

Thursday 9 July 2026

00:00:01.000--> 00:00:05.181

Well, welcome
everybody to today's event,

00:00:05.205--> 00:00:08.428

How I write – in conversation
with Khairani Barokka.

00:00:08.452--> 00:00:10.988

I'm Abi Fellows and
I'm a literary agent

00:00:11.012--> 00:00:12.708

with broad experience
in the industry,

00:00:12.732--> 00:00:16.348

having started in book
selling at Blackwell's in 2001.

00:00:16.372--> 00:00:19.468

After a stint on the sales
team at Faber and Faber

00:00:19.492--> 00:00:22.628

and a return to education
to complete an MA,

00:00:22.652--> 00:00:25.668

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I began my agenting
career in 2004.

00:00:25.692--> 00:00:29.148

I then moved into
literary scouting at RR Ltd,

00:00:29.172--> 00:00:33.000

working with overseas publishers
and TV and film companies.

00:00:33.000--> 00:00:37.108

In 2019, I returned to agenting
at The Good Literary Agency,

00:00:37.132--> 00:00:40.868

building a list focused on
amplifying and championing writers

00:00:40.892--> 00:00:44.000

from backgrounds that
have often been marginalized.

00:00:44.000--> 00:00:47.468

I moved to DHH
Literary Agency in 2003.

00:00:50.000--> 00:00:51.868

For my audio description,

00:00:51.892--> 00:00:55.908

I am a white British woman
with brown hair in a bun

00:00:55.932--> 00:00:59.748

and thin brown glasses and
wearing a black sleeveless top.

00:01:02.000--> 00:01:07.428

This event is part of our #SoAatHome
Spring/Summer 2026 programme

00:01:07.452--> 00:01:11.788

and is in conjunction with the Authors with
Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses Network,

00:01:11.812--> 00:01:14.000

the ADCI.

00:01:14.000--> 00:01:15.391

This event is free for all,

00:01:15.415--> 00:01:16.748

but if you can afford to,

00:01:16.772--> 00:01:20.548

please consider donating to the
Society of Authors Access Fund.

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00:01:20.572--> 00:01:23.245

This provides grants
to authors so that

00:01:23.269--> 00:01:26.828

travel, subsistence, childcare
costs, and access needs

00:01:26.852--> 00:01:28.451

aren't barriers to authors
taking part

00:01:28.475--> 00:01:31.268

in events, residencies
and retreats.

00:01:31.292--> 00:01:34.508

We suggest a
minimum donation of £5.

00:01:34.532--> 00:01:37.868

You can also help the
Society of Authors Access Fund

00:01:37.892--> 00:01:40.228

by making a purchase
on our virtual bookstore

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00:01:40.252--> 00:01:41.708

on Bookshop.org,

00:01:41.732--> 00:01:43.428

where you can

find books by writers

00:01:43.452--> 00:01:45.548

taking part in our

events programme.

00:01:49.000--> 00:01:51.628

This session will

last 45 minutes,

00:01:51.652--> 00:01:53.628

including a 10-minute Q&A.

00:01:53.652--> 00:01:57.868

Please do turn on the closed captions

option if you would like live subtitles

00:01:57.892--> 00:02:02.000

and this event has BSL

interpretation provided by Ali Gordon.

00:02:02.000--> 00:02:06.228

The recording of this event will

be available on the SoA's website

00:02:06.252--> 00:02:08.628

via their resources

page and Vimeo channel,

00:02:08.652--> 00:02:10.788

which will be emailed

to registered attendees

00:02:10.812--> 00:02:13.348

shortly after along

with the captions.

00:02:15.000--> 00:02:16.868

We will have a

quick Q&A at the end.

00:02:16.892--> 00:02:20.108

So if you have any questions,

please do post them in the Q&A box.

00:02:20.132--> 00:02:22.228

You can post them

anonymously if you prefer,

00:02:22.252--> 00:02:24.948

but do post your general

comments in the chat box.

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00:02:24.972--> 00:02:26.000

Thank you.

00:02:26.000--> 00:02:28.825

I would now like to introduce
you all to today's guest,

00:02:28.849--> 00:02:30.028

Khairani Barokka.

00:02:30.052--> 00:02:33.388

Okka, could I ask you to provide
your audio description yourself

00:02:33.412--> 00:02:35.000

and then I'll do your bio.

00:02:35.000--> 00:02:36.913

-Just saying, hi, everyone.

00:02:36.938--> 00:02:38.255

Thanks so much for being here.

00:02:38.280--> 00:02:40.628

Thanks to Abi and thanks to Ali.

00:02:40.652--> 00:02:43.748

My name is Khairani

Barokka. You can call me Okka.

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00:02:43.772--> 00:02:45.508

My pronouns are she, her, dia.

00:02:45.532--> 00:02:49.000

I'm an Indonesian

woman with a, um,

00:02:49.000--> 00:02:51.908

floral patterned

short sleeve shirt on

00:02:51.932--> 00:02:54.108

and have headphones on,

00:02:54.132--> 00:02:57.228

and behind me is a pink

background that says Annah, Infinite.

00:02:58.000--> 00:02:59.508

-Thank you.

00:02:59.532--> 00:03:01.308

So Khairani Barokka

00:03:01.332--> 00:03:05.388

is a writer, editor, translator,

and artist from Jakarta,

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00:03:05.412--> 00:03:08.868

whose work has been published
and presented widely internationally,

00:03:08.892--> 00:03:10.908

and centers disability justice

00:03:10.932--> 00:03:14.588

as anti-colonial praxis,
and access as translation.

00:03:14.612--> 00:03:16.268

In 2023,

00:03:16.292--> 00:03:19.633

Okka was shortlisted for the
Asian Women of Achievement Awards.

00:03:19.658--> 00:03:20.828

Among her honours,

00:03:20.852--> 00:03:26.148

Okka has been a UNFPA Indonesian
Young Leader Driving Social Change,

00:03:26.172--> 00:03:30.908

the first non-British associate artist
at the UK's National Center for Writing,

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00:03:30.932--> 00:03:32.588

an Artforum Must-See,

00:03:32.612--> 00:03:35.828

and Modern Poetry in

Translation's first Poet-in-Residence,

00:03:35.852--> 00:03:38.468

and later their

first editor of colour.

00:03:40.000--> 00:03:45.000

Okka's books include poetry

books Indigenous Species,

00:03:45.000--> 00:03:47.948

the Saboteur Award

nominated Stairs and Whispers,

00:03:47.972--> 00:03:50.347

D/deaf and Disabled

Poets Write Back,

00:03:50.372--> 00:03:52.948

Ultimatum Orangutan,

00:03:52.972--> 00:03:56.000

shortlisted for the

Barbellion Prize,

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00:03:56.000--> 00:04:00.000

and amuk, shortlisted
for the Jhalak Poetry Prize.

00:04:00.000--> 00:04:01.868

Annah, Infinite
is her prose debut

00:04:01.892--> 00:04:04.000

and an Expert Pick
in The Bookseller.

00:04:04.000--> 00:04:05.868

A very impressive person.

00:04:05.892--> 00:04:08.708

Where are you
geographically today, Okka?

00:04:08.732--> 00:04:10.658

Can you tell us a bit
about where you are?

00:04:10.682--> 00:04:12.828

-Yeah, I'm in North London

00:04:12.852--> 00:04:16.371

and I'm in the living

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room of my home.

00:04:16.395--> 00:04:18.051

-Is that where you
normally write?

00:04:18.075--> 00:04:20.485

Or can
you tell us a bit about your writing space?

00:04:20.510--> 00:04:22.911

-Yeah, no, I normally
write from bed

00:04:22.935--> 00:04:23.935

[laughter]

00:04:23.959--> 00:04:25.228

In my bed, in my bedroom.

00:04:25.252--> 00:04:26.388

Um...

00:04:26.412--> 00:04:29.188

I find that

00:04:29.212--> 00:04:32.000

I usually need

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00:04:32.000--> 00:04:35.451

space to lie down and
prop myself against pillows.

00:04:35.475--> 00:04:39.148

I usually write on my laptop,

00:04:39.172--> 00:04:43.228

but I need to take lots of breaks because
my dominant hand, my right hand is...

00:04:43.252--> 00:04:45.468

can get triggered sometimes.

00:04:45.492--> 00:04:48.228

So that causes some reactions,
so I need to take lots of breaks.

00:04:48.252--> 00:04:50.508

But also, sometimes,

00:04:50.532--> 00:04:52.988

I think like a lot of
people, if I think of an idea

00:04:53.012--> 00:04:54.668

and I'm out somewhere,

00:04:54.692--> 00:04:57.605

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I'll just write it on my phone
really quickly in my notes app,

00:04:57.629--> 00:04:59.908
or sometimes even
use the voice app,

00:04:59.932--> 00:05:02.868
or if I'm out and
about, or, um...

00:05:02.892--> 00:05:05.588
Or sometimes... I
actually still really love

00:05:05.612--> 00:05:06.988
to write longhand.

00:05:07.012--> 00:05:08.788
-Oh...

00:05:08.812--> 00:05:09.828
-Yeah and...

00:05:09.852--> 00:05:14.148
But I actually use this
app called OmmWriter.

00:05:14.172--> 00:05:17.028

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Has anyone else here heard
of OmmWriter or used it?

00:05:17.052--> 00:05:19.268

But it's basically...

00:05:19.292--> 00:05:21.908

It blanks out your whole screen

00:05:21.932--> 00:05:25.068

and it's very meditative and
there's background noises and music.

00:05:25.093--> 00:05:26.259

So I just need...

00:05:26.283--> 00:05:29.000

-So really conducive
to being in the zone?

00:05:29.000--> 00:05:30.000

-Yeah.

00:05:30.000--> 00:05:31.868

-And do you have a sort of

00:05:31.892--> 00:05:34.365

daily, weekly, monthly
routine to your writing

00:05:34.389--> 00:05:36.468

or does it flex all the time?

00:05:36.492--> 00:05:37.878

-I think it flexes all the time,

00:05:37.902--> 00:05:40.000

especially depending

on deadlines.

00:05:40.000--> 00:05:43.000

-Yeah, which we'll talk

about more, I'm sure.

00:05:43.000--> 00:05:44.508

-Yeah.

-Yeah.

00:05:44.532--> 00:05:46.708

-It's nice to... It's always

nice to picture you

00:05:46.732--> 00:05:49.068

propped up, getting

yourself comfortable.

00:05:49.092--> 00:05:50.868

-Yeah, exactly.

