

Lecture Notes

Class One

Outline for the class

- Introductions - Sama, Finn, and Eliza (5:00-5:10pm)
- Relationship to the land - Discussion led by Sama, including bodyminds in context activity (5:10-5:40pm) This is where we will do introductions
- Break (5:40-5:50pm)
- Crip peripheries as the centre: An introduction to our political orientation - Discussion led by Sama (5:50-6:30pm)
- Collective access - Discussion and time for questions led by Eliza (6:30-6:45pm)

Notes

Office Hours

Office hours for Eliza in slide deck & on pressbook (will add this following class as well)
Sama hours to update

Relationships with the Land

- Relationship to our body-mind-lands
 - Land as kin; learnings grounded in Indigenous, anti-colonial learnings
- Our context in Tkaronto
- Our context in technology
 - Fed and fueled by exploited labours of third world siblings
- The disablement of the earth is bound to disablement of earth's peoples and body/minds
- Community making beyond just the human, the living
- Interconnected liberatory projects
 - Land back first and foremost

Land Acknowledgement

- Refusing/disrupting performativity & the products of institutional performativity and co-optation
- Invitation to activate - positionality

Lecture

- We are at war (eg. struggle against the casino of Colonialism - Castro)
 - Also about truth - human potential and nature
 - What new fruits can we bear when we demand that these states (of white supremacy, capitalism, neoliberalism, anti-Blackness, etc) are not natural, but naturalized?
 - Naturalizing that domination, selfishness, etc is a natural part of human nature naturalizes systems of violence and domination
 - **Oppression is not a fact of life, it is a fact of power and ideology**

- **Undoing this fixity is the nexus where we gather and wherein our cripp aims come into full focus**
- Ethos of non-assimilation
 - Ongoing critical engagement with new praxis can develop new relations
- Crossing the epistemic line - struggle for epistemic justice
 - 1) return to the base/locus of enunciation
 - Return to ones indigenous language, the linguistic currencies of our third world peoples; calling into question the semiotics of english; using global south archives/knowledges as our centre and grounding
 - 2) shifting the geo and bio of knowledge/moving the centre
 - 3) decolonizing the normative foundation of critical theory
 - Produces schools of thought on a false universalism - calcifying our truth
 - 4) rethinking thinking itself
 - Madness, disrupting Sense
 - 'Daring to invent the future' through mad knowledges
 - 5) learning to unlearn in order to re-learn
 - Challenging privileging of global north as makers of universal histories
- Rethinking thinking
 - Shifting geography of thinking
 - Knowledge and ontological autonomy - naturalized as Europe and NA
 - When epistemological justice is also the space to know and think and be;
- Condition of work we produce today is the theft of land and genocide of Indigenous ppl
 - The grants for our project - products of mass disablement projects of the Global South
- Non-metropolitan, non white/western global south/third world & trans-national theories when included are often only included as footnote - not as focus; or as
- 4 key ways that settler colonial disability studies reproduces epistemic empire
 - Claim of universality (white disability theory is universal, disability from the white lens is universal)
 - Reading from the centre
 - Gestures of exclusion
 - Grand erasure
- Access maps in Falastine (Palestine)
 - Disability within Palestinian context
 - Countering disability pride as universal - unmappable onto context of mass disablement, deliberate settler colonial violence; "shoot to cripple"
 - Mobility disablement as a tool of colonial occupation & violence
 - Example of autism animated by zio-western empire as a particularly attractive trait - a 'superpower' for analyzing satellite imagery for death-making
 - Debility as a tool of empire and colonial occupation
- Decentring NA/white disability studies disrupts the implied universalism of disability pride & rights discourses

- Which are unmappable onto the embodied experiences of Indigenous, BIPOC, debilitated ppl - trans-national embodied experiences of disability, people & land rendered not only disposable but necessary to dispose in order to maintain empire & colonial project
- What does it mean to be healthy without a health politic
- How do we organize access scripts which embolden dissent rather than deference
- Access washing/crip washing
 - Representation within empire activated to imply that empire is more moral/just/left leaning

Mutual Aid Component

- When we demand access, why dont we demand access to life first and foremost?
 - We will adopt a campaign as a community that we will tend and fundraise for during the course
 - Post a campaign that you are interested in us supporting together over this next week in the Discord
 - We will pick together a campaign

Discord

- We are using discord as an area for engagement, commons, etc
- The prompts we went through in the class will be available on the discord for ongoing discussion
- We'll talk about mutual aid & a campaign to choose in the channel as well
- Questions can go in discord as well - you can also email or ask q's in other ways but feel free to put them in discord
- A main part of conversation this week will be also what org you may want to work with, and the dimensions of group work in this class for you
 - Group work style, schedule availability, wants & needs in group work
 - We will also send a form with the same questions to folks so you can answer how ever you would like
 - And we will use this info to pick groups

Class Two

Reminder: Fill out forms sent by Eliza by Monday to be able to get the stipend from the course

Lecture

- Access washing
 - The co-optation and absorbing of access by imperial systems
 - The ways that humanitarian logics are employed by imperial systems in order to subsist and sustain imperial systems

- The antithesis of disability justice, something that must be named and learned in order to unlearn
- We have to ask access for whom?
- Universities act as a tool and a trojan horse to conceal imperial and settler-colonial complicities in the U.S. and the State of 'Israel'
 - For example, when the university platforms zionists that include talks with CART, transcripts, recordings, etc → seems like access but actually provides a space for more people to be indoctrinated into white supremacist, settler-colonial ideologies
- Whose disabilities are rendered “enough” of a disability, why? How do our positionalities change our experience with disability?
 - If you are a benefit of the state they will allow it, if not you will fall to the sidelines
 - When we get accommodations, we must think about why..what power, what privilege do I have that has allowed me to be within a world-ordered space?
- Access exceptionalism
 - We are implicated in erecting a movement that sprouts from and is invested and indebted to the periphery
 - Access exceptionalism and access washing are very similar
 - The ways that access is weaponized to exert whiteness, severing disability access from broader social justice, and an individualistic understanding of access that asks us to comply rather than be non-compliant
 - It is an *intentional* and intrinsic part of the system
 - What would access look like if it turned away from a rehabilitative, reformist regime?
 - We cannot change the world with access, representation politics, deference politics or standpoint epistemology
 - What would it look like for us to first and foremost demand **access to life?**
 - What types of access do we prioritize and why?
 - If the end-all-be-all is to allow white people to go into spaces, the end-all-be-all is to maintain settler supremacy → what matters is that whiteness is allowed to live and breathe
 - **Do we want to be in a world where there are a million rules and boundaries for us to work and exist in radical togetherness?**
- **Case study – AI and the global south**
 - AI is a very good case study of the way that individual access for the privileged comes at a very bloody and lively cost for the subaltern and the marginal
 - AI diverts water away from communities in order to power ecologically pernicious data centers
 - OpenAI, which is the parent company of ChatGPT engages in digital enslavement practices → outsources Kenyan labourers to parse through stolen and mined data, paying people \$1.32 to \$2 an hour

- This work is also maddening and disabling, due to the fact that Kenyan workers are forced to sort through and watch violence against Black folks, many of them come out with PTSD
- **We can sacrifice our comfort and facility and replace it with very interdependent forms of access-making and therefore of life-making**
 - **We have to burden each other!!! To feel joy in the weight that we are bearing for each other**
- We have to redirect ourselves from individualism and towards communalism
- **Cultural accessibility landing page**
 - This is something that we can edit and change throughout the course and beyond it
 - Forging digestible and changeable community apparatuses that can be tapped into by crips and non-crips, most things in this spreadsheet are written in plain language!
 - If something is difficult to understand, leave a comment and we can reword things together
 - Feel free to share with others
 - What does it mean to go beyond the checklist of access?
 - How do we tend to access frictions as a celebration of the messiness of being together?
 - Another goal is to archive the ways that disabled, deaf, mad, crip creatives and life makers have ensured the safety and survivance of each other
 - Fray the colonial project of individuation by committing to caring for one another's body minds instead of leaning only on ourselves or the state
 - **It will be important when we start working with one another :-)**
- Mutual aid is the core directive and the crux, when it is not the centralized value then you will find it fraying at the seams
- **Critical Frameworks for Understanding and Practicing Access**
 - We want to focus on the connection between how we understand and practice access
 - Often access focuses on only "doing" a one time solution to the so-called problem of disability
 - Access is often to include some disabled people into normative culture, leaving those norms intact → it assumes that normative culture should be maintained and not be disrupted
 - Not all disabled people can be included in the system (intentional) and many do not want to be included!
 - This approach to access is invested in maintaining normative culture over centering disability
 - Access Frameworks
 - Critical Access (Aimi Hamraie, 2017)
 - Access is always and always has been political

- The assessment of whether disabled people are deserving of inclusion, it is often mediated through other aspects of our identities
- Critical access must always be carried out through critical disability, critical race, decolonial and queer
- We must use access to work towards cultural transformation over inclusion
- **When everything is about liberation, when access fails this imperative, our role as access workers and activators then must be about this failure**
- Open Access (Carmen Papalia, 2018)
 - The needs of disabled and debilitated people cannot be standardized
 - It is a perpetual negotiation of trust between those who practice support as a mutual exchange
 - Constantly engaging with access as changing
- Access Intimacy (Mia Mingus)
 - Approaching access as a relational practice
 - It is a critical and political practice, we set the conditions that can allow access intimacy to flourish
- Aces(sens)ibility (Jimmy Elwood)
 - What does accessibility give access to?
 - Accessibility often facilitates a problematic form of inclusion into a naturalized colonial habit of being
- Gallery space as a crown jewel of empire that is inherently exclusionary and violent
- What is disability art?
 - (Crip) Art that is politicized and refuses an apolitical understanding of cripness and debility, one that is historicized, contextualized and understands pain & trauma
 - (Crip) Art that moves us materially into revolt
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Class Three

Checking in about captioning options

- Angie will be live captioning our classes now
 - 2 options: typing directly on zoom captions or into a google doc
 - So far we will do this directly on zoom, if desired we can switch to doc
- Access concerns, directions always welcome! Discord, in class, private emails - however is best for you to communicate these

Intro to Access Reports

- Context and background section
 - Mandate and values, how the org understands itself in relation to the arts sector and the community
 - Who is their audience? What is the scale? What do they think is important?
 - Important context for access plans - access will look different for each different org
- Organizational understanding of access
 - Clarifies organizational understanding of access - how they currently understand access both **internally** (staff access needs, sick days and leave, collaboration and flexibility, recruitment of disabled staff) and **public** (how they practice access in public facing events - what access practices they use)
 - Working with a disability justice informed understanding of access - intersectional practices of access (eg. chairs for large or fat bodies, financial access, power dynamics & relationality built into access practices)
 - Also the communication of access that the org does
 - How do they communicate to broader public and patrons in the space
- Access practices and access gaps broken down into sections
 - Sections based on their activities
 - Gaps are things we noted that they could be doing but are not
- Recommendations
 - Coming directly from ppl we talked to while creating access reports
 - From staff members, community members
- Suggestions for areas of focus
 - As a group, your first task will be to identify what you might want to do in terms of creating an access plan
 - You won't be able to address every gap that an org has - Yoonmee and Lisa have made suggestions for area of focus to help focus in on what might be possible/a place to start
 - To begin conversation with group about what you want to focus on

