

Speaker 2: Well my first question. I know you've been in involved in several exhibitions, but I wondered if you could kind of give up introduction to your most recent exhibition that you carried out?

Speaker 1: Well, the last one was the dotMD festival I did a graphic medicine exhibition there at the invitation of the organizers. So Guy that runs it a guy called Ronan Kavanagh. He's a doctor from Galway and he's been very supportive of graphic medicine and of my graphic novels and he came over to my book launch in London. And when we were in the pub after my book launch, I think I asked him if he could give us any sponsorship money. Towards the conference in Brighton and he said yeah, he said yeah sure. Will you will you organize an exhibition for dotMD graphic medicine exhibition so I said yeah fine. So it was kind of like in the pub sort of late at night. He asked me if I do this, so I said, yeah, it's great. So Yeah, so it's because originally I was I was kind of thinking of having an exhibition as part of the conference in Brighton. We started to investigate that because I thought we could have one exhibition that sort of told [or taught?] both sides but the amount of work in organizing the conference was just so much that it's even though we had like Pheniox the place that we have the evening events. They were quite Keen to have one, but it was just too the time scale was too short and there's too much work to put it together for that. So I just decided to put together for Galway. So and it went very well. So the the delegates over there were mostly doctors. He aims it at he's a doctor and he it's rather than it being sort of like a humanities-based thing. The content of the conference is kind of humanities-based or a lot a lot to do with like literature or arts or what have you but he aims it at doctor's because he kind of knows his he says I know that I know my audience. So yeah, so we - it went really well the come there the The exhibition was a sort of an integral part of the festival. We had a sort of space like a temporary walls erected in a sort of mini galleries space and the exhibition got quite a lot prominence. It was in all the literature to do with it Festival. I did a introduction to it on stage it was mentioned several times during the conference and loads of people came to look at it and loads people were really impressed because they just had, you know their doctors and they had really seen any Comics relate to health care or hadn't really considered using Comics or reading comics. So there's a lot of people that it was their first introduction really to it so it went well

Speaker 2: good.

Speaker 1: So it was -do you want me to just carry on talking?

Speaker 2: if you have more to say otherwise, I'll jump in there.

Speaker 1: Yeah. so I organised it over several months emailing people whose work I like kind of people who I had mostly had previous contact with and whose work I thought we'd sort of work in kind of a couple of Standalone pieces and who I kind of thought would You know probably just email me their their images. So I sort of said to them right? Well, this is a one-off exhibition. It's only after two days. It would be great. If you could take part in it.

Could you if if you are willing to please just email me a couple of pages of your work or whatever you think would work in a sort of - i think . I said said to people between one and three pages And I got really good response overall. God knows I'm just trying to think of how many - I should have the numbers actually the numbers are actually on the website on the page numbers of people that took part in is all kind of like list of all the people that took part is but 40 odd people we had I think they had like about 80 something images, or maybe it's 38 people, but 40 people. This is like eighty-something images. they basically people emailed the image files and I had somebody at London print them up on really nice sort of **Museum grade paper**. We sent them over and then we sort of hang them hung them using this little magnet system where you stick washers to the walls and then you kind of mail things I'll

make it so they were kind of a they were unframed they would just sort of straight into the wall with bit of exPlanetary text very basic sort of explanatory text and as **we impressed that people would just spending a lot of time people like reading the whole thing like reading everyone reading the whole text - spending ages there.** People were ort of saying. I mean it took Ages to hang it. I was sort of hanging out with these two Fine Art installers and they were Very they were quite slow hanging it and well it took us a few hours to hang it. **And then we hung it visually we hung it up based on how the work worked together visually as it would sort of pick kind of prominent images for the sort of center of the space and then -would work out other walls would work visually but then people were going like This is amazing how you've hang it because these kind of work in sequence. Was it? Did you mean to do it like that? We're going. Oh, yeah. Yeah. It's like we were we just did it right there that we like right? Okay these go there. Right that looks good there - that looks good there but people more than one person sort of seemed to say this sequence is really amazing. You've kind of like work this out really well and the it's kind of like the strip seem to work. From one to the next like so but that was that was a fluke. But I wasn't going to tell any body that.**

Speaker 2: so kind of on that what was the intended experience for the people that encountered it?

