, yeah.

HN: And um, people run into each other. I mean, we've seen everyone in this room at least once around town.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

HN: You know? [Laughing] So yeah, I guess that vi—I guess a mix of who [Inaudible - 00:05:59].

[Pause]

SPEAKER 2: Yeah I don't need to—I think this question ties in...

HN: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: *Does the local gallery roster and museum record reflect our city's demographics?*

[Pause]

ID: No.

KB: No.

[Sounds of coughing and laughter]

SM: [Laughs] Short answer? No.

HN: Right?

[Laughter]

[Pause]

SM: Like, 'Mm...' [Chuckles] And no.

[Laughter]

HN: You got a weak card over there. [Laughs]

ID: Them a pull mine [Inaudible - 00:06:34].

HN: Right? [Laughs]

SM: But it should.

HN: Yeah I know. Right.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SM: I was even-I was havin' this conversation--but not necessarily about art, but about food in Chattanooga--and how I don't think the restaurant industry here reflects the community. Like I'm sure there are a lot of Black chefs who are in here, who could open up their own restaurant; should they give them the opportunity, same with artists? And so I just don't know where--I mean I do know--but I don't know where [Laughs], what's happening and why [Pause] we don't seem to have it together on that front. Um, when I go to other cities that are similar in size to Chattanooga, and I see the art community--or even like the food and beverage community, and how many people are represented--I'm like I, I can't understand why our city isn't there yet.

SPEAKER 2: I mean the art museum, like those other cities have more spaces or venues where people can show and see that...?

SM: Probably more space, yes. But also I think [Pause], I think there has to be something too with developers--and like they'll—Now I'm getting into a [Inaudible - 00:07:51]--but I think when there's soulless construction and like...When-when you buy a building--and I know people want to make money. I get it, we all need money--but when you do it without the intentions of at least one or two spaces in my building will be somewhat affordable for an art gallery, or a restaurant, or whatever it may be, I think then we-then we lose the charm, we lose the local aspect of it? I don't-I don't know what it is. I think of Birmingham for some reason, and just other similar cities where...[Pause] I don't know. I wish, I-I want more people that looked like us, and you know, the arr...shi-sh...better showcased I guess.

SPEAKER 2: But you had a Black gallery; you were the only one.

ID: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: You know? I got one.

SM: Mhmm.

ID: It was the um...[Pause] When we had our gallery, it-it was more so the uh...[Pause] I well I--I can go ahead and say it; we all Black at this--...

[Laughter]

ID: It was, it was like a-a glass ceiling in this city. Like okay, 'Well y'all go-y'all got a Black gallery, and y'all are here, and that's where we're going to keep y'all.' 'Cause when we tried to network with other galleries around town, and-and partnership and collaborate, it was 'Oh we'll get back to you.' Y'know, kind of thing. Where I noticed other new galleries that opened up--I ain't going to say no names--but they don't look like us. They were invited in open arms, you know? And these collaborations that we were excluded from. So we was like, 'Well we're going to do our own thing.' Like me and [Inaudible - 00:09:39] was like, 'We're gon' continue doing our own thing,' and-and it worked. I just hate that we were running into those, you know, those barriers--which I expected, we expected it--uh but it didn't stop us from doing what we were doing. But it did, it did piss me off, because I'm like 'We're just as valuable and valid as these other people. We're offering top quality art, fine artists, you know services just like everybody else.' But we don't get invited to the, the Art Stroll, you know? We don't even get invited to the art conferences, you know, kind of stuff. So, yeah it's-it go-it goes into what you were saying 'bout you know developers and hierarchy, I guess you could say in that regard.

KB: I mean I remember back in 2017 when um, I was kind of having that same feeling right? It was like, was shortly after me graduating high school. Um, me feeling

like you know, 'What am I going to do with this art that I'm making?' And, 'I have so many creative friends around me, and we're all just like making stuff, and we're not showcasing anything; we're not really doing much.' So I was like, 'You know I think we should definitely like create a movement.' And um, that's why I started like—When I started ArtTrap, that was like that thing for me that was like, 'This is a space for young artists, youth to express ourselves, when I feel like we don't get into certain galleries, or certain rooms um, because of whatever idea that they have of us. But um, I think based off of what you just said, like I-I think we have to be our own pioneers of starting our own, [Clears throat] excuse me, art crawls or whatever the case may be. I think like if you really just want to do something, why wait for someone else to open the door for you? When I think like we already start with that idea, so it's like-it's like do it. You know? Like, that's just what we do as creatives, you know? Like, if-if you really love something you'll stand on the corner and say that. You would stand on a corner and set up a table and show it off. Like, you just don't wait on anybody. You know?

ID: That's always the best thing to do.

KB: Yeah.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: Yeah. Especially when you understand the way you feel, when you're playing in this. You just don't wait 'til you, you know...And, the reality is everybody does everything for their own self interest.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: So, someone doesn't keep curious--,

KB: [Clears throat]

ID: Of the-their interest, they're not really interested. So what you do, you find people that have that same zone of interest, and you go from that. And understand that the limitations are not going to come because, now you're setting up yourself as a competitor.

KB: Right.

ID: And have competition to competition. So, you're not open.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: So, you didn't-do your own stuff, get your own name, and then you just bust into the industry, and then they pay attention to you.

KB: Exactly.

ID: And then they ask you 'Can I be a...'

SPEAKER 2: 'Part of you?'

[Crosstalk]

[Laughter]

ID: Right.

[Laughter]

KB: Hey. Hey. Hey.

ID: And then you decide what you want to do.

[Laughter]

KB: Hey, yeah. Yes.

[Crosstalk ends]

ID: But that's-that's, you know—We-we have to always keep in mind that, [Pause] we have to—We have to see each other; we have to seek for ourselves. And we cannot wait.

[Pause]

KB: As Black people we do that. We've had to suffer through that for a very long time. You know? I mean--my great grandma--I mean seeing her struggle and her like, just even fighting for her own house, having to go through um, aunts and uncles to get their signatures, and have to pay them off just to get, you know her very first house You know what I mean? That's that same thing where you just have to like, f-fight those barriers, you know, um in order to reach success. And, um that's-that's extended toward me. Like you know what I mean? Like now that I have something so valuable, I can't let anyone just take it from me. You know I have to allow my life to pump through it, and like, stand up for it. And um, uh-I think we just have to do that for our community, creatively, and-and stand up, and-and just do it.

[Pause]

HN: Yeah I've always said Chattanooga's well-meaning, but behind, in so many ways, really anyway you like. Um, and it [Speaking while laughing] didn't really come to light, truly with all of this-this social injustice burn, past two years. Um, while people are well-meaning and, superficially understand--and want to do what's right--but when it comes to making the actual work, it's like, 'Mm.' And so I see the what you mean Jody, about the glass ceilings. You see the-want-lookin' at me say, 'Oh, hey you guys have a space.' Like--,

[Crosstalk]

KB: Mhmm.

HN: 'Mm-they're making movement. We're doing well--,'

SPEAKER 2: Right.

KB: Mhmm.

HN: 'We co-like—We're equal.'

[Laughter]

KB: Yeah. [Laughs]

HN: You know?

SM: You know it's like, 'No.' [Laughs]

KB: [Laughs]

HN: Yeah. And so I think to your point--and tell me your name one more time--,

ID: Issac.

[Crosstalk]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

HN: Issac. To Issac's point, we have so many Black professionals and artists, and just Black people in this city, that exclude excellence. You know? The fact that we're sitting here having this conversation--um I think Chattanooga's small and we are not the majority here--but there's something in that allows us to really band together, and to make change in the city. And unfortunately it starts just with us, 'cause nobody else has come in and really helpin' us out. Um, I kind of like break from the question here, but--,

SM: [Laughs]

HN: My point is, it-it-it starts with us. So I think as far as getting our foot in the door, it-cou-like-gonna be--what you said--it's going to be having these conversations. Um, exuding excellence, having spaces for just us, and then eventually people being like, 'Oh you're real successful over there; can we collab for a minute?'

KB: Right.

HN: 'Cause eventually it will happen--,

[Laughter]

HN: You know? [Laughs] And even in that keeping our authenticity and ownership, Um, but finding a way to benefit from those, um relationships.

SPEAKER 2: Right.

SM: Yeah yeah yeah.

ID: Right right.

HN: So...

[Pause]

HN: I might have gone around the question, but...

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: No, I think you did it.

HN: [Laughs]

ID: Question is just a spark.

HN: [Laughs] Right?

SM: A-heh-yeah, exactly.

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk ends]

SPEAKER 2: I think about the museum--as that has for about ten years now--I've been on the Hunters' Acquisition Committee, and just the discussions that we have about um, making sure that the collection is more representative of our demographic. Um, which it was not and it's you know making progress. Um but even two conversations that we've had recently just about local art and um, how and if, you know, we acquire those things for the collection. So it's really interesting just to hear people's perspectives about it.

