# TFEO Wireland Ranch Transcript

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audio drama, ranch, laughter, people, writing, capitalism, clip, talk, episode, psychedelic, language, courier, feeling, years, audio, struggle, ran, money, delivery, car

**SPEAKERS**

Joseph Rutledge, W. Keith Tims, Delivery Driver, Archaeologist, Strange Female Voice

**W. Keith Tims** 00:12
(theme music) Hello, and welcome to The First Episode Of, a podcast about audio drama and the creative process. I'm W Keith Tims audio drama producer and podcaster. In this show, I listen to the first episode of an audio drama, then have a discussion with the creators about their show, their methods, struggles and successes. Today, we're discussing the first episode of Wireland Ranch.

**W. Keith Tims** 00:41
[Begin clip from Wireland Ranch.] (sound of someone turning through several radio frequencies. We hear snippets of music, news reports, police sirens.

**W. Keith Tims** 01:02
A psychedelic cosmic horror story, Wireland Ranch is the creation of Joseph Rutledge. Its shifting storylines revolve around a strange crumbling shack in the Mojave Desert, a missing delivery driver, a drug addicted PI retracing the drivers steps, and the narrator an archaeologist digging all of this up 5000 years in the future. Wireland is also a mythological indictment of capitalism, casting the forces of consumerism, fear and greed as cosmic entities. Rutledge relies on a psychedelic style to draw his listeners into feelings of dread. The first episode of Wireland Ranch, "Return of the Overseer" focuses on a struggling courier who is contracted to pick up a package from a mysterious shop and who is drawn into an altered state of consciousness and vanishes. I spoke to Joseph remotely from his home in Georgia.

**Strange Female Voice** 01:03
Wireland Ranch: An Amagamation [End clip.]

**W. Keith Tims** 01:06
Why don't you tell me a little bit about yourself as an artist and a creator.

**Joseph Rutledge** 01:25

Growing up, I always, you know, wrote poetry and stuff like that never took it seriously, you know? Until I went to prison. I was arrested for possession of heroin under a gram. I got four years while I was only in for three before I got paroled. But I spent that entire three years writing, doing nothing but writing. I was pretty much in solitary confinement the whole time because I have a disability: heart problems. So they wanted to keep me out of general population. So it was just like me in a room with a pencil and a pen and a copy of Twilight (laughter). That was literally about it.

**W. Keith Tims** 02:48
The vampire book? (laughter)

**Joseph Rutledge** 02:49
Yes, God. Dude, I was in fucking prison. And I couldn't make it through this fucking book. It is utter, utter trash. And like, I'm sitting here thinking like, Okay, if she can do this, right. It's all just really about content and consistency. So anyway, I spent the whole time writing I wrote two novels while I was in there. And then after I got out, it all went to the wayside because hey, now I'm free, right? Like, why am I going to waste my time writing? So I did that for a few years. And finally, it was like, Dude, you are wasting your life. What are you doing? So I got all that stuff up in a crate all the stuff I had written in prison and a smushed it all together and ended up with this.

**W. Keith Tims** 03:34
Do you want to talk about your life and where you were before you got arrested?

**Joseph Rutledge** 03:38
Sure, sure, I was like, in the very depths of like, the worst of human experience, like I guess I can't say that I imagined like genocide and things of that being a part of that is much worse. But like, for a person, just an individual, and especially in American society, the very worst afflictions you can have or homelessness or addiction. I at the time, had both. I had just came back from Las Vegas, I was living in a homeless shelter up there. As soon as I got into Georgia, I got off the bus got patted down had a little more than half a gram of heroin and was immediately and unceremoniously arrested. Yeah, it was really, it was a dark time. And it was, um, I was in a position to where if I had not gotten arrested, I would very likely be dead.

