

Adrian

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SPEAKERS

Adrian Anantawan, Man 1, Rhoda Bernard, Man 2



Rhoda Bernard 00:03

So great to see you all back for day two of the ABL assembly 2022 Arts better the lives of everyone conference. As many of you know, this conference originated in 2013 at Boston Conservatory, and it was then titled The teaching music to students on the autism spectrum conference. We started off that year with about 50 people all in one room for a two day event with a narrower focus on music education and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Every year our audience has grown and this little conference overflowed to tone just a few years later. The 2016 merger between Boston Conservatory and Berklee College of Music made it possible for us to create the Berkeley Institute for arts, education and special needs, which expanded all of our work beyond autism to other populations, and beyond music to other art forms. It also made it possible for us to rename this conference the ABL assembly, arts better the lives of everyone and to expand its focus as well. Since then, the annual Abel assembly has hosted about 200 people every year, and an in person event in April in Boston. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic we reimagined the 2020 April assembly in an online format, and we have continued offering the conference fully online ever since. We hope that our 2023 conference will be a hybrid event within person and online sessions, all with remote participation options. So stay tuned on that. The Berkeley Institute for arts education and special needs is a catalyst for the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of visual and performing arts education. We firmly believe that the arts better the lives of everyone. Our work takes place in three areas, arts education programs for people of all ages with disabilities, including 12 music programs, two adaptive dance programs, and a theater program. These programs serve about 250 families every week, in person and remotely, including a permanent virtual arm of programming that reaches people all over the world. first of their kind graduate programs in music, education and autism, including a master's degree in a graduate certificate designed for working teachers with summer and evening classes and in in remote participation options. And finally, professional development for the field including this conference, which is our flagship offering, as well as teacher study groups, workshops, consultations, research projects, and online searchable Resource Center, a leadership network that engages leaders in the field domestically and internationally, and a brand new podcast that we'll drop later this spring. Stay tuned for that one, and much, much more. You can learn all about our work on our website berkeley.edu/bei AESN. Before I introduce today's keynote speaker, a few words of thanks. I'd like to thank Dean Darla Hanley and my many Berkeley colleagues for their support. I'd like to

thank our producers Creative Generation, for sharing our vision for this conference and making a shout out to members of my team. So combo for creating and updating the conference website, or Jana and Ferreira for spearheading. I'd like to thank all of you, attendees and committee members for being with us. One other announcement. As you all know, in addition to this weekend's conference sessions, we are continuing our popular digital learning series with a dynamic slate of new sessions that will unfold over the next 12 months. Recording and production of the 2022 2023 Digital Learning Series will begin later this spring. Watch your quick announcements of the new sessions. And now it is my great pleasure and honor to introduce today's keynote speaker. Adrienne and Antoine Adrienne and Antoine holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music, Yale University and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. As a violinist he has studied Itzhak Perlman and Pincus Zuckerman and as well as unselfie Muda. His academic work and education was supervised by Dr. Howard Gardner. Memorable Moments include performances at the White House, the opening ceremonies of the Athens and Vancouver Olympic Games, and the United Nations. Adrian has played for the late Christopher Reeve, Pope John Paul the second and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Adrian helped create the virtual chamber music initiative at the Holland Holland Bloorview AIDS rehab center. This cross collaborative project brings researchers, musicians, doctors and educators together to develop adaptive musical instruments capable of being played by a young person with disabilities within a chamber music setting. He is also the founder of the music inclusion program, which is aimed at having children with disabilities were instrumental music with their typical peers. From 2012 to 2016. Agent was the co director of music at the conservatory lab Charter School, serving students from the Boston area in grades kindergarten through eighth. His work there was recognized by Mayor Marty Walsh in a one in three Impact Award in 2015. Adrienne is also a Juno Award nominee, a member of the Terry Fox Hall of Fame, and was awarded a giant diamond jubilee medal from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second for his contributions to the Commonwealth. He is the current chair of music at Milton Academy, the artistic director of shelter music Boston, and a faculty member at Boston University, Tanglewood Institute during the summer. Throughout the year, Adrian continues to perform, speak and teach around the world as an advocate for disability and the arts. Please join me in giving a warm welcome to today's keynote speaker, Adrienne and Antoine.