[Pause]

KB: Art takes time. Uh I'm-I'm learning that um...Especially because like I-I get caught up with the question of like, 'What do you do?' And it's like um, me just being twenty-seven, like I feel like, all that I've done isn't enough to like, speak for what I've...You know, so I have so much more to do. You feel me? So it's like, I can't just use the last ten years of my art career as this like, testament of like, all I've done. Like, I feel like last year was my re-embark on-on art. You know? It's like, I'm now in the space of like, becoming a man. So, me on this journey is going to change my artwork once again, you know? And um, I-I-I think I'm-I'm slowly starting to really understand that these things take time. Um, when you're really building something that you want to share with the entire community, it's not going to happen in a year; it's not going to happen in two years. If you want it to last a very long time, you have to have a lot of ducks in a row, to um, let it be able to stand on its own. You know? Um, in order for no one to take it from you, you know? And um--,

[Crosstalk]

ID: And um, it's not a sprint.

KB: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: Right.

[Crosstalk ends]

KB: Truly. Truly man. And um--I know this isn't really correlate to any question, but I just felt like I had to kind of say that, just 'cause um--I think as artists, we can get kinda boxed into that, that question. It's just like, 'What do you do? What do you do?' And it's like, 'I do a lot of things.' But it's like, I'm not an expert at it, because I'm still growing in these-these forms and, um yeah. I want to say that.

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: With, with the question I don't feel uh [Pause] sad, depressed. I feel optimistic actually, because we have representation, and there's seeding...seeds now if that makes sense. So, we have the Chatterly. We have James Administrator. We have the iconic Isaac as a sculptor.

[Laughter]

ID: You know we have representation, and the seeds in these areas to-to grow, so we don't have this conversation ten years, fifteen years from now. So, that makes me optimistic about the-the question overall, because we have representation in different areas uh, that's laying seeds for change. And--,

KB: Heard.

ID: This young man here, you know we have the seeds that's gonna, y'know sprout fruit to change this question as a whole. So, that makes me optimistic.

[Pause]

KN: Hmf.

HN: That's some work. [Laughs]

KB: [Chuckles] I can read off this question here--.

SM: Yeah.

KB: Um, *How is cultural memory passed down through generations? Discuss legacy, intergenerational advocacy and mentorship. How is cultural memory passed down through generations?*

[Pause]

ID: I-I would say uh, one way is mentoring, uh and some of the stuff that I do with the kids I volunteer and work with. Like, I give them a whole shitload of history.

[Chuckles] Right?--.

[Laughter]

ID: 'Cause I love Black history, so I'd dump it on them whether they want to hear it or not. And they already know, 'Mr. [Inaudible - 00:19:41] gonna be talking that stuff today.' Yup.

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk]

HN: 'Talkin that stuff.'

KB: They need that. You know? Me too though.

ID: I'mma talk a the first hour though--,

[Laughter]

ID: Before we get to the fun stuff. They gone—You know, so—I think the opportunities like that--and situations like that--that's passing--,

KB: Yeah.

ID: Y'know--,

KB: Right.

ID: Stuff on to generations uh, [Pause] and-and other cases like that too. You know? Our interactions with other people, other groups, is furthering that too. We're transferring a story to somebody else that's going to transfer to somebody else. So, I see that as, y'know keeping it going—Teaching, you know, all of those methods are forms of that, I think.

[Crosstalk ends]

KB: That history part is so important though.

ID: Yeah, yeah. Right?

KB: Like, I wish I was more brainwashed by my Black history growing up.

HN: Right?

KB: You know? Like um, going to a cultural school like CSA--and something like--um, they're so fixed on education and stuff right? And like, um we had courses about Black history--and all these things but like--I felt like I wasn't connected to it. And um, you always get kinda caught up in that situation of being taught your history by a

white person. You know what I mean? Um so, I'm already looking at this person like, 'How do you know exactly what my people have gone through?'

HN: Right?

KB: Even though it's written in a book, but all of that is like, just like, curated stuff. You know what I mean? Like, I want more of an experience of people that actually walked the marches, that actually were beaten in those riots. Like want--you know what I'm saying?--to come to the schools and like, help me understand why this is so important. You know what I'm saying? And, um, I think that will definitely, um transmit into like our creativity--in our outlets, things like that--a lot better, 'cause, I think we're very just like detached from our work sometimes, because we don't know ourselves, you know?

ID: Alright.

KB: Yes bro, yes. Um...

[Pause]

HN: I feel like storytelling, one--in-along with that community investment--so, what I'm doing right now with Big Brothers, Big Sisters--we're a mentorship organization. Um, and so it's building community around our kids. But one lack we've seen is, first off men for our boys, and second off Black men for our boys. So having community come around them, and it's not community that looks like them. You know they're still caring for them well and loving them, but I've seen matches that are Black men with Black boys, and just the relationship there. You know? The things that can be done that aren't schooling. Um, and so I think along with the education piece, that community investment, all of us realizing it's all of our jobs to share that with the next

generation too, you know? It's not just the parents, it's not just education system It's us too, you know? So...

KB: Each one, teach one.

SM: Right.

ID: Mhmm,

HN: Yeah.

KB: Facts

SPEAKER 2: Um I think about the mentoring part too, 'cause I've [I] um, have um, people that-that I consider, that I'm mentoring, um...Because, like when I was coming up--and I told Jody and then this, like-there--I didn't have a concept of what I'm doing now; that that was even--,

[Crosstalk]

HN: Right.

SPEAKER 2: A profession.

SM: Profession.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: You know? Um, and if I did, it was definitely not anybody that looked like me.

HN: Right.

[Crosstalk ends]

SPEAKER 2: So, I do take that mentoring aspect really seriously. I take the representation seriously, um because I don't want—I want young people now to see,

you know, they can be an arts administrator if that's something that they're interested in and know that that option is out there. And-but for the younger people that work with me--especially the Black younger people--I really, intentionally, I'm like, 'I'm going to tell you everything I know, so that you--if this is the career that you want--then you sh-you can be able to feel empowered to move into it.' So, I think mentoring is definitely important. And um, they might not-not get that in other places. Yeah.

[Pause]

KB: Facts.

SPEAKER 2: More of them came and--,

[Crosstalk]

ID: So necessary.

[Crosstalk Ends]

SPEAKER 2: She was so confused about some of the experiences she had had, and I pulled up the *WHITE SUPREMACIST WORKPLACE* and said, 'Go home and read this.' And then she come back; in those days she was like, 'Oh I don't understand it, oh man.' [Laughs]

[Laughter]

SM: The White welcome.

HN: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: So, I'm just like, somebody showed that to me a-a while ago, and I was like, 'Oh, okay.' So, it's about just passing on the model, 'cause you'll be in these environments where all kinds of things happening and signals are being transferred, and you don't know 'cause it's not the culture that you planned on. So, we need to know if we need to pool, and hopefully the next generations will have to.

SM: Not gatekeeping our knowledge.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

SM: [Laughs]

ID: Mhmm.

HN: Yeah. Honestly yeah. And allot spaces for that. You know? Allowing these kind of spaces, need for our kids. We're not bringing 'em into this...

SM: Right.

[Pause]

SPEAKER 2: Do they want a--,

SM: [Inaudible - 00:25:21] question. Uh, *Describe the local arts community and how you and your work relate to it.*

[Pause]

HN: [Laughs].

KB: The local arts.

HN: No wait, you're like, 'I'll I-need that soon.'

[Laughter]

KB: I mean, I too-for, for starters, I'd say like, with my experience with ARTSVILLE last year I think that was very focused on the city--and um, spec-specifically Alton Park, and getting their story heard--um, I think that definitely connected me, um to that part of the city, but also with my own. Um, just because I felt like, um Alton Park, Avondale definitely have a correlation of, y'know predominantly Black environment. But also um, a lot of poverty at the same time, um of just what we see at the eye. But I think it's a lot of wealth that is out there just living in the people, in the minds. Um, so uh, I definitely um, I think that work that I was able to um, create last year definitely tapped me more and more closer to like why I was born here in a way. Um, why that I was so connected with Glass Street, my community for so long, um prior to this residency. Because it was prepping me for, me to go to different parts of the city and connect um, and understand. That's my answer there.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: I think I see it from multiple levels though, in the, like in the work that I do. When I interact with people um, like it's a given. Like Chattanooga is a great arts community. You know, it's vibrant; there's lots of opportunities. Um, you know and-but when I go into these spaces, I'm automatically someone who's not there.

KB: Mm.

SPEAKER 2: But this morning, I actually got emotional seeing all these people here. [Chuckles] Like all in one room.

[Crosstalk]

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

KB: That's right.

SM: [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: And all artists?

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Because I spent so much of my time like being the only one. Like even last night, I was at an event. I was...but I already know.

[Laughter]

KB: Mm.

SPEAKER 2: So I'll sit in my car and be like...