**W. Keith Tims** 04:23
You mentioned you had a disability.

**Joseph Rutledge** 04:24
I talked about it in Wireland sometimes. I was born with a coarctation of the aorta, which basically means I had 0.1% blood flow going to my lower body pumping through the aorta like that the aorta was so compacted. That's the thing they usually catch at birth, but they didn't catch mine. The only reason they ever found out about it is because when I was playing football at nine years old, my nose would just start pouring blood just all the time. And that's when they finally realized hey, it's all there because it's all in his torso and it's got to come out somewhere, you know. So they did the surgery and ever since then my blood pressure has ran on average about 160 over 210. Somewhere around there like

my entire life. So I have to be really careful about all the things I do like what I eat, like, a lot of physical activity causes immediate chest pain to the point where it's like, okay, if you keep doing this, you're probably gonna die. So yeah, that is about the extent of the disability. It's rough, man.

**W. Keith Tims** 05:25
When you got out of prison, how did you turn things around?

**Joseph Rutledge** 05:30
When you're on parole? They don't care whether you're disabled or not, you're going to work right. That's it. That's all there is to it. So I was lucky enough to have a restaurant who was ran by a guy in a similar situation who was in prison himself. And he gave me a chance he took it easy on me, he let things slide that a normal employer wouldn't let slide like the amount of breaks, etc. So I was able to pull myself together with that. And with the help of my family, man, my stepfather and mother took me back into the house. You know, I squandered that for like, maybe a year after I got out. Then I met a woman, we had a couple of kids. And it was like, Okay, this is what I'm doing. Now, this gives me meaning where I was lacking meaning before.

**W. Keith Tims** 06:10
Were you ever involved in the arts at all before then?

**Joseph Rutledge** 06:13
Yeah I made, my only experience with a digital audio workstation. For instance, before this was making beats. I have always made music, but I never thought, okay, you know how, when you write, you don't really know if your writing is good or not. You know what I mean? Like, you can think, oh, yeah, that's great. But you don't really know. And I was always afraid to find that out. You know?

**W. Keith Tims** 06:36
Yeah, I write something. It's like, I like it. But what the hell do I know?

**Joseph Rutledge** 06:40
Exactly, exactly that. Yeah. So I had experience there, made a lot of music wrote here and there. A friend of mine, we came up with an idea for a show, it was actually we're going to write a book back when I was like, 21 years old, right. And we came up with this concept for something called The Dope Show, which is like a reality show where people are trapped in this really weird mansion and given free rein over recreational drugs, and then cut off from society completely, right. We worked on that for a long while, maybe 10 years all said and done, and it never went anywhere. But we had all this material. When we released the first installment of Kill FM, this dude, his name's Tony that I hadn't spoken to since I was 23, who we originally came up with the concept with together for the Dope Show. He found me. And now we're able to work on that together. It's like the circle life, man. Yeah, it's fantastic.

**W. Keith Tims** 07:34
Well, since you brought it up, you also do Kill-FM which is a weird fiction anthology podcast that comes out occasionally. I'm pleased to say that I've been involved in the first two, I was a voice actor for one

and the first one and I wrote my own production for the second one, it's, I really enjoyed that experience. Talk to me about Kill-FM and why you started it and what your aims with it are.

**Joseph Rutledge** 07:54
Okay, so it started out of spite. (laughter) Like, we had all these people who are making all these great shows Echoes in Between, the Madness of Chartrulean, Wireland, and Saph's Supernatural Protection Company. And it's like, the conversation is, at the time always revolved around a very small and very specific group of people, right, who seem to have zero interest and widening the pool for the rest of us. So we started joking around, like, oh, we can make, I'm not going to name any names here. But we can do this sort of thing, which is similar to that sort of thing. Jess, from Echoes came up with the, you know, "Kill FM keeping you company on the road to hell." And so we just kind of ran with it. And like, I'm a kind of a control freak a little bit. So with that first installment, I was like, everybody gives me everything. And I'll put it together. Nobody had any idea what I was doing. Y'all just sort of trusted me. And I think it turned out really, really well. It was originally just meant to be a Halloween special. It got such a good reception. And there were so many people involved, like the Liminal Lands Discord server, like flooded with people around the time that Kill-FM, the first installment came out. And so we were like, Okay, maybe we're onto something. And then before I knew it, Saph and I were like, Hey, let's just keep doing this.

