

00:00:11:18 - 00:00:12:14

Thank you.

00:00:12:14 - 00:00:17:22

So I think we're doing a little bit of our own introductions, each chat for about 5 minutes,

00:00:17:22 - 00:00:21:06

and then we will chat and see where the conversation takes us.

00:00:23:01 - 00:00:24:14

I've got some slides

00:00:24:14 - 00:00:26:18

for my introduction because it really helps me focus.

00:00:27:24 - 00:00:29:13

So, yes, I'm Laura.

00:00:29:13 - 00:00:31:03

My pronouns is she/her

00:00:31:03 - 00:00:34:06

I'm co-artistic director of Stop Gap Dance Company.

00:00:34:13 - 00:00:37:11

Still quite new into the role, so I'm

00:00:37:11 - 00:00:40:01

still slightly finding my way with that.

00:00:41:01 - 00:00:42:17

Audio description.

00:00:42:17 - 00:00:44:04

I'm a white female.

00:00:44:04 - 00:00:48:05

I have brown wavy hair that I've tried to tame back today with some clips

00:00:49:14 - 00:00:51:03

I'm usually wearing purple.

00:00:51:03 - 00:00:52:16

Today is no exception.

00:00:52:16 - 00:00:56:24

I've got a purple jumper, multicolored scarf and various other purple things around me.

00:00:58:07 - 00:01:03:03

I'm sat in my wheelchair
and I also identify as neurodivergent.

00:01:04:14 - 00:01:05:10
So a little

00:01:05:10 - 00:01:09:11
bit about my journey
to becoming co-artistic director.

00:01:09:17 - 00:01:13:05
So I joined Stop Gap in 2001 as a dancer,

00:01:13:17 - 00:01:16:18
and that was straight out of having done
my A-levels.

00:01:16:18 - 00:01:21:11
So a lot of my..
the majority of my training was basically on the job

00:01:21:17 - 00:01:24:15
and growing alongside as the company grew.

00:01:25:19 - 00:01:28:06
And so my current role

00:01:28:06 - 00:01:34:15
within my area of the co-artistic
directorship is focusing on creative learning,

00:01:34:19 - 00:01:38:03
talent development and advocacy.

00:01:38:21 - 00:01:42:22
So a little bit about more about Stop
Gap Dance Company.

00:01:42:22 - 00:01:47:19
If you're not familiar with us,
we are an inclusive contemporary dance company

00:01:47:24 - 00:01:50:15
presenting world class, inclusive dance work.

00:01:51:01 - 00:01:55:01
And our artistic vision
is to offer a window into a parallel world

00:01:55:07 - 00:02:00:17
where human interdependence, strength and vulnerability
play out with poetic realism.

00:02:01:03 - 00:02:02:10

So that's our artistic vision.

00:02:02:10 - 00:02:06:02

But alongside that, we also, as in the introduction,

00:02:06:06 - 00:02:09:20

says Stop Gap is driven by a diverse creative team

00:02:10:01 - 00:02:12:14

who use dance as a movement for change.

00:02:12:21 - 00:02:17:03

So we also have a social ambition
going alongside our artistic vision,

00:02:17:19 - 00:02:20:09

and that is to create an inclusive world

00:02:20:09 - 00:02:23:03

where diversity is not just accepted,

00:02:23:14 - 00:02:28:01

but pursued. A world where no one is limited

00:02:28:01 - 00:02:32:07

by prejudice
against deaf, disabled or neurodivergent people.

00:02:33:14 - 00:02:37:22

So within this, the area of inclusion and relevance,

00:02:38:03 - 00:02:43:14

I was kind of thinking how I wanted
to introduce the areas within the company.

00:02:43:14 - 00:02:47:15

And for me
I kind of felt it naturally split into four areas.

00:02:48:13 - 00:02:52:04

So creation and productions;
reaching a wider audience;

00:02:52:07 - 00:02:53:15

Training and development;

00:02:53:15 - 00:02:57:06

And creative leadership and governance.

00:02:57:06 - 00:02:59:09

So I'll just very briefly touch on those.

00:03:01:02 - 00:03:05:06

So inclusion and relevance

with creative creation and production.

00:03:05:06 - 00:03:09:19

So for us, diversity is really important,
it is basically

00:03:09:19 - 00:03:12:05

like the lifeblood of the company.

00:03:13:17 - 00:03:15:22

Yeah, diversity is the lifeblood

00:03:15:22 - 00:03:19:00

of the devising process.

00:03:19:10 - 00:03:22:04

Different perspectives, reference points and life

00:03:22:04 - 00:03:27:13

experience are essential in driving a process
that will deliver relevant,

00:03:27:13 - 00:03:32:01

rich narratives
that new dance audiences can connect with.

00:03:32:02 - 00:03:36:20

So it's really we're not just an inclusive
dance company because it's a nice thing to do.

00:03:36:20 - 00:03:43:08

It's like essential to the make up of the company
and that we work with unique individuals

00:03:43:08 - 00:03:49:00

and celebrating uniqueness rather than thinking
about trying to be a carbon copy of each other.

00:03:49:24 - 00:03:53:09

And alongside that, representing diversity on stage

00:03:53:15 - 00:03:57:05

gives an audience a chance to reconsider both

00:03:57:05 - 00:04:03:06

what is dance and who can dance, and to address
potentially negative and narrow stereotypes

00:04:03:13 - 00:04:07:03

they might have formed about differences.

00:04:07:05 - 00:04:09:14

So then that kind of leads onto then the audience.

00:04:09:14 - 00:04:14:10
So we're inclusive and diverse within the company,
but we also want our audiences

00:04:14:10 - 00:04:17:23
to represent the diversity of society.

00:04:18:06 - 00:04:22:24
So we're developing different ways
to remove barriers and to make work accessible

00:04:23:05 - 00:04:28:06
to a wider audience
so it can become a universal shared experience

00:04:28:13 - 00:04:33:09
rather than there's certain times where you may have
accessibility there, but it might be, oh,

00:04:33:09 - 00:04:38:14
just on this evening, this is when it's audio
described or this evening is the signed performance.

00:04:38:14 - 00:04:41:17
We want to make it all a universal experience.

00:04:42:10 - 00:04:46:15
So we questioned what if dance was more
than just a visual experience?

00:04:47:00 - 00:04:50:15
What if music and spoken word
were more than just auditory experience?

00:04:50:16 - 00:04:52:19
How can we make that cross-over?

00:04:53:12 - 00:04:55:07
And we're particularly working with this

00:04:55:07 - 00:04:58:17
with our current new production,
which is called Lived Fiction,

00:04:59:06 - 00:05:01:18
and it's embedding creative access

00:05:01:18 - 00:05:05:03
in the process rather than as a bolt on at the end.

00:05:06:05 - 00:05:08:08
And this does take time

00:05:08:08 - 00:05:12:18

and investment,
but also really importantly, consulting

00:05:12:18 - 00:05:17:19
with those with lived experience is integral
to actually making it meaningful.

00:05:18:02 - 00:05:18:22
Thank you.

00:05:25:08 - 00:05:26:04
Thank you, Laura.

00:05:26:04 - 00:05:27:09
Thank you.

00:05:27:17 - 00:05:28:17
Hello.

00:05:28:17 - 00:05:30:21
My name is Tarik Elmoutawakil.

00:05:31:08 - 00:05:33:20
I didn't come with any prep.

00:05:34:05 - 00:05:37:04
That's normally a condition for me speaking, is that

00:05:37:04 - 00:05:40:03
I prefer to speak from the heart.

00:05:41:04 - 00:05:46:04
Because I feel like with ADHD,
I can't always rely on

00:05:47:04 - 00:05:49:14
being able to even remember what I've written in my notes.

00:05:49:14 - 00:05:51:18
So I ideally, things just kind of like,
come out here,

00:05:51:18 - 00:05:55:07
but I normally also don't
speak to anyone before 11 a.m.

00:05:55:19 - 00:05:58:23
So let's see how this goes.

00:05:59:16 - 00:06:01:01
Um, all right.

00:06:01:01 - 00:06:06:15
So I think, oh, I should do,

um, a description of myself, shouldn't I?

00:06:06:15 - 00:06:10:09

So I'm a brown person, man.

00:06:10:19 - 00:06:13:10

I've got a little beard thing going on.

00:06:13:21 - 00:06:17:07

Um, I have lots of accessories.

00:06:17:15 - 00:06:21:17

Silver. Amazigh North African jewellery, a lot of it.

00:06:22:04 - 00:06:23:06

My own culture.

00:06:24:20 - 00:06:27:04

And, um,

00:06:27:10 - 00:06:31:09

I've got a shaved head.

It's also balding, but shaved.

00:06:31:22 - 00:06:36:08

Um, a fluffy purple jumper

00:06:36:20 - 00:06:39:21

and some pleated green

00:06:41:12 - 00:06:42:14

pleather trousers.

00:06:42:14 - 00:06:44:00

Look at those.

00:06:44:18 - 00:06:47:07

Um, so that's.

00:06:47:07 - 00:06:49:13

That's a bit about me

00:06:51:11 - 00:06:51:23

Okay.

00:06:51:23 - 00:06:55:02

So I actually think one of the nice..

one thing that I like to share with people

00:06:55:10 - 00:07:02:23

is my creative journey, my journey into the arts,
because I feel like that can be useful.

00:07:02:23 - 00:07:05:04

And I didn't plan to be in the arts per se.

00:07:05:20 - 00:07:09:12

Um, no, I didn't just fall into it, but I

00:07:10:22 - 00:07:12:16

let's, let's just do the story.

00:07:12:16 - 00:07:15:08

So, um, in 2001,

00:07:15:08 - 00:07:18:02

I moved to Brighton for university,
studied psychology.

00:07:18:09 - 00:07:21:05

I didn't know that I had a hearing loss at the time,

00:07:21:11 - 00:07:24:08

and I also didn't know that I had ADHD.

00:07:25:19 - 00:07:28:21

So did a degree, found it

00:07:28:21 - 00:07:31:07

really difficult, persevered,

00:07:32:07 - 00:07:37:03

managed to get through it, decided
to stay in Brighton, and I got a job in a pub

00:07:37:19 - 00:07:41:16

at the time it was like a little lesbian pub
called the Marlborough Pub and Theatre.

00:07:42:16 - 00:07:47:06

I started working there in 2001
and with not any particular ambition,

00:07:47:06 - 00:07:49:22

just like I just want to be happy in life.

00:07:51:00 - 00:07:54:24

And yeah, in 2008

00:07:55:00 - 00:08:01:01

I went to rejoin the festival circuit, just,
you know, working in a hippie cafe

00:08:01:01 - 00:08:03:22

at Glastonbury Festival was the first one
I did that summer.

00:08:04:04 - 00:08:05:03

And I met loads of people

00:08:05:03 - 00:08:08:18

who were making things happen and I was like,
I wonder if I can make things happen.

00:08:08:24 - 00:08:11:03

I wish I was the kind of person who could do that.

00:08:11:03 - 00:08:15:08

And then I thought, I'm not going to know
unless I try and by the end of that summer, well,

00:08:15:08 - 00:08:19:22

at the very first festival,
I decided that I would put on one event

00:08:20:00 - 00:08:23:06

in the theatre above the pub.
And I was like, Wow, I'm going to put on this event.

00:08:23:15 - 00:08:25:21

It was steampunk, but it was like 2008.

00:08:25:21 - 00:08:27:03

So it was it was cool. All right.

00:08:28:21 - 00:08:31:04

So I just had a steampunk cabaret in mind

00:08:31:04 - 00:08:34:23

and was going to produce this whole event
with other artists that I was meeting.

00:08:35:07 - 00:08:38:03

By the end of the summer,
I decided that I would just take over the theatre.

00:08:38:03 - 00:08:40:14

I saw an opportunity there.
I knew that theatre would be empty.

00:08:41:01 - 00:08:42:24

I knew that the theatre would be empty.

00:08:42:24 - 00:08:44:03

And I thought,

00:08:44:18 - 00:08:48:01

maybe I can just start doing things up there.

00:08:48:10 - 00:08:51:17

I knew the building
while I had experience in the Marlborough, the pub,

00:08:51:17 - 00:08:53:16
and I thought
maybe that is something that I can bring.

00:08:53:16 - 00:08:58:16
I also had been there for quite a few years
and seen it change hands a number of times.

00:08:58:24 - 00:09:02:01
So I kind of knew
I had an idea about what not to do as well.

