Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning:
A Bridge Over the Fortress Wall

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Maia Mackney, confirm that this thesis, *Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning: A Bridge Over the Fortress Wall,* is all my own work. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed:

Date:

Abstract

This thesis examines issues of sustainability in the work of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning (BGCL). BGCL occupies a contested space between two very different political agendas and communities. On the one hand, the Barbican is sited close to the Capital's affluent financial centre, and its programming is designed to appeal to an international audience. On the other, there is deprivation and poverty in the local area. This thesis is interested in how a sustainable programme of arts activity can be created with local communities within this context. It interrogates arts projects supported by BGCL, each of which has been chosen to illuminate different aspects of sustainability. It argues that sustainability in this context depends on the interplay between both the temporal and spatial dimensions of the work. Drawing on the work of Rosi Braidotti, sustainability is shown to be concerned with 'the embodied and embedded nature of the subject' whose 'sensibility to and availability for changes or transformation are directly proportional to (their) ability to sustain the shifts without cracking' (2011, 310). Understood in this context the sustainability of the organisation, the project and the BGCL's engagement with local communities is concerned with flexibility and resilience to change. This suggests that arts practice that takes place over time, and with an understanding of place and context, both enables participants to be supported as part of a process of 'becoming' and allows the department to build meaningful relationships with local communities. This will also be shown to depend on the relationality of space, where the relations between people, the local environment, the local and the global are implicated in BGCL's participatory arts practices.

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Prelude: Voices from the Barbican

Claudia sits sipping a cup of coffee whilst watching her daughter crawl on the soft carpet of the Barbican foyer. She comes here every day to escape the confines of being a new mother in a sometimes-lonely studio flat in Great Arthur Tower on the Golden Lane Estate. Space and warmth. Enough space for her daughter to learn to walk. Company - the company of other young mothers who she has come to notice are using the Barbican in the same way as her.

John doesn't use the Barbican, he only walks past it. He says, 'it isn't a case of feeling excluded, it isn't an issue for me, I'm just not interested all that much'.

Bill and Christine live in Harrowing House tower block on the Golden Lane Estate. They retired to the bustle of the city from the quiet and culturally isolated suburbs of a town in Gloucestershire. They like to walk to Guildhall over the walkways in the Barbican complex. Christine likes the higher levels because they rescue her from the pollution on the ground which aggravates her asthma. Bill and Christine have an easy relationship with culture and use the library, free services, exhibitions; they would go to the Barbican more if the programming wasn't so 'staid'. 'Small c conservative' says the retired ad agency art

director who did retirement in reverse to the norm. They like Café Oto and Vortex in Dalston.

Ali sometimes sleeps on the sixth floor in the afternoon – no one moves him along.

Many years before the birth of her baby Claudia describes how she ran, lost, out of breath and in tears, to try and find the cinema. She was going to meet her (future) husband. Like many before her she feels frustrated and uselessly lost in what has fondly been described as the 'jungles of Angkor Watt set in a multi-storey car park' (Heathcote 2004, 41). Years later she thinks of the Barbican as a safe haven and throws an impromptu second birthday party for her daughter in the foyer. No one asks her to move on.

Hiroko works for an international hedge fund overlooking the Barbican and thinks the Barbican Centre looks dated and she doesn't want to go. Full stop.

John, who drinks in the Two Brewers on the Peabody Estate, performed as one of two hundred extras in Deborah Warner's version of Julius Caesar back in 2005.

Nick has lived on the Golden Lane Estate for thirteen years and has worked in the City for the past twenty-five, 'driving bankers around as opposed to being driven, mind' (Nick, 11th October 2012). He has been to the cinema at the Barbican a couple of times and to the James Bond exhibition. Nick feels it's a shame that previously all social housing owned by the Corporation of London changed when they brought in 'right to buy':

It's sort of broken the community down a bit. People buy flats to let out and move in and out in a matter of months. It's hard to build an inclusive community when that's the case. And everything's become so bloody – sorry, I shouldn't be swearing – so bloody trendy lately. I mean, God… I feel it's a great shame that ordinary people who've lived here all their lives are being pushed out to the suburbs because they can't afford to live in Central London, because there isn't

any affordable housing – social housing – I think it's a great shame. This thing

about Islingtonites – that's very much upper middle class/middle class – it's fine,

but it's just sort of spreading all over the place… Everywhere's trendy now.

Here… it's like Hoxton Square, I mean just a few years ago, my God, it was just

an ordinary, normal part of London, but God knows how much a normal pint of

beer costs there. Probably people don't drink beer there any more, probably…

cocktails, or something. Sorry, I'm sounding like a grumpy old man[1].

Nick isn't grumpy; he is alert, engaged and witty and his words perfectly capture a

fundamental challenge the Barbican Centre faces in attempting to build long-lasting

relationships with local communities.

I am in the Pit Theatre in October 2012, at the very beginning of my doctoral journey

at the Barbican Centre. I am watching a sharing of a week's worth of laboratory research

and development work which is part of Paul Hamlyn Foundation special initiative *Artworks -*

Developing Practice in Participatory Settings, whose London pathfinder is based at Barbican

Guildhall Creative Learning (BGCL)*.* The sharing is the result of a project where artist, writer

and curator Isabel de Vasconcellos listened to the stories of a handful of Barbican locals

about how they use the Barbican Centre, if they do at all and how they engage with the

local area. They were asked; 'How do you use the Barbican?' Isabel thought this a simple

question on the surface but one that, layer by layer, reveals not only how a person uses a

physical space but also how they understand their engagement with culture. The sharing

makes me think of how I use the Barbican. I was introduced to theatre early by my mother

and father and saw Kenneth Branagh in Hamlet when I was nine years old at the Barbican

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[1] Personal Interview. Nick, Barbican Centre 11th October 2012

Centre. I liked the sword fights. Twenty-six years on and I still like the sword fights but I am also trying to grapple, explore and disturb the complex cultural, socio-economic and artistic factors that influence people's engagement with culture and how these can determine sustainable approaches to participatory arts projects.

Many years later in 2017, having moved myself and my family away from London to a rural and culturally isolated town on the south coast of England, I visit the Barbican with my two-and-a-half-year-old son and six-month-old daughter to go on a Barbican architecture tour and visit the department again to work on a project. It strikes me, perhaps surprisingly for the first time, what an extraordinary local resource the Barbican Centre is for communities and I consider why it is that some local people feel disinclined to both take ownership and make good use of it. It has taken a move to a town that is comparatively financially affluent, albeit considerably more culturally disadvantaged than some communities in the London boroughs surrounding the Barbican, to realise the significance and importance of the work of Creative Learning in building a bridge over the Barbican's vast and monolithic fortress walls. This thesis represents an attempt to understand the significance of cultural practice to communities over time and takes the Barbican as its subject.

Chapter One: The Barbican Centre and the Development of a Walled City

Part One: An early focus on sustainability

The year before I commenced my doctoral research, I ran a theatre project with a children's rights organisation, Afrikids, which is based in Bolgatanga, northern Ghana. Their UK fundraising department aims to make itself redundant by 2020, and I became interested in the development model Afrikids uses for its work in Ghana. Although the Ghanaian head office will continue to develop work and support local communities, at the time it was their hope that each project would be self-sustaining, both in terms of resources and through active grassroots engagement by local communities. Watching the effect of this development model on local Bolgatanga communities, and observing the very strong sense of ownership the local residents had over the development of the projects supported by Afrikids, I began to consider how issues of sustainability might similarly affect the programming choices of large cultural organisations in the UK. It was with this interest in facilitating enduring positive change in local communities through the arts that I began my time at the Barbican Centre in October 2012. Although my research has inevitably taken me in a variety of different directions, this enthusiasm and curiosity for the ways in which an arts organisation can contribute to sustainable change has dominated my research. I began with the premise that there needs to be long-term benefits from Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning's work with, and for, participants.

Given the Barbican's location, international reputation and participatory work, it is in a unique position to plan high quality participatory practice that can effect sustainable change in the surrounding boroughs. Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning Department operates within the context of a monumental and international arts centre offering a global

programme of activities. Its position within this context creates many challenges for the Creative Learning Department, but being part of a major cultural organisation also provides the opportunity for long-term engagement with the local area. They have found, however, that engaging diverse audiences in a sustainable way has proved challenging for BGCL. This thesis aims to address this issue head-on; I am interested in how they might fulfil both cultural and social goals in the long term.

In this thesis, I investigate how a sustainable programme of arts activities can be created with local communities within the context of the Barbican. In this thesis, I will consider the social, ethical and economic components of sustainability by interrogating arts projects supported by Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning Department, each of which has been chosen to illuminate different aspects of sustainability. From the beginning of the research process I was interested in how participatory arts has both a temporal and spatial dimension, and that the long-term benefits and sustainability of the work of BGCL depend upon the interplay between them. During the research process I was inspired by the work of Rosi Braidotti. Her work questions ideas of sustainability, and it enabled me to consider change in what she describes as 'the embodied and embedded nature of the subject' whose 'sensibility to and availability for changes or transformation are directly proportional to (their) ability to sustain the shifts without cracking' (2011, 310). Braidotti's work, as I shall explain later in the thesis, enabled me to bring together ideas of sustainability with identity, and to consider how the arts might support people in changing over time.

The material circumstances in which participatory arts take place are important, and gentrification in London has become increasingly prevalent in the media and in cultural analysis of London communities. To date, there has not been any published research

conducted which conceptualises the ways in which the education programmes of arts

organisations, including Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning, respond to inequalities

exacerbated by gentrification through their work. This study aims to contribute towards an

understanding of how participatory arts in general, and BGCL in particular, might engage

with local communities without exacerbating the inequalities associated with gentrification,

urban regeneration and the displacement of local communities. My research examines how

BGCL plans a sustainable programme of activities within the context in which urban cities

are being gentrified by the arts. This analysis therefore contributes to the fields of

participatory and socially engaged art, cultural policy and theories of cultural sustainability.

Throughout the process of my research, I have been concerned to develop an

understanding of how BGCL might negotiate time and place in their programme of activity,

and how these negotiations create more equitable and sustainable socio-spatial relations

with the communities in which they work.

In this chapter I shall introduce the history and development of the Barbican Centre,

and locate Guildhall School of Music and Drama and my research within both its historical

context and the current cultural climate. The Barbican was part of a postwar utopian vision

for London, but it is also a fortress, and it can be experienced as a place of exclusion. This

paradox means that the Creative Learning Programme always occupies a compromised

space, and how this is negotiated became a central theme in my research and in this thesis.

In this chapter I shall explore how issues of sustainability define the narratives surrounding

participation and engagement at Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. As a Collaborative

Doctoral Award holder, I also held a very particular position within the organisation, and

reflecting on my own position within the BGCL department is part of the spatial and

temporal story of this research. [2]

Barbican: An Urban Utopia?

The social meanings of the Barbican Estate and Centre and how these have changed over time provide an interesting contextual platform for this analysis. The Barbican Estate and Centre were developed between the years of 1964 and 1982, and however they are perceived now, they were conceived as a Corbusian utopian vision for postwar London. How far the Barbican development might be considered utopian now is subject to debate, and in particular there are questions raised about which social demographic has benefitted from the Barbican's utopian beginnings.

The history of the Barbican sheds light on its social meanings today, and why it appears to occupy such an ambiguous place in London's cultural landscape. Prior to the Second World War the Barbican was an area of both residential and commercial use. In *The Barbican: Sitting on History* (1990) Jennifer Clarke documents that during the latter part of the nineteenth century as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, the area saw massive industrial growth and dwindling residential populations. In 1851 the local population of the Cripplegate Ward, for example, was 14,361 dropping to 'a mere 2,000 [...] with 21,000

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[2] I obtained consent from the university's Ethics Committee prior to starting this research. Additionally, I was bound by Barbican Guildhall's own ethics process; this included obtaining a consent form from each participant at the beginning of the project. This form included consent to use photographs, audio recordings and videos. The names of the participants included in the projects I feature in this thesis have been anonymised in order to protect their identity.

actually employed in the local area' by 1891 (Clarke 1990, 50). Despite dwindling residential populations, however, Clarke notes that there 'were still enough people to justify some new "social" housing' (1990, 5). Cripplegate Ward Boys' School was built on Bridgewater Square and a Mission was developed in Golden Lane to tackle the poverty of the area. Geoffrey Holden Pike, who documented the area in the late nineteenth century, described the inhabitants of Golden Lane and Whitecross Street:

> 30% are costermongers and itinerant street traders; 20% are labourers and poor women who live by washing, charring and needlework; 30% are either paupers or persons of doubtful occupation and the remaining 20% are industriously wearing out their lives in the attempt to earn a livelihood (Holden Pike, cited in Clarke 1990, 51).

One such resident, coincidentally, was my grandfather, Leon Edgar Mackney, who was born and lived with eleven siblings in a one-bedroom social housing flat on Roscoe Street between the years of 1886 and 1901, moving in 1901 around the corner to Langton Street where he lived until 1917, when he joined World War One and left for East Africa. The Peabody Estate on Roscoe Street, built during the London slum clearance of the late nineteenth century by a social visionary, George Peabody, is not a hundred yards from where the Barbican Silk Street entrance now sits. Forty years after my grandfather left the area, the Blitz in World War Two hit the Barbican and destroyed the Peabody Estate on Roscoe Street and much of the surrounding area. 29th December 1940 saw a massive bombing campaign of the City of London, and the obliteration of the Barbican area. Bombs created a 'no man's land of rubble' and destroyed St Giles Church, Central Telegraph Office,

residential housing and many shops, pubs and warehouses (Clarke 1990, 58). The Ironmongers Hall off Aldergate Street, the Fire Station in Redcross Street and some sections of the old City Wall were saved. For several years following the Second World War the Barbican was a deserted wasteland, home to only wild flowers and shrubs. By 1955 architects Chamberlain, Powell and Bon presented a preliminary report for the viability of a residential estate within the Barbican area and, by 1957, the Court of Common Council accepted recommendations to redevelop the area.

Whilst the Barbican at first appears to be a product of the late 1960s and early 1970s, David Heathcote argues in *Barbican: Penthouse Over the City* that this disguises the fact that it was the result of planning that supported the 'ideals of pre and postwar efforts to modernise London' (2004, 41). The Barbican went through seven planning iterations with each new plan representing 'an ever more complex attempt to realise the changing aspirations of a society that had an increasingly complex, optimistic and affluent view of the future' (Heathcote 2004, 41). Based on an architectural vision of Le Corbusier, Chamberlain, Powell and Bonn attempted to capture something of the spirit and vision of Le Corbusier modernism. One major point of discussion was whether to include an arts centre, cultural facilities and schools in the plans. Heathcote states that one of the great successes of the Barbican development is the way in which it represents the creation of 'luxurious urbanism' and a 'Corbusian vision of the good life' (2004, 224). However even in the 1956 plan it was apparent that this 'could not be easily combined with either subsidised housing or with the inclusion of schools and cultural facilities' (Heathcote 2004, 108). The tension not only related to the noise pollution and transient tourist population cultural facilities might create, but also the concern that social housing might detract from a 'good class of residential community' (Heathcote 2004, 108). Even the 2012 Barretts Solicitors 'Guide to

Buying in the Barbican' which was distributed to prospective buyers, states that 'the south of the Barbican was generally for City executives. The north of the Barbican, with its concentration on small flats and bed-sits, was intended for their clerks – it was thought the two classes shouldn't have to meet in the lifts'.[3]

On April 15th 1971 the Barbican Arts Centre Project was finally agreed by seventy-eight to fifty-nine votes with building commencing later that year. In 1977 Guildhall School of Music and Drama relocated to its current Silk Street venue, with its entrance next door to the unfinished arts centre. The residential estate was developed between the years 1964-1975 and following a long struggle between planners and the City of London, the Barbican Centre was completed in 1982.

Heathcote describes the history of the Barbican to 'encapsulate the struggle between the forces of conservative and progressive urbanism in the reconstruction of postwar London' (2004, 33). The development has been described as 'utopian' due to its plans for the provision of accommodation, and the development of a new living environment in an area destroyed by World War Two bombs meant compromising the desire to build more profitable commercial property[4]. On closer examination of the notes from planning meetings during the early stages of development the City of London voiced a concern for 'the necessity for reviewing the voting qualification in the city to prevent a further decrease in the list of voters' ('Report from Public Health Committee of Corporation of London 1953', 1). This was most likely to be the motivation behind the costly development of living accommodation rather than buildings for commercial business use. The development of residential property was a compromise which yielded less profit but

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[3] Slide 6 27.12.12 http://www.barbicanliving.co.uk/h6g.html
[4] 16/5/2018 http://www.barbicanlifeonline.com/2016/11/28/our-concrete-utopia/

provided an electorate in the City. The architects Chamberlain, Powell and Bonn (C,P&B) were tasked with ascertaining the viability of 'providing living accommodation for a large number of people who could be expected to pay an economic rent' (Chamberlain, Powell and Bonn 1959, 2). Heathcote argues that this decision was political. In order to justify the provision of accommodation on economic terms the planners did not prioritise social housing but designed accommodation to house affluent would-be voters:

> The Barbican had to be an unsubsidised estate for middle and upper income
>
> groups in order to buy off the corporation which were in favour of wholesale
>
> office development on the site. By building housing for wealthy tenants there
>
> was some prospect that the corporation might make some money from the site.
>
> This sugar-coated the pill for those unwilling to accept the development on the
>
> grounds that it was necessary for the corporation to have an electorate within
>
> its boundaries of sufficient size to form a significant part of its electorate
>
> (Heathcote 2004, 184).

This dramatically changed the socio-economic make-up of the area, in the first instance through the decision to build properties which could yield commercial rents.

Human geographer Tim Cresswell suggests that urban planning and architecture hold considerable influence in the social construction of place. Urban planners contribute to engineering the socio-economic demographic of an area and subsequently the social meanings of place. Cresswell argues in *Place: An Introduction* (2015) that place is a social construct, like space and time:

> [L]ooking at the social construction of a place involves explaining the unique
>
> attributes of a place by showing how these places are instances of wider
>
> processes of the construction of place in general under conditions of capitalism,

patriarchy, heterosexism, postcolonialism and a host of other structural

conditions (Cresswell 2015, 51).

Cresswell mirrors geographer David Harvey's opinion that 'the only interesting question that

can then be asked is: by what social processes is place constructed?' (Cresswell 2015, 29).

Urban planning has been closely linked to both social change and social engineering

and this is particularly true of the Barbican area. In *Visions of the City: Utopianism, Power*

and Politics in Twentieth Century (2005) David Pinder argues that Le Corbusier, a key

influence of Barbican architects C,P&B, 'sought to change urban space as a means of

instituting wider social change' (62). CIAM (Congres Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne)

was founded in 1928 as a platform for modern architecture, and, according to Pinder, many

architects 'claimed that it was through architecture and planning that current urban and

social crises could be resolved' (Pinder 2005, 62). It was in the spirit of modernist

architecture and a modernist architectural utopian vision that C,P&B began their plans for

the Barbican Centre. On what terms did they negotiate this 'social change', and who were

the intended beneficiaries? Even from early planning iterations it seemed unlikely the

beneficiaries would be of the same demographic as George Peabody's tenants not half a

century earlier.

By 1974 when the complex was complete, it was already attracting criticism. One

vocal critic was architectural critic Reyner Banham, who argued in *New Society* that the

ideology behind a 'Corbusian vision of the good life' was out of date (Banham 1975, 222).

Banham argued that the Barbican has become an isolated area for the privileged few:

The Barbican is Britain's largest voluntary ghetto - but not for the reasons of

high rent alone. It matches in its style and planning, architecture and amenities,

what is now the prime educated middle class dream of a good life in the city,

established as a standard modern future by Le Corbusier (Banham 1975, 73).

The Barbican was seen by Banham 'as a kind of architectural treachery, whereby the

language of modernism was used to bolster the values that the ethical agenda of the

discourse of modernism was most anxious to distance itself from' (Heathcote 2004, 224).

The Architecture Review ran an editorial 'Barbican Development in the City of London:

Model for a Short-Lived Future' which stated that:

> ruefully in the 1970s we are coming to accept that the premise which underpins
>
> the vision is untrue. We are now mid-term in this exceedingly privileged area,
>
> we are coming to perceive that more light and air are no longer substitutes for
>
> that thinning of the social weave, that loss of personal identity, not to mention
>
> that coarsening of the visible man-made world which the Corbusian reality has
>
> brought. 'Instant city', vast monolithic, into which we passively slot, no longer
>
> attracts (Cantacuzino 1973, 67).

The Barbican was being held accountable for not representing the ideologies of the

architectural style in practice. Banham argued that, in a modern context, architecture ought

not to be socially exclusive but be accessible and affordable for all. The Barbican Estate and

Centre embraced a modernist vision for urban planning, both aesthetically and in terms of

the functionality of the built space, but in planning and in practice it privileged only a few

social milieu and classes. This led me to consider the role of architecture and urbanism in

social engineering over time and question the use of the word 'utopian' to describe the

development of the area.

The discussion surrounding the Barbican's development encapsulates what Pinder

describes as the 'frequent division between utopian thinkers primarily interested in

questions of social and physical space, who have designed cities, architectural fantasies, and those mainly concerned with imagining social change' (2005, 22). In analysing the link between social change and urban planning Pinder highlights the distinction between an 'ideal city' and 'utopia proper', the former 'having more in common with the plans for geometric layouts' which according to Banham 'was often conspicuously indifferent to the social system to which it gave shelter' whereas the latter 'is often obsessional about the proposed social system, but not too concerned about architectural form' (Pinder 2005, 22). The description of the Barbican as a 'utopian' project therefore relates to 'utopias of spatial form' as opposed to 'utopias of social process'. Echoing David Harvey's theory of utopias of spatial form, Pinder asserts that 'utopias of spatial form…project an ideal spatial order as means of securing social processes so that the dialectics of social change are excluded, while social stability is assured by a fixed spatial form' (2005, 23). This is demonstrated in C,P&B's key concept in designing the Barbican, which Heathcote sees in theatrical terms:

> A vision of gracious living was the dramatisation of space, the transformation
>
> of space into performance area, or put more simply the design of spaces that
>
> fostered social interaction and made people look good (Heathcote 2004, 136).

In contrast, social change was not a high priority for planners and the City of London, who ostensibly intended to keep different classes separate through architectural plans in which the more élite apartments used separate lift systems.

   In prioritising luxurious urbanism C,P&B and the City of London acted as architects of social landscapes. In *Theatre & the City* (2009) Jen Harvie argues that 'the city organises us as groups or individuals and reinforces or challenges social hierarchies' (8). This is true of the Barbican area. The design of the luxury accommodation on the Barbican Estate, aimed to yield high rents for City of London, resulted in a local population of middle to upper income

groups. The socio-economic landscape of the area changed dramatically following World War Two and the rebuilding of the Barbican. This was compounded by the fact that in the 1980s Margaret Thatcher gave local authority council tenants the 'right to buy' their flats. Although the Barbican Estate flats were let at commercial rents and were not 'affordable housing' for council tenants, they were initially owned by City of London, therefore tenants were included in the opportunity to buy their flats at a reduced rate. The result of this scheme is still felt in the area today; most flats on the Barbican Estate are privately owned and sell for between 700,000 pounds and 1.9 million pounds. This has had an impact on the people who attend events at the Barbican Centre. Throughout this thesis I am interested in how both space and time are significant to issues of cultural sustainability and how they have influenced the ways in which BGCL engage with local communities three decades after the opening of the arts centre.

Barbican: The Fortress

For centuries the word 'Barbican' was used to denote the area surrounding what is now the Barbican estate and Arts Centre. As early as the 15th Century, 'Barbican' spanned the breadth of three ancient wards: Aldersgate, Cripplegate Within and Cripplegate Without. Ever since the Roman invasion of Britain in AD43 the area surrounding Barbican was associated with defensive architectural structures. The City's Roman wall and its defences can still be seen today in the streets surrounding the modern Barbican complex. Perhaps it was not surprising then that the architectural structure of the estate and arts centre came to represent the defensive history of the area visually with vast walls of concrete separating Silk Street from the interior of the arts centre. Pedestrians can see the

Barbican Centre and estate from a great distance, but often struggle to find their way into and around the building. Someone interested in entering the building can spend a great deal of time wandering around the moat-like Silk Street before stumbling across the unassuming entrance to the centre. I sometimes wonder even now if Silk Street is in fact not the main entrance to the enormous brutalist building and that I have missed some vital induction which might provide me with information relating to the position of a more suitable entrance. I query whether, despite many years of visiting the building, I am in fact unaware of the appropriate entrance and am visiting it via a secret back passage.

The word 'Barbican', meaning 'the outer defence of a castle or walled city' or 'fortress', captures the issues surrounding the ways in which the Barbican Centre attempts to engage with and diversify audiences from outside of the monolithic 'walled city'[5]. How many, like Claudia whom I introduced in the prelude to this thesis running lost and crying to meet her date, have found the Barbican's brutalist maze potentially oppressive or daunting? What does this mean for diversifying audiences and inviting them to enter a walled city they might not have visited before? David Heathcote states that the Barbican was famously designed for the benefit of its affluent residents:

> (Barbican was designed) to be experienced as a resident, to reflect their sense of
> self and to be convenient to them. These factors go some way to explaining
> what became perceived as the awful pedestrian experience of public access to
> the arts centre. In reality it has become a shibboleth, since what can be

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[5] Oxford Dictionary of English 2nd Edition

objectionable about walking to the arts centre above the formal lake and

gardens of the Barbican interior? (Heathcote 2004, 38).

Certainly, Bill and Christine, also introduced in the prelude to this thesis, enjoyed the ability

to get lost and find their way within the walled city. But what of people less adventurously

inclined to explore the concrete mazes on offer around the arts centre and estate? What of

people less comfortable with visiting a cultural centre?

The Museum of London, whose home has been the Barbican for more than forty

years, is relocating to Smithfield Market by 2021. The motivation behind the costly

relocation is not only a desire to extend the space to make room to house unseen relics, but

also to allay concerns about access to the Barbican being off-putting for day trippers and

tourists unfamiliar with the local area. In 2015, museum director Sharon Ament confirmed

in an interview for *The Evening Standard* that the decision to relocate was partly influenced

by visitors struggling to find the museum in the maze of the Barbican. Ament stated that

'the existing building wraps around other buildings and its entrance is less than wonderful.

The front face is actually a brick roundabout. While curious and eccentric, it is hard for

people to get in'[6].

The space surrounding the Barbican Centre is representative of more than a

geographical tendency towards lost and aimless wandering; it is also an example of a period

in Britain's cultural history in which the priority was not increasing access to arts activity but

rather to celebrate 'high art' for élite audiences. The cultural facilities were designed to

service the clientele living in the luxury flats surrounding the complex and tourists visiting

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[6] http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/museum-of-london-going-ahead-with-70m-move-to-smithfield-10138884.html. 6/4/2015

London and the programming of internationally renowned artists in the concert halls and theatres. Seen in this light the metaphor of the fortress, when the Barbican Centre first opened its doors, was not only an architectural point of exclusion for the many, but more significantly, a safe and protected space for the few.

Socio-economic complexities of the local area, the surrounding boroughs

What does the urban development of the Barbican in 1970 mean in terms of sustained engagement with local communities in 2018? Are BGCL's efforts to increase engagement, access and participation in the arts and their attempt to diversify audiences, an uphill struggle to counter the effects of compromises made in the planning stage of the development? The Barbican provides a geographical example of some issues prevalent in the cultural policy and planning of the late twentieth century that has inevitably both influenced and determined the nature of engagement in participatory art within the arts centre in 2015. I am interested in how the Barbican negotiates the socio-economic complexity of the local area and, in particular, the considerable discrepancy between the affluence of the City of London and the poverty that also exists in the surrounding boroughs. Throughout this thesis, I shall investigate the effect an international arts centre might have on urban deprivation and how this is significant to a discussion about sustainable engagement with local communities.

Jen Harvie argues that there exists a 'complicit relationship between (monumental) theatre(s) and market ideologies' (2009, 29). Harvie cites the Barbican Centre, Royal National Theatre and Sydney Opera House as notable examples of monumental theatres. She argues that although these venues demonstrate a city's investment in the arts and a

commitment to its citizens' cultural participation, they also may 'actually compromise citizens' well-being' (Harvie 2009,30). The central tenet of her argument relates to the fact that whilst a monumental theatre aims to represent a civic achievement, this cultural success may not be accessible to everyone. Not only does much of the city's population not possess the cultural capital to feel included in large-scale creative ventures, but worse still, these monumental venues might in fact eventually displace existing communities. She suggests that theatres can represent the values civic authorities hope to encourage, such as affluence and élitism. She argues that, like in the case of the Barbican, urban planners and town councils develop cultural venues to gentrify poorer urban areas. This, she believes, is often done without consideration for the effect this may have on existing communities who might subsequently be displaced. The fact that the Barbican Centre was built on an area which was destroyed by bombs during World War Two, and the subsequent decision not to replace low-cost housing that was there before, has impacted on the local communities. The complex is thus positioned politically within its environment:

> Barbican brought tower blocks of expensive private apartments and an arts
> complex where programming is arguably aimed less at comparatively poor
> immigrants still neighbouring the Barbican to the north and east and more at
> those on its southern flank: comparatively wealthy city workers. The issue is not
> just that monumental theatres literally displace already dispossessed urban
> citizens - though that's bad enough. What these theatres reinforce is a set of
> ideological priorities that legitimate so-called free market economies and
> priorities, even where those might not be best for all (Harvie 2009, 31).

When the Barbican Centre was completed in 1982, prior to the subsequent gentrification

and urban regeneration of the area, critics commented on the contrasting socio-economic

make-up of the surrounding areas. Heathcote argues that this created a divided community:

> most damagingly critics made hay with the central tension of the Barbican - the
>
> uneasy relationship between public and private spaces. Critics rightly contrasted
>
> the wealthy exclusivity of the estate with the residential deprivation surrounding
>
> it and the hidden isolation of what was supposed to be an international arts
>
> centre. The idea that the Barbican was a ghetto of high culture trapped in a
>
> beached liner accurately reflected the public experience of the development
>
> (Heathcote 2004, 37).

The metaphor of the Barbican as a ghetto of high culture is apposite and relevant to my

analysis. Whilst Barbican did include lunchtime concerts for local workers and Royal

Shakespeare Company performances some of the programming choices were a little more

obscure and, perhaps, less accessible to local young people. In 1984 the programming for

the Barbican Centre art gallery included an exhibition entitled; 'Munch and the

Workers/Tradition and Renewal: Contemporary Art in the German Democratic Republic' on

display between February and April 1984. The gallery featured an exhibition later that year

entitled; 'Painting in Newlyn 1880-130/Patrick Heron'. The first performance at the Barbican

Theatre was a Royal Shakespeare Company production of *Henry IV parts I and II* directed by

Trevor Nunn, and the first decade of the Barbican Centre saw international artists and arts

organisations feature to critical acclaim, including Leonard Bernstein, the London Symphony

Orchestra and numerous performances by resident theatre company the Royal Shakespeare

Company. In 1986 Prince Charles and Princess Diana opened Britain's first and largest ever

festival of Japanese culture in the UK, called *Tradition in Japan Today*. These programming

choices reflected the artistic excellence of the venue, and appealed to international audiences, but weren't always balanced by events and performances which were accessible to local audiences and families from the surrounding boroughs.

The accusation that the Barbican Centre was a ghetto of high culture gestures towards the ability of large cultural venues to sustainably embed into local economic and cultural structures. The Barbican is not the only London cultural centre which has struggled to integrate successfully into local economies. The Globe, which was completed in 1996, and the development of the South Bank were similarly contentious. In their 2002 publication *Cultural production, place and politics on the South Bank of the Thames,* Peter Newman and Ian Smith argued that the cultural quarter on the South Bank was not utilised by its residents:

> the land-value impacts of large venues and sites of cultural consumption work against small and marginal cultural enterprises. Building up the image of a cultural quarter may itself encourage high value uses and thus operate against small firm relocation or start-ups. We saw that the council had only limited success in developing training programmes to encourage more local residents into the culture industries. The developments along the South Bank are not (yet) embedded in the local economy (Newman & Smith 2002, 22).

Similarly, the Barbican Centre came under fire for the development of an area, the relocation of middle and upper classes to areas surrounding the cultural centre which had the effect of bringing the living cost of the area up, and following Thatcher's 'right to buy', pricing out any locals who had managed to secure the few subsidised flats on the estate. Nick, whom I quoted in the prelude speaking thirty years later in October 2012, said 'it's a

great shame that ordinary people who've lived here all their lives are being pushed out to the suburbs because they can't afford to live in Central London, because there isn't any affordable housing – social housing – I think it's a great shame' (Nick 11th October 2012). What Nick is discussing is the issue of gentrification in London following urban regeneration schemes. His words capture the resulting displacement of communities following gentrification. These are issues which are of central importance to an analysis of models of sustainable engagement with local communities and will be explored throughout this thesis.

The Arts Centre: shifting cultural agendas: from high art to neoliberal creative cities

The terms 'creative cities' and 'creative class' were developed by urban theorist and US academic Richard Florida in his 2002 book *The Rise of the Creative Class and How it's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* and his subsequent 2005 book *Cities and The Creative Class.* Florida argues that a creative class of people, imbued with creative talent, are now at the forefront of a postindustrial climate. One of the ways members of this class influence urban areas is through attracting other creative individuals to migrate to these cultural hubs. Prior to this cultural shift, workers would move to areas based on industry and often industrial jobs, whereas groups of creative individuals now choose to live in areas which appeal to them because of their diversity, tolerance of individualism and creative opportunities (Florida, 2005). Florida argues that there is now a prevalent tendency for creative companies to move to areas which are populated by this 'Creative Class' thus creating a thriving economy based on people who are able to work not just in the creative industries but are able to adapt their skillset to other sectors of the economy. In his 2002 research Florida stated that this 'mobile creative class could be a leading factor in economic growth, which is expected to grow by over 20 million jobs within

a decade, by 2012 equalling almost 40% of the population' (Florida 2002, 4). As such Florida

states that in order for cities to flourish economically and become 'creative cities', they

must attract a creative class able to migrate or relocate to these urban areas. He describes

this as 'human capital for urban-regional growth' (Florida 2002, 6).

There is evidence to show this creative city agenda is socially beneficial in the sense

that it encourages a shift towards an economic climate. Jen Harvie states in *Fair Play* that it

is 'broadly sympathetic to creative and cultural workers' (2013, 118). The creative city policy

approach 'claims socially beneficial objectives - to foster cities' economic competitiveness in

the face of declining industrialisation and to promote creative cities as socially tolerant'

(Harvie 2013, 110). The way in which the creative city agenda favours a creative class which

is able to be economically mobile enough to relocate, risks exacerbating class distinctions.

Harvie questions whether if, indeed, these cities do prosper; 'how is that prosperity

distributed?' (2013, 119). She asks what are the social, not just economic outcomes and

who benefits and on what terms? She argues that the chief characteristics of a member of

the creative class are 'physical mobility, their openness to moving from city to city and their

access to resources that enable such movement', thus alienating populations who are not

financially able to relocate (Harvie 2013, 115). She argues that 'the focus of recent urban

and cultural development policy to foster creative cities in order to attract a creative class is

potentially engineering urban populations in problematic and uneven ways' (Harvie 2013,

110).

Additionally, significant to the changing perception of the role of the arts in society

were the policy shifts following Tony Blair's first election success in 1997. The context which

followed the success of New Labour gave way to the arts being used as an engine of social

change, particularly as a means of alleviating social exclusion. Social exclusion, a concept first adopted in France in the 1970s, refers to those who have, for various reasons, lost connection with society. It was an idea which displaced poverty as a key thrust of social policy. The rise of unemployment, underemployment, increasing migration and welfare cuts had concentrated social discourse into repositioning how social policy might tackle social disadvantage. These economic and social transformations had created what is described by British political economist and journalist Will Hutton in *The State We're In* as a 40:30:30 society:

> 40% of the population in permanent and secure employment, 30% in insecure employment, 30% in marginalised, out of work or working for poorly paid wages and most at risk of social exclusion (Hutton 1995, 106-110).

New Labour's much trumpeted 'Third Way', which attempted to reconcile centre right economic and centre left social policy, involved a mixture of public and private funding. This had an impact on arts funding, through government investment in large scale projects, for instance the Millennium Dome and Tate Modern, and smaller scale projects, for instance encouraging the arts in schools, prisons and hospitals, to act as agents of psychological, social and economic renewal. In 1997 Blair set up the Social Exclusion Unit (S.E.U) in order to form an integrated departmental approach to the problem of social exclusion. The S.E.U.'s Policy Action Team compiled a report on neighbourhood renewal which argued that the 'arts could make a real difference to health, crime, employment in deprived

communities'[7].

There is an interesting dichotomy ensuing from this issue for a creative learning department interested in fostering an egalitarian ethos in urban populations, but which operates within an international arts centre dependent on a funding structure influenced by these cultural agendas. It is against this cultural, historical and geographical background that my research is placed. The context affects the participants and communities with which BGCL works, and this has led me to question how creative learning programmes are both part of this agenda, and also serve as a point of resistance to it. I became particularly interested in investigating how participatory art programmes are developed and received in parts of London that are influenced by the creative city agenda. My examples include the immediate surroundings of the Barbican and also the area surrounding the Olympic Park. These districts tend to benefit creative workers more than they benefit members of the local community. This presents a challenge for BGCL in terms of working with communities in the long term, where they are interested in developing strong relationships with local people.

Although Banham described the Barbican as Britain's largest voluntary ghetto in 1974, there has since been a shift in the vision of a good life in the city. This vision now includes a desire to engage with local communities, diversify audiences and increase access for students wishing to study at Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD). The latter part of the twentieth century saw development in the field of participatory art. Referred to over the years as theatre in education, applied drama, community music, socially engaged

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[7]

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http:/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/publications_1997_to_2006/breaking_report.pdf

performance art and arts outreach projects, participatory art is an approach to making art, music and theatre in which participants and/or audience members are actively involved in the creative process. The creative process might involve them engaging with art-making in diverse ways, with some artists adopting a process which uses co-creation to develop work. Other approaches to participatory practice involve audiences' engagement as part of the artistic process and product. Artists have worked on the intersection between activism and art and engaged diverse audiences and communities in this process.

The Barbican was a little slow to develop a socially engaged programme, only establishing Barbican Education in 1999. In 1995 when John Tusa first joined the Barbican Centre as its Managing Director, working in partnership with Artistic Director Graham Sheffield, there was no access or provision for arts education and no immediate intention to source funding from City of London to develop this field of work. Their mutual ambition was described by Sheffield in *The Guardian* when he said, 'I feel we need to turn this place inside out by using the approaches to the building and making what goes on inside more visible'[8]. This is significant in that it reveals his awareness of the fact that the Barbican is literally 'hemmed in to the north and east by some of the poorest boroughs in London', stating that he 'feels the lack of education and audience development policy, we need to reach out to audiences in the surrounding borough, to animate the Centre'[9]. By 1999 the Barbican began to develop a programme to reach local people, motivated by a desire to break down the

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[8] https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/the-trouble-with-the-barbican-1524149.html 30/5/2018
[9] https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/the-trouble-with-the-barbican-1524149.html 30/5/2018

metaphorical fortress wall that was separating the arts centre from its neighbouring

boroughs, through 'Barbican Education'.

The changing climate in the Barbican at the end of the twentieth century was also

reflected in the Guildhall, its close conservatoire neighbour. The Guildhall expressed a desire

to widen the demographics of students in the conservatoire by changing the élitist entry

requirements which had previously favoured students who had the means for extensive

private tuition in a specialised instrument. Although the Guildhall School Annual Reports,

dating back to 2010, do not provide data relating to the percentage of state school educated

students on their further education courses, they do document that 42.7% of Junior

Guildhall students (Music Course, String Training Course and Drama Course) were privately

educated. As a result of these cultural shifts, GSMD began to develop a more collaborative

practice in their Guildhall Connect (1984) scheme alongside provision of scholarship

schemes. The development of a participatory programme at both institutions will be the

focus of the next chapter of this thesis. It is worth noting in this introduction, however, that

in its first iteration Tusa intended that the education strand of the Barbican's work not be

seen as separate from, or inferior to, the main arts programming at the centre. This was not

always successful; the participatory programme in its early days lacked diversity and tended

to be kept separate from the main arts programme at both institutions. In 2009 Guildhall

Connect and Barbican Education merged to form Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. The

conjoined department has operated as a bridge[10] between the two organisations, and

provides a more comprehensive, unified and inclusive participatory package, not just for

local communities but also for artists wanting to engage with the professional development

[10] BGCL was first described as a 'bridge' between internal departments by Sean Gregory in planning meeting held at Barbican Centre in March, 2014.

pathways and platforms GSMD offers. Long-term engagement based on equality and

sustainability within the context of a creative city agenda which benefits creative workers

more than local communities, has not always been easy for the Barbican Centre. This is the

dichotomy I investigate within this thesis.

Chapter One Part Two: Twenty-first Century models of sustainability

Sustainability has become an important marker of equality to theorists and practitioners working in the field of socially engaged and participatory art. In *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics* (2011) Shannon Jackson considers a range of social engaged art and performance with a view to exploring the social systems on which they depend. In doing so Jackson seeks 'artforms that help us to imagine sustainable social institutions' (2011, 14). This ambition represents a shift in thinking which is, in part, due to the impulse to understand 'how art practices contribute to interdependent social imagining' in the long term (Jackson 2011, 14). Given the political complexity of this agenda, such a cultural sector is expected to measure the impact of socially engaged work on communities of participants. I found it important to consider which elements of the sustainability agenda were useful to my research. I found that the recent inclusion of a cultural dimension into sustainability studies was particularly influential in shaping my thinking.

Sustainability and sustainable development are concepts which have gained momentum in the last two decades. They capture a zeitgeist arising from a twenty-first century awareness of climate change, the effects of globalisation and global economic crises. The concept of sustainability has become particularly widely debated in development studies, the Green movement and the cultural sector, and it is a field of thought which focuses on the long-term effects of human action. This shift in thinking is articulated clearly by urban sustainability theorist Janet Moore in the *Journal of Transformative Education* (2005), where she argued that sustainability is 'the reconciliation of social justice, ecological integrity and the well-being of all living systems on the planet' (2005, 78). She continues to argue that 'the goal is to create an ecologically and socially just world within the means of

nature without compromising future generations' (Moore 2005, 78). Her analysis is based

on the popular 1990s 'three-pillar' model of sustainability that is centred on ecological

integrity, economical well-being and social justice. Recent advances in sustainability studies

have included a cultural component to this model; cultural analyst and policy commentator

Jon Hawkes advocates a four-pillar model which includes cultural diversity as a major

dimension of sustainability. In *Art and Sustainability* (2011), Sascha Kagan follows this lead

by suggesting alternatives to an economic view of sustainability:

> as a shared dream, vision and world view, as well as a conversation,
>
> sustainability reveals itself as a cultural phenomenon, if "culture" is understood
>
> as a value system and set of signifiers framing social identities and dispositions
>
> to act and to behave (Kagan 2011, 13).

The inclusion of a cultural framework in sustainability studies is in part due to a rejection of

an over-reliance on the economic imperative for sustainable development. It is a way of

looking at sustainability not simply in terms of its economic and ecological benefits, but also

in terms of community, justice, ownership, participation, equality and empowerment.

Systems thinker Fritjof Capra suggests in *Social learning: Towards a Sustainable World*

(2007) that 'what is sustained in a sustainable community is not economic growth or

development but the entire web of life on which our long-term survival depends' (Capra

2007, 13). I am taking Capra's definition of cultural sustainability as central to this research.

The four-pillar model of sustainability offers an opportunity to conceptualise it as 'a

dialogue of values' (Capra 2007,13). It responds to an increasing drive on the part of

governments and arts organisations to use arts as a means to foster social inclusion, urban

regeneration and cultural diversity. It recognises the role culture has to play in bringing in

transient tourist populations and day trippers to urban areas and shaping surrounding behaviours and communities.

The four-pillared approach to sustainability is based on the underlying principle that every society, person and organisation is both dynamic and changeable, and I am concerned to develop an understanding of the way arts organisations can complement this in their programming. John Blewitt argues in *Understanding Sustainable Development* (2008) that 'when advocates use the term sustainable development to mean "sustained growth" then it has little meaning, especially when development is considered as growth in terms of material consumption' (21). He advocates an interpretation of sustainability that is multidimensional and which distinguishes between social aspirations, 'including justice, participation, equality, empowerment, institutional sustainability and cultural integrity' (Blewitt 2008, 21), and ecological or economic agendas. If sustainability is cultural as well as economic, it suggests that one way to conceptualise it is to recognise its systemic ecology.

Capra has utilised this method of thinking in systems thinking, which prioritises a science for sustainable thinking. This focus on systemic connections considers the links between communities, cultural organisations, social structures, time, space and the environment. It is an understanding of human and non-human interactivity as relational (Bruno Latour describes this as 'networked'). It encourages ways of thinking about the interdependence between people and places, including the dynamic between the material world and the ephemerality of art-making. This will become very important to developing my own understanding of cultural sustainability within the context of participatory arts. Blewit states that this 'holistic way of thinking crosses disciplinary boundaries and eschews either/or dichotomies or mechanistic cause-and-effect metaphors' (Blewit 2008, 221). Due

to the complexity of many sustainability issues, this way of thinking provides an approach to a problem which takes into account 'interrelatedness and avoids single disciplinary solutions' (Blewit 2008, 221).

This method of conceptualising processes has important implications for cultural theorists, artists and cultural geographers and it is through this perspective that I base my understanding of cultural sustainability. My own research into cultural sustainability will utilise a similarly flexible and relational way of thinking about the world. In the process of my research I have found the conceptual framework of Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze and Doreen Massey particularly illuminating, because they offer one way to consider sustainability in relation to both temporality and space and place formation in the practice programmed by Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning Department. My research is concerned with the ways in which the aims of three different projects might be achievable in a sustained way, the way in which BGCL might encourage ongoing relationships with local communities and how this might contribute to the creation of more equitable and sustainable socio-spatial relations with participants. This analysis leads me to consider the significance of the ways in which the department plans long-term projects and pathways of durational activity as opposed to 'pop-up' temporary installations and art projects.

To analyse how personal and social change might be sustained over time, I have turned to the work of Rosi Braidotti. In *Nomadic Theory* (2011), Braidotti argues for a positive vision of 'the subject as a radically immanent, intensive body, that is, an assemblage of forces or flows, intensities and passions that solidify in space and consolidate in time within the singular configuration knows as an "individual" self' (2011, 303). She contends that this dynamic entity represents a 'portion of forces that is stable enough to sustain and

undergo constant though non-destructive fluxes and transformations' (Braidotti 2011, 303).

Braidotti's idea of this 'dynamic entity' (2011, 303) informs my understanding of the relationship between the participants, the artist and Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. The concept provides a vocabulary to analyse the capacity to both affect and be affected by the surrounding environment over time. As such Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning is seen as a 'mobile unit in space and time […] not only in process but also capable of lasting through sets of discontinuous variations while remaining extraordinarily faithful to itself' (Braidotti 2011, 306). Braidotti argues that:

> In this field of transformative forces, sustainability is a concrete social and
> ethical practice - not the abstract economic ideal that development and social
> planning specialists often reduce it to. It is a concrete concept about the
> embodied and embedded nature of the subject (Braidotti 2011, 310).

This suggests that the capability to endure changes and transformations (becomings) are directly related to the subject's (person, organisation, network) capacity to sustain flux and transition without cracking. It suggests the importance of thinking about sustainability in terms of the interdependence between people and places, and in particular the dynamic between an arts organisation's long-term presence in a community and the ephemerality of art-making.

Taking the long view: Research methodologies and my role within this context

I am a Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) holder funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The CDA programme, launched in 2013, provided funding for doctoral

studentship projects which encouraged a bridge between academic institutions and organisations operating outside of higher education. The aim of this programme of doctoral study was to encourage collaboration and partnership between academic institutions and organisations working within the cultural sector. The very dynamic of this programme was interesting in terms of cultural sustainability and durational activity for arts organisations. The CDA programme of study provided links between the academic institutions, whose position has always been to 'take the long view' by conceptualising in the long term, and arts organisations. The latter have, through necessity, had to be responsive to a fast-paced globalised world and shifts in cultural trends.

The relationship between a CDA holder and the organisation in which he or she is embedded can be unique and is devised by the candidate and their respective supervisors from both organisations. For me this was negotiated by myself and my two supervisors; Helen Nicholson at Royal Holloway University of London and Sean Gregory at Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. In my first year I was keen to learn as much about the department and the ways in which it engages with local communities as possible, and so I threw myself into my role, initially working one day a week as part of the research and evaluation team. It was important to me that I felt embedded within the team in my first year of research. I was unsure at that point of the exact focus of my research and so I worked on the evaluations of many projects for funders, until I found projects I felt might be particularly relevant to my interest in ethics, durational work and the link between duration and sustainability in the work of the department. In my second year of doctoral study I became more selective in which projects I chose to work on as part of my own research, although I still engaged in many projects which have not featured in this thesis, but which

have undoubtedly informed my knowledge of the overall values and aims of the department. In my second year of research I also began to be employed as a freelance research and evaluation consultant to run internal evaluations for funders and to contribute to the research culture of the department. This freelance position is one I still hold and value today in 2018; the ability to return to the department for work has been invaluable to the process of updating this thesis over the years. This is important, since it provided me with the opportunity to look at the work of the department from the perspective of an outsider. This is methodologically significant since as a CDA candidate I tended to feel both invested in and protective of the team and the department, and this dual position presents inevitable challenges for critical analysis.

In discussing the significance of my role and negotiating my position within the department, I found the most helpful description was that I was responsible for considering how sustainability defines narratives of participation and engagement at BGCL and to find a conceptual shape for this analysis. Given the durational nature of doctoral research I found myself to be in a unique position to 'take the long view' perspective on the work conducted by BGCL. I was close enough to the department to feel embedded into the praxis of the organisation; however my position as researcher enabled me to explore some of their practice from an outside perspective.

In my role as CDA holder it was important to be able to articulate and conceptualise the tensions surrounding issues of sustainability, and to reflect on how Barbican Guildhall negotiates these tensions. It is my hope that this thesis will contribute to providing an understanding of sustainability and durational work at the Barbican Centre and inform the programming choices of the department. I considered my job as not trying to resolve the

tensions surrounding the ways the department engages with local communities in the long term but rather to acknowledge the issues and consider their significance to the department. Ultimately, I understood my position in the department as one able to 'take the long view' and consider the challenges of creative learning as a sustainable practice.

My position as CDA holder attached to the research and evaluation team influenced and put pressure on both how I selected case studies and the research methodologies I was able to use to explore them. Each case study used different methodological tools, which will be explored in more depth in the chapters. It is worth noting here that I had to adapt, and this meant that my research methodology diverged from how I might ideally have researched the projects, to fit in with the evaluation and reporting needs of the department. This predicament is unique to the experience of CDA students negotiating their position as part of a research and evaluation team alongside their own research needs. Interestingly this had both positive and negative effects on my research. It presented me with the challenge of how my contribution to the evaluations might fulfil the department's need for short-term outcome-driven statistical analysis dictated by funders alongside my own (and their) pervading interest in the long-term benefits of their programming for those involved. This tension has informed the content of this thesis, since it encapsulates a current struggle in the arts to provide outcome-driven mechanistic evidence for funders, which is dictated by neoliberal government agendas, with a genuine desire amongst arts organisations to conceptualise the benefits of the work they create. Since this is at the heart of issues of sustainability this methodological challenge influenced and informed my own research interest. Additionally and fortuitously, in my role as CDA candidate my ability to work on many different projects over a number of years also meant I was able to watch

individual participants' progression from one project to the next. This reaffirmed my interest in durational engagement. For instance I met Georgia, a guitarist who is part of a music ensemble *Future Band*, in my first week at the Barbican when I interviewed her related to my first case study, *Unleashed,* a participatory project which will feature in Chapter Four. Three years later, in 2016, she worked with me as a work experience placement student on an evaluation about *Barbican Box Music*. I have discussed with Georgia the benefits of being involved in music making ensembles at the Barbican approximately ten times over the course of my five years at the Barbican. This has enabled me to garner an understanding of the long-term effects of her participation at the Barbican Centre.

In my second year of doctoral research, employed as a research and evaluation consultant, I had more autonomy over my methodological choices. The department was excited about the prospect of creating a more dynamic and responsive evaluation methodology and so I was free to incorporate new research tools. My dual function as CDA candidate and freelance consultant meant they had a cost-effective way of incorporating more rigorous and creative research and evaluation methodologies. I responded to the challenge of combining my own research with the reporting needs of the department, by devising a creative evaluation methodology which attempted to encapsulate the many different research and evaluation needs. In 'The Usefulness Of Mess: Artistry, Improvisation and Decomposition in the Practice of Research' in *Applied Theatre* (2011), Jenny Hughes with Jenny Kidd and Catherine McNamara discuss the difficulty in devising and conceptualising research methods which 'privilege notions of practice', within a context which demands the provision of more mechanistic findings for funders of applied practice

(Hughes et al 2011, 188). They discuss research methods which are responsive and embedded within creative practice. Through this process they seek to challenge 'notions of method and methodology as epistemologically secure, finite, discrete sets of procedures fit for the purpose of discovering certain measurable findings about the impact of certain applied theatre practices (such findings are often expected of funders of commissioned research)' (Hughes et al 2011, 188). The ways in which I attempted to utilise 'responsive and practiced methods that support the creative, social and political aims of projects' (Hughes et al 2011, 188) was always an ongoing negotiation for me in my role as CDA researcher at BGCL.

