

# Grounded Futures Show

## Episode 20: Alchemizing Futures, with Shaunga Tagore

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### Transcript

#### SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Grief, thriving, people, writing, life, planet, ancestors, queer, Buffy, stories, relationships, astrology, trust, storytelling, quantum communicator, fictional characters, kin and kinning

#### SPEAKERS

Uilliam, carla, Shaunga

#### **magneto** 0:02

I know the kind of pain you're feeling Alex. I once had it myself. You some kind of doctor? No Alex, I am Magneto and I have come to offer you sanctuary

#### **Uilliam** 0:21

Welcome to season three of the Grounded Futures podcast. This is the show where we discuss topics that are important to our collective survival and thrival. We also dig into ways youth, and anyone really, can gain new skills to thrive amid current and ongoing disasters. The season's meta theme is all about trust, trust in ourselves, trust in our work and art, and trusting each other. We are your hosts Uilliam And carla, welcome to our show. We produce Grounded Futures on Squamish, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh lands, but our guests are from around the world. A big thank you to Zach Bergman for our show music and a big thank you to Robin Carrico for our show arts. And before we start today's show, here's a short jingle from one of our pals over at Channel Zero network.

#### **TIME TALKS PODCAST** 1:10

I'm going to make those pompous academics regret kicking out such a genius, deciding to build my lab and do my research. Have you ever stared at a 500 page book or wish you could just talk to the author about their ideas instead? If so, the Time Talks podcast, part of the Channel Zero network is for you, where we discuss history, politics, music and art with an anti-authoritarian and anarchists perspective. [unintelligible sound sample].

#### **Uilliam** 1:48

For today's show, we are joined by Shaunga Tagore. Shaunga is a queer, prismatic (non-binary) theatre artist, writer, speaker, cat mama & Buffy enthusiast. (And they weren't kidding when they called her, well, a witch.) Her witchy powers and ancestral roles include, but are not limited to: quantum communicator, creatrix, death doula, time keeper and grief worker. Shaunga is the founder of Otherworldly Giants, a creation company and storytelling school where we create and study stories that serve as altars for building a new world paradigm. Shaunga has spent the last decade working as an astrologer, cosmic coach, artist, and producer, primarily in queer, racialized, survivor, and disability justice oriented communities. Welcome to our show, Shaunga.

**carla** 2:37

Yay.

**Shaunga** 2:39

Thank you. Thank you for having me.

**carla** 2:41

Such a delight. Welcome to the Grounded Futures portal.

**carla** 2:46

Yeah, I've been really excited to talk with you for a while. I was. I really, really appreciated your astrology, it was probably my favourite. So just really nice to share space with you, thanks for being here. And Happy New Moon and solar eclipse. Yeah.

**Shaunga** 3:03

Oh it's the Eclipse alright!

**carla** 3:05

Yeah, right. Yeah, we could talk about that a bit if you want. And we'll definitely get into some more planet stuff, obviously. But let's talk first about Otherworldly Giants, the deviation channel and your new podcasts, which is amazing. We are really enjoying it. We both love the water soundscape. Thanks for that. That's beautiful. And you wrote in your show notes for the podcast.

**carla** 3:35

"I do not recommend you listen to this episode while driving. My work is energetic medicine. And this story is a cleanser. For many of you. This story will activate healing inspiration, creativity, grief and, or memory."

**carla** 3:49

Yeah, fact. So as a spellweaver and storyteller, tell us about this amazing podcast. What got you to doing it? What was the call? And, to quote you, "a podcast that weaves multiple genres into one mind-bending awe-inspiring world full of magic colours, animals and ancestors among us, including some Buffy."

**Shaunga** 4:14

Some or a lot. Yeah. Thank you. Oh my gosh. Okay, what, what brought me to this work? I mean, it's a really huge, it's a really huge question. I really, this so Otherworldly Giants is the

company and storytelling school and divination channel. So it's kind of a three part — it's a world with three main parts to it and the divination channel is the podcast element of it. And I launched it in spring, in March 2022. And it is really my life's work. You know, I'm 38 years old. So I guess I launched it when I was 37. And yeah, and I guess I can even say astrologically it was during a time of... what I was going through is this transit called the North Node return, the nodal return. And so the North Node is really about your life's calling. It's about your major sort of karmic, almost like your fate, and the big work that you're supposed to do in this lifetime.

**Shaunga 5:34**

And so it is like that life's calling, souls calling. And so when you go through that return point, it's really like, something is coming into accumulation and fruition around those themes. And so for me to come out, yeah, I almost want to say, like, my whole life, my whole life in many lifetimes, I think was, you know, kind of leading up to what this is for me right now. And yeah, I guess too I'll say, like, it's my alchemy. That's how I like to, you know, describe what this work is. And why, you know, the part that you mentioned from my description, where I talk about weaving multiple genres together, because it's really, it's not following any blueprint. You know, I can't say like, Oh, it's a Buffy rewatch podcast, like it's not, or it's like an astrology podcast, or it's a storytelling part. It's, it's all of those things. And none of those things. It's all kind of weaved together. And it's one of those things that it's hard to explain because there is no blueprint and the reason why there's no blueprint, it's because it's really my personal alchemy. It's the place in me that is so unique, that we all have right? That is like nobody else lives in the very particular intersections that you do.

**Shaunga 6:10**

And intersections, not even as we commonly think of it in, like, activist circles, right? It is those things like race, gender, class, etc. But it's also like, it's like Buffy and astrology, and past life healing, you know? It's like those things that are like, so unique to you. And so that's really where this podcast and this work landed for me. And it was the right timing for me to be able to channel something that I think is cohesive, even though you know, you have to be at a particular kind of, like, I like to say frequency, like you have to be kind of on a similar wavelength as me to be able to, like, you know, receive it and get it and enjoy it and that kind of thing. So it's not for everybody, but yeah, it really, yeah, it's my alchemy. And it's one of the great loves of my life. So that's where it's coming from.

