

Time for Repair: **A conversation about theatre & the future**

An Open Space event
Hosted by Battersea Arts Centre and Improbable
Held online 27th May 2020
(second event in a series of four)

Collected Reports

Improbable

**BATTERSEA
ARTS CENTRE**

Overview

On Wednesday 27th May 2020, Battersea Arts Centre and Improbable hosted an online Open Space conversation. This was the second in a series of events held by Battersea Arts Centre & Improbable in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Around 90 people attended across the course of the 2.5 hour conversation.
- The majority of participants were freelancers working in theatre & performing arts. Around 45% were artists, makers or writers; 30% were producers; and the remainder venue managers, designers, administrators and stage managers.
- Participants attended from Band 1 and 2 NPOs, Arts Council England and other funders. Around 15% of participants were in senior or leadership roles, 25% mid-career and 60% early career.

The agenda was set by the participants as a group at the start of the conversation. Five main themes emerged across the sessions called:

Future scoping

- The world's turned upside down - what's become possible that we couldn't do before?
- What does box office income look like in the future?
- What does doing things differently look like?
- How / what theatre can shift outside
- In what way could theatre be an aid to community building in communities?

Support for artists and freelancers

- How to pay freelancers enough when dreams are big and budgets are small?
- Artist not creative practitioner
- Help me create a unified voice for freelancers
- Co-operation not competition: how can theatres help artists to co-operate instead of competing?
- How do we ensure the survival of early career artists?
- Can we give freelancers the space and agency to explore the future of the industry?

Wellbeing

- Where to find motivation to keep our skills alive
- Wellbeing - how are we doing right now?
- Fear of getting stuck vs need to be in the space with others
- Who are you when you can't create?
- Creating more inclusion for those facing digital poverty / exclusion and those with other lived experiences that are un/under represented
- How might we help children to process this time?

Leadership

- What are our responsibilities right now?
- Leadership, control and making it up as we go along

- Is lobbying the government the best way to create a sustainable future for theatre?

Performance without physical presence

- Dancing without touch, togetherness and travel
- How can we enable an audience to feel like they are an audience?
- Humanizing zoom to reflect your emotional state
- Is connection a self-fulfilling myth
- The art room

This document contains the reports from this event – the reports have not been edited or curated in any way and are presented as they were at 6pm on 31st May 2020. We hope that these ideas, provocations, themes and questions may be picked up by participants at (or organisers of) future events.

For information about future Battersea Arts Centre and Improbable events visit www.improbable.co.uk or www.bac.org.uk.

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| The world's turned upside down, so what's become possible NOW that they said we couldn't do BEFORE, and how do we go about doing it? (Penny Babakhani)..... | 5 |
| Dancing without Touch, Togetherness, and Travel (Ben Wright) | 6 |
| How to pay freelancers enough when dreams are big and budgets small? (particularly makers making for a set price) (CLAIRE STRICKLAND)..... | 11 |
| Artist not Creative Practitioner (Jocelyn Cunningham)..... | 12 |
| Help me Create a Unified Voice for Freelancers (Colin Grenfell) | 13 |
| Co-operation, not competition: how can theatres help artists to co-operate, instead of competing? (Milo Harries) | 14 |
| How can we enable an audience to feel like they are an audience? (Louise Kempton)15 | |
| How do we ensure the survival of early career artists? (Jen Davis) | 17 |
| Wellbeing - how are we doing right now? (Caroline Horton) | 20 |
| What does Box Office income look like in the future of theatre? (Sophie Ignatieff) | 21 |
| What are our responsibilities right now (Anthony Roth Costanzo)..... | 22 |
| humanizing zoom to reflect your emotional state (Tracey Gibbs)..... | 23 |
| Leadership, control and making it up as we go along (Ess)..... | 23 |
| Can we give freelancers the space and agency to explore the future of the industry? (Gemma) | 25 |
| Is Lobbying the government the best way to create a sustainable future for theatre? (Natalie) | 27 |
| What does doing things differently look like? (Kate Maravan)..... | 27 |
| Where to find Motivation to Keep Our Skills Alive (Tracey Gibbs) | 28 |
| Is connection a self-fulfilling myth. Can we repropagate it within this medium of 'untogether' togetherness? (Rad) - feels related to the empowering audience question... .. | 28 |
| Fear of getting sick vs Need to be in the space with others. (Susan Kempster) | 29 |
| Who are you when you can't create? (Aida Rocci) | 30 |
| How/What theatre can shift outside? (Gabrielle Moleta) | 31 |
| Creating more inclusion - for those facing digital poverty/exclusion as well as those with other lived experiences who are un/under-represented? (Laura)..... | 32 |
| Communicating value of what we create. (Clare)..... | 34 |
| How might we help children to process this time? (Sarah) | 35 |
| In what way could theatre be an aid to building community in communities? | 35 |
| The Art Room | 36 |

The world's turned upside down, so what's become possible NOW that they said we couldn't do BEFORE, and how do we go about doing it? (Penny Babakhani)

Session Convener: Penny B

Participant names: Kate M / Laura D / Pady / Anne S / Sam H / Tarek I / Emma A / Col G / + more!

Theatre's bicycle moment

Overwhelmed - don't know where to start?
How to imagine things beyond the consensus of what we've been told?
Want to do things differently, but don't know what that looks like?
Just have more and more questions, but very few answers.
Few certainties around how it might happen.

Salaried positions - really busy saving their asses.
Thinking outside the box in terms of WHO to look to for inspiration: within and without the arts. Freelancers and independents. Economists and scientists.

Where have you placed yourself?
Smaller organizations are being more imaginative. Smaller connections are thinking really imaginatively.

Being part of the bigger voice can be a waste of time.
Bigger organizations thinking of smaller solutions.

Live streaming panels

Recorded and available on demand - build up a repository and archive
Joining up people from different parts of the country, or even from different countries
- geographical distances collapses
Making conversations accessible - who is having the meeting.
No more travelling 5 hours for an hourlong meeting!
Accessibility to decision-making: facilitate easier access to the rooms where things happen - open up the room to more people
Paying artists - new funds to ensure artists get paid
Moving audiences online, move beyond people who can physically get to the theatre
Live and digital audiences are different segments of the population
Capture the audiences as part of the recorded/streamed performance, so that you do convey that audiences are part of the experience
Shift from separation of audience and performer, moving towards continuum
Create a sustainable theatre future that has financing behind it
Free at the point of use for members of the public
We're so used to accessing things for free
Difficult asking audiences for money
Actually make theatre online

Don't try to replicate what we do in a live space, but how this works in a virtual space with live bodies

Theatrical and filmic quality

Exclusive content is a part of the solution? Unique performance rather than archive
Disrupted our way of working - is it so bad if everything is free? Public services like NHS are free at point of us

Breaking down barriers between artforms. Theatre working with filmmakers, and digital artists.

