

Washroom Talk 4 (temporary transcript)

Location: Tate Liverpool
Date: 29th of November 2007
Time: 19:00 – 20:00
Participants: Anna Manzano
Honor Donnelly
Charlotte Tupper
Emily Voelker (Lilly Lotus)
Mary Fitzpatrick
Transcribed by: Marion Githegi

"Art is the perception of art. (Statement Washroom Talk 4)" What is the importance of art in culture and the cultural development of the human society? What is the importance of the Turner Prize when it comes to art and culture?"

9.37 mins

Emily: Whose actually seen the turner prize?

Mary: I have

Honor: I've read about them, I've not been there coz I don't live in London. Its not easy access, I do go to galleries in London, but I've been here before to a few other things. But it's not just about visiting galleries is it?

Emily: Yeah, don't you read about art and stuff?

Honor: Well yeah, I mean what do you do? I mean I think I'm quite a creative person.

Anna: How?

Honor: How! Errr I draw probably quite badly and I'm in the process of doing a families piece, but I'm not going to say exactly what it is, because it will give it away to my audience, who will actually think its gonna be very **perverse**, errr and it isn't necessarily, so err.

Mary: What's your name again?

Honor: Honor, and I write poetry.

Mary: Oh that's an amazing name!

Honor: Yeah [Laughs]

Mary: I like your style

Honor: I don't think I got a style...

Mary: No I mean your, here I am ness.

Honor: Errmm I just come to do this so, there's no point of being miserable is there, I'm not just going to sit here and say nothing. But you know I don't know what you want to talk about, I kind of got ideas that you know, where I come from, nobody is encouraged, I come from a very working class background, and from my parents background, I wouldn't even call them working class. They were shit poor, they wouldn't even be allowed...

11.15.01

Charlotte: That's a good phrase

Honor: It is!

Charlotte: They weren't working class they were SHIT POOR!

Honor: They were shit poor! They really were yeah, but erm, lots of people don't have either the chance to get to galleries because they can't afford the fair, or they're always in London, or I mean there are galleries where I live, it try to get all the people into them, and try to get them to participate and actually be creative is a whole new thing in itself.

Charlotte: Maybe it's coz of the whole gallery aspect of it though...like...

Honor: Well its so snotty, it started of with the champagne.....

Emily: Absolutely!

Honor:And I love champagne, but so, what's that got to do with it?

0:12:38:06

Emily: Err yeah, I think this is what I want to say somewhere, coz I always end up, I know a lot of people who do, coz I work at the fax centre just down there.

Charlotte: Oh I've just been there

Anna: DO you live here?

Emily: And I work as a community artist, and I do stuff that involves people, and you get a, its just so snotty and exclusive, and it makes me so angry. And there was this one thing, a fact that there was this woman, I mean anything of art is very supportable, but its that she had no wonder to vigor and for films, and she just basically traveled to Israel and to, to south America to find trance, whilst in the (something) when we did art there was this whole bolestry project which was local, and involved hundreds of people, and also this part of it which was little, but that place had so many visitors, but that's not important

Charlotte: Yeah it's the artist

Emily: Yeah it's the peak

0:13:38:09

Charlotte: Yeah it annoys me so much

Honor: Well if we talk about commercialism, and you know, who can afford to actually go and you know, there's lots of people who can be creative

Charlotte: Well it shouldn't be about money at all, that's the thing, I tend to have, not disrespect but disregard in it, in the art gallery, that's why I prefer Richard Long's work, or Andy Gold's work, who work in nature as such. Like at the moment I've been doing community work as well, and officially I'm a paid artist, and I'm doing workshops with them, art workshops, its got a lot of tax on them but with claim, but the sales have sold, but this whole other séance world, other than just the visual, because that's obviously what they're impaired with. And we had a discussion last week, we took them round Manchester city (something), and they were questioning, well how come this person can go to a gallery and I can't? And they were questioning like, how come they get to be the artist and I'm not? And they just assumed that if your work isn't in the gallery then you're not an artist. And I said you're an artist as well, its not just after three hours you've made stuff, just because its not in a gallery and someone isn't looking at it through a glass frame, or there's a do not touch sign next to it, or a (something), doesn't mean to say that your not an artist.