How were the Access Reports Created

- We started by doing discourse analysis of all of their access texts
 - Policy, statements, recruitment docs, etc
- Supplemented this data by interviewing the staff and focus groups with community members who were invested in the organizations; we also sent around surveys to larger community that ppl could fill out about their experiences

How will they guide your work

- They provide a snapshot - act as a baseline for your access plans
- You can build from them so you're not starting from scratch without any info about the orgs and their access practices

Invitation to Contribute

- Pls contribute to these access reports!
- Drawing on your crip wisdom and experiential knowledge
 - If you identify a gap that is not identified in the access report, feel free to collaborate and write it into the report - take it as direction for your group
 - or suggestions too!
 - Cultural accessibility landing page can also provide ideas

General note about the access reports

- You might notice moments where the articulation of access/the values that the org claims are not backed up in their practices/are inconsistent with what they're actually doing
- Developing new practices for orgs or clarifying their communication to reflect what they are actually doing

Next Steps

(We don't have class this week - 2 this week and then none for next week)

- During this time, please connect with your group, read over access reports and start thinking about areas you might want to focus on for access plan
 - Scale and scope is really up to you! & this will be different group to group
- Then set up a meeting with Yoonmee, Lisa, and Eliza do discuss what you're thinking, questions about access reports or organization, etc; and the focus you're thinking on
 - You can also get connected with the organization that you're working with
 - You can also potentially set up a site visit to the organization if you're wanting that (hybrid style)
 - You'll also be connected with a mentor who can act as a sounding board for you
 - Mentors have either worked with your org or have experience doing access activation work in similar circumstances

Access Texts Lecture

Importance of access texts

- Text as a site of power
 - Access texts as an established site of power within existing colonial+neoliberal systems which privilege written policy
 - Impact of the AODA which requires orgs to have written access texts, and greatly informs the way they do access
 - Access practices which become like a check list

Example of access text

- Access rider - Johanna Hedva's access rider
(<https://sickwomantheory.tumblr.com/post/187188672521/hedvas-disability-access-rider>)
 - Something that artists develop that explains all their access needs/requirements for participating
- Public facing access info that orgs share about their access practices
 - Tangent from this - access guides which can take some of the labour off of disabled ppl before going to an event/space
 - Access guide could become a part of the work you do with orgs

Developing Access Texts with orgs

- Some orgs might have contradictions between their texts and practices - eg they say they include everyone but

Studio 1

- Studio sessions starting - will not include a lecture today, just discussion and feedback about access plans
- Mutual aid campaign check in -
 - Offering to continue supporting campaign through sharing link, qr code, projects like book sale, art builds etc
 - Discord has link to campaign
- Event coming up - Nov. 13 at Tangled Art - conversation with some of the folks who have been involved in audio play Living with Drones
 - Audio play created in collaboration with Gazan artists and musicians - <https://theatrecentre.org/event/living-with-drones/>
 - Some of these folks will be at the event discussing the play
 - Hybrid event
 - More info on Discord/Pressbook
 - Nov 20 another event about cross solidarity between Turtle Island and Palestine follow up to the Nov 13 event
- This class we're discussing access plans & will discuss what is needed for your projects moving forward
 - Next classes will be held like studio space and workshops, where we can cover different topics that may be relevant to your projects
 - Even though these access plans are small group work, this will always be collective work that includes all of us
- Next steps
 - Next week we won't have class
 - Instead, next week:
 - Each group should set up a meeting with instructors (Yoonmee, Lisa will also join) to discuss and finalize your plan
 - Not every group member has to be at this meeting
 - Will put together a workplan at meeting (figuring out tasks, schedule, who will do what, what support you might need) for the work from now until mid December
 - Workplans are flexible! If the work ever feels unmanageable, plan can change - you can reach out for more support as well

- After finalizing your access plan you will meet with the organizations (with the support of instructors/other project team members - or not if you want to meet just with the org directly) to discuss the plan
 - We're not asking them for permission for your plan - more so to get further contextual information from them that will shape your work
- You will also be put in touch with your mentors at this time
 - You can contact them directly or with the involvement/support of project team members/instructors as well
 - Mentors will help answer questions, support, give wisdom for anything you might need with your access plans

Next Steps

- Eliza will be in touch on Monday to set up Meetings
- Folks working with TO orgs (Theatre Centre, Onsite) - we will also try to make meetings in person/hybrid if group members want as discussed (RAFF may be not in office/too busy with festival but will check in)
- If folks are okay with it, send Finn/Eliza your proposal and Finn will put them up on pressbook
 - Finn can also upload summaries of the discussion/proposals to pressbook as well
- Feels like meeting after next week would be helpful
 - Discussion about funding seems useful
 - We also have one more module/discussion about transformative justice that we'll be in touch about in terms of timing
 - Friday afternoons seem to work for people? But will check in further
 - X, Miles, Elysia, river thumbs up for friday afternoon
 - Nov 7 may be a good time for the next meeting - but will follow up with an email about this to everyone

Studio 2

Class Outline today

- Welcome, access check in, mutual aid check in
- Two upcoming events
- Group work updates
- Discussing disability justice, ableism, cultural accessibility
- Discussing Working with access texts
 - Drawing on this idea of intervening on workplace policies, introducing DJ, decoloniality in policy&practice
 - Thinking of creating access texts and statements for organizations

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GQb8SkLz_-KU8sQUe9G4MC8bZmZlqch1Zo3-cKml0Pk/edit?tab=t.0 - link to lecture notes

Access Check in

- Angie still available in class doing captions
- Finn taking notes in collective doc
- Contact Eliza, Sama Finn at any time with any access needs, check ins

Mutual Aid Check in

- Folks have been contributing & updating in the discord mutual aid channel
- Supporting Mohammed in raising funds
- Miles contributed proceeds from zine fair, Kirin contributed & Elysia raised money through clothing sale for two different campaigns
- Matching & match trains
- Posting on social media on stories
- Mohammed is 100 dollars away from affording a tent - this could be a good goal post for the next few days
- Book sale Sama hosts regularly with other friends posted in discord - was able to raise a good amount this past sale

Upcoming Events

- Free school
 - Program dedicated to teaching by the community, in and for the community
 - This year thinking about access to information in unfree times
- Two events coming up:
 - This thurs & next thurs, both 7-9 pm and hybrid
 - Mask mandatory
 - Held at urban space gallery (401 Richmond)
 - This thurs event:

- Conversation about audio play Living With Drones:
 - <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/unsettling-journalism-a-conversation-about-living-with-drones-tickets-1866928095189?aff=oddtcreator>
- Will include performance of play and conversation
- Access notes
 - Hybrid, mask mandatory, will include active listener, interpretation
- Next Thurs event (Nov 20): From Turtle Island to Palestine: Cross-movement solidarity in Action
 - Panel ft four activists working across labour and Indigenous solidarity movements towards liberation of Palestinians in the face of genocide
 - Similar access notes as Nov 13 event
 - Thinking of how Land Back is both local and global movement, will be talking about that work; cross-solidarity building in relation to genocide, March on Gaza
 - Event link in class notes:
 - <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/from-turtle-island-to-palestine-cross-movement-solidarity-tickets-1965572351816?aff=oddtcreator>

Group Updates

- Folks have been meeting with organizations and meeting with mentors over the past few weeks
- Any updates, needs, thoughts about that?
 - From Lindsay - things are going well, going to try to go to an event for their org tomorrow or Wednesday

Lecture Notes

Disability Justice and Cultural Accessibility

- Continuing our engagement with introducing policy/practice in orgs
 - Interventions at policy level can be quite effective
 - Communicating access to the public is also important
 - In a practical, rather than aspirational way
 - So ppl know what to expect - up to date information
 - Also explaining access practices as for many they may be new
 - Think about making these changes in a way that reflects disability justice and cultural accessibility
- Starting by thinking of collective understanding of DJ (disability justice) and cultural accessibility
 - What principles come to mind when you hear DJ?
 - Which DJ principles feel most urgent in work with orgs so far?
 - What frameworks do org's current access practices align with?
 - How are power and resources organized to centre ppl most impacted? What would shift if DJ rather than compliance set the bar for decision making and evaluation?

- What makes cultural accessibility different from generic inclusion or accommodations upon request?
 - We are approaching access as one size fits one - the context defines how access plays out - rather than working with access checklist, specific practices
- Whose risks are centered in org's current access decisions?
 - Eg - at one org, staff member's comfort was being prioritized over the need for mask mandates/covid safety of visitors
 - 'We can't force people to do something they don't want to do' - when we hear this we get a sense of who is being centred
 - Risks of funders or landlords
 - In old buildings - the city owns the building, or org can't get funding to make architectural access changes, want to maintain the 'historic' building
 - Language of risks/who is being risked can be helpful to make sense of these situations to organizations
 - Framing dichotomy of who is being prioritized, what the impacts are - challenging neutrality of access decisions/lack of decisions
 - Even to ask/challenge the language that orgs use to describe their ideals
 - We can see how white supremacy is mobilized in access practice
 - White folks using language/practice of access to secure access where they don't belong
 - Prioritizing white folks' access comes at a cost to racialized people's access to certain spaces
 - Eg prioritizing a white person's request for no smoke in a space over Indigenous ppl's smudging practice
 - Commenting on policy can be revealing about who is prioritized
- Whose access needs are centred in org's current access decisions? Where do those priorities show up?
- Sama's thoughts: "Thinking about Margaret Price's words in resonance to this: "Every gathering excludes. Every effort to welcome creates, as Ahmed (2012, 43) argues, someone who is "not at home." Although collective accountability can be built through gathering of various kinds, we cannot ignore the fact that it occurs through and because of harm, not in spite of harm"

Ableism

- When we think about workplace culture, certain ways of being in a bodymind are prioritized over others
 - This is where pushing against 'one size fits all' solutions can be impactful
 - Certain workplace expectations implicitly imagine certain minds and bodies that are required for the space (and policy is created around this expected norm)

- How do we push against this? & how do we make policy that is different across different roles and needs
 - Policy doesn't have to create universalism
- You might face pushback - eg if we say some ppl can stay at home, others may request that
 - Well what's wrong with that?
 - Whose risk are they prioritizing with this?
 - The org, landlord's, profits - or employee's?

