

# STEPPEWOLF HALF HOUR

## Season 2, Ep: 11 – Kuumba Lynx: “Reclaiming Joy”

**Air Date:** 8/31/21

**Featuring:** Jacinda Bullie, Darius Parker and Audrey Francis. With Abhi Shrestha and Michelle Medvin.

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**Jacinda Bullie:**

It came out of this whole concept of younger poets really saying, “I got something to say.”

**Audrey Francis:**

From Steppenwolf Theatre Company in Chicago, Illinois...

**Jacinda Bullie:**

The starting point for KL has always been like, “Who are you?” You know. “Who's your people? Where are you from?”

**Audrey Francis:**

This is *Half Hour*. Welcome back to another episode of *Half Hour*. I'm Audrey Francis, and this week we've got a little something different up our sleeve. On this episode we're featuring a local Chicago organization that's been doing incredible work all over the city for the past 25 years: Kuumba Lynx. I sat down with Jacinda Bullie and Darius Parker—two of the incredible artists and visionaries who help make Kuumba Lynx run. But before we get into that conversation... not a huge deal (in parentheses, extra huge deal)... I am here with Steppenwolf's Education Programs Coordinator, Abhi Shrestha, who's going to set the scene for the conversation. Hi, Abhi.

**Abhi Shrestha:**

Hi, Audrey! So excited to be here.

**Audrey Francis:**

So grateful to have you here. So, for all the devotees of *Half Hour*, you might remember that Abhi joined us last season when we sat down with Storycatchers Theatre.

**Abhi Shrestha:**

And I'm sure ever since then you've been receiving and collecting all of my fan mail?

**Audrey Francis:**

I've been drowning in it. It's like It's like death by 1000 paper cuts. [Laughter] Anyway, so, Abhi, as you know, we've been trying to get this incredible organization on the show for a really long time. But for our listeners who might not be familiar, can you tell us: what is Kuumba Lynx?

**Abhi Shrestha:**

Well in the conversation Jacinda and Darius do a really great job talking about this, but Kuumba Lynx is an organization that was founded in 1996 by three amazing women: Jaquanda Villegas, Leyda "Lady Sol" Garcia, and Jacinda Bullie. For me, Kuumba Lynx uses art as a tool and as a resource, and specifically performance and poetry rooted in a pedagogy and a culture of hip hop, to create a brave space for young people to be. To be and to process and to understand the world around them and their relationship to it—which is very harmonious to how we think about and how we create space for young people in Steppenwolf Education.

**Audrey Francis:**

That actually brings me to my next question. What is Steppenwolf's relationship with KL?

**Abhi Shrestha:**

So, Kuumba Lynx, or KL, has had a history with Steppenwolf that actually precedes me. Their youth have performed work on our stages in different capacities. Recently, Darius Parker (who is Kuumba Lynx's, Director of Operations and also someone who went through Kuumba Lynx as a youth) Darius and I have formed a strong friendship as we collectively think about the space we want to create for Chicago teens. We've had multiple collaborations where Kuumba Lynx youth and Steppenwolf's Young Adult Council have been able to share space, have been able to watch shows together at Steppenwolf and have critical conversations around them. Kuumba Lynx youth have been brought to perform their beautiful and important works at events curated and moderated by the Young Adult Council. And recently also Kuumba Lynx teens have joined our Loft Opening Committee, which is a group of teens who help advise and dream up how we engage our new Loft space in the new building,

**Audrey Francis:**

Which you're in right now.

**Abhi Shrestha:**

And which is super exciting. *[Laughter]* But something that Darius and I have been working towards and dreaming up is collaborating on workshops that serve our respective teens together. How do we combine and lean on each other's pedagogies to create a space where our collective teens can bring themselves fully and learn not only from the facilitators, but more specifically from each other? I think Kuumba Lynx and StepEd share a similar value that our goal as the adults in the space is not to teach, but to create a space where learning happens and to provide resources and frameworks to help shepherd that.

