



COLLABORATIVE
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LIVE ART
AND
PRIVILEGE

TOOLKIT



Live Art
Development
Agency



ways of getting classy

A toolkit of methodologies

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In 2016 Kelly Green undertook a research residency with LADA exploring Live Art practices and methodologies in relation to issues of class and cultural privilege. This was a two stranded residency, in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) and Sidney Cooper Gallery, involving time in LADA's Study Room followed by engagement with CCCU and community groups in Kent and the Rhondda Valley, Wales as part of a wider project with Tate Exchange, London.

The residency at LADA was part of *Restock, Rethink, Reflect Four: Live Art and Privilege* the current iteration of an ongoing series mapping and marking underrepresented artists, practices and histories, whilst also supporting future generations. The residency was also part of LADA's contribution to the Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme (CAPP), a transnational programme funded by the European Union focusing on collaborative practices with the aim of engaging new participants and enhancing mobility and exchange for artists.

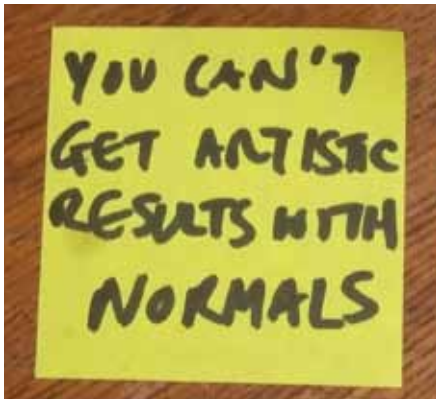
From her residency Kelly Green created two resources – *Let's Get Classy*, a Study Room Guide on Live Art, Class and Cultural Privilege and this Toolkit of Methodologies *Ways of Getting Classy*.

Kelly Green is a London based working class single mother, academic, and performance artist. She is a noisy, feisty, hot mess. Her performance work is fun, interactive and is mostly about class and gender. Kelly's art practice is a mash-up of Live Art, stand up, dance, and bad singing.

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1. Introduction – Working with Normals



During my residency in LADA's Study Room there had been a writing workshop, and one morning I was greeted with the above post-it note left on the desk, which made me LOL. This statement is privileged, and raises some pressing and interesting questions: Who are the 'normals'? And who determines what is 'artistic'?

My interpretation of the 'normals' are those who have not had the privilege of arts education, or understand the 'cultural codes, or passwords, that provide status' (Helguera: 2011) in contemporary Live Art spaces. I was not present during the workshop, so I am not aware of the context of the statement, and there is a strong possibility that I may have completely misinterpreted it, but as someone whose practice is embedded in working with 'normals', I know that you can get creative responses from those who have not previously engaged with art practices, Live Art especially, as it enables a space for an alternative discussion and expression.

Ways of Getting Classy is a toolkit offering provocations and ways of working with working-class artists and communities. I discuss the residency and the results of the practical research undertaken. There is also a classy chat between

myself, Professor David Bates and Dr Licia Cianetti, whose research informed and drove the initiation of the outreach element of the residency. And there are offers, lists, exercises, for *Ways of Getting Classy* with working-class artists and participants.

The Residency

My CAPP supported LADA residency was two-pronged: firstly, I was a research resident with LADA based in the Study Room, where I conducted practical research and facilitated discussions, workshops, interviews and chats. I used this element of the residency to explore class and art with those who engaged with Live Art, and those who did not.

The second element of the residency was practice based with Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU), working directly with two communities of young people: Astor College, Dover and Valley Kids, Wales, applying my methodologies, informed by the research conducted whilst in LADA's Study Room.

Photo: Jason Pay

LADA Time

For the LADA element of the residency, I focused on sharing stories of art and class: I have over 30 hours of audio files documenting workshops, discussions and interviews. My initial aim and expectations for the residency shifted and evolved from my original intentions as I had hoped to facilitate most of my work in the Study Room, however, the outreach groups were unpredictable, which is and always will be, one of the challenges of working with communities. Therefore, I had to adapt my practice to suit the needs of the participants, which meant one session with a group of stay at home mums interestingly took place in the living room of one of the participants, because her child was not well enough to go to school, thus she invited me to deliver the group session at her home over a cup of tea and digestive biccies. I worked with participants from a range of social economic backgrounds: a group of young people from a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU); an education centre for those who have been excluded from mainstream school. I ran a workshop in a primary school, with only a selection of pupil premium students: those who were entitled to free school dinners, aged 7-11. I also held a talk the University of East London.

2. C.H.A.V The Residency – Working with community groups and CCCU

Charming Hilarious Arty Vibrant

The second element of my residency was based at Canterbury within the Politics Department of Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU), working closely with David Bates, the Sidney Cooper Gallery, and in partnership with the Tate Exchange project, *The Fairground*. The project aimed to subvert ideas of exchange, and forms of commodification, by reinventing the fairground as an arena of free exchange and creativity; a fairground of art and ideas. CCCU initiated this artist-led project to explore the specific idea of how contemporary forms of economic exchange produce surplus, or waste populations, that are then represented by the media and reality television as freaks. The freak show is no longer at the fair, but in your living room via the accessible form of entertainment: reality TV. For this element of the residency, *Waste Not, Want Not*, I applied my knowledge and experience of working with low economic community groups, to experimentally engage them with ideas of class and politics through Live Art practices, to subvert the notion of ‘poverty porn’ and the modern-day freak show, and to challenge the ideas and stereotypes of Britain’s poor. The collaboration

developed with two groups of young people; A-level art students from Astor College, Dover, and eight participants with varying Special Educational Needs (SEN) and emotional needs from Valley Kids, Rhonda Valley, Wales.