HN: I'll be...[Laughs]

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: Be the only one.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: I don't know if y'all have experienced it.

HN: Yes.

SM: All the time.

KB: Yeah. No, yeah.

ID: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: [Inaudible - 00:27:52-00:27:54].

SM: Sometimes I'll say—I say 'No' to some things, 'cause I don't want to be the only one--,

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

SM: And sometimes it's exhausting. Like I think we're all used to in certain situations, being the only one.

HN: Yeah.

ID: Right.

SM: But it's also just tiring--,

KB: Mm.

SM: And, sometimes you're like, you know "Yeah yeah yeah, like I need you to get more Black clothes."

HN: That's right.

KB: I feel you. [Chuckles] I feel you. [Chuckles]

[Laughter]

HN: Right. Can't be the only one speaking, when you're wondering about this space.

KB: Yeah.

[Laughter]

HN: [Inaudible - 00:28:15] expect me to speak.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

[Laughter]

HN: Bring some others of 'Us' in here.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: But it does-usual—That's what I see. I see a vibrant arts community, but I see people m-m-left out and missing--,

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Not committed to it. And that's why I try to, like help make those conditions, you know.

SM: Yeah. You're doing great.

SPEAKER 2: I mean I'm trying to--.

SM: The work y'all are do—I mean...

SPEAKER 2: We can do so much better though.

SM: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: But its-it is a struggle.

SM: Yeah.

ID: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: I mean, we can work too, but if the sector is not working together--,

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Then it's not going to happen.

SM: Exactly.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: I mean, I think like with school, like knowing that they're wanting to take out of-take Arts out of like schools now. Like I think that's going to cause so much disadvantage. Because--,

SM: Right.

KB: You know.

ID: Mhmm.

KB: I mean, that's an outlet for a lot of Black and Brown kids to express themselves. You know? I mean, I can relate to that; I was never great at math. I was never good at school at all, but I need—Expressing myself is a natural thing. You know? And um, I'd like--even what you're doing with ArtsBuild, like I would love that to be ushered into these schools. To y'know f-f-scout for--not just Black kids--but all kids to get closer to the arts, so the next generation is just prevalent with like, you know, just like, thought. Um, I don't know, like...doers, and just like, people ready to like really um sustain this community. 'Cause, we don't see a lot of us in these spaces.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

ID: Mhmm.

KB: But, I think that's the only—Like, we can change that; that's just inspiration to like, really change. Like, that's where the work starts. Like, these kids want to do creative stuff. I mean, like, how many times I talk to kids, I feel like, 'I want to be a rapper.' Like, 'Okay.' Like, 'That's an art form.' Like, like, 'If you're going to do this, like, make sure you're saying something that means something.' Like, you know? Like, 'I understand you might want to talk about guns or violence and all those things--and that's, I don't find anything wrong; I think it's what you're conveying with it--like, if you're wanting people to think that you're a tough guy, or a girl or whatever the case, like, you know, that's not going to get you far. But if you're informing people on these things like,

'this happened where I'm from,' and giving people this worldview of like, you know, the culture...it's different.' So...

SPEAKER 2: I think what you said to me, Joly, though, that we always have to be thinking-like creating our own to, um—'Cause, I mean, sometimes you just have to--.

[Crosstalk]

SM: Right.

ID: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: It's just not-you're not going to get the, the entree--,

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: So you make your own.

SM: Right.

HN: Yeah.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: To make your--...

SPEAKER 2: Her own space. Take up space.

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: Perfect example of that is Miya, Miya Bailey in Atlanta. He, for years tried to get in the galleries in Atlanta, and different places. And now, he done brought the whole block.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

KB: He done brought all the Castleberry, you know? Like—And he started his own art stroll; his own, you know uh, [Pause] show-his own exhibits.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

KB: You know? His own schedule, his own—And now people—Now they're coming to him. If y'all been to the Castleberry--over in that--now the galleries are moving over there, to where he's got going on. I'm like, 'Look at that.' You know? So, we-that's the perfect example of that; starting on and waiting until they come to us. You know? Now, you know, they're flocking to try and buy space over there next to his gallery and be part of his art stroll. I was like, 'Man, look at that.'

[Crosstalk]

ID: Shout out to Atlanta.

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: And these are galleries that turn him down. He told me, like, Marsha Jones, uh, no, uh, is it Woods, Marsha Woods Gallery [Marcia Wood Gallery]? Whatever they got--yeah...Like, she was one of the people that turned him down, and now she moved over a couple of streets up from--you know, like--and want part of his art stroll now. So I was like, 'Man, that is crazy.'

[Crosstalk]

ID: Mhmm

SPEAKER 2: Does he mean studio [Inaudible - 00:32:28]?

[Crosstalk Ends]

ID: This-but it's nothing if not surprising. [I] mean, I mean, if you look at the history of, you know, a lot of artists--especially Black artists, espec-especially

musicians--a lot of them went overseas, right? In the early days, they honed their craft--everybody loved them--and because of that sparkle over there, when they came home, and then people [were] like, 'Oh, I heard about this from some [Inaudible - 00:32:48-00:32:49] playing the Germany.'

[Crosstalk]

[Laughter]

ID: And, 'Blah blah blah.' And then they started gettin' on that back way--.

KB: Right.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: And it's just one of those things that I always keep in my mind, is that, you know, sometimes you're really not appreciated in, you know, the hometown. So I don't think of—I think of my hometown--or I think of wherever I lay, that's my place, where I do my work--but, I don't strive to make it work for this city. The world is mine; I'm going to hustle the work. And then, the city can catch-catch up.

KB: I heard that.

ID: The thing I call a break--,

KB: Mhmm.

ID: Right? So it's just, keepin' that mindset that you gotta do-you gotta get out there, and most likely they gonna come. People gone come to you.

KB: Yes.

[Crosstalk Ends]

SPEAKER 2: Did you start with that thought, or you-you had to come to it at a certain point?

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: I came [Pause] to grad...I received a couple golden medals, um from Richard [Inaudible - 00:33:47], okay? One thing he told me, we was sittin' in his car and was talking about sculpture, and he was like, 'Remember, no one asked you to be an artist. No one [Inaudible - 00:33:59-00:34:00]. You want it, you gotta go out there.' And when he told me that, he shaped my mind, and I was like, 'Okay, I gotta be one of those; I gotta be out there.' Don't take-take for a minute that I think somebody's gonna appreciate it. So that means I have to remember what I'm doing, is for me and my purposes, and where I want to go. That's somebody else's problem. So I need to pursue my goal, [Sound of hand rapping on the table], and that's what I'm like. Starting to reshape in my mind on understanding that they're really looking at how things have been structured, right? And then how others have succeeded in looking into their histories, and understanding. 'Okay cool, I can't get upset because this person won't let me in; this person's about them. This person's not about me. They don't need me. So, okay, you don't want to play with me? Cool. [Pause] You're gone. You're gone.' That's [Inaudible - 00:34:59-00:35:00].

SM: [Chuckles] Right.

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk]

ID: I know it's gonna happen...

KB: Yes. That's right.

SM: They always want an invitation.

[Laughter]

ID: We're goin', 'What's that?'

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

KB: Yup. Yup.

[Laughter]

ID: 'It's all good.'

SM: Right.

HN: 'He smells good.'

[Laughter]

ID: I heard something interesting that she was playin'...What was that called again?

[Laughter]

ID: So it, I mean, so it-it was from, y'know some a the griots, that was given to that hit. [Inaudible - 00:35:31-00:35:32] information. Alright? And then being, just it's what I'm saying, okay.

[Pause]

KB: Mm, I like that. It's inspiring right there, brother.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: Yeah. I've been fort-I've been fortunate; I've had good people. You know? Especially him, 'cause like okay, 'I want to do this.' But, um, You know like I was sayin', 'This is America.' It's not [Inaudible - 00:35:54]. You know? So, every-every time we do

something, it's just building you-making you harder for the next level; to restrain the next forces that's gonna try to oppress you.

KB: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Mm.

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: With that outlook though, is it like-is it like, do you think you should take every opportunity the same, in a way? I guess for like, every accomplishment or everything that you do, should you all-should you take it the same exact way? Like, nothing's bigger than the last thing that you accomplish. Do you think that? Like, this is just a marathon, right? It's like, say someone—Say you just won a B.E.T. award, right? Like, next year you could win another B.E.T. award, right? But like, do you accept the same accomplishment the same way? Like, I don't know if I'm asking it in the right way, but it's just...

HN: ah-ee-is, eh...You're kinda asking—You're comparing...I mean y-what you're an-I feel like you're essentially asking—You're talking about like the um, road of growth.

KB: Yes.

HN: Yeah. And ye-You're asking...You're basically saying, is-is every step making you closer to being a better artist, a better person? Is it-is it leading to growth regardless of whether it's a step up from the last award is the same otherwise?

KB: Yes. In a way.