Questions to ask when looking at policy (expanded in class outline, pressbook)

- Whose body-mind is centred?
- Where are burdens placed?
 - For example - documentation expectation, which places cost and burden, danger or is completely inaccessible to different employees
 - Burden placed onto employee
 - Needing to get approval from manager/supervisors removing power from employee
 - Beware of vague language - like reasonable or excessive
 - What does this mean? Reasonable for who? The person, the budget?
 - Idea of excessive demand - laden with power and judgement, operating through an ableist idea of what a reasonable vs excessive sick time is
 - Can also come up with when to tell employer/coworkers when you are sick
 - How much notice is expected & how we communicate rooted in ableist ideas of reasonability
 - Creating collectivity within structures of business
 - For example, sharing responsibilities so not one person is responsible for key things which puts pressure on them to come in when sick/unable due to other responsibilities like care work
- What risks are prioritized?
 - For example, 'the show must go on' - when someone is sick, prioritizing show continuity rather than protecting sick ppl
- What's missing?
 - Example - privacy safeguards around documentation - how are medical docs destroyed
- Equity check - how could this differentially harm Deaf/disabled/mad/neurodivergent, immunocompromised, precariously employed, precarious immigration status, queer or trans, and/or low-income staff?

Where to look for ableism in policies

- Hiring policies
- Work from home
- Sick day
- Public health policies
- Workplace accommodation

- Accessibility
- Policies around developing partnership
- Others?

Prompts for commenting on policies

- You may not be creating comprehensive policy for orgs from scratch yourself, so another way to work with policy is to comment on them, highlighting barriers, impacts - making notes for further changes
 - Name the barrier
 - Explain the impact
 - Eg - amount of labour that is required to be on set in person for theatre performances
 - there may be days where people have to be on set/in person, but reconsidering what days are necessary and what other participation expectations can work, addressing labour
 - Offer a better practice
 - Add implementation details

Quick tips

- Replace manager discretion with clear, published pathways
 - Often times accommodations/different ways of doing things like working from home, collaborating on tasks etc is determined by manager discretion
 - Takes power away from worker
 - Creating clear pathways to outcomes for workers
 - Beyond just saying something is possible - like unlimited sick days - actually illustrating how that will happen
- Replace punitive language with care and safety language
- Convert values into rules, resources, timelines
 - Eg if org says they prioritize health and wellbeing of staff, what does that actually look like/transfer to in practice
- Provide multiple options
- Reduce documentation to what is strictly necessary, if any

Example: Sick Day Policy

- Example made by Eliza for us to work with:

“Employees receive five paid sick days per calendar year. Unused days do not carry over. Sick days must be approved by your supervisor prior to the start of your shift where possible. A doctor’s note is required for any absence beyond one day. The note must specify dates and confirm inability to work. Remote work is generally not available for production staff unless they are severely ill. Excessive absences may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The company follows public health guidance. Masking is optional unless mandated by law. Medical information may be requested by HR and will be kept on file.”

- Any words, practices, phrases, logics of note?
 - From X: vague words like excessive, feels very punitive/like there’s not room for

conversation; authority is given to the doctor and supervisor, not the employee; layers of surveillance incl. asking for medical information & keeping on file; power is in the law - re masking

Rewrite from Eliza:

“Staff have unlimited no-fault paid health days annually (physical/mental health; illness; disability-related flare-ups, menstruation symptoms, etc.). No documentation is required. If documentation is provided for long-term leaves, it will be securely stored and deleted by HR after resolution. Stay-home norms: If you have cold or flu symptoms or test positive for COVID, stay home. COVID-conscious practices: Mask-positive rehearsals and audience-facing shifts; portable HEPA in rooms; remote or reassigned tasks when feasible. Supervisors may not discipline staff for using health days.”

- Note about long term leaves - long term leaves with medical documentation are sometimes required for insurance/funding needs
- Rewrite offering a stark contrast, showing how policies regulate bodies
- Note from Amia:
 - There’s also an expectation that illness is contained, and can be measured consistently, and in a way that benefits and centers production, “doctors note beyond one day” or even just “five sick days per calendar years”. Furthermore, I find it this idea, I believe it’s Nicholas Rose, who speaks to the idea (probably in line with Foucault) that the disciplining the body as a surveillance measure is necessary for the proliferation of capitalism”
- Note from X:
 - 2 questions - would you present the rewrite you gave, is it to show the difference or is it meant to be presented as an option? Concern it would be rejected
 - Regardless of rewrite, if org says it’s too much/too different, that they’ll be exploited or no work is done, how do you navigate that/steer towards productive shift?
 - Response from Eliza:
 - Offered rewrite to show what is possible, what org could do if they were really thinking about sick days through anti-ableist perspective
 - Wouldn’t offer as rewrite to org, unless they’re prepared to follow up on promises
 - Could be helpful to offer alternatives
 - While picking something apart, use language like what’s written in rewrite to offer alternatives that address the negative impacts of policy
 - Orgs are different in approach to policy and the amount of barriers to change they present
 - If you just give them the radically different rewrite, maybe they’ll throw up those blockages like you don’t know our insurance policy, etc

- About having a conversation - if they say ppl will take advantage of unlimited sick days, discussing this
 - How are you determining what taking advantage is?
 - How are you surveilling the use of sick days to determine what taking advantage is happening?
- Unless org requests new sick day policy, in general giving opportunities to tweak policy and language and have that be a conversation
 - In context of practices, how to implement policy always a part of conversation

Writing access statements

- Many groups thinking about how to write access statement for orgs or how to present how to write an access statement
- What should access statements do:
 - State purpose and who it's for (artists, staff, audiences).
 - List specific supports offered by default (ASL/CART schedule, relaxed shows, low-stim rooms, sensory info, companion tickets).
 - Make supports findable (links to maps and access guides, seat measurements, door widths, elevator/bathroom info, routes). You might not have this info, but your org can fill it in.
 - More information the better; and linking relevant info like floor maps that might be elsewhere on site to access landing page
 - Provide multiple contact options (text/phone/email/DM) and a response timeframe.
 - See how org is approaching access
 - Shift the burden to the organization (proactive offers, not "accommodations upon request" only).
 - Language on job ads can be shifted according to this too so ppl don't have to disclose before applying/considering applying
 - Minimize documentation (state when it's not required; if ever needed, explain why and how data is protected and deleted).
 - Name roles/owners (e.g., Access Producer/FOH lead) and the access budget or funding source.
 - Include COVID-conscious basics where relevant (mask-positive practices, ventilation/HEPA, stay-home norms).
 - Use plain language and avoid euphemisms; provide alt text and readable formatting.
 - Explaining what access practices are; they may be new to some people
 - Offer choices and alternatives (multiple ways to attend/participate; remote/low-stim options).
 - Explain how to request something else and what the process looks like (simple steps, timelines).
 - Build feedback and accountability (anonymous form, contact for concerns, how

decisions get made, public change-log).

- Public change log - log to update public about changes, for example covid updates
- Commit to review cadence (e.g., quarterly) with paid input from Deaf/disabled/mad/neurodivergent community members.
- Address affordability and ticketing (companion tickets, sliding scale, fee-free access lines).
- Signal a justice-based stance (collective access, commitment to community, interdependence, leadership of those most impacted) rather than compliance optics.
 - Statement can also describe how it was created, who was involved and how
 - In our particular context - you could include your involvement in the statement if you want, but if it worries you about being made responsible for their practices out of your control or something that's something to consider/talk about
- Their statement must accurately reflect what is actually going on
- Including their access limitations
 - Could become a reminder to change an access practice
 - Orgs might be hesitant to include limitations in case of pushback; but this is an opportunity to see what practices need to be changed

National Ballet Access Statement discussion

- National ballet's statement:
 - "The National Ballet of Canada is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for all persons including patrons/customers, employees, contractors, job applicants, volunteers, suppliers, and any visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, or use our services. As an organization, we will meet and support the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner, and as set forth in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) and all associated standards and regulations. The National Ballet of Canada will strive to ensure that all policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the core principles outlined in the Act."
- Any comments?
 - From X:
 - Feels a little intense - saying we will meet all needs for everyone ever, instead of saying what they're actually doing; making such a long list of all the roles - maybe describing things that would create access needs is more useful; power is placed in the law, 'we will do everything as long as it's regulated in the act' - access is not regulated just in the law; unspecific - how will they do everything they're saying?

Some prompts for rewriting

- What is this page for and who is it written to (artists, staff, audiences)? Is that explicit in the first sentence?

- Could also be interesting to create different statements for different roles/groups
- Does it name concrete supports (ASL/CART schedules, relaxed shows, low-stim room, sensory map), or just say “inclusive/accessible”?
- Can a first-time disabled visitor decide if they can attend from this page alone (maps, door widths, elevators, seat details, routes, photos/audio tours)?
- Are there multiple contact options (text/phone/email/DM) and a guaranteed response time? Who replies?
- Who is doing the planning labor: the org or the person? Is “accommodations upon request” the only pathway?
- If you need something not listed, are the steps simple (2–3 steps) with clear timelines and what happens next?
- Are companion tickets/sliding scale/fee-free booking clearly explained?

Covid Consciousness statements: what should they do

- **Note:** This is often a real negotiation with organization - possibly none of the organizations are prepared to uphold a covid consciousness statement
- State the purpose in plain language: keep people safe and events running without sacrificing health.
- Name stay-home norms for symptoms, positive tests, and known exposures, with paid isolation where applicable.
- Specify mask-positive expectations for close-contact work, rehearsals, backstage, and crowded indoor settings; say when/where masks are expected and provided.
 - The more detail and more transparency the better
- Describe ventilation measures: HEPA units, outdoor/door-open practices, and how often filters are changed.
- Outline testing practices: when rapid tests are used (e.g., close-contact work, outbreaks) and how they’re provided.
- Offer alternatives: remote or reassigned tasks, flexible deadlines, and easy hand-off protocols.
- Centre high-risk people: name how immunocompromised and disabled workers’ needs shape decisions.
- Provide clear contact channels (text/phone/email/DM) and response times for health/access questions.
- Define roles and ownership (e.g., Access Producer and Production Manager), and where the budget lives.
 - Who is in charge and how is it budgeted for
- Include privacy limits for any health data collected: what, why, who sees it, retention, deletion.
 - Including how it is communicated when someone on staff for example has covid, how their information is collected or retained
- State audience-facing practices (if relevant): masking guidance, CO₂/ventilation notes, late entry/virtual options.

- Commit to material supports: free high-quality masks, rapid tests, HEPA units, outdoor options when feasible.
- Add non-retaliation language for using sick/isolation days or raising safety concerns.
- Set measurable targets: availability of masks/tests, ventilation benchmarks, outbreak response timelines.
- Include a feedback loop (anonymous OK) and a public change-log of updates.
- Specify review process and triggers (e.g., quarterly or when case trends/outbreaks change).
 - How often are you reviewing your process, what triggers a review
- Use accessible formatting and plain language; avoid medical gatekeeping or punitive tone.

Next Class

- Friday the 21st will be from **1:30 to 3:30** rather than 1 to 3
- What topic would you like for the topic of that class?
 - If folks have thoughts or interests let us know!
 - Some ideas from Eliza brought up from presentations:
 - Funding/budgeting
 - Transformative Justice to come a some point as well - might be better towards end of semester
 - Session for brainstorming & discussing what you're all working on also a possibility
 - Bringing in guest lecturer
 - Watching and discussing interviews
 - Not having class an option too!

