

Hip Hop Bruha Transcript

Episode 3: Aisha Fukushima - 07/12/2019

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:00:00] What's up? Well. To hip-hop bruja and online think platform and podcasts that seeks to provide a critical analysis on everything from hip-hop pop culture to All Things political through an intersectional feminism lens and I'm your bruja host DJ cotton candy DJ turntables extraordinaire hip-hop feminist poet Community organizer published author editor lecturer public speaker Global hip hop culture.

Ambassador and known to be a people's hip-hop scholar but enough about me today. We have a very very very good friend of mine who is visiting with us today. I look up to her tremendously. She goes by the name. I shall Fukushima. She's a singer speaker educator and wrapped of it. She founded wrapped visum which is rap activism A hip-hop project spanning 20 countries and four continents amplifying Universal efforts for freedom and Justice.

She's a multilingual multiracial African American Japanese woman who was done lectures and performances everywhere from the United States to France Morocco, Japan Germany, England South Africa Senegal, India. Denmark and Beyond her activism work has been featured on Oprah Magazine tedx KQED public television The Seattle Times TV to and Morocco the Bangalore mirror hype South Africa's number one hip-hop magazine and so much more.

But there's so much more tie should than her bio actually States just as a person who I've gotten to know over the years and actually when we're always in a lot of hip-hop academic spaces. There's a Vibe where I feel that we really connect and understanding hip-hop itself the culture as. Global Travelers, we both are but also in the respect of understanding what it's like in the academic spaces that we tend to be in and then in other spaces and understanding the organizing aspect of things.

So I feel that I should I have that connection in that understanding on top of that. She's just a dope all-around person super. Like down to earth like tremendously grounded in the work that she does. She's an inspiration. She brings so much peace and calmness and love but also Fierce is hell and I'm truly honored to have her in the show visiting with us.

And coming in to share her wisdom her knowledge her groundedness with us. So let's give it up for I shoulda and let's hear more about her and her work. Absolutely candy. Thank you so much for having me and it's just such a pleasure want to say bonjour salam-o-laikum and the death combined. My how are y'all doing?

Aisha Fukushima: [00:04:46] My name is Aisha Fukushima, and I should be on stage and in life, I produce I sing and really at the heart of the power that music has to help us build solidarity to help us heal and to pursue a larger mission for free. Justice all around the globe.

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:05:04] I love that you always bring in all of who you are and all the work that you do and in really thinking about who you are in terms of how

you embrace all of your cultures and identities. How do you continue doing that? In the very core of your work with the kind of intentionality that you bring to your work.

Aisha Fukushima: [00:05:27] Well, thank you for that question. How do I embrace the multiplicity of my identities in the core of my work? You know, sometimes the first image that comes to mind is. Like a string instrument or even like a woodwind instrument that I kind of see myself sometimes as an instrument that has its own shape has a form but it can play many different tunes and really like my work is when I'm in resonance.

So a lot of times like even a drum comes alive when there's like a frequency or an impact or depending on who's in the room that drum can play many different tunes and it can be in tune with a lot of different songs. And people and Vibes and so and it's not being an instrument doesn't necessarily mean that there's no Identity or content or something unique that you bring.

But I also think a lot of. The multiple elements of my identity in the cultures that I've grown up in and the way I've come and I'm always learning to understand myself both locally and my current base in Philadelphia or nationally across the us or internationally around the world having had the honour to travel to 20 different countries doing this work a lot of it requires listening and then finding those points of resonance with one another and so I think for me, that's all.

One way of thinking about it and allowing what comes alive in the room to help animate and to help embody the work and part of why that's so important to me is I think it can be really looking at the balance of power and privilege and the challenges that I faced on an individual level.

Sometimes it's easy to let. One's identity or one's initiative whether that's from like an imperialist route or it's from. The center of our own experience in our daily lives is easy to let that take over when we have the power of the mic or any other kind of power intent, but we're seeing playing across our political Spectrum right now.