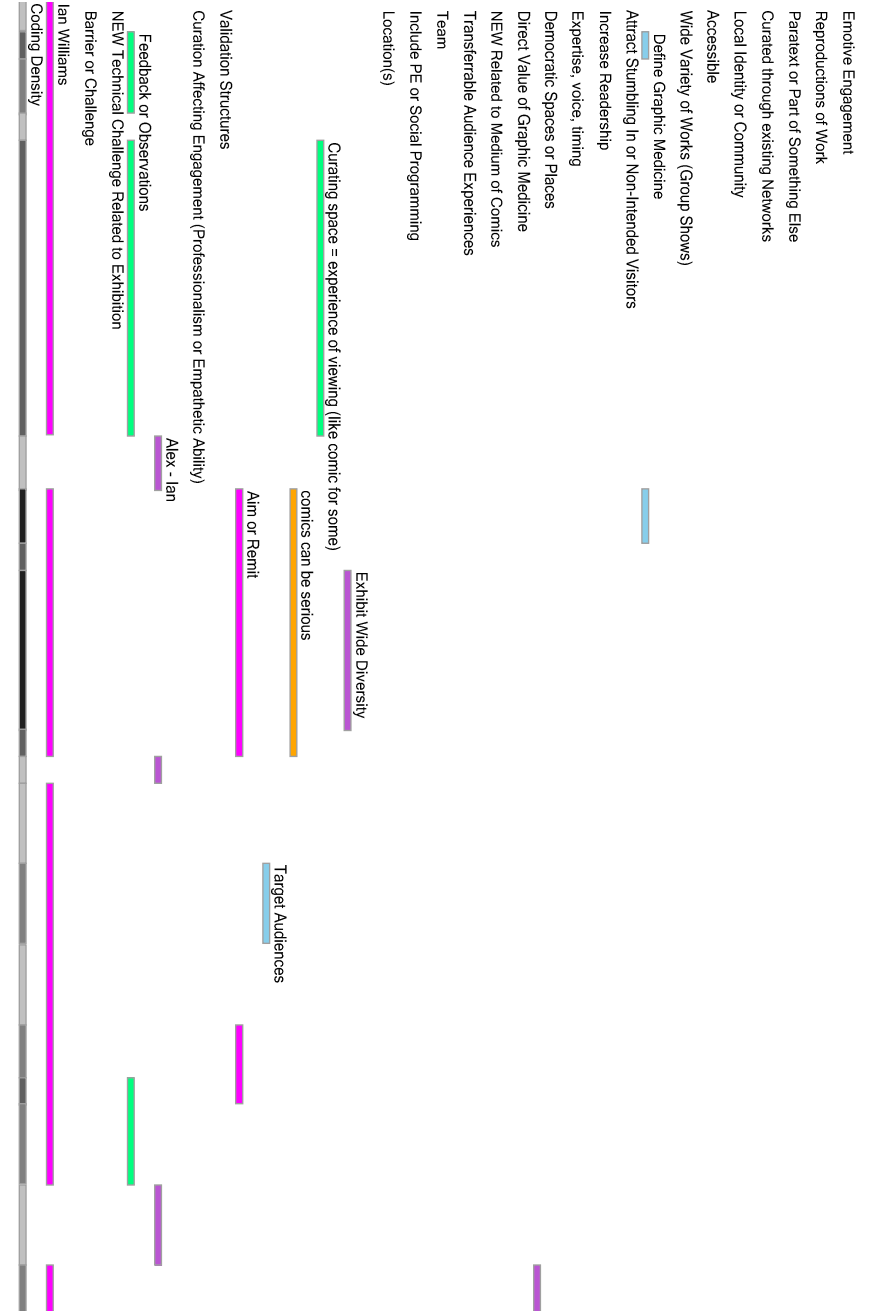
Speaker 1: it? Well, it was I guess it was a sort of partially like an intro - like a graphic medicine 101 just an introduction to A make people aware that there are Comics graphic novels that deal with Health Care issues. I wanted to give people a sort of broad. You know like a broad introduction to it. So he had some quite you know, a broad range of things. I wanted some things that would could be classed as self-help some that were autobiographical some that was fictional and some that were gag strips some that. you know were just silent like Tableau, and I wanted to give people an idea of the I suppose the different styles of comic and also, I wanted a few things in there that would quite provocative so I wanted it to be kind of quite hard hitting and so I mean, you know, I mean, you know, I have you been to Ireland have you been so

Speaker 2: no not yet.

Speaker 1: Well, you know, Ireland's like a Catholic country. and until recently. I mean, it's just in the last 10 years. It's really sort of stuck to open up that mean they only had three voted in for kind of termination of pregnancy. Was it last year or the year before? Yeah. I mean traditionally it's been like an incredibly sort of conservative Catholic country. So I put in Binky brown Meets the holy Virgin Mary and I wanted that in there. I just thought - want to maybe that would be quite provocative and then there was so that is like so that had a bit of nudity and stuff in it and I want and sort of anti-catholic kind of rhetoric it and then there was things like Katie green lighter that my shadow we had some picture of the secrets with where she is sort of carved. She's like naked and some carving bits off her body which is quite sort of visceral I guess. and yeah, I kind of wanted things to be a bit sort of like provocative and I wanted people to get the idea that you know Comics can be quite radical kind of quite so would have whats the word - [intrigue?] so but nobody kinda made those bridges so it was great and free seem to like really enjoy it and people I mean I was like, I'm always impressed when you go to an exhibition people just like - you know I am always impressed when you go to an exhibition and people are spending like loads of time reading like really absorbed in it

Speaker 2: and what Because I've seen a couple of the images and so I kind of have a sense of the space it was in and I wondered if you could just kind of describe the space that they would be reading in then

Speaker 1: it was on a set of temporary walls that were situated in a sort of Atrium foyer space as you so that the conference itself was In part of the university its quite a modern



