



Berklee Institute for
-Accessible Arts Education

ABLE Voices Episode 53: Rae Brazill

[Introduction music by Kai Levin plays]

[Dr. Bernard] Hello, everyone, and welcome to the ABLE Voices Podcast. I'm Dr. Rhoda Bernard, founding managing director of the Berklee Institute for Accessible Arts Education, and I'm proud to present this podcast featuring disabled artists and arts educators. We are inviting artists with disabilities to be guest hosts for the ABLE Voices Podcast.

Today's guest host is Kace Valentine. Kace Valentine is an influential voice in the worlds of alternative music, fashion, and autism advocacy. Their powerful music and bold comedic TikTok reel style have earned them a devoted following of fans who love their unique perspective and inspiring message. As an autistic person themselves, Kace is passionate about promoting autism awareness and acceptance. Kace uses their platforms on Instagram and TikTok to share their own experiences and educate others about the challenges and opportunities of living with autism. Their content covers a wide range of topics, from alternative fashion and music to autism advocacy and comedy, all with the focus of empowering their followers and creating a more inclusive world. As a performer, Kace has an electric energy that captivates audiences and leaves them wanting more. Their live shows are a mix of ethereal vocals, whimsical guitar, and raw emotion, creating a truly unique sound. Whether you're a fan of their music, content, or advocacy work, Kace Valentine is a force to be reckoned with. Through their creativity and passion, they're helping to create a world where everyone can feel accepted, celebrated, and empowered.

[Kace Valentine] Hello, everyone. I am Kace Valentine, and today, I am guest hosting the ABLE Voices Podcast. Today, we are speaking with Rae of Artio. Rae, how are you doing today?

[Rae Brazill] Hello! I'm very good, thank you! How are you?

[Kace Valentine] I'm doing great! Today, I'd like to start off by asking you a bit about your story as a musical artist. How did you start as a musician, and how did you get to where you are today?

[Rae Brazill] That's a long story! I've just done music for pretty much my whole life. I grew up in a musical family, and I started bands in high school. I wrote rubbish little songs and stuff when I was a kid, and then I started wanting to write music as an actual job and wanted to be an actual performer. Then, I met my band members, and then we started Artio and here we are!

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Kace Valentine] Lovely! Yeah- like I said- I've been a fan for a little bit, and I've heard some of your songs-

[Rae Brazill] Thank you.

[Kace Valentine] Especially your new situation, with your whole- the really long music video that's multi-parts. I love that so much-

[Rae Brazill] Oh yeah! Thank you.

[Kace Valentine] I love how all of your music videos have- at least the recent ones- all have a distinct style. It's very film-like, and you can see your taste in it if you-

[Rae Brazill] Thank you.

[Kace Valentine] For lack of a better word. I also- I initially discovered you through TikTok and- through a video on your TikTok talking about being an autistic individual, and I'd like for you to tell us a bit about your experience as an autistic person as possible. As a musician with autism, how does your autism impact your ability to perform or tour, and- how would you say it impacts you in general?

[Rae Brazill] I mean- in the capacity of music and Artio itself- it does impact everything, but not necessarily in a negative way. I think it just changes the perspective that I have on stuff. For writing and recording and stuff- my lyricism is, I think, sometimes a little bit different and abstract because I think of things in a different way to other people- possibly- I'm a very sensory person, so a lot of our lyrics are about sounds or feelings or textures or- you know- it's a very sensory writing process even though it's very heavily doused in metaphor. It's like- I think you

can kind of hear, and I mention a lot of things like teeth and bones, and- you know- have a very repetitive, very anatomical writing style, I think, which definitely stems from a lot of my hyper fixations and stuff like that. I don't really like loud sounds, and that's something really- like- everyone gives me grief about that, and they're all like, "But you're in a rock band?" I'm like, "Yeah, I'm aware of that; I just have a special little guy with special little allocations for me to do things," and like, when we're on tour, we have a policy that if there's going to be a loud noise, so everyone has to shout, "Ears!" and then I'll cover my ears. Or, I won't be brought into the room until I have to be, and I'm essentially babysat on tour by people who understand what it is to be caring for an autistic person and facilitating an artist at the same time, and I'm very lucky that I have a team that is very inclusive of me and just accommodate me which is great.