00:09:03:04 - 00:09:06:22
And even though I didn't have a theatre background,
I thought, I'll just take over a theatre.

00:09:06:23 - 00:09:09:06
What could go wrong? Um,

00:09:11:15 - 00:09:13:20
Lots could go wrong,

00:09:13:22 - 00:09:15:01
but actually it didn't.

00:09:15:01 - 00:09:16:07
I don't think.

00:09:16:07 - 00:09:18:11
I came with an idea
collectively with a group of people.

00:09:18:11 - 00:09:23:04
We had this idea for this thing called Brownnton
Abbey, which was an 'Afro futuristic space church

00:09:23:04 - 00:09:27:02
themed performance party
that senses, celebrates and elevates

00:09:27:08 - 00:09:30:08
disabled queer people of colour'.

00:09:31:14 - 00:09:32:07
And it was amazing.

00:09:32:07 - 00:09:34:04
And it really kind of like.

00:09:34:04 - 00:09:36:09
It was a tool, a creative tool

00:09:36:09 - 00:09:40:15

that helped me connect
with other people who I'd been told

00:09:40:15 - 00:09:44:09
didn't exist in Brighton,
or that I would be hard to find a community.

00:09:44:15 - 00:09:48:14
And that was, I think, a catalyst for me to, um,

00:09:49:22 - 00:09:53:12
to use arts and the resources to bring together

00:09:53:12 - 00:09:59:09
the people that were otherwise
struggling to be together and like thrive.

00:10:00:13 - 00:10:04:17
So yeah, that might have been partly my journey.

00:10:05:00 - 00:10:08:19
Marlborough Productions over time was like
growing and growing and we do quite a lot of work

00:10:08:19 - 00:10:11:00
that's all about our communities

00:10:12:07 - 00:10:14:17
leading their own stories.

00:10:15:15 - 00:10:16:01
Definitely.

00:10:16:01 - 00:10:20:18
Something that occurred to us was that as diversity
became more popular,

00:10:20:18 - 00:10:23:23
there were a lot of people
who were trying to do stories about other people

00:10:23:23 - 00:10:26:13
who were more diverse than them,
and that was something that we were not.

00:10:27:05 - 00:10:29:08
That's not really good phrasing 'more diverse than them'

00:10:29:08 - 00:10:31:04
but you know what I mean.

00:10:32:06 - 00:10:32:15
Yeah.

00:10:32:15 - 00:10:35:18
So yeah, people were having control

00:10:35:20 - 00:10:39:02
and ownership of their own stories
is something that I think is very important to us.

00:10:39:11 - 00:10:41:22
I think that's enough of an intro from me.

00:10:41:22 - 00:10:43:17
And let, let's hand over to Rikki.

00:10:51:18 - 00:10:53:24
So I am

00:10:55:07 - 00:10:59:12
kind of medium brown black person

00:10:59:20 - 00:11:03:13
with blond dreadlocks, blond and brown dreadlocks

00:11:03:13 - 00:11:08:05
that go down to my chest and over my shoulders.

00:11:08:24 - 00:11:11:12
I'm wearing lots of brown and orange today.

00:11:13:04 - 00:11:19:10
And so I think that says it,
kind of that's what it says, isn't it?

00:11:19:10 - 00:11:27:05
Well, and and I have been creating art
since well, I'm like everybody else, really.

00:11:27:05 - 00:11:29:18
I started out knowing I was an artist.

00:11:29:18 - 00:11:34:05
Every child comes into this world
thinking they can do whatever they want

00:11:34:13 - 00:11:36:16
and they always think they can make art

00:11:37:06 - 00:11:40:14
and they don't have to have any sense
of judgment on themselves.

00:11:40:22 - 00:11:44:04
They just make their pictures,
they tell their stories.

00:11:44:09 - 00:11:48:16

They put on little plays, you know, driving the bus,

00:11:48:16 - 00:11:52:19

driving the ambulance mummies and daddies, doctors and nurses, all of that.

00:11:52:22 - 00:11:55:07

They just do it all without any fear.

00:11:55:07 - 00:11:57:03

They're not looking for reviewers.

00:11:57:03 - 00:11:59:09

They're not looking for critiques.

00:11:59:09 - 00:12:00:03

They're right.

00:12:00:03 - 00:12:02:15

They're not looking for assessments.

00:12:03:01 - 00:12:04:10

00:12:04:10 - 00:12:07:19

They just get on with it and they do it.

00:12:07:19 - 00:12:12:14

And they do it with absolutely no apology and no permission.

00:12:13:06 - 00:12:15:15

And and then quickly

00:12:15:15 - 00:12:19:18

things start to come in like, 'oh, can you get an award for this?

00:12:19:18 - 00:12:21:01

Can you get a certificate for this?'

00:12:21:01 - 00:12:25:12

Which is great till you don't get a certificate for it, and you don't get an award for it.

00:12:25:22 - 00:12:30:04

And before you used to bring your own awards home and say, you know, to your parents,

00:12:30:04 - 00:12:34:01

can you put this on the fridge and and and there it was.

00:12:34:01 - 00:12:38:18
You just you had your gallery,
you had your dramas, you had your theatre,

00:12:39:00 - 00:12:42:12
you found your costumes and you put on your shows

00:12:42:19 - 00:12:46:03
and and you lived your best life.

00:12:46:13 - 00:12:50:06
And then it becomes a whole kind of series of things
that you're allowed to

00:12:50:06 - 00:12:51:23
so boys aren't supposed to do this.

00:12:51:23 - 00:12:53:09
And girls are supposed to do that.

00:12:53:09 - 00:12:55:15
And they're supposed to think this and they're supposed to think that,

00:12:55:15 - 00:12:57:18
and the whole thing starts to cave in.

00:12:58:16 - 00:13:02:01
I was... my mum came from Jamaica

00:13:02:01 - 00:13:06:14
when she was 12,
and by the time she was 16 she was pregnant with me

00:13:07:17 - 00:13:09:16
and, and she was

00:13:09:16 - 00:13:13:04
my mum's lesbian
and she was still working all of that out as well.

00:13:13:15 - 00:13:17:24
And so she really wanted to empower me

00:13:18:05 - 00:13:21:11
and so she, she saw I like I,
as soon as I could speak,

00:13:22:06 - 00:13:24:18
I was looking at letters and thinking,
What are these?

00:13:24:18 - 00:13:27:21
And so she taught me to read when I was three.

00:13:28:04 - 00:13:31:01

And, and from then on I knew I wanted to write.

00:13:31:22 - 00:13:34:19

And and she was thrilled

00:13:34:21 - 00:13:38:16

that I was wanted to that I was getting on with words

00:13:38:16 - 00:13:41:21

because she had to change her accent with everybody she met.

00:13:42:02 - 00:13:44:06

She, you know, immigrant girl.

00:13:44:06 - 00:13:49:05

And I was somebody who just was so comfortable with words and with the language.

00:13:49:07 - 00:13:52:01

And so she immediately encouraged that.

00:13:52:04 - 00:13:54:03

And I decided I wanted to be a writer.

00:13:54:03 - 00:13:56:11

And nobody told me at that point I couldn't.

00:13:56:18 - 00:13:58:10

And then when I was about seven,

00:13:59:24 - 00:14:01:12

I decided I wanted to be a playwright.

00:14:01:12 - 00:14:03:11

And then the messages started to come back.

00:14:03:11 - 00:14:05:07

There are no black playwrights.

00:14:05:07 - 00:14:06:13

There were no black actors.

00:14:06:13 - 00:14:07:16

I was born in 61.

00:14:07:16 - 00:14:11:02

So I'm I've decided to be a writer in 64.

00:14:11:02 - 00:14:15:01

And and and in 68, I've decided I want to be a playwright

00:14:15:15 - 00:14:20:20
and that now, when you put it that way,
I suddenly realise, okay, what was going on there?

00:14:21:02 - 00:14:23:24
And for me, I was going on
and I was getting this done.

00:14:24:08 - 00:14:29:00
And so that was how I started to work
with other creatives.

00:14:29:04 - 00:14:33:13
I would write plays for people,
so I cast my plays first and then I write

00:14:33:13 - 00:14:38:09
for the people who are in the play,
not to represent them like that autobiographically,

00:14:38:15 - 00:14:41:23
I may make them transform themselves
or encourage them towards that.

00:14:42:05 - 00:14:43:21
So sometimes it's like

00:14:45:06 - 00:14:46:22
it's like I'm designing a

00:14:46:22 - 00:14:50:21
fashion show and I think, Well,
Naomi would look amazing as a Greek goddess.

00:14:50:21 - 00:14:53:21
She's never going to walk down the street like that,
but she's comfortable

00:14:53:21 - 00:14:57:07
on the runway in that
and that's how I work with actors.

00:14:57:07 - 00:15:00:17
Sometimes they're wearing,
they're kind of wearing the character that they are,

00:15:00:17 - 00:15:04:01
and sometimes they're wearing something

00:15:04:01 - 00:15:06:17
miles away from them
that they're excited to explore.

00:15:07:04 - 00:15:12:10

And that has been really the ethos
of my whole career and my creativity.

00:15:13:07 - 00:15:16:16
I had a whole period where I started to wonder

00:15:16:16 - 00:15:19:19
if I was ever going
to get a foothold in the industry because

00:15:20:23 - 00:15:25:05
people kept saying, You're too gay, You know,
you're too black, you're too this, you're too that,

00:15:25:18 - 00:15:28:07
And and I started to think, well,

00:15:28:13 - 00:15:31:23
you know, how do you do the headshots
and get an agent and all of those things?

00:15:32:07 - 00:15:36:23
And then I hit a point where I realized
I was right in the very beginning

00:15:37:13 - 00:15:40:11
and that I should just make my work my way

00:15:41:03 - 00:15:44:09
and I should encourage other people
to do the same.

00:15:44:19 - 00:15:48:17
And that doesn't matter
how conventional and headshotty they are

00:15:48:23 - 00:15:54:08
and how radical and out there they are.
That they're all welcome at the table

00:15:54:08 - 00:15:58:18
and that they all have a place in the world
and they all have something to say.

00:15:58:22 - 00:16:03:22
They will have a face worth seeing,
a voice worth hearing, and a story worth telling.

00:16:04:09 - 00:16:07:11
And that has led to fantastic experience

00:16:07:11 - 00:16:11:03
for me as an artist, as a choreographer, as a

00:16:11:11 - 00:16:15:22
as a of course, I'm very diverse as a creative too,
and I can encourage that

00:16:15:22 - 00:16:20:13
in other people who are constantly being told,
Stay in your lane, this is what you're meant to do.

00:16:21:03 - 00:16:25:10
And also it's helped me become a mentor,

00:16:25:17 - 00:16:30:17
which to me, I would die
if I couldn't create something every day of my life.

00:16:30:24 - 00:16:33:10
But there's my second passion

00:16:34:04 - 00:16:36:17
and it's almost a twin passion, I guess,

00:16:36:17 - 00:16:41:15
just one was born a few seconds
before the other, is to encourage other people

00:16:42:00 - 00:16:45:08
to make the art that they want to make in the way
they want to make it

00:16:46:05 - 00:16:49:24
and connect with the wider world as best they can,

00:16:50:02 - 00:16:52:20
but most importantly, connect with themselves.

00:16:53:00 - 00:16:58:01
So I mentor writers and directors
and many, many actors

00:16:58:01 - 00:17:02:11
and producers and dancers and choreographers
and so on and so on and so on.

00:17:02:11 - 00:17:10:10
Musicians, and every single person I work with,
it frees me.

00:17:10:10 - 00:17:11:22
It teaches me.

00:17:11:22 - 00:17:15:19
And so I still feel like I'm seven years old

00:17:16:03 - 00:17:19:18

writing my first play,
even though I don't know what it is now, my 50th.

00:17:20:04 - 00:17:25:07
And so so really I'm here to encourage
that in all of us

00:17:25:07 - 00:17:29:07
in this room
that complete and utter freedom that you are

00:17:30:17 - 00:17:33:01
whatever kind of artist that you want to be

00:17:33:07 - 00:17:37:15
and that you have a face worth seeing, a voice
worth hearing story worth telling,

00:17:37:21 - 00:17:40:15
And you're not too black,
you're not too white, you not too fat,

00:17:40:15 - 00:17:42:16
you're not too thin,
you're not too tall you not too short.

00:17:42:16 - 00:17:46:18
You're not too rich, not too poor,
not too gay, not too straight, you're not too middle class,

00:17:46:19 - 00:17:47:21
you're not too working class.

