

MINUTES: OPEN HALL 2, vibe check-transcription by Ruth Buchanan

From everywhere we arrive.

OPEN HALL

MINUTES

Location. Location. Location.
Is also a time line is also specific
Is also a time line
Is also a feeling
(PLACE> Where you at?)

Location Location Location

Let the question simmer
Let the chime chime
Rise
Raise
Rise
Raise

Chime

Pause

READING:

Agent 1: In February 2020, amidst the rising urgency surrounding the rapidly increasing global transmission rate of the identified coronavirus disease, Aotearoa reports its first cases of COVID-19. On 11th March, the World Health Organisation officially declares a global pandemic. A mere two weeks later Aotearoa would completely close its borders, as the country entered Level 4 alert and complete lockdown. Within this turbulent new context, extremities within or current social schema are pushed even further. Within Aotearoa and further afield globally, the social and cultural issues that inform our daily lives develop a proximity that is inseparable. Decolonial activisms, Black Lives Matter movements, Anti-Trump movements, capitalist critique, environmentalist action are now conflated under the clouded impact of a global health warning. Political ripples are not only felt simultaneously they are now completely conflated. WITHIN SUCH A CLIMATE:

WHAT CAN ARTISTS DO?

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

Agent 2: (love all these thinking faces)

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

Agent 2: (love all these thinking faces)

Agent 3: Disappearance (an option?)

Agent 1: I have some thoughts (a feather in my pocket for instance)

Agent 2: Start. But I'm not an artist. But start. Start: Artists could support each other?

Agent 4: (artists could support each other)

Agent 2: If we've learnt anything it is artists need to/could self organise. Town Hall is a gesture in that direction, to see where that leads us.

OPEN OPEN OPEN OPEN OPEN: ACT?

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

(Agent 5, coffee cup, large waves behind. Is this real? Float, feather in pocket, rise, raise, rise)

Agent 1: I ask it like that because that's how I feel it as a citizen. Art can help manage, art can help the experience, art can help manage, conflation. For example. As a maker. As a receiver. (call me?) How does that help me organise, mash up, filter, deal with the fact that implications seem to be contradictory. (The relation is arrows and conflation, things not related become related?)

Agent 2: SILENCE / LEAN

(Agent 6: MUSIC)

Agent 6: IS it happening TO US. Or. Responsibility? What right do you have to address things that aren't specifically your own domain? Travelling to: disempowerment.

ALSO: ECONOMY

Agent 7: New question: Not being an artist? Is that the suggestion that it's something they haven't been doing before? Is it just a bit more...?

Agent 1: Double whammy: Double bind: Tripled. Responsibility. Urgency. Despair. (Feather in my pocket). Various layers. Obligation, is that part of it?

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

Agent 8:(Frontline?) The answer has extremities. It's always been there (this question). It's not come out of nowhere, it's been building. Artists have been addressing this question all along. BUT: CRISIS. Palpable. Distance different places, different realities, legal ramifications of broader CRISIS.

Agent 1:Responsibility feeling?

Agent 8:Committent.

Agent 2: Do institutions have a responsibility? Funding? If artists are independent and therefore don't' have a responsibility, do institutions?

(Agent 9: We all have a responsibility!)

Agent 10: We all have responsibility. Artists do? What can art do? Practical limitations (child care etc). Arresting: Conflations. Where does the work go?

What does it mean. The work of others. Meaning. The work of others. Meaning.
Elevate work that addresses these issues, rather than personal response.

IMPACT?

Robyn Kahukiwa. Gives strength

Institutions = slow

Institutions = slow

Insitution = slow

ENGAGE?

Agent 11:XXXXXXX

Agent 12: Just. Just: What do artists do? Is it a requirement that you change because of the circumstances? Continue. Remain alert. Care. Interconnected = support? Frances Hodgkins, close to death. Blind. POTENT, HOPE, HUMAN PERSISTENCE. Meaning.