Astor College is located in Dover’s Tower Hamlets, which is in the top 20% of most deprived small geographical areas in the UK. Astor College, and its teaching staff, is dedicated to ensuring social inclusion and achievement among economically marginalised groups: the participants were all from low income families, with one pupil premium student within the group.

Valleys Kids is situated in the Rhondda Valleys in South Wales and is in the top ten most deprived areas in Wales. Valleys Kids main goal is to give ‘a lifeline to individuals and families who are on the edge, struggling to survive’. The young people from VK have varying emotional and special educational needs, thus their challenges and support needs varied.

Photo: Jason Pay



My Approach

My approach with working-class people is by, with, and for the community, which I believe breaks with the hierarchical cultural practice, of talking about, and to, the underrepresented. This creates a space of respect and creativity, which challenges the position of privilege of the artist, and the participant. I endeavour to encourage creative agency and take a step back as an artist in this project, allowing the young people to take creative agency to become the artist.

My approach is always process over product; the participation in the creative process is the element of most value in engagement projects, rather than the output. In the first few sessions with the group, I facilitated political workshops and then played with different ways to challenge and explore these ideas through the body, giving the participants tools early on to start to create their ideas into physical responses. I feel that Live Art provides a space for activism and engagement as it is a platform of expression that is interdisciplinary, which makes way for new representations and meaning. It's about finding nuggets, the good bits that make you tick, that make you angry and finding a way to use art practices as sites of activism.



Waste Not, Want Not

The project resulted in nine Live Art presentations all exploring class and politics.

1. Pennies and Pounds

Narisse Tait, Astor College, Dover

Narisee's piece was a comment on the unfair distribution of wealth in society. It challenged the negative and pernicious representations of 'Britain's poor.' Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves.

2. House of Horrors

Reese Beech, Astor College, Dover

Reece's piece was a playful comment on world politics, creating a subversive house of horrors, in which we came face to face with the freakishness of key contemporary world 'leaders' – Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump and Kim Jong-Un.

3. The Booth

Robert Murga, Astor College, Dover

Robert is a Slovakian-born artist. His piece subverted representations of 'the youth of today,' and creatively distorted ideas of self-image.

4. Fish 'n' Chips

Jack Goodman, Astor College, Dover

Jack's piece focused on common racial stereotypes of 'white British' subjects. It challenged the negative 'post-Brexit' assumption that one can characterise such groups as 'racist' 'little Englanders.'

5. Pink or Blue?

Laura Scrivens-Waghan, Astor College, Dover

Laura's piece explored gender and sexuality and posed a challenge to the male/female binary. It interrogated the expectation that 'men' and 'women' should behave differently, and explored how the colours pink and blue serve to symbolise and, importantly, subjugate.

6. Trump's wall of peace

Levi Phillips, Luke McGrath, Ioan Morris, Valleys Kids, Wales

This piece was a comment on the disenfranchised white working-class America. Levi, dressed like a clown Donald Trump, invited you to engage with him in a conversation where he would ask you a series of questions, to evaluate whether he thought you would be considered middle class or working-class, whether you would want to build a wall which was a wall of flowerpots, or whether you should comment on the wall of peace.

Photos: Kelly Green and Jason Pay



7. Window/mirror

*Chiara Sullivan, Amanda Bush year,
Jessica Richards, Valleys Kids, Wales*

This piece was a comment on the perceptions of class by those who were working-class unemployed or homeless. The audience had to stand outside to engage with the piece and look into the window, which commented on divisions of class and spaces.

8. Balloon Man

Lestyn Harris, Valleys Kids, Wales

The Balloon Man offered dark alternatives to the fortune teller, with balloons which were full of questions.

9. Chav Rat

Shannon, Valleys Kids, Wales

This piece was a playful comment on the representation of the chav and the dehumanization of working-class females.

3. The Role of the Artist? A Reflection

I entered Astor College with plan in hand and lots of games and ideas to play with, excited to meet and to start working with participants. However, I had been informed that we would have five students, and when I arrived there was just two. During the session one student refused to talk to me, and the other just smiled and said yes a lot...not quite the beginning of the project that I would've liked. The exercises I had brought were for a larger group, so I then had to adjust and think on my feet, but with only two participants, communication and teasing out the ideas was difficult.

For the following session I had five students in total – they didn't automatically engage once in a group and it took some time for them to warm to me, but the focus was really on their engagement with the topics and practice. We played games which got them to chuckle and have a laugh which was satisfying, however it was really about the questions I was asking and these guys, who are 16-18 years of age, were being asked to engage in a discussion on ideas of class and cultural privilege. Obviously, I didn't walk in with an academic text because the way in which you approach this type of discussion is incredibly valuable.

