

5/13/21 Fat and Superfat Visibility in Art and Graphic Design with Toni Tails

12:04:37 Hi everyone, good afternoon, good evening, good morning wherever you are in the world. I am Tigress Osborn. I'm the Chair of the Board of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance and welcome to the NAAFA webinar series.

12:04:52 Today our special guest is artist Toni Tails, and I'm going to introduce, Hi, Toni. Hi. And I want to tell you a little bit more about Toni and we'll get into some discussion with her in just a minute.

12:05:03 Before we do that, just a couple of announcements. First of all we want to tell you that we are joined today by our friends Selena and Arty from Pro Bono ASL who will be providing our ASL interpreting.

12:05:15 You can and should learn more about Pro Bono ASL by visiting them on their website, which is probonoasl.com.

12:05:23 They've been with us for all of our Fat Liberation Month activities. We're planning to have them with us for the rest of the month, and on into the future.

12:05:31 We also have captioning available today. It's provided by Otter AI so if you're with us live, you can click the CC button and start captioning for yourself.

12:05:42 If you are not with us live we will clean up those captions before you see them on our videos, so that you know that you are not at the Napa webinar series which would be a very different, and much more wineful event.

12:05:56 But today,

12:05:58 before we get started, I just want to tell you more about Fat Liberation Month. Yay May, 2021, Fat Liberation Month.

12:06:06 We are almost at the halfway mark and we've had a fantastic run of activities and webinars and posts on our blog and, and much more to come. To see the calendar for the events that are still coming up, you can visit NAAFA.org slash Flm dash events, or you

12:06:28 can just go to NAAFA.org, naafa.org, and click on the Fat Liberation Month tab and explore all this there. There's a little bit of history about how we came to be doing this,

12:06:41 the event calendar and some info about our presenters and performers this month.

12:06:47 Coming up next on the NAAFA webinar series, this Saturday at 2pm Pacific, we are going to be interviewing photographer Spencer Pablo of the However Chubby Project, and Spencer will be talking to us about empowering fat bodies through portraiture and also

12:07:05 self empowerment through fabulous selfies. So Spencer is going to give us some tips on lighting and other tricks that can make our selfies look even greater.

12:07:15 We know that selfie love is self love and fat visibility is important so showing ourselves in ways that don't minimize our bodies, is, is a form of revolution and Spencer's going to give us some tools for that.

12:07:30 And then on Monday at 4pm Pacific time we'll be joined by longtime fat activists Marilyn Wann of Fat?So! fame. Fat, exclamation point. So, question mark.

12:07:42 So, pardon me, please. Please join us for those webinars and check the calendar of events for additional webinars that are coming up for the rest of the month, and some other activities that we have planned for you.

12:07:55 And with no further ado, I want to introduce you to today's special guest, Toni Tails, Toni. Hi! Hi!

12:08:04 Toni is the CEO of ToniTails.com, Design with Curve Appeal, the home of her art, writing and popular t shirts featuring fat positive art and empowerment messages.

12:08:16 In addition to being a renowned artist and graphic designer, Toni is also

an autism Mama, a childhood sexual abuse survivor and a PTSD, ADHD queer babe.

12:08:28 She is also outspoken as an advocate for Disability Rights, supporting sexual trauma survivors, ending mental health stigma and creating an anti racist and gender inclusive world.

12:08:41 She is a published author and illustrator who's diverse work supports intersectional fat liberation.

12:08:48 Toni is a longtime NAAFA member and the creator of NAAFA's 50th Anniversary Conference logo. Thanks for that, Toni.

12:08:55 Welcome to the show Toni Tails, everybody. Thank you, thank you, I'm really happy to be here. And I love that little bio of me; sounds so awesome and fancy. I love that. We think you're awesome and fancy so I'm glad that you, you feel it in the way that we describe

12:09:13 you. Appreciate it. So Toni, um, let's talk about how you, let's, let's start at the beginning. How did you get started as an artist?

12:09:21 Um, it, just in general,

12:09:23 I've been drawing since I was a little kid.

12:09:26 I've always won art contests in school and stuff like that, just naturally like to draw. Crayons I think were my beginning, or maybe finger painting on the walls.

12:09:40 I'm sure I got in trouble for that a few times.

12:09:44 When did you start to draw fat people?

12:09:47 I started specifically in 2006.

12:09:51 I saw an image by one of my artist friends.

12:09:54 His name is Nick P. Marton, and he draws these really beautiful fat women, and they're always adventurous and spirited. This specific image that encouraged me was a picture of a fat lady. She was riding through the sky on a huge candy cane just smiling

12:10:13 with a Santa hat on and I was like, I've never seen anything like that before. I've never seen a body like that expressing so much joy. And until I saw it, I didn't realize I needed it, and then I wanted to be a part of providing images that would do

12:10:31 that for other people. And I started right away, that day.