Zoom's been set up for business - not set up for performance, or sharing with an audience.

Can we build a digital platform that better suits live performance, to recreate that experience of being in a room with people

What have we missed about audiences? It's not the seats and the booze, but rather the audience members around us and how they react.

Audience reaction on Zoom involves LOOKING at other audience members instead of hearing them.

Do venues also a responsibility to hold digital spaces as well, or should they actively sit them out?

Not just what we want to take with us, but who gets to do it as well?

Virtual environment has enabled a lot more creativity, and it's a very personal/intimate experience

Taking art out of the confines of the meeting.

Democratize who experiences work, and

Dancing without Touch, Togetherness, and Travel (Ben Wright)

Session Convener: Ben Wright

Participant names: Mary Price-O'Connor

Connie Rotunda

Susan Kempster

Time for Repair:

A conversation about theatre & the future 27th May 2020

How to keep dancing/dance making when the foundation stones of Touch, Togetherness, and Travel have temporarily evaporated?

Raw notes from 27th March

We are involved in social neurotransmission - navigating the nuances of a group - at play with the kinaesthetic

In order to continue there is a profound frustration at the lack of testing for Covid 19

In this time of separation there is an expansion and enhancement of sense memory - through deprivation there is a stimulation of a *sense* of touch.

As a mitigation of the disturbance of the present situation there is an increased sensitivity of the sense of touch from being with one's *self*

Conversations are ripening

With regard to teaching contact, educators are seeing a lack of self-consciousness watching dance students move with in the localities of their homes, chosen outside spaces. Students are listening to themselves more *deeply*

There is a sense of newness, an increased freedom to explore within these present limitations.

Being in touch with others has been replaced with a heightened experience of touch with the floor, with surfaces, with the natural world, objects. Being in the natural world as a chance to change our physiology

No amount of thinking/theory will replace physical presence but there is opportunity for an expansion of embodied knowledge, to delve into deeper imagery to transmit and invoke movement ideas.

This time as a swaddling - like the conditions that encourage babies bones to grow from the restraint of pressure/touch

We met again as a group on 31st May to talk further...

Space, rest, repose.

If we expect the 'same as' - we will be disappointed. Not optimal to focus on what's missing, rather to embrace this time as a place of discovery and potential.

'I have found the loss of control liberating' - Susan Kempster

We all need to be tolerant of the open ended questions right now - to embrace the **slowness**

Hold onto to our desire to return to rooms full of energy

Education

Rising to the concern of keeping students safe, to support their wellbeing and continue to learn.

Discussed some practicals, Connie Rotunda has been in conversations with Theatre designers at Theatre Arts Department at SUNY (New Paltz, USA) about acting classes. Testing ideas of erecting plexi glass screens between students with an open performing space in-front of the class - also investigating face masks designed

for people with aural impairment - plastic face coverings that keep the mouth visible for lip reading. This seems feasible with small classes of students 18 max.

Keeping ourselves separated by outerwear

Original curriculum programmes seems rather meaningless. Larger dance classes exacerbate the challenges of retaining distance.

Contact teaching on line

Challenges include looking through screens to give students physical corrections - it is tough. In digital space, if a teacher gets too involved with one student it is easy to lose the class (contrary to the shared experience of being in the same room, sharing space and thinking, peripheral awareness and learning)

Giggles are missed, the way things in a dance class 'spill'

Muting (Zoom)

It feels vital to arrive in larger zoom gatherings unmuted and to wrap up with similar aural permissions.

Some concern that new dance students arrive already quiet, with smaller voices. How do we ensure that all are heard and given air time?

Are young voices being diminished by the mute button?

We all acknowledge this longing to communicate - perhaps this is a time to touch through voice. *Sound Touch*

Mary Price-O'Connor shares that her teacher and mentor Karin Greenhead wrote on the touch of sound

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273793760> The touch of sound Dalcroze Eurhythmics as a somatic practice

Time is passing oddly

This time increasingly feels like physical preparation for an imagined future.

We reflect on attending to:

Inner tempo

Savouring

Noticing

Deceleration

Finding deeper connections

More awareness of ourselves to eventually benefit others.

Appreciating local environment

There are less car emissions, more chipmunks.....

Inclusivity ?

Has this period increased inclusive engagement with the arts? - How are disabled artists finding this time? Has there been more access to culture particularly for those from low socially economic backgrounds?

What about digital poverty? How are barriers to access being addressed?

Shifting the way we begin - Creative provocation

How do we examine gesture, re-think the tangible? Enhance sensorial interactions. Are there ways to reconnect to the analogue, slow modes of communicating - sharing letters, instructions and provocations sent via post, choreographers and dancers working with objects, defining home spaces with objects that have been mailed by collaborators.

Writing rather than typing catalysts for moving?

Scented instructions in envelopes

Dancing slow, an awareness of expanding.

Tiny revolutions

Matilda Leyser's <https://motherswhomake.org/home> is mentioned

What might choreographic graffiti look like/ provoke

Invoking dancing

Take some chalk, scribe movement instructions on walls, watch passers by <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/may/01/not-just-weeds-how-rebel-botanists-are-using-graffiti-to-name-forgotten-flora-aoe>

There will be a time when we will gather again - in the meantime
GET READY FOR THE INJECTION OF THE ECSTATIC

LINKS

Gratitude - **STOP/LOOK/GO**

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_steindl_rast_want_to_be_happy_be_grateful?language=en

Mary Price-O'Connor forwarded some links and thoughts from her practice :

The Dalcroze Subjects are the fundamental elements of expression and experience and form the foundation of the Dalcroze approach to teaching and learning.

Subjects more usually associated with the arts, experience, expression and interpretation

-
- Time: pulse and measure, duration, metre, additive rhythm, timing, time patterns
-
- Anacrusis, Crusis, Metacrusis
-
- Form: phrasing, shape, process
-
- Repetition and Contrast
-
- Silence: space, repose
-
- Accent: change, emphasis
-
- Polyrhythm and Cross Rhythm
-
- Augmentation and Diminution
-
- Nuance: gradations of tempo, duration, texture, pitch, articulation and dynamics
-
- Time, Space, Energy: weight and flow
-

Subjects more usually related to teaching and learning processes.

-
- Reaction, Readjustment, Response
-
- Use of Automatism
-
- Internalisation
-
- Incitation and Inhibition
-
- Association and Dissociation
-

Dalcroze Eurhythmics people who trained of note were Marie Rambert Mary Wigman and it certainly influenced Contemporary dance in its own way.