**Shaunga 7:04**

It's amazing. Yeah, definitely. Alchemy. That's amazing.

**carla 8:06**

Yeah, I love that. I love the weaving together. It's so true. I'm really a fan of, well, weaving...

**Uilliam 8:18**

Yeah.

**carla 8:18**

...different types of storytelling. I love the way you answer that. Thank you.

**Uilliam 8:22**

Yeah, that was really good. Okay, moving on. Um, there is so much collective grief right now. It's actually feeling more like cosmic grief, and that feels connected to your work. You wrote that "I find great joy in my purpose as a grief worker and my ongoing study for grief in its many forms." That's powerful. And through this work, you provide a guide to working with what you call impossible grief, which is based on learning song and storytelling, and perhaps speak to why comedy is so important in that work for you. Can you tell us more about that?

**Shaunga** 9:00

Yes. Oh my god, like where, when did I say that?

**carla** 9:05

We do a deep dive.

**Shaunga** 9:11

So I am, like my, I guess I hadn't said this yet. But my really big focus in life is ancestral healing. And so that is, yeah, that's just like weaved through everything that I do. And it's my focus in my personal life and in my professional, creative life. It's everything. And yeah, I know that one of the big sort of things that I'm feeling, within my own body and also in the collective, is this sort of ancestral stored grief that has just been accumulating for generations, and in so many generations and so many like, you know, collective cycles. The collective and individuals in the collective did not have a way to release their grief, they didn't have the tools or the strategies or whatever was going on in their societies, they didn't have what they needed. And so there is, yeah, so much accumulation of that. And I believe that, you know, that that's one of the gifts and challenges and purposes (or purposes, I don't know) of the time of our generation, of this time that we're living in, and the coming generations, is to be releasing that stored grief.

**Shaunga** 10:37

So a lot of us are grief workers, and a lot of us come into that work not exactly knowing or, or having an empowered perspective around that because we weren't taught it we weren't raised with, like, "what is happening when I'm feeling so much grief?" So a lot of us, you know, just have this feeling of like, "I'm too much." "There's too much in me to hold." You know, so I think a lot of people are feeling the pain of that right. But I think you know, a lot of us are called to be here as grief workers and grief releasers and called in our lineages to release that stored grief. So, yeah, and all those things that you'd like. The comedy, the laughter, the transmutation of grief through laughter is just so big. Laughter and song are probably the two biggest things for me in terms of what really releases grief. Laughter, song, being in water, you know?

**Uilliam** 11:38

That was an amazing answer. Yeah, I really loved, I loved the last thing there about water. And, ya know, I always think that, you know, not having one straight emotion at all time, being able to accept all the other ones of happiness, while also dealing with grief. And, you know, calling a funeral not a funeral, but a celebration of life or something like that, right? Making it more about not so gloomy, but also not ignoring the fact that it's also pretty, pretty hard. Yeah, I mean, so like that. Yeah. Yeah, like that.

**carla** 12:13

Embracing it all.

**Shaunga** 12:14

Yeah, you know, on that: and I feel like, we often tie grief to emotions, like misery, despair. And it is those things sometimes. But that's not the core definition of grief to me, you know? The grief is just, grief is love. That's how I would define it, right? And so in there, yes, sadness and sometimes despair. But like you said. Yeah, also, joy, happiness, like all these kinds of celebration, there's so much in there.

**carla** 12:41

That's beautiful. Beautiful, beautiful work. I love that thing about like that you tied it into. Being said, "You're too much," as a kid. Oh, boy. Yeah, I relate to that. I remember once an aunt told me, like a great aunt, she said I turned around and said, "It's because I have 100 people in me, like I'm dealing with stuff!" And she said, "Yes, you're definitely processing a lot of ancestors."

**Shaunga** 13:06

Oh wow!

**Uilliam** 13:07

Oh my god that's amazing.

**carla** 13:08

But then I didn't know what to do with that. And it didn't get supported outside of that one relationship. So that I hear you.

**Shaunga** 13:14

That was your aunt you said?

**carla** 13:15

Yeah, like a great aunt. Yeah.

**Uilliam** 13:17

Great aunt, yup. Yeah.

**carla** 13:18

Wild, hey?

**Uilliam** 13:19

Yeah, exactly.

**Uilliam** 13:21

I mean, yeah, it's just like how, as soon, right when I was born, I was aware of death.

**carla** 13:26

Yeah.

**Uilliam** 13:26

And all that. Like, as soon as I was born, it was like, so many other kids around me were just like, right in the moment of all these kinds of things. But then I'd be like, crying about the fact that we're all gonna die one day.

**Shaunga** 13:39

Are you a Scorpio rising?

**Uilliam** 13:41

No, I'm an Aries rising.

**carla** 13:44

Pisces. Cancer is his moon.

**Uilliam** 13:47

Yeah. Pisces sun.

**Shaunga** 13:48

I wonder if Pluto is doing something in your birth chart.

**carla** 13:50

Right?

**Uilliam** 13:51

Probably, yeah.

**Shaunga** 13:52

Because Pluto is that, like, "I'm aware of death."

**carla** 13:56

Totally.

**Uilliam** 13:56

Yeah, I think — I was also — I think when I was born, I was just, like, my past life didn't full on Disappear.

**carla** 13:59

It was part of the transition.

**Uilliam** 14:05

Yeah, probably part of the transition is, I probably was born with still a, "Wait, I just died though!"

**Shaunga** 14:11

Yeah, yeah.

**carla** 14:15

Oh my gosh, we could nerd out forever.

**carla** 14:17

Um, well, I'm gonna get more into the cosmos. You created a theatre show project called the Otherworldly Giant Saga, which is a collection of stories where the planets and Zodiac signs come to life as humans and ancestors in a parallel universe. And it's so cool. Can you tell us more about it? And I have to ask: Do you have a favourite planet in our solar system?