12:10:34 Will, Toni, will you say his name again so that we can...His name is Nick P. Marton, he goes by @limegreensquid and his art is amazing.

12:10:47 Yeah so y'all should check that out and any, any of, anyone that Toni name drops during the webinar we'll, we'll try to put in the notes so that y'all can seek them out and support other fat and fat positive artists.

12:11:02 So, um, so when you first got started drawing fat bodies, Toni, were you drawing models or were you just making up people or how did that go for you? I was drawing my friends. I had gotten involved with like the BBW bashes.

12:11:15 And I was doing pinups for my friends they weren't very good.

12:11:20 I actually was mentored by Les Toil. He helped me a lot, and made me feel good about my art. And so I just kept working at it for years and eventually started getting a little bit better.

12:11:33 And I found out I have a kind of natural ability to market. And so, I used that to push forward the images that I was creating. I tried to create really, images that look like something you would see in the media

12:11:50 anyway, they just happen to be fat.

12:11:53 So that I wanted to be more inclusive of all different types of bodies, all different types of people.

12:11:59 And will you, just going back for a minute, will you say for folks who don't know what is a BBW Bash? BBW Bash is a party where fat women, and women and men who admire them, and all sorts of people of all genders come in to celebrate and be happy.

12:12:21 They don't have to worry about their size at all. You can just enjoy yourself without, you go swimming in a bikini and no one's going to be pointing or laughing at you. You don't have to feel self conscious.

12:12:32 It's really nice.

12:12:33 I haven't been to one in years but that was kind of my introduction into the fat community.

12:12:39 And I think that was probably the first time we met was probably at one of the, the BBW Network's Vegas Bash. Bashes, there are organizations all over the country and in Toronto and in some other international places that plan these multi day party events

12:12:57 that are known as the bashes and.

12:13:01 And I know that some of them are starting to roll out again now that folks are vaccinated and the world is opening up. So you should, you should look out online if that's something you'd be interested in attending and.

12:13:18 and.

12:13:17 So, were you there as a vendor or a participant? Like were you just there to party and you just started drawing people by the pool or?

12:13:24 It's an interesting story how I got involved in the whole thing.

12:13:29 And I actually, at the time I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, which later, it ended up, that was misdiagnosis but my psychiatrist refused to give me medicine that I needed, and unless I promised him I would lose weight.

12:13:45 And I told him I'm not making a promise like that because that's for me to decide, not him.

12:13:50 And I felt like it wasn't right. So I Googled about that and I came across Dimensions Magazine and those forums there and that's what got me into everything. And then a vendor from Vegas Bash contacted me to model some of their bathing suits and lingerie

12:14:11 and I got a free pass that first time and that's where I started. I got a part of the whole community.

12:14:20 Lots of folks make their way to activism through those bashes and through BBW parties. Like, you know, having fun together is a great starting place and the visibility of fat bodies in most cases is really affirming for a lot of people.

12:14:33 Let's talk about that,

12:14:35 the affirmation of showing fat bodies. A lot of plus size artists only show artists who depict plus size women in particular and images of femmes, only show a particular hourglass kind of body shape, but that's not what you do.

12:14:53 Can you talk a little bit about why you

12:14:58 look, how you choose what kind of bodies to feature and why you have such a wide range of bodies?

12:15:05 I listened to what fat people say about their own bodies.

12:15:11 If I hear someone say something negative about their body, that encourages me to create something beautiful from that.

12:15:19 I noticed some people feel uncomfortable because their legs are really big.

12:15:25 I can't remember how to pronounce the word limp FEMA lymphoma.

12:15:30 You know what I'm talking about? Cause I don't know how to

12:15:32 pronounce it.

12:15:34 Lipedema, or lymphodema. Yeah, there you go.

12:15:37 Okay. And so, because I heard people being upset about that, it made me want to depict it as beautiful. So what I did is I created, using their shapes, and every lump and curve, I turned into like a curly que with little flowers growing out of it.

12:15:57 When people can look at an image and maybe see that it's beautiful, then they can look at their own image, and see that beauty. That's what I'm doing, because everyone is beautiful in their own way, you know, we're all beautiful.

12:16:09 I just want to show people that they're beautiful, hopefully.

12:16:14 And I think I've mostly seen pictures by you, of the feminine form. Is there a reason why you stick with the feminine form?

12:16:23 It's the majority of what I do. It's just, it comes naturally to me, but I'm trying to branch out a bit with that too.

12:16:31 And I definitely encourage other artists in my groups and stuff to depict all different types of people.

12:16:40 So let's talk about your groups, I know you have some very popular groups on Facebook that are collectives of different kinds of sort of sub themes or sub communities of fat community.

12:16:53 Tell us about those.