Agent 13: Keep doing what you doing. PARALLEL: Begin to divest yourselves from the parts of your artistic life that have very obviously contributed to the situation we are in. (Art) Globalism. Lifestyle. Deranged lifestyle. Institutional responsibility: repurpose as mutual aid? Difficult? Consider these options?

(Agent 9: location?)

Location. Location. Location.

Is also a time line is also specific

Is also a time line

Is also a feeling

(Agent 14: "mutual support")

Agent 15: Just had a thought about institutions which is a little throw away but whatevs. Institutions come from a place of privilege, in my experience the privileged hate apologising, and that's the first step in redressing right?)

Agent 8: Any institutions implementing change? Power?

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

Agent 1: XXXXX

Agent 16: Touches us. Different experiences of the roving pandemic touches us differently through different lenses. Artists can: Hold Space. Hold Space. Discomfort. Do. Verb: Accheive or complete? (tricky). Value > That is counter < Value. Agent 10 said: Looking to those who've responded. Networks (we are interconnected, the work is there J.C.Sturm). Those answers need space. Talk back. Institutional response? Adequate?

Agent 17: Imagine, what would happen to artists if institutions were to de-fund themselves into a mutual aid model? Repercussions? Change? Repercussions? Change Some. What does that mean for art?

Agent 2: Critique of institutions centre, and not. To have space. Experiences. Art experiences. Rely on institutions to educate, support. But how does that reach the audience? What does the institution do?

Agent 12: Institution (Hot seat). Provide space for artists to make there work. Opportunities. Artists > audiences > space. Artist > audience > space. LIMITATIONS

Agent 17: Binary? Artist / Institutions. Why are they in opposition? Doing? Responding? Urgency? Artists need institutions? Think without institutions?

(Agent 9: When we say institutions do we mean museums? galleries? colleges? Or what? I think artists make institutions when they make "artist run spaces" and sometimes they become institutions...)

Agent 13: Remember: institutions produce artists and vice versa. Institutions presupposes the existence of artists, in that manner. ENTANGLED.

Agent 2: Hot. Capitalism.

Agent 6: Representation vs Community? Intimacy, community, necessity of balance. What can institutions do? Institutions are a space of representation rather than intimacy. Intimacy. Intimacy. Intimacy. Not enough whanaungatanga. Represent, select, represent, select. How can they get the engagement? See yourself in there?

Agent 18: Mental health. For many art = home. Audience, artists and homes. Homes. Large community that sit at the periphery but we need that conversation, to provide this home. Home. Home. Mary Jane Jacobs: clumsy at adapting, should direct A-R-I's, direct funds. Artists in criss = quick. Institutions = slow. Institutions aid quick adaption?

Agent 9: California. Location. Institutions that structure art discourse here are art colleges. Cal arts is important but it's in an epoch making financial crisis (private funding). Artists and teachers: Absolutely adaptable. BUT also, everything is very different in different parts of the world. Out of control pandemic and psychopath and wild fires. Exhibition? WHEN? March..

Agent 2: More mild situation? Exhibitions? Calling in. Vibe check?: Amsterdam, Scotland, London?

Agent 19: Not an artist. Curator. Art history (studies). Communities trying to assert a position, around essential services, transforming into community service? Service? Survival? Getting through? Its always artists that are part of the causalities, particularity in the gig economy. Concerns: how? Art? Capitalism

ART / CAPITALISM
CAPITALISM / ART

(WHAT ARE THESE WITHOUT EACH OTHER? A FEATHER IN A POCKET?)

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

Agent 20: Overwhelming. Overwhelmed (?) Limits? As an artist, the limits, are the same as the limits in life. Strategy: turn to what I'm surrounded by (location). Close attention to what's close. Relationships. Close. Turn to them. Close. Close by.

Agent 21: Do? Do? But doing? What are artists doing? What did we do? It's not speculative. Hold institutions responsible? BLM. Knee jerk: Retrain? Retrain? We ran away from art. Could say a lot that we ran away from art as artists. But as an artist we have skills. Can be utilised.

