



# Library podcast

## John Freeman and Natalie Diaz

[00:00:05] Welcome to The Seattle Public Library's podcasts of author readings and library events. Library podcasts are brought to you by The Seattle Public Library and Foundation. To learn more about our programs and podcasts, visit our web site at [www.spl.org](http://www.spl.org). To learn how you can help the library foundation support The Seattle Public Library go to [foundation.spl.org](http://foundation.spl.org)

[00:00:35] That evening. Hi everybody. Welcome to tonight's program with Natalie Diaz and John Freeman. Thanks so much for being here tonight. I'm Stesha Brandon. I'm the Literature and Humanities Program Manager here at The Seattle Public Library and I want to begin tonight's program by acknowledging that we are on Duwamish land. We would like to thank our author series sponsor Garry Kunis and the Seattle Times for a generous promotional support of library programs. Thank you as well to our program partners. Copper Canyon Press an elite Paper Company. Finally we are grateful to The Seattle Public Library Foundation to library foundation donors here with us tonight. Thank you very much for your support. Now I'm delighted to welcome Rick Simonson from Elliott Bay Book Company who will introduce tonight's program.

[00:01:20] Thank you Stesha and thank you very much for being here tonight. You're about to see and hear two extraordinary poets. And I'll start by calling them poets. But both as both Natalie Diaz and John Freeman are here with stellar collections. Natalie's book of poems both the beach each published by Copper Canyon Press Natalie's published five years ago entitled When my brother was an asthmatic and John's published this fall entitled maps. So each is here for that reason but there you'll also hear I think as the night goes along that they are also in other forms in other ways as citizens of a larger world both in the literary sense and in the human sense in terms of the work they do the way they are the world and and a lot of the concerns they share and express. And one of the other striking things because they have so much in common is tonight's the first night that John Freeman and Natalie have met so from basketball which is a deep and abiding passion for both of them to Palestine to other things they have many many things in common as interest. So that will probably come out in various ways. Natalie her first I reading in fact was in a gym because she among other things has an extraordinary basketball background but she sure Alexi and Sean Ray. I hope you get Sean's other name and just Walters didn't evening in a gym in which poetry and basketball we're all engaged in but she's been here other times since and she has been working as I think we'll get to hear tonight on a new collection of poems along with other kinds of writing that she's doing so you're going to get to hear that it's very exciting what she's effective even even after when

AWP was insular hearing some incredible new poems she was working on to go with the ones that were and when my brother was Nasdaq which has been huge and widely praised collection.

[00:03:21] So tonight I think you'll hear from Natalie first and then following her will be John who has been in this space before and actually in Seattle a number of times. He's the book he's we're with tonight. This new the newest of three books he's actually had a hand in this fall is one of his own writing of maps. And that was preceded by one other book that was really of his own writing which was a book some years ago called The Tyranny of email or non-fiction book. He's been more known for his work pulling together voices from near and far and doing this. First in this country is in this country and elsewhere as the editor of Granta and now as the four issues along of Freeman's which is published by annually a new one the newest one of which came out this fall. The future of New Writing is a wonderful collection of bringing into English many writers who have not been published in this country were in English before and some of whom many of whom we will be reading more of. He's someone who's done this amazingly over over time somehow traveling incessantly the other new book of his though and this follows an earlier collection of an anthology based on New York called A Tale of Two Cities. And this anthology and published this fall A Tale of Two Americas which contrasts the inequalities that are ever more apparent in this country.

[00:04:46] And it's a book of of fiction nonfiction and poetry incredible array of writers many of whom may all or putting original new work in there. Natalie has a poem in there so that will be as another source of connection for what they'll do tonight. I think we'll be drawn into some of that at a time when Donald Trump is proclaiming Jerusalem the capital of Israel and is also reducing the newly set national parks and by the Navajos. So all this is in this time we're in and these to poets and writers and advocates and witnesses will speak to so much that I think that helps us face it so they will take turns up here reading and at some point will also converse I think and as Stacia said and take questions from you that may come along the way so and we do have copies of their books to be signed afterwards. So I will say Natalie's next work that you'll see in print there is least one and probably other anthologies coming of new anthologies of Native American poets and actually the one that Heidi Erdrich is doing for gray wolf. Next spring is a younger poets collection so some these exciting extraordinary new voices Laura Day from Seattle cedar go Leslie long soldier and others are in this collection that will be something to look forward as well as Natalie's work in there as well. So that again for everyone the Seattle Public Library and Elliott Bay we thank you for being here. Emily as you please join me in welcoming personality Diaz and then John Freeman. Thanks

[00:06:30] You and your heart tank vacuum.

[00:06:32] Chloe Munch Mitch Dunham Yemeni those that are there any natives here next. Me too. We're all MCs. Okay we're gonna just wait for a third one and then we'll take over the place so. But thank you for for being here tonight.

[00:06:49] And it's lucky for me to be here with John who's done so much work for other people so it's lucky to be here tonight and to celebrate his book as well.

[00:06:58] I'm just going to start with a couple poems and then I'm gonna turn it over to John Allen Kiran. Scorpion cut my brother has a knife in his hand.

[00:07:09] He has decided to stab my father. This could be a story from the Bible. If it wasn't already a story about stars I weep. I love chronicles the Scorpions clatter to the floor like yellow metallic scissors. They land upside down on their backs and eyes but writhe and flip to their segmented bellies. My brother has forgotten to wear shoes again.

[00:07:38] My Scorpion's circle him whip at his heels in them is what stings in me. It brings my brother to the ground. He rises still holding the knife. My father ran out of the house down the street crying like a lamp lighter but nobody turned their lights on.

[00:08:00] It is dark.

[00:08:03] The only light left is in the Scorpions. There is a small light left in the knife to my brother now wants to give me the knife. Some might say My brother wants to stab me. He tries to pass it to me like it is a good thing like Don't you want a little light in your belly. Like the way Orion and Scorpius across all that black night pass the Sun my brother loosens his mouth between his teeth throbbing red and Terry's one way to open a body to the stars with a knife.

[00:08:43] One way to love a sister help her bleed light.

[00:08:48] And this next poem I have really bad anxiety. And so one of the things I've been kind of working on is how I can rename that or what language I can do I can use or make or build so that it's not the thing it is and you know I think if if I'm going to like rely on poetry to do anything God forbid it can at least help me with my anxiety. And so this came this poem was written kind of in a fit of insomnia across the course of many many evenings and I thought you know I kept I knew I was anxious. I kept naming it which wasn't helping and so I thought what if I call it something else what might come of it from the desire field.

