

HEART OF THE COMMUNITY: ADDRESSING HEALTH DISPARITIES IN BLACK AND BROWN COMMUNITIES THROUGH ART AND ADVOCACY

Versiti Podcast: Season 3 - Episode 5

Host: Edgar Daggett

Guest: Brad Anthony Bernard

INTRO CLIP

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EDGAR: Wow.

BRAD: I have artwork from grade school. Well even as a child my mother would tell me, ‘well you know baby you gotta keep your artwork nice because when you grow up you can put it in a gallery.’ And I was like you know, I wanna play football, you know, alright. You know but then you know my mother saved artwork that I did as a child.

BUMPER

EDGAR: How’s it going everybody? I want to welcome you all to another episode of Stand Out From the Inside podcast presented by Versiti once again I’m your host Edgar Daggett. Super excited to be back. You know if you guys haven’t caught up on any of our past episodes go right now. Catch up. A couple good ones have gone by already. So for this week’s episode we are gonna focus on Brad Anthony Bernard. He is a local artist here in the great city on Milwaukee. Not only that, he has worked with Versiti in a 2022 campaign, The Heart of the Community. So to get this podcast rolling. Please welcome Brand Bernard. Brad, welcome.

BRAD: Greetings. Greetings. Thank you Edgar.

EDGAR: How you doing?

BRAD: Doing good. It is great to be here.

EDGAR: Super excited to have you. You know, we were talking about this season, who we're gonna be the guests for this season. And your name came up right away. We're like, we have to give Brad on, on the podcast. We have to get him on the podcast to describe, you know, who he is, you know, what he's about and the great work that he's doing. Cause we're all. Fascinated and in love with the art that you're producing.

BRAD: Thank you. Thank you.

EDGAR: Now, so how's everything, how's everything been and what, you know, what's new? What's new in Brad's world?

BRAD: Well, you know always trying to stay motivated and inspired. It's often challenging, but right now just gearing up for the mural season you know, every spring and summer. That's an opportunity to really get out here and, and beautify the community as best as possible with some, some public art and some mural projects. It also gives me an opportunity to coordinate internships for my students at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. Providing them with opportunities for some professional development skills as far as community art. Learning how to develop partnerships, learning how to network, and also giving them an opportunity to showcase their skillsets as well as being able to compensate them for their time. So it's really the time of the season is now as far as muraling is concerned here in the city of Milwaukee. [00:03:10]

EDGAR: Wow. Staying super busy. And what kind of, where are these murals being placed? Where do you have like an idea of where they're going to go or, you know, is it up to the children?

BRAD: Well, you know, the children, they are college-age, by the way.

EDGAR: College. Got it. the grown folks. The grown. Young, young adults of this year.

BRAD: Yes. Well, you know right now the, the bulk of my work can be found in different parts of the city, but most recently, and most notably, I curated a mural tour on the near West side on Vliet Street between 40th and 27th Street. And so what I did was I, I kind of surveyed that emerging business district and identified a number of blank walls on the sides of occupied and. Unoccupied buildings. And so put together a proposal. Presented it to the Martin Drive Neighborhood Association as well as the Vliet Street Business Group. And then

also as a near West side artist. I partnered with the Near West Side Partners entity. And through them their community liaison, Melissa Mueller, who was a grant writer. I partnered with her. and she was the grant writer that helped to establish many of the murals that now exist on West Vliet Street. So the concept was to develop a mural tour to stimulate the business. District there that was emerging. And then also beautify the neighborhoods while hopefully slowing traffic down. That particular corridor of Vliet Street has at least 15 to 18,000 drivers traveling through from Wauwatosa into the downtown area daily. [00:04:57]

EDGAR: Oh.