The most interesting part for me was going into these kind of spaces and working with students as it highlighted my position as an artist in the whole process – I felt there was an assumption, by the partners of the project that these participants would relate to the media representations of young people in the UK, however they weren't aware of these representations and I found they had no connection to this issues, no anger, no emotion whatsoever... but what does this mean? They didn't feel that they were economically deprived or culturally underprivileged...

For me as an artist, I get angry, then I make art. I'm angry about the class system, accessibility and the arts being privileged – I have a chip on my shoulder. This project has enabled me to explore these ideas with other groups and understand that they're not as angry as me, which was a massive surprise and my mind wanders back to consider if I was angry at their age?

During one of the sessions I asked all of the young people to come back to me with a political issue that made them *really* angry and that would be a starting point to create an artistic response. There were restrictions within the context of the school,

Photo: Jason Pay

the students' work with me needed to be used for their A-Level assessments, thus my approach had to fit the remit of the national curriculum.

Each young person came back with a different topic that angered them; one was gender and sexuality, one came back with poverty, great! Another two participants were finding it challenging to engage with my practice, as they were used to being told by a teacher what to make and create with a structured learning outcome, so they both needed quite solid direction as they worked more conceptually. So, once I had given them an idea of what they were to create they were then able to engage with the content, and from the conceptual ideas to help them define what they wanted to do, as they could see it, rather than trying to envisage it in their minds.

But out of the five students there was young one person in particular who was really angry, and in the *wrong way*. He was angry, as he was being called a racist in his own country because he hated anyone who voted remain, feminists, social justice warriors, people that fought for other people's rights. Essentially this participant hated *me*.



This was hard to be confronted with, as let's be honest, working within the context of the arts we tend to assume that all have the same left-wing way of thinking. Preaching to the converted.

I had a lot of internal questions once I'd met this student and those were complex in nature, however I didn't have the time to ask him those questions. I didn't have the time to re-politicise him, I didn't have the time to change his way of thinking and really, was that even my job?

I strongly disagree with his views but I question whether as an artist I have the right to censor him making art about his feelings of being underrepresented, even if to me they are wrong?

Looking at the disenfranchised white working-class people across the country who are turning to far right parties and extreme political behaviors, we must consider that there is a reason why this is happening, and who was I to censor him?

What I did do was challenge this young person, asked him to research his media sources and offered articles on the Brexit, YouTube videos on immigration, and gave him the space to ask questions without the fear of judgement.

Interestingly, he took to Live Art amazingly well, he excelled in his ability to want to challenge and subvert. His piece was strong and motivated and he executed it well. The piece *Fish'n'Chips* which was a response to the Brexit vote and how the media insinuated that the vote was a classed issue; those who voted remain were the lefty middle classes and those who voted leave were the uneducated, racist working-classes. The young artist wore a navy suit with a union jack flag tie and he wore a mask which was made of varying coloured skin tones. He knew that this was problematic and the mask was his way of acknowledging that. He then would approach people in the gallery space and ask them questions around British tastes, for example; do you prefer tea or coffee? Do you like fish n chips? He would then decide whether he thought you were British enough and if you passed you would be given a mini union jack flag.

4. A Classy Academic Chat with Prof David Bates and Dr. Licia Cianetti

KELLY: We're just gonna have a chat about the project, so can you tell me about the initial ideas when initiating the Tate project?

LICIA: So, you start because I wasn't there...

DAVID: I mean I started with a conversation with Ian McKenzie who was connected with the project already in various ways through the University of Kent connection because we've been doing something entirely different, and then he said to me 'why don't you come to the first Associates' Meeting' which is the family associates' meeting, so we got right in at the beginning of it, within a couple of weeks. That's the session I referred to as the sort of 'speed dating' where everybody got together in a room and had a chat – we found people interested in them. I think right at that stage we spoke to Valleys' Kids that early on actually but there were some other people involved as well, up in University and others that we ended up not working with.

LICIA: Yeah, at that point there were only the general ideas about, I don't even remember whether the–

DAVID: Did we come up with the–

LICIA: –the fairground, I don't think we were there yet. When I arrived there was an idea of doing it more inhouse I guess, because the text that was written beyond making fun of it, back end of the idea was commodification reflecting on that, Live Art came to mind, not producing objects with the values, stuff like that.

DAVID: Initially I was talking about something to do with migration with another organisation, then we decided we didn't want to go in that direction. Then Ian or Stephan came up with the fairground and it was at that point that I thought freak show, fairground so I think that's–

LICIA: –Yeah probably that's the direction and there was a moment where I was there and I thought why don't we actually not improvise and pretend to be curators or artists but bring an artist in and see what that's like.

DAVID: You know through the connections and the reality of how that might go ahead, where we had a piece of research or writing that didn't have to have that connection introduced the theme of waste really, the idea you developed out of the other stuff.