**Audrey Francis:**

I think that's my favorite part about this conversation—was listening to the approach to education. Because I know that—not to date myself—but I wasn't educated that way. I was told what I needed to learn and how I needed to learn it and how my brain and soul needed to approach it. And what you're doing, the idea of inviting teens in to just be and learn from each other is an incredibly inspiring perspective.

**Abhi Shrestha:**

Same! Like that resonates so deeply. And I feel like the thing that I really love about, you know, working in StepEd and working with Kuumba Lynx is that it feels like something that I wish I had as a youth growing up as well. So, I'm just really excited to continue working with Kuumba Lynx and seeing what comes up what happens.

**Audrey Francis:**

Same. Should we listen to it?

**Abhi Shrestha:**

Yes, let's do it. I'm so excited to share this conversation and so excited to share my love for Kuumba Lynx.

**Stage Manager:**

Welcome back, everyone. This is your half hour call. Please sign in if you've not already done so. This is half hour. The house is about to open. Half hour, please.

**Audrey Francis:**

I'm just going to start off right off the bat with a question for Jacinda. Jacinda, can you tell me the one specific moment where you realized not only that Kuumba Lynx needed to exist, but that you were the person—one of the people—who needed to bring it into the world?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

I don't think I feel like I was the person that needed to bring it in the world, I think that I just happened to be in a moment in my own life, where I was recognizing the need for a brave space. A collective of folks who shared the desire to have, you know, love be a constant. A collective of folks who were, you know, experimenting with creative work. Looking at personal stories. Knowing the importance of the struggle of being involved in movement making. And just growing up in hip hop and loving on hip hop in the ways that we were. So, I think I just, it was like, right place, right time for myself, where I was in my own life trajectory and then the community in which I found myself in at the time. I grew up in the late 80s, early 90s, where hip hop was very underground. So, we didn't listen to it on the radio in that way. But we had basement parties, and, you know, just sort of the party was the center of the art and the culture making. There were graffiti writers. There was big, Black, you know, Black Book Sundays, where folks would, you know, meet at a writer's bench. Or they were, you know, Friday and Saturday night parties. And that's sort of just where we built family and developed the culture of the principles that a lot of what KL is now founded on. Around peace, love, respect, knowledge.

**Audrey Francis:**

It's so cool to hear that it was just an organic evolution. It sounded like it started happening in you and around you all at the same time. And then together, y'all collectively manifested this thing that Darius—you found at 15 years old? I've read that you talk about a moment where when you came to Kuumba Lynx on the first day, it completely shifted your framework of how you view the world. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

**Darius Parker:**

I've always known about Kuumba Lynx as an organization. They were housed right across the street from where I used to live up in Uptown. So, me and my friends always knew about Kuumba Lynx existing right? But we were just so... [*Laughter*] so not... what's the word I'm looking for here for us? I mean, we're just young, right? We really didn't understand the different things that existed in this world that affect us as young folks of color. We had no idea, right? And so, I remember joking with my friends, like "We're never joining a Kuumba Lynx. Like all they do is talk about fighting the man and talking about racism. We ain't joining them. They're like, that's too much." And it's so crazy that that was our like running joke. And then like, now I'm in it. And that's like, it's a part of who I am everything I've grown to be.

**Audrey Francis:**

Can both of you tell me from your perspective, what is what it Kuumba Lynx?

**Darius Parker:**

Kuumba Lynx is a not for profit, hip hop arts and education organization, which utilizes the elements of social justice, transformative and restorative justice, hip hop, to create performance works that we then tour across schools, universities, arts making spaces, healing spaces, communal spaces, right? Having a conversation from stage to audience about the different things that we are internalizing in this world, right? Thinking about systemic oppression, systematic racism, institutional racism, things like that that affect our young folks that they don't necessarily think about. Especially me as a youth, right? A lot of things I had thought about in this world. Kuumba Lynx was like, "Hey, these are things that are happening. These are things that are affecting you. These are things that are affecting us. How do you feel?" It's really about "What do you think about these things?" Right? And I was like, "Well, I don't really think about it. I don't really think, you know, I don't really think it exists." Oh, Darius how blind you have been to this world. And really thinking about how I use my voice and then becoming an alumni, becoming a part of leadership—how can I provide platforms that were provided for me, right? And I'll talk to Abhi and other folks over Steppenwolf, like, when Kuumba Lynx performed at Steppenwolf that was that was a huge highlight for me at 17. Like, I never would have thought I'd perform at Steppenwolf. So, I was like, "How do we get us back with Steppenwolf?" And so, me and Abhi now, we have created this amazing friendship. Now, we're thinking about what collaboration looks like between orgs and providing space for our young folks together. So yeah. I went on a few tangents. But—