[00:09:33] I don't call it sleep anymore. I'll risk losing something new instead like you lost your frozen moon shook it loose.

[00:09:44] But sometimes when I get my horns in a thing a wonder a grief or a line of her it is a sticky and ruined fruit to unfasten from despite my trembling. Let me call my anxiety desire then let me call it a garden. Maybe this is what Lorca meant when he said bad they could they get over today because when the shade of night comes I am a field of it of any worry ready to flower in my chest my mind in the dark is not Bestia unfocused hot and if not go to exhaustion beneath the hip and plow of my lover then I am another night wondering the desire field bewildered in its low green glow belling the meadow between midnight and morning insomnia is like spring that way surprising and many pedaled the kick and leap of gold grasshoppers at my brow I am struck in the witchy hours of want I want her Green Live her inside me in a green hour I can't stop green vein in her throat Green Wing in my

mouth green thorn in my eye I want her like a river goes bending green moving green moving fast is that this is how it happens.

[00:11:13] So you wanna.

[00:11:14] So now I'm Beulah and even though you said today you felt better and it is so late in this poem. Is it okay to be clear to say I don't feel good to ask you to tell me a story about the sweet grass you planted and tell it again or again until I can smell it sweet smoke leave this thrashed field and be smooth over tea and spice.

[00:11:41] Thanks for coming.

[00:11:43] It's such a pleasure to be here with Natalie I've watched her basically burn up so many bookstores with these poems that have been in this book and I've been watching the poems that she's got the largest pile of over there and one of the really beautiful things about her work is how she creates a mythology out of the out of her experience and her family. And and the past and blends mythologies and I think in some ways mythologies are another way to name a thing. You know if a thing is named like a blunt object it becomes two dimensional but in mythology has to be grappled with in its complexity. And in this country I think we have a lot of degraded mythologies. And so the word mythology has become kind of it's become kind of looted of its power and you never feel that when you read my brother was an airstrike. We have a lot in common. I played basketball but not nearly at the level that Natalie did. She went to the Final Four Freshman year at Old Dominion and played in Europe. I played until I was a sophomore at Del Campo High School and I stopped growing. So it's another pleasure to sit next to her. I'm I'm just gonna pick up on some of the images that you had in your poems and I'll just read a few. The first one is really short. It's called the last.

[00:13:15] This goes stars beat back your kindness night plot the sun for days recounted her breaths and then there was only one.

[00:13:30] So this is sort of the orienting explosion which made me write poems again and I since you reading about your brother.

[00:13:40] I'll read about my my older brother who's an actor in L.A. He plays first guy killed in horror film occasionally.

[00:13:47] He's nice nice Dad nice young dad also first guy killed.

[00:13:51] So after this incident I went to go see him.

[00:13:57] And we were trying to figure out how to mark time. We decided on a tattoo driving around L.A. top down my brother and I discussing how to remember when all this yellow light tells you to forget to turn around and just become another stop being you become another we decide on our

tattoo at first. It's not big be discreet. The kind you notice like the glint of a watch but of course as we talk it gets bigger.

[00:14:39] Elaborates it crawls up arms down our thighs like it needs to keep moving.

[00:14:46] Growing to outpace whatever replaces I say the neck is off limits finally. We have to admit there is only one way this will end. What if I get a tattoo of her face on my face it's not enough we drive in silence for a mile before I realize that is exactly what a faces so I'll read one more poem and then you can have a little chat since we were reading our anxiety poems

[00:15:25] Yeah. How much time do you have. This is a poem called backing measures. It is not realistic. Don't worry I'm fine. I've been here 40 nights and 40 days as the air thins evening chills in the cold white lozenge of the moon licks the sky white around its edges. I try to understand why I have put myself in a place where all I can do is watch myself think and then think about that thought. I imagine if I open my skull like a gourd there would really be another head inside an overgrown seed and inside that one yes another and so on. At least they're mine but I wonder what bitter gourd they grow from. I am not however to ask myself this question.

[00:16:18] It is macro temporal impossible to know and they say incapable of being changed three retreat the brain so that we can deal with the mind my indulgent doctor tells me as if I have sprained my ankle his legs crossed showing a bone white shank wrapped in Argyle a sinister Christmas stocking after each conversation I am allowed to smoke and after each smoke I returned to the room and cry over what I have done and swear to my dead mother it is not her fault.

[00:16:53] And then the knight returns with its black scarf or if I'm lucky I have the moon's mute worry to imagine and pray to which is the same thing. And what frightens me more than her silence or the tick and creak of such a large building and the hours when there are just three digits on the clock is how similar being here is to being dead My life has been abandoned like a ship set ablaze and left adrift at sea. Weather is the time you can see it float away and then when it is spied in the distance lost at latitude and it falls from the map altogether and it's as if it were never there at all.

[00:17:37] Thanks you are to have one eye.

[00:17:42] I'm thinking a lot about poetry because I've been to a lot of protests since. Oh well. November 9th 2000. And of course since before then and everywhere I go there's placards and no one has quotes from novels. No one has a giant quote from Giovanni's Room. It's always Audrey Lord or of a few other poets.

[00:18:07] I feel like one of the things that poetry does is rename things or return them to their original names or give them alternate names. And I wonder when you were writing your first book and some of these poems if you ever feel like you're doing that or if that's if that's an entirely unconscious process.

[00:18:29] I think I mean who or how many writers do we have here.

[00:18:33] All of us probably we all should be I think I see some of your writing.

[00:18:38] Okay great. That's the hardest thing to do is say I'm a writer because then you your parents are like and how are you going to feed yourself kind of thing.

[00:18:46] But I think for me it's it's maybe a its language is such a strange thing because it's it's our attempt to name it but it's also an acknowledgement that you can't name it.

[00:18:59] And so it's such an interesting thing especially having been you know an athlete for so long where you you know you want to win you want to to you know there's certain kinds of perfections that need to happen or even Lux that need to happen in order to have a victory. But poetry is the complete opposite. It's it's that just acknowledgment. It's kind of embracing that I I can't do this. I can't say I can't ever possibly tell you about. For example my brother or I can ever possibly tell you how. Like what my desire feels like. And so for me it's it's maybe these names that I know are not the thing but they're just a name so that I can touch it a little bit.

[00:19:48] I mean I don't know how you feel about it.

[00:19:53] I think one of the books I read this year that I loved the most in poetry is this book by a Arab-American poet named Lawrence Joseph called. So where are we.

