

GIGI: Boy, to wear a dress.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: No, I--

GIGI: I'm giving away my age here.

[LAUGHTER]

And it's like--

JIMMY CARPER: That was 20 years ago.

GIGI: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: And that's a nice skirt by the way.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: Actually, 21 years ago this summer, Phyllis Frye overturned that.

ALEJANDRO: Right.

GIGI: And I remember times in Houston when it was very difficult to be bisexual or any alternative. And to go to the bars was always a little bit of a danger.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. And--

GIGI: And it takes the turnout not just at the polls but as a community to come together and fight this oppression we live under.

ALEJANDRO: And the thing about it is that in terms about fear and danger, it's like, I think as LGBT people, we come out as there's this fear. There's this danger, this anxiety that's placed upon or that we get trained to live with for fear of living out visible lives that are contrary to the gender and orientation that people expect us to perform. And I'm serious. And doing this, kind of, work is so empowering because you're constantly having to out yourself talking to voters, whether it's on election day, whether it's doing block walking, whether it's phone banking.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: You're constantly doing that. In Miami, there's an amazing story where it was such a great opportunity. There were 300 people I got to work with in Miami on the Save Data organization. And it was a special election that Miami was holding. And it was an opportunity to talk to thousands of voters about this human rights ordinance in Miami.

And so throughout the day, I talked to-- I went through all these different really fabulously diverse neighborhoods in Miami. And in the morning, I started off with monolingual Spanish-speaking Cuban neighborhoods. And then in the middle of the day, I went to the yuppie professional neighborhoods. And then, at the end of the day-- and those were all-- it was just-- and it was a really diverse crowd.

And at the end of the day, I ended up in an African-American middle-class neighborhood. And it was great because at the end of the day, yeah, and just at that point, I was just so in voter mode. I was talking to everybody who was-- I was just not even fazed by it.

But then, when I was faced with-- so here comes this guy leaving the polls. He's 6' foot 4," African-American. He's wearing a suit, totally just sharp, total professional, and there with his son, who's about seven or eight. And I was like, oh, OK, I'm going to do this. But I was a little intimidated. And I was like-- because parents-- because I think straight people get a little-- there's a little concern, I think, if it's in front of their kids. And sometimes, they--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: --get a little strange about that when you start talking about orientation or gender. And I was like, I'm going to do it. And he was amazing. And it was my anxiety about it. But it was like, there were-- it was an assumption which was wrong. I told him what we were doing about the nondiscrimination ordinance or the human rights ordinance in Miami. And I said that regardless of whether it was about race, gender, orientation, the different categories, we felt that everybody should be included from-- should be protected from discrimination. And he just looked at me. And he said, OK, where do I sign?

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

ALEJANDRO: And there he-- his son was right there and--

GIGI: Well, you know--

ALEJANDRO: It's just that kind-- and here, and that's-- and the thing that pisses me off, though, is that the right wing has done a fabulous job of giving the perception that most people are against the things that we support. And they're not.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. No.

ALEJANDRO: They're not.

JIMMY CARPER: That's the other thing. Growing up, we are so ingrained with a lot of things because you just mentioned, and I know exactly what you mean because I'm there.

ALEJANDRO: Right.

JIMMY CARPER: And I'm trying to overcome it. But you were saying that you don't want to talk about sexual orientation in front of the child.

ALEJANDRO: Right.

JIMMY CARPER: But you talk about heterosexuality in front of a child. You talk about people having babies and all of that.

ALEJANDRO: Right. Exactly. Exactly.

GIGI: [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: So what you're saying is it's this internal homophobia that--

ALEJANDRO: Exactly. Exactly.

JIMMY CARPER: --that somehow, being gay is--

ALEJANDRO: Perverse.

JIMMY CARPER: Perverse.

ALEJANDRO: It's perverse.

GIGI: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: It's--

ALEJANDRO: Exactly.

JIMMY CARPER: And when it is-- when you realize it isn't--

GIGI: I'd like to jump in here and turn the tables a minute.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, OK.

GIGI: When I was a kid growing up and I had a-- you know me. I had a father that was a minister.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

GIGI: And I had these feelings that I had to keep deeply hidden.

JIMMY CARPER: And you're very androgynous.