HN: Yes. Mhmm.

KB: That's right.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: I, I-I think every step you take, is a step down to show your potential. And even if you slip and slide back, you still have to make that steps back to where you were at. But that journey informs you with a second time, [Inaudible - 00:37:26], and you can shift here, shift there. You can build something to climb over. But you're always, always like that. And that's where you have to, you know—Projections. Projections are great. You know? Because if it just goes well, you know, and then they give you fuel to the fire. Yeah I remember when I was in grad school, I had this one grad student that was like, 'Ah, blah, blah, blah, blah.' He pissed me off.

[Laughter]

ID: I was like, 'Don't need that shit.'

HN: Right? [Laughs]

[Laughter]

ID: 'And...'

[Laughter]

KB: Yeah.

ID: Right?

[Laughter]

ID: In my accent because I use these slight-handed insults as fuel for me. So I arranged all these signs to make more work.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: Right? And so now I can say, "I'm here doing my stuff. With what I have. The question is, 'What are you doing here?'"

SM: Uh huh, right.

KB: I like that. Yeah, yeah.

ID: So, 'Big Fish' is one time in this little lake. It's different in the ocean. So it's like, y'know use that, use-use negativity to charge yourself.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: You know, do that mission.

SPEAKER 2: No, one thing I would say too you is like, I'm thinking about my career, as you make steps, um of like living that moment and appreciating for yourself.

ID: Right.

KB: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: Um considering you are always focused on 'The next, the next, the next.'

ALL: Right.

SPEAKER 2: And we—We miss out on wonderful moments in our lives.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: Um, Um, because we're always comparing and feeling like there's not enough for 'What's next.' So that's one. And the other thing I would tell you too is, a marathon is made up of steps. So each time you're moving forward--or like you said, you might get knocked back sometimes--but you're not going to be all the way to the-to the starting line. Um, and then think about too--as you move forward, like--you're being

put in places where it's good for you, but also, how can you open and give access to other people? Um, 'cause then as a people, that's what we've always had to do. Like when I complain about being the only woman--I mean, we joke about it--but if I'm the only one, then I need to make sure the next time I'm not the only one. That the things I saw and learned, that I bring back and share, the grants I learned about, you know, whatever...So-so that we're always opening doors and bringing people forward. That's what I think about [Inaudible - 00:39:36] is, I've turned a certain age--,

SM: Uh huh.[Laughs]

[Laughter]

HN: Don't be sayin' what it is, but...

SPEAKER 2: Well I feel like I'm like at this point, man...I'm...[Laughs] But um, I do think about like, 'What do I want my legacy to be?' And I really want it to be—Like if I come to something, [Inaudible - 00:40:17-00:40:18]—Look, I've seen people that, I was like, 'Oh, they got their first grant arts bill.' Or, you know they got a job through the city, or you know—The-like the other day, somebody said, 'My sister is doing the 100 websites 'cause of that program we started at the Urban League. Yeah, I was like, 'What problem?' 'Cause I can't even remember.

[Laughter]

SM: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: There [are] things that I want.

SM: Yeah. Right.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: You know? I wanna be comfortable, but I also want to know that, community moves forward because, because I exist and I'm a planner too.

KB: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

KB: I love that, man.

SM: I love that.

HN: I was though wondering if it's...Hopef-hopefully I didn't also commandeer your question?

KB: No no no no no. No.

HN: Or you-can say-anything-answered like you want it to...okay?

KB: Yes yes. Well 'cause like em, while you were saying that--well both of y'all, everybody was saying that--I was thinking like, I was—I think what I was really trying to say was like, 'Do you take the successes the same way as the failures?' I'm thinking--;

[Speakers intermittently agree]

KB: Like in-in a sense. And then like--I know you guys; you're talking about the marathon--and like, thinking about a marathon, like, you're doing different things around a marathon. You're running, you're riding bikes, you're swimming, like um, whatever else goes into a marathon. But um, all those require different techniques, you know? So it's like, looking at the path, y'know, on the art path, you know? Um, you might be in a residency one year, but the next year you're kind of freelancing; or free-forming. And that's-that's a different step of the marathon. Like, that might be swimming; that might be—You have to pace yourself a little bit different than the residency, which could have

been a bike ride, you know? It could have been a little bit easier. Who knows? But like, I kind of took that from what y'all were saying. But thank y'all.

HN: Me too. I don't want...Real quick. As just someone who...especially working in an all-boys middle school--,

[Speakers intermittently agree]

HN: It's been fun to have this conversation with my boys, you know? Um, to think--especially with media and just, everything going on--they have this mindset of, 'Oh, after this, it's always the next, I'm always getting better, and I'm always gonna da-da.' Um, and they don't think about—I think, I've had to push myself lately--when things don't go as expect-how I expect--and I think, 'Okay, working hard, just should have gone here.' I've had to sit back and say, 'First off, it's cliché but, what have I learned about myself here? What can I learn?'

[Crosstalk]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: That's not cliché'.

HN: Yes, yeah. But second, how's the experience allowed me to connect with somebody else? So you say, you know, I'm, and say, 'Been saving up this month; I'm taking a month, and I'm gonna be not working, da-da-da-da-da' Me a year ago, woulda been like, 'Oh cool, sounds, okay.' Because that was me in January. You know, me taking a month, being like, 'Okay, what's on here? I'm saving up; I don't know what's happening next.' I felt that in my soul, you know? And so immediately I was like, 'Oh, I know exactly where he's at right now.' And so even if you got a B.E.T. award, and then you got another one here. Like, 'I thought I would excel next time.' You first off have to

experience now if somebody else who's been there, and you're like, 'I feel this frustration.' Second, you're able to say, 'Okay, but I am consistent. I did well enough to get this award again.'

KB: Exactly.

HN: But, 'Alright, what can I tweak next? I want to make sure that next year I bring something new and interesting. Um I'm not in the same place that I was this year. So...

KB: Right.

SPEAKER 2: And if you don't get another one, look...euh, I don't have one. Nobody else.

[Laughter]

ALL SPEAKERS: [Inaudible - 00:43:22-00:43:24]

SM: We don't have one.

SPEAKER 2: Exactly.

HN: Right, right, right. [Laughs]

ALL SPEAKERS: [Inaudible - 00:43:23-00:43:26]

KB: Facts. Facts. Facts.

SPEAKER 2: I mean, you got a B.E.T. award, so period.

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: Right. [Pause] Man. I mean, yeah, I mean, those accomplishments are great for everyone to see, but I mean, like, I-I think when you look back on your journey, right, you're like, 'Okay, I'm fulfilled that I was able to rise above the circumstances that I

came from and-and I made it.' Like, I think that-that will be like my nice, like, last breath, is the fact that I did something that nobody believed in. Like, it's the craziest thing, right? Like, a-a lot of my friend groups have changed over these years, but my closest friends growing up--like, I was just with one of them, like, a few weeks ago--and I was just, like, telling him about my journey and what I'm trying to do with this next year. And um, I've been trying to guard myself from that too, because you'll tell the wrong people--which-and he's the right person in my life, but at the same time, he told me something that was-that kind of affected me--but he was like, uh 'You know when you moved off to Nashville, bro, that didn't work. What make you think you can go off to New York? Like, what made you think that's just gonna work, right?' So it's just kind of like, when you kind of get hit with those type of responses--off of your dreams for people, you know what I mean?-it's just kind of like, um, okay?

[Crosstalk]

SPEAKER 2: The lies um, they're telling you what they can't do.

KB: Right.

HN: Right.

KB: Right.

ID: Facts.

KB: Pretty much.

SPEAKER 2: So they prolly living in the same house on the same street.

SM: Right.

KB: [Chuckles] Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: I'm just saying, when people are telling you what-what you might not be able to do, they're telling you what they don't have the courage to do.

HN: Yes.

KB: Yeah, right.

SPEAKER 2: And so what if it doesn't work out?

KB: Yeah. 'I did it. I tried it.'

SPEAKER 2: I mean, you tried it.

KB: I'm trying something that most people just leave in their head.

SM: Most people don't try.

SPEAKER 2: Exactly.

KB: Yeah.

ID: Yeah, um, they...

KB: Most people just dream about it, but I'm actually take-taking steps to...

SPEAKER 2: Just go for it.

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SM: And like, I think, we've been designed to have these misconceptions about failure; like if a business closes. 'Well, it's fine. You opened up a business; you had a business for "X amount of years," whatever, but it didn't fail.' And those failures-failures can also teach you. So I think we have to start looking at our failures as like learning experiences--,

KB: Right.

SM: But also opportunities for the next thing.

SPEAKER 2: So the other goal that you might have a word for it called 'Failing up.' Have you heard about that?

[Crosstalk]

SM: Oh yeah. [Laughs]

HN: Yeah.

KB: Yeah. [Chuckles] Yes, yes.

SPEAKER 2: I learned that on some show.