Honor: Yeah but they're not gonna be allowed that luxury, in the lack of, a life in art, and a life of developing themselves, you know, and flying off to New York to galleries and being sponsor by the likes of, you know, it still isn't going to allow that creativity. Unless its continued and that becomes a political thing.

Charlotte: I don't find that creative anymore, you know, flying off to different countries, and having your way, you know I'm probably just saying that, its not as if I've done it. If I did have the opportunity, but I'll need a hand as well. Just having in a gallery, in a gallery, oohh yeah four walls, tadah, lets have your work in there, oohh yeah, another gallery it's a cube, its got white walls, lets put your work in there. It's just boring, like...

All: Ooohh dear!!!

Anna: Just come in come in.

Honor: I think these are natural brakes aren't they, its break time, time for a cup of tea.

Charlotte: Would you like to come in and join the discussion?

Anonymous (Liverpoolean accent): I actually just wanted to go to the toilet!

0:15:45:16

Charlotte: Oh, it's the next door

Anna: When you've **shambethed**, you can come in and join us.

Anonymous: But there's a sign on there that say's ladies?!

Mary: Yeah take the sign off, yeah give us the sign, we'll hold it there [pointing to chest area]

0:16:28:04

Mary: The last talk was a full moon, and everybody was completely insane, it was, it was completely insane.

Charlotte: I was insane on the full moon

Mary: I was completely insane, I was shouting into the camera, about all kinds

Honor: Well I was planning of having a few drinks before I come in, but I didn't get the chance as soon as I got off the train, and then I've walked it from Liverpool Street.

Mary: Where have you come from?

Honor: Manchester

Mary: Oh right!

Honor: So I've walked it, just got here, round about 7.00pm

Charlotte: I got here this morning

Honor: Did ya? I was planning on coming to do some research at the library, earlier on today, but then I got waylaid, but the I had to do a few other things.

Anna: What are you guys doing?

Anonymous: Are you from Liverpool? Where are you from?

Anna: Yes. Well I'm Austrian, but I am from Liverpool.

Anonymous: Well you live here

0:17:11:17

Anna: Yes

Anonymous: Oh, well you just asked her something

Mary: (Something)

Anna: I study community, community drama!

Anonymous: At Liper? I've been there.

Anna: Oh have you?

Anonymous: Yeah I did that course.

Anna: A couple of years ago?

Anonymous: I did that in 2000 and graduated

Anna: Cool

Anonymous: Community art

Charlotte: Its all about community

Anna: There is no community arts anymore, its called community drama

Anonymous: Oh yeah I know, I'm abit gutted by that

Honor: What is "Community" shortly, what is...community, what is community? I've sort of call them, buzz words that sort f buzz around, and kind, people keep on latching onto the word community, its just disappeared, a lot of the time there is no community.

Mary: Well I think a lot of the communities have been broken up, haven't they.

Charlotte: Well could you let them reformed

Honor: No I don't believe they have

Mary: I think the original communities, I think, a lot of the original communities, I think have purposefully broken up. Especially you know the path finders project.

Honor: No I don't know

0:18:29:07

Mary: Path finders is where they've taken over loads and loads of town streets, towns streets.

Honor: Oh it's like privatization of houses

Mary: It is yeah yeah

Honor: Same sort of thing

Mary: Yeah, it's very shady, very....

Honor: Welcome

Mary: Hello

Honor: This is the ladies room.....just don't trip the wires

0:19:28:20

Mary: I think someone should go upstairs, get a glass of complementary beer for everyone

Charlotte: Its free upstairs isn't it

Mary: Yeah

Anonymous: We should do that, shouldn't we?

Mary: Yeah, yes yeah

Honor: No beer for me

Anna: Yeah neither for me

Anonymous: What no drink?

Honor: I don't mind a drink just no beer

Charlotte: Lets just get drunk, you tube would love it!

Anonymous: Water?

0:19:53:17

Honor: Water's fine

Anonymous: Water?

Mary: Or juice

Honor: Beer

Charlotte: Beer!