Agent 2: Art = useful? Impactful? Yet here I am.

Agent 21: Fight. Reflect. Leave the realm of art for a minute? Shape the reflection through leaving. It hasn't been hectic yet but could it be? Hectic? Feeling. Feeling? Feels? Hectic.

Agent 22: Crazy context to be in (England) Numbers = unreliable. Economy. Etc. People / Care. Context. Hard to be in that context. Envy? Realisation: art is survival. Exhibition at Tate Margate. Xxxxxxx backyard art? Made art out of what they could. Assembled in their garden. Art that was made with what you have. Creating regardless...of audience or. Why I make work: it's real power, it's necessity.

Agent 23: The crux: What can we do outside of institutions? Institutions are in crisis. Do artists prop them up or do they find ways to work outside of them. Artists are moulded by institutions but institutions = history = power. What is the future?

Agent 2: Historical precedents of art doing something in times of crisis? Art can communicate through time. Precedents?

Agent 24: St Augustine, City of God. It constantly sits in my mind. Sense of someone writing into the fall of an empire. Nobody knows what's going on. What can we do? Taking note? Look back? Feedback loop? Do things that we don't know what the outcome will be. But take note. And move forward.

Agent 25: Back to Agent 2: Working at a big institution. Slow beast. But a lot of resources and energy go into it. If you want work acquired and cared for...The multi use of an institution, becoming a civil defence headquarters ---> relationship with community ---> assumption that art will save us. A lot of weight. Should it be the case? Funding priorities: make people feel better, stop homelessness...Expectations placed on the artist are ridiculous...but this funding is also not only for artists. Expectations placed on artists, that produce responsibility, is that we want? Need?

WANT / NEED

WANT / NEED

WANT / NEED

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

Agent 8: Challenge to globalisation. Aotearoa's geography >>> world. Challenges. Economies shift. Long term impacts of what we're going through. This is only the beginning. Here: institutions become important, that relationship, because of the support they offer artists. Opportunities to develop work. Challenges will increase. The future of this situation. The future? Challenges? Isolation. Isolation. Isolation. Has been a critical part of art history here, will that happen again?

Agent 17:What is the experience now of being a really young artist (student)?

Agent 26: Response. I'm young. It's bad here (Amsterdam).On a residency. Institutional response? Extend residency. Funding: Government = Bad/Okay. Studios remain open, a privilege. Crazy context, numbers outside. Utopia inside Dystopia outside (numbers go up, orange, orange, orange). Working is hard though. Safety? Looking for it. Feeling it? Feeling. Feeling. Feeling. Feeling. Try to help each other as artists. What can artists do: Try survive. Personal practice is shifting, so more focused on community. Share? Talk? Do: share, talk? Come back to the studio space. Utopia

STUDIO / UTOPIA
productivity?

Agent 2: Mark Fischer. Children of Men. World is falling apart. Rich house: What use is culture if there is no one to look at it? Productivity now = struggle. Struggle to produce. And also a crisis of audience. Is there a crisis of audience?

Is that: ART / CAPITALISM
CAPITALISM / ART

Agent 1: I work in institutions. Art school. Revealed: perfect evil machine. Hopes, ambitions, dissapate in bureaucracies...Problematic structures inherent in a place like this...From the inside: I've been looking back at things on the outside: Music. Musicians who embody the freedom to respond to the situation in a way I can't, I enjoy a lot of privilege yes, but also wade through a lot. WANT/NEED/SPEED. WANT/NEED/SPEED? Historical precedents: the power of reggae music. Born out of state of emergency, absolute poverty, oppression. Response: Full frontal. Clarity is a hot commodity (clear, clear, Let the chime:

Rise
Raise
Rise
Raise)

Acumen to articulate that clarity. RIP TOOTS. Tools of clarity. Global response = remind me actually that loss of life should not be tolerated. Governments response who didn't save lives. (lucky, geography, etc, but also?) The bottom line is how we tolerate, or excuse the loss of life. No excuse.