00:05:50.892--> 00:05:53.428

-So we're going to
talk especially about

00:05:53.452--> 00:05:55.788

being a disabled
writer and, you know,

00:05:55.812--> 00:05:58.388

hopefully give some really
useful advice for people.

00:05:58.412--> 00:06:00.748

You've spoken to me in the past about

00:06:00.772--> 00:06:02.588

the importance of
community to you,

00:06:02.612--> 00:06:04.988

and I'd love to hear
you talk a bit more about

00:06:05.012--> 00:06:08.108

how you found that community
and what you've gained from it.

00:06:08.132--> 00:06:11.548

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And any advice you have for people
to find community for themselves.

00:06:11.572--> 00:06:13.348

-Yeah, 100%.

00:06:13.372--> 00:06:15.628

I mean, I think a big
goal of my life is to

00:06:15.652--> 00:06:18.628

gain more and
stronger community.

00:06:18.652--> 00:06:23.868

And I don't think that
access can ever be done solo.

00:06:23.892--> 00:06:27.068

I think that access is
inherently a communal act,

00:06:27.092--> 00:06:29.000

especially in the
arts and in publishing.

00:06:29.000--> 00:06:30.000

-Yeah.

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00:06:30.000--> 00:06:32.788

I wish I had had
an access doula.

00:06:32.812--> 00:06:36.428

There are such things as access
doulas who help newly disabled people

00:06:36.452--> 00:06:42.108

or people who are newly coming
into a disabled identity manage,

00:06:42.132--> 00:06:46.148

and I think I try to be an
access doula to others,

00:06:46.172--> 00:06:48.000

such as mentees or people

00:06:48.000--> 00:06:51.000

who may have
questions for me. But,

00:06:51.000--> 00:06:54.028

it took a long time, and
it was very haphazard.

00:06:54.052--> 00:06:56.428

Long story short, because I

00:06:56.452--> 00:07:01.188

wrote a whole book over
14 years about the process,

00:07:01.212--> 00:07:02.628

which is Annah, Infinite,

00:07:02.652--> 00:07:04.000

about the process of

00:07:04.000--> 00:07:06.708

becoming physically
disabled and chronically ill

00:07:06.732--> 00:07:11.268

and not having any access
to access because of...

00:07:11.292--> 00:07:13.588

Well, frankly, you
know, colonial history

00:07:13.612--> 00:07:17.548

because my cultures used to have
really strong disability justice community

00:07:17.572--> 00:07:20.000

and then sort of

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resources and knowledge

00:07:20.000--> 00:07:21.628

kind of taken from

that community.

00:07:21.652--> 00:07:24.948

And so it was a very

long, slow process

00:07:24.972--> 00:07:26.348

in crip time,

00:07:26.372--> 00:07:31.108

of figuring out how to protect

myself and still be an artist,

00:07:31.132--> 00:07:32.908

and how to,

00:07:32.932--> 00:07:34.388

um...

00:07:34.412--> 00:07:37.148

advocate for myself and

how to find community.

00:07:37.172--> 00:07:39.788

And that's always

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an ongoing process.

00:07:39.812--> 00:07:41.000

But, yeah.

00:07:41.000--> 00:07:45.508

-Of course, and I think that... that
question of advocacy is really important,

00:07:45.532--> 00:07:47.668

and we'll come back
to that a bit more later,

00:07:47.692--> 00:07:50.828

but I think having people
around you who also model that,

00:07:50.852--> 00:07:52.000

and you can compare

00:07:52.000--> 00:07:55.628

strategies, I guess,
is really, really helpful.

00:07:55.652--> 00:07:59.788

Something that I think
comes up quite often is

00:07:59.812--> 00:08:01.588

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how much people disclose.

00:08:01.612--> 00:08:03.468

So, in terms of
meeting an agent,

00:08:03.492--> 00:08:06.458

meeting publishers, how you
advocate for yourself,

00:08:06.482--> 00:08:09.588

how you talk about yourself.

00:08:09.612--> 00:08:11.108

What's your take on that?

00:08:11.132--> 00:08:13.748

How do you... Do you remember
the first conversation you and I had

00:08:13.772--> 00:08:15.028

around you being disabled?

00:08:15.052--> 00:08:18.508

I don't, but I'm curious
what your memory of that is.

00:08:18.532--> 00:08:21.028

No, I don't, but I think it's...

00:08:21.052--> 00:08:22.228

I'm...

00:08:22.252--> 00:08:23.988

My work is pretty clear about...

00:08:24.012--> 00:08:25.148

[laughs]

00:08:25.172--> 00:08:28.828

being disabled, so I'm sure

it came up at some point.

00:08:28.852--> 00:08:33.588

But I think also in terms of

advice for people, I would say,

00:08:33.612--> 00:08:37.388

I mean, if you're already part of

networks of authors who are similarly

00:08:37.412--> 00:08:40.748

ill or disabled, I think that's

fantastic. And to seek us out.

00:08:40.772--> 00:08:43.948

I remember when I first became

chronically ill and physically disabled,

00:08:43.972--> 00:08:45.148

I googled, like,

00:08:45.172--> 00:08:48.388

"young woman becomes
disabled, writer how?",

00:08:48.412--> 00:08:50.748

or something like that,
and there was, like, one

00:08:50.772--> 00:08:52.228

podcast.

00:08:52.252--> 00:08:53.708

Um...

00:08:53.732--> 00:08:56.748

And now there's just
so many resources

00:08:56.772--> 00:09:01.108

and... and outlets and books
and articles and platforms

00:09:01.132--> 00:09:03.428

and the information
is out there,

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00:09:03.452--> 00:09:05.588

and never feel like
you have to go it alone.

00:09:05.612--> 00:09:07.000

Um...

00:09:07.000--> 00:09:08.908

I think in terms of raising

00:09:08.932--> 00:09:11.628

conversation about
disability and access needs...

00:09:11.652--> 00:09:13.588

It's funny, I recently

00:09:13.612--> 00:09:15.708

met a journalist who said,

00:09:15.732--> 00:09:17.468

"Oh, I interviewed
you 10 years ago

00:09:17.492--> 00:09:18.828

"and I just want to apologize

00:09:18.852--> 00:09:21.868

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because my editor
really pushed for me

00:09:21.892--> 00:09:25.148

"to ask you about your
diagnosis and your disability.

00:09:25.172--> 00:09:26.828

"And I really want
to apologize for that."

00:09:26.852--> 00:09:28.588

And I really appreciated that.

00:09:28.612--> 00:09:32.228

Because the fact is, I feel
like disclosure is so precious.

00:09:32.252--> 00:09:34.028

It's such a
pressurized situation,

00:09:34.052--> 00:09:36.948

and especially if you're...
if you're starting out.

00:09:36.972--> 00:09:39.228

But really, for anybody,

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00:09:39.252--> 00:09:41.000

you can feel like,

00:09:41.000--> 00:09:44.748

oh, I need to get on this person's
good side, so I do have to disclose.

00:09:44.772--> 00:09:46.668

But just to let everybody know,

00:09:46.692--> 00:09:49.468

you don't need to disclose
anything about yourself.

00:09:49.492--> 00:09:51.028

I prefer to say, like,

00:09:51.052--> 00:09:53.948

to ask people what
their access needs are.

00:09:53.972--> 00:09:56.708

And in that way, I'm not
asking for a diagnosis,

00:09:56.732--> 00:09:58.000

I'm not... And I'm...

00:09:58.000--> 00:10:00.828

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And access needs

particular to the situation.

00:10:00.852--> 00:10:02.188

So for instance,

00:10:02.212--> 00:10:04.108

literally today I

got asked like,

00:10:04.132--> 00:10:07.548

What are your needs for a talk

00:10:07.572--> 00:10:08.788

that I'm doing?

00:10:08.812--> 00:10:10.508

And so I will say,

00:10:10.532--> 00:10:13.228

"Oh, for this talk, it's going

to be out of town. I'm gonna...

00:10:13.252--> 00:10:15.308

"be using a rollator,

so I will need

00:10:15.332--> 00:10:19.148

"step-free access to accessible

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bathrooms and the stage and

00:10:19.172--> 00:10:21.188

accommodations and

this and this and this."

00:10:21.212--> 00:10:22.708

But if I'm...

00:10:22.732--> 00:10:26.988

Let's say I'm in an online situation,

I may not say all of that obviously,

00:10:27.012--> 00:10:28.628

but I may say, you know,

00:10:28.652--> 00:10:30.188

if it's like a long meeting,

00:10:30.212--> 00:10:31.998

I will say like, "Oh, I need

00:10:32.022--> 00:10:34.148

"breaks, right,

during the meeting."

00:10:34.172--> 00:10:35.468

Um...

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00:10:35.492--> 00:10:37.868

And what I've...

I'm still trying to do

00:10:37.892--> 00:10:42.468

more often is if somebody presents

to me like an inaccessible invite,

00:10:42.492--> 00:10:44.308

which unfortunately

still happens...

00:10:44.332--> 00:10:46.000

-I'm sure.

00:10:46.000--> 00:10:48.788

-I... Instead of,

like, just saying no,

00:10:48.812--> 00:10:50.788

I will always just, like,

00:10:50.812--> 00:10:53.188

say, um...

00:10:53.212--> 00:10:56.148

Born in the Year

of the Ox, like,

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00:10:56.172--> 00:10:58.708

what if we did make

this event accessible?

00:10:58.732--> 00:11:00.028

What if this became...

00:11:00.052--> 00:11:01.868

What if I could

still work with you?

00:11:01.892--> 00:11:03.868

And we made this

hybrid, you know?

00:11:03.892--> 00:11:05.948

Because I think, um...

00:11:05.972--> 00:11:10.228

There's really no excuse for

not trying in this day and age,

00:11:10.252--> 00:11:12.828

because access for one person

00:11:12.852--> 00:11:14.668

just multiplies in so many ways.

00:11:14.692--> 00:11:16.828

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I think what you and I
have talked about is, like,

00:11:16.852--> 00:11:19.588
it's... Access is better
for so many people

00:11:19.612--> 00:11:22.868
who may not... in audiences
who may need that access,

00:11:22.892--> 00:11:25.108
other writers who
may not disclose,

00:11:25.132--> 00:11:28.000
pregnant people, older people.

00:11:28.000--> 00:11:30.091
So many different
kinds of people.

00:11:30.115--> 00:11:32.268
So I would just say,
like, don't be shy about

00:11:32.292--> 00:11:35.708
making sure your
access needs are met.