00:17:47:21 - 00:17:52:18
You're not too anything, except too brainwashed
to realise just how beautiful you are.

00:17:53:17 - 00:17:55:03
And so that's it.

00:18:02:08 - 00:18:04:15
And it seems to me

00:18:04:15 - 00:18:07:21
that you've had similar journeys, really, right?

00:18:09:05 - 00:18:11:23
When you're creating the dance

00:18:11:23 - 00:18:14:24
pieces is what's the what is the

00:18:15:05 - 00:18:17:24
the kind of spark that galvanizes all that for you?

00:18:19:15 - 00:18:21:08
I think it's it's the people.

00:18:21:08 - 00:18:24:02
So I think it's it's very similar
to what you were saying, that it's

00:18:25:21 - 00:18:28:05
who is in the room, who

00:18:28:05 - 00:18:30:20
are the individuals and the diversity and drawing

00:18:30:20 - 00:18:33:23
on their their experiences

00:18:33:23 - 00:18:38:15
and like the way that they are
I think is really important.

00:18:38:15 - 00:18:43:05
And then how we can take the differences,
celebrate the differences,

00:18:43:05 - 00:18:47:12
but kind of find cohesion in amongst that diversity

00:18:47:12 - 00:18:50:20
and find like a commonality within the diversity.

00:18:50:20 - 00:18:55:00
And I think that's yeah, that's kind of where
the interesting spark comes from.

00:18:56:02 - 00:18:56:18
Yeah.

00:18:57:13 - 00:19:00:22
And so that's the whole idea is that each person

00:19:00:23 - 00:19:06:04
you make the most of who each person is whilst
creating something that has a unity to it.

00:19:06:13 - 00:19:07:16
Yeah, Yeah.

00:19:07:16 - 00:19:12:02
And I think that kind of
then that's like the, you know,

00:19:12:22 - 00:19:18:00
it's said so many times

but that, when the sum of the parts..

00:19:18:13 - 00:19:23:18
the sum of the whole is greater
than the sum of the parts. That kind of taking those

00:19:23:18 - 00:19:26:18
and actually really investing
in each individual part

00:19:26:18 - 00:19:29:17
to make the whole much richer.

00:19:30:01 - 00:19:35:03
Do you feel like that
there's a lot of loneliness that you're having to

00:19:36:10 - 00:19:37:10
to heal

00:19:37:10 - 00:19:41:07
in the performers and the creatives
that you're working with, or do they come to you

00:19:41:13 - 00:19:45:12
feeling quite confident already?

00:19:45:13 - 00:19:47:10
I think there's

00:19:47:12 - 00:19:50:09
there's definitely challenges within like the,

00:19:51:13 - 00:19:53:15
the training sector, like having,

00:19:54:17 - 00:20:00:05
or people having the opportunities
to get invested in before coming to us.

00:20:00:05 - 00:20:04:16
So there's so many other barriers
that are in the way of like

00:20:04:16 - 00:20:09:00
getting that same investment
that so many other people can have

00:20:09:00 - 00:20:12:19
and maybe take for granted within
their kind of developing their journey

00:20:12:19 - 00:20:16:17
is interesting that you're like, Well,

there's a difference there that you were like, Yes,

00:20:16:17 - 00:20:20:01

I knew I wanted to be creative, and I think I knew

00:20:20:01 - 00:20:23:02

from quite a young age that I wanted to be a dancer.

00:20:24:16 - 00:20:25:22

And in a way,

00:20:26:00 - 00:20:28:17

luckily for me, I think I'm not sure if that's

00:20:29:15 - 00:20:32:18

but I knew I wanted to be a dancer before

00:20:32:18 - 00:20:35:21

I had my injury, so I came through as a

00:20:36:23 - 00:20:38:05

a child, a young person.

00:20:38:05 - 00:20:42:10

I came through mainstream training
and then I had my injury

00:20:42:12 - 00:20:45:12

and was like 'but all I want to do is be a dancer.

00:20:45:12 - 00:20:47:22

I don't know what else I want to do.'

00:20:47:22 - 00:20:53:04

And so I've been aware
then of had that maybe happened at a different time,

00:20:53:12 - 00:20:57:10

I wouldn't have had that same investment
and same opportunities

00:20:57:10 - 00:21:01:22

as young person
to ignite that passion for creativity.

00:21:02:06 - 00:21:06:22

So then I'm quite now passionate about trying
to create those opportunities for others.

00:21:07:01 - 00:21:09:22

Do you mind me asking
how how old were you when you had the injury?

00:21:09:22 - 00:21:14:19

16. So I'd just started doing A-levels, doing A-level dance.

00:21:15:03 - 00:21:16:17

So it was like, Yes, I'm going to do this.

00:21:16:17 - 00:21:17:23

I'm going to do dance. Oh,

00:21:19:09 - 00:21:19:17

right.

00:21:19:17 - 00:21:21:00

Need to rethink that.

00:21:21:00 - 00:21:25:01

But then was very lucky
that the tutors that I had at college

00:21:26:04 - 00:21:29:12

supported me to come back and continue to train.

00:21:30:03 - 00:21:33:02

But if I hadn't had that,
I don't know where I would be now.

00:21:33:19 - 00:21:37:04

So you're trying to make sure
that other people have those channels?

00:21:37:05 - 00:21:38:22

Yes. Yeah.

00:21:38:22 - 00:21:39:05

Yeah.

00:21:39:05 - 00:21:43:09

Which is it's interesting, something I think we all said
kind of discuss when we had our chat before

00:21:43:15 - 00:21:47:21

was like the extra responsibility that we have.

00:21:47:21 - 00:21:53:18

Like when you are in a minority, you've not just got
the responsibility of doing your own stuff,

00:21:53:24 - 00:21:58:03

but also trying to create opportunities for others
to kind of support that,

00:21:58:04 - 00:22:04:09

you know, to increase the voices that may be
that's not necessarily a pressure for

00:22:05:10 - 00:22:06:16
mainstream

00:22:06:16 - 00:22:09:08
organisations or artists, I say mainstream with quotes.

00:22:09:14 - 00:22:10:06
I like that.

00:22:10:06 - 00:22:12:00
But no, it's not for everybody.

00:22:12:00 - 00:22:14:03
But for those you know, I love that.

00:22:14:03 - 00:22:18:24
But that being seen as other

00:22:18:24 - 00:22:23:01
and othered by people made me compassionate towards
all kinds of people.

00:22:23:01 - 00:22:28:06
I feel like it's a superpower,
but that shouldn't be a requirement.

00:22:28:06 - 00:22:32:01
It's got to be for the right people
because Tarik, you were saying... I was really interested

00:22:32:01 - 00:22:33:00
when you were saying

00:22:33:00 - 00:22:35:15
But you basically, you skated over it real fast,

00:22:35:20 - 00:22:39:08
But you were like,
I suddenly had a feeling of it was all going,

00:22:39:08 - 00:22:40:14
It was happening was happening.

00:22:40:14 - 00:22:43:04
And then suddenly you just had a,
you said a breakdown.

00:22:43:13 - 00:22:48:19
Was that because you felt outside or othered or lonely?

00:22:48:19 - 00:22:50:19
'Cause I feel like a lot of people are lonely.

00:22:51:11 - 00:22:54:23

Yeah, I felt like I was

00:22:56:07 - 00:22:57:13
different.

00:22:57:13 - 00:23:01:02
And I also didn't know how to articulate that
or want

00:23:01:02 - 00:23:04:14
to draw attention to it or like, say that.

00:23:04:22 - 00:23:08:23
I just I didn't I didn't know myself
as a disabled person at that time.

00:23:08:23 - 00:23:10:04
I was wearing hearing aids.

00:23:10:04 - 00:23:14:15
I didn't get my hearing aids
until I was in my mid, I think I'm a mid twenties.

00:23:14:15 - 00:23:18:01
I was living with a family who were like,
We think you've got hearing loss then,

00:23:18:02 - 00:23:21:10
when I was 28, I finally got the hearing aids

00:23:21:20 - 00:23:26:20
and then I think it was only by the time I was 35.
Because I used to be, you know,

00:23:26:20 - 00:23:29:23
My ears aren't very good or just don't you know.

00:23:30:22 - 00:23:33:02
I didn't understand myself as a disabled person.

00:23:33:02 - 00:23:36:08
And it was really liberating to go,
Oh, yeah, I have a disability.

00:23:37:14 - 00:23:38:24
It's quite a relief, actually.

00:23:38:24 - 00:23:42:16
What did you think before, did
you just think I've just not got it together?

00:23:43:16 - 00:23:44:24
Kind of, yeah.

00:23:44:24 - 00:23:47:18

I mean, I wasn't like, listening properly
or I wasn't maybe.

00:23:47:24 - 00:23:50:20

Maybe I wasn't, like, as interested or something.

00:23:50:21 - 00:23:53:19

I maybe that's also how ADHD connects
because I would, you know,

00:23:54:00 - 00:23:57:11

focus a lot more
when that when the interest is there. So,

00:23:58:18 - 00:24:00:24

so I felt like it was all just,
you know, it's my own fault.

00:24:01:05 - 00:24:04:05

I also just didn't see that this sort of...

00:24:04:06 - 00:24:08:00

because I can wear
I can not wear hearing aids and still follow along.

00:24:08:10 - 00:24:10:17

So I kind of just didn't understand
that it was a disability.

00:24:10:17 - 00:24:13:21

I think maybe I had a different idea about what
disability is, and I think a lot of people

00:24:15:11 - 00:24:16:09

experience that as well.

00:24:16:09 - 00:24:19:17

I meet loads people with hearing loss
who don't wear hearing aids and I really like

00:24:19:17 - 00:24:23:04

to advocate for them to be like, you know,
you can hear birds singing when you put these in,

00:24:23:07 - 00:24:26:00

have you realised that you don't hear birds?
You can also hear people.

00:24:26:07 - 00:24:29:03

That's that's quite nice too.

00:24:33:10 - 00:24:36:08

I did I did like that

without the hearing aids if I didn't hear something

00:24:36:08 - 00:24:40:13

I would like just assume
that someone had said something nice for example.

00:24:41:22 - 00:24:42:01

Yeah.

00:24:42:01 - 00:24:45:04

There was the thing about feeling
I think feeling lonely and just different.

00:24:45:09 - 00:24:48:05

And when I
when I said when I used to say living in Brighton,

00:24:49:20 - 00:24:53:13

I would see other people of color sometimes together
and I would assume that

00:24:54:01 - 00:24:57:02

other people of colour knew each other
and hung out together and that there was just

00:24:57:17 - 00:24:59:08

it was my.. I hadn't got it together

00:24:59:08 - 00:25:02:10

If I didn't know other people of color
in the very white city of Brighton.

00:25:02:18 - 00:25:07:00

And at some point I kind of like challenged
that and was like, Oh, maybe the opportunity

00:25:07:01 - 00:25:07:22

for us to be together

00:25:07:22 - 00:25:09:19

Are actually hard.

00:25:09:19 - 00:25:13:16

In the space that I lived
and worked, in the Marlborough, for example,

00:25:13:24 - 00:25:18:17

I found that when black and brown
people came together in this queer space,

00:25:19:22 - 00:25:21:09

it felt like that was like

00:25:21:09 - 00:25:25:03

a magnet to people to kind of
want to be part of this cool moment.

00:25:25:04 - 00:25:28:07
And so it actually made it hard
for us to be together in public, which also led me

00:25:28:07 - 00:25:32:18
to want to do things that were I, I loved
I love inclusivity.

00:25:32:18 - 00:25:36:10
I also love a little bit of exclusivity,
and we'll come to that.

00:25:36:10 - 00:25:37:08
But yeah, absolutely.

00:25:37:08 - 00:25:39:23
I had a a coming back to your to your question

00:25:40:14 - 00:25:45:02
I think a breakdown is just about feeling just like,
I don't know,

00:25:45:02 - 00:25:49:07
am I a fraud or am I like I don't really know
the things that other people know.

00:25:49:13 - 00:25:52:22
But then at some point I realized
I know other things and they really useful

00:25:53:00 - 00:25:56:16
and I can bring them to the table and be really
proud about my own journey, the things I know,

00:25:56:16 - 00:26:00:04
the people that I know, the connections
that I've made, the way that I see the world.

00:26:00:12 - 00:26:03:09
And, you know, difference is, is, is a power.

