

ENGLISH

SR: ramp?

tier: enough!

SR: 20 minutes podcast about

tier: how ramps are actually not enough when we're talking about accessibility Today we are going to rant a bit over how accessible everything is, damn! (irony)

SR: and how excellent everything works! I'm SchwarzRund and am currently working on my second novel, featuring the amazing tainoprincess Anakaona!

tier: I am simo_tier and I am currently working only on collages and that makes me incredibly happy

SR: yes! very good very good! yes you have just explained a little bit what our topic is today and yes, we want to share a little anger. that fits quite well, I'm in a very bad mood today

tier: I'm sorry!

SR: that's okay, that's part of it!

tier: that's how it is sometimes.

SR: yes, I thought we could just start with one anecdote, maybe each?

tier: good idea!

SR: what's the last or most important situation that was particularly absurd that happened to you?

tier: I particularly remember one thing, since I am now using the wheelchair and it's actually important with a ramp! I wanted to have a meeting in a bar and we chose this bar not because of accessibility but because of the location since we were a lot of people from different places in Berlin that came together. that's why I chose this bar and thought okay I'm calling them to ask. at first it was incredibly difficult to reach anyone, in the end it worked and then I was right away speaking to the boss on the phone and he said „of course we have a ramp, it will work out“. I was like „okay then the evening is taken care of,„ I went there and one of the people I was meeting was already there and said „oh, simo it won't work!“ The very caring and super-nice bar worker had no idea about the ramp and said she had been working there for several years

SR: o-oh

tier: and had never heard or seen any ramp. she was really trying hard, apologized a thousand times so it was really not her fault, the boss just hadn't communicated it. and she tried very hard to find several alternatives to the ramp. there was only one step at the entrance, so it wasn't even that high, but she actually wanted me to use the kind of sign that bars and cafes use outside for advertising, like „today the tea is cheap“

SR: soup!

tier: or something ... that she would take (both laugh) it for me to drive up with, which of course, would never work and would be super dangerous! it was a fail on all levels! the work was already done by me and somehow allegedly by the bar staff, although that didn't work, nothing worked! (laughs)

SR: wow

tier: it was absurd! Fortunately, there was a restaurant next door with no steps, so the evening wasn't a complete flop but it was adventurous!

SR: So it is not enough to just have a ramp, the staff should have heard of it.

tier: exactly! I used to work in gastronomy and it isn't that difficult to say „here is the ramp and this is how it is used.“ that takes a maximum of a quarter of an hour when everyone is present, and then it's done!

SR: then, yes! that is very absurd because a ramp is not cheap, it would also make sense to get customers into the shop after one has done that investment!

tier: as a recommendation for everyone working gastronomy somehow: it is also worthwhile to post on your website that you have a ramp! There are quite a few stores where we have also experienced that don't advertise anywhere that they actually have a ramp and are accessible for wheelchairs. and then they are like „nobody ever asks us!“ They could just put a sign next to the door: „we have a ramp, ask us“ and post it on their website so that people can plan.

SR: definitely definitely!

tier: so, tell me about yourself, do you have an anecdote?

SR: yes I think, I think so! I am often booked for events that they call inclusive or intersectional or simply both, because these are both good words with an i

tier: hahhah

SR: and that always sounds nicer on the flyers and actually people don't have a real emotional connection to either and that is actually quite interesting that the audience always absolutely has to be included and that the topics should definitely be intersectional – yes also disability, yes yes! and when I actually arrive with my claim for inclusion and my inclusive, intersectional claims for events, all of a sudden they become terribly annoyed and then it's used a little bit against me, in the sense of „the event is so important because it is so important in terms of inclusion that you should now do without YOUR disability, just leave it outside“

tier: wow!