BRAD: And so, this is just phase one that's been completed over the last couple of years. Initially wanted to be able to install 10 to a dozen murals on Vliet Street. And in 2021, was able to have five new murals installed. And there's two on the way that still need to be installed. And so, You know, the goal will be to have, a mural tour. There will be a new food truck garden on West Vliet Street where each of those mural locations could be kind of hosted by a different food truck entity. And really just getting people you know, out in the neighborhood increasing foot traffic, safe foot traffic, and just keeping people enlightened and, and entertained. Because a lot of the core belief behind what I'm doing as a muralist is to always have imagery that is either culturally or historically relevant to the Milwaukee area or the neighborhoods that the murals exist in. So again, that's the. Vliet Street Business corridor, 40th to 27th. The name of the tour is the Westview Mural Tour. The majority of the walls face West and they catch, capture the majority of the daylight throughout the day. And so thought it was important to be able to kind of emphasize that and then give people a small location destination that they can drive through and enjoy some of the mural work. So murals were created by myself. Reynaldo Hernandez and his daughter, Rosalia Hernandez created one as well. Celebrating Wisconsin's black athletes featuring Lule Cinder at the time. Now, Kareema Jewel Jabbar is a buck. Cecil Cooper, Hank Aaron, Ron Dane of the Badgers, Reggie White of the Packers and so on. Another one was created. Jenny Gao, Asian artists out of Madison. Another one I collaborated with local artists, Rui Joy on, on the Hmong Friendship Association. Also executed one on the African, Wisconsin, African-American Women's Center. So, you know was an opportunity for me to approach. Other area artists, one most notably on 38th and Vliet on the wall of a Clark gas station, which is like a large graffiti tag of the word Milwaukee with the championship trophy as the letter I. And then within each letter of the word Milwaukee, different landmarks located throughout the city, like the Horn Bridge, Allen Bradley, the domes, that sort of thing. So really just celebrating the city, celebrating the neighborhoods. And celebrating the culture that the city has to offer. [00:07:55]

EDGAR: That's awesome. That sounds amazing. Like I will go 100% too. Like I love when I see those murals where like, especially when you're not from those areas.

BRAD: Yes.

EDGAR: Like, okay, what is Milwaukee about? Or what is Wisconsin about? And you're seeing all this art and you're seeing like the people and you recognize you're not gonna, most people don't recognize everybody, but you recognize the few and you're like, you're like, holy cow, this is a man. How long does that normally take to make like. What is it like on one of these murals? Like how long? What's the average time?

BRAD: Well you know to give you an example, I don't know if you're familiar where a House of Peace is on 17th and Walnut, but that's that's two murals that are about seven foot by 15 foot a piece.

EDGAR: Okay.

BRAD: Now those are murals that I painted alone, right? Yeah. I originally painted them in 1995 and was invited back by the House of Peace in 2019 to restore them. So upon reinventing them about, a good solid six weeks by myself. Right.

EDGAR: Okay.

BRAD: But as far as some of the more recent murals where I've put together a, a crew of young artists that are students or from people from the community for example, a 12 foot by 32 foot mural that is now installed on the Wisconsin African American Women's Center that took three weeks. But that was also working with a crew of about seven or eight students that were working Monday through Saturday, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM So they, they were being, they were being paid as, as like a summer arts internship. And so having that manpower really increases uh, you know, how much ground you can cover in a short amount of time.

EDGAR: Yeah. Wow. That's, that's a tremendous project, but that sounds awesome. Now, before we get in, you know, there's so much work that you've done that we've seen, you know, here, here at Versiti. But all around what got you interested in art? You know, what was those beginning steps that said, Brad, I think I wanna become an artist. I wanna become an influencer.

BRAD: Yeah. Yeah. Interesting how that came about. Well, a couple different things. My, my sister. In her earlier adolescent years was a very gifted art visual artist. She had won one of those Draw Pinky the Mouse competitions used to seeing Readers Digest for Minnesota Art School's correspondence program. So I remember watching her do her little art correspondence and being enamored with how she was able to draw things and so that was the first inspiration there. And then what really kicked it over the edge for me is when Enter the Dragon with Bruce Lee was a new movie and my sister did this pencil drawing a double exposure of Bruce Lee and, you know, in my little kid mind I thought she was able to just draw it without looking at anything. So then even as a child being an art enthusiast, I thought you were cheating if you looked at pictures to draw. So, you know, there was that as an inspiration. And then it was also something that I did when sent to my room on punishment. So, You know, I got sent to my room and then I'm in there very quiet. My father was like, well, what the hell is he doing? He stick his head in and I'm sitting there coloring or something. And so then I think from that my parents just figured, well, if this is something he's gonna invest time in, then we going to encourage and support that. And so Darin lies and there's no other artists in my family oddly enough. My parents weren't, they weren't really art collectors of any kind, but they always managed to support and encourage that endeavor for me, even when I had art friends in junior high and high school who wanted to pursue art as careers, but their parents were not willing to pay for college for an art-based career because they didn't feel like it was a viable career choice. [00:11:46]

EDGAR: Yeah.

