



On Their Way Transcript:  
Bonus Episode: Christian Jordan Ellis

**'On Their Way' Theme Song composed by Bajio Alvarado**  
**(It's light and energetic. It puts a little pep in your step)**

**Jade:** Good insert-time-of-day-here-as-I-don't-actually-know-when-you-are-listening. Fellow humans, it's me, Jade. And today on our episode, as you probably saw from the title, I'm interviewing Christian Jordan Ellis. I first met Christian in our collective freshman year at Howard, we had several shared friends in common because all the artsy kids know each other. I swear, every artist at Howard the center of their own personal six-degrees-of-separation web. We're all Kevin Bacon, which is a wonderful thing to be. Anyhow, over our shared time there I was able to see some of their development as an artist and organizer, and I am quite excited that I get the opportunity to sit down with them and talk about it at length. I hope you're excited too, because you're only moments away from listening to the third bonus episode of (sing song) On Their Way. So buckle in, prepare your ears, and remember this is a WGC production.

**'On Their Way' Theme Fades**

**J:** Christian Ellis is a writer, painter, musician, performer, and organizer from Woodbridge, Virginia. Among their aspirations are the total liberation of black and queer people around the globe, the creation of a communist tribuna, and access to freedom and land on which to build shelter, create art and grow or hunt their own food. Hey Christian, how are you doing?

**Christian:** I'm doing good. How are you?

**J:** I'm doing pretty good as well. So, I'm just going to open this up with the first question that I ask everybody. Where do you come from and where are your roots?

**(Christian sighs deeply)**

**C:** That's a heavy question to start off the joint with. My roots?



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**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** I come from, I guess, well, I don't know if I necessarily, like, consider my whole self as coming from Earth, but I definitely come from somewhere, the same place that we all come from. But I was born in Detroit, Michigan, that's a good sign that your granddaddy's from Birmingham.

**(Jade Laughs)**

**C:** So, my granddaddy's from Birmingham, and my grandparents on my mom's side from Georgia or something like that. But then we moved to Virginia when I was, uh, four. So, we stopped going up there probably like around high school. So, I've been pretty much around Virginia, just growing up. Fredericksburg. I live in Dumfries now. Went to Woodbridge High School. Um, and, uh, my roots, I guess, all of that, I pretty much, you know, carry with me. Definitely, um, more of a spiritual thing for me, thinking about roots-

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** That's the ancestors, you know, living in the body. So, that's all like, "y'all are my roots" type shit, but you know, that's everything for all, but yeah, that's...that's who I am. That's where I come from.

**J:** Okay. So, could you tell our, um, could you tell our audience what exactly it is you do in your own words?

**C:** Yeah, sure. So I, I guess I'm an artist, definitely. Which to me is just being an organizer or I guess the first part of being an organizer, which is just trying to make friends, you know, trying to be a person in the world, trying to figure out how you can express yourself and how you can create spaces to express yourself. So, for me, being someone that's very individual. A lot of boundaries, a lot of rules in my body that I'm constantly learning about, uh, I have to create those spaces for me to even be able to express my art. So, I like playing music in bands. I like painting with people.



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**C:** I like meditating with people, and I also recently been more involved in community organizing, as well. Out here locally in Virginia and also just, you know, talking all that shit with...can I, can I curse? Can I say shit?

**J:** Go ahead.

**C:** Okay. Talking, just talking about this shit, you know, channeling really is what that is. We just are constantly, uh, doing spiritual labor. So, I try to just direct that towards places where I know it's reciprocated. So, that's my art. And then the nature of that is, uh, a lot of it's writing. So, I started off writing plays in the seventh grade. Um, since then I've been writing plays, poetry, cause I ended up just rambling, the characters just rambling on about the universe, so, I'm like, "ah, let me write some poetry, you know?" Started acting. Got me into musical theater so I started dancing, noticing things I could do with my body. And then that all plays into the breath. You know, singing and stuff started doing that around, uh, 10th grade. Acting around seventh grade.

**J:** Okay.

**C:** Didn't really get into poetry that much till, uh, high school around the time I graduated high school, maybe like 11th grade. And then I started doing, uh, slam poetry, picked up guitar and started learning. You know, taught myself piano, guitar and, uh, I paint now too, the last couple of years. Started doing expressions. So, it's really just all bodywork, you know, just movement work really because it's all process of meditation and then expression. So, pretty much anything I can get my hands on. I want to start crafting more things though. Getting into building furniture so I can start, uh, doing some community revitalization.