[00:20:03] And he's among contemporary poets. He's almost 70. I think he turned 70 recently it's his sixth book and he thinks a lot about. He's a former corporate lawyer and he thinks a lot about the violence of the law and capital.

[00:20:17] So he's trying to write in this is that we live in that is can. Can continuously assaulted by the language of force and yet still find through that a way to speak about love is in his mind. Love is not just a form of expression but it's a form of defiance and defense and an encirclement of the self and another saying this this is human because it is between me and you.

[00:20:52] And for some reason I you know Brent Ben Lerner is also published by Copper Canyon he has a whole book about this trying to use someone trying to write a love poem in objects made entirely of chrome you know I don't I feel I can use your new poems.

[00:21:13] There's a lot of poems about love and desire. To some degree at least the ones I've read. Maybe there's those that's just the tip of the iceberg. But do you feel like love is any harder to write about right now and you know if if you peek at Twitter you open a newspaper you open your eyes any day. There's the opposite of love.

[00:21:36] I think so. I maybe I've always felt that way. I think I'm thinking even about the love poems and in your book or any I even think just about the point that like reference Lebanon. You know I think

I think what poetry has made me realize in what language and the ways I've been taught language have I have gifted me with is it love is there's so many things. And it's not any of the things that people told you they were growing up.

[00:22:06] And I think in some ways the way I feel at least about the climate in our country right now is that all of the ways they told us Love was in our expectations for it have been revealed to be completely false you know. And so now we are in an opportunity because what else can we call it. You know I think innovation comes from despair a lot of times you know an innovation comes when you have no other recourse. But right now we I feel like we're in a moment where we can finally begin to enact all of the gestures of love which we've been hiding or keeping you know like what is what is intimate and what is public now is under in this like crucible because are our despairs and our griefs and our rages are now public in a way that you know they haven't been in the past. And in a way that I think we also know we're at this limit where you know it's not enough now for me to say to my intimate friend like I'm frustrated or I'm angry like you know we need something else.

[00:23:23] And so in a way I think this is why poetry has always been so important in these moments you know because it's there's so much compression in poetry that that pressure I think kind of explodes it at the same time.

[00:23:40] And so it's a place where I feel like what poetry does for me and what I hope it does for my reader is just that it's a promise of here's a split a space where you can feel where you can hurt you know where you can feel joy and maybe most importantly where you can not know.

[00:24:02] Because for me not knowing is the only thing that's going to get us to this next space that we need to you know like I'm not interested in a solution I'm not interested in conversion I'm not interested in agreement like you know what I want is for us to be in this pressure of whether it's love or anger or frustration so that we can actually come up with new ideas and new ways of interacting with one another. So I guess new ways of of love you know which I think I don't know I feel like I was I mentioned with Michael that you know that I was looking at your book and I was thinking about love as I was reading the poems because again especially the poems about Lebanon and even though they summer even though some of the poems that were from a distance but I feel like a lot of times to look at the thing is sometimes the best way that you can love it you know just to look at it.

[00:25:07] And I want to move sideways to yet another author but I was once interviewing Richard Ford and for the third in his Bascombe trilogy novels and the character has prostate cancer and he spends the entire novel in the car driving around in New Jersey in the suburbs and it's strip malls one after the other everything's ugly his car is breaking down his body's breaking down and I. And it's it doesn't immediately strike you as a as a political novel in any way. And I I said did you feel at all this is published during the middle of the Bush years. I said did you feel at all like this was sort of a cul de sac away from what you know obviously sideways in our conversation.

[00:25:51] All we were talking about was the war in Iraq and Guantanamo and the things that he was interested in and he said no you know we we made this country like this and we have to love it. And that way you love it is by looking at it.

[00:26:07] And I I took that away because I would never want to write that novel foreigner and 80 pages within a guy deciding whether or not to have prostate surgery as a lot.

[00:26:21] But it was it was a useful direction and a way to look at something even if it's made by accident is a way of loving it and I think that's in this present moment it's really it's really hard to love the country because it's being revealed for all the things that have been below the surface but not below the surface for many people and I think when you fall in love with someone it's a chance to love not just them but everything that they have been about and come from.

[00:26:55] And so my my partner was born in Libya and grew up in Lebanon and I.

[00:27:00] She is allowed and talkative family and I. I'm the recessive one in my family so I just sit there and kind of listen to stories over and over again when they get together because they they left Libya when Gadhafi came to power on the last plane. You know they're gonna get shot down and they went to Beirut just in time for the civil war and they left Beirut to go to the mountains during the civil war then the Civil War came to the mountains and they left for England.

[00:27:26] And so I I'm always listening to these stories and part of this book is and I guess this retelling some of those stories from the listeners I and part of the reason why I wanted to retell them is I grew up in California.

[00:27:46] You know there's lots of Air Force bases.

[00:27:48] In some ways the most empirical of all American states and I feel like I benefited from a lot of American power and I mean one of the ways of understanding being American right now and loving the country is understanding what we made of the world necessarily and to go out and and look and to look at the world and try to look without look just without projecting the fantasies that we have of places where American power has deeply shaped the landscape and so Beirut is one of those places because without all that U.S. support of the Iran Iraq war pushing both sides which pushed Iran into into Lebanon which in turn them from a multi-ethnic country into a country that was teetering on two hearing on civil war it would it would be a very different place. In fact they probably wouldn't be sitting here because I wouldn't have met my girlfriend and my life would probably be set back in New York.

[00:29:02] Looking at the box scores of the Sacramento Kings writing book reviews of non-fiction still and so I'm in some ways I think writing poetry is a long answer to your question is a way to embrace the nonlinear associative logic that the world moves and I think love is one of the most fascinating and joyful associative logics to follow because it can it can it can move in ways that I don't think we anticipate or can control to along.

[00:29:42] I talk about love a lot like it's a word I use a lot and I think sometimes again I think right now is a time for love to be new again for all of us.

[00:29:56] You know if you can if you can think of just all of them today if we went back through today like if you can rethink each moment of tenderness that you offered somebody today you know or to think you know what are the moments of tenderness which were offered you today like we just steam roll through our bodies and our emotions all day long we just go 90 miles an hour you know and that is something that I think is a very Western and very American thing and that is also one of the real powers of poetry is that by its very nature it returns you to your body in a way that you can't. I mean the very nature that it was something spoken like so your body is you're using this you know we even think like it feel like we we so misunderstand language like the very energy of it you know that I'm sitting here and you're sitting there and I'm just making a bunch of noises and somehow in those noises you and you have some sort of meaning and you think you know what I mean but you actually don't you know what those things mean to you and it's this kind of magical space and it's a very physically I feel like it's a very intimate physical space languages even the fact that and when I tell my students that sometimes I think they get a little bit grossed out because I tell them like I'm talking and I'm actually touching three little bones in your ear right now like that's what language is.