BRAD: So I'm even that much more grateful to my parents. Encouraging it and feeling it was a viable career option for me.

EDGAR: That's awesome. I love that support. Do you have one of your original paintings, like when you were a kid? Like is there a piece that you said this is what it, this is what it means to be an artist?

BRAD: I do, I have artwork from, I have artwork from every era of my life. I have artwork from Wow. Grade school. Well, e even as a child my mother would tell me, well, you know, baby, you gotta keep your artwork nice because when you grow up you can put it in a gallery. And I was like,

EDGAR: Okay.

BRAD: You know, I wanna play football, you know?

EDGAR: All right.

BRAD: You know, but then, you know, my mother saved artwork that I did as a child, and

EDGAR: That's awesome.

BRAD: And so I have artwork from when I was in grade school, junior high, high school early college to last week. You know what I mean?

EDGAR: Yeah.

BRAD: So, yes, I do, I've got a retrospective of work to kind of remind myself of my trajectory.

EDGAR: All right, and then, so when you're, you did all these designs, you did all these art pieces. You know, everybody paints different, you know, either messages or different like drawings or like, you know, people land. What made you go in the direction that you went? Like what, what was the message that, were you trying to send a message directly through art or where were you going?

BRAD: Well, you know, I'll be honest what inspired me to wanna pursue art was graphic novels, comic books, and fantasy art. Most notably, most notably, Frank Frazetta, best known for his Kona and the Barbarian and, and Tarzan book covers. Right? But then as I really began to become more of an intellectual and, and learning about the purpose art has, I was more compelled to deal with issues of history that have yet to be told or aren't often, aren't told at all as far as black American history. And then also wanting to have a little bit more purpose to my work. I still have a itch I haven't scratched yet as far as fantasy art or, or graphic novel art, but, I've realized that as a visual artist, as a Black American artist I feel like there's an obligation to depict imagery that is gonna uplift shine light on and celebrate the contributions of black Americans. As well as informing other people who may not know. So not to pigeonhole myself because I've done abstract conceptual artwork that was not rooted in the black experience, but at the same time, when it definitely comes to public art and murals I think murals have an obligation to stand in the gap where public education falls Short. [00:14:38]

EDGAR: Wow. So, you know, you're designing or you're, you're being creative in Iran. You, you're in your head space and you said you wanted to celebrate, you know, being a black American and kind of the influences of what you've

lived through. So do you focus directly on those type of messages or is it like people and then developing a story? You know?

BRAD: It could be a combination. For example, one of my more expansive and successful bodies of work is called Blues Roots. You know, I spent a considerable amount of time living in the Mississippi Delta, and I really was educated on the nuances of American blues. Blues is not just one genre. There's a number of sub-genres. There's urban. Hill Country, Delta Blues Roadhouse similar to how there's Reggae Sky, Rock Steady, Dance Hall, you know, to the untrained ear. All of it sounds the same, but once you become a little bit more educated you begin to be able to identify the nuances in those particular genres or sub-genres rather so, upon doing that, you know, after I left the south, I was reflecting on the number of Hill Country, Delta Blues musicians I had met where I was not even aware. Some of them were internationally known, but the exploitation is still very real. And when you have elderly. Black men and women literally on the stroll for a white manager to play till they drop, so to speak.

EDGAR: Mm-hmm.

BRAD: I was compelled to, you know, say, well, who's gonna tell their story once they've been worked to the bone and can no longer speak for themselves? You know? And so I started developing what I call portrait memories.

EDGAR: Okay.