The methodological approach I decided upon for many of my case studies combined quantitative surveys (conducted in many cases before, during and after a project), traditional ethnographic techniques (including observation of rehearsals, extensive note taking, focus group interviews, Critical Response Process sessions and in-depth interviews) with practice-based research methods (including creative responses to process and performance written by participants in the form of poems or 'free writing', photo diaries, video booths, picture drawing and sensory ethnographies). One of my main aims in creating this research and evaluation approach was to embed the research methodologies within the practice of the project. It was important to me that the producers and the artist were invested in the research process and that the methodologies were appropriate for their praxis. For instance, for my third case study which featured extensive psychogeographical urban wandering, I engaged in my own psychogeographical walk alongside participants. Additionally, given the project's focus on technology, I asked participants to respond to their environment and the process through a photo blog and video diary.

The development of this methodological approach enabled me to incorporate creative methodologies with statistical analysis and provided a rigorous basis for analysis (alongside the ability to provide the department with the statistics required by the project's funder). Additionally my position as CDA holder attached to the research and evaluation team meant I had considerable research resources and easier access to projects. Each of the projects I chose to research highlighted an area of sustainability I felt was significant to the department. The section below considers how each of the chapters contributes to my thesis.

It is important to note at this stage that towards the end of my third year of doctoral research, about halfway through 'write-up', I embarked on another long-term commitment; I became a mother. I took maternity leave from June 2015 for a year and so was absent from the department for that period of time, I took a subsequent six-month maternity leave when my second child was born from June to November 2017. The period of research for this thesis therefore began in October 2012 and culminated in June 2015, with write-up and submission being delayed by my maternity leaves. In early 2017 I returned to the Barbican to receive a comprehensive update on departmental practice, an update on certain projects relevant to this thesis and to discuss their new 'five-year plan'. This was important since the case study and courses discussed in Chapter Two and again in Chapter Five are based on evolving projects and further education platforms. I have endeavoured to update the projects which have evolved since my maternity leave and to note throughout this thesis where my research now differs from departmental practice. It is important to think of the ideas raised in this research capturing a period in time in the development of a department and its praxis, and also raising more enduring questions about sustainability and

participatory arts.

My approach to exploring cultural sustainability through my chapters

The inclusion of a cultural component to sustainability is important to my research on a number of levels. Primarily it acknowledges that peoples' individual identities and values shape how society is both viewed and lived in and how communities develop. Its addition to recent advances in sustainability studies acknowledges that the aspirations and values of individuals and communities are both the foundation of society and integral to sustainable societal development.

The inclusion of a cultural pillar to the four-pillar model supports an understanding of communities which are always in a state of becoming and positions individuals at the centre of this process of sustainable community development. In *Devising Performance: A Critical History*, Jane Milling and Dee Heddon (2015) discuss the changing conception of community. They consider the work of David Watt, an Australian academic working in the field of socially engaged arts and community studies, who stated that previous conceptions of community as static, idealised and unchanging are fundamentally flawed:

> 'The interaction within a group of people who choose to see themselves as a community continually alter the nature of that community. It is always in a state of becoming, and therefore growing, and thus avoids the stasis of a 'thing" to be serviced' (Watt 1991, 61)

I argue these fixed conceptions of community undermines sustainability since they neither allow for ongoing development nor take into account the agency a community and

individual have in facilitating change. Sustainability theorists (Hawkes and Capra) therefore advocate, amongst other approaches, that communities and individuals should be consulted in policy making in order to safeguard their cultural heritage and support and strengthen their capacity to work effectively as part of this process of societal becoming.

In addition to this individual and community focussed understanding of cultural sustainability, the inclusion of a cultural component also acknowledges the role cultural organisations and the creative industries play both in terms of shaping and communicating the identity, values and hopes of a society and generating employment and products which increase the cultural confidence of a country.

This multi-faceted approach to cultural sustainability has greatly influenced my research and this thesis will therefore consider cultural sustainability within a participatory arts context on three interrelated fronts. Firstly, sustainability will be considered in terms of the individual participant, his/her identity and capacity to sustain 'becomings' and 'transitions' without cracking (Braidotti 2011, 310). Secondly, I will consider the capacity of a participatory arts project to facilitate a sustainable way of working with local communities. An approach which privileges notions of long-term dialogue and active listening and eschews a parachute model of short-term intervention. Finally, sustainability will be explored at a more strategic level through an analysis of the role of the arts organisation in this dynamic and their capacity to forge long-term relationship with local communities. This three-pronged analysis will reveal the importance of thinking about sustainability in terms of the interdependence of people and places and in particular the dynamic between an arts organisation's long-term presence in a community and the impermanence and fleeting nature of art making.

This introduction has aimed to establish the historical context and current cultural climate surrounding Barbican Guildhall's engagement with local communities. I have also explored the issues relating to sustainability which, I suggest, defines narratives of participation and engagement at Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. My three-pronged approach to the analysis of cultural sustainability within a participatory arts context will be explored through three case studies, the significance of which I outline below. Revealing the complexity of this subject, there are often cross-overs between these strands, with case studies exploring more than one facet of my approach to cultural sustainability.

In Chapter Two I shall now introduce the values of the Creative Learning department and key members of the Creative Learning team. This chapter explores the values Creative Learning ascribes to its artists through an analysis of the professional development infrastructure which is provided by the department to support them. Each of the following chapters attempts to consider a key element of sustainability within a participatory arts context through the exploration of a piece of practice supported by Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. In Chapter Two the story of the development of the department reveals tensions that exist in attempting to engage and retain diverse audiences, and how their work seeks to break down barriers which polarise high art for audiences with imbued cultural capital, from art accessible to wider ranges of people. These tensions will reveal the importance of exploring cultural sustainability, and sustainability as an expanded cultural field by exploring the role of the arts organisation in facilitating cultural sustainability. It addresses notions of taste, cultural capital and sustainability. It will consider the values of BGCL and in particular a desire for creating platforms for sustained engagement amongst diverse communities of artists and participants. This chapter also explores the importance

of processes of dialogue and active listening to developing projects which support communal response and sustainable community development. It therefore speaks to both the project and the arts organisation role in my approach to cultural sustainability.

Through the conceptual framework of Henri Bergson, Chapter Three suggests new ways to think about time and shape and new vocabularies in relation to duration, with the intention to locate participatory arts within a twenty-first century ethic of sustainability. It paves the way for an analysis of duration within participatory arts by positioning it within the historical framework of the avant-garde. In order to locate these issues within current dialogues taking place at Barbican Guildhall this chapter explores the 2014 controversial and cancelled *Exhibit B*, an example of a piece of work engaging with issues important to East London communities through an aesthetic of shock and a temporal modality of the 'now'.

Through the conceptual frame of Gilles Deleuze, Chapter Four will explore the ways in which 'difference' is celebrated through the performance of *Unleashed* at the Barbican Centre in 2012, a durational participatory project which focused on the identities of East London youth in the wake of the 2011 London riots. The chapter is a call and response to the issues which surrounded the *Exhibit B* exhibition. This piece of work explored a similarly contentious theme to that of *Exhibit B*, but through a durational process, and thus reveals the potential for sustained benefits when working with communities over a long period of time. It will consider the concept that durational participatory practice is better placed to have a long-term impact on those involved. The ways in which durational work allows for an accumulation, layering and learning of experience will be explored through an analysis of the process of creating *Unleashed*. Both Chapter Three and Chapter Four therefore focus on the individual participant, their identity and how long-term projects which return individuals

to their lived experience of time are more likely to enable them to be 'stable enough to sustain and undergo constant though non-destructive fluxes and transformations' (Braidotti 2011, 303)

Chapter Five considers issues of space and place as they relate to sustainability through suggesting a relational approach to space which might counteract the damage created by a 'creative city' agenda. This chapter considers the second and third strands of my three-pronged approach, firstly how long-term projects allow time to embed in local communities and search for communal artistic responses and secondly how arts organisations can position themselves within communities in a way which doesn't decerebrate gentrification. Within this chapter issues of gentrification, urban regeneration and the subsequent ghettoization of existing communities will be considered and I consider the impact Barbican has on its local environment in the long-term. These issues are explored with the aim of revealing the ways participatory arts might 'draw attention to the way space is problematically redistributed and reclaim space for less advantaged communities' (Harvie 2013, 110). It achieves this by following the journey of the participants who took part in *Unleashed* two years after the project finished, through an exploration of a 2014 *Creative Careers* (formally called *Young Arts Academy*) laboratory.

To conclude I will consider the impact these debates have on Creative Learning and the Barbican Centre. I will show how this thesis contributes towards an understanding of how participatory arts in general, and BGCL in particular, might engage with local communities without subsequent gentrification, urban regeneration and displacement of existing communities. This chapter will consolidate my triangular approach to cultural sustainability within a participatory arts context. My research examines how Barbican

Guildhall Creative Learning plans a sustainable programme of activity within the context in which urban cities are being gentrified by the arts. The significance of working in partnership with other organisations will be explored in the conclusion to this thesis, and I will highlight where the ideas I raise might provide opportunity for further research opportunities. This analysis therefore contributes to the fields of participatory and socially engaged art, cultural policy and theories of cultural sustainability, and this contribution will be considered in the conclusion to this thesis. I will explore how my research has been concerned to develop an understanding of how BGCL might negotiate space and temporality in their programme of activity, and how these negotiations create more equitable and sustainable socio-spatial relations with the communities in which they work.

Chapter Two: Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning: A Bridge Over the Fortress Wall

Introduction: The values of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning

Historically, Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD) have operated from positions that are geographically close, but logistically separate. Situated in the heart of the City of London, but on the border of some of London's most financially disadvantaged boroughs, the Barbican and GSMD have had a complicated history with engaging local communities. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the Barbican Centre was initially built to repopulate the voting district of the City of London with 'middle class professionals'[11]. When the arts centre opened in 1982, its programming was intended to complement the other 'high class' amenities the complex provided (Heathcote 2004, 184). Guildhall School of Music and Drama was designed in 1880 to mirror the European conservatoires through the provision of training for élite musicians and performers in a specialised art form. Both organisations developed a reputation for artistic excellence. However, they not only tended to keep art forms separate in terms of departmental structure and programming, but they also struggled to engage audiences with diverse social demographics. This chapter will tell the story of the development of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning (BGCL) department and analyse tensions that exist in attempting to engage and retain diverse audiences.

Writing in 1974 in *New Society*, the architectural historian Reynor Banham stated that the Barbican had become inward facing. Banham argued that in designing the Barbican

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[11] 24/6/2014 http://www.buildingworkersstories.com/project-2/

Centre and accompanying residential areas, the City of London had pandered to the privileged by creating exclusive accommodation and planning an arts centre that represented the cultural ambitions of the middle and upper classes in terms of its programming and arts provision. Banham described the Barbican as a venue which appealed to cosmopolitan tastes:

'[Barbican] is a cosmopolitan business club with extensive residential accommodation […..] a council estate for the rich' (Banham 1974, 79).

Since Banham's criticisms in 1974 of the residential complex, the Barbican Centre has opened and has attempted to shake this perception and alter internal practices to be increasingly inclusive. One practical response was the formation of a department able to offer a comprehensive programme of participatory activity, Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. Inclusivity is one of the main aims of BGCL and this chapter considers how they aimed to achieve this within the context described by Banham in 1974. I pick up the story from where I left off in the previous chapter, by establishing how the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music and Drama responded to late twentieth century shifts in cultural agendas through the development of an education programme.

BGCL strive for sustainability through long-term engagement with participants and professional development opportunities for artists. This departmental programming choice sits in contrast to an approach that is more commonplace in the spaces outside the South Bank Centre, by which the main public foyer spaces at the Barbican Centre are 'taken over' by short-term ad hoc 'pop-up' projects, for example 'Hack the Barbican' and the 2017 children's pop-up play area. My research investigates how BGCL champions dialogue and collaboration, both between people and art forms, and analyses how this represents a

radical break from traditional conservatoire training at Guildhall School. I found that the challenge of engaging diverse audiences over a long period of time involves, unsurprisingly, breaking down barriers that separate 'high art' for audiences with cultural capital from art accessible to wider ranges of people. I am interested in exploring what these tensions demonstrate about the importance of the inclusion of a cultural component to sustainability studies. I consider the role arts organisations and higher education establishments play in legitimating hierarchies of social status and the effect this has on developing a sustainable programme of activity.

When I first arrived at the Barbican to begin my doctoral research there were a number of terms which had become commonplace both within the department and the multiple contexts in which BGCL worked. For instance 'cross-arts', 'collaboration', participatory practice the department described as 'dialogic' and which involved processes of 'active listening'. I felt these terms required more detailed analysis and positioning within a conceptual framework to understand what they signified about the wider ambitions and values of the department. Through this analysis I consider how these ideas relate to current research in this area. This chapter reveals the research process by which I contextualised the lexicon and vocabularies prevalent within the department when my research began, a process that underlines the continuing ethos and culture of the department.

Part of the challenge of facilitating inclusive practice at Barbican Guildhall has been the historical cultural context through which the centre was founded. Designed and built based on the cultural values of the mid-twentieth century, the Barbican Centre has often been considered a flagship of international artistic excellence. Despite this, as shown in the prelude to this thesis, local communities have also not always made use of the art provision

on offer at the Barbican. I am interested in considering why this is the case and how Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning has found mechanisms to increase engagement with the centre. How notions of taste and cultural capital relate to sustainability and long-term engagement with individuals and communities is important to this analysis. I found that considering Bourdieu's theory of 'pure art' and 'noble' art forms to be helpful in understanding more about the Barbican's historical and current programming choices and Guildhall's professional development provision for artists (Bourdieu, 1979). Both organisations have sometimes acted as 'institutions of legitimation' that engage in what Bourdieu has described as a process by which art institutions legitimate social class:

> [organisations mediate] relations between status hierarchies associated with different tastes and cultural preferences on the one hand and the organisation and reproduction of the occupational class structure on the other (Bourdieu 1984, xx).

BGCL has sought to change the nature of the relationship between the Barbican Centre, Guildhall School and local communities through facilitating a more inclusive practice. In my research I have become interested in how they create platforms for sustained engagement amongst diverse communities of artists and participants through projects that favour dialogue, active listening and collaboration between art forms and people.

Since Bourdieu wrote *Distinction* in 1979 and the Barbican's completion in 1982, boundaries between 'pure art' and other artistic mediums have become increasingly blurred. As I discussed in Chapter One, in response to the developments in the fields of applied drama, community music, socially engaged performance art and arts outreach projects in the 1980s and 1990s, the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music and

Drama began to develop their participatory programme. This strategic move was both encouraged and required by government funders during this period of time and therefore spread to the non-subsidised sector. As a result of these cultural shifts, GSMD began to develop a more collaborative practice alongside provision of scholarship schemes. The first iteration of Guildhall Connect, an arts outreach project, began as a final year undergraduate Music Performance and Communication Skills (MPCS) module in 1984. In 1987, the Performance and Communication Skills (PCS) postgraduate diploma course began and then became a fully formed PCS department in 1992. Funding for an Arts and Community Development project was raised in 1994. Initially funded by Youth Music and described as a creative ensemble outreach project, Guildhall Connect was formally established in 2002. In terms of the degree curriculum at GSMD the BMus and the BA in Acting were established in 1992 (prior to this date the BMus was called the Associate Diploma AGSM and the BA Acting was Associate (AGSM) Diploma in Professional Acting). Additionally, they run a BA in Stage Management and Technical Theatre which became the BA in Technical Theatre Arts in 2010/11, BA in Video Design for Live Performance since 2015/16, MA in Acting since 2010/11, MA in Music Therapy established in 2006/07 and Guildhall Artist Master programme (established 2008) whereby students can specialise in different artistic disciplines, for instance composition, leadership, performance. The most recent addition to the curriculum at Guildhall School has been the BA in Performance and Creative Enterprise (2015), which will be discussed in the conclusion to this thesis.

The Barbican established Barbican Education in 1999 and since its first iteration, it has been intended that the education strand of the Barbican's work not be seen as separate from or inferior to the main arts programming at the centre. However, despite this aspiration to integrate the participatory practice of Barbican Education within the main arts

programme at the Barbican this was not always a straightforward process. In *Creative Learning Across Barbican Guildhall: A New Paradigm for Engaging in the Arts* (2013), Director of Learning and Engagement Sean Gregory and former Head of Research and Development Peter Renshaw discuss the intentions behind the collaboration between the two departments:

> Historically both the Barbican and Guildhall School's learning and participation programmes have been constrained in their ambition to work more collaboratively across the arts. They have tended to lack the diversity of those that take part. They have not always embraced the knowledge and best practice of their partners and have been limited in their connection to the Barbican's art programme. This common organisation divide perhaps reflects in microcosm the gaps that can exist in the professional arts and learning sectors (Renshaw and Gregory 2013, 4).

In 2009, Guildhall Connect and Barbican Education merged to form Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. It was Gregory's main aspiration that the work of this new department should never be seen as peripheral to the main arts programming at the Barbican, and the partnership would 'fundamentally test what an arts centre and conservatoire can achieve through different ways of working, boundaries are being pushed and a new landscape of collaboration is emerging' (Renshaw and Gregory 2013, 3). Since 2009 the department has operated as a bridge between the two organisations and was formulated to provide a more comprehensive, unified, and inclusive participatory package, not just for local communities of participants but also for artists wanting to engage with the professional development pathways GSMD offered.

The focus on collaboration, both between people and art forms, inherent in the

projects and professional development pathways supported by BGCL, represents a radical shift for Guildhall School, whose historical focus had been on elite training for students studying one art form or instrument. Additionally BGCL have diversified the art forms they include in their programming to include spoken word, creative arts, technology and multi media, breakdancing, beat boxing and rap. Whilst this shift may have occurred earlier in the professional development pathways on offer at other higher education establishments, it is undoubtedly an unusual and radical move toward placing value on participatory and collaborative work at Guildhall School. This endeavour challenges traditional understanding of authorship through placing a value on dialogue and active listening, a process that is integral to a participatory artist's praxis. The value placed on collaborative authorship is at the heart of Barbican Guildhall's commitment to building long-lasting relationships with local communities and diversifying the sector in years to come. It is illustrative of a move away from reductive binaries which separate instrumental and artistic aims by celebrating the aesthetic potential and artistic excellence at the heart of their collaborative approach. Through this analysis I shall consider how notions of dialogue, active listening and collaborative authorship manifest themselves in the work of the department and explore the impact this has on the sustainability of their practice.

My research methodology and *ArtWorks*: A Paul Hamlyn Foundation Special Initiative

In 2011 Barbican Guildhall bid successfully to become one of five pathfinders for the Paul Hamlyn Foundation special initiative, *ArtWorks* (2011-2014). *ArtWorks* was described as an 'action-based research project' aimed at supporting artists who work in participatory settings and intended to develop practice in community settings. During my time working

on the project, I came to understand the term 'action-based research', within the context of the *ArtWorks* project, to mean a research process which aimed to reflect on participatory practice through practical research methodologies, for instance laboratories which were aligned with a specific research question, discursive reflection sessions with artists and participants, and projects designed with a view to explore an element of participatory practice. It was a methodological term I had not heard of before, and elements of it echoed the principles of practice-based research, namely that the research was an integral part of the project itself and was aimed at enhancing knowledge within the field. Artists and arts organisations who received funding or rehearsal space from Barbican Guildhall, through the *ArtWorks* scheme, were asked to reflect on what they had learned from their laboratory, workshop or project. Where I felt it differed from practice as research was that it was not always closely connected to a scholarly framework. Working within this context presented a number of challenges for me and had implications for my role within the *ArtWorks* project team. In particular I had to distinguish between my own academic research methodologies and the research methodologies aligned with the professional practice of a number of excellent artists and arts organisations connected with the *ArtWorks* project.

ArtWorks was a nationwide scheme with the five pathfinders spread across the length and breadth of Britain; *ArtWorks London*, *ArtWorks Scotland, Cymru, Northeast* and *Navigator*. These pathfinders covered different geographical areas, *ArtWorks Cymru* was led by Welsh National Opera in Wales, *ArtWorks London* was led by Barbican Guildhall in London, *ArtWorks Navigator* was led by Foundation for Community Dance which is a national organisation and consortium, *ArtWorks NorthEast* was led by University of Sunderland and *ArtWorks Scotland* was led by Creative Scotland. Each pathfinder bid alongside a range of regional partners, including HEIs, participatory arts organisations and

cultural organisations. The scheme was based on the principle that a participatory artist

who is supported to develop their own practice through training and continual professional

development will 'provide higher quality art-led experiences'[12]. *ArtWorks* was developed

with a dual ambition. Firstly it aimed to enhance the quality of engagement and outputs

within the participatory arts sector in order to raise the profile of the work within the

industry; secondly the programme intended to create a confident sector whose 'work is

validated, valued and seen as important'[13]. Not unlike the Collaborative Doctoral Award

Scheme, *ArtWorks* also aimed to promote greater links between HEIs and arts organisations

through forming networks of regional partnerships. When I applied for the doctoral award

scheme placement at BGCL, included within the research grant description was that my

activity would explore an element of the work of *ArtWorks* and this has meant my own

research methods were closely linked to that of Barbican Guildhall's. A primary example of

the challenge this presented me with can be seen in the way I approached researching and

writing *ArtWorks London: Participant Research Report: Young People in Participatory*

Ensembles (2013). This research report, which focused on the project *Unleashed* and which

is included in the appendix to this thesis, was written by myself and Sophie Leighton-Kelly

for Barbican Guildhall with a view to learning about the impact of this long-term project on

their young people. This project also features in Chapter Four of my thesis. I was part of a

team of researchers who talked with - and listened to – one hundred and fifty-two members

of the cast, in focus groups of up to six people, in the weeks directly following the

performance of *Unleashed.* This process primarily formed the methodology for the internal

research report and we included statistical data resulting from before, during and after

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[12] http://www.phf.org.uk/programmes/artworks/ 8.2.2017
[13] http://www.phf.org.uk/programmes/artworks/ 8.2.2017

surveys in the final report. These research methodologies were helpful in contributing to my

overall understanding of the project, but they did not help me in finding a conceptual

framework for my own research. I also felt the methodologies lacked a creative component

and did not help me understand the impact of durational engagement on a participant,

since the methodologies ended with the submission of the research report in the period of

time directly following the performance. With this in mind, I returned in May 2013 to visit a

selected group of participants from one of the music ensembles involved in the creation of

Unleashed, Future Band*,* to run a creative research session seven months after *Unleashed*

had finished. The ensemble had continued to meet in that time, and it was my hope that, in

engaging them in a creative way through pictures and storytelling, I might be able to gain a

nuanced understanding of the effect participation had had, and was continuing to have, on

their sense of self. Amongst other exercises, I asked them to draw a map depicting their

journey over the yearlong process, and invited them to articulate how they felt now, what

they felt then, what they wanted at the beginning and at the end and at stages along the

way, through postcards home, speech bubbles and diary entry/monologues. They were then

given the opportunity to perform sections of their maps, particularly the diary entries and

postcards home. The maps, which featured volcanos showing how participants felt when

they were performing, and craters which depicted their low moments, are analysed as part

of my own research methodology for Chapter Four. This example shows how I negotiated

the complexities of the nature of a CDA position and the methodological challenges

presented by my dual role as part of the internal research and evaluation team at BGCL and

my own doctoral research. It shows how I diverged from and adapted the methodologies in

place which were designed alongside the internal research and evaluation team.

Since *ArtWorks* incorporated an 'action based research' approach, during the course of the project many of the learning pathways at Barbican Guildhall were evaluated and tested to explore how they are able to support and develop the practice of participatory artists. It was a long-term study and as such the research outputs from *ArtWorks London* have supported my own methodology for this case study. In my position as Collaborative Doctoral Award Holder at BGCL, I worked on the *ArtWorks* project and so there was some crossover in terms of research methodology between their research and my own. Additionally, many of the projects which feature in this thesis were funded and supported by *ArtWorks.* The new BA in Performance and Creative Enterprise (PACE), which launched in 2015 and which I discuss in Chapter Six of this thesis, was a direct output from the period of research supported by *ArtWorks*. Additionally *Creative Careers,* discussed in this chapter, an ongoing project launched by BGCL to support artists between the ages of 16-25 and early in their career, resulted from the *ArtWorks* research project. Much of the research conducted by *ArtWorks London* during this period endeavoured to conceptualise the significance of the lexicon used by the department in relation to their practice, in an effort to consider what it signified about the wider ambitions of the department and the sector. In this respect much of the research conducted by *ArtWorks London* was aligned with my own research, both thematically and in terms of the period in time I was engaged in active research within the department. Vocabulary like 'participatory', 'cross-arts' and 'dialogic' was often probed and discussed in order to conceptualise their place within the participatory arts sector and how they could help to articulate the work of the department and advocate it. Both *ArtWorks* and my own research has wider implications beyond that of Barbican Guildhall and in the conclusion to this thesis I hope to place my research in a wider context and discuss the implications for the participatory arts field.

I was an integral part of the *ArtWorks* London research projects from September 2012, and I spent two years attending pathfinder meetings, conferences, watching practice and writing evaluations and research reports. This activity informed my knowledge of departmental values and has contributed to my research methodology for this chapter. However, I chose to see my position within the *ArtWorks* project as separate to my own research. It was important to me that my research methodology supported what I wanted to investigate rather than simply align with the objective of the *ArtWorks* project. One of the challenges of being a CDA candidate is to be able to integrate within an organisation and assist in their own research interests, whilst remaining both impartial and methodologically autonomous.

In addition to the methodological basis for this chapter, which was aligned with the *ArtWorks* project and to contribute to my understanding of the professional development models on offer at Barbican Guildhall, I have observed the informal learning pathways of four laboratories and one fellowship residency. Additionally, I engaged in a period of independent consultancy and research, which resulted in the 'BA Performance and Creative Enterprise research report' (2014). This report informed the new BA PACE's proposal and conception. This research project, written by myself in November 2014, was the culmination of a six-month period of scoping, consultation and research that informed the proposal in principle and helped to create the module structure for this degree. The methodology for this research incorporated focus groups and surveys, including creative focus groups with young people exploring what skills they valued in a participatory artist and the ways in which they liked to collaborate on participatory projects. During this period I ran creative research sessions with forty young people between fourteen and twenty-four years of age; fourteen emerging and established participatory artists between the ages of twenty-five

and fifty and, in addition, ran in-depth interviews with three graduates from competitor

courses in order to establish firstly, the need for a course of this kind and secondly, what

artists value and prioritise on a participatory bachelor degree. Further to the discussion

sessions, I had a total of thirty-five responses to the survey I drafted for the BA PACE

research report. Alongside exploring the content of the proposed individual modules for the

new BA with would-be students, this research report aimed to consider how BGCL might

sustainably support artists wanting to work in the participatory sector through the provision

of higher education courses. Through this research the department hoped to consider the

following research questions: how can collaboration, between both art forms and people,

be best supported through professional development pathways? What is the role of

dialogue and active listening in participatory projects? How can the ability to collaborate

with other artists be supported and taught at Guildhall School alongside the development of

individual artistic skills? How does this approach differ to that already on offer at Guildhall

School? How can the department break down barriers which polarise 'high art' from art

accessible to wider ranges of people through the provision of training for artists at Guildhall

School?

In preparing for this chapter, and prior to my maternity leave, I also conducted three

primary research in-depth interviews. These interviews, with Sean Gregory (then Head of

Creative Learning), Louisa Borg-Constanzi-Potts (then *ArtWorks* Project Manager) and

Gabby Vautier (then Head of Professional Practice) conducted in March 2014, will form the

basis of this chapter. I chose to interview these people since Sean Gregory was the person

who conceptualised the 'Golden Thread', Louisa Borg-Constanzi-Potts was integral to the

ArtWorks research process and Gabby Vautier was integral to the setting up of both

Creative Careers and the BA Performance and Creative Enterprise degree. They were in a

position to comment on how these projects contribute to creating sustainable relationships with local participants and artists.

'The Golden Thread': Cultural Change at Guildhall School of Music and Drama

Barbican Guildhall established a platform for engagement in participatory CPD, FE and HE courses which they described as 'The Golden Thread of Learning'. They did this in an attempt to diversify both audiences and participatory artists working in the sector. In 2010 88.6% of students at Guildhall School were 'white'. Although the Guildhall School Annual Reports, dating back to 2010, do not provide data relating to the percentage of state school educated students on their further education courses, they do document that 42.7% of Junior Guildhall students (Music Course, String Training Course and Drama Course) were privately educated. When looking at the demographic of specific courses at Guildhall School, these statistics become all the more troubling. In 2005, 76.6% of those enrolled on the BMus were white, 0.8 % were black or black British, 2.3% were Asian and 5.5% were 'mixed'[14]. In 2007, 90.9% of those enrolled on the BMus were white and 0% were black or black British, 4.1% Asian and 4.1 'mixed'. In 2006, 88% of the students enrolled on BA Acting were white, there were no black or black British students, 4% were Asian and 4% were 'mixed'[15]. These statistics illustrate the extent of the challenge faced by GSMD in becoming increasingly inclusive.

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[14] These were the categories used by Guildhall School in 2005. Guildhall School of Music and Drama 'PDF Equality Strand Breakdown: Ethnicity', 1.
[15] Guildhall School of Music and Drama 'PDF Equality Strand Breakdown: Ethnicity', 1.

Sean Gregory's metaphor of the Golden Thread has a dual meaning within Creative

Learning and, although not actively described in 2018, is inherent in their current creative

learning strategy. First, it describes a lifelong learning continuum for artists working in

participatory settings and, secondly, is used to describe models of provision for sustained

engagement with participants. Both understandings of this concept demonstrate the

department's commitment to long-term models of engagement and show the department's

desire to set aside participatory models which advocate short-term projects in local

communities that do not necessarily contribute to meaningful, long-term benefits for those

involved. Renshaw and Gregory describe the Golden Thread as providing 'a flexible and

dynamic lifelong learning continuum for audiences and artists, from the first point of access

through to professional practitioner training. It aims to establish learning pathways across

all art forms, styles and genres, with multiple entry and exit points for all' (2013, 4).

Through placing value on supporting artists working in participatory settings throughout

their career, Barbican Guildhall hopes to raise the status of the work and blur the lines

between the learning department and main arts programming at the Barbican. In an

interview conducted in March 2014, Gregory explains the link between the Golden Thread

and a desire to provide sustainable platforms of engagement for artists and participants:

> It was certainly, in its first iteration and strategy, about learning models. Even
>
> before Creative Learning got going, I was involved in a lot of conversations about
>
> a lifelong learning continuum, this sustained pathway that people could engage
>
> with alongside the more one-off project-based things we do. The Golden Thread
>
> was there in the ether even before I put that at the heart of the strategy
>
> (Gregory, 24th March 2014).

Gregory explains that when Guildhall Connect and Barbican Education merged in 2009 and

he was appointed as Head of Creative Learning, he wanted to maximise the unique position

of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning as part of both an arts organisation and

conservatoire. He describes what he saw as a major benefit of the combining of these

departments:

> One of the unique things about Creative Learning is having a conservatoire really
>
> driving what learning is about, because it is about sustained learning and
>
> progression whether you are a student under 18, or through CPD, whereas arts
>
> organisations are less well placed to do that because they programme and they
>
> think in terms of events and projects (Gregory, 24th March 2014).

This reveals the significance of the collaboration between a higher education institution and

an arts organisation to provide sustainable models of engagement for participants and

would-be artists. Barbican Guildhall are well placed to achieve this since they have capacity

to conjoin the long-term strategic planning of the HEI, aimed at providing rigorous training

for artists, with the more event and project focused drive of the arts organisation. The

unique benefit of the department, in terms of operating as a bridge between HEI and an arts

organisation, also means that artists in training have access to working on live and active

projects in local communities on a regular basis throughout their training. Productive work

placements are often renowned to be difficult for HEIs to organise, and this is not so for

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. BGCL have many arts partners and pre-existing

participatory groups who provide supportive and mentored work placements for students

to learn through practice. Indeed, from my own experience of participatory arts higher

education provision, a lack of work placements for some students necessitated hypothetical

conversations about working within a particular context that might have, on occasion, been

better explored through practice. I have also found from my limited experience teaching on BA courses at universities, that sometimes assessed workshops are planned and executed for other students on the course, and not delivered within the specific context and with the group of people for which they are intended. Students at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, in contrast, have access to a great number of work placements and are able to work in a variety of participatory contexts throughout their degree. Whilst working in contexts through work placements early in a student's undergraduate study certainly carries certain benefits (the ability to learn from the participant, experiment with what works with that group of people and develop artistic praxis through practice), it additionally carries an element of risk for artists in training (and their participants). It may mean that they are experimenting with working in challenging contexts before they acquire the conceptual background which informs best practice. It is this delicate balance that HEIs attempt to negotiate when planning their courses, their work placements and their practical projects. It is the hope that the link to Guildhall School and an HEI provides a safe space open to experimentation, with collaboration between art forms in a participatory context through the Pitt Lab laboratories described later in this chapter, and other training models linked to Gregory's Golden Thread of Learning. This capacity for risk and experimentation is easier for an HEI to facilitate than an arts organisation which has a pressure to deliver high quality outputs for audiences. Working in partnership in this context, therefore benefits both Barbican and Guildhall School.

'Learning models' is a term used by Gregory to describe the CPD courses on offer at Barbican Guildhall. The term was frequently used by members of the team in conjunction with the preface 'informal' and 'formal'. The former, 'informal learning models', was used to denote the laboratories, seminars, projects and workshops. Their use of the term 'formal

learning models' described the FE and HE courses on offer at Guildhall School. The focus on

prioritising 'learning models' which support participatory artists progressing through their

career marks a distinct shift in thinking regarding the perceived potential of participatory

work. It constitutes what Louisa Borg-Constanzi-Potts, *ArtWorks London* Project Manager,

describes as 'quite a feat in itself' (Constanzi-Potts, 24th March 2014). It is also indicative of

the fact that Guildhall School recognised the need for a change in focus to art forms that

appeal to wider audiences, and their subsequent development of learning models which

support a cross-arts approach. In an interview conducted in March 2014 she said that 'what

we are talking about is a culture shift in a conservatoire. That's massive at a conservatoire

level' (Constanzi-Potts, 24th March 2014). What Constanzi-Potts is articulating here is the

cultural shift amongst 'institutions of legitimation' (Bourdieu 1996, 471) which has

challenged cultural hierarchies that previously placed great emphasis on 'high art'. The

previous focus on 'high art' for elite audiences resulted in an acceptance of hierarchies of

social differences in terms of cultural consumption and to behaviours of self-exclusion. This

resulted in a perception amongst some local communities that the Barbican was not 'for

them' and historically led to a difficulty in appealing to wider audiences, which will be

discussed in more depth in the next section of this chapter. However, it is significant in

terms of what Constanzi-Potts discussed in an interview in March 2014, since it indicates the

desire at Barbican Guildhall to alter their historical focus on one art form and a belief that

providing training models which support a cross-arts approach is the way to achieve this

change. She understands the Golden Thread to be the concept *ArtWorks London* was built

around and that essentially the two are 'very much intertwined in their focus' (Constanzi-

Potts, 24th March 2014). She argues that:

The Golden Thread is to understand that an artist is involved in a lifelong

learning and that at every point and stage in their career they should have the

opportunity to engage in learning and development. For me, it is the sense that

learning is on a continuum and there are points where an artist can re-engage

with learning and we need to provide something along that pathway that can be

both formal and informal (Constanzi-Potts, 24th March 2014).

In addition to supporting artists at multiple points in their lives through the Golden Thread,

there is also a desire to nurture their artistic skills alongside other skills which support their

ability to work in socially engaged settings. She argues that some higher education

institutions do not necessarily have the support structures to allow for students to 'explore

their own artistic practice and allow for that to develop in tandem with their socially

engaged work' (Constanzi-Potts, 24th March 2014). This is certainly not a new way of looking

at the aesthetics of participatory work. In 2005 Helen Nicholson argued in *Applied Drama:*

The Gift of Theatre that 'creating a new set of binary oppositions between "applied" and

"not applied" drama risks emphasising the utilitarianism of applied drama at the expense of

its artistic and aesthetic qualities' (6). However, it does mark a distinct culture shift for

Guildhall School, and its significance to a hierarchical culture which values 'pure art' forms

must not be underestimated. Guildhall School's role as 'an institution of legitimation'

(Bourdieu 1984, 144) has historically had an impact on how participatory practice is

perceived by the academy.

This shift toward an understanding of the integration of the social and the aesthetic

experience is illustrative of a move away from the separation of instrumental and artistic

aims. I am interested in the implications on both the role of the artist and authorship in a

participatory exchange and how participatory work is positioned within wider Barbican

Guildhall culture. Through the provision of both formal and informal models of engagement a participant, emerging artist and artist can source provision for the development of new and existing skills at any point during their lifetime and career. Many of the models of engagement favour an approach to collaboration that brings together different art forms (described colloquially by Barbican staff as 'cross-arts') and people from different communities. This is significant to the department's aim to diversify those working in the sector. Where this change in focus toward participatory and cross-arts work, through the BA PACE degree and other learning models, does seem to reflect historical practice at Guildhall School is in its focus on skills-based learning. Whilst the new degree at Guildhall School does include modules that encourage young artists to be 'reflective practitioners', it doesn't always demand rigorous academic reading. This is in contrast to the more academic foundations of a conventional degree and aligns with the practice of Guildhall School in terms of its skills-based tutelage.

One example of the provision of a 'Golden Thread' of learning provided by the department is the link between *Creative Careers* (formally known as the *Young Arts Academy*) and the BA Performance and Creative Enterprise (PACE). *Creative Careers* was initially set up because of a gap in provision between first access projects on offer to young people in the surrounding London boroughs and provision which encouraged entry into further and higher education institutions (including Guildhall School of Music and Drama). The link between *Creative Careers* and the BA PACE degree, which will be discussed in the conclusion to this thesis, illustrates the progression inherent to the concept of the Golden Thread of Learning which Gregory has prioritised in the 2015 five-year strategic plan for the department. Participants who are part of *Creative Careers* develop skills which are highly valued on the BA PACE degree, namely the ability both to collaborate in community

contexts and to work alongside other art forms. *Creative Careers* embraces art forms and creative skills previously excluded from traditionally identified 'high arts', such as breakdancing, beat boxing rap, spoken word, graffiti, experimental music, devising theatre and technology and multimedia arts. These young people are encouraged to continue their 'Golden Thread of Learning' by applying for a BA PACE degree. It also demonstrates the ways in which the department hopes to increase diversity in the sector, appeal to a wider range of audiences and ensure sustainability.

One of the projects that prompted this change in focus was *Unleashed*, which took place in 2012. *Unleashed*, which is the focus of Chapter Four, encouraged ensembles to work across art forms and embraced less traditional art forms, for example rap, spoken word and breakdancing. Following *Unleashed,* staff at Barbican Guildhall felt that there was a need for a structured formalised pathway for young people to continue collaborating across art forms and in different contexts. Although the youth ensembles involved in *Unleashed* continued to meet individually and collaborate on ad hoc projects, it was discussed in the post-show evaluations with artist leaders and participants that young people would appreciate the opportunity to create a network of artists aged 14-25, who would be able to meet regularly to continue to work in this way. In addition, Barbican Guildhall identified, through *ArtWorks* research, a gap in the further education provision for young artists who want to work in collaborative and participatory settings. *ArtWorks* research found that young participants were often provided with the opportunity to develop collaborative skills through first access projects, but did not find it easy to bridge the gap between being a 'participant' and continuing to develop artistic skills post-16. This is a major factor in the troubling statistics that show an uneven ethnic balance of artists who work in participatory settings. Many further and higher education courses require young

people to specialise within a particular art form or instrument, only developing the ability to collaborate with other art forms and in community contexts after this initial training is complete.

Unleashed was where the concept for *Creative Careers* began, an opportunity that provides the time and space to blur the lines between participant, collaborator and aspiring artist. It was hoped that it would be a gentler and slower introduction to working in community contexts than launching into an 'Applied Theatre' module as part of a BA degree in Drama. Barbican Guildhall felt that providing a platform for the development of these collaborative skills at an early age to young East and pan-London aspiring artists would have a significant effect on the sector in future years. It is hoped that *Creative Careers* will diversify the demographic of artists working collaboratively through providing a free or subsidised learning pathway and encouraging aspiring artists who have not necessarily thrived in traditional education structures, to continue their learning pathway.

Creative Careers was written into the 2014 National Portfolio Organisation bid to the Arts Council. It was planned to be free initially, but later perhaps to attract corporate sponsorship. The plan was to operate a financial model whereby participants who could afford to pay would subsidise those who were not able to contribute. It would be based on raw talent as opposed to polished skills, further challenging the traditional criteria for entry requirements to Guildhall School. Gregory explains that Creative Learning would not state 'you need to have Grade 5 flute to be part of this' (Gregory 24th March 2014). It would therefore not be based on an audition but rather a skill set and personal qualities which include, as Gregory puts it, criteria such as:

> Creativity, leadership, responsiveness, empathy, mutual understanding, a real
>
> love of their work, love of people, love of variation and context, passion (not just

for your art but for people and for potential). You need to be an optimist, you

always need to have a can-do attitude, everything is possible, and you have to

be pragmatic and realistic (Gregory, 24th March 2014).

The network of young people who would make up the *Creative Careers* cohort might reach

up to 300 young people, able to stay in touch, collaborate and communicate both virtually

and also through laboratories and projects. These artists would most likely contribute to

projects in groups of up to thirty at a time, meeting to experiment, collaborate across art

forms and contribute to creative learning projects which occur throughout the year, such as

Dialogue. *Dialogue* is an annual collaboration between Guildhall students and up to 200

community members from East London that results in a two-day festival of music and arts.

In 2018 *Dialogue* focused on the question 'how can creative practice kick-start a

conversation'?[16] These collaborations would also be able to contribute to each young

person obtaining different levels of accredited Arts Awards. Vautier commented in an

interview that:

> The YAA (*Creative Careers*) is absolutely inspired by *Unleashed*. It is about what
>
> happens when you bring young people together to do this collaborative work. I
>
> think there was a definite sense from [participants] that they wanted more
>
> opportunities to do that and we have managed to make that happen over the
>
> last couple of years through ad hoc projects. The YAA will give us the
>
> opportunity to really look at that properly and to open up the industry to these

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[16] 17/1/2018 https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2018/series/changing-dialogue-festival-from-the-guildhall-school?utm_source=SilverpopMailing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CCED160118E&utm_content=&spMailingID=55772630&spUserID=MjY3MTMzMjExNTcS1&spJobID=1322455714&spReportId=MTMyMjQ1NTcxNAS2

young people. I am passionate about changing the demographic of the people

within this office, let alone the artists we work with (Vautier, 24th March 2014).

Vautier continues to argue that at the heart of this pathway, at the start of a Golden Thread

of learning, is the emphasis placed on intertwining the social with the artistic: 'the key thing

for me is that at the heart of all these pathways is socially engaged work, cross-arts

interdisciplinary work and enterprise. I hope that we will have artists who can make things

happen, who are artistically excellent but are socially minded and can pay the rent' (Vautier

24th March, 2014). Developing artists in this way places the collaborative aspect of the work

at the heart of their artistic identity. *Creative Careers* represents a commitment to diversify

the sector and create a workforce of artists able to work collaboratively in a variety of

community contexts. Subsequently *Creative Careers* has operated as a platform for

recruitment for the BA PACE course, which will be considered in the conclusion to this

thesis. This demonstrates the way in which the Golden Thread of Learning is able to

sustainably support participants in a career in the arts. Part of my work as a CDA is to ask

critical questions of these practical assumptions and the idea of collaboration will be

conceptualised in the second half of this chapter.

Challenging Art Forms: 'Cross-Arts' and collaborative art practices

Shannon Jackson, author of *Social Works,* comments that 'one can cite example after

example where the "social" turn in art seems to depend upon a cross-medium turn as well

[....] socially engaged art seems to require artists to develop skills in more than one medium'

(27-28). Jackson argues that the most conceptually intriguing feature of the recent

inclination of developing work across mediums, whether this be described as

interdisciplinary, collaborative or the Barbican's term 'cross-arts' work, is that it challenges

perceptions of what is located within the aesthetic sphere. She contends that 'not only does

it position social art as intermedial: but that this intermediality also recalibrates inherited

understandings of what is within and what is without the art event' (Jackson, 28).

Particularly relevant to this analysis is her belief that:

> By capturing the medium specific skills that enable social engagement, the social
>
> in these scenarios cannot be neatly located to the realm of art's 'context'. The
>
> social here does not exist on the perimeter of an aesthetic act, waiting to feel its
>
> effect. Nor is the de-autotomizing of the art object a de-aestheticization. Rather
>
> the de-autonomizing of the artistic event is itself an artful gesture creating an
>
> intermedial form that subtly challenges the lines that would demarcate where
>
> an art object ends and the world begins (Jackson, 28).

Jackson's description captures Barbican Guildhall's position on participatory and

collaborative work. It facilitates a way of viewing the process of developing work

collaboratively as part of the 'aesthetic act (by challenging) the lines that would demarcate

where an art object ends and the world begins' (Jackson 2011,28). The process (and not

product) of creating work through dialogue and active listening can be seen to be an

'aesthetic act' in its own right (Jackson 2011,28). The power of collaboration in enabling

artistic creativity and innovation was described by Renshaw as 'not being achieved in

isolation, in a silo of convention and predictability, but by people choosing to work together,

celebrating how their different talents, perspectives and insights can create something that

transforms their practice and their ways of seeing the world' (Renshaw, 2011). This chapter

attempts both to capture the 'medium specific skills' (Jackson, 28) at the heart of these

collaborations and to explore the role of the artist and authorship in participatory practice through an analysis of the supporting infrastructure provided by Barbican Guildhall.

Developing a programme of activity that is based on collaboration, mixing of art forms and challenging conceptions of artistic authorship that focus on individual artistic autonomy, marks a big cultural shift for Barbican Guildhall. As I have already argued, both international arts centres and the conservatoire might be seen in Bourdieu's terms, as 'institutions of legitimation' (Bourdieu 1996,140), that serve to perpetuate cultural hierarchies. It is important to consider why it has been so challenging for the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School to engage and retain diverse audiences and position and integrate their participatory work alongside their main programme of activity. Historically, as I shall show, this hierarchy has contributed to a lack of sustainability in the participatory work of major arts organisations.

The cultural divides within major arts organisations are, in many ways, defined by institutional structures. In *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1996), Bourdieu links artistic autonomy to capitalist modernity through:

> the appearance of cultural production specially designed for the market and,
>
> partly in reaction against that, a production of pure works destined for symbolic
>
> appropriation (Bourdieu 1996, 140).

Where such a dichotomy is still evident in arts institutions such as the Barbican and Guildhall School of Music and Drama, there are significant difficulties in trying to weaken established cultural values and create involvement and opportunities for those outside the cultural elite. In the mid-twentieth century Bourdieu described 'Pure Art' as being non-market driven and imbued with symbolic value, representing a form of capital whose value centres on cultural positioning. Those groups of people who consume such symbolic

representations use them unconsciously to foster separateness and distinction from those who cannot access such products, either because of financial constraint and/or a lack of education and the cultural capital to decode its aesthetic language. Bourdieu states 'a work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code into which it is encoded' (Bourdieu 1996, xxv1). Bourdieu's argument signals, within the context of Barbican Guildhall, that those who do not possess the cultural capital and 'who lack the specific code' may feel 'lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythms, colours and lines, without rhyme or reason' (Bourdieu 1996, xxv1). In contrast Bourdieu categorises popular culture by its propensity for mass-reproduction and its likelihood for a short-term life. He sees it as being negatively associated with market value. He argues that consumers of popular culture are confirmed in their lower cultural status by the constant consumption of cultural products which are created for money. The recipients become a function of another's financial benefit. He argues that the 'social order is progressively inscribed in people's minds' through 'cultural products including systems of education, language, judgements, values, methods of classification and activities of everyday life' (Bourdieu 1996, 471). The result of this is an acceptance of hierarchies of social difference, to 'a sense of one's place' (Bourdieu 1996, 141) and to behaviours of self-exclusion. Bourdieu, writing over forty years ago, focussed his thesis on traditional western art forms of the mid-twentieth century, art forms which he ironically described as 'noble', for example; classical music, ballet, theatre and opera. Since then there is now a wider and more culturally diverse set of art forms on offer at arts organisations. However his analysis might explain the difficulty some arts organisations have in appealing to diverse audiences, and also impacts on processes of displacement surrounding urban regeneration projects inherent to the creative city agenda discussed in Chapter One.

It is important to emphasise that Bourdieu discusses these concepts in relation to social processes, as opposed to personal dynamics, and refers to these processes as 'habitus'. Habitus, whilst durable, is not fixed or permanent but shifts from one context to another over time and describes how social structures inform propensities to act, think or feel in certain determined ways. Habitus, alongside shaping the way a person behaves, interprets and experiences the world, is also fundamental to Bourdieu's understanding of how social class is produced. Habitus is the process by which the culture of a particular social group is embodied in the individual and it is 'society written into the body, into the biological individual' (Bourdieu 1990, 63). As a consequence, art acts at the socio-political level to legitimise and reproduce the social structures of domination that a hierarchical world of class and status foster.

Through his analysis Bourdieu links engagement in the arts to distinctions in class. He developed a theory which accounted for 'why art and cultural consumption are predisposed to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences' (Bourdieu 1990, xxx). His theories still have relevance for this context, particularly the conservatism of Barbican Guildhall, since they provide a methodologically rigorous analysis of why some arts organisations have, historically, struggled to engage with diverse local audiences in the surrounding boroughs. In particular, his focus on the role educational and cultural 'institutions of legitimation' play in mediating the relationship between status hierarchies within cultural preferences is relevant. Bourdieu argues that 'nothing more clearly affirms one's "class", nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music….there is no more "classificatory" practice than concert-going, or playing a "noble instrument"' (Bourdieu 1979, 18). It is only in the last twenty years that Guildhall School has developed courses which branch out from its historical remit of providing élite tutelage for individuals in one art form.

Historically Barbican Guildhall supported art forms favoured by the middle classes and they recognised that in order to change the demographic of people attending the centre, they needed to support a wider array of art forms. This concern reflects in microcosm wider attitudinal barriers within the cultural industry and is perhaps the cause behind unbalanced demographics of those working within participatory arts that I find particularly concerning. In the *ArtWorks' Artist Survey Report* published in July 2014, of the 1,083 surveyed participatory artists working in Britain, 85.3% were white, with only 6.9% black or Asian minority ethnic (BAME). This, when compared to internal department's statistics which show high participant diversity in youth groups, demonstrates a lack of ability to retain engagement past the projects which participants first take part in as young people, into an adult career in the arts.

Additionally significant to Bourdieu's analysis of the value placed on a 'pure art' and a 'noble instrument' by institutions of legitimation is the fact that of the 1,083 artists surveyed through *ArtWorks*, 25.9% said they earned between 76 to 100% of their income through participatory or socially engaged work, with 20.2% gaining 51 to 77% of their pay this way. Of these artists, 67% claimed that they did not feel employers valued participatory work as an artistic practice in its own right and 79% felt that there was not enough understanding by employers about the potential benefits of the work.[17]

Since its conception, Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning department has attempted to develop a sustained and long-term engagement with both artists and communities. Through their learning models, the department hoped to challenge notions of artistic autonomy. Additionally they hope to disturb the hierarchy of art forms present at Guildhall

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[17] 17/1/2018 http://www.creativescotland.com/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/26097/ArtWorks-Scotland-Skillset-Research-Report-Oct-2012.pdf

School through the development of a collaborative practice with the ambition that this praxis might widen the demographics of artists working in participatory settings and raise the status of the work in twenty years' time. Bourdieu argues that the link between 'unequal stock of cultural capital for members of different classes' (Bourdieu 1979, xx) and processes by which taste is legitimised are embedded in arts organisations and educational systems:

> the role played by the education system in mediating the relations between the status hierarchies associated with different tastes and cultural preferences on the one hand, and the organisation and reproduction of the occupational class structure on the other (Bourdieu 1979, xx).

This suggests that Barbican Guildhall has a role to play in legitimising tastes through the curriculum provision for students and artistic programming for audiences. In the past Guildhall School has trained students in art forms conventional to Western conservatoire tradition. Prior to 2006, when they launched the MA in Music Therapy and MA in Training Actors, there were only two degrees on offer at Guildhall School, BMus and BA Acting. Breaking with this tradition is indicative of their desire to broaden audiences. It also reveals the significance of a GSMD advocating and launching a 'Golden Thread of Learning' that enables students to work in a combination of artistic mediums to create work in a range of socially engaged contexts. This is additionally relevant to a discussion surrounding how to diversify audiences and create a sustainable practice.