12:16:56 I have a group called Zaftig Art that has fat artists who share their art, and we get all kinds of body shapes there, all different types of people. When we first started, most of the artists were men, but now it's been several years and we have over 16,000 members.

12:17:19 A lot of thin artists have come in, a lot of trans artists and the art has really just expanded into some really glorious diversity I really love seeing that happen.

12:17:34 Another group that I have I don't participate in it very much anymore, is a BBW group called Curvy Princess. And I started that because there was a group that was having contests, and they were gate keeping, like if someone was too small fat or too big fat,

12:17:55 they weren't allowing them to be in it. So I created something that would accept everybody, you know, as long as you appreciate and are kind to people.

12:18:04 You know everyone's allowed to be there.

12:18:06 So that's what I was going for with those two groups.

12:18:11 And let's talk about your presence on social media. I know that you have, I think, over a million followers on Facebook? Last time I saw, it was 1.8 plus million, And, and you're also on which of our other faves? Instagram. You're not Tik Toking yet?

12:18:30 And I am on Tik Tok too. Yeah, I just started really doing that a lot.

12:18:35 And yeah, yes I'm Toni Tails on all these places. I'm on Twitter too but it's just an echo of my Facebook so I've never done as much with it.

12:18:46 So do you have a typical follower on social media?

12:18:50 Typical follower.

12:18:53 Some people who follow me, don't even realize I'm part of the fat community until they start seeing my posts more because I had a lot of graphics go viral on Facebook that I created for users and billions of people have used them.

12:19:11 So, I have a lot of people that come in and just don't even think about that and then they're pulled into the community and they start seeing the beauty in themselves as well which is really cool.

12:19:24 I'd say the typical follower is someone who has felt bad about their body at some point. They're not always fat just, you know, everybody judges themselves, and through my art they're able to see that, that diverse bodies are a good thing.

12:19:43 There's nothing wrong with that.

12:19:45 So what are some of the things that you hear from people about that empowerment? I know that there are folks out there, you're one of those artists who have a lot of folks out there that have tattoos of your work.

12:19:56 What does that mean to you?

12:19:58 It means a lot to me because that's a permanent piece of art on your skin.

12:20:02 If you're going to choose one of my pieces for that I love it. If any of you do that, just send me a picture. I'll share it through my social media. I think it's really cool.

12:20:12 I, I get contacted by people all the time who showed me tattoos or some of my shirts or something that people are wearing.

12:20:21 And one of my favorite things that I hear from people. I hear people, quite often who tell me that they'd never seen their body depicted. It's not always my art they're seeing. A lot of times, they're seeing art in the group from different people that,

12:20:36 but they're seeing their body, their actual body being presented as something beautiful. I've had people tell me that they're showing their arms and legs for the first time here in the summer, or just not covering up completely and enjoying being cooler

12:20:51 during the summer, and things like that. They mean a lot to me. And I, a lot of what I do, I'm trying to help kids see their bodies in good ways too. My niece,

12:21:04 she's never been overweight, but she started worrying about her body because the, you know the media, other people. A lady came up to her one day and said, Wow, I see, you're starting to get fat,

12:21:17 when she was 12 years old.

12:21:20 And, you know, that kind of stuff, it tears kids down; makes them worry.

12:21:25 So I'm hoping that the images I create can help with some of that, you know. It's one of the many pieces that can go into helping create a better body image within yourself.

12:21:37 And you're also really explicit in your messaging so you have these images that just stand on their own and exist beautifully and create visibility and empowerment that way, but you also tell people pretty directly, what you, what you think about the

12:21:51 world, and the causes that you're interested in and what kind of responses do you get from that?

12:21:58 It's varied I mostly get positive responses.

12:22:02 I also get people who say that I'm going to cause people to be unhealthy

12:22:10 because I'm glorifying obesity. You're glorifying obesity!

12:22:14 I get health trolls. We do that a lot around here.

12:22:17 And I'm like, yeah, glorifying it. What's wrong with that, you know, if you think somebody is unhealthy because they're overweight which I won't even go into that,

12:22:26 just because you think that they're unhealthy doesn't mean that they don't deserve to enjoy their life.

12:22:31 It doesn't mean that they don't get to feel beautiful and do whatever it is that helps them live their best life, you know? Right! And health trolls always

end up coming down to what you look like.

12:22:48 They don't really care about your health at all. We all know that if people who care about health have a myriad of other ways that they could be advocating for health besides individually attacking fat people, which doesn't work anyway so they're, they're

12:23:02 misguided. We know this and we see that too. I love the term glorifying obesity cuz I'm just like, oh, you think I'm glorious? Bang! Yeah, right.

12:23:13 Yeah.

12:23:15 What about your writing? I know that folks who know you as a visual artists may not know but you have a Medium account and you write in some other places, right? Mostly Medium, because they pay really well.