SR: and it's incredibly frustrating that they really think these big terms would already be filled with, we put a semi-good, half-bad ramp on the door but don't clear the space in a way that wheelchair users would really get through, the counter is four meters 80 high and our bar worker is one meter 20 tall (laughs), so no conversations can take place between bar staff and wheelchair users. this has always been extremely confusing, but it actually gets more confusing for me when a lot is considered, when there is a quiet room and there is an awareness team and everything! which I think is totally great! and then I arrive and say „hey if I have to walk around the event for 14 hours, I would need a place where I can rest briefly“, which is not even a blatant claim, it is what most artists ask for, it's actually quite exhausting to communicate with people for 14 hours and to stand for long, especially with chronic back pain and that's never really possible. and then it's played off against each other. maybe that's a good docking point, without wanting to name any names: there is a book event, let me say, in which we both haven't been able to table for two years now, I mean we haven't sold our art at the event. Maybe a bit about us: I am a person with invisible disabilities, especially chronic back pain and various trauma-related psychological issues and chronic illnesses. would you like to say something about yourself?

tier: yes, until recently my disability was also mostly invisible. I have a disease called ME, with especially a lot of pain, exhaustion and stress-related bla-trauma-bla, a lot of very complex stuff, and recently I received an electric wheelchair, which makes my life a lot easier. therefore I am now mostly visibly disabled and my experiences change regarding all of that. it was often very difficult for me and that's why I'm always very excited about how great you are doing it, or actually you have to do it, to communicate your needs, or what accessibility means to you, because I think it's also important that we talk about that here, it's not just .. so it's important to look at how the ramp looks and what the ramp situation is, but just about all the other stuff. And that we can then slowly take further steps in spaces that we might organize or visit and to look. ok disability does not only mean, or not only people in wheelchairs are disabled, but quite a lot of people

SR: or actually disabled (irony)

tier: yes, actually disabled, people using wheelchairs need accessibility, it's much too reduced! so that's what totally makes me fume, if there are spaces or events that are declared as „free of barriers“, I don't like this phrase at all!

SR: ah, I hate that phrase!

tier: because you can never think of everything, and especially when there are some spaces calling themselves „free of barriers“, that means that they have a ramp and a wheelchair accessible toilet, and sometimes not even a toilet!

SR: yes, yes, no, definitely! and it was like that at this event where we as the only people who speak explicitly about disability (although we don't know how the other people are positioned). But one year we sold things there and then some wheelchair users complained – quite rightly – that it was too crowded. so that was the event once every year. it was way too crowded, it was really hard to get through

tier: the tables were built too closely

SR: exactly, the tables were too close and so the decision was made which was a little strange.

because then it was actually decided that... would you like to tell that?

tier: well it was decided that, the year after, well I'd say that we as individual artists weren't able to sell at the event because it now has fewer tables in order to have enough space for the visiting wheelchair users and that just felt very absurd: „because we un-invite disabled activists, we create more space for the disabled „.

SR: yes, absolutely, and then the decision was made, or the decision email said: „would it be possible for you to do without your needs? “ We had articulated what we basically need to be able to table there and then they expressed the wish that we should not just not have our or something? (laughs)

tier: So I would like to add another aspect, because we both position ourselves as fat, or I mean we are fat!

SR: yes!

tier: and we requested that if tables are built very very closely, then it is very uncomfortable to sit there as a fat person and that would be nice to consider that and then this would be basically a request for us not to be fat! Well, it was not said like that, but it felt like that.

SR: well actually the question was if we could just be thin and able, because they finally want to think of disabled and fat people! (irony)

tier: (laughs) yes, oh yes and that's just ... this thing is already .. that's nothing current it was quite a long time ago, but how painful it remains .. and we are actually still talking about it!

SR: it's just extremely bizarre! it just shows that there's zero understanding. that's why it is with every reduction it doesn't mean that putting any label to say „yey, I did it!“ or to pay attention to the group that screams the most and to kick all others against the shin. yes, those were brief insights where we experienced how just a ramp isn't enough, which is the title of our podcast. to show where, yes, less representation actually leads! and rather leads to that disability is thought of less. you are also an organizer yourself with the queer zine fest. and how do you deal with it? queer zine fest berlin

tier: well, first of all it has to be said that in our orga- team has several disabled people in it and I believe that

SR: a first point!

tier: a first point .. I am always surprised when, well that is the life I think of many able-bodied people who just don't know any disabled people and then .. people move a lot in their own bubbles and that's why we think of a lot of things automatically, because we'll just say what we would need and that's already .. but yes, we've had from the beginning, actually the „i-word“, had a very intersectional approach and thought about what is bothering us about events? how do we want to do things better? like finding a location and how it appeared to be a really difficult thing, when one's really is tough with the own demands such as that the location has to be accessible, wheelchair-accessible, and have enough rooms so we can offer things like childcare or a quiet room or food! and what we actually also do is that we have a very •let's say tangible – anti-racist approach. we have a quite radical

door policy where white people who practice cultural appropriation with their body-modifications or such don't get access.