And so it's for me. It's so important to listen and to work in resonance with communities because for me that's what solidarity looks like and feels like and it's essential for us in my humble opinion in order to. To not only survive but thrive in the future. I mean climate crisis all the immigration debates that are going on and much needed reform the continued oppression of folks both locally and all around the world.

All these kind of core issues are ones that involve us working together. So again that for the me that residents are being the instrument listening and then vibing are creating a vibration with what's in the room is so. Crucial to then building hopefully building a larger movement, which I think is at the core of our liberator work

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:08:26] you said a lot there. Thank you so much for that. I mean that was really beautiful. I love how you really talked about being an instrument and having that analogy or that symbol of who you are the work that you do and then even how you talk about the tune and The Vibes and how you even see. It doesn't necessarily mean that there's no identity because to me when I think

of instrument and you know as an artist as a musician, I think. It's so unique and there is an identity to an instrument so many different ways and then you work alongside other instruments other elements and people especially you as an international artist that is traveled to 20 different countries. I mean, what are some of the things that you've learned as an artist, I'll Global artists because some of the things that I love that you talk about is, you know talking about which I've talked to pretty much a lot of academic Scholars. Or just even artists how we're missing information or there. Not as archived or as documented in terms of international hip-hop and as and I so I think you know, what have you learned in your travels? What are we missing in understanding how hip-hop is global around the world and how are folks showing up in that work? Globally.

Aisha Fukushima: [00:09:48] Wow. Hmm. What are we missing in global hip-hop and how are folks showing up Global? Well, that's cool. That's such a big question can be like I'm so again honored to share this vocal resonance space with you as a global citizen as well and doing this work. So I'm very curious. I think we can Ciphers on this a lot. Let's see I think. So it's really hard to summarize and I wouldn't even dare to like try to summarize all the different stories that are out there, especially in terms of global hip-hop. But what I what I can say that I am humbly learning is even if. Some elements of hip-hop that may be documented depending on who's telling the story around the world about how hip-hop started in their respective regions. Sometimes there's a common narrative that I've heard of like. Yeah. I was I got a table of yo, MTV Raps or gotta, you know small recording and someone brought back from New York when they visited in my family and then all of a sudden you created this larger movement. And I heard this story like for example in Morocco or some of my friends said that's for them was the start of their hip hop practice. I think that's one narrative that I've heard and I also heard narratives like my friends data G that a g family in Senegal and they said. Well, we called our album Boomerang because we believe that hip-hop started here in West Africa with Grill storytelling and then it's traveled all around the globe and it's come back in this manifestation of hip-hop as one. Form of Grill storytelling or I think about being in Kazakhstan and I remember some of the folks being like what's emceeing like tell me more about this hip hop culture and is particularly about what does this whole idea of rap mean and freestyle and so as I started to describe it I was at a classical music school.

And the students took out a to stringed instrument called a domra and then they started playing it and tapping the front the front becomes like a percussive element while they still strum and then they started singing on top of it in a form that felt like they were rapping and doing their own thing.

You know, they're like MC on this tostring don't wanna and let me know in the classical school in Kazakhstan that this was their form of freestyling and they said this is called it's this has been alive for many many many generations. This is a core part of our culture and it's how we can freestyle about love and politics and give each other a hard time and tell stories some people might like in graffiti to ancient hieroglyphs or even cave paintings back back back away and you know that we've been drawing on walls and leaving messages for one another for for a long time.

So. I guess I just bring up those examples because I think that some of the practices that people might identify in my humble ever-evolving practice of

wrapped of ism. They might call it hip-hop. But I think I also want to acknowledge how much bigger it is and how much deeper rooted it is and even ancestral Traditions that are also innovating at the same time to adapt to our current.

Times in our current environment our current needs and means and modes of communicating and galvanizing one another. So I think that's one of the large stories of hip-hop that gets Untold and sometimes we get bogged down in single narratives around how hip hop started or what it means and I truly part of why I started to rap to visum was understanding that especially when it comes to hip-hop activism folks around the world are doing this work.