12:23:26 But yeah, I write a lot about childhood sexual abuse. I write some funny stuff, and stuff about mental health, and just some miscellaneous art articles about artists and different things that I like in the world.

12:23:43 But I do focus a lot on autism, especially stories about my son, growing up, and about childhood sexual abuse because I feel like that's something people don't talk a lot about.

12:23:55 I've also been talking a lot about the death of babies and infants because I lost my first son when he was six hours old and I've realized that, that people don't talk about that a lot.

12:24:07 So those, those things that people don't speak about I try to speak about them, if I have the spoons for it. I've been taking a little bit of a break from writing for a while.

12:24:17 But I'll get back into it eventually.

12:24:20 And the writing that you have already done though, people can find mostly on medium.com? Yeah, Medium.

12:24:27 It's tonitails.medium.com.

12:24:30 Toni what else are you doing that people don't necessarily know about? Like many of us who are fans of your visual art, that's primarily how we see you. Now folks know that you're also a writer if they didn't know that already.

12:24:43 What else have you got in your bag of tricks that we need to be aware of?

12:24:48 Well, I started creating graphics for Facebook, and these graphics, they're called frames and you can add them to your profile pictures.

12:24:59 I created a group a few years ago when I started that and that group has expanded, it's become very large. And one of the things I really like about it is we have a lot of older folks in there that maybe don't know how to use a lot of the technology.

12:25:16 So they, they got interested in the frames because you can just push a button and there you go. So we've created a community.

12:25:24 The oldest person in my group is in their late 90s.

12:25:29 And so we've created a really cool community of older folks that can communicate with each other and with the younger folks that come in there too and a lot of camaraderie. But it all just started from these little graphics you know and it's really neat.

12:25:44 It's all very friendly.

12:25:47 It's called Toni Tails Frames. If you want to look it up there's some fake groups out there but you could tell which one is mine pretty easily by the art.

12:25:57 I want to ask you about fake groups and people and imposters and people using your art without your permission. But I also just want to acknowledge since Toni was talking about the age span of a group that in addition to May being Fat

Liberation Month,

12:26:09 it's also Older Americans Month.

12:26:11 Awesome.

12:26:14 So, let's go back to what you just said about some fake groups. Who's out there being Toni Tails imposters in the world? Like what is that experience about? Um, I don't think they realize that Toni Tails was a person at first. I think they felt that it

12:26:31 was a type of graphic, maybe? They started creating pages and groups trying to pull in followers based on my name, and they have a lot of followers and I don't mind, most of them.

12:26:44 But I don't want them pretending to be me and then doing all kinds of things that I would never do you know. I have, I have some haters out there, but most of my haters don't have anything to do with fat and have more to do with homophobia, because I

12:26:58 created a lot of pride frames and they made people very angry.

12:27:05 What, um, what about people using your art without permission? I know that, um, you know in, in today's world, people often just grab images from the internet that are not meant to be used in commercial ways. But you have a lot of art that's available

12:27:23 for people that you want us to use and share and, and be proud of. But the,

12:27:31 but when is it crossing the line?

12:27:34 Whenever someone takes one of my images and uses it either to make money or for their business. That's crossing the line. I don't mind anyone using any of my images for personal stuff.

12:27:45 Like if they want to make themselves a T shirt, or if they, if they're using it to just share with their friends, you know, but I don't like art being used for anything commercial without permission. Some of it already has been claimed by other businesses

12:28:05 too so I really, for their sake don't want that to happen.

12:28:09 And I've had quite a few images stolen over the years and it still happens.

12:28:15 People that, that have actually inquired about me, creating a logo will sometimes just take one, because they don't want to pay for it. So that's something that a lot of because I have so many followers that's really helpful they let me know when they see

12:28:30 stuff like that because the big community is a small community, and most people know me so it's not gonna work out really well when we try to steal it.

12:28:37 But I'm open to people using my images I create. I purposely create shareable images.

12:28:44 You know I want, I want people to feel free to use them and, you know, just be ethical about it, you know.

12:28:54 Right. Yes. Some of the most popular things I've shared on my own social media have been pictures of, that you've done of me. Tell people how they can get themselves as a Toni Tails art piece if they want to.

12:29:08 Are you still taking commissions for things? I do commissions mostly for logos and stuff I'll do some pinups now and then too but if you put an image out there and it's just, it inspires me, I'll just make it. You do that all the time so that's why you end

12:29:23 up getting so many because you have so many awesome vibrant images out

there.

12:29:30 If somebody wants me to make something for them they can go to my website tonitails.com and inquire there and we can talk about it.

12:29:42 Um, let's see if we have any questions from the audience. If you're here with us live and you have a question, please go ahead and type your question into the chat.

12:29:50 It helps us a lot if you actually type the word QUESTION in capital letters, so that if there's other chatter going on, it's easy for that question to pop out at us. While we give people a minute to que up their questions Toni, I'll go ahead and ask you

12:30:05 one more.