**J:** You mentioned meditation a few times. Can you talk more about how meditation feeds into your artistic process? It just sounds interesting to me.

**C:** Yeah. So, in seventh grade, my, uh, English teacher, Mike Viola, he taught me how to, um, he taught me how to meditate really.



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**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** Um, we were doing this....this production, kind of, like The Wiz, but it had like modern music in it. Like we, we did like Nikki Minaj, for some reason-

**(Jade Chuckles)**

**C:** I was just on stage as the scarecrow. And I ended up being the Scarecrow in our, in our...my senior year production, which was cool, but this was back in seventh grade and I'm just sitting on stage for like half an hour, just, you know, down. Pose. You know, and that's really how I...and then I just entered that into my process, being an actor, I had to meditate before all my shows to kind of dissolve myself and enter into the character's body. So, that's something that I would just do pretty much for performances. I also would lead like Suzuki exercises, which is, um, a movement process, but I would, uh, kind of do with my own spin on it, which I got from my mentor and, uh, kind of edited myself of which ended up just being a process of meditation. Um, recently I try not to be as verbally involved in instructing on meditation.

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** That's now more of a thing that I just kind of lead by example with.

**J:** And are there other ways that spirituality feeds into your art?

**C:** Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

**(Jade Laughs)**

**J:** Talk about a few of them.

**(Christian and Jade Laugh)**

**C:** A couple of 'em?



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**J:** Yeah, a couple of 'em.

**C:** Uh, I mean, it's everything. Like it's like, you know, everything is a ritual. Like first of all, the artistic process itself is a ritual, like there's so....Like I've just always. you know, had like, I guess, a pain in being affected by, you know, parts of my brain that I can't reach the subconscious, you know, nightmares, sleep, paralysis, that kind of thing.

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** Um, so in order to really get those thoughts out, you know, the artistic process is like....it's a ritualistic instinct the artistic process is. It's like a...it's like waking up in the morning and saluting the sun, you know?

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** Which leads you to your pose, which leads into your yoga. It's like a song is stuck in your head and then it gets played. So it's, it's all, it's all spiritual in that we're literally, you know, completing an ancestral task based on the creation of this song, you know. Vibrationally, we are on a, at a level, which is significant, um, in terms of the size of things, like when you think about why atoms are the size that they are, it's just, it's all surface area to volume ratio. So, like the place that we are within physical reality is, you know, it's significant. You...that can't be denied. So, when we're dealing with the things that we know that are going on in our subconscious as significant in the way that we move through this spiritual reality, um, you know, we can oftentimes disregard the simplest things that we do as non-spiritual. But once you really accept that, you start to realize that everything that you do has that type of meaning. And then the artistic process is just, okay, "I'm going to isolate that also this level of understanding that I've reached or yada, yada, I'm going to isolate that and then try to create something more out of this little piece that I've carved out".

**J:** Hmm. So, okay. That's interesting. So can I, uh, I want to ask how that applies to a specific piece of art that I've had the privilege of seeing, but before we get into that, I'm going to ask you to explain the plot of the art just so people know what we're talking about. So, recently for the, Howard 8x10 festival, I had the privilege of seeing your play, *Rebirth 01*.



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**J:** So, could you just sort of explain what the plot is of that so that when we talk about it later, people can understand what we're talking about?