Barbican Guildhall's use of the term 'cross-arts' is significant to both an understanding of the value they place on collaboration as key to their understanding of artistic identity, and their attempts to radically alter Guildhall School's culture of expert tutelage in art forms traditionally taught at a Western conservatoire. Although the

conservatoire runs courses for artists specialising in drama (for instance BA Hons Acting) which involve extensive elements of collaboration, there has never been a course which engaged different art forms in collaboration with each other and with people from a non-arts context. They also do not have a course that disturbs notions of single authorship through modules that specialise entirely in devising or group composition. There is a deep suspicion over what 'cross-arts' work entails and its place within a conservatoire whose repertoire traditionally favours tutelage in one art form. Through championing cross-arts work they are hoping, as I shall reveal, to place value on a mode of participatory practice which might appeal more widely and therefore retain diverse audiences in a sustainable way. In placing emphasis on collaboration (between both people and art forms), disturbing conceptions of authorship at the conservatoire, BGCL are challenging historical cultural divides which separate 'pure art', 'noble instruments' (and I argue noble art forms) from other art forms and through this disturbing hierarchical cultural divides.

Gregory is eager for the term 'cross-arts' not to be used as a 'convenient shorthand' to describe practice which involves multiple art forms working together. Rather he uses the term to describe a practice which;

> encourages cross-fertilisation between the creative arts, technology and multi
> media with the aim of developing an artistic language which relates to wider
> audiences (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 12).

The department uses the term 'cross-arts' to describe its collaborative practice. In valuing collaboration between art forms, Barbican Guildhall aims to develop a new art form, one in which different art forms work together to form a new aesthetic dynamic. By the use of the term 'cross-arts' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 9), Barbican Guildhall describes a practice in which art forms are not located next to each other on stage, as is one

understanding of multi-arts, but rather that the collaboration between art forms creates a new artistic aesthetic. This aesthetic helps to define the significance of collaboration to Barbican Guildhall's value system and is placed at the centre of all their learning models on the Golden Thread of Engagement.

Gregory and Renshaw describe how the twenty-first century has provided the opportunity to 'create new hybrids of performance and communication [......] by artists who make sense of the contemporary cultural world through working together with creative practitioners from different disciplines' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 10-11). Contemporary arts practitioners are 'increasingly creating meaning by combining, "mashing up", and mixing sources' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 10). They describe how 'artists are encouraged to engage in a cross-arts rather than multiple arts approach to participative collaboration so that art forms are interacting with each other rather than just working in parallel' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 10). By creating work which mixes (non-traditional) art forms BGCL challenges the dominant culture of valuing 'noble' (Bourdieu) art forms prevalent at Guildhall School. They are attempting to appeal to a wider demographic of audience and, through this, aspire to break down barriers that lead to 'behaviours of social exclusion' and 'hierarchies of social difference' (Bourdieu 1996, 141). The *ArtWorks London* application for the pilot year, *Shift*, describes how Creative Learning sees 'art forms morphing and combining, boundaries are becoming porous between disciplines, styles, genres and between learning and artistic practice' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 10). This desire to blur the boundaries between high or 'noble' art forms has major implications for the training of artists working in participatory settings, an issue which is explored in both this chapter through an analysis of learning models on The Golden Thread and in Chapter Six, where I explore the significance of the new BA PACE degree.

Gregory and Renshaw analyse why some artists, practitioners and teachers have been resistant to working in this way or feel threatened by developing interconnected ways of working. They link this resistance to the challenge of re-evaluating an individual's artistic identity in the face of collaborative ways of working:

> Their sense of self is rooted in how they have engaged over many years, with their particular art form and professional colleagues in what is referred to as a community of practice. That is, we perceive who we are in terms of a form of life and network of relationships that give a sense of purpose, meaning, values and a framework with which to judge the quality of engagement. The shift toward collaboration and shared creative process across disciplines constitutes a challenge, both towards the individual and to the organisation because it encourages practitioners, producers, managers, students and teachers to redefine who they are and what they do in terms of a new paradigm (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 12).

The significance of working collaboratively to an artist's sense of self is why cross-arts practice is placed at the centre of all of Barbican Guildhall's models of learning. An artist's identity is developed and nurtured at these very early stages of learning, whether they be early in life developed during the arts projects with which they first engage (described at Barbican Guildhall as 'first access' projects) and further education, or early in the stages of a career shift to a participative arts career, developed through continuous professional development pathways. As such, exploring these learning models becomes an important ingredient in assessing the values ascribed by Creative Learning to the artistic identity of their practitioners. Gregory and Renshaw explain that this gives a new energy to the practice:

The collective creative energy at the heart of cross-arts practice, or any form of

collaborative practice, opens up new connection and new possibilities. It

generates new ideas and extends our ways of perceiving and understanding that

leads to new forms of making and performing art. (Gregory and Renshaw 2013,

12).

The cross-fertilisation Gregory and Renshaw refer to in relation to cross-arts work is a

challenge to 'high' art forms which, as Bourdieu argues, have historically legitimised

social differences and led to behaviours of cultural self-exclusion. Renshaw and

Gregory talk about '[encouraging] cross-fertilisation between the creative arts,

technology and multi media with the aim of developing an artistic language which

relates to wider audiences' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 12). This philosophy talks to

Bourdieu's theories of taste by describing activity that breaks down barriers which

create a hierarchy of art forms, and championing a new art form that is accessible to

the many, not the few. It shows the importance placed on broadening the perspective

of Barbican Guildhall to diversify audiences in the future.

Dialogue, Active Listening and the Participatory Artist

On September 10th 2013 a group of artists gathered together at the Pitt Theatre

for an Artist Leader Laboratory, an event that aimed to explore aspects of their

practice. One topic of discussion recurred, that revolved around the idea that 'great

relationships are created during "a project"- but how do you sustain a relationship

with the community so they don't feel like tokens valued for a marginal amount of

time?' (Artist Leader, 10th September 2013). This prompted debate around the role of

dialogue and conversation within a participatory process and the impact this has on

long-term relationships with local communities. Grant Kester argues in *Conversation*

Pieces (2004) that artists who work in participatory settings are able to have a flexible

creative vision, reliant on the input of participants. He argues that participatory artists

develop an important capacity to listen:

> Artists begin their work not with the desire to express or articulate an already
>
> formed creative vision but rather […] to listen. Their sense of artistic identity is
>
> sufficiently coherent to speak as well as listen, but it remains contingent upon
>
> the insights to be derived from their interaction with others and with otherness.
>
> They define themselves as artists through their ability to catalyze understanding,
>
> to mediate exchange, and to sustain an ongoing process of empathetic
>
> identification and critical analysis (Kester 2013, 118).

Kester's argument here explicates the dialogic qualities participatory artists require which

include the ability to remain open to their own and others' 'otherness', listen actively, and

approach their artwork in a way which remains contingent upon the insights gleaned from

the participatory exchange. He does not, however, place as much emphasis on the

importance of conceptualising and exploring the significance of these qualities to

developing a sense of artistic identity.

I will now use an example of Kester's theory in my own practice outside of my work

at Barbican Guildhall. I have selected this example since I feel it demonstrates how dialogue

can be integral to the artistic process, and additionally I hope to demonstrate the

implications of my thesis to the wider participatory arts field. In all of my work within

participatory contexts, and in particular my work outside of Barbican Guildhall with Bravo

22 Company and veterans who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), I have

observed that it is the process of dialogue during the story-sharing phase of each project that forges the artistic style of the product. Each Bravo 22 arts project begins with an extensive story-sharing phase whereby the artist engages in a period of consultation and discussion with participants about what they hope to capture through art, about their military service, their lives at home and their injuries. It is through listening to the stories of the veterans and engaging in dialogue with them, learning from them about their lives, that the artistic team is able to develop a sense of the aesthetic of the piece of work, whether that be a sculpture in the art projects or a performance in the theatre projects. To give an example of this in practice in the '*Bravo 22 Well-being and Recovery Through Art'*, working with complex needs patients at Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre Headley Court in 2017, sculptor and artist Al Johnson decided to focus on the head as a site of trauma. This carried both symbolic and actual significance for participants; the head was felt to be a place that was associated with physical trauma for some, due to head injuries experienced in active service, but also the location which participants associated with the complexities of their PTSD diagnosis. Through conversation with participants Johnson began to understand the symbolism of the head as a place from which participants were unable to escape. For some the head was a place that, whilst belonging to them, was also unknown and frightening to them. As a result, the decision was made that participants would work with plaster of Paris to form 3D sculptures of their own faces with plastic transparent backs which enabled participants to insert various symbolic objects into the centre of the 'skull' to capture an element of their lives or something which depicted their experience of injury and/or PTSD. The decision to focus on the head as a site of trauma and the plastic material used for the rear of the skull was based on conversations with participants in the story-sharing phase of the project. This section will explore the role of dialogue in the artistic

identity of an artist working in collaboration within socially engaged settings. I will show how Barbican Guildhall nurtures and values this quality through their learning models.

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning's focus on the interconnection between the artistic and socially engaged will be seen to be integral to both the emphasis placed on dialogue and active listening and a strong artistic aesthetic. There are four points I would like to explore in this section: first, I will establish what Kester defines as a 'dialogic aesthetic' and explore the concept of active listening. Secondly, I want to explore the specificity of the relationship between discursive interaction and identity; what is the role of dialogue to the development of self? Thirdly, I want to establish how dialogue and active listening can be used as a framework to negotiate 'boundaries of difference' between collaborators (Kester 2013, 112). Finally I want to explore non-verbal conversation or 'corporeal interaction' as it pertains to the praxis of students at Barbican Guildhall, in particular the praxis of BGCL music ensembles *Future Band* and *DrumWorks*, which will influence the *Creative Careers*, in which an artistic product is formed through a process of musical conversation and dialogue between collaborators (Kester 2013, 115).

Kester was an early proponent of a shift towards a 'dialogical aesthetic', which he initially explored in 2004 in *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (2013, 82). He argues that dialogic practices require that 'we understand the work of art as a process of communicative exchange rather than a physical object' (Kester 2013, 90). Although Kester is primarily a visual art historian, and perhaps dialogue and active listening are more obvious and accessible concepts for an artist coming from a performing arts background, his conception of the process of communicative exchange and active listening can be usefully applied to Barbican Guildhall's idea of cross-arts work. In particular, his book provides apposite examples of socially engaged practice, which focus on a communicative

exchange between groups of people who are perhaps unused to collaborating. For instance, the work of Wochenklausur's dialogical exchange play [....] *An Intervention to Aid Drug-Addicted Women* which featured a discursive space in which policy makers, city councillors, sex workers and activists discussed pragmatic responses to the drug problem in Zurich in a creative safe space, provides a useful example of his theory in practice (Kester 2013, 97).

Kester's theory is formulated on the principle that a dialogic aesthetic necessitates a re-evaluation of the role of the artist to 'one defined in terms of openness, of listening and of a willingness to accept a position of dependence and inter-subjective vulnerability relative to the viewer or collaborator' (2013, 110). Kester provides a clear description of what this involves in practice when he discusses how with dialogical practice an artist comes to the project or to a given community influenced and informed by his/her own unique set of social and economic forces. He states that during the process of exchange both artists and participants will be challenged to develop new insights collaboratively:

> In the exchange that follows, both the artist and his or her collaborators will have their existing perceptions challenged; the artist may well recognize relationships and connections that the community members have become inured to, while the collaborators will also challenge the artist's preconceptions about the community itself and about his or her own function as an artist. What emerges is a new set of insights, generated at the intersection of both perspectives and catalyzed through the collaborative production of a given project (Kester 2013, 95).

This analysis demonstrates the significance of collaboration to building long-term meaningful relationships with local communities.

One major component to successful discursive interaction and perhaps the most significant quality of a participatory artist is the ability to listen. In *The Other Side of Language: A Philosophy of Language* (1995), Gemma Corradi Fiumara argues against the 'assertive tradition of saying' that she contends has dominated Western philosophy and art, and states that 'we have little familiarity with what it means to listen' (23). This has led to Kester's analysis of the 'long suppressed role of listening as a creative practice', which he describes as an 'aesthetics of listening' (2013, 107). He argues that the focus on active listening prevalent in the work of Jay Koh, Singaporean-born Cologne-based artist, can avoid potential dangers of 'homogenization, negation and universality implicit in discursive interaction' (Kester 2013, 103). Koh, Kester argues, is sensitive to the potential obstacles of a communicative exchange based on speaking rather than listening and has developed modes of interaction which limit these inclinations.

Of interest to this analysis into the ways in which art practitioners define discursive interaction, is Gregory and Renshaw's attempt to explicate their understanding of the role of dialogue, and, in particular, listening, in 'a new paradigm for engaging in the arts' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 1). They make a link between creative learning, collaboration, and making connections between artist and participant through conversation. They argue that 'creative learning and innovation best flourish in a culture of collaboration with its twin planks of interaction and dialogue in which finely tuned listening is a critical component' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 18). They conceptualise this approach through an analysis of Richard Sennett's 2013 book *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation* (2013), in which he argues that 'listening carefully produces conversations of two sorts, the dialectic and the dialogic' (Sennett 2013, 18). Sennett states that, in dialectic conversation, the primacy of sympathy rather than empathy can undermine the integrity of the

conversation. In contrast, dialogic conversation focuses on empathetic encounters and 'attends to another person on his or her own terms [....] it is a more demanding exercise, at least in listening; the listener has to get outside him or herself' (Sennett 2013, 21). Gregory and Renshaw offer an analysis of the qualities inherent to collaborative learning:

the kind of conversation that is fundamental...is better seen as dialogic. That is, one that is not primarily seeking resolution through finding common ground or shared agreement but one in which the process of exchange enables people to become more aware of their own views, values and preconceptions together with expanding their understanding of one another (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 7-8).

The ways in which the development of these qualities have been supported in the learning model on offer at Barbican Guildhall can be seen through an analysis of the laboratory environment. As part of their Golden Thread of engagement, Barbican Guildhall offer the use of the Pitt Theatre to artists who want to develop work in a laboratory environment, in which they are given the time and space to be free to experiment. The term 'laboratory' was developed within a theatrical context by Grotowski (1962) and later became the name of his theatre company, 'The Laboratory Theatre'. Grotowski's use of the term 'laboratory' within an artistic context signified a shift in his company's practice away from developing work for performance towards processes of artistic and self-discovery. Experimentation was concerned with both the art of acting and the development of self. Barbican Guildhall have appropriated the terminology to depict something of what they hope to achieve through their Golden Thread of Learning; space and time for artistic development alongside the development of self. 'Barbican Open Labs' offer artists 'chance to experiment in a working theatrical space without the expectation of a final product. Barbican Open Lab accepts

proposals from artists who are at the beginning of a cross-arts or participatory idea or

question, want to try something that scares them or explore the creative process with new

collaborators'[18].

Entelechy Arts: An *ArtWorks* and Barbican Guildhall Open Lab

I would like to explore one such laboratory whose focus mirrored this praxis and

which through observations revealed how a laboratory setting facilitated exploration of the

participatory qualities of dialogue and active listening. It was a laboratory run by Entelechy

Arts on 13th September 2013 and supported by *ArtWorks London*. Observation of the

laboratory raised questions which related to the role of co-production in collaborative

practice. Entelechy Arts, a participatory arts company based in South East London, works

with people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to 'produce high quality theatre, music,

dance and video events and performances'[19]. In order to receive support from the *ArtWor*ks

project, through the provision of space to run the laboratory, Entelechy Arts was asked to

reflect on what was learned through the research process. This process of analysis and

reflection could be in the format of a mini post-project seminar, a reflective discussion at

the end of the laboratory or a written account of their research through practice. Rebecca

Swift, Associate Director of Entelechy Arts, stated in the reflective report written after their

Open Lab and submitted to BGCL, that the research question which was closely aligned to

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[18] https://www.barbican.org.uk/take-part/emerging-practising-artists 27.12.17

[19] 3th July 2014 http://www.entelechyarts.org/

the practice was; 'how can we support the artist to be present and engaged with people in a variety of places and spaces?' (Swift 2014, 1).

The day involved exploring ways to co-produce with members of Entelechy's artistic team alongside disabled and nondisabled participants, in a way that cultivated an ecology where the artists' own creative identity engaged equally with that of the participants. The day was led by a 'cross-disciplinary ensemble of artists across ages and abilities, making use of "weaving" (please see Fig. 1 below) as a practical, creative, theoretical and metaphorical framework through which the guiding principle of co-production in participatory settings was explored' (Swift 2014, 1).

Figure Two. Entelechy Artists and Participants "weaving" exercise: Swift, 1

The day began with a multi sensory practical activity, followed by discussions and presentations which explored the company's guiding principles; developing work 'with and

not for' others and co-authorship. Exploring different forms of dialogue and conversation became an important focus during the day, with the group exploring 'how to form a bridge between non-verbal experiential communication and more classically accepted verbal ways of communicating' (Swift 2014, 2). This was particularly pertinent to this laboratory since one of the participants with cerebral palsy communicated with the assistance of a talk machine and another participant was both blind and deaf. In the report written in January 2014, Rebecca Swift analysed the experience of exploring dialogue in a laboratory environment. She comments on the fact that the laboratory 'established a relational practice, which meant that we couldn't arrive with prescription, but had to create structures to hold and draw out the unpredictable and allow agency and idea to emerge from different quarters' (Swift 2014, 4). The work of Entelechy during the laboratory moved away from a directional role in which work was created using traditional conceptions of artistic authorship, and made significant the role of responsive listening and collaboration. Entelechy's use of sensory activities during the laboratory was aimed at exploring the different ways people are able to communicate with one another, and much of the improvisation was developed using sensory techniques. By asking participants to negotiate the challenges of an improvisation task using sensory means, new methods of communication were explored. In one exercise a musician's double bass was hugged by a blind/deaf participant in order to feel the reverberations through touch. This in turn was a new way of the musician experiencing his own music. The laboratory provided a learning environment to explore Entelechy's practice, with artists and participants working together to explore sensory ways of working. Exercises and round table discussions were co-led by participants who were frequently referred to as 'experts through lived experience'. The laboratory environment as a learning model was able to provide the time and space to

explore communication and responsive listening. During my observations over the years of the story-sharing phase of Bravo 22 projects, what I have felt was lacking is a way of facilitating conversation between artist and participant which makes use of the practical, sensory and exploratory techniques witnessed during the Entelechy laboratory at Barbican Guildhall. Bravo 22 projects have tended to use a more traditional model of communication and dialogue, by which an artist asks questions and listens to the responses of the participants in order to develop an artistic practice. The laboratory environment enabled Entelechy to experiment with a way to communicate, which placed artistic exercises at the heart of their approach. The artistic nature of the 'weaving' activity pictured in Figure Two facilitated a form of communication between artist and participant, which made traditional dialogue redundant.

The link Kester makes between discursive interaction and identity development will become pertinent to my analysis of the development of self in Chapter Four. Kester 'view(s) dialogue not as a tool but as a process of self-transformation' (2013, 111). The focus on process as integral to discursive interaction echoes Bergson's philosophy of duration, which I will explore in Chapter Three of this thesis, in that it provides a framework for understanding the ways in which identities are formed. This will be considered in more depth in the following chapter. Kester argues that a dialogic aesthetic reveals how identities develop over time:

> (Dialogic Aesthetic) provides a way to understand how identity might change over time - not through some instantaneous thunderclap of insight but through a more subtle, and no doubt, imperfect process of collectively generated and cumulatively experienced transformation passing through phases of coherence, vulnerability, dissolution, and re-coherence (Kester 2013, 123).

This reading of participatory arts links dialogue to duration and has an impact on the planning of projects and learning models. Kester believes that a major difference between a dialogical aesthetic and other forms of aesthetic engagement relates to the 'relationship between identity and discursive experience' (Kester 2013, 112). Used in a creative space, a dialogic process can become a model for future social interactions. He argues that in conventional aesthetic experiences the viewer or audience participates in the 'dialogue' with the artwork through a physical experience of liking or disliking the work itself. This experience of liking or disliking is a solitary reaction to the work. In a dialogical aesthetic he argues, however, subjectivity is formed through dialogue and is therefore a collaborative endeavour:

> subjectivity is formed through discourse and intersubjective exchange itself.
> Discourse is not simply a tool to be used to communicate an a priori 'content'
> with other already formed subjects but is itself intended to model subjectivity.
> (Kester 2013, 112).

In this sense, a dialogic aesthetic is able to model inter-subjective exchange outside the creative space and therefore begins to provide a framework for negotiating difference and alterity between collaborators. Through active listening and dialogue, collaborators work to identify with the perspective of others and 'rather than enter into communicative exchange with the goal of representing "self" through the advancement of already formed opinions and judgments, a connected knowledge is grounded in our capacity to identify with other people' (Kester 2013, 114). A dialogical aesthetic provides the framework for ongoing identity development amongst participants and artists.

The capacity for dialogue to negotiate boundaries of difference was articulated in the report written by Entelechy Arts following the laboratory at Barbican Guildhall on 13th September 2013. They argue that the laboratory helped them to develop their practice as artists who are 'required to engage with difference' (Swift 2014, 4). They said that, through the laboratory, 'they learnt that a sculptor and a poet approach the transition from a non-verbal sensory landscape to verbal interaction in different ways. We learnt to create structures that let people connect in contrasting unique ways, different speeds and using different art forms' (Swift 2014, 4). This is indicative of the ways in which different modes of dialogue in participation are able to support the work of the different people involved in the project.

What, then, constitutes the aesthetic qualities of dialogue and listening? Or, in fact, what makes a dialogical process in and of itself an artistic practice (without an end product)? One interesting way of understanding how beneficial discursive interaction can be to creativity and collaboration, hence enabling exploration of its aesthetic qualities, is through an analysis of non-verbal discursive creative exchange. Dialogue through music or physical interaction or, as Kester describes it, 'corporeal interaction' is of particular relevance to the praxis of artists working with BGCL, including those on the *Creative Careers* project and the new BA PACE degree. This is how dialogue and active listening can become an intrinsic part of the artistic identity of a participatory artist. In the same way that improvisers 'accept' suggestions and this becomes part of the dynamic of improvisation, collaborative work communicates in the art form itself. It models a musical call and response which mirrors a devising process in theatre, and is based on unpredictability. Gregory and Renshaw explore the relevance of this in relation to collaborative learning. They analyse the theories of Keith Sawyer, psychologist and author of *Group Genius: The*

Creative Power of Collaboration (2008), who studies the ways in which jazz bands and improvisational theatre companies collaboratively create work:

> Since each performer cannot know what the other performers will do, each has to listen and respond to the other, resulting in a collaborative, and inter-subjectively generated, performance. In these group improvisations - including small-group jazz, 'improv' theatre, and everyday conversation - no one acts as the director or leader, determining where the performance will go; instead, the performance emerges out of the actions of everyone working together. This is why jazz musicians often refer to musical improvisation as a 'conversation'.
>
> (Sawyer 2008, 194).

Students on the BA PACE degree and participants engaging in Pitt Labs as part of the *Creative Careers* project and BCGL participatory ensembles explore collaborative composition and devising in a way which mirrors this non-verbal conversation as illustrated in the analysis of *Unleashed* in Chapter Four of this thesis.

> For Sawyer, the interconnectedness, the shared vision, that lies at the heart of a collaborative conversation (as in any musical or verbal improvisation) generates unpredictable outcomes that stimulate the participants to see themselves, their colleagues and the world differently. It is through this interaction, with its unique chemistry, that creative ideas and leaps of imagination begin to fly.
>
> (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 8-9)

This analysis reveals the aesthetic qualities of discursive interaction and its relevance to the praxis of artists working at Barbican Guildhall. The department aims to provide participants and prospective students with the opportunity to devise, collaborate and compose alongside other artistic disciplines in a way which develops a young person's artistic skills in

tandem with their collaborative skills. They prioritise an aesthetic that places collaboration and dialogue at the heart of the artistic identity alongside building a community of young artists who want to develop a socially engaged practice. They do this in the hope of broadening the diversity of the sector and removing barriers which previously existed between these young people and access to further education and international arts organisations.

Inclusive practice at Barbican Guildhall

Since its conception, BGCL has evolved to become a bridge between the international arts centre and the surrounding communities. It has sought to change the nature of the relationship between the Barbican Centre, Guildhall School and local communities through facilitating a more inclusive practice. Barbican Guildhall's approach to increasing engagement has been to focus on training artists who can work both in collaboration with other art forms and in community contexts. Through this process they have explored the ways in which work can be developed collaboratively between local participants and artists. The specificity of the terms 'cross-arts' and 'collaboration' become significant to the department's ambitions to create a more inclusive practice, since they illustrate their belief that they needed to diversify the art forms on offer at Barbican Guildhall to appeal to a wider audience. Notions of taste and cultural capital relate to sustainability in this context since, historically, the Barbican has struggled to engage diverse local people through the provision of 'high art' for international audiences. This has led to 'behaviours of self-exclusion' (Bourdieu 1996, 141) amongst local people, and to a sense that the Barbican is not 'for them'. Most of the young people BGCL engage in their projects

have never been to the Barbican before despite living in close proximity to it and it is the

department's hope that they might achieve an ongoing relationship with these communities

in the future. In my research I have become interested in how BGCL creates platforms for

sustained engagement amongst diverse communities of artists and participants through

projects and learning pathways that favour dialogue, active listening and collaboration

between art forms and people.

This focus on collaboration has had implications for the role of the artist working in

participatory settings at Barbican Guildhall, and I argue this has implications for the

sustainability of the relationship built with local communities. It signifies a shift in thinking,

about not only the role of the artist in creating long-term relationships with local

communities, but also the capacity of those communities to shape the future of the

department's praxis. Through dialogue and active listening, work can be created within a

sustainable context. The skills and qualities inherent to a participatory artist mean that they

are equally able both to speak and to listen, and that their work 'remains contingent upon

the insights to be derived from their interaction with others and with otherness. They define

themselves as artists through their ability to catalyze understanding, to mediate exchange,

and to sustain an ongoing process of empathetic identification and critical analysis' (Kester

2013, 118). It is through this unique collaboration between people that cultural

sustainability is achieved. As discussed in the previous chapter, the inclusion of a cultural

framework for sustainability studies seen in the four-pillar model of sustainability illustrates

the significance of this. In *Art and Sustainability* (2011), Sascha Kagan states that 'as a

shared dream, vision and world view, as well as a conversation, sustainability reveals itself

as a cultural phenomenon, if "culture" is understood as a value system and set of signifiers

framing social identities and dispositions to act and to behave' (Kagan 2011, 13). What is

sustained is not economic growth but the development and progression of communities.

Through dialogue and time, equal and balanced relationships emerge. Utilising dialogic

artistic practices is one way art can help to create equal and balanced relationships between

arts organisations and local communities. Seen in this light, the way participatory artists

position themselves within a given community is essential to ensuring cultural sustainability.

The power of collaboration in enabling artistic creativity and innovation was

described by Renshaw as 'not being achieved in isolation, in a silo of convention and

predictability, but by people choosing to work together, celebrating how their different

talents, perspectives and insights can create something that transforms their practice and

their ways of seeing the world' (Renshaw, 2011). This chapter attempts both to capture the

'medium specific skills' (Jackson, 28) at the heart of these BGCL collaborations, for instance

active listening, and an ability to work using a 'cross-arts' approach. I have explored the role

of the artist and authorship in participatory practice through an analysis of the supporting

infrastructure provided by Barbican Guildhall. This has the effect of challenging an

understanding of 'pure art' and the separation of art-form departments at Barbican

Guildhall in the hope that 'the stitches holding the artistic programme and creative learning

might eventually dissolve so as to think, plan and implement as one. Critical to this is the

melding of the artistic programme with the creation of exciting and radical original work

that may come from new collaborations' (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 12). This cultural shift

at the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music and Drama represents a long-term

commitment to artists and participants in the hope of ultimately diversifying the sector and

widening access to the conservatoire. These two organisations' role as institutions of

legitimation is significant to historical cultural hierarchies which have previously prevented participation in the arts. This chapter has captured the story of the development of the department and considered Barbican Guildhall's desire for internal cultural change that will promote a more inclusive practice.

It should be noted that whilst BGCL champions collaborative practice in local communities, there are other ways in which they widen participation into higher education and facilitate access to conservatoire training from underrepresented groups. BGCL faces its biggest challenge when trying to support and encourage participants from their target boroughs who are not necessarily interested in pursuing participatory or collaborative practice professionally but who do want to specialise as an instrumentalist. As discussed throughout this chapter, this is because many of the young people they work with do not come from socio-economic groups which can support the private tuition required to achieve the level of instrumental skill to gain access to BMus courses at UK and international conservatoires. BGCL's response to this issue, along with encouraging participation in projects like *Creative Careers* and *Dialogue Festival*, has been to both strategically align and work in partnership with local music hubs to facilitate free instrumental tuition to young people in advance of their application to HE institutions. The capacity to work in partnership with other arts organisations is important to ensuring cultural sustainability and this will be discussed in more depth in the conclusion to this thesis.

Within this chapter I sought to contextualise the vocabularies prevalent within the department during my time there, and through this illustrate the prevailing ethos and culture of BGCL. It was important to me that this research formed Chapter Two of this thesis since the lexicon used by BGCL, for instance 'dialogic' and 'cross-arts', signifies the wider

ambitions of the department. The term 'cross-arts' in particular, is specific to Barbican Guildhall and required some clarification in advance of discussing the work of the department in later chapters. An analysis of the specificity of these terms to the department's wider cultural agenda, will contribute to an understanding of the underlying ethos behind the participatory case studies explored in Chapters Four and Five. This research is positioned in the second chapter of this thesis to introduce the department's values and it will also assist in contributing to understanding why the work of Henri Bergson has been useful in conceptualising the department's approach to sustainability in Chapter Three.

Having introduced the work of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning and captured the department's core values as they pertain to issues of cultural sustainability, I will now continue to develop my argument through exploring what I believe to be an essential factor in achieving sustained change in participatory arts; namely the length of time of a project. Through the conceptual framework of philosopher Henri Bergson, Chapter Three suggests new ways to think about time and shape new vocabularies in relation to duration, with the intention to locate participatory arts within a twenty-first century ethic of sustainability.

Chapter Three: Slowing Down: Participatory Arts and a Twenty-First Century Ethic of Sustainability.

Prelude

It is March 2013 and Roger, a sprightly and persistently optimistic eighty-year-old, sits opposite me and talks about what the area around Bangabandu Primary school in Tower Hamlets used to be like. His reveries formed part of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning department's participatory festival *Dialogue*, whereby eight-year-olds from a local school worked alongside residents from his housing association, Gateway, on an intergenerational music project based on 'seeing things'. Collaboratively they wrote:

> People we see are not what they seem,
> Our stories are not people's thoughts,
> Different people, different tales
> Take time to find what is there

That afternoon women who were originally from Montserrat, sang as part of Fellows Court Community Choir. They told song-stories of their lives before coming to London. Memories of an island full of children and dogs were woven together with the beats of a nineteen-year-old beat boxer and students from the Guildhall leadership course.

Later the following day, at The Arbour in Tower Hamlets, Salima, a woman who took part in a project for recently migrant women and Guildhall students, cried a little as she described how her memories of missing her mother emerged when she sang:

> I hear voices in the street
> Someone calling after me
> An echo of my dreams
> A distant memory

Hear Azan in the air

This is a call to prayer

And your voice in my ear

My heart beat

Later that week my own mother and I walked around the exhibition, *The Bride and the Bachelors: Duchamp with Cage, Cunningham, Rauschenberg and Johns* which forms part of the Barbican's *Dancing around Duchamp* season. Knowing I would be writing about 'shock-of-the-new' (Hughes 1991) within the avant-garde period, I tried to imagine the effect *Nude Descending a Staircase* would have had on its 1912 audience, and struggled to imagine the furore surrounding Duchamp's radically challenging practice of blurring the lines between art and life. I tried to envisage how, in 1917, the use of a fixed object like a bicycle wheel attached to a stool or the urinal he named *Fountain* could so radically alter what we think of as art, and pondered the effect this might have had on my own understanding of life. I imagined the impact on the listener of hearing John Cage's use of 'random' (1951) for the first time, the Chinese text IChing and indeterminacy in music. I attempted to picture how this radical period of art had influenced and determined what I saw at The Arbour and Bangabandu Primary School earlier that week.

In September 2014, the following year, whilst I was sitting at my 'hot' desk at the Barbican Centre, crowds of angry protestors gathered outside The Vaults on Leake Street below prohibiting the entrance of the artist performers of Brett Bailey's controversial *Exhibit B*. It was clear that the use of shock in art was still prompting outrage and critique. At the Barbican we were being told to refer any press enquires to Barbican's communication department. A few days later the exhibition was cancelled, prompting much discussion about censorship in art.

Moments of shock at Barbican Centre and twenty-first century approaches to time as a tool for the radical

In this thesis I am searching for new ways to think about time, and to shape new vocabularies in relation to duration, with the intention of locating participatory arts within a twenty-first century ethic of sustainability. I am interested in finding new and productive ways to rethink participatory arts that will have implications for planning projects at the Barbican Centre that take place in community and educational settings over a long period, and where lasting and sustained collaboration is possible. This has led me to consider how debates surrounding time and the duration of participatory projects, have the potential to inform sustainability policies at Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning.

My interest in time and in the long-term sustainability of participatory arts projects reflects contemporary unease with the political ambition of community-based arts. One key critic is Claire Bishop, whose book *Artificial Hells* (2012) discusses the idea that participatory arts practices have become depoliticised, or deradicalised, in recent years. She lays the blame clearly on policies generated by New Labour and the 2010-2015 Coalition, who regarded the arts as a tool for social inclusion and funded it accordingly. She argues that we have witnessed a transformation of the 1960s discourse of participation whereby the terms 'participation, creativity, community, no longer occupy a subversive, anti-authoritarian force, but have become a cornerstone of postindustrial economic policy' (Bishop 2012, 14). In particular, she critiques Grant Kester's notion of dialogic durational practice, and questions its ability to achieve lasting social change. She goes so far as to argue that all

socially collaborative practices are perceived to be equally important artistic gestures of resistance:

> [They] end up sounding identical to government cultural policy geared towards
>
> the twin mantras of social inclusion and creative cities (Bishop 2012, 16).

Bishop believes that the discourse of social inclusion set forth by recent UK governments has been discussed in terms of a simple transition from excluded to included members of society. She describes this transition to 'included individual' to be geared towards accessing 'the holy grail of self-sufficient consumerism and be independent of any need for welfare' (Bishop 2012, 13). In her section entitled 'Art as terrorist act', Bishop contrasts what she sees as the deradicalism of participatory arts in recent years to the avant-garde era's belief that at the point of reception, a work of art should have a similar effect to a political action:

> If the contents are to be expressed in a revolutionary manner, if the work is to
>
> make an effective impact on the recipient's consciousness, it is essential to deal
>
> with the material in a shocking, disquieting, even violent way (Bishop 2012, 127).

These comments echo the subversive aims of the avant-garde artists from the previous century who hoped to disrupt audiences through moments of shock and whose work I visited at the exhibition at the Barbican Centre in 2013. Despite Bishop's belief that participatory arts have moved away from the use of shock and disruption, the use of such aesthetic techniques is still prevalent today. The controversy of *Exhibit B,* which used elements of audience participation, and its subsequent cancellation, bear witness to this.

In 2014, *Exhibit B,* a live promenade exhibition in The Vaults on Leake Street directed by Brett Bailey and whose London installation was produced by the Barbican Centre, was

cancelled after crowds of protestors blocked the stage door. *Exhibit B* was a touring

performance piece which featured in arts festivals in Europe, including at the Edinburgh

Festival. The production included twelve live tableaux, installations featuring black actors

and artists in depictions of 'human zoos' which audiences were invited to walk around. This

exhibition featured elements of audience participation and engaged with issues important

to many East London communities, through an aesthetic of shock and disruption. It was the

intention of the director, Brett Bailey, that *Exhibit B* would interrogate and challenge

dehumanising stereotypes of otherness and expose historical and current racist and

xenophobic policies in the EU. However, many protestors interviewed by the *Evening

Standard* in September 2014 asserted that the exhibition only recreated spectacles of

humiliation and control and they challenged Bailey's right, as a white South African, to

engage with issues of racism through this medium, stating in some extreme cases that he

exploited the performers. In an interview with *The Guardian*, activist and sociologist Dr

Kehinde Andrews stated that the exploitation of performers related to the objectification of

the black body:

> The exhibition literally turns the black body into an object. Such objectification
>
> was at the heart of human zoos and recreating this re-exoticises and reproduces
>
> the original racism. This is not a discussion about censorship, but about racism,
>
> what it is and who has the power to define it. [20]

The latter charge of exploitation was vehemently and widely rejected by the performers of

Exhibit B. Bailey's cast of performers changed from city to city, the reason being that he

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[20] Andresm Kehinde 25/4/2018
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/27/is-art-installation-exhibit-b-racist

hoped to encourage debate amongst local artists and participant performers. Bailey stated

that he always encouraged the performers to respond to the piece and help shape the

development of the exhibition. In addition to this, *Exhibit B* encouraged audiences to get

involved in debate by providing a room for reflection and comment at the end of the

exhibition. Bailey encouraged performers and participant performers to voice their own

opinions about the subject matter of the piece and these were displayed alongside their

photos at the exhibition. Despite these mechanisms to provoke constructive discussion

surrounding the issues raised by the piece of work, many interested potential audiences still

felt alienated, estranged and angry about its presence in East London. Many of the

protestors had not seen it, with some stating they felt unable to visit the exhibition because

of the expensive price of the tickets.[21] Prior to its debut in London, *Exhibit B* had been

performed in other cities, including Edinburgh and Amsterdam, and was always surrounded

by controversy and debate. However, this debate reached a climax in London, where

protests outside the venue prompted the Barbican Centre to close the exhibition within its

first week. The Barbican stated in a press release published on its website that the protests

outside The Vaults verged on violent and this caused the Barbican Centre to close the

exhibition for fear of risk to its performers. The protesters disputed this, stating that as the

protests were peaceful and that no arrests were made, that it was in fact closed in order to

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[21] http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/protesters-force-barbican-cancel-human-zoo-exhibition-9752872.html

end the cycle of negative press.[22] Whatever the reason for the closure, the result caused

much discussion about censorship in art. [23]

The debate surrounding *Exhibit B* prompts me to question why protestors, some of

whom were artists themselves, responded so forcefully and sought a total ban on the

exhibition rather than feeling able to respond to it and engage with the issues the piece

raised. Why was the piece surrounded by the greatest controversy in London, arguably the

most multicultural and 'progressive' city in which it had exhibited? Was it the choice of

venue, the Barbican Centre, which impacted on the dynamics of the debate surrounding the

exhibition? Was it the intended brevity of the exhibition, five days, which created such

emotion? *Exhibit B*'s explosive and short-lived intervention into the local community leads

me to consider the implications of Bailey's choice of a temporal aesthetic to engage

audiences in important issues such as racism and colonialism. One factor which contributed

to the protests surrounding the 'pop-up' exhibition was a lack of time in advance of and

during the project for thoughtful and meaningful dialogue between interested parties,

audiences and the artistic team. The piece was always likely to prompt a visceral and

emotive reaction in its audiences and was only scheduled to run for five days at the

Barbican Centre. With such a short amount of time to deal with such explosive subject

matter, it is perhaps no wonder audiences felt alienated from its content. Being confronted

by the image of a semi-naked or naked black slave, who was instructed by the director to

hold the gaze of audience members and to 'function as a (visual) sledgehammer' is an

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[22] http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/protesters-force-barbican-cancel-human-zoo-exhibition-9752872.html

[23] Kehinde, Andrews 24/4/2018
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/27/is-art-installation-exhibit-b-racist

extreme example of the use of shock in this piece of work. In the ensuing debate on the

discussion forums of the SCUDD website (The Standard Conference of University Drama

Departments) following the closure of the exhibition, a number of points were raised

pertinent to this thesis. In particular, the discussions raised issues relating to the use of

shock and the lack of time for meaningful discussion with local invested communities. One

contributor, writer, performer and director Aleasha Chaunte, stated that:

> Perhaps the question for the Barbican is what mechanisms are in place that
>
> meant that a large group of people feel they are not included in the debate
>
> except from outside the front doors? Is it the ticket cost? Is it the architecture?
>
> [24]

Another contributor discussed the difficulty in programming a temporary exhibition within a

community with vested interests in the issues raised, without the time for prior meaningful

engagement. Bill Aitchison, Artistic Director of Bill Aitchison Company, considered the

challenge of parachuting a controversial piece of art into a community without establishing

with invested audiences a relationship based on reciprocal exchange and dialogue over

time:

> I rather see the problem as being one that the Barbican has created for itself by
>
> selecting this work in the first place whilst not having enough pre-existing trust
>
> within the black community in general and not making sufficient overtures prior
>
> to this specific exhibition. They were caught off guard in their art bubble. In this

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[24] 26 September 2014, Aleasha Chaunte. https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A2=ind1409&L=SCUDD&F=&S=&P=149313

respect ticket prices and the centre's wider artistic programme and culture are a

part of the issue [25]

The importance of the centre's 'wider artistic programme and culture' becomes significant in this analysis. Aside from the aesthetic of the piece, which attempted to disrupt audiences into debate through the use of shock, I am also interested in how a durational approach to the subject matter might have negated the dismissal of the project by audiences. Crucial to establishing why time is of central importance to participatory arts debates is the fact that *Exhibit B* was part of the main central programming at the Barbican Centre and not linked to the work of Creative Learning, who arguably have established pre-existing trust with local black communities over many years of artistic activity. By contrast, in the next chapter, I will consider how Creative Learning and the Barbican main programming successfully developed a project that dealt with a similar subject matter to *Exhibit B* but through a durational aesthetic and ongoing dialogue with invested communities. As discussed in Chapter Two, Creative Learning has attempted to build ongoing relationships with neighbourhoods local to the Barbican, whereas programming at the Barbican Centre has historically been geared more towards the needs of a fluctuating cultural tourist industry and a cultural consumer wanting to see new and exciting products. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the Barbican Centre is making concerted efforts to move towards programming in which Creative Learning agendas are included and not operating in isolation from the rest of the centre. Rachel Seoighe at the University of Warwick, discussed the lack of ownership amongst protestors over the piece and its short-term intervention into their space:

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[25] Saturday 27th September. Bill Aitchison. https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A2=ind1409&L=SCUDD&F=&S=&P=149313

Perhaps more importantly, as the protestors consistently stated, they - whose

history of oppression and violence is the subject of this piece - were also largely

denied the opportunity to visit because of the high cost of the ticket. This was

experienced as further removing ownership and authorship of history from the

hands of the black person to the elite, white-dominated institution. [26]

This project demonstrates how shock, with its radical avant-garde history, is still used in

current artistic practice. It suggests this approach is not exclusive to the avant-garde era but

rather has informed current artistic and participatory practice. Additionally, the response to

Exhibit B illuminates the importance of time to develop relationships with local communities

in order to encourage sustainable and meaningful dialogue. The debates surrounding *Exhibit

B* highlight an important question regarding the impact of short-term interventions in local

communities and the ways in which artists attempt to engage audiences in the long term.

Bishop's argument that a piece of art must induce a sense of shock in order to be

aligned with the radical is challenged by the response to *Exhibit B*. It is also significant in

relation to debates surrounding art's ability to communicate with an audience. I want to

consider whether or not durational work – projects that are developed over a period of

months or years - is better able to facilitate a space in which participants are able to engage

in meaningful dialogue with artists**.** Grant Kester argues for an art that is based on a slower

approach of dialogical exchange and reciprocal openness which he says requires 'an

important shift [towards an understanding of a] work of art as a process of communicative

exchange' (Kester 2004, 90). This slower approach he believes makes possible the ability for

cumulative learning as opposed to flashes of temporary insight. Time therefore becomes

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[26] 25th Sep 2014, Rachel Seoighe, https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-
bin/webadmin?A1=ind1409&L=SCUDD#70)

important to debates surrounding participatory art and sustainability in general, and at the Barbican Centre in particular.

In this chapter, I shall focus on developing an understanding of how concepts of time might be used to inform participatory arts projects. This is a new direction for participatory arts, as I have suggested, where the politics of change have been associated with short interventions, based on the idea that participants need to be 'shocked' in order to experience the world in new ways. This is, I suggest, not always as politically radical as has been thought. I am interested in finding a way to conceptualise the long-term relationships with the local community that are afforded when major arts organisations invest time in participatory arts. As such, this thesis explores whether implicit in effective dialogue between artist and participant is a commitment to time. I am interested in how far, and in what ways, participatory arts projects held over the long-term might be considered politically radical.

The culture of speed up: The politics of time

The relationship between time and politics depends on the understanding that time is socially constructed, and as such its social meanings can be challenged. David Wiles follows this trend in relation to theatre, and argues in *Theatre and Time* (2014) that 'time is a socially produced act of dividing and counting' (54). The clock served to organise civilizations, was used to produce economically efficient societies and benefit commerce. Wiles suggests that 'political power has long been bound with the control of time' in an effort to both coordinate society and to increase efficiency of labour and productivity (54).

The advent of calendars and clocks, as early as 2000 BC, not only provided a way of measuring units of time but also provided a rhythm, structure and therefore discipline to everyday life. An economic value has therefore been placed on units of time. This thesis considers a person's subjective experience of time, which often differs from the ordered and measured clock time which runs parallel to it. There is a difference between our lived experience of time and clock time, but this has led to social consequences that are personally felt. The beneficiaries of consumer society are able to take advantage of the multiple opportunities presented by a temporally ordered society, but at the same time, Wiles suggests, they 'feel bereft of time because time is finite' (Wiles 2014, 57).

If time is felt and experienced and socially constructed, then it follows that lived experience of time is changed by technological advance. The idea that time and space have become compressed as a result of technological change is widely held, and these technologies have facilitated the creation of a networked, globalised world able to trade with greater ease across continents. In *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (1990) geographer David Harvey talks about a 'time-space' compression that results from processes of what has been described by cultural theorists as 'speed up'. Speed up is inextricably linked to both capitalism and globalisation, where, Harvey argues, capitalist societies operate under the proviso that if we can work quicker, produce more efficiently, get from A to B faster, we might enjoy greater success, a more leisurely weekend or perhaps, even, an early retirement. This idea is debated by German sociologist Hartmut Rosa, who argues in *High Speed Society: Social Acceleration, Power and Modernity* (2009) that speed up appears to provide an answer for the feeling that time is finite:

> To taste life in all its heights and depths and in its full complexity becomes a
> central aspiration of modern man. Acceleration serves as a strategy to erase the

difference between the time of the world and the time of our life [....]

acceleration of the pace of life represents the modern answer to the problem of

finitude and death (Rosa 2009, 91).

Here Rosa raises a discrepancy between how a person experiences time and the time

measured by clocks. Rosa's perspective seems to offer a rather sympathetic understanding

of the value placed on the speeding up of everyday life. By contrast, following Harvey, I

argue that speed up is more closely linked to economic gain and control within the capitalist

globalised world. Who benefits from the economic gain facilitated by speed up, and on what

terms? This question has been debated by, amongst others, Zygmunt Bauman who

considers that a move towards a 'liquid' software-based modernity (2010) has meant

economic power lies with those who have access to instantaneity. The benefits are

experienced by those already privileged and able to access the mechanisms in place which

facilitate speed up. This places time in relation to the political and offers a way to

understand that there is a temporal dynamic to how advantage and disadvantage is

experienced.

Chrono-political power: Who benefits from speed up?

One of the issues that faces the Barbican is that the arts centre, on the whole,

addresses audiences who are socially privileged, and Creative Learning works in areas of

social disadvantage. At the heart of the Creative Learning department is an interest in

developing long-term relationships with local communities, yet the Barbican also serves

more mobile populations such as tourists and those who work in the City nearby. My

contention is that inequality is temporal, and this relates to the different ways in which

people living or working near the Barbican experience time and the pace of life.

To understand how time is differentiated in populations close to the Barbican, I have

turned to the work of sociologist Sarah Sharma. In *In The Meantime: Temporality and*

Cultural Politics (2014) Sarah Sharma critiques a 'tacit acceptance that the world is getting

faster' through a complex and ethnographic exploration of how the discourse of 'speed up is

part of the problematic cultural context in which people understand and experience time'

(2014, 8). She considers a 'more complex insight into the politics of time and space ushered

in by global capitalism' (2014,8), and she recognises the power relations that play out 'in

time', a concept she calls 'temporality'. Sharma's analysis of 'power chronography' does for

time what Doreen Massey's theory of 'power geometry' achieved for theories of space and

place. Massey, whose theories I discuss in depth later in this thesis, argues that, through the

theory of 'power geometry', the so-called universal time-space compression became

differentiated: 'different groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated

mobility' (Massey 1994, 149). Massey argues that space is relational and that previous

spatial theorists, for instance, Fredric Jameson and David Harvey, did not account for social

differences such as gender, class, race and sexuality. These social differences were therefore

'either unacknowledged or lost from view of the disorientated postmodern gaze into social

spaces affected by the acceleration of capital and time-space compression' (Sharma 2014,

9). Massey's analysis led to what has been referred to as 'the spatial turn'. Sharma states

that whilst space has often been linked to power, time has not often been acknowledged as

a form of power:

Since the spatial turn, cultural theory has paid close attention to how space is

imbricated in games of power - whether by extensions, expansion, colonization,

imprisonment, banishment, confinement, inclusion, or exclusion. In all these

forms of spatialised power, a temporal counterpart is implied. But temporal

power….is more subtly and quietly asserted and as such has gone unremarked.

Ultimately the spatial turn did not acknowledge time as a form of power, a site

of material struggle and social difference (Sharma 2014, 10).

Thinking of time as a form of power prompts the questions: who controls time, and how can

time be experienced in a way which exacerbates social differences? How does the

experience of time differ from one person to another? Both of these questions are pertinent

to understanding the experience of participatory arts. They are particularly relevant for

Barbican Guildhall since one of the main issues Creative Learning has to resolve is the

uneasy tension between the fact that the Barbican Centre must appeal to mobile

populations such as tourists and local audiences that are socially privileged, whilst Creative

Learning works in areas of social disadvantage. I am interested in developing an

understanding of how that inequality is temporal, in terms of the different ways people

surrounding the Barbican experience time.

As I have pointed out, the location of the Barbican poses specific difficulties for

socially engaged artists who seek to use the arts to transcend social division. This inequality

is amplified by being so close to the wealth of the City of London. Sharma invokes a similar

example of how inequitable experiences of time create inequality by discussing the example

of Shibuya Station in Tokyo. Shibuya Station is a space where throngs of pedestrians pass

and many thousands of people travel through the travel interchange, some stopping to shop

at the vast and fashionable underground shopping centre, Shibuchinko, others going to

work at the underground business district. This underground space, Shibuchinko, is a mile wide and a thriving consumer and business area. Shibuya is a technological and consumer mecca for 'card carrying members of the new information technology, such as gamers and game developers, technophiles, fashionistas, pop culture junkies, advertisers and software engineers' (Sharma 2014, 3). For these people the pace of life is full of opportunity and 'signifies a future that is densely inhabited by creative, energetic, tech savvy and forward thinking types' (Sharma 2014, 3). The business district is similarly full of people who benefit from the speed of global capitalism and thrive in a fast-paced world. Shibuchinko is a space in which 'people and capital seem unencumbered and almost immaterial [.....] an evolution of technology and commerce in a networked and creative humanity' (Sharma 2014, 3). Sharma comments on the fact that, for critical theorists of globalisation and technology, Shibuya is 'emblematic of something much bleaker,' (Sharma 2014, 3), what Paul Virilio calls the 'over exposed city' (Virilio 2002) in which billboards, neon lights, surveillance cameras 'take the place of physical architecture, and commodity and instant communication make space yield to time' (Sharma 2014, 3). Not everyone who frequents this area has the same relationship to time. Many do not benefit in the same ways from the fast-paced nature of this underground metropolis and many cannot access this 'liquid modernity' in a way which means they benefit from it (3). These people for instance, the cleaners working through the nights, the taxi drivers delivering passengers at the crack of dawn to financial centres, the restaurateurs whose sole purpose is to serve the daily influx of business clientele reveal how speed up is often inequitable.

Like the crowds in Shibuchinko, the City of London sees a flux and shift in its population at different hours of the day. It has the highest number of commuters in England and Wales according to data released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) based on

the 2011 census. From Monday to Friday the population in the City grows to 358,266 people from its resident population of 6,307. This is an increase of over 5,500%. By comparison the weekend seems ghostly quiet. Sharma discusses the fact that the 'figures at the Shibuya best exemplify not so much the speed of life but the different temporal itineraries that constitute social space there' (Sharma 2014, 5). The space is shared by a host of people whose 'convergence is not random but temporally ordered - they come to inhabit and experience time (and space) differently depending on where they fit within the larger grid of time' (Sharma 2014, 5). The investment banker who commutes from the suburbs to the City of London to work as part of the global marketplace fits into the grid of time very differently from a person working in one of the many eateries designed to service the transient weekday population, which open at dawn. Similarly, the life of a resident of a local council estate in the City of London is negatively influenced by the massive increase in weekday population through rising prices and ensuing gentrification. Their experiences of time are interlinked, since one person works hours that support the other person's life. However, the last two groups of people do not benefit in the same way from a networked, fast paced, globalised world. They are disproportionately disadvantaged by the pattern of working hours. Those who support the lives of those who benefit most from 'speed up' usually cannot afford to live in the same space; their time is literally worth less per hour, not to mention the fact that research reveals that long-term night shifts can lower life expectancy by up to 11%.[27] This is the context in which Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning is working. The participants with whom they work tend to be people who do not always benefit from a networked globalised world.