KB: [Chuckles]

SPEAKER 2: I'm... 'Word?' Okay?

KB: Yeah it's real.

SPEAKER 2: Yes.

ID: [Laughs]

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: As long as you're getting something from it, learning, moving to the next level, you're just 'Failing up.'

SM: Your] turn.

HN: [Laughs]

ID: See I didn't know some of the things, that you was talkin' about; failure and then [Inaudible - 00:45:57]. Unfortunately, [Inaudible - 00:45:58-00:45:59] poor

condition. [Inaudible - 00:46:01-00:46:02] right? So, like you said, if you had a business and it folds, it's like this devastating thing.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: A majority of the cul-culture that's just called bankruptcy [Inaudible - 00:46:13], and then they get a new one.

[Crosstalk]

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Start a new business. Yeah.

KB: Mhmm.

SM: Very true.

ID: And a new business.

HN: Right.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: And a new business.

HN: Yeah.

ID: And none of them talks about all those failures--,

SM: Exactly.

ID: Right? And-and they just like--,

SPEAKER 2: They just talkin' 'bout they successful.

ID: 'Uh, we started off on a tax assessment. Uh, that's a loss.'

SM: Right.

HN: Right.

ID: 'I don't owe anybody any money.'

KB: Word.

ID: '[Inaudible - 00:46:30]. Now you can't come after me. That's done. Now I can start his new one, because it's just new.'

KB: Mhmm.

HN: Yeah.

ID: Right? But for us, But for us, it's like [Pause], it's the end. End...

SM: Yeah. Right.

KB: End of the world. Yeah. World.

SM: [Laughs] End. Right.

KB: [Chuckles]

HN: But, yeah...

KB: Yeah dude.

SM: There's some cultural things.

HN: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, there's a lot of cultural...

HN: She's like, 'Wait a minute...'

SM: I'm like, 'I've just given me...' [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: Cause just...Y'all are sayin' about taking off for a month, or a week. Like I struggle with that, just the generation that I'm in. 'Cause it was drilled into me, like to work work work. You know?

SM: Mhmm.

HN: Mhmm. Same.

SM: Right. Same.

KB: Mhmm.

SM: It took, it took me turning a certain age, to finally be like, 'Right, rest isn't a bad...' Like I always equate resting or lounging as laziness.

ID: Right.

SM: And so I was like, 'Work, work, work. What's the next goal? What am I trying to do now with my business? What else...?' And I took a month off, 'cause it was catching up with me--,

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

SM: And I'm just working nonstop, and continuing to have goals, becoming a parent in 2020, losing a parent in 2021. And I was like, 'I gotta take a break.'

HN: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: You have to rest.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SM: And um, It's gonna ha—Everyone around me is gonna have to be okay with it. My business partner was like, 'Do what you gotta do.' My husband's like, 'So what are you gonna do for a month?' I'm like, 'Gonna lounge and boss you around.'

HN: Yeah.

SM: Right? I don't know. [Laughter]

HN: Hey hey.

SM: Lucky you.

[Laughter]

SM: And that's what I did. And when I think about the life that I want--and what I want my daughter to see is that she can design her life--and it's okay to take the month off.

HN: Yeah.

SM: "Rest is resistance." So anyway.

HN: Now you're-yourself is just as important as what you do.

SM: Yeah.

KB: Yeah.

SM: I can't create if I'm tired. Yeah, yeah.

SPEAKER 2: If you're not...

HN: Tossing a line. I think the other prosper-isn't...

KB: Y'all sayin' it right now, I'm tellin' you.

[Laughter]

KB: Real.

SM: Yeah.

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SM: And we deserve to take a break. And it-it's okay. Like, it's okay. We deserve to take breaks. We gotta take care of ourselves.

HN: Yeah.

KB: Right. Do you think that's just—that's another those—one of those things that just like passed down to us? Like--'cause our grandparents, great grandparents, like--they literally had to slave every day, you know what I'm sayin', just to feed the whole household. Sometimes up to ten people in one household; they had to do it. You know? So, it's just like—And that's all you've seen? What do you mean 'breaks?' Like...

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk]

ID: Yeah. Like, that's a foreign word.

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

KB: Mama-mama, mama was talking about, 'I gotta keep these lights on. I gotta keep these lights on. I gotta keep this water on.' You know what I'm saying? Like literally like, that was part of my grandma's success. Like her te-telling me all my life like, 'You ain't never went a day without the lights off. You ain't never went a day without no clothes on your back; No food...' Like, I felt like those things right there, been instilled in me. Do I—I, It's hard for me to even want to take a month off. 'Cause I'm like, ah I'm like, ah like 'What was she think?' But um, but just like you said, I mean it's that rest. Like, you need that. You need that 'cause, you can't constantly try to find yourself, and

you're stuck in this like little-little sector in this world. Like you have to get-jump outta that, and-and just explore.

[Crosstalk]

HN: Right.

SPEAKER 2: That's why you talking about. New traveling. It's what I—It's the way I can just get away from everything.

HN: Right. Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: Nobody's phone can reach you.

HN: Right. Right. [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: If something happens with him--,

KB: I mean, yeah.

HN: [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: I'm sorry. I'm on the other side of the world.

KB: [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: You're on your own.

ID: I mean eh-hi, ee-man...[Chuckles]

SPEAKER 2: Nuh uh. I'm tryna survive too. I'm tryna survive too.

SM: Right on.

HN: [Laughs]

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: Uh yeah, you gotta take care.

KB: You can't-yeah...

SPEAKER 2: You—Whatever it is that gives you that peace, you have to.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: 'Cause you gotta let it go. If you're in India, and it's like, 'I can't worry about nothing back in Chattanooga.'

SPEAKER 2: : Right.

SM: [Inaudible - 00:49:57].

ID: Like, 'I'm here; I'm on India time.'

HN: It's so specific. Right. Right.

ID: I'm-I'm...fuh-it. I'm-I'm channeling what the Indian people have going through. You feel me? Like, I'm...

SPEAKER 2: Y'know y'all are gone wakin' me up. What's goin' on? Yeah, no. No.

ID: But...

SPEAKER 2: But I had a therapist that had-been really helped me with that though.

SM: Help.

ID: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: 'Cause I had--at one point--I felt like I had totally defined myself. And like the-the the familial relationship--and the way that people needed me--and she really helped me to break-break away from that. Yeah.

ID: It's free.

SM: And that's-that I've been working on in therapy to is, like being okay with relaxing. Like, even I tried to like—I'm not a bath person. When I like tried one time--,

HN: Yeah yeah yeah.

ID: [Laughs]

SM: My husband was like, 'Have you taken a bath before?' He was like "Lay back.'

ALL SPEAKERS: [Inaudible - 00:50:38-00:50:42]

SPEAKER 2: It's so hard to [Inaudible - 00:50:39-00:50:41].

[Laughter]

SM: He's like, 'Relax...'

SPEAKER 2: I've been there before too.

ID: [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: Okay, that was it...

SM: I'm like, "I don't have enough time-time to..."

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: Don't even know what they're doing for it.

HN: I'm the same way.

KB: [Chuckles] Word.

SM: I'm just like sitting there..But I'm always like checking my email. 'We need to apply for that grant.' Where do I get the...

HN: Aw yeah, yeah.

SM: It's like. 'Go go go.' And it's—I like it, but I don't also want to be defined by that. So...

HN: Yes yes. Right.

KB: Mm, right. Yeah.

SM: We're saying—It's still a work in progress. I'm like, I'm trying to be okay with just—Even today, I-just laying in the bed before I came here. And I was like--,

SPEAKER 2: I'm like...

SM: Slowly I'm getting there. But I was also like 'Oh my god, my closet.' Like, 'I need to do this later.'

[Laughter]

HN: Yeah.

KB: Yeah.

SM: And so I'll do it when I get home.

ID: Well...[Sound of hand knocking on the table].

HN: Yeah.

ID: Thank you. I gonna need a [Inaudible - 00:51:25-00:51:27].

KB: We'll connect it...yeah. We're connecting here. You know what's up.

[Laughter]

ID: It's been a minute.

SPEAKER 2: We prolly haven't even been in it for a, what?

ID: [Inaudible - 00:51:31-00:51:32]. Seriously. Let me tell you this...It's funny, but it's-it's, It's funny. Like, you know, the concept of, y'know even showering and baths, right? Or just different ways that you approach it--.

KB: Mhmm.

HN: Yeah. Yeah yeah...

ID: To do a shower, it's like, 'Take it off.'

SM: Right.

HN: Right.

ID: 'Scrub scrub scrub scrub.'

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SM: Right. Right.

ID: You havin' a bath.

KB: That's right.

ID: With water...[Inaudible - 00:51:52].

[Laughter]

KB: Yeah right.

[Laughter]

ID: [Inaudible - 00:51-53-00:51:55]

HN: Well that's just all you need.

KB: Might light a candle. [Chuckles]

ID: Some [Inaudible - 00:51:59].