00:26:03:17 - 00:26:07:18
And rather than like feeling like I should be
the same as other people,

00:26:08:14 - 00:26:10:19
you know, I kind of
I knew that in other parts of my life.

00:26:10:19 - 00:26:13:23
But I think in the world of art, for some reason

I felt like I should know,

00:26:14:04 - 00:26:16:03
should be able to replicate
what other people are doing.

00:26:16:03 - 00:26:18:06
And it was a moment when I went, Oh,

00:26:19:07 - 00:26:19:20
I can do

00:26:19:20 - 00:26:22:22
what I do and bring that and encourage
other people to do what they do.

00:26:22:22 - 00:26:25:23
And we will bring our own,
all of the parts of ourselves,

00:26:25:23 - 00:26:29:05
the wholes of ourselves as well, because

00:26:29:05 - 00:26:32:14
it was also a point
at which I realized that I'd have to be like queer

00:26:32:14 - 00:26:37:03
in queer spaces and leave the disabled
and brown parts of myself elsewhere.

00:26:37:13 - 00:26:38:16
Oh, wow.

00:26:38:16 - 00:26:42:03
And that moment when you start to realize I'm
actually I want to have all of my parts

00:26:42:03 - 00:26:42:16
all together.

00:26:42:16 - 00:26:44:24
I can bring all of me to any space I'm in.

00:26:45:07 - 00:26:47:15
Yeah, that's quite hard to find actually.

00:26:47:16 - 00:26:50:12
I think everyone struggles with that.

00:26:50:12 - 00:26:51:04
Yeah, I agree.

00:26:51:04 - 00:26:54:23

I think feeling like a whole,
a whole human being, where we haven't got to hide

00:26:54:23 - 00:27:00:06
parts of ourselves can be, you know,
can be a bit of a vulnerable thing can't it?

00:27:00:08 - 00:27:04:18
I think the idea as well
that that being a whole human

00:27:04:24 - 00:27:09:16
and sometimes like what you need,
whether access needs or

00:27:10:01 - 00:27:15:03
you know whatever to make you be
be able to be the best that you can

00:27:15:09 - 00:27:19:13
is remembering that some of these things
it's like human access requirements.

00:27:19:13 - 00:27:25:15
You know maybe you need something for you
for that day that is not necessarily related

00:27:25:15 - 00:27:29:06
to like a protected characteristic, but it's just

00:27:29:12 - 00:27:32:20
what you need as a human to be able to thrive.

00:27:32:20 - 00:27:36:08
And every human needs something
that's specific to them.

00:27:36:18 - 00:27:37:08
Yeah.

00:27:37:08 - 00:27:40:01
So there's no such thing as a disabled requirement.

00:27:40:01 - 00:27:42:07
There's a human requirement. Yeah.

00:27:43:07 - 00:27:45:08
And I think so many think when you start

00:27:45:08 - 00:27:48:16
I've certainly discovered with some of the like

00:27:49:23 - 00:27:52:20
artist labs that I've been leading

is like we start by

00:27:52:20 - 00:27:55:23
just making an access agreement.

00:27:55:23 - 00:27:59:03
So separate to an access rider,
we can come on to those as well.

00:28:00:04 - 00:28:02:05
But like that actually everyone in

00:28:02:05 - 00:28:05:24
the space has an opportunity to safely express
kind of what

00:28:05:24 - 00:28:11:00
they need to feel safe
and to be able to get the most from that space.

00:28:11:00 - 00:28:12:11
And sometimes, you know, it's very human.

00:28:12:11 - 00:28:16:15
Things like I've got, you know,
some little people who are depending on me,

00:28:16:15 - 00:28:19:04
so I need to have my phone on
because I'm in emergency contact.

00:28:19:12 - 00:28:23:03
Sometimes it's just like,
you know, I need to be able

00:28:23:03 - 00:28:27:03
to step out of the space
and not feel judged for not being,

00:28:28:07 - 00:28:28:19
you know,

00:28:28:19 - 00:28:31:22
engaging with it the whole time
because I need that space

00:28:32:06 - 00:28:36:17
and these things to just to verbalise them
and give people the opportunity

00:28:36:17 - 00:28:40:15
to feel that it's okay
and they're not going to be judged for these things.

00:28:40:15 - 00:28:42:15

And I think that's a very universal...

00:28:42:15 - 00:28:46:01

How do you, though, how do you this is a

00:28:47:05 - 00:28:50:04

I'm going to get into trouble for this question,
but I'm going to ask it

00:28:50:06 - 00:28:52:08

because people are thinking it.

00:28:52:08 - 00:28:55:10

How do you stop people taking the piss?

00:28:55:10 - 00:28:56:14

Because some people have that.

00:28:56:14 - 00:28:59:04

Some people, you know, have requirements.

00:28:59:04 - 00:29:01:06

And some people have. 'I just want it.'

00:29:02:06 - 00:29:05:13

It's not been,
interestingly, it's not been an issue.

00:29:05:13 - 00:29:08:17

And if anything, the issue has been the other way
round that

00:29:08:17 - 00:29:12:02

people are so surprised
about being asked their needs.

00:29:12:08 - 00:29:16:21

They're like 'Well, I don't know how to articulate what I need because I've not been asked.'

00:29:17:17 - 00:29:20:06

Wow. Yes. Yes.

00:29:20:12 - 00:29:24:00

Every time I do meetings

00:29:24:00 - 00:29:27:12

with actors, I always say to them, 'Well,
what would you like to play'?

00:29:27:12 - 00:29:31:20

And they never know because no one ever asks them
that, they're supposed to just

00:29:32:12 - 00:29:37:17

..whatever job's going just slightly,
you know, desperate for it, as opposed to having

00:29:37:19 - 00:29:43:05

a creative agenda that they can centralise
whilst being open to other things.

00:29:43:13 - 00:29:46:15

And often
I ask people on the first day of rehearsals

00:29:46:15 - 00:29:50:13

or whatever, workshops or whatever,
'What do you need to do your best work?'

00:29:50:13 - 00:29:55:10

And again, they think that they it sometimes
takes them a week to come back with the answer

00:29:55:10 - 00:30:00:06

because they've never been asked and they'd never
thought they had the right to ask themselves that.

00:30:00:06 - 00:30:01:04

Is that what you're talking about?

00:30:01:04 - 00:30:05:06

Yeah, I think so, definitely that and to kind of make it more

00:30:05:06 - 00:30:09:11

of a commonplace thing
and also to not feel like

00:30:10:16 - 00:30:12:08

and I think it's particularly

00:30:12:08 - 00:30:16:08

more so with freelance artists
and independent artists

00:30:16:17 - 00:30:20:12

that also they may get asked
but they then don't want to be a trouble maker

00:30:20:16 - 00:30:24:22

or they don't want to,
you know, feel that they're being awkward

00:30:24:22 - 00:30:27:19

and they're not going to be asked back
because, 'well, they asked for that.

00:30:27:23 - 00:30:31:00

That was a bit unreasonable', when actually it's not.

00:30:31:07 - 00:30:35:00

So I think there is is a conversation
that we've been having that

00:30:35:09 - 00:30:41:08

actually there is a responsibility for everyone
just to ask, no matter what,

00:30:41:08 - 00:30:45:14

whether you think someone might have access,
needs or not, whatever it is, ask.

00:30:46:00 - 00:30:48:08

And like if people get used to asking.

00:30:48:08 - 00:30:53:01

If people get used to being asked,
then we can just all be a lot more open

00:30:53:15 - 00:30:55:16

and talk about it and not feel

00:30:56:21 - 00:30:59:15

pressured about, 'Oh, is it going to be accepted?

00:30:59:15 - 00:31:01:00

If I ask for these things?'

00:31:01:00 - 00:31:02:24

Is that then... are we frightened of that

00:31:02:24 - 00:31:06:17

Because, 'oh, they're going to say no more disabled people'

00:31:07:00 - 00:31:10:00

or you know, 'just don't invite any black people in

00:31:10:00 - 00:31:12:17

and they won't mention racism
because they won't be here.'

00:31:13:06 - 00:31:16:22

They're just they're too fussy, you know,
We just don't want to deal with that.

00:31:16:22 - 00:31:20:08

Yeah, maybe that is a yeah,
I think that's a valid fear.

00:31:20:15 - 00:31:21:15

I think that's a valid fear.

00:31:21:15 - 00:31:26:14

And I think as also if you're marginalised in multiple ways, obviously that's going to happen even more so.

00:31:26:14 - 00:31:30:04

So you might only bring a little bit of what your needs are.

00:31:30:04 - 00:31:31:16

I also think it takes quite a lot of work

00:31:31:16 - 00:31:35:13

to figure out what your needs are and it's an ongoing process and that changes.

00:31:35:13 - 00:31:39:14

I think people forget that, that your needs change over time

00:31:39:14 - 00:31:45:05

and we have to keep checking in with ourselves and like feeling our feelings.

00:31:45:11 - 00:31:46:22

That's a tough one. I think,

00:31:48:20 - 00:31:49:10

you know,

00:31:49:10 - 00:31:55:01

it's some vulnerable work and it takes it takes some confidence, which is why it's really,

00:31:55:01 - 00:31:58:19

I think, important also to also encourage people to

00:31:59:04 - 00:32:02:17

to share their needs. A lot of the time you know we

00:32:02:17 - 00:32:07:00

we will ask people for access riders but actually we now

00:32:07:00 - 00:32:11:09

we work with people to create an access rider and we remind people that it is

00:32:12:10 - 00:32:17:00

a live document, so something that can be continually added to because I think that I have a certain

00:32:17:00 - 00:32:22:19

amount of needs and later on, I'm always discovering new things that actually I need, like

00:32:23:03 - 00:32:27:07

just before this we had these bright lights up here
and we were sat here for a little while.

00:32:27:07 - 00:32:31:21

I could sat for an extra half an hour
with bright lights on my face and just accepted it.

00:32:31:21 - 00:32:37:10

And it's because of thinking about access that I'll
actually voice 'Can we just turn the lights out?'

00:32:37:10 - 00:32:39:03

And of course, we can turn the lights down.

00:32:39:03 - 00:32:40:14

But in the past, I might not have done that.

00:32:40:14 - 00:32:42:16

I might have just suffered through it.

00:32:42:24 - 00:32:46:17

I think that's a thing that I think there's
the expectation that we should suffer.

00:32:46:24 - 00:32:50:16

Is that because,
because vulnerability keeps getting mentioned,

00:32:50:24 - 00:32:53:20

Is it because we're worried
that vulnerability means we're weak?

00:32:54:11 - 00:32:56:21

I think so. It sounds like it, doesn't it?

00:32:56:21 - 00:32:59:08

It's that word
that sounds like it's the weak word.

00:32:59:08 - 00:33:02:08

It's still hard because you, forgive me
for telling on you, Tarik,

00:33:02:13 - 00:33:04:19

but we were talking earlier because you did,

00:33:04:19 - 00:33:06:08

that was amazing when you said that about the light.

00:33:06:08 - 00:33:11:10

So simple and so easy and,

00:33:11:15 - 00:33:14:20
but you were saying last night
your hotel room smelled of poo.

00:33:15:04 - 00:33:18:16
It smelled of poo, my hotel,
and I didn't want to make a fuss about it.

00:33:18:16 - 00:33:21:15
Right.
We were talking about why don't we want to make a fuss?

00:33:21:17 - 00:33:23:15
I was tired and I didn't want to make a fuss.

00:33:23:15 - 00:33:24:11
But you're absolutely right.

00:33:24:11 - 00:33:27:21
And I was on my own, and I didn't feel that I had the...

00:33:27:22 - 00:33:30:07
I couldn't pull the energy together to advocate for myself

00:33:30:11 - 00:33:33:06
sometimes as community is really helpful
because we help each other.

00:33:33:11 - 00:33:36:06
We help advocate. And I do remember thinking like,

00:33:37:04 - 00:33:38:17
I wish there was a WhatsApp group for us

00:33:38:17 - 00:33:42:08
actually that I might mention the room
and someone else might go, Oh yeah, just...

00:33:42:11 - 00:33:44:20
And they probably actually
was someone that I could have reached out to.

00:33:44:20 - 00:33:48:02
To be fair to the organisers,
but I just didn't have the capacity.

00:33:48:02 - 00:33:50:02
I was tired out from the journey.

00:33:50:02 - 00:33:54:01
So ideally the hotel would call your room
and say 'Anything smell of poo in there?'.

00:33:54:04 - 00:33:58:18

Exactly they did tell me when I checked in,
'Hey, if there's any problems I can say.

