

Welcomed by Design Trailer Transcript

[Transcribed by: Lynn Priestley]

Lynn: Hi, I'm Lynn Priestley, and this is *Welcomed by Design*... [0:04]

[orchestral plucking music with forward momentum]

...the show where we explore the many paths to making the design world more inclusive, accessible, and welcoming. [0:14]

As a disabled and queer design student, I've been interested in inclusivity since I began studying digital design. [0:23]

Once you start looking, it becomes painfully clear that design is often done with an "average" user in mind, which almost always means the socially-dominant and centered user. [0:35]

[more suspenseful plucking]

Think able-bodied, white, male, heterosexual, cisgender, wealthy, and thin. But despite what the label "average" suggests, most people fall outside of this list in at least one category, which means most people have experienced design that excludes them in one way or another. [0:57]

[door slamming shut and locking]

So the question becomes how can we start making design a practice that welcomes more than just one kind of mind and body? [1:11]

[plucking gradually becoming more layered]

I recently read a piece by Jay Dolmage that used the phrase “inviting disability in the front door”, and this concept really stuck with me. When designers make inaccessible things, they are usually required (legally) to go back and add something to make them accessible, a process called “retrofitting”. One example of this would be the ramps added later to the side or back door of a building, that don’t match the original architecture. Such design choices signal certain bodies are an afterthought. Technically, a wheelchair user can now get into the building, but should this count as a real “welcome”? I’d argue no. [1:51]

[piano music with a hopeful mood]

The idea of inviting disability through the front door, from the start, proposes a different future. What if we can design spaces that plan for, rather than react to, human diversity? To design in ways that recognize users and create warmth, signaling that you can not only get in this door, but also that you are genuinely welcome to join the party? [2:18]

[sounds of people laughing at a party]

Hence, this podcast’s name: *Welcomed by Design*. There are many different ways we can think about inclusion in design, ranging from accessibility with the disability community, to working to design artificial intelligence without bias. On this show, we’ll explore some of the lenses and design practices that ultimately invite more people to engage with what gets made. [2:44]

We’ll talk about topics like digital accessibility, universal versus custom design, co-design, and multisensory design, with some truly incredible authors, advocates, and practitioners. My hope is that these episodes can bring an introduction of the different practices that we as the next

generation of inclusive designers need to know. [3:04]

So welcome, take a seat, and let's learn how we can make every mind and body feel more welcomed by design. [3:15]

[piano music slowly fades out]