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[27] 1.2.2017 https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/mar/17/night-shifts-health

The idea of time as a valuable commodity has been opened for debate in participatory arts, where there has been a call for a slow pedagogy or a slow applied theatre. In 'Peacebuilding performances in the aftermath of war' Paul Dwyer comments that the elongation of projects relates to the need for 'taking the time to search for a communal response' (Dwyer, 2016 in Hughes and Nicholson, 146). When describing the *The Bourgainville Photoplay Project* Dwyer advocates for 'the need to simply dwell in a context long enough to become aware of possible contradictions between indigenous and non-indigenous practices' (2016, 146). An impression of time sped up in contemporary life and the subsequent 'slow movement' which has responded to, and at times supported, speed up is not of central importance to my thesis. Of greater interest to my argument is the idea that the consequences of 'speed up' have different implications for different groups of people. In particular, I argue that participatory arts tend to work with groups of people who do not benefit from speed up and are negatively affected by inequitable temporal relations. This makes time an important concern of participatory artists and theorists. Sharma discusses the idea that people are divided by different temporal groups:

> Rather than facilitating an egalitarian global village, the yielding of space to time divides the citizenry into temporal binary. There are two temporal poles of chronopolitical life: fast classes and slow classes (Sharma 2014, 6).

Time is experienced differently and inequitably by different groups of people. Economist and social theorist Jeremy Rifkin describes these two groups of people as 'the time rich and the time poor' (1987). Historically these two 'temporal classes' have been imagined as separate and much like 'distant ships that never pass, unknown to each other' (Sharma 2014, 6). Sharma considers the concept that speed theorists have provided too simple an account of the acceleration of everyday life and temporal

difference. Not thinking in terms of the complexity of differentially lived time, Sharma

believes, can in fact exacerbate inequitable temporal relations.

Why then is temporality particularly important to a debate surrounding

sustainability in participatory arts practices? What is a major global cultural institution's

position within the bio political economy of time? Firstly, Creative Learning is constituted in

time in a way that is structurally related to the time of the Barbican Centre and the wider

Barbican area; the latter is dictated to by the time of consumers, tourists, the cultural

demands of a creative class and funding structures operating within a globalised world.

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning both operates within, and must be responsive to, this

context. This affects its long-term programming choices and therefore sustainability.

Secondly, and most importantly, the people Creative Learning seeks to work with, alongside

and for, tend to be those who are negatively affected by inequitable temporal relations.

They tend to be people who don't benefit from a globalized, capitalist, tech savvy and fast-

paced world. Time therefore becomes an essential and productive way to rethink

participatory arts practices.

The speeding up of consumer society has been exacerbated, or significantly aided

depending on your perspective, by the advent of twenty-first century technology. However,

David Wiles states that the progressive acceleration of time can be traced back to as early as

the sixteenth century, and the regime of the clock (Wiles 2014, 57-58). The clock chopped

time into hours, minutes and then into seconds. As society became able to quantify and

measure units of time, the discrepancy widened between quantitative and qualitative

experiences of time. Wiles states that time is a social construct:

The creation of minutes and seconds led to the illusion that there was such a thing as 'absolute time', a virtual clock that existed outside and beyond the realm of human beings [….] The emergence of absolute time […] reinforced the perception of eternal power structures which human beings can neither influence nor function without (Wiles 2014, 58).

Through this analysis, temporality becomes another form of reification. Speed, acceleration and deceleration became part of cultural and social developments and movements. The impact of the discrepancy between lived time and clock time on the culture of speed up has meant that many theorists have returned to the work of Henri Bergson to help theorise lived experience of time.

Bergson offers an alternative understanding of time which favours our lived experience of time, or as he calls it, durational time. He offers an account for the discrepancy between our lived experience of time and clock time. In contrast to the conventional understanding of clock time that provides structure to our everyday life and which places commercial value on units of time which can be divisive and commercially competitive, Bergson's theory of durational time is socially unifying because it places a value on human lived experience of time.

Before moving to ideas of duration, I shall return to examine the use of shock in the avant-garde era and how it has informed current participatory and artistic practice. This analysis historically and theoretically contextualises my investigation into the progressive shift in the conceptualisation of time and duration in modern artAvant-garde artists responded to developments in the early part of the twentieth century by utilising time, and in particular

the explosive and shocking 'now moments', as a tool to usher in radical political change.

Since I am hoping to argue that participatory arts can use a slower approach to temporality

in order that participants can experience the world in different ways, I would like to explore

the differing ways in which avant-garde artists approached temporality and political action.

Temporality and Shock in Modernism and the Avant-garde

Walter Benjamin said that 'even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is

lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place

where it happens to be' (Benjamin 1968, 214). Walter Benjamin's philosophies are

illustrative of modernism and the avant-garde's conceptual understanding of aesthetic

experience as instantaneous, as opposed to durational. Significant in a reflective analysis of

Benjamin's conceptual approach is Karl Heinz Borher's collection of essays *Suddenness: On*

The Moment of Aesthetic Experience (1994). Borher argues that a popular analysis of

Benjamin's philosophy is that he seeks the 'dissolution of historical continuity and its

replacement by the concept of discontinuous time' (Borher 1994, 197). I argue that not only

is this aim indicative of a paradigm within twentieth century art but also reflective of

broader ideological components of the twentieth century.

Walter Benjamin's philosophy of shock and his theory of 'the moment' are explored

in his essays 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936), 'On Some

Motifs in Baudelaire' (1939) and 'Thesis on the Philosophy of History' (1940). It is important

that he chose these areas as a means to explore temporality in modern art and literature, as

they represent three conceptual strands of his analytical approach. In 'The Work of Art in

the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' he explores the significance of the development of

technology which is able to reproduce art to the idea that 'that which withers in the age of

mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art' (Benjamin, 215). Here he addresses

the Dada movement's use of shock and this will prove significant to my own analysis of

temporality in the Dada movement later in this section. In 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire'

he analyses the influence of modern urbanism on the sociological and psychological

preoccupation with shock through an analysis of Baudelaire and Freud. This work engages

with Bergson's concept of 'duration' and its influence on Proust. It is here that he begins to

explore the concept of the experience of time and its actualisation in modern art. Finally in

'Thesis on the Philosophy of History', Benjamin illustrates a complex relationship between

temporality and a Marxist utopian vision able to 'blast open the continuum of history'

(Benjamin 1968, 254). Each of these three theses contributes to an understanding of

temporality in modernity.

In 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' Benjamin explores the

effect of technological advancement in the reproduction of art and its effect on a work of

art's 'unique existence in the place where it is at this moment' (Benjamin 1968, 214). This

thesis holds significant ideas central to my analysis. Firstly Benjamin explores the idea that

'that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art'

(Benjamin 1968, 215). The significance of the 'aura' to a work of art lies in 'the authenticity

of a thing [...] the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning to the history which

it has experienced' (Benjamin 1968, 215). The concept of the aura can be described as the

unapproachability of an indefinable quality surrounding a work of art. Benjamin describes

this as 'the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be' (Benjamin 1968,

222). Benjamin believed that since the advent of film, when authenticity ceased to be an

important part in the making of art, the function of art fundamentally changed; 'instead of

being based on ritual it begins to be based on another practice, politics' (1968, 218). The use of shock is thus linked to politics in works of art during the avant-garde era. Benjamin explores these ideas through an analysis of the Dada movement's use of shock. He argues that 'what they intended and achieved was a relentless destruction of the aura of their creations, which they branded as reproductions with the very means of production' (1968, 231). What Benjamin intends by comparing film to the Dada movement is to provide an illustration of his belief that, prior to the proliferation of reproductive technology, the Dadaists' attempted to create film-like effects in their paintings, poems and performances. They achieved this through what Benjamin describes as 'a word salad containing obscenities and every imaginable waste product of language. The same is true of their paintings, on which they mounted buttons and tickets' (1968, 237). In *Theory of The Avant-garde* (1984), Peter Burger explains that in providing this example, Benjamin shows that 'the loss of aura is not traced to a change in reproduction techniques but to an intent on the part of the makers of art' (29).

The Dada manifestos represent an interesting paradox in that they are both philosophy of art and work of art, and as such they are an excellent source for analysis. At the same time as reading the Dada manifestos, the reader experiences something of the shocking style discussed by Benjamin. I am told, for instance, in *Monsieur AA The Anti-philosopher Sends Us This Manifesto* (1920) that I should 'punch myself in the face and drop dead' (Tzara 1992, 28). The style has a somatic effect on the reader. The abruptness through which this stanza leaps out is characteristic of Tzara's aphoristic temporality and has the effect of startling, amusing and shocking the reader.

One recurring idea throughout the manifestos is that Dada is 'the abolition of the future' and that 'Dada is against the future' (Tzara 1992, 45). The frequent reference to the

destruction of the future focuses the reader's attention very much on the present moment. This concept features in the equation exhibited in *Colonial Syllogism:*

No one can escape fate

No one can escape DADA

Only DADA can make you escape fate

= you owe me 943 francs 50

(Tzara 1992, 51).

This is illustrative of a conception of time that is discontinuous and focused on the present. The image of the reader trying to escape fate alongside escaping the immediacy of Dada is clear in this description. I imagine it as a cartoon whereby the reader is running away from fate with Dada close at their heels, an image in which you are trapped in the moment with Dada. This preoccupation with the present is made clearer in *Note On Poetry* when Tzara writes 'Art is a series of perpetual differences. The strength to transmute this succession of ever-changing notions into the instant… that is the work of art' (Tzara 1992, 76). The Dada movement's conception of the present moment is aligned with their desire to break the 'aura' of their work of art and shock the audience. Tzara writes that 'every page should explode, either because of its profound gravity, or its vortex, vertigo, newness, eternity, or because of its staggering absurdity' (Tzara 1992, 7). He continues by asking the reader to:

Put the photographic plate of the face in the acid bath.

The shocks that have sensitised it will become visible and will surprise you.

Punch yourself in the face and drop dead

(Tzara 1992, 28).

It is clear that when experiencing Dada 'it is impossible to take time for contemplation and evaluation as one would before a canvas of Derain's or a poem by Rilke' (Benjamin 1968,

231). The anti-future element of Tzara's writing becomes apparent in a number of

metaphors he uses through the manifestos, 'every page should explode' (7), 'explosive star'

(61) and 'Dada- the roar of contorted pains' (13). Benjamin argues that Dadaist 'became an

instrument of ballistics. It hit the spectator like a bullet, it happened to him, thus acquiring a

tactile quality' (Benjamin 1968, 231). The symbolism of this metaphor is indicative of the

link between the somatic, explosive shock and the force of 'now time'. Benjamin's

understanding of shock as a sensorial experience becomes evident in his analysis of Dada

and its preoccupation with the present. Here Benjamin's conception of the explosive force

of 'now-time' is first explored and later solidified in his essay *Thesis on the Philosophy of*

History (1940).

In *On Some Motifs in Baudelaire (1939)* Benjamin engages with the idea that shock

was a paradigm of the modern individual's experience. It is in this essay that Benjamin also

engages with Henri Bergson's 1896 work, *Matter and Memory.* Benjamin argues that since

the end of the nineteenth century, philosophy has made a series of attempts to understand

an individual's 'true' experience as opposed to 'the kind that manifests itself in the

standardised, denatured life of the civilised masses' (1968, 153). Benjamin understands

Bergson's theory of 'duration' as an attempt to define the nature of a person's experience

of time and he argues that Proust's work *In Search of Lost Time* is 'an attempt to produce

this experience synthetically' (Benjamin 1968, 154). Benjamin explains that Bergson 'leads

us to believe that turning to the contemplative actualisation of the stream of life is a matter

of free choice' (154). In contrast, although much influenced by Bergson, Proust's

interpretation differs in that he believes it is 'a matter of chance if an individual forms an

image of himself, whether he can take hold of his experience' (Benjamin 1968, 155). This

becomes significant to my analysis when Benjamin discusses Proust's analysis of

Baudelaire's work in which, according to Proust, 'time is peculiarly chopped up, only a very few days open up. They are not connected to other days, but stand out from time' (Benjamin 1968, 177). If I apply this analysis to Benjamin's own exploration of the significance of shock in the work of Baudelaire, a more complex relationship between shock, experience and temporal continuity can be seen.

Benjamin discusses how temporality thematically features in the work of Baudelaire who, he says, 'has placed the shock experience at the centre of his artistic work' (159). Benjamin's analysis of Baudelaire provides an apposite illustration of his understanding that shock was central to the modern person's experience of the collisions and bustle of city life. He states that 'pedestrians act as if they had adapted themselves to the machines and could express themselves only automatically. Their behaviour is a reaction to shocks' (Benjamin 1968, 173). It is in this analysis that the modern landscape of the early twentieth century and the huge technological advances of the Industrial Revolution become particularly relevant to the specificity of shock to modernity.

It was during the Industrial Revolution that not only was there a transformation in how the passage of time was perceived by people, but additionally there were huge advances in the design of timepieces. Factories and commerce during the Industrial Revolution demanded precision time management, and so day-to-day the clock structured life. The progress in the design of timepieces meant that from the early twentieth century people could have a clock on their mantelpiece and a watch on their arm. David Wiles considers this in relation to the creation of a sense of 'absolute time' to control and organise society and a move away from a person's individual experience of time. The avant-garde artists' response to this climate was to create pieces of work which shocked the audience

into breaking with time by focusing their attention on the 'now moment', with a view to raise anti-establishment sentiments.

A further point that pertains to my own analysis is the concept of 'experience' in relation to 'shock'. This features significantly in Benjamin's essay and it is clear his understanding of the modern experience is centered on 'shock'. Although influenced by Freud's theory of shock, Benjamin's differs in that his theory is less based on the effect of shock on 'the apparatus of the soul' and more on how shock interacts with the 'apparatus of human perception' (Benjamin 1968, 175). His theory of shock therefore revolves around sensory experience. Although it was developed in essays that dealt with the analysis of artistic expression, his theory originated from engaging with psychological and sociological approaches. Benjamin writes about shock and a theory of shock prevention in relation to two different types of experience:

> The greater the share of the shock factor in a particular impression, the more
> constantly consciousness has to be alert as a screen against stimuli; the more
> efficiently it does so, the less do these impressions enter experience (Erfahrung),
> tending to remain in the sphere of a certain hour in one's life (Erlebnis). Perhaps
> the special achievement of shock defence may be seen in its function of
> assigning to an incident a precise point in time in consciousness at the cost of
> the integrity of its contents (Benjamin 1968, 159).

Benjamin's interest is focused on shock as a sensorial experience and ultimately on how a person might prevent this experience of shock from happening in life. Benjamin argues that the effect of modern life was the reduction of individual to automaton and it is perhaps his intent, when celebrating the use of shock in art, that its effects would

desensitise the audience to the shock of modern life. He distinguishes between two experiences, 'Erfahrung' which is defined as an ongoing experience over an extended period and 'Erlebnis', which in contrast is a single noteworthy experience or moment in time (159). He argues that in modernity 'Erlebnis', or a temporal discontinuity of experience through shock, increasingly replaces the progressive flow of experience of 'Erfahrung'. This is significant to the analysis of modernity's preoccupation with 'the moment' and the subsequent temporal aesthetics developed by avant-garde artists.

It is in his *Thesis on the Philosophy of History* that Benjamin demonstrates how his temporal theory is aligned with Marxist political action. The conceptual framework for Benjamin's preoccupation with shock and the present moment in modern art is solidified in this thesis. He states that 'history is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogenous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now' (Benjamin 1968, 252). Benjamin argues for the necessity of discontinuous time in historiography, a temporal discontinuity and, as Bohrer explains, 'the distinction between the concept of the moment and the theory of a continuous, progressive, and theoretically interpreted historical time' (Bohrer 1994, 198). 'The present' in Benjamin's work does not mean transition as it did to Bergson but rather a moment 'in which time stands still and has come to a stop' (Benjamin 1968, 254).

Benjamin aligns the present moment and shock with revolution and a fight for an oppressed past. Benjamin provides the illustrative example of Maximilian de Robespierre, influential in the French Revolution of the eighteenth century. Benjamin argues that Robespierre's vision of revolution was 'charged with the time of the now which he blasted out of the continuum of history' (1968, 253). It is clear that Benjamin aligns 'the presence of the now' (253) with Marxist political action when he argues:

A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a present which is not in transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop. For this notion defines the present in which he himself is writing history (Benjamin 1968, 254).

The explosive force of Benjamin's now-time and materialistic historiography is based on a 'constructivist principle' (254) whereby a historical materialist stops fleeting time and fills this stop with his own moment. In this moment the 'cessation of happening' is 'a revolutionary moment in the fight for the oppressed past' (Benjamin 1968, 254). For Benjamin 'shock', the moment or the constructivist principle's specificity to modernity is directly aligned with Marxist political action with a clearly political goal. To Benjamin shock and the force of the now moment had the ability to reconnect the individual with their inner Marxist self.

Karl Heinz Bohrer raises some contradictions inherent in Benjamin's 'Marxist' approach to the temporal modality of the now. Bohrer argues that:

This temporal modality of the 'now' that transforms 'empty' time, the metaphor of the 'second' that dissolves traditional categories of time and space....of the transitory....are opposed to the Marxist construct of a course of history that naturally progresses toward revolution (Bohrer 1994, 199).

He states that Benjamin might not have renounced the utopia of world revolution, but that he 'shifted its temporal course into a utopia of the moment' (Bohrer 1994, 199). Bohrer's reading is pertinent to my argument that an aesthetic which aims to shock a viewer through a temporal modality of suddenness might not be able to effect sustainable change in their life praxis. Later in this chapter I question the ability of shock to achieve lasting change. I

explore the idea that shock loses its effectiveness quickly, through an analysis of Peter

Burger's *Theory of the Avant-garde* (1984). In situating the aesthetic experience so

decisively in the 'now moment', in creating an aesthetic revolved around temporal

discontinuity, the avant-garde artist does not allow for the spectator's experience of a

continuous, evolving and progressive understanding of time.

In *The Moment: Time and Rupture in Modern Thought* (2001), Heidrun Friese argues

that, in contrast to Bergson, whose philosophy 'denies the moment any distinction in the

flow of consciousness, time in literary modernity is neither seen as an endless persistent

and invariable flow nor as an empty continuum', but rather is representative of 'flash-like

raids into the conceptual […] complex formations of distinct and distinguished moments,

harsh interruptions and events' (Friese 2001, 10). Friese argues that 'the moment' is

characteristic of modernity's attempts to cope with 'time, succession and simultaneity,

movement and standstill' (10).

Theorising time through the philosophy of Bergson allows for a more nuanced

understanding of communities and identities that are in a constant state of flux. It refocuses

on a person's lived experience of time. In highlighting duration within participatory art, the

emphasis is not placed on a shift in practice but a shift in conceptualising practice, and is

therefore reflective of the broader twenty-first century ideological developments of

neoliberalism and globalisation. In an effort to conceptualise durational work, theorists have

returned to the theories of Bergson. This has come at a time when societies across the globe

are re-evaluating the balance of their late capitalist, increasingly globalised culture. I

question the efficacy of temporal discontinuity as a means to achieve a lasting change in an

audience and participant's life praxis in participatory arts. I am concerned to develop an

understanding of how Barbican Guildhall might engage with local communities in the long term.

Participatory Arts: Taking the Long View

Running participatory arts projects with sustained relationships over time is not a new phenomenon in participatory art; indeed TIE companies working in the 1960s developed long-term models for engagement. However, I would argue that the way in which participatory artists are beginning to reconceptualise time is indicative of a twenty-first century zeitgeist towards sustainability. At the Theatre and Performance Research Association (TaPRA) conference in September 2013 the Applied and Social Theatre Working Group called for papers relating to the idea of 'slowing down'. They attributed this interest in speed and the arts to the slow movement which began in Italy in the 1990s. Academics at TaPRA linked the proliferation of slower activities, for instance 'the slow food movement' and durational arts praxis, to 'a shift from the global to the local and from mass consumption to small-scale production with an emphasis on operating on a more humane scale'.[28]

Over the last decade, this durational practice has become particularly prevalent within participatory art as illustrated by Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning Department which has spent a considerable amount of time establishing a dialogue with a 'community' and engaging the community within the planning of projects. Unlike some international arts centres in London, for instance the Southbank Centre, Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning

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[28] (18.6.13 http://tapra.org/news-calls/call-for-papers/applied-and-social-theatre-working-group-call-for-papers-slowing-down/).

does not operate on a festival model or favour short-term projects in local communities. BGCL works towards a strategic five-year plan for engagement with local communities, to ensure meaningful and context-appropriate engagement. Head of Creative Learning, Jenny Mollica, who both conceived and produced *Barbican Box* a project that brings together students and teachers to work with a theatre company, spent a year talking to teachers. Mollica's extensive conversations with teachers centred around how best to manage, set up and sustain the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) project and they took place long before commencing workshops. At the heart of *Barbican Box* was the concept of sustainability, whereby professional theatre practitioners (in 2013 and 2014 Complicite) train teachers to deliver workshops with their students, culminating in a performance by the students. Since the theatre company primarily works with the teachers, not the students, the learning becomes internalised within the practice of the institutions since the teachers are able to take their skills into future work in a sustainable way. This sustainable outcome was a product of the lengthy discussion period at the beginning of the project and hence a result of both dialogue and duration.

Barbican's 2012 project *Unleashed*, which provides a case study for Chapter Four, had a duration of over a year. The participant ensembles which worked on *Unleashed* meet frequently; some have been running for eight years, with funding coming from City Bridge Trust and Arts Council England. A further example of the importance placed on time for meaningful dialogue with participants is *ArtWorks NorthEast's* partner project Helix Arts' minimum duration policy for participatory projects. Helix Arts understands this to be essential for a meaningful dialogic encounter with a community. This is such an important prerequisite for their method of working that they will not accept commissions which do not adhere to their minimum time frame policy.

I am seeking to understand, at a philosophical, ethical and aesthetic level, what underpins this interest in speed or slowness. I have found that the work of Bergson affords a way of thinking about time that was potentially neglected by the avant-garde and as such his theories provide the conceptual basis for my exploration of the use of time in participatory arts practice. It is both ironic and significant that we must go back in time over one hundred years in order to reconceptualise durational participatory work and analyse how one might be able to 'take the long view' in an artistic context.

Conceptualising Durational Time

One of the objectives of this research is to develop an understanding of participatory arts practice that is sustainable over time. Rather than relying on the immediacy of shock, this requires another way of thinking about engagement over the long term, and for this I am drawn to Bergson's concept of 'duration', developed in *Time & Freewill,* first published in 1889. He differentiated 'duration' from 'unreal time', a term he used to refer to a conception of time as static and not linked to our lived experience of time. Bergson's conception of duration is directly linked to his theories of creative action, where he suggested that the process of 'becoming' as opposed to 'being', defined the human condition. Before applying his philosophy to a theory of durational dialogic participatory art, I shall address Bergson's concepts of 'real duration' and 'becoming not being'. These two ideas, which he developed in his major works *Time and Freewill* and *Creative Evolution* have relevance for twenty-first century participatory arts because they offer a way of thinking about how participants' lives change over time, and how this also takes time. This has immediate and important application to the second point integral to this thesis - the

theory of 'becoming not being'. This will be explored in later chapters alongside the conceptualisation of case studies that take time

According to Bergson life is flowing, a process of becoming. A change, or change, is a continuous and indivisible movement and therefore time and duration is flow and an always 'becoming' changing moment. This represents a shift in thinking, Bergson argues, from the perception that the external world is composed of solid objects in space and that time is fixed. Therefore time, thought of in this tangible and accessible way, is composed of 'states of being' which can be measured at stages. Scientific conceptions of time, according to Bergson, cannot account for the reality of material things or people's lived experience of time. Our *understanding* of time as a succession of states is not helpful to our *experience* of time. In other words, life is lived in multiple timeframes, with the past, present and future all integral to experience. For artists intending to work in community settings, this has powerful implications, suggesting that what people bring to the experience, and how they imagine their futures, are integral to the present moment.

Fundamental to understanding Bergson is the distinction between the concept of time that is a symbol of space (states of being: 'old', 'yellow', 'frozen', '30') and a concept of time that is a true duration. Duration according to Bergson is pure mobility. He uses the metaphor of an arrow shot through the air to represent the idea of pure mobility in his concept of duration; if the arrow is always at a point then when is it ever in flight or mobile? If the arrow were to be at a given point it would stop and its flight would therefore cease. It is possible to divide into rests and stops any motionless trajectory. However, what we fail to see is that 'the trajectory is created in one stroke, although a certain time is required for it; and that although we can divide at will the trajectory once created, we cannot divide its creation, which is an act in progress and not a thing' (Bergson 1954, 309).

Perhaps the most helpful metaphor to understand both duration and Bergson's notion of becoming would be the 'kaleidoscope' which Bergson uses to show the constant changing and 'becoming' of real duration. He suggests that viewers looking into a kaleidoscope are only interested in seeing the new picture (or state) which results from each new shake of the kaleidoscope and they are not interested in the shake itself or the constant changing or becoming of the image, but only in seeing the new picture. He says of this way of looking at duration and becoming, 'the movement slips through the interval, because every attempt to reconstitute change out of states implies the absurd proposition, that movement is made of immobilities' (Bergson 1954, 308). In terms of human 'becomings' this theory suggests that 'the child can become a youth, ripen to maturity and decline to old age. Infancy, adolescence, maturity, old age, are mere views of the mind, possible stops imagined by us' (Bergson 1954, 313). Bergson suggests that childhood, adolescence, maturity and old age are integral parts of the evolution, and not static moments in human development. When we say 'the child becomes a man' Bergson argues that 'the reality, which is the transition from childhood to manhood, has slipped through our fingers. We have only the imaginary stops 'child' and 'man'" (Bergson 1954, 313). He suggests that a more appropriate use of language to represent this philosophy of becoming lies in the statement, 'there is a becoming from the child to the man' (Bergson 1954, 313). When we perceive of human life as made of definite states - infancy, childhood, adolescence, maturity, old age - which we pass through and which we imagine have a period of stability followed by change it is, in fact, unreal time of which we are thinking. Bergson writes in *Creative Evolution* that:

> Life is an evolution. We concentrate a period of this evolution in a stable view
>
> which we call a form, and, when the change has become considerable enough to

overcome the fortunate inertia of our perception, we say that the body has

changed its form. What is real is the continual change of form; form is only a

snapshot of a transition (Bergson 1954, 304).

Bergson suggests that change is a continuous process, and that to regard life in terms of

different 'states' is externally imposed rather than representative of how life is experienced.

In *Bergson: Key Writings* (2002), Keith Ansell-Pearson and John Mullarkey argue that

in *Time and Freewill* Bergson:

Sought to show that the actuality of our psychic states presupposes a virtual

multiplicity of duration. The divergent degrees of a mental state correspond to

qualitative changes, changes that do not admit of simple measure or number

(2).

Intellect enables a person to understand time as a homogenous medium 'in which our

conscious states are placed alongside one another as in space, and so form a discrete

multiplicity' (Pearson and Mullarkey 2002, 2). The view of time in which conscious states are

strung out or the understanding that a period of time is divisible into units, is a clearly

spatial understanding of time. Pearson and Mullarkey argue that 'the question Bergson

poses is whether time can legitimately be treated as such a medium' (Pearson and

Mullarkey 2002, 2).

In *Creative Evolution* (1907), Bergson expands on this idea of conscious states when

he compares how we distinguish the qualities of colour and sound that we encounter in our

everyday lives: 'each of these qualities, taken separately, is a state that seems to persist as

such, immovable until another replaces it. Yet each of these qualities resolves itself, on

analysis, into an enormous number of elementary movements. Every quality is change'

(1954, 301). In an effort to understand these qualitative changes, human intellect places a single representation upon them. The reason the idea of 'becoming' and 'real duration' is so difficult to grasp lies in the fact that we see ourselves as outside of the perception of the external world and not as an ever-changing part of it:

> Instead of attaching ourselves to the inner becoming of things, we place ourselves outside them in order to recompose their becoming artificially. We take snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality […] the mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind (Bergson 1954, 306).

The link I make between Bergson's metaphor of the cinematograph and modern art serves as an apposite example at this stage of my argument. The spatial conception of time, as exhibited in the use of static snapshots or moments of visceral insight, is not capable of facilitating a viewer or participant's ability to 'attach (themselves) to the inner becoming of things'. As Grant Kester argues of the static use of shock in the avant-garde era that 'the self that is disrupted, dislocated or ruptured can't at the same time possess the coherence necessary to comprehend and internalize a new critical perspective' (Kester 2011,184). Important to this analysis is the concept that the audience experiences a lack of comprehension as shock:

> The avant-gardist work (does not) create a total impression that would permit an interpretation of its meaning […] this refusal to provide meaning is experienced as shock by the recipient. And this is the intention of the avant-gardiste artists. (Burger 1984, 80).

Shock and a temporal modality of the 'now' moment was utilised by the avant-garde artist to facilitate change in the audience. However Burger sees two issues with the use of shock as a means to achieve such a significant aim, and these are essential to my argument regarding how to effect sustainable change through the use of an aesthetic of duration. Firstly, it is almost impossible to 'insure that the recipient's change of behaviour is given a particular direction' (Burger 1984, 80) and, secondly, inherent in aesthetic of shock is:

> The impossibility to make permanent this kind of effect. Nothing loses its effectiveness more quickly than shock; by its very nature, it is a unique experience. As a result of repetition, it changes fundamentally: there is such a thing as an expected shock (Burger 1984, 81).

He continues to argue these types of shock cannot have a long-term impact on the viewer:

> Such a nearly institutionalised shock probably has a minimal effect on the way the recipients run their lives. Between the shock-like experience of the inappropriateness of the reception and the effort to grasp the principles of construction, there is a break: the interpretation of meaning is renounced (Burger 1984, 81).

The central question this raises is: how does being shocked into a state of 'alertness' in a realm where all meaning is renounced, sustainably help to heighten one's presence of mind to perceive hidden operations of political power? How can a piece of art achieve lasting social change if it is unable (or indeed meant) to communicate to and with its intended audience? The result of being shocked into a position of alertness for some audiences and protestors engaging with the issues *Exhibit B* explored was simply alienation and anger. I

argue that the application of Bergson's theory of real duration as a conceptual basis for an analysis of the use of time in participatory arts can contribute to a reconciliation of what Kester understands to be a fundamental failure on the part of the avant-garde to facilitate within the viewer 'the coherence necessary to comprehend and internalise a new critical perspective', and as such possesses the power to facilitate a sustainable change in the participant's life view (Burger 1984, 184).

Placing value on a lived experience of time over 'unreal time' or clock time is both potentially radical and politically subversive. David Wiles states that 'to recover time in the theatre is one means of engaging afresh with the world that we inhabit and are inextricably part of' (Wiles 2014, 67). Hans-Thies Lehmann explores how a 'durational aesthetic' in contemporary theatre facilitates the audience to return to their lived experience of time. This is demonstrated in the work of performance artist Marina Abramović. A durational aesthetic 'prolongs time in order to create a kind of time sculpture, a work made in the dimension of time, drawing on the device of repetition, and countering the tendency in Aristotelian theatre to erase our experience of time as time' (Wiles 2014, 62). I consider the ways in which durational participatory art is able to return participants to their 'experience of time as time', to their lived experience of time and how this can be seen as an act of resistance.

Bergson has important implications for identity and community theories and has been used as a means to conceptualise durational practice in art in the work of John Mullarkey (2013), Laura Cull (2013), David Wiles (2014), Claire Doherty and Paul O'Neill (2011). In Chapter Four, I explore the significant influence Bergson's theories have had on the philosopher Gilles Deleuze and his subsequent conception of identity. I use this

conceptual framework for an analysis of how duration relates to identity in the 2012

Barbican project *Unleashed*.

A Bergsonian view of participatory practice

What role can art play in facilitating an individual's experience of real duration and

awareness of their own development as a process of continual becoming? In this section I

argue that, in contrast to the avant-garde use of time as static, when Bergson's theories are

applied to durational dialogic participatory practice then the attributes he sees as unique to

philosophy transcend what he understands to be the inadequacy of art to perceive and

represent qualities of change and 'becoming'. The art that Bergson believed to 'enrich our

present but scarcely enables us to go beyond it' (Bergson 1911, 225) I argue is art which

uses a spatial, static conception of time through its representation of 'states of being' as

demonstrated in, for example, Bergson's early understanding of the cinematograph, in

Dada's use of instantaneous shock, Brecht's use of freeze-frame and Cubism's

representation of three-dimensional forms which compressed space, mass and time into

one static canvas.

Bergson sees some limitation to art's ability to effect change. In his 1911 Oxford

University lecture entitled 'The Perception of Change' Bergson argues that:

> Art enables us, no doubt, to discover in things more qualities and more shades
>
> than we naturally perceive. It dilates our perception, but on the surface rather
>
> than in depth. It enriches our present, but scarcely enables us to go beyond it'
>
> (Bergson 1911, 265).

In debating the emotional significance of the arts, Bergson suggests that feelings of sympathy illustrate his theories of time. Sympathy can be 'a qualitative progress […] a transition from repugnance to fear, from fear to sympathy, and from sympathy itself to humility' (Bergson 1913, 19). Can art be reflective of the characteristics common to the concept of a qualitative multiplicity? In *Creative Evolution* Bergson argues that:

> It is to the very inwardness of life that intuition leads us - by intuition I mean instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely (Bergson 1911, 176).

He argues that it is this intention which the artist attempts to regain 'by placing himself back within the object by a kind of sympathy, in breaking down, by an effort of intuition, the barrier that space puts up between him and his model' (Bergson 1911, 177).

The avant-garde artist's use of a series of epiphany-making 'snapshots' or 'shocks' which were instantaneous and non-durational, illustrates their spatial understanding of time. It is this temporal discontinuity that prompts questions as to the longevity of its effect on audiences. This returns my analysis to Benjamin's 'now moment' at this point to highlight a spatial understanding of time. The explosive force of the now moment vividly captured in Walter Benjamin's metaphor of the Dada movement as an 'instrument of ballistics' (Benjamin 1968, 231) demonstrates the static conception of time. This spatial understanding of time is at the heart of Bergson's analysis of the limitations of art to go beyond merely enriching our present moment. Bergson's understanding of the limitations of art will necessarily in itself have been limited by the nature of artistic practice of his time.

This thesis moves towards an analysis of a durational participatory art which has the ability to transcend what Bergson saw as the limitations of the art of his century.

Durational participatory artists can move art away from a static conception of time. The role of the participatory artist is generally not limited to producing a performance and/or an art object, but rather they can conceive of the process of exchange and engagement in any given community over a period of time. The artist working in participatory settings is able to work from Bergson's place of 'intuition'. Described as a philosopher of process, Bergson can help us to understand what is happening during the process of a participatory project. If we understand the 'identity' of both a participant and an artist through the eyes of Bergson, as a unique living, changing thing in constant flux, then it facilitates a rather liberated view of what the outcomes may be from a dialogic artistic encounter. It also avoids the ethical pitfalls of an artist being a representative for a given community, since the artist is also engaged in this process of changing and 'becoming' and can be reciprocally creative. The artist may bring his/her artistic skills to the project, and the participant might bring his/her own artistic skills and knowledge of the given context, but viewed through Bergson's philosophy, both artist and participants are engaging in an ongoing reciprocal negotiation of mutual 'becoming' (Bergson 1911, 313). Bergson states that 'the more we study the nature of time, the more we shall comprehend that duration means invention, the creation of forms, the continual elaboration of the absolutely new', and I argue in subsequent chapters that durational participatory projects are able to be sensitive to the qualitative changes this philosophy embraces (Bergson 1911, 11). As with a qualitative multiplicity, a durational, dialogic participatory encounter brings together a collection of people whose ideas can interpenetrate, to a space where they have time to experiment, create and intuitively take leaps of faith. This continual process is not one

which is able to be quantified or made static. Participatory art is able to transcend what Bergson understood as the limitations or inadequacy of art to perceive and represent qualities of change and 'becoming'.

To illustrate the use of a how Bergson's theories relate to participatory art projects, and to provide an account of how practitioners conceptualise their use of duration, I will explore a project entitled *Beyond* which took place in Leidsche Rijn in 2003. I am interested in exploring how this project contributes to my argument that sustainability in a participatory arts context has both a temporal and spatial dimension, and in questioning how the long-term benefits of the work of BGCL depend upon the interplay between these. *Beyond* was a ten-year programme of temporary public art commissions whose main ambition was 'initiating and promoting forms of urban life in Ledsche Rijn - a suburban extension of the city of Utrecht in the Netherlands' (Doherty and O'Neill 2011, 242). The *Beyond* project was launched in 1997 on the largest new-style housing estate in the Netherlands. The art projects commissioned as part of *Beyond*, the Paper Dome and The Sculpture Park, were developed alongside the urban planning process and illustrate how cultural intervention can impact on urbanisation. The lead curator, Tom van Gestel, was primarily interested in offering challenges to the planners and identifying potential issues in the planning process, 'making them visible through an arts programme that would promote urbanism' (247). Most significant to the idea of a durational and dialogic participatory art practice was that *Beyond* aimed to engage with its emergent communities in a transparent and interactive way. *Beyond's* overall time frame was long enough 'for a situationally informed practice to be realised within Leidsche Rijn during the time its fledgling communities emerged' (Doherty and O'Neill 2011, 264). The use of the words 'situationally informed' are particularly relevant as they relate to both the portfolio of skills and the amount of time it takes for an

artist to fully understand the context in which they are working. O'Neill argues that unless

sufficient time is spent engaging with local inhabitants, agencies and planners, the likelihood

of sustaining any lasting effect after the artist leaves the project site diminishes. Van Gestel

understood the rationale for the durational approach to *Beyond* as being based in its

development alongside the urbanization process of an area. He argues that:

> In this way durational praxis can make possible a mode of facilitating
>
> participation [...] as part of a slowly unraveling narrative that encourages the
>
> involvement of residents in the process (Doherty and O'Neill 2011, 272).

Beyond is an example of a movement in contemporary culture which is representative of a

shift from epic and historical, to local and plural accounts of change. The development of an

area is linked to the ongoing process of community development and individual and

collective narrative formation. *Beyond* artistically complemented this idea and aided this

process of development. The premise behind the project was that Leidsche Rijn is an

emergent place that is never fixed: a hybrid, differentiated and mobile collection of people

in which, at any moment, 'an ever-changing and constantly (be)coming community was

emerging' (Doherty and O'Neill 2011, 283). As such, any artistic intervention unable to be

flexible to the 'constant becoming' nature of the urban development process would not be

likely to have long-term sustainable benefits. *Beyond* removed the pressure of time

demands and the need to produce a 'finished' product and was therefore able to be part of

a 'cumulative process aligned to the evolution of a community' (Doherty and O'Neill 2011,

283). The interest in developing an art praxis able to complement the societal shift towards

a focus on local or little narratives, is clear when O'Neill argues that '*Beyond* inserted little

histories in an area which has no history at all' (Doherty and O'Neill 2011, 283).

Important to my analysis is O'Neill's argument that projects are constrained by viewing time and place as static:

> When artists, curators and commissioners contribute to sustaining a practice-in-place for a period of static, immobile time, with a view to leaving something behind, there is the prevailing belief that a transitory and delimited duration matters (2011, 272).

Beyond, in part, managed to avoid this temporal constraint by developing and adapting the project in line with the understanding that place is always in transition. When it eventually completed its ten-year process, *Beyond* contributed to leaving something tangible behind. The installation which remained at the end of the process represented the significant contribution *Beyond* had made to the development of the area; it was not simply an installation in place for a period of static immobile time.

Theorisations of time by the participatory artists involved in *Beyond* have been important to my analysis. In particular I find it pertinent that O'Neill also links Bergson's concept of duration and creativity to *Beyond's* durational aesthetic:

> For Henri Bergson, duration is not only a psychological experience - a transitory state of becoming - it is also the concrete evolution of creativity, as a state of being within time that succeeds itself in a manner which makes duration the very material of individual creative action. For Bergson, duration is always evolving through our actions in time, allowing for the unknown to be brought to

the fore in a manner that does not foresee its own formation during or within the course of action (Doherty and O'Neill 2011, 273).

O'Neill's application of Bergson's theory of 'becoming' to *Beyond* lies in the idea that the narrative of the project was a creative evolution. He stated that *Beyond* 'refused to foreclose an ending, while responding to the changing conditions under which the project proceeded' (Doherty and O'Neill 2011, 273) over the period of ten years.

Despite Bergson's resistance to metaphor to depict the quality of duration, the story of how *Beyond* helped the process of urban development is an example of Bergson's concept of a qualitative multiplicity. At its heart was an ethos of qualitative changes evolving organically over time. *Beyond* uses Bergson's concept of duration in art that is future-orientated.

To apply Bergson's philosophies to durational participatory art necessitates an alternative method to facilitate this awareness of the non-fixity of our identities. This process is one that encourages the awareness of psychological duration and welcomes the idea of 'the becoming and not being' nature of ourselves in time. I investigate whether participatory arts projects may achieve this aim successfully by altering the participant's conception of time through the elongation of projects. Lengthy participatory projects ask participants to surrender to the changing rhythm of the duration, tune into their own lived experience of time, and separate from clock time that is used as a method of control and subversion. I argue that this can facilitate the participant (and artist) to understand a non-static conception of time. Perhaps in this light, projects which stipulate a duration for a minimum period of time are more likely to be able to facilitate an awareness of the

potential for change from one instant to the next. It is through this conceptual framework that I explore the case studies in Chapters Four and Five.

Conclusion: Time, Dialogic Practice and the Radical

Throughout this thesis I address questions of sustainability by considering issues of time, space and process in durational participatory practice. Through reconceptualising time and duration utilising the theories of Henri Bergson, I am interested in the efficacy of participatory art as a medium for lasting social change.

My thesis speaks to current debates within participatory arts; one key theorist engaged in these debates is Claire Bishop. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, Bishop challenges what she sees as the move away from an aesthetic of shock and disruption in current participatory practice towards a focus on duration and dialogue. She equates the use of shock and violent explosive aesthetic choices with a radical inclination to subvert the status quo prevalent in much of the participatory artwork of the 1960s. Both the avant-garde era and recent participatory art projects attempt to challenge the status quo and facilitate a 'heightened presence of mind' within the viewer or participant. Historically, the avant-garde attempted this subversion theatrically through their use of 'shock and dislocation', which Bishop discusses in relation to the radicalism of an era determined by grand narratives. Some participatory practice has been influenced by this temporal trend, as witnessed in the exhibition *Exhibit B* at Barbican Centre. However, this conceptualisation of time is different from the analysis I suggest in this thesis. I am not arguing that there is no place for the use of temporal discontinuity and shock in art but rather I would like to consider the efficacy of these techniques for participatory arts practice and explore the power of durational projects to effect sustainable change.

Bishop makes an important point regarding the effect of recent cultural policy on participatory practices, but she underestimates the power of a slower approach to arts practices and the process of 'becoming not being', a practice which conceives of its role as a dialogic exchange. My reconceptualisation of duration, through the application of Bergson's theories to modern art, reveals important points in any discussion of the radical within arts practice. If the function of 'unreal time' is understood as a device to organise time and thereby space so that human activity is possible, it can also therefore be seen as a device to facilitate, albeit sometimes necessary, control. When we consider the importance to the Industrial Revolution of the phrase 'clocking in to work', it is possible to see 'unreal time' as a fundamental aspect of organising 'duration' so that human activity is organisationally possible and is the position from which all political discourse flows.

In his later years, Bergson took an active role in politics and was a key architect of the League of Nations, later replaced by the United Nations. At this stage of his career, in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, Bergson discussed the perils of a 'closed society' which is fixed in conformity to codified laws and customs and unable to offer alternative life narratives. He proffers the alternative option of an 'open society' which reflects his ideas of creative evolution, duration and continual becoming (Bergson 1937, 1). I argue that the people Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning seeks to work with, alongside and for, tend to be those who are negatively affected by inequitable temporal relations. These people might benefit from communities that are able to offer productive alternatives to a 'closed society'. They tend to be people who don't benefit from a globalised, capitalist, tech savvy and fast-paced world. In developing this critique I address questions of sustainability and illuminate fundamental questions about the efficacy of participatory art as a medium for lasting social change. How might art be able to be representative of the ideologies of Bergson's 'open

society'? I argue that the 'new radicalism' inherent in participatory art is one which develops through progressive accumulation rather than instant shock. It encourages a layering and learning of experience rather than instant insight, a process which grows organically out of long-term dialogue with participants and communities. It is through taking the time to search for communal responses within community contexts that sustained change can occur.

The philosophies of Bergson explored in this chapter have significant implications for the concept of difference, 'identity' and the longevity of a project's aims. These implications are explored in Chapter Four. Chapter Four focuses on a durational participatory project at the Barbican in November 2012, *Unleashed*. *Unleashed* dealt with similarly contentious issues as *Exhibit B*, but through a durational aesthetic in which participants shaped the development of the project over the course of a year. As such, the next chapter serves as a call and response to the issues raised in this chapter. The process for *Unleashed* will provide a basis for a further exploration of the idea that if you remove the control of 'unreal time', are participants and artists able to perceive the natural state of 'becoming' and potentially see themselves become, in smaller and larger measures, different? Will their accumulative understanding of self as non-fixed alter as they progress through the durational art practice? Deleuze's work is significant to this chapter since it develops Bergson's interest in difference and becoming.

In Chapter Five I will explore a relational approach to space within the work of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning, in which space is the product of interrelations over time. As we witnessed through the exploration of the project *Beyond* in this chapter, a relational approach to space and a long-term framework for engagement become interdependent when working in community contexts in a sustainable way.

Chapter Four - Radical Rhythms: *Unleashed* at Barbican Centre

Prelude: 'I spoke. Did you listen? Did you listen? I spoke'

At the core of this analysis lies the stories of many young people, stories which will develop for many years after the curtain went down on the final performance of *Unleashed,* or the binding is finished on this thesis. A printed text can only be representative of a snapshot in time, one author's insights into these young people's stories. With this in mind, the research methodology that underpins this chapter attempted to embrace an element of duration. The benefit of investigating duration and sustainability for a doctoral thesis is, methodologically, I had the time to engage in thorough and extensive conversations with members of the cast and creative team over a number of months. Additionally, I was able to return seven months later to a group of participants to discuss the project retrospectively. I was part of a team of researchers who talked with - and listened to – one hundred and fifty-two members of the cast, in focus groups of up to six people, in the weeks directly following the performance of *Unleashed* in November 2012. I returned in May 2013 to visit a selected group of participants from one of the music ensembles involved in the creation of *Unleashed*, *Future Band,* to run a creative research session seven months after *Unleashed* had finished. The ensemble had continued to meet in that time, and it was my hope that, in engaging them in a creative way through pictures and storytelling, I might be able to gain a nuanced understanding of the effect participation had had, and was continuing to have, on their sense of self.

This prelude shows something of these creative discussions and of the power, passion and ownership felt by members of the arts groups for young people, which Barbican

Guildhall Creative Learning refers to as 'participatory ensembles', during the development and performance of *Unleashed.* There were five participatory ensembles involved in *Unleashed*; *Future Band* is an experimental music group, *Drum Works* is the youth arm of a drumming ensemble *Drum Heads, Young Poets* is for poets and spoken word artists, and young people from the ensemble *Young Film Makers* made the short films which were shown as part of the performance.

The images shown in this prelude were drawn by the members of *Future Band* during the creative evaluation session run six months after *Unleashed* finished. I asked them to draw a map depicting their journey over the year-long process, and invited them to articulate how they felt now, what they felt then, what they wanted at the beginning and at the end and at stages along the way. The poem was written by Kieron Rennie, a member of *Barbican Young Poets Ensemble* during the development process for *Unleashed*, extracts of which were performed in the final performances. This poem and these images give a flavour of the ferocity and joy with which they told their stories of being young in East London. They are better placed than I to describe why.
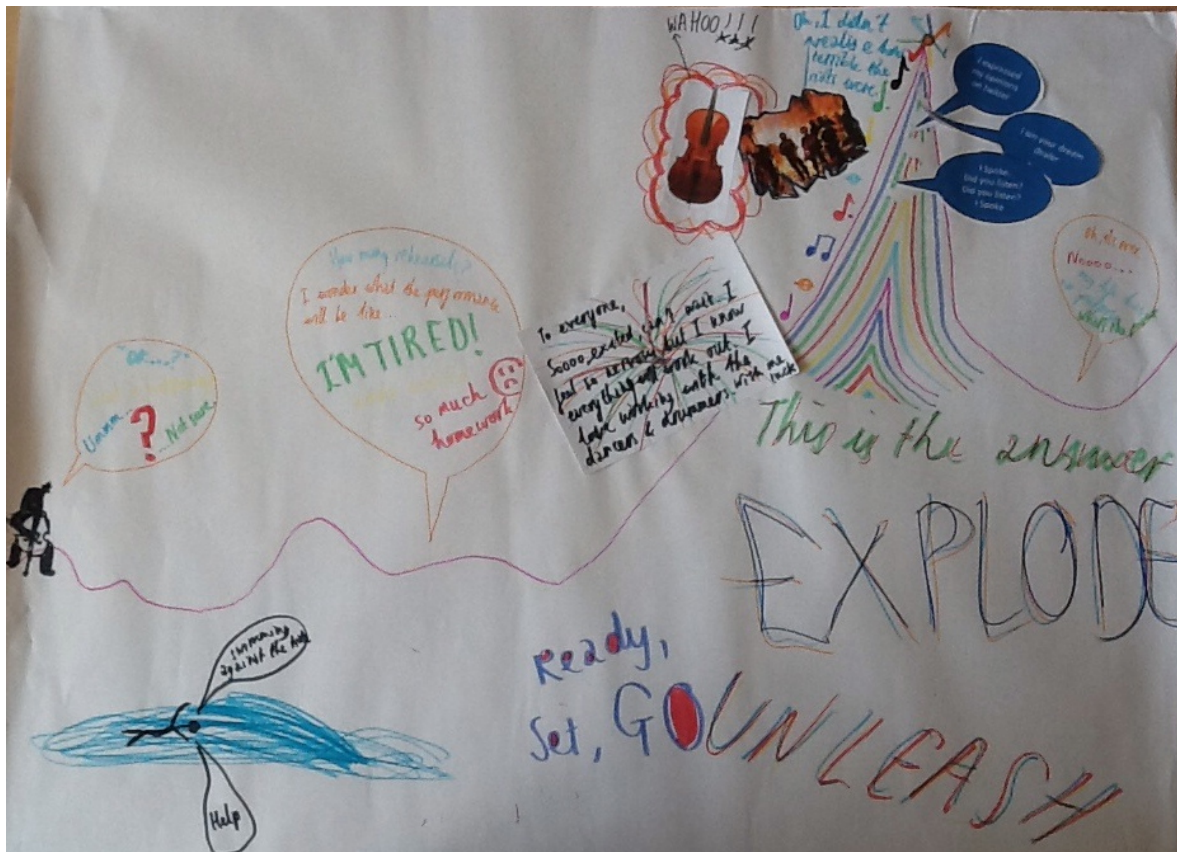
Figure 3: Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

Just Listen
Written by Kieron Rennie

I spoke
Did you listen?
Did you listen?
I spoke.
The dog only bites when provoked.

The youth centre is gonna close.
Cuts by the government
Cut deep.
You can see the lacerations in my generation.
Last year how many young people died?
Fell by the wayside
Guns and knives
Guns and knives
Guns they don't bark
They just bite.

Knives are pushed inside.
He was an outsider pushed inside

A gang
They replaced the family he wished he had.

Father has gone away
He no longer waits.
Mum works double shifts
Hoping; to make ends meet.
In the ends these, olders walk up youngers posing as parental figures.
Teaching them; various means to get them figures.
He was fourteen touching figures
Fourteen: touching triggers.

He never thought he would fall in so deep he can't sleep.
Never did he think his best friend would become an enemy.
Hearing Chinese whispers that he's speaking his name
And he's hearing the same.

The street code is you, exchange bullets instead of words.
Because there's nothing worse than appearing weak
So you speak,
In language of violence: to strike fear in enemies.

They say money is the root of all evil
I see greed as the branches
That blossom leaves of envy.
You will see such trees in the streets.

He tried getting a job, but it was harder than he believed.
Countless visits to the job centre are bringing him down to his knees.
He's serving a prison term, I mean he's riding a bird that took him off the streets.
So anger rises in these young souls like heat.
I saw many flickering flames when London was ablaze.

London riots.

Sky News was now concerned about our views.
Troubled youth became worldwide news.
Now I view, headlines from newspapers
Saying: "I've applied for 3,000 jobs and haven't got one. It's soul-destroying".

