

## **Transcript of Interview with Taya Mâ Shere by Kit Heintzman**

**Interviewee:** Taya Mâ Shere

**Interviewer:** Kit Heintzman

**Date:** 06/27/2022

**Location (Interviewee):**

**Location (Interviewer):**

**Transcribed By:** Angelica S Ramos

### **Some of the things we discussed include:**

Founding a school for the ordaining of earth-based models of feminist Jewish spiritual leadership/Priestesshood. Having taught spiritual leadership online and in-person pre-pandemic. Counter-oppressive devotion and spirituality. Having traveled to teach just before lockdown and having those plans canceled; planning to stay somewhere for briefly days and ending up staying for a year and a half; quarantining when you know few people locally. Connecting with nature. Safety precautions in spiritual gatherings. Online Shabbat; the importance of gathering and maintaining community; Jewish High Holidays rituals online. Creating a series called “Priestessing in the Time of Unravel”. Considering people’s different needs as things open up; different community members’ comfort with safety precautions. Reflecting on early-pandemic writing, “Sex in an Era of Physical Distancing”: <https://centerpost.rowecenter.org/sex-in-an-era-of-physical-distancing-taya-ma/>. How safer sex practices and boundaries resonate with COVID safety practices and boundaries: regular STI/COVID testing, mask/barrier methods, exposure risk behavior with other people. Having conversations about safety and needs without judgment; different risk thresholds and different vulnerabilities. New conversations about safety and boundaries opening up with vaccination. First trip out to a grocery store since the pandemic. Experiencing harassment for wearing a mask. Finding safety within oneself, self-love. The impact of the pandemic on the collective nervous system, trauma-feedback loop. Coping with the unknown. The Podcast Jewish Ancestral Healing’s growing listenership: <https://www.jewishancestralhealing.com/>. The balance between sovereignty and interconnection.

**Kit Heintzman 00:03**

Would you please tell me your name, the date, the time and your location?

**Taya Mâ Shere 00:07**

I’m Taya Mâ Shere today is Wednesday, July 27. And I am surrounded by beautiful green fabric in a room that is cool and I am breathing to come more fully into my body as we enter this conversation. I’m so happy to be here.

**Kit Heintzman 00:34**

Do you consent to having this interview recorded, digitally uploaded and publicly released under a Creative Commons license attribution noncommercial sharealike

**Taya Mâ Shere 00:47**

Yes.

**Kit Heintzman 00:49**

Thank you so much. Would you please start by introducing yourself to anyone who might find themselves listening, what would you want them to know about you and the place that you're speaking from?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 01:01

I love this question. I'll share a bit about my work which is also my passion. I co founded Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute, which is devoted to reclaiming and innovating embodied earth based models of Jewish feminist spiritual leadership. And I am the host of Jewish Ancestral Healing a podcast, which speaks to share with conversations with spiritual leaders, artists, activists, and visionaries around ancestral traditions and counter oppressive practice. I also serve as faculty at Starr King School for the ministry, where I train emergent clergy in organic multi religious ritual. And these strands inform my work and my pray. I'm also musician with five albums of sacred chant, mostly Hebrew goddess chant. The most recent album is Hebrew and Arabic chants of counter oppressive devotion. And my projects in the world tend to be around reinvigorating ancient traditions, to support connection to what has been in ways that are juicy, alive and resonant now, and supporting folks in finding connection to places of meaning, power and possibility within their own traditions, the traditions that either they're from or that draw deeply to them, to help folks make more meaning and find more pleasure, presence and joy. And so these strands shaped my orienting to most things I, I also place a really strong value on presence as prayer. This comes from my own orientations of what's possible when we are additionally here in this moment, honoring our bodies honoring right pace, as a foundation, and all the things

**Kit Heintzman** 03:35

Would you tell me a story about your life during the pandemic?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 03:43

