

DARCI 2025 Pre-Conference Workshops

Morning (10:00–13:00)

Joel Snyder: Audio Description: If Your Eyes Could Speak

How can a blind person “see” a media event, a theatrical presentation, or a museum exhibit? This workshop will demonstrate how audio description (AD) provides access to the arts for people who are blind – and involve workshop participants in the creation of AD for short video excerpts. AD makes visual images accessible for people who are blind or have low vision via a translation of visual images to succinct language. Using words that are vivid and imaginative, describers observe, select, and use language to convey the visual image that is not fully accessible to a significant segment of the population. This interactive session will be largely based on my own professional audio description work over 44 years in the areas of performing arts (theater, dance, opera), media (film, video, DVDs, streaming services), and museums. All providers of audio description and those interested in studying AD should have adequate training in the fundamentals of audio description. In addition to an overview of the history of audio description and a focus on the nature of the audiences for audio description, the workshop to be presented is focused on “The Four Fundamentals of Audio Description” developed by Dr. Snyder throughout the 1990s:

- OBSERVATION: Active Seeing / Visual Literacy -- how to develop skills in concentration and observation
- EDITING: WHAT SHOULD BE DESCRIBED -- the art of “editing” from what you see
- LANGUAGE: WHAT WORDS TO USE – Brevity, Imagination, Objectivity
- VOCAL SKILLS: using the spoken word to make meaning”

Dr. Joel Snyder is known internationally as one of the world’s first “audio describers,” a pioneer in the field of Audio Description. Since 1981, he has introduced audio description techniques in over 40 states and 65 countries and has made thousands of live events, media projects and museums accessible. In 2014, the American Council of the Blind published Dr. Snyder’s book, *The Visual Made Verbal – A Comprehensive Training Manual and Guide to the History and Applications of Audio Description*, is available as an audio book, in Braille, and in English, Polish, Russian, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and Chinese print editions. His PhD is from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona with a focus on audiovisual translation/audio description. Dr. Snyder is the President of Audio Description Associates, LLC and the Founding Director Emeritus of the Audio Description Project of the American Council of the Blind.

Benny Shakes: Blue Badge Bunch

Step into a world of rip-roaring laughter and learning with "Blue Badge Bunch" - the most engaging, inclusive game show that's taking the nation by storm! Designed for kids and grown-ups alike, this show promises heaps of fun and insight in equal measure. The perfect way to spend your time, whatever your abilities! Blue Badge Bunch has toured the UK three times and had two full runs at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe at the Pleasance Courtyard, as well as receiving three rounds of Arts Council funding for its innovative ideas and disabled representation. Join Benny Shakes for an interactive session that highlights the skills of people with disabilities. The workshop features a series of games and challenges, including drawing with feet, cooking one-handed, and representing audio description in theatre and TV. Audience members are invited up on stage to compete in the games including:

- The Big Draw: Showcasing artists with limb difference
- That's Life: Cooking one-handed while being poked by giant foam fingers
- Let's Talk: Describing images to draw, representing audio description in theatre and TV
- System Overload: Completing tasks while wearing headphones with multiple instructions
- Jamie's Gamey!: Guessing TV show titles and instructions from symbols

Benny is a standup comedian and workshop leader, he has led the team on three successful tours and two Edinburgh Fringe runs at the Pleasance Courtyard. Benny has Cerebral Palsy. He is the winner of the ND review Disabled Champions Award 2023, as heard on BBC Radio 4 and creator of the hit show Blue Badge Bunch.

"Benny Shakes is a great comic, end of story" (Stageside UK).

"The honesty and humour cannot fail to endear the audience" (Theatre & Arts Review).

Elizabeth Kuti: Making Inclusive Audio Drama

This workshop will take participants through a series of practical exercises for writing audio drama parts for actors with learning disabilities, and neurodiversity of all kinds. Participants will discuss the ethics of 'writing with' and 'writing for' groups, and the dangers of 'ventriloquizing' the voices of LD people. They will examine how best to work collaboratively to provide a platform for the authentic portrayal and representation of learning disabled and neurodivergent people. They will also investigate inclusive rehearsal practices. Elizabeth will offer practical exercises and provocations drawing on my work at the University of Essex, with the BBC, with independent audio drama companies such as Pier Productions, and with the theatre company Separate Doors. Through the workshop Elizabeth will offer a practical exploration and discussion of her findings and her proposed best practice guidelines for audio drama producers who wish to 'normalize' the voices, stories and experiences of ND people in audio drama. I will discuss artistic and practical strategies for making inclusive audio drama and reaching both 'ND' and non-ND audiences, and invite further exploration of the issues, practical, ethical, artistic and political in being a non-learning disabled playwright or drama producer working with actors who have learning disabilities or other neurodivergencies. This will be an inclusive workshop and Elizabeth welcomes the presence of non-neurotypical participants. Delegates are encouraged to bring pen and paper.