**W. Keith Tims** 09:12
Do you have a particular goal in mind for doing Kill-FM?

**Joseph Rutledge** 09:14
Just to have fun, man, it's not that serious. You know what I mean? So much of this shit is taken so seriously, by so many people. I guess to expose people to things they otherwise wouldn't have heard, especially given the limited nature in which the veterans of the industry are willing to help newcomers.

**W. Keith Tims** 09:34
Let's talk a little bit about Wireland Ranch. I like to try to summarize a show (Joseph laughs) in a nice easy, sort of couple of sentences for the listeners. I find myself finding a little challenging with Wireland. Psychedelic horror certainly, as part of that there is a story involving a courier and some mysterious magical or cosmic forces and a very strange shack out in the middle of the desert. So why don't you tell me about Wireland Ranch.

**Joseph Rutledge** 10:02
Black magic capitalism. That is what the underpinning of the entire show is. I'll use an example I've used in the show 9/11, for example, right? This thing happened whether... and I'm a conspiracy theorist straight up pretty much like I'm pretty, but I don't think that 9/11 was some huge conspiracy. What I do think is that a group of people saw what could be accomplished, if they were to take it to its extreme from the aftermath of 9/11. And they brought it all together in a way that I don't think can be called anything else other than a magic spell. They were able to get an entire society to hand their rights over, they were able to go into a war with a country that had nothing to do with anything. And they were able to get us all behind it and get us all to a point where we were all willing to do exactly what they wanted,

because the single thing happened. And to me, that's magic. I don't think there's a greater force of magic in this entire world than a good capitalist, you know, not good, and like, oh, you're a good person, but good in like, oh, you're really good at fucking people over. Each of the entities within Wireland are specific archetypes for what makes up capitalism, what allows the human condition to lean in this position. And that's what I think wirelend is truly about at its core.

**W. Keith Tims** 11:26
I'm interested to your answer this question. I mean, I think we can all agree that there are problematic things involved with capitalism. But what do you think the problems of capitalism are?

**Joseph Rutledge** 11:35
That there's no ceiling, a huge capitalistic organization always thinks there's more profit to be made. We're at a point in the world not just as a society, but as a world where that ceiling is quickly approaching, and we're going to hit it so hard that I don't think a lot of people are going to come out of it alive. The main problem with our particular capitalist system, is the amount of money that goes into creating legislation and getting people elected. One specific thing that I would say, here's the main problem with capitalism, it would have to be Citizens United. That would probably be the thing that tipped everything overboard.

**W. Keith Tims** 12:15
The Citizens United decision was one that allowed corporations to be counted as people for purposes of donating money to...

**Joseph Rutledge** 12:23
... and money to be counted as free speech, yes.

**W. Keith Tims** 12:25
Money is speech. Yeah. Why did you want to tell this story?

**Joseph Rutledge** 12:30
I think because the feelings of inadequacy being trapped in this modern world, world 2023, a single person can't change anything. Unless that single person is a billionaire, then they can change the world to their whim. But for us, what can we do? And the only thing we can do really, is to bring people around to say, hey, maybe this thing that you've thought of as grand and wonderful your whole life isn't. There's a personal toll for each and every person in this country, and especially in other parts of the world. Maybe you can make them realize that hey, maybe this wasn't a good idea in the first place. The absurdity of Wireland is the way that I try to convey that. A tree that won't stop growing leaves will eventually fall over. And that is how our current society exists.

**W. Keith Tims** 13:18
Why audio drama as the medium for this story?

**Joseph Rutledge** 13:21

Keep in mind when I made the first episode of Ireland, I had zero experience doing any of this right. I think that audio drama brings a level of resourcefulness, like the creators do that is not as existent in any other form of art. You don't have to have any money to start an audio drama. But you also don't have to have to have any money to paint except for to buy the paints, right. But how do you get it out there? Yeah, you can paint but who's going to look at that painting? With audio drama, it's different people are always willing to say, okay, new show, let's hear this, you know?. And I think that it's just the best outlet for what I do,

**W. Keith Tims** 13:58
Right. I mean, it's true that you know, for the cost of a web hosting service, even even some of those are free, you can put yourself on a platform to be discovered.