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00:11:35.732--> 00:11:38.511

Don't feel like you have to
disclose more than you have to.

00:11:38.536--> 00:11:40.388

-Yeah, I think
that's great advice.

00:11:40.412--> 00:11:42.668

And I think, you know,
the more we just normalize

00:11:42.692--> 00:11:44.628

talking about access needs,

00:11:44.652--> 00:11:47.705

the less it makes people
feel like they're asking for

00:11:47.729--> 00:11:50.668

preferential, specific treatment,
which of course they're not.

00:11:50.692--> 00:11:53.988

And I mean, I think that's partly why
I don't remember that conversation,

00:11:54.012--> 00:11:56.868

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is because I just ask all
the new clients that I have,

00:11:56.892--> 00:11:58.268
what are your access needs?

00:11:58.292--> 00:12:00.552
And, for example, it might be
someone's pregnant and they

00:12:00.577--> 00:12:02.457
just, you know, suffering
with morning sickness,

00:12:02.481--> 00:12:03.801
can't be on screens
at the moment,

00:12:03.825--> 00:12:06.548
needs a voice note. There's all
sorts of different ways we all need

00:12:06.572--> 00:12:08.708
access needs at different times.

00:12:08.732--> 00:12:10.112
-Yeah, exactly.
-So, yeah, I think...

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00:12:10.136--> 00:12:14.028

I think that sort of normalising
that conversation is really impactful.

00:12:14.052--> 00:12:15.668

Do you think...

00:12:15.692--> 00:12:17.000

So I have...

00:12:17.000--> 00:12:19.628

One of my clients who
has an access rider

00:12:19.652--> 00:12:22.348

and they, when they signed
with me, they said to me,

00:12:22.372--> 00:12:26.428

"Just put this in front of everybody who's
going to have anything to do with me",

00:12:26.452--> 00:12:28.108

in a sort of ripple effect.

00:12:28.132--> 00:12:30.748

Do you think something like that
is a good idea and something that

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00:12:30.772--> 00:12:32.508

people should ask agents to do?

00:12:32.532--> 00:12:35.948

Or is it a sort of works for
some people, doesn't for others?

00:12:35.972--> 00:12:37.388

-I think the latter.

00:12:37.412--> 00:12:40.028

I prefer to

00:12:40.052--> 00:12:43.228

not use access riders
for a few reasons.

00:12:43.252--> 00:12:45.228

The first... And first of all,

00:12:45.252--> 00:12:47.348

I think it's great that
your client has that

00:12:47.372--> 00:12:48.968

and I think that
makes it a lot easier,

00:12:48.993--> 00:12:50.335

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especially if you

don't have to...

00:12:50.360--> 00:12:52.428

If your agent can

present an access rider

00:12:52.452--> 00:12:54.000

and you don't have to be the one,

00:12:54.024--> 00:12:57.868

A, sending that document, and B,

stating something over and over again.

00:12:57.892--> 00:12:59.148

Um...

00:12:59.172--> 00:13:02.388

For me, I feel a lot

more comfortable

00:13:02.412--> 00:13:03.828

when I

00:13:03.852--> 00:13:07.428

A, don't necessarily have to

disclose, like, all my access needs.

00:13:07.452--> 00:13:09.628

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As mentioned, it
depends on the situation.

00:13:09.652--> 00:13:11.388

So I'd prefer,
like... I don't need,

00:13:11.412--> 00:13:15.000

you know, I don't necessarily
want every single thing out there.

00:13:15.000--> 00:13:17.348

And also because
that document then,

00:13:17.372--> 00:13:20.708

I think especially
with, you know,

00:13:20.732--> 00:13:23.428

[inaudible] and
Palantir, you know, like,

00:13:23.452--> 00:13:25.628

that's really
confidential information

00:13:25.652--> 00:13:28.000

in access riders

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a lot of the time.

00:13:28.000--> 00:13:31.668

And I think privacy is a
really important concern, and

00:13:31.692--> 00:13:34.188

you may not know where
that document ends up

00:13:34.212--> 00:13:36.228

in what Google Doc,
who has access to it,

00:13:36.252--> 00:13:37.668

how long it will be kept there.

00:13:37.692--> 00:13:40.948

And so for me, I...

00:13:40.972--> 00:13:43.148

If I can share something from

00:13:43.172--> 00:13:47.028

a project that I did where, um,

00:13:47.052--> 00:13:50.628

I recently had the
opportunity to direct short films,

00:13:50.652--> 00:13:52.068

which was really great.

00:13:52.092--> 00:13:55.868

All about disabled
and sick intimacies.

00:13:55.892--> 00:13:59.348

But for that, it was my
first time working with, like,

00:13:59.372--> 00:14:02.348

a cast and crew
of dozens, and I...

00:14:02.372--> 00:14:04.508

and many of those
people, most of those people

00:14:04.532--> 00:14:07.000

had never worked
with each other before.

00:14:07.000--> 00:14:09.988

So I said to every...
Well, apart from

00:14:10.012--> 00:14:13.788

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giving them guidelines on, like, how
it would go as an accessible director.

00:14:13.812--> 00:14:15.228

Like, these are my access needs

00:14:15.252--> 00:14:18.148

and this is why it's going to be an
accessible shoot with lots of breaks.

00:14:18.172--> 00:14:19.708

I said,

00:14:19.732--> 00:14:21.828

"If you have any access needs,

00:14:21.852--> 00:14:25.178

"please tell myself
and the producer."

00:14:25.202--> 00:14:28.948

And if those access
needs relate to, for instance,

00:14:28.972--> 00:14:31.628

you need to tell catering
something, we will

00:14:31.652--> 00:14:33.468

tell catering that thing.

00:14:33.492--> 00:14:35.348

In that way, it's not like

00:14:35.372--> 00:14:38.828

I'm presenting all my access
needs to everyone on this, like,

00:14:38.852--> 00:14:41.000

many person

00:14:41.024--> 00:14:44.468

working environment.

00:14:44.492--> 00:14:46.388

And I felt that that made it...

00:14:46.412--> 00:14:50.068

made everyone feel a bit
safer as well, and also if,

00:14:50.092--> 00:14:52.868

like, the leaders of the
project know, Okay, we need to...

00:14:52.892--> 00:14:55.508

we have these
access needs in mind.

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00:14:55.532--> 00:15:00.468

We can ask for those needs without
even necessarily needing to say,

00:15:00.492--> 00:15:01.668

"Hey.

00:15:01.692--> 00:15:06.428

"Ann or Abi needs this done",

00:15:06.452--> 00:15:09.508

because usually those
access needs are just, like,

00:15:09.532--> 00:15:11.588

potentially good
for other people.

00:15:11.612--> 00:15:12.931

So we can...

00:15:12.955--> 00:15:15.228

In terms of the
planning of that.

00:15:15.252--> 00:15:17.148

So that's what works for me.

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00:15:17.172--> 00:15:19.668

But I know a lot of people
who use access riders

00:15:19.692--> 00:15:22.778

and... and it really is
helpful for them. So,

00:15:22.802--> 00:15:24.885

please don't rule them out,

00:15:24.909--> 00:15:27.148

but also don't necessarily
feel like you have to

00:15:27.172--> 00:15:29.000

if that's not how you
would prefer to work.

00:15:29.000--> 00:15:30.908

-Yeah, I think that's
really interesting.

00:15:30.932--> 00:15:34.228

And I think as an agent, you
know, everybody is an individual.

00:15:34.252--> 00:15:36.548

So the question for

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me is always, you know,

00:15:36.572--> 00:15:38.748

how do you want me

to advocate for you?

00:15:38.772--> 00:15:42.388

And are there any resources

or things you'd like me to say?

00:15:42.412--> 00:15:44.000

But I think that kind of

00:15:44.000--> 00:15:48.028

specific approach to

access and talking to...

00:15:48.052--> 00:15:50.588

telling people what they

individually need to know

00:15:50.612--> 00:15:52.228

is really wise.

00:15:52.252--> 00:15:56.268

How... What have your experiences

been with events and publicity?

00:15:56.292--> 00:15:58.068

Do you feel that, uh,

00:15:58.092--> 00:16:01.868

the sort of responsiveness to
access needs has improved?

00:16:01.892--> 00:16:04.428

-I think 100%.

00:16:04.452--> 00:16:05.708

I think also

00:16:05.732--> 00:16:09.788

part of that is because I
deliberately align myself with people

00:16:09.812--> 00:16:13.748

and places and authors and
publishers and event spaces

00:16:13.772--> 00:16:16.428

that, you know, do
declare access needs

00:16:16.452--> 00:16:19.000

on their website or when
they announce events.

00:16:19.000--> 00:16:20.428

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Um...

00:16:20.452--> 00:16:22.668

I think there's a lot of, uh...

00:16:22.692--> 00:16:26.748

a lot of information you
build as a chronically ill writer

00:16:26.772--> 00:16:28.908

about, like, Okay, who's
going to be good about this?

00:16:28.932--> 00:16:31.198

I think it has improved,

00:16:31.222--> 00:16:33.231

but still... You know what?

00:16:33.256--> 00:16:37.548

Unfortunately, like, even just
travel as a disabled person,

00:16:37.572--> 00:16:41.823

I cannot count, I literally cannot
count the number of times that,

00:16:41.848--> 00:16:43.668

because they're understaffed,

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00:16:43.692--> 00:16:47.028

you know, access staff will
forget about you at the train station.

00:16:47.052--> 00:16:48.765

Or, you know, like,
these things aren't

00:16:48.789--> 00:16:52.148

anything new, unfortunately,
for people in our community.

00:16:52.172--> 00:16:54.708

So you can plan, you can...
You know, I've worked with,

00:16:54.732--> 00:16:56.000

um...

00:16:56.000--> 00:16:58.028

You know, even when
you have an access aid,

00:16:58.052--> 00:17:00.068

even when you
double, triple check,

00:17:00.092--> 00:17:01.228

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things can go wrong.

00:17:01.252--> 00:17:02.588

And that's unfortunately...

00:17:02.612--> 00:17:05.388

You know, society really
has a long way to go still.

00:17:05.412--> 00:17:06.588

-Yeah.

00:17:06.612--> 00:17:08.588

-And so... And that's
really disappointing,

00:17:08.612--> 00:17:10.038

because sometimes
I'll think, gosh,

00:17:10.062--> 00:17:12.228

I've been asking for these
things for, like, 15 years

00:17:12.252--> 00:17:15.828

and, you know, many people
have been asking for much longer.