Graphic Score Graphic score for Stripsody Cathy Berberian track on Spotify

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1XDDMMtazj7LB2HHs23gOS?si=wetjikaDQbGY5h0Vcp6Qpw>

Here are some more with a couple of John Cage scores

<https://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/latest/graphic-scores-art-music-pictures/>

Further thinking

When I think about improvisation, or more specifically instant composition and group improvisation practice, and from there perhaps making work, one of the most important things, at least for me, is for there to be some common ground and

connection between everyone. This can be established through tasks, or just through practicing in the same physical space. It can also happen through discussion, planting seeds, ideas, concepts, and then letting those go, for them to later reemerge through intuition. It strikes me that while the timeline of making a dance work right now might need to be stretched - certainly if the outcome is to be a physical dance work on a physical stage/performance space - much can be done as groundwork working remotely, using technology, communicating ideas, sensations, tasks, thoughts. The resultant fertile ground when physical practice is allowed again, just might be really quite spectacular. SK

I've noticed during this time a kind of springing up of creativity. I've noticed this in myself and in others. I've also been incredibly impressed by how the dance world, particularly, has responded to the challenge. Yes, we all miss touch, and breath, and those wonderful empty spaces that are dance studios, but there has also been a rallying around and sense of community that has been amazing, as well as loads of creative responses. There's also been something in the being able to get out of the hamster wheel for a minute that has been restful, and jumping out of fight or flight mode that has given space, at least for me, for more creative thinking. SK

The potential for collaborations to emerge from hitherto unthought of places and people is also interesting. SK

It just might be that this fallow time, this slowing down and reimagining how to make work, brings a richness to future work. Certainly too there will be enormous pleasure and appreciation for being able to get back in the room with others. SK

How to pay freelancers enough when dreams are big and budgets small? (particularly makers making for a set price) (CLAIRE STRICKLAND)

Session Title: How can we ensure that we don't underpay freelancers when budgets are small and dreams are big? (particularly makers making for a set price)

Session Convener: Claire Strickland

Participant names: Charlie Findlay, Shanti Freed, Claire Strickland

TIME, COMMUNICATION, DECISIONS.

- **budgets will be smaller** - International touring has such an effect on budgets - how will this be possible. e.g. large, complex, expensive puppets need the revenue of an international tour to make them financially viable.
- We as makers are dependent on others. Ultimately we are facilitators of other people's ideas. We rely on other people having jobs for us
- We don't want to be leaders, we want to be a part of the team around others

- There is a big question of companies using freelancers when we are really employees. Many theatres and companies are using freelancers for over 2 years, on a full time basis.
- Often things we make are cut. As part of the creative process things do inevitably get cut. BUT, if there was a strict cut off point, and timetable for decisions, there would be fewer cuts, and less money spent.
- If it isn't the theatre spending on something being changed at the last minute, then it is the freelancer who is having to spend more time on it (because they are making for a set price) which has a financial impact.
- It comes down to **communication**. More time to create after decisive communication.
- More time for directors, actors and designers to play and use the props, costumes and puppets.
- More time for costume changes to be worked out in the rehearsals.
- Costs can really be saved if things are not cut. How can this problem be solved? This is about collaboration and communication.
- More collaboration.
- Less striving for perfection and absolute decisions by one person
- **More time** to spend on working with something to make it work.
- A dream - it would be great if we could communicate our **timeline** of creative process, and what we need time for. Can we teach this to new directors and designers?
- It is also about designers standing up for their ideas
- We love being part of the community of putting on a show, being backstage during tech. The feeling of being backstage.
- We learn new skills from other makers around us
- **Please let go of searching for perfection if your budget does not allow this.**

Please make decisive decisions early on

Artist not Creative Practitioner (Jocelyn Cunningham)

Session Convener: Jocelyn Cunningham

Participant names:

Malaika Cunningham, Gloria Burgess

How can we protect the view of artists creating art that is not about applied practice? Particularly for early career artists or those who are very reliant on commissioners.

So much about confidence or fear.

How do we ringfence the opportunity to fail and not address social or economic outcomes only?

Need to reclaim the nebulous value of art.

not always the best way.

art is still about doing something that is original?

working from a question or

NOT just about outcomes

starting with How.

How can I create a democratic space through theatre? this kickstarts a journey.

Judging the work only by the social outcomes.

naming is based on the role. prefer theatre maker.

failing is not reaching people you want to reach

my artist hat is always on

helping people to re-imagine/not artistry

my artist hat is always on but I sometimes take off the creative practitioner hat off

I went into academia because I felt I needed to prove art worked

how we get funding defines our work in a long term way and it is hard to break out of that.

moving into a space where we are talking about depth of connection within digital formats. How to be vulnerable, how to have courage. possibilities in how we cross global boundaries, how to create safety online. Entry music! let's not marginalise -

(reference to Parker Palmer)

Help me Create a Unified Voice for Freelancers (Colin Grenfell)

Session Convener: Colin Grenfell

Participant names: Leon, Adele, Colin

A small select group!

I was worried that there isn't a unified voice for freelancers.

Adele thinks that the best thing is to organise within smaller groups (such as Trade bodies like Equity or The Association of Lighting Designers. These smaller bodies can appoint representatives to join together. A pyramid structure is created.

No big organisations like the NT are able to help with all staff on furlough

Is it possible an organisation can loan a bit of website for a freelancers message board?

How many of us are out there - freelancers - in the arts?

Do we need a union or just a group to collect ideas?

People to speak to:

Freelancers Task Force - Kate McGrath
National Theatre - Task Force

Creative Scotland:
Getting collectives to talk to each other..

Small groups but joined up
Too large a group can be a "Big Wobbly Jelly"

I would really like to see a massive unified group.

Co-operation, not competition: how can theatres help artists to co-operate, instead of competing? (Milo Harries)

Session Convener: Milo Harries

Participant names: Alice, Hannah, Aida, Tarek, Gabrielle, Antonia

Taking notes retrospectively, so some things will have fallen through the cracks.

Some things raised:

Would it be possible to have a competition structure that put artists into collaboration with each other? Rather than offering the opportunity to put on a play (say), offering the opportunity to collaborate with other 'winners'?

What this raises is an underlying idea of how the industry works - whether predicated on individuals, or ensembles; what work looks like, and what it might have to look like.

Comes from a desire not to think simply of how to divide such resources as we have, but how to multiply them.

Tarek observes that the utility of prizes in bringing money into the system - attracting sponsorship via charisma.

Alice observes that for many the model of work is individual, and they won't want to collaborate in a predetermined way.

Alice raises the question of whether residencies need to work in the same way. Do they need to lead to a 'product', like a performance? Could you offer more residencies of different kinds, allowing people to find some kind of home within a building (and using the credibility of that attachment), without having to give them so much in material terms?

Are there ways of giving more people the cachet of association with a respected institution? Taking the statement of belief that a contract represents now, and finding a less expensive way to express that faith - to the artist and to the world?