**Shaunga** 14:45

Oh, that's interesting. That's kind of like asking a mother, like, "Do you have a favourite kid?"

**carla** 14:51

I love it! I totally have a favourite planet.

**Uilliam** 14:56

And a favourite kid.

**carla** 14:57

No, no. [laughs] Yeah.

**Shaunga** 15:03

Who's your favourite planet?

**carla** 15:05

Mars.

**Shaunga** 15:06

Oh, ok ok ok. Yeah. Um, yeah, no, I don't, I don't know. So, I mean, yeah, I guess for the listeners, I worked as an astrologer for the last 10 years, and through... And so I started reading people's birth charts. But as I went in, through, like, I went through a big ancestral and spiritual awakening in the middle of that career, like maybe 2015. And then I started realising that I actually had the ability to speak directly to the planet, you know, and, and this is, it's really, this is what, in my opinion, like decolonizing astrology is about. It's about recognizing that we're in, in relationship to the land, in direct relationship to the land, and the stars and the planets are part of the land that we live in, you know? So, yeah, I could almost say I'm like, Mercury is one of my, like, very identified with Mercury as like a Gemini Stellium. I'm very identified with Venus because I have, like, a Venus conjunction sun, which means like, Venus is like, very tied into my identity. Neptune is like a very strong planet in my birth chart. But the thing is, like, I don't have a favourite because, and this sort of leads into the plays that I'm writing. Because I'm writing stories and plays about the planets, I feel like when you're a writer, you have to love every single character that you're writing in order to do them justice. Or maybe it's the other way around, like you fall in love with a character and you want to express them, you want to birth them, you want to write them.

**Shaunga** 17:01

And that's kind of what it is for me. Like there's... Yeah, I just love them all for who they are, you know. But yeah, this saga started because I had been doing these, you know, this work as an astrologer. And also at the same time, for the last decade, I've been working as a performance artist, you know, in theatre, dance, burlesque. And then at some point in, I think it was 2018, I just got this download of like, "Oh, the next play that I want to write is a musical

starring the outer planets." And then, and I knew that the title was Otherworldly Giants. And so then I started writing the musical. But then when I started doing that, then I was like, "Oh no, this is much bigger than just one musical." Otherworldly Giants then became this whole company. Like I said, with three, there's like a creation company, and a storytelling school and a podcast. And there's multiple stories about every planet. And eventually, they'll all lead into the musical.

**Shaunga** 18:09

So I think once I get to the musical, which might not be, I don't know, like 5-10 years from now, then I'll have really finished something that my spirit needs to do in this lifetime, through this container. And so I have like five or six plays in my head. All in this container, right now. So you know, that's just, that's, that's one of my, let's say, challenges of like, who I am as a creator, is like, I get so much information. And my body it, like, moves much, much slower. So that's the balance that I have to try and figure out is like, when the stories are coming out and how. So, you know.

**Uilliam** 18:53

I totally understand that my brain's never in coordination with my body. Sounds so cool, though. I'm excited to see where your work goes.

**carla** 19:05

Yeah.

**Uilliam** 19:06

I'm excited.

**carla** 19:07

Yeah, I love it. I agree with you that it is the part of decolonizing astrology, a lot. I'm so excited you do the work you do. This is, I dropped out of high school and studied astrology circa 1983-84. I never became an astrologer. I'm, I'm not... It's not that I'm critical of other astrologers. I just, I'm always like, that's not quite right. But when I connected, when I encountered your work through Hari Alluri I was just like: "There it is!" So I miss, I miss that. Yeah, I mean, and I appreciate that you're moving, doing other stuff and we get to get it through your podcasts and other creative work. But I do miss your astrology. I'm just gonna say.

**Shaunga** 19:47

I know.

**carla** 19:48

I'm sure I'm not the only one who gives you that feedback.

**Uilliam** 19:52

Yeah, speaking of astrology, we and probably some of the viewers would like to know what is Mercury retrograde? And why are so many people scared of it?

**Shaunga** 20:02

Oh, you're gonna get a different answer from me.



**carla** 20:07

Yes, yes!

**Uilliam** 20:08

Perfect.

**Shaunga** 20:10

So Mercury Retrograde is... So first of all, retrograde is, it means backward movement, or inward movement. And so what actually is happening in the sky, you know, is that the planets speed up and they slow down, speed up and they slow down. And so when a planet slows down, from our perspective, it looks like they're moving backwards. And so, that's when we say, a planet is in retrograde motion. And what that means is the qualities and energies associated with that project, uh that planet, then start to move inward. So, so what we say the energy is blocked, it's not moving forward, there's a lot of, and so Mercury is the planet of communication, technology, like phones, and, you know, your laptop, and it's short term travel, like, you know, the the subway, the buses, in your, in your city, that kind of thing. So that's why, you know, your phones will break down. Transit is always delayed, you never get anywhere at any time, anywhere on time. And you have a lot of, I think this is why people really get upset with Mercury Retrograde, is the relationship, kind of, kerfuffles that happened because nobody is... When you try and communicate with one another, you're actually just having a conversation in your own brain. And it's hard to actually listen to each other, because your thing is going inward, your communication energy is going inward.

**Shaunga** 21:53

So it actually is a really good time to reflect and revisit things and slow down. And actually, people get really upset when they can't get to places on time or when, you know, the thing is delayed, because we have such, this like instant gratification. this thing with instant gratification, right? That we need, we need our tech to work, like, right away. And it's like, oh my god, a song is gonna take like 20 seconds to download and we're just like, oh my god, like freaking out about it. Right? So, and why I was like, "Okay, you're gonna get my answer." Is because this planet goes retrograde three times a year for about three weeks at a time. So that's a very large portion of the year. And when you look at the energy, the ancestral energetics carried in this planet, we're talking about the communicators and the storytellers, that's who Mercury is. And there's this, the channels, you know, and people who bring gifts and labour into their relationships of communication, and doing that kind of, you know, kind of work. The connectors, right? And so when, it's like, what happens when we need to take a break? What happens when we slow down? We get so much pushback in this.