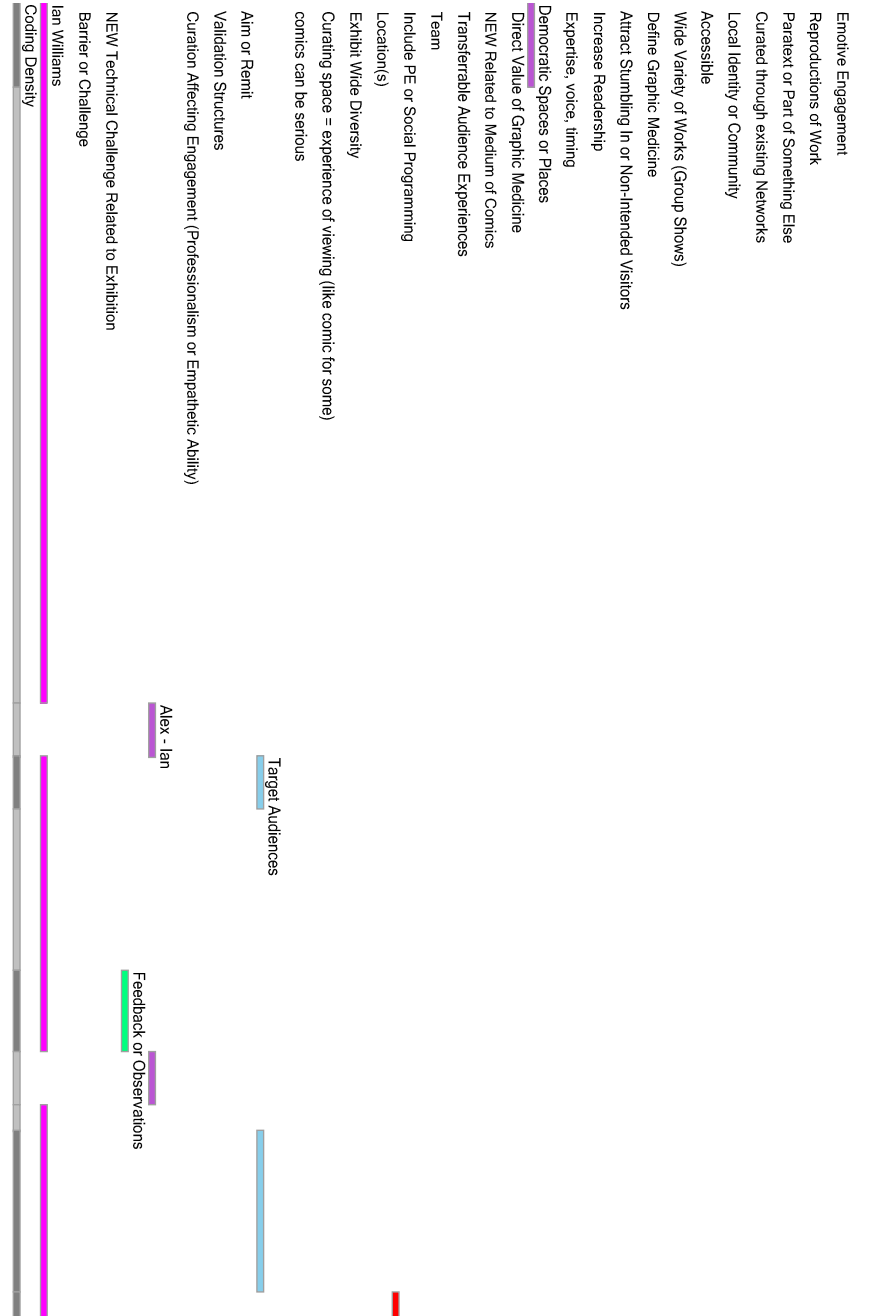
building called the Bailey Allen Hall so the actual conference was all than the the Talking part of it was all in one very big room parallel panels or anything like that and just going in just there's a foyer before the room where the registration everything was and that was quite a big space. and the walls were set up within that space. So it was kind of like a two-sided. there was sort of one main bit of wall which is about 9 meters long, which was double sided and then two kind of like a so It was like an H or an I as well. I suppose it was like a one long bit of wall and then two cross walls at the end so that it stood up and those and we used all the surfaces. So so the two main viewing things would be a kind of three-sided sort of wall. So it was like, yeah 9 maybe thats too much yeah its about 6 meters and then the the kind of the side walls were probably be 3 meters kind of across. I think we had its up till hanging space of about 19 metres or something. So when we use the ends of the wall, we had like vinyl lettering on saying **graphic medicine and we had just a very brief explanatory text**, which actually if you have a look on the graphic medicine website and there's a post or I'll send you the link to it. There's a post which I just read to them briefly and put a load posters on that. So and I was thinking right should I have? Like, you know, like in museums you have like loads of wall text explaining this and or dividing it up or whatever loads of explanatory things and then that kind of just seems like sort of like a bit of an oxymoron really like it's it's comics and like why are you know, do we have to have text explaining Comics? But so I didn't really do I just put them there it's put like Very brief explanatory text and what you say is graphic medicine is really and then just put the comics up. They had brief biographies page one which had the name of the year the book or the name of the strip and a very brief biography of the artist. Yeah. I then the artist also. So the exhibition was a sorry the conference had they used an app called Hoover which is a bit like Shed or something like that. So you can load a load of content into it. So they listed like a biography for every artist that was in the exhibition into shed. And yeah, so and like links to their websites for things like that.

Speaker 2: cool So you talked about having a short introduction on stage. Was there any other sort of public engagement or was it -

Speaker 1: No so it was a captive audience the only people seeing it there were about 500 delegates at the conference so I did a talk about 5 minutes to just Say well just tell people a little bit about graphic medicine introduce them very briefly to the concept of graphic medicine and tells them that the we exhibit was there and you know go have a look at it and then it got mentioned a few times and it was it was sort of featured in the way that the app the Hoover app. worked like every day at the schedule and every day it would list the exhibition, you know from like eight to six or whatever right graphic medical exhibition was kind of there yet. all the time sort of like as a block so throughout the time and so it got really good prominent. **Got really prominent, you know posting and people took it as a serious thing rather than like just bolt on kind of it felt like it was like an integral part of the proceeding rather than like, it's just a sort of novelty bolt-on sort of, you know feature.**

Speaker 2: Because there's lots of exhibitions with conferences and I wondered do you think there was anything was it the app that did that did that or do you think it was the audience?

Speaker 1: I think it's like the positioning of it. I think it would it helped that it was yes. It was in the app. It was also on the It was all so they put which was clever. I means that the conference are so honestly compared to most academic conferences that you or. I are going to it was so well produced that mean they've got they've got serious money they get huge sponsorship and they had 500 delegates and doctors pay quite a bit more than your average academics really to get so I don't know how much because I got I was a guest I don't know much people pay to go to it. But you know from being about 300 pounds each or something. It's like a two-day conference so they had fair and they had good sponsorship. So the whole



