

## For All I Care Episode 05 - Transcript

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:00:00] My experience of time has changed in the last few years. Time used to feel very hyper present, everything now, very fast and very close. As in my only experience of time was the red hot now.

And then a few years ago in the work that I was doing as an artist, I was working a lot with ritual cultures of the Black Atlantic and there was quite often an idea of ritual time, which was cyclical. That time is round. It connects back in on itself. And we're here in the centre. I started to realize there was this cyclical nature of time that could feel gentler, more caring towards myself, more caring towards the world. So that's something that's really fascinating to me. That changing our perception of time can help us care more.

This is For All I Care, a mini-series about how to care more creatively brought to you by Baltic Centre For Contemporary Art and Wellcome Collection. My name is Nwando Ebizie. I'm a multidisciplinary artist, and today in the fifth and final episode of the series, we're taking a long view of care and casting our eyes towards the future.

Over the past four episodes, we've looked at how we can care for our bodies, for our communities and for the natural world. But what does it mean to care for the future and how does imagining different, more caring futures help us to create a better present?

**Roman Krznic:** [00:02:02] One of the extraordinary things about the human imagination is our capacity for our minds to dance across time. We are experts at the temporal pirouette.

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:02:12] I went into that wanting to write a story about a woman in the future, because then I won't be limited towards the sort of short-term predictions people have about the lives of black people today.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:02:29] One of the ways I care for the future is through Afrofuturism.

Afrofuturism is often described as a cultural aesthetic, a sub-genre of sci-fi that has black people in it, basically. But for me, it's so much more than that. It's a way of rewriting the stories of the children of the African diaspora, who were told that they had no past and no future.

So we wanted to hear from Ytasha Womack. She is an Afrofuturist thinker whose nonfiction book, *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture* is used in classrooms and universities around the world. She's also a filmmaker, dancer, and novelist. We invited Ytasha to talk to a public philosopher who's also been thinking deeply about the future.

His name is Roman Krznic, and his latest book is called *The Good Ancestor: How To Think Long-term In A Short-term World*. It looks at the actions we can take now to create a better, more caring world for all of the generations to come. Here's Ytasha in conversation with Roman.

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:03:44] Well, I have to say, it's such a pleasure to, to meet you Roman. I have heard of a lot of rumblings about your book *The Good Ancestor* so it's really exciting to

be able to connect with you. And I'm just wondering, why do you think it's important to imagine different or better futures?

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:04:03] Ooh, that's a big question, isn't it? I guess for me, I think there's something that many people recognise in society, which is that we live in an age of chronic short-termism. The future's incredibly difficult to connect with emotionally or in other ways. That we know our politicians can barely see beyond the next election or the latest tweet, that nations sit around international conference tables, bickering away while the planet burns and species disappear and as individuals we're, you know, looking at our phones and clicking the buy now button, you know, in a sense, this is the age of the tyranny of the now and it seems to me that there are so many ways in which we need to think about the long future of our species. You know, there are so many long-term challenges. We've got to be planning for the next pandemic. We need to look at the long-term challenges of racial injustice, which gets passed on from generation to generation, and we need to, of course, tackle the global climate crisis.

But for me, there's kind of one question which encapsulates them all and it's this: how can we be good ancestors? In other words, how are we going to be remembered by the generations to come? And in many ways it's a recognition of the way we treat the future, you know, that we dump so much in the future. We dump ecological degradation, technological risk, injustices and inequalities of many kinds, and I guess as I see it, we need to liberate the future from the domination by the present.

But you know, I'm wondering, Ytasha, how do you think about the future? Do you think of the future as a place of care, a place of struggle, a place of conflict, a place of liberation? What is the future for you?

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:05:43] I think of the future as this infinite space of opportunity and dreams manifest. And it's interesting because when I talk about Afrofuturism, I use it as a lens to deconstruct time and I often talk about Afrofuturism where I'm centring that it doesn't emphasise non-linear time. It looks at the future, past and present as very much one. And in that sense, you know, futures are... on one hand, it's our dreams and our hopes, but it's also very much the result of what we do today. And I felt as if we in the present can be informed by these futures.

I think we accept that we're informed by our past, but I don't think we necessarily feel as if we're always informed by our futures. I think it's literally imagining futures and then thinking retroactively, this future that you've imagined, what lesson could be there that would change what you do today?