00:17:15.852--> 00:17:16.852

But it's...

00:17:16.876--> 00:17:19.668

So I think also to not
be so hard on yourself

00:17:19.692--> 00:17:21.000

and to make sure that...

00:17:21.000--> 00:17:23.000

I think access is protection.

00:17:23.000--> 00:17:24.000

-Yeah.

00:17:24.024--> 00:17:28.148

-And to really, in publishing,
create environments and situations

00:17:28.172--> 00:17:32.068

where we know we are
protecting other people.

00:17:32.093--> 00:17:33.841

Also, I'm...

00:17:33.865--> 00:17:35.468

Don't know if I've,

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00:17:35.492--> 00:17:37.000

um...

00:17:37.000--> 00:17:40.188

If I'll have pause to
mention this later on,

00:17:40.212--> 00:17:44.331

but I just wanted to shout out
InklusionGuide.org with a K,

00:17:44.355--> 00:17:47.548

and I'll just put it
in the... in the chat,

00:17:47.572--> 00:17:51.588

which is a project that I was grateful
enough to be a consultant on,

00:17:51.612--> 00:17:53.268

and, um,

00:17:53.292--> 00:17:54.908

it basically... It's a free...

00:17:54.932--> 00:17:58.228

If you don't know, it's a free
downloadable guide for anyone in Lit about

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00:17:58.252--> 00:18:03.068

what access can be
provided at literature events.

00:18:03.092--> 00:18:06.668

But it's also applicable
across the arts more broadly.

00:18:06.692--> 00:18:10.468

There's also an arts toolkit
for access that's online for

00:18:10.492--> 00:18:12.148

the visual arts field.

00:18:12.172--> 00:18:14.508

And I think these things
are just so useful because,

00:18:14.532--> 00:18:16.148

as many of us know,

00:18:16.172--> 00:18:17.588

the amount of times

00:18:17.612--> 00:18:20.148

that we are asked
for unpaid labor

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00:18:20.172--> 00:18:24.948

to help institutions become better
at access when it's not our job,

00:18:24.972--> 00:18:28.991

you know, is another
thing I have lost

00:18:29.015--> 00:18:31.018

track of how many times
I've been asked to do that.

00:18:31.042--> 00:18:34.068

So when you can just send a link
saying, hey, here's something I worked on

00:18:34.092--> 00:18:36.000

and here's all the
information you need.

00:18:36.000--> 00:18:37.000

-Yeah.

00:18:37.000--> 00:18:38.588

-Yeah, it's... it's...

00:18:38.612--> 00:18:39.908

And also, you should be paying.

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00:18:39.932--> 00:18:41.856

It's something we have
talked about. It's, like,

00:18:41.881--> 00:18:42.948

you know,

00:18:42.972--> 00:18:44.988

chronically ill and
disabled writers

00:18:45.012--> 00:18:48.000

who are asked for advice
should be paid as consultants.

00:18:48.000--> 00:18:50.348

-Absolutely, and I mean,
that's the thing with the

00:18:50.372--> 00:18:52.028

wonderful Inklusion
Guide, is that

00:18:52.052--> 00:18:54.988

people were paid for their
consultancy and their knowledge

00:18:55.012--> 00:18:58.788

and the expertise that people like

you have gathered over many years.

00:18:58.812--> 00:19:00.068

And my advice to be...

00:19:00.092--> 00:19:01.705

would be to people to

00:19:01.729--> 00:19:03.388

make sure that

agents know about it.

00:19:03.412--> 00:19:06.788

And I see it as my job to make

sure publishers know about the guide,

00:19:06.812--> 00:19:09.000

because it has so

much information in it.

00:19:09.000--> 00:19:13.000

And it just avoids that

repetition of the same

00:19:13.000--> 00:19:16.468

requests, really, and it's...

You know, I know a lot of people

00:19:16.492--> 00:19:21.068

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want to engage and want to
know how they can be better,

00:19:21.092--> 00:19:23.388
but actually just don't know
where the resources are,

00:19:23.412--> 00:19:25.908
which is why you then end up
being asked a lot of questions.

00:19:25.932--> 00:19:29.000
So yeah, it's great to kind
of signpost people that way.

00:19:29.000--> 00:19:31.308
We had a question from

00:19:31.332--> 00:19:33.468
someone ahead of
this from the audience,

00:19:33.492--> 00:19:36.068
which was, "what has been
the most beneficial request

00:19:36.092--> 00:19:37.908
"that you've made
in terms of access?"

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00:19:37.932--> 00:19:40.108

Is there any one thing, or is it

00:19:40.132--> 00:19:42.988

a whole different

list of things?

00:19:43.012--> 00:19:44.308

-Uh...

00:19:44.332--> 00:19:48.000

Different list of things.

00:19:48.000--> 00:19:50.388

But I think that...

00:19:51.682--> 00:19:53.988

Yeah, a different...

different list of things for sure.

00:19:54.012--> 00:19:55.768

And I just want to say

thank you to everyone

00:19:55.792--> 00:19:57.148

who sent us so many questions.

00:19:57.172--> 00:19:58.172

It's really great.

00:19:58.196--> 00:20:02.428

-I tried to feed them into what
we're talking about as well.

00:20:03.000--> 00:20:06.468

Yeah, I suppose every... event is
different and comes with its own

00:20:06.492--> 00:20:09.188

challenges as well.

00:20:09.212--> 00:20:11.068

I mean, I know one
of the things I've had

00:20:11.092--> 00:20:12.908

is, some sort of...

00:20:12.932--> 00:20:15.948

I won't name names, but push
back on why someone might need

00:20:15.972--> 00:20:17.828

more than one
personal assistant.

00:20:17.852--> 00:20:20.748

And having to sort of
really push back and say,

00:20:20.772--> 00:20:25.148

"I'm... there's no need for me to
provide the specifics of that information.

00:20:25.172--> 00:20:27.132

"You just need to take
my word for it that they do

00:20:27.156--> 00:20:29.188

"and we're not trying to
scam you out of a ticket."

00:20:29.212--> 00:20:30.948

So, you know, I think...

00:20:30.972--> 00:20:32.628

I don't know if you
agree, but I think

00:20:32.652--> 00:20:35.468

having people in your
work circle who can just

00:20:35.492--> 00:20:37.348

say that without that question

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00:20:37.372--> 00:20:39.553

then having to come
to you to deal with.

00:20:39.577--> 00:20:41.988

-Yes, I think maybe,

00:20:42.012--> 00:20:45.348

like, a broad statement
I can make is that

00:20:45.372--> 00:20:51.000

making sure that as many people I
work with as possible prioritize access.

00:20:51.000--> 00:20:54.628

I know that's very blanket statement, but
I guess that would be the... the answer.

00:20:54.652--> 00:20:57.508

-Yeah, but it's really... I
mean, I've noticed recently that

00:20:57.532--> 00:21:00.348

I have had people ask
me my access needs

00:21:00.372--> 00:21:03.245

and I don't really have

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any, but I might sometime.

00:21:03.269--> 00:21:05.548

But I think the more

that people just ask,

00:21:05.572--> 00:21:08.148

I think what tends to happen

is that people look up and go,

00:21:08.172--> 00:21:10.188

oh, this person

is disabled. I will,

00:21:10.212--> 00:21:12.628

you know, ask more

questions than I normally do,

00:21:12.652--> 00:21:14.748

whereas just asking everybody

00:21:14.772--> 00:21:16.748

just, you know, we...

00:21:16.772--> 00:21:19.428

It makes it so much

easier a conversation.

00:21:19.452--> 00:21:20.908

-Yeah, yeah.

00:21:20.932--> 00:21:22.508

And you will get,

00:21:22.532--> 00:21:25.268

as mentioned, you know that
pressure of like, oh, we just make

00:21:25.292--> 00:21:28.228

things easier if I just knew
what was "wrong" with you,

00:21:28.252--> 00:21:30.748

quote unquote or something.
It's like, no, actually.

00:21:30.772--> 00:21:33.628

That's awful language and

00:21:33.652--> 00:21:36.028

that's really not
necessary, and...

00:21:36.052--> 00:21:37.708

You don't need to be that nosy.

00:21:37.732--> 00:21:38.818

I'm not gonna...

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00:21:38.842--> 00:21:41.000

not gonna ask you
your medical details.

00:21:41.000--> 00:21:42.000

-Yes, exactly.

00:21:42.024--> 00:21:43.508

It's quite astounding

00:21:43.532--> 00:21:46.428

how intrusive people
can be sometimes.

00:21:46.452--> 00:21:47.588

Yeah.

00:21:47.612--> 00:21:51.131

Have you had scenarios where

00:21:51.155--> 00:21:54.468

people haven't been kind of
receptive to your access needs?

00:21:54.492--> 00:21:57.428

Do you just walk
away at that point, or...?

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00:21:57.452--> 00:22:01.000

I know we talked about not wanting
to have to educate people all the time.

00:22:01.000--> 00:22:04.428

Yeah, it took literal...
It took so long. It took...

00:22:04.452--> 00:22:07.228

I want to say from 2011

00:22:07.252--> 00:22:10.948

to 2021, it was a
real slog and struggle.

00:22:10.972--> 00:22:13.296

And because I came from
a position of like, you know,

00:22:13.321--> 00:22:15.148

I was back home in
Indonesia, I didn't have...

00:22:15.172--> 00:22:16.188

There was...

00:22:17.000--> 00:22:19.108

I didn't have any

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00:22:19.132--> 00:22:24.188

accessibility or, you know,
an access doula or access to...

00:22:24.212--> 00:22:26.548

I wasn't medicated
for a long time

00:22:26.572--> 00:22:27.788

because I wasn't believed,

00:22:27.812--> 00:22:29.828

which is also part
of the story that I've

00:22:29.852--> 00:22:32.868

been trying to tell people. And...

00:22:32.892--> 00:22:37.148

I think also people not taking access
needs seriously when actually, like,

00:22:37.172--> 00:22:39.788

potentially they can have
very serious consequences.

00:22:39.812--> 00:22:43.828

So I would say for a good
decade, it was extremely difficult

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00:22:43.852--> 00:22:47.468

and still something

that, you know, I have to

00:22:47.492--> 00:22:50.000

grapple with that

past, but increasingly,

00:22:50.000--> 00:22:53.228

I find that people are

good and it's, um...

00:22:53.252--> 00:22:55.791

Although, still too

many exceptions.

00:22:55.815--> 00:22:58.988

And I think, again,

community is a real part of that.

