



## Dundee Contemporary Arts

**MANUFACTURING CULTURE 20<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

### **Afternoon Discussion**

**[Clive]** Are there any specific questions that relate to the things that Brian said there, not least, the spelling of some of the writers because I know it's always an issue when you go to Google afterwards.. but anything specific before we kind of open it up into a slightly broader conversation?

**[Morgan]** The background of Karl Polanyi.. is he an Historian? A Philosopher? All of those things?

**[Brian]** Curious guy you know. He's definitely an Historian of Economy and he developed his form of understanding of the History of Economies because he didn't just study the Western Economy, but he then went on to study other Economies through the lens of Anthropology. Some people consider him the founder of what they now call Economic Anthropology. He could be related also to Marcel Mauss, who also studied in 'Gift Economies'. A major influence on Polanyi's thinking was the studies of the Trobriand Islanders who used this particular form of money called the Cowry shell, which entered into the Kula trade in the Trobriand Islands. People would go on long canoe journeys and when they got there they would have these great meetings and discussions and ritualesque bargaining over these shells which they would trade with each other which had a great role to play in marriage and otherwise did not resemble money in any respect whatsoever. So the point of that is that his main idea was to say that money is not just one thing. Money is embedded in a society and culture and has different meanings depending not only on the different culture but on the phase of that culture. Therefore money should not be treated as a universal, as it is in classical economics, but rather as something whose meaning varies from culture to culture and over time.

**[Morgan]** Does he purport any way of resolving that collective cognitive distance, that is laissez-faire capitalism, and what amounts to a society without reducing the audience to sense of shape and form?

**[Brian]** Yes of course, the last chapter of the book, *The Great Transformation*, is very interesting, it is called '*Freedom in a complex society*', and if you read it you think it's something like a blueprint for the post-war welfare state, although maybe it didn't quite turn out that way. What he's trying to say is that he has this notion of dis-embedding but also re-embedding. In other words that you can take the economic function - which he doesn't propose to abolish - and put them back into a situation where they're being watched over. This used to be common sense, regulate the economy – otherwise you have crisis. We can get into the economist Joseph Schumpeter's creative destruction and so on. It's been great, especially in the City of London it's really profitable. But if you go round the world and the economic crisis from the last 3 years there's a wonderful act of creative destruction for the stock market which means they can do what they like, finances are consolidated, ...it's terrifying. And so, embedding the economy in a system of checks and balances that doesn't destroy economic relations but also keeps them from destroying peoples' lives...

**[Clive]** I missed the last hour of the discussion this morning and am not entirely sure how it concluded but I don't know if anybody wants to volunteer to articulate the point at which that conversation reached. Does anybody have a clear sense of that?

**[Morgan]** Something called NI11 is meant to be thrown out? Everybody seemed to be relieved about that, I'm not sure what that is. It's sounds like a form...? (laughter).

{Cannot hear what the other people are saying from 5.11 – 6.38}

**[Anne]** I guess the discussion around mixed art venues and community cultural centres is that they are on the intersection and they can manage a balance between open source and collaborative programming for example and curation of making a choice and personality. I thought that was very interesting and it was brought up but we didn't get to the end of it. I'm interested in the connection with that and I would be interested to hear more from you Brian around this concept which I find quite challenging and interesting for that reason, which is about value and culture. What is value? If that's no too sort of anoraky. I would like to hear a bit more about how that links to some of these things that we were talking about, about where you place value? Words like hierarchy as well, and choice.

**[Eddie]**

Can I just follow this up because I wasn't sure what kind of culture you were talking about Brian, in that phrase? Because at some points you were talking about Art, at some points you were talking about Culture as produced by something produced by the cultural infrastructure. At other times you were referring to culture in a sort of wider Raymond Williams kind of sense.

So, you know, it wasn't clear to me what you were referring to when you refer to Culture.

**[Brian]**

Of course Culture has these different meanings and those arguments are perfect. What I wanted to really focus on was indeed this question - what can be done with the kind of artistic culture that everyone in the room is involved with but with respect to these other cultures and wider cultural questions. One very much concerning the Economy and the other concerned more with the texture of Social Relations and what Raymond Williams called 'structures of feeling'. Now what can be done with that?

Now I think that everything in human society always has very fine mediations, you know? You move from one dimension of existence into another through precise practices and in the case of the debate about value. I think that each artistic experience offers different ways to do that depending on the people who you bring together to do it. I don't believe for a minute in any kind of aesthetic populism but I think it's interesting that you have all these people who could form part of this organ of perception - the specialisation of Universities, the non-specialisation of general consumerism, the difficulty for people in professions to exercise an aesthetic choice - all of these are realms where one could bring together and make certain kinds of debates happen. But they are going to be different each time and what could come out of that are not only specific conclusions but also a realisation that there's a kind of arena or theatre, in which you can confront other people and gain more understanding of what it is for each person. What they value, how to bring that into words and in the case of more advanced disciplines, how to reformulate the discourses. And so you have a kind of multi-level arena in which these questions of value can be expressed and debated, that's what I'm trying to get at. And I think that where we often fail, in the contemporary arts, is really in the evaluation. It's not about us evaluating what we did, it's about providing moments where people actually begin to evaluate for themselves. Not what we did, but what they made out of it. What they experienced. This is what I love to do. And I think there's a lack of that, it's not done enough.

**[Anne]**

Thank you, that's very interesting. I think, a personal observation about all of these things and about the relative hierarchies. Where we are responsible for welfare, coming back to how we look at welfare in a cultural sense and without being gatekeepers in all of these things. But I suppose in the case of a cultural centre I would guess that the key thing is to create the space and conditions for the artist to create work. In a way that's the only unmediated thing that's going to be central to this. I've no more thoughts other than that. For me it comes down to centrality of the artist in these spaces. And making sure that it's looked after.

**[Clive]**

The tricky thing within all of that though is that we can't absolve ourselves of the choices that we make in that process. I think that if you ask somebody that is managing a building, or that is curating a space, you're making choices and I think the choices are informed by a sense of values and that ultimately you are making choices in order to try and represent some of those values. Now, at a certain point those values disappear, they dissipate into the general process, the general consensus, that this is kind of a good thing. But beyond that, when we go into these modes of crisis where there is a need to be able to articulate that, and to express that in a way that reinforces it, and is actually also able to identify where the value lies within that. We've actually absolved ourselves of that responsibility in that process of stepping back from an argument. But that's always my fear. I really like the whole process of trusting to artists and trusting to audiences as well. Not talking down, but saying 'we believe this to be good', 'we believe this to be significant'. But the problem is that at a point that comes into crisis and we have to defend that, we've lost the terms on which we defend it.

**[Anne]**

Yes, well, I think it's hugely important to give a commentary and articulation and a contextualisation about why you make the choices and that's your responsibility as a director of such a cultural centre. I think it's absolutely critical that you explain the context about making the choices.

I guess the thing for me, is the thing about crisis and what does it mean? I've hardly got my head around all of this and what it means. I'm working mostly in Ireland at the moment and the economic crisis there is significantly more volatile so we're facing changes absolutely all the time. We're having to remodel everything and challenge everything all the time. But I suppose then the thing about responsible cultural policy making (I hate to use that word sometimes) and decision making in a crisis comes to the gate keeper role or the government role or the funding body role about

what it will support and what the fundamental things are. Because if you're working, say Clive, you're working, you took the choice you take, you take the choice with the resources that you have, ok? And that means inevitably there's a bit of abdication because you have to pay the electricity, you know? Because you've got bricks and mortar and have to pay rates and water and you have to pay the electricity, you have to pay those things first. And what's left can go into the art. And it's a whole issue about cultural venues. We all know DCA is a great success. But we all know of other venues that have tried to be creative where there hasn't been a resource; there hasn't been a commitment either to make enough space for things to happen or enough ongoing revenue for things to happen. And so there's no point in having cultural venues that can deliver in the way people here have outlined unless they've got the resources to do it and that means therefore that to give the artist the space, I would say, personally that it comes down to the role of the gatekeepers, if there are to be gatekeepers and funding, to decide what's important in terms of the welfare of art and culture in society with adequate resources.