LICIA: Yeah, we are trying ways of putting these ideas that were more theory into a text that could translate to different contexts. I think, kind of what you were saying earlier on the train, you write something then you find yourself going back into the academic lingo and it doesn't always work in context so if you had a bit of back and forth, think of ideas that could work beyond our mind. Waste was one but then that didn't work with the school which was interesting, waste was seen as too offensive or–

KELLY: Yeah

LICIA: –which makes sense, well it made sense from the perspective of exchange. I guess we didn't want to create a lovely exchange, we were recommended to change a few things but what happens with economic exchange so the margins of the productive exchange, so the known productive so there was–

DAVID: I think we were never concerned to be nice about it all were we?

KELLY: [laughs]

DAVID: D'you know what I mean? You kept reintroducing the idea of it, I remember you saying the phrase 'exploitation' that would come in–

LICIA: I mean–

DAVID: –rather than exclusion or marginalisation which we didn't like–

KELLY: Yeah

LICIA: The idea that everything is lovely, and lovely is the word that's used. People are lovely, and the ideas are lovely and somehow there was a little bit of an edge missing, cos there is conflict as well ... the kind of same idea with new audiences,

its problematic. Why is there the old established audience and you make the new audience that have a different space engaging in different things. There are some things that were problematic in the outreach...

KELLY: Yeah...

LICIA: ...ways and there's always that fine line of being too oppositional then you end up not doing anything cos you can not collaborate but also being too taken with everyone being so lovely and then you end up producing content for the institution for free.

DAVID: I think quite interestingly because we saw how that conversation operated in that particular space, so you're expected, I think when you engage with certain other associates and certain people within the Tate as well, to be precisely in this way and everything's about an opportunity. They didn't like to hear messages that were quite different–

KELLY: –negative

DAVID: –or critical or looking at this in a different way or messages that were as explicitly political, as we were.

KELLY: I found that interesting with our project because if you read the Tate Exchange ethos they're saying they're not from a political position so there shouldn't be anything in the space of a political position. Actually, the stuff we took in was from quite a political position.

...

DAVID: They still claim it was a non-ideological role but it was precisely the most ideological role you could have. One interesting thing that came out, I keep coming back to this but one thing that's interesting is to see that the real tensions

between parties and associates and members of the community and people coming in and battles about music and conflicts with the institution were some of the most important things that actually came out of that whole thing. In a way, I'm quite glad it happened, because, do you know what I mean? Cos that's really where the power is.

KELLY: Yeah, we spoke a lot about the young people owning the space through this project, so then making noise – I remember one of the earlier workshops I did, I sat down with the young people and was like 'what does a gallery sound like?' They were like it's quiet and I was like 'what does a fairground sound like?' and I was like we're gonna make these quiet spaces sound like this, playing around with that. I think for them to feel that they had the opportunity to do that and to be heard and to be seen was really important, in terms of politics and power of the space.

DAVID: You could talk about the ownership of the space as well. In order to own that space, it's already owned by someone else and you have to take it off them and that's the interesting thing...

KELLY: Yeah exactly

DAVID: –It's already owned, you know?

KELLY: You're also paying for the privilege as a Partner to be there...[laughing]

DAVID: We really own it in a marketable sense.

KELLY: Yes actually, you've paid for that space for that week so!

DAVID: –by doing its' outreach, they've contracted it out and we're not used to that–

KELLY: –and we're paying them to do their outreach. It is an interesting dynamic, I think.

LICIA: Then there's also being realistic about to what extent can you change the institution you know, is it their idea to change the institution or not? Probably not right?

DAVID: I feel we're in the business of legitimating.

...

KELLY: Okay, so commodification. How do you feel the project was? Did we get the results we wanted from your first ideas? Is that a clear question, how is it...? So, from the first ideas in initiating the project and the response from the young people? Obviously, we didn't know what the result was gonna be or the ending, how do you feel that the process went in relation to the results?

DAVID: The process was important, that bit I think went, I mean I didn't have any experience in this area before, so it went really well. That aspect, the work you did with Astor in terms of developing the theme. I don't think the output was quite what I would have anticipated at the beginning, but that's not the point, no that's not to say they responded in different ways.

LICIA: It's also a learning curve, especially for us who have not done work with groups like this before. It's also interesting to see what happens to your idea, so you have an idea of something and you think these people, even if you try to be as open as possible, these people they are categorized in a specific way to respect my political ideas and sensibilities. So we're left to produce this kind of work. Of course, that's not the way it happens and there's also observing that is interesting. It's a pity not to be the fly on the wall and see the entire process, the burden on everybody and the burden on the process, you know somebody just watching– [laughing]

DAVID: [laughing]

LICIA: The visibility of the process can be, not frustrating but I feel like would be interesting to know more about the process. That's also part of understanding one's role and learning what is everybody's role within.

KELLY: Yeah

LICIA: Yeah

DAVID: I think that helps in a lot of other ways, you're not worried that you'd do something stupid or say something silly. We all know cos we've seen it and I think that's quite important. Trusting that someone is singing from the same hymn sheet whilst not trying to prescribe it.

...