BRAD: So a combination of things occurred. There was one that reflecting back on the meeting of those musicians, and then there was also me flying into Memphis and looking at the landscape and thinking to myself how the landscape looked like a woven quilt. And then the idea of maps being like organic geographic quilts, if you will. So then I started embarking upon. This conceptual motif of blending together Painting and making along with a very patchwork quilt, like, look to that. And so starting with the location of where a particular blues musician may reside or where they were from, that's what I would establish a painting with. And then eventually adding in different symbolic puns or, or symbols that represent key information about that individual. And then lastly, imposing a portrait depiction of that musician within that map patchwork framework. And so it was very well received. Quite a bit of the work has sold over the years and many reproductions of the work as well as I maintained the integrity of some of the original works. [00:17:51]

EDGAR: Wow, that sounds amazing. And everybody who's listening, you guys can go to Bernard Art Studios, check out a lot of the pieces that he has, you know, things that he is working on, and some of the f fabulous pieces that he's working on. So, you know, I want to, I wanna dive in first, you know, a little bit into something that you've created. And let's start with the piece behind you. You know, you have this amazing background, you know, tell me about it. You know, what went into it, you know the people on it. You know what you, what you know. Why is this one behind you?

BRAD: Well, you know what this is kind of like my doodle board if you will.

EDGAR: Okay.

BRAD: It's a, it's a four foot by eight-foot panel that is for me to experiment depictions of different black American music performers that I've been a fan of over the years. So representations of soul, R and B, funk, neo-soul blues, what have you. And, and then also it, it could serve as a template for a larger project down the road that has more of a public exposure.

EDGAR: Wow. That's, that's awesome. Because I see it from a distance. I'm like, the time it took, the creativity behind it, and then to be able to recognize some of the people, you're like, wow, that, that's an amazing piece. You know? That's awesome. So, you know, professor, you know, obviously an artist. What made you go to the teaching route? What, you know, we've heard a little bit about it, but what made you decide, I'm gonna go to the university level and be a professor.

BRAD: Well it, it's, it's a means to an end. I think I had aspirations of being a full-time artist, but, you know, I come from a long line of educators and teachers in my family. My mother, she taught school for about 35 years. So when opportunities came about for me to be able to work. Community youth, whether that be through an arts center, an arts council or whatever programming may have been available through an arts organization. I realized I kind of had a natural knack for it. And so after waiting tables all through, undergrad. To be able to sustain myself through being a community art educator seemed like a viable path to take while developing my own personal art career. And so it's been rewarding in that aspect. And not to be off-topic here, but you know, I studied with a muralist who was originally from Detroit. [00:20:33]

EDGAR: Okay.

BRAD: Who moved to Milwaukee. His name was George Gist. And he was a protege of John Arne Lockhart, who was a professor at the University of Michigan. And so that being said his work was a derivative of John Arne Lockhart, and my work is at times a derivative of George Gist. So that being. When I was at the Black Arts Festival in Atlanta one year, there was John Arne Lockhart, whom I had heard about. He was almost like a mythical creature. And what was interesting is I had a binder with me, with my artwork in it over about a decade's worth of art. And I approached this man, I said, Hey, it's really great to meet you, sir. You know, I was an apprentice with one of your former students from years ago, Mr. George Gist. He was like, George Gist, whatever happened to George gist? Oh, yeah. So he knew what I was talking. About, about maybe about 6' 5", 6' 6". He might have been about 80 at the time, but he had very, very clear young eyes and a very strong, youthful voice. So if you were not looking at him and you heard him speak, you would think it was a man half his age speaking. There was nothing withered or tired about his tone. But all that being said, as he thumbed through my binder, I asked him a question. I said, well, If you're successful enough to just do your art, why do you bother teaching? He said, the reason why I continue to teach is because you're always constantly around new young ideas. That have yet to be realized because they don't have the maturity or the experience to fully realize them, he said, but the trade-off is you can manifest that idea with your wisdom and your experience, and then you pour into them the knowledge that they need so they can aspire to their highest goals as artists. So it's a trade. [00:22:30]

EDGAR: You're learning from them as well.

BRAD: Right, exactly. And so I thought that was very profound. And then I said, well, what about artists who have different styles of work? Does that show a lack of focus?