And they're rapping and doing their thing in multiple languages and organizing like there's no tomorrow because they feel the fierce urgency of now and it's really time for also Us in the state's I say humbly with the privilege of my American citizenship for us to listen up and to share the stage or to hand over the stage to our colleagues abroad who are doing this work and have we have a lot to learn from as well.

They might not show up in the top 40, but it. It mean that they're not kind of all stars who are just inspiring us and helping pave the way for a more sustainable just Equitable tomorrow. So I don't know if that summarizes the stories but I think that's one thing that I've humbly learned in this journey. Um around Global hip-hop.

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:14:23] Yes. Oh my gosh, you did put it so lovely and the way I imagined when you talk about it, globally every time you talk about the connectivity of the of global citizenship and what solidarity looks like in terms of hip-hop, but particularly it's not single narrative conversation because to me there's multiple truth.

So it's really exactly the multiplicity in in just. Ending the concept of hip-hop period is the multiple truths that exist and sometimes we get so caught up in the semantics which I also understand because often people are erased and especially when it pops become sore so corporatized so co-opted it matters to folks in terms of their placement and visibility and Hip-Hop that they feel erased right a lot of our Pioneers feel that way because so I think I think. Where we can try to Bridge and and gather and collect together to formulate the collectivity in this coalitional way that hip-hop is meant to be or has always been or can expand with right and I think you really spoke on that and terms of what does it mean to be in solidarity and that's often hard to paint for a lot of people, you know, because.

I mean in theory we can think about it but then in practice sometimes people get lost in and how that really looks like and to me you've seen and even mentioned some of these ways that people have been doing it in terms of well. This is what it can look like in this is what you do through rap to visit, you know, and I think it's really beautiful.

Aisha Fukushima: [00:16:17] Thank you for that. And one thing I want to build off of your point candy because it is so important about the multiplicity of those voices and I totally hear to what you're saying about people feeling eclipse and their story gets the klippstein co-opted and all these things which is so so real and part of why.

I think about stories and I find strength and stories like the boomerang Grill storytelling or the Kazakhstan folks were like, this is an ancient tradition prize is that like, you know, it's bigger than that that solidarity that the fact that the practices that we've been gravitating towards that we've been innovating on for so many generations.

Our practice all around the globe and many people have found it as a source of Liberation and power and that gives us a Common Language to the point where you know, I can land in Belarus and find breakdancers all these incredible folks who want to build immediately because we all speak the language of hip-hop like that's power that multiplicity that.

Multiple roots of what we perceive or understand to be hip-hop which is constantly evolving and going in all directions at once. You know that there's power in in that so I just want to kind of shop that I'm like even imagining in my mind like a powerful Baobab Tree like that. It can be so kind of expansive and The Roots and you know, just some of that I think.

Gets lost when sometimes for some people hip-hop my get boiled down to like a Geico commercial whatever it is. Yeah one version of hip-hop and and maybe a mini soundbite version of what they see on a quick screen.

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:18:04] And that was I shall on the conversation of the multiplicity of hip-hop various narratives that exist and how there's power in that and we're going to go take a break. We'll be right back at hip-hop bruja as soon as we listen to this track.

That was , Fukushima song Flint. And that song broke it down talking about can't breathe the what was happening. What is happening in Flint? Well, we're back here at hip-hop bruja, and we're going to get back into this conversation when I should focus Shima and now we're heading into the conversation and she breaks down rap to visum for us.

Aisha Fukushima: [00:20:34] Um, in terms of how our activism looks like in practice. I think it's very much about. Again, it goes back to listening piece. So oftentimes it starts with an invitation from a community oftentimes. Some of my strongest collaborators are young people and educational entities and organizations who are amidst some challenges or midst an emergency to borrow language from books like complex movements and even like tipping my hat to emergent strategy.

They're in this moment of emergence trying to bring in a new transition and how things are run for example in their school and their community. And so what I do first is I listen. And I learned about why it is they think that our collaboration is important and what they want me to bring to their space and or help open up as someone who has a slightly different position or power as someone who's oftentimes coming into a community and I can speak up also in very little time in a way that slightly different than folks who are fully immersed in that environment and maybe I've been saying all the things for a long time.

