

HEART
OF GLASS

with.
for.
about.

fig01

**making
a meal
of it**

fig02

fig03

WITH FOR ABOUT MAKING A MEAL OF IT

On 17th and 18th April 2018 Heart of Glass hosted the fifth staging post of the Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme (CAPP), an ambitious transnational cultural programme focusing on the dynamic area of collaborative arts across Europe.

The conference series **With For About**, produced by Heart of Glass annually, aims to create a space to discuss and reflect on the fierce and urgent questions facing collaborative and social art today, and more broadly reflect on the role of art and artists in civil society, and the nature and potential of collaborative art with and within community and social contexts.

Making A Meal Of It, the third iteration of our **With For About** series, aimed to create a different type of 'conference' experience.

At the start of day one conference participants (normally understood as delegates) were randomly split into groups and set a collective task:

TO PRODUCE A DINNER COURSE, PRESENT IT IN A MEANINGFUL WAY; DOCUMENT THE PROCESS AND THE EVENT; CONTRIBUTE TO DISCUSSION; SUBMIT A PAGE FOR PUBLICATION.

We wanted this collective task to form the basis of a shared discussion that addresses the issues we are concerned with: of documentation, knowledge sharing, building a lexicon, building an archive, supporting artists and workers. We also wanted to collectively publish a document within the timeframe of the gathering.

We wanted participants at this gathering to have a collective experience in space and time. We wanted to embody the values we expound. We wanted to reflect on a common task.

Through our various projects and initiatives working within our local community, but also nationally and internationally, working within the arts sector, but also routinely across other sectors, we have become acutely aware of the growing rhetoric surrounding collaborative and social arts practice, and how limiting this language can sometimes be to our overarching aim: to collaborate and work in solidarity in the creation of contemporary art that reflects upon, responds to, and challenges the politics of our times.

In order to try and capture some of the nuances, complexities and subtleties, we have many terms and descriptors for variations of collaborative and social arts practice. Various and in different eras: Socially Engaged Arts Practice, Relational Art, Dialogical Art, Community Art, Collectivism, Participatory Arts, to name but a few, are terms that have achieved varying degrees of recognition.

Words, despite their limitations, help us talk about topics we would not otherwise be able to discuss, and see things we would not otherwise be able to see. A common vocabulary helps us share emotions, share ideas, learn and grow. An uncommon vocabulary can have the opposite effect.

It is for this reason that we sought to create a different type of 'conference' experience.

We wished to symbolically and actively 'enact' the principles we seek to discuss, to work together bringing different experiences and perspectives together through artistic endeavour.

We wanted participants to explore the principles of collaboration through doing, and over the course of a day to forge relationships, make a meal and create meaning in the process.

On day two of the conference, we collectively reflected on the experience we embarked on together as a way to explore some of the fierce and urgent questions we encounter in our work.

The content of this publication was formed by the 6 groups who made the meal and documented their process. Each group submitted their content by 11am on 18th of April. The publication was then laid out, immediately printed, and distributed at 5pm that day to conference delegates.



PLACES, SPACES AND MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS...

‘All artists are alike. They dream of doing something that’s more social, more collaborative, and more real than art.’

—Dan Graham

At a time when many of the traditional mechanisms of social solidarity, mutual support and popular engagement are being systematically dismantled there is an urgent need to create new kinds of civic spaces. Spaces where people can come together to imagine a world that is otherwise, ‘different (yet) common futures’ and work collectively to construct new forms of participation and exchange. Spaces where Graham’s suggestion about the dreams of artists feels less like a provocation and more like a call to action.

Creating these spaces will inevitably ask us to make new alliances, identify new collaborators and challenge the very notion of the cultural institution. What kind of work will be shared in these spaces? Whose voices will be heard? What forms of encounter will be created between artists, communities and audiences? Will they even be spaces in the traditional sense of the gallery or museum?

In imagining a ‘centre’ for collaborative and social art practice Heart of Glass is taking up the challenge to envision such a space. A space to host the narratives of the radical traditions from which our work has emerged alongside crafting a place of nourishment and a site of care for contemporary practitioners.

As part of this imagining, and as collaborators in charting what Ariella Adzoulay calls the ‘as-yet-unmapped space of praxis’ we would like to invite you to respond to one of the questions we have been asking ourselves.

- How can we begin to document, critique and share the stories of a complex trans-disciplinary practice so often embedded in a particular place and time? Rooted in process over product? Ephemeral in its very nature? How can we acknowledge the importance of the local and place-specific whilst sharing methodologies and examples of practice in ways that might still inspire others?