**Audrey Francis:**

[*Laughter*] Jacinda do you have anything that you'd like to add? I mean, I know that there's, there's so much that Kuumba Lynx does. To you today, what is Kuumba Lynx?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

I mean, I think it's always been, for me, the same. It looks different, like as we evolve and grow. But I think at the core, what anchors us, what's in our DNA, is this idea about collective imagination. Asking the what if. So, like interrogating the world that we live in, not always knowing what the answers are. And I think when I listen to Darius talk about as a youth being like that, "We don't want to be messing with them." I think it's scary to ask questions. Because the truth is, that we don't have all of the answers and all the solutions. And I think for young folks—I was, you know, there is this age when we were imagining KL Jaquanda, myself, and Lady Sol. So we were, you know, we were young, we were in our late teens as well. So, asking questions can be scary. But I think at the root of when someone says like, "What is KL?" I think KL is about, you know, fighting to reclaim our DNA joy, right? What I mean by that is to not always stay in a pain narrative, but to learn how to move through that, right. And so, reclaiming the joy that that is inherently ours, right? It's about reclaiming our sovereign selves, right? It's about acknowledging our relationship with this land and the people that currently inhabit the land. Like, those are principles that have always been there. And it's about asking questions, as—you know, it's like the little shorty that's like, "why, why, why, but why, but why, why?" [*Laughter*] That's us. Right? And not necessarily having all of the answers but not also, not being afraid to try new things. To fail and to try something else. And it's crazy because I'm saying all of that and there's no mention of creativity.

**Audrey Francis:**

Right.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

There's no mention of that, of, you know, art making, of skill acquisition of like all of the things. But another piece that kind of anchors us is that we know we are creative. We are inherently creative, right? Because what is creativity? It's so much more than "I'm going to produce this play," or "I'm developing this character" or "I'm going to have this, you know, DJ mix." It's an expression of the essential questions that that lie within each of us, right? That's what our art for me is. And that's what hip hop is. Hip Hop is about exploring that and about experiencing that, about sharing that, about fighting for that, about challenging that. And so, it just so happens, that hip hop, birthed out of a marginalized folks' experience is going to tackle some of those deeper pieces that Darius talked about. So, when he's the shorty across the street, like, "Who's this crew that's talking about this big word gentrification?" Well, we're talking about that because we're experiencing that. It's a lived moment for us. So, we talked about, you know, when we met Darius, we were doing a lot of like prison work in juvenile detention centers. Or just work around, you know, young folks being incarcerated, or the three strikes law. Well, quite honestly, I'm one of the founders and just to be fully transparent, I had—my first son's father was incarcerated. I was dealing with that firsthand. So those were, you know—or living in Uptown, you can't help but talk about gentrification, right? Because we've experienced that for 20 years. So, I'm saying all that to say—what is KL? It's just an expression of like, the lived experience of the moment in time.

**Audrey Francis:**

It's so beautiful to hear you both talk about it because it's such a holistic and comprehensive approach to empowering the youth whether they become artists or not. Right? You talk about healing as a part of that practice. Can you tell me more about how healing fits into your work?