**[Clive]**

Yes, I guess that if you look internally at a centre like this, we all have debates and discussions, but essentially there's a shared sense of belief that actually often doesn't require that level of articulation. The level of articulation in practice flows out through other things; it flows out through what's said about this exhibition, or what's said about some of the programming, but the point at which we then have a transaction with a funding body, or somebody who wants to support us is actually about how we reinforce that notion of trust, so it's actually about binding in that relationship. Now, if we're really good at doing that then what that does it, again it takes away any responsibility to provide an effective articulation and that goes all the way up through the system that at every point when you build that trust you actually lose the ability to articulate. Now, there's part of me that thinks, actually, that's really good! Because we don't need that articulation – if we all share that belief, then that works. But the problem is, is that at some point within that there is a trade, there is a point where we move outside and - I can't remember what the phrase was that you used Brian - about the externalisation of the economy? This idea of when we reach the boundaries of the faith sect that we operate within, and we have to cross that into another space and that's where we come up against those things. So in some ways all the processes that we're involved in and all the conversations that have been going in Scotland about 'what's the vision of creative Scotland' is actually about the point where that transaction has to happen. It's not about us talking to Amanda, it's not about Amanda talking to Jim, it's actually at this

point where the key transaction happens that says 'this stuff is worth doing'.

**[Anne]** There's another point you that was missed this morning that was relevant as well – that you commented on the fact that it's particularly difficult though because we have had the Creative Scotland process and it's only got to where it is with the British Council. And we've actually had a situation where 2 of the main institutions - Creative Scotland and the British Council - there's been a challenge and those establishments haven't appeared to be advocating for the Arts in the way that they need to do so.

**[Morgan]** There's one aspect in terms of that externalising and that discussion about whether there's a consensus where you don't have to keep articulating something but there is a danger, I think, in terms of the way one organisation in particular has shaped the Creative Britain agenda, in terms of a focus on entrepreneurship and it is that; 'let us seek out those most talented people and focus our energy on them because they will save us, because they're the transnational traders that you reference and that is a mistake and I think that comfortable thing where we can get a consensus because we could get screwed pretty quickly.

**[Eddie]** But actually, can I just link this back to something very practical to do with DCA. And to do with the kind of work that you show at DCA because Clive I want to hear from you, about cultural ambition, and I want to hear what you've got to say about very specific things to do with what you've achieved in ten years. What I heard at lunchtime was what I expected to hear which is how DCA has been important in terms of confidence building, place building, reinforcing a sense of Dundee's position in the world. Unless I missed it, which I think I was there the whole time, I did tune out occasionally, but it was about art and cultural ambition. This for me is a very significant thing in the context of what we've just been talking about, I haven't heard it articulated. What has happened in the last ten years of DCA in terms of that cultural ambition? What it actually means, in cultural terms, rather than social or economic terms. What does it actually mean? And what is the difference between DCA being here and not being here? Your chair was refreshingly free of clichés, when he said 'if it wasn't here we'd have to reinvent it'. I'd be interested to know what has been gained /what's been lost in that process? Culturally.

**[Clive]** I guess in very simple terms one thing that Richard McCready said (who was the councillor who stood up) - I can't remember his exact words, but what he said was: 'we now live in a city that recognises

that contemporary art is good for the people of that city'. And if nothing else that's quite an achievement in ten years.

**[Eddie]** How's that measured?

**[Clive]** That's my point. That actually where we're at is that it's a shared belief, it doesn't matter if it's measured or not.

**[Eddie]** But you said it as fact. You've displayed that statement as fact, so therefore it has to be measured in some form.

**[Morgan]** Go back to the Tinkerbell theory - if you believe, then it is so.

**[Eddie]** But the problem is, there's only one Eden project and there are 99 that aren't. Tim Smit created a mythology about his own project – and I buy into it as well. But I'm interested in it to go beyond the idea of shared belief, which is not really measurable anyway beyond the people who are in this room who can stick our hands up and say 'yeah, we believe'.

**[Clive]** My point is that a shared belief that something has value is way above, in my own personal hierarchy, any sense of measure. And I would have to live by that. For me to reach that point where I say 'we have a shared belief' and someone turns round to me to say 'ok, well how do you measure that?' – you haven't got the point.

**[Anita]** I think that's fine Clive, as long as it doesn't become an inward looking shared belief amongst us. We can go 'yeah, yeah, of course, absolutely', it's actually ensuring that that shared belief is shared amongst the wider public.

**[Eddie]** You sound like creationists.

<laughter>

**[Clive]** Recreationists

**[Anne]** There's also a real challenge to that, you know, the Tinkerbell Theory, and the shared belief thing. And I guess going back to Ireland and the Abbey Theatre there's a shared belief among the people in Ireland that it's a good thing. 94% of people on a phone-in think that the Abbey Theatre is a good thing, and that's fine. And that's even when there was a crisis a few years ago. So there's big value there, it's part of the national conversation, it's very important. But the issue now, in an economic recession is that, in Ireland, there's at least 25% coming out of the Arts council budget, not just

in a one-er, another 10% next month, it's freefall. So the issue is, in that context, even though 94% of people think that the Abbey Theatre is fabulous and fabulous for Ireland, most of it's funded by the public sector, the public purse, and somebody has got to make the decisions about where the money goes, and it comes down then to choice. So, it's all very well if nothing's going to change if there's enough resources to keep everything going and everything has a shared value to keep the status quo, but the problem is in terms of disruption when something has to change.

**[Clive]**

I was answering Eddie's question about what was said downstairs. Now, for me, that notion of at least defining a shared value within a city like Dundee in the last ten years is a big step forward. The next step of that is significant as well. That next step is how we articulate that, how we make that understood and take that into places where it currently doesn't exist. And that was the point I was trying to make earlier about how you have a duty and responsibility to articulate that shared value as it moves up through that chain. Now at the moment the first step, the first ten years of DCA have been about establishing that shared value. We've come a long way to get to that point, the point of today is to say, actually we've got that, where do we go next? How do we begin to understand what that actually means in a civic context, in a national context and in an international context in terms of the shared values that have grown up through a project like this.

**[Dave]**

One of the things that has been missing to some extent has been our audience feedback. It's all been remarkably interesting for me when we do audience research the sort of things that they project onto the organisation ..... People use words like cool and trendy, that's not what we aspire to we're more interested in works of art and where that's going.. The changes that we might be going through now chimes with the sort of things that are selling well, we've gone through a period of fantastic attendances, content with issues in society and people are turning up for that. Now, maybe it's because they're unemployed and have got a bit more time, actually maybe it's because people are searching for value, searching for things to engage you, and debate with. I got into this business in the seventies on the back of socialist agit-prop theatre, in the small town of Billingham. And got more and more interested in that through the eighties, because there was lots of theatre companies out who wanted to say fuck off to Thatcher. Unfortunately it failed miserably but nevertheless I think we're probably coming into a time where more and more artists will take advantage. It's interesting in Edinburgh last year I saw some really interesting theatre for the first time where people were taking up big social

political issues as opposed to entertaining us with some fairly tame comedy. I think there's going to be more of that. I hope there is. I'm hoping that we can play a significant role, certainly where I am, I think that's the issue. It's that territory that Brian was describing I think that is going to be the thing that's defining where our works going to go. And actually engaging our audiences more in that conversation is the only way I think.