KELLY: What do you think the Live Art element added to the pieces? This was sometimes a challenge due to how the work had to fit within the school curriculum, and with Astor we were working with visual artists and some of them didn't necessarily want to be pushed into Live Art directions.

DAVID: I think, part of that might be, the person who can reflect on that particular issue the most is you because you had to be with them, as a Live Artist dealing with them here at Astor who weren't Live Artists and aren't used to that view at all – but also the pressures of if you get time in a school day that it has to somehow relate to some output in the curriculum, so that's another constraint or another issue that has to be responded to. You spoke about the difference between here, a very much visual arts culture I suppose, and them. Tangible objects and that sort of stuff..

KELLY: It became more tangible cos I was just thinking when you were saying about the–

LICIA: –cos they needed the portfolio and they needed, I think that was a good thing also. One of the things when we were selecting the arts, we were worried about selecting somebody who'd be in a way, be respectful of the context. There were so many contexts involved and you'd get somebody who'd be very prissy about oh no, this must be Live Art and he puts us in a school that does not have, potentially something it lacks in terms of understanding art, where its going or where its at. But then there is that context and students have to produce a portfolio that's made of images and objects so..

DAVID: ...and that's the negotiation point, you don't get that time with that school unless they achieve that cos you don't know what's happening today, I've not heard the bell going off all the time–

KELLY: [laughing]

DAVID: –whole regimented everything is till the end of the working day.

LICIA: So, what was the word? Experience or kind of, I dunno?

KELLY: I think it was interesting, I found it a challenge in the beginning, but I understood the framework and the context of what we were in, so I knew what we had to do. There's another interesting thing when products start to need to be made, it's about the quality of product and what the product looks like and then that becomes a really weird tension as well. In terms of when stuff went to the Tate cos I'd left...because June's an artist, she was an amazing support in the role and led quite a lot as well the quality was different here to some of the stuff that was created at Valleys Kids. I'm not trying to say anything negative, how those things were in the space together it changes things. It was a huge collaboration and because I didn't make one thing with one group I let their imaginations go and

they were able to do different things. Now I can't talk...about navigating those things and those aesthetics in the space. There's this thing around quality in the outreach projects, the products from these outreach things are not high quality.

...like something with a higher aesthetic it was like 'oh that's art!' The community stuff wasn't seen as such, d'you know what I mean?

DAVID: Yeah

KELLY: I remember feeling a little annoyed by that. I think it was a challenge in terms of space as well so if you're coming into a school and you're doing something in an arts space, I can't make them roll around on the floor and do stuff that's performative because it's a limited area. Whereas if you want them to do stuff with their body you need to really break that down over a longer period of time to get them comfortable with doing that. I was really proud of everything that they did, and I think they did an amazing job. We had people who didn't talk to me for 10 hours for the first few sessions, completely silent, but by the end were going up to people in public in the Tate, that transition has been amazing for them. It's been a different project to how I initially thought it would be but not in a negative way, just different.

...

KELLY: There's been this conversation, in terms of the groups we're working with and the initial ideas around this freak show and representation and ideas, we spoke about it via email. We had to be really careful that young people weren't identifying with certain categories that we were talking about and I remember thinking we need to be really aware of that. Which I think we have been—

DAVID: But that points back to the unease other people had about the terms we were using.

KELLY: So maybe just a little comment on that from you guys? I don't really know what the question is but your thinking around that?

LICIA: For me, it was a double level of translation in the sense that translate from the things we were talking about to the context of young people might or might not identify what we're talking about. But also, there is cultural translation being from another place, class discussed in a different way. It's always difficult to compare, class works in similar ways everywhere but when you go and dig at the bottom...but the way it's represented here, as much as everyone's talking about class all the time everyone's very squeamish about it. The idea of the working-class you either fetishize, this came up in the discussion at the beginning when we were talking about waste and the element of disgust but there's also this kind of fetishism of the perfect—

DAVID: —the perfect worker?

LICIA: —the salt of the earth—

DAVID: Oh right.

...

KELLY: We spoke about Live Art and art being a classed-space, do you not feel the same with academia?

LICIA: Oh yeah.

KELLY: [laughing]

LICIA: It is. I think its classed in different ways, its classed about the people that end up in academia which already are gendered very heavily but then coming from the outside you have, it seems

more clashes because of the strict hierarchy of Universities. The idea that there is a hierarchy in University or schools or whatever implies that there will be people who work and study in the good places who are good people and people that, by design because if there is a hierarchy there's always going to be something at the bottom who will have to study and work in worse places. This kind of hierarchy I don't want to recognise but at the same time, its everywhere.

KELLY: You're in it yeah

LICIA: You're inside it, you participate in it because you have to–

DAVID: –in British society, especially around the hierarchy stuff with Universities reproduces this as though it's good thing–

LICIA: –it's a merit!

DAVID: –yeah exactly.

LICIA: When you see so many students from private/public schools –

DAVID: –confusing discourse there–

LICIA: –yeah, go into the top universities it's unrepresented.