**Darius Parker:**

Absolutely. I think that when I was first joining Kuumba Lynx, I was uncertain about my sexuality. I hadn't define, or even had, like, a mentor that helped me through figuring out my own queerness. And so, I think that—I know that Kuumba Lynx provided space for me to navigate to grow in my own queerness, right? They let me be who I want it to be at any point in time. I never felt judged. I never felt like I couldn't be as flamboyant or as loud, or as—you know. Like they always nurtured that part of me and—full transparency—that didn't happen at home. And so, I think that that's why I've gravitated so close to the organization, gravitated so close to Jacinda and Jaquanda, and Leyda. Because they provide a space for me to just be. You gonna learn; you gonna think critically, you'll get your buddy here make some art. [*Laughter*] But, really uncovering those parts of yourself—your shadow self, right—who you are oftentimes afraid to be. Only comfortable being when it's just you. Right? They challenged me to think about that. And it wasn't even intentional. It wasn't like a "You got to be... If you're thinking about being queer, you need to be queer," right? It wasn't even that it was just like "Darius you can be your fullest authentic and truest self." And that's what always resonated in my mind. "Who is my truest and most authentic Darius? how am I showing up as him? What am I doing to nurture him?" And I really have to credit Kuumba Lynx for offering me space to be confident in that, right, to be truly proud of my blackness and my queerness and my masculinity and my femininity, and the intersections of all of them because they ought to be celebrated at the exact same time. And society wants us to think that they cannot. And that's why I go as hard as I do. Because I need black boys like me, who feel similar to me—or even Black girls, Black non identifying folks, non binary folks who feel like they can be their truest queerest self. I'm doing it. This is what looks like for me. And if you're rocking with me then you can just as fierce, you can be just as bad, you know. You can be just as amazing as you want to be you decide.

**Audrey Francis:**

Thank you so much for sharing that. And I want to ask, how have the last two years or a year and a half or 18 months, changed Kuumba Lynx or pivoted in a way that maybe either of you didn't expect?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Yeah, I mean, and I'm not an online type person, like, I really struggle with accepting zoom and this kind of world that we're living in, but um... I think that it's—I sometimes I feel like I've been able to see some more authenticity because we're in our home so yeah. There's—you can rock that tiara more, you know what I'm saying? You can beat that phase more in virtual world. Whereas I think... some folks, I think, have found a freedom in being online, right? Have found a freedom in like, "I can go visit my mama and still do such and such" or... I think for me, though, creating art has been challenging. Like, I still like I see some folks have like really moved, right? And for me, I'm like, "I don't really—I just—the human contact." The touch is like, so critical for me. But I'm a really touchy person. So that could be individual. [Laughter] But I think in general, KL's all about hugs and giving dap and so, so yeah, right. So, I think that, you know, I think some people are struggling and some people are good with it. In terms of the uprisings that, you know, took place. You know, I am... I don't know how much KL shifted in that because we've always been conscious of the need to uprising right. But Jaquanda and myself both come from families who centered black liberation and talked about movement building, you know, in that way, and were involved in movement building in Chicago specifically. So that didn't feel new. I think it was beautiful to witness young folks retake that power in whatever ways they chose to express it during the uprising. So, I think that shifted a little bit the urgency for a lot of folks.

**Audrey Francis:**

Yeah.

**Darius Parker:**

Yeah. A lot of our—like, Jacinda said—like, the work isn't new to Kuumba Lynx. So as youth were starting to lead the protests, right and resisting what's going on in our city. Organizations like Good Kids Mad City, Assata's Daughters, Let Us Breathe, right, a lot of folks or organizations we have built community and family with right and so to see our youth out there with them like, "Oh, okay. Yeah, we talked about now we're going to be about it." And so, for me, that was really a huge highlight to me. Finding that joy in the darkness and in everything that was going on, like that brought a lot of joys to my heart. I'm like, "They get it. They get it." Now why the grown folks can't get it? That's another conversation for another podcast. [Laughter] But our youth for sure, collectively, in Chicago, get it. Right. And so, for me, looking at them, saying, "Okay, how can we continue to provide space for our youth to feel confident and empowered to resist the way in which they have?"

**Audrey Francis:**

Wow. So, the *Half Hour* podcast actually stemmed from this curiosity about each artist's "moment before" they begin to create. So, Darius, what is your ideal way to start your art making process? What would your half hour be?