Mary: Beers cool

Anonymous: I think I'll have wine if they've got some

Charlotte: Do you want me to come help you?

Mary: There's complementary beers.

Honor: Oh is there?

Mary: That's why I mentioned the beer

Anonymous: Well I want to get the free stuff

Mary: Yeah get the free stuff

Honor: This project is getting delayed while we go get free booze

0:20:40:21

Mary: Oh cool I like this video, do you know, the last talk, actually hope you don't mind me saying, was a little bit boring because they stuck to that very question rigidly for an hour. Where as our convo we've covered sort of, different....

Honor: Well I mean we could stick to it, but I can't remember what it was, that's why I asked him for a copy about it

Mary: Its more interesting to talk around it, isn't it

Honor: Well!

0:21:05:03

Anna: Well I still would like to come to the community thing, what, because my mother tongue is German, and there is, there is no such word as community, the word has very different connotations, so what do you actually mean when you say the word community? Where talking about arts in the community kind of thing.

Ruth: Oh ok

Anna: We started of kind with what do we mean about the word community

Mary: Was that the actual question

Anna & Honor: No, no no no

Honor: That's what I thought

Anna: No

Honor: Can (something) in community art as well

Anna: Can someone define the word community for me

Honor: It's a group of people that have come together for, similar purposes, or share certain things in their lives, you know whether its cultural or ethnicity

Ruth: Location

Honor: or religion, or yeah location, erm background, that kind of thing, it could be anything, it could be anything. Hello, do you want to come and join the art talk? Oh!

[Laughs]

Honor: But I don't know did people call themselves communities, you know 20 years ago, 30 years ago, 40 years ago, I don't think they did actually call themselves a community

Mary: But they were a community

Honor: But they didn't need, they didn't need a label called "community", to actually tell them who they were, where they lived, what they were, you know, and what they were about

0:22:34:05

Ruth: And if you do community based art project and things, it can be quite limiting, quite limiting in a sense to calling community based, because all sorts of connotations, don't you think, get attached

[Laughs]

Ruth: I'm actually not allowed alcohol because I'm on medication, but I'll watch you drink it though

Mary: Is it errmm, the idea of doing community art, is it a way for other classes to patronize.

Honor: No I'm with you on that one

Mary: I mean is this not a way for middle class to sort of, in our curatorial world, sort of patronizing those...

Honor: Oh we'll invite you into our company

Ruth: I completely agree, I think it's like a return to the Victorian ideals

Honor: I don't in fact, people shouldn't do it, I think it's got to be done in some way, you've got to....

Charlotte: The education theme in the art gallery is really good

Honor: Its fantastic coz it gets them used to those kind of places, and they don't feel that there in places they don't belong anymore or.....

All: Cheers!

Charlotte: And its free, it's so much better

Mary: I know! It is, isn't it, I love the Kanes, have you been to the brewery?

0:27:04:10

Honor: I was going to raise the subject of women artists, and you know women in art, anyway, so erm, and the difficulties the women have, there aren't too many Tracey Evans about in the world are there?

0:27:15:12

Mary: Well this is why I (something) talked about in the last talk you see, because I actually went and made a complete with the Tate. Sorry I don't know if any of you actually work for the Tate, but it was so crazy last time, I was talking about how I wrote this letter of complaint to the Tate, because the last three Curated shows were about the history of Britain, you know, and they hardly had any women in these exhibitions at all; And erm I sent my letter, and I never heard anything back from them

0:28:23:11

Mary: But his community in the history of Britain show, there was just photograph after photograph after photograph taken by middle class blokes' right, who of erm, of working class communities, I don't know if you saw that exhibition

Honor: I probably, yeah I did yeah

Mary: It was on unbelievable; it was basically loads of like....

Honor: I'm not against, I'm not against that their lives are documented, but you know who in the working class would necessarily run the camera in those days...