00:22:59.012--> 00:23:00.868

I mean, there's some...

00:23:00.892--> 00:23:02.148

[laughs]

00:23:02.172--> 00:23:04.628

Genuinely, I was thinking,

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00:23:04.652--> 00:23:07.948

oh, some of my best
friends in publishing,

00:23:07.972--> 00:23:11.028

we share all the time

00:23:11.052--> 00:23:12.868

about our experiences
with access,

00:23:12.892--> 00:23:15.468

and I do not know
their medical diagnosis,

00:23:15.492--> 00:23:18.828

but we will send long
voice notes to each other

00:23:18.852--> 00:23:22.148

And voice notes are another
form of crip community, right?

00:23:22.172--> 00:23:25.548

And I find that even working
with voice notes for like,

00:23:25.572--> 00:23:28.308

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you know, with
access aids or, um...

00:23:28.332--> 00:23:31.108

with publishers
is... is helpful.

00:23:31.132--> 00:23:34.548

I think, yeah, I
think I've definitely...

00:23:34.572--> 00:23:37.308

I don't think I had the...

00:23:38.000--> 00:23:41.548

The strength to walk away
because I just was so desperate

00:23:41.572--> 00:23:43.468

to be in the arts and

00:23:43.492--> 00:23:45.828

in an artistic
community in some way

00:23:45.852--> 00:23:49.068

that I couldn't walk
away, sometimes literally.

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00:23:49.092--> 00:23:51.868

But I think, now,

00:23:51.892--> 00:23:53.868

I am able to say,

00:23:53.892--> 00:23:55.468

um...

00:23:55.492--> 00:23:56.951

As mentioned,

00:23:56.975--> 00:24:00.188

something happened

very recently, where it's like,

00:24:00.212--> 00:24:02.428

"Hey, we love your work, but

00:24:02.452--> 00:24:06.228

"it's, you know, this event is

not in an accessible space."

00:24:06.252--> 00:24:09.028

I can then say, why

not make it hybrid?

00:24:09.052--> 00:24:10.558

You know, like, what is...

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00:24:10.583--> 00:24:12.000

Because...

00:24:12.000--> 00:24:14.948

how can you love my work
and know what I write about

00:24:14.972--> 00:24:19.308

and not want me to... You
know, I would feel terrible

00:24:19.332--> 00:24:23.908

putting people in an
inaccessible space.

00:24:23.932--> 00:24:25.948

I can't access it, certainly.

00:24:25.972--> 00:24:27.188

But, yeah.

00:24:27.212--> 00:24:29.748

-Yeah, and it's been a shame to
see that move away from hybrid,

00:24:29.772--> 00:24:31.068

but I think there's still,

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00:24:31.092--> 00:24:33.000

you know, people
advocating for that.

00:24:33.000--> 00:24:36.388

We should talk a bit about
publishing processes, I think.

00:24:36.412--> 00:24:41.108

And particularly editing and
timelines and things like that.

00:24:41.132--> 00:24:43.068

And I'd love you to speak a bit

00:24:43.092--> 00:24:47.148

about how you've navigated
deadlines and time processes,

00:24:47.172--> 00:24:51.000

and how you've factored in
your own timelines on that.

00:24:51.000--> 00:24:54.148

-Yeah, I think it's
wonderful when

00:24:54.172--> 00:24:56.628

people you work with understand

00:24:56.652--> 00:24:59.151

crip time, which

is just basically

00:24:59.175--> 00:25:02.628

our body, minds move according

to their own different rhythms and

00:25:02.652--> 00:25:06.668

according to disability justice, we

move at the pace of the slowest person

00:25:06.692--> 00:25:10.658

is a big principle, and

disability justice was created by

00:25:10.682--> 00:25:14.228

a queer crips artists of color

collective called Sins Invalid,

00:25:14.252--> 00:25:15.988

and if you go to the

Sins Invalid website,

00:25:16.012--> 00:25:18.868

you will learn all about the 10

principles of disability justice.

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00:25:18.892--> 00:25:22.708

And it was also present in many communities around the world.

00:25:22.732--> 00:25:23.732

Um...

00:25:23.756--> 00:25:24.828

Was and is.

00:25:24.852--> 00:25:26.000

Uh...

00:25:26.000--> 00:25:28.348

So, I think that...

00:25:28.372--> 00:25:29.668

Um...

00:25:31.000--> 00:25:32.988

Oh my gosh, speaking of access needs, brain fog.

00:25:33.012--> 00:25:34.388

What was your question again?

00:25:34.412--> 00:25:35.748

-I was just asking about...

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00:25:35.772--> 00:25:37.828

You know, I mean, I can
speak to this a little bit,

00:25:37.852--> 00:25:41.828

but kind of navigating the fact that
contracts have firm deadlines in them.

00:25:41.852--> 00:25:43.348

And I know for me,

00:25:43.372--> 00:25:48.108

I just really like to allow as much
time as possible for anything,

00:25:48.132--> 00:25:49.788

for all sorts of
different reasons,

00:25:49.812--> 00:25:53.000

but I think there's a real
importance in advocating for

00:25:53.000--> 00:25:56.428

the crisp time as
an aspect of that.

00:25:56.452--> 00:25:58.228

-Yeah, for sure.

00:25:58.252--> 00:26:00.425

I think that's very true.

00:26:00.449--> 00:26:02.148

-Do any scenarios spring to mind

00:26:02.172--> 00:26:03.948

where you feel like that

00:26:03.972--> 00:26:05.748

you've had a learning

curve with that

00:26:05.772--> 00:26:08.000

or that something has gone

particularly well, perhaps?

00:26:08.000--> 00:26:11.000

-Yeah, I think...

00:26:11.000--> 00:26:13.348

I think there's been

a learning curve,

00:26:13.372--> 00:26:15.908

certainly as a writer,

00:26:15.932--> 00:26:17.428

but even like as an editor,

00:26:17.452--> 00:26:20.228

you know, in terms of...

00:26:22.000--> 00:26:24.508

understanding that, like,

00:26:24.532--> 00:26:26.868

if you assign something,

00:26:26.892--> 00:26:29.588

to have it with

crip time in mind

00:26:29.612--> 00:26:32.788

means that, you know,

you really can respect that.

00:26:32.812--> 00:26:34.980

And I'm kind of trying to

implement that more widely.

00:26:35.004--> 00:26:37.671

I don't think... Because early

on, I was still learning about,

00:26:37.695--> 00:26:41.000

you know, access

and everything, and...

00:26:41.000--> 00:26:44.908

I think I've definitely had a learning
curve with that for myself as well.

00:26:44.932--> 00:26:46.028

Um...

00:26:46.052--> 00:26:47.908

And it's not just about

00:26:47.932--> 00:26:50.468

advocating for crip time,

00:26:50.492--> 00:26:54.548

but I think, like, internal
work that we all need to do

00:26:54.572--> 00:26:56.948

is to understand that it's Okay

00:26:56.972--> 00:26:59.748

to not, you know, be the fastest

00:26:59.772--> 00:27:02.228

or live according to these

00:27:02.252--> 00:27:06.348

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hyper-capitalist

deadlines.

00:27:06.372--> 00:27:10.628

It's art. It will wait

for you if you let it,

00:27:10.652--> 00:27:12.388

if you want it to,

00:27:12.412--> 00:27:15.628

Inshallah. You know,

like, I couldn't have...

00:27:15.652--> 00:27:18.868

It's funny, because I always say,

oh yeah, this book took 14 years.

00:27:18.892--> 00:27:21.548

And I'm really

actually proud of that.

00:27:21.572--> 00:27:23.083

-Yes, yes. You should be.

00:27:23.108--> 00:27:25.748

-I'm really proud that....

Thank you. That I stuck to that.

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00:27:25.772--> 00:27:28.988

But I have said that in situations
where other writers are like,

00:27:29.012--> 00:27:31.588

"Dear God", you know, like...

00:27:31.612--> 00:27:34.538

"Wow, I really don't want
that to happen to me."

00:27:34.562--> 00:27:36.000

But I'm like, listen, if I...

00:27:36.000--> 00:27:40.000

Genuinely, I feel like if it
had been published at any

00:27:40.000--> 00:27:42.428

earlier time, I
wouldn't have had

00:27:42.452--> 00:27:46.028

the time to process a lot of things
that were still happening in my life.

00:27:46.052--> 00:27:49.348

Psychologically, I don't
think I would have been

00:27:49.372--> 00:27:51.708

in as good a place

to finish the book,

00:27:51.732--> 00:27:55.000

because it does deal with

a lot of personal things.

00:27:55.000--> 00:27:58.508

And that takes time, and

healing takes its own time,

00:27:58.532--> 00:28:00.428

and writing takes its own time.

00:28:00.452--> 00:28:04.668

And like one much

smaller example I give

00:28:04.692--> 00:28:06.588

is there is a poem

00:28:06.612--> 00:28:08.908

that I say took me

10 years to write.

00:28:08.932--> 00:28:10.628

But here's how that went.

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00:28:10.652--> 00:28:14.000

So, I wrote this
poem when I was 21.

00:28:14.000--> 00:28:17.588

And I sent it
everywhere for years

00:28:17.612--> 00:28:19.028

and nobody picked it up.

00:28:19.052--> 00:28:22.000

And I was like,
"I... But... I..."

00:28:22.000--> 00:28:24.905

"I kind of don't think it's that
bad, guys! Like, what is going on?"

00:28:24.930--> 00:28:26.836

And other things get
published, but I wouldn't.

00:28:26.860--> 00:28:29.431

And there's this one poem
that I just, like, I really believe in.

00:28:29.455--> 00:28:32.148

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But I was like, well, I'm wrong,
I guess, you know? And then...

00:28:32.172--> 00:28:33.908

And then I became

00:28:33.932--> 00:28:36.148

chronically ill and
physically disabled,

00:28:36.172--> 00:28:37.736

and I realized
that there was, like,

00:28:37.760--> 00:28:40.068

one line in that poem
that was, like, really ableist,

00:28:40.092--> 00:28:42.908

and I had learned since then.

00:28:42.932--> 00:28:46.348

And I was like, oh, actually, I'm
glad this didn't get published before,

00:28:46.372--> 00:28:49.268

because now I can
change this one line

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00:28:49.292--> 00:28:51.388

after, like, 10 years
of trying to publish it.