DAVID: –yeah

LICIA: –and it's happening at this industrious scale and being part of it, it's almost kind of–

KELLY: –perpetuating it

DAVID: When I taught at Manchester as a Graduate Assistant, I remember teaching loads of 'Tarquins' in various classes daunted by all the names and I had a lot broader accent then – but I know they didn't take me seriously and it wasn't cos I didn't know about the topics cos I did know about the topics although you start to doubt yourself as well cos you're subjected to that–

KELLY: –an impostor syndrome?!

DAVID: Yeah, I just have constant impostor syndrome.

KELLY: Yeah same

DAVID: Yeah that's what I've had all my life. You know what we've spoken about before–

KELLY: Oh yeah

DAVID: –at length, haven't we? Do you feel like an impostor?!

LICIA: Yeah, all the time!

KELLY: [laughing uproariously]

LICIA: I told you I went from impostor syndrome this year to full impostor–

DAVID: LOL

KELLY: LOL

5. Ways of Getting Classy – Provocations and Exercises

Kelly Green

Do's and Don'ts of Working with 'Normals'

Do be open
Do be yourself
Do set boundaries
Do make a fool of yourself
Do know your shit
Do research if you don't
Do encourage
Do laugh
Do embrace the space
Do drink tea
Do chat
Do follow ups
Do debriefs
Do angry
Do commit
Do patience
Do Learn
Do play
Do comfortably challenge

Don't shut down
Don't judge
Don't underestimate
Don't talk street
Don't talk mockney
Don't do hate
Don't impose
Don't demand
Don't expect too much
Don't pity
Don't make assumptions
Don't be pretentious
Don't think you're helping
Don't try to shock
Don't be unrealistic
Don't tell people what to think
Don't think you're right

Kelly Green

What's your Chip?

This is an exercise that I have facilitated in various settings and is a great way to get political and challenging topics to the forefront of a workshop discussion. This exercise enables you as an artist/facilitator to gain a better understanding of what the common social issues are within the community group and is a great icebreaker.

1. Ask your participants to sit in a circle on the floor or on a chair, whichever best suits the needs of the group.
2. Everyone to go around the circle and say their name.
3. Everyone is now to say 'Hello my name is... and my chip is...'. This is to be a small chip on your shoulder, for example; cold food, people being late, weak tea, squeaky trainers, etc. Small scale things that annoy you in your daily/everyday life.
4. Once everyone has had a go, are there any similarities? Do our small-scale grievances and annoyances create communities within our group?
5. Now ask everyone to think of the ONE big chip on their shoulder. Some participants may want to take a minute to think about it, that's okay give them the space to reflect on what it is before they share with the group. You should be clear on your 'chip' – mine is always class and I explain why: being a working-class single mum and the representations in the media etc.
6. Repeat the exercise, "Hello my name is... and my big chip is..."
7. Open the discussion of the topics/chips/issues that have come up through the sharing. Are there 'chips' that crossover or intersect with each other? Can the 'chips' be grouped together? Do they create communities? Are they prevalent to this community?

Follow on activity

Still images: In small groups create still images (unmoving scenes, as though someone has taken a photo of a scene), of the chips with the audiences not knowing what chip the group has. Discuss what people see. Explore interpretation and question what happens when exploring chips with bodies in space.

Catherine Hoffman, Artist

Ten Tips on Being Feckless and Poor Whilst Pretending Not to Be

1. Get involved in activities with middle class boys and girls. For example: Left wing political movement, church and religion of any kind, theatre, music, serious sport, school. If you are able to hang on for a while, you will be like them. Some of them will get off on your poverty porn. Some of them will be 'charitable' so be prepared to be patronized. Gently, cut all contacts with poor people.
2. Always hide your free school meal ticket at all costs.
3. Whatever it takes do not SMELL, STEAL deodorant if necessary.
4. Make friends with nylon knockoff versions of fashion. Or be confident knowing that you started the 'retro' thing with your jumble sale get up way before anyone else. If in doubt wear jeans, an instant unifier.
5. Change your accent. Learn to be comfortable in the "prestige dialect" version of your language.
6. Overcome a sense of inferiority especially in dinner parties, galleries, college... Learn to be a winner without bragging about it. We like winners.
7. Do not go into higher education – this will mean even more poverty. Definitely do not study or go into the Arts.
8. Do not get ill.
9. Do not get up the duff. Disease and babies are expensive and will hold you back.
10. Keep your expectations low, or rather, acquire non-monetary goals, and avoid self-destruction.

About the artist

Catherine Hoffmann's work explores the intersection between performance art, theatre, humour and music in a number of solo and collaborative projects. Described as an elemental weather system, she creates a mixture of interactive one to one performances as well as staged pieces for Art venues, festivals, galleries, cabaret, club settings, one off events and varied sites. Singing, vocality and DIY song making is a huge part of her practice.

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David Bates, Politics Academic

Ways of Establishing an Outreach Project: The how, the what, the who

To establish a good “outreach” project, it is first important to question what we mean by outreach. For “outreach” is ideologically loaded. It presupposes hierarchical relations – those at the top seek to “include” those at the bottom. Those at the bottom are assumed to have a deficit of cultural capital. Outreach means always that one party has the power, but does little if anything to challenge this power.