When pandemic began, I had just moved from my home of seven years in the Bay Area, preparing to teach around the world before landing in my new home overseas. And I flew away from the bay, again, packed up leaving after after those seven years, I flew away just as pandemic was beginning to hit the news, and there wasn't yet even a question of like, was it safe to fly? But after that first flight things moved very quickly. And I was somewhere that I had intended to be for four days. And in that span of those four days, the dominoes dropped and I think maybe I had I don't know, 14 flights canceled not like the same flight rebooked but like 14 different flights in the coming months. I'm teaching here teaching they're teaching here teaching there. on various continents dropped like canceled one by one by one or actually many of them very fast. And in the span of these few days, I went from like this very careful map of my year my work my income, my my, my teaching plan and also my plan to make a new home and a place that I have been deeply dreaming into. Like at all sifted. And I know this was not unique to me. And just noticing as I remember back to that moment in time, the like the the amount of question marks that emerged with like, I thought I knew what was happening, and I have no idea what is happening and my my response to that, in some ways, first was to show up in and with community. Virtually because we were all aware we each were whenever the dominoes dropped. And I felt drawn to create a series called precessing in the time of unravel, and we quickly or I invited some of my favorite folks, in our priestess community, in our Jewish spiritual community to teach on what it means to be so deeply in the unknown and how we can resource and cultivate presence and connection as what we have known to be as changing so deeply, and we have the series are immensely helpful and connective in this time that was so stressful for so many. In our community, I'll speak to and, and we began to reshape our programs to this point, in this particular community, which has a an ordination program, a three year training, ordination program, and also has a lighter spiritual community and, and really the movement changing the face of Judaism. We had mostly gathered in person, traveling folks traveling from all

over to do that. And as pandemic began, we began to shift our prayer online and I remember our very first Shabbat prayer service I guess it was like the third Friday in March 2020. And it was so important to gather we so desperately, deeply needed to be in community in prayer. And we had no idea that that gathering return into weekly Shabbat gatherings from here on out. Now, two and a half years later, we are still gathering every Shabbat virtually for prayer and folks who never in our community have had the opportunity to meet because they were a part of different cohorts or lived in different parts of the globe or joined us at different times in our trainings, suddenly got to connect and know each other and became friends, more than friends became deep, connected community. And at first, during our first layers, we we didn't actually advertise or open widely, our Shabbat gatherings many synagogues are like spreading the word live streaming, really building very strong membership bases through virtual offerings. And we made a choice to keep our prayer services more intimate. I think that choice lasted for some time. I'm not remembering how many how many months in or maybe even longer, we kept it close to those in our community and, and those in the same space as those in our community. And then we began to widen it little by little and invite folks to join us and now our community of weekly prayers has folks that have been with us for many years and folks coming new for the first time and it's been so sweet and potent to build virtual prayer community and it's also been an immersion for our, for our priestesses, our ritual leaders and how to create effective virtual ritual. Because we are, among other things, a ritual leadership training program and pre pandemic our work focused on how to create potent, meaningful, effective rituals in person we didn't even say in person because it wasn't like there wasn't a question. It was kind of a given that that's how we were working until a pandemic and then in this time, our people have been and crafting skills around offering powerful ritual space through virtual portal. And so that's been, that's been something that we've given attention to as well. I'm gonna listen here for a moment to see what I'll add. I'll extend the story until now, because we still gather for weekly Shabbat toasts. And we this past year have faced big questions of how, as a community, that pre pandemic was really rooted in in person gatherings, to create connection and transformation. What do we do now, after a year and a half, two years of virtual programming? Do we stay online doing resuming being in person and there's really different needs priorities and desires within our community? Some folks, for resource reasons or abilities, reasons or reasons related to where they are in the world, are thrilled to keep everything virtual, because it allows points of connection that wouldn't otherwise be possible. And some folks are yearning to gather in person again. And we're inside now two and a half years later, active conversation as we are dreaming into next layers of our training program and the continuity of folks who have been with us, or who were with us pre pandemic of how to well meet, how to well meet the vibe, the varying needs of folks. At this time, particularly regarding do we gather virtually do we gather in person and I'm remembering a moment maybe it was a year into pandemic, when folks began to talk about things going back to normal. And it felt so clear to me. And my close people that like, there is no going back to how things were but there is a listening to what now, how do we have the the moment in the landscape of pandemic is shifting, like how, how, how do we create and shape neck. And that was a conversation a year into pandemic and still two and a half years later, we're in pretty much that same conversation and, and feeling the possibility and also the dynamic tension. Like there's some in our circles, who are like really excited to go back to how things were. And then there are other, I'm included in the others who are just like, going back is not a thing. And the forward needs to shape differently than what we were up to before and how can we make the best of what was before and to what is now and what has emerged as clear through this process of pandemic. And in this moment. So let's say two and a half years in we're speaking in July of 2022. I hope I'm doing my math, right, but it's two years on change. I am like in a particular place where I I am much more quarantining still, than most folks that I know I wasn't always there were like, some months for various reasons that I was choosing travel and being out and doing things in outdoor spaces.

