



## **Bonus - Solstice Special with Shanda Leer**

### **Nerdin' About Podcast Transcript, Bonus**

#### **Michael**

Hey everyone, welcome to Nerdin' About. I'm Space Michael, and with me as always is someone who recently during a workshop, I was going to introduce her as my cohort, but I said co-heart and that is my co-heart. Dr. Kaylee Byers.

#### **Kaylee**

Oh, hi, that was the loveliest little slip up. I really feel that you know what I mean, we spend a lot of time together and have over the last millennia. So, yeah, it's nice that at this point, we share a heart. Thanks for that.

#### **Michael**

It's always fun to teach with two people. I've been leading workshops, and when you're up there, and you're just talking to a bunch of people, and they're just staring at you it's hard. It's so much better just to have somebody to banter off of, and to insert non sequiturs.

#### **Kaylee**

Nonsense.

#### **Michael**

Hopefully, a lot of nonsense. I imagine that's what it's like, if you were say, on this set of the new Matrix and the Wachowski Sisters. There's always like two people coming at you with some perspectives. I think that's cool.

#### **Kaylee**

It depends on how much perspective they're giving me. I can only take so much, but yes, pretty into it.

#### **Michael**

So, we obviously don't have a regular episode for you. Since I'm really into the Solstice, I wanted to put in a little episode into your feeds here. Solstice is a somewhat important holiday for me, if you can call any holiday important. From an astronomy perspective I can always throw some of that in there. Solstice as we get into Perihelion, which this year is on January 3. So, I like to open some baseball cards. What about you, Kaylee, what's Solstice for you?

#### **Kaylee**

More light. Actually, the light that's currently shining on my face is a day lamp. I could use more of the day. I'm here for it. I cannot wait to bask in its glory. So that's it for me. Only more rays from here on out.

#### **Michael**

Well, I sort of figured this. So, I thought for this Solstice episode, we should bring in someone who also loves Solstice and that is a local drag performer, the Established Shanda Leer. Hi Shanda.



**Shanda**

Yeah, that's right. (Laughs)

**Michael**

So, I know that you are performing on Solstice. What is Solstice for Shanda Leer?

**Shanda**

Well, it's a paying gig. So, we love that at this time of year. I think I side a little more with Kaylee on this one, because of the daylight, even though drag queens are nocturnal creatures. You know, I look best at Golden Hour, etc. I desperately need to know that more daylight is coming back. The turnover where it's like, "okay, you know, every day, it's going to be a little brighter". I literally will be counting on my calendar like, "okay, February 12 not dark before 6pm."

**Michael**

Of course.

**Kaylee**

Means less work hours for you too, though, right? I mean, when there's all this extra darkness. You're just expected to work throughout all those hours. I mean, you must be exhausted.

**Shanda**

As if we're not staying up until five AM. Please. (Laughs)

**Michael**

Oh, I really want that to happen soon. Thanks for joining us here, Shanda, for bringing your Solstice perspective. We're going to do a little bit of nerd outs. So, are you game to stick around and nerd out with us?

**Shanda**

Yes, absolutely.

Song - ("*Whatcha Nerdin' About*" – Jay Arner)

**Michael**

Well, why don't we start with you Shanda, and let us know what you've been nerding out about?

**Shanda**

I'm oddly proud of this one. It's the Beatles "Get Back" documentary by Peter Jackson all nine plus hours of it. In the 70s, they had their last film, which I believe was called Let it Be, because it's the album Let it Be, which is where all of this filming took place. I mean to have the foresight of being the Beatles after you go through Beatlemania and then think, why don't we just film us hanging out? Because people will like that. And they do.

**Kaylee**

Yes.

**Shanda**

So, they've got all this incredible footage. They've restored it to a truly wild resolution. I feel like I'm sitting feet away from Paul McCartney. Like I said its nine hours, three parts, each part is



three hours. It sounds absolutely bananas, and a lot of it is just them noodling around our guitars and being cool bros. It's very strange. But also, little tidbits will pop up, and they'll be so rewarding. Like they have a very short conversation about Yoko Ono, and how they all like her.

**Kaylee**

That's counter to the popular narrative.