**C:** Word. Word. So, *Rebirth 01* is sort of, eh, a little bit Afro futuristic vignette. Um, it's a 10 minute play that I wrote for the 8x10 festival, Howard Players. It starts at the breaking point, um, of a long dance, which is being acted out by three feminine presenting characters who are supposedly at a party. And, uh, The audience may take the...take on the role of the members of that party, regardless they're dancing and, uh, when they begin to speak, you realize they're involved in some sort of dream work. Someone has a prophecy there was a darkness at the gathering, so there's just lines and the audience [is] slowly being initiated into this situation without having the full picture, and then it just continues to get curious, one of the characters, I would say maybe the main character, uh, Sema or Sima, uh, says that she has wished for her lover to come sweep her up in this darkness that her sister...her sister, Secret, prophesied would happen. The darkness was the prophecy of Secret. And Sima had wished for, in this darkness, her lover to come. So, apparently this means something because Mama, the third character, and Secret are....they're in shock and they think something horrible will happen. She should not have messed with Secret's prophecy, basically. Two other characters enter they're looking for their third character, and then it's just really just a moment of suspense and tension as the characters figure out what's happening and the audience figures out what's happening and in the end, uh, the song that they were dancing to, and the song that's been playing throughout the play, returns and is revealed to be the sixth character. Um, the third masculine character who is really just, um, Sima's other side. So, they all dance and they all die except Sima rises from the ashes and embraces her immortal lover as he's called. So, they're looking for this powerful third figure that exists, but does not have a physical form, and, uh, it turns out to be, um, manifested. So, it's almost like a...a ritual, which, uh, summons some type of spirit, um, in part, it was called *Rebirth 01* because it was made to summon my spirit of playwriting, and then also the actors told me some mythology about the characters that I didn't know, but Persephone, apparently, uh, who Sima's referred to as in the play, uh, was the goddess of rebirth.

**J:** Mhmm.



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**C:** So, um, it's really just a, it's a ritual. Um, it's got a lot of dancing and a lot of music. It was, uh, it was a beautiful process, but hopefully I kind of skipped over some things-

**(Jade Laughs)**

**C:** Cause it's a lot going on.

**J:** Since you mentioned earlier how the subconscious feeds into your crafting of work, how did the subconscious craft into, uh, into the creation of this work? Because when I was watching it, I was personally thinking, "Oh, this is, this is pretty...I guess I need to be on a different level to understand this. I'm not looking at this the right way." So like, how did the subconscious feed into your creation of the work?

**C:** Word. Well this is something that I recently had just figured out kind of the other day leading my first meditation since, uh, since school. A lot of my work now is more, as I'm coming from it's abstraction, which I discovered through painting-

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** And abstraction is really just the process of creating...creating images, which don't have complete form, that leaves room for the, for the viewer or the audience to have a completely different experience than I had as the playwright. So, in this experience by kind of connecting, um, these characters, which don't have a definite setting, which don't have a definite context to them, um, connecting those characters by...by lines, which I suppose are drawn through mythologies that I've walked through in my life. Um, by just drawing those lines and connecting the characters through the dialogue the audience can have a subconscious experience of the play. So, I just really have to do the work to kind of solidify, um, my next works, uh, cause this one was a little bit like "what's going on", you know what I mean?

**(Christian Laughs)**



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**C:** But, uh, you know, part of that, I consider a failure of myself not being as involved in the process as I could have been, and also maybe I could have given it a couple of rewrites-

**(Jade Laughs)**

**C:** But I'm definitely proud of it as, uh, as a work that, uh....yeah, I like to do like quick drafts, you know, cause it's all expressions-

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** But it's like, I enjoy that what's happening in my work is something that's beyond my own perception. That kind of, for me, takes it to another level where I can keep, keep reading it and then have another understanding of it every other time.

**J:** And I know you said you liked doing quick drafts because it's expressions, uh, cause it's like expressionism, have you written longer works in this, in this style? Like a one-act or uh, or a full length play?

**C:** Uh, no, I've started a lot of them, but I've never written a full length play in this style. Gotta get my stamina up, but I do hope to eventually write...write something long, hopefully a novel, but probably a couple plays just in one expression. So, uh, like I said, I have to cultivate this space for me to be able to do that, but it'll eventually be a goal. I do plan on doing more solidified works and more edited works in the future, but I'm more concerned right now about, I guess, just being an organizer and finding places to live, uh, you know, making sure everybody eats right and then, then I'll be able to hone in on my craft more.

**J:** That makes, that makes sense. I do want to mention one thing that you mentioned in your bio that relates back to your organizational aspirations. In your bio, you have a lot of these really big ideas like black and queer liberation, uh, communist tribunals, access to food and land where your people can build, build their lives.





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**J:** These are all such big generational shifts that will take such a long time to....which may very well take a long time to develop and create. So what are you doing...what are you doing, uh, now to build up to, and to further invest in that future of liberation?