**Taya Mâ Shere** 13:33

And for for particular reason right now I'm close to home and minimizing in person contact with folks. And it's, it's wild to watch the distinctions around. Folks approaches with this, by choice by desire by necessity, how we're each orienting in this moment when some may be experiencing pandemic as over them may still be feeling impact high. And that's really curious. I'm thinking to have the Seminary where I teach Starr King which had a really strong virtual presence and distance learning present, pre pandemic, and we had a lot of distance students, and then during pandemic shifted fully online. And what we found as we have made some attempts as a school to begin to hold some in person programming again. But it really wasn't actually optimal. And I've been grateful for my courses at the seminary to continue virtually, and it seems that much of our programming will continue to build virtually and there are a lot of gifts in that. And there are some losses in that too. Just continuing to be in the weighing of it all. I'm thinking at this moment in the seasons, and in the year, many of us who are Jewish clergy are beginning to look toward the hugging the High Holidays, the the Jewish New Year and kind of the pinnacle moments in our prayer year. And during the first autumn of pandemic of 2020 2020. For many, this, it was like, can we do this really sacred thing online in our community, we were like, yes, we're so excited to do it. And many synagogues entered into this world that, like, had never considered broadcasting over tech, in these like high ritual moments. And now it's for many, not all, for sure. But for many, it's a given. And now as we are arriving toward High Holidays, what we find is in our community, some folks are really wanting to gather in person and some are so excited to be in our online portal. And just seeing folks really weighing how to continue to nourish and nurture, virtual community community that is not rooted in place, but rooted in other points of connection, how to balance that with routing in in person, community and contact and so the conversation stays alive here.

**Kit Heintzman** 16:42

I'm curious, the last few years have had so much going on that aren't just the pandemic. I'm wondering, in addition to how to how COVID-19 was sort of shaping you what were some of the other issues that were on your mind and heart over the last couple of years?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 17:00

I'm listening in here. My response what arises for me is really actually connected to pandemic but perhaps more personal, perhaps slightly tangential. What arises for me is the ways that relationships have reshaped when contact is primarily a distance, and how to build relationship from afar. How to build relationship when there are differing needs around safety. I know. For my for myself, this has been such a continually evolving theme, I wrote an article in the first few weeks of pandemic effects in a time of physical distancing, that made some ripples in my communities. I don't quite say it went viral, but it made its way beyond my usual spheres. And it's like a very exciting for many folks template on what's possible in erotic connection, not in person. And like offered a map of all these possibilities for people to play with, and got really awesome feedback around it, and was like happy and heartened and like, I felt like I had offered a good thing. And as, as the time unfolded, wow, I really saw how naive I was in a lot of the orientation of my piece which, which was seeking to offer, like positive possibilities and pleasure in challenging circumstances. And, and I think what arose for me was more like the impact of the challenging circumstances of building relationship, not not just erotic relationships across distance and like what happens when we are used to certain kinds of contacts in our relationships and don't have that either seeing families or loved ones, much less frequency them with much less frequency than before or not perhaps having tools We need to ground I'm someone who is deeply somatically oriented. I'm very supported by being resourced in my body and, and the shifts in, in simple contact. Because I was in for much of the first parts of panaemic was in a pretty isolated quarantine. And this really continued to learn about the capacities of my own system and how

to work with them to be more imbalanced and more well. I'm gonna listen in here to see if there's anything else I want to add. I think that's all I'll say on this one.

