Braeden 0:15
Hello and good morning! you're listening to the west meeting room on CIUT 89.5 FM, the sound of your city. We are recording today's episode of the West meeting room and Hart House where we are taking up space on dish with one spoon territory. My name is Braden and I'm grateful to be behind the mic today. In the studio are a few producers of our show, Sabrina and Ari. Thank you for joining me today. You want to say hello,

Sabrina 0:40
Hi.

Ari 0:41
Hello.

Braeden 0:43
So today is the winter solstice and we are wrapping up our last couple broadcasts of 2019. It's the shortest day of the year and some of us are taking a holiday. Some of us have been fighting off the winter sickness as I'm sure you can hear it some of our voices. And now is a time when I feel like we're all nudged or maybe completely inundated with prompts to reflect and look back on the past year. It only just dawned on me that this year is kind of special because we're closing out an entire decade. I've been hearing a lot of reflections about the past 10 years. And I know for a lot of people looking back can be uncomfortable and painful. So I think what I would rather do is cast our gaze forward and focus in on our intentions for the future. And that's kind of a big part of what we wanted to focus on for today's episode. During our production meeting last week, aside from moving through the long list of day to day items that we need to accomplish to make sure we bring you a show to broadcast each week. It's also a space for us to spend some time together, it's become this safe space to share with one another and support one another. And we talk about our fears and love and loss and we laugh a lot together. And a big theme of our show has been rituals of self care because I think we're all struggling on this journey towards cultivating love for ourselves.

So, as we've been having these conversations together about getting to know ourselves and being comfortable in our own skin, and setting intentions for the future, something that keeps returning to our conversations is the subject of tarot and tarot cards and tarot readings. I don't really know much about tarot. I had my tarot read once by a roommate several years ago. I remember she had these very beautiful old cards that had been passed down from her grandmother. And I found it to be really grounding experience. It sort of took the internal chaos of my consciousness and organized it into a narrative almost like a storyboard, I guess. So I'm really looking forward to learning more about this today. We'll have some special guests joining
us in studio to talk a bit more. But in the meantime, Sabrina, when we were talking last week, I really loved when you mentioned that you liked how Tarot was a way you could get to know yourself better. So I'm wondering if maybe you could expand on that and tell us a bit more about how you got interested in Tarot.

Sabrina 3:00

Yeah, I think Tarot has a lot of strong ties with divination. And there's a lot of people use it to divine and that basically just kind of means like to tell the future, predict it or look into it. But for me, I think the cards work really well to help reflect how you may feel about a situation, or even to act kind of like as an impartial third party to kind of check a situation against. And for me, when I started getting into Tarot, it was because I wanted to start on a journey of getting to know myself better, and finding out, you know, who I am and why I do the things I do. And maybe in ways that I don't like myself or I feel like I hold myself back. How do I change those things? Or how do I come to accept those things? And that's kind of how I use Tarot. I use it to help me make decisions and not in a way where I let the cards tell me what to do. Because I think that can remove a person's agency, but very much in a way where I think about what I think I want, or how I think I see a situation and then I'll ask the cards and I'll lay them out. They have their own meetings, yes, you can interpret them and interpretations change deck by deck. And so it is like talking to someone else. Because you might have even though your interpretation goes into it, like, you might have a completely different idea of something. You might think that a situation is bringing about weakness, or like, you know, it's just the worst thing in the world. And you can't say anything better coming out of this situation. Why is this happening to me? And then you draw a card on strength, and you might draw another card. And those two together means you know, strength and change. And that might be the tarot saying, you know, there's strength and change in the situation. And that's not to say that, you know, you will necessarily grow stronger or you know, things will necessarily change for the better but that's a perspective that you might want to consider. And it's perspective that if you're too close to something, you might not see yourself. And then instead of thinking, This is the worst thing in the world, why is this so terrible? Why is this happening to me? You can think okay, well, how can I contextualize this situation? Based on strength and change? Can I find anything good out of this? Can I find a way to grow out of this? And then from there, you can think you know, well, how do I feel about this new interpretation about the situation? And as you ask yourself these questions on the backdrop of you know, these tarot cards, you can come to a new realization, new way to view a situation or a new way to learn about yourself and how you deal with hardship. And that's specifically that's not the only way to use the tarot. I'm not. I don't think there's any good or bad ways necessarily. But I think that's how I approach. It kind of like therapy.

Ari 5:52

Yeah, I think for me, like, I don't know I'm pretty new to Tarot. I think a lot of people are just getting into it right now. Well, a few of my friends did. And then I was sort of like, Oh, this seems really interesting. But for me, I think it's like, I don't know, an avenue for like self reflection. And a sort of it provides space to be alone with yourself and like, especially with things that you might not be comfortable with. And like, yeah, like Sabrina was saying, different
ways to interpret events or situations or feelings, emotions, anything in your life that's going on. And it's sort of very, like, easy way to do that. So yeah, that's sort of what I've been enjoying about it. And it's also just fun. I like sort of memorizing so it's fun to like, look at the cards and like, Oh, I actually like remember what this means. Like, I don't know. And I really like reading other people's Tarot as well. I think it's really fun and like, opens up conversations that you might not have with people. Like I'm super super close with my roommate and I read her cards and I don't know, learned new things. So yeah, it was cool.

Braeden  7:00
That's great. Yeah, I loved what Sabrina was saying about sort of contextualizing certain situations and, and with what you were saying about. It's a way to spend time with yourself because I think that's really important. But sometimes being alone with ourselves and with our thoughts doesn't always feel like a safe space. So, yeah, to have sort of a gentle ritual around, creating that space to be alone with yourself. I think is really important. So thank you both for sharing that. We're going to take a quick break and when we come back, we will have a few special guests joining us in the studio on this Saturday, Winter Solstice morning. You are tuned into ci ut 89.5 on the FM dial and you're listening to the West Meeting Room. We'll be back in a moment.