So in many ways, it's. Dingbat power and also leveraging the power of creativity to get people out of their comfort zone so that they can have conned candid conversations through new modes of being because what I find often times when I

go to different places that people they might be able to recite all the policies they've written for quote-unquote equity and inclusion, or they can.

Say that discrimination is bad in their business or in their XYZ organization, but when it comes to the action that's really hard when it comes to the Praxis that's really hard. We might be able to recite those points. But how do we embody it? How do we actually because activism is a daily Choice?

How do we actually make that real? And so I view my role after listening and understanding? What is what is the role that people invite me to have? Especially those change makers who are kind of at the Forefront of that change again often young people after understanding that then I pair that with a wrapped of his in pedagogy that I started creating when I was 15 years old around Performing Arts music.

Poetry movement to get people literally to start embodying some of the principles that are crucial to not only having people being treated with dignity amongst one another but also respecting our environment and the environments that we live in are many ecosystems wherever those communities are and so far that's been across four continents. I'm always learning and also taking the lead of the young. Who are also my teachers in that Journey?

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:23:36] This is beautiful work that you've done and I love hearing about it. You know, you've spoken a lot on on some of the things around what you do around wrapped ISM and you really really painted it what it looks like for me and I really love that you talking about Adrienne's work around emergent strategy because how she opens it up and and and describing emergent strategy work or is just literally talking about the birds and how they find each other in. Activity, right and I really love that because even just that visualization and help me understand we still gravitate together to build the world we want right and what do we do with that? And I think that's exactly a lot of what your work is and I'm amazed by you having starting to do this at 15 years old and creating this pedagogy work. And so I really think about your work and it's just so neat. So needed for us as artists because one thing I always continuously say for me is how one we're doing the work but there's always a necessity for us to sharpen our analysis. So that we're more intentional of our Consciousness, right and how we put it into practice and how we not just even again going back to like, okay, we can what you said recite the policies and the equity inclusion and have all the language in the jargon, right?

But how does that look like when how we literally? Treat one another every day how we treat one another and then and then how do we come together to build that Collective Liberation? Right and and part of that is yes sharpening your analysis, but actual mindfulness. Practice of mindfulness intentional way of how we come together. And so what I noticed in a lot of your work and especially I enjoyed your session when we were in a ten core recently, which we were I really love how you I love that we do it together. I really love how you bring in the mindfulness aspect the meditation the breathing some of the like a lot of that and bringing in. Into how you incorporate your workshops with everybody and and can you speak a little bit more about that and what brought you to bringing that into your practice into how you held these conversations and hold space for people in the way you do it.

Aisha Fukushima: [00:26:07] Mmm. Yeah, so mindfulness is. Such a key thing for me and the same time something I struggle with like as you say mindfulness. I'm like no because I grew up. So I grew up in part immersed in mindfulness practices by way of my mom. One of my youngest childhood friends also was super into mindfulness even in elementary school, and I remember her inviting me to sit down to meditate and I was. I remember loving it so much and at the same time as I got older struggling with being able to just clear some of my thoughts and all the busyness and to just sit into focusing on the breath or two just recenter or to even feel that that was deserved or that that was something I could afford to do and at the same time even if I just. One two three minutes or 10 seconds 10 breaths, you know just to recenter it and kept noticing that it could recalibrate my whole day and I think part of that struggle I bring up because I think a lot of people struggle with mindfulness and trying to build in that practice even if that's just a conscious breath before they take their sip of morning coffee.

No and actually taste the coffee or whatever it is because so much of our culture is built around. I can't help but feel like there's a lot of distraction. There's a lot of things that are supposed to grab our attention very quickly and not necessarily an encouragement to mindfulness. So that's something literally that I build in two spaces because I've noticed that it can shift a space what I what I mean by that in practice, especially when it comes to social justice in particular is often times.

I started doing this practice very organically around mindfulness because I would walk into a room and as I mentioned, you know, sometimes there's a lot of tension built up. Maybe you can tell people some people have rushed their their heaving with their breath or whatever and you can just tell that there's so many emotions and things that people have gone through in that day or in their lifetime before they got to that space and for me mindfulness is a way of routing and making space for people to actually be present in the space.