12:30:07 If you could have,

12:30:12 you get, you draw popular culture figures; Disney characters, other kinds of characters,

12:30:20 is there a celebrity that you would love to, to draw?

12:30:28 Lizzo.

12:30:32 Definitely.

12:30:34 I probably will draw her. Super popular. Have you ever,

12:30:38 have you ever had someone, someone famous that you've drawn come in contact with you because of that piece of art?

12:30:47 No, but I have had people that I didn't realize were famous contact me to have them drawn. And that's pretty neat when you find it out later.

12:30:57 But, oh, actually?

12:31:02 I did a long time ago have Tess Holiday get in touch with me about an image I did for her years and years ago, and I didn't realize she was famous either.

12:31:14 Sometimes I just don't know. I can be pretty clueless with that stuff. Right?

12:31:20 So let's, actually while folks are thinking about the questions that they want to ask you, Toni.

12:31:25 You were willing to do a little drawing demo for us today, so why don't we go ahead and do that now to give people a little bit of time to think about what they might want to ask?

12:31:35 Yeah, so just give us a moment of patience while Toni starts her screen share.

12:31:52 So I'm here and I've got an image of myself that I put over to the side.

12:31:56 I generally just grab pictures.

12:31:59 You asked earlier how to get a picture drawn. If you're in my group, there's times I'll say, "post a picture", and if one inspires me I'll draw it.

12:32:09 And so, I never really know what I'm going to draw ahead of time.

12:32:19 Now I'll just sketch on here.

12:32:25 And I usually start off just with scribbles just to get a

12:32:25 basic shape.

12:32:27 So you're drawing on a computer for us today? Do you always draw on the computer or do you use other mediums as well? I use other mediums as well. The computers the most convenient because all of your materials are right there in one tiny little package

12:32:47 it's nice.

12:32:47 What I end up doing with these kind of images, and I start off by just getting the basic actual shape that's there. And then I just create layers upon

layers and eventually make it into a minimal image.

12:33:06 One of the things I really like to do is include tummy lines because I think that people always feel like they need to hide those.

12:33:17 Yeah that is part of what I was saying earlier about the sort of predominance of hourglass figures in,

12:33:26 in fat positive art. We're really seeing a shift in that not just you know, your work has always included bellies, but I think a lot more people are inspired to do work that shows, like you said, the, the, the legs that are not, you know, that don't fit

12:33:43 into an hourglass frame and the bellies and the arms and the stretch marks and all of the things that even in fat positive art, we weren't seeing as often as we experienced them in the real world.

12:33:58 And in our own bodies. Yeah it is nice to see and I get why people do the hourglass figure. I do it too and it's really fun to draw, and it's easy to draw.

12:34:09 But, expanding your horizons a little in your art, a bit will open you up to a whole lot of ideas you never even thought of. Of course it's always good to do that.

12:34:21 It's always good to be able to touch different people, bring different people into the fold you know. Yes. I like people to feel seen.

12:34:31 Can I ask you one of the questions from the chat while you're drawing? Absolutely.

12:34:36 Since you inspire so many people into loving their bodies and their art, what would you like to see improve in the art world for the mainstream depiction of fat people specifically from the artistic design side of things?

12:34:49 There are a lot of tropes that negatively impact fat people that are reflected in how characters are designed. How can the art community become more responsible in integrating a fat liberation lens?

12:35:03 I think first and foremost, instead of looking at fat people as a character, looking at them as a human being; different personalities, different types. Everybody's not constantly feeling down about themselves and eating tons of food but some people are, you

12:35:23 know? There's all different types of people, and I think,

12:35:28 and I've started to see a lot of us, if any of you guys watch like Steven Universe, for instance, that's a really good one that has a lot of different body types and a lot of diversity.

12:35:40 I love Steven Universe so much. Bertha Pearl of Size Queen Clothing helped me make a Rose Quartz costume a couple of years ago and it was just a lot of fun.

12:35:53 I love that. See stuff like that is so good for everyone to see.

12:35:57 You know, I, I'd love to see more of that happening.

12:36:01 Just, I like seeing fat people included,

12:36:06 not because they're fat but just because they're a person.

12:36:10 Yeah, and that's like that with all diversity.

12:36:13 You know, just, it's nice to see different types of people just depicted as, as people.

12:36:22 Have you thought about animation yourself as, are we ever going to see a Toni Tails cartoon?

12:36:26 I've done a few little ones over the years, but yeah, have, I thought about doing that? I created a character just recently that I might end up doing some cartoons with but I'm definitely going to do some little comics.

12:36:39 Her name is Adora Belly.

12:36:42 And she's based loosely on me.