Studio 3

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ew9nZ8bjlQK978V68SGniionRzcc0ALWoDjDjwFIh_U/edit?tab=t.0 - class notes

- Note from Finn - I'm going to try to make these notes a bit more concise, if something is covered in this outline I will try to not take too many notes on it, and focus on things that are said in class that aren't in the notes (do you like this approach? Last week's I added in things that were in the class outline notes so everything was all together but not sure that was preferable to a more concise notes)

Outline for Class

- Focus on funding and covid consciousness
- Check in and access check in, mutual aid check in
- Honouring Alice Wong (disability justice advocate, writer, journalist, activist, and many more)
 - Being drawn into a politic of local and global disability justice, drawn into love and collectivity through her work
 - Alice Wong died this past week and has become a crip ancestor
 - Feels important to honour her, think with her and the work that she cared deeply about
 - If you have love, thoughts, anything to bring in about Alice Wong and her work please do bring them into the class (and discord!)
- Discussing funding and how to research funders of grants - how are they tied to Israel and other deathmaking projects & how you can find this information
- Presenting some funding available that might be relevant to your access plans
 - And discussion of what our role is in terms of funding with the orgs
- Discussion of covid-consciousness and work with organizations
 - Bringing in ideas from our own lives, experience with organizations so far, and ideas around managing pushback and communicating with orgs about covid and covid conscious measures
 - If time, we'll look at some clips with an interview with Mask Bloc TO member (founder?) Katie Babcock

Mutual Aid Update

- Mohammed has started his own small business selling soccer jerseys to help support himself and family - we will add this link to the chat and discord
 - Link to Mohammed's instagram:
 - <https://www.instagram.com/mhmdlkhtyb81/>
- Flooding in Gaza has caused damage to his belongings and tent - we will be raising more funds for this as well
- Survival funds are needed more than ever during this falsified ceasefire

Honouring Alice Wong

- Alice Wong was an activist, writer, Disability Justice leader, advocate, community organizer

- Note - check out the Disability Visibility Project: <https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/>
 - If ever you're feeling isolated, alone, need a pick me up - it's a beautiful digital space to get lost on; a curated archive of so many different voices
 - In a time of celebrity-ism, where the same voices seem to be amplified across platforms, Alice Wong was really focused on amplifying voices that are missing elsewhere; "making disabled stories visible" - meant she did a lot of work finding and sharing stories that offer a multiplicitous view of disabled life
 - Showing life and vitality in midst of death-making projects; equally important as discussing/revealing these projects is showing how we live amidst them
 - She talked a lot about "Connective tissue" of disabled authors and crips
- She was a cofounder of many campaigns, and really thinking about ways to be active in activism from bed, online
 - Discussing isolation and creating ways to be active digitally in organizing and activism - for example Crip the Vote, Access is Love Campaign and Crips for eSims for Gaza
 - In honour of Alice, we're invited to donate or amplify the Crips for eSims for Gaza Campaign: <https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/2023/12/25/crips-for-esims-for-gaza/>
- Connecting back to article - Why Palestinian Liberation is a Disability Issue
 - Disability justice requires solidarity with Palestine
 - Collective liberation is central to disability justice; cross-movement solidarity
 - Solidarity isn't transactional or conditional - we shouldn't care just because we relate; but because we require cross-movement solidarity and relationship building towards collective liberation

Funding

- A lot of our work in this class is thinking about both what we invest in as a reflection of our values, and thinking about how many accessibility measures cost little to no funding
 - But we're also interested in funding as an opportunity for organizations to amplify their commitment to accessibility

Thinking critically about where funding comes from

- Quick discussion of the Azrieli Foundation & its ties to many art funding opportunities
- Stop Arts Washing
 - Campaign which has been working to stop arts orgs from investing in & receiving funds from Azrieli Foundation & other ties to Israel
 - Projects aimed to de-link arts from genocide and apartheid Israel
- How to determine whether an org/funding opportunity you want to be sponsored by/receive funds from is sponsored by Azrieli org (using Toronto Arts Foundation as an example)
 - First go to Annual Reports and Financials on website
 - (because of optics, a lot of orgs will hide funder/investor info and bury them in things they think folks won't read like annual reports)

- (toronto arts uses a lot of aesthetics and narrativization of their work in this report to distract from their complicity)
- If you know which investor you are looking for that is complicit, you can CTRL+F and find them in investor lists
 - So many of these investors are engaged in death-making, colonial projects
 - What does it mean to be using these funds for our work
- What does the partnership with foundations like Azrieli do for Azrieli?
 - Association - putting their name on project, association with projects that legitimize them/crip-wash Israel and the Azrieli foundation's work
 - Tax write offs
 - We don't necessarily know everything that the partnership does
 - Does it influence programming and funding decisions? It can and we won't necessarily know
 - Investors could leverage the money they put into orgs to influence practices
 - If we receive funding from these orgs, we're receiving money that also funds genocide & we don't know to what extent our entanglement reaches
 - It's hard when so many artists need these finances to survive - but what does it mean if this comes through the deathmaking of other people, other communities
 - Note from X - are there tips for artists who need the money from orgs and then find out those orgs/funds are complicit - once they're already in the space/associated; or in a situation where they will not survive without funds - what can they do?
 - Working with collectives/working individually to push for divestment
 - Responsibility to hold survival needs alongside the reality of what funders are doing
 - Looking for other funding opportunities
 - For people in precarious situations, some boycotting are degrees of privilege you don't have
 - Using whatever stakehold you might have from within, if you are embedded within/cannot remove yourself from entanglement within these funders/orgs to push for divestment
 - We are all implicated within these systems & bodies that are making us live out of line with how we want to live
 - Morally injury - the decay that we experience when we don't live in accordance to our politic - many of us live with this and don't notice
 - It doesn't make you a worse or better person when you make a decision that is against your

politic/when you decide not to divest from involvement of funders/orgs that are complicit in these deathmaking projects

- We live in the morally grey all the time and will continually navigate this; measuring the degree we can live with moral injury and material needs/survival
 - It's always a matter of life and death - a matter of whose, our's or someone else's
- Fully divesting all these bodies from their colonial projects is a monumental task, taking this on in whatever way we can
 - Do you know people with connections and resources that we can engage in
 - Resource Movement - resource mobilization project engaging with youth who are recipients of generational wealth
- Keep chipping away at these systems in the way you know how and are able
- Anecdote from Eliza
 - Pensions of faculty are generated from TMU's investments
 - Faculty for Palestine are demanding transparency of what these investments are and divestment from Israel
 - OPSEU just passed a motion last night - they will completely divest from the funding of Israel and armament
 - Collective action really can create change; what change can come when we completely divest from genocide?

Covid Consciousness

Notes from collective discussion

- From Miles: to manage pushback from others in terms of masking and making the practice going into their daily lives
 - Making covid policies explicit
 - From Eliza: thinking of Tangled's signs on their walls that say disabled people are worth protecting, masking is solidarity; I see that you are wearing a mask, thank you for trying not to kill me
 - Managing pushback from others it can be really difficult when it affects you on such a deep and personal level

Covid Consciousness

- Sama addition:
 - Bringing in this idea of the great forgetting - we already did this and it was possible re: masking and covid consciousness - there is already precedent for this; communicating this to organizations that there are already proven practices and possibilities that can come out of covid consciousness

- Accountability without punishment - Dean Spade Love in a Fucked Up World writing on accountability without minimizing harm
 - Society responding with denial or individualization of harm - that person is a bad guy and deserves punishment
 - Minimization is deeply entrenched
 - All people do things that hurt others and all people are hurt - not punish a few people but all collectively learn and change our behaviour
 - Most people who do the worst harm never get punished; our punishment system punishes people who are targetted by empire & colonization
 - Moving away from punishment based society
 - We don't need to skip over feeling hurt, but move away from lies about "good and bad people"
 - Improve our capacity to give and receive feedback in our personal lives
 - Listening and not minimizing feedback, developing conflict skills

Class Six - Crip Temporalities/ Spatialities/ Territorialities: Freedom Making as Place Making

Check in - access, mutual aid, group work check in

- Group work check in
 - From Elysia - going good, split up work and feeling excited despite tensions with institution
 - From Kirin - same, work continuing through the weekend
 - Note that we can use the class space to talk about tensions and receive any care that you might need!
 - From Breanna - going well, trying to figure out what finished project might look like - is it a working doc, action items, slideshow?
 - From Eliza - it is up to you; there's no standard format - what you develop will be in relation to the communication and direction you received from org
 - Typically people will put together google/word docs; especially if you have a lot of language around statements/commitments, action items, links that you want to embed in document
 - Access reports can act as a model for you
 - you can begin with a summary of the access that currently exists and gaps you've identified and are going to address
 - Eg theatre group started their original presentation with a framing of disability justice - this could be a good place to begin; framing your approach, then introducing the gaps and current access plan (and how you identified these gaps - through communication, access plan, own experience for example), and then in terms of offering your access plan (which is something the organization will be following for 6 months) that can take any shape
 - You can switch to a powerpoint, list a series of recommendations in doc using headers with descriptions of how org can implement them
 - You can finish off with markers of community accountability
 - reaffirming that this is not about a 6 month experiment but creating relationships with community & lasting practices
 - Summary of implementation, impact/community responsibility
 - If you feel your access plan is still a bit unfinished that is okay & a part of the work
 - We cant necessarily predict a linear timeline for completion
 - Work up to the timeline and hand over a product that you feel represents your work and passion for the project - but if you feel for example it's not quite edited or formatted or

completely finished in certain sections - just communicate this to us, and we can make a plan together for how to complete

- Talk with your group about this and what options work for everyone
- Coming back and doing more work in Jan for example is an option (not an expectation or obligation, only if this would be satisfying or work for you; and note not everyone in your group would have to come back though everyone should agree to this being done)
- Reminder that everyone is getting an A and this project will not impact the mark you get
 - Probably more likely - you can hand off parts of your project for our team to finish off for you, with your direction & being accountable to you

Upcoming Deadline/Class Content

- Next week we'll hear from you about your plans and do feedback
- Week after that we'll hear your final presentation
- Dec 16 you submit your final plans, let us know how you feel about it and any other directions
 - And then after that we'll follow up with you with how it's being implemented etc

Mutual Aid Update

- From Elysia about Mohammed's campaign
 - Updates - the person who is running the campaign for him accidentally sent too much money, so he isn't able to take more donations until that amount is sold (around 2000)
 - Sama and Elysia are trying to get in touch with the fundraiser organizer to get that figured out
 - Right now not sure if it is beneficial to be uploading to his campaign as he is not able to get the money at this time

Lecture Notes

Starting with moment of candour

- Difficulty narrowing down the material for this lecture - there feels like there is so much left unsaid
- This work is dire and indispensable and warrants terror in the presence of its absence
 - The aggression, quietness, decay, enmasse displacement and debilitation; deluge of lives being severed so violently from their futures bringing up an ambient anxiety and a scarcity of time/spoons/dialogue where we can talk about this

- Feeling a timer start - I have this amount of time to persuade people to become purveyors of revolutionary practice
- Intention and knowledge that the lecture today might feel

Thinking of everywhere

- As an interrogation, pressurizing the idea of where and routing us towards idea of elsewhere
- Role that space brings to our thinking and work with accessibility
 - Mobilizations of crip access as incorporeal and inextricable from land

Thinking with Ruth Wilson Gilmore

- “A geographical imperative lies at the heart of every struggle for social justice: if justice is embodied, it is then therefore always spatial, which is to say, part of a process of making a place”
- Conversation about liberationist modalities is a conversation about space
 - Everyday spatial struggles
 - Place-centred violence of settler institutions and structures
- If freedom is a place, how do we find it, and how do we make it over and over again

Going mad as in going home

- Madness as a place - La Mar Jurelle Bruce - madness as place within Anglophone idiom
- Mad diaspora
 - “Emergence of unprecedented diasporic subjectivities, ontologies and possibilities that transgress national and rational norms”
 - Madness “inventing the future”

Mad Mapping Freedom

- Dream together on idea of what a free(d) place would look like, feel like, what would be present, absent
- We know the face of injustice really well, what do we know about its antithesis?