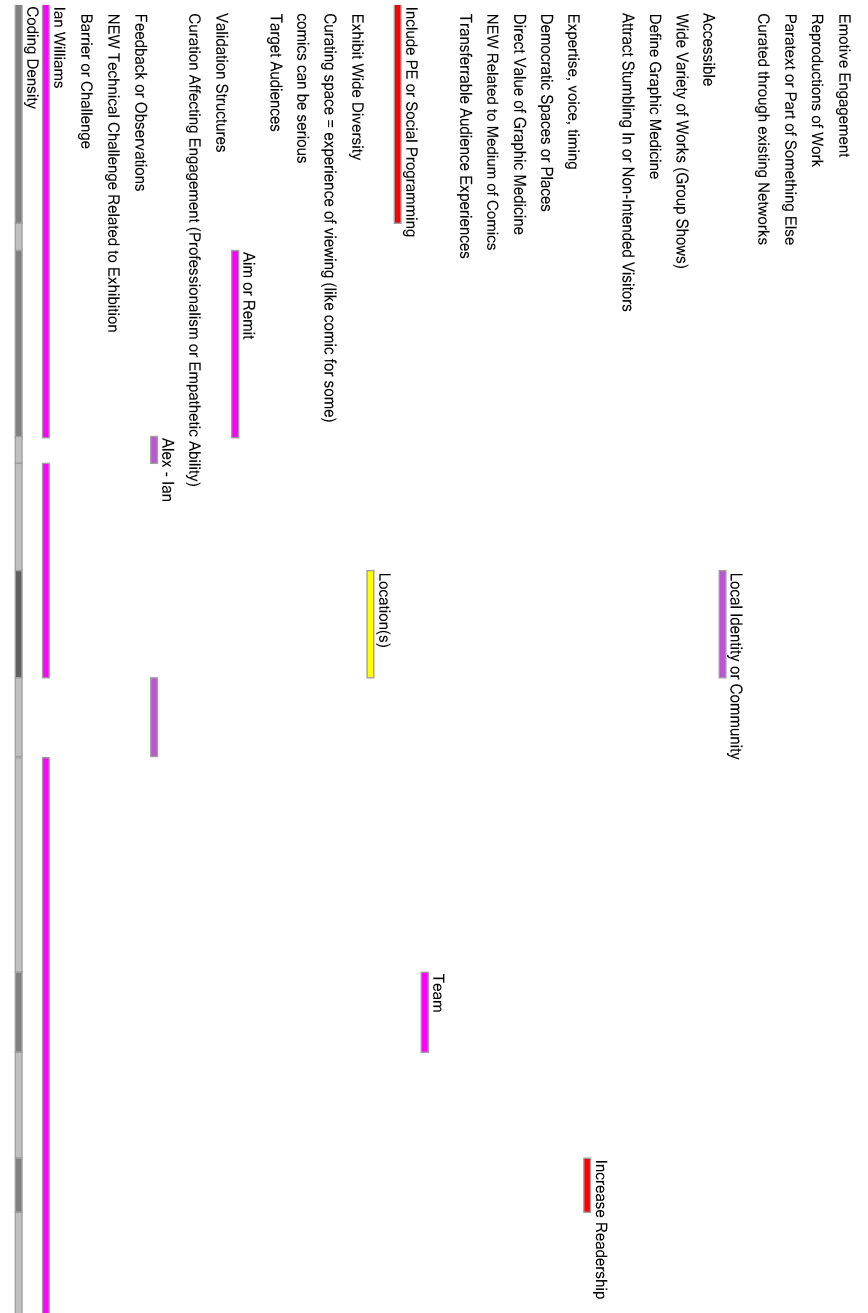
thing was so well reoduced. So they also had like by the reception they had like a huge sort of wall banner suppose. It was that had had the whole conference the Whole schedule printed out. So it was like prominently displayed there it was. Like I said, I got to stand up and be really visible in front of everybody. And that it got. Well, it didn't think that really helped which I haven't mentioned was MK so MK was one of the yeah, so sorry. I've completely forgotten this bit. So yeah MK was one of the speakers so so Ronan knew I think I'm probably introduce them MK to Ronan like via email so Ronan in invited MK to go and speak the. Okay I sent him her book. So she was going to be a guest there. So Ronan that sorry. This was like shouldv'e said this at the beginning. So this is sort of like so because you speak about Comics, right? So said well, okay will be quite good to have like a kind of broader. tie in, you know, withsort of graphic medicine. So so that's helped that MK was one of the kind of speakers and so she was talking about comics with and then she also mentioned the exhibition so it was kind of like a nice contextualizing thing for her talk. So She was specifically talking about Comics to do with like palliative care because she was speaking as part of palliative care. Sort of after non I suppose she obviously gave a kind of quick run through of like why Comics kind of thing as well.

Speaker 2: Mmm. Oh cool. wonderful

Speaker 1: So I suppose MK and I were quite visible. We had like our books and stuff there as well and also Dana Walroff who do, you know, Dana? Yeah. So Dana Is has been working in Ireland so she came across for one day of the conference as she was there and we were all kind of sort of signing books and stuff because the they have a bookshelf. It's like ever since I well I've suppose this is the second time I've been to this conference, but they have the like a very supportive local independent book shop in GalwaySo they got load of I sent them a list of graphic novels and they got as many as they could so they had like quite a few titles there so selling those as well

Speaker 2: cool. And then when when organizing The Works you had said kind of like how you picked works and how you reached out to people. So is it just you then who picked which one's of those that got sent were the ones that got printed?

Speaker 1: yeah basically. I just sort of I contacted people and I said - in some cases I said which I had certain things in mind like me have these pages. So with David Small I said can we have that page and that page? And so we justin green but other people they sort of dictated it like with Ellen Forney I contacted her. She said sure which Pages do you want and I said I quite like the one with a merry-go-round and this this page and whatever and then she sought said I was I know what would work really well with I really like this double spread which works really well if it's like of a boat Drifting away from a kind of Mooring and she said this is like my favorite double-page spread from Marbles. So so that worked. Well, so in a, you know, some people I just left it up to them and said whatever you would like to because at the end of the day it was kind of it was like I was just asking people a favor that the only thing I would have So the plan the ongoing plan with the exhibition because we still have all the prints would be too we're hoping to show it again in a couple of other places and I'm quite Keen to get some like an exhibition fee so that we can pay pay the people who lent us givin us those files so you can payment exhibiting feel because I'm feel strongly that people should be paid But for this one off exhibition it was like for me it's like a kind of favor really like the only Advantage for them is that they might get, you know, people would see their work might sort of decide to you know, buy their book or whatever but it was you know, I mean, I just kept it simple. I just said can you just send me a couple of files? Can you send me those but most most Comics artists have got everything On their computer. Yeah as files so they just said sure and they just sent me tiffs or PDFs of think so some of the my kind of selected deliberately other people. I just sort of said Send me two things that you would like to show



which represent your work but not everybody. I mean so so and then The final so we had we then as I mean some people sent me more than you know, I said. So most people send me one to three pages and then we it was a matter of then when I was sort of like T-ing up all the files because there's always like a load of work with like going through every file and like making sure it's set so that's ready for print digitally so I had to do all that, you know, like just make sure they were print ready in a sort of format checked and everything and in that process it became obvious what might look good to get so some people and end up with one. One sheet other got kind of longer. So like Rachel Linley ended up. So I try to print as many as I could at A3 size, you know, but some people work was smaller in A4 and it wouldn't really kind of it wasn't it's not fair to blow people's work up if it's meant to be small. So Rachel Lindley ended up showing six pages of hers. I think we've or 8 maybe which was a kind of sequence of Pages which worked really well shown some eight. A4 sheets all together some yeah but most people are probably showed say two A3 images.

Speaker 2: And so you talked about this traveling or having another life. Is that kind of like the plans or is there specific places you would like it to go?