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:06:50] It's interesting, actually, you know, that idea of trying to imagine the future and how you might get there makes me think of this part in your book. One of the films you mention is The Matrix. And I thought that was a really interesting one to mention, obviously, a film that many people have seen, a film with a big multi-racial cast and stuff. What kind of glimpse does a film like The Matrix actually give us into Afrofuturism? How does it help us understand what it's all about?

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:07:20] Well, when people ask me about Afrofuturism, oftentimes they ask me to define it. It's a way of looking at the future or alternate realities, but through a black cultural lens. And I'm talking about people who are on the continent of Africa, descendants around the globe. And I talk about it as a artistic aesthetic. As a practice, but also as a philosophy of sorts and it intersects the imagination, liberation, technology, mysticism, and black culture.

And when I think about The Matrix, I think about some of the core concepts that make Afrofuturism a little different from other takes on the future. For one, there's the non-linear time, looking at past, present, and future is one, but then there's also the, this concept of valuing the divine feminine.

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:08:16] Right, The Oracle, right?

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:08:18] Right, and that's where we get into The Oracle. And the divine feminine is really this valuing of intuition. And in Afrofuturism there's very much a valuing of that realm, which in a lot of wisdom systems, you know, it's referred to as the feminine aspect of humanity.

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:08:36] You know I've always loved The Matrix, but it's so fantastic when you start looking at something through a new lens and that's one of the things I, I love about your book Afrofuturism, it's really helped me sort of rethink my relationship with past, present and future and actually, as you were just mentioning earlier about that sense of moving, uh, away from standard conceptions of time and that kind of, in some ways, melding of past, present and future, it reminded me of a lot of the things I've written in my book about indigenous cultures around the world that try and bring, in a way, the living, the dead and the unborn into the same room.

I remember talking with a Maori legal activist from Aotearoa, New Zealand, who was saying how, when she's speaking, or when she's living her life, she feels both her, her ancestors in the room with her and all the generations yet to come.

And there's that strong sense of intergenerational connection, which certainly in the culture that I've grown up in, a very sort of white Western culture, individualized, consumerized, that connection with all those other generations seems to have been kind of severed, which makes it hard to connect with future generations.

**Jerome Kavanagh:** [00:09:57] You know, there's a view that the ancestors are pretty much watching your every move, so what you're trying to do is live your life in a way that when you become an ancestor, then your descendants will look at your life and you'll be giving an example.

Kia ora, my name is Jerome. I'm from Aotearoa, New Zealand, and I come from the tribe, Maori tribes here Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Maniapoto, and I live in a little village on the West coast of the North Island, which is Ōtaki.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:10:34] This is Jerome Kavanagh, a musician and sound healer from Aotearoa, New Zealand. For Jerome, Maori understandings of time have helped him to care

not only for his ancestors and the community he lives in now, but also for the generations to come.

**Jerome Kavanagh:** [00:10:53] My understanding of the modern concept of time is that things are linear. So we have a past, present and a future. The concept in our Maori culture though, in most indigenous cultures actually, is that time is not linear. It's more of a circle energy or shape, so that the past the present and the future are kind of all happening at the same time, all in the one present moment. And an example of that is our practice around tūpuna taonga, which is acknowledging our ancestors and still having a communication and a relationship with our ancestors, even though if we were to look through a Western lens though, they're dead and gone, and that's it.

There's a concept of the veil and that's a very thin one. And so you can still talk to your ancestors and communicate with them, and there's no separation. It's, we're connected to everything. Everybody and everything.

Kia ora mai tātou. Greetings to one and all. Today, in this pūrākau Maori, this Maori guided meditation from Aotearoa, New Zealand, we're going to invite you all to begin by placing your hands on your pito. That's your belly button.

We need to re remember the time that we were once joined from the pito to the rauru, your belly button joining to your umbilical cord. Which once attached you to your mother, floating in the whare tangata, in the sacred womb of your mother surrounded by the wai tapu, the sacred waters.

When I say "hii" we're going to take a deep breath in to this space, through the nose. Hii and hold it. And when I say "me te haa", gently release through the mouth, the exhalation long and slow, Pera te hau maiangi like a soft summer breeze.

Hii

Me te Haa

I want you to visualize that Taura heretapu, that sacred cord that joined you to your mother. And also in the same way your mother was joined to your grandmother, and your grandmother to your great-grandmother, all the way through your matriarchal line.