So that we can actually make the change and so I saw that in when people walk in oftentimes they have crossed arms or there maybe their fists are little clenched because they're nervous about being in a workshop or meeting new people. All these different kinds of body language cues and even things that you hear from participants and folks colleagues comrade so to speak.

You're working with in a workshop or in a performance sector space and then once we do even a minute of mindfulness walking them through, you know, just dropping into their breath. Then I noticed a body language changes the energy in the room changes. There's a whole new level of openness that we might have been two hours into a session and we might not have gotten to that same openness that we got to within one minute if we hadn't taken a a chance to.

Three Center on the breath and check in with ourselves so we can check in with each other and be present with each other for me. That's foundational to my humble social justice work in that it allows me to feel more connected to be more resonant and to listen more deeply in a world that's often filled with a lot of distraction and it is sometimes built or encourages.

In my opinion to not see here understand feel for one another so that practice is so crucial for me and also in bouncing out that the empath part of myself and I think a lot of people might relate to this specially social justice folks is that. We feel so

much for what's happening in the times and sometimes we forget to give compassion to ourselves or to water the plant that we are so that and so that we can all grow in our ecosystem and in our garden so that practice of mindfulness also allows me reminds me to bring back some of that nourishment so I can continue to travel with the flock

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:30:22] and that was I shift Fukushima gently reminding us to be compassionate with ourselves so that we. Can return with the flock to build towards Collective Liberation. We're going to take a break and we'll be right back.

Hmm. What can I even tell you about this artist and the song words can't even describe how much of a fan I am of this artist. I'm telling you. She goes by the name cut eat. She's an artist based out in Melbourne, Australia. But got roots in Papua New Guinea and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander. I mean, I'm telling you she is super talented Neo-Soul hip hop all over she sings she rhyme she spit she's super talented on top of that.

She was named as one of the best rappers MCS. I'd like to say under 25 by Red Bull Music. And she's got over 5 million streams on Spotify. She made ways with a lot of her joints 2002 and something and natural woman. I mean. You've got to see your live. I haven't even seen her live. I wish I could see her live, but I've seen a ton of videos of her performances that were live as well as her music videos, and I've got her songs. This one that you just heard is called me shining that dropped earlier this year. So I'm telling you right now support. Artists International artists specifically women in hip-hop women in general. I mean you just gotta pick up her music her vibe is what I'm feeling if there's any artist that we need to look to I would say you've got to look to Kai eat for real for real for real now.

We're back on the show. And we I should actually mention that in a few weeks. We'll be having some guests from Australia. We're going to have a two-part series featuring guest from Australia. I was in Australia earlier this year. So I've met a lot of these folks and I'm super excited to have them on the show. So I just wanted to share that real briefly and maybe one day we'll have kite on the show. Wouldn't it be nice?

But anyway, we're back to the show and we're going to get back into the conversation with my good friend. I shall Fukushima as we've continued talking about mindfulness practice as well as pausing pausing and savoring moments.

So let's get back into the conversation with Aisha and hear her thoughts and all of this. So I shh. Mindfulness meditation being intentional to be compassionate with ourselves. I mean you're inspiring me to get back to you that you know, the distractions are real and honestly, the distraction is like literally survival of capitalism, right?

Yep. And yeah, I think it. It's a reminder that we need to pause and savor every moment we can and I mean, that's how I used to try to meditate if I couldn't if I couldn't even do 20 minutes in a day, right? It would be just a reminder to take a breath. You know and that can go a whole long way. I mean, that's how I manage, you know to be more to be more mindful because sometimes doing 20 minutes is difficult, right either that or or but difficult in not because I don't want to butt in especially now more than ever.

I feel like I've got an off-balance. Ever since I've had children and I'm trying to figure out how do I balance my life again? You know and how do I how do I bring to bring things back into my life that I also love to do? So I think part of it is just taking these moments of pause and savoring and then taking just a breath and sometimes I'll do a reminder of like I'll put a dot on my phone which like a sticker dot to be a reminder to take take a breath literally but coming back to the work that you do is just.