**C:** So, like you said, um, It's definitely something. Well, first of all, you know, and I'll get into this lifetime, but like you said, it's intergenerational, um, it's something that we have to kind of set up a mindset for, a spiritual preparation. And that's where the whole concept really, for me, of preparing for the afterlife comes into. It's like being able to...being able to be proud of the work that you did. But in terms of work that I'm trying to do, I want to eventually start a non-profit community organization that contracts different cooperatives, hopefully independent artists, entrepreneurs, people that understand the need for black liberation and can express that through a project. Hopefully getting them funding, but really just connecting everybody with each other, um, community development, I guess, uh, directly. So, saying, "this is, uh, this is a person who has the same vision as you, who has the resources that you don't have." So, um, you know, but that's more like, uh, political stuff, I guess.

**(Christian Laughs)**

**C:** In terms of, uh, being prepared to have access to land, should the land be free, that's something that I don't have the answer for. Uh, that's something that time's going to tell, I guess. Um, but it requires, you know, constant self-education, um, constant, um, you know, paying attention to what's going on and finding reliable news sources, and, uh, that's the type of thing that I want to be able to enable all of my friends to do. Like, you know, so it...like everything, everything is just like letting it kind of fall into place, but also seeing it fall into place so that you can like, get things, push it, but also like, yeah, chilling off it.

**(Christian and Jade Laugh)**

**J:** Then a question I would have would be, as you know, like we're in a world that commodifies the aesthetics of Black liberation. From like the way the Black Panthers dressed, to the, to the



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style of the Afro to, to like the, just the aesthetics of what it means to be a free Black person have been commodified.

**J:** And as a result-

**C:** Mhmm.

**J:** A lot of the ethos of Black liberation, a lot of the, the theory of the, of the thought leaders has been deradicalized, so it can be more palatable to a mass audience. Uh, you can see this now with things like how everybody has, uh, ACAB in their bio, but not everybody means it or, or things like that. So, when you have, like, this sort of dynamic going on, the sort of violent, uh de-radicalization of anti-blackness going on in the world, how do you create, uh, that furthers Black liberation without falling into these pitfalls?

**(Christian Sighs)**

**C:** That's such a good question. Okay. I'm trying to figure out, the first, um....so, well, first of all, I'm just going to say, like, one of the things that we see is a lot of the art that's being created, and I started just from an artistic standpoint is cause it's at, um, where I kind of enter into this process, but, like Lovecraft Country. For example-

**J:** Mhmm. Oh, I enjoy that show. Go head.

**(Jade Laughs)**

**C:** Okay. But I'm not, I'm not, but I'm not going to hate on it. You know, it was cute.

**J:** Uh-huh.

**(Jade Laughs Again)**

**C:** Like, and then, you know, financially all that's going towards the same, you know, yada, yada, I don't know what's going on behind the scenes-



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**J:** Uh-huh.

**C:** But in terms of the...it's not Afrofuturism, if you are enabling the same perception of Black people, that's already existed. It's only Afrofuturism, if you are creating a world that is truly absent of...you know, like, it doesn't have to be this beautiful utopia, like Octavia Butler created these dark worlds which mimic the things that we're already going through, but in a, in a sense where, "oh, this is actually the earth doing these things to us. This is actually the true nature of my condition", as opposed to what we're living in now is, you know, "this is somebody doing this to me. Like this is...I have somebody keeping me in bondage." So, regardless, they have...the art has to be an expression of freedom, and in terms of, you know, not having liberal co-optation of like, of these movements, it's important that you, like as a Black artist, and me, move through all of the situations that we kind of, uh, find ourselves in. With a little bit of, uh, with a little bit of awareness, but that's really just kind of having high standards. And that's why patience, like we were talking about, but also the word for....I'm trying....yeah, all of that, patience and the push, you know. Both of those are like....both of those are an important quality that you gotta keep in those situations. Um, because somebody's gonna....Sorry. I'm just thinking about what we talked about earlier.

**(Christian and Jade Laugh)**

**C:** Uh, yeah, librel co-optation is, uh, it's easy to fall into, um, like you...like, people just gotta read, first of all. Like all the things that people are retweeting and stuff, people don't read half of that stuff. They don't read the sources that are being quoted, you know?

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** Um, and that's not, that's not to be elitist, you know. I'm lucky to have a certain amount of political education, but it has to also be in like, uh, the work that we do as artists. Um, so one of the things that I want to focus on with whatever program, I start, whatever, if I'm enabling you to build a fan base or if I'm enabling myself as and artist to build a fan base, you have to recognize that you are inherently a community organizer. You're gathering people around an idea. So, on



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the firsthand, that idea itself should be, if it's real art, it should be inherently radical, and you know, that's something else we can get into.