12:36:47 What about, what about graphic novel work? We recently had Philip Barragan and Mason Arrigo on the show, and they did the Fatizen graphic novel together; Phillips the writer and Mason is the artist.

12:37:13 Have you thought of that or have you have? No I haven't.

12:37:04 I haven't done that yet but I am open to that stuff. I, my stuff will be more cutesy.

12:37:13 But yeah, I definitely would like to do some stuff like that, for sure.

12:37:23 So back to that, back to the question about mainstream depictions of fat people. Do you feel like people see you as a mainstream artists or do you feel like artists who draw fat bodies are still sort of treated as a different category than regular

12:37:39 art?

12:37:41 You know I honestly don't know. I'm, I'm kind of in my own little bubble of the fat community,

12:37:49 and I haven't branched out far from that. Although I recently, I'm doing some stuff for Cartoon Network.

12:37:59 And everything I'm doing for them is going to be fat positive, so we'll have to see how that goes. I'll keep you updated on that as it goes on.

12:38:12 Are you allowed to tell us a little more about that?

12:38:15 I'm doing some Steven Universe designs, um, some regular show designs.

12:38:25 And I've got one image, available already which is Lion from Us from Stephen Universe

12:38:34 on, tonitees.com you can find them.

12:38:39 And that's Toni T e e s right? Uh Huh, and that's tee shirts, right? If you go there, the best tee shirts, to buy for femme types, they have them marked under curvy, under female and curvy, and they go up to size 32. But really, like if you don't mind a fitted shirt, which

12:39:01 I don't, I'm really a size like 7 or 8X but I can wear them with no problem.

12:39:09 They're fitted but they, they fit nicely for what I like.

12:39:14 And that's why I choose, chose that place to get.

12:39:19 It's called TeePublic. I chose them because they had the biggest shirts for the least amount of money.

12:39:25 They didn't have the women's Curvy at first, that's something that I negotiated with them for a few years ago, and they've increased it, they've added hoodies, tanks and all sorts of stuff over the years.

12:39:36 They started showing more fat models also which is great.

12:39:42 That is great. We, we know that sometimes those types of sites like TeePublic, can, you know they'll have the sizes but they won't show them on us.

12:39:51 Yeah, if you see like their normal plus sizes are not really plus size, I don't know.

12:39:58 I've had people buy them and tell me that they're just really small, but if you, if you go into the men's regular tee shirts, which I've tried to get them to call unisex,

12:40:10 those go up to 5X and they're very roomy, and the curvy ones, they go from size 14 to a size 32 and, and they work really well too. They're really big and comfy and well made.

12:40:26 You've done some other fashion work.

12:40:29 Can you tell us about that?

12:40:33 And, which work are you talking about? I do so many different things.

12:40:37 What are you thinking? I was thinking of the skater style dresses that you were doing before. Oh,

12:40:44 I still do those CowCow for CowCow. CowCow!

12:40:49 Yeah, I'm thinking about doing that a little bit more of that. I had some personal stuff going on that's kept me from some of my more passion projects, stuff like that and the Tee shirts, they don't make a whole lot of money. I do it more as a way just to have

12:41:03 images available out there for people to wear of fat people, you know?

12:41:14 We have, we have time for a couple more questions from the chat if anyone has other questions. I just want to ask a little bit more about the question that was already asked. They mentioned tropes of fat people.

12:41:27 Is there anything that you will not draw fat people doing because you are tired of the stereotypes, or concerned about the way people might receive it?

12:41:38 I will never draw anyone being upset about what they eat, ever.

12:41:44 They're gonna enjoy it. It's part of life it's something that's supposed to be good for you, that you're supposed to enjoy.

12:41:52 I'm not gonna draw a fat person as a wallflower in the back with no one paying any attention to them.

12:42:01 So those kinds of images I don't do, or anything about dieting, period. I don't believe in dieting

12:42:10 personally, so I'm not gonna, not gonna draw that. I've been approached by a lot of companies that would want me to do that, actually but I won't.

12:42:19 Yeah, I was just going to ask about if you, if there were any kinds of jobs you would turn down and if the diet industry had approached you for things? I've turned down a lot of stuff, and they want to use my audience as a way to, to sell their product,

12:42:36 and they're reaching out to the wrong Lady for that.

12:42:41 Do you find it frustrating that sometimes in the advertising that you can't control on social media that your, your fans are exposed to diet culture through that?

12:42:52 I haven't had any really negative experiences of that nature, because I'm so careful about where and how I, I do my images, and I'm always like you said very outspoken.

12:43:07 If something makes me mad, they're going to know about it.

12:43:11 I don't, I don't sit back quietly.

12:43:21 So what's going to happen next with the picture that you're drawing? Will we, will you finish it and we'll be able to see it out in the world somewhere?

12:43:31 Yep, I'll finish it up. I don't exactly know what, what I'm going to end up doing with it in the end, but it'll be cute. I can promise that. It's cute already.

