



# An Ocean of Patience

[Watch/listen to the captioned video  
with dancer, Cristophe Phillips](#)



Here we float  
an ocean of patience  
hoping to be included, respected, not judged.

What are you afraid of?  
We simply swim through the world differently.  
Our existence is dangerous - to us, not to you.

We don't want your pity.  
You continue to underestimate us.  
Your ableism is what you must overcome.

Society has disabled us through exclusion and prejudice  
You keep shoving us to the margins -  
but like the tide, we return.

You can try to avoid us,  
force us to hide - stealth mode and careful -  
but we're right here beside you,  
and our patience wears thin.

Our storms are justified.  
How can we not be angry,  
when you continue to exclude us, day after day?

Here we swim.

We will rage - just like you.

Here we dive.

We love deep - just like you.

Here we sail.

We are bright - just like you.

Here we break water.

We can hurt - just like you.

Your avoidance is pure cruelty,  
when we offer a bounty of creativity,  
skills, talent and care.

We are gifted, sensitive, strong, beautiful...  
Out of many, one people.  
Give us a chance.

All we ask is equality  
and access to accomplishment.  
No need to invoke a hurricane -  
simple adjustments are all it takes.

When you trust us, hire us, speak to us, know us,  
you'll gain infinitely more empathy.  
Incredible things will happen.  
Don't be afraid.  
Be part of the change.

Here we float  
a magnificent ocean.  
Include us, respect us - opportunity awaits.

 [Watch the captioned video](#)





# An Ocean of Patience

[Watch the captioned video with dancer and choreographer, Cristophe Phillips](#) 





# About An Ocean of Patience

Audio 

*An Ocean of Patience* is a creative response to the provocation "How can organisations and institutions integrate more inclusive practices to benefit communities through platforming disabled\* artists?"

Using this question as a starting point for research and discussion, *An Ocean of Patience* is the first in a series of duets where two artists based in different countries and from different artistic disciplines, who are disabled, D/deaf, blind, neurodiverse and/or chronically ill, would explore their experiences as artists from marginalised communities and co-create an artistic response.

One billion people live with a disability on planet Earth – 15% of the world's population (18% in the UK). The majority of us will experience a disability of some kind in our lifetime.\*\* Disabilities are still seen as negative, taboo and shameful due to many different factors, including the lack of representation in public life, the arts, media, and leadership or decision-making roles.

The Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic has further highlighted the systemic ableism, difficulties and barriers facing disabled\* people across the globe. Difficulties that are often life-threatening and/or traumatic.

But the arts can help facilitate positive cultural change by partnering with and showcasing artists from marginalised communities.

We add to the voices of disabled people and community-led organisations that have been advocating for change for decades.

*An Ocean of Patience* is our call to action.

\* 'Disabled' includes people who are D/deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, neurodiverse, chronically ill, and/or have physical, learning, cognitive, or sensory disabilities and/or mental health conditions which have a long-term effect on day-to-day activities. The social model of disability says people are disabled by the attitudes, structures and barriers in society. It is a civil rights approach to disability.

\*\* <https://humanity-inclusion.org.uk/en/action/disability-the-global-picture>



**Poet: Jeda Pearl Lewis** @jedapearl [jedapearl.com](http://jedapearl.com)

**Dancer and Choreographer: Cristophe Phillips**

Audio, Editing and Project Management: Jeda Pearl Lewis

Camera: Amanda Anderson

Sound Effects: PMSFX via ZapSplat

Background photo: Egor Kamelev (Pexels/Canva)

**With thanks to:**

Mary-Angela Fatta

[Jamaica Association for the Deaf](#)

Andre Witter

Jamaican Deaf Community Leaders

Jamaican Sign Language Interpreters:

Denque Wedderburn

Donett Ledford

Hughen Spencer

[Tide Rising Art Projects](#)

Oneika Russell

[Kingston Creative](#)

Liliane Rebelo

Fiona Ferguson

Noel Jordan

[Imaginate](#)

This project was funded by Festivals Edinburgh as part of **Momentum**, the Edinburgh Festivals' International Delegate Programme.

Momentum is jointly delivered by Festivals Edinburgh, [Creative Scotland](#) and [British Council](#), with additional support from EventScotland and City of Edinburgh Council.





# Artists

## An Ocean of Patience

**Jeda Pearl Lewis** is a disabled Scottish-Jamaican poet and writer based in Edinburgh, Scotland, UK. Her work often explores the 'in between', identity, belonging, hidden histories and survival. She is inspired by folklore, science fiction, her Scottish-Jamaican heritage and shared history, and her experiences as a Scottish person of colour, parent and disabled person.

As Co-Director of the Scottish BAME Writers Network, she helps advocate and provide professional development for writers of colour in Scotland. In 2019, she was awarded Cove Park's Scottish Emerging Writer Residency and shortlisted for the Moniack Mhor Bridge Awards. Jeda has performed at StAnza, Event Horizon, Inky Fingers and Hidden Door and has been commissioned by the British Council's Momentum program and Rhubaba gallery. Her poems and short stories are published by Black Lives Matter Mural Trail, New Writing Scotland, Open Book, Not Going Back to Normal, TSS Publishing, Tapsalteerie and Shoreline of Infinity. Find her online @JedaPearl or [jedapearl.com](http://jedapearl.com)

**Cristophe Phillips** is a Jamaican dancer and choreographer who is Deaf. He is a member of the PAH! Deaf Dance Company and is an advocate for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in Jamaica. He has served as a member of the National Youth Parliament of Jamaica and was selected to participate in the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi, Russia.

Cristophe has participated and performed in Jamaica Cultural Development Commission Deaf Dance festivals, winning several medals. He is passionate about inclusion in the arts and education, and his work is inspired by finding ways to express thoughts, feelings, experiences, and understanding in relation to the struggles, obstacles, miscommunication, and oppression of the Deaf community. He is studying for a Bachelor of Arts in Choreography and Performance at the Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts and plans to become a Deaf Dance Educator to support Deaf youth realize their dreams in performing arts.

