

Flower Arrangements (enhanced transcripts).

[Content Notice: racism, ableism, profanity.]

This series of videos was made by The Curiosity Paradox for the Desire Path Virtual Launch Event on February 18, 2021.

These were formed from clips of recorded dialogues with our [Conversation Contributors](#). Many topics we covered are ones that have rhymed and repeated in our conversations with other people doing this work. We discussed several works of art, the limits of standard access, and Access Art as an evolving idea.

From these conversations, we have produced the following Flower Arrangements.

If you have reflections on the questions presented here and want to dialogue, please [contact The Curiosity Paradox](#) or our [Conversation Contributors](#).

Flower Arrangement #1 – How is ADA Access A Barrier?

An array of dried plant sculptures.

[Water trickling gently throughout. Crows in the distance.]

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #1

How is ADA access a barrier?

Lichen on a twig.

Becky Emmert, Head of Accessibility, Portland Art Museum.

I so appreciate ADA and what it is, and it was needed. But we're so far beyond that. It was written before the Internet existed.

We're trying to continue to shape our society based on something so archaic.

Sea holly.

Rebel Sidney Fayola Black, Access Artist, Disability Justice Consultant.

I think like, ADA access is a barrier a lot of the time. You know, people are able to check off a list and say, "Hey, we've done our due diligence and that's all we have to do."

Crimson clover.

Leila Haile, City of Portland Disability Program Coordinator,
Creative Laureate, Co-Founder of Ori Gallery.

For me, logically, you're like, "Oh, we must think about
Disability and access at the beginning of every process and
at every step throughout."

But for folks in the institutions that I work with, you know,
the ADA is a tack on they put at the end to make sure they
don't get sued.

We have to fight it on every single tangible level, right? And
even intangible, like how do we fight that spiritually?

An array of dried plant sculptures.

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #1

How is ADA access a barrier?

Flower Arrangement #2 – How Do We Shift Away from Standard Access?

An array of dried plant sculptures.

[Water trickling gently throughout. Crows in the distance.]

Desire Path, Flower Arrangement #2, How do we shift away from standard access?

Hazelnut blossom.

Babatunde, Executive Director. Black and Beyond the Binary Collective.

A lot of able bodied folks are making a lot of assumptions and ideas around the needs of Disabled folks. If people have money to support imperialism and continue to support a police force that brutalizes Black folks...

I feel like let's shift some of those resources into making things more accessible for folks and creating a higher standard and quality of living for everyone.

Curly fern leaf.

Cheryl Green, Access Artist, Independent Audio Describer, Captioner, and Multimedia Digital Artist.

I try to put my emphasis not on being compliant, but on being interesting and creative and artistic in my accessibility work.

Sea holly.

Rebel Sidney Fayola Black. Access Artist, Disability Justice Consultant.

When I'm producing work, I interrupt if there's an access need. I don't think, "Oh, it's so important that the presenter get to present their whole thing at the expense of people not understanding."

Instead, I say, "Hey, can we take a pause for a minute? We're having some access issues."

Branching lichen.

Saara Hirsi, Social Education and Equity Consulting LLC.

In my own experience and with people I work around them, they really don't know the right question to ask.

So I always have to educate the community what they can ask and how can they use their own creativity so they can do their part to get access they need.

Crimson clover.

Leila Haile, City of Portland Disability Program Coordinator, Creative Laureate, Co-Founder of Ori Gallery.

I view my position as like I should be institutionalizing solutions that the community has already come up with, and that should just be the name of the game. And people don't see government work as that. But that's what I think it is.

My job is to ungaslight the people and really reveal that, you know, we have the answers we have been looking for and we are the ones who will save us.

An array of dried plant sculptures.

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #2

How do we shift away from standard access?

Flower Arrangement #3 – How is Resisting White Supremacy an Access Art?

An array of dried plant sculptures.

[Water trickling gently throughout. Crows in the distance.]

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #3

How is resisting white supremacy an Access Art?

Cornflower.

Anaïs Isiria Gurrola, Dramaturg and Artist.

No, Portland is not white. You're looking in the wrong places. We are here. People of Color are alive and well in Portland.

Sea holly.

Rebel Sidney Fayola Black, Access Artist, Disability Justice Consultant.