Elizabeth is a playwright whose works include *The Sugar Wife* (Abbey Theatre, Dublin, 2024; Project Arts Dublin and Soho Theatre, 2005-6;); *Fishskin Trousers* (Finborough Theatre, 2014; Park Theatre, 2017); *Treehouses* (Abbey Theatre Dublin 2000); and for radio, *Sea Longing* (BBC Radio 3 2019). She was the Writer in Residence at Hampton Court Theatre from 2015-16 and wrote over fifty micro-plays for performance in the Palace over that period. She has won the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, a Stewart Parker Award and the BBC Audio Drama award for Best Original Drama. Elizabeth is a Professor at the University of Essex where she has taught drama, playwriting and literature since 2004. Her audio drama *Gret and Will* starring Sarah Gordy MBE, an actor with Down's Syndrome, was produced by Pier Productions and broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 2023. She has also worked with director Ness Brooks for Separate Doors Theatre Company writing drama for neurodivergent actors (Derby Playhouse and Chichester Theatre), and supervised the playwright Judith Johnson's Ph.D. in writing plays with and for the inclusive theatre company Razed Roof. *Making Inclusive Audio Drama* is her account and analysis of best practice for playwrights and audio drama producers who want to make audio drama with neurodivergent actors.

Ouassima Bakkali Hassan: Exploring Audiovisual Translation: The Art and Techniques of Subtitling

This workshop will be delivered in Spanish with simultaneous interpretation into English by using the brand new facilities in the Spring Lane Building of the University of York. We are delighted to be able to use our new facilities to support the delivery of and participation in this workshop.

See Spanish description and bio below the English translations.

Workshop Description:

In this workshop the participant will learn and use free of charge subtitle editors, so that in addition to learning how to do accurate translations, they are able to master the tools and files used in the subtitling sector.

On the other hand, the participant will translate very short videos on different themes and genres, giving them the chance to practise on how to deal with different types of audiovisual material and solve problems linked to reading speed, character limits per line, translation of cultural references, word games, humour, and much more.

All the exercises and practical tasks in the workshop include final translations.

Together with knowledge from other practical courses on subtitling specific to tools, this course will help you get prepared for subtitling work and in the process of working as a professional subtitler.

What Will You Learn in This Course?

- You will master the main functions of subtitle editors used in the subtitling industry. You will understand and apply key subtitling guidelines related to reading speed, character limits per line, spacing between subtitles, segmentation, line breaks, and more.
- You will learn the conventions for writing and formatting subtitles, including the use of italics, periods, semicolons, commas, quotation marks, ellipses, parentheses, dashes, symbols, etc.
- You will develop strategies to overcome various translation challenges specific to audiovisual translation. A full module is dedicated to analyzing common issues such as translating humor, cultural references, wordplay, proverbs and idioms, songs, names, and more.
- You will learn how to perform spotting, timing, and synchronization of your subtitles efficiently using different subtitle editors.
- You will experience working with subtitles displayed directly on the screen, ensuring real-time visualization of your work over the video you are translating.
- You will learn how to play your subtitles on any device, allowing you to check for errors on-screen and correct them as you learn.

- You will be able to self-assess your translations in each project with feedback from the instructor, who will explain key challenges and different translation possibilities for each case.
- You will learn while having fun, as all projects and videos are carefully selected to ensure that you not only enjoy translating them but also watching them.

Participants should come equipped with their own headphones and laptops. They should also download in advance the software Subtitle Edit, which is compatible with Windows machines.

I am Ouassima Bakkali Hassani, a professor at the King Fahd School of Translation in Tangier, Morocco, affiliated with Abdelmalek Essaadi University. After completing two master's degrees—one in Translation and another in Audiovisual Translation—at the University of Cádiz, I decided to culminate my academic journey with a PhD at Pablo de Olavide University (Seville, Spain), where I specialized in "Audiovisual Translation in Morocco."