Hannah: Is it viable to find more flexible ways of organising residencies (and similar) for younger artists, that might diversify their opportunities without reducing them? I.e. - rather than the Donmar employing one young director to assist on everything, employ two 'part time' in some way, giving them latitude to develop their own work during a period when they are linked to a prestigious venue?

How can we enable an audience to feel like they are an audience? (Louise Kempton)

Session Convener: Louise Kempton

Participant names: Radhika Aggarwal, Caroline Pearce, Gemma..., Connie...
alex brenner, Pady, Gloria Burgess

Many online shows require a form of "homework"/ prep for show - kill the buzz - organised fun

not trying to do what we did before - working with a new space/audience
everything needs to shift ? Or taking your tools to a new place?

Audience expectations - have they shifted?

seeing things from your domestic space - changes how we think, experience

Building in an audience 'check in' time....

-Endowing a sacred space - setting up the intention of the space - can be moving...can transform the environment even if it's the same physical space you occupied earlier...

-that facilitation/setting up can set up a lot of connection.

We don't traditionally acknowledge the audience in a 'real theatre experience'...well we do but implicitly by all being there...so perhaps we need to acknowledge the distance and bring people together in this medium...

Why is it more draining (for an audience) to be on a zoom ? Could it be that the physicality we transpose from working at a laptop and the focused eyes we hold in a light room don't facilitate relaxation? Perhaps encouraging audience member to get comfy, darken the space if they want to, soften and distance the focus..

Setting the options for interaction can be nicely permissive so we don't all have to sit in a yellow box of the same size. Caroline had an awesome camera blocker thing so that you don't have to have your name on display or a photo of you up when you stop video. Choosing our level of participation/anonymity

How do we overcome being alone as an audience member? Is there a way to laugh/sneeze/cough within a platform and not cut off the main speaker..remaining muted is a standard etiquette but does set up more distance.. How do avoid amplifying distance in untogetherness?

Audience experience/atmosphere:

before the show, - eg enough prep to feel like a special experience (eg collecting tickets and drink) but not so much pre show admin that feels like homework...

length of the show / episodes? maybe more breaks, rests, music breaks, texture of experience

how can it feel like a real show?

what is the collaboration with audience and how do we find the essence of that?

finding community of audienceship

enabling connection not forcing it

different access issues - past and new - who's enabled by this, who's disabled by it? what are the new challenges and how do we acknowledge and address them, as well as the old/ previous ones?

Companies having an open and clear policy about how audiences are being invited.

How do we endow this space as sacred??

I (Caroline Pearce) would love to keep this conversation going - I responded to the crisis by sharing whatever work I encountered on a fb page now called Theatre Fans NE - that might be a place through which I'd be interested in this chat, if anyone wants to connect.

Who is the audience? Is this a unique opportunity to create a new one - open it up? The conservative 'this is what theatre is' people are not 'the audience'! That evolves is not static..

How do we ensure the survival of early career artists? (Jen Davis)

Session Convener: Jen Davis (Director and Co-AD of Shoot Festival) @jendavis5 on twitter

Participant names: *Email addresses have been taken out*

Aisling Gallagher - Director @twoshadesofhope

Tracey Gibbs - Projection www.traceygibbs.co.uk

Constance Villemot - Set and Costume Designer - @constancev_set

Erica Campayne - Relationship Manager, Arts Council England
(London theatre team)

Jude Kelly

Sita Thomas - Director - @sitathomas5

Clare - Arts Fundraiser

Lou - Directing, Producing. Day job: ticketing/FOH - @loucorben on social

@AidaRocci in Twitter and Instagram

Samina Zahir - Consultant, Researcher, Producer, Curator

Antonia Georgieva - Director/Writer/Artistic Director @AslantTheatre (twitter & insta)
- @AntoniaDirects on twitter

Rachel Thomas - Actor, Producer, Writer and Joint Artistic Director of Seventh Sense Theatre (@7thsensetheatre) - @rachellos on twitter

Nick Sweeting - Producer @improbable and @javaad alipoor

Reece McMahon - Arts Producer - @reecemcmahon

Notes

We all felt worried about the prospect of fewer opportunities for emerging artists after the pandemic. The circumstances will have changed so much and we were very concerned about the future of recent graduates and their route into the industry. There are potentially two years of graduates who are going to be missing out, they are ready to go with nothing to do. .

Jen has been running an emerging arts festival (Shoot Festival) in Coventry since 2014 and felt that although there is some support currently available (in the way of bursaries/ACE emergency funding) the pandemic will have a devastating long term impact on early career artists. Will the funding streams completely dry up?

Jude Kelly wondered whether there was anything professional artists could do to help? Cross-generational support could be really useful. How can we make that happen?

How do we also ensure that the industry is accessible to working class artists?

It's also important to note that 'early career artists' does not just mean 'young'.

Tracey also felt that her 'skill base was starting to deteriorate' - it's so challenging to offer early career artists physical opportunities at this time. Not everything can be done online.

How can we find new pathways quickly for early career artists with payment opportunities? There needs to be a joined up approach across the sector.

Some members of the group felt that they had been more creative since lockdown began.

there feels a need for an almost safepond to hold all the little fishes ? and push for targeted responses
Tracey Gibbs

Has anyone witnessed some 'good practice' with regards to supporting early career creatives?

MIF

Middle Child had made a statement to show their commitment to new voices. Can other organisations make this commitment? If so, they should make it now and not post-Covid. Emerging artists cannot just be an afterthought.

Young Vic Directors Network - extensive online programme happening right now, sign up here, especially good if you're not London-based/wouldn't have been able to access workshops etc. before as everything has moved online

<https://directorsprogram.youngvic.org/>

Caitriona Shoobridge & Stef O'Driscoll have been doing Class & Coronavirus discussions for anyone who is working class, benefit class, criminal class, under class - open to anyone in theatre, not just directors. Get in touch/follow Cat to find out about the next one

<https://twitter.com/catshoob/status/1262344293152428032?s=20>

When we begin to move out of the emergency phase - what happens to early career artists when the sector opens again?

Could ACE do an arts audit of companies who have been operating less than five years? We need to know how many artists there are operating in the industry.

Emerging Arts Festival across the UK?

Jen talked about Shoot Festival and their mission. They support early career artists based in Coventry and Warwickshire and act as a 'feeder organisation' to some of the larger institutions such as the Belgrade Theatre, Warwick Arts Centre and the Birmingham REP - www.coventryshootfestival.com

Jude liked the idea of an emerging arts festival taking place across the UK.

Local is global right now - Adele Thomas.

Reece agreed and felt that it might be useful to look at the Rural Touring Scheme who offer brilliant local theatre to their networks.

Who are early career artists making work for? - Their community. It is the most important access point right now.

