

ABTT Reimagined Futures Seminar Chat

- 0:48:28** **Raquel Meseguer:** Raquel - Bristol!
- 00:48:45** **Ant Lightfoot (he/him):** Ant - Bristol! :)
- 00:49:02** **Matthew Cock, VocalEyes:** Hi, I'm Matthew from VocalEyes, an arts sector support organisation working with and for blind and visually impaired people
- 00:49:44** **Emma Savage:** Emma from Wiltshire.
- 00:50:00** **Rose Kigwana (she/her):** Hiya - Rose Kigwana, South East Dance, Brighton
- 00:50:37** **Bethany Pound/Kavina Pound:** we are from Greenwich London and we run Danzability(Kavina and Beth)
- 00:50:39** **Adrian Davies:** Hi from Nottingham Museums
- 00:50:50** **Hazel Low:** Hi, I'm Hazel, a Theatre Designer from London
- 00:50:50** **Elena Giakoumaki:** Hello from Charcoalblue!
- 00:52:09** **Ruairí Ó Cuív:** Ruairí Ó Cuív, Dublin, Ireland
- 00:53:21** **anne minors:** Hello from Anne and Sound Space Vision
- 00:53:31** **Matthieu Mereau:** Matthieu from Haworth Tompkins Architects, London
- 00:53:53** **Jamie Beddard:** Hi, Jamie Beddard - Diverse City/New Wolsey/freelance occasionally
- 00:54:51** **ben stephen (he\him):** Hello - Ben @ the Albany, Deptford. An arts Centre.
- 00:55:14** **David White:** Hi - David a musical supervisor from London
- 00:55:52** **Cliona Ni Mhochain:** Hi all, Clíona here - London based PM
- 00:56:15** **Martina Fatato:** Hi! Martina, from Charcoalblue
- 00:56:19** **Jill Standish (she/her):** Hi, Jill from Ripon Arts Hub, North Yorkshire
- 00:56:18** **Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator:** Currently speaking is Dan Daw. Dan Daw is a Queer, Crip dance artist and disability activist. His work often reflects on the social/political relationship to difference or the other and is fundamentally rooted in finding ways to free underrepresented bodies from patriarchic oppression.
Dan launched Dan Daw Creative Projects in 2015 and he is currently making his next work, 'The Dan Daw Show' in collaboration with theatre director Mark Maughan.
- 00:56:55** **Catrin.Powell:** Hi, Catrin from Arup in Winchester

00:57:44 Andrew Miller: Hello, I'm Andrew, co-founder of #WeShallNotBeRemoved - the UK Disability Arts Alliance - and one of the few disabled people to have run a multi-arts venue

00:58:21 Michelle Rolfe: Michelle from BOP Theatre in Scotland

00:58:42 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Hi everyone, if you want to share you message with everyone, please do ensure you select the drop down on the chat box which states "all panellists and attendees". Thank you!

00:59:18 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Although the majority of performing arts venues are compliant with current legislation around accessibility, there is much more work needed if our cultural spaces are to be truly open to all.

Our aim is to create a benchmark that will inform and inspire new architectural, institutional and cultural approaches to the design or refurbishment of public arts buildings, looking towards a future accessible

Organisations involved in this seminar today include Studio Three Sixty, Adjaye Associates and the Association of British Theatre Technicians

01:00:47 Marc Rees: Be great to include a Welsh venue

01:01:54 Lucy Osborne (she/her) studio three sixty: We'd love to include a Welsh venue - do you have any in mind? We'd also like to reach the South West...

01:01:02 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Studio Three Sixty refurbish, regenerate and build cultural spaces that enrich people's lives.

They are an award-winning design practice founded by Emma Chapman and Lucy Osborne in 2015.

Their people-centred approach is shaped by their unique experience as practitioners, artists and theatre consultants. They create 'thoughtful, beautiful and affordable design that cares for people and the planet.

01:01:24 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Adjaye Associates were founded by Sir David Adjaye OBE, a Ghanaian-British architect with a passion for community-driven projects, who was recently awarded the RIBA Royal Gold Medal for Architecture.

His approach to architecture as a force for change began when he observed the difficulties his brother Emmanuel – who was partially paralysed – faced when visiting his special school.

Selected completed works and current projects include: the Sugar Hill Mixed-Use Development and Children's Museum of Art and Storytelling in Harlem, New York; two neighborhood libraries in Washington, DC; the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver; the Nobel Peace Centre in Oslo;

01:01:25 Matthew Cock, VocalEyes: I'd be really grateful if the panel and attendees could share the VocalEyes, Stagertext and CAE survey <https://vocaley.es.co.uk/theatre-access-survey-2021/>

01:03:24 Matthew Cock, VocalEyes: Buildings aren't just architecture, though? they are people, programmes, attitudes etc....