- How do we share the knowledge, the learning (and un-learning) that comes not only from our work as artists but from our participants, our collaborators and co-creators? How do we develop a mutual pedagogy, devolve artistic privilege, nurture alternative voices, open challenging conversations?
- How can we build a lexicon to describe a ‘field’ of work that sits at the intersection of community building, critical pedagogy and art? A form working with and across disciplines: from social policy to architecture, ecology to activism, urban planning to anthropology. And how do we prevent that language from reinforcing the elitism, exclusivity and obfuscation that characterises much of what is written in academia and the art world?
- How do we create an archive that remains live and responsive? That constantly re-frames, questions, and challenges the dominant culture? Radical in both its content and its realisation? An archive that encourages dissent and dissonance as much as cohesion and consensus? An archive that offers the possibility of envisioning different futures alongside recording the present and documenting the past?
- How do we best support and nurture ourselves as artists and workers in this field of labour? Find our natural collaborators and colleagues in the search for social justice? Question who we serve? How do we foster the conditions for our work to flourish? Enable sustainability? Develop resilience? Create legacy? Optimise diversity and widen access to this awkward, messy but exhilarating field?

by Chrissie Tiller

*Heart of Glass Associate & Thinker, teacher,
facilitator, connector and provocateur*

Spoon Feeding Spooning Spoon Foods



With For About

PEA AND MINT SOUP

Spring onions
Potatoes
Peas
Garlic
Stock
Mint

Simmer spring onions and potatoes in stock. Add pea, mint and garlic, boil 5 mins, whizz up. Serve with fresh mint and a squeeze of lemon.

CARROT, GINGER AND CORIANDER SOUP

Carrots
Ginger
Coriander
Onions
Potatoes
Stock

Fry onions in olive oil. Saute carrots and coriander stalks, add stock, simmer until soft. Whizz, add coriander tops, Season to taste. Served with a coriander leaf garnish.