00:28:51.412--> 00:28:53.908

And it got published in Poetry
Review, like, my first time

00:28:53.932--> 00:28:55.428

submitting to Poetry Review,

00:28:55.452--> 00:28:57.828

which is not to say
that, like, you know, like,

00:28:57.852--> 00:29:00.588

oh, these miracles
will happen all the time,

00:29:00.612--> 00:29:02.988

but just to say that
sometimes there's a reason

00:29:03.012--> 00:29:05.268

for things taking
some time and...

00:29:05.292--> 00:29:07.990

-Yeah, sometimes, yeah, you look

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back in hindsight and think, yeah,

00:29:08.015--> 00:29:09.015

that makes sense.

00:29:09.039--> 00:29:11.000

But I think you're
absolutely right that

00:29:11.000--> 00:29:14.268

the kind of capitalist
forces in publishing can

00:29:14.292--> 00:29:17.268

have an idea for the time
that they want the book out,

00:29:17.292--> 00:29:21.108

and the deadline gets
decided based on that, that time.

00:29:21.132--> 00:29:22.245

And actually,

00:29:22.269--> 00:29:24.738

I think it's all too
easy for authors to feel

00:29:24.762--> 00:29:26.000

they have to sort of fall in

00:29:26.000--> 00:29:28.028

and hit that delivery date.

00:29:28.052--> 00:29:32.828

So I think, sort of, my advice
would be to people just to always be

00:29:32.852--> 00:29:34.948

as realistic as you can be,

00:29:34.972--> 00:29:38.068

at the beginning, of how
long you think you'll need

00:29:38.092--> 00:29:39.631

and then just add
a couple of months.

00:29:39.655--> 00:29:42.468

And I... And I say that
to everybody I work with.

00:29:42.492--> 00:29:43.537

-That's good advice, yeah.

00:29:43.561--> 00:29:46.322

-Like, whether there's illness or

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disability involved, just, you know,

00:29:46.346--> 00:29:48.948

let's just go, let's just

leave some wriggle room.

00:29:48.972--> 00:29:52.268

And I think that avoids some
stress further down the line.

00:29:52.850--> 00:29:54.188

-That's really good advice.

00:29:54.212--> 00:29:57.251

Yeah, and sometimes it takes
even longer than that, you know?

00:29:57.275--> 00:30:00.548

But as long as... I think
when people... You know,

00:30:00.572--> 00:30:03.388

if you're a writer, you want
your work to be out there.

00:30:03.412--> 00:30:05.308

You know, you do
want to finish things,

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00:30:05.332--> 00:30:07.548

or have them be as
finished as... You know,

00:30:07.572--> 00:30:09.692

The saying that, like,
nothing's ever really finished,

00:30:09.716--> 00:30:12.428

but as you do want to share
your work with the world and

00:30:12.452--> 00:30:15.000

I think editors and
publishers should trust that.

00:30:15.000--> 00:30:17.028

-Yes. Yeah, I completely agree.

00:30:17.052--> 00:30:19.708

And, you know, there's always...
Things can always be moved

00:30:19.732--> 00:30:22.708

and there'll always be readers out
there, even if it's six months later.

00:30:22.732--> 00:30:25.468

You know, it has to be the

best that you can make the book.

00:30:25.492--> 00:30:28.748

And so we had a lovely question
from an audience member,

00:30:28.772--> 00:30:31.628

which is... And it might
be quite hard to pick one,

00:30:31.652--> 00:30:35.391

but it said, "If you could change the
publishing industry to be more inclusive,

00:30:35.415--> 00:30:38.188

"what's the first thing you would
do to accommodate crip time?"

00:30:40.356--> 00:30:43.988

-The first thing I would do
to accommodate crip time

00:30:44.012--> 00:30:45.468

is to

00:30:45.492--> 00:30:49.000

introduce people to
the idea of it, I think.

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00:30:49.000--> 00:30:50.000

-Yeah.

00:30:50.000--> 00:30:52.748

-I think a lot of people still
don't really understand...

00:30:52.772--> 00:30:54.000

I was actually...

00:30:54.000--> 00:30:56.218

And it means different
things to different people.

00:30:56.242--> 00:31:01.348

I was actually recently at a
symposium in Derby last month

00:31:01.372--> 00:31:05.268

called PACING & SPACING
on writing art and... and...

00:31:06.295--> 00:31:09.508

I'm going to butcher this, but
writing art in the crip time process

00:31:09.532--> 00:31:11.628

or something,
but it was all about

00:31:11.652--> 00:31:13.000

crip time and writing.

00:31:13.000--> 00:31:14.000

-Yeah.

00:31:14.000--> 00:31:16.228

And it was amazing,
actually, because

00:31:16.252--> 00:31:17.818

so many different...

00:31:17.842--> 00:31:20.748

I'm neurodivergent. There
are many other neurodivergent

00:31:20.772--> 00:31:23.108

speakers as well,

00:31:23.132--> 00:31:25.708

who write and think in a way

00:31:25.732--> 00:31:28.268

that is completely
different to my own brain.

00:31:28.292--> 00:31:29.428

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Right? And...

00:31:29.452--> 00:31:31.788

And it was so fascinating to get

00:31:31.812--> 00:31:34.148

a sense of, for

instance, one speaker

00:31:34.172--> 00:31:37.668

is autistic and notes

down details in a way that

00:31:37.692--> 00:31:43.068

I, who is neurodivergent in a

completely other way, simply can't.

00:31:43.092--> 00:31:45.748

And the way that we

both think of time as well

00:31:45.772--> 00:31:47.000

and how we think about

00:31:47.000--> 00:31:49.108

how we allot time to writing.

00:31:49.132--> 00:31:52.828

I think it's really

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fascinating, and I think...

00:31:52.852--> 00:31:54.788

I think it's actually...

00:31:54.812--> 00:31:59.000

It's such a strength to embrace
your own particular crip time.

00:31:59.000--> 00:32:01.468

-Definitely. And I
think also, you know,

00:32:01.492--> 00:32:06.000

in a wider sense too, that curiosity
about how different people's brains work

00:32:06.000--> 00:32:08.468

is, you know, just a
really exciting thing

00:32:08.492--> 00:32:10.708

to bring into your
working practices.

00:32:10.732--> 00:32:14.348

I had a client the other day, I
love the way they phrased it,

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00:32:14.372--> 00:32:16.948

they said that they didn't
have many spoons left

00:32:16.972--> 00:32:18.948

and they weren't sure
how many spoons I had,

00:32:18.972--> 00:32:20.468

but if I had enough spoons,

00:32:20.492--> 00:32:21.885

would it be Okay if I did

00:32:21.909--> 00:32:23.445

the thing that needed doing.

00:32:23.469--> 00:32:24.469

-Love that.

00:32:24.493--> 00:32:27.308

-And it was great. And actually,
I just said, you know, yesterday,

00:32:27.332--> 00:32:29.325

if you'd asked me, not
many spoons. Today,

00:32:29.349--> 00:32:30.908

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I'm great, I'm
feeling energized.

00:32:30.932--> 00:32:35.000

Leave it with me. And
so my advice, partly,

00:32:35.000--> 00:32:36.348

would... to publishing,

00:32:36.372--> 00:32:41.508

would be do your own research,
don't force people to educate you, but...

00:32:41.532--> 00:32:44.268

but be curious. And
actually, like, for me,

00:32:44.292--> 00:32:47.308

I think I am a far better agent,

00:32:47.332--> 00:32:49.708

because I work with so
many disabled authors

00:32:49.732--> 00:32:52.988

and that has informed my
practice with everybody I work with.

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00:32:53.012--> 00:32:57.308

So yeah, just kind of
be, I guess, open-minded.

00:32:57.332--> 00:32:58.708

[laughs]

00:32:58.732--> 00:33:03.468

So we have a couple more
minutes for audience questions,

00:33:03.492--> 00:33:07.508

if anyone else wants to be brave
and pop something in the box.

00:33:07.532--> 00:33:09.068

But while we're waiting on that,

00:33:09.092--> 00:33:10.388

I'm going to ask you, Okka,

00:33:10.412--> 00:33:12.628

what are you working
on at the moment?

00:33:12.652--> 00:33:13.948

-Hmm, Okay.

00:33:13.972--> 00:33:16.668

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So I'm working on,

00:33:16.692--> 00:33:17.948

uh...

00:33:17.972--> 00:33:22.428

I'm doing a keynote lecture

00:33:22.452--> 00:33:26.668

for a conference

on AI and translation,

00:33:26.692--> 00:33:28.750

but they have

00:33:28.775--> 00:33:30.091

kindly said that...

00:33:30.115--> 00:33:31.685

One thing I really love

00:33:31.709--> 00:33:34.588

is that people who

know my work is weird

00:33:34.612--> 00:33:36.508

will now say, like,

00:33:36.532--> 00:33:40.948

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this can be in any kind of weird
format you want. This can be

00:33:40.972--> 00:33:43.471
hybrid genre because
that's what I love.

00:33:43.495--> 00:33:45.708
That's my, you know, that's my

00:33:45.732--> 00:33:48.548
juicy spot is like, I
don't really care what...

00:33:48.572--> 00:33:51.628
what my writing is characterized
by others as, whether it's like,

00:33:51.652--> 00:33:53.652
you know, I call this book
speculative non-fiction.

00:33:53.676--> 00:33:56.108
There's poetry in it, there's
fiction, there's nonfiction.

00:33:56.132--> 00:33:57.908
And I love when I
have that freedom.

00:33:57.932--> 00:34:00.148

I really love it. So
that's something I'm

00:34:00.172--> 00:34:02.508

working on, because I have,

00:34:02.532--> 00:34:03.788

as many of us do,

00:34:03.812--> 00:34:06.000

very strong opinions about AI...

00:34:06.000--> 00:34:07.348

[laughter]

00:34:07.372--> 00:34:08.372

and translation.

00:34:08.396--> 00:34:10.328

-Glad to hear that great
minds are working on it.

00:34:10.352--> 00:34:11.352

[laughter]

00:34:11.376--> 00:34:12.908

-Uh... Yeah, oh!

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00:34:12.932--> 00:34:14.348

And just to say,

00:34:14.372--> 00:34:17.548

Kathryn in the chat says,

"I'm a fan of wiggle room

00:34:17.572--> 00:34:19.711

"and should advocate more
for that with my own work."

00:34:19.735--> 00:34:21.828

I think we all, yeah,
need reminding.

00:34:21.852--> 00:34:24.491

And yeah, Paula,
thank you for asking

00:34:24.515--> 00:34:25.548

the question.

00:34:25.572--> 00:34:28.548

And also, oh, I'm so glad
that Abi brought up spoons.