01:03:47 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: The final organisation involved in this session today is the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT)

The ABTT is a membership organisation which sets and upholds standards in technical excellence, safety and compliance for theatre and live performance. They advise on safety, planning, good practice and enforcement and provide publications to support their members' knowledge.

The ABTT currently provides advice through the Codes of Practice, Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment and Guidance notes and Publications. The ABTT produces a Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry with the Support of the Safety Committee. This includes (but are not limited to) Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment , 'Blue Books': Guidance Notes, Safety Matters, Sightline and FAQs.

The ABTT Theatre Planning Committee has been active for the past thirty years, providing impartial advice at planning stage to improve the design and technical standards to new or refurbished performing arts buildings of any size. It reviews plans for new and remodelled theatres, opera houses, performing arts centres and concert halls, which are brought to it by clients, consultants and architects.

01:04:37 Rose Kigwana (she/her): Dan - thank you this is very exciting. When do you expect to do the consultations? We would love to offer The Dance Space, Brighton as one venues/ towns. If we are open by then.

01:04:29 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Our current speaker is Joao Barroso. João Barroso is Project Director at Adjaye Associates London studio, where he has worked for over a decade on a breadth of the practice's formative and key projects.

He has extensive experience overseeing various international developments and commissions across the UK, Europe, Middle East and Asia with a predominant focus on cultural, civic, mixed-use and commercial typologies.

Currently João is leading the design for The Africa Institute, a global research-based think tank and post-graduate studies institution in Sharjah, UAE.

He previously worked on the international winning design for the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art & Cultural Center in New Delhi, India and also formed a key part of the project team in delivering the Aishti Foundation, a mixed-use arts and shopping complex in Beirut, Lebanon.

01:05:33 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: You can find more information on "Reimagined Futures" here: www.reimagined-futures.co.uk

01:07:14 Matt Atwood: Hello. I'm Matt Atwood. I'm a Venue Designer with Arup Venues. I strongly believe that the spaces we create should be relevant and inclusive to their communities. This concept is the heart of our practice design philosophy

01:08:37 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Now speaking is Doron von Beider. Doron von Beider is Head of Research for Adjaye Associates where he has worked for the past five years.

As a qualified architect, researcher and an academic, he brings over a decade of experience in the development and delivery of strategic architectural research and theory. His work encompasses both academic and practice-based methodologies which are applied to studio works of diverse scales and typologies.

In collaboration with numerous design teams, Doron has provided comprehensive and in-depth research for a range of international projects and competitions including the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Westminster, London; The Thabo Mbeki Presidential Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa and the landmark project for the National Cathedral of Ghana, in Accra.

01:12:18 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: If anyone has any questions for our speakers today we would love to hear from you! Please do put your questions on to the Q&A tab and we will be reviewing these in our Q&A towards the end of the session.

01:15:11 Michael Achtman/he him: Hi, I'm Michael Achtman. I'm working with Extraordinary Bodies/Cirque Bijou/Diverse City to create an accessible mobile touring venue (Big Top) for inclusive circus practice.

01:16:13 Jamie Beddard: Worth visiting Murcia: The company Pupaclown, and venue Centro Escenio de Integracion Social. Visited a few years ago, and was mightily impressed by some of the features

01:17:03 Raquel Meseguer: Hi I'm Raquel - I champion horizontal events and claim lying down as a site for story telling and theatre. I ask venues if it's possible to spectate from lying down - something that would make theatre much more accessible for people with invisible disabilities that involve energy impairment.

01:17:19 Raquel Meseguer: I would ask that any new venues has the possibility to lie down to spectate.

01:19:37 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Hi Raquel, what a great idea. If you have any questions on how this could be achieved or want to incite a discussion about this with our panellists, please do post in the Q&A

01:18:40 Ali Pottinger: Ali Pottinger, freelance stage manager, BSL Interpreter, project manager for Technical Theatre BSL project, and ABTT member! London

01:18:58 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Hi Ali, great to have you with us!

01:20:10 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Great questions from Will, thank you! If anyone else has any questions about our topic today please do let us know!

01:20:39 Ant Lightfoot (he/him): I'm Ant. A neurodivergent, queer artist dreaming of an inclusive future for the arts, both for spectators and for the artists that prioritises care and support.

01:21:03 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Hi Ant, thanks for joining us today

01:23:05 Matthew Cock, VocalEyes: Donmar Warehouse's Blindness also had integrated audio description available to any visitor to the installation, and also a Listen At Home version for people who could not travel to the venue for any reason.