GIGI: Yes, and I used to get beaten for being too femme. I would have died to have heard someone say, I'm GLBT. It would have been a role model as a kid. Believe me, I needed these things as a kid, all of us that are different do if we search back in our childhood enough.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

GIGI: And even if it's not a GLBT kid standing behind the father, they need to know that their best friend is being persecuted unless we speak out and turn these tables around.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

ALEJANDRO: And I think that now-- and, GiGi, I just think that there's so much more that as a community, as the LGBT community--

GIGI: Oh, yeah.

ALEJANDRO: --here, we have so much more to speak out, so much more room to be more visible than-- I just-- but it's exciting. I don't-- I'm not saying that as a negative. But I think, for me, it's an exciting thing to push that, to push the community.

GIGI: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: As Dave Fleischer from the Gay Lesbian Task Force would say, agitate.

[LAUGHTER]

GIGI: Well, I think it's really wonderful that you do the block walk and going out into these neighborhoods because it's so easy being gay in the Montrose.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

GIGI: But when you're in somebody else's turf, and you're knocking on a strange door, and you're saying, hey, let me tell you about GBLT issues, it can be a little scary.

ALEJANDRO: And it's funny because you can quickly find-- and it's just hilarious. Someone-- we were in Timber Grove, Lazy Brook. That's the thing. The cool thing is that you really-- there are all these pockets of LGBT people throughout the city.

GIGI: Oh, yes.

ALEJANDRO: And that's the fun part when you uncover a pocket.

[LAUGHTER]

There was-- so there's hilarious-- and well, some--

[LAUGHTER]

So to speak. And so there was [INAUDIBLE] I was walking down this block. And guess what it was called? C Queen.

JIMMY CARPER: No.

ALEJANDRO: I found so many LGBT--

[LAUGHTER]

I'm serious.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, if you found that street, wouldn't you want to find a-- try to buy a house on that street?

[LAUGHTER]

Hello.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: But it was great. But--

JIMMY CARPER: That was funny.

ALEJANDRO: But no. And you could tell there was this house. It was well-manicured. It was snazzy and stylish [INAUDIBLE]. And then, I'm looking at my voter registration roll. And it says, I'm just making up a name, Mr. Murphy. And sometimes, it has an age. It says, oh, Mr. Murphy is 38. And there's nobody else in this house. So I'm looking at the house. It's American.

[LAUGHTER]

And you're thinking, uh-huh.

JIMMY CARPER: Uh-huh.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: Well, anyway, but it's-- I'm just being a little funny here. But you really do get a really neat diverse group of experiences.

BOBBY: You know what I think?

GIGI: Well, I want to turn the tables again for a moment because I love turning tables.

[LAUGHTER]

What if we lived in a world where someone brought up a plan for city council to prohibit straight people from adopting children?

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: Oh.

GIGI: Or if we decided that it should be legal for people to be fired on the job for being heterosexual?

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: There is a twisted logic.

ALEJANDRO: That's a-- no, I know.

JIMMY CARPER: Turn the tables on them.

ALEJANDRO: No, I think--

GIGI: No, no, I'm saying this because--

ALEJANDRO: Well, I think what you're saying is--

GIGI: --human rights is human rights.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: Well, exactly.

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly.

ALEJANDRO: And I think that what you just illustrated, GiGi, is something that really has to be spoken louder and louder, which is there's privilege and power in everything. And you've got to speak about that. And we-- and so even as a gay man, I've got privilege and powers as with a particular construction of gender and masculinity that empowers, that lets me do things that other people wouldn't if they weren't performing that role.

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

ALEJANDRO: Or there is power in being middle upper class, upper class, and what that means. And so how does that influence the person's quality of life? And so no, it's speaking openly and really thinking clear-- I was going to say, but really, trying to be as honest and present about what those privileges are, and how they impact the quality of life that we're going to lead, and how other groups of people who don't have those privileges. And they live different-- they lead very different lives. It's not like they're any different. It just means that the privilege is--

GIGI: It's an arbitrary decision.

ALEJANDRO: It's an arbitrary thing.