[00:31:40] There are three bones in your ear stir up the hammer the anvil that are moving and making sense in your brain somehow you know and I think part of what poetry has done for me is one it's giving me giving me back like my own body in a way that I can be visible you know where visible through stories and sometimes even if those stories aren't beautiful they might be painful but you can't be a fool whole person unless you can one have pain and also tenderness. And so I think poetry gives us back a wholeness that a lot of times we don't have in other forms of art. And also of course just in our utilitarian day and so it does feel like a real labor of love to just remember the self even while you're writing like to say I have a body I am I am I am making this thing of myself and the gift of offering it to somebody else you read another poem.

[00:32:47] Yes. Just. Just any poem. I'm going to so I'm going to read a poem that kind of incorporates one of our Indigenous stories so I'm having your mock up and we have of course we have you know the way our language works is it's very very based.

[00:33:11] So you know the thing you do like so the chair is only a chair because you can sit in it and so that those two words are the same. Of course in our in our minds of course they would be the same because you wouldn't need a chair unless you're actually sitting in it. And so they become the same thing. And in all of the ways we talk about the place we live including the sky including the water we don't have these. So right now I'm thinking of course of of bears ears because of the you know the cutting and the you know Escalante and all of these places and it's just the largest and it happens to be in Utah which has a really white population. So that that we notice that this has been happening to many lands for many many years hundreds of years. But I'm thinking it's interesting because we've had names for these places forever. And the way we name places are not after like

the men who stuck a flag in them or you know kind of what it looked like like Oh I think those look like bears ears you know.

[00:34:20] But they were named for the things that happened there in the creation of our world and in the creation of our stories and all of the things we knew. And so this is kind of a story about the way we talk about the Milky Way. I'm from Fort Mojave which is on the border of California Nevada and Arizona. So we have wide open skies. So of course the stars and writing a lot about the stars because they almost like press down on your body you know they're so low. And then the Milky Way we we see.

[00:34:51] And so this is a little bit about that how the Milky Way was made my River was once UN separated was Colorado red fast flood able to take anything it could wet in a wild rush all the way to Mexico. Now it is shattered by 15 dams over one thousand four hundred and fifty miles pipes and pumps filling swimming pools and sprinklers in Los Angeles and Las Vegas to save our fish.

[00:35:25] We lifted them from our skeleton riverbeds loose them in our heaven set them aside or a cheer on Mojave salmon Colorado Pike minnow. Up there they glide guild with stars you see them now. God large gold green sides Moon white belly to breast making their great speed way across the darkest hours rippling the sapphire sky water into a galaxy road the blurred wake they drag as they make their path through the night sky is called the cheer on noonday.

[00:36:05] Our words for Milky Way.

[00:36:07] Coyote 2 is up there locked in the moon after his failed attempt to leap it. Fishing net wet and empty slung over his back a prisoner blue and dreaming of unzipping the salmon's silk skins with his teeth. Oh the weakness of any mouse as it gives itself away to the universe of a sweet milk body just as my own mouth is dream to thirst the long desire always the one hundred thousand light year roads of your wrists and thighs and so we in the story we believe that these fish which we always called Jihan Munir which means the true fish or the real fish they and it was the largest fish and they would they work like salmon.

[00:36:56] So when the when the Colorado would flood it would create these lagoons and things and these fish would actually hop from lagoon to Lagoon so they would move outside of the water. So the settlers the settlers mean used that word settlers I think ever. But you know from trappers to cavalry men they thought it was like a salmon and it was so important to us that they called it the Mojave salmon. And so that those fish moving across the sky is is our story about the Milky Way is that that's the wake they're leaving.

[00:37:35] And then our Coyote of course. So if you see that you can price see it in the moon tonight if there's if it's not too cloudy here. But when we look in the moon we we see a coyote who's kind of slumped over. So next time you look take a look and you'll see his you know his mouth kind of pointed down and he's hunched over he's got a big head. So he's a little hunched over but he was trying to he was very greedy and he was trying to hop over the moon to get the fish and he would he

had a big saying that it usually took many Mojave men to to use across the Colorado but he tried to do it all himself and because he was greedy he fell into the moon and so now he's trapped there.

[00:38:18] So that was kind of the story there that I base that on. What a wonderful story. You got any moon you got.

[00:38:24] I'm gonna I've got a fish farm.

[00:38:29] This is like pictionary.

[00:38:33] Because I'm an editor I'm frequently traveling with really good storytellers and one of my good friends is this writer Alexander Hellman and among many of this is working on five books right now one of which is a book about it's called How did you get here. And Sasha was grew up in Sarajevo and left before the siege the longest siege in modern warfare which almost destroyed Sarajevo but didn't. And all of his books in some ways are about trying to come to grips with the erasure of where he was from while falling in love with Chicago which was also Sarajevo for him. And so wherever he goes he meets Bosnians and he will walk into a room and hold his points as that man as Bosnian. And I'm like why he's wearing Speedos you know.

[00:39:27] And so we went to Tokyo together for a festival and he of course within five minutes had met a Bosnian who was in charge of the anarchist network. And we made a date to go see this guy at the Tokyo fish market. The next morning and we got there way too early. Apparently the is amazing fish market that typically used to open around 630 but we got there and they've changed it so that they can actually do their business without people watching them do it.

[00:39:59] So we did what you could only do then which is have sushi for breakfast. So I wrote this for him it's called the fish Americans are peculiar about breakfast.

[00:40:11] You say as we belly to this sushi bar in the rain 8:00 in the morning man with blistered forearms got like knife curious where we're from. I say New York you say Chicago although I know that's a complicated answer and how you love learn to love it as fierce as your jaws squared down on cuttlefish and tuna eel and giant prawns moments ago scrabbling with 12 terrified lakes to escape their tank top five of their brethren it's just breakfast washed down with green tea grown and Shizuka steeped in water from the Iroquois River shed when you went back to Sarajevo after the siege stranded you in America the water tasted different you say like ash and the cinemas had moved blocks of houses plain evaporated and most of your friends moved upstream in Montreal or Paris where once we belly to a mosque to Jean joint and Cous Cous with Bosnians who chewed French words into chunks the Moroccan chefs could understand you grunt.