00:33:58:18 - 00:34:01:19

And I was aware of that and I just kept telling
myself, I'll probably be all right.

00:34:01:19 - 00:34:04:11

I'll get to sleep.
It'll be fine. It'll be fine, it'll be fine.

00:34:04:11 - 00:34:05:19

And then I went, at midnight.

00:34:05:19 - 00:34:09:04

I was like, 'Oh, I feel like I'm sleeping in a sewer.'

00:34:10:20 - 00:34:13:17

'I don't want to bring this energy tomorrow'.

00:34:13:17 - 00:34:16:06

So I did ask for some.

00:34:16:07 - 00:34:18:08

Some for some change.

00:34:18:19 - 00:34:18:23

Yeah.

00:34:18:23 - 00:34:22:07

Just a reminder to keep...
it can be really hard to advocate for yourself.

00:34:22:11 - 00:34:23:15

Why is that hard?

00:34:23:15 - 00:34:24:02

I don't know.

00:34:24:02 - 00:34:26:24

What do you find it
hard to advocate for yourself? Yes.

00:34:28:18 - 00:34:30:03

Yes sometimes.

00:34:30:03 - 00:34:32:13

The immediate answer is no.

00:34:32:13 - 00:34:36:02

The immediate answer is,
I do not find it hard to advocate for myself.

00:34:36:02 - 00:34:37:21

I'm very, very independent.

00:34:37:21 - 00:34:41:22

But that very statement,
'I'm very, very independent'

00:34:42:05 - 00:34:46:04

is a way of not asking for things
from people.

00:34:46:05 - 00:34:47:03

Right?

00:34:47:03 - 00:34:51:04

It's 'Look at me,
the brave samurai on my own, getting it done.

00:34:51:04 - 00:34:57:19

Gay, black, doing it,'
you know, as opposed to, 'You know what, Help!'

00:34:57:19 - 00:35:00:02

00:35:00:02 - 00:35:05:00

So I think I do I, I think I do struggle with it

00:35:05:00 - 00:35:09:08

more than I think I do
because my thing is I help other people.

00:35:09:20 - 00:35:15:03

I remember I had a long term boyfriend and

00:35:15:21 - 00:35:19:16

and I remember when I first met him, he said, 'Oh,
you love looking after people, don't you?'

00:35:20:06 - 00:35:21:21

'Who looks after you?'

00:35:21:21 - 00:35:23:22

And I thought, 'I look after me.'

00:35:24:11 - 00:35:27:08

But, you know, and so it's

00:35:27:13 - 00:35:32:00

so I think that we
we all struggle with this in various different ways.

00:35:32:06 - 00:35:34:13

And so it helps if we

00:35:35:15 - 00:35:38:18
because I've had a big argument with a friend
recently who's been very

00:35:38:18 - 00:35:40:19
I think, badly behaved.

00:35:40:19 - 00:35:43:07
But I suddenly realised

00:35:43:07 - 00:35:47:06
I just need to call this person more
or text them more and say, 'how are you doing?'

00:35:48:11 - 00:35:51:02
And so at the beginning of every week I do that.

00:35:51:02 - 00:35:54:02
And it's really changed
the way they interact with me.

00:35:54:16 - 00:35:56:08
And so I guess that's it.

00:35:56:08 - 00:36:00:14
Just asking people, how are you doing
and asking yourself, how are you doing?

00:36:01:07 - 00:36:05:12
And, and and encouraging other people to ask you,
how you doing?

00:36:06:02 - 00:36:08:10
How are you doing today? It's a great question.

00:36:08:16 - 00:36:12:02
Also what you were saying that's making me
think about a culture of interdependence.

00:36:12:02 - 00:36:18:08
I think we know the West is very much like,
we're a solo individual being.

00:36:18:12 - 00:36:22:17
I mean, we focus on who we are as an individual
and not about who we are as a community,

00:36:22:23 - 00:36:26:04
how are we interdependent, what is the kind

00:36:26:04 - 00:36:32:00
of environmental relationship between all of us.

00:36:32:12 - 00:36:39:17

Oh yes, because if I. I'm always saying to myself, make sure you're alright

00:36:39:17 - 00:36:41:20
so you can contribute to other people well.

00:36:41:20 - 00:36:44:15
But we have to ask it's everything...

00:36:44:20 - 00:36:45:21
Is everybody all right?

00:36:45:21 - 00:36:48:07
If everybody else is all right, I'm better.

00:36:48:08 - 00:36:50:00
If I'm better, everyone else is alright.

00:36:50:00 - 00:36:52:22
So it's it's a whole helix kind of thing, isn't it?

00:36:53:11 - 00:36:54:14
Rather than separate,

00:36:55:15 - 00:36:57:08
you know, this is okay.

00:36:57:08 - 00:37:00:04
That's okay. Are we Okay?

00:37:00:04 - 00:37:04:00
So I really should be
when I'm saying to my friend, how are you doing?

00:37:04:15 - 00:37:08:00
The question I should be asking my mind at least is
how are we doing?

00:37:08:17 - 00:37:10:16
Absolutely. And yeah, how are we doing?

00:37:10:16 - 00:37:11:03
How are you doing?

00:37:11:03 - 00:37:12:08
How am I doing?

00:37:12:08 - 00:37:13:05
How is it doing?

00:37:13:05 - 00:37:14:14
How's it all doing?

00:37:17:11 - 00:37:20:17
Oh. my mind is blowing.

00:37:21:08 - 00:37:22:24
I mean, how are we doing?

00:37:22:24 - 00:37:25:12
You're doing good, you're doing good?

00:37:25:20 - 00:37:29:20
And do you have any, do we have any questions?

00:37:30:15 - 00:37:32:11
Audience Member: Tarik, could you just say a bit more about

00:37:32:11 - 00:37:34:08
you said you're going to come back to it, You never did.

00:37:34:08 - 00:37:37:12
And I'm a bit fascinated about you saying

00:37:37:12 - 00:37:39:11
that you really liked moments

00:37:39:11 - 00:37:42:18
of exclusivity
and about the tension between the two.

00:37:43:10 - 00:37:43:24
Yeah.

00:37:45:02 - 00:37:50:02
So I guess
I mentioned before about being kind of the festival world.

00:37:50:02 - 00:37:53:17
That was a big kind of I did, I like,
I like festivals, like summer festivals

00:37:54:01 - 00:37:57:23
that there's the principles
of radical, inclusivity that Burning Man uses.

00:37:57:23 - 00:38:01:07
Burning Man, yeah, some errr about things about that,

00:38:01:07 - 00:38:05:18
but also some amazing things
about that kind of like radical self-reliance.

00:38:05:18 - 00:38:10:04
which will also take us away
from radical interdependence.

00:38:10:16 - 00:38:14:15
But I did remember once hearing a talk,

I've never actually been to Burning Man,

00:38:14:15 - 00:38:18:10

I've been to some European versions
of the kind of these same type festivals,

00:38:19:19 - 00:38:21:13

and I remember hearing once

00:38:21:13 - 00:38:24:17

someone talking about radical exclusion.

00:38:24:22 - 00:38:27:11

My first...

00:38:27:11 - 00:38:28:24

it was a straight white man talking about it.

00:38:28:24 - 00:38:32:12

And so I instantly was a little bit of my
hackles were up a little bit,

00:38:32:12 - 00:38:35:20

but actually he was talking
some sense. That was a good reminder

00:38:38:17 - 00:38:42:23

that people can share knowledge
that might not even necessarily

00:38:43:04 - 00:38:47:08

he might not have needed to make some radical
exclusive inclusive space for himself,

00:38:47:08 - 00:38:53:05

but he was talking about an important concept
that I'm glad that I listened to because...

00:38:53:06 - 00:38:57:20

Let's face it.

Straight white men are the best at radical exclusion.

00:38:57:21 - 00:38:59:10

I mean, yeah, I guess they know all about it.

00:38:59:14 - 00:39:01:20

That is an expert, why not listen?

00:39:02:06 - 00:39:03:01

Yeah, that's true.

00:39:03:01 - 00:39:04:11

Yeah, he knew what he was talking about.

00:39:04:11 - 00:39:06:14
And the value, the benefits of it, I guess.

00:39:06:23 - 00:39:11:13
But that helped me kind of articulate
why I need sometimes to make spaces that way.

00:39:11:13 - 00:39:15:09
So, for example, Brownton Abbey,
I realized that I wanted to do

00:39:15:09 - 00:39:19:08
something
that was for disabled queer people of color because

00:39:20:08 - 00:39:24:19
there are not many opportunities
for disabled people.

00:39:24:24 - 00:39:28:23
There are also less opportunities for disabled
queer people and even less opportunities for disabled

00:39:29:03 - 00:39:30:00
queer people of colour.

00:39:30:00 - 00:39:32:19
You can keep adding more marginalisations to that,

00:39:33:03 - 00:39:35:15
and it's going to be
there's going to be less opportunities.

00:39:35:19 - 00:39:39:04
I realised if I wanted to make the space for us,

00:39:40:12 - 00:39:44:07
I had to be quite firm about it
because otherwise it would be...

00:39:44:16 - 00:39:48:14
I knew that, you know, we would take Brownton Abbey to a new location,

00:39:48:18 - 00:39:52:21
we like to work with artists from that location
as well as artists coming on the tour with us

00:39:53:03 - 00:39:56:20
and that we would ask for recommendations
from the venues and that some of those recommendations

00:39:56:20 - 00:40:00:16
people would say,
'We don't know any brown, disabled, queer people.'

00:40:00:16 - 00:40:02:05

'I don't think there are any here,'

00:40:03:08 - 00:40:06:17

'but we've got a white, disabled queer person.'

00:40:06:17 - 00:40:11:04

'And could they be in it?' And I absolutely agree those people need opportunities.

00:40:11:04 - 00:40:12:09

Everyone needs opportunities.

00:40:12:09 - 00:40:15:19

But having the power to say 'This is what this is for'

00:40:16:00 - 00:40:20:23

was really helpful just to create that boundary and make the space that we desperately needed.

00:40:21:06 - 00:40:25:19

And it allows for, for example, there's lots of conversations

00:40:25:19 - 00:40:29:19

I used to not be able to have until I started to realise I could have a radically exclusive space.

00:40:30:00 - 00:40:33:22

I didn't really understand myself until I started to have moments when I could be

00:40:33:22 - 00:40:38:11

with other people who had a similar experience and have a conversation that was going forwards

00:40:38:23 - 00:40:41:13

rather than having to explain things and sort of go backwards

00:40:41:20 - 00:40:45:11

in order to go forwards, you know, keep moving forwards in this conversation.

00:40:45:18 - 00:40:49:08

So I really felt like 'Oh this has been beneficial to all the people in this room.'

00:40:49:17 - 00:40:54:04

Having a radically exclusive space for a reason is really helpful and people understand it

00:40:54:09 - 00:40:59:08

when if you've got a knitting club,
Extreme Knitters, right,

00:40:59:15 - 00:41:03:02

I only want extreme knitters to be in that group
because if I've got beginners,

00:41:03:22 - 00:41:05:21

beginners need their own opportunity, their own space.

00:41:05:21 - 00:41:07:19

I want to be just with extreme knitters,

00:41:07:19 - 00:41:09:22

people understand that. But for some reason,

00:41:09:22 - 00:41:13:04

mostly when it comes around things
around making a space for just people of color.

00:41:13:13 - 00:41:19:04

That I think is when the when people start going,
'Hey, that's not okay, that sounds racist to me.'

00:41:20:04 - 00:41:20:19

And so that was

00:41:20:19 - 00:41:23:21

actually quite an important step to me to say

00:41:23:21 - 00:41:28:02

sometimes I feel this is most important
for marginalised groups really

00:41:28:07 - 00:41:31:13

essentially is like you need to
sometimes make spaces for ourselves

00:41:31:22 - 00:41:35:06

and you can also make spaces
that are a mix of the two.

00:41:35:11 - 00:41:38:00

For example, with Brownton Abbey

00:41:38:00 - 00:41:40:11

I like to think of the auditorium
as a space for everybody.

00:41:41:09 - 00:41:44:07

Everyone could come enjoy.

00:41:44:07 - 00:41:48:02

When I say everybody,

I mean I wouldn't really want to have

00:41:48:11 - 00:41:51:02
a homophobic racist, ableist person in there

00:41:52:02 - 00:41:57:05
unless they are also experiencing
and having their minds blown and changed.