**Shanda**

Yes, even after they broke up, Paul McCartney liked her because I've been watching a lot of interviews now being like, what was the climate after they broke up? Let's see all of this stuff now, because it does get contentious during the documentary. He gave some interviews afterwards saying she's not that bad, but they're sitting around in a warehouse where they were going to actually film this huge TV special, and it was going to be their last televised performance together. Eventually, that led to the rooftop concert, but they have this huge studio setup. They're sitting around waiting for people one day and Paul's like, "Yeah, everybody's going to hate her. Because she's the odd one out, they're going to be like, Oh, she came in one day and said on an amplifier and the Beatles broke up." And she's a lovely woman. He's like, "I don't know why the press don't like her." Meanwhile, me in 2021 sitting at home on the sofa being like, "I know exactly why they didn't like her." (Laughs)

**Michael**

I saw her an appearance on Conan O'Brien once and it was so funny. Conan was so awkward. She came out and she was like, "let's do something. I want you to get into this big bag with me." And literally, there was a giant bag and the both of them crawl into this bag. This is live on television. You can't see them. They're in the bag, and you hear their microphones rustling. Then she's like, "okay, take off your clothes.", then he starts throwing out his shoes and his pants. It's the most bizarre piece of television I've ever seen, and so brilliantly at the same time.

**Kaylee**

Sounds great.

**Shanda**

She's so cool. She's been putting out music since the 70s, and she most recently put out a bunch of dance music bangers that I would not be surprised to hear in any club that I've ever performed in. They're fantastic.

**Michael**

Nice.

**Kaylee**

I'm going to have to check those out. I haven't seen this documentary yet. It is on my to-watch list over the course of I imagine two weeks. I heard the fashion is pretty exceptional.

**Shanda**

Oh my gosh. I'm actually speechless. When they started off, and they had their manager, George Epstein, the guy who died, and he was the one that said, you have to wear suits, all look the same when we're touring. He was very into branding before I think that was really prevalent in the music industry. So now it's at the end of the 70s all of these guys have either had horrible drug addictions, or still going through them or have had all these like wild,



emotional, tumultuous times in their life, and they're just hanging out. They've got money to spend on clothes, and they're really experimenting with style. It's really fantastic.

**Kaylee**

I love that. I think that's really fun, and you know, thinking of sort of the 70s and 80s we have another nerd out our audio engineer Elise Lane just released some music, and it's got a fun 80s vibe and also has some fun style you know looking into some themes of purple, blue, pink, well you could tell if you've seen our logo, we're into that. So that's what Elise has been nerding out about right now too, and I think you were going to play a little clip of that weren't you, Michael?

**Michael**

Yeah, let's have a listen.

Song - ("*Antoneon*" - *Elise Lane*)

**Michael**

So go check out Elise Lane. The song is called Antoneon, really cool stuff. I dig it.

**Shanda**

I'm really loving the single art for this. It's got like a tinsel backdrop. It's got the pink and the purple or the purple and the green. I guess I'm colorblind. So that's something new I learned. You're right. It's very 80s. At the beginning, it's kind of like a Gary Numan vibe, but then you get into it, and it's like, okay, well, what if Stevie Nicks sang over Gary Numan?

**Kaylee**

We've all wondered it, now we know.

**Michael**

We've also got some nerd outs that were written in. Our next one comes in from Nicole Imeson who is a mechanical engineer from Calgary. She's the host of Failureology, a podcast about engineering failures around the world across disciplines. She's nerding out about the Leaning Tower of Pisa. She went into thinking and researching "So what? The tower leans" but came away fascinated with how the tower was built, and how it's kept standing all these years. Shanda, have you ever climbed the Leaning Tower of Pisa?

**Shanda**

I have not. I tried, I didn't get a good response. I have never been to Pisa, but actually I did try. I took a train through there. One time, I was in Florence, and I was going down to Rome. I have to say in terms of beautiful ancient engineering, there's a huge church or Cathedral in Florence that they don't tell you about. Then you walk around the corner, and it's this massive thing that's painted beautifully. I just stood there for like five minutes. Is this something I'm allowed to see? Like it's just hiding? So how do they do that? How do they hide the building? Where are the bodies?

**Kaylee**

In the building. (Laughing)

**Shanda**

Probably a ton of them underneath.



**Kaylee**

So, we've got one more nerd out from @MevNotBev. They're nerding out about the ethics behind learning analytics. Have either of you ever learned anything about analytics?

**Shanda**

Yes, I've dipped a toe into data science, I do have a life outside of drag performing. One thing that I dislike very much is Google Analytics. They're extremely helpful. The tool is okay to use etc. The ethics behind analytics though I find that interesting. I'm wondering if maybe MevNotBev is thinking in a global context? Because we've got a lot of COVID data out there. Is that okay to share so much of it so publicly where people don't understand and there needs to be a whole dissemination of the info? Or, you know, is MeV actually thinking how much Google Analytics actually sucks, and it's so ingrained in every machine, everything that we have. It's like that Pixar movie Soul where everybody's got like a little dot floating around out there.