Welcome back to the west meeting room. We're broadcasting on ci ut 89.5 FM, the sound of your city. We have a few special guests joining us in the studio today. Would you mind introducing yourselves and tell us a bit about yourself?

Katie  8:32
Hi, my name is Katie. I'm currently a student at York University. I'm studying disaster and emergency management in my masters. I'm just finishing up and actually just on the research writing portion of things now, after I handed my last assignments for this semester. And then as far as my experience with magic, I've been kind of on and off practicing Wiccan pagan, but more of like a new agey agnostic mix of those things. On and off since I was Like around eight years old, probably. nusstuvery on as a kid and then very off for a while and then back into high school back off and then back into it a lot recently. Yeah.

Jae  9:12
Hi, I'm Jae and I'm a recent graduate of the theater department here at UofT. If we're doing UofT related introductions, and I'm just taking some time off right now, and chilling. I'm focusing on my magic my spirituality, and reading Tarot and doing fortunes and spells and stuff for clients. Come to me.

Braeden  9:34
Amazing. Thank you so much for sharing your time with us today. So maybe a good place to start. I'm curious to know how each of you would define Tarot, for those of us who aren't familiar, and I don't know it did did if you brought cards today, we would love to, for you to describe a bit about them and tell us what they look like for our listeners.
Well, I actually brought the wild unknown deck today.

yes! youngin synchronicities um, should I bring it should i take it out from my bag is that

Sabrina 10:11
yeah

Braeden 10:15
yeah

Sabrina 10:16
You said you had the Wild Unknown

Katie 10:18
I have the Wild Unknown at home yeah, maybe I didn't even I didn't think to actually I was literally thinking I was like, should I bring show and tell stuff I was like, What do it bring? Woudl i bring the books and I bring the decks like, I bring both I bring everything that I have when I read like, it just became too complicated. I was like, gonna have a bag that will hold all of my both of my decks like both of my books, my Grimoire like the whole nine yards. I was like, Okay, this is too much. But I have two decks. So I have kind of a light deck and a dark deck and I have the line Strider deck, which is like a lot of it's a lot of whites and watercolors and line drawings. And then I have the wild unknown deck which is kind of like my dark deck which is very nature. Lots of black. Definitely when you have the two together what is very clearly like bright and light, and I find that the interpretations are that way for that one and the other one is definitely a little darker. And I like having the balance. And then one of them I bought myself and one of them was a gift. Which is a fun distinction because I found out after having bought my first deck that traditionally I guess like a deck is supposed to be gifted to you. It's part of the divination, the luck, that side of things, I guess. But I heard that long after I had gotten my first deck, so yeah.

Sabrina 11:35
Jae, I feel like I might have asked you about that one.

Jae 11:39
Right? Yeah.

Sabrina 11:40
Am I gonna have like it's just like breaking a mirror the spirits gonna, like smite me because I bought a deck on chapters for you know,

Braeden 11:48
I don't know who started that story. It's, I don't follow it. I feel like it's because during the 50s and the 60s, And the occult revival, right? It was all about sort of romanticism and kind of pseudo mysticism. And so everybody was coming up with their own special rules about things.
And this somehow sort of really became popularized because I feel like it does really play into the kind of ancestral sharing legacy, you know, kind of idea. But yeah, I don't personally follow it. But you can do whatever you want to do. Like follow your truth, follow your bliss. Yeah.

Katie 12:25
that's kind of what I find really interesting about like magic and this whole practice in general is that it is kind of a make your own rules. Which I think is my I read somewhere that it's become really, really popularized among young people like it's, it's the most popular spirituality or religion, whichever you think of it as your brain I guess. It's become much more popular with young people like and young people of all races to which is really interesting, and they're going back to different forms of magic. So like for someone, like for me with white ancestry for me, that's going back to paganism and like old European traditions, but that might be different for everybody. And there's different, there's so many different backstories of it. And it all comes together. And that's like modern understanding of magic, which I think we all kind of like, take and borrow from. Which is interesting.

Sabrina 13:15
I do have a question based on like, segwaying off your points, but I did want to get to Jae talking about your decks. So do you want to ask Jae just saw you blowing into your cards? What does that mean? What does that do?

Braeden 13:26
Oh, it's just it's something I do to sort of clear it or cleanse it.

Ari 13:29
Yeah. I guess like on that. I'm curious what you both do to like prepare to read Tarot. And what's your sort of ritual around that? How do you get ready?