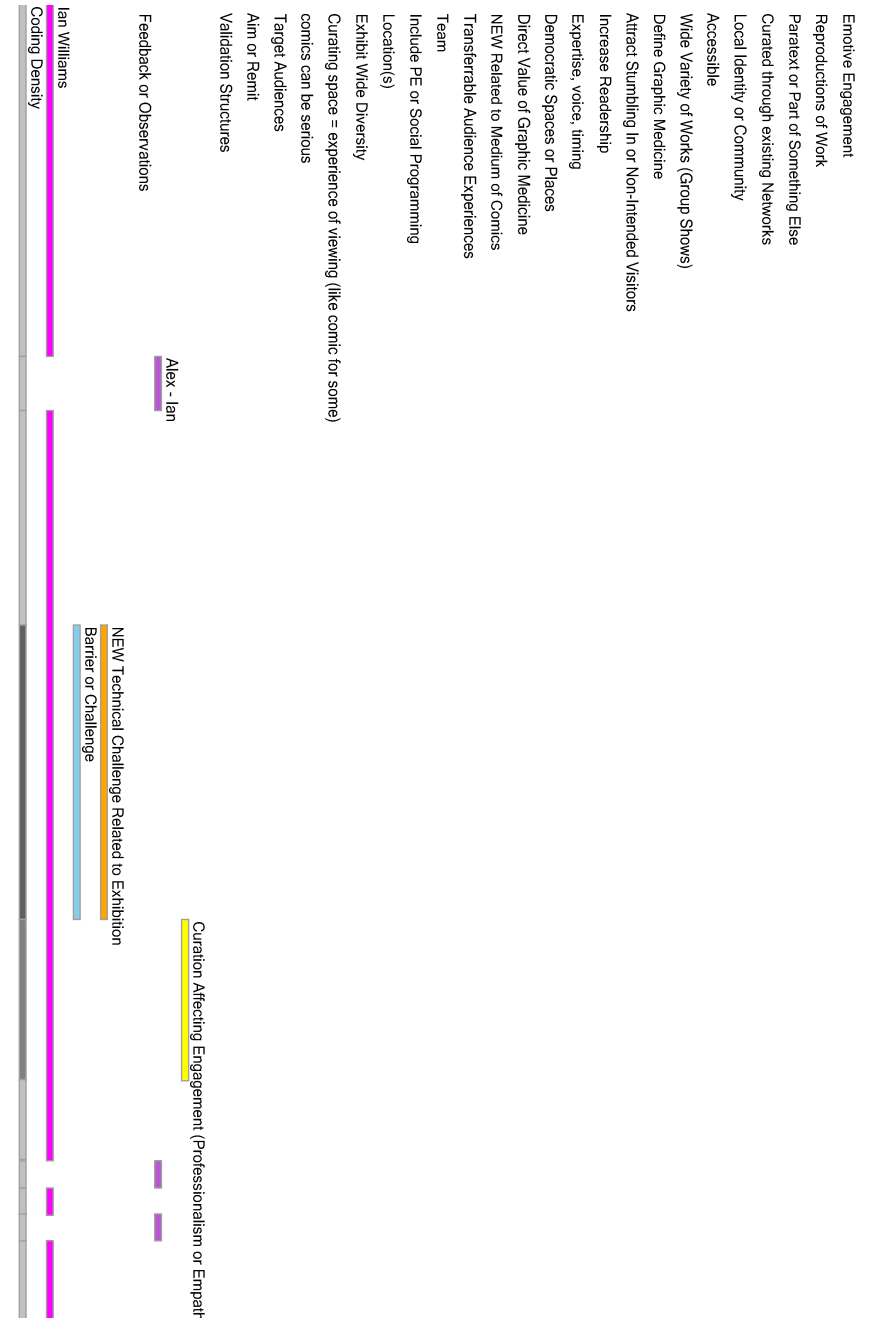
Speaker 1: It has gone somewhere and it will be shown so it's gone. So I mean this was organized on the hoof because the Life after that. I mean I had a very good idea that right. Well at the very least I have all these files together I could ask people's permission to reexhibit like this could be the beginning of it like a touring exhibition because there's loads of science festivals and stuff like that. We're always looking for touring exhibitions. So as it happened. The actual prints were so bloody lovely. I mean they were so they were so sort of like they looked so great that we thought right? Okay. Well we've got to do something with these they are so because they deserve they're not going to go in the bin they deserve to be shown other places ... It is not meant to be just like put up as a kind of like really for a load of doctors and a kind of annual conf, you know their annual conference which would be like really some conservative" like the look like look at funny cartoons bit of light relief," you know, so I we're not doing that, but if you want to if you want to if you want to have a proper exhibition, let's talk about it. And then their galleriest their archivist who knows very well came back to yeah, that's that's right. Let's sort of try and organize this properly so that hopefully cause their sorting out a bit funding or something. because I said it would be really good to you know have if with lending you this exhibition, you know, you should pay us a fee so that we can pay the artist for it. and and it will You know, we have to maintain the exhibition and kind of like, you know, install and stuff like that. It's all like it should be a bit professional. because I think if you so I've sort of done a lot of not Comics exhibition specifically, but I used to be a previously had to sort of parallel career as a painter and printmaker. So I did a lot of kind of exhibition exhibition that's exhibiting hanging exhibitions. And I mean, I just kind of think that if you make something look really professional and cool that people will think it has worth and if you just pin it up on the wall, like a throwaway thing people will really look at it will give it Any won't give it any kudos or gravitas. . And then the third with my having hopefully we've got to one in Cork as well in Ireland. But then so then my next we have plans to get when we get a moment to sort of maybe apply for funding and we could make it bigger exhibition. We could tour around the UK and stuff.