12:43:43 Now the reason I knew I could ask you if you would do a drawing demo is because I've seen you do videos sometimes where you do drawing demos. You also have some meditation, kind of videos on YouTube and what else? What else can we find on your YouTube?

12:43:57 My YouTube lately I haven't done much with but I'm, I'm planning on doing more drawing videos and crafting.

12:44:05 I enjoy just nerdy stuff in general.

12:44:11 But my Facebook videos,

12:44:16 I get paid for those too so that's where I put a lot of my shorter videos,

like the tick tock type videos. I like to do a lot of funny stuff.

12:44:29 And you, you also have some fun

12:44:33 in your responses to trolls.

12:44:37 What do you think about the idea that, the "don't feed the trolls" idea?

Obviously, you, you play with them sometimes, you tease them and, yeah. Tell the audience who hasn't, give us an example for people who haven't seen you in

12:44:55 troll fights, of how that, how it might go if someone tries to troll you.

It doesn't go very well for the troll. It goes pretty well for me and all my friends who laugh at it.

12:45:06 The thing that these people that are bullying don't comprehend, is if you're a fat woman in this world, and you've learned to love yourself, ain't nobody going to be able to get to you. You've already been through hell and made it through the fire and

12:45:22 nothing they say is going to make a slightest impact. But what I do worry about is some of my followers who aren't there yet, being hurt by it. Yeah. So yeah I like to,

12:45:35 if for instance, if someone tells me, recently I had on TikTok a guy who said, Well, I hope you enjoy living to the ripe age of 37. And I was like, dude, I'm 43. Nice try.

12:45:52 I know I love that one. We talked about that a lot here.

12:45:56 One of our board members Peggy Howell has a campaign on Instagram called #oldfatty, and it's completely, it's hashtag old fatty, and the whole point of it is that people tell you that you're going to die by 30.

12:46:12 And, you know, livin her best life and thriving in her 70s and wants to be visible, so that other younger..I love that.

12:46:20 I love it too like and like you said. I need to draw more of that definitely.

12:46:26 Yeah, well, you know, Peggy's got some fantastic pictures on her Instagram. I know, I love her. Gonna be hopping over there after this, grabbing so we, um, you know, but what you said about like, we, we know that we might be,

12:46:44 I'm not gonna say bulletproof because it's not like I, it's not like trolls never ding us just because we've been through it but like, right, right. I think that, you know, those of us who have more experience with having already heard that stuff before,

12:46:56 you're right, we do worry about the impact on the more vulnerable, vulnerable people who are newer to these fat liberation ideas and, and who are more at risk for having that do real damage to their self esteem.

12:47:11 So I think it's always fun to see you just go after them.

12:47:16 It's a lot of fun to do too. The ones that get to me sometimes are the ones that bring my child into it.

12:47:25 Because I have my own guilt, as a mother, of not doing everything well.

12:47:31 But then I just remember they don't know me, they don't know anything about me and even if I have made mistakes, it's not their place to tell me so.

12:47:40 Right? Yeah, even if you have things that you wish you'd done differently as a mother, a stranger on the internet is probably not the best one to assess that. And if they're going to go out of their way to be unkind, definitely not somebody you want to

12:47:53 emulate anyway.

12:48:01 Exactly.

12:47:55 Um, do you want to talk about your, do you want to talk a little bit about

your son because you do share quite a bit about him on your site. Sure.

12:48:03 He's 17 now you can be a team this year.

12:48:06 He's on the autism spectrum and we've had a lot of adventures over the years, with, with all of that.

12:48:16 Now that he's getting older. I'm really working on trying to find a way for him to be more independent.

12:48:21 And he wants that too, to a certain degree although he's perfectly happy to stay with me forever until he gets a girlfriend anyway. That's what he tells me. He's like, if we break up I'll just move back in with you, mom.

12:48:33 Okay. That

12:48:36 works. Are there projects that y'all work on together?

12:48:40 We used to do a lot of those kinds of things together. Now he likes to just focus on, he creates music. He composes music. He creates a lot of fanfiction.

12:48:54 He writes, different shows. And so, I've focused more away from the autism itself when it comes to him and focus more on the things that he enjoys and wants people to know about that he does I think that that's a really good thing.

12:49:09 And he and I together have made some changes. If you've heard of BrainPop?

12:49:28 They used to have a video there where they talked about autism as a disease that needed to be cured and Sky and I got in touch with them and, and talk to them and they updated that video so that it talks more about neuro diversity so that's one of the

12:49:31 things we're proud of having achieved.

12:49:34 That's incredible. Yeah, really cool. It was all Sky's idea too. My son,

12:49:41 he said, Can we con, can we contact them? And I said of course we can, I don't know if we'll hear back.