And another breath, hii

Visualizing the Taura heretapu, the sacred cord running from you to your mother, to your grandmother, to your great-grandmother and so on and so forth. Visualize this Taura heretapu, this sacred cord glowing a golden colour from your belly button through your genealogy, through your matriarchal line, and eventually coming back to the first mother of us all, Papatūānuku, the earth mother. Breathe into this space.

Hii

Me te Haa

Hii

Me te Haa

And just in your own time, breathing at your own pace, re-remembering this sacredness. Our connections to our mothers, in connection to the first mother, Papatūānuku. Mauri Aroha.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:15:47] I found that so beautiful. There was this visceral image of an umbilical cord connecting down through earthwards, the sound of the spinning disk gave me this feeling of heaviness, of being led heavier and downwards whilst the umbilical cord connected into the great beyond beneath me, which was blackness and the blackness was a comfort, a warm enveloping sensation.

For me the sound healing was a powerful way of thinking about the long view of care that we're looking at in this episode. Bringing my ancestors into the room and feeling that visceral connection to them makes it easier for me to extend that same care to future generations. But many people have been cut off from their own ancestors and their history because of slavery or colonialism or forced migration.

Here's Ytasha Womack in conversation with Roman Krznaric.

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:16:55] A lot of times the, the barrier in us tracing our history is tied to the commodification of human beings during the transatlantic slave trade so, you know, once you get past this, into the civil war, into the Antebellum South period, uh, you can't find names, records, you're looking through property rolls at some point and people aren't always named.

In one case I'm able to go back to maybe the second, third generation before the end of the civil war.

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:17:29] Wow. That is incredible.

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:17:31] Yeah. So that would be going back to the, um, I guess early 1800s. And, you know, these are enslaved ancestors or their owners in that case. And then there were, in another branch which gets a little skewered, um, they're able to go all the way to the actual boat itself.

But I think about say my relationship to those people and then I think about me having the same relationship to, you know, say my descendants or people in my family line or, they don't even have to be in my family line, just people who connect with these ideas and thoughts in the future. And to me, it just seems like there's this two-way path of communication. It's a little hard to explain, but almost as if I'm being informed by both sides of time.

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:18:21] Yeah that's really interesting actually, because it makes me think of the way, at least I think about the idea of the legacies that we leave to future generations, you know, to me, that is one of the big questions. What will we leave to the generations to come, what choices will we make today?

But I think it's very difficult to really make those choices if you haven't contemplated the past, if you haven't looked at the legacies we've inherited from the past. And I guess the way I see it is that in some ways, we've inherited, or some parts of society have inherited some positive legacies, legacies from the past, for example, the, the medical discoveries that many of us benefit from, or the cities we live in, but there are also these negative and destructive legacies from the past too of course, legacies of colonialism and slavery and racism that create deep inequities that must now be repaired. That to me raises the question, okay, which bits are we going to pass on and which bits do we want to kind of get rid of and change?

Because it's a little bit like, you know, most religions or ethical systems have some version of the golden rule, you know, do unto others as you'd have them do unto you. But I like to think of that in an intergenerational way too. Let's do unto future generations, how we would want past generations to have done unto us. That for me helps me sort of connect a little bit through time, helps sort of roll the past, future and present together into one to some extent.

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:19:50] Do you feel that human beings are kind of built for long-term thinking?

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:19:55] Well, in a way, our conversation is proof that we are built for long-term thinking. One moment we can be as individuals looking at our phones and the next moment we can be talking about what the world might be like in a hundred years from now and, you know, you're writing science fiction novels and one of the extraordinary things about the human imagination is our capacity for our minds to dance across time, we are experts at the temporal pirouette, and I think it's an extraordinary thing that, you know, we can sit and imagine or try to imagine what songs we might want played at our own funeral, or we can plant seeds in the ground that we know will never become mature trees within our own lifetime. So we can engage with the long-term. I mean, that long-term capacity of our minds is how we built, you know, The Great Wall of China or voyaged into space.

I guess, as a novelist, Ytasha, I mean, I'm really fascinated by the challenges that you've faced and tried to confront as a writer of trying to imagine different worlds. What for you, have been the, I guess, the literary struggles, imaginative struggles, political struggles of being a, a sci-fi novelist?