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** It should be inherently revolutionary. But secondarily, you know, you have a responsibility for, uh, what types of programs you're doing online. You know, like, if you are creating healing environments, uh, what you're doing with these people that you're having [inintelligible] with. Like, especially now having people together around an idea is just inherently powerful, so that can't be wasted, you know, that opportunity. So, I'm not saying, just get everybody together, but like, you know, teach, you know, heal, do the work. Uh, while you have this opportunity, um, I think, you know, we're done with politicians. People need, like, people need community trust. Like we're done with leaders, you know what I mean? If you're....if you're spinning truth, you know, if you're a conduit of truth, you know what I mean, uh, then you gotta be just looking to give out that truth. Like, that should be your main priority. So like, Yeah. Yeah, that's good.

**(Jade Laughs)**

**J:** Okay. Well, you brought up an interesting....you touched on something that you said we were gonna to get back to, so we're gonna to get back to it now.

**C:** Okay.

**J:** What qualifies as radical art in your eyes?

**C:** Word. Word? Well, I don't think it's necessarily a label, I'm just saying, I think all....what I was saying was I think all art is inherently ra....well, I should have said revolutionary, but you could call it whatever you want.

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** But like, if it's...if it's new, right, and that's what people look for...if it's, like, if it's the truest expression of, "okay, this is who I am. I've been placed. I'm a random number on this long list of



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trillions, or whatever, billions of humans that have ever existed. This is my number, and this is what the expression of that is, and it's, it's unique. It's different from everything that's existed and nobody else can do that any other way.

**C:** “Cause it was my... It was my hand that guided the pencil across the page. Right?” If, if that is art to you, which to me, it is, then that inherently has to be like, “why can't I say, why isn't the song perfect yet?” You know?

**J:** Mhmm.

**C** It's because there are boundaries on you from the, you know, we have not reached a certain level of human evolution, so we're constantly going through these trials and those are being manifested as, you know, and not to blame it on God, but like, those are being manifested as real conditions of slavery, of institutionalization, uh, both conscious and physical violence that we're subjected to. Uh, because we're not there yet. I'm not free. The song isn't just spilling out of me yet, because I'm not, uh, my body is not in a perfect condition, whatever that is, you know, and we know it's unachievable, right? But if you're going to try to achieve some type of a truth through your art, then it's got to come from a place outside of what's around you, outside of everybody else, and the only way to do that is to, you know, break down those walls of what you've been told to think, and that is the most revolutionary thing. Because you'll discover so much truth about the nature of these things like incarceration, police, and, like, you'll discover so much truth based off of how you feel emotionally...naturally about the situation. That's the best learning that you're going to do. The best reading you're going to do is to discover how you inherently emotionally react to something like your physical condition. And then your expression of that art is going to be, you know, a reflection of that, if that impacted what you're doing. And if it's not what you're doing, then, uh, I'm not, that's not art to me or at least nothing I'm going to consume.

**J:** Okay. Well...okay, so this is interesting. So, when you're talking about revolutionary art and the art expressing something beyond the constructs that we have, you start getting into the concept of radical imagination, like that just naturally kind of flows forth. So, then my question becomes, what is your practice of radical imagination? How have you developed a radical imagination?



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**C:** Hmm, that's crazy, I've never heard that term before. Um, I don't, I don't know if I'm there yet. Definitely not there yet, as far as my imagination. I can say that, um, my mind kind of works in a certain, uh, with a certain what's the word? With a certain, like, amount of chaos for real.

**(Jade and Christian Laugh)**

**C:** So, I've always kind of, um, I've kind of had to deal with, like, you know, multiple layers of...of reality just in order to make it through night. Uh, so I wouldn't say that I have amassed the amount of control over my own mind to say that I have a radical imagination yet, but, um, I think imagination in itself is like...it's it's it's very vast, you know? And we, we do a lot of imagining that we're not really aware of, so it could just be that there is no like, uh, there is no taming that, uh, for real, um, but in terms of, you know, achieving that I think that's like, that's something that I wouldn't want to...that's something I would want to have is a radical imagination, but that's not something that I currently have.