I hyper-focus on stuff, and it's- nothing in Artio is like half-ass; everything is thought out because- my special interest is this band, so stuff gets done! When something needs to be done, it will be done to the highest possible standard, but I will still have a week of burnout afterward. It swings in roundabouts, I guess. It affects everything that I do, but it's all I've ever known how I behave. I don't know if I can compare what I do to how I've seen anyone else do it or understand that everything that I do is connected to that. Because- it's kind of just what I do, but I think it does affect a lot of stuff.

[Kace Valetine] Yeah! I get that, and on the topic of it being your special interest- I feel that the music industry is my special interest, and the bands that I've been in the past, they kind of occupy that space in my mind, and I've always put all my energy towards what I do in that context and also- as someone who- like your band is your special interest and you make sure stuff gets done, do you like to have more of a leadership or managerial role in your band to have more creative control? Or what kind of roles do you play in your band when it comes to songwriting, production, merchandising, marketing, etc.? What are some of your favorite aspects of taking care and putting love into your special interest?

[Rae Brazill] I guess the best way to answer that is- I don't really- when we pick roles in Artio, it is like we play to our strengths. So, we make sure that everyone who has the capacity to do something and do it to a good level does it. Everyone has their roles, and they all do everything they do well because we want each other to thrive. I handle a lot of the visual stuff, the artwork, the outfits, and anything that you can see of Artio. It's either been done by me or has been designed or orchestrated or produced, I guess, visually by me. That's because I'm a very visual person, and when we write music, I can hear and see the music video. I know what the color scheme is going to be from picking the song, and it's not like a decompartmentalized process; it just is. It just happens.

When we were writing the album that we just dropped, it was like I could see the videos in my head, and I knew that when I picked the album name, and it was “Baby Face,” and we were going to reference Bugsy Malone and a lot of gangster films. I was like, “Why don’t we have Scarface gangsters as a huge visual inspiration?” But then also, it tells a trans story, so I wanted to incorporate that into the videos, and so- I handled a lot of that, and I was very lucky to work with a good friend of mine and a very talented videographer, Marie Deebs, who basically took my ramblings and treatments and story and drawings and sketches and just like- this whole little universe that I’d created for these videos and just made them real. We directed them together, and it was really cool. Being able to work with people like that who just kind of understand what I’m saying when I think people normally wouldn’t, and they’re like, “No, yeah, I can completely see it.” They just make it, and it is cool.

I design a lot of the merch, and- well- I design all of the merch, music videos, branding, social media, and marketing, but I also love that side of stuff. I love understanding the human psyche and what people want to see and then putting what I know needs to be there in front of people because I think I’ve spent my whole life people watching, observing, and mirroring because of having undiagnosed autism for so long and then realizing what it was and being like, “Oh, that’s it!” I understand people, and I would say in a clinical way rather than an emotional way. I can’t pick up on sarcasm, but I do know what’s going to stop you from scrolling on TikTok. It’s a very strange thing.

[Rae Brazill and Kace Valentine laugh]

[Rae Brazill] I just kind of handle a lot of that stuff because I like it and don’t mind it, and I find it very fascinating. It’s the psychology of music marketing and promoting a song. Sometimes, it is a little bit dehumanizing of, like- I have spent years of my life working on this thing, and then I need to make it digestible for a 30-second clip so that the general public can see what I do. Sometimes, that’s a little bit hard because I have to switch off from the creative sensory person who is just passionate, hyperfocused, and has a special interest in this project and then go to the cold, analytical study of what humans want and very quickly, but I think because- I have the capacity to do that because of being autistic. It just makes it a little bit of an easier transition to kind of do a lot of roles because I have- I don’t know- I don’t even know if it’s like- it’s not brain power, I’m just able to multitask and do lots of things and I learn things very fast. Learning how to process and package and ship merch when we started gaining the- I guess, the need to start selling it. There’s stuff that I- there are things that I will not be responsible for in this band, and that’s just a rule. Then, there’s stuff that I really thrive at, and everyone wants you to do well at it, so we give each other the good tasks that we want and deal with the bad ones when we can.

[Kace Valentine] It definitely makes sense playing to your strengths in a band format because everyone has their own things that they're really good at or really bad at. For example, I dislike doing anything accounting or financial-focused. That's not my thing, but I love branding and marketing, so yeah! That makes a lot of sense, and also, as someone who is well-versed in the music industry, and kind of what makes someone watch a TikTok or be engaged with certain content. I did see that your long form content is very highly produced and beautiful.