Emily: What would be a good idea, yeah, is give people cameras, and they can go out, and if they don't know how, it's not difficult to take photos

Mary: But that's another, in a way is that another way of patronizing people who are excluded from that. I mean when I walked round the exhibition, I was looking at all the wall space that was given to all these blokes, right; there was literally big selection of photographs by the usual brigade. And there were a lot of pictures, and it was sort of like, the history of Britain was completely represented by one section of our society. It was really unbelievable

Honor: Well that's really just like the **caval** isn't it, you know, in the fact that you know, most of the celebrated writers are men, you know, and it's taken a hell of a long time, for any women writers to actually even be established or even be recognized

Mary: Well you see, I've always seen writing as a lot easier for women than, certainly photography, photography is like a rugby's' club, a rugby club to me, I'm sort of, I've got one foot in the photography world, but well a toe, but the rest of me is in the fine art world

Charlotte: I agree to be honest

Mary: Yeah, photography is just pure rugby
0:30:33:22

Charlotte: Its more masculine in photography, where as writing I always see as more emotional, and emotive and I associate that more with women

Mary: Well, I mean I don't...

Charlotte: I mean I'm not trying to generalize at all, but I see women writers as being a lot more...

Honor: But that's what writings about

Charlotte: Yeah completely, obviously

Honor: It depends, you know, obviously there are styles, you know, men write in particular ways, that doesn't mean they haven't been able to write women characters, but you know they right in particular ways

Mary:

Honor: You know that is to say something, that you know, if you're a famous male writer, your somehow more intelligent than women

Emily: I'm wondering about it. So we are women and are aloud to do the same things as men, and we can do the same things as men

Mary: But we're not, I don't think we are

Emily: But then maybe, the stuff that becomes great art or something that is mostly respected, seems to be done by most of the time by men, most of the time. Is it because A, women just aren't as good as men, or is it because the standard are all just male standards, and women are just different, women are different, why is it?

Anna: I think its just in the history, men had more opportunities to write, so probably the better writers are men

Honor: Maybe more prolific because they've had more opportunity, but not better,

Mary: It's the filtering system, the filtering, because both male and female curators I believe actually have an ingrained filtering system that operates for white middle class male practitioners, and that's my opinion

Emily: I think that's true

0:32:30:15

Mary: There's a filtering system going, now I wrote about this on, on....

Honor: I mean there's another name for that filtering system, isn't there, I don't think they've sort of come up with some great term for it, but its some kind of acceptance for patriarchy, isn't it, by women. I don't think it's a filtering, I think they've accepted it purely as its presented to them

Mary: But somewhere along the, like the Chinese art, I mean I've wrote to the Tate about the Chinese art show, the Chinese art show here

Charlotte: I saw the real thing

Mary: It was really good, but, there was only one female in the show, and I couldn't find her work actually, I don't even think it was in the galleries, it was somewhere else

Charlotte: To be fare the exhibition wasn't created amazingly, because I missed half the work, and I came to see it as part of my degree work, and I missed half the work coz it was tucked away so, coz there weren't any spaces, but its difficult though with that, because it depends doesn't it, because if you do the history of Britain its obviously gonna be more males than women, because women were repressed back in the day

Anna: Yeah that's what I was gonna say

Charlotte: If you go and do an art exhibition at the moment about 20th century art, your going to have equal numbers of women if not more, because obviously....

Emily: But the thing

Charlotte: In modern day

Emily: Yeah they are now but I still think they do different things, if we're still in the world of creating things, **its gonna be** men, because obviously they're more.... I mean are you gonna be making things, or are you gonna be making babies. But I also think that women make things differently, and they don't, I think women are different from men, that they make different things, that they don't fit in the [pause]....

[Laughs]

....man world of things that is is is of being good, because even when women weren't making jobs they were making things, so erm I don't know, they were always making things and creating things all the time, but its nothing that would....

0:34:32:17

Honor: Yeah but women have always worked, women have always worked, there's nothing new in that, its just that there work was never recognized

Mary: There work has never been recognized. Exactly!

Honor: And women work now, and they work longer hours because they do a lot more, and the kind of work they do, particularly working class women, there not then able to go and take time off, if you like, because the men would go and take time off, and you know, book a time in **Amerdahide** or something.