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:21:09] Well, when I started working on, uh, my Rayla 2212 book, I went into that wanting to write a story about a woman in the future and at some point decided to put it 200 years out and then I said, Oh, let me put it on another planet because then I won't be limited towards the sort of short-term predictions people have about the lives of black people today. I didn't really want to get stuck in those ideas.

But, but what became a really interesting point of contemplation for me was, you know, while I wanted to make a statement about a black woman on another planet, uh, and black culture in interplanetary societies, I simultaneously had to think about, okay, how does she relate to being black?

You know, is her relationship to that identity... It wouldn't necessarily be the same as mine, just as you know, if I went back 400 years ago, some of these concepts shift. I really thought about that. And then it started making me think, well, does she relate to being American? You know, does she relate to the ideas of being from Earth? And all of that really sort of just shifted my own thinking.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:22:30] When you're racialized as black, it has a massive impact on the way you see your past and your future, because it has a massive impact on your past and on your future. And so I really connect to that allure of Afrofuturism and creating speculative black perspectives, because it's a way of testing out your own relationship to those concepts. A way of engaging your imagination to build something that can make more sense than the reality that's quite often projected onto you.

So let's channel that power of our imaginations now and hear from someone else who's forging new, more caring futures through words.

**Ama Josephine Budge:** [00:23:19] So I write speculative fiction and it gives me hope and faith in a world and a society that tries to make us smaller all the time. It allows me to expand infinitely, which is a big deal when you're a black woman, who's been told to be small.

I'm Ama Josephine Budge. I'm a speculative writer, artist, curator, and pleasure activist.

So this particular story, *No Home Left Behind*, was commissioned by The Architectural Review for their land issue and they approached me looking for a piece of speculative fiction that looked at the ways in which changing architectures affect peoples.

And I immediately started thinking about this idea of a sentient home that was left behind. That was really integrated into a family structure, and yet couldn't be moved, couldn't be mobilized.

The attraction for me to the, to the idea of a sentient home is really quite ironic because I'm really quite freaked out having AI's be so integrated in our intimate lives. And one of the reasons why I have that aversion is because you know, that technology is not being built for me or by people like me with people like me in mind.

So I was interested in what, what, what this technology might look like if it was learning and developing and growing in response to, black people, to black queer families, to black queer people who are not located within the global North.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:24:50] Let's hear Ama's work now. It's called *No Home Left Behind* and it's set in a future West African community. It tells the story of a sentient caring home who goes by the nickname Humm. Humm looks after and protects the human family who call them home, Maame and her two children, Gbanga and Naya.

**Ama Josephine Budge:** [00:25:13] Hummfourbedwestsunfacing Meni was busy preparing dinner. They had grown dark green scotch bonnets, Gbanga's favourite, on their back porch

for three summers now, but this was the first year the harvest came to see them in full abundance.

'I see you scotches!', they sang out happily as their electromagnetic appendages, invisible to the human eye, gently clipped free four ripe, grinnin-teef-green bulbs of joy, chests puffed out proudly. An unoccupied branch of energy spritzed the scotches with plant food tincture: an offer of reciprocity.

'Yes you are looking good this year! Thank you for coming.' Humm moved their attention to the front door as they felt Naya's approaching hormonal and bacterial readings. Suddenly aware something was wrong, Humm sent out protective appendages preparing to defend the family's eldest child.

'What do you mean you don't have a choice?', came a raised voice, two figures storming into view at the edge of the water-lily field.

Naya was stepping onto a large, fleshy, heart-shaped hoverpad, which promptly detached itself from its fellows to zoom across the wetland towards Humm's front porch. Her companion, or assailant – Humm could not yet tell which – was right behind her, his leafy-green hoverpad a little faster than Naya's, having been serviced more recently. Humm suspected he was unaware that shockwaves of terrible pain and imminent death awaited him the moment he crossed the gently murmuring threshold for which Humm got their name. He certainly didn't look worried or even glance up at Humm's broad shouldered walls or imposing double-breasted entranceway. No, his attention was clearly fixed upon Naya, whose flagrantly blue curls seemed to spasm with a dangerous electricity all their own.

'I told you to leave me alone!', she cried out, leaping off the hoverpad a good three feet from the porch in her haste to reach Humm.

'But Naya, please! It's been four years, you can't just change your mind all of a sudden. I love you!'