Katie 13:39
Hmm. So I, Tarot and journal kind of at the same time, I always do it as a writing practice, rather than as like a thoughts alone practice. So I get out whatever book I'm using at the time. Sometimes that's like a more traditional journal. Sometimes it's just like, scratch to my notebook, like my bullet journal that I carry. So pull that out. And then pull my deck out. And depending on how I'm feeling I might completely reorder my deck. If I'm feeling particularly discombobulated and like out of sorts, I might completely re organize it just so that it's kind of attuned to me right now. And then you blew on yours, I always knock mine three times on both sides before I shuffle, and then I just kind of shuffle until my heart's content till I feel like it's ready. And then split it either in half or in threes, depending on how I'm feeling and then draw from the top side. And with every reading I do, I always look at what's on the bottom side just has like a little like, what's there. You know, after I've done all this from the top, like, what was the bottom that was split from the top? Where did the duck split? Does that card have something to tell me? Yeah, how about you?
Um, well, I, and Sabrina knows this. I'm more spirit based in my practice, and so I'm usually talking into someone or something or an energy or an entity. And so I would usually say a prayer to them and sort of set the space and set their energy. If I'm just doing reading for myself, I'll usually sort of say a little prayer to my own inner self and spirit as well. Because I feel like many of us, are also sort of spirit beings having a human experience kind of thing. And we have divinity within us and then I'll light some incense or light some candles, you know, if I'm working with because I do work with cannabis, both recreationally and also spiritually. And so if I'm calling in cannabis that day, I'll say a little prayer to a joint or my pipe and then I'll take a puff and then I'll just start reading. And I'm finding more for me that Tarot and this was something another friend, another witch. I'm going to kind of name drop people and recommend their Instagram is seed ncr and they are a black person of color, doula, and who also really bring spirituality into their work. And so we were having tea one day very witchy, we were having witchy high tea. And we were sort of just talking and letting sort of spirits speak through us. And she really gave me the message that like to begin reading with playing cards. And to begin reading. Yeah, like using Tarot as a jumping point for spirit directly talking to me. And so I'm finding especially as I work with cannabis more, and I work sort of with the cards in this kind of say on space setting more.

Katie 16:36
That's really interesting. That brings up two things that I've been thinking a lot about lately, which is like, kind of investigating things that come from your past and how they affect you in the future. But then, also, yeah, setting boundaries and when you're, when you're being intentional and setting intentions and all of that that's something that almost all of my magic is because for me, it's all personally very spiritual based,

Braeden 17:02
To see the story as it is in the images reflected in other cards, which is what's so beautiful about Tarot. And the way Tarot has expanded as a divination tool. Because back in the good old days, right when Tarot was super expensive and you had to be like a rich, you know, like, I don't know a Duke or something to get like this famous artists from Italy to design a deck for your family, and you put it in a glass case, and no one ever touches it. You know, like it had a much more different energy. People read with playing cards, right. And that was a lot more challenging, because you didn't have the stories to picked it right away. In this kind of visual based story on the cards. It was just these geometric symbols of hearts, you know, diamonds.

So can we talk a bit about that, like I see some of you have your decks out in front I first saw like, like, what is a tarot deck and then maybe like what's distinct about the deck that you have in front of you?

Sabrina 17:53
And can we also talk about the different kinds because I didn't know that this deck was a marcedes deck, I think.

Braeden 18:05
From what I know, right, in different people tracer, right, some people like back in the Egyptology days, you know, when like white people really were like, into Egypt. Um, everything was traced back to Egypt, right as the source of wisdom, as the source of Western culture. And that is true in a lot of ways, right? And so Tarot was traced back to that, and to sort of the hieroglyphics and the pyaare depictions, right. But more historically, people tend to trace it back to the Silk Road and to China, because China had a similar game with similar symbols. That was played in a different way with sort of pieces of pottery or pieces of like cloth or cards, right. You know, that was really where playing cards came from. And Tarot originated from playing cards and originated as a playing card game, that rich royal folks like people with status could afford an artists to design decks for their families, right? Who could afford to print things would play and it was a very sort of courtly kind of pastime.

Jae  19:08
And then over time, it was sort of like, and then playing cards were always in used by just the populace, right? Because it was much more affordable for my understanding, and you can make your own and it was just pieces of symbols right, on a card page. And so it was sort of like these two things just kind of wove back and forth in and out of each other. And gradually, you know, as people read with playing cards through divination, people began reading with Terrell for divination as well. And then during the sort of occult renaissance of the 1800s, the 1900s, when like people were really getting back into kind of esoteric like this was sort of that kind of intellectual rebellion against religious institutions, right. Terrell really sort of took on a lot more symbolism with a cult orders, like the hermetic order of the Golden Dawn. And it's still very much remained an upper class kind of thing. Right? And a lot of ways, especially with sort of the added meanings that were added to it. Because these cult orders were generally for sort of literate, educated, middle middle, upper class,

Braeden  20:17
like, what do you mean by a cult order?

So like societies like secret societies, right, like, which aren't that secret, because, you know, it's just secret because of, you know, sensationalism, all of that. Right. But like a cult societies, right have always been a thing, right? And this is the thing, right? Like, you know, it's sort of like, again, it's very exciting, especially as you're just getting into it. It's really like it's like a labyrinth. It's like a maze. The deeper you go, the more ancient histories and recipes and spells and traditions you can find. And you really trace sort of knowledge systems, right? And so there's always been these organizations and societies have of magicians or culties, right. Who You know, sometimes die down sometimes just all they like leave behind is a manuscript or a set of writings, right? And then they get picked up again by another generation. And people get together and practice right? And you know, the tarot was very much something that was absorbed into this, this kind of this tradition and period of magic, right. But like these call orders really added sort of this is where you get sort of the Kabbalah coming in, in relation to Terrell, right. And both the hermetic and Jewish traditions of Kabbalah, right? This is where you get sort of Sufi ism coming in Islamic mysticism, right? blending and, you know, in Arabic countries, they also had their own sort of style of Tarot almost right, a different style of deck. That kind of get
distilled again, into the modern books that we have, right? Where you get sort of glimpses of these older associations, right that like the Empress card is associated with this sort of sphere or dimension on the tree of life, right? Which is sort of one way of laying out the mystic route to return to God from either a Jewish perspective or hermetic perspective,

yeah, um, could you tell me about the particular deck you have in front of you?

Oh, yes, yes. Um, so this is the wild unknown and it definitely connects more with the Mars, the rider Waite style. And so yes, my sign Rider Waite. Wait, I didn't even get to that. It's such a winding history

Are there two or are there three?