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Adrian Anantawan 06:30

Adrienne speaking and I am smiling. And just feeling like all those words wrote out were just so beautiful. And thank you for for this welcome. I'm also so grateful to be amongst friends and folks who are coming to this conference with the mindset of innovation, and artistry and education and then using all these gifts to be able to serve folks with disabilities in particular, I want to also self describe myself very quickly. I am an Asian male with slicked back black hair, and I have a big smile on my face and I am in my living room right now zooming to you today from Boston, I wish that we could have been together in person. And at the same time as Rhoda was saying, this community is strong and and connected enough that regardless of where we might be in the world, there's just such a connective tissue that we share. That really does transcend geography, and and especially in music, I think really transcends generations time, culture, all these precede boundaries that we have that really don't become so much of a barrier when we interface with the arts and music in particular. So I thought that I would share a piece of music that I recorded a few days ago, I wish I could play it in person, I think the quality will be better in this instance. But yesterday, April 9 was the birthday of famous classical composer. Her name is Lawrence price. She studied at the New England Conservatory. And this was a time where females and especially those who were African American were not recognized so much in classical music. Her work has experienced a renaissance and over the

last, I would say five years or so. And this is a piece called adoration. And I think it's just a gorgeous short piece that highlights her sense of melody, harmony for violin and piano. So I'm going to share my screen now and I hope that you enjoyed this offering Thank you so much for allowing me to share that piece of music. I think that the piece and composer in particular really do speak to the idea of amplifying voice and and thinking about ways classical music in particular can really just embrace a wider range of participants not only from like the audience's, but learners, and definitely people who just feel connected through this art form, in a way that has really moved me and has really benefited me in my past, so I thought I'd share as an outline a little bit about just my background, and then talk a little bit about sort of the work that brought me into education in the first place. And then think about ways that all of us can grow together, as I was saying, this connective tissue between all these people who are on this zoom call today to really just have a sense of, hey, we're not alone. And we're doing this together. And my story is just one such example. In a continuum of learning for all of us as we grow, as we continue to share what we know in order to serve folks that we care about in our communities, especially people with disabilities, I just wanted to describe this slide right now. It says values and beliefs, and it's their two pictures. One that's to the left is my grandmother who is holding me as a tiny baby, it's a black and white photo, she has a relatively stern look on her face, and I'm just a little cute baby in a blanket. And then to the right is my mom, who is smiling, and I'm slightly older, and I'm also smiling, and I'm on her shoulders. So I was born without a right hand. And I think that it was a surprise for my mom in particular, in a sense that like she wasn't expecting it, and she was fine with the idea of having a kid who might have some challenges eventually in life, like being able to ride a bike for instance, or, or be able to even like cut my food, for instance. But I think that her biggest worry upfront was presenting me to my grandmother for the first time, who is from a generation within the Asian culture where disability could be seen as a superstition or like a superstitious curse upon the family, this way of punishing more our future generations for sins of the past sort of deal. So my mom was a little bit nervous just because my grandmother wasn't very much a talkative person expressive person in that way. So I went to Hong Kong. And my grandmother took one look at me, and she said, Well, he laughs like any baby. He cries like any baby, he's just going to need some exercise. So she bought me a bracelet And this next slide here is sort of a tarnished Silver Bullet bracelet with a couple of bells attached to it and is relatively small. This is a zoomed up picture. But what my grandmother did was she bought this bracelet for me at the marketplace. And when I was in the crib shaking around, she would put this small bracelet onto my small hand. And whenever I was shaking around in the crib, the small hand if I was shaking it with the bracelet to go jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle. So I'm doing this motion right here in front of the camera, I was like, I was literally working out my biceps. And I could do that for hours. And she thought that was a way for me to sort of have some type of balance between the strength of my dominant hand, and obviously, the hand that needed a little bit more exercise. It was a very practical and loving solution. And at the same time, I actually give my grandmother credit for giving me my first musical instrument. So before I even started to play the violin, I was playing percussion instruments, which was a lot of fun. And I thought that I will share a quick piece of music for you right now. This is a piece that really just brings to center the spirit and values of my grandmother. And I think this is something that we all share in this space in particular, where we are seeing children, especially with disabilities as full humans, and the reason why we're able to see such transformation in their lives through music, or to see any one who's here who has a disability to think that like, Oh, I've been able to play music. It was because of folks and family within our lives that really did believe in the ceiling of what we could do and what we had versus what we are missing. So really translating that a deficit mindset into an asset based mindset. So this is a piece called the butterfly lovers concerto. It was a piece of music that my grandmother loved. She eventually had dementia. And this was the one piece that I could play on the violin that I thought I was really making a connection with