**Joseph Rutledge** 14:06
And we were lucky. I think Wirelend does pretty okay. When I first got into this, I'm like, Okay, I started looking into all the websites like how do you know if you're doing anything successful? And everything I read was like, Dude, if you're getting 20 downloads a week, that's 40% of podcasts. (laughter)

**W. Keith Tims** 14:24
You call it the Wirelend Ranch, an amalgamation as opposed to like an audio drama. Can you tell me what you mean by that?

**Joseph Rutledge** 14:30
Okay so Wireland Ranch is actually it's not obvious yet but will be come the second and third season is all of these things that I've written, all the short stories, the novel's the everything, I've combined into this one thing. so within Wireland, you're gonna end up having all of these things that link back to Wireland in some way or another. And all of this material is just sitting there waiting. And so like I have a novel called God's Wrath as a Motherfucker. That's a visually gonna be in there. And then I've got the Dope Show like, we've got a whole crew of people ready to make that. And the Dope Show is the house and the show and the network that the show was on is all owned by the same central villain of Wireland. I call it an amalgamation because I'm just, I'm throwing shit at a wall and hope (laughter) it all works out, you know?

**W. Keith Tims** 15:23
Let's talk about the first episode, which is called a Return of the Overseer. And the overseer is a important figure in this first season. And it's about a courier for hire who is contracted to pick up something from a Curiosity Shop. But the shop is very, very strange, and his experience there draws him into a consciousness altering state and then it hints at a destiny that he does not expect. We find out in the second episode that he is missing.

**Archaeologist** 15:51
[Begin clip from Wireland Ranch. The Archaeologist narrates.] (Quiet city sounds, cars passing) The pickup instructions listed on the screen stated "Come inside store and asked for order at reception. If store is empty. Wait. We will appear. If you're the impatience or come to the backroom. This is

inadvisable and may lead to stress and night terrors. But it will garner you the attention you seek." He stopped once again and considered cancellation but after a moment and a deep breath or two he shrugged to himself and pushed the heavy wood paneled door and, of course, friends, we all know it was locked. But below the lock, a small handwritten sign announced "If the door is locked ring the bell." and had an arrow originating from a spiral pointing toward a tiny red plastic button that seemed to be glued to the brick next to the brass door handle. And well, what else was it going to do besides press it and ignore the fact that it looked like a toggle switch you would buy a Home Depot and appeared to be connected to nothing? Just a weird toggle switch glued weirdly to a weird brick on a weird building. And as we all guessed friends, nothing happened. The button didn't even depress. A frustrated sigh passed his lips. And as he was about to turn and head back to the car, he heard a loud smooth-- (door unlocks). [End clip.]

**Joseph Rutledge** 17:11
Yeah, man, Wireland is about the vibes.

**W. Keith Tims** 17:11
It's not like a lot of action. It's really about just this guy goes to pick up a thing, right? But you spend a lot of time really developing a mood and using language to create a feeling in the listener.

**W. Keith Tims** 17:27
One of the things I like about your language is that it's it's like a little bit beat poetry. It's like a little bit David Foster Wallace.

**Joseph Rutledge** 17:35
Oh, wow. Okay.

**W. Keith Tims** 17:36
It's a little bit Hunter S. Thompson, you know? It's definitely got that kind of vibe to it. So I am curious about your approach to using language,

**Joseph Rutledge** 17:45
One of my biggest like, literary influences. I guess I've got a couple but William S Burroughs would probably be number one on the list. Something I didn't really know that people thought about wirelend until later on way after I'd made it is that people look at the narration as rhythmic, you know, like, like a, you know, like beat poetry. Like you just said. I didn't think about that when I was making it like when I was writing it. And my approach to writing is this: write a sentence, say it like I would on the show and if it sounds right in my head, that line stays, right? It's all about like, subverting with language in my mind, like, Okay, here's this dude. Yeah, he has a life a lot like yours, probably, they make deliveries and he's drawn into this vicious web of otherworldly influence. The writing itself is exemplary of the overall vibe that I want for Wireland. When I'm thinking about writing, it's not like I'm writing. Okay, Joe said this thing. I'm just these weird winding sentences that go on and on and on. There's like, probably in the first episode, there's a sentence, it's at least a paragraph long. Because I don't follow those same rules of language that is considered correct. I follow the rules of language that to me sound good and put a

person in a place where they would be able to hear these ideas in a way that they haven't necessarily heard before. I think the language is less important than the feeling I'm trying to convey with the words.