Naya splashed a little, landing on the bottom step which she'd usually jump, since the water hadn't receded as low as expected after the rainy season this year. Or the year before.

The moment Naya's thickly soled foot hit Humm's carefully sanded and varnished floorboards, they teleconnected, and Humm sent an instant warning crackle of power out to meet the frantically reversing young man, high top sizzling slightly as it passed over him. Just a warning, but a jolt nonetheless. He stopped in the middle of the lilypad field, feet lost in the calf-high carpet of fragrant pink and greenish-white blossoms, looking for all the world like one of those heartbroken lovers from the off-continent movies Gbanga liked to watch.

'Just go Tito!', Naya cried out dramatically, flinging open Humm's lattice-framed, mosquito-netted swing doors before disappearing into the house. The doors slammed loudly in her wake, Humm didn't bother to cushion the sound. The boy stood there looking bereft until his hovering lilypad, clearly struggling, began to vent its feelings by emitting little puffs of exhaustion, sinking lower and lower into the muddy water with each wheezing breath.

Hummfourbedwestsunfacing was not fazed. Seeing his reluctant retreat, they rushed their attention to Naya's room where she had flung herself across the bed, lavender sheets discarded in a heap on the floor.

'There now Naya, don't cry. What has happened?' Humm asked, seamlessly drawing from their meticulously maintained vat of comforting responses. Naya merely turned her head away, sobbing even harder.

'Whatever that nasty boy has done, it is not worth your precious tears, Naynay', Humm tried again, using her late mother's pet name, in the hopes of calming her down.

'He doesn't understand! I did say I would go with him to college in the city. I was planning to, I didn't lie! But everything has changed now, I don't have a choice. It's not my fault we have to leave!'

Hummfourbedwestsunfacing paused in their search for further appropriate phrases of support and encouragement, momentarily distracted.

'Leave? You were going to the city to specialise at the end of the rainy season Naya, but nobody else will be leaving. Not according to my family planner.'

'That's just it! Mama only told me today, it's that new girlfriend of hers that's spooked her, I know it is! Mama never would have considered leaving before they met.'

Humm was stunned. They had never even contemplated the possibility of their family leaving.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:30:08] That's the opening of Ama Josephine Budge's speculative story, No Home Left Behind. Later that day, the sentient home Humm has a conversation with Naya's mother, Maame.

**Ama Josephine Budge:** [00:30:22] 'I think we're going to have to leave, Humm. Although I don't want to. Lerato showed me the latest figures of sea level rise predicted for the entire basin and they're way above the official numbers, and so many families are going to die because of it.' She sighed again, then added hastily, 'You understand Humm, all of what I'm saying now is classified. Lerato shouldn't have told me, you must erase it from your records after this conversation.'

'Affirmative', Humm replied, without hesitation. 'Maame, after you leave will another family be rehoused here?'

'I don't know Humm ... I have never wanted to leave my homeland. The water here is as much a part of me as my own children. But the archivists keep no records of people facing this before, how can I know we would survive it? If Ngaga was still around then, maybe ... I don't know that she ever would have considered us leaving. She would say this place is where our spirits root, and that if we moved the children their souls would get lost forever in the journey to the afterlife. You know how she felt about you Humm. How we all feel about you. That doesn't change the fact that my children deserve a life that doesn't end prematurely from flooding, or poisoned water, or even hunger. It's only been half a century

since famine was eradicated on the continent after all. If the water keeps rising, we could be entirely cut off. Even if your inflation systems still worked, and – ancestors be with me – we managed to stay afloat, I have no idea where we would end up. I can't risk it all on a system that has never been serviced, that was maybe never meant to be more than a plaster over a fleeting moment of guilt as old and untended as the scars they left in our land and the blood they left in our water.'

'I understand', Humm said automatically, although they didn't.

Living homes were codependent by nature, they were built to learn and grow with and from their assigned families. They could shut themselves down to basic maintenance when a family went away, but only for short periods of time. Without the care and needs of their human companions, they soon fell into what the report Humm had found termed 'disrepair', but what they suspected was something much more like madness.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:32:57] That's an excerpt from No Home Left Behind by Ama Josephine Budge. That story was originally commissioned by The Architectural Review, and you'll find a link to the full story on our website.

I loved, fricking loved that story!