Speaker 2: cool

Speaker 1: That's another project

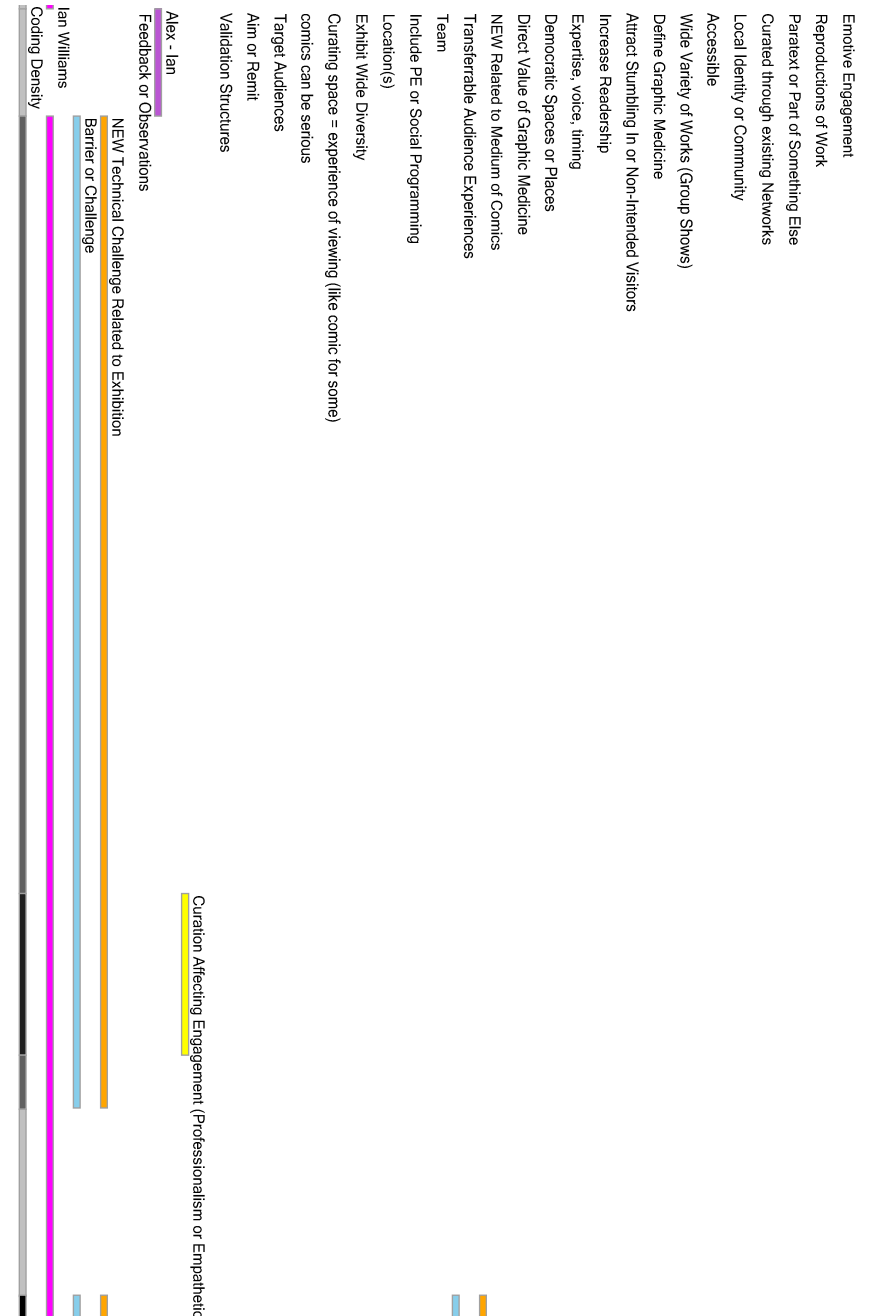
Speaker 2: to do in your free time.

Speaker 1: Yeah, I suppose you've got the core of the exhibition. It's just sort of liaising with people is nothing. So if you know looking to places,



Speaker 2: definitely yeah cool what's there because you've talked about like in the traveling like staying true to the representation of the artist in how you curate or the exhibition is curated in future installments, but I wondered if there was any other maybe challenges or barriers in organizing a graphic medicine exhibition that you ran into.

Speaker 1: Well, what challenge was that it nearly didn't get there in time because we sent it to let me this is like specific to sending stuff to Ireland. I kind of like so we sent it from the printers about week beforehand. Kind of forgetting that there was action that there is a like a border like that because you forget well, we shouldn't forget because brexit has been just talking about it for the last bloody. The Irish backstop the last two years, but because it's so easy to send stuff backand forth to Ireland. You kind of forget that there is a customs border and we sent it and we it cost like Because that's 700 quid to print it and the printer although they have no inherent kind of value there just for display really , but the material the printing and the materials cost about like 700 quid so the printer said should I put insurance value on it and I just unthinkingly said, oh, yes thinking right well if it gets damaged or it disappears then at least dotMD who paid 700 quid for it can claim that back. Kind of Forgotten and that if you put an insurance money on something it gives it an intrinsic value. So then it disappeared to customers for like about 5 days. We didn't know where it was because they were deciding whether they should make a customs charge on it like a charge like import Duty on it and honestly it arrived. the morning of no sorry. Well the the morning of kind of when everyone was registering for the conf - it was like so because I'm just thinking I'm gonna stand up there without the exhibition because I was in the programme being given, you know, giving us a talk about the exhibition of what the hell am I going to do if its not there? And honestly I was so stressed out I mean, I am laughing about it now, but I was like I was having anxiety about it becuase it was just like a fucking disaster, like its not going to be there I should have just taken it on the plane. I mean the thing packs up to like a large, you know, like a large A4 parcel I could have just carried in on the plane. But anyway, so that was one challenge. But so I suppose the the questions are about like how you display Comics because looking at the one at the Billy Ireland that Jared organized, I mean that is very Museum like is that mean it's kind of like the ones on the wall are framed there're either framed or behind their there in kind of if it vatrenes or what I don't know what you call them in a museum where you have kind of glass display cases, so it's all very how much? **like a traditional Museum or Art Gallery mounting I suppose that raises. That raises sort of questions about sort of the nature of comics because I suppose what they were showing was mostly original art. As opposed to all original are or the actual comic books as sort of as artifacts. Where as we thought it was much better to go for a kind of more contemporary feel because you'd be going on contemporary galleries you just see stuff like mounted on wall with magnets systems and kind of. So and we didn't want to frame everything. So we did it like that and it look really good and it seemed to kind of like it seemed to work really. Well, it looked professional but it also looked like really contemporary.** But one of the things got stolen like Nichola Street en - Nichola Streeten's print got stolen off the wall because somebody just pulled it off but probably not the delegate probably because it was in a space that some students had access to as well. So it's probably student but yeah it just disappeared off the wall the first night. So I told her and she took it as a compliment. and everyboday was actually saying when we put it back up God, that's really lovely. I really liked that. It was a page from Billy Me and You. But anyway got nicked, so just Shows the yeah it says soemthing about this. Yeah, yeah. I don't know so. you could think about out in the ephemeral nature of comics as both so these were all reproductions anyway. We wouldn't put original art work. We have some sort of anti theft. but it was good way to use good way to do it, but just high qualityreproductions. **The challenges I mean, yeah, yeah, that that I mean**