Mary: But I'll tell you something, the Curators of the Chinese art show were women, the Curator of the British History show was also a woman, and there was another show that was also Curated by a woman. And its just amazing, I find that amazing, you know, especially, especially, especially when you think, not that....

Honor: Well they got through the erm, the plastic scene....

Mary: Well its funny you know because....

Honor:not necessarily the glass one

Mary:The Curator of the History of Britain show, I spoke to her and I said to her, you know, her Curitorial was pretty right wing you see

0:36:11:07

Mary: But yeah I mean, you know, what really gets me, say for example, now I thought retraining as an architect, I thought well I'll research it and see if I'm ok in getting a job in it. So I looked it up, and sure enough there's loads on the internet, if you have a look. According to Riba more than 40% of people studying architecture are female, but less than 6 working architects are female, so somewhere in between studying and going for the job, they all leave. And according to Riba, the royal institute of whatever architecture blah blah

Emily: That's insane, sorry!

Mary: Yep, yep, this is a fact, now that's the same with....

Charlotte: Wait what's the reason? What excuse do they give?

Mary: Oh oh well child birth, that's the excuse you see. So all women go and do 7 years of architecture, and then they all leave to make babies.

0:37:11:15

[Laughs]

Anna: So if you want to have a baby.....

Mary: So about 12% of registered architects, I only know these stats coz I erm, I was erm, you know looking, coz I had a whole issue with the article, that's a whole other story, so erm

Charlotte: Is there anybody you haven't wrote a complaint to....

Mary: Well it's important isn't it

Charlotte: It is important

Honor: Its about getting women into, well not only through the glossing, but doing all sorts of things, for themselves, and also being responsible for themselves, and actually whether its getting the fund raising or you know, pressurizing galleries to take work or

Mary: I think it's a big issue in the creative, across the creative board, it's a big issue

Honor: But you know your widely **outside** all kind of careers but

Mary: But across the creative

Honor: But you know, we have not had that, you know, problem for a long time, and we hope you now, I think I'm including you as well, your generation, coz I'm a generation older, erm probably two generations older now, looking round, had a lot and took a time. And your going to have the class and some other things as well, but erm, that make things more difficult. But we're talking about now, where are we going now, what what what are women doing in art and what is art doing for women?

Emily: DO you know what I think I think though, I think its better, I think its slightly better I think its slightly better in Europe, well mainly in Europe, I find, I don't know what I find, what was that accent, I found out, maybe I don't, maybe I'm

talking shit, I talk a lot of shit, but maybe I find England is a little bit more or Britain is a little bit more chauvinistic, in that kind of way, and I find

Mary: They're a bit backward, yeah

Emily: And I find in Europe its much more erm....for example, I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing, but in Germany women are more, define themselves by what they do than what they're working as at the time, so yeah that's one thing

0:39:29:05

Mary: So why do you think the difference is between kind of cities, like London and erm Manchester, you know, and the kind of opportunities that women have in different cities, you know. My kids have all moved, and gone to London because there are no opportunities specifically where we live, there is no opportunities what so ever. I'm actually there seen as completely odd bald, because they work in, well two of them work in theatre and....

Mary: I thought you were going to say two of them work in architecture

[Laughs]

Honor: No one of his friends does, no but erm, it's a male, male but it's a **cashmere**, so erm, covers that sort of thing, but err, my girls in particular. One of them is in art and the other in theatre, so, and they've had to go south to work

Charlotte: I don't think there's not opportunities in the north completely, its not the same as London, but I do think. You mean the gender issues or just opportunities?

Honor: Well there's generally opportunities, there's generally less opportunities in creative industries and things like that, err and I think that still knocks on for women in particular you know.....