**[Clive]** I'd be very worried if we knew what's going to happen next. I think the whole point of the work that we're engaging with is that we hopefully create the conditions for what is going to happen next to happen. And that is our responsibility. And that's partly about what we show, that what we know about now, but it's actually all about the future. It's about the stuff that happens beyond that and how people respond to that and take that forward. Audiences are strange and complex things. I wouldn't claim to have any real understanding despite enormous efforts to try and measure, to articulate who comes into this building here. But what I learn from that is that I'm surprised by it more than it confirms any of my expectations. So sometimes that's on a hiding to nothing, that whole notion of linking into audiences in that way. That's my fear, you can get intelligence from it but what you can't get is data.

**[Chris]** I wanted to blame Mrs Thatcher [laughter] a little bit in relation to what you were talking about because I think what Mrs Thatcher did was she showed us how to extract more value from systems where we had started to extract value from them. From land and labour and corporations and so on. And she showed us how to extract more value to the point where there's very little margin left in the systems that we've got and the problem for these institutions is that there's no cushion. There's no margin, there's no room for redundancy at all. And in effect, I also wanted to come back and say, you talked about the idea of the self-regulating economic market as a fundamental driving metaphor in society and I was curious because there's a sense in which there's some discussion, MMM have been involved in it, about the idea of replacing that metaphor with an eco-systemic metaphor. Not in the sense of overlaying an eco-systemic metaphor over the economic, i.e. not saying money is like an ecosystem, but actually saying that the relations between the organisations, their audiences, their funders and so on are eco-systemic on multiple levels of which money might be only one of them. And I kind of wondered, is it useful to replace one metaphor with another like that? Is it just the economic metaphor that's a problem? Do we absolutely need some way to describe systems and we happen to have got very attached to an economic one and it would be good to replace it with a different one

or is that metaphor problematic fundamentally?

**[Brian]**

First of all, in terms of the market it's not just a metaphor. It's actually a technique of what the market tells us to go govern, in other words it's a way of governing. I wouldn't reduce it to just a metaphor because it's more instrumental than that. It's used to make decisions and therefore you get all this talk about precise measurements, because economics ends up being a real important part of the whole deal now. As to whether that way of governing, I think that should be replaced by an ecological form, which also allows you to make decisions because to govern you have to make decisions and you have to do it according to something relatively trustworthy otherwise you get into trouble. Polanyi is interesting because out of his work you can have an ecological understanding of society which you can't have with Adam Smith, because it's not there, its inputs and outputs. And it's completely linear. And everything that is external to that is just external. And those externalities are coming back to kill us, because you know, aggression in a society is also an externality, nobody calculates it, but it can produce damage. I would say, we can certainly blame Mrs Thatcher, I know everyone loves to do that here. But I'm afraid we've got to blame Mr Blair as well and the strides that have been made in the last ten years in commodifying everything are really incredible. I mean, we didn't have every service commodified until the last ten years; it was the total commodification of all services that really marks the brave new world that we live in now. And I think this has to be rolled back first by people. And I think practice will make policy here now totally. Francis and I were having this discussion during lunch, we were talking about practices where people are providing services for each other. Polanyi has a word for this - reciprocity, and reciprocity doesn't mean that you should expect the government to run by reciprocity but it means there's a kind of experimentation going on - on a non-monetary basis - which can provide clues for ways to institutionalise things that are partially monetised and partially not because the freedom in a complex society is really about that. Although money is very good for a time: i pay for it, it's mine, i leave. A gift relation is always a debt relation. Reciprocity is always what comes around, goes around. And when you get into social obligations that are written into law, then it becomes about hierarchy. And then you have principles that are intangible, you can't change them and someone has decided them and they must be respected. So all those things are a bit complicated and to shift from a governance that's based on the self-regulated market as we have now, to one that would actually respect the circularity of the culture and the linearity of profit seeking I think that in the cultural realm there's something really

interesting going on, which are these reciprocities. You know relational art isn't all it's cracked up to be but everyone has to observe that there's been a lot of work on social relations and that it's not all useless in the past few years.

**[Clive]**

We had an interesting discussion last weekend which I'm not entirely sure we agreed on this one, but you raised the subject, which I think is really interesting, the whole concept of 'the gift'. And how the concept of the gift sits outside of any of those mechanisms. And we were talking about this idea that the gift implies a debt, but actually I don't think it's a gift then. But there is something rather wonderful about this concept of a gift which I'm trying to draw on in order to understand some of those concepts of art, some of those concepts of creativity that are about something that is purely given without any expectation of return. And I've been coming back to it this last week to try and get my head around it a little bit, because I think within that there's some of the richness that I think we might want to identify as being within this value system that we want to appropriate. I think the economy is a very troubled one. I think ecology – having been through the loop with that one as well – is also a very troubled one, I don't think it maps on terribly well. But I do think there is something distinct and unique about this willingness to give without expecting return but for me, it's very very curious and I'm interested in where that might take us if we pursue that one.

**[Anne]**

I think it's a very interesting concept, going back to Chris's earlier point about Mrs Thatcher, and Dave's point about agit-prop and things, playwrights, visual artists – artists that make radical change through their work in terms of the dialogue. The issue though, as Chris said, is it's no longer a gift, we no longer have the margins. In the old days it used to be called the right to fail, and you'd have the right to fail. That's really ancient language but there was a bit about that, about gift, about risk taking and about accepting that you aren't always going to get the return because you had the margins. And I think that's pretty fundamental - you have wealthier artists who are the ones who will comment on things and change. But while there's no margins, and while a new play may empty a theatre in place of something more popular, these are the things, the balance of things we're facing..

**[Chris]**

I think that what you do get from systems thinking is the value of multiple descriptions and in a way that is partly the answer to metrics. That there is no one useful metrics. Actually it is multiple descriptions that begin to be useful way for dealing with that problem. It's not to try to find one solution but to find multiple voices

that give you a way to construct an understanding of something.

**[Clive]** Tom, can I drop you into some of this. We obviously got a bit more abstract in terms of rolling these arguments up to a certain level. And I'm quite interested, given your insight into processes and policy-making, whether any of these things you might feel actually have any currency. Or whether or not what we're actually beginning to talk about are areas that have no significance? And be honest with that please (laughter).

**[Tom]** I've think that I'm not really party to a lot of the thinking around this, I think a lot of the language around social networks and around this new age – whatever that means – at least implicit in that is this notion that there's a lot of reciprocity, there's a lot of interdependency that isn't monetised. The trouble is, the language is still monetised, it's loaded with monetary signifiers. So we talk about things like sweat equity. Is that a gift, plainly it's based on the assumption that there's going to some sort of return ultimately on that and into a gift campaign investment. And I think there's something emerging around the way the economy is going in the future and how the people in the last recession had some spare time on their hands because they were unemployed and were looking for a job. Whereas what we might find is that more people are socialised into thinking that they wouldn't work and create their own jobs. And whether the pathways to that are much more around developing a shared approach and developing much more mutual interdependencies. There's the systematising of social relations that provides the conditions for jobs to arise. I think that kind of stuff is coming to the surface on a policy level. Trouble is, I don't think we should only blame Thatcher and Blair but also to an extent we need to blame ourselves because we also tend to monetise everything, abstract everything etc. The whole slow food, slow fashion movement, the Greening of our industries, is to some extent, although it may be cynical to say this, it is an added form of capitalism in terms of Capitalism with a capital C. so, in policy terms, we're getting a softer sense of the role of money in terms of transactions that can create a prosperous civil society but I think the tools are still the old ones pretty much.

**[Clive]** Yes, I get this terrible fear, as someone who enjoys living within the status quo, every time I pursue these arguments to their logical conclusion they turn into something that appears quite brutal. That actually that process of change towards something that seems logically determined by that process of analysis is actually potentially quite brutal. Every time we bump up against the fact that we're monetarising this thing how do we get beyond that? I think

that I then start to worry, there's that fear that I'm just going to suddenly dress myself up in camouflage and run down the street..

**[Tom]** You get beyond it when you pay your bills (laughter). I suppose that is implicated through a cultural centre. I suppose businesses are changing and they're becoming much more individualised, personalised, much smaller with different types of overheads emerging with different kinds of values being developed I suppose.