**Darius Parker:**

So, I would get together with my folks and really think about our blessings. Right? I felt like when we first got to the pandemic, I also talked about, like, I woke up every day, like, I was thankful, "Oh my god, I woke up." And I will want to create some art around like, seeking a tomorrow, like "We made it to tomorrow, what are we gonna do with this day? How are we going to make this day as beautiful and as truthful as we possibly can?" I'm gonna want that to look a certain way through movement. A certain

way through poetry. In a certain way as like, ensemble, like I'm big on ensemble work. And so, I want it to be that, right? Like, counting our joy type of creative... I might be on to something.

**Audrey Francis:**

And Jacinda? What about you?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Yeah, I'm probably that typical, because I love—please, I love ensemble work—but I always want to have direction from you know, from my Creator, right? And so, my half hour before the chaos of the beautiful chaos, right, is always like, “Let me just ask for guidance,” right? When we ask, you know, those ancestors invested in our most, you know, awesome selves, to be present, to guide to ask our Creator, to, you know, keep us, you know, everything good and the way that we were meant to show up to this world. So I just—it's going to be in prayer is going to be a ritual is going to be given in gratitude.

**Stage Manager:**

Alright, everyone, 15 minutes. 15 minutes, please, to the top of the show. 15 minutes.

**Audrey Francis:**

Can we talk about Da Lynx?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Oooh!

**Darius Parker:**

Da Lynx, yes. Great question. Go ahead Jacinda.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Well, first of all, my love is Chicago summer. So, I don't go on trips and vacations like everybody does in the summer. I try not to because I love our city in the summer. It's just... I love the weather. I don't care, I just will walk the block. So, when summer comes, you know, I think my imagination really kicks in and I start thinking about *what ifs*. And, you know, over the time that we have been in this pandemic, a lot of young folks have really come up with, you know, their own things, right? Like, they've discovered a different artistry about themselves. Like, you know, they've taken on some new art form, or they're, you know, now they've created a business where they're, you know, they're now a fashion designer, or they're, you know, mixing sea moss and thinking about health and wellness, right? And so, they—oftentimes they were pushing so hard for KL to have like, pop up space during a pandemic. *[Laughter]* And we would be like, “Yo, we can't do that, y'all! We can't be in our tiny little—” you know, we have a healing space in Uptown that opened literally, like, two weeks before the pandemic kicked in. We had just opened up our healing arts space. Or just—we had just gotten the lease for it. So they were like pushing, they wanted to use it. And you know, we kept having to say, “no.” So when the summer came, we were like, “Got it. We about to make a pop-up spot for all of y'all entrepreneurs.” So, Da Lynx is a pop-up space that is open Thursdays and Fridays. And it is really—it is just a cool out oasis, right? It is really just about—come in, we got a beautiful meditation garden with medicines in it, right? We got, you know, echinacea, sage. We got herbs for tee. So, we're working towards collecting teas at the end that we'll use in the winter in our healing arts space. We got murals. We have these two repurposed shipping containers where you can come and shop and it's all youth work. 100% of what is made goes back to those young folks. So, we really just provided a boutique for them to sell their goods in. We have open mics on Thursday and then on Friday, we do hip hop Theater Festival performances. We have a really

cool lineup. But yes, mostly what I love about Da Lynx is that it's just—there's no expectation. It's like, imagine you just get to come to this space, you can jump rope, you can roller-skate, you can shoot ball. We have this really dope basketball court that we built, and this artist BYL, painted it. It is so fly. So you know what I'm saying, you can come, shoot ball, you could chill in a rocking chair, we have all these beautiful, red, black and green—

**Darius Parker:**

Jacinda makes some good smoothies every Friday.

**Audrey Francis:**

Amazing.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Yes, I mean, we just. Yeah, just like relax, right? Like Darius said, KL gave him this experience of, "It's okay to just be your most best authentic self." And this space is really about like, "just being." Like flow with it. You know, just come and do you. If you want to turn up at an open mic and we have live DJs—do that. If you want to get on the floor and like break or footwork or whatever—do it. If you want to sit in that rocking chair in the corner and smell the thyme and the rosemary, do you. Like there's no expectation, right? It's minimal work. It's like let's set up and now let's just be here.