[00:41:16] We pay. We walk in the rain to the marketplace dodging push carts piled with ice packs Styrofoam boxes cod and salmon and fish roe and smelt. You had to see where the fish were unloaded. So we step into that abattoir slip through aisles on wooden racks dark with blood peering at all the creatures of the deep hauled up and transported to a purgatory of ice octopus puffer fish squid

curled like pink knuckles tuna so big it had to be carved by vertical saw a technician squinting through a cigarette giving us thumbs up after it fell into a split log near the exit. A man holds a food group by its neck its tail twitching furiously but he doesn't smash it stroking its flank gently smoothing its perfect skin its scales its green fine body then its blade drawn so fast across the neck departure becomes a kindness I feel like we've revealed ourselves now we ready our fish poems.

[00:42:26] But how do you feel.

[00:42:28] I I went to a festival in Auckland and a native writer from here came and the first thing they do when you go to a festival in New Zealand is you go to a Maori MRI and are greeted and I wish my family gatherings were like this.

[00:42:49] People get up and sing and they they sing their story to a series of you know telling you exactly where you are what land you're in.

[00:42:59] And this woman responded by singing a poem back. But the first thing she said was My name is forget her name. And she said I want a list of what she does. Yeah. And she said. And I can I'm allowed to tell this story.

[00:43:16] All right I have the right to tell this story and I think about this a lot because some of my you know there are certain kinds of poets like Frank O'Hara. He's always dumping his friends and the poet in the poems and it always feels wonderful. And I have a friend another friend who always winds up in another person's poems and he hates it. He thinks please keep me out of these poems. I want to have a personal life and so I've I've never run into something where I've gone too far but I wonder you know what you just told is a more a broader story that that is a big umbrella that many people live under but when it's something personal I wonder how you negotiate that because I showed some of my poems to my dad and he said that's wonderful that's not how it happened.

[00:44:13] That's that. So that same phrase um my mother actually said that to me about the points in the book um and she had said like well that's not how it happened.

[00:44:23] And immediately my little sister. She's the youngest in our family have a very large family. She said What do you mean Mom. That's exactly how it happened. You know and I don't know which poems they were even talking about. And so I think it's I think it's interesting this the idea of projection when we write and that's I think what is most dangerous when you're writing about family or about beloved or loved ones is that you know you have your idea of what happened and then they have their idea of what happened and none of you know at all what happened. You know memory is completely faulty.

[00:45:05] And you know what.

[00:45:08] What my mother and father see in the poems are their own anxieties and worries and so they feel very guilty when they read the poem. If I if I have a poem about the brother character for

example when they read the poems they feel their own failures they feel guilty they feel ashamed. And so they're really projecting themselves into that. Whereas when my some of my siblings see the poems you know they feel like a little bit justified because they've been so angry and frustrated and have never found words or images to say what's happened or they feel like I had a little brother who was just really upset about one of the poems because he thought you know the poem kind of toys with the brother's death.

[00:45:59] Does the brother die or not. And he had just a really emotional reaction to that. Like what do you mean why would you say that why would you do that. And so I think that's something that I don't think it's ever easy. But I also think that that's sometimes the way stories work is I think every story probably had such a giant risk before it was ever told whether even you know if it's imaginative or if it's like mythological because you one know that truth doesn't necessarily exist at that point and it's a lot of you know emotional guesswork and images stick guesswork.

[00:46:43] And so I think you know for me the way I look at it as a poem or a story should feel like a risk and it should feel a little bit dangerous for me first I should risk hurting myself on it or I should risk feeling joy about it and that that's what I tend to trust. So it's I keep it in a very personal space first versus the other side.

[00:47:10] And any of you who've written about family or thinking about stories you might tell you're grappling with those same things.

[00:47:18] I mean when when your family's gone all you have of them is are stories they want their body turns into stories after they've they've passed.

[00:47:28] I think that's why that so powerful. Can you read the Zee poem.

[00:47:34] It's in my book I think oh you always have to borrow my book from the books from the bookstore. We were just talking about Spanish and in Mojave we have a flapped ah so like the word drop for example is like uh. Like that. That's like. So it's flapped and so it takes me a minute to loosen up too. It's gonna take me a minute Michael to say. Boudreaux when I read this said this poem is called zoology and it's it was kind of my attempt it. There are several poems in the book that are my attempt to kind of just tell the wildness of my family and also kind of look at some of the ways I'm a part of that family and that and also it was a really like a realisation of I think I I meant it to be a funny poem when it started out and I thought that I would just kind of talk about how we act like animals like my family sometimes and then I ended up having this realization about some of the things my parents have endured with with us zoology. My father brought home a zebra from Sinaloa. This house is a zoo. My mother wept.

[00:48:58] I but this amazing creature is for you. Me either he said you only give me beasts. She sobbed flinging herself over the bony swayed back of the zebra. She loosened a new Colorado River of Tears. So much water that the zebra stripes melted and pooled at his ankles like four beaten prisoners. I you see my father how'd you ruined it. I'm war. It is no zebra. It is a Boudreaux painted

like a zebra. But don't be sad. The beasts are not beasts. They are children painted like hyenas. We knew better. My mother had been weeping for 100 years and in all that time our ghoulish mouths had grown redder our beady eyes darker and our wet teeth even longer faces. She couldn't scrub from our heads tails that always grew back with one 100 years comes wisdom and my mother was right. We are a zoo and we will not spare even our parents. The price of admission. They will pay to watch us eat albuterol. My father will fall on his knees like a man who has just lost his zebra. My mother will paint the thin grey bars of a cage over her skin and reach out for us time over that poem.

[00:50:24] My eye. My family was quite fat.

[00:50:26] We had three boys and not just we were quite feral. I wonder how we survived.

[00:50:37] In a way I don't have any zero poems.

[00:50:41] I'm trying to think if there's something I can read that would respond to that.

[00:50:47] I have a dog poem is close.

[00:50:51] I find it quite strange how we live next to these animals that are that have knowledge systems that are probably as sophisticated as ours but completely unknowable and obviously a dog is not going to sit there and do calculus but is doing it can smell things from 9 miles away and it's a form of extended intimacy and my girlfriend's family is is a is obsessed with the half English and so they love dogs more than people and they are only capable of showing intimacy to dogs.

[00:51:28] So her mother will weep over a dog. But I've I've hugged her maybe three or four times and this.