[Rae Brazill] Thank you!

[Kace Valentine] The entire Baby Face Saga, that's something I don't really see in many up-and-coming bands- even bigger bands nowadays- a lot of people just don't invest in long-form content- even labels. It seems like short-form content is definitely what's being pushed at the moment and I just wanted to ask, what's your opinion on the difference between short-form content and long-form content today when it comes to engaging with fans?

[Rae Brazill] I think it's a really tricky kind of discourse around that because- I understand both of the standpoints on it and I agree with both of the standpoints on it. I am for short form and also against short form- like there are pros and cons. I think long-form content is so special, as well as music videos, documentaries, and short films- stuff like that to do with music. The creation of music is something so beautiful, and I think it is really important. It lets you actually see into the brain of the person and lets you into their world for longer, and it's not just like an in-your-face, flashing caption to get you to stop scrolling because you're already scrolling anyway because you're looking for stimulation or you're looking for inspiration.

You're just looking for something to fill a void really quickly, so you're just scrolling for short form and the way that most bands get discovered nowadays- unless you have a leg up in another way, which- you know- there's no shame to that- more power to you. But most bands that are independent or having to make ends meet themselves, a quick to do that is through short form and TikTok, and virality and promotion, and reaching your fan base. It's very important, and also, it means that you're a more regular occurrence in your fan base's day-to-day life, and staying on the algorithm is really helpful for maintaining numbers and a good fan base and all that stuff that makes labels happy and all that stuff that makes executives happy. It's the quickest- the quickest results you can get- because that's what I think a lot of people in the higher industry want to see. They want to see numbers quite quickly, and people have a high demand for artists, and they want to see artists quickly, so they'd rather see you post a TikTok every day than wait a year and a half for the next era with all these music videos.

I think music videos, specifically, are so important, and that's what got me into music, is the combination of a visual story with a song and the way that that tells a whole different narrative because when you write a song, you're not reliving everything that you wrote in that song in that music video. It's like two stories, or three stories, or four stories running in parallel with each other, and it shows the levels of this art because- I think creating music and creating music videos, it has to be treated as an art form rather than a quick way to gain attention or to earn money because there's no money in music. I don't know what that stigma is.

I think it's a way of expressing exactly what you want this song to mean and what you want this story to follow this song. Even if it's not like a plot video and is just a performance video, it's telling- it's graphically communicating something to you that you want someone to see, but I think that long-form is for the artist and short form is for the consumer algorithm industry side of it. It's tricky because I do both, and if I had to choose, I wouldn't make short-form, but it is a necessary step that I think lots of artists need to make. I think that there shouldn't be shame about it because you got to promote that music. You got to make it happen, and if you haven't got contacts or a large enough label to leverage stuff for you, it's very important, and not everyone can do the other way of- I don't want to make short form, but I have other things going for me, so I'm just not going to do it.

I don't need it because not everyone can kind of do that. I'm in the middle. I'm on the fence. I see the benefits of both. I much prefer long-form, but I understand that short form is a necessary thing that I think you have to do as well as the long-form. It's a tricky one, but that is my current opinion on it. It might change, it might not, but that's what I feel at the minute.

[Kace Valentine] Yeah! I totally agree with that. I feel like they're just two sides of the same coin, and my perspective is similar to yours. My view is that short-form content is really great for reaching out and finding a new audience, while long-form content is better for nurturing that pre-existing audience.

[Rae Brazill] Yes, definitely.

[Kace Valentine] Because if you're just finding new people and then just putting out low-value, quick content, then your new followers or new audience is just going to lose their attention and not move on to the next thing. You have to nurture the audience you gain; you can't forget that, so just focus on reaching new numbers or audiences and chasing the numbers behind that. So, in that sense, I feel like both are necessary, but they serve very different purposes.