**[Dave]** There is a whole culture, particularly using the internet of people sharing and picking up on a lot of the things that used to happen that we forgot. There's a lot of stuff out there – (Christy Peer?) at Newcastle referred to it a lot with his theory. He's on the fringes at the moment but I can see that as this recession continues to bite that whole sharing thing could really taking off and developing really.

**[Clive]** There is a difference though between that kind of sharing that is a long term development agenda which is that, ok, I can afford to give stuff but actually ultimately this is an investment in me getting something back. Which I think is different from the notion of the gift economy or gift structure because I think there's the thing with the notion of the gift that there may be a return but as soon as you can actually visualise , as soon as you can perceive that return it ceases to become a gift, it becomes about something else, it becomes about trade. And so it's whether or not there is a system that allows, that kind of terrible biblical metaphor about people eating with the wrong chopsticks, you know – does everyone know that one? [laughter]

**[Anne]** I do have more faith in the good of people and in wanting to share and I do have more faith that we have, as human beings, a desire to work in communities and look after ourselves. And I think that's more evident around social networking, it's more evident around those of us that are independent in terms of organisations, because we have to, in going back to the pebbles and boulders thing. Those of us that are pebbles – I'm glad to say that I'm a pebble again – need to make connections and work in groups all the time. And in creative industries – if I can use that phrase – that's even more the case. And if you look at the success of something like 38 minutes, which is a social networking site for people in the creative industries, which has been going for what, 3 months, 4 months (- almost 6 months) . It's got 800 members, not all of them active, and the amount of groupings that is going on and reciprocity developing, just sharing knowledge and information is the way it's going.

**[Morgan]** If we have that empathy as a society, as individuals and collectively, why are we so against programmes on television and radio just now about the word viruses and its impact on society and it breaks down. And even those small groups tend to tear each other apart and then the groups individually implode. (Talking over) Is it because we just want to scare the shit out of each other? (- I don't recognise that)

**[Eddie]** It's interesting in the music industries, I mean Tom used the slide about Radiohead 'In Rainbows' album which I'm sure you'll know about it, you basically paid what you want and later on you could get the object. But basically you just paid what you want so if you thought it was worth 50p you paid 50p or whatever. It's kind of interesting isn't it? In terms of an active reciprocity in a sense, also in the music business it's very interesting because it's transforming in a massive way, recording music is in crisis, it's beyond crisis. So in these days of quantitative easing (I'm a fan of quantitative easing personally – laughter) I think the idea of 'free' now, this sort of post-digital idea of 'free' has changed the notion of reciprocity. The idea that so much of what we do should be free, that's a kind of transaction, the basis of most transactions and it is kind of interesting. I think if you look at the wider economy what's doing well at the moment is luxury goods is doing really well. Primark etc. is doing well, and a lot of stuff in between is not doing well. And I'm interested about what's going on there and mapping that against the idea of free, the idea of sets of values that are placed around that. The more we talk about this the more confused I get – I can't see any clear trends or patterns or trajectories personally. I keep thinking about that quote from the American baseball coach Yogi Berra, he said 'when you come to a fork in the road take it' (laughter) I feel it's like that basically.

**[Judith]** But it's more about navigation, an acceptance that there's a structure and it's about how you navigate it. Also I'm interested in the artists who are doing it within their practice – artists like Superflex with their free shop – but that's then commodifying it because it's held within a collection which then raises their market value. Is it free or is it.....

**[Gwilym]** I think we're kidding ourselves here a little bit about the gift relationship. I think increasingly, when someone walks into your gallery or venue they think I'm paying taxes for this. So there is actually an exchange. It can be gift relationship with individual artists handing things to people actively outside of the structures

that we're in.

**[Brian]** I second that, I totally agree with that.

**[Clive]** I would absolutely agree with that but I don't think I was making the point that the process of making art/showing art is about gifting it to people. I think there clearly is an understanding of some kind of transaction taking place there. I guess what I was trying to get my head around more of was the process of creation of art and that as being the starting point for the whole process. I kind of went through this logical path that basically you cannot buy art, that actually you can buy an art object, but you cannot buy art, that the art resides somewhere else within that thing. And this goes back to the alienable/inalienable concepts that were picked up on earlier. There's part of me that thinks that as soon as the work of art (the object) is sold it diminishes that quality of art that it has. That's a kind of terrible thing to think about in the profession that I work in, because what it does - it obviously takes us into a position where not only are we denying the artist the right to transact in the things that they generate. But it also means that all those things that have the greatest value in our world, by my own token have the least value. I've got to reconcile that one, because that's a really difficult one. But I suppose what I was coming back to is if we follow that through and we believe that the significance of the work lies within its notion of it being gifted to the community then the community has to find a way to make that happen. And that's less of a transaction and more something else, and I don't know what that other thing is, and that's what interests me - to try and find out what that other thing is.

**[Chris]** But Clive, you've been reading Hyde's *The Gift* and actually I suddenly have a real problem with what you've just said. I bought one of the little publication by Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison about their project *Future Garden: The Endangered Meadows of Europe* at The Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle, Bonn .  
[If you want a link then its  
[http://www.theharrisonstudio.net/endangered\\_meadows.html](http://www.theharrisonstudio.net/endangered_meadows.html) ]

It comes in a package with a catalogue in German, which I can't read, and there's a ceramic tile – one of a set. They ran off additional tiles for the project and I have that framed on the wall. Probably cost me £30-40 between the catalogue and the print. It's worth far more to me than the £40 I paid for it. So that piece of work was not diminished by its reproduction and sale because actually it has greater value to me than the monetary value that it cost me. So it cannot have been diminished by being sold. And I would go on

and say food only exists in its use. The same way that you say you can't buy 'Art', what you buy is an object and you are therefore able to have a relationship with it and the art is in the relationship. Well frankly the same is true of food. Food is not food until you turn it into something to eat. Before that its just stuff to be consumed. Do you see what I mean?

**[Clive]** I would disagree with you, as food actually is a limited commodity whereas the experience of art is something that can be shared with out actually reducing the ability of it being shared. So if there is one macaroni pie, once you've eaten that macaroni pie it's gone. But if there's a piece of work hanging on a wall once one person has found the significant experience of that work it doesn't diminish anybody else having that significant experience.

**[Brian]** There's something to this thing about the food not being food. I think that there are different forms of relating to other people. There's the form which passes through reciprocity, there's a form which passes through redistribution and creates specific spots which are supposed to be open to all, and then there's a form that passes through the market, which is transactions. And I think clarifying, through talking about what those things are can add a lot to peoples experience. Because for one thing understanding that you have to make it art. I mean it's sitting on the wall but until you invest it with a desire to know what it is that you're not seeing in it, it's not art. You have to have that approach to something which is more than just an object to something that cannot really be possessed to make it art. Because otherwise it's just another object.

**[Chris]** The slow food movement make the same argument about food. It's just stuff unless you invest it with an effort.

**[Brian]** What's interesting is that that can't be done according to the rules of the market. And it can't really be done according to the rules of redistribution either. So the gift is made in the understanding that it's a gift. The thing that I don't like is when all value gets coded as economy. I think we need to open up space for these questions you know. The old old question, which really creates contemporary art, is it art? I mean this has been the whole thing that contemporary art was founded on, it always returns to that for its vitality, you know, artists seeking to show that this question is really the heart of contemporary art.

**[Anne]** Going back to cultural venues and the value of them - surely it's about making space where there can be creative experiences, it's

not so much about the commodity value, otherwise the art, the piece of art work is about creativity..