[00:51:34] This is a poem about a dog that has since passed a Mattie then a swift left turn or nose tilts to the breeze feathering or hair eyes closed in pleasure or curiosity rapture. I don't know so much of what she does remains a mystery as I'm sure we remain for her and she stands there pointing to a new day as she has four thousand times before. No diminishment or boredom as if this were the first breeze she ever smelled filled with magic and dog weed and bus fuel and Fox crap and burglars last night's laundry entering the spin cycle and she stands there poised and arthritic grandeur.

[00:52:26] Seven years into her overbroad illness plagued brief life showing us hope is routine. It's hope.

[00:52:34] I have a dog story. It's a Mojave story My God I don't know if you've heard this so. Okay so a long time ago. That's all my hobbies stories start up sat score.

[00:52:46] This was a long time ago but we the is lived in like the Colorado River basin so it's kind of you know now part of that is like you know where I live is like Las Vegas Nevada.

[00:52:59] We'll head City Arizona Kingman Arizona. So I'm off of like Highway 95 I-40 and then a little ways away. I 10. But at one point in time you know my hobbies were spread throughout the entire valley. And so we didn't really have neighbors. You lived with your family and and so we would gather together. You know once a year and we would gather together around the winter my elders say that we would gather together around the winter because people would be indoors and then they would. That's how we would make babies. We were indoors.

[00:53:32] But so when when the Mahaffey people would gather together they would come from all over the valley and gather together and we would live in the winter in these mud mud houses. We'd have a big fire in the middle. And while while the Mahaffey people would gather together of course we had dogs. So all of the Mojave dogs would also come with their families and they would also gather together and they had their own little mud house. And so you know they would come from all over the place and you know one by one they would file into the house and there would be a big fire there in the middle of the mud house and they were also coming to share stories. You know the same way our our Mojave men and women were was to say like who who had had children you know who died. What the news was from across the valley.

[00:54:20] But they would come in and because they were you know like natives we of course we sit Indian style right. So we have to sit down like that. But because they were dogs they couldn't they couldn't do that because they had tails.

[00:54:33] So what they would do was as they would come in one by one they would come in to the mud house and then of course they'd quickly shut the door. So the heat wouldn't get out but they would have to unscrew their tail.

[00:54:44] And so they would unscrew their tail and they would set it against the wall and then they would take their place and sit down. But of course like a lot of Native Americans a lot of Indigenous people were always late. We call it rez time.

[00:54:57] You're always running late but there was one day that you know all of the dogs were gathered around and they were you know there is a really incredible story about a war being told. And one of the dogs came in late and he saw all the tales lined up but he was late and he heard this really gossipy juicy story being told. And so he went to unscrew his tail but he was so rushed that instead of slowly putting his tail down he was walking toward the circle and screwing his tail. And he kind of tossed it.

[00:55:27] So he tossed the tail against all the other tails lined up and one by one they all fell down.

[00:55:32] And so there was this massive tails. But he didn't want to say anything because he didn't want to miss the story so he just went and sat down you know sat down Indian style of course in the circle. But then at the end of the night when everybody had to go home with their owners their tails were all jumbled up and it was late. They were cold the fire had already cooled off. So they just picked up any old tail and screwed it back on.

[00:55:54] And that's why today when you see dog sniffing each other's butts it's because they're looking for their tail.

[00:56:02] And so that's some Mojave science. We call that but that's the way that was. That was an important Mojave dog poem story.

[00:56:16] I think one of the things I was trying to put together with this book was you know maps or we have grid maps and subjective maps and so much of the way the world is run is based on grid maps and data points. You know that I am 43 year old male etc.. And so much of the world is lived and experienced through stories like the one that you just told and even when you were talking about your family and how when you would write a poem which is not a story but you would. It's a form of expression that comes out of experience or vectors off of experience everyone else would have a different idea.

[00:57:01] And I think of places as as you know the ultimate map of Seattle would be you know how many people live here.

[00:57:09] Two million to two point one million stories. You know if you could somehow figuratively imagine that and how that that would sort of collaborate and come together and what that would look like if it was an actual actual map and I think that it's sort of an endless process in a way when you think of it that way because it's it feels like every time you put together a book like this or you tell a story you're you're simply basically creating a cold as a short block your block your version of this place and one of the things I love about literature and reading is that there is no there is no pressure for that to be representative.

[00:57:59] You know it doesn't have to be a place. It's not a coordinate.

[00:58:04] It's a it's a sort of cloud yeah I think I mean and there are so many maps and I think that is like memory as a map for example you know when you think even right now if I just said like think of a moment from your childhood we would all take a different route there.

[00:58:23] Some of us might jump directly to the place but some of us might kind of move associated Valley and some of us might go to someplace joyful and someone some of us might go to someplace painful.

[00:58:36] And I think you know even the way language works language is also a map you know in a way it tells all the places that word has been. This is like an example I give in the Mojave language a lot is that we have a you know a very poor relationship with police officers on our reservation even our own tribal police officers. What's interesting is that our Madhavi word for police officer or policeman is it's again based on an action and it's the man who will rope you like an animal because when there was no military police officers would come to the reservation they would like literally rope the children and tie them up and put them behind the wagon and take them off to the school. And so what parents

would tell their children they would kind of send them off to hide and they would say like you know be careful. Go go hide go run because then the men will rope you like an animal and so. And it's interesting even to say like an animal because we have many words for tying and corded and things but only one way to talk about the way we tie up an animal. And that's. And so even for example that like that is a map of a sort. Like it's a map. An emotional map. It's a it's a physical map. And to kind of think about how that word landed and then to try to translate it into English and leave part of the map behind causes lots of problems.

[01:00:06] Can you read the arithmetic poem.

[01:00:07] Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah.

[01:00:09] So this poem I wasn't really sure what was happening with this poem and I feel lucky that that John kind of gave me a place to put it. I've been struck by I've been just struck by these statistics that are interesting for me to carry around.

[01:00:31] And one of them I'll read the statistics but this.

[01:00:34] So this idea of like what percentage of the population Native Americans are now compared to when we were ones one hundred percent is interesting for me because we are we're considered less than 1 percent. And so like for example like in this room of this many people I just I'm always struck when I met a reading like thinking like well how much of me can possibly be here if I'm less than 1 percent. Like what is what am I in terms of that you know.