00:41:57:05 - 00:42:01:14
But I'm not there for them
to be like advocating for themselves in that moment, I guess.

00:42:01:14 - 00:42:05:04
But so there's also some elements of things when I think about how we include everybody

00:42:05:04 - 00:42:06:19
that do we really mean everybody?

00:42:08:02 - 00:42:11:00
Do we want, do we want racists in the room?

00:42:11:05 - 00:42:13:09
Saying 'I want to be racist.'

00:42:13:24 - 00:42:16:19
Alex: Tarik, can I just thank you, an amazing answer.

00:42:16:19 - 00:42:21:12
And, you know, I'm here to kind of facilitate,
but there's so many things that you've raised there.

00:42:21:22 - 00:42:27:07
And I also think sometimes it's exhausting
when you're someone from a protected characteristics.

00:42:27:07 - 00:42:29:18
It's also exhausting constantly navigating spaces.

00:42:29:24 - 00:42:33:12
It's quite replenishing
sometimes being in radically exclusive spaces.

00:42:33:17 - 00:42:37:13
But there was a question close to the front here,
and then I think there's some other questions.

00:42:38:22 - 00:42:39:23
Audience Member: Thank you.

00:42:41:21 - 00:42:44:12
Yeah, so I'll just really quickly say
that I'm a white woman

00:42:44:12 - 00:42:49:04
with blond hair and a multicoloured jumper,
and I wanted to thank you guys.

00:42:49:11 - 00:42:52:15
It's very nourishing to hear these kind

00:42:52:15 - 00:42:57:09
of vulnerable, open, human and heart-led conversations

00:42:57:09 - 00:43:01:18
being presented, kind of on the stage
because it gives you power.

00:43:01:18 - 00:43:06:02
And that is very empowering for me to hear
and to sort of be part of.

00:43:06:11 - 00:43:08:19
But the question that I wanted to ask is

00:43:09:02 - 00:43:12:20
in witnessing these conversations it's evident

00:43:12:21 - 00:43:17:01
the time
and the sort of care that it takes to kind of

00:43:17:01 - 00:43:20:12
have those kind of conversations
and the trust and the vulnerability

00:43:20:22 - 00:43:24:11
and the challenge that I find often as a relatively

00:43:25:03 - 00:43:27:13
early career freelance artist

00:43:27:24 - 00:43:33:08
is how to kind of engage
with venues and producers

00:43:33:08 - 00:43:38:11
and the system of programming work
and getting it made and paid for when these are

00:43:38:11 - 00:43:42:20
the types of conversations and processes
that I'd like to run.

00:43:43:05 - 00:43:46:22
But I'm just there knocking on the door being like,
'Would you like to book my show, please?'

00:43:47:06 - 00:43:47:24

That kind of thing.

00:43:47:24 - 00:43:52:13

So I think that's a real genuine challenge
and I'd love to hear just any reflections

00:43:52:13 - 00:43:57:16

and thoughts that you or anyone else who perhaps
might run a building has to offer about that.

00:44:00:02 - 00:44:01:13

So because I mentor all

00:44:01:13 - 00:44:05:00

these different writers
and I'm encouraging more to be producers

00:44:05:07 - 00:44:09:19

and to put on the plays,
I'll work with, co-produce with very,

00:44:10:03 - 00:44:13:03

very talented producers to go forward.

00:44:13:13 - 00:44:19:16

The thing that's really it's always been hard, but
it's incredibly hard right now to get into spaces

00:44:19:21 - 00:44:24:14

because a lot of the theatres are not really talking
about it very much because it's embarrassing,

00:44:24:24 - 00:44:29:16

but a lot of them are really,
really up against the ropes like really badly.

00:44:29:21 - 00:44:34:13

Their electricity, running a theatre, uses
a lot of power,

00:44:34:23 - 00:44:37:22

and all the bills have gone up 500%

00:44:38:06 - 00:44:41:21

500%. Bills that they were struggling to pay before.

00:44:42:07 - 00:44:44:10

And some of them have lost their funding.

00:44:44:15 - 00:44:48:11

You know, they can't get audiences

00:44:48:17 - 00:44:51:21

that they've had all these years
where they weren't able to have shows.

00:44:52:01 - 00:44:54:05
So there's a lot of crisis going on.

00:44:54:05 - 00:44:56:17
And I think we
maybe we'll see more theatres closing.

00:44:56:17 - 00:45:00:02
Like I think I happened in Southampton
early on in the pandemic.

00:45:00:08 - 00:45:01:09
I think we may see more.

00:45:01:09 - 00:45:04:11
There's a lot of stress going on
and a lot of them can't...

00:45:04:19 - 00:45:08:14
the bandwidth, they can't do the bandwidth and
they're closed in the day and they're sitting there.

00:45:08:14 - 00:45:11:00
If you zoom with them,
they're all wearing coats and hats

00:45:11:00 - 00:45:14:17
because they can't turn the heating on,
so they can't host anybody.

00:45:14:24 - 00:45:16:21
It's a lot going on. With hat said,

00:45:18:22 - 00:45:19:08

00:45:19:08 - 00:45:22:22
that the thing I think that we have to
learn is pitching

00:45:22:22 - 00:45:26:23
how to pitch properly and pitch
well, how to network brilliantly.

00:45:27:11 - 00:45:31:13
People hate these words: pitching and networking,
but they're actually really fun

00:45:32:11 - 00:45:37:15
and we're creative, so we should have creative
responses to these problems instead of

00:45:38:07 - 00:45:40:14
just wishing that we could be accepted

00:45:40:18 - 00:45:43:16
by a structure that isn't accepting us all the time.

00:45:44:01 - 00:45:49:05
So I like the idea of making your own venues
whenever possible and putting on shows in

00:45:49:09 - 00:45:54:14
in new spaces whenever possible, and being creative
about, 'Let's put on a show in a library,

00:45:54:14 - 00:45:58:08
Let's put on a show in a museum,'
approaching other spaces and being creative in our

00:45:58:14 - 00:46:00:05
in our front room, in a phone box.

00:46:00:05 - 00:46:02:02
You know? Well they don't have many phone boxes any more

00:46:02:02 - 00:46:04:22
that's how old I am. But you get what I mean.

00:46:05:22 - 00:46:06:16
You know what I mean?

00:46:06:16 - 00:46:09:14
Like how can I make this happen anyway?

00:46:09:18 - 00:46:11:13
Because that's who I was when I was a little kid.

00:46:11:20 - 00:46:14:00
I wasn't asking theatres to put on my plays.

00:46:14:06 - 00:46:18:02
We used to put them on them in the block,
the stairwell in our flats.

00:46:18:03 - 00:46:20:08
And the kids used to sit on the steps
and we'd perform.

00:46:20:19 - 00:46:24:04
And to me that's still, to me, a theatre.

00:46:24:15 - 00:46:25:19
And do you know what I mean?

00:46:25:19 - 00:46:29:21
I'm not saying we shouldn't
be trying to get into those mainstream spaces

00:46:29:21 - 00:46:34:02
or those accepted spaces,
but I think if we narrow it to that

00:46:34:03 - 00:46:39:11
we over empower those spaces and
and we block ourselves

00:46:39:11 - 00:46:41:13
from being the kind of people who make art anyway.

00:46:43:06 - 00:46:46:04
And you can I think when you're doing your grant form,

00:46:46:04 - 00:46:50:01
which is another, you know, circle of hell,

00:46:51:08 - 00:46:53:13
if you say 'I'm putting on

00:46:53:13 - 00:46:57:13
I found an old phone box
because there's some left,

00:46:57:18 - 00:47:00:21
and this show is going to be on in a phone box
and people are going to gather around it,

00:47:00:21 - 00:47:04:13
you're more likely to get the grant, quite frankly.

00:47:04:16 - 00:47:06:08
Does that make any sense?

00:47:06:08 - 00:47:07:23
You probably have a very different take on that.

00:47:07:23 - 00:47:12:00
No, it just made me think about
just being on the fringes of things

00:47:13:13 - 00:47:17:24
and basically it makes me sometimes
think about a walled garden

00:47:17:24 - 00:47:22:13
or the people who are like the mainstream

00:47:22:13 - 00:47:26:17
maybe thinking about like flowers

that have been curated and put into place

00:47:26:24 - 00:47:31:13
and thinking about like the opportunities
that the wild flowers have

00:47:32:15 - 00:47:34:15
who are out on the on the fringes,

00:47:34:22 - 00:47:39:01
growing up in the cracks, taking over,
growing up over the walls and out.

00:47:39:11 - 00:47:42:07
So yeah, that's
I think there's something about like really leaning

00:47:42:07 - 00:47:45:09
into like the power of being a wild flower.

00:47:45:09 - 00:47:46:16
I love that.

00:47:46:16 - 00:47:49:18
I'm not sure if that's my own I might have read it somewhere. I'm sure I read it

00:47:49:19 - 00:47:50:15
I've tried to find

00:47:50:15 - 00:47:55:07
who said something about wildflowers,
and I can't find it, there's lots of poetry, so.

00:47:55:07 - 00:47:57:17
But it might not be my own thing, so don't quote me.

00:47:57:17 - 00:48:00:06
It's awesome. Wherever it's from.

00:48:00:20 - 00:48:03:01
You're a wildflower.

00:48:03:01 - 00:48:07:01
So you put on your grant form
'I'm a motherfucking wildflower.'

00:48:08:22 - 00:48:09:11
I mean, just

00:48:09:11 - 00:48:13:01
thinking about yourself
that way transforms the entire experience.

00:48:13:08 - 00:48:16:18

And I think that's the most important thing
for our mental health

00:48:16:18 - 00:48:21:01
and for our creativity is to think about yourself
in a different way

00:48:21:01 - 00:48:25:22
rather than someone who's failing at a system
or struggling to get into a system.

00:48:26:04 - 00:48:30:11
Somebody who is a system is their own ecology

00:48:30:17 - 00:48:33:10
and and is offering that to others,

00:48:33:17 - 00:48:36:17
but not dependent entirely on others.

00:48:36:23 - 00:48:40:22
Because I'm kind of like I like the self-reliance
thing and I like the community thing.

00:48:40:22 - 00:48:43:03
I think that there's a balance between the two.

00:48:44:01 - 00:48:45:21
Does that make any sense?

00:48:45:21 - 00:48:48:14
But I think it is getting good at marketing,
which, you know,

00:48:48:16 - 00:48:51:15
I work with these young people
and they're really good with it constantly.

00:48:51:24 - 00:48:54:16
Click, click, click,
marketing themselves all the time.

00:48:55:02 - 00:48:57:21
But and getting good at the the networking

00:48:59:13 - 00:49:01:12

00:49:01:12 - 00:49:05:11
and the pitching, but also just being creative about

00:49:05:23 - 00:49:11:19
'why do I have to,
why do I have to win those prizes?'

00:49:11:19 - 00:49:15:11
'Why I have to get those those validations?'

00:49:15:21 - 00:49:18:15
'How did they get there?
Why can't I do the same thing?'

00:49:18:20 - 00:49:22:16
That's why I meant when I was saying,
listen to straight white guys

00:49:22:16 - 00:49:25:22
because they're onto something.

00:49:25:22 - 00:49:28:01
Alex: Laura, did you have a reflection on the question?

00:49:28:21 - 00:49:29:24
Um, yeah.

00:49:29:24 - 00:49:35:15
I think something that we didn't speak about
necessarily today, but we spoke in our pre chat about,

00:49:35:18 - 00:49:38:21
was that kind of also being aware of the self-care

00:49:39:05 - 00:49:41:19
and that it is tiring

00:49:41:24 - 00:49:46:01
constantly having to, anyway
just as an artist like regardless of

00:49:46:07 - 00:49:49:15
you know, minorities or anything as an artist
I think it's tiring

00:49:49:20 - 00:49:54:19
constantly going and like knocking on doors
and asking for, you know, what you need.

00:49:55:01 - 00:49:56:18
So also that kind of

00:49:57:17 - 00:49:59:14
remembering like the bit of self-care

00:49:59:14 - 00:50:03:02
and sometimes like picking your fights,

00:50:03:09 - 00:50:07:19
like if the space that

you think you want to work in

00:50:08:00 - 00:50:12:03

actually is not being open to what your needs are.

00:50:13:07 - 00:50:15:24

Do you want to work there? Find somewhere else.

00:50:15:24 - 00:50:19:14

And it's really difficult as an artist
because we're so used to there

00:50:19:14 - 00:50:21:24

not being opportunities, and the opportunities are getting less..