Mad Mapping Activity -

https://www.canva.com/design/DAG51mDmTLE/v6VD3JhcvdpJQDnANeUHzQ/edit?utm_content=DAG51mDmTLE&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton link to shared mad mapping board

- We’ll keep working on this all day and then Sama will download and share it with us so we can look at it again when we’re feeling demoralized!
- This generative space comes from madness, from dreaming beyond what is Reason right now and how it is now
- The place is the process - the means is the place
 - Freedom cannot be defended by suppressing it even partially
 - The means become the goal
 - It matters what we ensnare ourselves in in order to gather
 - Travestied emancipation; “loophole of retreat” - a space of liberation that is a space of captivity
 - Route to freedom must be in togetherness

- Sustain these spaces through conscious action, again and again and again

Syrus Marcus Ware Interview

- Reviewing a part of the interview we did with Syrus Marcus Ware, founding member of BLM Toronto & instructor in performance arts - disability justice activist, advocacy and activism with cultural institutions identifying and ending anti-Black racism and systemic ableism+inaccessibility in cultural institutions
 - One project - Activist Love Letters - tempering the isolation that can come with activist works
 - Activist Portraits project
- Works with speculative futures, Afro-futures, Black crip futures
- Also very present online and on social media
- Interview articulates the difficulties in doing institutional access work, finding community, motivating us to imagine and create different futures

Thoughts from interview

- Establishing crip centric work spaces - task doubling (not sure if this was the exact term, we couldn't remember) where no one person is completely responsible for one task - other people can collaborate and take on work if one person is unable
- Sama thought from Rania El-Mugammar workshop - making yourself replaceable
 - Everyone is indispensable but sharing your knowledge freely so that everyone has the tools and knowledge that you have
- Finn thought on plants - there are so many lessons we can learn from relationships amongst plants, sometimes quite directly/in parallel - thinking with Robin Wall Kimmerer
 - Challenging the white colonial ideas of survival of the fittest or competition when in reality plants survive through interconnectedness and sharing their bodies, abundance and resources
 - Learning as a settler from models of plants and invasive plants - like the common plantain as Kimmerer discusses in Braiding Sweetgrass

Access Plans Feedback

Questions guiding conversation today:

- 1) What access gaps are we addressing?
- 2) How are we addressing these gaps / what are we proposing for our access plan?
- 3) What supports / feedback / collective wisdom / training do we need from the class?

Strategy Planner from Rania El-Mugammar

RAFF

Access Plan Feedback Notes

Reel Asian Film Festival

1) What access gaps are we addressing? 2) How are we addressing these gaps / what are we proposing for our access plan?

- Highlighted some themes/areas of focus:
 - onboarding/training
 - Access and DJ, work needs to begin internally
 - Propose focus on training RAFF staff during onboarding, hiring, and ongoing trainings quarterly
 - Incl. accessibility training that doesn't focus just on physical access
 - Incl. attitudes and beliefs around mental illness, neurodivergence, ableism, emotions, discomfort & cringe, psychoeducation, DJ, community roundtables, intersectionality, cringe theory
 - Cringe theory - from Sama: the idea that being cringe has come to be understood and filtered and demarcated via disability and madness (as in, we find things cringey because we are conditioned into marginalizing disabled and mad people) link: <https://csalateral.org/issue/13-1/cringe-theory-smilges/> - Eliza connects this to Mia Mingus theory of the ugly and invitation to move towards the ugly - idea of "normal body" and what is not (<https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2011/08/22/moving-toward-the-ugly-a-politic-beyond-desirability/>)
 - Onboard more disabled artist and community members
- Lack of community involvement of disabled people in RAFF
 - Assessing connection to community
 - Must be more connection with disabled Asian community members
 - Access coordinator regular meetings
 - Cards created by disabled Asian artists available at each venue, online,
 - Incl. details about accessibility of venue that also have symbols, drawings
 - Top concerns and pros of access
 - Signage of braille and audio
- Working on access of long term change for RAFF
 - Hiring Asian access coordinator with lived experience of disability
 - Can support goals beyond input and timeframe

- Concern about budget - evident through inconsistency of implementing active listeners; paid access coordinator may not be implemented consistently
- Included a resource for funding - [Enabling Accessibility fund](#)
 - Involves youth accessibility leader who applies
 - Govt fund for accessibility, youth partners with an org and submits on their behalf
 - Anything apart from salaries can be applied for funding
 - Due Nov. 3
 - Group could apply for organization - started looking into/doing this already

3) What supports / feedback / collective wisdom / training do we need from the class?

- From Eliza: A lot of feedback from focus groups was that disabled Asian film makers were feeling isolated from the 'in crowd'
 - We cant create an atmosphere of bringing people into the 'in crowd' with just ramps and push buttons - how do we make disabled people feel that they belong
 - Leaning into disabled ways of being that don't require disabled people to perform normative ways of being as a standard
 - These strategies seem effective to ensure these deeper shifts
 - Funding
 - The grant option - wanting to not put more labour on group members; creating the grant proposal could be an option without including group member or presenting the grant to them which they could apply to next Nov
 - If it feels doable to apply with the org to go for it but just proposed options to reduce labour for group
 - Like idea of introducing access framework, thinking of cringe theory as political orientation
 - Framework which can direct access practices
 - Org can enhance their praxis through these frameworks and theory (cringe theory) - shifting understanding for ex of what acceptable ways of being in the space are desirable
 - Then they can apply this framing when they are independently making decisions in the future
- Feedback desired - thoughts on areas of focus and anything additional that they could look into?
- From Elysia:
 - Really appreciate training and focus on beliefs and understandings about disability and DJ concepts
 - Area of focus - connection to community seems so important, excited about the artist cards as a way of doing this - unsure about time line but really exciting

Summary of Plan

- 3 main areas of focus:
 - Onboarding and training
 - Accessibility training for staff:
 - DJ and access, incorporating cringe theory (explanation above)
 - that doesn't just focus on physical access
 - For all stages (onboarding, ongoing training)
 - Increasing involvement of disabled people in RAFF
 - Onboard more disabled artists and community members
 - Collaborate with more Asian disabled artists
 - Creation of cards that communicate access info by artists
 - Assess connection with community
 - Beginning processes for long term change
 - Hiring access coordinator
 - Concern about budget
 - Address funding issues
 - Offering funding resources

IOTA

Access Plan Feedback Notes

IOTA

1) What access gaps are we addressing? / 2) How are we addressing these gaps / what are we proposing for our access plan?

- Develop framework that IOTA can begin to work from, intersectional accessibility ideas and practices
- Access funding - Halifax-based group member has good idea of local funding
 - Provide summary of information of funding opportunities to IOTA
- Lack of deeper understanding of disability
 - Provide a little intro, maybe including models of disability
 - Intersectionally informed ideas and practices - entry points into concept of disability
 - Ex brief overview of different forms of accommodations, physical and attitudinal barriers, intro to working with artists with intersectional experiences and identities (for example artists living on welfare; eg artists not being able to use transit/wheel trans - orgs need to bring a car to pick someone up - orgs will navigate this in different ways that can be harmful, so group will create a step by step intro of how to navigate this)
 - (another example for artists living on welfare - bank account is surveilled and people can lose benefits in different ways - orgs can ask artists how they can best receive funds)
 - Providing entry points that org can work with to begin working from
 - Not just about ramp - so many facets and we want them to understand this
- Creating access document
 - Access board presentation to give intro to accessibility - something that can start conversations about access needs at their org
 - Includes examples of access needs beyond some of the ones ppl may be more familiar with like ramp - financial access, emotional needs
 - Area to discuss access frictions
 - Space for further discussion since access is expansive and complex
 - Also quotes from access anthology - drawing on idea of access needs being complex, not always knowing them since no one has asked us/we only talk about them in intimate contexts
 - Staff can use with one another and artists they onboard
 - Want staff to also consider their own access needs
 - Personalized - i can do this this way; access needs
 - Easy to use; will create a little training which they can use themselves
 - Presentation will be in accessible format
 - What are collective possibilities?

- Other access doc/linked into the access needs presentation/training
 - Bank of access needs - Miles creating
 - Examples of access needs that can get us thinking and talking with loved ones
- Will continue to think about other access tools - so much of what IOTA does is virtual so group hasn't thought as much about in person event stuff like masking etc - feedback and ideas on this welcome!

3) What supports / feedback / collective wisdom / training do we need from the class?

- All feedback welcome!
- Elysia:
 - Really like the focus on building relational intimacy - so intrinsic to forming genuine investment in each other, coming from place of care rather than obligation
 - Presentation super cool & like how you're thinking of access beyond just the room you're in/virtual space - also how you get there etc
- Fardowsa:
 - Really like the suggestions and focus on access needs within organization & think the presentation is really effective thanks for sharing!
- Miles
 - Would like to know what amount of resources is appropriate for access needs bank - because I want the information to not be overwhelming and something to skim through
 - From Eliza: just like in the access anthology considering how there are kind of endless possibilities for experiencing art work /access - maybe not about how many suggestions are in access bank, but also creating a series of questions that ppl can ask themselves as a way of orienting to the access bank or even to the collective wisdom of the group
 - Maybe even readings as well like access anthology for people to draw on

Summary of Plan

- Address lack of deeper understanding of disability and operationalization of accessibility
 - Develop access framework for IOTA
 - Intersectional accessibility ideas and practices
 - Develop an introductory document about disability
 - Incl. models of disability, brief overview of accommodations, physical and attitudinal barriers, working with artists with different intersectional identities (in particular artists living on welfare)
- Creating two access documents:
 - Access board presentation as introduction to accessibility
 - Incl. examples of access needs
 - Discussion of access friction
 - Bank of access needs document

- Incl. examples of different access needs to get IOTA thinking about their own access needs and artists'

Onsite

Access Plan Feedback Notes

Onsite Gallery

1) What access gaps are we addressing?/2) How are we addressing these gaps / what are we proposing for our access plan?