**Shaunga** 23:23

I'm passionate about this because of a very mercurial person, right? And I know what it's been like, you know, as a storyteller, when, or a communicator, when I'm like, "Hey, I can't actually have this conversation with you right now. I need maybe some time to myself." And the amount of like, oh, what happens like the amount of pushback, the amount of resistance, the amount of anger, sometimes. The same way that we get angry when our phone isn't working properly, and we, you know, start losing our, you know, excuse my French. You know what I mean? So, yeah, it's, that's, that's, it's a big, it's a big and important question. I

think in terms of like, why do people get so upset about the fact that the planet of communication needs to take a break? Sometimes. Regularly.

**Uilliam** 24:21

That was a really good answer. Yeah. No, I love that. Having to take a break? Yep, that's real.

**carla** 24:27

Yeah, like our neuro-different family with our nonverbal days.

**carla** 24:30

Yeah, nonverbal days. Yup.

**carla** 24:31

And um, I'm a Virgo with, I have five planets in Virgo. I really relate to Mercury, too. And I'm, I always... Yeah, I'm obsessed with why people get so upset.

**Uilliam** 24:42

Why, yeah.

**carla** 24:43

I'm like, take a break.

**carla** 24:44

Yeah, I loved your answer.

**Uilliam** 24:46

That was a really good answer.

**carla** 24:48

More Shaunga astrology please! Just putting that out there.

**Uilliam** 24:53

Yeah.

**carla** 24:55

I'm going to, I'm going back to something you wrote in the, on the Timeline. That was maybe a few years ago. [How Do the Ancestors Speak to You?](#)

**Shaunga** 25:05

Oh, yes, I know that.

**carla** 25:05

Yeah. Which is a fabulous piece. Thank you so much. I especially loved when you said, "I trust that a disruption in an individual relationship does not disrupt my inherent belonging in collectivity. I am more available to experience life as delightful, full of surprise, wonder and mystery."

**carla** 25:25

Beautiful. Yeah, I would love to hear more about that. And, what is the quantum communicator? Connected. This is a few questions. Sorry. Yeah, I'm just kind of curious about that. And, and you also use this term core creative, like your core creative collaborators. And so I think that it's all connected to ancestors. But I'd like to hear more.

**Shaunga** 25:50

Interesting. It's so funny, when you read me back work that I written, that I wrote months ago, I was like, "Oh, interesting. Who said that?"

**Uilliam** 26:00

I've been there before.

**Shaunga** 26:04

Okay, quantum communicator. I'm glad you asked that, because that's a term that I came up with or remembered just this past year. And I guess, you know, I'm always trying to find ways to describe my gifts, my spiritual gifts, and who I am and what I do. And like, another word for quantum communicator could be like Channeler, or Oracle. And so it's basically what I, what I describe, or how I describe a quantum communicator, or my abilities in that realm, is that I have the ability to communicate with anything and everything that has an essence in the universe. And so that is one of my gifts that I come here with. That's why I can speak to planets. That's why I can speak to ancestors who are, you know, on the other side. I can speak to animals. And when I say speak, I mean, I can listen, I can hear them, and then I can translate their messages, you know? So, I can talk to rocks, and they don't speak in English, but I, they'll get, I can hear the translation in English. You know what I mean? So yeah, I've kind of went back and forth for many years in terms of how do I describe what I do that feels like it really encompasses what it is for me. And so I, then this year, I was like, oh, quantum communicator, I like that. Because the quantum sort of, you know, reflects our quantum universe. And that's, yeah, that's what that is. There was... Oh, so. Okay, when you say, "I have this question about the core creative collaborators." Do you remember what context I said that?

**carla** 27:50

It was like, in regards to writing. I think in storytelling. And, and it's like, it's not just there's like a, you know, like, there's no such thing as the solo artists, because we're collaborating, even with parts of ourselves. But I took it, I was thinking it was more about the ancestors, but maybe I was off, but...

**Shaunga** 28:10

No.

**carla** 28:11

Okay, yeah.

**Shaunga** 28:12

Yeah. You know what, it's interesting, because I think that, I think when I wrote that, on my website, I was talking about calling in the people who I'll, who I want to work with most closely through my work with Otherworldly Giants. So those kinds of creative collaborators,

you know? And yeah, whether it's like a musician or composer or producer, that kind of thing. But you're right, because the most important part of my artistic, creative collaborations are my ancestors who I create with. And this has been really it's been a, you know, I've been working with ancestors for so long, but you know, I'm a colonised being like everyone else. And so I have to constantly like remember, relearn, go deeper, remember that, like, "Oh, my ancestors are with me, and I create with them first." You know, my, and even, like, I create relationship with my ancestors first, you know, and so it's like, well, if I want to good partnership, you know, I have to be able to call in the ancestors that I want to be in close partnership with, and then you know, everything else sort of works out from there.

**Shaunga 29:35**

So, you know, when I started releasing the podcast, which was in September, I really got on a roll in terms of like, oh, yeah, like this writing circle I have of ancestors that show up for me and create with me when I'm creating these episodes. It's so like, I feel them on a deeper level that I have before. I feel how nourishing it is and how generative it is, I feel their personalities. And so that's been like another level of my healing journey. And it makes the writing process so enjoyable. And I think that's important because I think as writers, we're always talking about how lonely it is. And it is a very solitary thing that sometimes you just, you know, you can have writing buddies or whatever, but sometimes you need to just like, it's you and the pen and paper or the laptop. But when I sit down, and I'm like, I can feel energetically that I just like, push everything else away, like all the other, even all the other ancestors who I normally would hang out with, and it's just like, just me and my writing team. And you know, then we write together and it's yeah, it's a beautiful experience.