We should not regard ourselves as experts who have the skills set to “help” communities. As one famous philosopher said, “the educator must also be educated”. This ultimately implies that we are not educators! We would be better to think not of outreach but of exchange – an exchange between interested parties in which all sides have “constitutive power” – the power to build, the power to pre-figure, the power to refuse, the power to destroy (See Bates, 2011; 2018).

We must start any project by asking a series of ethical questions.

- Who do we want to work with, and why?
- Why should they want to work with us?

- What power relations – our focus has been on the intersection between gender and social class – operate between parties in this exchange? (That is, is the exchange a “fair” one?)
- How can we ensure that we do not impose our ideas and concepts on those we are working with, whilst at the same time maintaining our own integrity? (This is in many ways the simplest of things which is so hard to achieve.)
- Is there an extent to which we are using others as a means to some external purpose, to achieve an objective which they have not shaped? (This must be interrogated over and again!)

Accordingly, it is important that the process of working to identify partners must be as democratic and as open as possible. Parties in the exchange will disagree. Openness – if combined with mutual respect – can stop disagreements becoming toxic.

It is also crucial not to shy away from difficult issues. Our work has looked at issues of class and abjection. In particular we have explored oppressive narratives such as those which reproduce the commodification of poverty and pernicious forms of abjection (specifically relating to class and gender).

Our partners have been on the receiving end of such narratives (to acknowledge this is also to emphasize the importance of the values identified above). But they have also been concerned to assert their constitutive power in refusing to be ‘interpellated’ through such narratives (see Althusser, 1970; Bates, 2011; 2018; Martel, 2017). Our work can at least create the spaces for such constitutive power to erupt!

But this raises a key issue – what if one of these spaces is an institution such as Tate Modern – a space founded on privilege? My view here is simple. Refuse such institutional structures where necessary. If involved in a project with a major institution, say NO where such an institution attempts to subordinate or subjugate. Say NO to its agenda of “outreach”, where outreach is viewed simply as a form of widening participation, which conceals ‘business as normal’. Create challenging projects which make elite institutions feel uncomfortable – for they should be uncomfortable. They are guilty!

They say money makes the world go round! It is impossible to produce an effective exchange without money. Key here are the following:

- Make sure you have enough money up front.
- Take care who you get funding from. Challenging projects should not be compromised by a need not to offend funders.

Accordingly, the ethics of the funders must align with the ethics of the partners. Again, be open from the start.

To read more

Althusser, L. (1970) ‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses’. See: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm>

Bates, D. (2011) ‘Immaterial Labour: Some Reflections on Hardt and Negri’, *Studies in Marxism*, 12. pp. 51-78.

Bates, D. (2018) ‘Agency’ in B. Franks et al (eds) *Anarchism: A Conceptual Approach*, London: Routledge

Martel, J. (2017) *The Misinterpellated Subject*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC.

Licia Cianetti, Politics Academic

What's the matter with conflict?

In my study of democracy in ethnically divided societies I came to the observation that the political inclusion of excluded groups is bound by a “presence–polarisation dilemma”. In its simplest form, this means that there are two scenarios:

(Scenario a) The excluded group makes its political presence heard assertively. This makes their voices an inescapable part of the public debate, but is also likely to make that debate conflictual and can ultimately make it more difficult to reach compromise, for example on policies that directly affect that group;

(Scenario b) The excluded group's political presence is limited to spaces and modes sanctioned by the majority. This limits the chances for conflict and makes it more likely for the majority to be magnanimous in making policies that affect that group. However, it also reinforces the majority's control over decision-making and leaves the excluded group as objects of policy rather than equal members of a democratic society.

What does this mean for artists / practitioners / academics who are involved in participatory practices with “excluded groups”?

1. Empowerment doesn't happen from the above.

The empowerment of a previously marginalized person/group implies by definition a redistribution of power. Although the sanitised term “empowerment” often hides it, power is relational and so for someone to get more power someone else must lose some. This includes the power relations between the artist / practitioner / academic doing participatory practices and the “participants”.

2. Empowerment cannot happen without frictions and conflict.

What follows from the point above is that there is no comfortable way to redistribute power. Comfort favours the status quo. We all know about how “comfortable participation” can be tokenistic and become a box-ticking exercise to please funders and gain legitimacy. Most people involved with participatory practices have been grappling with the problem of how to square their practice with the nagging doubt that the generosity of the “invited spaces” (Taylor 2007) and the empty rituals of asking people to “participate in participation” (Arnstein 1969; also White 1996) can in fact reinforce rather than challenge existing power structures.

3. The outcomes of conflict are likely to be ambiguous.

So, do we need conflict to open spaces for empowerment? Yes. But does conflict always end with something better? No, it can also be paralysing, making dialogue and collaboration difficult and reinforcing rather than challenging mutual fears and stereotypes. However, avoiding conflict when we build our participatory practices risks weakening from the start any chance of changing anything. This is the bind of the “presence–polarisation dilemma”. What we can do is to not dismiss this tension and to take seriously – rather than try to minimise or limit – the frictions and conflicts that derive from it.