It feels like there are two things which need to happen:

- 1.) A scheme/database that highlights the emerging artists in the UK
- 2.) A framework across the country which platforms their work

feels a role for ACE and our unions Equity Bectu etc guaranteed opportunities ?

a 'space' for companies and organisations to meet emerging/ early career artists?

Is anyone affiliated to an artists network at a theatre/ organisation? could those networks form a larger network?

Tracey Gibbs: 'Here are my tips I did for the MIF Artist Drop in Facebook page. I had a thought of strolling shows on the back of flatbed trucks taking it to the streets. Commercial sponsorship for companies to get exposure etc'

Lou Corben recommended this book: Open Book Theatre Management

Next steps:

- 1. Jen to send round the minutes from the meeting and arrange a follow up chat with those who are interested**

Wellbeing - how are we doing right now? (Caroline Horton)

Session Convener: Caroline Horton

Participant names: Alex Brenner, Nir Paldi, Paul Levy, Kevin Lewis, Wendy, Henrietta, Sarah Argent, Natalie Chan

Mired in uncertainty

Feel a lack of spaces to check in with feelings

Very up and down

On the rollercoaster

If we are already on a big emotional journey, and this has arrived, how is that now?

Thinking "do I need to make any more theatre?" "what's important now?"

Lots of big, different emotions

Prisoner of conscience - the small panorama opened

Does our imagination paradoxically open up when we are in lockdown? Does outside world become our inner world, and the very fact that the physical walls have closed in, give an opening to a much more creative panorama for our muse?

The overwhelming feeling of what happens after September?... feels like a cliff edge

"I need to close my computer"

Can we take time off?

Loneliness and isolation is a common thread

Feeling a lot of issues - wealth inequality

When people cross the road - is it due to race?

The struggles of people in care and care leavers

Corporate vs subsidised/arts sectors - huge differences in provision for employees

Questions about who I am and what do I do?

How are children coping?

Moving through the stages of grief somehow.

It's as if injustices and inequities are magnified

It's hard for early career artists

Is it the end? Or is it just the end for a bit... ?

Is the different boats in a storm metaphor the right one?

A more fundamental problem than Covid about Arts funding

Zoom an unsatisfying spaces?

No time to think through feelings

Our privilege means we experience this stuff so differently...

Can it help us to surrender somehow? To those hard feelings - then we can move through? 'Deny nothing'

Deep connection is not easy but possible online

What does Box Office income look like in the future of theatre? (Sophie Ignatieff)

Session Convener: Sophie Ignatieff

Participant names:

- Expecting theatre in the future to be either digital or with limited audience capacities, what level of Box Office income can we expect in our budgets, if any?
 - Important conversation about how we ensure theatre re-starts with a commitment to affordable ticket prices.
 - Spurred on by Old Vic's announcement of paid for content; pay what you can vs donation only digital projects
 - People's appetite to pay for digital content may evolve as situation changes
 - Earned income needs to be replaced in some form
 - Is it worth looking at other economic models from the arts like visual art/heritage where access is free? However these organisations also rely on a certain amount of people through their doors using their cafes/shops, which is in jeopardy at the moment.
 - Also need to look at the funding criteria for government support; re-evaluate this to ensure wider access
 - British theatre compared to European relies heavily on Box Office; emphasis on the popular but how does this relate to artistic value?
 - If we move to a community funding based model, then will the art they create be more likely to attract box office income as a result?
- Also important to consider what audiences will be able to give their money to in the future? Especially when we consider safety concerns - a key theatre-going demographic are high risk for Covid

<https://www.indigo-ltd.com/blog/after-the-interval-full-report-now-available>

What might the touring economy look like for producing companies, venues/promoters and publics, given the financial impacts across each of these? What assurances will audiences want around buying tickets? Will they prefer a free event, or a 'pay on the door' event to reduce their own risk in financial loss if they can't attend or the event is cancelled due to CV? When will audiences begin to feel confident to buy show tickets again? I think this will have the biggest impact on touring work; will indoor, venue-based work be most at risk, with lower ticket sales and highest potential losses if the work has to be rescheduled/cancelled? Will venues become very cautious about offering min guarantees and cancellation fees to touring companies/artists? Which artists/companies will be able to afford to operate in that way also?

-

- Theatre's diversity is its strength; theatre doesn't mean 1 thing, there are so many versions especially once you move beyond buildings.
- Lots of ways to make theatre safe outside or in found spaces
- Is this the moment to move away from buildings? If so, then funding needs to be distributed out beyond buildings to enable this.
- Festivals can be key in this
- Toilets remain a big issue even outside!
- Buildings are still very loved & community hubs, can't be completely discounted. Very complex argument with arguments on both sides
- Maybe the issue is who runs buildings; gate-keepers not artists. What about a model of rotating companies/artists running them?
- At the moment theatres have had to close & put staff on furlough, due to their overheads - the potential of their spaces & workshops etc is sitting unused.
- in 6 months time the landscape will look very different; with less organisations & artists so what do we want to save?
- Will it be 6 months time; everyone at the moment is fire-fighting from a company/personal point of view, so not ready to think about the future.
- Part of the answer is working more & more cross-sector - with science, universities, technology etc Beyond chasing commissions
- There is a real appetite for gathering together; as soon as its safe, people will want to come back
- Its companies who make work in unusual ways who are going to survive this
- Need to remember our freelancers in all this, in an even worse position - partly due to our lack of unions

Is it possible to make art without earned income?

Shall we look at the visual art sector where it's a different model that doesn't rely on earned income - it's free to access

British theatre traditionally has to appeal to the audience, because of its reliant on box office

What are our responsibilities right now (Anthony Roth Costanzo)

Session Convener: Anthony Roth Costanzo

Participant names: Rachel V, Euton, Ed. G

As things go into crisis mode will government and institutions choose the "safe" or "conservative option" ?

How do we incentivize risk and innovation

How do we be the voice for change that we want to see ?

How can this moment fast track the positive changes of past decades rather than reverse them?

How do we find money to support the artists who can keep things moving, and innovate

What do we do now that we can't bring people together.

Maybe one option is to just chill, gather your energies and go into a certain kind of hibernation.

But then who will define what happens during this time, and what the rebuild looks like

How do we do something that isn't just throwing something half-baked up online, and is still making things of quality

week by week everything is changing

How do we make space for deaf and disabled artists in this new context

Are there any other options before we're back, not being on Zoom

Outdoor space may be the next frontier, but where will we rehearse? You can't physically rehearse easily.

Unproducing is as hard as producing.

humanizing zoom to reflect your emotional state (Tracey Gibbs)

Session Convener:

Participant names:

why would we want this?