Really loved by the way that you mentioned your mom because that was one of my questions about that about your work and I really love how your mom is involved. So also how you incorporate and how you bring in rather your mom. So I think and your mom's so sweet by the way, so I think like two things is one how you bring in this work to remind.

See ourselves how we need to pause and save her how we need to survive capitalism not necessarily by constantly producing but taking a moment for ourselves and and and that again brings it back to your words of not just surviving but thriving right and so also so that. Component of taking a breath is so important to work that you do.

But another question is also how I think part of your coalitional building your solidarity building towards Collective Liberation is how you bring in people like families like your mom because solidarity isn't just organizational with. Other folks solidarity is within our families coalitional building is with our families and I feel that you bring that on how your relationship with your mom. Like tell me what that's like and how that practice is and and just in general why you do right?

Aisha Fukushima: [00:37:15] Yeah. Oh my gosh. That's a great question. Well. So I think sometimes I think about organizing like a constellation of stars. And so she's definitely a big star and that that constellation helps guide and then, you know different points of time.

We maybe see different stars or their different kind of moments as we continue to travel through time and space. Hmm. So Mom is part of the stars. And then I also have a working collaboration I take on wrapped up as an intern so I do mentorship. Particularly with younger college students who are interested in doing arts and activism work.

I've had everything from a really amazing MC jazz pianist that I worked with two like a young published poet who was studying also Oxford and then at the same time like doing community where it's just like really amazing kind of. Different folks from different walks of life and is now doing interested in doing Refugee work particularly focusing on North Korea, which is really cool.

So there. I try to build in both a level of mentorship and learning into all the different relationships and to know that that's Dynamic and that relates back to my mom and our relationship to because I mean, I grew up my mother primarily raised me on her own. we worked very much as a team. So we feel very much like students of one another my mom.

Also, you know from a more Buddhist tradition says our beliefs that the children have picked their parents. And so in that case, you said Joyce jokingly not jokingly

says thank you for picking me and then we agree and we disagree but we always learn from one another in that journey. And so I think that's really important because sometimes I think there's I bring up sort of that push and pull in that learning process because sometimes I think.

Especially with maybe more commercialized versions or the small Snippets of social organizing and what it is to build solidarity. We just think okay everyone at the rally we all just agree and then you know, we make a plan and we're just going to go for it. And I think that learning and evolving together is such a crucial part of creating long-term systemic change and also intergenerational change whether that be via interns who are also my teachers or working with my mom.

My mom also has an incredible background that I would be remiss not to mention. I mean she she helped grow one of the biggest landmark companies that helped bring American Artist the likes of James Brown and Funkadelic TLC. Well, that's a more complicated story. But Meshell Ndegeocello Natalie Cole like these incredible artists to Japan.

For some of them amongst their first kind of rounds of touring and so I grew up behind the scenes of the music industry seeing her organizing and understanding really the business aspects of what is otherwise an abundant form of Liberty Tori art and understanding what it is to organize in that environment and learning from her tenacity learning from her.

Not necessarily being afraid of the know as you work towards different kinds of yeses and trying out different. I'm almost thinking of Jenga blocks like playing with seeing which one's work and which ones don't and it's okay to play and it's okay to learn in that Journey. So I learn a lot from her in that sense as well and she helps guide me and at the same time.

I also give a lot of pushback when. Well working through different strategies, whether that's how to organize with another organization or maybe their political differences that or visions of like who's the best candidate in this case, you know, like those are all great debates to have and and it definitely helps me to grow more resilience and to grow more aware in the work that I do that we're constantly in dialogue.

She also has taught me a lot about mindfulness, so. That's been a big part and parcel of the work and has definitely helped ground me a mini a very short story that helped It's Kind of a Funny linkage as I grew up, of course in this mindfulness tradition. And then at the same time there was a point in time where I was like, okay, I'm you know, this is too much.