HN: Right.

KB: Might light a incense.

ID: It's like, you see the problem is...you know?

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: The bath will make your whole body feel different.

ID: Yeah

SM: Right.

KB: Mhmm.

SM: Yeah.

HN: Yeah, mostly yeah.

ID: Aight, I wouldn't be doin' that [Inaudible - 00:52:08]

[Laughter]

ID: Aight.

KB: What's up? I love a bath.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: You have to plan it though, for next week..

HN: Yeah. You do, you do.

SM: Put it on the calendar.

KB: I love a good bath man.

HN: If you guys haven't, throw some epsom salt in there?

KB: Yes.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah, yeah.

ID: Yeah yeah yeah yeah, yeah.

HN: You gotta, you gotta do it. Yeah yeah yeah yeah. [Laughs]

SM: L'il Melatonin.

KB: Got to.

[Laughter]

HN: I'm about that.

KB: Yeah.

[Laughter]

KB: It's peaceful. A bath is peaceful. Not gonna lie. It's just so-so...

SM: I'm tryin'.

ID: It is, it is. When we have time for them.

SM: Right.

[Pause]

KB: Gotta make that time. You know?

SM: Yup. For sure.

SPEAKER 2: Who else gone? What did—Did you--,

HN: No. And now I'm like...

SPEAKER 2: You did your or...?

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: Been creatin' our own questions, so...

[Laughter]

KB: [Chuckles]

SPEAKER 2: Haile, did you did yours yet?

HN: I didn't...I feel-I'mma ask this one—I guess—This one seems like it—We kinda already answered it, what we're talkin' 'bout...Um...*Discuss ideas for ensuring equity in compensation.* [Pause] [Inaudible - 00:52:52-00:52:53]. [Chuckles]

ID: Always ask for payment.

HN: I hear that.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: So it's like, 'Oh can you do this?' 'Yes. It'll be this much.'

[Speakers intermittently agree]

HN: Yeah, yeah yeah yeah.

[Crosstalk]

ID: But--,

SM: Yes.

SPEAKER 2: No.

ID: No.

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: Word.

[Laughter]

HN: Yes. With a smile, with a smile.

[Laughter]

ID: Exactly. Y'know?

[Pause]

KB: You shouldn't lower your wage at all. Like, that's what your-your value is set, at that mark. Like, people got to respect that, I think. And I think we as artists kinda have to also protect ourselves through like some type of contract. Or something. Because a lot of times I think we get paid through word-of-mouth. Um, not word-of-mouth, but just conversation or a handshake. And um, I think sometimes the person that might be paying you, thinks that, like, 'Oh, it's on my time when I can just pay that person.' And like, if you're an artist and that's your livelihood, like you pay your bills off of that? Like--,

SM: Right.

KB: Naw, I need something to like protect me; To know that I'm going to get paid this day, 'cause this bill is due this day, and I'm not trying to be diggin' ma-here somewhere, they're tryna--,

SM: Right.

KB: Tryna find it, you know? So, um...

ID: Either always do a contract, or do an invoice that has those steps.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: Yup.

ID: And get a payment, partial, upfront. Even if it's five bucks off of that, because five bucks guarantees that's a different contract.

KB: Right.

ID: So...And have your terms on there; 'Deposit, rest at installation, rest at this, rest at that.' So there's no question. Because when they give you the money--or they send you the e-the email back saying, 'Okay, with the money.'--that they're...They've agreed to the terms that you listed. So you make it come from you, so that uh-not the other way around. [Pause] And then they have to do it. Like it's not, and they have [Inaudible - 00:54:49].

KB: Mhmm. Got you.

[Pause]

KB: How you feel 'bout that?

[Crosstalk]

SPEAKER 2: God, oh I've be...

KB: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: Like I really tha—I'm not—I don't want to speak about what you did, but I-I remember you reaching out, and making sure you got paid for what you were worth, with um the office and your—You sent him an email and just, laid it out. And always like, 'I already love this bid.'"

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: Hey for real, I'm-I'm-I'm learning--I mean like--I'm in a situation now. Like, uh I created an art piece, and um, I'm supposed to be getting paid from it. I'm still haven't gotten paid from it, which is a learning experience. Um, and I'm just taking that on to the

next thing. Like, uh--exactly what you just said, Issac--like, knowing that when I'm sending an invoice--or I'm creating this, like, contract--that it's understood that I'm-I at least need a partial payment. Or at least need something to hold me down, because I think as artists we get thrown on the back burner. Like, you know? It's not as appreciated as people think. Like, you know? 'Oh this is really cool.' But it's, 'Uh okay, then like, pay me for it.' And like—And what we-what you're just saying, James I mean, like, the business overall with the arts building: the office was very professional; I had no issues with that whatsoever--but, I mean, I think when you're just working with people on the day-to-day, like, they are the ones that kind of get you, kinda—They kind of play you a little bit, you know what I'm saying? And it's like, we have to be entrepreneurs. Like, we have to be 'business mindset' too. To know that, like, you know, like, our work is this value. And it's because we're super nice, and like, we don't like confrontation all the time? Like, 'No.' Like, I gotta-I gotta become P Diddy sometimes--.

SM: Right? [Laughs]

KB: I gotta be like—I gotta be on my shit sometimes. Like, yeah.

[Laughter]

SM: Exactly exactly exactly.

ID: Yeah. And Suge Knight some nights.

KB: Yeah. I heard that. You... [Laughs].

[Laughter]

ID: Sometimes Suge Knight.

KB: Yeah.

[Laughter]

KB: Facts. Facts.

SPEAKER 2: He need it though 'cause every, in the—They offered every other artist to get—I was waiting to see the email to come back and forth from you; your came back and said, 'Um no, I need more than this.' --,

KB: Hey man...

SPEAKER 2: Like, 'This is why; these are my expectations'--,

SM: Crazy.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

HN: Okay.

SPEAKER 2: And they gave it to me too, yeah.

SM: Okay.

[Crosstalk]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

KB: Without steppin' on any toes too. Y'don-know-I mean—It's-it's like...

ID: And you don't even need...You all just gotta go like...this is to say, 'Listen to me. This is the reality. This this this this. Numbers don't lie.' Right?

KB: Mhmm.

ID: It's like, " This is this, this is this, this is this.' Right?

[Pause]

KB: Right.

ID: I'm not asking you for anything crazy. Right?

KB: Mhmm.

ID: You know? Just—And it's right there.

KB: Mhmm.

ID: It's like...

KB: Right.

ID: You know? And two, he's like, we had to make good on negotiations.

He's-he's, have to make terms--estimates, or those quotes--and enforce its [Inaudible - 00:57:43-00:57:44]. Make sure that all [Inaudible - 00:57:46-00:57:47] You know?

'Cause, [there are] situations where you might be working within a system. Right? And the system has their own [Inaudible - 00:57:55] dealing with the city? Tryna get paid by the city.

SM: Oh no...

ID: But the city—The city has a fifteen net or a thirty net. So if you go in[to] negotiations with the city, and they don't have any agreement otherwise, that they gon' pay you, you're going to be treated like a independent contract.

KB: Mhmm.

SM: Right.

ID: Right? And you're thinking, "Oh, I'm getting this money from the city, and it's going to be bomb right after." But no. They have their own process. So it's like, you have to know about their process, and if you want to step into that arena from their process. Or you need to negotiate another process, and try to do that, if you can [Inaudible - 00:58:30]. But most likely, the government's they don't have it.

KB: Right, they don't have to take time.

ID: 'Kay I gotta wait another day,' but ten days on, I'm callin' you.

[Laughter]

ID: Ay, 'cause you asked me be there at five, and you can count? And, get my whole en-in-um into your system?

KB: Right.

ID: Yeah. [Inaudible - 00:58:46-00:58:48]

KB: [Chuckles] Facts man. [Chuckles] Facts.

HM: Yeah.

[Pause]

HM: Facts.

[Crosstalk Ends]

SM: I think we have a, a little bit of a conundrum when we don't value people's time. Therefore, we don't want to pay them what they're asking for. So that's just [a] constant—Something I'm trying to be aware of, is making sure if someone's asking for this amount, like, they're asking for this amount. Like you can't negotiate someone's like [Laughs]...creation. Be like--,

[Crosstalk]

HN: Yea yea yea, yeah.

SM: 'Well, can you do it for like two dollars less?' Like no; no one's gonna do that. But I think as a society, we don't value people's time, um and even coming from an

organization that sometimes promotes free things--and everyone loves a free thing--and then they don't show up. Versus...

[Crosstalk]

SPEAKER 2: They Inaudible - 00:59:31-00:59:32]. Yeah.

SM: So it's like, you want to keep offering things so that the community can—There's no barrier to entry. [Pause] People don't show up. So it's tryna like work with it...People talk about the value of 'free,' and like, what does that mean? Is it good? Is it bad? [Pause] This is a whole conversation I'm having in my head, with my business partner about what that means, and how do we continue to do it? So, y'know, we have [Inaudible - 00:59:56-00:59:57] [Laughs].