00:50:23:07 - 00:50:25:22

So it's really difficult to say no

00:50:26:04 - 00:50:29:19

and it's really difficult to go, okay,
well I'll find somewhere else.

00:50:29:19 - 00:50:33:23

But sometimes, yeah remembering
that self preservation.

00:50:33:23 - 00:50:39:03

But there's a balance. You can be persistent
whilst having another avenue.

00:50:39:12 - 00:50:43:24

rather than just waiting for somebody to pick up
or answer that email or whatever.

00:50:44:08 - 00:50:45:15

You know what I mean?

00:50:45:15 - 00:50:48:14

Sometimes you have to have the party
turn up the music

00:50:48:14 - 00:50:52:04

and have them come and knock on your door
and going, 'Oh you're having a party,'

00:50:52:04 - 00:50:55:13

'Can I come to yours?' Because they're just..

00:50:56:22 - 00:50:59:12

people who seem to be gatekeepers

00:50:59:18 - 00:51:03:08

are always struggling with the next gate,
they're struggling to get forward and go forward

00:51:03:14 - 00:51:07:19
and get money from the Arts Council
or from the lottery or from funders.

00:51:08:00 - 00:51:12:22
They've got the same anxieties
we have, and it's very easy to kind of deify them

00:51:12:22 - 00:51:18:11
and just go, That's where.. they're God,
and I'm a mere mortal and I'm useless without them.

00:51:18:15 - 00:51:21:11
They're actually having the same crises.

00:51:21:11 - 00:51:25:01
Alex: True indeed. True that. There's a question further up,

00:51:25:01 - 00:51:27:04
but we have clocked you here,

00:51:28:00 - 00:51:30:04

00:51:30:04 - 00:51:31:17
Yes, you.

00:51:31:17 - 00:51:33:08
Audience Member: Hi, I'm Jonathan.

00:51:33:08 - 00:51:36:21
I'm a Chinese guy with a ponytail and a black hoody.

00:51:36:21 - 00:51:40:18
It's really inspiring hearing you, it's really, really amazing.

00:51:40:18 - 00:51:44:02
My question is around, you talked about radical inclusion

00:51:44:13 - 00:51:47:24
and I guess the term I thought of is diversity within diversity.

00:51:47:24 - 00:51:49:23
Some voices aren't seen as relevant.

00:51:50:10 - 00:51:54:14
I would say, like Gypsy Roma traveller, for a time,

00:51:55:01 - 00:51:58:16
the British Chinese and East Asians currently,

00:51:59:10 - 00:52:02:12
Southeast Asians too,

and then white Europeans, etc..

00:52:02:12 - 00:52:04:10

I mean, honestly, if you look at the NPO,

00:52:05:15 - 00:52:08:15

there might be one or two on the edges,
nothing in the mainstream.

00:52:08:15 - 00:52:13:10

So how can we... any thoughts on
how to empower and work together

00:52:13:10 - 00:52:17:06

and open up spaces for, um, you know, the diversity

00:52:17:06 - 00:52:19:01

within the diversity?

00:52:20:21 - 00:52:22:16

Oh yeah.

00:52:22:16 - 00:52:23:15

Do you want me to start?

00:52:23:19 - 00:52:24:23

Yeah.

00:52:26:06 - 00:52:28:10

it's goes back to that thing of,

00:52:28:21 - 00:52:31:11

um, all the people you've listed there.

00:52:31:22 - 00:52:36:00

I passionately agree that they're just

00:52:36:24 - 00:52:38:24

that just almost invisible,

00:52:40:02 - 00:52:43:01

but the....

00:52:43:01 - 00:52:45:05

Create work.

00:52:45:20 - 00:52:48:12

So it's really important to create work,

00:52:48:12 - 00:52:52:02

to create bad work at first and then better work

00:52:52:08 - 00:52:55:00

because people don't want to create work

unless it's perfect straight away.

00:52:55:07 - 00:52:58:11

And so I really struggle
because I mentor all these people,

00:52:58:11 - 00:52:59:15

It's hundreds of people,

00:52:59:17 - 00:53:02:21

and certain
people is harder to get them

00:53:02:21 - 00:53:07:22

to come to the table
because they think there's no space for them

00:53:08:13 - 00:53:11:24

and, and the only way to do it is to create work

00:53:11:24 - 00:53:16:24

rather than: somebody commissioned me
or somebody auditioned me or somebody..

00:53:18:02 - 00:53:19:01

00:53:19:01 - 00:53:23:03

you know, when when we are marginalized like that,
we have to create work

00:53:23:06 - 00:53:25:24

and we have to create it unashamedly

00:53:26:03 - 00:53:29:07

and we have to get it out there.

00:53:29:07 - 00:53:32:24

And then immediately -
having the party and turning the music up.

00:53:33:10 - 00:53:36:06

It's the only way.

00:53:36:06 - 00:53:38:15

Because if you,

00:53:39:18 - 00:53:40:07

you know,

00:53:40:16 - 00:53:43:06

something I keep banging on about, but basically

00:53:43:22 - 00:53:47:12

when people are the majority people in the space

00:53:47:18 - 00:53:51:17

they are only doing what we want to do.

00:53:51:20 - 00:53:57:00

They are creating pieces that look like them
and that represent them and that they can relate to.

00:53:57:08 - 00:54:00:05

And it's annoying that they're not including us.

00:54:00:17 - 00:54:02:23

But the fact is that just doing what we want to do,

00:54:03:24 - 00:54:07:12

Just because they get to do it
more doesn't mean it's wrong

00:54:07:12 - 00:54:08:18

they're doing it.

00:54:08:18 - 00:54:12:19

And so what we have to do is do what they're doing
and then get out there.

00:54:12:19 - 00:54:15:19

And I know that, you know,
if you're not from a rich background

00:54:15:20 - 00:54:19:20

or you're not connected,
all of that, that is a problem.

00:54:19:24 - 00:54:23:14

But they're not going to just open their arms
and just do it for you.

00:54:23:14 - 00:54:24:23

That's not going to happen.

00:54:24:23 - 00:54:27:18

So we have to create the work ourselves.

00:54:27:18 - 00:54:30:01

We have to do it more than once.

00:54:30:01 - 00:54:33:03

You know, you can't... if you cook a meal on Monday,

00:54:33:09 - 00:54:35:01

you know, it's not going to be there on Friday.

00:54:35:01 - 00:54:36:20

You're going to have to cook some more meals.

00:54:36:20 - 00:54:39:18

And so that's what we have to do as artists.

00:54:39:18 - 00:54:43:19

But I mean, you know, so you're East Asian,

00:54:44:13 - 00:54:48:16

Chinese descent, you know, I'm here for you myself.

00:54:48:22 - 00:54:51:21

If you want to write a play or create an opera,
whatever is you want to

00:54:51:21 - 00:54:54:20

do, I will help you and I'll do it for free.

00:54:55:02 - 00:54:58:00

So make it happen.

00:54:58:02 - 00:55:01:18

And if you can't do it, get your friends
who can do it to do it.

00:55:01:24 - 00:55:03:21

Because that's the only way.

00:55:03:21 - 00:55:08:00

That is the only way to create the work
and not wait to be asked,

00:55:08:23 - 00:55:12:17

not wait for permission,
because the only permission that counts is your own.

00:55:14:14 - 00:55:15:13

That's one of the....

00:55:19:12 - 00:55:21:00

Alex: Tarik, did you want to respond?

00:55:21:00 - 00:55:22:17

I was going to say this is more on that permission.

00:55:22:17 - 00:55:23:13

I think that's really one of the

00:55:23:13 - 00:55:26:20

a lot of the time people are waiting for permission
and we have to give it to ourselves.

00:55:26:20 - 00:55:30:02

So if you're waiting for someone to give it to you,

that's

00:55:31:15 - 00:55:32:19

here you go.

00:55:32:19 - 00:55:34:04

But actually you need to you do that.

00:55:34:04 - 00:55:39:18

I actually think I was waiting for someone to give me permission to recognise myself as a creative person.

00:55:39:18 - 00:55:42:04

And people would say, Oh, you're a creative person, but maybe I didn't know.

00:55:42:11 - 00:55:44:12

Can I say that about myself?

00:55:44:21 - 00:55:46:13

Does that sound vain?

00:55:46:13 - 00:55:50:04

So yeah, there's a thing about making that start. Just start somewhere.

00:55:50:05 - 00:55:52:00

It doesn't matter what your first step is like.

00:55:52:00 - 00:55:54:08

You're like, just then take another step, then take another step.

00:55:54:08 - 00:55:59:06

Just keep stepping. You'll get somewhere eventually, and you don't know where it's going to be necessarily.

00:55:59:13 - 00:56:04:04

There's something really big also about finding your community, helping to advocate for.

00:56:04:04 - 00:56:07:24

So if you feel that something is missing or you're disappointed

00:56:07:24 - 00:56:10:10

that something doesn't exist, that's great

00:56:11:00 - 00:56:13:13

because you can make it, you can be the first one to make it.

00:56:13:23 - 00:56:17:07

So like, rather than saying that as a as a problem, it could also be that

00:56:17:07 - 00:56:18:13
you might even be the solution.

00:56:18:13 - 00:56:23:20
So much of the time
we see freedom as a problem.

00:56:24:05 - 00:56:29:02
Like when someone dumps you and you're like:
'I don't want to be free' and actually that sets you free.

00:56:29:02 - 00:56:30:21
Someone fires you, they set you free.

00:56:30:21 - 00:56:33:04
If someone won't give you a grant,
they set you free.

00:56:33:07 - 00:56:35:09
It's someone won't take you in their theatre,

00:56:35:09 - 00:56:36:15
They've set you free.

00:56:36:15 - 00:56:39:10
What you're doing is
you're actually resisting freedom.

00:56:39:12 - 00:56:40:20
And so

00:56:40:20 - 00:56:41:21

00:56:41:21 - 00:56:44:06
Until someone goes out with you, which is lovely.

00:56:44:12 - 00:56:45:01
You're free,

00:56:46:12 - 00:56:46:19
right?

00:56:46:19 - 00:56:48:06
Until somebody.

00:56:48:06 - 00:56:50:06
So somebody has sex with you, you're free.

00:56:51:04 - 00:56:54:07
You don't have to please
anybody else. Just yourself.

00:56:54:17 - 00:56:56:03

And so that's the thing.

00:56:56:03 - 00:57:00:18

I think, you know, it's
it's about using that freedom and

00:57:00:22 - 00:57:03:20

and seeing it as that because

00:57:04:13 - 00:57:10:07

the way that bullies work really efficiently
is they bully you for a couple of seconds

00:57:10:07 - 00:57:13:11

or they blank you or ignore
you, exclude you for a couple of seconds.

00:57:13:16 - 00:57:15:20

Then they rely on you to do it
for the next ten years.

00:57:15:20 - 00:57:18:00

Bully yourself, exclude yourself.

00:57:18:05 - 00:57:22:10

They rely on you to do their work for you
while they're off bullying someone else.

00:57:23:12 - 00:57:25:07

And not even thinking about you.

00:57:25:07 - 00:57:28:23

So that's why you have to generate it yourself
and see what

00:57:29:02 - 00:57:31:23

see the situation you're in as freedom.

00:57:32:22 - 00:57:33:21

Alex: Powerful.

00:57:33:23 - 00:57:36:11

Laura, did you want to respond?

00:57:36:11 - 00:57:38:14

I don't think I can add any more to that.

00:57:39:12 - 00:57:41:01

Alex: So we're going to move on and take another question.

00:57:41:01 - 00:57:43:00

There's two questions at the front here.

00:57:43:00 - 00:57:46:06

All I wanted to quickly add to that was, in answer to the question,

00:57:46:06 - 00:57:47:12

I think it's also about connection.

00:57:47:12 - 00:57:50:14

Diversity within diversity
means building relationships,

00:57:50:14 - 00:57:54:01

building relationships with communities
not being afraid to say,

00:57:54:08 - 00:57:58:07

'look, you know, I'm really interested
in connecting with you and your experience.'

00:57:58:14 - 00:58:01:08

Build a relationship often there's a welcome there,

00:58:01:17 - 00:58:03:06

not suspicion.

00:58:04:22 - 00:58:08:08

Audience Member: Hi. Open question to all.

00:58:10:04 - 00:58:13:12

Where would you feel like

00:58:13:21 - 00:58:18:10

is a good place
to start in approaching access riders?