**Taya Mâ Shere** 17:34

What are some of the things that brought you to the decision to quarantine and isolation and then as you as knowledge changed as needs changed, how did you discuss needs around safety with others?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 21:17

Quarantining isolation is kind of just what happened, I mentioned that I was in transit when the dominoes dropped until I landed for, I don't know a year and a half maybe somewhere that I had intended to be for four days and made choices and so I didn't know many people where I was at all and was also very protective of my health for particular reasons and really leaned into nature, I was grateful to be somewhere beautiful and let nature become my community. I also was a huge portion of my work pivoted to online I'm very, very lucky I felt very lucky in that way and things reshaped to be online and so many hours a day I was like, deep in zoom land, teaching and reading. And so I hadn't I was like oversaturated with connection through the computer and really leaning into nature and quiet in moments that were not that and I think conversations shifted for me around like our experiences shifted, when most folks I knew began to be vaccinated. Conversations open about traveling to see each other or sharing a meal outside or going for walks outside and and I remember kind of that first emergence, the first Cummings out and being totally nervous. My first I feel like my first making my way into the world was like, being with someone who wanted to go grocery shopping at a health food store and I had only gotten food delivered during that first year or whatever it was, and I was so nervous going into this health food store and it was such a wild experience because going into health food stores used to be my favorite thing like that was what I would do to ground and I just remember like having I wouldn't say I had a panic attack at the register wasn't to that degree but I was so uncomfortable I pretty much bolted from the store. I think maybe the checker wasn't wearing a mask and I I was it was hard for me and I and as I emerged I was I was in a place where a physical place where there was a real disparity around how folks were orienting toward vaccines and masks and all the things and so I remember like as I began going in public a little bit more I remember multiple times being in store, waiting in line with a mask on and being harassed by folks without masks on, because I was wearing a mask and like then arguing with me about like the truth or not like this COVID exists and definitely doesn't have me wanting to go indoors to more places, those experiences. I haven't, I haven't geographically been in many places during this time. But I've been in a couple of very different kinds of physical locations and eventually moved overseas to a place where there was a lot more collective care, not medically, but like, there was agreement that this is a thing there wasn't like is COVID real, there was like COVID, Israel, and we were lucky to have vaccines, and everyone should wear masks indoors. And it felt really different. I mean, my nervous system to be in that kind of space. Though, also, that more stressful because that the medical care available to me in that place would have been very different than in North America. I'm just listening here. And a lot of my community, like I have, have different pockets of community, some who take great care around precautions, for reasons similar to mine or different than mine, some who don't. For their various reasons. And, and for me, it's really ebbed and flowed, in terms of my comfort levels and my practices and in certain places I hold tight and other places and more useful around it all. And some of it depends on the time and the surge of COVID. Some of it depends on perhaps how I'm feeling in my body or what my commitments are to, to the folks that I'm around in terms of safety. I think that my only experiences in my in my life really, until pandemic, having conversations about like negotiating shared physical safety, where folks have different ideas about it, like had been around safer sex practice, I haven't, like done things like bungee jumping or other things where maybe like, we have to figure out like, do we have the

same safety protocols? I don't know, bungee jumping is probably not the right example. But but definitely like the conversations about shared protocols or not. And like, where are our bottom lines? What are we each need? How are we deciding, like, whose needs take priority here? With these are kinds of conversations that have become much more normal or normalized, haven't necessarily become easier. I see in our community, even right now, this week, as we plan a gathering, that we're actually still figuring out, will it be in person or virtual? The kinds of conversations that we're having of like what's needed if we are in person, how will we meet the collective needs around around precaution and, and I don't anticipate gathering in person. But I'm very much a part of the conversations where folks who are anticipating or hoping to gather or having having those conversations.

**Kit Heintzman** 28:42

Would you share something an example of what a conversation about boundaries in COVID, and safety boundaries and COVID looks like and then maybe reflecting on how conversations about safer sex pre pandemic brought you to the kind of conversation you are having now?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 29:16