[Speakers intermittently agree]

KB: I know.

HN: And rent...

ID: And free is never free.

SM: And free is never free. Uh, but I don't think people who aren't paid, I don't think they know that. Like, 'Free,' sure, is free to 'The Consumer.' However, on the back end, know-a lot of hands, that went into making this free.

HN: Yeah.

SM: This free event is expensive.

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: Mhmm.

KB: Very.

HN: Very expensive.

KB: Yes.

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk Ends]

SM: And so, yeah, just—I think we just don't value people's time, anymore; like the human part of it. Like some-some-m—there's like a disconnect. Whereas like you only see, like, 'You are creating art; I am paying you. That is it.' And then it's like, no, there's like a relationship here. I like...

[Pause]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: What I deal with a lot—So we'll have a lot of people reach out--different non-profits, churches, organizations--they'll say, 'We want to get an artist that can do "X-Y-Z."' And I've—I've learned now, like, when I reply I say, 'Well, tell me what your budget is.' So I'm teaching them right then that there's a pay expectation. And it-whatever that budget says, that's the artist list that I'mma be able to see me. 'Cause everybody's not gon' come in at-at every level. So, yeah. It's just-it's constant. I mean people still think that arts are free. This is fluff; it's add-on. Um, and then don't respect the time and education that goes into it. [Pause] And don't lower your prices too.

SM: Right. We even—We received a-a-a grant from ARTSVILLE to do a program...[Laughs]

[Laughter]

SM: In-in-in our budget, we budgeted for the artist--Erica's one of them--for their brainstorming time. Because they have to create something, but they also actually shou-have to meet with, like, another instructor. So we're like, 'What's your fee, to plan it? To brainstorm? And we'll include that in your final invoice.' 'Cause I think...like, there-there's a whole mapping out that happens--before you even get to the creation part--that I think people also miss. So we're trying to be better about recognizing that we-you're not just coming with this piece of art. Or you're not just coming to teach this class. But you've planned and prepped for it beforehand. So how can we compensate for that planning time too? [Pause] And that's the one commodity that y-we can't get back. So how we spend our time, and very like, thoughtful, 'What I say "yes" and "no" to.'

SPEAKER 2: I had to learn that, you know?

KB: Facts. The capacity. I do have the mental capacity to, like, do this.

HN: Right.

KB: I've seen a-I've seen a funny meme, where someone was like um, 'I have to tell my friend,' uh like, 'I have to...' basically, see, like—The meme was, a friend came up and was like 'Do you have the capacity to hear about my day?'

[Speakers intermittently agree]

KB: And, like, it was like, they compared it to age. And it was like, I'm at that age where I have to sit there and think like, 'Do I have the capacity to...'

[Crosstalk]

SM: Right? [Laughs]

KB: No.

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk Ends]

KB: I don't have the capacity to answer that question. And uh, and-and-and, and it's like, I feel that, dude; it's a lot of overwhelming stuff--mental health stuff going on too--you know?

SM: For sure. Yup.

KB: And I mean, like, [Pause] time is so uh valuable. Um...

SPEAKER 2: Mm, did you read yours?

ID: Mhmm.

[Laughter]

ID: Uh, [Pause]...It says, *Discuss the spectrum of artists who co-opt aspects of Black culture and personal gain-for personal gain.*

HN: Say it one more time.

ID: *Discuss the spectrum of artists who co-opt aspects of Black culture for personal gain.* Hm...[Pause]

ID: My number one would be Kanye.

KB: I'm—For some reason, I was like, 'I'm just gonna say Kanye.'

[Laughter]

ID: Ye. Kanye.

KB: Who-gonna say Kanye? [Chuckles]

ID: He—The past couple years, he's shown us he will co-opt Black culture, Black everything and then, you know, for his personal gain, and then turn on us. Uh, pretty much.

KB: Kanye-Kanye, Kanye is a weird conversation for me 'cause I still, like, really appreciate Kanye. Even though I don't agree with a lot of things that he's, like, discussed like, in the media in the last couple years. But, um, for some re-I just feel like he's still for Black people. I think he's just, like, having a lot of daring conversations that, like, a lot of Black people aren't really having, in a way. Like, okay, look...

[Crosstalk]

SPEAKER 2: No...

[Laughter]

KB: When he said, Look...

[Laughter]

KB: When he, when he said...When he said that thing...

SPEAKER 2: You didn't like...You didn't see...you didn't see my face.

KB: Look...

[Laughter]

ID: [Chuckles]

KB: When he said that thing about Harriet Tubman right, that was crazy.

ID: Well that was embarrassing.

KB: That was-that was crazy.

ID: [Chuckles]

KB: But I-I looked at it in the perspective like this, right? [Pause] She could have freed a lot more slaves, if they knew they were free, I mean if they knew they were slaves. Right? That's-that was one thing; that was one reference he did say, right? But, ah dang...Let me-let me close. Lemme uh--,

SM: No, 'cause it's...[Laughs] He...

[Crosstalk]

KB: I ain't even gonna start. Everybody gone...

HN: No. You-you yeah, you're fine. You're fine.

SM: Keep going. [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: Did she say we have five minutes? So uh...

ID: Uh oh.

HN: Oh you...

SPEAKER 2: You-you got it, you want to tell--,

KB: You got it...

SPEAKER 2: You done started; you're on now.

HN: Yeah you did start it.

ID: That's right.

[Laughter]

KB: Well I-I...

ID: Like I...

[Laughter]

KB: Look, look--,

ID: I respect his artistry, but--,

KB: Yeah.

ID: I guess his pers-his political stuff turned me off.

KB: Ay, yeah. Yeah yeah. I don't-I don't agree with a lot of that stuff though. But I-I, I think with the Harriet Tubman conversation though, like. It was, it was kind of like...Like when he was sayin'—When he said, 'Slavery was a choice.' That was-that was the most radical thing that Black people heard. And it was like, 'What the fuck?' Like, you know?

SPEAKER 2: [Laughs]

KB: But um, I looked at it; It was like, 'Okay.' Maybe the choice was, 'Do we continue to stay in bondage with this, or do we try to...' Uh...

ID: Roll over.

KB Exactly. You know? And...

SPEAKER 2: But that's because you don't know the history of constant revolts that happened--,

KB: I know. Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: Throughout American History.

KBL Right right.

SPEAKER 2: And the resistance, and the sabotage, and the way that people fought enslavement. You know?

KB: Mhmm. Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: That people can say something like that, and people want some...But, you don't know the-the full history.

KB: Yeah. We don't know the full history.

[Crosstalk Ends]

SPEAKER 2: I think he's a great artist. I think he's totally, culturally uninformed. And shit, you-we should not—They uh-they're not gonna invite me to N.A.S.A., to talk about like the space system and rockets, because I don't know shit about it.

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: So if-if you don't know something, you should keep your mouth shut. Just do what you do. Learn. You know? That's my opinion about Kanye.

KB: So it's like, Kanye should just make beats, and just make shoes.

SPEAKER 2: I mean...

[Crosstalk]

KB: No, No...Don't be out here politin-tics.

ID: Stay out of politics.

SPEAKER 2: It's not about—Probably thinking that right now, 'I shoulda just kept [Inaudible - 01:06:42-01:06:44].

KB: Yeah. Yeah. [Laughs]

ID: James, Is he really uninformed, or is he [Pause] making a choice to become something else?

SPEAKER 2: Maybe he is.

ID: Because for me, it's kind of hard, because I believe his mother was a professor.

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: That's so true. You're right, you're right.

ID: He grew up in an academic environment. So, he came from a privileged set within our culture--,

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. You right.

ID: [Inaudible - 01:07:09-01:07:11] institution.

SM: Right.

ID: Alright? And he expresses it differently, but let's not forget those were some [Inaudible - 01:07:17]. He-he knows stuff.

SPEAKER 2: He knows--,

KB: Mhmm.

SPEAKER 2: You right.

ID: Right? He's just...Philosopher.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: Maybe-maybe he's no...

KB: Yeah, [Inaudible - 01:07:26-01:07:27].

ID: [Inaudible - 01:07:27]?

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: I-uh, somebody—I was watching something, they were talking about like, Blacks and movin' it up, these conservative women. And see I think Black people, we've always been socially conservative.

SM: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: But they said the line is shorter, and that stuck with me. Like, if I go saying right-wing stuff, I can gather so much more attention as a Black person, than I can if I was saying, you know, 'Me Too.'

SM: Right. Right.

SPEAKER 2: You know what I'm saying?

ID: And that's-that's the thing right? [Inaudible - 01:07:59]. What's happened is that you, you're-you're-you're playing within the greater society. So you're going to garnish more. Right? So if somebody sees, 'Oh he's with us...' Right?