Throughout my career, I have dedicated myself to the study of languages and audiovisual translation, fields in which I have a solid academic background, having graduated from the same institution where I currently teach. Driven by my interest in accessibility and disability, I have focused my research on these areas with the aim of contributing to the development of literature on a specialty that remains largely unexplored in the Arab world, particularly in Morocco.

I have several academic publications on this topic, including:

- Censorship in the Dubbing of Spanish Series into Arabic. (2024). Peter Lang. ISBN 978-3-.
- Dubbing in Morocco: Professional and Linguistic Aspects. (2020). Collective book. Edited by Ahlem Hal. Berlin.
- The Translation of Spanish Cultural References into Dariya: The Case of Two Series, Los Hombres de Paco and Mis Adorables Vecinos. Entreculturas 9 (February 2017) ISSN: 1989–5097.
- bAudiodescription in Morocco: State of the Art. Turjuman- ISSN: 1113-1292. April 2014, Vol. 23, etc.

Additionally, I have participated in several international conferences, such as:

- (October 24-26, 2024). Audiovisual Accessibility and Sustainability in Morocco. Paper presented at the International Congress on Inclusive and Multilingual Communication: Scientific-Argumentative Knowledge Generation and Its Dissemination in Diverse Contexts, Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Tetouan, Morocco.
- Bakkali Hassani, O. (April 1-2, 2024). Professional Orientation Workshops for Undergraduate Translation and Interpreting Students. Seville, Spain: Pablo de Olavide University.

- Bakkali Hassani, O. (2023). Manipulation and Translation in Arabic Dubbing. In CUICID 2023 Conference Proceedings (pp. XX-XX). Madrid: CUICID. ISBN 978-84-09-48185-9.
- Bakkali Hassani, O. (November 27, 2023). Artificial Intelligence in Preparing an Interpretation Assignment. Lecture given at the Department of Translation and Interpreting, Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, University of Málaga, Málaga, Spain.

Descripción del taller:

En este taller, el participante aprenderá y usará editores de subtítulos libres o gratuitos para que, aparte de saber traducir correctamente, domine las herramientas de trabajo y los archivos que se ven en el sector del subtitulado.

Por otro lado, el participante traducirá vídeos muy cortos de distintas temáticas y géneros, por lo que tendrá volumen de sobra para saber cómo lidiar con todo tipo de productos audiovisuales y resolver problemas relacionados con velocidad de lectura, límite de caracteres por línea, traducción de referencias culturales, juegos de palabras, humor, transcreación y mucho más.

De hecho, todos los ejercicios y proyectos prácticos del taller incluyen las traducciones finales.

En definitiva, junto con los conocimientos prácticos de nuestros otros cursos de subtitulado específicos sobre herramientas, este curso te ayudará a tener una gran preparación en subtitulado y convertirte en subtituladora o subtitulador profesional.

¿Qué aprenderás con este curso?

- Dominarás las funciones principales de los editores de subtítulos que se utilizan en el sector del subtitulado.
- Sabrás entender y aplicar las principales pautas de subtitulado en aspectos como velocidad de lectura, límite de caracteres por línea, espacio entre subtítulos, segmentación o saltos de línea, etc.
- Aprenderás las convenciones de uso y redacción de subtítulos en aspectos como el uso de la cursiva, el punto, el punto y coma, la coma, las comillas, puntos de enlace, paréntesis, guiones, símbolos, etc.
- Aprenderás a superar todo tipo de problemas de traducción propios de la traducción audiovisual, ya que dedicamos un módulo completo a analizar los problemas más frecuentes (traducción del humor, referencias culturales, juegos de palabras, refranes y frases hechas, canciones, nombres, etcétera).
- Aprenderás a hacer el spotting, pautado o temporizado de tus subtítulos de manera productiva con distintos editores de subtítulos.
- Descubrirás cómo es trabajar viendo tus subtítulos en pantalla, ya que siempre podrás tener tus subtítulos sobrepuestos encima del vídeo en el que estés trabajando.
- Aprenderás a reproducir tus subtítulos en cualquier dispositivo, por lo que podrás comprobar en pantalla si hay errores y aprenderás a la vez que los corriges.