**Joseph Rutledge** 17:46
I think the use of language is important. I do think sometimes people get hung up on realism as a thing. Because honestly, I don't think even people who like realism, like real realism, you know, right. We want language that has been crafted, right? We want language that has been carefully chosen to evoke emotion or feeling or make it sound believable to character or holds interest.

**Joseph Rutledge** 19:41
Wireland itself says very nasty things and flowery language, right? Wireland is a very angry show. I don't think that an average listener would listen to the first few episodes and be like, Okay, this is an angry show. But the more and more you listen to it, you realize, okay, this is just like pure aggression, poured onto the paper, you know?

**W. Keith Tims** 20:01
Well there's no doubt that there is a very strong anti-capitalist sentiment running through it even from the first episode. You talk about the courier working for slave wages and you have some very it's very tongue in cheek and it's very wry in the way you present it right, but it's certainly very cutting.

**Archaeologist** 20:16
[Begin clip.] The chime seem different on the last delivery he made. The bright focus-group approved Pavlovian dinging (Courier's phone dings urgently) that ushered slave wage delivery terms on the his screen was muted and slow, (The dinging turns strange and vibrating.) seemed deeper, darker. And somehow, as he considered the memory, more than a little unwelcoming. (Jazz drums under.) He'd been making waste of time, low rent deliveries all day at that point, $2 here and $3 there, an average all day delivery shift, and a perpetually collapsing economy veering dangerously toward what some might consider the end, while others, like our driver here, would consider an improvement. [End clip.]

**Joseph Rutledge** 20:56
I just want people to look around and go, Okay, well, well, maybe that delivery driver that you think is making all this money, barely has enough gas in his car to make it to your house. I don't think people realize the reality. They know their own reality. And they know they're struggling. And they know things are hard. I don't think they think that is a universal situation. And every day, it's becoming more and more universal. We're all equally fucked here. (laughter) We're all equally fucked. And we all need to get together. And if we don't, it's gonna be so bad.

**W. Keith Tims** 21:31
So there's definitely a psychedelic aesthetic that you bring into the show. And I want to talk about that. Because it's not just merely sort of about like the hallucinogenic elements or the dayglo colors that we think of when we think of psychedelia, but I think you're actually tapping into sort of the original psychedelic movement that came out in the, in the 60s, you know, with the belief that LSD and other substances could unlock parts of the brain that sort of, or deal with mental illness or altered states of

consciousness. And also, of course, tied into that as a strong counterculture movements, right, there was right, there was a lot of rebellion. And there was a lot of attacking the dominant conservative society at the time. What attracts you to the psychedelic aesthetic?

**Joseph Rutledge** 22:12
During every trip that I've ever had, personally, every psychedelic experience I've ever had, there's this moment of like, sheer overwhelming darkness. And sometimes you can snap out of it, and have your good trip, and everything's great. But sometimes that shit like worms into your brain, you know? When I say psychedelic, that's what I mean. It's that very sharp and very sudden feeling of dread that you are aware, if you're not able to get rid of this, it is your destiny for the next six hours. (laughter) If you don't get rid of this, this terrible feeling, then you're stuck with it. And I think that's the part of psychedelia that we, that I like to deal in. Because that, to me, is the heart of it. Yeah, it can be good. Yeah, it makes everybody laugh. But the things you're laughing at on psychedelics is the absolute absurdity of your station in life, like who you are, where you are, at the moment, everything just becomes this, like, Oh, this is crazy. And that's the part that I'm trying to tap into is just that that weird moment, where you're just like, you can either embrace the darkness and run with it and have the worst time of your life or you can run away from it. But if you embrace the darkness and run with it, you're going to come out on the other end in a much better mental position than you would have had you scurried away from that darkness.