[Rae Brazill] Yeah, that's exactly it. They both- I think they both should be done, and I think they're both really important, but it depends on where you're writing from and where you're coming from and what situation you're in, which helps- I guess how passionate in the debate of it you are. I understand that the hustle must be done, and I'm very proud of the music I write and the songs that I write, and- you know- I write my lyrics and I write them with my chest. I'm happy to then sell that to people online because it is- it's like selling it. It's like, "Hello, person that's never seen me before, this is a reason why you should listen to me right now! Stop doing what you're doing! Stop it! Look at me now!" But that's what it is, but then people who do support you and do love you and you have that beautiful artist-to-audience relationship, then they get to watch you exist in long-form content, and it's like theatrical and special, and it's not just like a candid- you've propped your iPhone, and you're just like lip syncing- this has been planned out and booked, and there's been a location got, and people have traveled and- you know- there's a crew and rigging and- you know- a whole lot of love, passion, teamwork, and a community aspect has gone into creating a music video or a series of music videos that just adds a whole other layer to how impactful music is as a form of entertainment and expression. But, no one would find you and then get to experience that if they didn't see your promotion, which at the minute is a lot of short-form. So, I think it's- the short-form is the appetizer, and then, the long-form is the reward-

[Kace Valentine] Yea!

[Kace Valentine laughs]

[Rae Brazill] It's the main course, but- you know- treat yourself! Have a starter!

[Kace Valentine] Yeah! That's all- yep- I think you got it.

[Kace Valentine laughs]

[Rae Brazill] Ladies and gentlemen, we got it.

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Kace Valentine] We solved all the issues in the music industry right there-

[Rae Brazill] You heard it here; we've fixed it!

[Kace Valentine laughs]

[Kace Valentine] I would like to know- and I'm sure the listeners here would like to know- have you received any education in the arts or music industry?

[Rae Brazill] Technically, no. I- the family that I grew up in were a very musical family and a very creative family, but we were not a wealthy family, and we couldn't afford for me to have music lessons or singing lessons or- like, I have no music theory beyond what I have picked up from my band members. I know what certain musical buzzwords are, but everything just comes from my brain. I don't have any logic behind it. I understand the steps to take to write a song, but I'm not thinking about them when I do it. I couldn't afford to have singing lessons and music lessons.

I'm self-taught on guitar. I watched some YouTube tutorials- you know- big moves. I learned how to sing by emulating my favorite singers and copying them. Then, doing covers of songs and in vocal styles and in ranges and keys that felt comfortable, and then I just started kind of discovering my own voice by just doing it and listening to myself and- I think I have a natural musical ear because I think even if you have extensive musical training- which is great- good for you- but I think you have to have a natural, kind of, adaptability for it if that's the right word. You have to have a musical ear to then pick up- because you can learn as much music theory as you want, but if you don't have the ability to write a song with it and feel a song, feel the music, and create something- I think that's quite- I don't- that's not the point I want out of music. I want to create because I want to create rather- I want to know everything about what I do.

I have- I did drama and art in high school and sixth form, which is like college- I guess- but I didn't do music because I didn't do music lessons so, then I didn't have music grades, so then I couldn't get into these courses to do music and then- because I didn't do music in high school, I couldn't do music in college because I didn't have grades in music, but the whole time I was creating and writing music and being in bands. I had a song on- little flex- I had a song on Radio One whilst I was in college, and I was denied the music course even though I could prove I can do music. Here's something cool that happened- my band's song was on Radio One, and they were like, "Yeah! But you don't have the grades."

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Rae Brazill] And I was like, "But I'm showing you I can do it!" and they were like, "Nah. You needed a number." So, it's- I've not been- I've not had access to doing music for- educationally- or formally. Everything I do is just the vibe, the feel- the vibe! Just the inside of my brain just doing it. All the other members of Artio are- because I can't speak on behalf of them, but

they're all musically educated, and they did it in high school and college and university- they know their stuff, but they know it in a way that they have that passion and born natural talent for it as well, and then they've put in their 10,000 hours, and they know what they're on about- they know their instrument- they know their equipment- they have their theory knowledge and they're incredibly talented musicians and artists and songwriters.

I think it's really important both ways. You don't have to be educated in music to be good at music, but I think that if you are adept to music, it's really cool to then learn more about it. I'm learning more about myself and my voice and vocal technique all the time, but I just didn't get it from formal education; I got it from learning, doing, emulating, and listening and YouTube videos and live shows, and- learning how to sing live is a whole different ball game to learning how to sing- like learning to understand what singing is. Then, when you do it live, it's a whole different thing, so- I just learned as I went and just picked up what I needed to pick up as I did it rather than having a formal education on it.