Why? Well, there's many kinds. That's the cart. I'd like I know, the rider Waite on the Mars side. Like it's most familiar to me. The rider Waite was really a, Arthur Edward Waite, I believe what's his name? Commissioned. pixee Coleman Smith, who was a woman of color who was a mixed race who had black ancestry as well as indigenous ancestry, I believe, and she designed this deck for Arthur Edward Waite wasn't credited for a really long time because she was a woman of color right? But she really gave rise to this style of parts where there's pictures on the minor arcana. So Tarot was divided into right the major and the minor and the major is really sort of the specialist of Tarot. What makes Tara unique? Because the minor is essentially equivalent to a playing card deck right? Rather than, rather than hearts, diamonds, spades and clubs. You have Pentacles chalices, wands, and swords. Right? Or a thought nice or nice, right, which is very cult secret society. 1980, like, early 1900s, late 1800s that's very much their flavor, right. This weird mix of sort of like Christian mysticism with Jewish mysticism with Egyptology and like, yeah. And so that's where you really get that style of deck, which the wild unknown also inherits in a lot of ways, but also not so in a lot of ways because the wild unknown also really reminds me of the my size style, which is the much older tradition of Tarot right? Where the minor arcana is still geometric shapes. But it's done sort of in the more traditional Tarot symbolism of wands, knives, Pentacles and chalices, right?

Katie  24:07
I'll have to look into getting myself a Mercedes because one of the things that really drew me into magic when I was a kid was all of the symbolism and geometry and sacred geometry. That was something I got, like really, really, really into as a kid. I like I said, I only got into Tarot pretty recently. It's kind of my it's probably my newest, newest magical endeavor, I guess. And, yeah, I kind of learned to read while I was living in Japan from these two women who they would go to a coffee shop at the same time every week and sit down and read, put out decks for themselves over tea and coffee and sweets, and read their own readings, read each other's readings, maybe do another one if it so called and So they brought a lot of us actually into it because we were all in kind of similar emotional states and we all lived in the same apartment building. It was very like it was probably the closest to a coven I've ever had.

Sabrina  25:11
So I wonder what that idea of like, community and friendship, you know. What is unique about the tarot community? What's unique about the magic community and further than that, yeah, how do you find community?

Katie  25:28
Yeah, my first foray into magic. My, I kind of got to know more about it because my friend's mom was Wiccan and she was actually a therapist to used Tarot and and like the youngin associations in her therapy practices, and was like the lady in the neighborhood who threw the solstice parties every year with like six foot bonfires at the appropriate times and food at the appropriate time. Like it was. It was a really magical Little community. So that was cool to grow up around. And I think even now like it's I've kind of lucked into another group as well. Like it. I don't know that I've ever sought it out intentionally. So I, it's really the million dollar question like, how did we end up in these spaces where we have community, whereas other people don't have community around magic? I think maybe now because it's, I feel like the newest resurgence of magic is we're totally at one right now. Like every other meme is an astrology meme. And like, more and more people are getting into Tarot. More and more people are starting to keep shadowbox or grimoires. And all that right? Now that we're kind of coming into another one, there's, I think there's some people who are there's some people who are into it because they've been into it for a while. And there's a lot of people who are coming into it new coming into the fold right now. And I wonder if maybe the people who are coming into the fold and because we're in an era capitalism and it's very like some of its very commodified. Right. So you're maybe not getting your first deck from someone gifting it to you, you're getting your first deck on Amazon like I did.

Jae  27:09
Which, I mean, which is fine.

Katie  27:12
it's totally fine. Yeah, like it's, yeah, it also. Like there's so much beauty to how much it's proliferated because now there's a million decks with so much more symbolism and so much more crossover. But I also worry that it's some of its being like distanced from spirituality in some ways and I wonder if that's distancing it from community as well with social media and Instagram like because it seems to be a very visual medium and then and then that sort of bit my main like exposure to it with his has been on Instagram and following other people who are, I guess, are artists for certain decks and it has it's been exciting to see other decks with more representation. With more, maybe exploration of non binary characters and their artwork. I wondered maybe do you have any, any name dropping you want to do for? Are there artists that are making decks currently that we might not have seen in the mainstream sort of distribution of Tarot decks.

Braeden  28:09
Seeking to that I really the decks that stand out for me. It's a deck that features all sorts of characters and personas of African descent and it pulls from sort of West African mythology a lot, especially as well as Congolese traditions, which is very rare because Tarot is a very white
sort of image. The images are often sort of these kind of light, white, thin people in occult poses, like that's a very, it's a very sort of traditional representation. Right of folks in Tarot. Yeah. And so hers is really amazing. And I've really been also getting into Tarot that doesn't feature people like the Wild Unknown, right? And there's I know the artists is skull Garden, and they did different Oracle decks and they also did a Tarot deck. And he, it's just animals and he paints them on wood blocks, and then photographs them or scans them. And then it's sort of like you're holding this thing that is a thin piece of cardboard, but the sort of texture that it looks like and the weight of it looks like you have a woodblock and it's very cool. Yeah.

Katie  29:19
That's really cool. So there's there's actually a Tarot deck that was made in Toronto. And it's careful Tarot and it's by a person named eisah. So they're a non binary person of color who actually attends the U of T. So I'll just casually drop that one there. I met them at an equity event and then actually found out way after the fact that they had made a tarot deck and now like, kind of, like idolize them like a famous person a little bit. But that was a really cool discovery and the it's all collage and there's not a complete absence of people, but the people are not only white, which is so refreshing. Because it's just it, that's something that's always bothered me about a lot of them and especially that it's usually like, queen and king where right even with this deck where its mother and son and daughter and father. Yeah, it's still there's still like a very stark binary, their hetero patriarchal kind of binary.