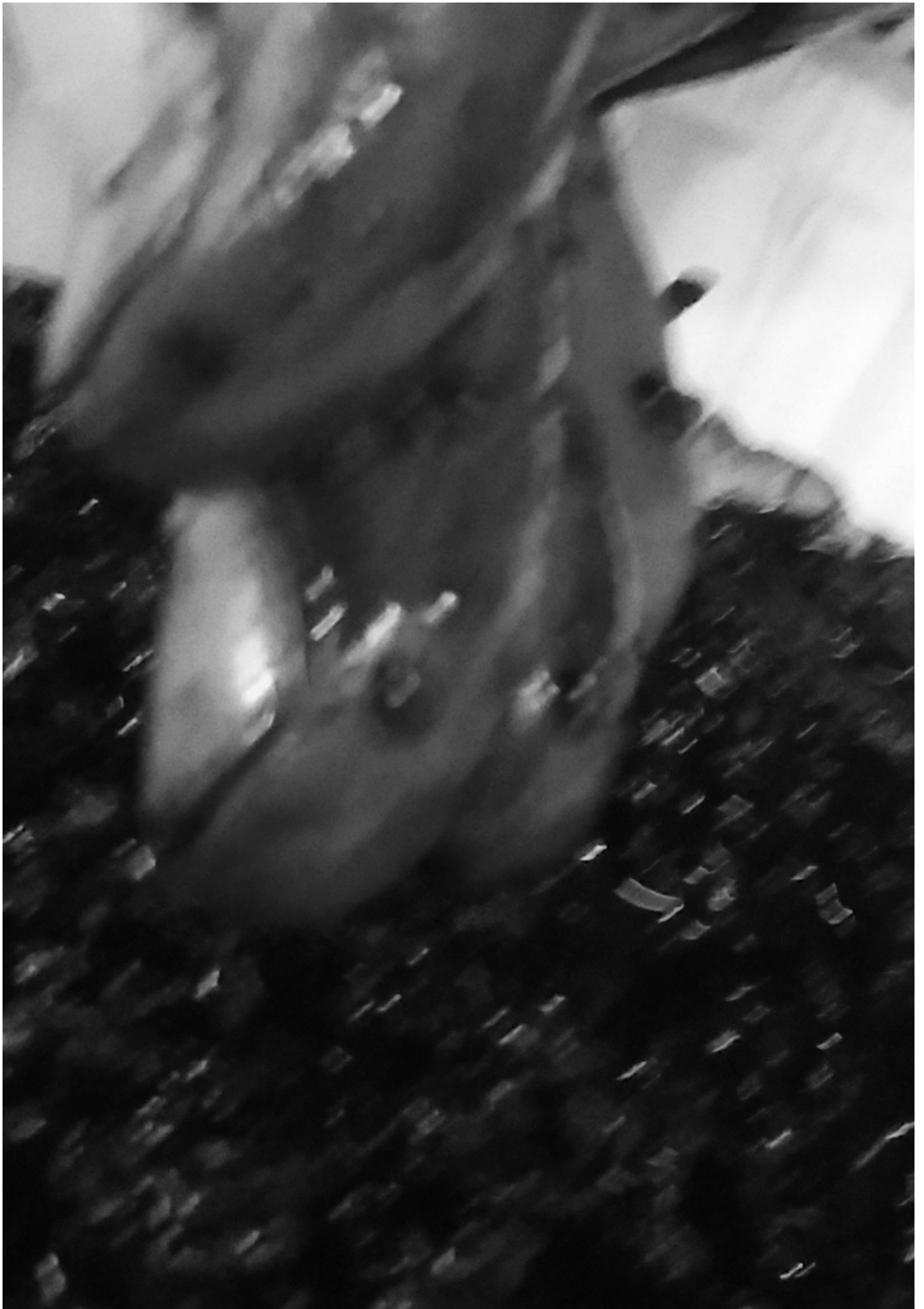


Making a meal of it



Heather Morrison
Mark Storor
Jeni McConnell
Marina Moreno
Jakob Bartnik
Ana Martinez

Tellervo Kalleinen
Kaisa Kukkonen
Rhyannon Parry
Eilish Langton
Jan Uprichard
Eileen Malaniff





13 women in a room. what are the possibilities of abstention?



Preface

The group spent time at the beginning discussing how we should respond to the local context. Some people were drawn to going and talking to people and supporting local businesses. In the end we embraced the provocations of the Quaker Meeting House and the generous introduction made to it by Mike, as we introduce below.

Statement read out at Making a Meal of It in Hungarian and English (acknowledging the transnational nature of the CAPP project):

‘We spent the day in the Quaker Friends Meeting House.

Our initial warm introduction to this space from Mike, instigated our conversation. Quaker values are often based upon living a peaceful life, charity, supporting activism and local community.

These values resonate with what is important in social practice.

Today we serve to you all, things that are recognisably local: Pimmie’s Pies, Barton’s Pickle, Connoisseur Ales and tables decorated with plants from the Quaker gardens.

The question you will find on the label of your beer, ‘How do we engage with local experience in our work?’, we would like you to consume, think about and write some form of an answer on the back of the label for us to later collect.

We donated the remaining money to the Quaker Friends Meeting House with the ask that they would consider donating this to a food bank.”





Selected responses to the question 'How do we engage with local experience in our work?':

Deep listening. Acknowledging and respecting other knowledges. Question 'our' – who owns the work produced by collaboration?

Listen + hear.

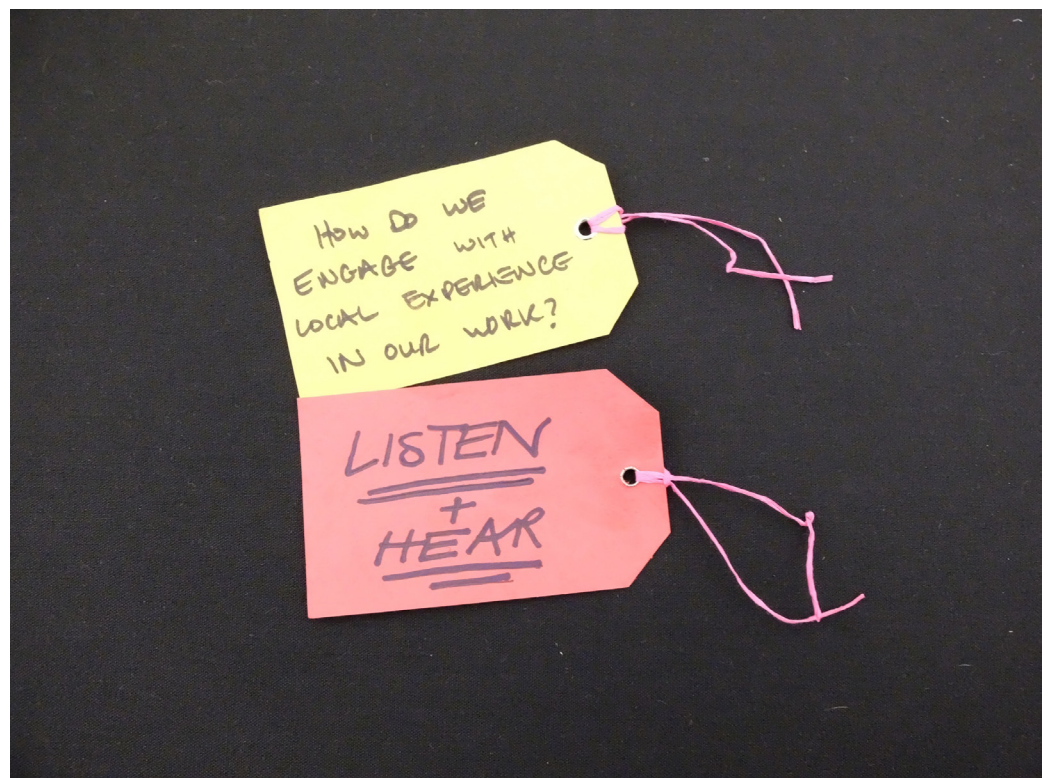
Carefully, respectfully, over longer periods of time.