**J:** All right. Huh. Okay. Interesting. So, I'm going to be meta referential right now, we've been talking about a lot of heady concepts. We've been talking about some topics that go to theory, and I know personally from like me talking with my own family members that this isn't always what people want to hear, sometimes they just want to watch like...like art, that's just, you know, like something that you watch.

**C:** Yeah, man.

**J:** Yeah. So how do you, how do you, um, bring....how do you make these topics palatable for like just the average Joe, you know?

**C:** Word. Word. Well, I don't make very much art first of all.

**(Jade Laughs)**



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**J:** Okay.

**C:** And then, well, it's normally not palatable for the average, for the average Joe. So, I have written some, well, I had to write...well, not had too. Like, I had volunteered and I had been commissioned to write, uh, this piece. It was for St. Jude. We did like a gala. It was called the Golden Gala, but she had this story, she used to work, uh, do art therapy for kids with cancer.

**J:** Aww.

**C:** And she has a story she wanted. So, um, and it was, it was nice. Uh, so I had to, you know, I guess just write about real things. The only thing you can really do is have real situations. So, uh, so, but oftentimes those real situations are private. So, journaling, uh, writing about, uh, people in your life, you know, things that you might send to them. And then once it gets to a certain point where you're distant from that person, then you can start to write about them, you know, uh, you know, in, from a detached point of view or write about who they are as a, as a person, as a metaphor and what your relationship was. But besides from that, it's like most, most things are very, very private. And most things don't ever make it to the page, so that, I guess, I guess how...okay to answer the question, how I make it palatable is continuing to do-

**(Jade Laughs)**

**C:** Is continuing to do this and like just hone in on what it is I'm trying to actually talk about, um, just by, through being patient and not always trying to make, uh, all bunch of stuff at once. You know, I have a lot of ideas and, um, you know, I might hear people talking about lets collab, do this-that. A lot of stuff falls through that's my bad for anybody listening. But,

**(Christian Chuckles)**

**C:** I guess, uh, when it comes to writing as normally somewhere where you can be a little bit more heady and people enjoy it-



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**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** But besides that it's like, um, if it's not at a certain threshold, you just gotta keep it inside until it's ready to come out.

**J:** This is all quite interesting. I like, I like talking theory. Uh, speaking of theory, uh, just aestheticism and such, but speaking of theory, uh, what's theory, what theory are you reading or have you read or has been especially influential in your life?

**C:** Hmm, well right now I'm reading, *African Cosmology Of The Bantu Congo*. It's very interesting. I wouldn't say it's....I haven't gotten very far, so it hasn't really changed my perspective that much, but it's definitely adding clarity to some things that I've already been thinking. Um, one thing that I read that kind of changed my thinking a long time ago was the works of Sigmund Freud.

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** I just picked up, like, I got full work and just skim through it. Read pretty much the whole thing, and then I started writing my own theories. Um, I started reading about Karl Young and then, you know, read Karl Marx, all that.

**J:** Yeah.

**C:** Reading *Pedagogy Of The Oppressed*, um, *Blood In My Eye* by George Jackson definitely changed my perspective a lot. That one definitely shifted, uh, shifted the nature of the emotion, which I was trying to express. So, that's really a good book. Yeah. [Frantz] Fanon. I've been reading Fanon. Fanon is interesting, you had to go through a lot to kind of access that one, that emotion.

**J:** Mhmm.





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**C:** Uh, but yeah, just, I try to read, um, I try to read a lot, uh, different types of things. So, you know, when you're watching TV, you're reading script. So then you get your scripts in that way.

**C:** Uh, you can read some poetry, uh, try to read mantras, a lot of what people are tweeting, a lot of it's poetry. Uh, some of its prose, a lot of it's script, and then, uh, prose is like just words in order. So, you read articles. Uh, I like to read the stuff that you write, the stuff that you post.

**J:** Oh, thanks. Thank you.

**C:** Been reading a lot of different types of stuff.

**J:** Okay. Thanks. Um, then another question I would have would be like, what's your intellectual/creative lineage then? I suppose we kind of covered the intellectual lineage with the books, but with your creative lineage then, who can you trace your artistic inspirations back to?