**carla 30:52**

Wow, that's incredible. Thank you for unpacking that for us a bit and opening it up.

**Uilliam 30:56**

Yeah, definitely.

**carla 30:58**

Yeah, I love it. Yeah. Makes me feel good. I love pushing against any ideas of individualism or something. Like, yeah. Beautiful.

**Uilliam 31:09**

Yeah, yeah, definitely really connect with that stuff.

**carla 31:11**

Do you include future ancestors in your framework? Like when you, when you think of ancestors. Are you thinking across all time?

**Shaunga 31:19**

Yeah. Yeah, no, totally. And, and I mostly in terms of, there's a lot of ancient ancestors who I connect with who aren't me, although you can make an argument that, you know, everyone we connect with is some version of us, right? But when it comes to the future ancestors, I don't actually connect with a lot of ancestors, at least not consciously, except for myself. I connect with my future self a lot, you know? And so, I believe she writes with me, you know, and she helps me channel. And I'm actually helping right now, my past self channel. You

know, so it's like, when I think about the things that I was writing in 2016. I'm like, when I think about 2016 now, I'm also sending that energy back to myself at that age, right. And so, yeah, I'm always really mindful of the ways that I am supporting myself, in many, from many different dimensions and angles. Yeah, there's a practice that I started this year of writing letters to myself at age, like, 41, or 42, which is kind of cool. I started that I guess at age 37. So it's kinda... Yeah, me five years into the future. Because I feel like there's something, there's something about that five year mark, where I'm like, "You've gone through something that I'm gonna take a few years to go through, and you're at a place of like, I got you I get it." You know? I can. I can, I can hold you. I can send you what you need. Like I have that perspective. Yeah, and sometimes I connect with, like, my old, old woman self, and that's really cool too.

**Uilliam 33:16**

No, that's amazing. Yep. Stay connected to all those ancestors. And future and past and all. That's all connected. I really liked that.

**carla 33:27**

That's a beautiful practice. Thanks for sharing it with us.

**Uilliam 33:30**

Yeah, definitely. Before we move on to the usual questions we ask everyone, I wanted to ask how did you come across Buffy and what has it meant to you? I remember it being big when I was a kid and I never fully, I never got brutally into it. Like, not brutally. I just, I never got into it the way some of my friends did.

**carla 33:54**

Or your brother.

**Uilliam 33:54**

Or my brother, yeah. My brother was really into it when he was younger and has given me the whole rants about the entire series and the sub series and all the other things. Yeah, as I was just curious on how that started, and.

**Shaunga 34:08**

Yeah, okay. Yeah, this is actually my answer to your third question about recommendations. But yeah, no, Buffy. It's interesting, because my next episode on my podcast, that I'm writing right now, it talks about my Buffy origin story. So actually, it answers your question in like 40 minutes or something, which I won't do right now. But no, Buffy. I was a little younger than Buffy when it aired. But other than that, I was kind of like, I watched it live and I was sort of growing up with her and it raised me and I was a kid like, I watched a lot of TV. And you know, I'm going to talk. This is one of the things I'm really passionate about. That I'm going to talk about more and more are, you know, through Otherworldly Giants, is the concept, and reality for me, that the characters, fictional characters, are also our ancestors.

**Shaunga 35:10**

They're like, they're real, as real, as much as you believe in ancestors or spirit beings or whatever, fictional characters are real like that, too. And they are friends, you know, they're, they are our friends. And I think that it's so important to recognize that, especially for kids

who grew up, like lonely or didn't have access to like, you know, a lot of, a social life, or, you know, grew up in social circumstances where they weren't valued or were bullied or whatever, that kind of stuff. So often, like, the fictional characters, like they show up for us, and they, they are our friends, you know, and they mean a lot to us. And I think, yeah, that's important, because there's this kind of what's it called, is this conception that, like, you're kind of a loser, you know, like, Oh, you don't have friends, you're just like sitting around, like watching TV, or reading books, or playing video games, or whatever. But it's like, well, these are relationships too, and they matter.

**Shaunga 36:09**

And so that's, you know, that sort of, I recognize now that that's what Buffy was for me. And so I watched it when it was airing. And then I kept watching the reruns. And at this point in my life, I realised that, like, I have a major ancestral calling to do work with Buffy in terms of, you know, there's been so many Buffy podcasts over the last few years. And so I started listening to them. But then when I was listening to them, I started getting like these huge downloads about, you know, what it was, I was like, studying and looking at this text in a way that I hadn't before. When I was just watching it, I was seeing themes that are, like, so relevant to our time, like ancestral healing. I'm like, Buffy, is a text about ancestral healing. It's about healing your lineage. You know, it's about coming into your magic and, and your power and the, you know, what happens when you misuse your power. And you know, it's about abolition to me, even if it has a lot of problems in terms of race, and racism.

**Shaunga 37:19**

But even through looking at it, looking at the problems, I am, like, I'm learning so much. And that's why a big part of season one on my podcast is about looking at Buffy and studying this text from the perspective that I have now. And making that decision to lean so hard into something that for so long was just like, oh my god, I'm so obsessed with Buffy. And it's like this weird thing that Shaunga does. But I'm now like, I'm making it a part of my business and making it a part of my life's work. I'm like, literally banking, banking on this, you know, in terms of financial, whatever. And my ancestors have guided me to do that. And it's one of those moments where, you know when I was talking about our alchemy at the beginning. We have to take risks to be our alchemy and show our alchemy in the places that we are called to be and do it and it's always gonna feel scary because it feels like who's gonna want me like this? Right? Whether it's you're doing a podcast or in your relationships, right? Who cares about this the way that I do? But I don't know. I just have a Slayers calling, I guess. So I'm just leaning in. I'm at the beginning of that journey, but I trust it.