EDGAR: Yeah.

BRAD: Or does that show that you're just diverse in your vision? And he said, well, you know, you, you're trying to find your voice. You're trying to find yourself. He said, like, this piece right here, this piece looks like you are really getting close to what you're trying to. Now, what made that so profound is that particular painting that he pointed out, mind you, the artwork was not in chronological order, but the one painting he picked out was a painting. I had probably finished a week or two before that. It was like one of the most recent paintings I had actually done, and he was to able to identify that as me arriving at developing my voice. And so it was kind of like after training with Obi Won meeting Yoda, right? [00:23:25]

EDGAR: Yeah, yeah.

BRAD: You know what I mean? And, so you know, back to the original point, you know, the, the, the idea of arriving at teaching always, it, it started off as a means to an end. I'd rather get paid doing something art related than having a job that had no art at all. And so that being said, it's been very rewarding. And then also too let's be clear, you know as a black man in America, or even a black man in Milwaukee, as an artist, if you don't have a credential behind your name or an institution that supports that, what you do, you're kind of perceived as otherwise.

EDGAR: Correct?

BRAD: Yep. And I know that firsthand because how I was perceived as a community artist for positive rep for myself in spite of whatever negative perceptions. But all that being said upon returning back to Milwaukee and being a professor at that time at Mount Mary University, well you know, then there was, oh, well he's a professor at Mount Mary. Well, surely he's credible, you know, viable.

EDGAR: That was different, right?

BRAD: Yeah. And legitimate, you know.

EDGAR: Yeah.

BRAD: And so I will admit that you know, having my master's has. Commanded a certain level of respect from whoever if necessary. But then also it's provided me an opportunity to, to, to work with people of different educational institutions and then also different arts organizations as well, and, and taking all of that and galvanizing it.

EDGAR: That's awesome. You know, and a lot, you know, is, and I love the fact that you're learning from the students and then you're using kind of like what your, some of your mentors or your friends have given you what they're giving you and continuing to like evolve in your work. And that's, I feel like it's always about advancing, evolving. And that's what we all do and that's what we all try to do, even when we're not noticing it. You know, we're, we're like, Holy crap, I really learned something, or I'm learning. Then you're acknowledging it and you're continuing to go. So it keeps pushing you and pushing you, which I really love. So, and then we wanna get to another piece, you know? And for those who donate here, adversity, we had. A campaign called Heart of the

Community, heart of the Community was to not only show the passion about blood donation, but to show each city or one of the major cities that our footprint is in. The beauty of it, and that's something that Brad has just mentioned, is about, you know, one of those mural pieces that'll be launching. Talking about the beautiful city, you know, its roots. You know what it shows, you know, it's not just a bunch of buildings up in a, in an area, but you know, some of the some the identity that the city has. Yeah. So the heart, heart of the community, you know, it was designed by yours truly. What went into the, into that, those pieces, you know, whereas five pieces.

BRAD: Mm-hmm.

EDGAR: You know, it talked about the beauty of. Milwaukee, you know, Chicago, Indianapolis, and then Columbus.

BRAD: Yes, yes, yes. Well now j just for clarity, I did not do a Columbus, or,

EDGAR: No, not Columbus? Okay.

BRAD: No, no. But, but, Milwaukee, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, most definitely. And to backtrack a little bit, I mentioned the Blues Routes Blues series that I did, the Portrait Memories within each of those depictions of those blues musicians continuing motif, hence the name, blues Roots was incorporating interstate highway road signs into the composition of those different blues musicians. So when Versiti came to me about the concept of heart of the community. They wanted me to depict recognizable aspects of each of those cities. They wanted me to be able to somehow show a heartwarming. Or pulling at the heartstring moment sentimentality or things of that nature. Comforting one, people comforting one another, enjoying one another, that sort of thing. And then also I incorporated the highway, interstate, and road signs into those compositions as indicators of location. So that anybody looking at any of those pieces, once they see that interstate sign, if they're from that area they will be able to identify exactly what it is. And especially if they visited any of those individual cities, they will also be able to tell, not only from the interstate and road highway signs, but they'd also be able to look at well-known landmarks that are located in different parts of those individual cities. So that was a lot of how the concept came together. And I believe for like, for example, for, for the Chicago piece. You know, I showed the Picasso sculpture from downtown. I showed the skyline of Chicago. I also showed, well, you know, someone like, kinda like jogging on the lakefront, but then...