- Podrás autoevaluar tus traducciones en cada proyecto gracias a los comentarios del docente, ya que se explican las dificultades más importantes y las diferentes posibilidades de traducción que puede haber para cada caso.
- Aprenderás divirtiéndote, ya que los proyectos y vídeos están seleccionados de forma cuidadosa para que disfrutes no solo traduciendo, sino simplemente viéndolos.

Participantes en el taller necesitan traer sus propios auriculares y ordenadores portátiles. También deberían descargar el programa Subtitle Edit, compatible con ordenadores de Windows

Afternoon 14:30–17:30

Petra Kuppers: Planting Disabled Futures: a Community Performance/Virtual Reality Experience

In the *Planting Disabled Futures* project, we use live performance approaches and virtual reality (and other) technologies to share energy, liveliness, ongoingness, crip joy and experiences of pain.

In the development of the Virtual Reality (VR) components of the project, we ask: How can VR allow us to celebrate difference, rather than engage in hyper-mobile fantasies of overcoming and of disembodied life? How can our disabled bodyminds/spirits develop non-extractive intimacies, in energetic touch, using VR as a tool toward connecting with plants, with the world, even in pain, in climate emergency, in our ongoing COVID world? *Planting Disabled Futures* explores VR technologies with fellow disabled dancers/makers, to ask questions about access, community, sensuality, environmental poetics, and the futures of queer/crip play. We play with VR techniques in community performance settings to create an immersive experience that offers disabled and non-disabled audiences opportunities to move with disabled dance artists and visualizations of future plants, engaging communally in delicious movement rituals. The focus of the project is on enjoyment and enrichment, with collaborative aesthetic access, and tech/life integration as tools toward the playful immersive community potential of VR.

We'll still start our workshop with a presentation of the project as a whole. In the next part of the experience, people will be in a generative workshop, and two people at time can split off and experience the work via two Quest headsets, with the support of access doulas (German community dance leader and project head Petra Kuppers and US mad activist/poet/dancer Stephanie Heit). You will be guided to a virtual tree – and inside that tree are multiple portals filled with small movement and audio snippets of disabled dance artists engaging with plants, inviting audience members to enter. Audio description, captioning, haptic experiences, and various live access doula methods will be part of the experience. During the generative workshop we'll use sensory explorations of co-presence, creative writing and movement practices inspired by the *Planting Disabled Futures* project. If weather and access allow, we might have a component of this outdoors (for a short sensory journey). The project is disability-led and collaborative, emerging from a community arts aesthetic.

Petra Kuppers (she/her) is a disability culture activist and a community performance artist. She grounds herself in disability culture methods, and uses somatics, performance, media work, and speculative writing to engage audiences toward more socially just and enjoyable futures. Her latest academic study is the award-winning *Eco Soma: Pain and Joy in Speculative Performance Encounters* (UoMinnesota Press, 2022, open access). She is German, has lived in Wales for a decade, now teaches at the University of Michigan, was a 2022 Dance/USA Fellow, and a 2023 Guggenheim Fellow. She is currently at work on *Planting Disabled Futures*, a virtual reality/community performance project, as a Just Tech Fellow (2024-2026).

Michelle Duxbury: Nature: Sensory: an introduction to creative audio description through multi-sensory exploration of the landscape

Join disabled and neurodivergent artist Michelle Duxbury for an introduction to creative audio description through an exploration of the landscape beyond the visual. During the first part of the workshop, participants will spend some time exploring the outdoor space on campus, working with a series of prompts and provocations designed to centre a multi-sensory approach to engaging with the landscape. Participants will be encouraged to immerse themselves in the sounds and smells and feel of the landscape, documenting and recording their experiences using simple equipment such as their phones or notepads. In the second part of the workshop, participants will be invited to spend some time creating an audio description of the outdoor space they were exploring, again centering a multi-sensory approach and stepping away from a simple visual description. At the end of the session participants will be invited to share their audio descriptions with the group, if they are comfortable to do so. Alternatively Michelle is happy to share on their behalf.

Michelle Duxbury is an artist and postgraduate researcher from Leeds, with a studio practice based in Wakefield. Her work explores an intrinsic link between landscape, body and identity, and how our individual and collective (dis)connection to landscape can impact on our feelings of belonging/not belonging. She works with embroidery, moving image, sound and immersive installation work, using fictional narratives and speculative thinking to radically reimagine how disabled (and other marginalised) people might interact with landscapes they can not be physically present in, drawing on her own experiences as a disabled, neurodivergent woman from a working-class background.