I don't have any time for this and I was working in public schools in the San Francisco Unified School District, and I remember being in classrooms that were. Way too full the resources were spread so thin in some cases and as someone who is working as a paraprofessional, I got to kind of observe a lot of different classroom teachers and seeing what they're doing while still assisting students and I would notice that a lot of the teachers when they reach their moment of absolute like I'm.

About to burn out and want to yell. I'm really frustrated everyone screaming and we've lost any sense of like, you know learning mission in this class period they would ball up their fists and that you could just see their face start to change and then they would take a deep breath. And it was so interesting because Time After Time different different teachers different circumstances.

This would happen over and over again and I started to notice how that breath was a reset for them and it was like literally one breath because I didn't have time with 40 kids in the classroom to do anything else. So but it was such a powerful moment of transition where all of a sudden I could see them going from like one option.

Like I need to yell at everyone right now to like hey, what are their options? Do I have to make to transform the energy that's in this room. And so if that helps kind of like anchor back. The mindfulness and the many learning Traditions that are part of the work. Those are all things that help inspire me. And then I hope our Cipher through all the different kinds of solidarity relationships that I build whether that's with my mom or with r activism interns or otherwise.

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:43:48] Wow, I mean. I'm so amazed several things cause I know it's time right but I want to like I know I wish it wasn't I wish we had more time together. Um, but first of all, I mean, it's I want I never knew this about your mom. So this is I'm so happy to hear this because I you know, I just had done we were talking and she shared a lot about her mom, you know, and how she came into her orgonite her organizing work and maybe I should do a show on bringing on. All of your mom's no, thank her for real. I think that b beautiful that's another podcast show, but I think it's so beautiful her history and her work and her practice and how that showed you what this form of Liberty art is in what you said? So I think that's beautiful and I also love that it also taught you about how. Not to be afraid of the nose as you work towards the yes and that it's okay and to really be strategic in how you make those decisions and then how you've come to your own practice on how you make these discussions together to work through these debates that you call it. I mean that's just beautiful. I love the relationship that you're continuing to build with your mom and you're doing this through hip-hop you're doing this through your rap to visum. It's just amazing work. So I'm just like again I'm always. In our view for real and I really love

Aisha Fukushima: [00:45:20] thank you ma'am. You are also very amazing. So I'm like I'm sitting over here like come on now confetti and the glitter and all the things your way to cause I'm like hello.

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:45:36] Well, that's why I mean we just. Got over together. I mean and we do we do in so many ways but more of it right and I just think like even how you just started off talking about these different constellations I can because that's multiplicity. That's that's emergent strategy right there. You know, like how we work in collaboration together and how we just gravitate towards one another and you and your mom gravitate together and I saw that I really saw that and of course it's not to say that things are perfect because nothing ever is any partnership relationship and etcetera, but just that alone. So anyway, I'm just as we close up. I just want to you know, leave it to you to share any last thoughts on how you do your work and are what's coming for you and what you've got next in line for you. And what do you envision? In the future of not just your work, but in

hip-hop and Beyond hip-hop and in community and towards Collective more liberation of things there.

Aisha Fukushima: [00:46:44] Thank you for that. Hmm a stories coming up for me around I remember as. When I was pretty young that my my mom at that time was cleaning homes, and it was just tough. I remember eating oatmeal for a month when I got to college. I didn't want to eat oatmeal any more Koop. Nice all these kind of like affluent kids eating oatmeal knows like what the heck because that was the only food that we had to survive on right and at the same time my mom recognize that the world might keep putting different.

Boxes around who I or we should be respectively and I had already gotten that from teachers and from other students about well because you have this identity you need to talk this way. You need to be this way or you can't ever succeed in this and all these different stereotypes and boxes that were were limiting and at the same time.