I've read:
"There's a 240% increase in long-term young unemployment in the UK".

So please tell me, it will be okay.
Please.

Some of these, unemployed were told education is the key.

So possess the keys of GCSEs, A-levels, BTECs and Degrees.
But as these
Statistics show it doesn't necessary open the door to jobs.

So many feel: robbed,
Depressed, stressed, worthless because society
Says
Without a job you're worth less.

I heard this boy at age of nine
Say when he's older he may carry a knife for protection.
I told him neither Gun nor Knife offers protection.
It often leads to people fearing you; not respecting you.
And it is better to be respected than feared.

I live in a society where,
You wear a hoodie and you're perceived to be YOB.
Any congregation of young people is esteemed to be a gang.

We are always put into boxes
Viewed as statistics
Thus society ignores our individual characteristics.
We are said to be all the same.

But we will rebel; we will not wear the negative stigmas
You believe should be our clothes.
We will cling on to our dreams.
Still believe in Napoleon Hill's ideology
That any thought or dream conceived, and believed can be achieved.
We just plead
You stop pulling the rug from underneath our feet.
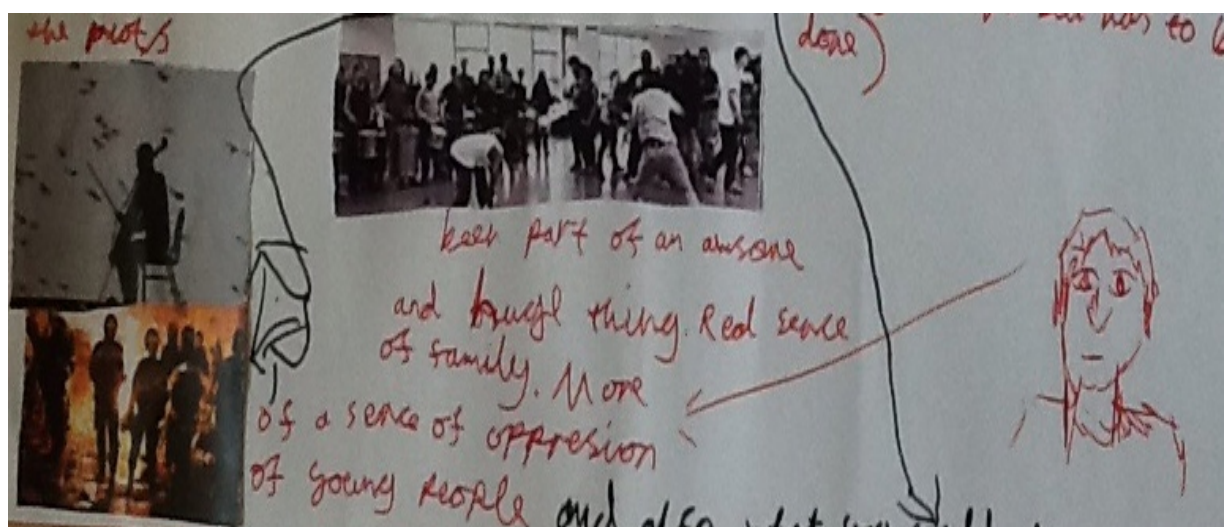
Figure 4: Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

Introduction: Identity and time: The Barbican's response to a climate of uncertainty

This chapter will explore how questions of identity and temporality are related to the participatory project *Unleashed,* performed at the Barbican Centre in November 2012. It will consider how projects that have a slower approach to participation and have a duration of several months can enable participants to reflect on their lives in a way which may facilitate sustained change. *Unleashed* explored similar themes to that of *Exhibit B,* but did so through a lengthy collaborative devising process with groups of participants with whom Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning had long-standing relationships. The significance of a shift from the use of shock to a slower approach to engaging participants and audiences is significant to issues of sustainability.

In August 2011 the UK saw the worst civil unrest in thirty years as rioting broke out across England. The East London boroughs of Hackney, Barking and Peckham were particularly badly affected by looting, arson and violence. The media, politicians, and members of the public have debated the causes behind the riot. Some have asserted that cuts in public funding and services, the anger at the shooting of a local resident, Mark Duggan by police, and a growing feeling of resentment amongst disenfranchised youth, escalated to incite a violent protest. Others have been quicker to blame the people rioting, who were mainly young, condemning them as 'the sick of society' driven only by a 'greed' for material goods[29]. The London riots of 2011, and the subsequent media reports which stigmatized youth and gang culture, was the cultural and political context motivating the development of the participatory project *Unleashed* at the Barbican Centre. UK media

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[29] 12.11.2016 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/8694401/London-riots-water-cannons-to-be-used-on-sick-society.html

outlets homogenized the young people, condemning them as 'feral scum'[30]. There was an absence of young people's voices in the post-riot analysis and this became a starting point for a creative process which would culminate in the performance of *Unleashed*.

The Barbican Centre's response to such a volatile cultural context was to give time and resources to a process providing the opportunity for grassroots creative reflection around these issues. The artists involved were already embedded in the local community through a network of participatory ensembles, some of which had been in existence for six years prior to the start of rehearsals. This case study serves as a call and response to the issues raised through the exploration of *Exhibit B* in the previous chapter. *Unleashed*, which was co-produced by Barbican main programming and BGCL, shows how successful partnerships between internal departments at Barbican Centre can lead to a sustainable practice. *Unleashed* also explored issues of race, and artists worked with an ethnically diverse group of participants. 4.5% of the participants involved in the project identified as being Asian or Asian British, 34.8% identified as being Black or Black British, 1.3% identified as being Chinese, 27.1% identified as being White British and 15.5% identified as being White Other, 6.2% identified as being 'other Black background'. The remaining participants identified as being dual heritage (White and Asian 2.6%, White and Black African 1.9%, White and Black Caribbean 1.3%). The difference between the two productions was that the development of *Unleashed* was embedded into local communities; existing ensembles of young people, schools and invested parties were engaged in dialogue about the contentious issues it raised throughout the eighteen-month devising process. It was situationally informed and

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[30] Hegarty, 16.8.2011 http://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/aug/16/london-riots-young-people-voice-anger

responded to local issues through engaging local stakeholders, artists and communities in creative dialogue.

In August 2011 Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning's five ensembles; *Young Poets, Drum Heads, Drum Works, Future Band* and *Young Film Makers,* were invited to take part in *Unleashed*, a professional production on the Barbican Theatre stage, devised over eighteen months and performed by young people between eight and twenty-four. It involved a creative team of forty, 128 young ensemble members from Creative Learning's existing groups, alongside twenty-four dancers from the youth arm of London hip hop dance company, Boy Blue Entertainment, a total of one hundred and fifty-two participant performers. Directed by Walter Meierjohann and co-directed by Kenrick Sandy, artistic director of Boy Blue Entertainment, *Unleashed's* three performances took place on 23rd-24th November 2012.

Each ensemble developed work separately in rehearsal during the eighteen months with intensive laboratories and residencies punctuating that period of time to generate more concentrated cross-ensemble work. The aim of the forty artists was to guide the participants through the process, and keep in mind an overarching sense of the whole piece. To begin the process the young people were asked to respond to a series of ideas, which acted as a stimulus for creative work. They were asked to brainstorm how they felt about London, their associations with growing up in the city, their memories of the riots of 2011, their experience of gangs, and their hopes and dreams for the future. The *Young Poets* then developed poems which incorporated the ensembles' responses to these ideas. The ensembles, in turn, responded creatively to the poems, with dancers developing choreography representative of the themes captured in the poetry, and the orchestra and drummers composed musical and rhythmic accompaniments in response to both the poetry

and the choreography. The ensembles worked in creative dialogue with each other to develop the content of the piece. During the laboratory and residencies, they were provided with the opportunity to gather all the ensembles together to a space where these creative responses were workshopped and explored.

   Unleashed exploded onto the Barbican Theatre stage in October 2012 with a ferocity and joy which were both angry and hopeful. The cast represented London's cultural diversity as the audience was led through a narrative which spoke of the participants' experiences growing up in the city. They told us stories through dance, film, music, drumming, spoken poems and verbatim reveries, of London, of postcode gangs, of cuts in youth funding, of poverty and isolation, of the London riots, and of their aspirations for the future. The staging was minimalist with a rectangular Perspex orchestra box floating above the stage in which only the occasional props assisted the performers in narrating their story.

Figure. 5: *Unleashed* at Barbican Centre November 2012, Photo Mark Allan.

This gave the piece a simplicity that focused the audience's attention on the participant-performers. The large-scale choreography of the chorus of drummers provided a dynamic setting for the action as they moved around the stage supporting smaller scenes and providing an electric energy and atmosphere. The drummers conveyed something of the vitality and noise of life in London as well as supporting the more frightening moments of territory battles between rival gangs. Something of the terror of the London riots was captured through films showing flames and explosions whilst a large burning bin was wheeled on stage. Musicians responded to street dancers, dancers worked alongside filmmakers to provide amusing miming montages. Spoken-word artists portraying politicians during the rioting scene were complemented by miming dancers who often satirised the politically-charged climate with humorous gestures. Moments of calm in later scenes depicting the dreams and aspirations of these young people complemented the bustle of this piece and spoke of individual stories and hopes for the future.

Figure 6. *Unleashed* at Barbican Centre November 2012, Photo Mark Allan

Having joined the Barbican towards the tail end of the rehearsal process I was sadly unable to observe all the rehearsals. My methodology therefore had to rely on observation of the final stages of rehearsals, the performance, statistical information gathered after the project completed and extensive discussions with participants and members of the creative team. As an audience member, *Unleashed* made me want to know more about the identity of these young people, about their hopes in life. It raised questions as to how this project might have helped them to redefine their sense of self in a social climate which is often unprepared to embrace difference. The project worked with people who were less likely to benefit from speed up and more likely to be disproportionately disadvantaged by inequitable temporal relations. I was interested in the effects of a creative process which removed participants, albeit temporarily, from a space in which time was imbricated in power games and social control. One artist leader explained the main aim was to 'try and make sure everything is devised from the ground up'[31]. The strong sense of ownership amongst the participant performers was clear in the research discussions afterwards:

> It was different in terms of the message we got across about the London riots, and youth in general. It was important, because we don't really feel that we have a creative platform to express our views, and this project allowed us to do that[32]

I want to conceptualise this whilst moving the debate on from a simple and reductive understanding that the project simply allowed their voices to be heard by an audience, by considering how durational projects can allow participants to explore their own self-

[31] Artist Leader Interview, Barbican Centre, October 24th 2013.
[32] Participant A *Drum Works* Interview, Barbican Centre November 28th 2012

sustaining identity and voice. *Unleashed* responded to a feeling amongst the participants that some sectors of society and, in particular, the media, were homogenising the young people of East London. The process of devising fundamentally challenged this sense of fixity by providing space and time for them to 'change the story about themselves'[33]. I consider how it enabled them to 'change the story about themselves' through the creation of a creative space which facilitated time for internal reflection. By removing participants from the constraints of a fast-paced consumer society driven by an ordered, measured clock time the project was able to allow participants time to consider themselves and their changing sense of self as separate to a homogenised society. This slower approach of dialogical exchange and reciprocal openness requires 'an important shift [towards an understanding of a] work of art as a process of communicative exchange' (Kester 2004, 90). This slower approach makes it possible for learning to develop over time, to accumulate gradually, rather than flashes of temporary insight. What this allows for, therefore, is learning that is more likely to be sustainable.

At the heart of this project was a sense that the participants were redefining their identities through the process of devising, and through performance, where they challenged audiences' perceptions by asking them to see them in a different light. This process depends on a conception of identity which is always differentiated and in motion. I will explore the extent to which time was a factor in this flux. To that end this case study allows me to explore the links between identity and temporality. The conceptual frameworks I have developed to interpret *Unleashed* draw on the philosophical work of Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze builds on Bergson's conception of becoming, and this offers a way to

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[33] Phillips, S Interview, Barbican Centre June 17th 2013

theorise identity within this case study. I hope to develop an understanding that moves past the conception of a transformative encounter in which artists liberate participants or 'give them a voice', towards a nuanced understanding of the collaborative exchange between artists and participants over time. It felt important to discover a conceptual lens through which I would be able to explore these ideas in depth, but one which also embraced the diversity and difference at the heart of these young people's lives. Concluding, I will begin to raise questions about the radical nature of both these temporalities and their potential for sustainable change.

The relationship between a director's or facilitator's authorial vision, high production values and the young participants' own voices will also be explored in this chapter. Both the Barbican's position as an internationally-acclaimed arts organisation and the high-quality production values impacted on the temporal dynamic. There was a steady process of developing the work over a year, followed by professional production values and public performances. *Unleashed* therefore operated in different temporal registers (slow devising followed by large scale and explosive performances) and this dual temporality was mirrored in the performance itself, with fast explosive dance and drumming sequences followed by slower, more reflective, moments of calm. Had the process and performance of *Unleashed* not operated in different temporal registers perhaps the experience for the participants, and audience, might have been less rich.

One author who has written about the importance of duration and dialogue in participatory work is Grant Kester. In *The One and the Many* (2011), Kester critiques the use of shock in art by questioning its ability to lead to any meaningful self-transformation in the viewer. He contends it merely produces a feeling of trauma or punishment in the viewer and, despite having been accorded 'intrinsically liberatory power in the tradition of the

avant-garde', its effect is 'considerably more complex and potentially ambivalent' (183). He considers how a durational and dialogic approach might better benefit participants in the long term. *Unleashed* reveals an approach to participation which is not concerned with shocking or rupturing a participant's sense of self without any support structure in the aftermath. Rather, through analysing this project I consider a participatory process which aims to facilitate space and time for people to develop their own sense of self-sustaining identity to more successfully negotiate the challenges in their lives. The people who worked on the project tended to be those who are both negatively affected by inequitable temporal relations and unable to conform to their society's homogenous life rhythm.

However, it is not my aim to prioritise duration to the exclusion of other temporalities in artistic creation. In *Ethical Durations, Opening to Other Times* (2012) Laura Cull argues that 'it is not a question of producing a new hierarchy in which slowness is fixed as the dominant value, but of placing a value on the multiplicity of durations' (195). This research speaks to debates following the publication of Claire Bishop's *Artificial Hells* in 2012 which I discussed in the previous chapter. Bishop raises the idea that participatory arts have been seen to be renouncing authorial vision in favour of collaboration and dialogue. A study of Barbican's participatory ensembles during the period they worked towards *Unleashed* provides an environment which will avoid prescriptively equating slowness and dialogue with an ethically 'good' model of participatory 'best practice'. Rather it will be more helpful to this research to develop and value a 'multiplicity' of different durations within a participant's engagement with an arts practice, and explore their effect on these young people's sense of self.

In the previous chapter, I reconceptualised duration in a way which highlights temporality in participatory practice. I will now relate these philosophies to theories of

identity. This analysis will therefore explore the significance of the redefinition of self to the lives of the participants involved in *Unleashed* and the extent to which the lengthy devising process impacted on issues of sustainability.

Identity and Temporality in Performance

Gilles Deleuze's philosophies of difference and time are useful in exploring the process by which the young people involved in *Unleashed* re-defined their identities through devising and challenged perceptions through performance. This was important to the project since local young people felt they were being stigmatised and blamed following the London riots and had not, up until the project commenced, been asked about their perspective. Deleuze's theories place great value on the role of 'difference' within society and therefore they are useful to my analysis. According to Bergson, life is a flow, a constant becoming, composed of indivisible threads that realise a durational temporality quite unlike the divisible states of unreal time by which and through which the world is organised. Deleuze expands on Bergson's concept of becoming; he disputes a unified concept of self by arguing identity can only exist in relation to the concept of difference.

In 1968, Deleuze conceptualized 'difference' at the heart of being. He first explored these theories in his 1956 article 'Bergson's Conception of Difference', in which he argued, 'what Bergson essentially reproaches in his predecessors is not having seen the true differences of nature' (Deleuze 1999, 42). Bergson placed significant emphasis on difference in its own right when he stated that 'freedom must be sought in a certain shade or quality of the action itself and not in a relation of this act to what it is not or to what it might have been' (Bergson, 183). Deleuze later developed this analysis in *Repetition & Difference* (1994)

and argued that difference had been subordinated to the concept of sameness. This had the effect of making the idea of difference a concept of a difference between two things which are the same, and thus a negative concept.

Running parallel to the concept of difference is an understanding of repetition aligned to the identical, which Deleuze sought to challenge and which has significant implications for the young people involved in *Unleashed*. Deleuze developed an ontology which stated that, at the heart of the concept of repetition there are qualitative differences. This theory challenges the idea that groups of people are able to comply to a homogenous life rhythm or to follow the same life course and expect to end up in the same place at the same time. The implications of this theory for the identity of a young person of East London attempting to negotiate the changing social and political climate are significant. If difference is subordinated to sameness, it supports a framework in which blunt comparisons between people, to a concept of 'the norm', are encouraged.

The poem *Just Listen*, written by Kieran Rennie during the *Unleashed* devising process, makes explicit the feeling of society homogenizing young people of East London and is an example of the very issue these young people hoped to combat.

> I live in a society where,
> You wear a hoodie and you're perceived to be YOB.
> Any congregation of young people is esteemed to be a gang.
>
> We are always put into boxes
> Viewed as statistics
> Thus society ignores our individual characteristics.
> We are said to be all the same
> (Rennie, K. Unpublished Poem, 2012)

The culture of comparing young people to a standardised 'norm' was the stigma the participants in *Unleashed* hoped to challenge through performance: 'we will not wear the

negative stigmas you believe should be our clothes, we will rebel' (Rennie, K. Unpublished Poem, 2012).

Cull talks to this debate by linking temporality to radicalism. She discusses the movement amongst 'dominant capitalist forces to establish one, homogenous rhythm and speed, arguing that this rhythm segregates the (valuable) moving and the (useless) still' (Cull 2012, 204). She explores the idea that people must demonstrate their productivity and that speed is central to personal worth in a capitalist society. This supports David Wiles' argument that the emergence of an absolute time, through the advent of clocks as early as 2000 BC, commercialised time and therefore placed a value on a person's ability to be productive within the grid of time. Thus a person who is ill, incarcerated, not able to thrive in traditional education structures, demonstrating 'antisocial' behaviours or financially disadvantaged is not 'in motion' in this way and is therefore 'unproductive' (Cull 2012, 204). Inevitably, this considerably influences a person's sense of self, and therefore central to this discussion is the link between temporality and identity theories. Rennie's poem *Just Listen,* makes this point explicit:

> So many feel: robbed,
> Depressed, stressed, worthless because society
> Says
> Without a job you're worth less.
> (Rennie, K. Unpublished Poem, 2012)

This analysis reinforces the sense that society is unable to embrace difference in itself, whether that be different speeds and paces to get to where one wants to go, different methods for achieving goals and, indeed, different goals themselves. Participants in *Unleashed* had felt that they were 'all said to be the same' (Rennie, K. Unpublished Poem, 2012).

The concept of difference appeared thematically throughout the performance of *Unleashed* through a subtle, satirical articulation of the differing representations of the identities of these young people. One of the first scenes of *Unleashed* showed a throng of young people in a dance sequence depicting the fractious relationship between rival East London gangs vying over territory. This introduced us to a central theme of the piece by responding to the media stigma attached to youth and gang culture. Aggressive arm movements, breakdancing and body-popping represented a dangerous war of postcodes. This scene was interrupted, just as the main fighters were about to hit each other, by a slow-motion sequence led by Rennie, who offered a reasoned explanation of why some young people turn to gangs. He described the need to seek solace in an otherwise isolated world, a world in which opportunities for young people of East London are increasingly scarce. He explored the idea that gangs represent an, albeit dangerous, stability and sense of family some lack at home. Rennie questioned the idea that if one young person follows a set course they can expect the same outcome as another young person:

Some of these, unemployed were told education is the key.

So possess the keys of GCSE's, A-Levels, BTECs and Degrees

But as these

Statistics show it doesn't necessarily open the door to jobs

(Rennie, K. Unpublished Poem, 2012)

This is playing with the concept of difference featured in the roles taken by the young people as well as the spoken components of the performance. The choreography of the gang sequence and build-up to the fight between the two rival gang leaders were depicted in a way which made me question whose perspective on these young people's identities

was represented in the bravado of the gang members. Both gangs looked like they were playing their parts and copying their peers in a way which spoke of a level of choreography in real life. This was mirrored in the identical costumes, with the rival gangs only differentiated by colour schemes. The characterisation was perhaps intended to be two-dimensional and, when watching the performance, made me question if the participants were telling us about their own understanding of self or lampooning that of the politicians and media who analysed the aftermath of the London riots. In a conversation with Rennie in January 2014, he confirmed this reading of the characterisation and spoke of their desire to challenge the ways in which they felt their peers had been represented by the media. In contrast to this portrayal, Rennie depicted an articulate and aspirational young man in a position to offer much to the world:

> But we will rebel; we will not wear the negative stigmas
>
> You believe should be our clothes
>
> (Rennie, K. Unpublished Poem, 2012)

By showing us scenes which depicted throngs of similarly dressed and choreographed aggressive teenagers directly followed by articulate and intelligent self-analysis, the participants were asking the audience to question the validity of sameness so inherent to the representation of youth by society.

Figure 7. *Unleashed* at Barbican Centre November 2012, Photo Mark Allan

The next sequence deepened this analysis of the representation of young people by

contrasting the way in which politicians and the media articulated the factors contributing

to the London riots with the participants' own honest reflections. This again highlighted the

differences so inherent to the characters of these young people, by allowing us to hear their

individual voices within the space. The scene opened with a burning bin being wheeled on

stage by members of the cast, visually representing the destruction of the riots. In this

scene, numerous pianos became lit to reveal the youngest cast members sitting on top of

them, reflecting on their experiences. The innocence and insight of their comments not only

sat in stark contrast to the central burning bin but also the aggression of the young people

in the previous scene. Significantly, the honesty of the young people's insights satirised the

damning and at times patronising analysis of the riots by Michael Gove and Harriet Harman

which was projected on a large screen behind the stage.

Figure 8. *Unleashed* at Barbican Centre November 2012, Photo Mark Allan

Figure 9. *Unleashed* at Barbican Centre November 2012, Photo Mark Allan

The young people told us that:

'I remember seeing the police use force'

'I remember seeing a man steal basmati rice and thinking how poor and

unhappy he must be to need to steal rice'

'I think they will riot again. There is still so much to protest about. If the

economy doesn't change…'

'Yes, if the government doesn't start to get to know their youth'

(Meierjohann, W. *Unleashed* DVD, 2012)

The gang scenes portrayed a sense of fixity in the characters of the young people through the use of matching costume which had the impact of visually representing the gang members as the same as each other. The depiction in the media of young people in the weeks following the London riots sat in stark contrast to the real, nuanced and articulate young people that we saw in later scenes of *Unleashed*. The young people involved in *Unleashed* challenged the perceptions of homogeneity by satirising the two-dimensional, stigmatised representation of youth by the media.

Deleuze offers a critique of the concept of a fixed identity that controls difference by highlighting qualities of sameness. These conceptions of identity did not support Deleuze's commitment to pure difference and meant, ultimately, that inherent to their structure was the supposition that 'difference is the ground, but only the ground for the demonstration of the identical' (1968, 61). In her 2002 publication *Gilles Deleuze*, Claire Colebrook argues that, for Deleuze, these conceptions of identity meant 'the very power of life, for change and creation would be stalled or exhausted by self-involved life forms that lived in order to remain the same' (Colebrook 2002, 5). This understanding of identity is particularly unhelpful to a young person negotiating the uncertainties of a social climate unable to support the wide variety of different cultural and economic milieux present in East London.

My methodology for researching this project, which included focus groups and in-depth discussions in addition to creative research sessions, allowed for me to hear the views of nearly every participant involved in *Unleashed* in small groups of six to twelve people at a time. This was important to me since it meant I would not make the mistake of making assumptions about how participants responded to these themes based on a select few. A recurrent theme in my discussion groups in the weeks after the project ended concerned the stigma attached to youth culture and the participants' desire to challenge this. During these sessions, which were semi-structured discussion groups, with participants in groups of six to twelve people, one participant articulated the importance of difference when she said; '*Future Band* lets me feel that it's ok to be different…it gave me the chance to see difference as not a bad thing'[34]. A more helpful conception of identity for these young people would be a fluid conception that embraces difference and a process of becoming.

Deleuze developed a synthesis of time as a way of understanding a person's 'becoming' or sense of self. His synthesis of time integrates the passive synthesis of habit, the active synthesis of memory and the empty form of time or the eternal return of the absolutely new. I would like to focus on the eternal return of the new within this chapter since it represents 'the new, complete novelty. It is by itself the third time in the series, the future as such' (Deleuze 1968, 113). The eternal return of the new introduces ruptures and breaks in a synthesis of time dominated by habit and memory. This has significant implications for the concept of identity since it inscribes difference at the centre of being.

The concept of eternal return of the new is the point at which difference is embraced, and this featured throughout *Unleashed.* A scene during the second act

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[34] *Future Band* Participant an Interview, Barbican Centre June 24th 2013.

contrasted the stigmatised and two-dimensional portrayal of young people so prevalent in the media, with the participants' subtle, humorous and nuanced understanding of self through a dream sequence depicting their hopes and aspirations. The earlier scenes depicting the media's representations of youth in the London riots were dominated by the stultifying compressions orientated on habit and memory, whereas the future-orientated dreams of the young participants dramatised in Act Two of *Unleashed* celebrated the possibility for change. They told us about their dreams of weddings, jobs as physiotherapists or teachers, of visiting the world and of setting up dance schools for unprivileged children. This sequence was full of hope for the future and juxtaposed the anger and sadness of the previous scenes. It was forward thinking and broke from the representational repetition which featured in earlier scenes, leaving the feeling that *Unleashed* was inherently hopeful for a different future. This element of hope is linked to the concept of the new and of breaking a cycle dominated by habit and memory. The piece illuminated this idea by warning the audience in a poem by Kareem Parkins-Brown, *The Dream Dealer*, of the perils of negotiating this social landscape:

So flirt with impossible with a picture of your children already in mind

When you were a child you fell in love with the impossible.

Until something told you that the impossible's an obstacle.

(Parkins-Brown, K. 2012)

These sequences began to prompt questions about how participants felt creativity helped them to redefine themselves in a social climate that is often unprepared to embrace difference.

Later in the piece, the participants began to offer answers to some of my questions, through a sequence that explicitly articulated what dance meant to the participant's lives

and futures. The audience was told in a scene that celebrated creativity through individual, paired and group choreography of what dance means to these young people. The movement scenes were symbolic of the sense of freedom these young people feel when they are dancing, and were visually representative of the narrative booming out of the speaker system on stage:

A freedom of expression enables me,

Relieves my suppressed emotions, feelings

Personification and visualization of the cosmopolitan canvas in my narrow-

minded skull

Juxtapose

Creates a new identity,

A new me

I'm afraid to be, simply me

Striving ambition, boldness

Belief

Ambition

A voice to connect with

Unity

A common ground

Of which together we reach new heights,

Flight

Wings we soar with together

This is why I am, we are

Dance

(Meierjohann, W. *Unleashed* DVD, 2012)

This poetic exploration of the effect creativity has on the creation of 'a new me' is supported by Deleuze's third form of time, his eternal return of the new accounts for the effect of newness and difference on identities otherwise reliant on habit and memory. We are told by one pre-recorded voice that 'Dance has helped me develop as a person' (Meierjohann, W. *Unleashed* DVD, 2012) and this theme featured throughout the piece. This quotation suggests awareness on the part of the participants of the ways in which the arts are able to support a shifting sense of self.

Duration, 'becoming' and participatory art

I established in the previous chapter that the development of a durational aesthetic is not a rejection of the use of shock and disruption within the avant-garde movement but, rather, reflects how the twenty-first century is beginning to reconceptualise durational time as a tool for radical intervention. In participatory arts' practices, one of the figures who has contributed to this debate is Grant Kester. In his book *The One and The Many* (2011), Kester critiques the use of 'shock and dislocation' within the avant-garde tradition. This goes some way to explaining why he advocates a durational-dialogic aesthetic, which is based on reciprocal dialogue between artist and participant over time. Kester considers 'shock', or a temporal conception of the 'now moment', as akin to the feeling of punishment and trauma within the viewer, and questions whether this leads to self-transformation or simple defensiveness. He makes the case that the radicalism of the arts in the avant-garde tradition relied on dislocation and disruption:

> Shock, disruption or ontic dislocation are accorded an intrinsically liberatory power in the tradition of avant-garde art, capable of revealing new, critical insight into the formation of individual and collective identity. However, the actual forms of reception and affect set in motion by the experience of disruption or dislocation are considerably more complex, and potentially ambivalent. (Kester 2011, 183)

In debating this point, Kester relates participation in the arts and temporality to theories of identity, arguing that:

> The self that is disrupted, dislocated, or ruptured can't at the same time possess the coherence necessary to comprehend and internalize a new critical perspective. (Kester 2011, 184)

This way of thinking becomes particularly relevant when working with people who may not have been able to conform to their society's homogenous life rhythm.

To make this new critical perspective last, Kester advocates a durational-dialogic aesthetic, which is based on reciprocal dialogue between artist and participant over time. At the heart of Kester's argument are the theories of repetition and difference developed by Deleuze. Colebrook argues that, for Deleuze, 'newness is not just the shock of the new that has its contextual effect and then passes away; the new is eternally new…the new does not occur within time, true time is newness itself, the eternal production and transformation' (Colebrook, 63). Kester's theory, drawing on Deleuze, suggests that participatory art is able to live this understanding of time and therefore has inherent potential for creativity. In this reading, newness is linked to durational work and identity in a way that has sustainable benefits for those involved.

Kester explores how the philosophies of Deleuze and Bergson can help explicate identity, difference and 'duration' in a durational dialogic participatory project:

Drawing on Bergson [Deleuze] postulates instead a mode of being that is always/already differentiated, and which doesn't have to search for difference in an external object. Bergson describes being as a process that unfolds over time (through 'duration') in which identity is never fixed. Thus we carry 'difference' within ourselves, in all the potential forms of being that each of us contain[35].

How does this contribute to an understanding of participatory art that is dialogic and durational? Kester suggests that dialogical ontology allows for a person's becoming, or a sense of self that changes over time. He suggests this happens through a process of discursive interaction and operates in both spatial and temporal registers. He states that developing work in a community context should be a process of dialogical exchange:

In the context of a cultural politics, the "positivity" of this mode of being would derive from the interaction between the artist and a given community or constituency. The creative autonomy of the artist (Deleuze's "great directors" and "privileged souls") would be replaced by a concept of the artist as a co-participant in cultural or political struggles rooted in a specific community context. The "work of art" would emerge less as a discreet object (a novel,

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[35] March 2015, http://www.grantkester.net/resources/Deleuze.pdf

painting or convention centre) constructed along the lines of a figural formalism than as a process of dialogical exchange[36].

I will now consider how processes of discursive interaction contributed to identity change in the devising and development of *Unleashed*. This focus on change offers an attempt to deepen my analysis of the link between identity, radicalism and temporality in this durational project. An analysis of the process of developing the work over a period of eighteen months will illuminate the sustained benefits of long-term work for those involved.

Radical Rhythms: The devising process and dual temporalities in *Unleashed*

Both the Barbican's position as internationally-acclaimed arts organisation and the professional quality of *Unleashed's* production values had an interesting influence on the temporality of the project as a whole. The explosive quality I witnessed in *Unleashed* on stage belied the steady and egalitarian nature of the devising process. As an audience member, the piece felt as if it was quite literally unleashed upon us with a dynamic, provocative and politically subversive tone. However, my research has revealed that behind the scenes lay many months of thoughtful, dialogic and grassroots creative development. In this respect, *Unleashed* operated in different temporal registers: the steady process of working together as an ongoing ensemble, to developing work over a period of eighteen months, to the inevitably more pressured run-up to performing a piece with production values that are commensurate with a professional arts centre.

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[36] Kester March 2015, http://www.grantkester.net/resources/Deleuze.pdf.

Following the publication of Bishop's *Artificial Hells*, and the debate pertaining to whether or not participatory arts have been seen to be renouncing authorial vision in favour of collaboration and dialogic practice, it has been argued that the sector has become deradicalised. In *The Ideology of Duration in the Dematerialised Monument*, Dave Beech also discusses what he understands to be an 'ideology of duration' (Beech 2011, 315) and warns against duration becoming an artist's ethic. Indeed, it is important not simply to equate slowness with an ethically 'good' model of engagement during a rehearsal process. However, the atmosphere during the lengthy devising process was no less radical or provocative than the high-impact politically-charged performance itself. If by 'radical' Bishop seeks sustained change on the part of the participant and a 'heightened critical perspective', might it be possible to consider a slower, accumulative approach to the radical? I argue that, inherent to *Unleashed*'s devising process, was a radical way of working and being in society, an atmosphere imbued with what I describe as a 'radical rhythm'.

'Changing the story' through devising *Unleashed*

In order to focus the analysis into the devising process, I have divided this section into four main points that are important to the link between identity and temporality in the devising process. The first section will explore the working atmosphere during devising and how this is linked to what one of the parents described as the participant's ability to 'change the story about themselves'[37]. The second will investigate the radical rhythms and affective atmospheres within the rehearsal room, and how this 'utopian bubble' was able to leak into

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[37] S. Phillips Personal Interview, Barbican Centre June 27th 2013

the experiences of the participants outside the rehearsal room. Thirdly, I will reconceptualise the significance of the process of devising around past events in a way which moves the debate on from a reductive understanding that participatory art is concerned with giving participants 'a voice'. Finally I will conduct an analysis of the significance of a multiplicity of durations on a participant's sense of self. Each point reflects a conversation with a participant, a parent of a participant or a member of the creative team. I hope that by letting these conversations guide my research I allow the words and stories of others to be heard.

Unleashed was devised by five separate ensembles developing work individually over a period of eighteen months with intensive rehearsal periods where cross-ensemble work was further developed. The process was unique in the sense that it negotiated the logistical and creative issues involved in devising with a very large cast of young people from eight to twenty-four years of age working across a number of artistic disciplines. It also presented a number of challenges; notably the interpretation and perspective on the themes differed from one age group to the next. One older participant, aged approximately twenty-four, who was part of the Young Poets ensemble, decided to leave the process because she felt that the work did not accurately represent her perspective on the riots, young people's identity and gang culture. In discussions, she said to me that she thought the process helped the younger participants negotiate the complexities of their responses to the volatile climate but that she couldn't commit to a project which she felt didn't accurately talk to her own understanding of the issues involved. In particular, she felt the portrayal of gangs in the gang scenes was 'two-dimensional'. She said that gangs in London

didn't 'take up colours'[38], which Americanised the portrayal of gangs in *Unleashed*. I argued

in the previous section that the portrayal of gangs as two-dimensional was purposefully

aimed at lampooning and satirising the ways in which the media portrayed youth culture.

However, the fact that this young woman decided to leave the process, is an example of

how seriously invested the participants were in making sure that they 'changed the story

about themselves' in a way that accurately reflected their sense of self. Negotiating these

issues was a fundamentally important part of the devising process and this negotiation took

time. The fact that the creative process was not rushed meant that most participants felt

invested and had a strong sense of ownership over the story being told. The participant who

left the process, did so amicably and continued in her commitment to the youth ensemble

Young Poets. Unlike *Exhibit B*, most participants felt they had the time to discuss and devise

a piece of work which accurately reflected their own opinions about the sensitive issues

raised within the piece. The participant who didn't was also given the time to disagree,

challenge and ultimately decide that whilst the piece wasn't right for her she could stay

involved in the ongoing ensemble at BGCL. Within this section, I will explore how the

atmosphere in devising attempted to support and encourage each young person's

perspective.

    Some participants who play and compose in *Future Band,* one of the ensembles

involved in *Unleashed*, have worked with the ensemble for up to six years prior to the

project starting. This is an unusually long period of time to be working collaboratively with a

group of creative people. *Future Band* was developed by Detta Danford and Natasha

Zielazinski in 2006. Danford and Zielazinski are artist leaders and professional musicians who

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[38] Young Poets Participant A, Barbican Centre November 24th 2012

graduated from Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and who now teach on the BA

Performance and Creative Enterprise. *Future Band* encourages an experimental composition

process and is unlike a traditional way of learning to play an instrument. It has made me

wonder if there is something interesting and relevant to this thesis about the way people

compose, which, similar to devising, operates in a very egalitarian, open way.

In an interview with Danford, she was asked about how *Future Band,* or the arts in

general, can strengthen peoples' 'sense of who they are'. She responded:

Some people have been in the band over the four years and some people have

just started. So there's that sense of growing in the band, and as you're growing,

learning about who you are, which is going on through all our lives all the time.

But I feel that there's something…that the way we work together and the way

we play together, and the space that's around that…I mean, I feel that about

myself when I am in *Future Band*, that I learn about myself every time. [39]

This perspective supports the conception of selfhood as always changing and shows how

the arts can help people to reflect on this process of identity. When asked to articulate what

qualities inherent to *Future Band's* working ethos creatively facilitate this development, she

responded:

I think there's something about the way we create music, the way that we come

up with ideas together and explore sound and explore composition that always

surprises me, and is kind of fresh in my mind. So I think there's something about

expectations always being…having that kind of freshness and newness and being

surprised, and how that relates to learning about yourself or forming an identity

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[39] D. Danford Interview, Barbican Centre June 2013

for myself…I do feel that we've seen the young people in the band really grow

and express themselves in lots and lots of different ways. I relate that to getting

a sense of who you are as a musician but also as a person, and in terms of how

you feel about yourself, and how you see yourself as part of the group, and how

those interact[40].

Significant to my argument is the fact that she attributes 'something about the commitment

and long-term-ness of it'[41] to feeling the sense of belonging and identity development she

discussed earlier in the interview. Danford articulated in practice what Kester discusses in

relation to identity and newness, repetition and difference. She argued that, inherent to

Future Band's ability to strengthen 'a sense of who you are', is the combination of the 'long-

term-ness of it' alongside 'freshness and newness and being surprised'[42]. This statement

reveals the effect the working atmosphere of repetition and difference has on the identity

of the participant. She emphasises the focus placed on the 'fresh and the new' in the

process of developing work.

In an interview conducted in November 2012, Sian Phillips, a parent of a *Future*

Band participant, had some interesting thoughts about how engagement in the arts

had helped her daughter Georgia develop a sense of her own individuality:

To be human is to be flexible and adaptable. The connection through music has

contributed to her being a very flexible person with other people, very

embracing of all different kinds of people.[43]

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[40] D. Danford Interview, Barbican Centre June, 2013
[41] D. Danford Interview, Barbican Centre June, 2013
[42] D. Danford Interview, Barbican Centre June 2013
[43] S. Phillips Interview, Barbican Centre June 2013

When asked to analyze the benefit of engaging in music ensembles, Phillips made links between the creative process and her own field of specialism, counselling.

> People that come as clients to have counselling have come because they are not happy in some way, and they want to effect some change. And when they feel hurt or when they've made a connection, or when they've…it moves something, it shifts something that's stuck and painful. And it changes the story about yourself. We all have stories about ourselves, and actually you can't hang onto that in quite the same way.[44]

This idea of 'changing the story about yourself' is at the very heart of Bergson's 'becoming' and Deleuze's theory of repetition and difference. However, what Phillips is articulating here is that, in her profession as a counsellor, the positive benefit she has witnessed is people's realisation that they 'don't have to hang onto their story'. The 'changing the story about yourself' element of the process of creation inherent to *Unleashed*, and articulated by Phillips in relation to her own work, relates to Deleuze's eternal return of the absolutely new. It is 'in itself the new, complete novelty. It is by itself the third time in the series, the future as such' (Deleuze, 113). The qualities discussed by Danford in her description of *Future Band's* creative process exemplify an environment in which this 'becoming' is able to take place. She describes a process of growing and becoming alongside fellow participants over a long period of time and links this to 'freshness and newness and being surprised'.[45]I argue that time was essential to the reflectivity experienced during this project and is therefore a productive way to rethink participatory arts. The flashes of temporary insight

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[44] S. Phillips Interview, Barbican Centre June 2013
[45] D. Danford Interview, Barbican Centre June 2013

experienced when being shocked into considering your sense of self by works of art with a ballistic temporality may not be as sustainable for the viewer or participant. 'Changing the story about yourself' also appears thematically throughout the *Unleashed* performance, with participants portraying multifaceted sides of their characters and challenging the audiences' perceptions of youth culture.

Sustainable radical rhythms: the chill factor

During the devising process, young people of East London thought about and articulated their experiences of being young in this urban location. The performance was their way of responding to the events of July 2011 and years of stigma they perceived to be attached to young people and gang culture. The performance was joyful, angry and at times satirical. In this sense *Unleashed* was certainly 'radical'. However what interests me more than the political content of the piece of work, was the affective atmosphere in rehearsals. This atmosphere can be articulated by the phrase 'radical rhythms'. By 'radical rhythms' I refer to the idea that, whilst *Unleashed* had politically provocative content, also inherent to its process was a radically provocative way of working and being in society.

In an interview between Peter Renshaw and members of *Drum Heads* young musical ensemble conducted in November 2012, participants discussed the effect the creative atmosphere had had on their lives outside of the creative space. One participant stated that '*Drum Heads* has changed the way I listen to music, definitely and that has inadvertently changed everything'[46]. Renshaw asked if it had changed the way he 'listened to the world',

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[46] Anonymous Participant A *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, Barbican Centre November, 2012

which prompted a conversation about politics and the ethos behind the way they worked creatively:

> I'd say as a learning group, I'd say we're socialist. If we think about how we work and stuff, like everyone is equal. When they ask us to like, input and stuff, they will listen, they actually listen to what we say and they do do what we say. It's nice to not just be told to do something[47].

How this participant describes the process of developing work in the *Drum Heads* ensemble illustrates how active listening is an essential skill for a participatory artist. In Chapter Two of this thesis I explore Kester's theory of an 'aesthetics of listening' (Kester 2013, 107) and show how Sean Gregory and Peter Renshaw hope dialogue and active listening can become part of a 'new paradigm for engaging in the arts' at Barbican Guildhall (Gregory and Renshaw 2013, 1). Through taking the time for active listening and allowing the group to work at a pace which did not exclude any one member, and ensuring the devising process operated from a ground-up structure, meant they broke with a traditional rhythm of working towards an end goal. The working ethos and creative space in rehearsals allowed Bergson's conception of duration to unfold in a fundamental way. Participants articulated this through the description of the atmosphere in the room as having 'the chill factor'[48].

> You can chill, have no goals or you can chill and have goals. I think when we make the music... There's a connection that comes about from when we make music together, like we can drum for ages and ages and no one will have to say

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[47] Anonymous Participant A *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, Barbican Centre November, 2012
[48] Anonymous Participant B *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, November, 2012

anything, and it's not weird. We've been doing it for so long…nearly all of us have been here since the beginning, right at the start, so it's sort of natural[49].

'The chill factor' is a way of describing experiencing Bergson's duration in that it provides the space and time for participants to consider themselves in new ways. This temporality is a radically provocative way of working in society, one which is able to encourage an awareness of identity as a continual process of becoming.

This radical way of working is interesting but I wanted to understand to what extent this atmosphere, described by one participant as 'utopian'[50], was only experienced within the rehearsal room. What happened when the participants left the space? For this 'radical rhythm' to be sustainable, it would need to be experienced outside of the rehearsal space. Patrice Pavis wrote about how audiences at the theatre experience time in *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture* (2003). Pavis states that stage time 'unfolds in a continuous present, for the performance takes place in the present' (Pavis, 409). Pavis argues that there is a rupture between the time of the play and the sense of time experienced by the audience:

> …the time of performance underway and of the time of the spectator watching it. It consists of a continual present that is constantly vanishing and being renewed. It is measurable chronometrically - from 8.31 to 11.15, for instance - and is psychologically tied to the spectator's subjective sense of duration (Pavis, 409).

In contrast, time is experienced differently in durational participatory projects. When working over a long period of time a participant's experience of time during a workshop and devising process may be able to impact their experience of time outside

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[49] Anonymous Participant B *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, November, 2012
[50] Anonymous Participant C *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, November, 2012

of rehearsals and in their personal lives. Time in a durational participatory project may still be measured chronometrically, i.e. every Wednesday evening from 6-8pm for three years, but is arguably *inherently* psychologically tied to a participant's subjective sense, of a duration linked to life *outside* of the creative space. This is because it becomes part of their long-term rhythms. Pavis suggests the time on stage and the time in the auditorium or outside the theatre operate in two different rhythms which coexist but remain separate in the spectator's experience. This project shows that participants were able to bridge the gap between their experience of time when working creatively and that of the outside world. This significantly influences how sustainable a project can be. It is able to, as Kester questions, 'make lasting a new critical perspective' (Kester 2011, 184).

This became particularly evident in conversations with the cast of *Unleashed* when they discussed whether working in the ongoing ensembles was representative of a 'utopian bubble'[51]. Renshaw discussed this point in his interview with members of the *Drum Heads* ensemble when he asked if the working ethos was 'almost a model…a microcosm of the wider world' (Renshaw). One participant responded that whilst the space felt like a 'sectioned utopia away from the world', they wanted to bring the 'utopia in here…to the world' through working across disciplines and with other groups of people. He said 'we are not locked off, only with each other'[52]. This idea of the project being utopian or concerned with social change is interesting to this analysis and opens up a discussion into the aims behind participatory work. It moves my discussion on from simply being concerned with identity change. He described the

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[51] Anonymous Participant C *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, Barbican Centre November, 2012.
[52] Anonymous Participant C *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, Barbican Centre November, 2012.

method of taking the working atmosphere outside of the rehearsal space by saying

'we have got a language and (for instance) the dancers have got a language and then

when we come together we create a new language'[53]. He suggested the language was

not a verbal language but a 'way of being', which is able to be taken into different

contexts. In the same interview he continued to state that 'It becomes part of you

outside of it as well…the connections in the brain. I just think it changes your mind,

changes the way you think'[54]. I think what this participant is articulating is that the

experience of engaging in art has shifted something in him in a permanent way. The

atmosphere in the rehearsal room had leaked into his everyday life.

Reconceptualising 'giving a voice' to participants

It was evident in numerous discussions that *Unleashed* provided a platform to

articulate how participants felt about the riots of the previous year and perceptions of

youth culture:

It was different in terms of the message we got across about the London riots,

and youth in general. It was important, because we don't really feel that we

have a creative platform to express our views, and this project allowed us to do

that[55].

It would be easy to suggest, in reductive terms, that the project *gave participants a voice*. I

suggest the complexity behind this term lies in the relationship between time and identity

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[53] Anonymous Participant C *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, Barbican Centre November, 2012
[54] Anonymous Participant C *Drum Heads*, Focus Group, Barbican Centre November, 2012
[55] Anonymous Participant at Morpeth School, Focus Group, 5/10/2012.

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leading me to ask, how can the phrase 'giving a voice' be conceptualised? Why was this so important to the young people involved in *Unleashed?* One possible answer might be that providing space and time to reflect on potentially traumatic past events is fundamentally important to the moving on from them. This is linked to the idea that one's identity is not determined and fixed by an event in history but that it is always fluid. Deleuze's theory of contraction becomes particularly relevant to this analysis. Colebrook states that, for Deleuze:

> Repeating the past always transforms the past, for the past is as much in
>
> production as the present. Each performance or memory of the past opens the
>
> past anew. (Colebrook, 64)

Here the contraction of past into the present occurs when we remember, repeat or reflect on it. In repeating or remembering events from the London riots or challenging inaccurate perceptions of young people, the participants engaged in this process of contraction in a positive way. This fluid understanding of time and identity meant participants didn't simply recount a stagnant event in the past but rather they were creating the past anew and challenging societal perceptions surrounding youth culture.

Through this analysis, the creative process of devising moves away from the ethically precarious understanding of participatory art as a process by which an artist transforms or liberates the life of the participant. Rather, it facilitates an environment and time in which a participant and artist alike can redefine identities through devising, and challenge perceptions through performance. Understood in this way the process for participatory work is not about 'transforming' someone's life or 'giving them a voice'. Rather, it facilitates the opportunity to creatively reflect on issues which affect them. In this respect the process

of writing and devising becomes significant to the wider process of awareness of the

possibility for social and personal change.

Multiple temporalities and *Unleashed*

Unleashed exemplified the idea that collaborative, dialogue-based arts activities

engender a sense of ownership and pride amongst the participants over the artistic and

thematic content. The durational nature of their engagement had significant implications

for their changing sense of self. However, the project achieved this alongside very high

production values and artistic excellence as shown by the national newspaper reviews and

audience feedback. It is my hope that, by exploring the multiple temporal registers involved

in the process and performance for *Unleashed* I will avoid simply equating slowness with an

ethically sound model of participatory engagement. Within recent critical theory, the

reductive but prevalent separation of process and product, and aesthetic and instrumental

benefits of art, does not support the need for articulating a multiplicity of cultural values. It

is important to develop a nuanced understanding of the aesthetic and social benefits of

participatory art.

Beech argues that duration can be a work of art's 'ethic, its mode of address and its

commitment to the process of a culture coming into being' (Beech 2011, 314). Addressing

the debate between Grant Kester and Claire Bishop, Beech argues that 'durational work has

become exemplary of a certain strain of discourse which calls for an ethical foundation for

the relationships between an artist and community' (314). Beech argues that, in

contemporary thinking regarding the arts' engagement with its public, duration has become

'ideological because it is isolated and abstracted as something valuable in itself' (Beech

2011, 317). He warns that duration runs the risk of becoming an artist's 'ethic'. The following section will explore the effect of a multiplicity of durations on the experience of participants involved in *Unleashed.*

In an attempt to gain insight into how participants viewed the process and performance of *Unleashed* I led a research session that applied a range of creative approaches. Whilst extensive discussions with the participants and creative team gave an insight into the durational process, it was difficult for anyone to articulate how one's sense of self changed and fluctuated over a period of eighteen months, and extremely challenging to grapple with the concept of time. I felt I needed to develop a research methodology which provided a way of exploring the journey in a flexible and imaginative way. By facilitating a creative session, I also hoped to avoid the trap of asking 'leading' questions. I asked the participants to think about *Unleashed* as a journey which started in the weeks prior to the first rehearsal. I explained that some journeys are all uphill, some have ups and downs, some journeys feel fast and some slow even though time remains a constant. I suggested that they draw their own personal journey as a map and visually represent the fluctuations they felt (for instance through the image of a mountain, fast streams, stagnant lakes, valleys, craters etc). In addition to this, I requested that they write postcards home to friends or family from stages along the way and I asked them to draw an image of themselves before and after with speech bubbles to say 'how they felt', 'what they were thinking' or articulate 'something they valued that might have changed during that year-long process'.

I wanted them to consider their subjective experience of time during the project. The results of this session were significant to a discussion of the varied temporalities within a participatory project with a professional performance outcome. The maps unanimously

articulated a sense of time speeding up and pressure mounting towards the performance

week. This was visually represented by volcanos, mountains and peaks:

Figure 10. Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

Figure 11. Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

Figure 12: Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

Figure 13: Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

This 'fast mountainous' stage of their journey, which represented the performance weeks, had a direct correlation with a participant's sense of highs, lows and excitement. This was demonstrated by the postcards written home from this section of their map; the words 'Ecstatic! Mad! OMG' and 'sooooo excited, can't wait' went alongside images of lightning, whirling fireworks and volcanic eruptions. Explosions, electricity and lightning used to represent the performance weeks visually explicates a temporality which embraced 'the now moment'. This explains the significance they placed on a platform that enabled them to articulate their stories to the audience. This contrasted with the long devising period, in which the ensembles explored the themes of the piece, which was represented by participants as valleys, long paths, slow-running water/rivers.