**W. Keith Tims** 23:32
In the first episode, the courier actually has a very vivid and I would say, dreadful in the sense of being filled with dread experience where a statue of sphinx comes to life on this counter of the Curiosity Shop and there's a disembodied voice that's talking to him and...

**Archaeologist** 23:48
[Begin clip.] (strange drone) So. Time to get the delivery and peace the fuck out, he decided.

**Strange Female Voice** 23:52
(from out of nowhere) Your package is on the desk.

**Archaeologist** 23:55
He hesitated in his first step toward the desk, lifting his leg high as if the floor was a sponge and his candy flip is kicking in ecstasy and acid mixing to make the world and especially the floor, both frightening and new.

**Delivery Driver** 24:11
(confused) Fuck, I'm... I'm gonna be late...

**Archaeologist** 24:14
... he muttered. (the drone becomes more intense)

**Strange Female Voice** 24:15

(distorted and doubled) We are sure wherever you are going, you will get there right on time.

**Archaeologist** 24:20
He took another clumsy step. Now only a few away from the desk. He could finally see the box on the solid slab.

**Strange Female Voice** 24:28
Watch out for the majestic Sphinx, Overseer. She's been known to seek attention (voice turns low and hostile, breifly inaudible.) which can be real doozy if you aren't. (Sudden loud roar.) [End clip.]

**W. Keith Tims** 24:42
It did feel very much like that kind of altered state of consciousness and that sense of uncertainty about what you can trust and what you can't trust.

**Joseph Rutledge** 24:50
I try to do that with the language itself like with the story itself as well as the audio I use a lot of binaural audio different Hertz in either ear that can sometimes make you feel a certain way, without you realizing it. I do a lot of work in that aspect to make sure you were feeling the way that I felt when I was writing it. Audio itself the form, especially audio drama, audio fiction, that, to me is magic. And I just tried to run with that in the best way possible.

**W. Keith Tims** 25:19
What is magical about audio drama, in your opinion?

**Joseph Rutledge** 25:22
People who love audio fiction, for instance, they don't just turn the show on in the car. I mean, of course they do sometimes, right? But what they're looking for is to be taken over by this thing. And I think audio with headphones on, dark room, you're going to bed, whatever it might be, has a greater ability to rip you out of yourself than any other form of art, audio drama forces you to just sort of like be with yourself, and let those things wash over you and try to understand what the creator was doing and try to get yourself in that same mind frame that the character is in. And I really don't think that any other type of art comes close to being able to do that.

**W. Keith Tims** 26:01
Yeah, I've said this a couple of times. For me, the audio drama experience is number one, it's very personal, right? It's intimate. Yes, the experience is right there in your ears. And it's usually just you by yourself. I mean, sometimes people will play it on speakers or whatever. But right, it's usually just you. And then the other thing is that it's incredibly imaginative because you only have the audio as your sense. And we're actually very visually oriented creatures. So what that forces us to do is that we fill in the gaps, we make things appear in our minds based on the cues we get from the audio. So it's not just personal in the sense of feeling intimate, it's personal in the sense that we create the image of the action along with the Creator. And I do think that's kind of magical.

**Joseph Rutledge** 26:46
And just little things like being able to like I talked about binaural audio a minute ago, that in and of itself, you can play a frequency at four Hertz in one ear and six in the other. And it can create a feeling of intense unease that is completely separate from what you're actually consciously hearing. And I think that's where like that that meeting between subconscious and consciousness is where the magic lies for audio drama.

**W. Keith Tims** 27:17
What do you struggle with?

**Joseph Rutledge** 27:19
Myself? I struggle with like, a lot of times, what's the point? Right, that's probably the main question I asked myself more than anything else is, what's the point? Why would anybody want to listen to what I have to say, I'm a 40 year old ex con like, and I'm just talking shit about capitalism for like, an hour at a time. (laughter) Who's who's listening to this? You know, I think that's probably my biggest struggle is realizing that maybe the uniqueness of Wireland resonates with people on a level that I don't quite understand. That's what is going to either make or break the show. You know?