**Audrey Francis:**

Amazing. And I absolutely want to come see you. Last thing, is there anything that I missed that you want to make sure we get in here? Anything that you have coming up or anything that you want to make sure we get in there?

**Darius Parker:**

Yes. So, I did want to talk a little bit about Kuumba Lynx and our partnership with Uplift Community High School, due to the Sustainable Community Schools Initiative. So, what that looks like is that Kuumba Lynx directly is able to create programming, events, strictly for our community in Uptown, and strictly for our Uplift students and to really think about what education looks like, right? I like to think that we add the lemon pepper seasoning to what CPS has going on. Right? How can we make this be intentional? How can we reimagine testing? How can we reimagine homework through a Kuumba Lynx hip hop lens? But we also didn't talk about *Half Pints* today. Do you want to talk about *Half Pints*?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Yeah, man, so exciting. It's just, you know, it came out of this whole concept of younger poets really saying, "I got something to say." The starting point for KL always been like, "Who are you?" You know, "who's your people?" You know, "where are you from?" Like, "what are the things that you think about? Where do your investments in this world lie?" And so, our thinking with *Half Pints* was, if we start this conversation and this dialogue at an earlier age with fourth and fifth graders—sometimes second and third graders—imagine a second, third, fourth and fifth grader that is used to a praxis of constantly interrogating and asking about who they are, and wanting to know the stories, their origin stories and their birth stories. And that becomes a normative practice, right? You're constantly engaging with your community and your peoples, your family, your friends in this way. Imagine the kind of writer you would be when you hit high school and you hit college. The kind of thinker you would be the kind of active person you would be. The way that you would activate the land that you live on, the communities that you thrive in. So, the whole idea of *Half Pints* was really like cultivating space for a younger group of folks, of citizens, to be able to start to have these conversations early on. And to guide them through

performance and play and through writing, and storytelling. And so, *Half Pint Poetics* is for young folks between the ages of eight and 14—sometimes younger, like I said—to just really dig in to who they are and where they're from. And to turn that into performance work that is shared in a slam like environment.

**Audrey Francis:**

*Half Pints* sounds so cool. And to think that you're engaging with these kids at this age before we can say, "I can't do that." You're catching them before that moment where we think that we're it's not cool or anything like that. Are you following an outline of a curriculum that you've created? Or are you? How are you doing that? How are you teaching them?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

So, *Half Pints*, whoever is like the facilitator for sure they're going to create, you know, just for the sake of if they're already they're doing a residency in a school, they're going to create a curriculum, but we don't have a specific, like, "this is the only one." We don't—in KL we don't necessarily buy into that concept of "Here's a curriculum book. Now you can teach it." Because we truly do believe that curriculum, yes, we can have a template and outline, we can share resources, right? We can say, "Hey, have you ever read this? Or have you seen this or let me turn you on to this writer, this poet or this movie." But those are, at the end of the day, just a bunch of resources. And the way you engage and interact with them is going to be based a lot off of the way in which you engage and interact with the world, right? And what you've experienced, right? And so, we never do not want to take that into account. So, we're never just handing over a workbook like "Boom." If we hand over some kind of workbook, it's just to say, "Hey, here's some resources. Here's some ideas, but do you." Because we definitely think anyone who's facilitating space, the only way you can do that is really by being authentically who you are. And facilitating that space in that way and making room for those in that space to be authentically themselves.

**Stage Manager:**

Five minutes, please. Five minutes to the top of the show. Five minutes.

**Audrey Francis:**

Are y'all ready for the lightning round?

**Darius Parker:**

Uh oh. [*Laughter*]

**Audrey Francis:**

Okay. Darius what I what animal do you most identify with?

**Darius Parker:**

A wolf.

**Audrey Francis:**

Jacinda?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

A peacock.

**Audrey Francis:**

Okay, we'll start with Darius: who are some artists that are giving you inspiration right now?