**Shanda**

I haven't seen this, it sounds adorable.

**Shanda**

Yeah, it does. I think through the Google lens would probably be a little more menacing.

**Kaylee**

Yeah probably. (Laughs) Everything's tracking you all the time. It's analyzing you. How do we feel about it? I mean, it does make my life more convenient. I don't love that my phone listens to me. But every once in a while, I'm like, "Yeah, actually, you know what? I did need a new pair of breeches to go horseback riding." So, thank you for recommending this particular brand. Those are styling.

**Shanda**

I should say, I want them to keep Google Analytics complicated enough, so that I still have a very fulsome career, because a lot of people won't understand what to do with it. But like, don't change it too much. Because I'm really settled in where I'm right now.

**Kaylee**

Keep it just the same. No change.

**Michael**

I think that it's important to remember that something like analytics is something that people study really deeply on. Even in this time of people learning a science like immunology really quickly, they have to understand that analytics is a tool. It's not the whole picture. Like people shouldn't be like going into analytics and saying like, this tells us everything. No, it's just one way to give you some information. You need to use some other things to give you have a bigger picture, whatever it is that you're trying to analyze or look at.

**Shanda**

I mean, yes, that's so true. Because to really pull back the veil I do work in a marketing. We're not just pulling something from Google Analytics and saying hey, this how many people visited your website this week? You drill down into all of that stuff. Then you paint a full picture, and you do an annoying little presentation deck. This is why you should change to your website if you want people to buy your breeches.



**Kaylee**

It's to make them look more like classic stretchy pants. That's the thing. I can just tell them right now. That's what I want, high waist.

**Shanda**

I can take that back to the table.

**Kaylee**

Thank you so much. Michael, what are you nerding out about right now? Are you all solstice all the time? What's going on over there?

**Michael**

Only two times a year am I solsticing all the time. Not exactly sure when this episode is coming out, maybe around the Solstice. There's a range of Solstice time until Perihelion. I'm nerding out about one of our past nerd night guests, one of our favorites, John James, an amazing multi-disciplinary artist. I know Kaylee, you love John. She was recently in town. She's been on a worldwide tour offering many different services, which she describes as sacred marking, energy altar ceremonies, which is what I did. I did this session, that was essentially a guided meditation, and it was just so cool. I can't really say much about it. Because what she does with you may be very different from what she did with me because it is very personal. She interviews you and takes a lot of information about this journey that she's going to take you on, which is going to be a very specific journey. Then I came out with new eyes and my brain was just fully charged up. She brings such a wonderful perspective. Then immediately as I'm leaving almost feeling literally high, driving home, she actually said like, take care driving home and I was like, I am fully high right now.

**Kaylee**

That's when John James is like, PS I'm a cop. (Laughs)

**Michael**

Yeah, I was like I needed to check my eyes in the mirror. Are my pupils dilated? Like this is wild right now. They weren't. So, I wasn't actually. But I started listening to this podcast called The Longtime Academy, which paired really well for the state that I was in. It's made by the people on the Headspace app. It has guided meditation inside of the podcast and has a lot of these stories, and it's all about long time thinking. I'm always in that headspace. It gets me thinking more along those lines, because I want to think like that more. This podcast really starts to get you into thinking how you can integrate that into your line of life, and more tangible things that you can do in your life beyond just like sitting there in your headspace, "I would like to think long time". There are things you can do, perspectives that you can bring into your thinking. In this podcast, they bring in these Indigenous perspectives, people all around the world that think like this, and even John James herself, brings an Indigenous perspective. It's this thing called seven generational thinking. It's how you take seven generations from the past and seven generations into the future into this thinking and when you plan, you have basically 14 generations of people that are all with you at that time. For me, around Solstice, this is the headspace I like to get into and thinking not just the time, the place that I'm in right now, but all of the time and space inhabited by all the people close to me in my life and the effect that I have on this planet right now. Bringing in that seven generational thinking gives me a lot of comfort. I mean, you know, it's wintertime right now, comfort is nice. So, when I think about that, I also think that they may be thinking about me in that place. You know, when I'm alone in my apartment sorting



baseball cards, I feel like I'm part of this rich tapestry of the universe. I'm realizing now that I may still be high, but I'm fine. That's partly why, I wanted to bring both of you here. I care about both of you a lot. The end of this year helps me reflect a lot, and that's really what I'm nerding out about. Kaylee, what have you been nerding out about?

**Kaylee**

Well, you know, me as your co-heart, and I pretty much do two things. I work and I listen to podcasts. So, my other thing right now is a podcast. So, this week I started listening to a relatively new podcast that I really like called Stuff the British Stole.