**Uilliam 38:44**

Yeah, that was amazing. That made me so happy. I'm so into fiction and stuff and whatnot. Um, that made me think about how, you know, the connecting to fictional characters and how there's some, you know, I've been quite recently a bit obsessed with stuff like Norse mythology, mythologies and stuff. And some of those mythologies like a lot of those characters, reading books and stuff, they're pretty much fictional characters, but they were also real at the time as well. They were real Gods. Real, you know, elves and all these kinds of things to people back then but they were also fiction, and also these kind of things. And I just like, it made me think about how so many religions, and all those kinds of things, have the mixture of realism and fiction and it's connected and humans have been storytelling

since the very beginning. It's just been our thing connecting to these, you know, the hero's journey that's a fictional character but it's really, really affected so many people in life.

**Shaunga** 39:50

Yeah.

**carla** 39:51

I love, like in the gen, I feel like it was your gen that came up with the "Kinning".

**Uilliam** 39:56

Oh, kinning a character.

**carla** 39:57

Do you know about this?

**Shaunga** 39:59

You kin a character?

**Uilliam** 40:01

My generation is really big on this. So if there's a fictional character — it can, you can also kin real people, which is fact-kinning, it's called factkin. So you can kin an actor, you can kin a whatever. But you can also kin characters. And kinning — because you know, kinship, right? — it's literally if there's a character, you don't have to be exactly like them but sometimes you can, but if you're like, really, really relating to this character, fictional character, and you have a full connection to them, then you say you kin them. And it means just that, then there's so many people online that will see, they'll start seeing half your personality also coming from — it's like, kinning a fictional character brings that character to life through you, in a way, it's like now you're that fictional character.

**Shaunga** 40:43

Oh, that's so cool.

**Uilliam** 40:44

Yeah.

**Shaunga** 40:45

That's so cool. That's totally — because I wrote about Cristina Yang from Grey's Anatomy in my recent thing, and I kept calling her my person. Which I think that that's—

**Uilliam** 40:53

It's kinning. Yeah.

**carla** 40:54

You're kinning.

**Uilliam** 40:55

You're kinning that character. Yeah, exactly. No, I have many, many kins. I'm also very obsessed with anime. So there's a lot in that world.

**carla** 41:03

Yeah, it's a fun one. Yeah. Love that. Thanks for talking more about Buffy with us. Yeah, for our guests, or, for listeners who are guests into the portal. Yeah, you... I could, do you want me to do this one? We'll flip.

**Uilliam** 41:20

Yeah, sure. 'Cause I just asked, I asked... We've, uh, we were supposed to do the next one.

**carla** 41:23

We went off script 'cause we were so curious about Buffy.

**Uilliam** 41:27

I wrote my own thing just now.

**carla** 41:29

I also want to say I have listened to a few of the podcasts. You don't have to be up on Buffy to get the whole beauty of this podcast, this is really, really important.

**Shaunga** 41:40

I agree with that. Yeah, yes.

**carla** 41:41

Yeah. I'm a Trekkie. And a long term like, actually went to the conventions back in the old days.

**Shaunga** 41:48

Oh nice!

**carla** 41:49

And I don't... Yeah, it winds up in my stories, too. And I just start—

**Uilliam** 41:54

Star Trek and X Men.

**carla** 41:55

Yeah, I just wrote a whole essay with my other son about Magneto as a potential site for youth liberation and youth autonomy.

**carla** 42:04

You wrote Magneto like it's a group of people.

**carla** 42:07

Yeah, like Magneto is like the ultimate symbol. But anyway, so I relate. But you don't have to have read any of it or watched any of it. So I appreciate that about your work. Yeah, so we're just going to pivot now a little bit to our, kind of, the themes of the show. And one of them is this idea of thriving amid, and through, disasters and hard times, or we call it thrivistance.



And we're curious to hear some of the ways you cultivate thriving in your everyday or thriving.

**Shaunga 42:40**

Thriving. Yeah, you know, like, that question for me is one of those things where I'm like, my goal — I don't know if goal is really the right word — but my desire is, for everything in my life to be rooted in thriving or the road, the timeline of thriving, you know. And I think that, you know, that that's, you can maybe describe the crux of my spiritual practice like that, it's, if I'm doing something, or making a choice, even if it's a small one that isn't on that road, that timeline of thriving, I'm not being me, you know? I'm not being me. And so that's always my way of—

**Shaunga 43:35**

You know, in spiritual communities, we talk about this concept of alignment, and it's like, when do you feel aligned? And when do you click into the alignment? That's about thriving, you know, and so the alignment is like, my spirit feels good, my soul my body, like, whatever my circumstances are. And I think, you know, your contextualization around, like disasters and big changes and that kind of thing. I think, yeah, it's even, it's about how do we find empowerment when we are not in control of so much around us? Like, how do we find thriving in the midst of grief, in the midst of change? Like, those are the big questions, I think of our generation and of our time, and even more important, too, to route and anchor into the desire, the pursuit, the choice of always wanting to find that timeline, no matter where you are. And that's me and that's not everyone, you know? And I end up having like, big relationship clashes with people who maybe I love and want to be with and resonate in some ways, but if we're not on that, that if we don't, if we don't share that desire, then our relationship is not going to work out, it's only going to go so far, you know? And I guess, you know, I was thinking about this question before, you know, I signed on. And I think because I have, it's much like I don't have an answer of what are some ways I try to thrive because like I said, I'm trying to do it all the time.