[LAUGHTER]

But the other thing too is that as gay people, and I say gay, I mean LGBT or queer. But what I mean is that one thing that we've really got to put out there in speaking about power is that, all right, speaking about privilege, we've got to be honest about power and honest about the fact that there's nothing wrong with saying as an LGBT community, we want to build practical power.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

ALEJANDRO: And we deserve it. We deserve a voice. We deserve to be incredibly visible. And we deserve to say, we want to build this. And I don't care. I don't-- it's not about you. It's not about your other communities. It's about us. And it's about us making things happen.

GIGI: How fabulous.

BOBBY: You know what I think?

JIMMY CARPER: And it's because we-- and the only reason I think we hold ourselves back is because part of us believe the lies that are told on the other side.

ALEJANDRO: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: And like I said, it becomes ingrained. And we've got to shake that loose.

BOBBY: You know what I think is interesting--

JIMMY CARPER: What, Bobby?

BOBBY: --is that this country is now something around 230 years old, 220 something, 230 years old.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, well. Yeah.

BOBBY: And most of the groups who have been discriminated against from the Black community to women without the vote, all of the things that they've gained have been in the last 80 years--

JIMMY CARPER: That's true. That's true.

BOBBY: --of a country that is 230 years old.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, amazing strides.

BOBBY: I think amazing strides have been made. But I also think, in a way, it's shameful that we had to wait this long for that many people to get what they deserve as human beings no matter what segment of the community we come from.

ALEJANDRO: And even having said that, Bobby, we have so much more work to do.

BOBBY: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: Because--

BOBBY: Exactly.

ALEJANDRO: --if you have African-American men, it's like 30% of them are in prison in Texas.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

BOBBY: Yeah, that's--

ALEJANDRO: You have this outrageous number of Black men in prison.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: And being Latino or being white, it's like it should be everybody's problem. Why is it that one particular community has so many of its people in prison? It's not a random thing. You have to ask yourself, what is it? What was constructed? Or what led to these series of consequences to get a huge majority, a disproportionate group of people in prison?

BOBBY: And society--

JIMMY CARPER: And then, we would-- and when we get to that point, we will probably also discover why 30% of Black gay men are HIV-positive.

BOBBY: Right.

JIMMY CARPER: I think it goes along the same lines.

ALEJANDRO: Or why LGBT kids commit suicide at a higher rate.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes.

ALEJANDRO: So it's just that-- and anyway, yeah, I think we're in agreement about that. It's just, there's a-- the thing that I love too is that I think that people-- those conversations take place at PVA. We have-- one of the things that we-- well, when we formed this organization over 18 months ago is that Grant and I talked about, we don't want to have these fights. And I'm sure we're going to have these other fights about, well, should we include racial justice in this organization?

[LAUGHTER]

Should we talk--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes.

ALEJANDRO: Should we talk about reproductive freedom?

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: Should we talk about whether transgender people should be part of this-- no, it's a lot of BS. If you can have a consistent philosophy about human rights for everybody, then it's just not going to happen. And that's my opinion and I think PVA's opinion about having a broad social justice-- being part of a broader social justice movement, and holding ourselves accountable, and saying, OK, we do it in a very specific way through the electoral process. But again, we see our fight is connected to other fights.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: And I think that ours is a very specific unique one that-- and not a part of anybody else's. And so I just--

BOBBY: It's why we're calling it human rights.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes.

BOBBY: It's about, are you human? Then we're talking about you.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: I need to jump in here and remind folks that they're listening to *After Hours Queer Radio* with attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

ALEJANDRO: Yay.

JIMMY CARPER: I'm Jimmy Carper. Bobby's here.

BOBBY: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: GiGi.

GIGI: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: And Alejandro.

ALEJANDRO: Alejandro, yay.

GIGI: And I do want to say--

BOBBY: Such a pretty name.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

GIGI: Barnett USA, at the annual meeting before last, decided to withdraw support for [INAUDIBLE] for that same reason because it's not protecting everyone. We really need to come together. And that's what I-- really, the whole philosophy behind community-first is bringing our community together and saying, we aren't going to stand up for this anymore.

ALEJANDRO: Right. It's like-- it's a wonderful coalition building to see African-American leadership saying, we're not going to take orientation off--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: --off of the hate crimes that I just mentioned.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: We're not going to do that.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: I think that's a big, big boost for us.