**[Francis]** I agree with what you're saying because you're giving people space where there's very little financial pressure on them. They can make something that might look monstrous and it doesn't matter because no-one's going to buy it, but if we're going to give them money to make it then they can make anything. Whereas if you make something for a gallery, the gallery's saying we know a collector who'll want three of those but in one of our galleries you can make something which can be the most horrible thing in the world or it can be beautiful but there's less pressure. In Glasgow there used to be no art markets, so there's a lot of freedom to make anything you want, because nobody gives a damn. So that was a great freedom that's gone. But it was a really valuable thing. That creationist moment, where you created and it doesn't matter if anybody wanted it or not. And then the market comes in afterwards and that's a kind of valuable moment.

**[Judith]** So maybe the collapse of the economy and the crisis we've been talking about is actually a really golden moment for the arts, because at that point you get a change in structures again..

**[Anne]** They only become a golden moment if we collectively say this is what's important. It is the agit-prop, it's the market following the art in Glasgow. Those are the only things; these are the things that generate everything. But to do that in an economy which is shrinking and the public sector's looking for value to be expressed in all sorts of other ways according to what it impacts upon. That means a bravery and a decisiveness on a policy-making level which says 'these are the things that are important' and although other things are important we know we can't afford to have everything, so it's only an opportunity if it's followed through with bravery and clarity.

**[Clive]** Is there anyone else who hasn't yet joined in the conversation? Because I'm conscious that there are people in this room who haven't spoken yet who I know have views.

**[David W]** How do you find the value set that can be communicated with the funders or the powers so that be that they understand - that is a parallel value .....

**[Clive]** I did a piece of work for the Arts council a few years ago, the outcome of which was a discussion about the creation of a CQ – cultural quotient. Which was a number that you would generate,

which you would give to your local council and say 'this year we have a 76'. And they would say 'brilliant, because the gallery down the road has only got a 43'. And that's actually all they needed to know. And we actually talked about how you would come up with this number that could be used in this way and how the whole sector was complicit in it and we all made it work for us. Whether or not it could happen.....

**[Eddie]** Must have an interesting appeals process.. (laughter)

**[Clive]** Let's not back off this, let's completely throw ourselves into it and see what happens. I think what came out of it was that it was absolutely career suicide for anyone who chose to adopt it or implement it. It was a way of actually saying well what if we actually lived in that space, what would actually happen? Where would that take us? I think the answer is that we can't go there, it's just not a place we can enter, and for lots and lots of different reasons.

**[Anne]** So that's what you're scared of? What you said earlier about 'I'm really scared of how brutal it's going to be' – it's about that is it? It's about the fact that everything might become porous, that you won't succeed, that you might not win? For example a low cost disruptive model of assessment is voting – you could say what's the lowest cost model for actual assessment...it could be people just voting .....it's completely technologically driven and actually there's no judgement coming in from...

**[Clive]** But I wouldn't be afraid if that because democracy isn't about voting. Democracy is about understanding the decision that you're making. And whether people understand the decision is up to us, going back to this articulation issue - that if we don't articulate it we're failing in our duty to encourage a democratic approach to supporting what it is that we're doing.

**[Amanda]** I just wanted to pick up on David's point, do you think when you're producing – when you're trying to articulate what you do, that there's a measure of us looking at the economic value of what you do. Because I think that at the moment - and this will probably change - that it's absolutely not there. There's been a thing about counting of numbers, which I don't think has been terribly effective, and I think everybody accepts that that's not effective, that counting of numbers is not telling you about the quality of experience but I don't think anybody's ever tried to look at the work of organisations in Scotland and determine their economic value. There's been a lot of talk about the creative economy in the past year, which has been unclear and not necessarily helpful in settling some of the debate

but I think at the moment there's a big leap of faith that comes in the kind of relationships that are formed. And there's a leap of faith from the funders to the organisations, there's a leap of faith from the organisation to the public, there's all of that kind of stuff and in a way if we get overly wrought by that we could lose the kind of current way of working which is not horrendous I think. And that we end up in a system where it is the generation of the number that either gets you in at the top or gets you down at the bottom, I don't know. I was just interested in what you were saying.

**[David W]** I was thinking more about the point to view of the future. And in terms of the way Creative Scotland develops because everything is so monetary in the way that we reference things. The introduction of something like that is something that you could see as possible ?

**[Amanda]** Well it comes back to that thing we were saying earlier is that there is opportunity to make sure that some of the policy - because as we say there isn't the policy there and it's been unclear - so what's the way that we influence that policy so that those other values are at least as evident as the economic and creative economy values that've been coming out more recently. And I think that, for me anyway, what it has and what it's great strength is an ability to articulate some of that. And I know people are saying 'well we can't' but I think that actually people can. And I think that it's being able to articulate that kind of consistently and not in a competitive fashion. I think one of the problems is that ultimately most of the people in this room - if they're working in Scotland - are ultimately competing for what is a small resource and that resource may diminish, we don't know but that's the thing, it's the trying and to work co-operatively, collegiately, to articulate some big kind of thinking as opposed to such micro level thinking.

**[David W]** The problem is that the language that we use is so money referenced?

**[Amanda]** I think that we can or that can change, you're saying 'we' but you're also saying 'we don't feel that is right'. So that's what the sector can do, it can lead that change in articulating value. I mean there's nothing to stop this room full of people talking in a very different way. And if more people are talking differently then surely it'll....

**[Clive]** We have become habitualised into that being our dominant belief system therefore those are the terms on which we express ourselves. And I would hope that we can get beyond that. Obviously it's a fairly careful and fairly tricky journey because there's a lot at stake, a lot at jeopardy in terms of trying to evolve

beyond that.

**[Tom]** A practical example is, what we're dealing with is informational asymmetries between the policy maker and the organisations and then by extension, the public. We've been using the word 'broker' today and brokers are, you can't get away from the monetary method, but brokers are the tradesmen of information asymmetry that's why they're essentially there to buy that analysis and interpretation and trade off it. On a practical level what's happening – spawned from a bit of work that we've been doing with Dave and people in Bristol at Watershed and Broadway in Nottingham, 6 venues altogether - is looking at whether there's a network approach where there is actually a bigger network that is UK wide that links similar, but very place specific and different venues but links them in terms of being able to develop an overlapping narrative, if not a shared narrative, and to develop an exchange of knowledge, and practical things around capacity and leadership and management but also around where we're going and what it is we were doing and how that can be articulated and thus trying to overcome some of those information asymmetries and find one way of tackling this. But it's only a smattering of venues across the country – individually they're all struggling and losing their hair, stressing over it.

**[Clive]** I guess it's that thing about how you actually construct those corporate and shared global spaces as well.

**[Chris]** I'm not stopping someone who hasn't spoken but.... (laughter)

What I was going to say was quickly something about attachment theory. What goes on is that back in the 70s arts organisations put on exhibitions, they were visited by critics, they wrote about them, the evaluation was wholly within the arts. As you get into regeneration and arts organisations and artists get involved in regeneration, they start thinking 'there's a big pot of money, I want to get my grubby paws on some of that'. And the consequence is, having got involved in it that they have to account for themselves in those terms. You get into working in education, you get into creative partnerships programme and that's great and there's a pot of money but you have to be able to account in terms of the learning outcomes. So that's where the criteria comes from. You get involved in healthcare to get into the money but you've got to be able to account in terms of the sort of evidence based research that healthcare does. Creative Industries is where we get, along with regeneration, (I think creative industries kind of comes out of the regeneration) is where it's about the money. So in a sense it's who

we choose to attach ourselves to, construct the criteria against which we have to produce the evidence, and that is numerical, financial, whatever. So in a way, it's our choice.

**[Brian]** That creates the field where value is going to be negotiated. And so the question of who your partners are ends up being really really important. And of course there is in a moment where the regeneration's going to go down, because it really is. Because, you know, real estate is not going to be the big thing, you know, it's an interesting chance to change some of the partners and create a different field for negotiating.