**Darius Parker:**

Artists who are giving me inspiration right now. Jasmine Mans, Lizzo. Um... Okay.

**Audrey Francis:**

That's great. Yeah, Jacinda.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Okay, this is gonna sound real funny, so don't laugh at me y'all. But I have a 15-year-old and I'm all about Little Durk. *[Laughter]*

**Darius Parker:**

What? We have never talked about that.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

I know! It just really happened because, you know, I moved from the north side where I used to walk a lot to now staying out west where I have to drive a lot. And so, we're in the car lot. And I'm like, "Go ahead, play whatever you want. Let me see what your life is about." And I'm like, "Okay!"

**Audrey Francis:**

This is really good.

**Darius Parker:**

Yeah.

**Audrey Francis:**

Okay, Jacinda what do you daydream about?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

I daydream about swimming in the ocean.

**Audrey Francis:**

Darius?

**Darius Parker:**

I daydream about my future husband and what he going to talk like, what's his career going to be? If my family—if Jacinda's gonna like him? But I think about that. *[Laughter]*

**Audrey Francis:**

Darius if you had a superpower, what would be?

**Darius Parker:**

It would be to move things with my mind.

**Audrey Francis:**

Jacinda?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Move myself wherever I need to be.

**Audrey Francis:**

Jacinda, what's one thing you do every day?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Pray.

**Audrey Francis:**

Darius?

**Darius Parker:**

Brush my teeth.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Yes! That's how you gonna get a good man. *[Laughter]*

**Audrey Francis:**

Darius what's your favorite place to unwind in Chicago?

**Darius Parker:**

My favorite place to unwind in Chicago... I'm going to say Lalo's by UIC and their karaoke night.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

You have never invited me to that. I would be so into that.

**Darius Parker:**

Let's go.

**Jacinda Bullie:**

I'm going. You know I like chips and guac.

**Audrey Francis:**

Oh my god, I love chips and guac. Jacinda, what is your favorite place to unwind in Chicago?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

I love the lake. Like any block that I could just walk and—

**Darius Parker:**

I was just gonna say outside. She likes outside.

**Audrey Francis:**

Okay, Jacinda, what is your most prized possession?

**Jacinda Bullie:**

Oh, Darius you go if you have one; I gotta think about that. Oh, I got it. I was doing a silent fast. So, I wasn't talking for 24 hours. I was like out in Cali blah blah, blah long story short. You get it. I was out there trying to get right with myself and my creator. And I looked down when I was on this like height type thing. And I found this beautiful gold pendant for a necklace. A charm. That was—I'm Muslim and it was in Arabic and it said God.

**Audrey Francis:**

Whoa.

**Darius Parker:**

Whoa.

**Audrey Francis:**

That's awesome. Okay. Darius?

**Darius Parker:**

Well, I cannot top that. *[Laughter]* I'm gonna say my prized possession is my apartment. It I just got it. I it was hard leaving my mother. So yeah, I'd say that it's that.

**Stage Manager:**

All right, everyone. This is your places call. Places, please, for the top of the show. Have a wonderful show tonight. Places, please. Places.

**Audrey Francis:**

I hope that conversation sits with you as long as it has with me. I just keep thinking about it. And I can't say thank you enough to our guests this week: Jacinda Bullie and Darius Parker of Kuumba Lynx. And thank you for listening to this episode of *Half Hour* brought to you by Steppenwolf Theatre Company. *Half Hour* is produced by Patrick Zakem; mixed and edited by Matthew Chapman. The theme music for *Half Hour* is by Rob Milburn and Michael Bodeen. The voice of this episode's stage manager was Michelle Medvin. And special thanks to Abhi Shrestha, Assata Lewis, Anna DeNoia, Erin Cook, Joel Moorman, Madeline Long, Christopher Huizar, Kerstin Adams and all the folks at Steppenwolf. You can learn more about Kuumba Lynx on their website [kuumbalynx.com](http://kuumbalynx.com) and on Instagram or Facebook. Till next time: a lifetime to engage the half hour to places.