Don't know.

By exploring the different constellations inside of community – as an exterior entity. BY communicating.

You buy beer from them.

I would question what local experience, whose local experience? As a non-local digging into the multitude of experience is important.



Listen to our walk through St Helens here:
soundcloud.com/user-106208412/a-walk-through-st-helens





So, what will be leftover, how much money, how much legacy? £200.30 placed on the BBC TV's Bread The Family Board Game. After all the effort and energy spent... after all the negotiations and a bit of a break... a breakthrough.

We are given a frame and a task to be free-ish within it. There are roles and our names Aidan, Britt, Chris, Kristóf, Georg, Salomé, Lena, Lindsey, Marie, Michelle. There's WhatsApp Bread Group.

There's a conference provocation, which asks questions around 'as yet unmapped space of praxis' and privileges process over product – these are old questions that feed new desires, again and again. And lots of questions about archives and legacy, and what forms of encounters are possible here... There's always this desire to be and think otherwise.

Oh, the unknown.

Someone mentioned bread, the idea of breaking the bread. I was reminded of the event that is to take place in Lancaster on otherness and bread breaking on 3 May. Maybe someone remembered that. Circulation in our making, our politics making, our arts making, our community making.

And what happens? We fall into a structure, into production and post-it notes, a certain kind of aesthetics, which produces a certain kind of politics and a certain kind of community. What are we doing and why?

The glass buyer, the wine sourcer, the glass cleaner, the writer, the witness, the coffee getter, the passive one, the rule protector, the image collector, the leader, the kneader, the needy one, the facilitator, the listener, the joke maker, the dough maker, the stirrer, the pragmatist, the protagonist, the panic maker, the panic taker, the distancer, the reader, the carrier, the glass, the jug, the wine, the bowl, the bread.



We bought some fabric from a local shop, bread ingredients from M&S, ASDA wine and flowers, charity sourced glasses and water jugs. We had lunch in a Victorian Café, fish and chips for some of us. Someone said we went soft touch on the local.

We talked about money and wondered about pressure we feel. Someone said they were competitive. Can you breathe in here? Why do all the same questions always come up? We talked about care and community and food culture. Some said they were okay with conflict. We mentioned suicide and musicals in the community about community. What are our group dynamics? Some of us longed for a more passive role. Some of us felt that with passivity comes a certain emancipation in critical thinking as well as doing.

But, let's make something, actually physically make something. Let's break bread and drink some wine and water and let's be aware that we ended up replicating a Christian ritual. That's what the Italians do, someone said, they start it off with bread and wine. Let's remember the moment we discovered BBC series Bread The Family Board Game in the kitchen which offered itself to us, a vision, a solution, a way out. Yes, it's about bread.

Let's work out a negotiation in sharing the bread and wine. Is there enough for all? You pick your bit, you pass it on.

Have we touched the unknown? We wished to... We met one another, we touched each other, a bit.





TEECH'UMS *Radicaliser*



A TONIC FOR LEARNING AND UNLEARNING

This remedy is used to cure perceived ailments. Do you have a problem that needs fixing? Or is your problem caused by do-gooder artists who don't understand your locality or community?