**[Chris]** But I think the other thing we haven't done, as the art sector, is necessarily gone and persuaded those other sectors that maybe our criteria has some value in those circumstances. And I'm not sure we've actually gone and persuaded the educationalists that the criteria we would use are actually also relevant in there. And I'm not sure we've gone and persuaded the healthcare people – some organisations have maybe done a bit of that but I think we've taken the money and got the criteria, I'm not sure we've necessarily pushed any criteria back through the system. But that's a big generalisation.

**[Brian]** Around Europe I see that Arts have pushed a lot of criteria into other systems. Education definitely, arts and public parks and spaces also.

**[Morgan]** Could I ask on that matter, Germany tended to try to cling politically to it's social market model in terms of a free market model. Is the rhetoric around creative industries and creative economies any different in your awareness than it is perhaps in the UK?

**[Brian]** There's nowhere that's as extreme as the UK that I know on the continent, you know. France or Germany, no. But the thing is that real estate has been such a driver, and this is not necessarily connected to policy, it tends to sweep other forms of urban policy along with it, so that you do have a tremendous sort of creative industry thing because there was perceived convergence between that and digitilisation. And so there the private sector – two private sectors – one concerned with freezing capital through real estate, and the other one concerned with making money off of computers and everything associated with computers and wires. And they came together and brought the art as something extra therein. And that has developed pretty much everywhere and I don't really see the exception to that in all the advanced societies.

**[Clive]** I think the real scary one for me is this notion that we are never ever going to be able to look at a control experiment in terms of state intervention in culture whereby it doesn't happen so let's see what goes on. I then had the sobering experience of going to China where, as far as I can gather, there is no state policy in terms of intervention in culture on behalf of society, to make society better. The whole idea of it being somehow a virtuous thing does not exist. Similarly real estate doesn't exist either so there's this kind of horrible, massive experiment going on which is all of these questions that we're asking being played out on a huge scale. And it is quite terrifying and I would recommend going to have a look at it for anybody and perhaps reading Brian's paper as well if you are going to go.

**[Tom]** Did you visit a creativity park? There's a tax break if you find somewhere like an old factory and turn them into creativity parks – there's hundreds of them ...

**[Eddie]** I mean obviously the fundamental issue to do with culture is about entitlement isn't it? It's not statutory to provide culture. I think it's interesting what's happened to education over the last few years structurally. Where education has been positioned, and just think about what used to be the Department of Skills, something and Education is now called the Department of Children, Schools and Families. Now that's a really interesting shift in terms of when you think about the rhetoric around education is positioning it in a very different way than it's position only a very short time ago. And of course there is now, underneath and around education there are a huge amount of schemes that are addressing one way or another, the idea of, a whole set of social issues around education. And fundamentally the education system hasn't changed in Britain since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, since it was conceived, the idea of public education hasn't really changed very much. So I'm interested to think about what that might mean – that kind of shift. If that shift is mirrored in other ways including areas which are not part of statutory provision. ...What that might look like under a Tory government in 12 – 15 months time.

**[Clive]** For my part, to jump in on that, one of the things it might have been useful to pick up on earlier in the day, is this notion that actually we don't provide culture, that's not what we do.

**[Eddie]** Who's we?

**[Clive]** The agencies in this room. Culture happens. We intervene in that culture, so actually we are agents of intervention as opposed to

providers of culture. I know in Scotland there was quite a lot of conversations earlier in the cultural commission report about this idea of cultural provision as almost being a statutory obligation that would fall on certain bodies. And I think that's hugely problematic because I think actually you cannot stop culture from happening. And I think what we may learn from that is actually how we then think about education and how we think about healthcare, and how we also preserve some of the things that are valuable about healthcare in the UK at least whereby healthcare is not about the provision of healthcare it's about the provision of health and actually thinking about those things as being subtly and distinctly different – sorry, that's my line on it.

**[Morgan]** Do you think the government sees agencies or organisations or cultural centres as providing culture? It's like that Dick Penny thing where we don't provide culture we give them a microphone and a mirror, whatever it is in terms of reflecting – the tools to magnify it or to support it.

**[Clive]** Well but then it comes back round to that thing about how does somebody who is not part of this discussion understand what we do? They have to find a way of doing that. If we reject the one that actually it's about part of the economy then it becomes about the providers of service. And actually we need to challenge that and reject that, we just become the recalcitrant child and throwing everything back if we don't come back with something that's more constructive.

**[Eddie]** Let's talk about it in more specific terms then, about culture as a much wider disputed thing, from the Raymond Williams, TS Elliot definition through to something much more specific produced by a specific culture. But it comes down to the role of the arts institution and art. A different, very specific thing which is not in itself culture but something else. It's produced under different terms, it's situated within a cultural context. It's different, alright? How can you say that a cultural institution does not produce, does not create the conditions in which art itself is produced and by dint of the fact that there is, whatever you want to call it, a transaction between someone who goes into the gallery or someone who comes in to see your curatorial programming team here, you're making decisions which in themselves produce cultural value. At the very least they produce cultural values in which things are situated. So and then they are widely understood and then it's about making meaning so in that sense you are creating culture.

**[Clive]** Yes we are. But what I'm saying is that we are not providers of

culture. People bring a culture into the space and we make interventions into that culture, people are not cultureless until they come into this building. That's the point I'm trying to make. So if you carry that through to an education metaphor, there is that danger that people are education-less until they've been to school and if that starts to apply to our institutions then that's a really tricky one.

**[Chris]** But the sense is precisely that the government thinks it's providing health as a service through the healthcare system, and actually they're providing intervention whereas people are fundamentally healthy and you go to the healthcare system if you're not – if something is going wrong. And we really don't want to explore that too far because it does make an argument for saying actually all these organisations, DCMS, arts councils but the reality is they're added value in relation to something that already exists. And actually if we're broke then that added value is surplus to requirements and it's actually already out there and it's fine and it will still be there in 10 years time if you wipe out all that infrastructure culture will still be going on in Dundee. There wouldn't be the highlights, there wouldn't be the interventions, there wouldn't be the added value. there wouldn't be all that. But it's a very dangerous place to go

**[Brian]** If you say that a cultural centre is fostering the conditions under which culture becomes public then you're going to have to respond - or maybe it's interesting to respond - to the democratic question, Are you not selecting that culture that you want to become public and be validated and gain value. And then it's very interesting to be able to respond – 'No, because there are these different ways in which culture is being fostered. We have the idea that culture exists, but we can observe, that it is non-accessible to the public, and it doesn't gain the kind of refinement from a confrontation that a confrontation with a public brings so that we are providing a service, we are fostering this culture but we are also responsible to show that we are not fostering just the culture that we happen to like.' I think this is also something quite interesting, in terms of thinking of a different logic of measuring what's going on that no longer has anything to do with monetary profit and loss but it does have to do with judging how the public institution is exercising its mission to foster culture.

**[Anne]** And another layer on that is of course, we've been talking about gate keepers and choice, because it is all about public money. We wouldn't be having the same debate that we're having if it wasn't about public money and justification in terms of public sector investment because people like the DCA, and other organisations

have got a special status because they have been chosen by the public purse to deliver culture. It's a clear view of culture that is rewarded by the public purse and told to represent culture and I think in a cultural venue centre lots more arguments ... when it comes to a company that's rewarded for 2 years because their vision of culture is one that's recognised by the funder who then says here's the public purse. So there's more than one intermediary here, I suppose that's the point. And the fact that there is more than one intermediary in any event is a kind of challenge in the recession and a challenge in the way that the world is changing as well. In the case of Scotland at the moment we have got the government which makes certain decisions according to it's policy and it's not completely hands off, let's be clear. We've got the Arts Council and Scottish Screen which make decisions according to their policies and the local authorities. They're the gatekeepers and then it gets to Clive and then he presents the work. So we're talking in layers, we've actually got a heck of a lot of layers of choice and gatekeeping already going on which you could say gives a lot of protection to the public purse or you could say it makes it convoluted. Because the case actually should be quite simple. Whether it's about having that quotient or whatever you said, that number, or whether it's just about clarity so that the public can see what they're getting.