A little exercise:

Think about the two scenarios (a) and (b) above: Which one is better? Why? Resist the temptation to make your life easy by coming up with a scenario (c) where everything goes well. Discuss this with the people you work with. Can you agree on which scenario you’d rather work within? How would you make that scenario work?

To read more

Sherry R. Arnstein (1969). *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*, *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35: 4, 216–224.

Licia Cianetti (forthcoming 2019). *The Quality of Divided Democracies. Minority Inclusion, Exclusion and Representation in the New Europe*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Marylin Taylor (2007). *Community Participation in the Real World: Opportunities and Pitfalls in New Governance Spaces*, *Urban Studies* 44:2, 297–317.

Sarah C. White (1996). *The Uses and Abuses of Participation, Development in Practice* 6: 1, 6–15.

Sebastian H-W, Live Artist

Dearly Displaced – Or, Ways of Working With Those Displaced From Social Housing

In 2018 I was commissioned by Camden People's Theatre to develop a scratch performance for their *Starting Blocks* platform at Sprint Festival, where I made *Transient Borders*: an interactive performance installation and live verbatim theatre archive, exploring the forgotten narratives of displaced Londoners relocated out of London, living in temporary accommodation in cities around the UK. Weaving together both theirs and my own personal testimony, music and archive footage, audiences encountered through intimate multi-sensory experiences, glimpses into the lives of migrants and the dispossessed.

To initiate my interviews which formed the main process and research for the performance, I wrote letters to the people I had met and wanted to meet, explaining about who I was, the art I make, the performance I was working on and why I wanted to interview them. Here are my top tips for what you might include in your letter as a way of working with those displaced from social housing and affected by social cleansing:

1. Write them a letter: This works both ways – this helps you formulate a clear, specific intention and invitation behind the who, what, where, when and why you want to work with.

2. Give them some examples of the questions from your interview – Let them know what you plan to ask them, so they can be prepared.
3. Be as transparent as possible – especially when it comes down to money/funding/financial support you're receiving (if at all) towards the making of your work.
4. Even if you don't have funding, what else can you provide to help/assist/support those you want to work with? It doesn't necessarily all have to be financial/linked to capital – you could exchange time/resources you already own etc. Have a long think and mindmap a range of 'offerings' that might be useful to the specific person(s) you're wanting to involve e.g. do they have young children? can you offer support on childcare?
5. If and when at all possible you can: Travel to the location(s) of the displaced people you want to interview. Travel, especially the costs and the logistics of travelling, can be the biggest obstacle for them to attend your interview or work with you.
6. Try and divest some of your funding to support the local housing campaign group: Most of these groups operate on a voluntary unincorporated not-for-profit basis and they need as much financial support as they need. If financial funding isn't possible, give your time, energy or

resources and more to your local housing action campaign group. Your local housing action campaign group needs your help. I've recently begun giving my time to helping the indomitable Focus E15 Campaign Group, mostly by helping out set-up, assist and take-down their Saturday Street Stall as well as joining their open public meeting. At first I had thought that perhaps I should invite my interviewees to my studio on the estate – but then I thought again and realised that it would be more beneficial for both the displaced and the campaign group to invite the interviewees to the space dedicated to fighting their cause, meet the campaign group and also divest the funding I received to donating financially to the cause.

7. Have patience – everything takes longer than you think – This is the biggest thing I am learning from working with both individuals and families displaced from social housing

8. Make sure you include as many different kinds of ways and forms that they can contact you back. Not everyone uses email, and not everyone has stable internet access (especially the displaced living in temporary accommodation) but the majority of people have a mobile phone number – which I feel has been the most successful way of keeping in touch and arranging interviews/meetings etc.

About the artist

Sebastian H-W (MX:UK) is a Live Artist based between London and the West Midlands whose work explores identity, memory, technology, participation and the body, through cutting-edge approaches to creating live performance, interventions, installations, workshops, texts and games. He has made work across a range of sites, spaces and places including grand theatres, white cubes, black-boxes, historic watchtowers, city streets, quiet canals, smartphones apps, and deep inside your memories.

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The Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme (CAPP) is a transnational cultural programme (2015 - 2018) focusing on the field of collaborative and socially engaged arts practice across artform and context. CAPP is made up of a nine organisation network, led by Create the national development agency for collaborative arts in Ireland.

CAPP is a diverse range of dynamic cultural and artistic organisations supporting the development of artistic projects of excellence. Partners include: Agora Collective (Germany), Create lead partner (Ireland), hablarenarte (Spain), Heart of Glass St Helens (UK), Kunsthalle Osnabrück (Germany), Live Art Development Agency (UK), Ludwig Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art (Hungary), m-cult (Finland), and Tate Liverpool (UK).

The overall goal of CAPP is to improve and open up opportunities for artists who are working collaboratively across Europe, by enhancing mobility and exchange whilst at the same time engaging new publics and audiences for collaborative practices. The different strands of the CAPP programme consist of national and international professional development opportunities, artist residencies, commissioned works, touring and dissemination, and a major showcase in Dublin (Ireland) 2018.

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