01:23:39 Dr Angharad Beckett (Uni of Leeds): Hello everyone, I love you are all thinking and doing inclusion. I'm the Director of the Centre for Disability Studies, University of Leeds. I work in the area of disability politics and human rights. I come at this issue from a rights-based perspective. Under UN CRPD Article 30, disabled people have the right to participation in cultural life. So I want to support initiatives that help realise that right! I am also interested in how ableist logics inform the design of space, with exclusion being the (often unintended) consequence. I want to positively disrupt those logics. So the work you are doing is very exciting and up my street! :-)

01:27:46 Dr Angharad Beckett (Uni of Leeds): Also UN CRPD: Article 9 on Accessibility references the built environment
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-9-accessibility.html> AND Article 30 on Access to Cultural Life, Leisure...
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-30-participation-in-cultural-life-recreation-leisure-and-sport.html>

01:28:25 Dr Angharad Beckett (Uni of Leeds): We, in the UK, have signed and ratified the convention and thus have a moral and legal obligation in this regard

01:24:00 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Some relevant articles and links that we have found useful when investigating the building regulations for this session include:

- Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Building Regulations 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2214/contents/made>
- Statutory guidance under the Building Regulations:
Access to and use of buildings: Approved Document M
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m>
- Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2004/406/contents/made>
- Building standards technical handbook 2020: non-domestic buildings
<https://www.gov.scot/policies/building-standards/monitoring-improving-building-regulations/>

01:28:37 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Some of the resources we have used while investigating access for buildings have included:

- Disability: The global picture <https://humanity-inclusion.org.uk/en/action/disability-the-global-picture>
- The Social Model of Disability Definition -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24KE__OCKMw
- Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

01:30:07 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Now speaking is Robin who is Chief Executive of the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT).

Robin has over 30 years' experience in the Arts and Entertainment industry gained in organisations such as English National Opera, Stoll Moss Theatres, Theatre Projects Services, The Junction, DanceEast and Rambert. He has taught at Carmarthenshire College of Technology and Art, City of Westminster College and Anglia Ruskin University. nisations: The Junction, Cambridge; The Jerw

The ABTT exists to promote technical excellence in live performance. It supports the technical interests of theatre through information, advice and education. The ABTT produces a Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry in the UK with the support of the national Theatre Safety Committee.

Membership of the ABTT is open to anyone interested in the technical aspects of the presentation industries. Robin has worked as a Stage Electrician, Lighting Hire Client Contact, Lecturer in Performance Technology, Technical Director, Building Director and Theatre Consultant.

He has delivered three new-build capital projects for performing arts organisations: The Junction, Cambridge; The Jerwood DanceHouse, Ipswich and Rambert on the South Bank in London. Robin served as a founding member of the ABTT Training and Education Committee, a Trustee of the ABTT and as Honorary Secretary. He is a director of Skillscene and a member of the Standing Committee for Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment.

01:32:40 Lucy Osborne (she/her) studio three sixty: The ABTT are responsible for the current legislative frameworks which guide and shape the design of performing arts buildings

01:33:28 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: The ABTT currently provides advice through the Codes of Practice, Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment and Guidance notes and Publications. The ABTT produces a Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry with the Support of the Safety Committee. This includes (but are not limited to) Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment , 'Blue Books': Guidance Notes, Safety Matters, Sightline and FAQs.

Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment, acknowledged by the HSE, aspires to be a common guidance for the whole of the UK. These Technical Standards have been developed by an entertainment industry standing committee to help make improvements in building, maintaining, managing and operating places of entertainment.

Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment is a publication which provides a set of standards for the buildings, equipment and management of premises which are primarily used for entertainment. Such buildings can present unique hazards to performers, staff and the general public due to the number of people present in unfamiliar surroundings which may be noisy or poorly lit.

The standards are intended to apply to indoor venues although much of the guidance will also apply to outdoor events. The intention here is to help licensees, technical managers and enforcers to understand the requirements and needs of places of entertainment. The aim is to provide simple guidance in an easy format.

More information can be found here: <https://www.abtt.org.uk/product/technical-standards-for-places-of-entertainment/>

The ABTT also produces 'ABTT Guidance notes' which are brief documents providing guidance and recommendations on technical topics that are relevant to our Industry. These are typically more detailed on specific subjects than is contained within 'Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment'.

More information can be found here:
https://www.abtt.org.uk/shop/?product_cat=guidance-notes

01:37:28 Lucy Osborne (she/her) studio three sixty: We want to use this project to work with the ABTT to improve this legislative framework and create a universal benchmark which centres care.

01:39:28 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Hi everyone, we are just taking a short break so that our BSL Interpreters and Captioner can rest their minds and hands! We will be back shortly to start the next part of the discussion with you

If anyone has any questions on what we have covered so far, please do pop them in to the Q&A Feature and the bottom of your screens We have some fantastic questions in there already - it is bound to be an interesting discussion!