**[Tom]** Is there some value in looking at some of the language developed around public service broadcasting? To think of it in a sense of context, actually some... cultural centre are public sector broadcasters anyway, so there's already a language being used, and government is currently reasonably literate in it...

**[Clive]** I think that one of the really interesting discussions is the one that relates to the advocacy of open source and creative commons and the threat that that then produces to the BBC. And I've been really ripped by that discussion because instinctively open source and creative commons works for me, but the point at which that then blows something like the BBC out of the water would not be a cost that I think I would be prepared to take for producing something like a proper sense of open source. So there's a principal against pragmatism being weighed up there which I haven't got to the bottom of. I don't know if anybody else has got a better insight to that one? That's a really tricky area.

**[Anne]** That's why there is public service broadcasting though. And why the BBC and others have been funded to deliver a particular type of content service with public value and that's the same for the arts.

**[Clive]** But I guess has the BBC ever been able to articulate those things that we're trying to articulate here. I don't think it has. It's won out because it operates at a certain strata of society which has enabled it to defend itself again those attacks.

**[Tom]** The reason why it just about clings on is that it has that brand integrity; it has that ownership that means it retains that gravity. Which is actually something, on a very different level, that something like DCA has. Which is a form of capital that can be worked ..

**[Dave]** This discussion about broadcasting makes me think about multi channel and one of the things that's exercising us – it would be interesting to know what DCA and other people think about this - the fact that the organisation that I'm with, Cornerhouse, is rethinking itself – a bit of a reverse on the FACT situation, where you were an agency that took on a building. We're a building that wants to become more of an agency. And take the content that we're developing, to take that stuff online and the publications and to other venues.. Actually we've become much more interested in working outside of the building. And hence our projects in International Festivals ... It's that type of thing, having established DCA for 10 years, taking the values, the content of this place, to other places in the city.

**[Clive]** Internally we haven't really had a huge amount of discussion about this. Because what we're about is this building. And that's where we are now. What we do is we export what we aim to do within this building into other environments. But we do that partly as a way of consolidating what we do here in the building. I'm less concerned about that as being a goal of what we do, it's a way of getting support for what we do. I don't know about other venues or institutions how they perceive themselves.

**[Dave]** It's a sort of response to the fact that our building is rubbish. We've lost out to two big projects in Liverpool on the capital development.

**[Tom]** Like Watershed, Dick sees it as the brand value and the integrity of the local building he's developed means that it's provided with a power and it's invested in with a sense of responsibility by a broad public out there that visits it online. It becomes that amplifier and that broker for its digital spaces, because of the success of the building. Four and a half million people go through the website every year and however many thousands of people go into the building so there has to be a different kind of public that projects what it's doing in different types of work with different kinds of

audience. And actually, it's very good in the numbers game, in terms of making the case to the RDA or the local authority saying there are 5 million people that interact with us on an annual basis in a meaningful way.

**[Clive]** I think the whole case of the UK centres and what is claimed and what is considered to be an activation of their mission through what is then expressed in those terms is something that I do challenge quite a lot I think.

**[Tom]** But that's the point about the extent at which you have to believe it, you kind of separate yourself from what you really believe in order to develop these narratives to have a positive impact in public sector investment.

**[Clive]** Yeah, but I guess that's that duplicitousness we talked about this morning. That I desperately want to avoid the necessity of duplicitousness in terms progressing what the organisation does.

**[Morgan]** Would you like DCA to be one of those 6 sample organisations that, in terms of work that you do is included in that documentation. I mean they're all centres that we recognise in Scotland as well, would you not like the DCA to perhaps to have been platformed in such an environment? In that glossy booklet and then being looked at on that national UK level?

**[Clive]** The thing is, I don't know. Because we are a Scottish organisation and our policy position is determined in relation to Scottish policy. So the relevance of being positioned within a UK policy position is actually not that significant for us. So while it may be interesting, I'd rather we were working and making those comparisons with venues in the Netherlands, in Italy, in Serbia, that to me would be where it would be starting to get more interesting.

**[Anita]** I think within that, and you touched on this Tom right at the beginning, the local and the global. The relevance of your organisation while being outward looking and having that international, it's relevance is on the local and if it loses that that's where I think we become detached and go off the air and then I think, that's where I think the articulation of value and how you to whoever gets lost and gets murky, it's about your relevance to the people who want to enhance their experiences by being part of this.

**[Clive]** I think you can put it more crudely that that, it's our relevance to people who own it. You know? I don't own DCA, my senior management team don't own DCA. DCA is owned by a group of

people that constitute the board, that terrible stakeholder word. They own this project and we work for them to make this project work. And that is what we've articulated around that is that link between the international, between the national, between the local, and that sense of continuity, that it's about bringing things in and exporting things that actually reflect that. I'm really proud of that, that's a wonderful position to be in, but it's not me that's made that happen. It's a whole bunch of other people and it's a whole bunch of other people that will sustain that. So there is a consensus around that which I think is really important.

**[Eddie]** Can I just ask, why do you think it's more important to benchmark DCA against organisations in Holland or in Serbia, because I don't get that.

**[Clive]** Not to benchmark, but to actually understand that the challenges we face in articulating what we do are shared in those different contexts.

**[Eddie]** But why's that more relevant than understanding concepts in Bristol?

**[Clive]** It's not. It's more relevant in terms of having a wider set of comparators, because if one is looking at a certain amount of comparators that relate to an English model, which is about setting those things in the context of an English or UK funding system that's focused on England then actually that's less relevant. We've done it internally. I've presented comparisons of DCA with Cornerhouse, with Sheffield's cultural quarter, with Watershed, with Chapter, in order to explain to my board here what is significant about DCA. But actually in terms of understanding the bigger picture I'd rather expand that. I'm not afraid; I'm not ashamed of the idea of actually making those comparisons, I'm very happy to do them.

**[Gwilym]** I wonder whether we could borrow something from the environmental world here, kind of measuring for the arts and ecosystem stuff. I'm thinking about how often healthy environments are judged by certain indicator species. I know for example that to measure the health of motorway embankments they count certain types of beetles. I'm just wondering what our beetles are? Whether we can identify just a handful of beetles that we can measure that actually might be some distance away from your venue or just somewhere out there...

**[Clive]** I think to be honest that is probably the primary measure that most

of us use. It is counting those beetles on your map of it. I would say that it's right up there - that is the number one. That whatever statistics we generate we all have that species that we identify as being significant, to evaluate us and what it is we actually do.

**[Gwilym]** So I guess it's those people that support us who need to have that common belief, and value. That this little group of beetles or whatever they might be, that's the success. That's why it works.

**[Dave]** There's a difficulty I find that if I'm talking to the leader of Manchester City Council, Sir Richard Lees, who understands economic development, he likes to go to the cinema, he likes to go to the gallery, but he doesn't feel confident in talking about aesthetics or things to do with the ...?. So it's easy to fall back on his numbers, and economic impact, and very difficult or uncomfortable for him to talk about intrinsic value... so whilst I can understand what you're saying, whether they allowed you or not, I don't want to be insulting now, Richard would say exactly the same, it's a difficult one, how do you get them to believe, that what we're telling them is the truth.

**[Clive]** But I don't think we should always assume that people who are in charge of economic development have to be philistines.