- Developing foundational access practices
 - A lot of their policies/checklist are building off of OCAD's or are case by case
 - So a personalized plan feels useful
- Starting by compiling everything they have into one place
- Also interested in encouraging covid-cautious/safe culture
 - Link OCAD Mask Bloc and Onsite, getting masks in space
 - Implementing HEPA air filters (not usually super expensive and makes a big difference)
- Expanding on physical access
 - Increasing amount of seating available for example and making sure seating is comfortable, permanent, appropriate
- Tools that fulfill the needs of neurodivergent ppl
 - Like stim toys, noise cancelling headphones
- Implementing methods of getting access feedback after shows
 - So Onsite continues to build their approach and can figure out what is working, not working
- Public facing access plan and Internal access documents
 - Incl. theory, access guides for patrons
 - As well as documents and plans for people within org to draw on for internal access plans and ongoing development of access approach
- Carmen Papiia's open access, changes when people enter the room - opportunities for introducing a political framework

3) What supports / feedback / collective wisdom / training do we need from the class?

- How to get started?
 - From river: Mask Bloc and the gallery, creates overall sense of safety at the outset; building rapport with the gallery
 - Map out plan for permanent seating - better for different folks. This might be a longer-term project
 - You used a work other than "compliance", which was great
 - From X:
 - Their group is also trying to work on creating a bit of an introduction so org can understand relevance and importance of work
 - Do you have recommendations or ideas on funding? Discourse or resources for finding funding/conversation around that
 - Response from Elysia - this will definitely be something that needs to be discussed as there wasn't an indication of budget already available

- Response from Eliza - there are available grants/resources that can be called on, crowdfunding
 - We can collectively think about this
 - Sama also noted re bringing in air purifier - building one together can cost under 100 and contribute to collectivizing access - link:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKI-amQikZ4>
- People/Orgs often wrongly think that only disability arts orgs can apply for access funding but that is not true
 - We could ask someone from Tangled or also from Ontario Arts Council etc to talk about funding if that feels useful to everyone!
- How to complete within the timeframe?
- Group doesn't have additional questions right now but sure to have more to come!
- We can also add the proposals to pressbook/discord/ make them available to everyone if this is comfy and desirable so we can all access them and offer support

Onsite Gallery Access Focus Proposal

Our group seeks to develop a foundational access practice for Onsite gallery, both a public facing access plan and an internal one to train staff and student monitors. At the moment, there are no regimented access practices in place, and things seem to go by OCAD's accessibility policy, or on a case-by-case basis. We believe that Onsite gallery should have their own set of access practices that is specific to the contexts that they exist in and will move through. The first thing we seek to do is to compile their checklists for exhibition installations into one place, as within our meeting, they were said to be scattered.

We will also look at introducing a culture that prioritizes covid-consciousness through stocking the space with N95s and KN95s – we are aware that they have masks in the space but not sure what kind of masks. This could also potentially spark a partnership with Onsite and the OCADU mask bloc, which would hopefully keep this project going after their allotted 6 months to make changes. In addition to masks, we would like to implement HEPA air purifiers into the space. This will likely not be a large upfront cost, and only requires the filters to be changed periodically, but it would make a big difference! Expanding on the current physical barriers to access within the space, multiple areas dedicated to permanent seating would be ideal. When speaking with Amia, who has been within the space and spoken to the curators, she said that they often only bring out seating if it fits the visual identity of the show, and otherwise they have small blocks to sit on that are not comfortable nor accessible. Thus we believe that finding ways to integrate permanent seating would be beneficial. The access needs of neurodivergent people within the space also seems to be a gap at the moment, we think that having access to noise

cancelling headphones and stim toys (like they do at Tangled) would be something necessary to begin filling in those gaps.

To make this access foundation a living one rather than a stagnant document, we propose that each exhibition seeks feedback from visitors about the accessibility of the exhibition. This way, access needs are less like a checklist and more subject to change depending on the people within the space and the nature of the exhibit. This allows access to be something that is built upon over time, as Onsite gallery better understands what is working within their spaces and what isn't. So far, our public facing access plan aims to tackle all of these things as well as writing down ways to get to the gallery, and the theoretical frameworks we want to bring to the table (i.e. Papalia's ideas of open access). With the internal access documents, it might be beneficial to bring more of a theoretical perspective to inform how staff and students are beginning to think about accessibility. We want to move away from just checklists and accessibility as a procedure that is one and done, rather we want to position it as a long, creative project that changes when someone new enters the room. In addition, we want them to understand why these things matter — like masking, air purifiers, stim toys — so that we are fostering a culture of genuine investment in accessibility rather than compliance.

Summary of Access Plan

- Developing foundational access practices
 - Many of Onsite's access practices currently are just OCAD's - creating personalized practices
- Compiling current access practices into one place
 - Creating a document/record of everything Onsite is currently doing
- Encouraging/implementing covid safe practices
 - Link OCAD Mask Bloc and Onsite
 - Get HEPA filters in the space
- Expand on physical access
 - Improving seating in gallery
- Introducing tools for neurodivergent people
 - Stim toys, noise cancelling headphones available for use
- Implementing methods of getting access feedback after shows
- Developing access plan/documents that are public facing and ones that are for internal use
 - For example, educational documents that introduce theory to employees, access guides for patrons
 - Docs that are living and encouraging ongoing development of access plan

Theatre Centre

Access Plan Feedback Notes

The Theatre Centre

1) What access gaps are we addressing?/2) How are we addressing these gaps / what are we proposing for our access plan?

- Disability collective had already given some reccs prior to this access plan, so group has drawn on this plan
 - Went through and picked out some of the gaps that were highlighted by Disability Collective
 - Most of the reccs are branched off of the Disability Collective's suggestions
 - Went through their doc and noted which gaps seemed most pronounced
- Want to see/encourage TC to recommend that employees at centre have AODA training
- Sensory accessibility tools
 - All Deaf and Hard of Hearing ongoing production- Rocky Horror Picture Show? This would have to be led by the D/HOH community
 - Crowdfund or make ASL classes available to people who work there - build more rapport, hands on interpretation
 - TDSB has some relatively affordable classes thru continuing education
 - Could be something that is posted on social media/incl in advertising
 - Donate a portion of proceeds of non-captioned events to make possible events that will be captioned/have ASL available
 - Goal to Double amount of asl provided at events w/in 6 months
 - Time line may need to be flexible/discussed
 - Host regular mixer for Deaf and Hard of Hearing folks
 - Implement reccs from Disability Collective even if this is slow/one at a time
 - Discuss which have already been implemented
 - Seek mutual aid to raise money for ASL at events
 - Have miniature/tactile versions of sets for touch
 - Tours of stage and behind the scenes that are not rushed so ppl can touch sets costumes etc
 - Implement options for seating that have clear sight lines available
 - Have assistive listening devices with audio description available to audience members
 - Large print materials and braille signage
 - Try to make sure walkways are clear, unobstructed and well lit
 - More prominent focus on stand up nights as does not involve as much physical comedy, more easily described
 - Accessible website compatible with screen readers
 - Sound indicator for intermission and end of shows/production
- All staff trained on assisting disabled patrons, quick briefing for new staff - time shouldn't be an issue.
- Covid cautious reccs
 - At least one to two mask mandatory performances

- Make explicit on ticket buying site which are mask mandatory
- Provide KN95 masks - table with masks available
 - Mask bloc toronto a resource for free masks
- Mask mandatory performances - consider asking patrons to eat and drink outside theatre
- Encourage masking, strongly encouraged even for shows not specifically mask mandatory
- HEPA for every room, always running
- Review sick day policies for employees
 - Make sure employees will not feel they should work while sick
- Implement ability for ticket buyers to get refund/credit if they become ill and have to miss their show
- Encourage performers, employees etc to regularly rapid test - at the very least before mask mandatory shows
 - Mask Bloc TO a resource for rapid tests
- Hand sanitizer readily available in all spaces

3) What supports / feedback / collective wisdom / training do we need from the class?

- Group interested particularly in: If you notice any crossover between certain access points that could be combined or reduced into one access point
- From Eliza:
 - Love how community grounded the reccs are
 - Like community consults, crowdfunding access funds
 - Looks like you have recommendations for audience, performers, and staff - which feels holistic
 - One way of organizing your document - into these categories
 - Great focus on systemic changes
 - Theatre centre is a bit funny because a lot of their shows are from ppl who rent the venue - rather than all shows they produce and put on
 - Community generated ways to shift programming and put things into policy feel effective
 - In interviews we learned they continually defer to artist - artists get to make the decision which leads to major inconsistencies
 - (like the seating at Onsite which will only appear if it 'fits the show aesthetic')
 - Creating policy w/in rental agreements which require these access tools like masking
- From Elysia
 - Really like idea of tactile miniature sets and longer tours so people are able to take time to look at things
 - Also focuses feel large - maybe could be more manageable if you focused on implementing assistive listening devices, braille, ASL and the masked shows

- (not exhaustive list - everything under umbrella of ASL and access for HOH folks and covid safety would already make the space more safe to be in)
- Any support you need? Workshops that might be helpful in next 6 weeks?
 - river: maybe another check in w Eliza and Yoonmee
 - Also contacting the Theatre Centre and starting the connection

Summary of Access Plan

- Theatre Centre (TC) received an access audit and plan from disability collective, but it's unclear how much that was implemented/seems that many of the plans have not been put into place
 - This plan draws on that work
 - Foundational step is to find out what has been implemented
- Plan focuses on:
 - AODA training for staff
 - And training for staff on how to assist disabled patrons in space
 - Development and implementation of better access practices for d/Deaf, HOH and Blind people using the space, for example:
 - Incl. more ASL and ASL training for staff
 - Funding for ASL through mutual aid and portions of proceeds from other shows
 - Un-rushed touch/tactile tours of set, costumes (and models of stage that could be touched)
 - Programming like Deaf & HOH mixers, shows that are more transferable with interpretation like comedy nights
 - Assistive listening devices available, sounds to indicate end of show and intermission
 - Clear line of sight seating available to book, unobstructed and well lit pathing to seating
 - Large print and braille signage
 - Covid safety, for example:
 - Introducing more mask mandatory performances
 - Having masks (KN95) available
 - HEPA filters
 - Reviewing sick day policies for employees to ensure staff take time off while sick
 - Encouraging employees and performers to regularly rapid test
 - Implementing ticket refund/credit policy for patrons who had to miss a show due to being sick

Feedback Round 2

Access Plan Feedback Round Two - from class Dec. 5

- During this class we'll hear from groups about their access plans
- & do consent based feedback
 - We'll give feedback based on your direction (if there's specific feedback you're looking for, or just general feedback)
- After this class there'll be about a week to apply any feedback & hand them in by the 16th
 - This does not mean they have to be complete!
 - (more directions in previous class notes - you can decide with your grp and let us know if there are things you want to do, or have us do, to finalize your plan past the 16th)
- Yoonmee and Lisa also here today to hear about your plans :)
- Over the next week, reach out to your mentors if you can as you work
- Final presentation can be in whatever form works best
 - Having a visual element can help
 - Won't be a time for feedback - but if you want feedback, you can email about that
- Final presentations can show your work, creativity, approach
 - How does disability justice, decolonization, disability lead approaches change the way organizations understand access and the way we understand access through this work?