ALEJANDRO: Yeah, and the fact that-- and then, PVA working with straight African-American men and women on Aida Edwards's campaign. People say, oh, well, people of color, well, they're pretty conservative. Or I don't know. Here we are. We're doing it.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

ALEJANDRO: We're working. We're doing it. We're right--

JIMMY CARPER: You've learned the lessons from Harvey Milk. And you must have coalition building.

ALEJANDRO: You've just got to do it--

BOBBY: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: You've got to do it.

ALEJANDRO: --because we're not going to win it alone.

JIMMY CARPER: No.

ALEJANDRO: We're going to win it building-- forging alliances with other people who share, who understand there's this interconnected oppression. And so they're fabulous. We have two phone banks Tuesdays and Thursdays from the training center of-- which is adjacent to the Shrine. And we also have a block walk at the Shrine on Saturday morning. So we have six phone banks at PVA. We've got three phone banks at the shrine. And we've got two phone banks simultaneously on Saturdays leaving from Third Ward and from Montrose.

JIMMY CARPER: I wanted to ask you a question earlier. But I think I already know the answer. It should be obvious from the conversation we've had. But how does a performance artist like you end up doing political work?

[LAUGHTER]

That's a dumb question, yeah.

ALEJANDRO: Well, I--

JIMMY CARPER: Because your performance art was political.

ALEJANDRO: Yeah, but hey, listen, life is-- you've got to make life interesting. You've got to constantly challenge yourself. I went to-- this is to answer your question. I went to the Wharton Business School. So I've got an economics capitalist training. But I also--

[LAUGHTER]

Which is-- hey.

JIMMY CARPER: No, that's true. That's right.

ALEJANDRO: But I also have a degree in 20th century lit and queer feminist theory.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

ALEJANDRO: And so the thing about it was, I was like, I want to go out and make change. And I had a hard time finding a job right out of college that would provide me a salary to live and work on stuff. So I decided to work for a few years in corporations. And I was lucky enough to work with Brown, and Root, and Chase.

And it was great because I had-- I made a lot of friends. And I got-- I learned a lot. But then, I just switched gears and started doing performance art. And it was-- and that's really where the performance art-- I uncovered-- there was more of a political vein in the work that I wanted to do that was taking a break.

JIMMY CARPER: I saw that in you. And each time, you were really more intense about it, yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: And it was thanks to Michael Crawford, [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

ALEJANDRO: Chuck.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: What a great group that was.

ALEJANDRO: Wasn't it? And this is what, in a microcosm, about going back to the whole idea of community is that I would not have taken those steps were it not for being a part of a group of people, being mentored by Loris Bradley from Diverseworks.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: She was awesome.

[LAUGHTER]

And so just being mentored in this-- as this baby queer coming out. But really saying, OK, write. Write what you're feeling. Write what you're thinking. And then, you know what? Why don't you go perform it on stage in front of 100 people?

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Whoa.

ALEJANDRO: Put your baggage out on the stage.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. That's right. That's an amazing thing to me.

GIGI: Well, I'm going to throw out a hard question here a little bit.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: So that's how I came into politics after that.

GIGI: Let's say we've got some people in the audience that think, oh, I don't think I want to get political. I don't want to go out and do these things. What would your response be to them?

ALEJANDRO: Look at that look you're giving me.

[LAUGHTER]

No, I-- you know what though, I really think that it's-- that's the challenge is to say, is to ask questions. The challenge-- the thing is, it's easier to make a judgment. And it's easier to, say, write somebody off. It's more difficult to listen. And it's more difficult to ask questions and say, OK, well, why?

You might find-- they might have had a bad experience with some other community organization. Or they might have had-- they may not have a fully-formed idea about what it means to volunteer. They may not-- they may feel cynical about the process and not-- and feel that they don't have-- that the work that they do-- or they don't have a voice in the process. There's a lot of different reasons why.

And so for me, it's more of a challenge to understand what's motivating them to say no. And then, if there is a way to-- and if there is some things that we can say, I'm like, well, if it's about not being able to find a way to make measurable results or change, well, hello, PVA is all about action, and change, and results. And we can show-- we can demonstrate that.