[01:01:01] So this poem came about from American arithmetic Native Americans make up less than 1 percent of the population of America point eight percent of one hundred percent. Oh mine efficient country. I do not remember the days before America. I do not remember the days when we were all here police kill Native Americans more than any other race. Race is a funny word. Race implies someone will win implies I have as good a chance of winning as who wins the race which isn't a race Native Americans make up one point nine percent of all police killings higher than any race and we exist as point eight percent of all Americans. Sometimes race means run I'm not good at math. Can you blame me. I've had an American education. We are Americans and we are less than 1 percent of Americans. We do a better job of dying by police than we do existing when we are dying. Who should we call the police or our Senator. Please someone call my mother at the National Museum of the American Indian 68 percent of the collection is from the U.S. I am doing my best to not become a museum of myself. I am doing my best to breathe in and out. I am begging let me be lonely but not invisible but in an American city of 100 people. I am Native American less than 1 less than whole. I am less than myself. Only a fraction of a body lets say I am only a hand. And when I slip it beneath the shirt of my lover I Disappear Completely that comes of much it's really powerful it's just it's crazy math.

[01:03:19] Math is pretty crazy. But I really have thought about that like if someone tells you you are less than 1 percent like suddenly you're like well what percent of me is here. And what would happen

if that person was gone or even with Indigenous people we have blood quantum which is really this silly thing that's like you know.

[01:03:38] So there's always a lot of jokes that say well careful if I'm a quarter you know DNA or I'm a quarter Salish like Well which part of me is that. Is it like my right hip and my right leg you know or.

[01:03:49] So it's just interesting to kind of think about that.

[01:03:52] But also I think it math is one of those things that we used to be able to lean on or count on in a way I've never been very good at math.

[01:04:02] But but it's one of the things that is like suffering right now in this era of like meaning and language in that it like it doesn't matter if math makes sense you know because because like truth is not you know.

[01:04:24] All right I guess I'm just. That poem is me trying to work out all of these wonders and worries and ideas about like I know language has power because I know what it's been to me in my own life and I know the ways it's hurt me and I know that also the joys it's brought me in terms of poetry but I also am just at this point where I'm really wondering like well the thing I've staked my heart in and my passions and in my time and like it must be able to do something more than it's doing right now.

[01:04:58] And part of that question is also dealing with these ideas of statistics and that doesn't matter how many statistics how much proof how many numbers how much you know perpetuity we can say it again and again and still here we are.

[01:05:17] And I don't even mean that to be such a devastating or despairing statement because I think again back to the naming of it to to be able to say it like we've gotten so far away from from one of the languages of love which I think is also critique you know like I I know how to behave in public because my mother taught me you know and she critiqued me in lots of ways.

[01:05:44] You know a little spank here a little you know. But but she did that because she loved me you know so she taught me and corrected me and guided me. And it's something I think we're so far away from is the conversation of critique that is also love like we got to a point where you're not allowed to tell anybody when they're wrong. We see it in art where everybody's brilliant. No we're not all brilliant.

[01:06:14] You know there might be a few people out there but the rest of us are just grinding along like everybody else.

[01:06:20] And so that poem has kind of as my piece of starting a conversation with myself or with you all or with language about what is the real power of language and what can it do for us or for me or for our relationship together yeah.

[01:06:41] I mean I can keep spinning in circles because I don't know that.

[01:06:45] I think part of it is the. Right now the grinding forces within this administration is this is the subtraction from citizenship of people who were previously measured by fractions and percentages.

[01:07:02] And so it's you know with it this is off topic for poetry book with the gutting of the Voting Rights Act and now it's restrictions can be placed upon people that will make it harder and harder for people who were measured by fractions to go and vote and be represented in government and on and on it goes down the line and through different policies and it and it feels like the one thing this administration cannot stop is is expressions of culture it can legislate it can make policy around the policy if you will but it cannot stop a poem and that's what one of the reasons why I was sort of burbling up after you finished your poem is after the end of this logic you move into a register of intimacy and it is it is completely resistant of any kind of calculus that could be measured because it's like you show us right in front of us an act of intimacy and love.

[01:08:08] And instantly we are on the outside of that and it's in measurable because only you and the person you know which is not a real person or maybe it is a real person can can be there I have a um a measurement poem called coins and then I think we should probably finish so we just go to Q and A now. I was in I teach in a low residency writing program in Paris and I saw a I was there for the last three terrorist attacks which starts to feel a little is not fun. Especially for the French and I was. So I went to the the first kind of almost impromptu expression of mourning that happened right after the Charlie Hebdo attacks and then suddenly there was twenty thousand people on a square a few hours later and I wrote this called coins. The crowd rotates by chemical signals fired into synaptic gaps zeros and ones shot into space downloaded onto screens reassembled into words instructing Parisians to gather at Republique by 6:00 that they do in the thousands and begin their waltz around the draped statue that shows how good ideas must be held aloft abstracted like 12 lives turned to martyrs treasure one side of a coin depicting decadence and insult the other tenured here brave insouciance before backwards ideals Cannon puff announces their transcendence from lives into paper lanterns rising from the hands of fingers in black who've mounted the plant like security agents of justice glowing white orbs drift upwards through the silvery drizzle and thousands cheer as one unified tonight as somewhere else thousands are too in agreement that a life is not just a life but a vessel for the value we assign it. Any questions.

[01:10:28] My growing up I'm still growing up my growing life um well I'm I'm I grew up at Fort Mojave so it's um the reservation again on the border of California Nevada and Arizona. So on the Colorado River um and I'm also Pima and my father's um Spanish and my family came up from Spain to Argentina through Mexico.

[01:10:52] Um and so I grew up with this strange eyed idea about what is mythology and what is history you know because as an Indigenous person you're always told that your stories or mythologies and then you're also taught history which you actually know is a myth myth.

[01:11:11] You're like Wait a minute this is screwed up. But so I grew up in the desert which is you know I love coming to the the Pacific Northwest. And I you know I don't know how I would do in the rain but I mean where I'm from it's one of the hottest places in the country.

[01:11:31] And I think even now it was when I was in Phoenix last week and it was like 89 90 degrees at home. And so it's a really hot place. I have a huge family. And I was an athlete. I think that's why for me language is so has to be so physical like I need it to be you know a physical and I need to think about it in terms of like momentum and rhythm.

[01:11:55] So a lot of times like again the book The lines are kind of long sometimes and there's a lot of like you know accumulation and then slowing down. But I grew up kind of at the intersections of different languages and then I after I went away to college to play basketball I went back and that was the most recent work I've done before I became you know like a writer is in linguistic work on my reservation. So working with the speaker the last speakers of our Mojave language to to build a teaching tools and archives and that still work that is you know it'll go on forever. But yeah that's kind of more or less in it in a nutshell like those are some of the things. So the way I come to poetry is never from poetry it's always from you know like right now it's a lot of art and architecture and you know sports or family story things you know.