Figure 14: Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.
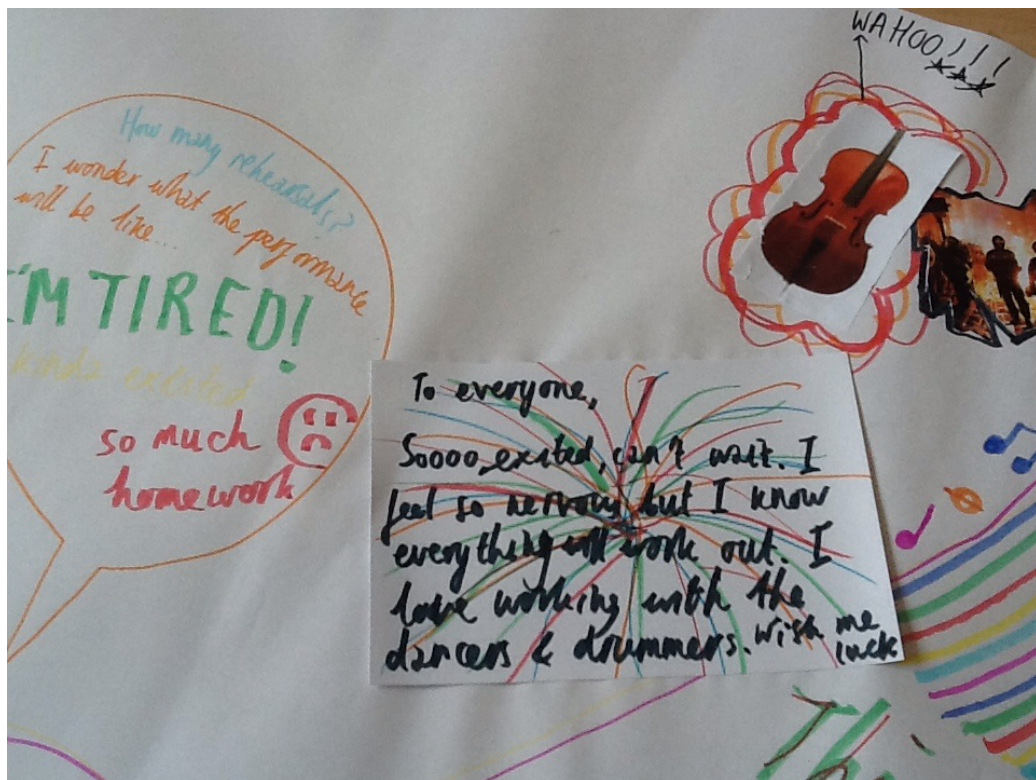
Figure 15: Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

It seemed to show that the slower process represented in their maps yielded more significant questions about what they were trying to achieve, both individually and collectively. Participants commented in postcards home that they had found 'the answer' during these stages of the process. Images of valleys, flat paths and slow running water used to represent the lengthy devising processes were accompanied with the most 'soul searching' questions. In one image a participant described the long devising process as 'each step is a thousand miles', accompanied by an image of her thinking 'what is this project? This is fun. Breaking free' (Fig. 16).

Figure 16: Mackney, Maia. *Future Band* Creative Session, 2013.

A further image showed a boy describing the sense of oppression he felt after the London riots - 'a sense of oppression of young people' - and, later in the journey, 'been part of an awesome big huge thing. A real sense of family' (Fig. 14). Another participant drew an image of herself walking slowly along a path in the section of the map representing the devising

period, with a speech bubble saying 'London seems more interesting now' (Fig. 11). This same participant drew an image of herself cartwheeling at speed to represent how she felt during the performance weeks.

At the end of this session, I asked if anyone would like to tell the story of their journeys and explain their maps to the group. During these descriptions, one young participant explained that she felt that it was 'such a long time we were working on it'[56]. This prompted a discussion about time which I will include unabridged:

MM: How do you think the journey, your journey, would have changed if the devising period for *Unleashed* was four months instead of a year?

Participant: Ummm. I think it would have been a bit more updownupdownupdownupdown. Because we would have had to squash a lot more rehearsals in, and rather than the steady progress we made at the beginning it would have been a bit more 'arghhh we have to write something for a huge show in four months' so it would have been a lot more hectic and probably less enjoyable actually. Coz we would have had a lot more pressure on us to do it and we would have had less time to think.

MM: And what if it was a four-year project with intermittent performances, not necessarily one big crescendo performance at the end but smaller sharings throughout?

Participant: It wouldn't have had this big uphill happy kind of explosion thing. I think that's what made it. I think if you were doing it over four years you would

[56] Anonymous participant A, Focus Group with *Future Band*, London February, 2013.

be a bit like 'why am I doing this? There is nothing to work towards'. Because we

hadn't something at the end...[57]

This suggests that a condensed rehearsal period would not have allowed for time for

reflection and space to think through the issues the piece raised. As one participant

described, the process would have been more 'updownupdownupdown' and would not

have allowed for moments of calmer reflection. Participants creatively responded to their

sense of self in a volatile cultural climate, post-riots, and a condensed rehearsal period

might have impacted negatively on their experience of the project. Another participant

articulated the multiplicity of durations inherent to the temporality of *Unleashed*:

What I found good was that...most projects have this sort of goal at the end, and

all the rehearsals running up to it are the path to that goal. For me, all the

rehearsals and stuff was less like...*Unleashed* was more of a thing as a whole

instead of three nights doing three shows[58].

This conversation demonstrates the complexity of the different temporalities inherent to

the process for *Unleashed*. I argue these multiple temporalities operating in *Unleashed* are

linked to the concept of repetition and difference. Had *Unleashed* not operated in different

temporal registers perhaps the experience for the participants might have been less rich. As

Cull suggests, it is important not to create a hierarchy in which slowness becomes the

dominant temporality.

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[57] Anonymous participant B, Focus Group with *Future Band,* London February, 2013.
[58] Anonymous participant C, Focus Group with *Future Band,* London February, 2013).

Conclusion

The young people involved in *Unleashed* were invited to recognise themselves in different ways through devising, to celebrate the diversity amongst them and, through performance, to challenge the perceptions and stigmas attached to youth culture. This project provided a group of artists and young people with the space and time to creatively explore issues significant to their lives and redefine their identities in performance. Through considering this project through the perspective of Deleuze and Bergson, I argue that durational participatory practice is better placed to have a long-term impact on those involved.

This research talks to the recent debate following the publication of Bishop's *Artificial Hells* which argues that participatory art has become deradicalised, favouring dialogue and sustained engagement with communities over 'disruption…unease, discomfort, frustration or fear' (Bishop 2012,26). Bishop suggests that this is to the detriment of the piece of work and argues, indeed, that it 'presents the participants of collaborative art as dumb and fragile creatures, constantly at risk of being misunderstood or exploited' (Bishop 2012, 26). In contrast Kester believes that shock and fear can have both an uncertain and short-lived impact on the viewer. Viewed through this perspective, participatory arts seek to fulfil what Kester understands to be a fundamental failure on the part of the avant-garde, and projects which utilise an aesthetic of shock, to possess the coherence needed to make lasting a new critical perspective or sense of self. I have conceptualized the link between temporality and identity in a way which does not necessarily champion a new hierarchy in which slowness is equated with ethical practice. It was important that the lens through which I explored the identities of the participants of

Unleashed allowed for a slower approach to the radical without excluding the excitement and significance of a faster, instant-impact temporality in art. The collaborative ethos of *Unleashed* neither polarised high quality production values and grassroots development, nor equated slowness and dialogue with "best practice". Rather, *Unleashed* challenged traditional understandings of authorship within participatory practice alongside placing a value on a multiplicity of durations.

In this chapter I have suggested that participatory arts practice that takes place over time, and with an understanding of place and context, both enables participants to be supported as part of a process of 'becoming', and Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning department to build meaningful relationships with local communities. In Chapter Five, I shall further question how sustainability depends on the relationality of space, where the relations between people, the local environment (including objects and the non-human), the local and the global are implicated in BGCL's participatory arts practices.

Chapter Five: Creative Careers: Deviating from the yellow brick road

Prelude

Psychogeography could set for itself the study of the precise laws and specific

effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the

emotion and behaviour of individuals. The adjective psychogeographical,

retaining a rather pleasing vagueness, can thus be applied to the findings arrived

at by the type of investigation, to their influence on human feelings, and even

more generally to any situation or conduct that seems to reflect the same spirit

of discovery (Guy Debord 1955, xx).

I walked around the streets and parks of East London, alongside the young people

involved in the *Creative Careers* laboratory on a hot June day in 2014. I traced their

footsteps, looking at the pavement in front of my feet and listening to the sounds of the A12

flyover overhead. We talked and walked, and armed with our cameras and notepads we

jotted down any thoughts that came to us. It was my first experience of a

psychogeographical walk. I walk a lot, at least five times a week, perfunctory tramping of

the Dorset countryside with two dogs, not to mention my once-weekly swift and regulated

march through rush hour commuters to get to the Barbican Centre. This felt different

somehow. It felt adventurous and creative, as our walking was an act of discovery. Our walk

under the A12 flyover brought to mind a time when I was working in suburban Chicago and

was advised to take a taxi to the next venue, not half a mile away from me. Surprised by this

bizarre suggestion I decided to walk. I found that the suburbs of Chicago, like many big

American cities, were extremely hostile to pedestrians. Provided with no safe place to walk,

I accidentally committed a multitude of 'Jaywalking' crimes in an effort to reach my

destination. Along the way I perceived a different side of America, one that was

commercialised, regulated and ordered to precision. Having received odd looks from many, being shouted at by builders, tooted at by large SUVs, I arrived stressed but with a prevailing and wonderful sense of rule-breaking satisfaction.

My East London walk, alongside the participants from the *Creative Careers* laboratory, carried with it the same sense of provocation, of breaking the way pedestrians are supposed to experience London. We spotted buildings we hadn't noticed before and took photos of incongruous objects we would not otherwise have seen in the gentrified area surrounding the Olympic Park. We captured images of disused buildings and experienced the poverty and rubbish standing next to large-scale urban development. The photos and poems exhibited in this prelude I hope give a flavour of the *Creative Careers* pilot week and our urban walks on Fish Island, the Olympic Park site and Hackney Wick. The poems were written, and the photographs taken in response to the experience of the participants involved in these walks.

Figure 17. Morris, Byron 2014: Participants capturing sound during an audio capture laboratory.

Memory by Dominique Dunne

We managed to catch
a moment
between our fingers
like a fish
but it slid away.

All we had to show
for its existence
was the water

on our hands.

(Dunne, 2014. An unpublished poem written in response to the *Creative Careers* laboratory week).

Figure 18. Morris, Byron 2014: Participant capturing the Olympic Park during a video

capture laboratory

*

Ghost Town by Dominique Dunne

Move through an empty park,
where noise has been turned down.

Shadows and insects
have now become people.

We record them.

Capture the slight flutter
of bee's wings,

drop pound coins into the River
to hear the gulp of her stomach,

listen to the ricochet of railings
against our pens,

spill open bottles of water
into the dark earth,

make instruments from blades
of grass. A police siren interrupts.

Reminding us
that we are not really ever alone.
*
(Dunne, 2014) An unpublished poem written in response to the *Creative Careers* laboratory week.

Figure 19. Morris, Byron 2014: Video Capture laboratory.

Introduction: Creative cities for the many not the few[59]

In *In The Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics* (2014) Sarah Sharma considers a 'more complex insight into the politics of time and space ushered in by global capitalism' (2014, 8). In Chapter Three I drew on Sharma's analysis of the power relations that play out 'in time', a concept she calls 'temporality'. Sharma suggests that the idea of a 'power chronography' does for time what Doreen Massey's theory of 'power geometry' achieved for theories of space and place. Massey, whose theories I will discuss in this chapter, argues that, through the theory of 'power geometry', the concept of universal time-space compression became differentiated: 'different groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated mobility' (Massey 1994, 149). Massey considers the way in which space can be relational. She argues that previous spatial theorists, including Fredric Jameson and David Harvey, did not account for social differences such as gender, class, race and sexuality. Sharma supports Massey's analysis of space, and states these social differences were therefore 'either unacknowledged or lost from view of the disorientated postmodern gaze into social spaces affected by the acceleration of capital and time-space compression' (9). In this chapter I am interested in considering how both space and time can be imbricated in games of power and how both can be used as forms of power and 'sites of material struggle and social difference' (Sharma 2014, 10). I will consider how sustainability has both a temporal and spatial concern and that the long-term benefits of the work of BGCL depend upon the interplay between these.

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[59] Amin, Ash, Doreen Massey and Nigel Thrift. *Cities for the Many Not the Few,* Policy Press, 2000. Print.

As I discussed in Chapter Three, due to the influx of workers on weekdays, the City of London has an ever-changing population, making it a diverse and unusual area to live and work in. Additionally, whilst the City is one of London's wealthiest boroughs, communities in the surrounding areas can experience extreme poverty. This makes the City of London, and the areas around the Barbican Centre, an unusual and contradictory space for participatory work to take place in. What interests me in particular about working in this context is the ways in which local communities experience both time and space differently and how this might impact on the work of BGCL. Sharma's analysis of how temporality can be experienced inequitably by different communities makes a direct link between time and space. In Chapter Three, I contrasted the investment banker who commutes in from the suburbs and who benefits enormously from a globalised, networked and fast-paced world and a person on the minimum wage working in a local eatery designed to service the weekday population of the City of London. Their experience of time is interlinked in the sense that one person works hours which support the life of the other, however they do not benefit from a globalised, fast-paced world in the same way. Sharma asserts that one group is disproportionately disadvantaged by the pattern of working hours and the developing physical space around them.

Alongside the impact of 'speed up' on the boroughs surrounding the Barbican Centre, I also consider in this chapter the impact of 'third wave gentrification' on the City of London. In *Gentrification* (2013), Loretta Lees, Tom Slater and Elvin Wyly argue that processes of gentrification are closely tied to the contexts of the neighbourhoods and cities in which they are situated. They highlight the link between globalisation and contemporary gentrification through exploring the 'complex multidimensional effect of global-level socioeconomic transformation' (Lees 2013, 132). They consider how gentrification has both

a temporal and spatial dimension, using the City of London as a case study. Lees, Slater and Wyly state the spatial dimension is easier to recognise, since it is visible in the regeneration of commercial premises and the influx of cultural establishments, restaurants and shops. The temporal dimension of gentrification can be seen in its cyclical nature, mutating to form different types of gentrification over time ('studentification', residential, commercial and tourism gentrification) and this is particularly important in terms of cultural sustainability. An analysis of the life course of gentrifiers 'looks at their cultural and residential predilections over time and space' (Lees 2013, 131). This brings the cultural and residential choices of Barbican Guildhall artists to the forefront of this analysis. They describe the City of London as an incubator of gentrification and a site of 'third wave' or 'super gentrification', whereby gentrification is superimposed on an area already gentrified a decade earlier (Lees 2013, 146). As the areas around the City of London become increasingly re-gentrified, the chic eateries and cultural establishments on offer are not equally obtainable for each and every person making use of, and living in and around, the surrounding boroughs. I consider how cultural venues can exacerbate gentrification and in particular how the Barbican Centre has responded to this predicament. In particular I explore the inextricable link between issues of time and space which arise when discussing cultural sustainability within a London context. Of interest to my argument is the idea that the consequences of 'speed up' (globalisation, gentrification and displacement) have different implications for different groups of people. In particular, participatory arts tend to work with groups of people who do not benefit from speed up and are negatively affected by inequitable temporal and spatial relations. This makes time, and how it relates to space, an important concern of participatory artists and theorists.

In this chapter I will explore this inequality through an analysis of a BGCL *Creative Careers* laboratory, which took place in July 2014. The pilot week laboratory aimed to test the parameters and scope of *Creative Careers.* It utilised psychogeographical urban walks as a means to create artistic responses to space through the medium of music, film and spoken word. The walks themselves and the resulting films created drew attention to and creatively explored the spatial issues relating to the gentrification of the cultural hub surrounding the Olympic Park area. As a direct result of engaging in this practice I will argue for developing a cultural practice which supports creative 'cities for the many not the few' (Amin, Massey, Thrift, 2000).

Barbican Guildhall's choice of venue, the once industrial and now ultra-hip and edgy Fish Island, was used for this site-specific participatory project. This choice of venue represents a more general move within London arts organisations to migrate middle-class audiences to edgy and hip found spaces. This has the impact of gentrifying the areas which surround these cultural quarters. Inherent to the concept of building sustainable relationships with participants, communities and young artists, is the need to understand the impact of their presence on the urban environment. Lees' argument that state subsidy of cultural venues results in coordinated transformation of neighbourhoods into enclaves of affluence, reveals how cultural venues like the Barbican Centre must be sensitive to their impact on the gentrification of surrounding boroughs. The *Creative Careers* pilot week encouraged artists and participants to consider and recognise their place in the capital, their cultural position and the complexities of their own timespace, and to develop a subsequent artistic response to these ideas.

I consider the cultural and political context surrounding Barbican Guildhall's work through an exploration of the Creative City agenda. A dynamic and relational approach to

space, in which space is always in construction, will be helpful to this analysis. I am interested in what a relational approach to space, whereby space is influenced by people's interactions with it, means in terms of participation. Lees' analysis of 'tourism gentrification' has been helpful to the exploration of the complexities and specificities of the site used for the *Creative Careers* foray into psychogeography, Fish Island, Hackney Wick and the Olympic Park area (Lees 2013, 131). Through this lens I consider the implications of Barbican Guildhall's choice of venue to 'go out', to a once industrial and now regenerated fashionable area of East London. This choice of venue and area, in light of the Creative City agenda and Lees' insights into 'tourism gentrification' is significant to BGCL's response to working within this context.

In the second half of this chapter I will reflect on the work of the participants during the week. Through their work, as I shall identify, participants engaged with their urban environment and I am interested in the impact this had on the films they created at the end of the week. Psychogeography and urban wandering was an interesting tool through which the participants' explored Fish Island and the Olympic Park area in a new and creative way. Psychogeography, as I shall suggest, is both a radical act and an artistic tool. This complements both a relational approach to space and a theory of timespace. I am interested in how the temporality of the *flâneur* is an example of a political choice of deliberate slowness, an act of subversion of the "time equals money" equation. By researching the work of *Creative Careers* I am hoping to shed light on the ways in which participatory arts might highlight the way in which space can be inequitably distributed in areas of London experiencing third-wave gentrification.

This chapter opens questions about the implications of this dynamic and relational approach to space on my thesis. I consider how participants position themselves in relation

to space and the re-imagining of that space as a product of their interactions. How BGCL negotiate the complexities of working in this context is significant to their ability to build long-lasting relationships with local communities without undermining existing cultural and community values. Additionally, I am interested in how BGCL aim to maintain a long-term cultural presence in the boroughs surrounding the Olympic Park site in light of Lees' research into tourism gentrification.

Creative Cities, a 'creative class' and processes of gentrification

Participatory art at the Barbican Centre is influenced and determined by the broader social and cultural context of contemporary neoliberal agendas such as the 'creative city', the 'creative class' and processes of gentrification. The changing nature of place results from these shifting cultural agendas and this presents a challenge to BGCL in terms of their ability to facilitate sustainable relationships with local communities within this context. There has been a recent rise in the use of 'pop-up venues' in London, which both mobilise space and afford arts organisations temporary, and not always meaningful, infiltration into communities. In considering this move to the temporary and often dynamic use of public spaces, I hope to shed light on the ways in which both an arts centre and participatory art projects can be complicit in the ghettoisation of less advantaged communities which can result from processes of gentrification. Jen Harvie's discussion in her 2013 book *Fair Play* about the ways in which socially engaged art might respond to this charge by 'drawing attention to the way space is problematically redistributed and reclaiming space for less advantaged communities' is particularly significant to this discussion (110). Specifically, I intend to explore this through an analysis of the *Creative Careers* laboratory which utilised

concepts of psychogeography and urban wandering as a means for participants to re-imagine their relationship with the urban environment and create artistic responses to their impressions of the surrounding space.

As an international art organisation heavily funded by City of London and Arts Council England, the Barbican is at the very centre of the shifting cultural trends prevalent in London. The Barbican has seen a gradual change from a late twentieth century paternalistic focus on high art exhibited within the fortress walls of the centre, to a move towards fostering independent self-sufficient creative cities accommodating a creative class, through creating opportunities outside of the centre through partnerships with other local arts organisations and cultural events off site. This shift to encouraging a workforce of artists able to be self-sufficient and entrepreneurial it would seem, has become all the more acute since I began writing this chapter in 2015. This is evident, even in the change in name of the *Young Arts Academy* (2014) to *Creative Careers* (2017). The latter promises to equip its participants with the entrepreneurial skills to make a career of their skills, the former appealed more to artists hoping to explore their craft as part of this flexible and creative platform of engagement.

In 2018 the Barbican Centre, Guildhall School, LSO and Museum of London launched their interactive website 'Culture Mile'. This website describes the mile surrounding the Barbican as the 'beating heart of London where creativity is fast becoming the most valuable currency'[60]. The website provides the user with an interactive map which shows where the latest 'pop-up' cultural event will be held. When I was browsing I was directed to the event 'Pop-Ups: Culture Curve - Dynamic Shifts', an event which is described as:

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[60] 7.3.2018 https://www.culturemile.london/

A temporary installation which transforms the curved façade of the Barbican

into a responsive, visual display of colour and movement. It is the confluence of

people in the area that creates the artwork itself, with the movement of the

workers, residents and visitors through Culture Mile triggering the display [61].

This is an example of where shorter-term participation is encouraged at the Barbican

Centre. The description of culture and creativity within 'Culture Mile' as a fast-growing local

'valuable currency' serves to reaffirm Richard Florida's argument that a creative class of

people, imbued with creative talent, is now the economic driving force in a postindustrial

climate. As discussed in Chapter One, Florida argues that the migration of creative

companies to areas populated by a 'creative class' has led to enormous economic growth

and urban regeneration in recent years. Whilst this is true, Lees asserts that urban

regeneration is more complex than simply the result of a 'creative class or cultural

intermediaries driving gentrification' (Lees 2013, 132). Lees argues there are more complex

effects of publicly subsidised large-scale development in urban areas. She describes a

process of 'municipally managed gentrification or state-led gentrification' whereby state

subsidy of cultural venues leads to the creation of targeted affluent areas and the

subsequent displacement of local communities (Lees 2013, 132). The Barbican Centre and

the surrounding area are a good example of state-led gentrification, which endeavoured to

'attract middle classes back to the central city' through local authority investment in an area

and state subsidy of its cultural venues (Lees 2013, 132).

There is evidence to show the Creative City agenda to be socially beneficial in terms of

the way in which it supports creative and cultural workers in the face of declining

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[61] 7.3.2018 https://www.culturemile.london/

industrialisation. However, it does favour a creative class of people financially affluent enough to relocate to areas like Culture Mile. Lees argues that despite the subsequent processes of displacement, it was the aim of first generation gentrifiers to 'diversify the social mix and dilute concentrations of inner city poverty' (Lees 2013, 132). However, in more recent years, second and third generation gentrifiers are 'more individualistic' and this has fostered increasing social exclusion (Lees 2013, 198). Lees states that 'gentrification (in London) is largely driven by globally connected workers employed in the City of London' (130). She discusses the displacement of first wave gentrifiers by the super wealthy:

> Super wealthy professional workers in City of London are slowly imposing their
>
> mark on the inner London housing market in a way that differentiated it from
>
> both traditional professionals and traditional upper classes (Lees 2013, 150).

Local disadvantaged communities are increasingly struggling to afford to live in the boroughs surrounding the City, and how they experience the space is very different from their wealthy neighbours. This echoes Sarah Sharma's point about how time can be experienced differently and inequitably by different groups of people.

> There are two temporal poles of chronopolitical life: fast classes and slow classes
>
> (Sharma 2014, 6)

Historically these two 'temporal classes' have been imagined as separate and much like 'distant ships that never pass, unknown to each other' (Sharma 2014, 6). Not thinking in terms of the complexity of differentially lived time, Sharma believes, can in fact exacerbate inequitable temporal relations and I believe the same can be said of space.

Harvie questions whether if, indeed, these cities do prosper; 'how is that prosperity distributed?' (2013, 119). There is a discrepancy between the economic and social benefits of these 'prospering' creative cities. Similar to the discrepancy between who benefits from

'speed up' discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis, I argue space can be experienced inequitably by different groups of people, in particular those people who are economically disadvantaged and do not have the means to enable free movement to creative hubs and cities. Florida stated in the 2005 book *Cities and the Creative Class* that 'every human being is creative' (Florida 2005, 4) and that anyone can be mobile if not rich. However, Harvie argues that 'the focus of recent urban and cultural development policy to foster creative cities in order to attract a creative class is potentially engineering urban populations in problematic and uneven ways' (Harvie 2013, 110). There is an interesting dichotomy ensuing from this issue for a creative learning department that is interested in fostering an egalitarian ethos in urban populations, particularly when it operates within an international arts centre that is dependent on a funding structure influenced by these cultural agendas. I am interested in how BGCL responds to this cultural context through their work with local communities.

Cultural Policy Theorist Kate Oakley argues in her article *The disappearing arts – creativity and innovation after the creative industries* (2009), that 'the non-creative class are thus marginalised twice: once because their consumption preferences and needs do not reflect that of the creative class, and secondly because the effect of an influx of the creative class may well raise land and housing prices and drive out the provision of more basic services' (130-131). Florida's theories of the Creative City risk exacerbating class distinctions by creating an economy favouring the middle classes with the means to move to dynamic areas full of economic and creative opportunities.

London exemplifies some of the characteristics inherent to Florida's Creative City. In a postindustrial era London's skill and knowledge-based economy thrives, making the

creative industries one of the leading employers in the UK after the finance industry[62].

Mayor Boris Johnson stated in his 2011 publication *London Plan or Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London* that his 'vision for London embraces two objectives. London must retain and build upon its world city status…and must be somewhere people and business want to locate' (Johnson, 5). However, London is also a city of vast economic disparity; '19% of the population of inner London are in the top tenth for income nationwide…while 16% are in the bottom tenth of income'[63]. This combined with a post New Labour and 2014 Conservative-led coalition focus on neoliberal agendas of self-reliance and reduced state control and subsidy.

Harvie argues that changes in urban policy have had some social benefits. However, she believes that those benefits have not been experienced equally by different groups of people:

> those benefits have been enjoyed largely by the middle classes, and the effects
> of further entrenching neoliberal capitalism and extending gentrification have
> been largely disadvantageous for London's enormous population of poor (Harvie
> 2013, 113).

This has significant implications for a Creative Learning department operating within this cultural framework. This chapter focuses on the way space can become linked to social power struggles and hierarchies, and the Barbican's response to this predicament.

BGCL are attempting to negotiate their role within this cultural framework. This is not always easy and is sometimes contradictory to their own ethical and political agenda. In

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[62] 14/2/2019 https://www.nesta.org.uk/news/creative-industries-are-driving-economic-growth-across-the-uk-on-track-to-create-one-million-new-creative-industries-jobs-between-2013-and-2030/

[63] 23/1/2015; http://www.londonspovertyprofile.org.uk/indicators/topics/inequality/

part Creative Learning are driven by a desire to be in line with and driving cultural trends and fashions, as demonstrated by the focus on enterprise and entrepreneurialism within their new participatory BA degree which is in part dictated by neo-liberal agendas of combining the creation of a self-reliant workforce with a reduction of State subsidy. This extends to the practice of the *Creative Careers,* first explored in Chapter Two, which has a direct focus on encouraging its trainee participatory artists to be self-reliant and enterprising. In addition to this, a previous focus on pop-up performances which 'parachute' artists into local communities without necessarily establishing meaningful dialogue, demonstrates the ways in which cultural trends have influenced their programming choices. BGCL are programming with a particular emphasis on building sustainable relationships with local communities, however, and moving from ad hoc projects to platforms for sustained community engagement. Both working within the confines of certain cultural trends whilst simultaneously shaking up and challenging agendas makes Barbican Guildhall's approach to spatial issues significant. This is evident in the way in which the centre has reimagined the use of the physical space, opening up the Barbican foyers to local communities in 'Hack the Barbican' takeover days and attempting to make the space more inviting and accessible, in contrast to the ivory tower 'high art' ethos of the late 1980s. Harvie states that 'space is literally the terrain on and in which contests over social equality and inequality are being worked out' (2013, 112) and that art has the capacity to both challenge and be complicit in these social inequalities. An arts organisation's programming choices might, despite the best intentions, not be accessible and equally beneficial to all. This makes space significant to this chapter and thus the work of the Young Arts Academy during the pilot week held in July 2014. This focus shifted my perspective and took my thesis in a new and exciting direction, towards a consideration of issues of space. The next section of this chapter will explain the

content of the Young Arts Academy pilot week and introduce the reader to the artists and participants involved, before continuing on to consider a relational approach to space which I believe may be important to the Creative City agenda and processes of gentrification.

The *Creative Careers* pilot week

When I introduced *Creative Careers* in Chapter Two, I described it as an initiative launched in 2014 that will provide an opportunity to create a network of artists aged between fourteen and twenty-five, who would be able to meet regularly to collaborate artistically in different contexts. It aims to produce a community of East London participatory artists capable of being enterprising about generating their own work in the current unstable economic climate. Its focus on enterprise is important in light of the Creative City agenda discussed in the introduction to this chapter. Following on from *Unleashed*, a public, professional, cross-arts theatre production on the Barbican Theatre stage which was conceived, developed and made by young people, it was felt that young people would appreciate a coherent and sustained opportunity to collaborate across different art forms in a variety of contexts. *Creative Careers* focuses on working collaboratively across art forms, working in socially engaged practice and developing a sense of entrepreneurialism. The *Creative Careers* platform represents a long-term commitment both to diversify the sector and to create a resilient, artistically excellent and socially motivated community of East London artists.

Written into the 2014 National Portfolio Organisation bid to the Arts Council, the *Creative Careers* was always intended to be free, and later might operate under a financial model which is supported by both corporate sponsorship and schemes whereby participants

who can afford to pay, effectively subsidise participants who are not able to contribute.

Creative Careers offers young creatives the opportunity to develop their career through monthly talks, workshops, laboratories and networking events with industry professionals. In addition with its links the BGCL participatory ensembles *Creative Careers* also has a strong focus on encouraging a self reliant and entrepreneurial workforce. In 2018 the network of young people involved in *Creative Careers* reached 2,217 young people. These young people are able to stay in touch, collaborate and communicate both virtually and also through seminars, laboratories and projects. Between April 2017 and March 2018 Barbican Guildhall held fourteen *Creative Careers* events, both at the Barbican and offsite venues including The Hospital Club, Shoreditch Town Hall and Somerset House. In addition to benefiting their participatory skills, *Creative Careers* beneficiaries received training for essential transferable skills such as communication, negotiation, teamwork, critical analysis and problem solving. The *Creative Careers* programme 2017-2018 included workshop events entitled 'The Art of Programming', 'The Art of Creative Networking' and seminars like 'How to Fund Your Project' and 'Finance for Freelancers'. A 'Changemakers' workshop held in September 2017 highlighted how women in the arts have addressed inequality in the spaces in which they work. Leading female artists, for instance Endy McKay, co-founder and creative director of Outspoken Arts, gave the audience a picture of their work, their philosophies and their approach to affecting change as female leaders in the arts and creative industries. Two Creative Career participants have gained paid employment at the Barbican Centre, one of whom is now a Creative Learning Assistant at BGCL. Many of the *Creative Careers* network took part in Young Creatives programmes, such as Barbican Young Photographers, which falls under the *Creative Careers* banner.

The pilot week launch of *Creative Careers*, and the focus of this chapter, took place in July 2014 with a five-day cross-arts creative week, in a brand-new space in Fish Island, Hackney Wick. Fish Island is a new offsite space being run in partnership between the Barbican and the Trampery, to support artists developing work across art forms through digital collaborations. The pilot week was designed to test the parameters and scope of working collaboratively across art forms in order both to inform future *Creative Careers* activity and to develop an understanding of what working in a 'community' of East London artists might involve.

The week was led by artists 'Tim' and 'Barry'[64] from partner organisation, *Just Jam,* alongside the delivery of bespoke workshops by visiting artists. Tim and Barry are the creators of online channel *Just Jam* and have been screening cutting edge talents of underground bass, house and grime music since 2009. In addition to their commercial work, Tim and Barry run workshops with young people and often later employ those young people to assist on professional projects. *Just Jam* have an informal policy in which any young person involved in a professional project with them is paid the market rate for their time and their artistic contributions, a policy which challenges the conception of 'participation' through commercialising a young person's involvement in the project. Interestingly Tim and Barry do not apply for funding from either philanthropic organisations or Arts Council England for their work with young people, rather their corporate work subsidises their socially engaged projects. This makes *Just Jam's* praxis an interesting model in terms of a neoliberal creative city agenda of creating a workforce of self-reliant creative entrepreneurs able to generate their own income without the need for state subsidy. The artistic merit of

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[64] Tim and Barry are their full artistic names 3.4.2015 http://www.dontwatchthat.tv/channels/just-jam/

their socially engaged work is as important to them as the output from their commercial work, rendering them an interesting organisation for study, in relation to issues of sustainability, enterprise and legacy.

Participants were recruited by invitation to take part in the *Creative Careers* pilot week. They were told that the week was designed for people aged between fourteen and twenty-five, who are creative, curious, and excited by the idea of experimenting through creative activities. There were twenty-five participants from five different art forms, filmmakers, musicians (singers, classical instruments and drummers), spoken work artists and producers. Thirteen of the participants were recruited from Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning ensembles, *Future Band*, *Drum Works, Young Poets, Young Film Makers* and *Young Producers.* In addition to Barbican Guildhall's young people there were two young people from *Just Jam* and ten invited from partner organisations *Wall2Wall Music* and *Verbal Arts Centre* who are based in Derry, Northern Ireland. The week responded to the themes of the Digital Revolution event, which took place at the Barbican, and commenced with a visit to the exhibition at the Barbican, which brought together the largest collection of digital creativity in the UK ever. This event was organised with a view to exploring how digital technology can inspire young artists to make work across a range of art forms. Participants were told that 'collaboration, working with people who specialise in an art form that is different to yours, will be a key part of the week' (*Creative Careers* 'Young Arts Academy' pilot week invitation).

Tim and Barry's thematic stimulus for the pilot week were two artistic movements, the Situationist International Movement of the 1950s and 1960s which was developed by avant-garde artists, political theorists and intellectuals and the Free Jazz movement. In particular Tim and Barry utilised the concept of psychogeography developed by the

situationists, an approach to geography that emphasises playfulness and drifting around urban environments. Founder of the Situationist International and Marxist theorist, Guy Debord, once famously described psychogeography as 'the study of the specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organised or not on the emotions and behaviour of individuals' (Debord 1955, 1). Originally linked to the avant-garde political movement of the 1950s, psychogeography now has a long literary tradition and has been reprised by artists, performance artists, writers, urban designers and architectural performance artists. Since the 1990s it has become fashionable in literary circles and is prevalent in the work of writer Ian Sinclair and has been used as a tool by which artists, authors, urban adventurers and city dwellers can experience their landscape in new ways. Described by Joseph Hart in 2004 in an online blog entitled *A New Way of Walking,* as a 'whole toy box full of playful, inventive strategies for exploring cities…just about anything that takes pedestrians off their predictable paths and jolts them into a new awareness of the urban landscape' (Hart, 2004). Psychogeography has been re-appropriated to counter the predictable ways in which a person experiences the globalised city. Martin Coverley described it in his 2010 book *Psychogeography* as a tool in which participants become involved in 'the refashioning of the urban environment' (Coverley, 23).

It became clear to me as soon as I arrived at the workshop why psychogeography was apposite for the work of *Creative Careers*, since in addition to encouraging participants to engage with their urban environment and notice new things they might not have seen before, it also emphasised a 'playful sense of provocation' (Coverley, 2). The *Creative Careers* pilot week placed importance on participants seeing London as a place of process and change. This created an approach during the week of seeing participatory work with fresh eyes and renewed zeal. This applied to the ways in which participants approached

their artistic skills, what they knew about working with other people, their assumptions about where to gather creative material and the manner in which they engaged with the surrounding space. Through adopting an attitude of playfulness and acceptance of contingency, artist leaders encouraged participants to experience their urban environment with a new awareness, while at the same time asking participants to approach their current artistic skills with the same sense of adventure and play.

Deviating from the yellow brick road

In June 2014, in my capacity as researcher, I was invited by Barbican Guildhall to be a part of the *Creative Careers* pilot week project, at that time still known as *The Young Arts Academy*. Knowing my interest in the future of the young people involved in *Unleashed*, the production team anticipated my desire to be involved in the evolution of *Creative Careers*. This meant I had much greater flexibility in terms of research methodologies used, I was there in a dual capacity as a consultant evaluating and researching the pilot week to inform future *Creative Careers* work and as doctoral researcher. In this instance, my dual position as consultant and CDA candidate, had an extremely positive impact on my research methodology. I had extensive resources to implement a creative research methodology, including technology and a budget due to my position as consultant. In addition to quantitative surveys (conducted before, during and after the pilot week), traditional ethnographic techniques (including observation of the pilot week and extensive note taking) I was able to organise a Critical Response Process focus groups alongside in-depth interviews. Critical Response Process is a feedback process invented by Liz Lerman at her Dance Exchange (2003). This process was useful within this context since it allowed for a

way of giving feedback to works which are in process and not finished, thus the research process could be closely aligned with the developing artwork and practice of the artists. I had the resources and time to implement practice-based research methods, which included creative responses to process and performance written by participants in the form of poems or 'free writing'. Due to the focus on technology during the pilot week I set up a photo diary and video booth which participants were invited to use throughout and which had a series of questions printed and put up around the booth. Barbican Guildhall Young Poet Dominique Dunne was invited to observe the full pilot week and write poems in response to what she saw and I engaged in my own psychogeographical walk alongside participants. One of my main aims in creating this research and evaluation approach was to embed the research methodologies within the practice of the project. It was important to me the producers and the artists were invested in the research process and that the methodologies were appropriate for their praxis and so I contacted them in advance of the project to discuss the methodologies I hoped to use.

In terms of my research questions, and in anticipating what the week might hold, I had initially hoped to watch a process which was similar to that of the devising period for *Unleashed*. Having been unable to watch the early stages of rehearsals for *Unleashed,* I was excited by the prospect of revisiting some of the participants involved and watching a similarly dynamic cross-arts process. Producers involved in the project had explained that the culmination of *Creative Careers* work would most likely result in an '*Unleashed Two'* in three years' time. Entering, as I was, the final year of doctoral research I had optimistically, and perhaps naively, anticipated that the week would neatly demonstrate my theoretical framework about the link between sustainability and process, duration and becoming and therefore tie in the theoretical concepts with the practice. I was fully anticipating exploring

the temporality of the rehearsal room and the atmosphere of the devising process in relation to my dual conceptual frame that focused on becoming and duration. I hoped that the case study might be able to focus on process, while Chapter Four has already focused on difference and becoming in performance. In reality the *Creative Careers* pilot week did not act as the last piece of a jigsaw puzzle and therefore neatly talk to the theories discussed in this thesis. Rather it tested my role as researcher and the relationship between my expectations and the reality of the practice. This had the effect of making me question the danger in the latter stages of doctoral research of making the practice fit the theory in the hope of solidifying an argument already decided upon. That said, what I witnessed during the pilot week did further my thinking in various different and unexpected areas which helped to develop the theories discussed in this thesis and broaden my perspective on sustainability in a London context.

Until summer 2014, my research had focused almost exclusively on sustainability through an exploration of temporality. I had neglected to explore the relationship between space and time, between London, Barbican Guildhall and its development. As noted in Chapter One I had always intended to explore the geography of the Barbican, the complexity of its place over time within the globalised City of London, the compromises made at the planning stage of the centre and the subsequent spatial issues that surround the ways in which it has attempted to build bridges 'over the fortress wall'. I had not ever intended to explore how participants might engage with these spatial issues in their work, or the effect that space has on their sense of self and their place in London. Furthermore, I had conceptualised space (and particularly the monolithic brutalist Barbican) up until this point as something which was fixed and unmoving. I had explored the dynamic element of Barbican Guildhall's engagement with communities only as it related to temporality. My

research into how sustainability defined narratives of participation at Barbican Guildhall until this point, had focused on how participants engaged temporally as opposed to spatially with their work and London. This is perhaps not surprising, having chosen to explore practice through the theoretical frame of Henri Bergson, whose philosophies had arguably negative implications for the conceptualisation of space in the twentieth century. Doreen Massey argues in *For Space* (2005) that 'it was not so much that Bergson "de-prioritised" space, as that in the association of it with representation it was deprived of dynamism, and radically counterposed to time' (21). I began to feel that Bergson had helped me to understand the complexity of duration in relation to difference, becoming and ultimately sustainability but that in order to fully explore the longevity of the work of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning, I would need to engage with issues of space.

In particular, I needed to examine the idea of 'Timespace' (Thrift and May 2003), or space 'as the dimension of a multiplicity of trajectories and durations' (Massey 2005, 24). In my research until July 2014 I had explored the participants' engagement with temporality and becoming through an analysis of a durational process and the representation of difference in the performance of *Unleashed*. I had not, as yet, explored the significance of both Barbican Guildhall and its participants' relationship with their urban environment and the effect space has on both their sense of self, their place in London and the work they develop. The *Creative Careers* pilot week, with its explicit focus on psychogeography and urban wandering, encouraged *me* to deviate or wander somewhat from my own anticipated research trajectory to explore the complexity of the spatio-temporal in relation to artistic creation and participation.

With a focus on psychogeography and urban wandering, the pilot week challenged the way a Londoner engages with the city, through asking participants to shift to the temporal

mode of the '*flâneur*' (stroller, saunterer) and engage with their urban environment in a critical way. The urban wandering experienced by the *Creative Careers* participants required a deliberate slowness, a deliberate aimlessness and an active participation in the reimagining/re-experiencing of the surrounding space.

A dynamic and relational approach to space

The emphasis placed on psychogeography and urban wandering by the *Creative Careers* pilot week prompted me to re-evaluate how I conceptualised space in this thesis. In this section I will explore a dynamic relational alternative to thinking about space, and explore how this can affect a participant's engagement with urban London and the effect this had on their work. Doreen Massey argues in *For Space* that Bergson counterpoised time to space in a way that deprived space of any dynamism. Massey argues that Bergson understood space as the 'dimension of quantitative divisibility' (Massey 2005, 23) but it does not necessarily follow that his theories are unhelpful to a twenty-first century approach to space. Bergson stated:

> Movement visibly consists in passing from one point to another, and
> consequently in traversing space. Now the space which is traversed is infinitely
> divisible, and as the movement is, so to speak, applied to the line along which it
> passes, it appears to be at one with this line and, like it, divisible (Bergson 1911,
> 248).

Massey argues that the character of space in this description shows that Bergson understood space to be static and without duration, rendering it the realm of the instant and the static. Bergson states, 'we cannot make movement out of immobilities, nor time out

of space' (1910, 115). Despite describing Bergson as 'one of the most forceful instigators of a more general devaluation and subordination of space relative to time', Massey finds much that is helpful in Bergson's philosophy for her own alternative approach to space (2005, 21). Namely that a 're-imagination of things as processes is necessary for the reconceptualization of places in a way which might challenge exclusivist localisms based on claims of some eternal authenticity' and instead of viewing things and places as pre-given 'discrete entities', recognising the continuous becoming which is in the nature of their being (Massey 2005,20-21). The concept that spaces are in a process of developing or are involved in a becoming in their own qualitatively different way politicises the debate around space.

Massey's approach to space focuses on three conceptual strands which are closely linked. Firstly, that space is recognised as a product of interrelations, and constituted through interactions 'from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny' (Massey 2005, 9). Secondly that is 'always in process of being made. It is never finished, never closed' (Massey 2005, 9). Lastly that diversity and multiplicity can exist in space. This analysis echoes much of Bergson's theory of duration and has prompted Massey, Jon May and Nigel Thrift (2001) to coin the phrase 'TimeSpace' as a way of describing this new approach to understanding the interrelation between space and time. As with Bergson's theory of duration, TimeSpace is significant for the thinking of the spatial and the political. In particular Massey advocates a 'relational understanding of the world, and a politics which responds to that' (2005, 10).

Massey states that 'the politics of interrelations mirrors, then, the first proposition, that space too is a product of interrelations. Space does not exist prior to identities/entities and their relations' (2005, 11). Massey argues that the relationship between identities, both human and spatial (places, nations), and the 'spatiality which is part of them, are all co-

constitutive' (2005, 10). This makes significant the ways in which participants engage with their urban environment and helps to reconceptualise Barbican's identity in relational terms (relational in terms of its interactions with local communities and participants). It is a liberating concept in that it opens up the Barbican and the area surrounding it to infinite possibilities for participation. It enables an area which was planned, built and developed during a time when the cultural agenda was to appeal to 'middle-class' (Heathcote, xx) audiences through the provision of high art, to be flexible, responsive and accommodating to the current desire to make accessible the spaces surrounding the Barbican to diverse audiences. Architecturally speaking it makes a vast concrete fortress flexible and responsive to the people who visit it. This view of space makes Barbican Centre and the area surrounding potentially sustainable, if the understanding of sustainability takes into account Braidotti's position that to be sustainable an organisation must be adaptable and flexible to change.

A relational approach to space also makes the effect the Barbican has when it decides to 'go out' into surrounding communities significant. If the Barbican's interaction and interrelations with a given community become a determining factor in the flux and reformulation of that space, then the ways in which Creative Learning chooses to be present and engaged in a space becomes very important. If we understand space as determined by interactions and a product of interrelations, the Barbican's presence in community venues becomes a socio-spatial, ethical issue. How can the Barbican maintain a presence in a local community without influencing a subsequent gentrification of that area or undermining pre-existing cultural values? At question here is the extent to which the Barbican's presence in local communities risks the invasion of the 'creative class' of individuals Florida advocates in his Creative City agenda. In addition to this the subsequent risk of exclusion of those who

don't possess the means to be mobile and the potential for gentrification following the development of Creative City hubs makes the Barbican's engagement in community venues important. How can a participant's relational engagement with the Barbican and the surrounding boroughs help to define the identity of this space? What is the significance of this in terms of legacy and sustainability of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning and its work? How can participants' relational engagement with the space counteract the powerful effect of an area defined in terms of globalised business interests? Creative Learning is constituted in time and space in a way that is structurally related to the time of the Barbican Centre and the wider Barbican area and the socio-spatial complexity of the surrounding areas. Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning both operates within, and must be responsive to, this context. This affects its long-term programming choices and therefore sustainability. These are the questions I will consider within this chapter.

Urban regeneration of the Olympic Park site and host boroughs

The space in which the work of the *Creative Careers* pilot week took place, the area surrounding the Olympic Park site, is significant and impacted on the ways in which participants engaged with the space through their urban wanderings and their subsequent artistic response. The Victorian warehouse building which is situated on Fish Island and which hosted the pilot week, sits on the banks of the River Lea in the shadow of the Olympic Stadium. It represents the collaboration between the Barbican and the Trampery which resulted in the creation of Fish Island Labs, 'a unique new centre to kick-start the careers of

a new generation of emerging talent whose work spans technology and the arts'[65]. The

Barbican and the Trampery state that:

> the building will be home to a diverse community of around fifty emerging
>
> practitioners who are pushing creative boundaries and using new technologies.
>
> Over a period of ten months this community will develop cutting-edge new
>
> work, covering everything from sculpture, installations and physical
>
> performance to coding, film editing and digital art[66].

The significance of the Barbican's choice of Fish Island as a site to venture 'out' of both the

confines of working in the City of London and also of developing work in traditional theatre

venues, is important to this thesis. Fish Island is representative of a wider move in the

London art scene of creating artistic experiences in 'found' spaces. Helen Nicholson suggests

in *Theatre, Education and Performance* (2011) that the 'seriously cool crowd are more likely

to be seen at performances in semi-derelict spaces such as old swimming pools, disused

factories and empty hotels than in more conventional spaces' (108). There is a certain irony

in the fact of choosing Dace Road and Fish Island Labs as a venue. Barbican Guildhall

attempted to capture something of these 'found' spaces but missed the spontaneity of this

movement by choosing a strategically edgy and hip area. The 'cool crowd' has been on Fish

Island for many years.

For want of sounding all of my thirty-five years of predominantly countryside

upbringing, on arriving in the much-revitalised Fish Island I became acutely aware of how

stylish and 'cool' the surrounding businesses and buildings were. Dace Road is lined with

artist studios and boutique businesses, for instance 'Britain Loves Bikes', whose home is an

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[65] 30.8.2014 http://www.thetrampery.com/tag/fish-island-labs/
[66] 30.8.2014 http://www.thetrampery.com/tag/fish-island-labs/

old factory building and which sells vintage Dutch bikes to young East Londoners. Further up the road 'My Four Fingers' sells original art and printed t-shirts featuring a variety of differently designed skulls. Café Greenway, that looked as if it once might have served the staff working in local factories, but whose clientele now seems infinitely younger and more edgy, also offers the option of hiring out the space for arts events. Perhaps the clientele of Café Greenway are the very members of Florida's 'creative class' responsible for the somewhat disparate economic growth of the surrounding creative hub boroughs of Hackney. It retains an air of 'the local cafe' with its exposed graffitied brickwork but has clearly been subject to the recent gentrification of the area. My taxi driver shared my opinion, stating unprompted, 'It didn't look like this last time I was here!' Perhaps Fish Island's resident creative community frequent their island on vintage Dutch bikes as opposed to black cabs.

Figure 20: Mackney, Maia. Image of Café Greenway.

Fish Island was a predominantly industrial area prior to the Second World War. In the early part of the twentieth century it saw both residential and industrial growth,

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however WW2 bombing campaigns led to the demolished housing being replaced by factories and warehouses. Unlike the Barbican following the WW2 bombing campaigns, the urban regeneration drive to gentrify the area surrounding Fish Island did not commence for another fifty years, during which time Fish Island's industry thrived through factories like The Percy Dalton Peanut Factory. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Fish Island and the neighbouring Hackney Wick, have become home to a large community of artists and people working in the creative industries. A 2009 study identified around 600 artist studios and 'one of the highest densities of fine artists, designers and artisans in Europe'[67]. The Percy Dalton Peanut Factory, which relocated to an out of London venue in 2005, has been converted into artist studios and is home to 'Britain Loves Bikes' alongside live work units and warehouse conversions. Seemingly commissioned and strategically placed graffiti can be seen on the walls of surrounding old factory buildings come creative spaces. The major regeneration of Fish Island is partially owing to its proximity to the Olympic Park site and represents another example of the state-led development of the cultural quarters which service the creative industries. The cultural hub surrounding the Olympic Park is an example of Richard Florida's 'Creative City' agenda and the planning strategies which accompany it. This is particularly the case since the decline in industrialisation; the major economy on Fish Island is driven by creative industries. The spaces which were once factories have been converted to house creative companies.

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[67] http://www.londonlegacy.co.uk/media/East-Wick-and-Sweetwater-brochure2.pdf

Figure 21. Mackney, M 2014. Image of canal.

With the economic growth associated with the creative city comes the inequalities

discussed in the introduction to this chapter. The issues and concerns surrounding the socio-

spatial development of the area around the 2012 Olympic Park site and the six host

boroughs are similar to those surrounding the Barbican development discussed in the

introduction to this thesis. The effect of globalisation, regeneration and gentrification on the

urban landscape is significant to issues of sustainability in the participatory arts sector, since

it has direct effects on communities of participants and residential displacement of working

class and immigrant communities. These economic and cultural changes are mapped on the

landscape through the displacement of both local residents and small businesses, the

development of fashionable living accommodation and 'hip' arts and cultural centres.

Nicholson argues that deprived urban areas are 'newly regenerated as cultural quarters to

attract affluent consumers with designer tastes' (Nicholson 2011, 89). This does not always have positive impacts on the existing residents of neighbouring boroughs. As Harvie discussed in *Fair Play,* some communities run the risk of being marginalised twice. Firstly they are marginalised through lacking the cultural capital and economic means to be a member of the creative class and secondly through their subsequent ghettoisation following rising house prices and business rates.

In *Applied Drama: The Gift of Theatre* Nicholson discusses the proposition that 'globalising processes are of central importance to applied drama, not least because they threaten to erode local, national and regional cultures through the spread of homogenous transnational companies' (2005, 11). In other words, how can the Barbican maintain a sustained engagement and presence within local communities without eroding the cultural authenticity of that community through the subsequent gentrification of the surrounding area? Fish Island can be used as an example of the ever-present possibility of state-led development of cultural quarters eroding the cultural individuality of spaces. In his 2013 article '*It's Not For Us*' published in *City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action,* Paul Wyatt discussed the impact of state-led gentrification on social housing and the displacement of local communities in the host borough of Newham, which contained 60% of the Olympic sites. He questions the success of the promised social legacy of the Olympic games which stated that 'within twenty years the communities which hosted the 2012 Games will have the same social and economic chances as their neighbours across London' (Wyatt, 318-319). Wyatt discusses the idea that rather than enhancing employment, training and housing opportunities for existing East London residents, that in the wake of the 2012 games the surrounding area and host boroughs will become 'revitalised for middle class communities as opposed to for existing working class residents and immigrant

communities' (Wyatt, 273). The choice of this area for the *Creative Careers* laboratory is

significant in terms of issues of sustainability in the work of Barbican Guildhall, since

participants (many of whom hope to become participatory artists) were asked to consider

these spatial issues and engage with their own place within this urban landscape. Artists

imposed the highly relevant and loaded theme of 'growth' and 'decay' on the participants'

urban wandering, the ironic significance of which will be explored in the next section of this

chapter.

Urban Wandering on Fish Island, the Olympic Park area and Hackney Wick.

The participants gathered on the second day of the laboratory at Fish Island Labs,

the first day having been spent visiting the Digital Revolution exhibition at the Barbican

Centre and getting to know each other better over a shared pizza in the evening. Prior to

the start of the laboratory, the young people were split equally into four groups; North,

East, South and West. Each group was composed of an equal number from each

organisation (i.e. two young filmmakers, two poets, two drum workers or musicians) to

ensure a mix of skills, knowledge and experience within each group. Over the course of the

next three days, each group took part in five labs: visual capture, audio capture, visual mix,

audio mix and a poetry lab. The visual capture laboratory session involved participants

exiting the warehouse building and walking in the direction of either 'north' 'south' 'east' or

'west' indicated in their group name. The prescribed general direction was put in place in

order to avoid each group recording similar footage from only one easily accessible site

close by and also to encourage them to 'get off the beaten track'. This was particularly

difficult for 'East' since a canal lay directly in their path and participants had to attempt to

find a crossing in order to continue their journey in the direction of the Olympic Park site.