[Kace Valentine] Yeah, I get that, and being- okay- knowing how to sing is one thing, learning how to sing live is another- learning how to sing and being a frontman- that is- that's just something that you have to learn by doing it, and it is an entirely different experience. And I wish- I don't know- I do wish I have had some sort of an education when it comes to how to be a frontman and how to engage with the audience, and how to really build up that energy, but yeah- that is something that you can learn. You just- yeah- I totally agree with all that you said, and also, I did want to know- when did you decide that you wanted to be in a band specifically, and that's how you wanted to pursue music?

[Rae Brazil] I always absolutely just loved bands, and I was a little emo from when I was very young. My dad would always have "American Idiot" by Green Day- that album would always be on, and I had a "Black Parade" My Chemical Romance poster in my room when I was like six and- you know- I've always been into rock music and when I was in primary school, which I guess- I'm not sure what the equivalent would be for you guys but- I don't know- middle school? Or grade school- me and my best friend would make up dance routines to Paramore songs, and I've always been into rock music, but I originally was like- this is the most Autistic answer ever- but I was like, "I'm gonna be either a marine biologist or a paleontologist," and that was what I believed I was going to be for so long!

Then- I'm finding the date of it now because it was- I went to a gig, and I saw Pvriss live in Manchester on the sixth of April in 2016, and I'd been a fan of Pvriss and Lynn Gunn specifically for a long time, and I saw them live, and I saw Lynn Gunn live and I heard these songs that I was so passionate about and invested in, and I knew these songs inside out. I'd rinsed that album so

much, and I saw it live on that tour for White Noise, and I was just like, “Oh. My. God. This is it!” I watched Lynn on stage, and I just was like-

[Rae Brazill claps her hands together]

[Rae Brazill] “I’m going to do that. I don’t care how I’m going to do it or what I have to do to do it; that’s happening now!” And I just got tunnel vision, hyper-fixated on like, “That’s what I’m doing. I’ve decided- everything to the curb! I love dinosaurs but I’m not digging them up anymore. I’m going to be a musician!” And I’d already taught myself how to play ukulele, guitar, and keyboard, and- you know- because I was on Tumblr in my early teens and, of course, I was into 21 Pilots. I learned how to do little bits of instrumentation, but not in a capacity of, “I want to be a performer.” It was like, “I want to sing House of Gold by 21 Pilots.”

Then, when I saw Pvriz live, it was like- I don’t know- something just kind of clicked in my brain. It was also the first time that I’d seen a masculine/Fem- AFAB person on stage that I saw a bit of myself in, and I was like, “Oh my god, that is the thing,” and since then, I started a band with my best friend that I went to that gig with and that was my first band that I started, and it was really cute. It was my high school band, and we didn’t really do anything, but we wrote songs in my garage, and we both fell in love with rock music and emo music in our teens together, and it’s a really important- it’s a core memory- it’s a canon event. Then, I was in that band until I met Ewan and Rob, and then we started Artio, and then- here we go! We’re here now, and Jay also joined Artio! And- yeah! I’m still of that mindset of, “Yeah, this is happening, and I will do anything and everything to make this happen!” It hasn’t changed. It’s just- I guess sheer determination, willpower, and fear of, “Well, I threw everything else to the curb many years ago,” and I’m like, “This has to work now. I’m too far gone; it has to work now.”

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Kace Valentine] Yeah, like, “This is my only option now.”

[Rae Brazill] Yeah, I’ve thrown everything else out. Uh oh, gotta make it happen! But also, I do love it. Womp womp-

[Kace Valentine laughs]

[Rae Brazill] No, I do love it, and I’m very passionate about it, and it is everything to me, and music is everything to me, but it is at the point now in which I’ve given so much and invested so much and sacrificed so much, but also gained so much and learned so much about myself, my

friends, and other people by doing music in Artio specifically that I'm like, "Yeah, this is forever! I don't care how long it is. It will be."

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Kace Valentine] Yeah, that's definitely- probably one of my favorite things about being autistic is that whole tunnel vision and just being like, "I don't know how this is going to happen, but I'm going to make it happen," and then it happens.

[Rae Brazill] Yeah- it's like that, "Yeah, I'm going to do it *somehow does it* How did I do that? Anyway, I'm going to do it again."

[Kace Valentine laughs]

[Kace Valentine] Yeah-

[Rae Brazill] That's just me with every release.