When I think about the kind of conversations that are happening in group space around boundaries, we're speaking about things like distance and masks, outdoors versus indoors. We had an experience at our last retreat, I was not there. But where the group had people had tested before arriving and there were agreements to be only outdoors for the duration of the gathering. People were sleeping in indoor spaces, but some were sleeping off campus. But in the shared in the shared gathering, it was permitted to be outdoors and then and then a weather warning as severe weather warning came in, it was deemed that the not safeness of being outdoors outweighed the possibly not safeness of being indoors together. And so the leadership team on site made the really challenging but clear call to go inside. And so everyone rapide tested and they re located the gathering inside. And this is this is an example that arises from the conversations to that we are having are like, most but not all folks in our community are vaccinated and and navigating. how that impacts or doesn't what testing we require her folks together for our for our group offering. With friends, it's often it's often questions around distance masks, no masks, when have you tested laugh? It feels very similar, as I'm saying it now to conversations around safer sex. Kind of like replacing masks with perhaps like barrier methods of protection. Like test COVID tests with STI testing, like the conversations around barriers around testing around like, what what have you been up to? I'm taking COVID wise, like asking people have like their exposure risks recently. Similar to safer effects conversations around exposure risks, but to me, there are many parallels. And my sense is that many folks kind of by necessity and pandemic time, have just become more familiar and comfortable with having these kinds of conversations around COVID boundaries. And my sense, is that in sex, positive communities, often there can be a culture of normalization of safer sex conversations where like these are things that folks perhaps have additional practice or fluency and not across the board, but where conversations like that are given. There are, there can sometimes be just the greater ease and and fluency and having them and I think that, that one of the things I see in these conversations, particularly I'll say in in the COVID boundaries, conversations is like an edge is when the content can get charged, or have judgment twinged in and I feel like it's really been an important learning to like have the conversations clearly and make choices according to like, what makes sense and like trying to find ways to have it be not loaded, not judgy, like just recognizing, okay, this, this is what it is, and what do we do with what it is like if, if I have X, Y and Z that I'm coming with, and you have X, Y and Z that you're coming with in terms of vaccination status, willingness to wear a mask or not immunocompromised history, recent exposures are not to do were you just traveling or at a large event indoors or whatever the thing is, and like being able to come to these conversations in the sense of like, neutrality like this is what has been and then how do we decide what decisions

we make, given what we're coming with and given what our needs are. And given what like is this high risk is this not high risk, and something that's high risk for one person may not feel as high risk to another person. And these vary for all sorts of reasons. Again, possibly immunocompromised status or being a caretaker for someone who's immunocompromised, or perhaps someone who has health insurance feels perhaps at slightly less risk than someone who doesn't have access to health care in the same way, like all so many variables go into this and finding ways to have the conversation that that builds bridges and also really respects the boundaries of folks who really most need their boundaries held well in these moments, so it feels important.

**Kit Heintzman** 34:37

What does the word safety mean to you?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 34:49

What a great question. I actually want to read something that I just sent about this in the Jewish Ancestral Healing Podcast, In the first season, I interviewed one of my dear priestess, sisters. YA (Yocheved Angelique) and her interview was amazing. She's a Puerto Rican, Jewish priestess, activist, healer. And in season two, she interviewed her child, Ari Felix, who's a brilliant astrologer, teacher activist, Star Weaver. And in Ari's newsletter that they just sent. They said this "safety has been established, not because I have 1000s of dollars in the bank, I don't but I will, not because everything's under control. And not because I know exactly what I'm doing and where I'm going, safety has been established, because I realized safety is the sensation of having a supportive, mature, loving relationship with myself. And therefore my reality, safety has been established, because I choose over and over to engage with God slash reality as if it loves me." And I saved these words from their newsletter, particularly for this line, "safety has been established because I realized safety is the sensation of having a supportive, mature loving relationship with myself and therefore with my right reality." What I love about this is the self referentiality in it the like finding center within and letting, letting ourselves not be thrown or skewed or overly shaped by the influences around us and really cultivating a sovereignty with interconnectedness, that, that allows us to be home inside of ourselves. And I say this in no way diminishing the very real needs around safety. Physically justicely. Like, in no way. Like, it's I'm saying this within the context of the need to support countering oppression, like for safety for all beings like that our needs are met for food, shelter, thrive, health care. We're living in a space that is not demonizing because of color, culture class ability. And I'm excited to highlight this piece here that that already speaks to, which again, for me is about sovereignty and the capacity for self referencing. Because I think that it can be easy, particularly in moments of crisis, to catch false urgency and perhaps not always be able to distinguish it from real urgency. And this is something that I saw throughout pandemic is like what happens when our collective nervous system is totally fried. What happens when we are in collective overwhelm and when like the trauma feedback loop continues to cycle and like maybe I found calm but then I talked to someone who's really overwhelmed like do I, how do I how do I stay regulated, in the face of extreme dysregulation, and building capacity for center which for me kind of begins with rooting in positive resource finding giving attention to what is most well in the body and the energy body in the community body and ancestral body is the pathway to healing I studied, trained as and practice a modality called somatic experiencing, which is a body awareness based trauma healing modality, which teaches that trauma doesn't heal by focusing first, on the places of fragments, or distress, but rather trauma heals by focusing on wellness by building capacity to give attention to what as well, and to letting overflow come from there to touch the places and form the places to kind of bring up the places and vibrant up I mean to attune the places distress is something of greater coherence. And over and over again, I've seen pandemic times as really like a boot camp in boot camp or Master's class, I really want to call it in navigating our individual and collective nervous system more well, like how to