EDGAR: Mm-hmm.

BRAD: You know, there was also a two pairs of hands where it looked like one person was consoling someone either going through a difficult time as far as grieving or perhaps preparing for a potential Life-threatening surgery perhaps. Right?

EDGAR: Yeah.

BRAD: So that was kinda like the moment being depicted as well as a couple sitting on a park bench look looking at the sunset or something. So that, that's kind of an example of how I approached each of those pieces.

EDGAR: Now, I loved it. So I live in Ann Arbor, so I've been to Detroit many, many times. And when I saw, I was like, wow, that's, that's some cool art.

BRAD: Oh, you like that, that Leroy, that Leroy Foster fist.

EDGAR: Yeah. I loved it. I was like, yep, that, that right there. That, that piece shows all of Detroit, you know, everything. You keyed into all the big monuments. And when I, when I walk in Victoria, you know, you have all the people for the first time they're taking pictures. I was like, wow. That was capture. Amazingly, I had to give myself a shirt. I was like, I'm wearing this. I'm wearing it everywhere. I, I wish I could, I wish I had it with me. I could pull it up right now. But it was amazing. And, and then I've been to Chicago a couple of times, so I've noticed some, some of the things, but you know, when everybody was amazed about it. And for all of you out there listening go to go to the major centers and check it out, and many of you probably already have a shirt and are wearing it. You know, it, it was a super exciting campaign that will continue to live on. for as long as time ha you know, comes because, you know, the piece everybody represents shows history and shows importance, as you said. The importance of also, you know, there could be a life-saving mission that we're, that we're pushing for. And you guys all coming in to see, to wear the shirt just shows that, you know, you gave a donation and you were, you were helping Versiti and all of his community members. So, no, it was, it was incredible. You know, when I was listening to the release of it, you know, there was a big presentation of kind of what, what it was gonna be. Everybody was in shock. Everyone was. We need to get this going. We want, we wanna see, we want this, we want this here. Can we get this in my smaller donor center? So it, it was amazing. People were super excited about it.

BRAD: Oh, that's great to hear. [00:30:59]

EDGAR: All right. So, you know, we've gone through the prof being a professor. We've gone to be an artist, but also an activist and showing like who you are, you know, what are the cities, you know, but there's also something else that came out of this, the Art of funk Festival. You know, this was coming, this came up in some of the things that you've provided as well. What is the Art and Funk Festival? You know, what is that, you know, this is something completely different than, you know, just creating a piece. Like what, what's the message behind the Art and Funk Festival?

BRAD: Well community Arts and funk festival, as it's known thus far is basically a community arts event entity. And so I've coordinated a number of festivals over the years starting from 2010 to as recently as, as last summer. And the community Arts and Funk Festival is really a, a way of showcasing, well, you know, I'll just say artwork created by marginalized communities, right? So, you know artists of color are, are, and not just only artists of color, but definitely giving a platform for artists of color to be showcased as well as artists of all ethnicities and nationalities. Most notably celebrating funk music as not only a genre of focus, but also as an audible melting pot of all the contributions of Black American music to the American Songbook, so to speak. So it's an opportunity for artists to come together, showcase and exhibit their works as vendors. It's also an opportunity for different arts organizations and arts programming. Curriculums to be showcased through informational booths. It's also an opportunity for regional and local original music singer-songwriters to showcase through music on a platform that's not gonna be skewed by too much of a demand for cover song performance. You know, it's almost like a visual artist being made to do master copies. Forever in a day. But then as soon as an artist develops their own composition of originality, it being somehow rejected. So, you know, the community arts and funk festival was a way for me to be able to give back and provide opportunity for visual artists as well as performing artists, and then also as an ultimate networking tool to galvanize partnerships and then also providing opportunity for area youth artists. To either have their work showcased or be exposed to the arts programming and artists that the city has to offer. [00:33:55]

EDGAR: Wow, that was great. And how does someone if they wanna showcase their art or be involved, how does, how does it, how does that work if I want to be involved?