**Michael**

Everything!

**Kaylee**

Truly. It takes a look at objects and artworks that were taken as a part of colonialism, and then distributed. A lot of it focuses on museums, but also those objects that have been distributed into people's homes. The podcast is created by Marc Fennell, who is very funny, he has a way of bringing humor to the topic. Sarcasm is my love language, there's a lot in there, and I appreciate that. Each episode dives into a different piece, a different region of the world, and a different time in which the British Empire, took some stuff. So, I just finished up season one, and what I think is so incredible about this podcast is that it's not only sharing some really interesting and sometimes really heartbreaking history, but it's also funny and really reflective. So, one conversation that has come up a couple of times is whether or not the pieces that were stolen would still exist today, if they weren't stolen, and sort of grappling with the answers of maybe sometimes yes, and maybe sometimes no, and how that court complicates the conversation about what was taken, and then how and when to give those items back. One of the taglines for the show is that the podcast will help us to see the Commonwealth and ourselves today in a different light. I think that it does that by holding space for those kinds of conversations as a part of also telling you about the pieces themselves and their history. So, A plus, all the recommends, checkout Stuff the British Stole.

**Shanda**

That sounds so fascinating.

**Kaylee**

It's so good. The last one was about the dodo bird and the dodo just breaks my heart generally, because they're like "hey, people" and then, you know. (Laughs)

**Shanda**

Now not so much.

**Kaylee**

Poor Dodo, so yeah, it's really fascinating.

**Michael**

Well, I think there should be a rebuttal to that podcast, and it should be "Stuff That Shanda Leer Stole from the British."



**Shanda**

Just 2 Men, and 1 Women that's it. Their hearts that is!

**Michael**

That's what I was trying to get at!

**Shanda**

Also, three DVDs of the Austin Powers franchise. I've recently been watching it, and it holds up.

**Kaylee**

Does it?

**Shanda**

It does. I mean, obviously, there is some dated humor in there. But if you get past it and say, hey, it's a different time, the mark of a true artist is growing through this kind of nonsense. A lot of it's still really good. (Laughs)

**Michael**

I have heard this. Yeah, I mean, it was a huge deal.

**Shanda**

You heard it directly from me, Michael, you got to watch it again.

**Michael**

Let's fire it up! So, let's fire this podcast right up and out. I don't know what that was. (Laughs)

**Kaylee**

Where is he going with firing it up?

**Shanda**

Just start recording now. (Laughs)

**Michael**

It's going into the fireplace, through the chimney out into the stratosphere.

**Kaylee**

Okay.

**Michael**

Thank you so much, Shanda, for joining us on this little podcast. Hopefully, we can see you on stage. Where can people find out about where you're performing in 2022?

**Shanda**

Oh, you should follow me on Instagram @itsshandaleer. That's my handle pretty much everywhere. I also recently started a Facebook page because you need a page to make events now. Dates to be announced in January and February, hopefully getting back to the brunch schedule, because I love having an evening free.





**Kaylee**

That's amazing and drag for brunch, or at brunch, no drag for brunch. Sounds spectacular.

**Shanda**

You're going to feel so satisfied.

**Michael**

I was also going to mention the podcast that you host as well, one of my favorite podcasts that I listened to. Where the Big Boys Game. Tell us about that?

**Shanda**

Yes, Where the Big Boys Game. It started out with my friend Mike and I as an experiment between two brand new friends because we had three fantastic things in common: video games, anime and wrestling. So, we're into our second year of doing it now and we're very grateful friends and we mostly just talk about games and anime sometimes wrestling still, but our strengths really lie with the games and anime, because we can play and watch those on our own time. He keeps up to a lot of current trends and stuff. I like to watch some of the older retro things, but still like we're a good complement to each other.

**Michael**

That sounds fantastic. I've been watching for the first time Cowboy Bebop and really loving it. I can't believe I never watched it before.

**Shanda**

I mean, that's really credited with being the first anime to really break the Western market and get everybody on board. Yeah, it's a Western and it's a Neo Noir. It's fantastic.

**Kaylee**

Who doesn't love that? Well, thanks for thanks for joining us, telling us a bit about your podcast, we'll get some drag for brunch. Thanks, everybody for tuning in to this episode. If you want to hear more from us, you can follow us on our socials @NerdNiteYVR on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. This episode was hosted by us it's going to be edited by Michael this time, enjoy it, and audio engineered by Elise Lane and until we Get Back after the Solstice, Here Comes the Sun. Go enjoy it.