there's this sort of there's always questions about you know, if you're putting If you put it displaying sort of comics which are popular kind of art medium either in a sort of high art setting Fine Art setting does that sort of change the nature of the work? Does it sort of It's Always questions about that kind of thing. How should it be displayed you to be displayed like fine art, or should it be in a much more kind of like Some kind of utilitarian. thing that keeps with the nature of comics but wasn't thinking too much about that. I just wanted to look good.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Ah can't think of any other challenges really I suppose things like content stuff like that. So we because Ronan asked if there was anything that was like really shocking or truly obscene and I mean the Because he was worried more that might freak out their sponsors I suppose but so I told him about like Binky Brown and he said oh no, that's fine a bit like a sort of blasphemy and everything was fine. But and there was this - there was another thing in it is sort of, you know verging on the kind of, ha, verging on the obscene, but there's nothing quite as bad as they . Yeah, you're like, oh, yeah. Yeah, I guess so the only thing that so it's like Ronan when he asked me about this and say oh no, it's all fine. Oh well suppose you've got like a naked man with Ray's coming out of his penis causing blasphemy in the Holy Virgin Mary's, oh right no thats fine, ha, Oh, right. Well and John Myers did a thing about which was a parody of an Ivan brunette he's so John Myers, you know John?

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: So he did a, have you seen that book he has done about MS?

Speaker 2: I've seen pieces parts of it.

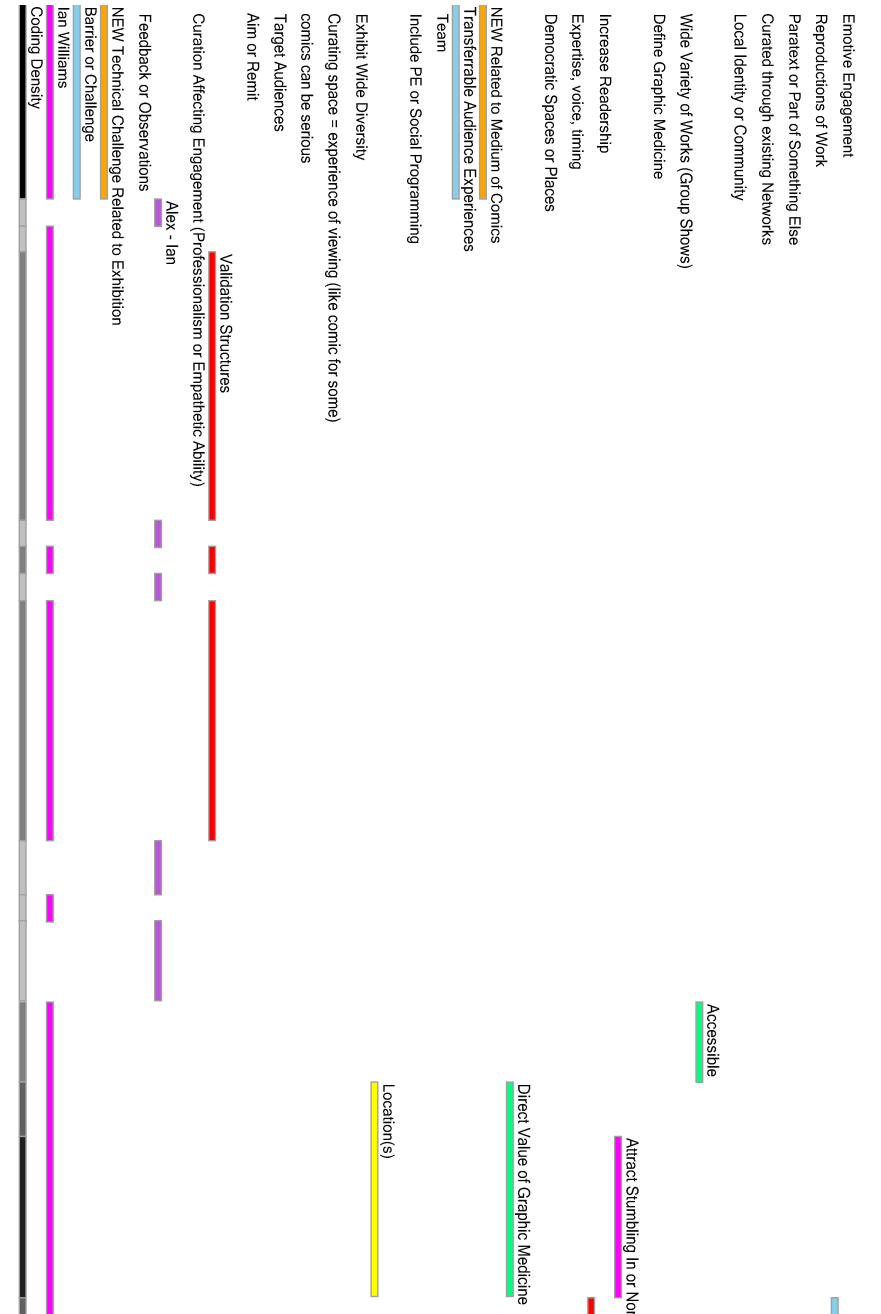
Speaker 1: Yeah. Well this this bit in it were he draws in the style of Ivan Brunetti and its got him shitting and pissing on Ivan brunetti like pissing in Ivan Brunetti's face, and I was like I suppose there is this piece of like somebody like pissing all over come under the guy shitting all over the place and he was going ah, it'll be qlright back. It's just - he said you know anything that is just like utterly obscene. So I was like thinking about how far can you go? cuz like Art spiegelman did a thing in one of his early sort of things. It was like somebody fucking kind of fucking a severed head like what if it had that would that freak out the - we didn't have that anything like that, but we were like would that freak the sponsors out if you had - Like how bad would it have to be like?