BRAD: Well anyone's free to email me at bernardartstudio@gmail.com rather. Or they could just go to the Arts and Funk Festival page and kind of peruse the website and see some of the history of what's occurred in past events and. Yeah, just, just send out an email uh, fill out the form become a member of the online

entity and then you'll just be in the database. But like I said, if people want to get directly to me bernardartstudio@gmail.com.

EDGAR: That's awesome. Well, Bernard, I wanna say thank you. It has been amazing listening to your story, where you've come from and kind of the messaging and also kind of like the leaving a message on our community and the impact that it's having. It's amazing and I'm super excited and I'll be traveling to Wisconsin to visiting those murals. I think that is super cool. And I love, and I love places like that where I can just, you know, walk by, you know, eat, have some good but also enjoy the art on the wall. So that's super exciting. And before, you know, we finish this off, I want to ask you one question. So this question,

BRAD: Right?

EDGAR: It's a big question. All right. How do you stand out from the inside?

BRAD: Hmm. I try to function with integrity and be a man of my word. And integrity and being of your word for a lot of people are circumstantial, you know? Depends on how much money's on the table for some folks, so, you know but in all honesty and, and seriousness I try to be a man of my word and I try to conduct myself with some integrity because oftentimes those are things that are either associated with weakness or things that are left to the wayside based on circumstances. So I would like to think that's, that's what separates me from the crowd.

EDGAR: Now, and that's amazing. And the way you carry yourself is definitely showing. And we are super excited that, that you were, you've been able to join the podcast and to showcase. Again, if everybody wants to check out Brad's work, visit bernardartstudio.com, amazing pieces that you can check out. Is there anything that that you want any of the listeners to know about you before you, before we head out.

BRAD: Let me see if I have any parting words of wisdom. Well, I guess I'll leave it with this. You know, something I, a couple different things I share with my students. One on a little bit more humorous tip I will tell them they have to develop how they want to wrap their burger. And what I mean by that is, you know, Wendy's doesn't lose money from McDonald's. McDonald's doesn't lose money from Sonic, and Sonic doesn't lose money from Culver's. They're all serving the same ingredients. The only thing that's different is the packaging and the pitch. And that's what all of us as artists are responsible to do. We have to wrap our burger in a way that it's compelling, intriguing, and engaging, and

allows people to embrace that which we create. But then also along with that, I tell 'em to embrace art as an acronym, so A.R.T. I said A for accountability. You know, we're. Supposed to be held accountable for anything we create. I tell students that the artwork they create is almost like their own form of a child. They may not always be pleased with it. They may not always be proud of it, but you have to love it unconditionally because you've created it, you know? And then along with that, you have to be held responsible, right? And so a lot of times people don't want to be held responsible because they don't want to be the ones accountable, right? And, but along with responsibility comes a maturity and a reliability that people can depend on. And then lastly the T. Transformation. You know, if you're willing to be held accountable and you're willing to be held responsible, well then there's gonna be a transformation that takes place in you as an individual. And then also how you engage with people is gonna be transformative. So, A.R.T, art, accountability, responsibility, and transformation.

EDGAR: You guys heard it here first. Yeah. Brad, I appreciate you joining the standup from the Inside podcast. Thank you so much for, for bringing on and showing us. Yeah, it was amazing work. Cause we, again, I'm still looking at the artwork behind you, so I'm so like, all right, this is awesome, but I appreciate for you joining the podcast.

BRAD: Hey, and that is the visual manifestation of the Funk Festival, right? It's just, you know, all forms of I think there's a couple people you can't see on there, but, you know it's a celebration, you know, and, and, and, and make no mistake about it, art and music will blur the lines where language and culture separate very well.

EDGAR: Alright that wraps up another Stand Out From the Inside Podcast Presented by Versiti. Please like and subscribe, hit that bell notification to be notified of all and any future episodes and remind you guys all of this, how do you stand out from the inside? This is the Stand Out From the Inside podcast. We'll see you all next time.