12:49:48 It really bothered him when he saw that video because that's something we use. We're homeschoolers and that's one of the tools we would use for education and he didn't want people to think that they needed to cure

12:50:00 something that's such an intricate part of his personality and who he is.

12:50:08 Yeah, and of course they're they're, you know, different identities, but I think a lot of folks in fat community can relate to the idea of being in, being in bodies that the medical community want to cure, instead of just letting us be our fabulous selves.

12:50:25 Mm hmm.

12:50:26 I have another question from the chat.

12:50:30 While there are folks who approached you with commissions that aren't in alignment with you and that sucks, what are the types of pieces you particularly want to be commissioned for or really appreciate drawing?

12:50:42 I love when, especially femme entrepreneurs get in touch with me.

12:50:48 And there they want something that

12:50:55 that can show their business in a way that they, that will make them happy. My words aren't wording right now, but I really love those kind of projects, especially when they give me a lot of free reign.

12:51:09 That's always good.

12:51:11 I like helping them get started with their business and I like to use my network to kind of get their, their businesses out there and help them because as a single mom myself, having been able to create a career and staying home and work from

12:51:28 home and able to take care of my whole family, and everything I want to help other people do that too,

12:51:45 especially when there's someone who, who has like mobility issues or something of that nature. It makes it harder for them to get out into the world, because that's something I can understand.

12:51:51 I've been through that myself.

12:51:53 So when people approach me for those kind of projects. I really enjoy it and I try to do one free project

12:52:03 every month for somebody who's disabled and wanting to start a business;

12:52:07 just like a logo and stuff; helping them get started.

12:52:12 Those kind of projects are my favorite.

12:52:16 Um, are there any in particular that you're, I don't want to put you on the spot but if there are any in particular that you're especially proud of seeing how those businesses have developed and you want to give them a shout out, we're happy to hear

12:52:27 about them.

12:52:30 I'm serious, a work in progress right now that I'm not at liberty to speak about yet, but you'll be seeing it soon and it's really really cool and it's got some celebrity involvement stuff it's really neat.

12:52:43 I can't wait for you guys to actually get to know about it but not allowed to talk about it just yet.

12:52:49 Gotcha.

12:52:53 We have time for.

12:52:55 We have time for probably one more question from the chat. While we see if anybody else has a question I'll go ahead and ask you one more myself. Toni what, what kind of language do you like best to talk about your own body, Obviously, at NAAFA we use the

12:53:10 word fat all the time.

12:53:13 What do you like? Fat is the most common but I'm cool with, I know that there's some controversy around it, but I'm cool with like SSBBW, BBW, Superfat,

12:53:25 all of those are fine with me. For myself I generally just say fat. And SSBBW, for folks who don't know, it's supersize big beautiful woman, bbw is big beautiful woman.

12:53:38 I asked you about super fat versus infini fat the other day and you said something like,

12:53:46 I like infini-fat too. I know a lot of people in the community do like infini-fat.

12:53:52 Um, I like, I know a lot of people in the community do like infini fat.

Um, but you said something in response when I asked you if you like super fat or infini, infini fat that was really delightful to me Do you remember your answer

12:53:59 when we were chatting the other day?

12:54:01 Probably something like, I like super fat because it sounds like I'm a superhero.

12:54:08 That was exactly it. Yeah, sounds like me,

12:54:13 That was exactly it.

12:54:15 Maybe I'll make this little character into super fat with like a cape coming out.

12:54:21 There it is.

12:54:26 Well it looks like we don't have any more questions from our live audience I'm going to ask you the question that we always wrap up with, Toni.

12:54:34 Is there anything that we didn't talk about today that I didn't ask you, our audience didn't ask you, that you really just want us to know about you as an

artist or you as a person?

12:54:44 Nothing about me as an artist but I want you to know everyone watching this, that you are absolutely beautiful, you're worthy.

12:54:54 And you deserve to take up all the space in the world. Just do it.

12:55:00 Do it. That seems like a perfect note for us to wrap on for this Fat Liberation Month special edition of the NAAFA webinar.

12:55:10 Thank you once again to artist Toni Tails. You can find Toni, the starting place, the hub is tonitails.

12:55:27 com, t o n i t a i l s.com and you can also find Toni on all of your favorite social media. Thanks once again to Selena and Arty from ASL from Pro Bono ASL for providing us with interpreting today.

12:55:37 And, and, please visit NAAFA.org to see the schedule for the upcoming events that we have for Fat Liberation Month. And also, we are able to bring these events to you free of charge, because of the generosity of our members and other contributors and supporters. If you would like to support in that way just visit naafa.org and click the contribute button. I'm Tigress Osborn, on behalf of the NAAFA board and the Future of NAAFA Committee, thank you all for being with us and we'll see you for lots and lots more Fat Liberation Month celebration. Take care everyone.