Cloves antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and anticoagulant properties.

Ginger relieves nausea, loss of appetite, motion sickness, and can ease pain.

Cinnamon has long been known in traditional Ayurveda that it is also an effective medicinal plant, but cinnamon also plays a role in European medicine today.

Mint has been used for thousands of years to treat an upset stomach or indigestion.

Thyme the flowers, leaves, and oil of thyme have been used to treat stomach ache, arthritis, colic, sore throat, whooping cough and bronchitis

Beetroot good for blood pressure and can be used as an anti-inflammatory

Whisky a known stress-reliever

Lemon high content of vitamins, citric acid, flavonoids and minerals, lemons have a detoxifying, anti-fever and anti-inflammatory effect

Rosemary known in ancient cultures as an antiseptic for harmful germs and to increase the memory

Carrots act as wormers (anthelmintics) and have antimicrobial properties. They are said to help protect against certain cancers.

Wild garlic cleanses the blood vessels and thereby acts against arteriosclerosis. As a result, the wild garlic can prevent stroke and heart attack. This wild garlic has been picked today from Carr Mill in St Helens.

Hot water has purifying and hydrating qualities

With For About

So, do you cure your own ailments, or those of your fellow diners?
Do you administer the medicine to others, or do you swallow it down yourself?





Who is here?

What is the artist's role
in the community?

What are we trying to
fix or to cure?

ETHICS

TRUST

*"If I had £555 I might
spent it on rent..."*

Who is in the room?

*"Who sets these conditions up and
who has the power to say who needs
or indeed wants that 'support'."*

TAKE YOUR MEDICINE?

*"We didn't have much tension or
uncomfortable moments and
sometimes this is needed for us to
truly take risks and challenge
ourselves."*

Where do we need to
compromise?

Who holds the power?

We have £336.06 remaining.
Where should that money go?

*A massage? A food bank?
A local refugee support group?*

After a lottery drawn by Mark Storer:
A LOCAL CANCER CENTRE

*"What I am taking away right now is
the sensation of a collective
negotiation project around a given
task and to experience myself and
others in our behaviour patterns,
arguments and ways of dealing
with things."*

Making a meal of it





Our story is a fable; a morality tale; a journey of self-critique. We started the day as artists-producers-practitioners hellbent on fulfilling a commission in a day. We cooked up a roiling, boiling, melting pot of ideas about (amongst other things) connecting ‘meaningfully’ with the community of St. Helens about food. Then we realised we hadn’t even connected meaningfully with each other. Why were we even here? We were forgetting process because we fixated on product; even, ironically, a process-based one. From here, we softened, started listening, telling stories, responding to contingency. A fortuitous meeting with local ‘cookie artist’ Mark in his shop at lunchtime – ‘I listen to Radio 4! I’m up for a bit of culture’ – evolved into a joyous hour of talking and icing. Twelve of us crammed into the shop, chatting about art and (in)accessibility. If the lexicon of socially-engaged practice is in danger of being an ouroboros that eats itself, so we offer the words from our earlier, earnest discussion to be eaten and transformed. Lovingly, skillfully iced onto five giant cookies by a local alchemist of sugar.

Amy Pennington, Jenny Rutter, Nicole Mollett, Cristina Pancini, Jess Allen, Léonie Higgins, Keelin Murray, Sara Cocker, Sheena Barrett, Jade Beavon, Herman Bashiron Mendolicchio, Andrea Simon, Mark Whibley.

Kill & Cure



with. for. about.

Tuesday 17th April 2018

Wednesday 18th April 2018



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union



COLLABORATIVE
ARTS PARTNERSHIP
PROGRAMME



Culture Ireland
Cultúr Éireann

Axisweb

Heart of Glass would like to thank the following:

Joshua Sofaer, Stephen King, Dave Darcy, Midshire, St Helens Baptist Church, St Helens Parish Church, Quaker Meeting House, St Helens YMCA, St Helens Council, Cathy Cross, Eggs Collective, idle women, Heather Peak (Studio Morison), Claire Weetman, Michelle Browne, CAPP Partners, Tate Liverpool, Culture Ireland, Axisweb, Chrissie Tiller, Alastair Roy and Sarah Bailey.

Collaborative Arts Partnership (CAPP)

www.cappnetwork.com

**HEART
OF GLASS**

Heart of Glass

www.heartofglass.org.uk

Tate Liverpool

www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-liverpool