understand what's going on our systems and regulate in ways that allow space for resourcing for deep breaths for care of body and mind and spirit and not not letting overwhelm or overload nose dive us, for so many folks. In my communities, like I've just seen, over and over us be way too stretched. And trying to both regulate ourselves well resourced ourselves well and also show up for each other well, and I feel like it's almost been like a constant baton passing of like, okay, who has more spoons, who has more capacity today to attend this and, and in, in Michael Hyatt community, our leadership can really spent the first years of pandemic both personally and organizationally in a lot of overdrive and whoever had like a little bit of extra in any given day would kick in to do the thing and really working now to the shape toward greater, greater sustainability. And I feel like, come to a point where like, it's not tenable to run on fumes. I mean, it never is, but really, at this point, looking towards sustainability, is is deeply connected all sorts of things to you, like, how can we be living in ways that nurture and nourish ourselves and each other our communities in this world, physically, emotionally, spiritually, and so to me, these all weave in to what it means to be safe, to not only be safe, but to build a nervous system that allows ourselves to know when we are safe, and when we aren't it to dismantle and train hyper vigilance. So that when we actually need to be hyper vigilant, we can act. And when it's not that moment, we can let ourselves rest because that rest is needed, period, like for its own sake, and it's also needed to be able to act. Again.

**Kit Heintzman** 42:50

How are you feeling about the immediate future?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 42:55

So much unknown. So much unknown. And I am finding that like the folks living in that with me, I am able to connect with more easily, like the returning to what was or like the like making plans. I don't know how to do either of those things right now. And so how I'm feeling about the immediate future kind of connects to how I'm relating to it, which is like doing my best to just like show up each day. Tending Well, really, really doing what I can to show up inside and the practices that support me do doing our best to prioritize where I'm placing my attention and my devotion, my care, my resource. And a lot of curiosity, a lot of confusion, I tend to me, I tend toward gratitude and optimism to certain degrees. I love orienting towards optimal possibility. And I don't totally see that now. I don't see not that. I think I feel very much in the immediate, like, I don't feel like I can see so far. Like, people are asking me to commit to things for next year. And like I don't know how to have that conversation. Like will I teach this thing a year from now? Like, okay, that presumes a lot of things that I don't feel able to presume. And even if I can presume them, my desire isn't to project in that way. It doesn't doesn't feel generative. Yes to dreaming. A little bit less. Yes. For me to planning. I feel I feel very much right here right now. I'm very much in prayer.

**Kit Heintzman** 45:06

What is something you've been grateful for over the last couple of years?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 45:16

I'm grateful for ways that this time has helped me become yet even more clear about what matters most to me. I haven't always known how to show up for that as well as I would like. I'm still learning I feel grateful for the circle of coastline support me I feel grateful for work when I've had it. I feel grateful for creative inspiration, the podcast, Jewish ancestral healing, which has now listeners in 67 countries and 1000s of downloads per episode and has raised amazing conversations, like been so well met, or people have named being so well met by it like the acclaim has been like, what I've been well by it that did not exist. Pre pandemic, it's like, an idea that arose in



the empty space of like, what am I going to do now? What's needed now. And I'm so grateful for the new possibilities and forms arising, I felt so excited to have conversations with people that I love and respect and who had such brilliant work. And I wasn't getting to have those conversations in person with them. And rather than just making a bunch of phone dates, I was like, let's broadcast this. And so like that inspiration in the form that has emerged from that I'm really grateful for that arising and feeling that as we're beginning to work on season three, now, I'm grateful for being alive, I remember distinctly feeling at the beginning of pandemic, like, I don't know if I will emerge from this alive. And I don't, I don't feel that we're out of pandemic yet. So I can't say I will emerge from this alive. And I'm grateful to be alive right now. So grateful to be alive right now.