A Silent way to just say how you are coping that day, that minute, that moment . a neutral start point for this new way of making collaborations and contacts in a distance format

Leadership, control and making it up as we go along (Ess)

Session Convener:

Participant names:

Theresa in Portland Oregon - leaders are just as uncertain as everyone else. We have to forgive ourselves for not knowing.

Learning to be ok with chaos.

The improvisors are handling some of the uncertainty better as they are more used to it.

Lee "pay attention to the processes unfolding and let that feed you".

Penny - leadership is about who shows up - we might be given the title of leader but then not know what to do. the first step might be being in a collaborative space - celebrating starting from noticing who turned up and what we've got in the room.

Can we imagine a government leader being able to do this?

Are/can leaders start to find it freeing? Turning up and making it up because we can't do anything else.

Working out what opportunities might be in that not-knowing.

Milly - pessimism curves and optimism. There can be an uninformed optimism giving way to an informed pessimism. Then you either choose to exit or you find some hope and energy and go to informed optimism. A space for exploration that allows a movement through these stages. As a leader you can come at this process with really small and simple goals (can I make one person smile today?).

Penny - start from just coming together, giving permission for a stepping stone towards a point where we might have solutions. We don't have to have immediately nailed it.

Theresa - everyone is getting through this at their own pace. Students not showing up etc. Then remembering whoever comes.. Everyone is dealing with this differently and we don't know the kinds of difficulties people are going through. Let's work with the group we have, the resources we have. You can't over plan because you don't know what's going to happen.

EMERGENT CREATION.

Different kinds of leadership - emotional, intelligence... Being able to say no.

Handing responsibility to others.

Not thinking about answers but about ideas.

Leadership being a thing that the group bestows as well as a permission we give ourselves. Understanding when we might have a privileged position and spotting when we need to hand the baton.

Griffyn - leading by doing. We are all in a different position of survival. This is the kind of time when people are most able to lead by example and when people are most looking for that.

Theresa - leading by example can also be showing vulnerability eg saying out loud I don't have the answers. Impro exercises to help lower the bar and get away from having to say everything is GREAT right now or everything is TERRIBLE. Opens a door for real honest conversation. If a leader initiates that honest conversation it can be good.

Allowing people to create from wherever they are. Providing vocabularies to help people express where they are and create from there. EG using Chekhov movement qualities.

Griffyn - a leadership that makes an equivalency of resilience and trust. Trust built on resilience substituted for trust built on integrity. Even in queer spaces, a show of vibrancy and alive-ness.

thinking about different leadership styles and being able to move through those and fluently/fluidly and find the appropriate form of leadership for that moment. Also knowing when not to be the leader at all. (Talking to you cis white dudes).

Exposing the mechanisms of power / power-share.

Inviting people into collaborations in different ways - different tactics for getting people to join in (Jodie Whittaker's Dr Who)

Can we give freelancers the space and agency to explore the future of the industry? (Gemma)

Session Convener: Gemma

Participant names: Gemma, Sacha Goslin, Sophie, Tracy Gibbs, Malaika

I wanted to ask how freelancers could be enabled to innovate at the moment? I'm really grateful for the open letter from venues and orgs, and the freelance task force, but I feel that we want to be empowered now to explore new models and ways of working. The privilege of being a freelancer is that we don't have responsibility for buildings and employees and infrastructure. (Also we can't be responsible - freelancers can't take on the emotional burden of feeling like they have to save buildings). But we COULD be doing lots of things if we had some space and money - exploring new ways of working, figuring out social distancing, figuring out how to use what is great about zoom and online and combine it with distancing - what can liveness and connectivity be now?

What can project grants be now? The trickle-down/building-based model isn't great for freelancers. It will probably take a more socialist model - giving everyone a universal artists income and putting groups together and setting them a task or a question. Then using what is found to make policy, make strategy, to feed back into the industry.

Set freelancers to work!

I don't want to be dependent on the generosity of buildings and institutions. Freelancers have to have an equal seat at the table in defining the work that is being made and funded.

Thanks Sacha for taking notes on the conversation.

Freelancers could, and should, have more opportunity to create work, that buildings couldn't, especially now when they need to worry about buildings etc.

Money for groups of freelancers to create work, work out solutions, etc, would give freelancers more agency than providing small amounts of money.

Protecting buildings should be responsibility of artistic directors, not freelancers.

Currently feels like others are organising the future, giving us what they can, but it's more out of feeling sorry for us than anything (or it feels like it)

Some organisations are paying freelancers fairly, but some aren't.

ACE structure and reliance on buildings relies on funding and options to trickle down, which isn't guaranteed.

Long-term funding model could be moved away from building focus, short term could empower people to make work now. Now we are still stuck in crisis management/firefighting phase.

We will start moving into a phase of 'what do we create now' in the autumn. At the moment a lot of creativity is going to waste unless we do it ourselves.

At the moment freelancers have the opportunity to shape the future, especially as they don't have responsibilities of programming, buildings, rent, etc (for buildings) and aren't on furlough.

What might come out of putting random freelancers together in a room?

Freelancers could be doing loads of stuff if we were given space, resources, and being empowered, rather than pitied. We can still be useful together.

Union, task force, etc, are great, but projects might need to wait.

what if freelancers were given an empty space to do whatever they want for a period of time?

Risk of buildings closing next year, we can't go in anyway, time to take the emphasis out of buildings? Their status, what they represent, access challenges due to the building (physical, and otherwise) How can we get beyond buildings?

Buildings will have to work in different ways.

Models of theatre that aren't in buildings and privileges buildings or using them in different ways.

Skills of workshop leaders and freelancers are being wasted by not being used due to lack of access to buildings at the moment.

We have a big problem with language, 'give people' 'allowing' when can freelancers be an equal part of the industry? Needs people to also know it's a job that needs to be done, not just fannying around with friends.

For freelancers it's hard to not be able to go and say to someone "Okay, we can just create something now" when working as a freelancer without a creative partnership. How do we restart those?

Now everyone is starting to feel more and more alone, even when they have creative partnerships now it's easy to feel like you don't.

Do we want to meet in the same way "when we can all meet again?" What is the value of meetings? We can connect in different way in meetings like this, in the same room. How can we make the best of having people all around all together.

We could give 10 freelancers a field and they could create something. We need to enable learning together.

Exciting development opportunity there, but where does the money come from?
Traditionally buildings would have done this.

Maybe it could be a DYCP type grant to work with people.

Would have to go hand in hand with a universal income for artists type thing, where everyone gets the same wage and you get given a chance, thrown into groups and given a job to do. Sort of like Open Space works.

There are similar issues with institutions and hierarchy in outdoor arts.
We need to find a way of working outside of the hierarchy, or changing the funding model to prioritise projects over buildings or festivals. What would it look like if we had more emphasis on the projects and outcomes for Arts Council.