To me, it's a very clear example of an Afrofuturist approach. I mean, there's no coincidence that in the canon of sci-fi which has been written by white men, AI robots, they're usually inhuman, threatening. There's a fear of armies of robots, killer robots, they're cold and unfeeling. You know, maybe it takes an Afrofuturist woman to create a nurturing non-humanoid robot.

So this is, this is why I love the core of this story, and I think for me, it typifies the best of Afrofuturism. It amplifies voices that haven't been amplified and brings to the fore important ideas and perspectives in the face of, as Maame talks about in the story, the blood left in the water, the plaster over a tiny bit of guilt, the environmental devastation left in colonialism's wake.

For a programme that's supposed to be about the future, we have ended up talking a lot about the past, and about how we relate to our ancestors, which might seem counterintuitive, but as everyone you've heard from today has said, when you think about the future, it's almost inevitable that you'll end up talking about the past.

Here's Roman Krznaric in conversation with Ytasha Womack.

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:34:38] I went on a Black Lives Matter protest with my partner and I was sitting in the middle of the street in Oxford, in the UK where I live, and this was a protest to bring down a statue of one of the architects of apartheid in South Africa, Cecil Rhodes, who is one of the funders of one of the Oxford University's colleges and I was sitting there on the street with everybody else and, I had this really great sort of moment of white privilege revelation about my own history, you know, because on my left was the statue of Cecil Rhodes, which was part of a building where I had studied 20, 30 years before and then on my right hand side was a library where I used to study back in the late 80s, and it was built

on slave earnings from the sugar trade in the Caribbean. So I was in a, kind of a pincer movement on both sides.

And one of the things, I remember sitting there literally on that street and remembering how the first day I went into my high school in suburban Sydney in Australia, and I used to think that the reason I was able to walk through the doors of my high school in Sydney was because my father, who was a refugee from Poland had struggled and come from nothing in order to give me those opportunities, but through the lens that I'd sort of been contemplating around white privilege, I suddenly realised that the only reason I could walk through the doors of that school was because that land had been colonised and stolen by the British in the 18th, 19th century during the colonial period.

But I think all of this for me is, again, a kind of recognition of a theme through this conversation we're having, which is the connections between the past, the present and the future, and this is all something we need to break down, exploring our own stories, going into the past and the journeys we may go on into, in the future.

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:36:29] Right. I mean, I think our relationship with the future is a natural one. I think people forget that sometimes, but, you know, especially people they ask about Afrofuturism and, you know, how'd you get into it and so forth. It's almost asking, like how did you develop a relationship with your own future or how did you decide to think about a future and see yourself in it, or aspects of your culture in it? Um, which is not a question someone would ask.

**Roman:** Right.

**Ytasha Womack:** Uh, but when you use the term, Afrofuturism, it seems for some people so foreign, like, Oh, why would you ever think of yourself in the future? And think your culture could play a role in that.

And so I always emphasise to people that it's just very natural to think about your future and I think it's natural to think about a past. You almost have to imagine the past to connect all the dots in the same that you have to imagine a future. They both seem like these... they both seem otherworldly at some point.

I mean, when you think about the future, what do you see or hope for?

**Roman Krznaric:** [00:37:38] Well, I guess one of the ways I think about the future is to see what I can learn from those cultures who seem to have a very, I guess, engaged and healthy relationship with the future and whether we can translate that wisdom into other realms.

So for example, in many Native American communities, amongst Lakota people or Iroquois people is the idea of seventh generation decision-making. So making community decisions based on considering the impact seven generations from today.

And, something I've been really inspired by is this movement in Japan called future design, and which is directly inspired by the idea of seventh generation decision-making. And what they do is they bring together local residents to discuss and draw up plans for the towns and

cities where they live and they typically divide them into two groups. Half of them are told they're residents from the present day and the other half are given these almost ceremonial robes to wear like kimonos and told to imagine themselves as residents from the year 2060. And it turns out when imagining themselves from 2060 the city dwellers come up with much more transformative and radical plans for the towns where they live in.

I love that idea of trying to work with the wisdom of other cultures and trying to use it to, I guess, expand our imaginations to help us liberate ourselves from the present tense and to do it in creative and imaginative ways. There's so much more work to do, I guess, you know, in these kinds of areas.