When we're not thinking about sick and Disabled people, neurodivergent people, people with sensory issues, people with multiple chemical sensitivities...

And you know, a lot of those people are people of color. And so this is also an expression of supremacy culture and white supremacy.

Lichen on a twig.

Becky Emmert, Head of accessibility, Portland Art Museum.
People make it hard, and I don't understand why people make it hard. I mean, I think it's really tied up in white supremacy.

Hazelnut blossom.

Babatunde, Executive Director, Black and Beyond the Binary Collective.

And if you're not really paying attention to the way that like you are holding white supremacy in your body, that shit will grow, that shit will grow and manifest. And honestly, it's like poison, you know?

Like that masculine energy of "Make a decision now." I live to challenge that in myself everyday.

An array of dried plant sculptures.

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #3

How is resisting white supremacy an Access Art?

Flower Arrangement #4 – How Is Resisting the Non Profit Industrial Complex an Access Art?

An array of dried plant sculptures.

[Water trickling gently throughout. Crows in the distance.]

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #4

How is resisting the non-profit industrial complex an Access Art?

Crimson clover.

Leila Haile, City of Portland Disability Program Coordinator, Creative Laureate, Co-Founder of Ori Gallery.

Non-profit entities—or like charitable entities—since the transatlantic slave trade have always existed as a front, right?

And like the Nobel Peace Prize was created because fucking Nobel was the world's largest weapons manufacturers and they wanted to change their image, so they created the Nobel Peace Prize.

Hazelnut blossom.

Babatunde, Executive Director, Black and Beyond the Binary Collective.

As someone that really does not like nonprofits, I never

thought I would start a nonprofit. And maybe that's exactly who should be starting nonprofits, is people that hate them. And are actually going challenge the way that they're structured or challenge the way that they maintain complicity in a lot of the systems that we're actually supposed to be fighting against.

Sea holly.

Rebel Sidney Fayola Black, Access Artist, Disability Justice Consultant.

This Disability Justice Dreaming space that I've been creating. You know, we share presence. People come and we... People come as they are. And I think that's important. People come with brain fog, people come with pain. People come in bed. And we share presence with one another. And then we're building grassroots resources together.

Arnica flower.

Subashini Ganesan, New Expressive Works, Founder and Executive Director.

What I need is time, but not time to do things. Time to not do things. Time to just [exhales]... So that things can defrag and fall into spaces.

Babatunde.

What if there were no successes or failures? We just built movement together. That could just be it. We just built movement and the end result is liberation.

An array of dried plant sculptures.

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #4

How is resisting the non-profit industrial complex an Access Art?

Flower Arrangement #5 – What is Access Art?

An array of dried plant sculptures.

[Water trickling gently throughout. Crows in the distance.]

Desire Path

Flower Arrangement #5

What is Access Art?

Sea holly.

Rebel Sidney Fayola Black, Access Artist, Disability Justice Consultant.

Surrounding myself with beauty is a form of access, I believe.

Lichen on a twig.

Becky Emmert, Head of Accessibility, Portland Art Museum.
Just living as Disabled individuals in this world is a radical act of resistance.

Branching lichen.

Saara Hirsi, Social Education and Equity Consulting LLC.
I use my own challenges like how I navigated the system and some people say, "Wow, if you do it, so I can do it."

Cornflower.

Anaïs Isiria Gurrola, Dramaturg and Artist.

In the way that community defense supports physical needs. I think art as access can also support ways of like fostering your mind and creativity in art that supports you and makes you feel safe and at home.

Curly fern Leaf.

Cheryl Green, Access Artist, Independent Audio Describer, Captioner, and Multimedia Digital Artist.

It's not good enough to always just say "music gets faster, music gets louder." I ask my body. Like, what is it doing? My heart's racing. Oh, music is racing.

I try to always remember what I have learned from audio description users and caption users about what they want. Want. And need. Users want an interesting and informative and immersive experience in a film. And so why not give it?

Crimson clover.

Leila Haile, City of Portland Disability Program Coordinator, Creative Laureate, Co-Founder of Ori Gallery.

We need creativity in order to imagine new worlds and new ways of being. Or even to remember how to reinstitute old ways of being. And so I feel like access art is refinding that divine creative.

An array of dried plant sculptures.

Desire Path.

Flower Arrangement #5.

What is Access Art?