**Shaunga 45:24**

But I do want to say that one of the biggest challenges I've had in choosing my thriving is the loss that comes with that. And I think maybe that's something that, I mean, I didn't realise it, comes with that. And I think a lot of people maybe don't realise it, because we think of like, "I'm gonna thrive, I'm gonna live my best life and everything's gonna be great!" It's gonna come with loss, in my experience, especially, you know, if you're really, as, you know, you want it in your life as ferociously as I do. Because it comes with so much deconditioning. And that means that relationships that you forged when you were in a place of maybe thriving a little less, and then you found more thriving, those relationships are going to fall apart, or they're gonna move on. And there's a lot of loss and there's a lot of— Yeah, there's loss that comes with that. And so I think that, you know, I was just like—

**Shaunga 46:23**

That's maybe what I'm most proud of, in terms of how I choose my thriving is that I've kept choosing it even when it was really, really difficult. There was something that I was like, "There's something else on the other side of the loss and the pain and the grief and the anger that comes with choosing this path." And I've stayed committed to it through some of the most difficult parts of my journey with it, I think. I were a betting man, I would say that my

most difficult parts of choosing the thriving journey are behind me, knock on wood. There's gonna be different challenges ahead of me, but I made it through that. And I'm, yeah, proud of myself for that.

**Uilliam** 47:10

Yeah, that was amazing. I totally relate to that.

**carla** 47:14

Yeah.

**Uilliam** 47:15

I'm very happy.

**carla** 47:17

I'm actually quite emotional because— Thank you. Thriving is obviously something... I'm working on a collaborative book right now called Thrivtopia.

**Uilliam** 47:30

It's a big thing for you.

**carla** 47:31

Yeah, I've just— It is the intersection where a lot of my loss is, so thank you for opening that up. You're such a healer. You're our guest, and you're healing everybody.

**Uilliam** 47:31

Yeah.

**carla** 47:37

Thank you. Beautiful. The timeline of thriving.

**Uilliam** 47:51

Yeah. That's a really good... yeah. Connecting to that as well.

**carla** 47:58

I'm like, mmm.

**Uilliam** 48:02

Um, we are also curious to hear how trust animates your life: work, creative process, whether ancestors or with the planets, with your cat, the people in your life—

**carla** 48:16

Stories.

**Uilliam** 48:17

—stories, your work?

**Shaunga** 48:18

Yeah. Oh, my God, there's a lot of ways that I can answer that question. Yeah, I won't. Yeah. Okay. Um, I will say this that, because this was just sort of on my mind, maybe today, and yesterday, I sort of had this like, Aha moment. For me trust— Okay, if I'm in the wrong relationship, or situation, that's a recipe for how trust erodes the trust I have for myself and the trust I have in other people. And when I say other people, I mean, like, "I hate people like that." That's where I'll go, you know. And so a lot of times, what I have to do is recognize, oh, wait a second. It's not that everything in the world sucks. And I can't trust myself. It's just like, I'm not in the right place. This isn't the right environment. For me, this isn't the right like community space, or this isn't the right relationship. And when I'm actually in a good quote, unquote, "relationship", but a relationship where we recognize each other, we see each other we're on the same level, just you know, level of maturity or level of whatever it is. There's an ease there, where, yes, there are still learning curves of trust, but I don't get all angsty about it the way that I do when I'm in the wrong relationship or situation — wrong for me, not wrong inherently, right? But, you know, so there's that piece of it.

**Shaunga 50:02**

And then the other piece of it is like, I realised that there is a part of me that was not fully believing that what I want for my life or relationships or work or whatever it is not believing that what I want is actually possible. There's part of me that knows what I want, but then is like, "Oh, but I could never have that." Or it doesn't exist. And if it exists, I don't have access to it. Then because I have that subconscious narrative going on in my mind, I end up choosing things that I don't actually want, because I'm like, "Well, then I'll just go with this instead." And then the trust breaks down, right? And so I think right now, the most important thing I'm working on, learning how to trust better, is to trust that thing, that I don't have yet that I know that I want, to trust that I can have it and it's already mine and, and it does exist and it's not out of my grasp and if I don't have it in my life right now to be patient and let it come in and not fill its space with something else.

**Uilliam 51:15**

I really loved the first part there. I've just, because I know so many times, it's like, "learn to trust yourself and just then you'll learn how to trust all these people in your life (that are making your life really hard)". And I'm like, "But I'm trusting myself that I need to not be in these relationships actually." Because for real, like anytime I get into a friendship, relationship of any kind where there is actual trust you know, it's the same thing is learn to love yourself before letting others love you, it's like, that's bullshit.

**carla 51:47**

Just smash all the binaries.

**Uilliam 51:48**

Smash all the— because it's like, no, you're actually, what's going to happen is you're going to find the right people who will love you and you'll learn to love yourself through that process. And that's your own personal thing. Why are you caring so much about other people's effect on that whole thing you have to work on? And yeah, just being able to, like, not, yeah, being able to leave relationships that people are like, "You just learn to trust each other." Like, but it's not working! Yeah, I really liked that.

**carla 52:18**

Yeah. Thank you for that. Yeah. So this is this part where we asked for recommendations. And we could, I mean, we asked, we gave you these three questions ahead of time. So if you have recommendations ready to share with us, that'd be great. And also, like, connected to the work you do, and like even astrology, or, yeah, we have a lot of young, younger, like teens who listen.

**Shaunga 52:49**

Yeah.

**Uilliam 52:50**

Uli's people.

**Shaunga 52:53**

Well, yeah, my answer was going to be Buffy. But we already talked about that.

**Shaunga 52:57**

I recommend, yeah, if you haven't watched the series, I recommend going in and you have my podcast although I do give spoilers so you might want to, if you care about spoilers, you might want to watch the series before you listen to my podcast. But you know, another show that I really love is She-Ra: Princess of Power. And that's a really fun show because I really love the 80s version, so I really, like when I was a kid I watched He-Man and She-Ra from way back then. And then they did a reboot of it in 2018 or something and there's like five seasons, but they're short seasons, and it's an animated series. And it's so cool the way that, there's like a diverse— Have you, have you both watched this or no?

**Uilliam 53:59**

I've heard of it. I remember when it blew up and I was online when it blew up and I know a lot of spoilers and a lot about the characters but I never myself watched it.