Other Updates from Class

Mutual Aid Updates

- The problem with Mohammed's campaign seems to be solved so he is able to receive donations again

Final Class

- Eliza's sent an email with two date options - the 15th and 12th for final class presentations
 - Based off feedback it seems like we'll do both sessions
 - With everyone's permission these classes will be recorded
 - After this class, Eliza will send another email to confirm dates
 - By Monday (Dec 8) we'll have confirmation of which dates your group will present

RAFF 2

Context/What RAFF is Doing Now

- RAFF have been running for 29 years
 - Their whole thing is showcasing Asian cinema and storytelling, both from Asian countries and diaspora globally
 - Part of their motto is sharing stories, supporting and fostering spaces where Asian creators can grow
- Their accessibility is there (to put it nicely says Angelo)
 - Some active listeners available in some parts of the festival
 - Really thorough google form for disabled ticket buyers
 - So ppl can self disclose disability and get access needs met
 - There is a lot of room to grow!
 - We can acknowledge work that has been done so far -
 - But good intentions are not a good excuse to stop trying!
 - Access is dynamic and constantly in motion
 - When accessibility spaces are created people ill show up!
 - Imperfect access is better than no access, but more can be done

Overview of the Access Plan

- Frameworks
 - Disability justice, Intersectional, interdependent lens - building community and meaningful connections
 - Cringe theory - Smilges (2024)
 - Aims to understand why we cringe or have negative reactions when we engage with people and situations
 - Cringing happens when we see something that violates our own social norms
 - This is particularly important in this context where saving face, maintaining assumed social norm (which is built on the need for safety, fighting back through protection of holding selves to higher value)
 - Genuinely working through own feelings that prevent us from going the extra mile is important
- Overall goal
 - Foster ideology and praxis of disability justice, care, and access
- Proposal:
 - Employ 3 part plan of action
 - Education - "in order to champion access you must know why"
 - Training that will be mandatory for all staff, volunteers, potentially board of directors to fill in gaps of knowledge

- Boils down to making sure everyone is on the same page, bring in cringe theory aspect into conversation - begin to challenge internalized notions of what disability looks like, own relationship with disability and society we live in
- Fostering community - "in order to champion access you must foster community"
 - First part - focused on film festival
 - Many film festivals are daunting and inaccessible (navigation is scary, rules change all the time)
 - Create events and workshops that let patrons know what the festival is, how to get tickets, how to get accessibility
 - Way of creating resources and continually addressing practices
 - Also way of bringing people in and potentially getting access to funding as well
 - Second - material aspect we need some money!
 - Social media campaign/art project creating postcards of accessibility standards in all the theatres RAFF works with
 - Fostering community with theatres, creating co-project with spaces
 - Showcase what cool events can happen and highlight theatres' uniqueness!
 - Also opportunity to do fundraising, joint fundraising with theatre
- Funding
 - Relevant grants
 - Canadian Council of the arts
 - Ontario arts council
 - Toronto arts council
 - All have accessibility funds that can be built into grants and projects
 - As training is finished, then make connections with theatres, then make some cool art with theatres and reel Asian, and then starting to create events through DJ concepts and ties into Asian and Asian Canadian cinema, stories, and then throughout exploring grants and fundings

Feedback

- What kind of feedback is wanted?
 - From Angelo - resources that connect to the ideas that the group are bringing up
 - Resources of events, groups, workshops that are relevant in the community right now

Trainings around DJ that are available

- River - mentor Velvet rec'd some trainings that might be useful - AODA style trainings but presented by disabled people - may be a bit more DJ oriented though still not DJ centric - resources: Changing Paces <https://changingpaces.com/about/> and Cortree - <https://www.cortree.com/disability-training/aoda-ontario/>
 - Angelo - was also noticing this - how much the available trainings are AODA centric
 - Breanna - we had the idea (Theatre Group) to make a training ourselves
 - From Eliza - maybe as a group we take this on and collaborate on something like this as a next step
 - Miles - I was part of a celebration for IDPD through CILT - maybe they will have something? A few orgs that I learned about where: ASE Foundation (for Black Disabled ppl), Disability Justice Network Ontario
 - Breanna to check in on CILT connections, see if there are any CILT resources, grants, funding

Feedback on Funding

- Eliza - really appreciate the focus on funding as a material way to enhance access; RAFF also just received an access grant
 - Toronto Arts Council receives funds from Azrieli (tied to the IOF)
 - Noting the ties that so many of these funding centres have ties to things we may not be politically aligned with; TAC might not be one to profile if you're offering a collection, or make note of their funding connection

Other Suggestion

- From Eliza - recalling an earlier conversation, love the idea of the postcards/digital postcards that outline access at the venues (this is so astute bc RAFF works through so many different venues)
 - I wonder - are you recommending to also make some access guides for each venue as well as the access standards
 - Access guides to help people navigate the venue, how to get there, etc
 - Link to access guides are in the Cultural Accessibility Landing Page if you'd like some examples to work from!

IOTA 2

Access Plan Overview

Access Bank

- List of accommodations and access needs examples that can offer an introduction and a way for IOTA employees to understand different access needs
 - If you're new to accessibility or even your own access needs it can be hard to know
- Bank is just a guide - access is not one size fits all, everyone's needs are different
- Different sections, eg
 - Environmental and sensory
 - Cognitive and executive functioning
 - Social and emotional safety supports
 - Policy level accomms
- Miles also compiling some articles and resources around access needs to provide
 - Incl. access rider resources - help prep them for developing access riders for clients

Policy Based changes - Accessibility Partnership Agreement

- Creation of doc/policy for IOTA when working with other orgs to be on the same page about access policies
 - Outlining values, goals and objectives, roles and responsibilities for IOTA and partners, duration & review of policy, budget, confidentiality, and accountability

Guidelines for IOTA when working with artists on welfare or low income artists

- Introducing IOTA to some of the challenges of these artists
- Recommendations for: commute support, payment considerations
 - Adding money into budget for food, commute costs, extra time for unexpected delays

Plain Language Guide to Accessibility and Working together

- A plain language guide that introduces IOTA about accessibility, access needs, working together through accessibility
 - Group activities identifying access needs and communicating them as a group & with clients

Feedback

- Desired feedback: formatting, resources that might be helpful; all feedback
- Eliza - particularly difficult doing this work without any contact from the org and thank you for your work!
- Eliza - access bank is really spot on in terms of providing a creative resource to fit an access need of the org; it feels innovative, well designed and will be effective

- In that list of access needs - also linking out to other resources that explain access needs, for example relaxed workplace can link out to something else that talks about that
 - Access landing page can be a blanket link to
 - Vital Practices Guideline also could be useful to link - <https://bodiesintranslation.ca/vital-practices-in-the-arts/>
<https://bodiesintranslation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Bodies-in-Translation-Vital-Practices.pdf>
 - Just so you can share community resources to folks!
- Access rider a great idea
- Access partnership agreement feels very implementable - it reads like an access rider; this feels like a new access practice that i havent seen - this addresses a need that IOTA has as they work so much with partners, where they don't necessarily know what the access needs of their partners are before they partner with them
 - Building in an expression of their commitment to access
 - Thinking of the partnership agreement as an access rider might also change the framing you are making about commitment to access
- Low income materials are great and very needed - fits in nicely with their mandate on the building relationships
 - Because you haven't been able to communicate with IOTA, maybe Lindsay can offer context-specific information for Nova Scotia (equivalents to ODSP etc) - giving local context would be great
- Plain language guide looks great
- Question from Miles - talking about changing the partnership doc to an access rider, do you mean changing the document to be that way? /explain more?
 - Eliza - if you can email it to me, I can give more specific recs, but what I'm saying is that your impulse to work with access riders as part of access bank, bc access riders are the organizations' way of understanding and meeting artists' needs and institutional constraints - now that it's documented, we're both beholden to it
 - Thinking of Cyn Rozeboom's writing in Access Anthology about their introduction of care clause - having their approach to access in writing rather than casual/verbal
 - Sometimes we think collective care/access justice can just happen informally, but sometimes having it in writing can be helpful especially when things go wrong - this is the impetus around the access rider
 - In terms of the access partnership agreement, I wonder if it is structured as we would normally structure a contract - a standard legal agreement
 - Suggestion would be to think about the purpose of the access rider which is to say that access cannot be standardizable, is creative, emergent, relational - to think about how the partnership agreement can make space for that more creative relational approach to access, instead of saying let's both commit to access

and sign, rather introducing steps involved, where both orgs discuss how they conceptualize accessibility - get at the changeable nature of access

- Still can be articulated as the partnership agreement - but outlines process for sitting down, talking about access, and writing a collective access agreement maybe as a way of doing it

Onsite 2

Context/What Onsite is Doing Now

- Onsite a part of OCAD, been open to 2007 - though recent space just open since 2017
- They have some access practices, mostly focussing on physical barriers

Access Plan Overview

Frameworks

- 10 principles of Disability justice - noting DJ asks more than an integration into normative bodymind politic; consider what it means to dedicate work and lives to collective liberation
- acces(sen)sibility - Elwood Jimmy - what are we giving access to; it is not enough to give access to intrinsically violent colonial ways of being
- Defining access as relational practice; we create collectively that alters our way of being; dream beyond what institutions define as enough for us

Gaps/Access Plan Focusses

Covid conscious policies

- Framework/foundation
 - linking Mia Mingus' "We will not trade disabled deaths for abled life..." - from You Are Not Entitled to Our Deaths
 - Covid as an intersectional issue primarily impacting working class, disabled, Black, Indigenous, people of colour - linking U Georgia study COVID's racial disparities; Alice Wong's work - "for me a mask is a symbol of love" - noting that other ppl masking protects people who would be unable to mask; we need eachother!
- Reccs:
 - Providing high quality masks (KN95 or better)
 - Onsite can get these from OCAD Mask Bloc, Donate a Mask, PPE Supply Canada, Canada Strong Masks
 - HEPA air purifiers - Onsite does have air purifiers, just would require filter replacements
 - Introducing Clean Air Stars resource which lets ppl know how many filters are needed
 - Zines - low cost education tool that visitors can take home - linking Mask Up We Need You
 - Policies must allow employees and student monitors to stay home when sick without penalty
 - Mask mandatory day & covid safety statement

- Onsite were interested in seeing statements from other orgs - so providing some examples from other orgs and also wrote a statement for them
 - Concern that onsite had - how visitors and monitors would react to covid masking statement
 - A statement that articulates the necessity for masking can help make sense to ppl
- Phrasing in new policies
 - Feedback form in gallery and online for requesting feedback about masking policies
 - As well as a form for accessibility feedback or secondary email for ppl to comment on other access gaps

Missing title here - Anti-colonial resources and practices?