Charlotte: You see I haven't related to any

Honor: I don't know there not really interested in being strip tease artists or something like that, so err there shouldn't be plenty of work in that area

Charlotte: I think its just me, but I haven't gone into the area that I wanted to be working right, I haven't noticed any gender problems

Mary: What area do you want to go into

Charlotte: Something to do with arts for health, which is mainly women dominated

[All talk at once]

0:41:40:04

Charlotte: I don't know any men that do it apart from one guy who does the sound, like musicians, no art at all its all volume based

0:41:47:04

Mary: Do you know virtually all the male art I get from the photography gallery in London, in the main gallery its usually solo male art, usually, I would love to see the whole history of the photographers gallery, I could I could, then I could work out my stats you know. But erm but every community project is mostly a female practitioner. So the genius the "big" guys in the gallery

Anna: But you could also formulate that in that way that, well at least I feel deeply, like women see what the important thing is, and the important thing in the end is not be a solo artist but is

Charlotte: Is to give

Anna: Yeah yeah

[All speak at once]

Charlotte: Its not what the worlds about, if the world was about doing everything solo, there wouldn't be another eighteen thousand billion other people on this planet with us, its about interaction with other people and communication, and not about being in a little cage by ourselves

[All speak at once]

Honor: I'm really glad you said its all about communication because that's what art is about

[All speak at once]

Honor: It's about what's inside one person, but if your communicating to a vast audience and, I don't know. I've had a lot of people particularly in Manchester who tell me that communication is a bad thing, apparently people are meant o be stuck in little boxes and aren't allowed to communicate

Charlotte: It's all about communication that's what it is

Emily:I'm right and I'm going to make so so much money for being a total self centered twat, and I'm gonna feel good about that, because I'm going to have a great status in my life

Charlotte: No your going to be a boring old shit, that's going to have no social skills what so ever

0:43:47:20

Honor: If you don't kiss ass, basically, your told that you don't fit with all the kinda powers that you know, that have, I don't know, the way with all, to actually give you the some kind of platform for your art, or something like that

Mary: Well I think it's important

Honor: Or they hose it off the wall if you paint it somewhere, like what's his name

Emily:

Honor: Yeah yeah

Mary: Who

Honor: Yeah, I mean that's one of the things I do, I go round Manchester photographing graphytie

Emily: Oh yeah

Honor: Errm I don't think I got any **Meese** I don't think I got that far, but erm, I've got loads of graffiti stuff

Mary: There's a bank sea in Liverpool

Charlotte: There's loads in Manchester

Honor: I've done quite a lot on Boaldon Street

Charlotte: Yeah he's got some stuff up there

Honor: Well I might have done, I don't know if its his but I've got quite a lot of, coz I've photographed it's like on the bottom, its not getting kind of washed over or painted over or something

Mary: But I think its important to know the reality of things as a practitioner, I said it's important to know the reality of things, the reality of the working of things

[All talk at once]

0:55:58:03

Jay: That's very funny

[Laughs]

Jay: That's very funny

Mary: What were you saying about him? You saying that he's a flirt

Anna: I don't think you've been listening, have you?

Honor: We've covered everything from the CIA to gun crime

Jay: It was very very funny, it was amazingly funny

Mary: Which bit? Where they're talking about you?

Jay: No, the most funny bit was when they moved the camera and arh arh, it looked very good in the box, oh oh what was that

Mary: Oh well that's all right then

Jay: That was really super good

Honor: Its been fun, it's abit hot

Jay: It should be on Youtube, on Sunday or Monday, Monday or Sunday

Mary: Oh can I show my work at the Tate?

Jay: I can show your work on here

Mary: Coz the Tate won't let me in so, does that get my work in the Tate?

Honor: I am my work

Mary: I need some cello tape, yeah I'm going to bring in a set of cards, and have an exhibition in the toilets

[All speak]

Mary: Where can I have my exhibition?

0:58:27:10

Honor: Can I just

Jay: We're gonna have it on the website anyway

Emily: No show it properly, this bit here

Jay: Lesbians and gays against the Nazis

Emily: Yeah

Jay: Only lesbian and gays are against the Nazis

[All speak at once]

Honor: That was so much fun Jay

Jay: It was fun yeah?

Honor: I actually got round to answering the question

Mary: It was a more interesting conversation this time than last time I have to say

Emily: Was it boys last time?

Mary: It was a boring conversation, we were just talking about art for a whole hour, h my God, very serious yeah, no one could get in a word

Honor: Well there you go then, I'm not very serious, well I am I am

Mary: Well you kinda forget where you are

[The giving of soap and art cards]

[Socializing]

Jay: Over!