Andrew Lansley: Reshaping Representation: Music, Accessibility, and the Power of Collaboration

This dynamic three-hour workshop brings together Technology in Music Education (TiME), Attitude Is Everything and Drake Music with a selection of guests and representatives from the UK music industry to explore cutting-edge tools and strategies for fostering inclusivity and creativity in music education, participation and performance. Through interactive sessions, hands-on demonstrations, and expert guidance, participants will gain practical insights to enhance teaching, learning, and music-making in diverse settings.

The workshop would begin with an overview of current sector strategy and initiatives, highlighting how educators, industry experts, and manufacturers are connecting and working together to trial and develop the latest music technology. Participants will learn about freely available resources, CPD opportunities, and active networks (such as DM Labs, AIE's Next Stage or the MU's Disabled Musicians Network) where research and practice is ongoing.

The second part of the workshop would feature The Table of Tech, an interactive installation curated by TiME. This hands-on session invites participants to explore a range of adaptive and accessible music technologies, including sensor-based instruments, adaptive MIDI controllers, and alternative interface tools such as eye-tracking and switches. Attendees will experience how these innovations expand possibilities for integrated music-making and open creative pathways for students and performers of all abilities.

By the end of the workshop, we hope participants would leave with actionable strategies, hands-on experience with new tools, and a deeper understanding of how technology can transform music education for everyone – as well as having a bit of fun!

Key Organisations:

1. Technology in Music Education (TiME)

Established in 2019, TiME is a UK-based alliance of music industry organisations, educators, and practitioners dedicated to advancing the creative and equitable use of music technology in education. TiME raises awareness of innovative tools, commissions new resources, and hosts events to showcase cutting-edge technologies that enhance teaching, learning, composition, and performance. By connecting manufacturers with schools and music hubs, TiME facilitates the development and trialling of the latest innovations. Offering free membership to individuals and organisations, TiME provides access to high-quality resources, CPD sessions, and a network of professionals committed to inclusive music education.

The Table of Tech is a collection of adaptive and accessible music technologies, including digital instruments, hardware, and software, that expand opportunities for students of all abilities to create, perform, and engage with music. This session

showcases adaptive MIDI controllers, sensor-based instruments, accessible synthesizers, and inclusive composition apps. It also features instruments with alternative control interfaces, such as eye-tracking or switch capabilities, that can support students of all abilities to perform music in real-time. These technologies support contemporary and high-quality integrated music-making for everyone.

<https://www.timemusicuk.org/cpd>

2. Attitude is Everything

Our vision is to see music and live event industries valuing disabled people as audience members, performers, professionals and volunteers.

We are a disability-led, national and international organisation that enables disabled people – audiences, artists, volunteers and professionals – to lead the change. We provide the sector with the tools, knowledge, expertise, resources and training to become inclusive, working across a wide range of partnerships from disability-led and grassroots music organisations to policy makers and large music and live event trade bodies. Through our work:

- Disabled people lead the change.
- Industry professionals learn from real-life experience and expertise.
- Barriers are identified and removed.
- Best practice is celebrated and rewarded.
- More disabled people play their part.

Known for our ability to effect societal change, we're respected by both the cultural and commercial sectors as well as disabled people.

<https://attitudeiseverything.org.uk>

3. Drake Music

Drake Music is a national arts charity working across the UK. They have been pioneering the use of accessible music technology for over 20 years, enabling more people to make music. In that time they have developed lots of imaginative methods of teaching, learning, writing and playing music. They are specialists in using technology to break down disabling barriers to making music.

Central to their work is the belief that everyone can fulfil their creative and musical potential, given the right opportunities. They are a Disabled-led organisation and work with Disabled people of all ages, from school children having their first instrumental lessons to professional Disabled musicians.

They work where music, disability and technology meet to:

- create opportunities and instruments that make music fully accessible
- get more people involved in music-making at all levels
- build an integrated musical culture where Disabled and non-disabled musicians

work together as equals

Their skilled team has an excellent track record of developing and delivering outreach, training, artistic development and education initiatives for Disabled musicians of all ages and in all genres. They research and develop new accessible musical instruments and technologies to create more ways to make music. Their artistic development programme supports Disabled musicians to progress their work and we offer training and consultancy for teachers, music hubs and other organisations

For more information please contact andrew@andrewlansley.org