her. The piece speaks to transformation, this idea of this simple melody from the Yellow River interfacing with sort of melodic fragments that represents the flotation and sort of weightlessness of butterflies. Thank you for letting me share that piece of music, I always feel a sense of bringing the spirit of my grandmother to this space. And just thinking about bringing sort of our collective energy about sort of just how we believe in transformation in people to this space as well. And I think music just has such a, an incredible way of speaking to that in such an authentic way. So I appreciate that opportunity. So I was about 10 years old, when our music teacher all wanted us to start playing musical instrument, and the one that she chose was supposedly assessable from a cost perspective. And I remember that there was a big reveal that she said, oh, all of us are going to play liver quarter. And I was like, Yay, that's gonna be great. And then I looked at the recorder that had a lot of holes in it. And I only had a few fingers to be able to play some of these notes. And I remember my teacher saying, oh, wait a second, Adrian, I don't think you might be able to do this. So you can become the resident audience member, you can applaud everyone or you can be our music critic. And I was like, That was disappointing, to say the least, and disappointing to my parents, especially. So it was one of those instances where my parents really just said, You know what, we're just going to do something else. And we're not going to learn the recorder, but like, seek other instruments that might be adaptable. And to be honest, the recording would have been adaptable if someone had really thought about it, because we've seen it but they I think there was just a limitation in in mindset at that point. So any case I I tried the trumpet first because that was something I could put on a stand and hold with one hand, I found. While it was something I could play, I didn't really like the sound personally, it was a little loud for me a little bit brassy for lack of a better word. And it just didn't feel like my voice. And speaking of voice, my dad thought the most or least expensive instrument would be the human voice I try singing did not sound great. Let's just say it was approaching competency is some people would say, and I decided, okay, maybe this isn't for me either. So I was really just ready to give up on sort of just like thinking about an instrument in particular, but I was watching of all things, Sesame Street and not sure value, but Sesame Street changed my life in terms of like the guests that they brought on in such a like safe, child friendly manner. And even back in the time that I was young, like it was incredible just to see like such a representation of people from different backgrounds, just interacting with them up is is a safe place, if they're always ahead of their time. Let's just say that. So I came across a clip that I wanted to share with you right now. And I will describe this first before playing it. It's a man who is going to be walking up the stage with crutches, who's going to have some challenges, he's going to sit down and play the violin. And at the same time there's another girl who is just running up the stage and she's also holding a violin as well. And we will see what happens steps you know some things that are really easy for you real hard for me yeah, but something's easy for you. They're hard to me. As a child, and seeing a representation of someone who was who had a visible disability sat down and like you hold an instrument, a different tool in his hands. And he transformed it to someone who was able to explore and, and express all his feelings and emotions was, as I said, transformative and inspiring to me. And his name, if those who might not be in the violin world it was is sharp is Chuck Perlman, who is one of the legendary violinists of our time. He grew up with polio, and has really just had, yeah, maybe one of the greatest careers as a violinist in history. And not only was it incredible to see that representation, to me, seeing just like, how disability can be seen as so much about your surroundings, in your social environments and attitudes. But the instrument was beautiful. It was virtuosic, it was flashy. And it was something that I told my parents without even knowing where we'd go with it, to say, I want to play this, and my parents said, You know what, we'll figure it out. So they bought me a small violin without really knowing how I was actually going to be able to hold the bow. So I remember knocking on doors with my parents, like just like seeing if I could audition for violin teachers. And some of them would say, in the nicest possible way, well, if you can't hold the bow, there's only so much you can do with