[Kace Valentine] Yeah, me with every little project I start. So we're approaching the end of the interview, so I have a couple more questions for you. First of all, you're very active as an artist. Please tell us a little about what you're currently working on and what you recently put out.

[Rae Brazill] We put out our debut album, "Baby Face", on March 1st on Slumdog Records, and that was really cool. That album is 11 tracks, and it's just everything to us and- I think a lot of people didn't expect the album to be what it was. They knew the singles and- you know- the singles- it's just bangers only. It's pure bangers only, but then there are a lot of songs on there that do- I think it's the showcase of Artio in 11 songs, soundtracked to a gangster film, essentially. It's really, really important to us, and we love it. We put that out in March, and we're super proud of it.

We also put out a comic book. A comic book that was made scene by scene of the music videos. We filmed the music videos last year- we filmed all of them in time for me to go and have top surgery, and then, in the time that I was recovering from top surgery- a very talented friend of mine called Tyler- he then drew the music videos scene by scene in a comic, and we have those on sale. They're really cool, and there's the Baby Face Saga comic. We also have it on CD and vinyl. All the CDs are signed, and all the vinyl is- oh, it's so pretty! I do all the packaging and designing of the branding and- oh man, I popped off! You know- not to toot my own horn or anything, but like- it is fire! The vinyls are translucent red- it's so pretty. It's for me as well- the physical aspect of the music's really important, so the merch and the physicals of the music,

CDs, and vinyl, and stuff like that- that for me is just as important as releasing it because that's the thing that you get to hold forever. It's like- not too deep, but streaming services could go down whenever. The internet could literally die, but if you can hold this album forever, you can hold this band forever if you have their merch, CD, or vinyl. That's not my justification for why I collect all that stuff! That's very important to me.

We're also working on some other really cool projects. I can't really talk about it right now because one of them I signed an NDA and the other one is just a secret! We're still cooking; we're in the kitchen. We haven't left that kitchen; we still cooking. We are working on loads of really cool stuff that's really exciting for us but also, I think, really exciting for the people that love what we do. We're also playing some festivals this year. We're on tour with Honey Revenge, who are the loveliest guys, and we're really excited for that. We're playing with them in the UK in Manchester, Glasgow, and London. Then, we're playing Slumdog Festival. We're playing the 2,000 Trees Festival, and we're playing the Burn it Down Festival. We're playing some other stuff, but it hasn't been confirmed, so I'm not going to say it. We have lots of stuff going on. We're constantly working, writing, and doing things, but it's a great problem to have!

[Kace Valentine] Yeah, that's great that you're constantly just creating and working on stuff. That's the way to do it.

[Rae Brazill] I wouldn't want it any other way. But I do get burnt out very easily.

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Kace Valentine] Yeah, I get that. That's a unique struggle of being like, "Oh, I can do this 24/7, but also- burnout?"

[Rae Brazill] Yeah. Yeah, and then it'll be a good few days of it, and I'll just be like, "Oop!"

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Rae Brazill] "Gotta stop!" But my band is so incredible, and our team is so incredible and accommodating that people kind of notice when I start pulling away, and I'm like- I understand that there's no weakness in admitting that I need time or that I'm struggling, or I can't handle the workload that I normally can because you're allowed to have ebbs and flows in your energy level and that's very normal if you're neurotypical or neurodivergent. My team and band are very- just the loveliest, greatest people and other people will then take the reins when I need to step down. I'm always present, and I'm always there, but they take over, and it's really great.

[Kace Valentine] Yeah, that's a nice dynamic to have. So, we're going to take a listen to one of Rae's songs. Rae, can you tell us a little bit about this next track we're about to hear?

[Rae Brazill] Yeah! This song I chose is called Wisdom Teeth. It's the last track on our album, and I think it's the one that gets slept on the most because a lot of people wouldn't expect it from us or from this album. It is my favorite one because it's the most existential song I've ever written, but in the best way because every line is like a question. I think a really fun way to end a body of music that's very definitive of, "Well, it's about transitioning and anger about political rights being stripped away from minority people." There's all this very angry, very purposeful lyrics. Then the last song is just constant questioning and every line is, "Tell me, are we having fun because the tragedy has just begun," and asking, "Is this the end or just the start?" over and over again, which I think is really fun because it's- is this the end or just the start of the album in question, the song in question, Artio as a band- is this all we're ever going to be or is this the end of a chapter? Or is it the start of a new one, and we're going to absolutely fall off? Is it the end or the start of the world? Just asking questions about the political climate and- is the end of society as we know it? Is it the start of a better one, or is it the end of the human- you know- it's asking every question possible in the set space of two minutes. I think that's why it's my favorite one, and I think everyone can take something from it, but not enough people give it a chance. So, that's why I picked Wisdom Teeth.