Freelancers need to be given more responsibility, but with less risk on the artist/freelancers, at the moment it is weighted in favour of the buildings, and they have all the power.

There needs to be an obligation put on programmers and buildings so that the risk is equal, rather than on the artists.

Freelancers should be on the board. Is it of use or interest to anyone?
Freelancers should apply to be on more boards, to increase our representation, but also challenging because we aren't being paid.

Is Lobbying the government the best way to create a sustainable future for theatre? (Natalie)

Session Convener:

Participant names:

Think I'm the only one here so far! Going to get some water! X

What does doing things differently look like? (Kate Maravan)

Session Convener: Kate Maravan

Participant names:

Kate has recorded her report on video – you can access it here:
<https://youtu.be/ITUouRTplvo> (auto captions available via YouTube).

Accessibility has increased for those who are disabled - for some this situation has enabled them to gain access to places they wouldn't otherwise have entry to.

Suggestion that it shakes up the Fringe system - very costly for artists

There is now an accessibility to work which is international without having to travel - opening work up to new audiences

---<https://www.bemorepirate.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2330932260569176/>
Artist Mutiny UK
from mary themovingtheatrelab@gmail.com x

Where to find Motivation to Keep Our Skills Alive (Tracey Gibbs)

No report.

Is connection a self-fulfilling myth. Can we repropagate it within this medium of 'untogether' togetherness? (Rad) - feels related to the empowering audience question...

Session Convener: Rad

Participant names:

Just got here at 19.34 from another very interesting session about feeling connected as an audience.

I think the point we discussed there about endowing a space in some way can be transformative and bring people together. I found it an exciting thought that facilitating the space as such can bring together so many remotely. Like this whole forum.

In facilitating the online togetherness, we perhaps can invite participants to replicate certain relaxation inducing aspects, yet at the same time acknowledge that this is a new medium and connection through it will be different.

There are multiple forms of connection. Being in our own personal spaces may induce levels of stress or relaxation that allow for a different level of honesty and revealing of self.

We could also, if we prefer to, re-enact the rituals of preparation of heading out to an assembly or assembled situation.

Fear of getting sick vs Need to be in the space with others. (Susan Kempster)

Session Convener: Susan Kempster

Participant names:

I've heard a lot of people say they are afraid to go back into a theatre, to sit next to someone.

I'd like to talk about fear and the immune system.

It's complex, because Covid-19 can be very nasty. But we live with millions of micro-organisms, bacteria, viruses, fungi, and we can't sanitise the world, or life.

Fear reduces immunity. How can we begin to feel safe again?

Another thought - we're waiting for instructions, and rules, from a government that neither knows what it's doing nor has anyone's except themselves' best interest at heart.

Will it eventually come down to people making a choice between the risk or the shared experience? If not, will we ever sit in a packed theatre again? Or do we wait until there's a vaccine, in 2 years, or 3?

Does anyone know any billionaires? Random, I know, but it would be nice for the performing arts sector to get a massive, long term bailout, to help get us through this. Unlikely it will be coming from the Tories.

Does social distancing inside a rehearsal room, or a dance studio, actually make any sense at all? Air moves, and is unlikely to respect any false illusions of boundaries. We've all had the experience of being in a room and someone's opened a Tupperware container with their lunch and the smell has instantly pervaded the entire space. Smells are tiny particles of substances carried through the air. These travel more than 2 metres.

What do we really know about contagion? about how this disease propagates?

There are some more successful treatments happening now, now that more is understood about the disease. We're not hearing about this though.

Are the suggestions about how theatres might reopen based on any real knowledge, or is someone just making it up as they go along? Is there anyone actually looking into this really properly?

We are asking others "when will we be allowed to get back in the studio, congregate again in theatres, but we also need to ask ourselves, perhaps, when and whether we will be ready.

Who are you when you can't create? (Aida Rocci)

Session Convener: Aida Rocci

Participant names: Antonia Georgieva and Shanti Freed

FEEL FREE TO ADD YOUR NAMES!

HELLO! JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT ANY POINT.

(Aida will be taking notes, but if you want to add anything written that's great!)

HERE ARE THE TOPICS WE ARE TALKING ABOUT (you can follow them or create a new one):

-Who are you when there is a lull in your career? (like when you finish a contract)
How is a director directing when there is no play?

- -We are artists before we are theatre people. So we find other creative outlets (writing, etc.)
- -Learning to improve our tools-- Be open minded about other art forms.
- - There are moments in which you connect to different art forms.
-
-

-This is relevant in the pandemic. Are we creating online content (very different from theatre) because we are scared of not having theatre?

-The experience of labelling yourself as a type of artist (eg. a writer) and then finding out that maybe it's not the best your best outlet.

- -It still does not negate your experience as a writer and gives you a basis for other art forms.

-In "slow" moments, who you are will try to create opportunities for yourself. Or develop skills.

-Working with other people. What happens when your work/identity relies working with people and you no longer can?

- -It's all about the application. If you enjoy theatre because you work with people, now it's just not good enough.
-
-
-

-Income-related.

- -You can't fall into the pit of despair. You choose not to.
- -Allowing yourself to be in freefall.
-

A part of being an artist requires having space, having "downtime". Not just blind productivity.

-Who you are when you're not creating? Why are you a "director"?

- -The person who you want to be. But also what you've done
- -You're not just defined by your work.
- -Portfolio careers vs. branding.
- -Vague labels-- you can be anything. OR a dramaturgy label.

-Existential crisis happens when you have many outlets and then you have no work.

- -But you have to remind yourself that it's ok to not know all the time.
-

-Maybe the people who work in the arts are more equipped in dealing with this situation because we are used to dealing with uncertainty in the job sector.

-Where does the impulse come from?

- -Other arts
- -Making things
- -Dancing?
- -Art school.

Things that we do:

- -Facilitating creatively-- could be an object or a space.
-
-

-Limiting identity by what you do:

- -You are as good as the thing you do.
- Things are changing during

How/What theatre can shift outside? (Gabrielle Moleta)

Participant names: Gabrielle, Leon S, Claire S, Rachael V, Alex B, Jon S, Lou K and Emma A

How much you need the focus to be kept in an outside space - by this we meant the audience focus. Ways of helping this to happen

We also talked about the difference between theatre/ work made for outdoors versus theatre that was conceived for an indoor space transferring/transforming to an outside space...hence the points below:

Discussing different ways of creating intimate moments in an outdoor space

How to take indoor theatre out?

The level of control- something really useful in re thinking giving up some of the control

Accessibility issues lift! and by control we meant the control that a theatre space holds over the audience-

Outdoor arts- what are the best examples of getting over the bridge- in terms of captioning or reaching sign language community? interesting discussion about this!