the instrument. Which meant that there were a lot of again, misconceptions in place like what I could actually do eventually if there was one teacher who said, You know what, we're going to take it one step at a time. So yes, you won't be able to hold the boat. Let's just like work on I'm on pizza Kado and reading music and holding the violin. So I actually have my trusty fiddle right here, and will be in my hands. And what I would do, for the first little bit of my time with the violin is play pieces of music where I would do this technique called left hand pizzicato. So I would use my pinky finger to pluck a string with this. You hear that a string later and then and then open strings right there. And then what I would do is I had to play a note, to depress the string, I still use my pinky finger to play different notes. So first is the first piece that I played on the violin was this. And we have this method in violin playing called the Zuki method. And I remember going through the entire first level, the first book, just playing with my pinky finger. And having a really sore pinky finger as I was plucking the strings. But in retrospect, maybe that wasn't the worst pedagogical challenge or sorry, way of like being able to teach the violin just one step at a time, I had no choice but to just work on one set of technique. And then I added the boat afterwards. So I went to a rehabilitation hospital in Canada, where I got a adaptation made for me, I'm going to show this up in the camera, it's called a spatula. And essentially what it is, is a plaster cast, which has velcro strap in my hand, attached to the bow is an aluminum sort of tube that fits through the wood of the bow. Basically, what I'm doing right now is I'm slipping my hand through, you do that off camera for sec, and almost fits like a glove, it's super light. And all I needed to do was sort of go back and forth. I was able to play some music. It didn't sound that great at first. But I think one of the things that I'm always learning as I work with kids we're using adaptations for for music is that it doesn't have to sound perfect right away. And in some ways, what was the equalizing factor for me was that wasn't that I had no challenges whatsoever, because I have this adaptation. But the adaptation enabled me to have the same type of problems and challenges as my peers, like how do you make a good sound? How do you translate whatever you're hearing, like in a recording to like how it should sound on the violin? I think that my method and what I've recognized when I work with children is that like our bodies are so different, no matter what, our minds are different, the ways that we learn are infinitely different. And the more that I was able just to think about from my own lens, what is a beautiful sound, I ended up developing technique that was very much not based on these appendages, my hands, which I'm showing them but my ears and trying to work my body in a way in an intuitive way to be able to express what my emotions and feelings might have been. So that was very useful. To me, as I continued to grow as a musician I violin is still an ongoing work of progress. For me. It's frustrating, and at the same time gives so much as and then led me to have a performing career I was all of a sudden being able to go to school, a conservatory to study music as a pre professional and I started doing some work as like a traveling musician, just going to different parts of the country and around the world. And that was just such an honor to be able to do that type of work and to think that I started off with maybe not being able to play the recorder to where I was after graduate school especially was definitely something that I still find tremendous humility with And you know, and Adam has a great point about like ears being the best guide and and yet at the same time, like I know I'm biased to because there have been plenty of musicians with hearing impairments, like Evelyn Glennie, for instance, who don't really hear in the same ways, but since vibration and she's a world class percussionist so I mean, it's just anything is possible and that is such a wonder and in the work that we do. So after I was sort of continued to perform, I decided that that lifestyle wasn't something that really helped me connect to how I wanted to give to the world. And definitely, like, even as I was formed, I always wanted to work with children and and I love like just being in classrooms, in particular. So that was already sort of circling around my brain when I was visiting the same Rehabilitation Hospital in Canada and just doing some performing for these kids. With Disabilities in particular, I was able to visit the music therapy wing of the hospital. And so I was very much hanging around prosthetics orthotics for my

adaptations, but here was like a division or like part of the hospital where music was still at center, but there was definitely like, a very intentional way of being able to use music to affect physical, mental, emotional outcomes. That really attracted me to just thinking about next steps. In particular, I came across a really incredible instrument at the time called the Virtual music instrument, and I'll describe it. First, very quickly, I'm going to be presenting a video where there are users who are interfacing with this device, who have various forms of physical or cognitive disabilities. Some might be only able to like move like a limb one limb, a slightly, some are in wheelchairs struggling to like, open up their muscles, and keep them flexible for instance, so I thought I would play that for you now.

M

Man 1 37:39

Thank you for choosing VMI virtual music instrument virtual music instrument uses cutting edge motion detection technology to translate movements into music. The system generates musical sounds from movements interacting with colorful shapes on the screen. When you start the software, it will activate the connected webcam. The webcam captures yourself and your movements related to the shapes you draw on the screen. VMI will interpret the motion and transfer the output to speakers So, come to the people in the blue, you can dance with the stars again