Braeden  30:24
The thing for me about that is complicated, right? It's sort of understanding the deeper code associations behind what it means. Like it's very much that it's that era of tradition, tapping into like the yin yang theories of like Chinese philosophy, which is also still very gendered. Right. But yeah, like, it's not it's just not a straight up no for me when it comes to that because I feel like, you know, like, it's important to transcend the binary but you know, like a lot of sort of older stories are still encoded in that. And I'd sort of like how do we engage with that in a way that doesn't just reject it? Because there's still wisdom there. Yeah, change it.

Katie  31:09
Yeah. And I think with the yin and yang to there's, for me at least there's always been this understanding that there is both within you and that everyone has masculine and feminine within them depending on how much you identify with either or both, is up to interpretation by every single human being on this planet. But then, yeah, there's such background and such history that I agree you really can't. Reject, get it like it to be in a process of evolution.

Braeden  31:37
Well, I guess cuz it's sort of like when we talk about masculine and feminine, what are we really meaning, right? Like, for me, I've had like generated sides, the binary, right, like it's sort of like, you know, for some people it might not be anything related to male or female or anything, right, like they're in their spirit might be more tuned to a tree like what's the gender, we gender trees Which is bizarre to me, by the way, gender trees based on the shape of their flowers, like, let's be real, like whether it looks like a penis or like, you know, like, but really like
a tree, right? But it's sort of like we're talking about this polarity right and the mystery of a polarity. And that is something that is very traditional, right, which is sort of like life came about, or the creation of the cosmos with the Big Bang of the cosmos came about from the collision of polarities from the collision of light and dark from the collision of sound and silence, right, the collision of sort of color and lack thereof, you know, and sort of this clashing of things. And I feel like that's really where this is, the the tarot was pointing to symbolically with that. But because, I don't know because of hunter gatherer society, because whatever, right. The way humans have chosen to develop this way, you know, and sort of essentially persecuted and murdered everybody else who doesn't agree with that being a story. I especially during the Victorian period. Um, it's just sort of very solidified into sort of like, when you mean masculine, you're talking about projective energy, you're talking about fury hot energy, you're talking about energy that goes like this, right? And when you're, I'm, like thrusting my fingers out. And when you are talking about, you know, feminine energy or talking about things that receive things, that pole, right, and it's sort of, it's really gross and a lot of ways that it's gendered into human bodies. Right? That because you have a vagina, you are a feminine energy, because you have right, but it's sort of like there is a story there of like, the deeper thing. Does that make sense? Yeah, I think that it's trying to get to Yeah,

Katie 33:42
and this actually touches a lot of what you're talking on really draws on kind of like how I've defined magic for my own personal uses. So for me, I always thought of magic as this thing where I mean from the dawn of time, we have trying, we have been trying to assign meaning to things Right? And I think at the beginning, we could call it magic because we understood so little of it. And so everything felt magical. And then scientific method came along, and we really pinpointed some truths. And we definitively figured things out.

Unknown Speaker 34:17
Yeah, bigger punches.

Katie 34:20
Right? It's done now, like we know we know it. All right. And I think a lot of people with the things we know in air quotes, because of fear, have it adheared themselves to those things as like unchanging, unflinching realities that we must cling to. We must never define them any other way. Because this is how I understand things. And this is how I'm comfortable, right? And, for me, magic has always been about that thing beyond what we know. And so for me, it's a space to interpret those things in new ways and to find new ways to understand things. And maybe that'll lead to new truths or maybe it'll lead to more gray and more uncertainty. Yeah, but either way, I think that's exciting.

Braeden 35:03
Yeah. It's interesting, like you talking about the rigid kind of feeling, especially in modern scientific thinking. Which is so interesting because so many of the like, OG, scientists were also cultist. They were alchemists, they were like, they were like doing astrology, while they were doing astronomy. They were like, trying to find, you know, the Philosopher's Stone, which is still
a thing people are practicing just under safer lab conditions. Yeah, you know, right, like finding the foot like, all of that right, but like I feel like yeah, it's it's interesting to look at sort of where binary thinking, like began popping up in different areas in human history, right. Like it was very prominent in a specific way in sort of like Germanic tribes, right, and Viking based societies. It was prominent during the sort of the confusion era and Chinese history and sort of and the links of colonialism with that and sort of who are the priests and priestesses who get wiped out? What are their temples? Like, right? Why did a sheerest Temple out of fall out of favor and history? Right when you know, it's documented that a lot of her priests were cross dressers, a lot of our priests were Unix, a lot of her priests, right played in very sacrificial ways, right speaking like being a unike. Right, like voluntarily as part of a ritual. Right dedication to the to the mother of love. Right and the mother of the red veil. Right and how sort of over time yeah, that tempo like we don't worship bashira today, we don't worship you know, in non a star, like the Mesopotamian Semitic goddess of love life, sex, right death, right.

Jae  36:45
Yeah, and it's interesting sort of how things fall out of favor and different voices rise up that have more of sort of a colonial force to it and what that erases and what silences and what that dominates. And then the effects on magic as a result of that, these kind of rigid in game binaries, right? It's all tied up together.

Sabrina  37:07
Yeah. And it's all cyclical.

Katie  37:07
It's all coming back and flowing. And that's kind of, I'm always trying to get a hold on the energy somehow, because otherwise you just feel very wibbly wobbly. And so it's, for me, tapping into this more is about trying to find some stability for myself in the change of it all and in the flux of it all.