00:34:28.572--> 00:34:29.668

-Mmm.

00:34:29.692--> 00:34:31.868

Because if you don't
know what spoon theory is,

00:34:31.892--> 00:34:34.988

it actually came from a
short story, I think, ages ago.

00:34:35.012--> 00:34:36.018

-Oh did it?

00:34:36.042--> 00:34:38.311

-Yeah, it came
from a short story

00:34:38.336--> 00:34:41.471

with a chronically
ill protagonist,

00:34:41.495--> 00:34:43.508

and I believe by a
chronically ill author.

00:34:43.532--> 00:34:48.428

And so basically, another way
you can bypass having to tell...

00:34:48.452--> 00:34:50.588

disclose too much about yourself

00:34:50.612--> 00:34:51.988

is to just say

00:34:52.012--> 00:34:54.018

spoons as a unit of energy,

00:34:54.042--> 00:34:57.000

to use spoons as a

unit of energy or capacity.

00:34:57.000--> 00:34:59.828

So if you say, like, I don't

have that many spoons

00:34:59.852--> 00:35:01.905

or I won't have that

many spoons left

00:35:01.929--> 00:35:03.988

or I have spoons for this,

00:35:04.012--> 00:35:05.708

that's kind of a shorthand

00:35:05.732--> 00:35:07.000

that we use.

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00:35:07.000--> 00:35:08.000

-Yeah.

00:35:08.000--> 00:35:09.428

Thank you for outlining that.

00:35:09.452--> 00:35:11.148

I've just had a brain
fog moment as well.

00:35:11.172--> 00:35:12.743

I was going to say something.

00:35:12.768--> 00:35:13.768

-That's Okay.

00:35:13.793--> 00:35:15.188

-Yeah, no, I just think in...

00:35:15.212--> 00:35:17.028

in response to
Kathryn's comment,

00:35:17.052--> 00:35:18.125

I think that

00:35:18.149--> 00:35:21.828

it can be so much easier to advocate
for others than to advocate for yourself,

00:35:21.852--> 00:35:24.708

and I think that that
can be the challenge to

00:35:24.732--> 00:35:28.000

kind of, yeah, make those... have
those moments of self-advocacy.

00:35:28.000--> 00:35:31.068

What helps you to
advocate for yourself?

00:35:31.092--> 00:35:33.828

Or is it just that you've
seen that it helps

00:35:33.852--> 00:35:36.588

and it, you know
it's worth the energy?

00:35:36.612--> 00:35:38.268

-Yes, I think...

00:35:38.292--> 00:35:40.828

my friends inspire me so much.

00:35:40.852--> 00:35:45.565

And seeing how fellow

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disabled and ill writers and artists

00:35:45.589--> 00:35:47.628

advocate for themselves

is a reminder like,

00:35:47.652--> 00:35:49.428

oh, yes, I can

advocate for myself.

00:35:49.452--> 00:35:51.000

And I still...

00:35:51.000--> 00:35:53.148

I think because I...

00:35:53.172--> 00:35:55.068

Still, I will need

00:35:55.092--> 00:35:57.778

sometimes, you know, there's

a group project a while back

00:35:57.802--> 00:35:59.428

and a friend of mine

just texted me like,

00:35:59.452--> 00:36:01.028

hey, you don't have to do this.

00:36:01.052--> 00:36:02.428

I'm not doing this

00:36:02.452--> 00:36:05.108

and I know that you've
not been feeling that great.

00:36:05.132--> 00:36:07.068

Don't feel like you
have to do this.

00:36:07.092--> 00:36:10.428

Because I will still sometimes feel
like, oh, I should, I should, I should.

00:36:10.452--> 00:36:13.308

And that's really hard, I think,

00:36:13.332--> 00:36:15.068

to just be kind to ourselves.

00:36:15.092--> 00:36:19.228

But I think, like, having friends
who are also disabled writers

00:36:19.252--> 00:36:22.668

and have that
kind of solidarity,

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00:36:22.692--> 00:36:25.000

and also co-reminders, like...

00:36:25.024--> 00:36:26.708

You know, like,

00:36:26.732--> 00:36:28.268

it's, uh...

00:36:28.292--> 00:36:30.318

My granddad used to
say like your well-being

00:36:30.342--> 00:36:31.988

is like number
one, two and three.

00:36:32.012--> 00:36:35.018

Like, just that's the
most important thing.

00:36:35.042--> 00:36:36.708

Oh, Anna, thank you. Yes.

00:36:36.732--> 00:36:38.148

Written by Chris-- Yes.

00:36:38.172--> 00:36:40.000

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Anna has just linked to the...

00:36:40.000--> 00:36:41.000

-Oh, well done.

00:36:41.000--> 00:36:43.348

-Thank you so much. Yes.

00:36:43.372--> 00:36:46.000

I would have forgotten
the title of it, but...

00:36:46.000--> 00:36:49.468

Yeah, I think... I think
that definitely helps.

00:36:49.492--> 00:36:51.988

-Yeah, and I think
that's really good advice.

00:36:52.012--> 00:36:54.108

And again, just kind of
having people around you

00:36:54.132--> 00:36:56.268

who you feel comfortable to say,

00:36:56.292--> 00:36:58.830

"You know what? I can't advocate

for myself today, can you?"

00:36:58.855--> 00:37:00.825

I mean, I know that has
come up for us, hasn't it,

00:37:00.849--> 00:37:02.468

in our working
relationship where

00:37:02.492--> 00:37:03.628

you've said to me,

00:37:03.652--> 00:37:07.000

can you respond on this?
And I suppose sort of having...

00:37:07.000--> 00:37:10.588

Working with people where you
have that trust and understanding that

00:37:10.612--> 00:37:12.085

sometimes you don't have to

00:37:12.109--> 00:37:13.868

say the thing, pick the battle,

00:37:13.892--> 00:37:15.188

you can just kind of go,

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00:37:15.212--> 00:37:18.000

like, they'll know what to say for
me, they'll know what I want said.

00:37:18.000--> 00:37:19.468

-Yeah.

00:37:19.492--> 00:37:21.188

Yeah, I mean...

00:37:21.212--> 00:37:23.958

Yes, I can say that
you've definitely

00:37:23.982--> 00:37:25.908

been in meetings that
I did not want to be in

00:37:25.932--> 00:37:27.378

and I could not be in.

00:37:27.402--> 00:37:29.508

-I wasn't fishing for
praise. I just, yeah...

00:37:29.532--> 00:37:30.908

-No, no, no, but...

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00:37:30.932--> 00:37:34.188

but I do really appreciate.

And... And that's...

00:37:34.212--> 00:37:37.348

I think anyone would be
very appreciative of that.

00:37:37.372--> 00:37:38.628

And you... And you...

00:37:38.652--> 00:37:41.000

You don't always
feel like you can

00:37:41.000--> 00:37:44.548

ask for that, but
to also understand

00:37:44.572--> 00:37:48.028

your own needs and your own

00:37:48.052--> 00:37:51.148

limitations. Not as,
like, oh, we're so limited.

00:37:51.172--> 00:37:53.588

Actually, I think disability
is, like, so expansive

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00:37:53.612--> 00:37:55.188

and we contribute so much,

00:37:55.212--> 00:37:58.548

in terms of neurodiversity, in terms
of, like, ways of seeing the world.

00:37:58.572--> 00:38:00.000

But...

00:38:00.000--> 00:38:02.000

But in terms of, like,

00:38:02.000--> 00:38:03.988

these are my hard limits.

00:38:04.012--> 00:38:05.428

I don't... I'm...

00:38:05.452--> 00:38:07.000

I can't talk about this.

00:38:07.000--> 00:38:08.000

-Yeah, yeah.

00:38:08.000--> 00:38:11.308

-And I'm not going to feel good
and I'm not going to be as...

00:38:11.332--> 00:38:14.348

I mean, professionalism is
such a loaded word and I don't...

00:38:14.372--> 00:38:17.428

You know, I think that
is unfortunately tied to

00:38:17.452--> 00:38:20.000

ableism in lots of ways still.

00:38:20.000--> 00:38:22.508

And I think it's just
knowing that, like,

00:38:22.532--> 00:38:26.108

I don't need to be in that
room for the outcome.

00:38:26.132--> 00:38:28.188

I think Abi will be a
better advocate for me

00:38:28.212--> 00:38:30.000

than I can for
myself in this case,

00:38:30.024--> 00:38:31.348

which

00:38:31.372--> 00:38:33.068

people should feel comfortable

00:38:33.092--> 00:38:36.388

understanding and saying

and, yeah, delegating.

00:38:36.412--> 00:38:38.588

-Yeah, definitely don't

work with people who

00:38:38.612--> 00:38:40.164

you don't feel

comfortable in that way.

00:38:40.188--> 00:38:42.428

But I think those boundaries

are really, really important

00:38:42.452--> 00:38:44.268

just to stay firm in.

00:38:44.292--> 00:38:45.708

Let me just double check.

00:38:45.732--> 00:38:47.708

Oh, we have a question

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in the question box.

00:38:47.732--> 00:38:51.028

Yes, so just to come back to
something we touched on earlier,

00:38:51.052--> 00:38:52.268

but someone has asked,

00:38:52.292--> 00:38:54.428

"How do you go about
finding your community

00:38:54.452--> 00:38:55.548

"as a disabled writer?"

00:38:55.572--> 00:38:57.188

So how did that start for you?

00:38:57.212--> 00:38:58.308

-Yeah.

00:38:58.332--> 00:39:00.028

So, um...

00:39:00.736--> 00:39:04.588

Literally googling
disabled artists in 2011

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00:39:04.612--> 00:39:06.585

and finding the work

of Petra Kuppers,

00:39:06.609--> 00:39:10.428

who I've had the huge honor

of, like, meeting a few times.

00:39:10.452--> 00:39:11.668

Um...

00:39:11.692--> 00:39:14.428

She is a wheelchair dancer

00:39:14.452--> 00:39:17.348

and a professor at the University

of Michigan and also a poet.

00:39:17.372--> 00:39:19.108

And I was like, oh,

00:39:19.132--> 00:39:21.028

I can... There's other...

00:39:21.052--> 00:39:23.068

You know, just like

possibility models,

00:39:23.092--> 00:39:24.718

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I think, was the
first thing that

00:39:24.742--> 00:39:27.988

kind of like, oh, there is...
there are people out there.

00:39:28.012--> 00:39:29.828

I joined...