00:58:18:10 - 00:58:22:07

And that could be sort of open to interpretation as

00:58:22:07 - 00:58:27:08

an access rider as a human more than just
necessarily a disability access rider.

00:58:29:00 - 00:58:29:17

But yeah.

00:58:31:04 - 00:58:32:22

Um good question.

00:58:32:22 - 00:58:36:19

I know there are
resources on the Internet.

00:58:36:19 - 00:58:42:17

I know there's various places
I believe I think Unlimited has some has on

00:58:42:23 - 00:58:46:17
and within Shape Arts there's definitely

00:58:46:17 - 00:58:53:00
Information there on how to do it and I think yeah,
just kind of I suppose start giving yourself

00:58:53:00 - 00:58:57:07
permission to think about
what is it you need and kind of as we said,

00:58:57:07 - 00:58:59:09
remembering the whole you.

00:59:01:03 - 00:59:04:13
But yeah,
there are definitely places and resources.

00:59:04:21 - 00:59:09:22
Also there are
some people like we have like a format as well

00:59:09:22 - 00:59:12:14
that, you know, there may be places that you can say, well

00:59:13:02 - 00:59:15:22
is there a format, can I fill in your format?

00:59:16:05 - 00:59:17:01
So yeah.

00:59:17:01 - 00:59:20:05
Can I borrow your format
and add to and customise it?

00:59:20:05 - 00:59:21:17
Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

00:59:22:18 - 00:59:25:16
I think generally a lot of organisations for sure

00:59:25:16 - 00:59:29:02
would be really happy
to share their templates for an access rider.

00:59:30:01 - 00:59:35:09
So just ask, ask your local arts organisation I would say,

00:59:35:09 - 00:59:37:18
and if they don't want to help,
that's that's a red flag.

00:59:38:02 - 00:59:38:15
That's fucked up isn't it?

00:59:38:15 - 00:59:38:21
Yeah.

00:59:38:21 - 00:59:41:04
No access to our access.

00:59:41:13 - 00:59:43:13
Come and ask us. We'll send you our template.

00:59:43:13 - 00:59:45:18

00:59:45:18 - 00:59:51:17
Alex: We've got time I think for one more question and I apologise if I've missed anyone.

00:59:52:09 - 00:59:55:10
I can only see so far up
and seeing the people in front of me.

00:59:56:15 - 00:59:57:21
Audience Member: Hi. My name's Rachel.

00:59:57:21 - 00:59:59:21
I'm from the English Folk Dance and Song Society.

00:59:59:21 - 01:00:03:07
I was born in the 1960s, so I loving the fact that...yeah.

01:00:04:15 - 01:00:07:05
medium height, perhaps small white woman

01:00:07:10 - 01:00:10:06
with slightly
greying bob, red jumper, black trousers.

01:00:11:04 - 01:00:13:21
I just want to ask you all about allyship.

01:00:14:13 - 01:00:16:24
I absolutely loved your presentation.

01:00:16:24 - 01:00:18:15
I feel very, very inspired.

01:00:18:15 - 01:00:23:00
I'm very committed personally in my life
and in my job to being the best possible ally

01:00:23:00 - 01:00:24:10
that I can.

01:00:24:12 - 01:00:27:10

In the multiple areas you've discussed.

01:00:27:10 - 01:00:28:14

Can you share your thoughts?

01:00:28:14 - 01:00:31:12

How can how can we be, we I'm saying as a white,

01:00:32:08 - 01:00:34:23

straight, non-disabled woman,

01:00:34:23 - 01:00:37:09

how can I and others of us

01:00:37:09 - 01:00:40:13

be the best possible

ally or the best possible allies to each other?

01:00:42:09 - 01:00:43:16

So allyship, I think, is an

01:00:43:16 - 01:00:48:22

interesting thing I think we should all

probably be ideally, we'd probably all be allies

01:00:48:22 - 01:00:53:01

for people that are not like us
or have differences

01:00:53:01 - 01:00:56:15

allied with with difference.

01:00:56:18 - 01:00:58:04

I generally

01:00:58:04 - 01:01:02:03

I'm not like I'm this kind of ally
and that kind of ally as an ally.

01:01:02:03 - 01:01:03:20

I think I like to

01:01:04:21 - 01:01:06:02

maybe

01:01:07:13 - 01:01:08:12

what am I trying to say?

01:01:08:12 - 01:01:11:09

I feel like, we ant to not insert ourselves as the ally.

01:01:11:09 - 01:01:14:23

I think sometimes I think it's about making sure
that we're supporting other people to be empowered.

01:01:14:23 - 01:01:16:20

I think that would be the best allyship..

01:01:16:20 - 01:01:20:24

Sometimes allyship is about speaking up, sometimes it's about shutting up.

01:01:21:18 - 01:01:26:11

It can be a bit of both. You know?

01:01:26:11 - 01:01:27:07

Yeah.

01:01:27:17 - 01:01:29:03

Any other thoughts on allyship?

01:01:29:03 - 01:01:30:19

Good. Yeah.

01:01:30:20 - 01:01:33:02

I was doing a project.

01:01:33:02 - 01:01:38:21

With lots of young actors and they were arguing, arguing in a healthy way

01:01:38:21 - 01:01:42:20

and debating and, one of them said,

01:01:44:00 - 01:01:45:17

'I want to be an ally in that area.'

01:01:45:17 - 01:01:48:12

And one of them went, 'Well, be an ally and fuck off.'

01:01:51:00 - 01:01:51:18

01:01:51:18 - 01:01:56:00

And all of them, including the person who said that, fell about laughing because we got it.

01:01:56:00 - 01:01:59:06

Like sometimes. The way to be an ally is to get out the way.

01:01:59:14 - 01:02:03:12

But of course, we rely so much on allies and people,

01:02:03:12 - 01:02:07:17

you know, and people who are inside helping people who are outside and so on and so forth.

01:02:07:17 - 01:02:12:16
But it's really about the way
you... it's a gradual thing.

01:02:13:13 - 01:02:17:00
So I know that a lot of times
I get emails from people saying,

01:02:17:06 - 01:02:22:08
I ' in London and I'm you know, I'm from Italy
and I don't know how to be an actor here.

01:02:22:12 - 01:02:24:19
And everyone keeps saying to me, Go to Rikki.'

01:02:25:02 - 01:02:29:02
And I think I'm really proud of that,
that people just think if anybody's

01:02:29:02 - 01:02:34:09
having difficulty fitting in, Rikki will,
you know, give them a bit of tough love,

01:02:34:09 - 01:02:37:19
basically Get it together,
make your own party' and all that kind of stuff.

01:02:38:03 - 01:02:44:12
But then I sit with a theatre
and they say, 'Oh, well, who sends you these plays?'

01:02:44:12 - 01:02:48:11
And they explain and they just say, 'Oh, we only get
plays from women in Chiswick who are talking about

01:02:48:16 - 01:02:52:00
moving to the country with their kids.'
and I'm like, 'Oh, well, I would

01:02:52:04 - 01:02:57:22
I would actually love one of those people'.
But I really get that big, huge range of it.

01:02:57:22 - 01:03:01:17
And they keep saying they get a narrow range
and I can only

01:03:01:17 - 01:03:05:08
I think it's because I make it clear
that I'm there for everybody.

01:03:05:23 - 01:03:09:18
It's just just how you do everything
and how you hold yourself, isn't it?

01:03:10:02 - 01:03:13:19

And because it's not like I've really said anything,

01:03:14:15 - 01:03:16:02

you know, I've just done it.

01:03:17:00 - 01:03:21:02

So once you've helped certain people,
everyone just starts to come to you.

01:03:21:15 - 01:03:24:14

You must be finding that with your...

01:03:24:14 - 01:03:25:23

are you not both finding that?

01:03:26:17 - 01:03:28:24

Does it not go beyond even that,

01:03:28:24 - 01:03:32:00

the kind of target groups
that you were working with initially?

01:03:32:11 - 01:03:34:18

Or is it. I don't know. Is it just me?

01:03:36:10 - 01:03:37:07

I'm not sure

01:03:37:07 - 01:03:41:03

Do you not find that that the fact
that you've been an ally to people

01:03:41:09 - 01:03:45:17

close to you, does that not has that
not permeated outside of that.

01:03:45:17 - 01:03:48:05

Yes. And I think that might
just be just how one holds oneself.

01:03:48:05 - 01:03:51:18

And I think one of the most important things
in allyship is listening.

01:03:52:13 - 01:03:53:16

Okay.

01:03:53:18 - 01:03:54:21

That's something I just

01:03:54:21 - 01:03:59:03

I just remembered, it's being able to like actually

what someone actually actually wants.

01:03:59:06 - 01:04:01:01

Sometimes people will be like, 'I'm here to help you.'

01:04:01:01 - 01:04:03:20

'And so I've done this
without actually asking the person.'

01:04:04:10 - 01:04:07:11

Alex: We're out of time. So Laura.

01:04:07:11 - 01:04:10:12

So another thing that I want to kind say of along with
that is

01:04:10:18 - 01:04:15:14

I know there's sometimes conversations
about making space and about stepping aside

01:04:15:14 - 01:04:19:05

to create space,
but sometimes there's a danger that like

01:04:19:09 - 01:04:20:18

if you're in a position of power

01:04:20:18 - 01:04:24:15

and you want to create space for someone
who's not been given that voice

01:04:24:15 - 01:04:28:23

and that power, it's not enough just to step aside,
because then you just leave a vacuum.

01:04:29:04 - 01:04:33:23

So actually you need to support those people
and work out what... support them

01:04:33:23 - 01:04:38:03

to understand what they need
to take on those roles and those leadership roles.

01:04:39:17 - 01:04:40:01

Yeah.

01:04:40:01 - 01:04:44:19

And that is, it's that giving that support
and sometimes as well,

01:04:44:24 - 01:04:49:13

like I say, asking what people need,
but also being aware that it's really draining,

01:04:49:13 - 01:04:52:16
it can be really tiring for someone
to say what they need.

01:04:52:16 - 01:04:57:16
So if you're not getting, you know, as we said,
if they don't know what they need,

01:04:57:16 - 01:05:01:04
then supporting them to explore and discover

01:05:01:04 - 01:05:03:18
what they need to be able to take up that space.

01:05:04:08 - 01:05:05:20
Explore and discover. That's nice.

01:05:05:20 - 01:05:07:23
Well, yeah, do some homework, do some research.

01:05:07:23 - 01:05:09:01
And what Alex says is

01:05:09:01 - 01:05:12:16
so bang on about listening
because everybody tells you

01:05:12:16 - 01:05:15:05
everything you need to know about them
the first time you meet them.

01:05:15:11 - 01:05:18:14
And if you're not listening,
you hear what you want to hear.

01:05:18:21 - 01:05:21:02
But if you listen, they always tell you.

01:05:21:02 - 01:05:24:09
So when I do
mentorship groups, and they go 'you read my mind.'

01:05:24:09 - 01:05:26:17
I say 'No, I listened to what you said.'

01:05:26:17 - 01:05:30:11
You told me what you needed already,
but you were just frightened to claim it.

01:05:31:00 - 01:05:32:20
Is that what is that kind of thing, you mean?

01:05:33:21 - 01:05:34:07
Yeah.

01:05:34:07 - 01:05:35:21
Yeah, I think so. Yeah.

01:05:35:21 - 01:05:36:02
Yeah.

01:05:36:02 - 01:05:38:07
Sometimes it's

01:05:39:02 - 01:05:43:08
is there is just
then be someone who can then draw those things out.

01:05:43:11 - 01:05:44:07
That's really helpful.

01:05:44:07 - 01:05:45:09
Without putting them on the spot. Yeah.

01:05:45:24 - 01:05:50:03
Alex: And I think also dare
I suggest that sometimes if you have been used

01:05:50:03 - 01:05:54:11
to navigating spaces and being smaller, it does take time

01:05:55:05 - 01:05:59:11
to actually really accept and understand.
That offer also needs to be very sincere

01:05:59:21 - 01:06:03:24
because you're asking someone to step out of a space
in a sense which we've often lived in

01:06:04:08 - 01:06:08:09
so much of our lives,
to recognize it's an opportunity for expansion.

01:06:09:00 - 01:06:10:14
I'm going to have to thank you guys.

01:06:10:14 - 01:06:13:14
This has been an amazing panel
discussion, so dynamic.

01:06:13:24 - 01:06:16:16
Who needs coffee now? Come on.

01:06:17:03 - 01:06:19:12
Laura, Tarik, Rikki.