Braeden  37:27
Well, speaking of that, right? I feel like that connects back to what we were talking about with community is, you know, in my experience, like, it's great that it's becoming popular and big, right, but there's always going to be a veil there, you know, between sort of what some I call not to sound like pseudo archaic, but like, what someone what some might call the deeper mysteries, right? The ones you have to pay a price for someone else. Yeah, right. Like the ones you have to sort of sacrifice to right? That you can't just sort of go to Barnes and Nobles and buy a book and buy a crystal and buy a little sage bundle and a witch kit from Sephora and like call it a day.

Sabrina  38:04
oh my gosh, you are calling me out!

Braeden  38:07
No, which is beautiful right but that's the key right? but you have to find the door and put the key in the door and I feel like what a lot of people are doing is and that's fine the first fit right if that's their aesthetic like if that's where they're drawing strength from. I don't feel like we should police who should call themselves a witch. Yeah, I feel like the term will police itself because if you're meant to go deeper the moment you start calling yourself that.

Sabrina  38:30
it'll start coming

Jae  38:31
Yeah, it will start coming because you are you are you are recognizing of filling a spiritual agreement that can made on the other side to come back as this thing, right? Because it's also important to recognize the term witch inherently I was talking with another witchy sister who very much goes deep with the term witch as well, it has an inherent otherness and isolation, right like the which even in pagan times, even in pre Christian pre persecution times right, witches is were controversial and greek tradition were controversial, you know. Like the only place where magicians are really celebrated was in like ancient Egypt and that sort of Mesopotamia area, right. It was always, you know, and like Persian traditions before, you know, before sort of the conquest of Christianity and Islam, right, like, that's where magic was really celebrated, but it was always seen as foreign even by other pagan nations, right? The term Majai itself is a foreign term that comes from Persian languages, right? And so you know, the identity of the word witch in the traditional sense before the reclamation that we have now, right where it just means sort of a femme, you know, healer who draws power from mysteries of the earth and right, like it has a much older and more complicated meaning, which is this otherworldly being walking in human skin. This otherworldly being coming in the form of a human right, who will do the things that the priests won't do in the name of their God. Will do the choices and follow the old old ways, right the ways that came even for humans foreign civilizations, right? The religions of the people before and this is where we get into fairies, right and the traditional meaning of fairies, right? Otherworldly predecessors halfway between the angels and man, right? Or divinity a man who are these sort of figures that hold magic, right? And that's what a which also means is you come as a human, but you have an older thing, living inside of you, you know, and that is scary to the establishment that is scary to normalizyl, right? That has been victimized even in pagan times. And so I feel like with that, to get there to find that piece of you to own that and honor that. It's a quest and it's a quest that you won't be able to just do in a coven, you know, that it will ensure a kind of loneliness that is a part of that initiation. And it's about how you come back from that loneliness and how you find yourself a mist a sea of silence. And with that new voice you call to your people. I'm getting quite poetic now. But with that new voice you call to your people, and then the true coven comes to you, and then that you covenant, that true society. Right? And you might find that the society isn't human. Right, you might find that, you know, the loneliness is actually comforting, because you talk to those who aren't walking in human skin right now. Right. And so there's there's a whole thing with that and so it's an interesting question that a lot of sort of practitioners who are just starting, they hold on to, because humans are very communal creatures, right? And that's important to honor to on your journey, especially if you're going to become a witch in a more
otherworldly, scarier, more traditional sense. To be drawn back. Yeah, where it tests you and tries you. You also have a human inside of you, you are also human right. And so how do you honor both? Yeah, there is God and the spirit, there is going to be something that pulls you into the wilds, into the dark woods. Where you will have to meet? Right? We can call him the horned God, we can call him the devil, we can call the great accuser, right? That dark shadow or dark mirror that you will have to meet. And through stepping through that the last fail, you become right? And it's it's a quest and it's a quest that doesn't just sort of you don't you know, because a lot of sort of older witches were Pooh poohing, right? Allowed in these new beginners they also come through this very rigid occult society system where it's you get the initiations, you get the degrees, it's like graduation studies. And it's like, when you go deeper, you know, like, according to the old old witches, none of y'all are witches right now. Yeah, just starting. Oh, you're just starting, right? And so it's like, yeah, there's always layers to that term.

Katie  38:31
Yeah.

Braeden  38:31
We've got like 10 minutes.

Sabrina  42:50
I did try to jump in here, because I loved the poetism. I love the theory and the abstract, but especially for people who are just starting out, I want to come back to more like, practical, more seemingly tangible, you know, what i mean? and I feel like I'm still there too, though, right?

Katie  43:07
Well, I am only in the begging of my journery. Still for sure.

Sabrina  43:11
This idea of community and I did want to touch on, you know, practically, you know, diversity, especially not just in the community, but you know, in terms of even capitalist systems like who's making the most money in magic and Tarot, like, who is being represented in the, the things that we use, like, who is the image of a witch or like when you think about, you know, what I mean, an idea of who's being represented and who isn't? How do we fix that? It's gonna be a really big topic to attack in, like the next couple of minutes, but I also wanted to touch on appropriation and melt that into that idea of capitalism, right? We're talking about, you know, magic and Tarot and coming home and you know, like, subverting a system that everyone's tired of, but capitalism can also hide truths. And I think that's a question that I want to ask about as well. Things like appropriation coming into capitalism, where it's like something like Sage where people are going to sell it if people are going to buy it, but there's so much history. Exactly. And how do you find that history? Yes, that's it, so appropriation, capitalism, diversity, community. Fact checking and holding people accountable, but also not trying to gate keep the whole thing.
Katie  44:28
I actually, a lot of what you just spoke to your touched on things that I've been going through recently with kind of this new coming into things like I have definitely felt called. And it's become this thing where I don't fully know what I'm getting myself into. And so I'm trying to do the best research I can, and trying to get into it in a way where I'm not appropriating because that's something that's very, very important to me, especially given my history, how that's attached to colonialism and the land that I live on today, right?