**C:** Um, well, my mom used to sing in the church choir-

**J:** Aww.

**C:** But uh, she's like, she's got more of that math brain. She got one of them really like, uh, calculating brains. So, I've always been real good at math, you know, uh, calculus and that kind of stuff. But, uh, but she just, she's one of those like numbered, you know, just tell her something and she'll figure it out for you. Um, so that's more of, I guess the analytical side of it and the...I guess my dad's pretty creative. He has a nice voice. Um, but he's, you know, military, not very expressive, creative.

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** So I don't know, it just kind of popped up out of no where for real. But, um, my brothers' like that too. We've always been creative. We used to make games. Uh, used to make our own toys, uh, make comics, that kind of stuff.



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Christian Jordan Ellis

**J:** Alright, and then, uh, this is probably going to be our second to last question since I'm looking at the time, but you said recently that, or you said earlier that you're starting to get more involved with community organizations in your own personal community.

**J:** So, can you tell us what that experience has been like, uh, being involved, uh, immersing yourself more in community organizing during this particular period in American history?

**C:** Yeah. I mean, it's a lot, you learn a lot, uh, you learn a lot about the limitations that there are, um, within the government, without the government, um, the limitations are between people, um, and a lot of the things that we're really gonna need, uh, should, the economic system fail us, as it's looking like in might, um, you know, the healthcare system should, these things fail us, like, the type of organization that we're going to need. It's hard to get people energized. It's hard to get people organized. It's really hard to get people on the same page, um, in terms of what a vision is. Uh, so, uh, you know, it's just life skills, really. One of the things, you know, I dropped out of Howard, so, uh, I did a little bit of organizing there with HU Resist.

**J:** Mhmm.

**C:** Just in the A [Administration] Building for real, uh,

**J:** That was a time, but yeah.

**(Jade Laughs)**

**C:** Yeah, man that was cool. That was cool. I was in there like every night.

**J:** Yeah, me too.

**C:** Like, you know, like same situation, you know, you gotta make sure people eat, you know, it's hard.

**J:** Mhmm.



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Christian Jordan Ellis

**C:** So, you know, we do mutual aid and stuff out in, uh, Virginia, Prince William County.

**C:** So, uh, you know, it's, it's serious work, uh, you know? So it's, it's given me, uh, given me kind of a broader perspective on what a lot of the stuff that I do is about, um, you know. A little bit more of a task to do so it's kind of slowed me down, but it really gave me more clarity.

**J:** All right. Well, we're here at our last question. Christian, you're clearly on your way to continuing to build and bolster and help communities through your art, as well as through your actual physical labor. Um, so I just want to know how will you know, when you've made it?

**C:** How will I know when I made it?

**J:** Yeah.

**C:** I think we don't know till that last moment. I think that's the whole judgment we're worried about, you know, I think you definitely figure out at the end if you mean. I think I'm a know when I let out that exhale is going to feel good. Like Ahhh.

**(Jade and Christian Laugh)**

**J:** All right. Well, can you tell the people where they can find you?

**C:** Yeah. Um, my Instagram is @christianjordanelis, C H R I S T I A N

**(Christian Laughs)**

**C:** J O R D A N E L L I S.

**J:** Man, you got a long name.

**(Jade Laughs)**



On Their Way Transcript:  
Bonus Episode: Christian Jordan Ellis

**C:** Long name? I think my, uh, I think my Twitter is. @chrisjordnellis without an 'A'. Like, Jor-dn, but like, you know.

**(Christian Laughs)**

**On Their Way' Theme Song composed by Bajio Alvarado**

**J:** And that was the third bonus episode of *On Their Way*. *On Their Way* was created, hosted, and edited by me Jade Madison Scott. The theme music was composed by Bajio Alvarado, and the logo was created by Amaka Korie. If you want to financially support us and do some last minute holiday shopping, buy some of our merch. We've got mugs, stickers, pins, t-shirts, sweatshirts, pillows, phone cases, and notebooks. To make a purchase you can go to our website, [wgcproductions.com](http://wgcproductions.com), click the store tab, and boom you're there. If you want to support us but don't want to spend money, first of all, I respect that, and secondly you can follow us @withgoodco on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Episode transcripts are also available on our website, [wgcproductions.com](http://wgcproductions.com). And that is what? A wrap.

**(Jade Laughs)**

**J:** Oh no. No. No. No. No. No, that was cheesy.

**(Jade Laughs Again)**

**J:** Um, I will catch you next week with Drew Emerson who is on his way to legal success. Remember to take care of yourselves and each other by wearing your masks!