Or if it's about having a voice or-- you know what I mean? But there's-- again, it's just finding out those challenges that people are facing internally because I really think, ultimately, I think people want to help out. Again, it goes back to the broader philosophy of, I think people really want to do help out. And for some reason, for whatever the reasons are, and some of them, there may be many of them, they get disconnected.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: They feel jaded. Frankly--

GIGI: I think one of the--

ALEJANDRO: Frankly, you've just got to have that philosophy because if you don't, because it's really easy to say, well, ugh, I can't just get anybody to volunteer. Everybody's empathetic.

GIGI: Well, I'd like to throw this out because there's a time when being bisexual, and being effeminate, and wearing leather skirts and male [INAUDIBLE] bars, I actually got thrown out at several of them. Thank you. But I still had the guts to go back into the next one. And I still put on my skirt, got on my motorcycle, painted my nails, and walked in the door, and said, hi, baby.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: Good for you.

GIGI: And--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, because that's you.

GIGI: It's me. And the thing is what I learned was that I can make a difference.

ALEJANDRO: Yeah.

GIGI: And if I can't make it in this arena, I jump to the national arena.

[LAUGHTER]

And I've become involved with Bi-Net USA. And I started something called Celebrate Bisexuality Day. And I had

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, the first Texas conference on bisexuality.

GIGI: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: Wow.

JIMMY CARPER: You did it.

GIGI: And I've had an impact in the world I live in. We can make a difference--

ALEJANDRO: You really can.

GIGI: --if we choose to act. If we choose to say, it's not my thing, I don't want to face up to this, someone else can handle it--

ALEJANDRO: Yeah, the--

GIGI: --but we won't make an impact.

ALEJANDRO: And part-- and if I can just add that you're--

GIGI: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: What-- I think one thing is when you asked earlier about, how do you do this? Or why-- when somebody said, I'm not political. I think what I'm really-- and this is a hard thing to really work on. But ultimately, I think it's one of the answers. And that the answer, one of the answers is, you really just see-- for me, doing this work, I see everybody as a family.

And it may sound trite. But it's like, growing up in a family of 10, being Latino, it's like you see somebody not-- they're not different. They are part of your family. And you don't just disrespect your brother. You don't disrespect your sister. You don't-- you may disagree a lot of times with your parents. But they're still your--

[LAUGHTER]

They're still-- people always say, well, they're blood. They're blood or I can't-- whatever. It's-

JIMMY CARPER: Like any family--

ALEJANDRO: Like in-- you'll have fights.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: And the same thing happens when I see, I do not want to turn my back on somebody who's LGBT and say-- because I just say, this is-- we're family. And I'll figure out a way and dialogue. And maybe it'll be-- it may not be as-- we may not see it in a lot of things. And we may end up maybe working minimally on a few things. But that's a start. And that, I think, is part of it is really seeing somebody saying, you're a part of a larger family. That we belong here in Montrose and Houston. And I'll figure out a way to work together eventually.

One thing, when I have time, but we've been really busy with working on this ballot initiative. But on Thursday nights at my tiny apartment, I invite people from all different parts of the communities in Houston. And I make them dinner. And it's a humbling thing to make dinner for people and to listen to them.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

GIGI: Cool.

ALEJANDRO: And you find out more about where they come from. And then, it's like a little salon thing where people exchange ideas. And they're like, oh, you know. And then, maybe they can-- and people from different communities. Oh, I didn't know you were doing this, writing or doing that and stuff like that. So again, that's just another way of building family, building community.

And I think what that does is that it allows people to open up to really start to say why they feel like they can't make a difference or they don't want to get political, they don't want to get involved. I really think it's a function of being disempowered. And it's a function of just not believing they can do something. And if you can find ways to peel that off and then let them take a risk again to believe that they can do something, I think they'll have some interesting things to say.

JIMMY CARPER: And we can make a difference.

BOBBY: You bet.

ALEJANDRO: Yes.

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: You bet.

ALEJANDRO: Right.

GIGI: I mean--

JIMMY CARPER: You have made a difference.

[LAUGHTER]

You have made a difference. You are making a difference. And give me all of those numbers again.

[LAUGHTER]

Because people out there are listening. And they want to, they want to volunteer for PVA.

ALEJANDRO: Yeah, it's 713-521-7161. And our email address is p-r-o-v-o-t-e-r, provoter@lconn.com. That's l-c-o-n-n, as in Nancy, .com.

JIMMY CARPER: Great.

ALEJANDRO: Great.