00:39:29.852--> 00:39:31.988

This was back when
I was in academia

00:39:32.012--> 00:39:35.348

and doing my, you know,
applying for PhDs, doing PhD.

00:39:35.372--> 00:39:36.971

Like, I joined, like,

00:39:36.995--> 00:39:39.000

I think professional
associations.

00:39:39.000--> 00:39:40.308

Or, um...

00:39:40.332--> 00:39:43.988

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I think there was, like, a Disability
in Theater and Performance Network

00:39:44.012--> 00:39:46.468

that I... that I was
part of that kind of...

00:39:46.492--> 00:39:50.028

Because I first came to the UK
to do an Edinburgh Fringe show

00:39:50.052--> 00:39:53.388

about not being believed
about my pain back in 2014.

00:39:53.412--> 00:39:56.000

Easier to do that than

00:39:56.000--> 00:39:58.028

get help, but, you
know, that's... that's...

00:39:58.052--> 00:39:59.788

that was kind of...

00:39:59.812--> 00:40:01.948

Got to write more
about that as a result.

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00:40:01.972--> 00:40:05.188

And then I think I
was very lucky that

00:40:05.212--> 00:40:07.828

when I arrived in the UK,

00:40:07.852--> 00:40:09.988

I'd already kind of made
those networks online.

00:40:10.012--> 00:40:11.571

I think social media,

00:40:11.595--> 00:40:14.828

Twitter back then, the artist
formerly known as Twitter back then...

00:40:14.852--> 00:40:16.592

-Yeah, it was really
useful back in the day.

00:40:16.616--> 00:40:18.668

-Really useful, really vibrant.

00:40:18.692--> 00:40:21.908

And a lot of

00:40:21.932--> 00:40:24.628

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other disabled writers

00:40:24.652--> 00:40:26.628

found each other

through social media,

00:40:26.652--> 00:40:28.068

which I think is still the case

00:40:28.092--> 00:40:30.468

and still a really useful tool.

00:40:30.492--> 00:40:32.138

Um, and...

00:40:32.162--> 00:40:34.388

Early on, I was

00:40:34.412--> 00:40:36.868

very thankfully

added to the team of

00:40:36.892--> 00:40:39.388

Stairs and Whispers: D/deaf

and Disabled Poets Write Back,

00:40:39.412--> 00:40:41.428

which was this anthology

out with Nine Arches

00:40:41.452--> 00:40:43.468

that came out in 2017

00:40:43.492--> 00:40:45.668

and that me and

my co-editors joke

00:40:45.692--> 00:40:48.000

we will always

promote, even though

00:40:48.000--> 00:40:50.108

it came out like a decade ago now,

00:40:50.132--> 00:40:52.805

because we're so proud of it

and the experiences we had

00:40:52.829--> 00:40:54.308

and the community we built.

00:40:54.332--> 00:40:56.908

I still work with a lot of

people in that anthology

00:40:56.932--> 00:40:59.000

and follow their careers,

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00:40:59.000--> 00:41:00.388

some of whom are, like, have

00:41:00.412--> 00:41:03.000

reached, like, leaps

and bounds and...

00:41:03.000--> 00:41:04.871

It was the very first

00:41:04.895--> 00:41:06.668

anthology in the UK,

00:41:06.692--> 00:41:10.788

poetry anthology, that was

entirely edited by disabled editors

00:41:10.812--> 00:41:11.812

-Yes.

00:41:11.836--> 00:41:13.188

-And that was very special,

00:41:13.212--> 00:41:15.508

because it was for us by us.

00:41:15.532--> 00:41:17.748

It wasn't like stories about

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00:41:17.772--> 00:41:19.588

a disabled person I know,

00:41:19.612--> 00:41:21.228

but it was really...

00:41:21.252--> 00:41:23.108

And it was multimedia,

00:41:23.132--> 00:41:25.948

Like, we have... We still have
the free SoundCloud page out

00:41:25.972--> 00:41:28.508

with the audio recordings
of people performing.

00:41:28.532--> 00:41:33.068

The Nine Arches YouTube page still has all
the poetry films we commissioned for it.

00:41:33.092--> 00:41:34.748

Like, it was really...

00:41:34.772--> 00:41:36.000

That's what... It's...

00:41:36.000--> 00:41:38.868

Disabled writing is

inherently interdisciplinary

00:41:38.892--> 00:41:41.908

because we had, you

know, BSL films in there.

00:41:41.932--> 00:41:44.068

It's like writing

is also visual.

00:41:44.092--> 00:41:46.105

Writing is

signing, writing is...

00:41:46.129--> 00:41:47.410

Um...

00:41:47.435--> 00:41:49.708

Yeah, and then just...

00:41:49.732--> 00:41:53.108

I was very grateful that not

long after I arrived in the UK,

00:41:53.132--> 00:41:55.508

I had that source of community.

00:41:55.532--> 00:41:58.588

But also, if you

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just look for, um,

00:41:58.612--> 00:42:00.918

disability outlets and...

00:42:00.942--> 00:42:03.828

and publication--

Anthologies are a great way

00:42:03.852--> 00:42:05.708

to find out about

more disabled writers,

00:42:05.732--> 00:42:07.888

and then you can look at

their bios and see, like, oh,

00:42:07.912--> 00:42:09.500

have they been part

of certain schemes?

00:42:09.524--> 00:42:11.028

Publish in certain places?

00:42:11.052--> 00:42:13.348

-It's a bit of a

detective trail, isn't it?

00:42:13.372--> 00:42:16.188

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To sort of go find
names, find places.

00:42:16.212--> 00:42:19.268

-There's disabled
journals like Wordgathering,

00:42:19.292--> 00:42:21.908

which has been
around since like 2007.

00:42:21.932--> 00:42:26.068

There's, you know, there's
been Deaf Poets Society,

00:42:26.092--> 00:42:28.588

there's... Gosh, I'm
missing out so many,

00:42:28.612--> 00:42:30.308

but just, like, a couple
that come to mind.

00:42:30.332--> 00:42:33.068

And if you look for them, they...

00:42:33.092--> 00:42:34.228

they, you know, they're...

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00:42:34.252--> 00:42:36.000

they're there. There's newer

00:42:36.000--> 00:42:39.908

Journals as well,
and books out there

00:42:39.932--> 00:42:42.628

by people who are
deaf and or disabled

00:42:42.652--> 00:42:45.348

that are... that
are really amazing.

00:42:45.372--> 00:42:47.000

So, yeah.

00:42:47.000--> 00:42:48.188

-Yeah.

00:42:48.212--> 00:42:51.868

Well, unfortunately that
is us almost out of time.

00:42:51.892--> 00:42:54.108

So yes, thank you for everybody

00:42:54.132--> 00:42:56.518

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who has sent in their questions.

00:42:56.542--> 00:42:59.065

That's been really useful. I

will say in terms of community

00:42:59.089--> 00:43:00.988

that authors are amongst

the most generous

00:43:01.012--> 00:43:02.388

and friendly, on the whole,

00:43:02.412--> 00:43:05.868

people I know. So just,

yeah, as Okka suggested,

00:43:05.892--> 00:43:08.108

kind of reaching out to

people to build those networks.

00:43:08.132--> 00:43:10.908

Kathryn has said

she's used social media.

00:43:10.932--> 00:43:13.705

If you have a moment,

say what platform, Kathryn,

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00:43:13.729--> 00:43:15.508

that would be really useful,

00:43:15.532--> 00:43:18.428

because we were all
sort of a bit lost when

00:43:18.452--> 00:43:19.548

we all left Twitter.

00:43:19.572--> 00:43:22.591

But for now, I want to
say a huge thank you

00:43:22.615--> 00:43:24.188

to Okka for today's event.

00:43:24.212--> 00:43:26.668

Thank you all for
joining us today.

00:43:26.692--> 00:43:30.468

Thank you to Ali Gordon for
providing BSL interpretation

00:43:30.492--> 00:43:33.000

and thank you to Elsa
Woodmeade for moderating.

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00:43:33.000--> 00:43:35.588

If you've enjoyed this event
and aren't yet a member,

00:43:35.612--> 00:43:38.028

please consider joining
with our special offer

00:43:38.052--> 00:43:40.668

and get 20% off for the
first year of membership.

00:43:40.692--> 00:43:44.000

Use code "SOAATHOME20".

00:43:44.000--> 00:43:46.668

The next Society of
Authors at Home event

00:43:46.692--> 00:43:48.028

takes place next Wednesday

00:43:48.052--> 00:43:49.468

with a Lunchtime
Learning session

00:43:49.492--> 00:43:50.868

on how to become a reading...

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00:43:50.892--> 00:43:54.000

Sorry, how to become a reading
volunteer with Coram Beanstalk.

00:43:54.000--> 00:43:58.108

For more, head to the
[Society of authors.org/events](https://Societyofauthors.org/events)

00:43:58.132--> 00:44:00.628

to book or check out
our events programme.

00:44:00.652--> 00:44:03.308

Reminder that this
event is free for all,

00:44:03.332--> 00:44:04.468

but if you can afford to,

00:44:04.492--> 00:44:07.868

please consider donating to our
Society of Authors Access Fund.

00:44:07.892--> 00:44:10.988

We suggest a
minimum donation of £5.

00:44:11.012--> 00:44:12.508

And a last reminder

00:44:12.532--> 00:44:15.108

that you can also find the
Society of Authors Access Fund

00:44:15.132--> 00:44:16.308

by making a purchase...

00:44:16.332--> 00:44:19.000

You can also help the
Society of Authors Access Fund

00:44:19.000--> 00:44:21.455

by making a purchase
on our virtual bookstore

00:44:21.479--> 00:44:22.748

on Bookshop.org,

00:44:22.772--> 00:44:26.000

where you can find books by
writers taking part in this programme.

00:44:26.000--> 00:44:28.668

So lastly, another
big thank you to Okka

00:44:28.692--> 00:44:31.868

and all of you who've joined

Thursday 9 July 2026

us for this fantastic event today.

00:44:31.892--> 00:44:34.508

Let's continue the
conversation on social media.

00:44:34.532--> 00:44:37.508

Kathryn says Instagram,
some people are on Bluesky.

00:44:37.532--> 00:44:40.118

But yes, let's all keep talking,
and thank you so much.

00:44:40.575--> 00:44:41.828

-Thank you all so much.

00:44:41.852--> 00:44:43.538

Thank you, Abi. Thank you, Ali.

00:44:43.562--> 00:44:45.581

Thanks, everyone who's attended.

00:44:45.605--> 00:44:47.108

-Thank you.

-Bye!