SR: YES!

tier: what turns out to be a very nice thing, because it just relaxes the space and makes it very comfortable and friendly, but that was a problem with finding space.

SR: mh-hm

tier: just by the way, because finding an accessible location in berlin is a struggle!

SR: yes, definitely!

tier: and then these other political aspects

SR: yes, and for example you consider something like addiction by not serving alcohol.

tier: yes!

SR: and that's exactly what I find really exciting is to see what is actually possible! and that it's not necessary to claim the label that one would have implemented everything! that actually if you try to consider a lot of things regarding accessibility, it will actually become more and more clear that you

can't think of everything!

tier: exactly!

SR: It's always a balancing act: ok if we now pursue this policy, if we make the aisles larger, if there are fewer tables, then it inevitably means that you are making political decisions! If we have fewer tables, who do I give these tables to? and who am I not giving these tables to? and that's where capitalism comes in! So with this book event, as I'll call it now (laughs), only very capitalist decisions were made: ok we have to think of accessibility, that is not possible in any way other than to organize the small space in the most efficient way! and that shows that disability actually has not been considered because then you would have to consider disabilities at every level..okay if we can have fewer tables, who gets these tables? if we now also have an disabled audience they might possibly like media that is not only about abled people and only written by abled people. So even from a customer perspective that makes very little sense and generally if we somehow want to be an inclusive event, an intersectional event, then which perspectives do I protect? which perspectives have to be considered even if it's maybe a bad capitalist decision or a bad capacitive decision?

tier: it just means that it takes a lot more work it's not even like, oh let's kind of get together with some people, meet three times and then organize an event.

SR: exactly!

tier: it is really a lot, a lot of work, much more than that one can imagine at first, and I think it's important to point that out and also important to take your time.

SR: yes, that's right!

tier: several events that I know and think are good, don't necessarily take place every year! ultimately they are organized by people who are exploiting themselves, „voluntarily“ working and get nothing for it ..

SR: or actually get paid! but that doesn't change anything: even if you're being paid, your time is limited!

tier: exactly and sometimes I think it is more important to think: okay what do we want to offer at our event and can we do it, how long does it take us to do all this? and then maybe taking a step back and to say: no, we can't do it in three months, we can't do it in six months! and then to take it seriously! and I especially believe in making everything transparent, that's what I keep learning, even as an organizer: the more transparent you make these planning steps for the community for which this event is intended, the easier it gets!

SR: yes, but there is an incredible amount of knowledge and experience and also the will to share that! it's just more awesome to share things beforehand than when it already went wrong!

tier: exactly

SR: yes that is definitely a great lesson that I also draw. yes, there are events that do that well, trans film festival (berlin) is one I can think of for example!

tier: yes, exactly! I thought of them too!

SR: then there's One World Poetry Night by Lahya Aukongo

tier: yes, every month in Berlin!

SR: yes, but also with big breaks! Lahya also takes the time to incorporate criticism and to say: okay it does not need .. it's every month, but always with a summer break and it just gives time to think: okay how do I do that now, okay how can I make it better? that's an important factor! yes I think that's what annoys me the most about this idea of ?? this icon of this wheelchair user sitting in this terrible wheelchair with the blue background. So from a disabled perspective – if we sell it as simply as possible the solution is, and then everyone will do it, and then everything is terribly simple and we are included immediately .. and so a simplification of community needs always makes us push a shitty narrative ourselves, right?

tier: yes

SR: and that annoys me! that annoys me because we have screwed up massively when it comes to ableism and that will not be undone in two minutes, and it will not be canceled out by any metal rail that is not even accessible! (both laugh)

tier: and now you might ask yourselves: okay, you have made many good points, but how can I

implement this with my group?