JIMMY CARPER: I sure appreciate you coming in.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: It's just the more I hear from you and Grant working together, Grant Martin is like--

ALEJANDRO: He is awesome. He is awesome.

JIMMY CARPER: He's one of these unsung heroes. He's just in the background just getting things done. And you're following in his footsteps, so it seems, yeah.

ALEJANDRO: Well, I have an amazing-- I can't speak enough about him. I have an amazing mentor in that what he says, and it's so true, is that he's like, he's like, just focus on the work. Focus on the big-- on achieving the results and on making change. And it'll take care of itself. And so he's great because he's so not about ego.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: It's not about-- it's about-- and really, he's harsh, just completely just dedicated to making change in the city. And--

JIMMY CARPER: And what's amazing is--

ALEJANDRO: It's remarkable.

JIMMY CARPER: Incredible.

ALEJANDRO: And so it's inspiring to work with him to do that. That's what's helped me.

BOBBY: It's-- and we can make a change.

GIGI: Yeah.

BOBBY: It's really cool to me.

JIMMY CARPER: We are. We're making a change.

BOBBY: It's really cool to me that everybody knows about the faces that have been part of change from the Martin--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BOBBY: Susan B. Anthonyms to the Martin Luther King's to the faces.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BOBBY: But we-- but behind all of those faces are the name-- are hundreds of other people supporting them who may never see the front page of a news-- whose faces you'll never see.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BOBBY: But they're just as important. They're doing the work.

JIMMY CARPER: Even more so.

BOBBY: They're doing the work to get people where they need to be as human beings as part of society as a whole.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BOBBY: And I think that's a very cool thing.

JIMMY CARPER: It is.

BOBBY: I think we're more made up of those people than anything else.

ALEJANDRO: I'll just end up-- and I have to-- I just have one quick story and--

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

ALEJANDRO: And this is about my parents, actually. It's interesting because it goes back to food. Latinos are all about food and just sharing food and stuff.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, it's true.

BOBBY: I'm Italian.

ALEJANDRO: It's true.

BOBBY: I'm Italian.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

BOBBY: I know from what you're talking about.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: And it's funny because I take my-- tomorrow, I was thinking-- I wake up early on Sundays to take my parents out to breakfast. And we do this every other week. And it's just amazing because-- and again, it's like the whole family analogy. I don't-- they've known-- I've been out-- I'm 30.

And I was out when I came out when I was 20-- 10 years ago. And it took them years before they actually were OK with it. There was-- one of my sisters had got married a few years ago. My dad was like, if you're going to bring your boyfriend with you, I'm not going to go to the wedding. So stuff like that.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah.

ALEJANDRO: But fast forward. So fast forward to the present. And we're in a [SPEAKING SPANISH]. And they're not much risk takers when it comes to cuisine. So [INAUDIBLE].

[LAUGHTER]

But that's OK.

BOBBY: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: So we're at this [SPANISH]. And I don't know. Somehow, we get on this topic of, somehow, masculinity is going through my dad's mind. And he asked the question. He's like, remember-- and this is all in Spanish, of course, because he doesn't speak much English.

And he's like, I remember at the time when you were about 12. And you were taking karate. I'm like, yeah, I remember. And he's like, yeah, you were really good in form and stuff. You used to really-- you could-- your instructor said you were really good with how you did everything. But you didn't want to fight.

[LAUGHTER]

And look, it's getting-- this is funny. It gets funnier. And I was like, yeah, well, I didn't want to hit anybody. And he's like, uh-huh. He's like, well, and your friend, what was his name? Richard? I was like, yeah, that was Rich. Yeah, I had this childhood friend from third grade through high school. And I'm like-- he's like, especially with him, you didn't want to hit him. And I was like, well, duh, I was in love with him, Dad.

[LAUGHTER]

And it was like-- and it was great because he was like-- he just looked at me. And he was like, oh, OK, and just let it go. We didn't talk about it. That was it.

[LAUGHTER]

My--

GIGI: Oh, what a great story.

ALEJANDRO: My mom was buying sweet bread in the corner. She didn't hear what was going on, [SPEAKING SPANISH].