A

Adrian Anantawan 40:22

that last one in particular was really cool where there was a child who has cerebral palsy sitting in his wheelchair and just stretching out his limbs to hit these individual notes to play Twinkle, twinkle, little star, just astounding technology and a tool that really adapted itself to the user rather than the user having to adapt to the environment. And I think that's always so important to think about, like, what modifications look like and how do we sort of gauge as educators or folks, we're trying to serve these folks in an assessable framework of like, what is that adequate challenge that gives agency and at the same time, allows a level of assistance to be able to create an environment in which their voices are amplified to the best possible extent. So that type of work led me to found the virtual music instrument initiative, which in turn sort of allowed us to use this instrument not only within the context of a music therapy, but also musical performance. I'll show you a very quick clip of some of the work that we did as a result of this project. So I was fortunate to run into or have a friend his name was Eric one who played the violin and was paralyzed from the neck down because of an illness. And he always wants to play the violin again, I'm going to show you have a quick picture of him right here he is smiling and just very happy guy who really found connection through music. So we adapted the VMI the virtual music instrument in order for him to be able to play this within a chamber music context and and have him sort of be on stage for the first time since his paralysis. So I wanted to share that video quickly. Which would you like to keep? Let's keep the quarter notes. Okay, so that was said, Okay. I think we're covering right now we can hear that. So coming to start from there. When I see someone like Aaron producing music, and we can read off of that into something completely new in a new territory, well, it makes it fresh again, for me as an artist is fascinating to see how technology is married in to the aesthetic and music making experience.

M

Man 1 43:32

ability to create music with just the wave of a hand with small gestures or moving your head

was something very powerful.

M

Man 2 43:38

I've learned playing with the violin for about eight years before I got paralyzed. Ever since I got paralyzed. I really didn't think that I was able to play an instrument. I've never done it in the settings like this before. Not mentioned on the stage. It's an incredible feeling. It's not something that I thought I would be able to do before BMI was invented. It's pretty good.

A

Adrian Anantawan 44:20

Great job, Eric. I think that came together pretty quickly in the dynamic out for us So that's an example of Eric, just playing on stage. Finally, again, we actually did this with the Montreal symphony. Afterwards, which was just an incredible experience for everyone. So that really led me to thinking, Okay, I want to do this like, and I want to do this not only within music performance, I want to do this with the music education as well, which is how I ended up in Boston. I studied at Harvard Graduate School of Education, arts and education, concentration, really learned a lot of the theory and sort of the practical ends of just working within the world of education. universal design of learning was an incredible course I'm sure a lot of you know that. And like thinking about materials that might interface with that type of curriculum was very important for me, I did internship at the Henderson inclusion school in Boston, where about 30% of their students have moderate to severe disabilities, and really just got sort of incredible experience thinking about the foundations of the work that I wanted to continue doing moving forward. So after graduation, I ended up directing an El Sistema inspired program. conservatory lab charter school is Rhoda was talking about really centering sort of accessibility in a different way. Not only necessarily disability, but also socio economic challenge, and, and just thinking about ways that we can make music accessible for a lot of children within this charter school. And then I moved on to where I am now at Milton Academy. And as a result of some of the work that I've done with our students, I've been fortunate to do a mini after school program at the Henderson called the music inclusion program where we have about 20 students. They're now in third and fourth grade and it's a half half ratio where half of them are typical students and then the other half have various forms of disabilities and we've got an incredible how can I say support from Milton especially where students teenagers are working with these kids and and thinking about various adaptations like digital xylophones for instance, which is really cool. I wish I had more time to share some of that work. But we're continuing as best as we can and and then sort of now continuing to try to travel the world and and see like how disability in particular is just so universal in a sense that like, wherever you are in the world that are false. We're doing this work like you are and really just expanding the ceiling and potential development for all of us. So I thought I would close with one more video of a girl that I met from Ah, Palestine. And she, as a result of, of violence in in her area, lost both of her arms. And she's about nine years old right now. And we were able to figure out a way for her to play cello with her feet, which I thought was really cool. So the next video and this is the final one I'll share is her performing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and she has like the cello on the ground and she's holding the bow well with her foot and whatever are what we do with our left hand to depress the strings of the of the cello. She's doing that with her toes and she's gonna just speak a little bit about her connection to music. Excellent I think that's just a precious story. And to know that, you know, from incredible trauma and life to know that music is something that makes her feel fully human is something that I know that all of us have

witnessed in the work that we do as educators as performers. And I know that all that we're doing here together is just amplifying our resources intellectually, and in many different ways, forming these networks that will allow us to continue doing this work with hope and optimism, despite the inherent challenges that will eventually come no matter what so I thank you so much for having me here as a guest, and I really hope we can see each other connect in the future. Thank you.

R

Rhoda Bernard 52:41

Adrian, thank you so incredibly much. Can we all please thank Adrienne for this time with us.