- Resources and zines covering colonization and the arts' role on colonization
- Anti-coloniality in the institution
- **need to refer to doc - I think I missed some of these details I think as we moved on

Integrating access for Neurodiverse communities

- framework/info to set a foundation for reccs:
 - Pulling from Workman Arts' access statement
 - Including mental health and neurodivergence in access statement
 - Tangled arts access statement which centres idea of relaxed performance
- Reccs:
 - Readily available stim toys, single use ear plugs
 - Relaxed performance (BIT guide offered)
 - Inclusion of information about any neurodivergent friendly practices on website and gallery materials
 - Designated low sensory zones
 - Dedicated questions email
 - Encouraging multi-sensory focuses of exhibition practices
 - Adding QR code to descriptions of shows with online interaction
 - Adding Active listeners to staff or to staff as needed

Feedback

- River - really liked all the practical points and the weaving in of DJ principles; in terms of logistics - glad that the budget does not seem to be as much of an issue - the budget can sometimes be an issue - River's group including timelines including what will be a longer project, what is immediate
- From Eliza - the covid statement that you've written is really thought out in response to the gallery's concern in navigating confronting people who are not masked
 - Statement which situates disability justice and care for ourselves/each other is a really effective way to help take care of their staff (which was a concern of theirs)

- Statement about art being pleasurable, but that we need consent and safety in order to engage in pleasure feels really great and effective
- Bringing in so many access statements feels helpful - both the elaborative and the shorter ones
- Eliza - the neurodivergent practices and policies feel effective, drawing on the Workman Arts practices feels effective
 - The self care bags Workman does are an interesting approach - it might be interesting to suggest to Onsite to make these bags, even just to think about what they would put in them, how they imagine care and community care (also since budget doesn't seem to be an issue)
 - Feedback and soliciting community feedback policies and practices feels really strong
 - Adding a line or some detail to the plan about how to communicate neurodivergent practices to community and what networks - Deaf Spectrum Network, Creative Connector Network, Akimbo - some potential listservs to promote through

Theatre Centre 2

Context

- TC is an arts hub for theatre
 - Have a cafe space where they host community events
 - And then have a performance space
 - Most performances are from ppl renting space to perform in/residencies

Access plan areas of focus

- Grant seeking
 - Longer and shorter terms for accessibility funding
- Action items
 - Primarily for groups that would not be able to access the TC currently at all
- Relationships to large funders
 - Looking into accessibility funding that could come from current funders
- Policy changes

Grant Seeking

- Still actively working on this part
- Presenting some current grants to org - three that they found so far are through Toronto Arts Council - operation grants that allows orgs to use for aspects like ASL interpretation
 - Also thinking about fundraising and accessing funds through current funders

Action Items

- 3 communities of focus that have the most barriers in space
 - Deaf and hard of Hearing, Blind and Low vision, and Covid Cautious folks
 - No audio description, ASL or covid cautious policies
- Deaf & HoH
 - ASL interpretation
 - Regular mixer for d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing folks
 - ASL shows ongoing
- Blind and Low Vision folks
 - Audio descriptive shows
 - Time set aside for tours - tactile representations of set, described tours of set and behind the scenes
- CC
 - 1-2 mask mandatory performances for each show
 - Clarity when buying tickets which shows are mask mandatory
 - Supplying KN95s at theatre
 - Providing resources like mask bloc, donate a mask
 - HEPAs rec'd and resources to access orgs that can get them access to HEPAs
- Note - because of budget constraints, group is also suggesting that they integrate one or two of their recs if not all are possible immediately
- Community building a main part of the vision of TC - another action item could be strengthening relationships with communities that are currently having a hard time accessing their space

- One idea - host mixer with theatre related trivia with ASL interpretation; note - they don't want to suggest this before any of the other suggestions are implemented - bc the space would not be accessible/shows would not be accessible

Relationships to large funders

- A lot of funding comes from BMO
- Is there a way to purposely allocate funding from current funders for accessibility
- A lot of the tension that has come up with work with org is funding
 - Pushback regarding ASL interpreted shows for example
 - Don't like the idea of inviting disabled ppl into space if they can't come to any of the shows

Policy Changes

- Having specific policies to those who rent out the theatre space (because so many of the productions are from outside theatre groups)
 - ie. ASL, mask mandatory shows
 - When renters apply to rent the space, making mandatory access policies - if there are concerns for cost then funding could be allocated
- Within residency program as well - making it mandatory to have access practices and prepare for that in their initial budget

Feedback

- What kind of feedback is wanted?
 - Advice on tensions regarding funding and policies for people renting out the space
- Eliza - plan is really comprehensive and a nice focus on funding and policy changes which will strengthen implementation
 - Emphasis on timeline of action items will increase the feasibility of making the systemic changes
 - Strengthening relationships through mixers is a great idea and TC seems excited about that - but also really appreciating that you don't want to do those without the actual changes made to policy and programming
 - Budget will still be required for these as well - reminder of how we invest in our priorities; cultivating relationships always requires investment
 - Reorient from access and ASL as something they want to fund in the future to something they fund now - they fund a lot now, it's not like they don't have a budget!
 - In terms of rental agreement, making accessibility a non-negotiable - citing orgs like Tangled as an example - highlighting how they make access mandatory and people show up
 - Language around this being an important investment, and how the community will follow
 - Fee for the rental agreement - tacking on extra money within overall fee to cover access costs
 - Aligning with their existing values - "reckless generosity"

- Access sponsor a great recommendation, and they can also use the income stream from renters towards accessibility
- If you're including a list of quick wins/list of things you can do quickly for accessibility - when we met, TC was really interested in the worker's experience of accessibility - adding something into plan around sick day policy perhaps
 - No sick day policy currently, all based on "honour system"
 - Introducing idea of job doubling - no one person is responsible entirely for one task - so if someone gets sick, someone else can do task

Presentations!

Notes from Class Before Presentations Start

- It's been amazing how each group has mobilized these crip and decolonial knowledges to work with the organizations!
- It will be super exciting to see how the access plans are activated

IOTA Final Presentation

Group Members - X, Miles, Lindsay

Notes about Implementation from Eliza

- We will meet with them in early January to introduce the access plan
- We will do interviews with them after 6 months, asking them questions about how their perceptions and practices of access have changed because of your plan
 - We will be in touch with you about all of that
 - You are always invited to join meetings, interviews, check in (no obligation as the class will be over) if you would like
- Access plan final due next Wednesday but your involvement can extend beyond that if you desire
- So grateful for your work 😊

Presentation Notes

IOTA Context

- Creative agency in Halifax, work incl. Art management and consultation, public art management, grant and proposal writing, curatorial research, workshops and facilitation
- Also engage in advocacy for “artists facing institutional barriers”

Access Gaps

- Wanted to develop framework for IOTA to work from with intersectional accessibility ideas and practices
- Give information about local funding
- IOTA needed a deeper understanding about disability, esp intersectionally informed ideas and practices

What We Aim to Change

- Ensure access standards are practiced with partnering orgs
- Promote awareness about staff/artist access needs
- Create mutual understanding when working wth disabled artists on welfare or low income

Access Policy: IOTA Accessibility Partnership Agreement

- Acts as a guide btwn IOTA and their partners, setting access standards, defining responsibilities
- Designed to support equitable, meaningful inclusion of disabled artists, audiences, and community members in all collaborative activities
- In more of a contract format - expressing objectives, responsibilities, values
 - Trying to include specifics, not just ‘lofty words’
 - Including plans for review and revision over time, accountability
 - Including things that are not always considered for access - like food, provisions for support workers, etc

- Doc is meant to be signed by all parties - for accountability and follow through
- Hoping this will respond to IOTA's difficulty advocating for accessibility with external partners who do not have an existing commitment to/practice of accessibility
 - Esp. something which is established before beginning work together

Access Board

- Creative activity spaces designed to prompt discussion about access needs of staff and partners
- Links to access bank
- Paired with plain language document of same information
- Meant to be a space of play, conversation
 - Noticed that IOTA had essentially one person who was in charge and very informed about access, while the others were not
 - Noticed a stereotypical understanding of access that could be addressed through more conversation
 - Meant to be accessible information even if you have no knowledge of disability
 - Challenging limited perception of what access needs/access tools are (more than just a ramp)
 - Including examples
 - Discussing access tensions
 - Asserting that resolving access tensions is context specific and that wellbeing should be prioritized over deliverables and deadlines
 - Activity where IOTA and partners introduce their access needs, and identify compatibilities & incompatibilities that can then be worked with
 - Includes contract option if people want something they can formally sign on to
- Plain language doc format includes same information, but in plain language in a google doc

Access Bank

- Tying into access needs activity, the bank includes list of accommodations and access needs
- Begins with explanation of resource - purpose of access bank
 - What are access needs?
 - Access bank as a space to reflect and share, develop interdependence
 - Access needs as not specific just to disabled people
- Pg 2-4 includes examples of access needs and links to resources
 - Not as exhaustive but to demonstrate possibilities for access
 - Eg. assistive tech and website accessibility, communication supports, scheduling and workload flexibility, environmental and sensory accomms, physical and mobility supports, cognitive and executive functioning supports, sensory and emotional regulation, social and emotional, policy level

- Everything meant to be a starting point noting context specific - person to person
- Pg 4 includes more links for general reading, incl. Intro to access riders and access intimacy (Mingus)
- Links are open to everyone through the headers in the doc

Working with Disabled Artists on Welfare

- Document outlining key often overlooked points for working with disabled artists who are low income/live on welfare/income assistance
- Highlights practical access needs
 - Access considerations: incorporate budget for food, materials, commute, extra time for delays (with explanations of these in doc)
 - Important to do these things in dignified ways - eg offering people lump sum amount or reimbursement of receipts for rideshare rather than calling a vehicle for them
- Highlights the importance of thoughtful payment planning/methods
 - Surveillance on bank accounts through income assistance
 - May lose benefits due to payment
 - Consider paying in specific ways - paying on different timeline, label payments as honorarium rather than salary
 - Honorarium will not be deducted while salary will be

Feedback/Next Steps Notes

- Really appreciate the plain language, focus on creating tangible agreements and practical considerations for honorariums
- IOTA's focus on relationship building fits very well with the work
- Access bank such a great way for people to think about access needs and identify needs they may not realize they have
- A few recommendations from Eliza:
 - Also send the slideshow to IOTA (as well as docs) - excellent way to orient to the access plan and entry way into access plan
 - Recc than can be taken up by you all, or the research team separately:
 - We want IOTA to be able to implement all these ideas in 6 months - maybe include something like a letter that offers a vision for how they can roll out the plan over time; where to start
- Feel free to send access plan at any point - due Wednesday
 - Feedback will come possibly in December or in January
- Questions from X:
 - Access bank can be used by others - will just get confirmation that this is okay with Lindsay as well
 - It might be interesting if there is something in the other groups work to add to
 - Finn's masking/covid presentation of interest

- From Finn - you are totally welcome to use this! Will send doc
- Mobilizing knowledge from the course
 - Eliza response: we'll check in with everyone about whether their resources can be shared and in what way
 - We will be in touch after checking in with everyone after the break over email
- Is it okay to share access board on platforms - or should that be later/is it not shareable?
 - Eliza: you can absolutely share them, publish them, put in portfolio etc however you would like
 - Also pls do get in touch for references, letters of accreditation if needed