GIGI: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: And so this great vignette is taking place. But it would never have happened had we not set the space where these-- no expectations. You're having food with somebody that you consider to be family. And those things, those doors, open up.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

ALEJANDRO: And these little stories like this come out. And that's what I mean by spending time with people that you may not be close with. You may not relate to directly or the people that you hang out with all the time. But you may not-- you just don't know what things happen when you spend time over food.

[LAUGHTER]

Food.

GIGI: Yeah, that's great.

JIMMY CARPER: But that was a great story. I really liked that.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: Thanks. Thanks. Thanks for having me over.

JIMMY CARPER: Because it shows the opening up, yes.

ALEJANDRO: It really does.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

ALEJANDRO: Well, thanks a lot for having me over.

JIMMY CARPER: You've been on this show so many times.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: I know.

JIMMY CARPER: You're not really a guest anymore. It's just, oh, he's going to be on the show again.

GIGI: Before long, he's going to become a co-host.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: I know.

GIGI: He's family.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, so many--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: That's PVA, 713-521-7161. You can make a difference.

ALEJANDRO: Great.

GIGI: Shall we go to music?

JIMMY CARPER: We shall. Thanks for being here. And I've got some music by Horse, who is going to be here in two weeks.

GIGI: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: Here in live, and in person, and singing, and doing whatever she wants to do because she is the woman.

BOBBY: Hell yeah.

[CHEERING]

JIMMY CARPER: Oh my. Oh my. Oh my. Oh my. Oh my. Oh my. That was Horse from her latest album Horse with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. And it's called "Both Sides." She will be here in two weeks live on the air.

BOBBY: Oh, wow.

JIMMY CARPER: And in the second 1/2 of that show, we're going to have Sonia, an interview with Sonia on the phone with Charlie Pacquiao. So that's going to be two incredible women artists two weeks from tonight.

BOBBY: All in one night. That will work.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. And Sonia is going to be in Houston performing at McGonigel's Mucky Duck on May the 24. So get your tickets now. They're available.

BOBBY: There we go.

GIGI: Oh, cool.

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: Yeah, nice.

JIMMY CARPER: So have you been?

GIGI: Oh, I've been doing good. Well, somewhat.

JIMMY CARPER: What's not--

GIGI: My grandmother died.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes, I heard about that.

GIGI: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: I am so sorry, because I know she was the only living relative that you really cared about.

GIGI: Well, she had a special place. And I want to dedicate part of the show to her because when I was a kid, she came up to me one day. And she knew I was different. And she said to me, she said, whoever you want to bring over, I don't care who it is, my porch swing is always open to you for courtship.

JIMMY CARPER: What a sweetheart.

[LAUGHTER]

ALEJANDRO: That's cool.

GIGI: As a teenager--

ALEJANDRO: That's pretty cool.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's nice.

GIGI: --that really--

JIMMY CARPER: That's very nice.

GIGI: --made an impression in my life. It made me feel good for who I am. She was a very special lady. And as a kid, a real little kid, she used to read King Babar stories to me when my parents were around. As soon as they were out of ear shot, she used to tell me about her escapades in Europe in the '20s.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I see, grandma--

GIGI: Oh, believe me, what we do today--

JIMMY CARPER: Grandma suddenly turned into Auntie Mame.

GIGI: --is nothing new.

[LAUGHTER]

We all need a good influence in our life. And I hope this show helps influence people to be able to stand up for who they are to be able to say, I'm proud of who I am and I love who I am.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

GIGI: I think more than anything else, that's what my grandmother taught me.

GIGI: You bet.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

GIGI: She said she loved me for who I was. And she taught me how to love myself for who I was. And that's what pride's really all about.

JIMMY CARPER: I think so.

[LAUGHTER]

Yeah, that's what it is to me.

GIGI: Yeah, and speaking of pride.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes?

GIGI: Coming up in May, we're going to have by BiCamp 2001.

JIMMY CARPER: I just happened to have a registration form right here in front of me.

GIGI: Oh, wow.

[LAUGHTER]

I wonder where that came from.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Mm, I wonder.

GIGI: Yes, it's going to be May 17 to the 20. We're doing it Thursday through Sunday.

ALEJANDRO: That's the weekend of my birthday.

GIGI: Ah.

ALEJANDRO: My birthday is the 19.

JIMMY CARPER: Happy birthday. Take off your clothes.