**[Dave]** I'm not making that assumption at all.

**[Clive]** No, I'm not saying that you were Dave, the problem is though that we make this assumption that they don't have a cultural life and don't have cultural values. I mean the chair of my board Robin, who spoke downstairs, works in economic development, but he comes to see a lot of things here and has a view on them and actually that's incredibly valuable. His view may not be the same as the view of the programming team or anything but actually there is a dialogue, there is a debate that happens around that, and I think that we should demand that those people in those positions actually can't make decisions about economic policy without understanding culture. Without understanding the impact that it will have upon culture, you know, it works both ways. I went to the Tyneside Cinema event that was brought up earlier, and I don't know if anybody noticed but the first person who spoke before Peter Greenaway came on came up and said, 'I'm really proud that this place has now been opened, in fact the last time I was in here was when I had my hard hat on'. And it was like, ok, well you haven't been in here since it opened then? You haven't been to see a film. And you're the person that made this happen or has claimed to have made this happen. There's so much that's wrong with that.

Sorry, rant!

(Laughter)

**[Ben]**

The other side of that, in terms of we are sitting here today struggling with trying to find the language to talk about cultural values. So we can't expect those people to know what that language is. It's almost like we have to continue having these discussions to try and find out ourselves what the language is and I think we can start to use that to have conversations with those people so that they can then actually find a language to talk about it as well because the numbers bit, the economy bit is the easy bit and so people, politicians, policy-makers always default to that because you can. And it's trying to find the other language with the cultural value, we need to keep working at so that we can then start to use that and have alternative meetings and discussions.

**[Sarah]**

I was just thinking about that in relation to each other, how we do that with audiences, to be part of a discussion. There's something about. I feel quite unthreatened by the future really, I feel liberated by the current situation, and don't think that I'm really naive because everybody's got this huge worry and concern about where things are going and I just see such an impact already on the power of artists and projects that artists are doing and the conversations that people are having. Tramway's a real exciting place to work in at a time like this, we're absolutely readdressing that relationship between that international to local – they're bringing in the best of international artists that totally work with kids that live around the corner that haven't engaged with the building in 20 years. There's all these things going on and to me it's the old fashioned holistic idea of what happens – what a 21<sup>st</sup> century art centre is. And it's about bringing all these different things together, and creating lots of different spaces and that value cannot define and tell you what value is. Value is something that I think is and can change, it's part of something I just have this total utopian confidence perhaps that actually by engaging people in that process they themselves will convince the politicians and the politicians must become part of that process. And therefore there won't be problems because we'll all start to do it together and will identify what that is, and we're never going to come up with an answer around value by sitting in a room and discussing that. You know what I mean? Because we can't. That's the reason that we can't. That isn't why you should value it because that's the reason that we couldn't come up with it last week and that isn't why you should value it because you don't understand that unless you're part of a process and engage in that process I think part of our role is about thinking about the ways to make that happen but based around really great work. And so

some of the things that Tom said, I don't know what was the word that you used that was that kind of fault line thing, (desire lines) . And I think in a way that's what I quite liked about what you were talking about, I didn't have this concern that these are things that are oppressing us. Today the conversations that go on are absolutely part of that, but I think the fault line analogy was quite interesting because I think that's what a lot of us are trying to do. Bring things that connect together on all sorts of levels. When you work in a city like Glasgow you're just so aware of the issues of poverty, and the lack of opportunity and artists are just completely part of that fabric and we're just here to create that space, that platform for that to start happening. And not worry too much about articulating, it's like a hippy, but to believe in the process, go with the process, trust in the process. And I feel really positive about the process at the moment, despite all my colleagues in London here freaking out everytime I speak to them about the art world. There's new in the now, and that's great.

**[Brian]** You know, when there's an economic crisis at least two things happen. One motivation becomes detached from money, and it becomes really important where the motivation is gonna be because it's not gonna be there in money. And then this thing of the gift who starts to have a lot more value because it's not being wiped out by other things that compete for people's attention. And I totally think that this value is created, and the reason you can't really say what it is is because it has to be created in time so it's always different. What really motivates people, what really gives them a way to go on a path in their lives.

**[Dave]** I agree with the artistic agenda, the caveat which I've not got to connect yet is with the maths and the fact that I'm responsible for 103 people and their livelihoods. And when you're talking about the change in the economic thing and the change in people lives that's the tyranny for me. Because at the end of the day those people are looking to me to lead the organisation to make sure they've got some money coming in to feed themselves - so that's the sort of thing. But artistically it's liberating and exciting, and you know I'm very excited by developing the whole open source and all that. But how do I make that work in a business model that is inherently reliant on public subsidy for a long time.

**[Brian]** I think you've got to look for speakers to articulate that and make it look desirable. I mean they have to speak they have to publish, they have to appear in different media and they have to speak to the politicians. And I think that's gonna count because when the systems of accountancy that have been working so far fail, people

are gonna be looking, you know? They're going to be listening. And they will hear different voices, and some of them will be conservative, you know? A lot of them will be. And so you'll have to compete on that. I was wondering you need something like philosophers because philosophers have to speak a language that people can understand.

**[Sarah]** I mean there's money there isn't there, it's that kind of confusion thing, it's like somebody said to me the other day, I didn't think of that. You know that whole thing where the banks want us to generate us to spend money and to go and spend it ourselves and bypass that middle man. I sometimes think of doing that! But there is a sense that if you can create the argument. I just think the argument will come with having much much more of a relationship with the audience. And I suppose it's that that I feel we haven't really...we've just entered into that territory at the moment in terms of a project we're doing at Tramway. But I think that's what I'd be interested to see, how the debate has gone on for so long you know, between the sectors and the funders and there's still this massive dislocation of the audience, and the minute you start to trust that audience a lot more and that can be difficult, it can be whatever, I think that will become those voices. I mean the voices can't just come from the culture sector but they will also come up from individuals in all sorts of different sectors in terms of working through processes together.

**[Clive]** I think that's great. In effect that's a convincing articulation of your belief in those systems and those structures and that's what needs to happen. I have that terrible thing where I wake up at 4 o'clock in the morning in a cold sweat wondering whether or not a rich cultural life is actually a collective delusion that I'm participating in. And whether or not there is something over and above that that I need to be looking at.

**[Anita]** I think you maybe you need to get a hobby Clive! (laughter)

**[Clive]** Ok, that's told me. I'm conscious that it's 16:45 and I think I was aiming that we probably continue this conversation until about 5, partly because I know we've got to get Tom away to get onto a flight but I hadn't believed that we would be able to actually sustain as rich and as deep a conversation as this over this period of time so I wanted to thank everyone for contributing to that because it's been at least what I hoped we might have done today and I think once I've had a chance to at least line up some of these things in my head I expect actually it will have been more than I would've expected from today. So thank you all very much for that. Taking

Eddie's hint. I'm slightly nervous that we've lost Tom because I wanted obviously to make sure that he's able to get away on time and also that we can thank him. Is he outside? Well, ok. Are there any closing points? Does anybody, apart from me, want to have the last word?

Anybody who hasn't said anything who's really really upset and angry about the whole scenario. No? That's good.

Ok, well, I don't know where we go next, I'm intrigued by it, I like the fact that we have a lot of people in this room whose focus isn't on just anguishing over these things, it's just on getting on and doing stuff. Because I think that hopefully will remain the majority and I think that's really really important. So I guess all I wanted to say really at this stage is, you know, thanks to everyone for coming along, thanks for sustaining yourselves through what, I suppose on lots of levels, is kind of a gruelling thing – sitting in a hot room and trying to keep a focus on these things. But especially to thank Tom and to thank Brian for coming in and actually providing us with the key to actually allowing us to open up some of these thoughts and some of these ideas. Which I hope many of us will be able to put into practice in terms of what we do next.

So, in the time-honoured tradition, I'd quite like you all to give yourselves a round of applause and to give Tom and Brian a round of applause.

[Applause] And thanks to DCA!

**[Applause and fade]**

**Speakers**

Clive Gillman  
Morgan Petrie  
Brian Holmes  
Anne Bonnar  
Eddie Berg  
Anita Clark  
Dave Moutrey  
Chris Fremantle  
Judith Winter  
Gwilym Gibbons  
Francis McKee  
David Watt  
Amanda Catto  
Tom Fleming

Ben Spencer  
Sarah Munro