Each group was led by either Tim or Barry and an assistant artist leader from *Just Jam's*

group of young people. The length of time each group was out walking and the distance

they covered varied, with some groups gone as long as four hours traversing many miles

while other groups whiled away hours in Victoria Park, not one mile's distance from Dace

Road. In terms of technical apparatus they used a digital SLR camera, a GoPro and gimbal

camera stabiliser (a device which ensures the capture of smooth and steady footage based

on the pivoted support system of the GoPro which allows rotation of an object about a

single axis). They were also encouraged to think about their reactions to the space for

future poetry writing labs and music jamming sessions. Participants were not rushed to find

stimulus deemed to be significant to the broad theme of 'growth' or 'decay' but were rather

encouraged to walk at their own leisurely pace, enjoy conversing with fellow artists, and

keep their eyes open at angles they may previously have been unaccustomed to. They were

encouraged to look for things they found interesting above, to the side, below their feet and

were asked to be inventive about how to capture this material, thus influencing the

perspective and angle of the video footage. It is only in 2016, much later than this first foray

into urban wandering, that the uniqueness of this way of walking has fully dawned on me.

Since becoming a mother, and having a small person dictate my every move for fear of a

public tantrum, I have experienced again the feeling of liberation (and let's be

honest…frustration) when being forced to walk against the natural pace of life and against

societal norms. A toddler aimlessly wanders, looking above and below, under rocks and at

interesting objects in their path. Many times in the last two years, when being cajoled into

following a merry line of ants 'look mumma I have found something interesting', I have been

dragged along for the ride and have been reminded of my first deliberately slow walk during the *Creative Careers* laboratory.

In the audio capture session of the laboratory, participants left the building, and headed in the general direction of their group name and were asked to experience their urban environment aurally, listen with renewed interest to the sounds around them and capture sounds which they felt spoke to their themes. Having captured audio and video footage participants then returned to Fish Island Labs to begin the process of editing. The audio editing process involved the group of participants gathering around a computer in a dark side room at Fish Island Labs and listening to the material gathered, selecting sections they felt complimented each other. 'Chance' and 'random' elements were also encouraged during the process of editing since participants were asked to be experimental and open-minded about the layering of the audio. The video-editing laboratory was interesting since it utilised live editing software. Anyone who has used conventional editing software knows how time consuming and laborious it can be, not always conducive to encouraging a collaborative creative environment with large groups of people. The live editing software had an interesting effect on the dynamic of the space, making it active in a similar way to that of a devising or composition process. Decisions were able to be made and reversed in the moment, enabling each participant to contribute, debate, play with various options and engage in the process of editing the footage gathered.

The intended outcome of these five mini labs was one short film, up to three minutes, and one short audio track per group responding to themes 'growth' and 'decay' utilising the discipline of psychogeography as a means to experience the urban landscape and gather material with a fresh zeal. Throughout the laboratory week Tim and Barry hoped to take the participants on a journey of experimentation through learning skills and

"jamming" with programs, instruments and tools they were not used to working with, and by facilitating the chance for experimentation and play. The aim of the week was to encourage participants from a primarily musical background, for example, to learn visual composition and experiment with looping and layering of the visuals.

By the end of Wednesday morning, each of the groups had one visual and one audio piece of content. Each audio was played over each video and collectively the participants had to decide which audio accompanied and enhanced which visual most successfully. This encouraged 'chance' as an artistic methodology once again by asking participants to analyse the 'random' effect the video had on a new piece of audio and vice versa. The final result would therefore be based on the chance creative effect 'North's' audio had when layered over 'East's' visual. This encouraged an atmosphere of risk and experimentation in which participants were forced to use their skills in new ways and break down assumptions surrounding the way you create music and film.

The process of gathering both audio and visual material encouraged participants to engage with the space around Fish Island Labs. The role of the creative walker in this process and the use of psychogeography as a means of finding 'new ways of apprehending our urban environment' (Coverly 2010, 13) became integral to the creative process. Towards the end of this section I will refer to the four films which were created at the end of the process in order to consider what they reveal about the participants' foray into urban wandering as a creative process.

It was a very hot June day when 'West' went west to begin their video capture laboratory. There were eight participants, three of whom were from partner organisations, *Wall2Wall Music* and *Verbal Arts Centre* in Derry, Northern Ireland. It was day three of the weeklong laboratory and the group of participants knew each other relatively well, having

already taken part in both the audio capture and audio editing labs. Some of the

participants knew each other very well, having worked together on numerous other

Barbican Guildhall projects, including *Unleashed.* I walked along with them down Dace

Road, as Tim explained the concept of psychogeography to them. He introduced the

situationist movement and explained their links with political activism. As we walked he said

that:

> One of their concepts from psychogeography was this idea of derive. A derive is
>
> basically walking through a city without any particular place to go, responding to
>
> the space around you. Usually when you walk through a city you are going
>
> somewhere specific; to the shop, to your mate's house, you have a purpose, you
>
> are going to a particular place. The derive is the idea that you walk outside and
>
> you let the environment dictate where you go, you explore the landscape in a
>
> new way. What captures your eye? What direction do you want to go and why?
>
> What do you notice that you might not have done before? Think about your own
>
> artistic practice, are you a composer, producer, musician, poet? How can you
>
> translate the knowledge from your discipline to this practice? How can you use
>
> your artistic skills to respond to this experience?[68]

   We walked down Dace Road, and joined Wick Lane, passing under the A12 flyover,

the walls of which told us that 'Nat has herpes' in a not as fashionably commissioned graffiti

as that spotted along Dace Road and at Fish Island Labs. We stopped under the flyover to

allow a participant to capture some footage which they thought looked interesting; white

polystyrene balls which had fallen off the back of a lorry and which lay floating on the

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[68] Personal Video of Urban Walk 'West' 22/7/2014

surface of a quickly drying-up puddle. It was a slow process of getting the angles right for the SLR and gimbal and initially I wondered how this very solitary act of collecting material was conducive to a laboratory attempting to encourage collaboration. While we waited, the remaining members of the group began to look around them at the ceiling of the flyover bridge which was made from striped metal and concrete materials, the dirt on the pavements, the smell of the fumes of the traffic above and next to them, the sounds of the A12 above their heads, the way the light at the end of the tunnel bounced off the metal strips of the ceiling and the reflection of the passing cars on the metal strips above them. Those who had not initially noticed material and stimuli started to become increasingly interested in the space around them. We had left the fashionable and safe-feeling Dace Road and were beginning to return to a part of London many of the participants were more familiar with. Industrial, loud, busy, dirty but only a stone's throw away from smarter areas. After about twenty minutes spent capturing material under the A12 flyover we emerged into the summer sun and spent some time contemplating the new redevelopment of modern purpose-built housing and flats to the right of Wick Road, Duckets' Apartments, clad in a combination of silvered wood and light bricks. I later found out that the river aspect apartments sold for anything between £350,000 and £600,000 for a one or two bedroom flat. One young person spent some time capturing footage of the wicker fencing which separates Wick Lane from one of the small yards of 4A Duckets' Apartments. Further down Wick Lane we stopped to capture some footage of a large spider's web in a bush with hundreds of baby spiders nesting. Opposite the spider's web was a derelict Donnelly's Irish pub which gathered some interest from the participants. The lettering from its signage had long fallen off and now read 'Top o the mor…' Its dilapidated frontage and boarded up

window, was incongruous next to the development of plush apartments on Wick Lane.

Graffiti on the boarded up windows showed a naked human body, half upside down.

Figure 22. Morris, Byron 2014: Participant capturing public house during the video capture laboratory.

Later I discovered that the once successful East End pub had operated under the name 'Top o' the morning' since 1983 but had in fact been a public house since 1864 before closing its doors in 2013. One reviewer wrote on Beer In The Evening website in 2011 that; 'I dropped into this pub recently, what a complete and utter disappointment. Immediately entering the place you were hit by the very strong smell of backed-up toilets. Dirty glasses, dogs asleep on the tables and a collection of oddball customers that would not look out of place amongst the cast of Shameless'[69]. The smell of the toilets notwithstanding, it struck

[69] 26/9/2014
http://www.beerintheevening.com/pubs/s/16/16975/Top_Of_The_Morning/Victoria_Park

me that perhaps the pub had fallen victim to the ever-expanding demand for London gastro pubs that cater to the cosmopolitan tastes of Florida's Creative Class, in particular the new tenants surrounding the Olympic Park development, tenants who perhaps did not appreciate 'oddball customers who would not look out of place amongst the cast of Shameless'. Participants stopped and discussed the pub in relation to the theme of growth and decay, commenting on the irony of its closure next to the recent housing developments not ten yards away. They discussed the irony of the fact that within the past thirty minutes they had witnessed both industrial and urban growth and urban decay. Many participants chose the pub; its signage, the weeds that peeked through the concrete pavement slabs by the front door, the graffiti-sprayed boards covering the windows, as a focus for capturing material.

To the right of the pub was the canal and footpath to Lea Valley Park and further down Wick Lane was Victoria Park. Participants chose to amble along into Victoria Park. So far it had taken approximately one hour to traverse perhaps half a mile, having 'got in the way' of the day-to-day bustle of the city. The act of slow and deliberate walking is counter-intuitive in a city which encourages the fast-paced getting from A to B. It immediately made me think of Bergson's duration, a small act of rebellion against society's enforcement of unreal time as a means to organise our daily life. Coverley considers walking to be:

> contrary to the spirit of the modern city with its promotion of swift circulation
>
> and the street-level gaze that walking requires allows one to challenge the
>
> official representation of the city by cutting across established routes and
>
> exploring those marginal and forgotten areas often overlooked by the city's
>
> inhabitants (Coverley 2010, 12).

Walking thus becomes an act of subversion and intimately linked to psychogeography's 'characteristic political opposition to authority' (Coverley, 12). It also challenges the static conceptualisation of space as representational, and allows for participation in a relational approach to space. Our walk under the A12 flyover brought to mind my walk in suburban Chicago and the prevailing and wonderful sense of rule-breaking satisfaction I felt at the end of it.

The temporality of the walker armed with a camera

The role of the contemplative walker featured significantly throughout the laboratory. I will now consider the significance of the walker as artist before exploring one of the films produced at the end of the week. The historical figure of the flâneur as the aimless stroller, the detached observer, associated with the elegant arcades of nineteenth-century Paris as described in the work of Edgar Allen Poe (1840) and Charles Baudelaire (1863) gave way in the latter part of the twentieth century to a more radical figure. Coverley argues that:

> The flâneur can no longer stand at the wayside or retreat to his armchair but
> must now face up to the destruction of his city. In the aftermath of the war, the
> streets were radicalised as never before and revolutionary change was in the air.
> If the urban wanderer was to continue his aimless strolling then the very act of
> walking had to become subversive, a means of reclaiming the streets for the
> pedestrian (Coverley 2010, 77).

Despite the deviation of the flâneur away from the apolitical and dispassionate stroller, to a more radical contemporary figure associated with psychogeography and the situationists,

what both these figures have in common is a characteristic deviation from standardised time. The temporality of the flâneur is important to this thesis since it has links to durational time, of breaking away from a world organised within unreal time. This temporality is often adopted by artists and was witnessed in the devising process for *Unleashed.* The atmosphere of the laboratory enabled participants to shift away from their accustomed fast-paced temporality to a slower contemplative pace. This pace was conducive to both a critical analysis of the space around them and to witnessing the flux and progression of the space and its relational qualities. In particular participants considered their own personal impact on that spatial flux. Slowing down enabled them to see things they perhaps would not have otherwise, and to view the city from a street level gaze. This was heightened by the use of the camera and recording equipment and gave the participants a purpose to their walks. In a collection of essays entitled *On Photography* (1977) Susan Sontag compares the eye of the flâneur to the gaze of the camera. She writes that the flâneur's interest is not in the representational qualities of the city but rather the neglected, deprived and forgotten areas, their aim being to document a hidden truth. She states that 'the photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitring, stalking, cruising the urban inferno' (Sontag 1979, 55). I question whether or not the experience of the participants engaged in the *Creative Careers* laboratory was consciously politicised in their own minds in this way. However, in asking them to engage with the space around them, and take on the temporality of the flâneur armed with a camera, artist leaders were encouraging a playful sense of provocation and an analytical eye. This had an impact on the films created, which captured some interesting images, sounds and video material apposite to the ideas discussed in this thesis. I will explore one of the films created in the next section of this chapter.

East Video Meets North Audio: Capturing the Olympic Park site

The short films produced by the participants were abstract and resembled the compositional qualities of an 'urban chill' music video or a Morcheba track. This style of music is a form of modern, relaxed, electronically enhanced music which originated from lounges and clubs in late Twentieth Century America. Typically, it is very relaxing to listed to but abstract in style using electronic interpretations of more traditional music styles, for instance Jazz. The young artists experimented with looping and layering visuals on top of each other, phasing visuals out at different speeds and experimenting with different ways to layer sound in the accompanying audio tracks. The opening image of the 'East Video/North Audio' short film focuses on some purple flowers swaying in a meadow; watching it you would not immediately recognise this place as London. In the background, out of focus, is the Olympic Park stadium which towers over the meadow in an almost oppressive fashion. The camera flicks between focussing in on the stadium and back to the meadow. The mix of industrial and urban footage and natural scenes continues throughout the short film. In the next shot we see ivy woven around and growing up industrial railings. The railings separate the pedestrian from the renovation of an old block of flats behind. It is sometimes difficult to tell whether the footage relates to the theme of growth or decay. We see both industrial growth and growth in nature in the short film, which sits incongruously next to urban decay surrounding the shot. This reminds me of the derelict 'Top of the morning' public house located next to fashionable new apartments on my walk with group 'West'. Seemingly abandoned building sites prompt the viewer to wonder if, when capturing the footage, participants associated it with decay or growth. Similarly the next shot shows a bee gathering nectar from a purple flower in a meadow while the Olympic stadium sits

seemingly derelict in the background of the shot. Nature and urbanity feature throughout the short film with the penultimate shot showing the reflection in the murky green water beneath, of apartments which look over the canal. Layered and phased over the river picture is the final shot, which captures a train, spliced in two, travelling in the same direction away from the viewer, the water from the previous image still rippling the surface of the image. The audio mirrors the play on urban and natural growth and decay. Layered over the video is a track composed by the participants in the studio during the audio capture laboratory, a Morcheba-esque sound which relaxes the viewer. The track is spliced with intermittent sounds from the world outside, captured by participants during their audio capture laboratory. We hear metal being struck against railings, an object plopping into the depths of the river, birdsong is spliced over traffic noise, drum beats and haunting echoes recorded under tunnels.

The other short films all seem to focus on the interplay between the urban and the natural experienced during the wanderings. In 'South Video/West Audio' the sharp distinction between industry and nature is more aggressively captured and edited. Images of urban streets, rubbish strewn, yellow lines telling pedestrians where to walk, traffic, and graffiti is quickly contrasted by greenery, flowers and trees. Footage of weeds poking through the tarmac is spliced over images of the busy A12 road and accompanied by a pounding drumbeat layered over the footage. The final footage captures participants walking into the middle distance spliced over greenery, giving us our first glimpse of the flâneur in action.

Having accompanied 'West' on their walk I began to feel like something of my own psychogeographical experience had been captured in the films created by participants. It felt like, without discussing with one another what our reaction had been to the space

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around us during the walks, we had all noticed similar qualities and focussed on similar

themes. In particular we had all engaged with the area's change in industry, change in

nature, decay and regeneration and our own place in the surrounding environment. All of

the four films created captured something from these themes. I was intrigued to find out if

participants had intentionally focussed on these themes in the films or whether my own

experience of taking part in a psychogeographical walk had made me read into the films

what I had hoped to see.

As part of the research methodology and following a screening of the films to

participants, artists and Barbican Guildhall staff, a post project Critical Response Process

session, based on Liz Lerman's discussion technique, was held. During this session

participants considered the significance of the theme of growth and decay. Responders

stated that they found the 'interesting juxtaposition between concrete fences and industrial

elements with greenery worked'[70]. Another stated that it made them 'feel very safe. It made

me feel like I was at home, I saw things I recognised', while a different respondent stated

that 'it made me feel the opposite. I felt trapped. Although I recognised the theme of

growth, and in a place where nothing was really growing you showed growth'[71]. Many

responders and participants commented on the 'interesting effect of including concrete and

fences in the theme of growth, because you don't usually associate that stuff with growth

but they are building something that is taking form. Changing the area around them'[72].

Another participant felt that seeing the Olympic stadium 'and seeing it in a state of change

connected with me...in the same way that the final image of the train represented growth, it

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[70] Participant A, CRP Session The Trampery London 24/7/2014.
[71] Participant B, CRP Session The Trampery London 24/7/2014.
[72] Participant, CRP Session The Trampery London 24/7/2014.

goes back to the industrial revolution and change'[73]. This became an interesting focal point, as participants discussed growth in relation to the changes to the surrounding area and what it might be like in fifty years' time. Similarly they discussed the quietness of the area around the Olympic stadium in relation to the theme of decay.

The psychogeographical walks featured in the *Creative Careers* pilot week complimented a relational approach to space by encouraging participants to reimagine the urban environment and therefore reclaim it. These walks were an example of the ways in which socially engaged artists might counteract the effects of gentrification by 'drawing attention to the way space is problematically redistributed and reclaiming space for less advantaged communities' (Harvie, 110).

Conclusion: Reclaiming space for less advantaged communities

There is an interesting paradox ensuing from the contemporary Creative City agenda which privileges policies of self-reliance, reduction of state subsidy, the migration of a creative class of individuals to creative hubs and the ways in which the Barbican Centre chooses to engage with local communities. This chapter has considered an approach to space by which space is recognised as a product of interactions and is both fluid and always in construction. Sustainability within the context of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning's participatory work depends on the relationality of space. Through this analysis the relations between people, the local environment (including objects and the non-human), the local and the global is implicated in BGCL's participatory arts practices. I argue that through

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[73] Participant, CRP Session The Trampery London 24/7/2014.

processes of gentrification a space is both privatised and its history obscured by creating the illusion of permanence. Psychogeography and the flâneur's approach to experiencing space is to re-imagine that space as relational and therefore reclaim it.

The relational approach to space considered in this chapter has implications for both this thesis and Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning department. It both reconceptualises and liberates the Barbican's identity in relational terms as a product of interactions with local communities and participants, opening up the surrounding area to infinite possibilities for participation. However, a relational approach to space does also make significant the effect the Barbican has when it decides to 'go out' into surrounding communities. If the Barbican's interaction and interrelations with a given community becomes a determining factor in the flux and reformulation of that space, then the ways in which Creative Learning choose to be present and engaged in that space becomes very important. If we understand space as determined by interactions and a product of interrelations the Barbican's presence in community venues becomes a socio-spatial ethical issue and a significant factor in determining the sustainable benefit of its participatory art projects. It prompts the question, how can the Barbican maintain a presence in a local community without influencing a subsequent gentrification of that area or undermining pre-existing cultural values?

In my early research I focused on temporality through considering how a durational engagement with local communities might influence agendas of sustainability within the arts sector. The *Creative Careers* pilot week's psychogeographical walks encouraged me to consider the longer-term implications of spatial issues. At the forefront of this discussion is the way space can be the platform and, at times, stimulus for cultural developments. My analysis of the urban walks we went on during the project, has revealed the changing nature of place resulting from these shifting cultural agendas and the subsequent challenge faced

by Creative Learning in facilitating sustainable relationships with local communities within this context. In doing so I framed my debate by discussing the ways in which both an arts centre and participatory art projects can be complicit in the displacement of less advantaged communities, which can result from processes of gentrification.

I have argued that of paramount importance to Creative Learning's effort to build long-lasting relationships with local communities is the ability to maintain a cultural presence in a space over a number of years without the subsequent gentrification of that area or the undermining of existing cultural and community values. How Barbican Guildhall operates within, and responds to, this context in order to avoid exacerbating inequitable socio-spatial and temporal relations is particularly significant. It will additionally affect BGCL's long-term programming choices and therefore sustainability. The *Creative Careers* psychogeographical urban walks and the subsequent films created, encouraged participants to reimagine the surrounding space and consider some of the spatial issues surrounding the post-Olympic cultural hub. In particular they prompted the question, how is prosperity distributed and what are the social, not simply economic benefits of Creative City growth? Fostering an awareness amongst participatory artists of the ways in which space can be problematically redistributed as a result of shifting cultural trends is important in creating a sustainable practice. There is an interesting dichotomy ensuing from these spatial issues for a creative learning department interested in fostering an egalitarian ethos in urban populations but which operates within an international arts centre dependent on a funding structure absolutely influenced by Creative City cultural agendas. Through this laboratory BGCL were attempting to negotiate their role within this cultural framework and were considering the effect of this cultural context on the participants and communities with which they work.

Chapter Six Conclusion: The footprint of the Barbican Centre: Implications for participatory practice in the surrounding area

'In come the craft ale brewers and coffee roasters reclining in their Eames chairs'

"The last thing this area needs," snarls Ravinder Atwal [in an article published in The Guardian in 2016], "is some middle-class film-maker reducing our community to a prose poem." Her words come at the start of Patrick Goddard's new film about Dagenham. What Atwal means is that artists like Goddard are not to be trusted. They are often the shock troops of gentrification. They set up studios in cheap, rundown areas and then what happens? Thanks to their visionary repurposing of the seemingly irredeemably abject, within a few years rents and house prices are soaring. Locals are squeezed out and in come the craft ale brewers and coffee roasters who recline in their Eames chairs hoping their rebranded locale will achieve its ultimate validation: a branch of Whole Foods.[74]

As I have discussed throughout this thesis, Barbican Guildhall is sited on a contested space, working betwixt and between the city's globalised and affluent financial centre and East London boroughs experiencing extreme deprivation and poverty. East London is home to more artists and arts organisations than anywhere in Europe, but it is also home to some of the most economically deprived populations in the UK. The City of London research paper 'Deprivation in London' revealed that in the East London borough of Newham a quarter

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[74] 24/4/2018 Jeffries, Stuart
https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/nov/29/artists-gentrification-dagenham-white-house-create

(27.1%) of the population were on low incomes, the highest proportion of poverty in any London borough. Additionally, the paper stated that Hackney, Barking and Dagenham both have the highest proportion of Job Seekers' Allowance claimants amongst the working age population in any London borough (3.2% respectively). Tower Hamlets was cited as having the highest proportion of children from out of work families at 36.4%, followed closely by Islington (31.5%) and Hackney (30.9%) in 2013[75]. These are the targeted boroughs with which Barbican Guildhall try to engage. I have been interested in how a sustainable programme of arts activity can be created with local communities within this context. Additionally, there is an interesting dichotomy for a creative learning department aiming to foster an egalitarian ethos in urban populations but which operates within an international arts centre dependent on cultural agendas which impact on the urban populations in problematic and unequal ways. My research began with the premise that there must be long-term benefits to the participatory work of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. I approached this idea through two independent but linked research questions. Firstly, how can BGCL facilitate cumulative learning and long-term benefit in the lives of those they work with, through the arts projects they produce? Secondly, how can a sustainable way of working be supported through the courses provided by Guildhall School of Music and Drama? These two research questions incorporated the two strands of work supported by Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning, the programming of arts projects with local communities and the development of courses and continual professional development pathways for participatory artists at Guildhall School.

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[75] 26/5/2018 https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business/economic-research-and-information/research-publications/Documents/research-2015/deprivation-in-londonV2.pdf (pages 6-8)

As I progressed with my research, the idea that sustained benefit occurs through a slower approach became increasingly interesting to me, in which dialogical exchange searches for communal artistic responses within a community. I found the conceptual framework of Henri Bergson useful in suggesting new ways to think about time and shape new vocabularies in relation to duration, with the intention to locate participatory arts within a twenty-first century ethic of sustainability. Similarly, Doreen Massey's understanding of space as relational and dynamic became useful in creating an understanding of how both time and space has been used as a form of power. It became clear to me that what was essential to building long-term relationships was the way BGCL negotiate both space and time in their programme of activity. It is through these negotiations that they may become able to create equitable and sustainable socio-spatial relations with communities.

In this thesis I have been concerned to develop an approach to participatory art which recognises the dynamic relationship between cultural organisations, social structures, people, space and the environment. This study contributes towards an understanding of how Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning, and participatory arts in general, might engage with local communities without exacerbating inequalities associated with gentrification. I suggest that arts practice that takes place over time, and with an understanding of place and context, enables the organisation to build meaningful relationships with local communities. I argue that implicit in effective dialogue between artist and participant is a commitment to time. It is through taking the time to search for communal responses within community contexts that sustained change can occur.

In particular my thesis offers a unique contribution to knowledge within this field through the development of a three-pronged approach to cultural sustainability within the context of participatory arts. I argue this will have implications for practice in this field, both within the context of Barbican and London, but also wider participatory arts practice. My research reveals that durational projects which privilege dialogue and active listening facilitate cultural sustainability within the context of participatory arts on three interrelated fronts; the individual, the project and community and the long-term strategy of the arts organisation.

My first finding reveals that long-term projects have a positive impact on the individual participant and his/her identity and capacity to sustain 'becomings' and 'transitions' without cracking (Braidotti 2011, 310). Valuing a longer-term model of engagement allows individual participants to alter their perception of time by tuning into their own experience of time. This therefore, allows people who do not necessarily benefit from a sped up globalised world the opportunity to reflect on their lives, embrace difference and, if desired, imagine alternative futures. Longer-term projects provide an opportunity to remove participants, albeit temporarily, from a space in which time can be used as form of power and social control, in which they are expected to conform to one homogeneous rhythm and speed. Duration within this context embraces difference and becoming, allows for moments of pause and does not exacerbate a societal tendency which segregates the '(valuable) moving from the (useless) still' (Cull 2013, 204).

Secondly, durational participatory arts projects facilitate a sustainable way of working with local communities which supports the conception of community as non-static and in the process of 'becoming'. My approach allows for practice which is both situationally

informed and contextually appropriate since it eschews a pop-up model of community intervention and allows time to search for communal responses of cumulative learning as opposed to flashes of temporary insight. Allowing time to search for communal responses also avoids any ethical pitfalls of an artist or arts organisation speaking for a given community or making assumptions about what is in their best interest. This three-pronged approach supports an active model of community and I argue this is at the heart of cultural sustainability and is therefore more likely to avoid issues of gentrification.

Finally, the third facet of my research findings will have implications to arts organisations at a strategic level. I have revealed how an arts organisation can forge long-term relationships with local communities by supporting long term practice which is both situationally informed and contextually appropriate. My research also reveals how HEI's can provide training and education for emerging artists which supports and values this approach to participatory practice. How an arts organisation engages with local communities in the long term without exacerbating gentrification can be seen through practice which privileges dialogue and active listening over time. It reveals how an arts organisation can benefit from listening to local communities in order to adapt and be flexible and responsive to change. My research does not privilege durational practice to the exclusion of temporary, dynamic and high-quality arts activity. Rather I have valued a multiplicity of durations in the strategic approach of arts organisations, through the combining of short-term dynamic arts projects, concerts and exhibitions with a participatory arts practice which supports long-term relationship building in local communities. Through this approach I have considered the position of Barbican Centre, and other arts organisations, as part of a systemic ecology and their dynamic connection to social structures, people, space and the environment. A

relational approach to space, within this context, not only allows for the agency a

community can have on a society but also reveals the importance of how arts organisations

decide to 'go out' into a given community and the impact they have on that place when they

do. This three-pronged analysis has revealed the agency a community, individual

participant, participatory project and organisation have in contributing to change in a

sustainable way.

In this final chapter, I shall consider the wider implications of my research for

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning and participatory arts. My research has contributed to

the fields of participatory art, socially engaged art, cultural policy and cultural sustainability.

I look forward and consider how these concepts have already begun to alter the practice at

the Barbican Centre, Guildhall School of Music and Drama and other East London arts

organisations. This chapter addresses two areas. The first section explores the implications

of my research for future higher education courses at Guildhall School. I look at the BA

Performance and Creative Enterprise (PACE) course to reveal the ways it aims to diversify

the participatory arts sector and encourage artists to move towards slower modes of

collaboration which favour dialogic artistic exchange. I reveal how BA PACE can be seen as a

direct output from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation special initiative *Artworks*, and

subsequently my research.

The second section considers the potential for implementing my research in the

programming of arts projects in East London communities. This underlines the complex

dynamic between the desire for topical, internationally appealing gallery exhibitions,

performances and concerts for global audiences visiting the Barbican Centre, and the need

for more sustained engagement with local communities. The legacy of arts practices in East

London might be illustrated by the newly renovated *The White House* in Dagenham, an initiative which aims to permanently return ownership of this artistic space to local communities. 'Create London', a new initiative funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, located at the Barbican Centre and set up in the shadow of *ArtWorks*, has developed and renovated *The White House*, a derelict eighteenth-century farmhouse on Becontree Estate in Dagenham. This initiative reveals how partnership working is essential to cultural sustainability. Similar to the model developed by Afrikids, in Bolgatanga Ghana and discussed in Chapter One of this thesis, Create London aims that by 2021 *The White House* will be an independently run and self-sustaining artistic space, owned and run by local artists and communities. It is significant that in the final months of my doctoral research I discovered, in the footprint of the Barbican Centre, an arts organisation whose central premise was to create a permanent artistic space to facilitate sustainable community development and exchange.

Through these illustrative examples I provide recommendations for how durational participatory practice at Barbican Guildhall could be developed further, both in terms of their curriculum for artists and projects produced for local audiences. My aim is to both advance the sustained potential of the creative practice of BGCL in their host boroughs and contribute to an understanding of the tensions that exist surrounding issues of sustainability in their participatory work.

One of the specificities and challenges of the Collaborative Doctoral Award scheme has been that the research needed to be relevant and useful to two audiences, an academic audience and Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. To meet this requirement, I sought to embed myself within the research and evaluation team at BGCL alongside driving my own

research needs. Interestingly this had both positive and negative effects on both my research methodologies and my research outputs. It impacted, even, on how I chose to order the chapters in this thesis, situating Chapter Two which introduces the values of the Creative Learning department ahead of the more academically traditional and conceptual Chapter Three. It also presented me with the challenge of how my contribution to the evaluations might fulfil the department's need for short-term outcome driven statistical analysis dictated by funders alongside my own (and their) pervading interest in the long-term benefits of their programming for those involved. Helpfully, it also enabled me to be involved with many projects which do not feature in the thesis but which have facilitated an in-depth knowledge of the progression of individual participants and informed my understanding of the department. This conclusion therefore aims to appeal to both audiences, by encapsulating some of the theory which I used to frame my research alongside more practical considerations and recommendations for arts organisations.

It is important to me that my research dispels any pre-existing binary between the programming of the arts at the Barbican Centre and the work of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. Through my research I have revealed how partnership between internal departments at the Barbican Centre can be mutually beneficial. I have revealed the areas where BGCL benefits from the programming of the major art house at the Barbican Centre, most notably through the links with world famous musicians, conductors (Sir Simon Rattle) and theatre companies Complicité and Royal Shakespeare Company. Additionally, through collaboration between the production teams at the Barbican Centre main and BGCL on, amongst many others, the participatory project *Unleashed*. In turn, I have shown where

Creative Learning contributes to the Barbican Centre's capacity to build relationships with local communities which are long-term, situationally informed and imbedded.

Inclusivity at Guildhall School: BA Performance and Creative Enterprise

> 'Oh, I couldn't come to Guildhall,' and I said: 'Why's that?' And she said: 'Well, I'm lower class and from Leeds. They wouldn't let me in.' I thought: 'No! Is that the perception of Guildhall?' And from talking to a couple of people, I think there's quite an attitude of that's what it is; that's the reality of it, whereas in my personal experience, I don't feel that at all. But PACE is a very stand-alone experience, I think, even within Guildhall.
>
> (Howell, Guildhall School 29th January 2016)

In Chapter Two of this thesis, and throughout, I considered the ways in which BGCL have attempted to build a more inclusive practice through the participatory projects and courses which form Sean Gregory's 'Golden Thread'. BGCL are attempting to diversify the demographic of artists attending Guildhall School with a view to this impacting on the participatory sector in later years. The troubling demographic data of Guildhall School in 2010, where 87% of the student body was white, illustrates the need for BGCL and Guildhall School's focus on diversification. One of the ways they have approached this aim is through the formation of the BA Performance and Creative Enterprise (PACE), a participatory degree which welcomes artists who want to work across multiple art forms, in socially engaged settings and who might neither have had the means for hours of private instrument tuition nor what Bourdieu describes as the 'cultural capital' to apply for a prestigious and exclusive conservatoire. In order to build a bridge between their participatory projects on offer

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for young people and the higher education at Guildhall School they have encouraged local participants, almost exclusively from UK state schools, with raw talent but who haven't necessarily polished their musical skills through private tuition to apply for BA PACE. Many of these aspiring artists have engaged with BGCL for a number of years through their young ensembles and through *Creative Careers*. Two of the 2016 degree cohort were in *Unleashed* at the Barbican Centre in 2012*,* one a young drummer and the other a member of the experimental music ensemble *Future Band*. This not only highlights the progression route available at Barbican Guildhall from young ensemble members through to emerging artists, but also the durational nature of the/my PhD process! Encouraging participants to continue their artistic engagement through to careers in the arts is fundamental to the way BGCL approach sustainability in their work. In Chapter Two I discussed Sean Gregory's 'Golden Thread', a concept which describes his desire to facilitate participants sustained engagement in BGCL's participatory projects and platforms for Continuous Professional Development (CPD). The new BA PACE degree can be seen as an important component on Gregory's Golden Thread, a progression route from engagement in *Creative Careers* which was explored in both Chapters Two and Five of this thesis. BA PACE was developed as a result of the years of research generated by Paul Hamlyn Foundation's *ArtWorks* project, and subsequently my own doctoral research. It is an example of how this period of research has already altered departmental practice at Barbican Guildhall. This new course reveals the impact of this research on the strategy of the organisation and HEI, and therefore is illustrative of the third facet of my approach to cultural sustainability in this context. The content of the course captures some of the findings

of this piece of research, in the sense that it champions praxis which is responsive to context and utilises dialogic techniques.

Having returned from maternity leave in July of 2016 to discover the BA was not only fully up and running (with a changed name from BA Performance & Collaboration) but about to welcome a new cohort of students, I realised I needed to learn more about how it was working in practice and the extent to which the course has altered perceptions of participatory practice at Guildhall School. In particular I was interested in discovering the extent to which the degree had either formed a self-contained subculture at Guildhall School or impacted on predominant conservatoire culture. This section of Chapter Six is based on the annual reports compiled at Guildhall School between 2010 and 2017, the *BA PACE updated handbook* (2016 & 2017), *Creative Learning Strategic 5 Year Plan 2015-2020* (2015) and the *Creative Learning Board Report 2016*. It is with gratitude that I would also like to thank Peter Renshaw for sharing his primary research and a late draft of his report *Collaboration: Myth or reality (2017)* which focused, in part, on the development and first year of BA PACE at Guildhall School.

BA PACE is open to musicians, composers, theatre makers, devisors, spoken word artists and poets. It offers emerging artists the opportunity to progress their individual craft alongside other artistic disciplines in a collaborative setting. BA PACE encourages slower modes of collaboration which favour dialogic artistic exchange. It illustrates the shift toward a participatory practice which embraces long-term, situationally informed engagement with local communities. The focus on cross-arts collaboration is particularly interesting in terms of Guildhall's desire to diversify their student body, since it reveals BGCL's belief that cross-arts work might appeal to a wider range of people. Shannon Jackson comments in *Social Works* that cross-arts collaborations are unique in the ways they combine traditions from a

number of artforms:

> The language of cross-arts collaboration means different things as projects
>
> integrate some art forms, revise other art forms and often break from the
>
> tradition of their own art practice by resuscitating the art traditions of others
>
> (14).

Gregory described this process as 'mashing up and mixing sources' (Gregory and Renshaw

2013, 10). The ability to work in this way is central to BA PACE. Analysis of the course

content on Guildhall's website also reveals that it has a strong focus on working in socially

engaged settings and it also encourages its artists to be 'entrepreneurial' by offering

modules in production and more practical skills like funding applications.

> The programme focuses on:

- Developing your own individual artistic craft through bespoke training (one-to-one lessons and mentoring)
- Working collaboratively as part of a cross-arts company, creating new work which is live, recorded and digital
- Collaborating with people in a range of community settings (e.g. schools, hospitals and healthcare centres, criminal justice institutions), creating participatory and socially engaged artistic work
- Cultivating employability by developing creative enterprise skills, including project management, fundraising and budgeting, pitching proposals, marketing and online resources[76].

The focus on collaboration, both between people from different contexts and art forms, and

the need for breaking from the tradition of their own art practice, inherent in BA PACE,

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[76] 3/5/2018
https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/youth_adult_learning/creative_learning/study/ba_hons_performance_creative_enterprise/

represents a radical shift for Guildhall School, whose historical focus had been on elite

training for students studying one art form or instrument. Whilst this shift may have

occurred earlier in the professional development pathways on offer at other higher

education establishments, it is undoubtedly an unusual and radical move toward placing

value on participatory and collaborative work at Guildhall School. This drive toward a more

diverse range of art forms, including spoken word, beat boxing, drumming, devising and

experimental composition is an attempt to appeal to a wider range of people. Through

providing opportunities to participants in local communities, initially through Creative

Careers followed by the option to progress to BA PACE, BGCL have adopted the strategic

approach to cultural sustainability advocated in this thesis. It was hoped this approach

would have an impact on the diversity of the student body, and in time the diversity of the

participatory arts sector.

In this respect they have, thus far, been successful. Renshaw comments on the fact

that 'the distinctive nature of PACE, especially at BA level, has attracted students from very

different backgrounds with an eclectic interest in the arts and contemporary culture'

(Renshaw 2017, 55). In the *Annual Programme Evaluation of PACE: Reflecting on 2015-16*,

prepared by Course Coordinator Carlos Lopez-Real, the PACE enrolment figures show a

diverse range of student backgrounds:

PACE Enrolment Year 2015-16
6 students
Black Minority Ethnics   50%
Educational background   100% all state school
Disability   66.7% declared disability
Geography   100% UK; 33.3% from targeted East London boroughs

PACE Enrolment Year 2016-17
14 students

Black Minority Ethnics	43%
Educational background	100% all state school or non-UK
Disability	35.7% declared disability
Geography	29% non-UK (Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Israel, Italy)
	28% from targeted East London boroughs

When compared to relatively recent diversity statistics from 2010 for the undergraduate student body at Guildhall School, where 88.6% students were 'white' and 15.7% identified as being 'disabled', this shows a significant improvement in terms of both ethnic diversity and inclusivity for disabled performers at Guildhall School (Guildhall School Annual Report 2010, 13). Additionally significant is the fact that 100% of the students in the 2016 BA PACE cohort were from UK state schools and 33% were from targeted East London boroughs. Although the Guildhall School Annual Reports, dating back to 2010, do not provide data relating to the percentage of state school educated students on their further education courses, they do document that 42.7% of Junior Guildhall students (Music Course, String Training Course and Drama Course) were privately educated. Seen in this context, it is understandable why the development of the BA PACE degree has been frequently described by the student body at Guildhall School as 'radical'. One student on the BA PACE course articulated, in an interview with Peter Renshaw conducted in early 2016, the social class difference ingrained in the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She was interested, in particular, in how conservatoire culture 'intersects with class and social background' (Renshaw 2017, 66). She recalled a discussion with a friend from Leeds; 'Oh, I couldn't come to Guildhall,' and I said: 'Why's that?' And she said; 'Well, I'm lower class and from Leeds. They wouldn't let me in'[77]. This concern reflects in microcosm wider attitudinal barriers within the cultural industry and is perhaps the cause behind worryingly unbalanced

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[77] Howell, Barbican Centre 29th January 2016.

demographics of those working within participatory arts[78]. It also reveals there is some way to go before this cultural shift within the programming of BGCL will become ingrained in conservatoire culture at Guildhall School.

In-depth analysis of student reflections written toward the end of their first year on the BA PACE course reveal an ongoing tension surrounding the cohort's sense of 'otherness' to the rest of the student body. One student, who prior to enrolling on the course used to identify herself as a spoken word poet but who is now more 'interested in using words with experimental music', frequently had to justify her place at the conservatoire to instrumentalists who seemed to resent the fact she hadn't come through what is perceived as the 'traditional' route into a conservatoire (Renshaw 2017, 67). She feels other students reflect a predominant conservatoire culture at Guildhall School in which they 'view their place at Guildhall as the result of years and years of dedication and hard work, and hours and hours of practice on their instrument. I think they feel that we make them less because we haven't spent years trying to perfect this' (Renshaw 2017, 67). Another student reflects on the fact the BA PACE cohort have been asked to articulate what they offer the Guildhall by fellow students who can't understand the collaborative and participatory elements of the new course:

> It could be very daunting, walking through the halls [of Guildhall] as a PACE
>
> student, with people asking: 'What is it you do? You don't play; you don't…' You
>
> know what I mean. 'What are you part of?'…Some people take to it pleasingly.
>
> They say 'Wow, it's a beautiful thing.' And then you have others who might say,

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[78] Artwork's *Artist Survey Report* published in July 2014, of the 1083 surveyed participatory artists working in Britain, revealed 85.3% were white, with only 6.9% black or Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME)

'Okay, so, why are you here?' Or 'what are you offering to the Guildhall?'

(Renshaw 2017, 67).

Despite great endeavour on the part of BGCL to place equal value on participatory arts and collaborative cross-arts work as on other courses at Guildhall School there is still a long way to go before this work is fully accepted and ingrained in the habitus of the conservatoire. It is my hope that this research will contribute to building a greater understanding of how BGCL can build relationships with local and diverse artists, support dialogic long-term artistic practices through their FE courses and how this can positively impact cultural sustainability. I have revealed throughout my research that the ways in which participatory artists position themselves within a given community is important to ensuring cultural sustainability. I have revealed how BA PACE can be seen as a research output from both Paul Hamlyn Foundation initiative *ArtWorks* and my own research and is an important step toward BGCL creating equal and balanced relationships between arts organisations and local East London communities. BA PACE can be seen as both an example and an impact of the strategic approach toward cultural sustainability advocated in this thesis.

Long-term participatory projects in community contexts: *The White House* in Dagenham

In the footprint of the Barbican Centre is an organisation, 'Create London', which endeavours to implement some of the ideas I have tried to capture in this thesis, in particular situationally informed durational engagement within local communities. The relationship between the Barbican Centre and their associate company 'Create London' also reveals an interesting shift toward partnership working at the Barbican Centre which is illustrative of partnership working as a sustainability model. This model reveals how the

large arts organisation can support the smaller organisation to fulfil its strategic aims

through the provision of free office space and by helping to build a network of interested

local artists and community groups. One project in particular is of interest to me. *The White*

House is a new public space for art and social activity on the Becontree Estate in Dagenham.

Create London, supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, renovated the once derelict

eighteenth-century farmhouse, and 'invites artists to live at the house, to make new art and

join people living locally to create the vision for this new public building'[79]. I think much can

be learned from the model of practice *The White House* has developed in East London. Their

approach to participation reflects the characteristic inherent to my three-pronged approach

to cultural sustainability, in particular through their long-term programming choices and

projects which advocate searching for communal responses to relevant local issues. Since

opening in August 2016, *The White House* has been home to six artists and has organised

frequent artistic events, including workshops, talks, dinner and artist residencies which

resulted in a 'socialist pantomime, a mockumentary film and a site-specific theatre

production and an anti-social social club' [80]. In addition to these events the house hosts a

'Front Room Programme' which invites members of the local community to organise and

facilitate coffee mornings, arts and crafts groups and film screenings. Two long-term and

ongoing projects facilitated by members of the local community include *All Hands On Deck*,

for prop and set builders of the pantomime and *Gingerbread Group Dagenham,* a group for

lone parents which was set up by local artist and mother Christina Ford. Both of these

groups meet weekly at *The White House*.

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[79] 3.5.2018 http://createlondon.org/event/the-white-house/
[80] 3.5.2018 http://createlondon.org/event/the-white-house/

Create aims to help artists connect more closely with communities through long-term artistic collaboration. Unlike arts organisations which have a fixed public space, like a gallery or a theatre, Create London prefers to work 'in the places people encounter everyday'[81]. There is something significant in the fact that *The White House* is a residential venue whereby artists live and sleep alongside members of the local community in the surrounding council estates. Living alongside members of local communities, sharing meals and day-to-day life in the heart of Dagenham, makes the experience of creating art with participants very personal and embedded in 'real' life. The residential nature of this approach challenges hierarchies between artists and participants, which can sometimes result from the fact that artists travel in to work alongside communities but are not always embedded within them long-term. In Chapter Three I discussed the specificities of City of London, with its transient population of workers, and how both time and space can be experienced differently and inequitably by different groups of people. The same can be true of the participatory artists travelling in to work in socially disadvantaged contexts. The residential nature of *The White House* aims to produce a situationally informed practice based on the sharing of space. Particularly relevant to considering the complexity of differentially lived time, is how both residents and artist residents experience time communally at *The White House.* It is my contention that this might avoid inequitable temporal relations between the two groups of people. Does sharing a residential space whilst creating art facilitate both artist and participant to experience Bergson's durational time, separate to regulated clock time? It would be interesting to develop this research further to consider how residential participatory art venues might facilitate a communal

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[81] 3.5.2018 http://createlondon.org/event/the-white-house/

sharing of both space and time, and the impact this might have on the sustainability of the project.

Although the premise for residential artistic and social activity is not new, indeed it even dates as far back as 1873 and the *Settlement House Movement* at Toynbee Hall, it is however far from standard practice in participatory arts activity in East London. What analysis of the Settlement House Movement reveals, is the capacity for residential social and cultural endeavours to challenge hierarchies through different social groups living and sharing space together, thereby increasing access to cultural activity and education (Nicholson 2011, 28-29). Similarly, *The White House* was set up to make long-lasting collaboration possible; it operates under the premise that its presence in Dagenham would facilitate sustainable community development:

> Create believes that by creating a new model for artists residencies in a new kind of community space we can change and challenge hierarchies within arts and cultural provision, engender local ownership, increase participation and generate strong local partnerships to support long-term sustainable community development[82].

Create London hopes that by the end of 2020 *The White House* will operate as an independent and permanent facility, with ownership over its development in the hands of local interested residents and artists. Aware of the dangers of gentrification, in particular the displacement of local communities following the regeneration of urban areas, Create London are developing models of long-term engagement which they hope will support sustainable community development in Dagenham.

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[82] 24/4/2018 http://createlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/RESEARCH-AND-EVALUATION-CONSULTANT.pdf

In addition to influencing the way they plan projects, Create London also explored the contentious issue of gentrification in the artistic material created at *The White House*. In the *Guardian* article entitled 'An invitation to the White House: We go inside Dagenham's experimental art factory', Stuart Jeffries discusses the problematic ways the presence of arts organisations can alter urban areas. He questions 'could this gentrification nightmare be Dagenham's fate, now that socially concerned artists are moving in?'[83]. Jeffries discusses the mockumentary film made by artist and film-maker Patrick Goddard during his residential at *The White House*. The mockumentary film was made alongside members of the local community, engaging them in debate, and explored the idea that 'artists are little better than locusts, descending on an area, plundering it for material while misrepresenting and exploiting the locals'[84]. Goddard's mockumentary considered the challenges of participatory art as a sustainable practice and engaged local residents in this conversation. The way Create London have responded to the challenge of developing a sustainable practice which facilitates long-term benefit for participants is to move away from a festival or 'pop-up' model of temporary installations or projects and toward long-term or permanent work which is developed through a dialogic process with local communities.

The long-term nature of *The White House* brings to mind the four-pillar model of sustainability discussed in Chapter One. The inclusion of the cultural pillar to sustainability studies is a relatively new phenomenon. Increasingly governments, businesses and arts organisations have used the arts to foster social inclusion, cultural diversity, urban and rural

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[83] 24/4/2018 Jeffries, Stuart
https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/nov/29/artists-gentrification-dagenham-white-house-create
[84] 24/4/2018 Jeffries, Stuart
https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/nov/29/artists-gentrification-dagenham-white-house-create

regeneration, and as a result many sustainability theorists are now including culture in sustainability analysis. This addition recognises the role culture plays in defining people, shaping behaviours and attitudes and additionally the role it plays in bringing in transient tourist populations to urban areas. Throughout this thesis I have been interested to develop an understanding of the way arts organisations can complement the four-pillared approach to sustainability studies through programming participatory projects with local communities which are long term, enduring and support community development in a way which doesn't displace local communities.

The implications of my research for ongoing research and practice in the wider participatory arts field

My research contributes to the work of Grant Kester and Claire Bishop in that it reveals the agency and power of participatory arts in contributing to change. I have achieved this through considering the interdependence of people and places, time and space and in particular the dynamic between an arts organisation's long-term presence in a community and the ephemerality of art making. I have extended Kester's debate by conceptualising the ontological reason *why* durational projects facilitate cumulative learning in an individual as opposed to flashes of temporary insight. I did this through the application of Bergson and Deleuze's conceptions of identity and difference to participatory arts theory. Through considering the complexity of differentially experienced time and the impact of temporal inequality on participants (and indeed artists) who may have fragile self-perceptions, I have developed and extended the conceptual framework surrounding Kester's approach to durational participatory practice. Through my analysis I have found

synergies between the research of Kester and Bishop, thereby extending their debate by revealing how a slower approach to participation can, indeed, be considered radical.

My research has contributed to the wider cultural sector and participatory arts field by revealing how partnership working and a holistic approach to integrating the work of creative learning into the main programming of the arts organisation can facilitate cultural sustainability. I have suggested how this strategic approach can enable meaningful and sustainable relationships to emerge between local stakeholders, communities, community arts groups and partners. Although much of my research has focussed on the specificities of working in East London, it can be applicable to many cities which are experiencing the effects of gentrification and negotiating their cultural practice within this context. A wider UK study would therefore be a natural progression from this piece of research.

My research findings have contributed to an understanding of how HEI's can support artists by providing training and education which values an approach to participatory practice which privileges dialogic cross arts work. By championing this approach to training participatory artists, I have revealed how HEIs might offer opportunities to local emerging artists, diversifying their student body and in time the participatory arts sector. The emerging nature of cross-arts work, the ground-breaking place of BA PACE within the context of Guildhall School and the challenges this has presented for how cross-arts participatory work is both perceived and integrated within the conservatoire does reveal the need for further academic research. BA PACE is still in its infancy and therefore a longitudinal study which explored, in greater detail, both the impact of a course of this nature on the sector and its contribution to cultural sustainability would be a valuable development of my research.

In terms of my own interest in developing this piece of research, I am excited by the opportunities presented by the residential practice at *The White House* and other longer term residential participatory projects. A natural extension of my research would be a study which considers what can be created when space and time are shared equally by artists and participants. Does sharing a residential space in the heart of a community whilst creating art facilitate both artist and participant to experience Bergson's durational time, separate to regulated clock time? Can sharing a space, and time, avoid the inequitable temporal relations often experience by artists and participants? What potential might this hold in terms of both the art created and the mutual change facilitated both for artist and participant?

An integrated approach at Barbican Centre: Working in partnership

Throughout this thesis I have been concerned to develop an understanding of 'Art forms that help us imagine sustainable social institutions' (Jackson, 14). One of the main challenges the Barbican Centre faces is that the arts centre appeals to audiences who are mobile and socially privileged, and Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning works in areas of social disadvantage. At the heart of Creative Learning is a desire to develop long-term and meaningful relationships with members of the community in the surrounding boroughs. Throughout my research I have found that inequality is both spatial and temporal, and that participatory arts tend to work with groups of people who are negatively affected by inequitable temporal relations and by the speed up associated with globalisation. It is my hope that this thesis contributes to an understanding of the challenges of creative learning as a sustainable practice. Throughout this thesis I have considered the ways both space and

time can be used as a form of power. I have found that participatory arts can respond to this through a slower approach to collaboration.

Historically both Barbican Education, Guildhall School and the Barbican Centre have not always been able to work collaboratively. It is through the work of Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning that a more connected internal practice has begun to emerge. The organisational and operational structure within the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School has shifted in recent years and includes a desire for Creative Learning not to be seen as separate to the Barbican Centre. The fact that a more connected practice has emerged as a result of these shifts is significant to the sustainability of the organisation. Rosi Braidotti's understanding of sustainability relates to 'the embodied and embedded nature of the subject' whose 'sensibility to and availability for changes or transformation are directly proportional to (their) ability to sustain the shifts without cracking' (2011, 310). Central to this analysis is the idea that the way Barbican Guildhall can achieve a sustainable practice is to be flexible and responsive to the changing space and cultural context. The sustainability of the organisation and the BGCL's engagement with local communities is concerned with flexibility and resilience to change. This enables me to consider that arts practice that takes place over time, and with an understanding of place and context, might support people in changing over time. Through my research I have revealed how partnership between internal departments at the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School has been mutually beneficial. BGCL benefits from the programming of the major art house at the Barbican Centre, and expertise of the conservatoire and Creative Learning contributes to the Barbican Centre and Guildhall's capacity to build relationships with local communities which are long term.