**Kit Heintzman** 47:45

I'd like you to imagine speaking to a historian in the future, someone far enough away that they have no lived experience of this moment. What would you ask them, what would you tell them cannot be forgotten about this moment that we're going through?

**Taya Mâ Shere** 48:05

Adaptability is everything. I think of a Pavia Butler's brilliant book, parable, the seller, and her teaching God is change. I remember reading that for the first time, 20/25 years ago, and the way that it totally transformed and shaped me, and how much this period has felt like lived experience, some degree of that story, not, not in every way, but like a reminder, to not presume we know anything about anything, to be curious to be adaptable. My, my wish for them, if they're like looking back at us would be like compassion, like have compassion for us, like we were doing the best that we can. Or that we could and I feel like that's something that has a theme that's arisen over and over in this time is like, wow, in a massive circumstances, like we're doing the best that we can and I think I would invite a remembering of adaptability and orientation of compassion. And also I would ask them to like protect each other more. Well, to take care of each other more. Well, I feel like we've learned a lot collectively about how to meet those most vulnerable and sometimes that has happened Well, in this time, and sometimes it's not happened in this time. And so I would ask to that. Be careful there as long be remembered that The truth of interconnectedness of the impacts that one has on the collective feels paramount. And like finding a balance of like, sovereignty and interconnection, that is really at the heart of it all.

**Kit Heintzman** 50:21

I want to thank you so very much for the generosity of time, and the thoughtful beauty of your answers. Those are all of the questions I know how to ask at this moment. So right now, I just like to open some space, if there's anything you want to share, that you haven't had the chance to yet. Please take some space and share it.

**Taya Mâ Shere** 50:45

I feel so grateful for the invitation into this conversation Kit and the archive holders I, I have thought a lot about many of the things that I shared and others grounds have arisen in this moment because of this space. And the questions asked, and it's a joy and of meaning to me to hear what emerges, as I continue to make meaning of this time, I am also aware of my academic training decades ago, is as a folklorist, and I've done archival work of various kinds over the years. And now in some ways, the podcast is kind of archive-ish. So we don't, don't don't think of ourselves as an archive, we're like more like conversations toward creating change. But what I'm aware of is I'm often in a teaching seat that I've approaching this conversation of archive, I felt nervous, like, I don't know, I don't, I don't want to be fixed in time. I don't, I don't, I don't know how I feel about this. And that in itself, has been a really enjoyable is right word. But I've I felt curiosity around what has arisen for me preparing to speak in

this context. And I found that the reality the actuality my experience of speaking in this context with you, in this moment has been such a joy and really an useful blessing and, and I'm grateful for the care given to call forth and preserve stories from this moment, and I'm grateful for the container, inside of which my work can perhaps be not only towards remembering, also toward prayer and thinking, and thinking of the practice of remembering which both in Judaism and, and also particularly in, in Islamic Sufism, the practice of Vicar remembrance is a primary way to pray. And I feel grateful to be in remembering and translating experience and sharing or energies with you here, as a way of prayer. And I, I'll close in prayer, just asking that this sharing here, be for good that anything that doesn't serve compost with ease and grace and that what has emerged from me in this conversation with Kit in this archive, and whatever arises for you listening whenever and wherever you do, be for a blessing that, that this offering be equally blessed and a blessing in your life and community that it'd be a blessing in our lives, our communities and in this world towards collective liberation and I offer great thanks to the loving and wise ancestors, guide less support me, guide less support us offer great appreciation for a more than human world that is our kin, the creature teachers and the plan faster than the elements and I give great respect to to the first peoples of the places where we each are the ones whose bodies are the Islam. man with such great gratitude to the weaver and weaving of all the pulsing presents the source of life and the cycling or the many millions of miracles that have gone into this moment, coming into being and may it be so that this is a blessing. Thank you.

**Kit Heintzman** 55:08

Thank you.