01:42:43 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Ok we will be back with you in just a second.

01:42:57 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: I hope everyone is back with their fresh cup of tea, ready for an interesting Q&A!

01:43:52 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: And we are back! Hope everyone is settled!

We have had some wonderful questions in so far, you can view these on the Q&A tab and like those you want to have answered first!

01:50:55 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: The questions we are currently looking at are:

To create a perfectly accessible space, we need to define what ableist architecture is in the cultural sphere. This is a huge piece of work as it must cover all impairments and all users: ie artists, participants, employees and audiences. How do we achieve that?

Have you considered a horizontal audience? I claim the horizontal for storytelling and theatre. I have chronic pain and need to lie down a lot. My community of people with invisible disability and energy impairments are often not seen or included. Horizontal spectating would make theatre MUCH more accessible for us. Have you considered this? and would it be possible in your vision? I've heard a lot about the best 'seat' in the house - what about the best 'horizontal seat' in the house?

The current questions we are answering are:

Are you incorporating thinking around the whole journey experience - whereabouts, links, infrastructure, etc - or primarily focussing on venue itself?

Picking up on Kate's provocation around the philosophical as well as the practical, I'm interested in hearing people's experiences and thoughts about the aesthetics of a building. How inclusive and accessible are they visually? Are entrances inviting and inclusive? Does equity in the full experience start with the invitation or just limited to physical building regulation minimum?

01:58:23 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: The Social Model of Disability Definition - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24KE__OCKMw

This is a video about a project, delivered by Shape Arts, which tells the radical story of the Disability Arts Movement, when a group of disabled people and their allies made great art and helped change the law'.

02:01:43 Robin Townley (he/him) CEO ABTT: Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment has just 37 stated single sentence Standards. Following the stated standards are more than 350 pages explaining how to approach meeting them. However, the first two are:
1. The premises should be designed and constructed, maintained and managed so as to ensure the health and safety and welfare of all the occupants.
2. Suitable provisions should be made to enable all people to use the premises.

More information on this can be found here: <https://www.abtt.org.uk/product/technical-standards-for-places-of-entertainment/>

02:06:09 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: So many of you are asking how you can get in contact about this project. Thank you! You can use the following email address to get in touch: emma.chapman@studiothreesixty.uk

02:06:47 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: The next question we are reviewing is:

Is 'total' inclusion/access possible? It does get bandied about a lot, and often unhelpfully. More honest appraisals/contexts more helpful to users. But delighted to be proved wrong

While I understand the point, I'm really struggling with the using Disneyland as a means of defining a utopian vision for access... When I visited with young children we were made to queue for hours in the blazing sun and it was almost impossible to find free drinking water. Perhaps it is actually an example of exactly what we don't want - a venue that has been designed for business rather than community.

02:07:38 Andrew Miller: There is useful piece of work to be done (perhaps by the ABTT, but disabled led) to start defining what constitutes ableism in venue architecture, the results of which could then trigger remedial works across the existing estate in the medium term to improve inclusion, as a staging post to achieving Dan's vision

02:07:47 Lucy Osborne (she/her) studio three sixty: Hey Matt, great question and I know what you mean! We mean it more in the context of a "fantasy venue"

02:07:48 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: Thanks Matt, what an interesting point!

We are currently looking at the question:

I'm interested in hearing about access for Deaf/disabled/neurodiverse designers, technicians and crew at venues. Seems like currently most access is focused on audiences, some provision for on-stage artists (including dressing rooms, backstage areas, etc.) but very little design for accessible working practice including Deaf/disabled/neurodiverse crew, operators, sound and lighting designers, etc. Any ideas in the pipeline?

I'd be interested in hearing the panel's thoughts about how much consideration the design of the Reimagined Future Venue will be given to accommodating disabled-led and similar performer companies, which exist at least in part to overcome under-representation in the arts (e.g. Ramps on the Moon, Graeae, Candoco, Bristol Paraorchestra).

02:12:58 Raquel Meseguer: Here Here Dan! Thank you for this and for giving it a good go!

02:13:11 Raquel Meseguer: And YES, we should be guided and come back to care.

02:14:45 Fiona Watt: Fantastic, fantastic panel event . Thank you so much!

02:15:05 Elysia Moore (she/her) ABTT Administrator: If you would like to get in contact with Studio 360 you can do so via following on social media, email, call, DM us

www.reimagined-futures.co.uk
Instagram @reimagined_futures

Twitter @ReimaginedF

You can email on emma.chapman@studiothreesixty.uk

02:15:51 **Jamie Beddard:** Thank you all, really interesting

02:16:06 **kat bridge (she/her):** Thank you all! for now and for future generations...

02:16:10 **Helena Breck:** Thanks to all the speakers for such an interesting and thought provoking webinar!