[LAUGHTER]

GIGI: Can I take mine off? Oh, I promise to be good.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

You can take them off at BiCamp.

GIGI: Oh, OK. Well, the steam-- the showers do get rather steamy.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: I've heard.

[LAUGHTER]

GIGI: But BiCamp is coming up. And we are looking for people to do workshops. And we're looking for hands-on workshops.

[LAUGHTER]

All, kinds of, fun things happening.

BOBBY: Does that mean Jim is going to be doing massage work?

GIGI: Oh, yes.

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: I got you.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, that'd be a lovely thing. Oh.

BOBBY: He's so good.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, he's very good.

BOBBY: Oh, he's so good.

GIGI: But we've got a full line up of things coming up. We're going to be having drum circles, and campfires, and even bi games.

BOBBY: Oh.

GIGI: That should be a lot of fun.

[LAUGHTER]

And if you want to have a really good time with the Kindred Spirits, come to BiCamp.

BOBBY: So this is for bisexuals and their friends?

GIGI: Bisexuals, bi-friendly. Lovers of bisexuals are welcome, friends, everybody. It is quite a different space.

BOBBY: So it's really camping out, though, huh?

GIGI: Oh, yes.

BOBBY: Like tents and sleeping bags.

GIGI: Tents, and sleeping bags, and campfires, and the whole works. And it's at the Rainbow Ranch Campground.

BOBBY: Oh.

GIGI: Just south of Dallas.

BOBBY: Boy, you can be yourself there.

GIGI: Oh, yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: Yes, that's the gay-owned one, right? Well, that'll work. So-- Yes, they-- not to be discriminatory, but I recently read an email from them. And they made the decision long ago that they thought that queers needed a place to be themselves. And so they will allow straight people. But they must be accompanied by gays.

GIGI: Yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: Boy, that sounds around the lines of, I don't mind straight people as long as they act gay in public.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, well-- well, yeah.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: Or bi in public, as the case may be.

JIMMY CARPER: There you go. Whatever.

[LAUGHTER]

Oh, that's neat. That's neat. That's going to be a lot of fun. That's coming up May. And how can people get their own registration form?

GIGI: They--

JIMMY CARPER: Because I don't have--

GIGI: They can email us at bihouse@flash.net.

JIMMY CARPER: Wait a minute now. Let me get that pen again.

GIGI: It's b-i-h-o-u-s-e.

JIMMY CARPER: Right. Howdy. I think-- I've got to get my paper.

BOBBY: Let her get organized.

GIGI: @--

JIMMY CARPER: Wait a minute. [bihouse, b-i-h-o-u-s-e](http://bihouse.b-i-h-o-u-s-e).

GIGI: @.

JIMMY CARPER: @.

GIGI: Flash.

JIMMY CARPER: Flash.

GIGI: Because I'm so flashy. And .net because I always wear net stockings.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, flash.net.

[LAUGHTER]

That's how you remember it, is that it?

[LAUGHTER]

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

--association. There you go. I'm sorry Jay isn't with you tonight. I always--

GIGI: She was planning on coming. But she wasn't feeling real good.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, I'll tell you what, I've got a book that came in the mail.

GIGI: Ah.

JIMMY CARPER: So I'm going to give it to you to give to her so we can hear her book report next month.

GIGI: I will do that.

JIMMY CARPER: Good.

GIGI: Well, it has been so good to be back again.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: I'm so glad to have you back. And so we'll be promoting the BiCamp.

GIGI: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Even when you're not here.

GIGI: Oh, good.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: And yeah, because it's not just a bi show when you're here. It's a community show every week.

GIGI: Oh, yes.

JIMMY CARPER: So--

GIGI: And we know that.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: So we need to move on to the news. And I have a song picked out for your going out because you were talking about your grandma--

GIGI: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: --grandmother standing by you and teaching you how to stand up. This is by a group called Duality. It's a nice peppy number. And it's called "Stand Up."

GIGI: All right.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: And you're listening to it on *After Hours Queer Radio* with attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College station. We'll see you next month, GiGi. Thanks for being here.

GIGI: You bet.

JIMMY CARPER: Stay tuned for *After Hours* news and views with Chris and probably me.

GIGI: Ah!

WOMAN: Flanagan--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes? And now, and now, and now.