I remember even with this very limited budget and like quite frankly living in a neighborhood where. You know, we had rampant forms of racism and other kinds of isms to the point where like our car tires were slashed 16 times, you know in the the years that we live there. She still wanted me to dream and to dream wildly and to dream big and to not be confined by those boxes that people so readily handed me. And so what that look like in practice is thinking I remember we would do these trips or shoe just hand me a map of Washington state where I grew up and she's like and actually had parts of Canada and parts of organ and kind of like the whole Northwest region and she just say, okay you can either close your eyes and pick a place or you just pick a place. Whatever it is, and then I you know close my eyes land my finger. I'm like, okay Canada and then next thing, you know, we drive up to Canada that day and I wasn't quite I mean we didn't really have funding for a vacation so to speak but it was. It's moments like that that are almost funny to think about now that I think part of the message or what I took away from that experience is that she didn't first of all knowing your power as a young person as a little little kid people might write me off at that age to have initiative and believe in my own agency and into dare to think out of the box.

Yeah, maybe we didn't have all the financial means to make something happen and. The same time we still made an adventure. We still had a good time that they're not to be limited by all those boxes or two. I would say I remember I think one of the first time she handed me that map of like, I don't know but what about the gas?

I was worried about all these concerns and limiting already limiting learning to adopt the limits of all those different boxes of all those circumstances that had been handed down to me of. Being working class of being a person of color being a woman which is all these things are also powerful identifiers, but I got used to certain narratives and her doing that simple exercises being like, where are we going?

You you point the way you decide with such an invaluable piece? And I think that's that's something that I hope will transcend to hip-hop. In the future that we don't get to use to the boxes that get gestured towards or the certain performative practices, whether they harken back to kind of oppressive politics or what have

you that we can keep dreaming big when it comes to Liberatore the laboratory capacity of hip-hop that is consistently undermined for a reason in a lot of large Media or large platform media rather and to keep building up platforms for that that.

That expression in its many forms to get heard to get seen to get felt to get practiced and I also implore. I hope that maybe that that small Gem of a story can help Inspire our maybe find some resonance and someone's heart out there in terms of what they're going through because. I have a feeling that I'm not alone in that constellation of stories and that constellation of are flocking together that sometimes those boxes can feel really heavy and at the same time those are not ours to carry and they're not ours to pass on from generation to generation.

So I think that's one one teaching that she's passed on to me and so far in this life that has been passed on probably from ancestors and I just want to keep sharing that. Here in this space and Beyond,

DJ Kuttin Kandi: [00:51:25] I mean one thing that stuck out for me was you mentioned how each things shouldn't be passed on, you know, because I thought of trans generational trauma and even though there is that there's also what my friend Valerie really work research on on on transgenerational bravery because if there is that there's also the bravery and your mother totally exemplifies that as well as you so thank you for sharing all of this. I mean, it's. Inspires me tremendously. I appreciate you deeply like why then you might love we got to have you back on the show at some point to talk about your pedagogy book when that are your toolkit when that comes out that's super important.

I would love to in terms of how people can follow up. They can connect with me on. Social media. Everything is Aisha Fukushima Instagram Twitter. My Facebook is at Global ayse. My whole name is spelled A i s. H a F u K Y u S h i M a and you can also find me at Aisha Fukushima.com. If you are a patreon supporter and or a YouTube subscriber and or a follower on any of these platforms, I invite you to subscribe to follow and to stay tuned.

I'm working on a whole new album of freedom song. And also building out a pedagogical tool kit that I'm really looking forward to sharing in the not-too-distant future. So those are a few of the many projects. But ultimately I'm looking forward to hearing from you all and hopefully building some wonderful things together because that's what it's really all about us getting free not alone, but collectively. Thank you so much candy for having me.

And thank you. I should for being here with us today for dropping all the knowledge. I mean you brought everything as you always do Coalition of building solidarity building movement work emergent strategy mindfulness practice and you shared all your beautiful stories of traveling global citizenship sharing your life with your mom with us.

I appreciate it all. Thank you for being you thank you for being all of who you are with us today. I hope you come back to the show because we'd love to see you here. We're such good friends are fans over here at hip-hop. Bruja loves you. Well, that's about it for today. And I hope that you all join us again as we bring to you

another episode of hip-hop. Bruja. I'm gonna close this off with one last Track by I should Fukushima and we'll see you next time here at hip. Bruja, peace.