SR: what is the solution?

tier: or with my shop or something, and the solution is actually – and that could be used across the board this tip: if you organize something, eg. in a group and your group is very homogeneous, then get help from outside your group! it doesn't mean that you as an able bodied person or group necessarily now have to make a thousand new disabled friends.

SR: that's weird!

tier: which would be very weird, yes. you can actually book people as consultants and pay them! So for example a very good person you could hire is SchwarzRund!

SR: yeah!

tier: there is now on the website schwarzrund.de

SR: (sings) promo, promo!

tier: a page for booking SchwarzRund as a consultant online!

SR: exactly and then I will advise you via skype!

tier: yes, and for example white guilt clean-up is a great group with which we from queer zine fest berlin have been working with because we are a white team and simply can't consider everything about racism, so we have externalized this matter and have expert who accompanies us and who's work we are paying for!

SR: it's great to pay people too, a totally good idea! I know all white leftist people won't quite understand now, but ..

tier: oh my god! (irony)

SR: what? paying people for events? (irony) that's also an accessibility-issue!

tier: and disabled people can be paid too!

SR: Exactly and that's a thing too, right? if you structure your organization in such a way that you are always meet for twelve hours in a chic café three times a week where there's plenty of beer, and are then surprised that your group only consists of 24-year-old white people who are the size of my thigh, mabe that's because your group is already being massively inaccessible because of who can even afford to work unpaid – also financially? this is something that's claimed of me a lot, this: „but you could also do unpaid activism, then you would be a real activist!“ where I think yes, but I can't, it just doesn't work! if I work unpaid for two months I'll have no money and then I have to take jobs again that make that I can't do activism! to me activism only works when one's being paid. So that's how far it goes and you will already notice: it offers a lot of material and that's what it will be about in our podcast: specifically that ramps are not enough! and many other topics that we have chosen that will hopefully show you on the one hand, how complex the whole thing is, but also deliver a few approaches about how to do things better and how to make better demands when you're criticizing events.

tier: if this podcast has helped you and maybe taught you stuff, you can pay us!

SR: yes!

tier: namely via our patreon which you can find linked here somewhere.

SR: exactly! that will be [patreon.com/rampereicht](https://www.patreon.com/rampereicht) if everything goes well, but you can also find it in the show notes.

tier: exactly, then we could buy ourselves some delicious tea, for example, or just generally get paid. and the plan is that we will later invite more people to record episodes or we'll record

us interviewing them and if we bring in more people, bring in experts, we would like to be able to

SR: pay them! preferably with your money! (laughs!) the idea is as follows: our podcast is available for free because we want everyone to hear it, who is somehow connected to the internet. we are also committed to ensuring that there will be a transcript that's uploaded externally, so the episodes can also be read.

tier: exactly!

SR: these are our contributions, but in order that we can afford that in the future, so the first season we're now basically pre-financing at our own expense, but that we can afford because of the time, but above all because of the guests, we urgently need your support. yes that would be cool if

you could do that! but we still have something for you:

tier: exactly, as we always want to do at the end of each episode is a recommendation! we like to recommend media that fits the current subject that we are talking about today

SR: today we recommend a really great video of the project „100 percent me“ the project was unfortunately canceled, that’s a shame! but the videos are still available and there is a video by Len. Len himself uses a wheelchair and his best friend, i guess, she is definitely in many videos, is a person who has no physical disabilities and in the video they try to portray in a video game-style, which is pretty cool all the barriers that Len is confronted with, starting from the cozy living room at home until arriving at the pub, which don’t bother the friend one bit.

tier: yes, with a lot of rage and frustration, but above all anger and by this video game-style it’s also a bit funny. because it is also important to laugh at all these things sometimes, because they can be difficult to endure.

SR: definitely, definitely! so that’s our recommendation. We will link the video to you, but look up in any case everything from the project, it is very very nice!

tier: we are ..

SR: crazy

tier: disabled

SR: sick

tier: trans

SR: queer

tier: tired

SR: black

tier: risk group (both laugh)

SR: and this podcast

tier: is it also.