**W. Keith Tims** 27:56
Yeah. I have a very similar struggle. I think, you know, that I wrote Book of Constellations probably had a sense of frustration about the way the world was going, really sort of looking at how things were spiraling out of control from capitalism, but also just in general, culturally, in our in our country. I also kind of go well, yeah, but who cares, right? What's the point?

**Joseph Rutledge** 28:18
Why does anybody want to hear YOU?

**W. Keith Tims** 28:20
Right. Exactly. And I guess I don't have an answer to that question. But I do kind of feel like I did something as opposed to nothing. And maybe that's enough.

**Joseph Rutledge** 28:30
I hope that it is because like, when I first started, I was like, when I first started, I was excited. You know, I'm doing this new thing. It's great. It's so exciting. And the more time went on, the more that excitement has to be replaced by will. And if it's not replaced by will, there's nothing left there. And I think that's what I've been struggling with since the beginning of the year. Finding that happy medium between who the hell wants to listen to this, and have you watched YouTube lately? (laughter) Like, have you seen the shit people are watching on YouTube? Like, so what I do to make myself feel better, I'll go find a very terrible piece of media with like, I don't know millions of views. Watch that and then go okay, well Wireland better than that, I'm fine. (laughter). That's about where it sticks.

**W. Keith Tims** 29:19
Now, this is bringing me to the question that I have to ask, which is, how do you measure success?

**Joseph Rutledge** 29:25
This might sound trite and very capitalistic from an anti capitalist like myself, but if I'm making enough money to continue making the show, to make it justifiable with my time and energy, just enough to live to keep making it, I guess that's what I would consider success.

**W. Keith Tims** 29:43
I mean, anti capitalists got to eat too, right?

**Joseph Rutledge** 29:45
Exactly right, dude, it sucks. It sucks. It's fine. It's funny. Oh, listen to a show like Behind the Bastards or like some more news. And it's like the here's all this hideous information about capitalism and "Now after these ads..." (laughter) They've got us in a position. And when I say they, I mean the overarching they right, they have us convinced that we need them. Charlie Kaufman giving his speech, I believe that was at the Oscars, and he was like they have made us think that we need them. When the reality is they need us. Without us there is no soul. They require us to be the soul of their machine that they keep going and going and going and exploiting. And if we all stopped, what would they be left with? If there's one thing I want people to see and people to understand is, the reason things are the way they are is because we allow them to be that way. And if we can all get together and say, Hey, we don't want it like this anymore. It changes. It has no choice but to change. And it'll be hard and they'll fight and they'll struggle and whatever. But if we all stick together, we can change the way things are.

**Archaeologist** 30:57
[Begin clip.] He cleared the notifications and clicked Confirm Pickup. He used the light from the screen to locate the small box on the desk. He grabbed it and ran through the door and into his car as quickly as possible. (car door slams) He plugged his phone in and when it vibrated to signal successful connection to vibrations did not stop. (distant rumble) A long low rumble shook the swampy summer night. In his rearview mirror, he saw the rush of a dust cloud headed toward the car and within a second (noise crescendoing) it engulfed him completely. [End clip.]

**W. Keith Tims** 31:26
Wireland Ranch is indeed all about the vibes. The show uses language and sound to evoke feelings of dread, uncertainty and wonder. Taking inspiration from counterculture icons like William S. Burroughs and Hunter S. Thompson Wirelend ranch wants you to feel as much as listen in the hopes that feeling will move you to change. (end theme music) You can listen to Wireland Ranch on most major podcast platforms, or see our show notes for more information. The First Episode Of is written and produced by W. Keith Tims. All the opinions expressed in this show belong to the people who expressed them and not necessarily to anyone else. The theme song is Mockingbird by David Mumford. This show is a production of Alien Ghost Robot Creative Media. If you want more information, want to sign up for our newsletter, or are an audio drama creator and would like to be on the show? Visit our website at thefirstepisodeof.com We're happy to be a part of the Audio Drama Lab, a Discord based resource for audio drama, development and networking. Check it out at audiodramalab.com. Keep telling stories. It's the only way we're gonna get out of this mess. Until next time!

**W. Keith Tims** 32:47
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