**carla 54:07**

I watched the 80s ones with the younger people. Yeah.

**Shaunga 54:11**

Yeah, this one what I love so much about it is so there's a diversity, there's a really big diversity of how the characters are, like, drawn and, and their identities. There's like, you know, there's people of color, there's like, queer and trans people. Yeah, but they live kind of in an alternate universe, and so they don't actually use that kind of language. And I just, I thought it was such a beautiful example of how you centre, like, a queer aesthetic, or not, aesthetic isn't even the right word, you centre queer experience and storytelling, you centre multiracial storytelling, but you don't call it out in a way where you're like, this is like, we're queer. And like, there's not anything wrong with that. But it's a way of, you know, because I think we have like conversations about like, just make the queer people normal, and it doesn't... Whatever like that, we don't need to make queer people like they're straight.

**Shaunga 55:28**

And so I think a lot of storytellers, right queer people into their storytelling, but then they just kind of act like straight people, or they don't get the culture of it. But She-Ra I feel like is an example where you make it the centre, but you don't, but you make it normal at the same

time. So you make that kind of centre the normal. And that is like, really cool. And besides that, I just, like, the storytelling and the character work is incredible. Like, I was, especially when we get to season four and five, I was blown away by the level of what, you know, what they're actually saying with the story about, like, collective healing, and honestly, like, decolonization. And, you know, like, reclaiming relationships with the land and magic. It's like, literally all the things that I want to be writing about. And it was like, all here, and it's one of my kin. What do you call it? It's my kin story.

**Uilliam** 56:30

Yeah.

**carla** 56:32

That's awesome.

**Uilliam** 56:33

That's amazing. Yeah, no, that makes me think, because I'm really into anime and manga, when you were talking about the queer thing, and how there is some animanga stories, that's a mixture of anime and manga, that are very like, they're, like, gay centred, it's like, the characters are saying they're gay and they are in a gay relationship and it's very gay, and a lot of times, those ones are really hard for me to watch. Those are the ones that end up not being written the best. Well, then there's like other ones — some of them I haven't seen, but I know — you know, ones like Sailor Moon, or, my brothers seen a lot of these ones as well, I forget some of the names. But a lot of those ones they're not— The characters aren't talking about that they're queer, or that they're dating or that they're anything like that.

**Uilliam** 57:24

It's just that it is a very, it's as a concept, it's a very queer series, which I actually like, more in that, like, it's important to talk about actual gay relationships and showcase them and stuff like that, like it's actually talked about it, definitely, but as someone who is queer and lives a queer life, I like being able to not see it just played off as, you know, the quick story and it actually be just about emotion and feel. And you know, that in Sailor Moon, like, two of the girl characters are definitely in love with each other, they say that they're in love with each other, but it's never, they're never like, we're gay. We are gay. We are gay and dating and gay. It's just like, beautiful moments of them staring at each other in the eyes and having those beautiful romantic moments but it's never like, straightforward, specified, and I just I've always loved that.

**Shaunga** 58:20

Like, it doesn't have to be like, "This is the gay storyline, and it's erratic and angsty."

**Uilliam** 58:27

So many of the gay-gay, like actual gay stories that I watch are so angsty, there's always like suicide stories, or depression or death. There's always death involved in the gay-gay stories, well, then just the queer ones end up being, even if there is death, it's like, it's beautiful, and it's really beautiful and amazing, you know? And then like, yeah, I'm like, I don't want to actually see real life when I go to watch fiction. I'm not in the mood to watch my actual experiences as a gay person.

**carla** 58:57

Yeah, that's so true.

**Uilliam** 58:59

Yeah.

**carla** 58:59

Yeah. Well, thank you so much. Is there anything we missed? Or that you would like to say?

**Shaunga** 59:07

No, I mean, like thank you for doing this work. And it's amazing, like, I love your commitment to joy and thriving and I love, you know, just what you said off mic you know about the purpose behind this podcast is to, like, disrupt who is allowed to have a voice, you know? Yeah, I love that. So just yeah, thank you for reaching out.

**Uilliam** 59:32

And thank you so much for being here.

**carla** 59:36

Yeah, I love connecting with you. And you also, just for people who go to our website, Shaungo wrote for the book we put together [Radiant Voices](#), an incredible piece. And they also did a, we call it an audio painting from, I think maybe 10 stories out of the book, and you can go listen to it on our website. Your telling of your pieces was so beautiful. Oh my gosh, thank you for that. And—

**Uilliam** 1:00:04

Before we end...

**carla** 1:00:05

Right! This is important.

**Uilliam** 1:00:06

Before we end, how can our listeners find you?

**carla** 1:00:09

And your podcast!

**Uilliam** 1:00:10

And your podcast?

**Shaunga** 1:00:10

Yes. Yeah, my website ShaungaTagore.com If you click under the divination channel link you'll see the podcast there. And so I have, like, a whole episode breakdown. This is how my creative brain works. Like I have the whole one year of episodes planned in terms of like, the themes and the titles. I don't know what's going in the titles, but I know the titles. And so, it's all there on the website.

**Uilliam** 1:00:44

Right.

**Shaunga** 1:00:44

So yeah, you can check it out and @OtherworldlyGiants on Instagram. Yeah, I'm just figuring out my social media stuff. Right now, honestly, but I'm there and I go there when there's something to post.

**carla** 1:01:00

Yeah, and I really, we can't recommend the podcast enough and all your writings, everybody. Go join it and let us know what you think about the show. Yeah, thank you so much.

**Uilliam** 1:01:13

Thanks for listening to our show. Grounded Futures is media production and mentorship collaborative. And this podcast is produced by carla bergman, Uilliam Joy, Jamie-Leigh Gonzalez and Melissa Sharp. And our sound tech is by Chris Bergman.

**carla** 1:01:28

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