ID: You know what I'm saying?

[Crosstalk]

SPEAKER 2: That elevates um...

ID: Exactly.

HN: Right.

SPEAKER 2: But that elev-until he become anti-Semitic or slightly...

ID: [Laughs]

SM: Right, and then they were like, 'Aw. [Inaudible - 01:08:19].' [Sound of hands clapping together]

SPEAKER 2: Then it was like--,

HN: 'Oh my god.'

KB: Yeah.

SM: [Laughs]

ID: Right.

HN: 'It—Sorry.'

KB: It was like, yeah...

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: But that's something too. Like, you can—The-the, the level of anti-Blackness--who was at [Inaudible - 01:08:29-01:08:31]...

SM: Okay with that.

HN: What's his name?

SPEAKER 2: Which is, you know...

HN: Is—What's her name? Candice Williams?

SPEAKER 2: Free thinker.

KB: Candace Owens.

ID: Owens.

HN: Owens. There we go. Owens, yeah. [Pause] Same.

[Laughter]

HN: Same same. [Laughs]

SPEAKER 2: I don't know.

HN: As far as like, you know...

KB: It's messy.

HN: The-wait...

KB: Messy messy.

HN: Black [Inaudible - 01:08:44-01:08:45] shorter line.

KB: Messy messy. [Sound of hand hitting the table]

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. Definitely, 'cause I don't-I don't watch 'em, and listen to them, 'cause it-dahm...mm mm—I'm too old; my pressure.

HN: Same as me...ohh.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: I just can't. Like when I'm scrollin', I see iri-oh my god; it's terrible.

[Laughter]

KB: Mhmm.

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

ID: But, the-the reason I-I thought of him first with this question is, because If you think back to the whole Hurricane Katrina, we was I—I know I was—Kanye then...'Cause Kanye said--,

[Crosstalk]

SM: Hell yeah.

SPEAKER 2: "George Bush does not care about Black people."

ID: What we all was thinkin'. He-yeah.

SM: Hell yeah.

ID: So we was like, 'Yeah, Kanye, you tell him. Yeah.'

[Laughter]

HN: Yeah, yeah yeah. 'You tell him Kanye.' [Laughs]

ID: 'Tell him Kanye.' And now fast forward like, is this the same person?

HN: 'Shut up Kanye.' [Laughs]

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk Ends]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: Do you think that that world though—Like, I mean...Kanye was more...Like it...The mm-mm, the wealthier you become, the more global you become, you become further and further away from like the average people too; and reality.

[Laughter]

ID: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: So maybe that has something to do with it.

[Crosstalk]

KB: Yeah. Ay yous-get...

SPEAKER 2: Like if-if-if I'm a billionaire, I'm telling people, 'I uh, oh what color? I think that red is ugly.' And they just go paint it?

HN: Right. Right.

SPEAKER 2: There-there's people that's just going to be your "Yes people."

HN: Right.

SPEAKER 2: You know?

ID: Ss-it's God-God Complex.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

KB: It's a lotta that. It's a lotta that in there; God Complex. Fasho. Dre-mm-get...

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: But when you said this, I was thinking about white artists that-that co-opt Black things for profit--.

KB: Ah, oh yeah. Yeah that...

SPEAKER 2: But you made—You took it a whole different direction.

SM: Yeah, the [Inaudible - 01:10:14] though; I love it.

[Laughter]

HN: Heck yeah. That was good though. It was good.

ID: [Chuckles]

KB: Mm throw Kanye in there--,

[Laughter]

KB: I feel like you said—You said that's what—You said that's what Kanye, like...

HN: [Laughs] He's like, ' I heard you guys said that...' [Laughs]

[Crosstalk Ends]

SM: But also [I] think, I think it's a [an] age thing too? [Pause] Don't want to sound like an Ageist on either side, but I think I also—Like I've seen Kanye in concert when--with *Watch The Throne*--got out, like I love Kanye.

KB: A great album.

SM: But now I'm like at that stage, where I'm like, 'Well, I did...I loved *Through the W...*' like, 'I loved *College Dropout*,' all that. But now I'm like 'I don't know.'

ID: Right.

SM: But a lot of my younger frien-friends--who are significantly younger than me--are still riding the Kanye boom. And like, they're like, 'Well what he said it's bad, but I mean...and-like whatever. Still gone rock my Yeezy's.' And I'm like, 'Okay.' I'm just like...I don't know. [Laughs]

KB: Yeah.

HN: Yeah.

SM: [Laughs]

KB: Look I don't know if y'all believe in the Illuminati, but I'm just saying. I mean, who knows? What if, what-what if everything he's doing is on some humiliation rituals? Who knows?

[Crosstalk]

SM: What?

SPEAKER 2: It is, It is a ye—He needs a really good psychiatrist--,

KB: Whoah whoah whoah, wait wait, ha, wait. [Laughs] What if-what if he's just—He-the...

SPEAKER 2: And some medication, and to sit his ass down.

[Laughter]

SPEAKER 2: 'Cause really what he needs...I'm not even—Like we talking about, 'We take your break.' He needs to take a break.

HN: He needs to take a break. [Laughs]

ID: Yeah, he does [Inaudible - 01:11:27].

KB: He-ee-take...He need to be take a break. He does.

SM: This is his time for a sabbatical.

ID: He definitely needs...

KB: He does.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. Just take your break. Yeah.

[Laughter]

KB: He does.

SPEAKER 2: Get in the tub.

HN: Like his [Inaudible - 01:11:33].

SM: First--,

[Sound of loud whistle]

SM: Don't toot that three times.

HN: What the hell? Oh my god.

KB: Uh oh. [Pause] Yeah.

[Laughter]

ID: And I think his mama dying really messed with him.

SPEAKER 2: Oh it had a [Inaudible - 01:11:40].

SM: Yeah.

KB: Yeah, that messed him up.

[Crosstalk Ends]

BLT STAFF MEMBER: Hey, I know you're in the middle of some really great conversations, but time has has run out.

PARTICIPANTS: Aw.

BLT STAFF MEMBER 1: I know. It just shows we have to do this again.

[Laughter]

KB: It's a good vibes.

HN: Yeah.

BLT STAFF MEMBER 1: Yes. So, Um, thank you for coming, and giving us your voices. We are just so excited to watch this thing. And you can come in and search your own self, and listen to what you had to say. Um, so for now, finish eating, finish your conversations. I'm gonna come around and stop the recorders. And we'll just carry on with our afternoon.

BLT STAFF MEMBER 2: Yup. And if you would like to have your portrait taken, and you have not, we still have an opportunity to do so. Um, we do need you to sign a waiver however so, um we have that at the front desk. And, and then thank you so much. Follow us on all social media. Big thanks to Stoveworks. Incredible work that you doing here.

[Sound of applause]

BLT STAFF MEMBER 2: And, and thank you to the BLT team. Aja and, and Eliza; would not be possible without them. So, thank you thank you thank you.

[Sound of applause]

SM: 'Kay so, the Illuminati...

HN: [Laughs]

KB: Yeah. [Laughs]

[Laughter]

KB: Right. [Pause] I kinda believe in it. I don't know. It's, it's real messy.

[Sound of conversation around the table]

[Pause]

KB: But you right though, I think his-his mom dying did...

[Crosstalk]

SM: When, we ended up on Kanye--,

HN: Yeah, yes, I just saw. [Laughs]

[Laughter]

KB: [Inaudible - 01:13:12], have you seen the um, the documentary on Netflix?

ID: Some of it yeah.

SM: Oh yeah. G-I haven't watched it. I said that I would.

SPEAKER 2: What? Kanye documentary?

KB: Right, it's so good.

SM: I know. John and I are both like...

KB: Oh it's um...what is it called?

SM: *Genius*.

KB: *Genius*. Yeah. It's on Netflix--.

HN: Jesus.

KB: It's like a three episode series. It's like--,

HN: What is it?

KB: It's called *Genius*.

HN: Nah, like what is it?

KB: Oh it's a Kanye documentary.

HN: Okay.

KB: But, it's...

SPEAKER 2: I didn't ca—I feel like, we have responsibility--,

KB: Like they documented his whole like, come up, like...

HN: Yeah.

KB: I's crazy, like...

[Speakers intermittently agree]

SPEAKER 2: And not—Not about watching it, but If you get into a certain level,
like you're supposed to try to do right--,

SM: Right.

SPEAKER 2: Educate people, watch and edit the things that they say, protect
your mind.

SM: Right. Right. Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: You know? I just don't—I'm not impressed at all. I'll still, I mean I
would listen to the music but--,

[Laughter]

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BLT STAFF MEMBER 1: What's that?

KN: He's just in so many different worlds though.

BLT STAFF MEMBER 1: Oh, that's a whole thing; I didn't get into it. I'mma stop it before I start...

END OF RECORDING

Transcribed by C. BAY MILIN 01/04/2023

To be copyedited.