Sabrina  45:03
Is that to say for example, that someone who presents themselves the way that you present yourself? Or it can be say it, like, does that mean that you can never practice in a way that say someone of another, you know, but like, how do you like if you're just like, I really like this connects with me, right? How do you build that rapport so that it's appropriate for you then it's not just you reading on like cosmopolitan and it's like, Okay, it's time,

Braeden  45:26
Well, that's the thing, right? It's like, you shouldn't just be reading on cosmopolitan and doing it. Like, that's not it's I feel like, like appropriation is this tricky conversation because people don't go deep enough with it. They, we I feel like sometimes sort of mainstream kind of like clickbait discourse, forgets sort of that appropriation as a symptom. Like it's, it's a symptom of sort of the breaking of treaties, the breaking of right relationship, the breaking where people don't want to share with you. Yeah, right. Like you know? like that, it's sort of like there's a healing that can be done. Right. And not appropriating is the first step in that. But then it's also there's another step which is recalculation, which is, you know, it's not just oh, I'm white. So I will stay away from sage and I'll stay away from indigenous folks, and I'll stay away from this culture that I'm not supposed to touch and then stop there. No, you should be approaching it as a subtler you're should be approaching it as someone right. And this is all myself included, right as this other I as much as they're unable to right? Reach that conversation and you know, honoring also your capabilities in sort of just going into spaces that you aren't familiar with. Right? That's important to honor. But on the other side, you know, if you want to use Sage, Who gave you this medicine, like, why, who told you this teaching? Where did you get it from and if you didn't get it from someone from within the community, maybe you should go and get it from someone within the firm community first and do all the preparation, every reconciliation work that leads to that.

Sabrina  47:03
Should there be a commitment to, you know, honor cultures and history. And we were talking about binary and like, where new age we're talking about, you know, subverting these binaries. But then there's also a lot of history and knowledge that comes. So understanding that, but then also just like respecting the earth and respecting the mother, and where spirit comes from her as well in where you source your materials and also how you get rid of your materials. I wanted to throw that in there. Yeah. Is there a place for that?

Katie  47:33
Yeah, I think there's definitely one of the things for me. Yeah, has been going back and investigating as much as I can and figuring out where things that I know and I'm familiar with lineup with teachings. Where I can better inform myself how I can go about doing that all of that is something that I'm continually trying to do and continually trying to go back to. And I think too like there's, maybe it's maybe Sage smudging is not something that you are comfortable with for because you feel appropriation with it because you don't know what spirits, you are calling on and asking because you're not getting in the right way. But maybe there's something that you can do. That's different. Maybe it's not using a singing bowl, but it's using bells. If you know these crystals that you're getting at a knuckled shop are being dug out of the ground by slave labours, or by child labours or whatever it may be like, I think you I think at the end of the day, you need to be doing so much more research and investigation onto the back side of things before you jump into it. Like we said, like don't just buy a cosmopolitan and like jump into the first thing and like start pintering spells, that you're using dollar store candles for the year then bearing in the ground like be a little more intentional.

Jae 48:44
I think it's important for me to clarify with what I was talking about with reconciliation that it's not like go find it. It is people to use age. Like it's not like you know, you're probably not going to get that medicine, right? Because actually, it's not your medicine. So you just shouldn't be using sage.

Katie 48:59
And white sage is an endangered species.

Braeden 49:00
It's sort of like, yeah, it's like Why? Because all cultures have the practice of burning things to clean things. Like that's, that's a pretty cross cultural thing. Why do you have to use white Sage? Yeah, like if you're pulling like Like, for instance, in our tradition we burn sandalwood right as Chinese traditions right? Or we burn my Hong or Mike ward. Like I wanted to clarify with that, because I realized in my head it sounds like,

Katie 49:25
Sounded like one thing.

Sabrina 49:26
Like your indigenous friends.

Jae 49:30
No, like you what recalculation is the first step is asking and then accepting that the answer might be no. And it might always be no, like that's, it's because you're actually just asking for forgiveness. You're not necessarily reaching out you're rebuilding bridges. And the other group just might not want to, you know, and that's okay, too. Right. You're just have to accept that as someone who, right. Yeah. And so yeah, that was important for me to clarify. And in terms of
sort of mining and stuff. It's also about access Right? like honoring what you're saying, but it's also like shits expensive. All you can have is $1 store tealight and that's what you're doing your spouse with, you know, like you burying a candle stuff in the ground. Like I understand the importance of being personally accountable in your relationship with Mother Nature but also recognizing that where our world is the state way it is right now because of large corporations. So like Yes, go vegan. If you can, yes, like limit your meat intake. Yes, don't litter. And there's alternatives right buy a potted plant instead, you bury it in your own garden if you don't want to give Mama Gaia you know petroleum jelly.

Braeden  50:39
It seems like a value that often gets lost in capitalist society is humility. And it seems like what you're touching on here maybe just like as an initial place of access as someone new to this humility should be kind of the bedrock should be the place from which you enter into this is being humble.