[01:12:52] So um yeah those are some of the I don't know if I answered that correctly.

[01:12:59] So when I said your poems feel like mythologies that say booting up all those previous reactions about history and mythology also I believe in the idea of personal mythology.

[01:13:13] Yeah that kind of mythology of us. Yeah. No no no. I mean I think a word is I think a single word is kind of like a myth. You know like it's true and not. And each one of us is going to interpret it. No yeah it's just you know it's very common to hear Indigenous stories called like a creation myth but you never hear them talk about like Jesus is like the creation you know like like this is the Jesus creation myth.

[01:13:41] I mean come on they rolled that big stone away. How did they do that. So possible the great core strengths. Yeah yeah. I mean his whole body went up into the sky.

[01:13:52] What do you guys even talking about what she was describing watching Ken Burns documentary and looking at the ways that resistance formed and localized area and created new communities as a result of that pose of resistance and in that creating of a community of withdrawal from Federal power if you will. Is that a apt description.

[01:14:18] And do we feel that happening now.

[01:14:22] I think the people in power are afraid we're going to make a difference. Which is why at Standing Rock. They they did everything they could to not let that footage be televised. You know or I mean I think we're seeing it in so many places and social media I think is designed to do just that to

take you away from your body and to kind of you know we're so far away from ourselves even that we've begun to in some ways I think it's good because we can access each other in a way we haven't before. But it then where does the physical gesture happen after. So I think they're very afraid that we are going to. Which is why you have this attack on language like how can I make language mean nothing to people because they do realize and it hasn't been that long ago that some of these things happened that did make it make a difference.

[01:15:19] So yeah I I I completely agree I think the I mean that's some of the Black Lives Matter protests have been so localized because the incidents have been extremely felt locally.

[01:15:35] And those were attended at least once. I've been to the attended by a huge variety of people and I think that has merged to some degree with some of the. The Women's March and I I think people were beginning to feel just that they're remembering the pleasures of being together in our bodies. And I think there's they're also beginning to feel the weight of and the stress of resistance in their bodies. I was in Syracuse. I don't know like five two weeks ago and I was talking to a public defender who is also a Black Lives Matter organizer and he was trying to decide whether to take time off of his job because he was he was really rundown and frankly kind of almost suicidal. He was so tired he was so tired of having to be explained the same concepts over and over again and I think there is power that can be had and getting together and using your body as a sort of force. I think there is also there's a lot of toll that's being taken on the body right now and the public experience of the airing of these stories and true stories of women who were assaulted and harassed the witnessing of televised violence against people by police.

[01:17:02] I think this is all felt in the body and I think that the cures for it are in the body being together being with friends hugging people. And I think in some ways this is why right now poetry to me in America is the most exciting genre. And it doesn't happen to be because I have a book book out. I just feel like that there's something really there's something thrilling and vibrant and there's so many different types of poetry that are being written at the within an inch of the the the language is capacity. And to me it feels like that has to do with the body because many of the poets who are writing these poems whether it's ocean borne or as a Mora or Natalie or or Robin cost Lewis you know there's just so many great poets right now and there are people that are feeling with their body.

[01:18:00] It's something I talk a lot with. Well one I have this kind of practice is I want to talk to my students so I would talk to my colleagues and my friends. I want them to know what poetry means to me and how I live it. And and so I try to to that's just kind of my approach to them is that I talk with them about the things I think are important you know. And that one makes me the most engaged but it is also they can film my kind of passion. But one of the things I talk with them a lot is about urgency. You know like when my students are writing things like that they first question we ask is like why is this urgent. Why is this important. Why is it important that you write this.

[01:18:49] Why is it important that somebody hears it.

[01:18:53] Because for me the farther away I can move them from teaching them craft the more powerful their poems will be and the closer they are to realizing the real power of them. And so you know craft they'll learn by reading and it doesn't mean they can't identify what they are doing and what other people have done but that is not what a poem is. You know a poem can be so many things and depending on where you grew up and what language your families speak and what your experiences have been your craft will be so different. And so I try to focus a lot more and this sounds kind of lame maybe but like we don't like it's not what you think what you like but where do you feel something in this poem or how do you how did you feel writing it. So I talk a lot about feelings and urgency and things that that might seem less craft or about mastery or expertise but I think the best poems are not about that like you know those are things you'll see on the outside. But how do they make you feel. That's why we all come to a page. So I try to stay again there like in the body even like semantically sometimes.

[01:20:01] Like where did you feel this you know in your body so take your class.

[01:20:09] I teach a class on the novel so very different right now. It's a series of novels the class theme is escape strategies or great escapes. So all the novels are about people escaping from one place to another escaping you know some form of containment whether it's a marriage or as physically dangerous space. But I do think a lot about the fact that many of the craft lessons that you could possibly excised from these novels are really things about living. And so I try to back into them always through not you know notice the way that this person uses the first person voice. I mean it is very hard to get people I think to write by simply teaching them a technique because it's it's very ersatz at that point. And the other class I teach is about building a little journal because I feel like when I was starting as a young person publishing seemed so mysterious to me and so the class the basis of the classes to try to get them to not believe in institutions because no one's paying you know I I mean I'm trying to get them to think you know not to say OK I have to leave here and go get a job at the New Yorker or go get a job at the Paris Review or get one of basically you know 30 to paying editorial jobs in literary journals. The class goal is to get them to start their own and that the whole focus of the class is to try to get them to look at the literary culture that's in front of them and think what's missing. Know what do I have what I want to put together what I want to celebrate what I want to curate and so I bring people in to talk to them who have all made that decision themselves but from different kind of angles.

[01:22:04] And so I think what we were talking about tonight relates to that because hopefully you know when you when you rename something in a poem in a text what you're what you're doing is resisting to some ways the containment that culture provides to.

[01:22:20] And I think with literary culture I think you can do the same thing on a small institutional level whether it's been building a little journal or right now anthologies that are very strong because everything is a group of people who look like me or marginal. And this is this means that the margins are so thick with with with all the best talent in a way. And I think it's as this as you were saying you know don't we have an opportunity here to mobilize locally and in literary terms. Absolutely. The the

anthology that Rick mentioned of of that Natalie's gonna be on is a perfect example. It's a time to kind of celebrate and curate together.

[01:23:05] Thank you.

[01:23:13] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.