We spoke of the obvious examples of successful outdoor work often being under the umbrella of a festival. Of drawing of the experience and knowledge of the positives of this for other work not traditionally conceived with this platform in mind.

Creating more inclusion - for those facing digital poverty/exclusion as well as those with other lived experiences who are un/under-represented? (Laura)

Session Convener: Laura D

Participant names: Becki H, Anne S, Samina Z

Wales has a particular problem with digital poverty - about 30% of the population have no or poor broadband connectivity, and that's before we get to poverty re affordability of devices

interested in how creative connections can be made IRL/ offline:

<https://funpalaces.co.uk/news/tiny-revolutions-of-connection/>

also interested in how the workforce and publics can be more inclusive and diverse than now? eg <https://www.a-n.co.uk/news/weshallnotberemoved-new-national-disability-arts-initiative-launched/>

Some high-risk groups will still be being shielded and will have to access shows this way. How can we be at the forefront of providing an alternative interactive experience for those who can't be in the theatre? eg live streaming/pre-records and the opportunity to meet and chat about show with other virtual audience members, or meet the cast.

We make assumptions and they are largely unconscious - inclusive spaces bring awareness

A crisis exacerbates an existing problem - eg with freelancers open letter/ via Fuel taskforce. And for instance, speed (of recruitment) disadvantages openness, diversity, doing stuff differently, including less likely to be represented

season cancellations mean under-employment for freelancers and esp disadvantages certain groups. some capacity has been elevated to see the people who need to be included. Another example would be to expand the commons. (Made me think of <https://www.voluntaryarts.org/pages/category/our-cultural-commons>) Old white patriarchy in control of decision making can exclude and cling to power. Is best when diversified eg to include more people of colour and changing "product" to pitch to certain audiences (eg African Americans). Very limited product seen as appropriate - eg not representing, disclosing a closed culture, asking PoC only to make "Asian" work or re slavery etc. And how to attract audiences?

a crisis is not an equal opportunities event - quite the opposite

Zoom is a very accessible space and was before Covid, and are now being marginalised in their own space b/c we arrived here. You don't know you're doing something until you're doing it - diversification has to come at every level - eg artists, audiences, etc.

5 million ppl in England don't have access at all - so reliant on tech/digital at this time.

Example of Coney with young ppl (pre covid) was DIY - getting their games through their letter box. And adopting traditional forms of communication eg having a penpal. eg to ppl you know or sent to unknown people in care homes. Writing in longhand vs touch typing - benefits to one or other or both

What did we do in the time before computers??? how was it 30-40 years ago? and how do we connect generations - not just via Zoom in creative ways but to write letters? and really need activities offline as so much screen time! (esp for kids)

interesting to see moments of connection IRL eg clap for carers/8pm NHS - and adding musical performances, or dressing up, or just waving/smiling.

Where is chance to be playful and connected?

eg hyperlocal small scale community work like Kitchen Circus by Cirque Bijou in Bristol: <https://vimeo.com/146395508> or that done by Knowle West Media Centre

And get out of your own bubble in doing so. Is there a local pairing scheme to move outside of white neighbourhoods? Purpose might be sharing life stories

Using libraries - computers and free wifi - as well as a physical hub, plus schools (or unis?) on a similar basis. Libraries feel like future of outreach as can be safer and more open spaces than cultural buildings.

Inclusion often not "enjoyed" by organisations and is sidelined in depts eg having an education or outreach team - but is more and more important strategically than ever - for workforce, funders, etc. Will funders enforce and how? #WeShallNotBeRemoved

need to give up power to change things: example from Seattle:
eg invitations to come to our place(s) and see who we are - into communities of place, of identity, of interest
eg include us in decision making and next steps - eg using Open Space

EXAMPLE <https://www.vanportmosaic.org/>

have to invest in it in the longer term - but pace of change is also glacial (in UK at least 20 years in arts and culture). Why have things not changed more? Ppl not wanting to give up what they have, to be inclusive you need to give up stuff - don't want to re access, comfort, social capital, etc so those whose interests to be in the centre will want to stay there. eg ADs needing to give up power/ control. If you believe in lack of abundance then there's the threat.

Capacity to care and change and learn - pace of change

Communicating value of what we create. (Clare)

Session Convener: Clare

Participant names: Penny Seward

With so much creative content online for free during this crisis, reaching more people than ever before but not usually creating income for those that made the work, I thought it would be good to share our thoughts on this and how we might be able to communicate the value of what we create going forwards.

Some thoughts on the meaning of 'value', making language more accessible across disciplines and working together to stand up for what we do.

- Collaborative approach to funding and programming. By involving fundraisers at the start of a project, it could help makers understand how asking for financial support works and empower them to be more involved in the process.
- What language are we using? Is 'value' too close to 'investment' which is too close to 'commercial'? Do these words mean makers fear their work could lose integrity or be exploited?
- We need to find the right language to help artists feel empowered to talk about their work in this way.
- What language do we share that we can all use together?
- There doesn't need to be a split between those that raise money and those that artistically create. Perhaps there is more fluidity between roles than we think? (BAC project working model, those with 'portfolio' careers spanning many different job titles.
- Fluidity in models to be all things.
- The current crisis has shown how much the public values culture. Consumption of online arts resources (theatre shows, art classes, dance classes) has been huge. How can we share the importance of the arts at this time to communicate to decision makers that they need to ensure its survival too?

Closing off the meeting at 19.35

Please feel free to add to the comments later if you arrive after this.

How might we help children to process this time? (Sarah)

Session Convener: Sarah Argent

Participant names: Tracy Snyder, Jon Spooner, Caroline Pearce

How can we help children cope with the trauma that they have been experiencing?

Children theatre making process vs. adult theatre practices?

Children and family access to virtual tools or equipment?

Examples of children's theatres doing the work now... Little Angel Theatre, ASSITEJ

- International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People ASSITEJ.org

What stories do the children need to hear and see vs. how can I get an audience?

Physical needs, lack of hugs and seeing your loved ones!

What is motivating you right now? Inspirationally, emotionally, theatrically?

"To hear a belly laugh of a young little one echo in an auditorium"

Access to parents directly has increased, with removal of gatekeepers of schools and teachers.

Focus on experience for FAMILIES and not just the children.

Who is integrating coaching and play?

The current situation is causing artists to question "Who am I - as a person, as a human?" - when the thing that motivates us, gives us pleasure, makes us feel whole ... being in a room sharing a collective experience with others, telling stories, offering them emotionally-engagement is not currently available to us.

Is it worth doing a SWOT analysis of the current situation? Are there actually some opportunities and strengths? Are we discovering new ways of working, of engaging with our audiences that are actually positives and there might be elements of these we wish to continue?

In what way could theatre be an aid to building community in communities?

Session Convener: Anne Stadler

Participant names:

No one joined so I went to another session

The Art Room