[Kace Valentine] Excited to hear it! Anyway, here is a bit from the song Wisdom Teeth.

[Excerpt of "Wisdom Teeth" by Artio plays]

[Kace Valentine] That's amazing! That sounds really creative.

[Rae Brazill] Oh, thank you!

[Kace Valentine] So, as the final question for tonight- by the way, thank you so much for your time and talking. It's been a pleasure being able to speak to you in person- kind of.

[Rae Brazill] Thank you for reaching out to me. It's really an honor, so thank you.

[Kace Valentine] Of course! I'm so happy you were able to make this work. As your final question, what advice would you give to a young artist who is also autistic?

[Rae Brazill] Oh, that's a big question! I'm still figuring this out! There's my answer-

[Kace Valentine and Rae Brazill laugh]

[Rae Brazill] I'm still figuring it out. Learning about yourself, your needs, and accommodations, and the things you need to put in place to be able to do the things that you want to do- you're allowed to do that. If people refuse to accommodate you and refuse to help you while you're figuring it out or- when you set your boundaries- do not work with them. It is not hard to accommodate people. An example I said earlier was when there is about to be a loud noise, a bang, or a sudden thing or something as a volume level that people know I'm uncomfortable with, they will literally take a second to shout, "Ears!" and then I know that I need to put ear defenders on or cover my ears- it's so simple, it's like- they're still going to do the thing, they're still going to make the loud noise because it needs to happen, but it is so simple for people to make those accommodations for you.

The more you learn about yourself and the more you allow yourself to be yourself, it's really hard not to mask. I'm aware of that- I do it all the time still, and I'm very comfortable with who I am, but the more that you learn and the more you tell people that you work with or that you love, that you're friends with or your team or crew or whatever- they will help you. They will be accommodating because it's so easy to do it, and if they don't, they aren't worth your time or creative energy, and you can find someone else to make you make things happen.

[Kace Valentine] That's great advice. Thank you so much!

[Rae Brazill] I'm glad it was good; I was like, "I need to be a conch of wisdom here. I need to say things that make sense."

[Rae Brazill laughs]

[Kace Valentine] You need to represent the entire autistic community as a whole.

[Rae Brazill] Yeah, no pressure!

[Rae Brazill and Kace Valentine laugh]

[Rae Brazill] I am not the example!

[Rae Brazill and Kace Valentine laugh]

[Rae Brazill] I'm very honored to be representing my community, but also, every autistic person is different. So, this is just what I be doing. This is just what I do.

[Kace Valentine] Yeah. We're just figuring it out-

[Rae Brazill] We're just figuring it-

[Kace Valentine] We don't even know what's going on.

[Rae Brazill] I'm 22, and I'm still figuring it out. You've got time. Don't worry!

[Kace Valentine] Yeah!

[Kace Valentine laughs]

[Kace Valentine] I've had a great time guest hosting the ABLE Voices Podcast. This has been a great experience being able to interview and meet so many talented disabled musicians. If you are looking to find me or reach out to me, you can find me on Instagram at @kace.valentine. I'm pretty active there. I post all my music-related things and everything not music-related as well. Feel free to follow me on there and-

[Outro music by Sebastian Batista starts]

[Kace Valentine] Continue listening to ABLE Voices.

[Dr. Bernard] ABLE Voices is a production of the Berklee Institute for Accessible Arts Education, led by me, Dr. Rhoda Bernard, the founding managing director. It is produced by Daniel Martinez del Campo.

[Outro music ends]

The introduction music is by Kai Levin, and our closing song is by Sebastian Batista. Kai and Sebastian are students in the arts education programs at the Berklee Institute for Accessible Arts Education.

If you would like to learn more about our work, you can find us online at [berkee.edu slash B-I-A-A-E](http://berkee.edu/slash/B-I-A-A-E) or email us at B-I-A-A-E at Berklee, that's L-E-E.edu