I would like to end this thesis by raising a further model of sustainability being explored by the Barbican Centre in 2018, one which certainly merits further research.

Essential to the way the Barbican Centre is approaching sustainability in 2018 is through its capacity to work in partnership with outside organisations. In addition to the partnerships the Barbican has with local music hubs and the Barbican's associate companies, for instance Create London, they also value working closely with local councils and non-arts organisations to achieve sustainable practice. In 2018 Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning and the Barbican Centre have launched an emerging partnership with Waltham Forest Council. This emerging relationship is part of an attempt to recognise the synergies and mutual benefits between cultural and creative organisations and local community organisations and hubs. Importance has been placed on partnership working at Barbican Guildhall as a result of research conducted by Warwick University as part of the Warwick Commission which attempted to look at 'The Future of Cultural Value' in the wake of 2012 Cultural Olympiad. The report, *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth* (2015) described the post 2012 cultural context as 'over siloed and disconnected in terms of policy making, strategy and financing' which negatively impacted on the future viability of work in communities[85]. Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning has recognised and responded to the need to not work in 'silo', by creating a network of local partners, able to share both strategic aims and financing. As part of the partnership with Waltham Forest Council a post was created, which is paid in part by Waltham Forest Council and in part by the Barbican Centre, and which facilitates the Creative Connectors Programme. This programme, delivered by the Barbican Centre, supports twelve grassroots organisations in Waltham Forest by providing practical advice and CPD opportunities. Additionally, the Barbican Centre works closely with Waltham Forest Council to produce Walthamstow Forest Garden

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[85] 14/5/2018 https://www.wbs.ac.uk/wbs2012/assets/PDF/downloads/press/Warwick-Commission-Report.pdf

Party, a festival of arts and music which is currently in its fifth year. This collaboration is an example of the importance placed on longer-term partnership working, and productive engagements between sectors, to cultural sustainability. It is the capacity and potential of BGCL to facilitate long-term engagement in East London, both between communities, local councils and grassroots arts organisations, which makes the work of the department a 'Bridge Over the Fortress Wall'

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ArtWorks London
Participant Research Report I
Young People in Participatory Ensembles
February 2013

Unleashed at the Barbican, November 2012. Photo © Mark Allan.

Contents

Executive Summary

Background
ArtWorks London is undertaking research about the experience of participants. This first report focuses on young people in participatory ensembles. We used the Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning ensemble model as a case study through which to undertake this research enquiry. Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning runs five ensembles in thirteen groups, involving a total of 552 participants.

All of these ensembles were invited to take part in *Unleashed*, a public, professional, cross-arts theatre production on the Barbican Theatre stage which was conceived, developed and made by young people. It involved 128 young ensemble members from Creative Learning along with 24 dancers from the youth arm of London hip hop dance company Boy Blue Entertainment, making a total of 152 participant performers. *Unleashed* was supported by a Creative Team of 40, which included 15 professional artist leaders and five students from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, who worked directly with the ensembles. Three performances took place in the Barbican Theatre over 23rd and 24th November with a total audience of 2217.

The production of *Unleashed* provided a catalyst to undertake research with the participants of all of the ensembles that took part, including both those that were part of the production and those that were not. Feedback was collected from the *Unleashed* participants via a survey. Focus group interviews were held with each ensemble, bringing together those that took part in *Unleashed* and those that did not. Additionally, a feedback discussion was held with the Creative Team of *Unleashed*, the artist leaders of each ensemble completed a feedback survey, and the audience of *Unleashed* was invited to feedback via a face to face survey.

This report follows on from, and aims to extend, the work of ArtWorks Cymru in participant research, the findings of which were published in March 2012.[86] In particular, both studies found that participants place great emphasis on the artistic skills of the artist leader, and that participants are disappointed when a project ends.

Key Findings
76% of participants responding to our survey definitely or probably agreed that they had learnt new skills through participating in *Unleashed,* whilst 98% felt that it had helped them to develop their existing skills. 73% of respondents agreed they had developed life skills (e.g. teamwork, leadership, communication) through taking part, exceeding our target of 60%. One participant drew on their experience of 'drumming while there's someone dancing to your beat,' to highlight how they had learnt teamwork through the creative process. Another participant, who was

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[86] http://www.artworksphf.org.uk/page/resources-and-research

home-schooled, commented on how *Unleashed* provided her with the opportunity to learn 'how to work with groups, listen to other people's ideas, and take them in, and incorporate them.'

Many participants said the production provided them with an opportunity to 'voice' their opinions in a safe environment and that there was a real sense of ownership of both the thematic and artistic content. A recurring discussion theme was that *Unleashed* provided an environment conducive to safe experimentation, mistake and discovery of participants' own artistic voice, which some believed differed from artistic education within schools. As one drummer described, 'when we do it here [at school], they have the beats and we just learn them. On that [*Unleashed*], we had to come up with the beats and teach everyone how to play them ourselves.'

Our research found that participants took part for a variety of reasons, including developing artistic skills, valuing the collaborative working process of ensembles, developing friendships and the transferable skills gained.

Participants placed significant emphasis on their enjoyment of working across art forms and with a focus on process-based skills, though they also value working towards a performance outcome. Participants value artist leaders with a style which is inclusive, collaborative and not directorial, and an atmosphere that is open to collaboration and risk-taking.

A number of participants commented on the development of artistic skills gained, and how the ensemble approach different from school based learning. Participants value a feeling of ownership over the work created through ensembles, both in terms of artistic material and thematic content. Those that took part in *Unleashed* also raised that they valued the opportunity to talk and be asked how they felt about issues that affect them as young people, such as the London riots.

In terms of inclusion and access, participants identified that the time commitment involved in *Unleashed* was off-putting to some ensemble members. Those that did take part felt that the project encouraged young people from family backgrounds which might not support arts activities to take part.

Lessons for Developing Practice in Participatory Settings
Unleashed demonstrates that collaborative, dialogue-based arts activities engender a very real sense of ownership and pride amongst participants, over the artistic and thematic content. Important to this research is that it achieved this alongside high production values and artistic excellence. There are some core areas for further research:
- There is a greater need for artist understanding of the conceptual, ethical and contextual issues which underpin work in participatory settings.

The high emphasis and value placed on artistic skills of artists, facilitators and leaders amongst participants, indicate that it is essential that artistic skills must be at the centre of participatory training models.

Participants value artist leaders with a friendly, collaborative and not directorial approach to work.

Participants highly value an 'expert' artist leader; someone with a wealth of artistic experience.

There is a divergence in perception between participants and artist leaders about the success of the process. During discussions artist leaders talked about the difficulty of 'finding a balance between sensitivities and delivering a result'. Participants did not pick up on this point to the same extent that the artist leaders did.

1. Introduction

This research enquiry attempts to determine what participants understand as 'quality' in relation to arts based projects. It will be one in a series of participant research studies conducted by ArtWorks London over the next two years. We seek to feed into ArtWorks projects by establishing a context in which training models might be structured and tailored to best suit the needs of participants. There was the sense in the quarterly ArtWorks pathfinder meeting held at the Barbican in October 2012 that there was a lack of insight into what participants feel they need from projects of this nature and what they understand to be 'quality' or 'excellence' in relation to this work. It also seeks to establish whether what artists attempt to achieve in their work in participatory settings is contextually appropriate.

It is hoped that the findings of this piece of research will effect learning that can be embedded into artist training for participatory work. That it will attempt to facilitate a better understanding of a best practice which both reflects the needs of the participants it seeks to involve and encourages a dynamic, creative and dialogic working environment for artists and participants alike.

The focus of this first report is on young people as participants. We used the Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning ensemble model as a case study through which to undertake this research enquiry. Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning runs five ensembles in thirteen groups, involving a total of 552 participants.

Barbican Guildhall Ensembles

Ensemble	Description	Recruitment Method	Ages	Number of Participants
DrumWorks	Three schools each hosting three groups of participatory drumming workshops on a weekly basis	Via Schools	11- 16	487
DrumHeads	Performance Drumming Group	Selected from School Participants		11
Young Poets	Fortnightly poetry workshops as part of a year-long programme	Selected from open application process	14-24	23

FutureBand	Termly week-long sessions of creative collaborative composition	Selected from open application process	8-14	23
Young Filmmakers	Regular meetings in holiday periods to participate in filmmaking workshops with professionals	Selected from open application process	15-25	8
Total across ensembles			**8-25**	**552**

All of these ensembles were invited to take part in *Unleashed*, a public, professional, cross-arts theatre production on the Barbican Theatre stage which was conceived, developed and made by young people. It involved 128 of the 552 young ensemble members from Creative Learning youth ensembles along with 24 dancers from Da Bratz and Da Bluez, the youth arm of London hip hop dance company Boy Blue Entertainment, making a **total of 152 participant performers**. *Unleashed* was supported by a Creative Team of 40, which included 15 professional artist leaders and five students from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, who worked directly with the ensembles. Three performances took place in the Barbican Theatre over 23rd and 24th November with a total audience of 2217.

The content of *Unleashed* dealt with life as a young person living in East London. It tackled the joys of being young growing up in London alongside issues of gang culture and the London riots. The production aimed to support the development of young people's skills in various art-forms through creative means resulting in a production that was marked by the quality of both the process and the final production. *Unleashed* aimed to raise the young people's awareness of what the possibilities of the arts can be, and develop the work of Barbican artistic associates, Boy Blue Entertainment.

As such, the Barbican Guildhall ensembles and associated production of Unleashed provides an excellent research environment for analysis into what constitutes 'quality' and best practice in relation to participatory work. We spoke to participants and artists from each ensemble, both those who chose to take part in *Unleashed* and those who did not.

2. Methodology

As part of ArtWorks London's ongoing research into participation, we undertook detailed research around *Unleashed* and the associated ensembles. *Unleashed* involved a professional team of ten, 15 artist leaders supported by a team of Guildhall Leadership Master's students, 152 community participants, and many more young people engaged in the early devising stages.

Central to this research was the methodological choice to interview the participants of the on going artistic groups (Young Poets, Future Bands, Young Film makers, Drumheads, Drumworks) who chose *not to* take part in *Unleashed.* This was an attempt to gain an insight into the value placed on process and performance and to facilitate an understanding into why participants might choose NOT TO take part in a project which culminated in a performance.

Researchers attended sessions with each of the Creative Learning **ensemble groups**, conducting a total of 22 focus groups. In addition, the *Unleashed* **Creative Team** were invited to a feedback discussion session, and the ensemble **Artist Leaders** were additionally asked to complete a feedback survey. *Unleashed* **audiences** were invited to give feedback at the end of each performance through a face-to-face questionnaire conducted by Barbican Ambassadors. 195 of the 2217 audience members (9%) responded.

Participant focus groups were held in groups of up to ten young people and were semi-structured allowing for discussion around the key questions. Data from the surveys alongside the analysis of qualitative focus groups provide us with insights into what participants feel they gained from being involved in their ensemble and, where relevant, the production of *Unleashed.* In writing the discussion guide for the qualitative focus groups (see appendix) we were conscious of our choice of wording. The word 'quality' in relation to arts practices is both abstract and subjective. When attempting to determine what 'quality' or 'excellence' means to a group of young people we felt it would be more helpful to pose questions which might encourage discussion of what tangible factors make a project successful.

Research and Evaluation Methods and Responses

Feedback Method	Who was invited to respond/ participate	Number invited to respond/ participate	Number of responses/ participants	Percentage of respondents
Unleashed participant Feedback Form	All participant performers in *Unleashed*	152	116	76%

Creative Learning Ensemble Interviews	All participants in DrumWorks, DrumHeads, Young Poets, Young Filmmakers and FutureBand	552	171	31%
Unleashed Creative Team Feedback Discussion	All *Unleashed* Creative Team	40	14	35%
Unleashed Artist Leader Feedback Survey	All *Unleashed* Artist Leaders	20	17	85%
Unleashed Audience Feedback Survey	Sample of audience across all three performances	2217	195	9%

3. Conceptual Context

This research draws on the conceptual context of artists' approaches when working in participatory settings. There has been much discussion within the academic field about different approaches to participatory arts projects and whether, as Grant Kester explores, co-collaboration or a more grassroots 'dialogic' approach[87] might be more contextually appropriate than the artist-led approach advocated by Claire Bishop[88]. Conversely some academics, artists and practitioners argue that the importance placed on 'dialogue' 'co-creation' and the focus on participants wishes have led to a 'dumbing down' of the aesthetic, and that this lack of focus on artistic excellence does the project and, most importantly, its participants a disservice.

This research project attempts to explore this issue by facilitating a discussion amongst participants about what constitutes 'quality' or 'excellence' in participatory projects. This area of research is a current topic, with art historians, academics, artists and practitioners seeking to explore whether a more collaborative approach or, to coin the term from art historian Grant Kester, a 'dialogic aesthetic' approach to participatory work, has more user centred aims than artist led projects and therefore might be more sustainable in a time where arts funding and austerity measures necessitate the development of models of sustainable practice.[89]

Unleashed echoes the idea that collaborative dialogue based arts activities engender a sense of ownership and pride amongst the participants of the artistic and thematic content. Important to this research is the fact that it achieved this alongside very high production values and artistic excellence as shown by the national newspaper reviews and audience feedback. In this sense it provided us with a good research environment to attempt to understand what participants value and see as 'excellence' in relation to arts projects.

It seems inevitable that the results of an enquiry of this sort would have fundamental and formative effects on models for training artists who work in participatory settings.

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[87] Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art.* University of California Press: 2004.
[88] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. Verso: 2012.
[89] Grant Kester, *The One and The Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*. Duke University Press, 2011.

4. Research Findings

4.1 Reasons for participation

For participants already involved in ensembles (Young Poets, FutureBand, DrumWorks, DrumHeads, Young Filmmakers) the decision to take part in *Unleashed* was a natural **'next step'** in a process and the opportunity to share their work in a performance context: 'performing in front of people makes you face your fears, stage fright' (FutureBand participant). The fact that the process resulted in a **performance outcome was high on participant's criteria** for taking part was important: 'we're all part of a drum group already, and that was the next biggest thing. We got that far, that we wanted to keep going' (DrumHeads participant).

Artistic skill development also came high on the list of reasons for taking part. Participants valued the fact that the process and performance would develop their skills as artists. Related to this point, 73% of participants said they are interested in a career in the arts and 57% would consider going on to study arts at Further or Higher Education level.

One key factor in participating in ensembles and performing as part of a collaborative group was summed up by one participant when they said of the **collaborative working process** 'it's a weird togetherness' (DrumWorks participant). Many participants commented on the value they placed on the **friendships** which were developed within their ensemble and during *Unleashed*: 'It's good because you can make so many friends you'd never have met otherwise' (FutureBand participant).

Many commented on deciding to take part to develop their **transferable skills**, for instance **improving confidence, timekeeping, contributing to a community and working as part of a team**. A number of participants referred to this:

> 'It builds your confidence when you are playing' (FutureBand participant)
> 'It give you opportunities when you join, we've performed in so many different places' (FutureBand participant)
> 'I wanted to do it because it's a good experience and you are giving something back to the community' (DrumWorks participant)

A key factor for young people, and their parents, in deciding whether to take part in projects like *Unleashed* relates to **the lack of affordable provision of participatory arts activities** elsewhere and a major benefit of all of the ensembles and *Unleashed* was that they are free. Issues such as affordability and the provision, or lack thereof, of refreshments during rehearsals were key, even to the youngest participants.

In addition to asking participants to articulate their reasons for taking part in arts activities we also asked them why they think their friends might *not* take part in projects of this kind. We wanted to try and get a sense of how we might diversify

our participant demographic and encourage discussion about what constitutes quality. Below are some examples of the responses to this discussion. We facilitated this discussion by asking participants to work in pairs and develop a conversation where each person tried to persuade the other of why they should take part/not take part in arts activities. By distancing the discussion from themselves, and talking about hypothetical friends, this encouraged participants to not feel nervous about criticising or expressing negative views about the process. The responses ranged from **arts not being a priority for some young people, young people not thinking about their futures** to **a lack of support and encouragement from parents.**

> 'They might not know about it. I only heard because of a leaflet at school. And they might be sceptical because they haven't done anything like this before. They've always been in orchestras reading sheet music… there is a lack of understanding of what we do' (FutureBand participant)
>
> 'people might not want do it because rehearsals are in half term and they think they have better things to do' (FutureBand participant)
>
> 'They don't think about their career, just about the present, what's happening tomorrow' (FutureBand participant)
>
> 'I think with regard to getting other young people involved. It's a horse to water thing. Some people just aren't interested in the arts. I'm not interested in chemistry and no encouragement could make me be interested. To bring people in who aren't interested in poetry, the whole Barbican system would have to come down to a lower denominator, and do things to a wider audience, so that although more people might be interested, there's less passion' (Young Poets participant)
>
> 'Some peoples parent's won't let them miss certain lessons, because there was maths (missed) sometimes' (DrumWorks participant)
>
> 'There are a few reasons. Badly timed rehearsals. I remember one 6-9 one, and I got home at 10.30, and my mum was, "why are you coming home at 10.30? Where's drumming going to take you in 10 years?" stuff like that. I was, "but mum, it's a once in a lifetime opportunity." Say someone gets a break from it. My mum's a traditional African woman, so you have to be a doctor, a lawyer or an accountant. That's it' (DrumWorks participant)

It is particularly interesting that some participants associate diversification and access with the potential of bringing the artistic quality of a piece 'to the lowest common denominator'. It is also pertinent that 'excellence' in relation to planning of participatory projects might relate to the ability to 'get the parents on board', thus making it easier for the participants to partake with support and encouragement. With a cast of over 150 young people this might not be possible but is worth consideration when planning projects involving fewer participants.

4.2 Artist leaders, collaboration and professionalism

Participants placed high value on the **professional aspect** of *Unleashed*, its high performance values and, in particular, the fact the process resulted in a

performance outcome. Participants enjoyed the **cross-discipline, multi-arts** nature of *Unleashed*. Many used the word 'inspiring' and said they 'enjoyed learning new artistic skills' from their peers.

Whilst participants value projects with a performance outcome, there was also much discussion around the future development of cross-discipline, skills based workshops with ensembles working together. There was a call for these sessions to be run by, with and for the young people with a primary focus on **process-based skills** sharing.

Participants **value artist leaders with a style which is inclusive, collaborative and not directorial.** One participant summarised his view on the delicate balance of collaboration and artistic leadership by saying 'if everyone's telling you what to do and shouting at you, I get really annoyed, but if they ask our opinion, and we can give it, that's good. If they leave everything to us, we're quite young and free, and we're going to mess it up. So you have to have a bit of both' (DrumWorks participant). It was evident during the discussion with the Creative Team that the artist leaders were aware of this. They had a clear grasp of the delicate balance needed between artistic vision, encouragement and co-collaboration during a devising process such as the work towards *Unleashed*:

> 'There was a massive difference in the creative relationship between the handful who participated in the Labs. So the understanding of their relationship with the creative identity of the project was different. The healthiest one was where they had a direct dialogue with you. For me that was when they felt it was their project' (Creative Team artist).
> 'The key thing was they'd feel ownership of it, and it would have a professional face. The ambition of that when you start to pick it apart is so enormous, but they are saying they felt it was their show' (Creative Team artist).
> 'Decision making happens. In any organic process, people are leading at different times and making decisions, but how you talk about it changes those decisions... "what we're going to do" or "what do you think?" or "we have got to do this"..., like we are making decisions together and you're part of it' (Creative Team artist).

A recurring point in discussions about quality and excellence was the ability of artist leaders to negotiate the delicate balance between collaboration and professionalism.

High value was placed on the **collaborative** aspect of the work. This was a much discussed issue and some compared it to another project at Barbican:*Survivor* with Hofesh Shechter involving participants from DrumWorks. It had more artist-led, directorial approach which participants did not value as highly. It was implied they didn't favour working towards a leader's vision but rather being provided with the opportunity and resources to develop their own vision.

Participants valued the **atmosphere created by the artist leaders and fellow participants** which was conducive to **experimentation and risk-taking**. Mistakes were not seen negatively by the group and this was important to the success of the project and the development of both artistic and transferable skills.

Participants valued the **professional working environment** during *Unleashed* and there was the sense that the Barbican was a desirable performance space. This was often related it to thinking about careers: 'performing in a space like this. It's the Barbican. On a stage to thousands. That's a good experience if you want to be a performer' (FutureBand participant).

Many participants said explicitly or intimated that they were thinking **about careers in the arts**. This was particularly clear by the value they placed on skill acquisition. There was also a feeling amongst the young adults of **thinking towards the future and career prospects**, and some expressed concerns about this: 'It's a difficult industry to get into…we might not get work as musicians' (FutureBand participant).

4.3 Learning: skill development

Participants in music ensembles (FutureBand, DrumHeads and DrumWorks) valued the opportunity to experiment and improvise with music and their own musical style. It was made clear that this **differed from school based learning** where they tend to be encouraged to read music without the freedom and time to experiment, develop their own style and make mistakes in a safe environment. This was echoed across all ensembles and art forms.

One of the key discussion points which emerged was the **difference in types of learning and skill development** between a school based environment and an extra curricular artistic environment. One participant commented:

> 'In a class you're talked at and there are set rules. But here it's more intimate, and everyone wants to be here. At school you get a syllabus, learn everything on it and take a test. Here we don't learn a subject, you can do what you want, and you're encouraged to explore your interests in a way you like' (Young Poets participant).

Another expanded on this point by saying 'I think in school you're more confined, whereas here you can explore the thoughts inside yourself and express yourself, and are not confined' (Young Poets participant). One participant said 'some of us are more confident. We were out of school, and when you're out of school you can talk to people in a different way' (DrumWorks participant). One young participant said that school orchestras focus on gaining qualifications, which isn't always suited to the way some young people want to learn:

> 'because I don't want to do grades, I can't do as much with school orchestras. This is the first orchestra I've been to that doesn't say anything about grades. So I can do stuff with them and not think, I'm the worst

person here. I might be as good as everyone else and it makes me happy to feel like that' (FutureBand participant).

Learning ranged from development of specific musical skills including improvisation, to confidence building, developing and sustaining friendships and the ability to work collaboratively in a group. One participant who was home-schooled singled out the development of skills which enable her to work alongside others collaboratively.

4.4 Learning: Ownership and collaboration*
* NB a sense of ownership over artistic and thematic content is different from a value placed on the collaborative nature of the work. However, they are so inextricable & conceptually linked they are placed together in this section.

Participants value a feeling of **ownership over the work**. There was a real sense that *Unleashed* stemmed from their own ideas. They had **influence over both the artistic material and thematic content of the piece.** Participants valued the ownership over content and the sense that their opinions were both listened to and heard.

Unleashed dealt, in part, with sensitive and pertinent material for young people of East London, with themes including gangs and the London riots of 2011. There was the feeling that they **valued the opportunity to talk and be asked how they felt about the riots**. One young person said that, before *Unleashed*, they had never been asked how they felt about the riots despite the fact they took place in their area, outside their homes and that some of the rioters were their age group. They wanted to tell their side of the story:

> *Unleashed* was different in terms of the message we got across in this one about the London riots, and youth in general. [...] it was important, because we don't really feel that we have a creative platform to express our views, and this project allowed us to do that. (DrumWorks participant)

One young person in Future Band felt nervous about the more serious content of the project, she was anxious that audience members might either have been involved in the riots of have been hurt by them and would not want the reminder. Only one out of 12 of participants during this focus group felt like this but it is important for artist leaders to be sensitive to concerns of this nature in future projects.

One older participant from the Young Poets ensemble, who began the rehearsal process for *Unleashed* but dropped out, said she chose to leave because she felt that the representation of the riots and gangs did not reflect her feelings and did not give a broad enough perspective. This is a crucial indicator of how strongly **participants value a feeling of ownership over the material and a sense that the**

material accurately represents their ideologies. The discussion is included unabridged to illustrate the range of opinions within the group:

>Participant A: I started and then stopped. I didn't like the direction it was going. I thought it was going down the same route of gangs, youth and a middle class view of what was happening.
>
>Interviewer: What avenue would you have liked it to have gone down?
>
>Participant A: I think it was just on the surface a bit, I wanted it to go deeper. I think it's about the people who are part of the riots as well. It was very much what happened and where were you during the riots, rather than, were you a part of it, did you smash up a shop?
>
>Interviewer: Would it have benefited talking more to people who were a part of it?
>
>Participant B: I went to watch it and I really enjoyed seeing young people being incredible. I was moved. But I also looked at the deeper political things, and it's as though they're perpetuating what the media was saying, that the riots were caused by young people. Which was not the truth. Everyone did something, but young people were used as a scapegoat. Talk about all the other people involved, or if not, talk about why young people found themselves in this position. There was no digging into the origins. But overall, I thought it was a brilliant production.
>
>Participant A: it was quite Americanised, between the orange and purple gang, like postcode wars, the way we know it, but I've never seen them take up colours, it's very American. Maybe it's something you can get on stage.
>
>Interviewer: it's an important issue. Did anyone else have any thoughts?
>
>Participant C: I thought it was confronting a big issue in the back of people's minds. Did you see the poet talking and there was a dancer behind him. The rhythm of his words, he was dancing with what he was saying.
>
>Participant D: I loved the mixing of art forms. The subject matter could have been changed, but I thought the different art forms worked really well.
>
>(Young Poets Group)

Participant A from Young Poets also commented that she felt most of the younger adults valued **an opportunity to 'voice' their thoughts about the riots** and that those younger participants did feel they were represented accurately, but that she would have preferred a deeper analysis of such serious content. When talking to the younger participants they indicated a high value placed on engaging with the content of the piece and being listened to. This issue is therefore most likely an indicator of **the challenges cross-generational arts projects face when dealing with sensitive material**. Below is a response from a younger participant regarding the use of sensitive content for comparison:

> Participant A: it was good because we got to perform on a big stage and
> it was good to show what happened in the London riots.
> Interviewer: did everyone else like that?
> Participant A: I think it's good that they involved politics in it. Then they
> can connect with an even bigger audience.
> Interviewer: what audience are you interested in connecting with?
> Participant A: everyone. It has stuff that would interest children, the
> dancing, gangs, the London riots.
> Participant B: people can relate to it.
> Participant A: yes, and then there were things that adults could relate to.
> (DrumWorks Group)

One participant commented on the fact he did not know a section was cut until 2 days before the show, which lead to feelings of frustration. The creative team discussed this point in their focus group:

> if we were to do this again, the stuff we'd need to improve on is a change in the process somehow. Once we get near the performance, the creative team has to make big decisions. But I feel **there could be an improvement in the way that's communicated. It has to stay connected to the roots all the way through**. We were connected to the roots for a long time, then realised how far we were from the finish line, ran, and dragged as many people with us as we could, knowing we'd lose people, and they'd come back at the performance'. (Creative Team artist)

This illustrates a challenge large scale projects face when blurring the boundaries between professional performance with high production values and education or community projects with participants. It is important to continue to research and develop how best to communicate creative agendas across age groups and ensembles for future projects of this nature.

High value was placed on the **collaborative aspect of the work**. This was a much discussed issue and some compared to another arts projects at Barbican, *Survivor* with Hofesh Schechter is one example, which favoured a more artist-led, directorial approach which participants did not value so highly: 'we don't really feel that we have a creative platform to express our views, and this project allowed us to do that. In Hofesh we were told what to do. In this we had input' (DrumWorks participant). The high value placed on the collaborative quality of this project was demonstrated by the fact that 70.7% strongly agreed and 25.0% probably agreed with the statement 'I enjoyed collaborating with other Barbican ensemble groups' in the quantitative feedback.

Criticism of the process for *Unleashed* related almost exclusively to moments where the collaborative spirit of the project slipped, which was in part due to time restrictions and the impending need to work towards a performance outcome. Some participants and artist leaders felt that there could have been more successful sustained cross-ensemble, cross-generational communication and

collaboration. This is indicative of the **extremely high value placed on mutual dialogue between artist leaders, professionals and participants** and the importance this has on a participant's ownership over the content of the piece.

4.5 Inclusion and access
When asked why some of their friends might not take part in participatory arts projects participants said that some friends only think in the short term (seeing friends, going out) and others might not know about it.

Whilst it was highly valued among participants that the project demanded a rehearsal schedule akin to a professional project with high production values, **the commitment this entailed might have been off-putting to some**, particularly those who placed greater emphasis on core curriculum subjects. One participant said her parents were not allowing her to continue with DrumWorks as it clashed with a maths lesson.

One participant who, unlike his parents, placed a high value on the arts, described the process as **'a once in a lifetime opportunity'** (DrumWorks participant). He felt that the professional nature of the work and the joy he felt performing meant he did not mind his parents not coming to watch or encouraging him to take part. This is extremely important as it indicates that **the project encouraged young people from family backgrounds which might not support arts activities to take part**. The discussion best explicates this issue:

> Interviewer: Why might people not get involved in a project like this? Perhaps your friends didn't- can you think of any reasons why?
> Participant A: there are a few. Badly timed rehearsals. I remember one 6-9 one, and I got home at 10.30, and my mum was, 'why are you coming home at 10.30? Where's drumming going to take you in 10 years?' stuff like that. I was, 'but mum, it's a once in a lifetime opportunity.' Say someone gets a break from it. My mum's a traditional African woman, so you have to be a doctor, a lawyer or an accountant. That's it.
> Participant B: if your parents don't come and watch, if means that they don't really care. It demoralises you, and you think, if my parents don't care, why should I?
> Participant A: will you carry on, regardless of that?
> Participant B: yes. My mum tried to force me not to, but... (didn't finish sentence and smiled)
> (DrumWorks Group)

It is important not to underestimate material conditions as a determining factor in a participants' enjoyment or decision to take part. How much it costs to get to the venue, where the venue is, how welcoming the rehearsal space is, rehearsal times, refreshments, and ticket prices for family members can all be influential factors,

particularly for a participant who might not be encouraged or supported to attend by their family.

Below are a series of quotes, which explicate this issue:

> 'they couldn't afford to come see it. Maybe if they made it cheaper for children. There was no separate prices' (DrumWorks participant)

> 'the travel was the main point. People who lost their Oyster cards. There were bus diversions, so it took ages and was quite stressful' (DrumWorks participant)

> 'we live quite far away, so we had to leave an hour after school, and it took an hour to get there' (DrumWorks participant)

5. Cross pathfinder learning: comparisons with ArtWorks Cymru participant research

Comparisons can be drawn with the Artworks Cymru participant research study of March 2012.[90] Whilst Artworks London focussed on a project which involved young people in this first participant research report , and Cymru engaged with a diverse age range of participants, nevertheless similarities in research findings can be highlighted.

'Participants frequently report that they would like more participatory arts activities to take place in their local area, and are disappointed when projects end' (ArtWorks Cymru Participant Research Study, p. 2). The second section of this point in particular was discussed at length with participants who expressed a feeling of 'a come down' after the exhilaration of finishing a large-scale performance. We aim to explore this issue in more depth through further research into the longer term impacts of this work in Summer 2013. One area of enquiry will ask how lasting the effects of taking part have been and if this 'disappointment when the projects ends' has any negative impact on of those involved. We currently assume that, given the continued engagement in ensembles throughout the year of all participants, this will not be the case.

'Participants reported that the artists they worked with were a key part of the success of the project that they participated in. […] To have a positive impact on them, participants expected that the artists would be professionals within their own field, as well as having strong interpersonal skills and some experience delivering participative work' (ArtWorks Cymru Participant Research Study, p. 10). This was also a key point discussed during the course of the ArtWorks London research. Participants place great emphasis on the artistic skills of the artist leader. Providing they had good interpersonal skills participants did not comment on the need for a wealth of participatory experience. Certainly no-one mentioned a preference for an artist with experience working with young people, only that they wanted an artist with the skills needed to work alongside young people. Asked about the qualities needed in an artists leader, one participant commented that 'I think it's their companionship to the group' and another said 'someone who doesn't control the group and is patient' (FutureBand participants).

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[90] See ArtWorks Cymru Participant Report on http://www.artworksphf.org.uk/page/resources-and-research

6. Conclusions

This research enquiry attempts to determine what participants understand as 'quality' in relation to arts based projects. The Barbican Guildhall ensembles and the production of *Unleashed* provided a good research environment to investigate what participants value and see as 'excellence' in participatory arts projects.

This research has highlighted a number of core areas that constiute quality for participants:

- Participants take part in participatory arts projects for a variety of reasons, including developing artistic skills, valuing the collaborative working process of ensembles, developing friendships and the transferable skills gained.
- Participants place significant emphasis on their enjoyment of working across art forms and with a focus on process-based skills, though they also value working towards a performance outcome.
- Participants value artist leaders with strong artistic skills and a style which is includive collaborative and not directorial, and an atmosphere that is open to collaboration and risk-taking.
- Participants value that the ensemble approach is different from school based learning.
- Participants value a feeling of ownership over the work created through ensembles, both in terms of artistic material and thematic content.
- Participants value the opportunity to talk and be asked how they felt about issues that affect them as young people, such as the London riots
- Overwhelming data from surveys and discussions during focus groups indicates the high value placed on the collaborative and dialogic quality of the process, the sense of ownership over thematic content and artistic material.

This report will be followed by a further piece of research investigating the same issues with participants in different contexts. The questions for the feedback forms and group discussions for that research have been designed based on the learning from this report.

Additionally, we are working with ArtWorks Cymru and Annabel Jackson to develop a series of questions to investigate participant understanding of quality on a wider scale.

7. Recommendations and further questions relating to embedding research into training models for artists working in participatory settings

Unleashed demonstrates that collaborative, dialogue-based arts activities engender a very real sense of ownership and pride amongst participants, over the artistic and thematic content. Important to this research is that it achieved this alongside high production values and artistic excellence, as shown by the national newspaper reviews and audience feedback.[91] The few criticisms made of the process for *Unleashed* were almost entirely directed at where the collaborative, co-devising spirit of the piece slipped due to the time demands and pressure of working towards a professional performance. In this sense much learning can be gained and further questions raised as to how the research findings might be embedded into models for training artists who work in participatory settings. Below are some suggestions and provocations for further exploration.

7.1 Practical Recommendations

There is a greater need for artist understanding of the conceptual, ethical and contextual issues which underpin work in participatory settings. ArtWorks Pathfinders could explore further the scope for thsi within a Higher Education learning environment.

The findings of this research suggest that experiential training would be most appropriate for the development and application of context based practical skills.

The high emphasis and value placed on artistic skills of artists, facilitators and leaders amongst participants, indicate that it is essential that artistic skills must be at the centre of participatory training models. Added to that must be a portfolio of roles (leader, facilitator, teacher, co-developer, listener, collaborator, conceptual thinker) which enable artists to effectively deploy those skills in participatory settings. This should underpin the ArtWorks London approach to setting up new training pathways.

7.2 Further Questions

Participants value artist leaders with a friendly, collaborative and not directorial approach to work. This could have major implications on methods of training for artists and should be further researched as part of the development of the new pathways.

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[91] *Unleashed* received two 5* reviews in the national press:
http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/unleashed-barbican-theatre-london-8352061.html
http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2012/11/24/unleashed-review_n_2184691.html
99% of the audience questioned said that the performance was 'very good' or 'good'.

Participants highly value an 'expert' artist leader; someone with a wealth of artistic experience. This reinforces the importance of developing artists' experience through continued CPD, experiential and qualification-based learning environments. The current seminars being run by A New Direction are further exploring this issue.

The mixed response from artist leaders to the question 'participants were actively engaged throughout the rehearsal period' is at odds with the positive feedback received from participants through focus groups and surveys. This shows a divergence in perception between participants and artist leaders about the success of the process. During discussions artist leaders talked about the difficulty of 'finding a balance between sensitivities and delivering a result [...] when does it change from being this wonderful organic creation into actually making it into something people will buy a ticket to see' (Creative Team artist). Participants did not pick up on this point to the same extent that the artist leaders did. This discrepancy may reveal a lack of interpretative tools amongst artists to see 'engagement' in the multiple forms its exhibits itself within diverse participant groups, and training needs to increase confidence in this area. Equally, it could demonstrate the critical faculties of the artists that continue after the performance, whilst participants may reflect more on positive outcomes and forget some of the challenges. This requires more exploration as an important influencing factor to inform a training model.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Baseline Participant Data

Which ensemble group are you part of?

Drumworks:Drumheads	12	10.4%
Drumworks: Morpeth	20	17.4%
Drumworks: Stoke Newington	16	13.9%
Drumworks: St Pauls	11	9.6%
Young Poets	6	5.2%
Bratz/Blues	31	27.0%
Future Band	17	14.8%
Young Filmmakers	2	1.7%
Total	**115**	**100%**

Which borough of London or region of the UK do you live in?

London Boroughs		
Tower Hamlets	33	31.4%
Hackney	19	18.1%
Newham	16	15.2%
Islington	6	5.7%
Waltham Forest	6	5.7%
Haringey	3	2.9%
Lewisham	3	2.9%
Barking and Dagenham	2	1.9%
Bexley	2	1.9%
Greenwich	2	1.9%
Barnet	1	1.0%

Brent	1	1.0%
Bromley	1	1.0%
Enfield	1	1.0%
Redbridge	1	1.0%
Southwark	1	1.0%
Wandsworth	1	1.0%
Other		
Kent	2	1.9%
East London	2	1.9%
Sittingbourne (Kent)	1	1.0%
South East	1	1.0%
Total	**105**	**100.0%**

Age group

5-11	9	8.3%
12-15	58	53.7%
16-19	33	30.6%
20-24	8	7.4%
25+	0	0.0%
Total	**108**	**100%**

Have you ever been to the Barbican Centre before?

Yes	88	89.8%
No	9	9.2%
I don't know	1	1.0%
Total	**98**	**100%**

Appendix 2: Participant focus group questions
NB This schedule was used as a guide for the semi-structured focus groups. Not all questions were asked in full to all groups.

<u>**Discussion Guide: Unleashed Participants**</u>

We are interested in why you took part in Unleashed, but also in why your friends might not have been interested in taking part in a project like this. We want to know what we can do to encourage young people who might not be interested in arts and music to get involved with stuff at Barbican.
Get into pairs- have 5 minutes to discuss:

Imagine you were talking to a friend who hasn't ever done a project like this try and explain why you think they should and what good stuff happened for you while you were taking part.

Person A is trying to persuade them, person B isn't interested or is unsure. Why does person B not want to take part? Are there any of your friends that wouldn't want to do a project like this, if so imagine person B is one of these friends.

Come up with 2 good reasons for taking part and 1 reason from person B why they don't want to take part. Did you persuade person B to join in?

Share reasons back to group (when sharing prompt- qu expand on why any of their friends might not take part in arts activities and what they think we could do to change this)

How do you think the rehearsal process changes when you are working towards a performance and how important is it to you that this project ended with a public, professional performance?
(prompt for younger groups- did you enjoy the performance? Do you enjoy rehearsals and why? etc)
What do you think makes a good artist leader?
Do you think you learned or developed any other skills through taking part in this project? What did you learn from the project?
If you became the artistic director of the whole of Barbican Centre and were in charge of everything-what would you have changed about Unleashed to make it even better? What things do you think make a project successful?

<u>**Extra Questions - If needed:**</u>

What did you expect before you started? Did the project meet those expectations?
Did your artistic skills improve through taking part in Unleashed?
Did this project inspire you to try something new/ try a new art form?
Do you think Unleashed was a professional working environment? If so how and why?
Has the project changed what you would like to do professionally? And how?
How important is being involved in arts, music, drama or dance to you?

Discussion Guide: Ensemble (non-Unleashed) Participants

We are interested in why you take part in this ensemble, but also in why your friends might not have been interested in taking part in a project like this. We want to know what we can do to encourage young people who might not be interested in arts and music to get involved with stuff at the Barbican. (any reasons not to take part in Unleashed?)

Get into pairs- have 5 minutes to discuss:

> Imagine you were talking to a friend who hasn't ever done a project like this try and explain why you think they should and what good stuff happened for you while you were taking part.

> Person A is trying to persuade them, person B isn't interested or is unsure. Why does person B not want to take part? Are there any of your friends that wouldn't want to do a project like this, if so imagine person B is one of these friends.

> Come up with 2 good reasons for taking part and 1 reason from person B why they don't want to take part. Did you persuade person B to join in?

> Share reasons back to group (when sharing prompt- qu expand on why any of their friends might not take part in arts activities and what they think we could do to change this)

How do you think the rehearsal process changes when you are working towards a performance and how important is it to you that some projects end with a public, professional performance?

(prompt for younger groups- do you enjoy the performing? Do you enjoy rehearsals and why? etc)

What do you think makes a good artist leader?

Do you think you learn or develop any other skills through taking part in this project? What do you learn from this project?

What things do you think make a project successful?

Extra Questions - If needed:

> What did you expect before you started? Did the project meet those expectations?

> Did your artistic skills improve through taking part in Unleashed?

> Did this project inspire you to try something new/ try a new art form?

> Do you think Unleashed was a professional working environment? If so how and why?

> Has the project changed what you would like to do professionally? And how?

> How important is being involved in arts, music, drama or dance to you?

Appendix 3: Statistical Data: Participant Feedback Forms

Was this project well organised?

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
42	40	25	4	3	114
36.8%	35.1%	21.9%	3.5%	2.6%	100%

Was this project enjoyable?

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
82	24	8	0	0	114
71.9%	21.1%	7.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Was this project inspiring?

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
73	31	5	3	1	113
64.6%	27.4%	4.4%	2.7%	0.9%	100%

Was this project special/different from other events?

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
78	25	10	0	0	113
69.0%	22.1%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

I enjoyed collaborating with other Barbican ensemble groups

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
82	29	5	0	0	116
70.7%	25.0%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

I developed new skills by working towards a performance

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
62	35	13	6	0	116
53.4%	30.2%	11.2%	5.2%	0.0%	100%

Our group leaders were helpful and supportive

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
77	26	10	1	0	114
67.5%	22.8%	8.8%	0.9%	0.0%	100%

I learnt new skills through taking part in Unleashed

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
62	26	15	9	2	114
54.4%	22.8%	13.2%	7.9%	1.8%	100%

I developed my existing skills through taking part in Unleashed

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
74	24	13	1	2	114
64.9%	21.1%	11.4%	0.9%	1.8%	100%

I developed life skills (e.g. teamwork, leadership, communication) through taking part

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total

54	32	20	10	0	116
46.6%	27.6%	17.2%	8.6%	0.0%	100%

I learnt about creating a professional production through taking part in Unleashed

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
70	27	14	3	0	114
61.4%	23.7%	12.3%	2.6%	0.0%	100%

I learnt about how a professional production is produced

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
64	29	17	3	2	115
55.7%	25.2%	14.8%	2.6%	1.7%	100%

I am interested in attending more arts events / performances in the future as a result of taking part

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
92	12	9	1	0	114
80.7%	10.5%	7.9%	0.9%	0.0%	100%

I am excited about performing on the Barbican Theatre stage today

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
95	13	7	0	0	115
82.6%	11.3%	6.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

I feel like I belong to a community of young artists at the Barbican

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
78	26	10	0	1	115
67.8%	22.6%	8.7%	0.0%	0.9%	100%

Are you interested in pursuing a career in the arts?

Yes	No	Not sure	Response Count
82	0	30	112
73.2%	0.0%	26.7%	100%

Would you consider studying the arts at college or university level?

Yes	No	Not sure	Response Count
62	11	35	108
57.4%	10.2%	32.4%	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in performing in a large scale theatre production?

Definitely increased confidence	64	66.7%
Probably increased confidence	21	21.9%
No effect on confidence	6	6.3%
Already confident	4	4.2%
Probably decreased confidence	1	1.0%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	96	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in your skills in the art form you most often work in / your ensemble?

Definitely increased confidence	45	47.4%
Probably increased confidence	37	38.9%
No effect on confidence	8	8.4%
Already confident	5	5.3%
Probably decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	95	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in working with young people from other art forms?

Definitely increased confidence	54	56.3%
Probably increased confidence	27	28.1%
No effect on confidence	11	11.5%
Already confident	4	4.2%
Probably decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	96	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in working with professionals from the creative industry?

Definitely increased confidence	53	55.8%

Probably increased confidence	30	31.6%
No effect on confidence	8	8.4%
Already confident	3	3.2%
Probably decreased confidence	1	1.1%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	95	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in communicating and presenting your own ideas?

Definitely increased confidence	42	43.8%
Probably increased confidence	33	34.4%
No effect on confidence	15	15.6%
Already confident	4	4.2%
Probably decreased confidence	2	2.1%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	96	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in working creatively as a group?

Definitely increased confidence	50	52.1%
Probably increased confidence	30	31.3%
No effect on confidence	8	8.3%
Already confident	6	6.3%

Probably decreased confidence	2	2.1%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	96	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in working collaboratively?

Definitely increased confidence	53	56.4%
Probably increased confidence	28	29.8%
No effect on confidence	8	8.5%
Already confident	5	5.3%
Probably decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	94	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in leading group work?

Definitely increased confidence	36	37.9%
Probably increased confidence	33	34.7%
No effect on confidence	23	24.2%
Already confident	3	3.2%
Probably decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	95	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in attending/visiting arts events?

Definitely increased confidence	50	52.6%
Probably increased confidence	25	26.3%
No effect on confidence	12	12.6%
Already confident	8	8.4%
Probably decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	95	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in working towards a deadline?

Definitely increased confidence	51	55.4%
Probably increased confidence	24	26.1%
No effect on confidence	13	14.1%
Already confident	4	4.3%
Probably decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	92	100%

Did taking part in Unleashed affect your confidence in taking your interest in performing further?

Definitely increased confidence	58	61.1%
Probably increased confidence	25	26.3%

No effect on confidence	5	5.3%
Already confident	6	6.3%
Probably decreased confidence	1	1.1%
Definitely decreased confidence	0	0.0%
Total	95	100%

Did Unleashed meet your expectations?

Exceeded expectations	55	50.9%
Met all expectations	29	26.9%
Met some expectations	23	21.3%
Did not meet expectations	1	0.9%
Total	75	100%

How would you rate the process of the making of the production overall?

Excellent	57	55.9%
Good	34	33.3%
Mixed	10	9.8%
Not Good	1	1.0%
Terrible	0	0.0%
Total	102	100%

Appendix 4: Statistical Data: Artist Leader Feedback Forms

What career stage do you consider yourself to be at?

Still in training	17.6%	3
Early-career	35.3%	6
Mid-career	17.6%	3
Established	29.4%	5
Total	100%	17

Was this project well organised?

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
4	4	9	0	0	17
23.5%	23.5%	52.9%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Was this project enjoyable

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
11	2	3	1	0	17
64.7%	11.8%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%	100%

Was this project inspiring?

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
13	2	2	0	0	17
76.5%	11.8%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Was this project special/different from other events?

Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	Mixed	Probably not	Definitely not	Total
14	3	0	0	0	17

| 82.4% | 17.6% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100% |

Taking part in Unleashed has inspired me to take my practice further / in a new direction

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
5	8	2	1	1	17
29.4%	47.1%	11.8%	5.9%	5.9%	100.0%

I learnt something new as a result of collaborating with other Creative Learning ensembles

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
12	2	3	0	0	17
70.6%	11.8%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

I have developed skills which will be useful in my future (career / personal) through taking part

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
9	4	3	1	0	17
52.9%	23.5%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%	100.0%

Taking part in Unleashed has changed the way I see my role as an ensemble leader

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
3	6	7	1	0	17
17.6%	35.3%	41.2%	5.9%	0.0%	100.0%

My relationship with the ensemble I most often work with was strengthened through taking part

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
14	1	2	0	0	17
82.4%	5.9%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

My relationship with Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning was strengthened through taking part

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
10	3	3	1	0	17
58.8%	17.6%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%	100.0%

I feel my ensemble and I are part of a community of ensembles at Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
12	5	0	0	0	17
70.6%	29.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

The production achieved the same standards of professionalism and excellence as the rest of the Barbican programme

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
13	2	2	0	0	17
76.5%	11.8%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants learnt something new as a result of collaborating with other Creative Learning ensembles

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
13	2	2	0	0	17
76.5%	11.8%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Unleashed was a good opportunity to train and develop the young peoples' specific art-form skills as well as collaborative skills

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
10	5	2	0	0	17
58.8%	29.4%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants gained confidence in working with young people from other arts forms through participating in Unleashed

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
14	0	3	0	0	17
82.4%	0.0%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants gained confidence in working with professionals from creative industries

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
10	6	1	0	0	17
58.8%	35.3%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants' self-management (time management, flexibility, sense of responsibility) improved through participating in this project

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
7	4	5	1	0	17
41.2%	23.5%	29.4%	5.9%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants' ability to work as part of a team improved through participating in this project

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total

8	6	3	0	0	17
47.1%	35.3%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants were required to think creatively to overcome challenges throughout this project

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
8	5	3	1	0	17
47.1%	29.4%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants were exposed to new experiences as a direct result of participation in this project

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
13	4	0	0	0	17
76.5%	23.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants were actively engaged throughout the rehearsal period

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	2	9	2	2	16
6.3%	12.5%	56.3%	12.5%	12.5%	100.0%

Participants were excited about performing on the Barbican Theatre Stage

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
14	3	0	0	0	17
82.4%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

The young peoples' awareness of what the possibilities of art can be were raised through taking part in Unleashed

Strongly Agree	Probably Agree	Mixed	Probably Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
9	6	2	0	0	17
52.9%	35.3%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

How would you rate the process of making the production overall?

Excellent	5	29.4%
Good	8	47.1%
Mixed	4	23.5%
Not Good	0	0.0%
Terrible	0	0.0%
Total	17	100.0%

Appendix 5: Statistical Data: Audience Survey

How did you hear about this event?

Word of mouth	76	39.2%
Other	62	32.0%
Barbican website	32	16.5%
Social Networks	8	4.1%
Barbican email	7	3.6%
Barbican leaflet/brochure	3	1.5%
Mailing list	3	1.5%
Magazine advertising	2	1.0%
Local newspapers	1	0.5%
Total	194	100.0%

Had you heard of the Barbican before coming along to this event?

Yes	164	85.9%
No	27	14.1%
Total	191	100.0%

If yes, have you attended a Barbican event in the last 12 months?

Yes	117	97.5%
No	3	2.5%
Total	120	100.0%

Based on what you saw today, would you come back to the Barbican?

Yes	183	97.9%
No	1	0.5%
Don't know	3	1.6%
Total	187	100.0%

How would you rate the experience?

Very good	167	88.8%
Good	19	10.1%
Neither good nor poor	1	0.5%
Poor	0	0.0%
Very Poor	1	0.5%
Total	188	100.0%

Including today, how many arts events have you attended in the last 12 months?

Just this one	32	16.8%
Two	29	15.2%
Three	33	17.3%
Four to Nine	49	25.7%
Ten or more	48	25.1%
Total	191	100.0%

How many times have done or taken part in any arts or creative activities in the last 12 months, i.e. talks or workshops?

One	19	16.0%
Two	19	16.0%
Three	29	24.4%
Four to Nine	22	18.5%
Ten or more	30	25.2%
Total	119	100.0%

Gender

Female	134	76.6%

Male	41	23.4%
Total	175	100.0%

Which of the following age groups do you belong to?

Under 16	4	2.3%
16-19	19	10.9%
20-24	29	16.7%
25-34	50	28.7%
35-44	22	12.6%
45-54	30	17.2%
55-64	13	7.5%
65 or over	7	4.0%
Total	174	100.0%

What borough of London or region of the UK do you live in?

Hackney	11	10.3%
Haringey	10	9.3%
Tower Hamlets	9	8.4%
Newham	9	8.4%
Wandsworth	7	6.5%
Lewisham	6	5.6%
Islington	6	5.6%
Camden	6	5.6%
Southwark	6	5.6%
Waltham Forest	5	4.7%
Enfield	5	4.7%
Barking and Dagenham	5	4.7%

Swale/Kent	2	1.9%
Barnet	2	1.9%
Greenwich	2	1.9%
Hammersmith & Fulham	2	1.9%
Bromley	1	0.9%
Bath & Northeast/Somerset	1	0.9%
Bexley	1	0.9%
City of London	1	0.9%
Westminster	1	0.9%
Harrow	1	0.9%
Kingston Upon Thames	1	0.9%
Leicester City Council/Leicestershire	1	0.9%
Kensington & Chelsea	1	0.9%
Nottingham City Council/Nottinghamshire	1	0.9%
Brent	1	0.9%
Horsham/West Sussex	1	0.9%
Richmond Upon Thames	1	0.9%
Lambeth	1	0.9%
Total	107	100.0%

What is your ethnic group?

Asian or Asian British	7	4.5%
Black or Black British	54	34.8%
Chinese	2	1.3%
Mixed - Any Other Mixed Background	2	1.3%

Mixed - White and Asian	4	2.6%
Mixed - White and Black African	3	1.9%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	2	1.3%
Other Black Background	2	1.3%
Other, please specify	8	5.2%
White - Other	24	15.5%
White British	42	27.1%
White Irish	5	3.2%
Total	155	100.0%