

Curated Crip Wisdom in the Time of Corona

By Carrie Sandahl

For general context: [Concept of Crip Wisdom](#)

*“People rarely get to view art that asserts that crips are geniuses. That we have knowledge, that we have life-saving brilliance. The ableist idea that we’re just these huge deficits is so strong. But my whole life is based around the idea that crip wisdom is both the ultimate reality and wisdom that everyone needs to learn from. I see crip wisdom in all the life-giving ways disabled, Deaf, sick and neurodivergent folks mentor each other, giving each other lifesaving wisdom that no doctor’s office will. [. . .] Crip wisdom is the wisdom of slowing the f**k down and making movements that stay at the pace of the “slowest” members — disabled, parents, older folks, poor folks, caregivers — because when you move at the pace of the majority of people on the planet you have stronger movements.”*

-Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

For more context: [Association of University Centers on Disabilities, Annual Gala, April 2020](#), two short acceptance speeches that address disability art and crip wisdom in the time of corona
See: [Sen. Tammy Duckworth and Riva Lehrer 8:21-24:07](#) & [Alice Sheppard 25:18-32:38](#)

If you want to feel hopeful and learn about the disability rights movement:

[Crip Camp](#), recent documentary streaming on Netflix

If you want to learn more about disability culture and art, and from more diverse perspectives:

[7 Documentaries to watch after Crip Camp](#), From Disability Visibility Project (many on Kanopy)

If you want to watch some cool dance: [Stop Gap Artificial Things](#), UK professional inclusive dance company

Cool dance with innovative use of space by wheelchair dancers/designers, [Kinetic Light](#), US disability dance company:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjLRPVnmY30>
<https://vimeo.com/235858755>

Cool collaboration, [Body and Being](#), US disabled dancer and composer collaboration

If you want to learn about how a Deaf dancer experiences music, [Shaheen Sanchez](#), Deaf dancer

If you want to laugh and learn, [My Gimpy Life](#), very funny web series from the pov of a professional disabled actress who uses a wheelchair

If you want more comedy, [Maysoon Zayid's TED Talk](#), on being “a Palestinian, a Muslim, a female, disabled, and living in New Jersey..”

If you want some moving and refreshing music/poetry: [Gaelynn Lea](#), musician and composer, winner of NPRs Tiny Desk competition

If you want thought-provoking documentary about disability and assistive/augmented technology, [Fixed](#)

If you want to learn about the relationship between disability art, right, and culture: [Invitation to Dance](#), Available on Kanopy and Amazon

From a reflection paper by one of my graduate students, Randy Colon
(used with permission):

I became disabled shortly before returning to school, so I have not had a chance to separate disability identity from academia, they grew together inside me at the same time. The [disability activist meeting] meeting felt to me like a bridge located somewhere between academia and the outside world, and, even if I do not fit in quite yet, I like to hear about disability in this context. I mentioned briefly in my last paper that I feel like I know less about disability now than I did before, and I think this is a good thing. I am hoping to go to more meetings like the [disability activist meeting], but also, I think I want to attend the housing task force community group at Access Living. It is hard for someone like me to find a group where I fit in and feel like I have something to contribute, but part of what disability studies is to me is the building of community. So, in short, events like these give me a place to start, and COVID, in a way, makes it a little easier. It's less uncomfortable going to a place alone if I'm sitting at home, less questions about where to sit, how to make small talk, where the food is, should I ask for help, figure it out on my own, pretend I don't want it in the first place. At the same time, it feels less real, like I am there, but since I don't already have a connection with these people, I'm a bit of an abstract shadow, a voice trying to join a conversation, easily forgotten. But, sometimes it is okay to pick at low-hanging fruit, start somewhere and hope for more.