**Ytasha Womack:** [00:39:13] Yeah. I think the beauty of thinking about futures is that there's so much wisdom from these human experiences across the world and if we, you know, look at these intersections, we can resolve a lot of these issues and I think that thinking in futures in this really kind of cross-cultural way where you're looking at this intersection of futures and histories is a special one.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:39:42] To close this episode, we're going to bring you one last sound healing from Jerome Kavanagh, and for this one, I want you to picture yourself on a beach in Aotearoa, New Zealand. And as you let this sound healing wash over there, maybe it's going to help you reshape your connection to the past, the present and the future

**Jerome Kavanagh:** [00:40:22] Kia ora mai tātou. Greetings to one and all. Today, in this pūrākau Maori, this Maori guided meditation from Aotearoa, New Zealand, we're going to take a journey to the ocean side, to the great expanse of the moana. The vastness of the sacred waters. So when I say "hii" take a deep breath in, breathe in all that fresh, sea air. Hold it and release long and slow, me te Haa.

And now with this visualization, we're going to shape shift, leaving our human form and changing into this beautiful fish diving into the water. You're a fast fish and so nothing can catch you. And as you dive into the water and shapeshift into this fish, you swim like lightning, with ease and grace through the water.

And in the distance, you see the silhouette, in the depths of the water, the silhouette of a beautiful mother whale and her baby. Floating there peacefully, summoning you to come closer. As you come closer to this beautiful ancient creature, tohorā nui, the majestic mother whale you start to feel her peacefulness, her gracefulness, and you sidle up next to her in reference of this ancient tupua, tohorā nui, the ancient whale, and here we'll take another deep breath, hii.

Me te Haa

And just for a moment we're going to sit here, gazing into the eye of the whale. She looks deep into your soul, looking into your eyes, with love, with grace. And through the power of the natural intelligence that lies within such creatures of the ocean and also resides ourselves.

Hii , deep breath in.

Me te Haa, long and slow out.

And now you're going to turn and bid farewell to this beautiful tohorā, this beautiful whale, and swimming back down to the one tapu, the sacred sands of the beach, and just as fast as you swam to the whale, you are now arriving back to the land. Up onto the land you go, shapeshifting back into your human self again. And now you're looking up into the mountains and you see the rising sun coming up, feeling that warmth of the sun on your face, radiating that beautiful energy of the sun, through your body and here one last deep breath.

Hii.

Me te Haa.

Mauri Aroha.

**Nwando Ebizie:** [00:45:09] I want you to just hold there for a while. Just hold those beautiful images. The meeting with a mother whale, a protective future home.

For a long time, I remember finding it impossible to project even five years into the future and maybe this is why Afro-futurism was such an amazing discovery for me. It has been a struggle to come through trauma, and for me to be able to imagine, really picture, and visualise change. I was stuck in a trauma cycle. I was surviving, not thriving. Afrofuturism is part of my safety net. Art saves my life every day.

Over the course of this five-part mini-series on care we've looked at the non-human world caring for us and the care we need to give to it. We've looked at self-care and the rock you held in your hand and the sofa that held you, the sleep gap that holds some of us back.

It's been a beautiful journey. Thank you so much for listening. And thank you so much to all our contributors today, Jerome Kavanagh, Ama Josephine Budge, Roman Krznaric and Ytasha Womack.

Roman's latest book *The Good Ancestor: How to Think Long Term in a Short-Term World*, is published by WH Allen, and Ytasha Womack's book *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture* is published by Lawrence Hill Books. If you'd like to explore more about the ideas you've heard in this podcast, please go to [baltic.art](http://baltic.art) where you can also find show notes, with recommended reading, more information about our contributors and a transcription of this episode.

I have loved going on this journey with you. If you'd like to continue following me, please head to my website, which is [nwandoebizie.com](http://nwandoebizie.com) or follow me on Twitter.

We've come to the end of the series and now I really want to hear from you. What do you think of this podcast? What do you want to hear more of? What could you do without? Please head to the For All I Care series page on [wellcomecollection.org](http://wellcomecollection.org) for details of a short

online survey. It's anonymous, but you can leave your details and opt into a prize draw to win a voucher for a hundred pounds.

For All I Care is a collaboration between Baltic and Wellcome Collection and the podcast is produced by Reduced Listening. The producer is Georgia Moodie and the executive producer is Alannah Chance. Our music is composed by Nkisi and the series is sound designed by Axel Kacoutié, and my name is Nwando Ebizie.