Katie  51:00
Yeah, I think that's a really beautiful way of encapsulating it because you are coming new into something that is so old. And there is so many histories from so many different parts of the world. And you can find your personal connections with parts of those history. Maybe it's about investigating beyond the newest trend of sage or whichever is the most popular and interrogating. What did the people I have connections with burn to clear this space? Did they? Did they burn something? Did they maybe use sound instead? Did they use bells? Did they use singing bowls did they use, what did they do and using it as a way to understand your space within history and understand how you are connected to things and then begin to make any repentance remittance that you require? Yeah, in the space where you're benefiting, where you're giving and taking and being really aware of how you fit in as an individual into the broader fabric of all of the energy of all time, and especially of the energies in the space, your present and right now, like I personally find for me and you touched to it as well, thanking, the spirits thanking, the place where you are thanking the people around you, thanking the ancestors, thanking them for allowing me a space where I can continue to try and do my best, and where I can continue to try and in what little ways I can undo what is being done. And it's very much balance and humility.

Jae  52:33
And it's like the other thing, it's sort of, you know, again, it's important to recognize, like, are you here because you just want to practice some spells, which is fine if you just want to dip in. I think that's okay, too. Right. Like, I don't think we need to be too precious about this thing. That you know, it's also sort of what we've come to call witchcraft, right? Everything's witchcraft these days. You know, where it's like back in the day. Everybody did spells everybody did they had a little rhyme, they had a little chant they, you know, they would plant Lavender by their front door for good fortune, practical magic, right? Or like, you know, they'd like sprinkle salt in places, right? Like there are, you know, every community had,
you know, the one person who would take away the curses or take away the evil eye, but not everyone was that person. Right? And so it's also like, what do you what do you mean when you say witch and what are you getting out of it? Because if you mean it in that older sense, right? Like, these answers will become clear, because you'll be pulled to where you need to, right. And if you don't want to be that, you know, the one thing I would give for beginners is make clear your intentions. Right? With what you're ready for, you know, and with sort of, like understanding our place here, yeah, it's complicated. It's like, you know, you have to understand the histories that you're coming from and the histories that you've inherited. You also have to live your life and so it's finding The balance of that, right because I feel like you know, especially as someone who's a sensitive and you know, a lot of witches are sensitives, right, or empaths or people who are just more easily affected by emotions and energies, just feel things more intensely, you know, it's important to also draw a boundary on sort of recognizing when is it ancestral responsibility that you play a part in? And when is it sort of, you know, to not take on everything as a personal thing, right? Because, you know, a lot of us, you know, especially as people who are more drawn to magic, if that's who you are, right, you can also have very sort of martyrdom based karmic cycles attached to you right? Where you're used to being like, Yes, I will give up all my magic to save the people you know, I will pour my blood take me, take me right. And I don't feel like that's constructive in the healing process of community as a whole right? Because we are we need to heal together. You know, not someone dies again. Right like that narrative did what it needed to do, but we don't need to keep repeating it in the same way. Yeah, and so it's that balance and it's sort of finding like why why do you want to do this? Why are you attracted to this? Right? It's not a nice thing to be a witch back in the say. It's still not nice and a lot of places Why do you want to call yourself that?

Katie 55:21
and especially if you go deeper with it? Like are you Yeah, are you in it because you're interested in the aesthetic and interested in having fun topical connections? Great, then that's the veil you will stop at but if you're not investigate that more, and look more into it and try and better understand your fit. And I think to like understand, when you know when you can trust your gut and understand when you need to ask questions, and when you maybe don't know everything and when you need to seek out and if you feel like you need to seek out keep seeking because if you seek you will find

Jae 55:58
The last thing I would recommend is, you know, the traditional way to do it is to begin with ancestors, because they are the ones who connect you to the other side because they are your barrier, right? You are literally your ancestors, this without your ancestors, this wouldn't be here in the same way. And for better or for worse, that's the reality. And so working with your ancestors is also, you know, setting boundaries is also clearing ancestral karma. Right. But those are all like, I think that's the unfortunate thing when talking about sort of the way it's booming right now is a lot of fundamentals get lost in translation. And so people don't realize, okay, I'm experiencing problems in my magic. Why? Well, because traditionally, you start with your foundations, which is the dead, right?
Sabrina  56:43
Um, do ancestors necessarily need to be biological?

Katie  56:46
No.

Sabrina  56:47
Okay. They can be your community...

Jae  56:49
who do you inherit? whose stories do you hold with you as well? .

Katie  56:53
yea, What is your community?Yeah, exactly. And where do you fit?

Sabrina  56:56
Where can you be found from our listeners? I know, Jae, you do magic and read professionally.

Jae  57:02
I have a business. I have a business now. Yeah, you can find me on Instagram as the Mandrake 333. My profile pictures and all seeing eye so you'll recognize it. Yeah the mandrake and that's the name of the store the mandrake.

Sabrina  57:18
The Mandrake three, three, all one word. You don't need to be found if you don't want to be.

Katie  57:25
I am unfindable

Sabrina  57:27
Everyone go to Jae the readings are great.

Braeden  57:32
Yeah, that's a great, great place to end. Thank you so much, Jae and Katie for sharing your time and wisdom today. I hope you'll come back. I think maybe this needs to be regular segment. So we have so much to unpack and keep unpacking. But thanks for starting this conversation with us. I'm really grateful to be working on the show alongside my fellow producers, Sabrina and Ari, and Mika and Saba, who are taking care of us in the soundboard today. I also want to say thank you to Day Milman, who worked really hard to bring the show to the airwaves. And most of all, a big thank to our listeners. we'd really love to hear from you. You can find us on Twitter @hpodcasting, and on Instagram @HartHouseStories. We're here every Saturday at 7am on CIUT 89.5 FM, and we post all of our episodes under Hart House stories on SoundCloud. Our Intro music was composed by Dan Driscoll. I'm Braeden signing off with my co host today and our lovely guests. And I'm hoping that this winter solstice morning find you somewhere safe
and cozy. Thank you so much for listening, and we'll see you next week in the West Meeting Room.

Transcribed by https://otter.ai & Monse