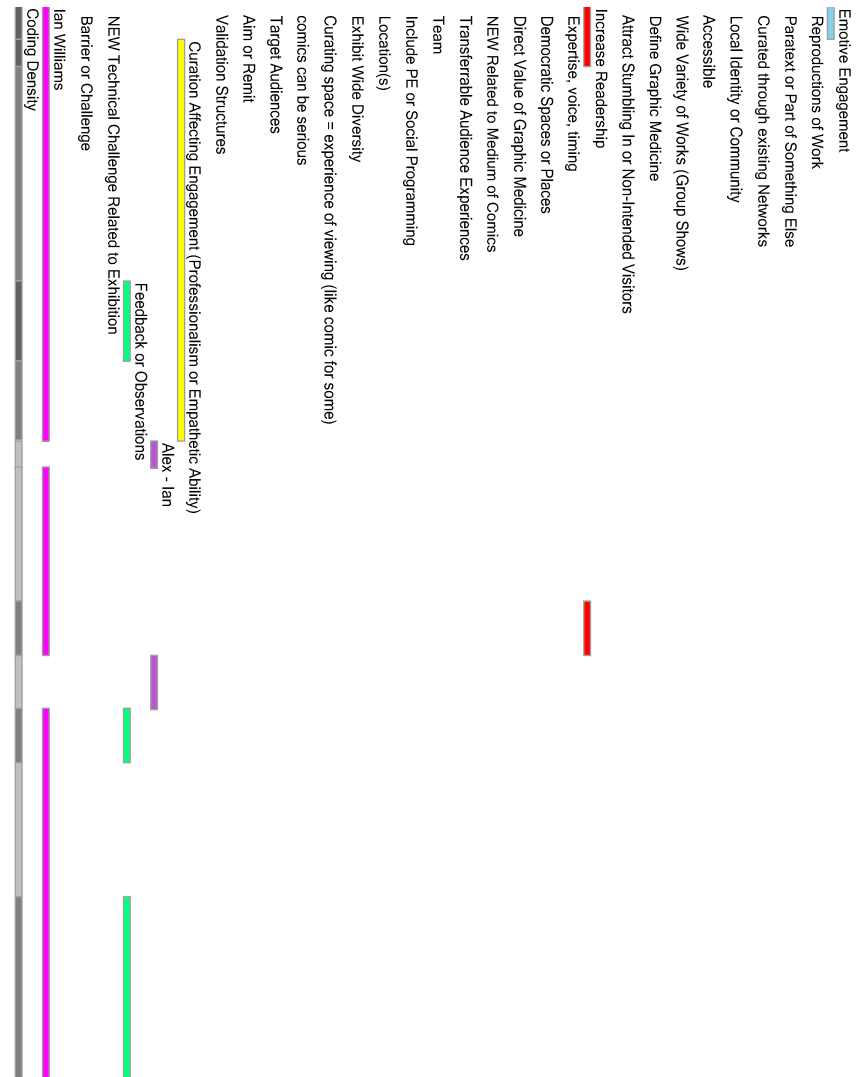
Speaker 2: Yeah. Definitely. What is the line then? What is the line than if it's not some of these other things?

Speaker 1: Yeah I don't know

Speaker 2: yes interesting. I think I just have one more question for you before I open it up to you. And that's just kind of your opinion of What is the purpose or what is a purpose of exhibitions in the field of graphic medicine?

Speaker 1: Well its spreading the word **It's a an accessible way of** people engaging in exhibitions in different in a different way that they would engage that they engaged like talks or kinds of comics the comics themselves or books or academic stuff. Like they're, you know, graphic medicine Manifesto. So it's way spreading the word and **I suppose they depends on what So exhibition is tend to be in what the obviously that can be in like exhibitions in comic spaces comic shops or comic festivals, but I suppose I the graphic medicine ones have been in other spaces where people would come across them. That might not be looking for them. So like libraries of the touring exhibitions of the libraries of medicine medicine in America or PathoGraphics in Berlin was in a pathology Museum so it would be Introducing the idea to people who are not necessarily ther e ook at think about Comics.** They might come at you know, they would obviously come across it as a sort of Novel idea. But it you know, you hope that those some people would be engaged in it and





then start to look at it look, you know, get the idea and start to investigate more graphic novels and comics and graphic medicine. So it gives it a certain. Gives it said kudos, you know, I mean anything that is displayed in an institution a publicly funded institution is automatically raised to in its significance. I mean, you know, you can place an old boot in an art gallery and it's immediately could take it off the street put it in and you know, you know, but I mean, obviously that is whole idea of things like whats The Reef, you know, like ready-mades and things like that. Yeah. So raising the gives it gravitas gives it Kudos gives Comics that kind of serious. People take them more seriously and think about them as a sort of serious cultural medium, I guess in the same way that reviewing comics and graphic novels in broadsheet newspapers does or whatever. I don't know People seem to like consuming exhibitions as well it seemed a good way of having well looking at people that were reading all the the were they were properly reading the strips. They weren't just like a weren't like glancing at them like those people spending a load of time that It was probably. You know, whereas if you just gave them a sheet of sheet that papers and so they told them to have a look at that. I don't know it did just it creates a different experience doesn't it I suppose expose for exhibition

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: I'm not sure I can put into words exactly. I mean I kind of like it's not that I don't really intellectualise these things- I come. I've been involved with exhibitions one way or another for the last Twenty years. So It is something that you do put exhibition up and people come and look at it. and you stick it on the wall and people look at it and like it or impressed or engage in it in some way but I don't have a deep theoretical grounding in which I'm sure you must or you must be developing. I don't like really think much about the theory but I just think it's a good thing and it's a way to get the stuff out there. get the stuff seen.

Speaker 2: Cool, I think that's all the questions I have for you. But is there anything that my questions didn't get at that you would like to add?

Speaker 1: **only that I think that theres a kind of hunger out there for these types of exhibitions I know that so when we were thinking of Doing an exhibition for Brighton and Dan locke he's a friend of mine in Brighton who you might not know either. I mean, he's published by NoBrow. He's done. He's done sort of a couple - he does kind of like science communication through Comics. he's done a graphic novel for NoBrow called out of nowhere and he's now doing one about the people who Like invented the MRI scanner, which is amazing. He has very good contacts with science festivals, you know loads. He's really good at sort of That kind of networking and he was like going like God they at science festivals just love this stuff. They really they're always looking for really interesting exhibitions and stuff to get stuff out there. So and the people that we approached two galleries in Brighton It's like conquer Gallery, which is a small publicly-funded gallery that does very contemporary stuff and also the Phoenix they both kind of really liked the idea they both were like, yeah, that sounds really cool. So I think there is a real sort of like that be appetite for it out there. Thats all.**