Agent 27: (Vancouver) TOOTS : reggae. The haves and have nots. (in) Ability to extricate ourselves from our responsibilities, and the wider social movements we are part of and not. Should? (Responsibility) Institutional worker. Thinking = hoarding of resources? How do we redistribute that. The Pacific ASSOCIATION OF artists run spaces a mutable aid fund for BIPOC artists. Great / Overworked / Overwhelmed.

FAST / SLOW /GROUND

How do your redistribute fund, space, power. POWER. POWER. Return to agent Agent 16: Holding space. Process = slow, but, response = urgent.

Agent 2: Time check.

(WHAT ARE THESE WITHOUT EACH OTHER? A FEATHER IN A POCKET?)

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

(Agent 28: Octavia E Butler Parable of the Sower, very prescient novel, Lauren learns to make Acorn bread. Her mode of learning is survivalist but her learning is not absent of culture. It is absent of art objects (Children of Men). That's the allegorical level. Making bread from a grain never used before. Zoom out, Lauren is reacting to the chaos - coming of age story, I think a deeper and broader definition of culture is absolutely necessary. Also political ripples between a pandemic and climate tipping dynamics produce parallel. She is also in process of redefining her relationship to god, a different bigger picture, overhauling the belief system. Micro and macro level dealt to.)

Agent 29: Rattle vibes. PEOPLE: People. Not cultural facilitators. But people. Clever, patient, passionate, people, that's what we aspire to be as artists if we're not clouded by professional. Or head etc. Would we be willing to start our own educational groups that were free, open to the community, in areas that could benefit from the education that we think we have. That would mean we would be okay with having less resources than we have now. That would mean that: we would be okay with living in a different environment/ we would be okay with the tension / AND Dissonance. Build capacity for people who are not alike, not part of this economy. Patience, committent, passion. Gracious and radical internal conversation we need to have with ourselves. PRACTICAL. Rather than pick open a complex global situation we can do very practical (applications) on the ground. That's very different than what we're used to.

(Agent 30: on that note (following Agent 29),I am glad that being an artist has enabled me a degree of self-sufficiency. For which patience is integral)

(Agent 31:Resonance here for me, more on personal level, interrogating a commitment to grace, compassions and what is of tangible use to my community, and thinking about community at like the closest smallest level, like the 15 people around me. Also very pertinent: becoming okay with having less than we have and being okay with tension)

Agent 7: Mark Fischer. Capitalist Realism. Again. Rising level of depression in capitalist society = serves capitalism + not address systemic function. Idea of devolving functions down to mutual aid serves the capitalist well. Admirable and good. BUT: Hold two ideas in our mind at once

MIND / MIND
MIND / MIND

Demand more form the institutions that exist now. Hold existing power to account before we abandon reform.

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

Agent 2: Spicy.

(Agent 1: Radical Hospitality.)

Agent 32: Critique of the question. Overwhelming. Deaggregate the parts. What was it like to belong to BLM as a movement, and believe in it wholeheartedly. What it is the cost of ongoing and sustained mourning. Agent 1: raising an acceptability of loss was the core of the first wave of BLM. Inorganic intellectualism. The dead body. Needed ways to communicate. Needed a voice. VOICE>. The unacceptable: stolen life was at the core of BLM. The movement needs to figure out its international agenda. Consider: Peter Brandt (?) essay, New Zealand is a space of radical hospitality because of its isolation and

stability. Stitch together? Can't. STITCH. STITCH. Diasporic: Pacific / New Zealand. America / African Continent. Britain /Caribbean. Where is mass death going to affect next? Climax? Coming catastrophe? (How large that is compared to COVID.) Internationalist agendas, not globalist agendas as active in Aotearoa. Connection is the only antidote to mass death that is applied so unequally.

CONNECTION CONNECTION CONNECTION CONNECTION CONNECTION CONNECTION CONNECTION

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE

(Agent 1: Radical Hospitality.)

Agent 33: Follow up? Write responses. Letters to editors. Share. Please. Thank you this takes courage.

Agent 1: How we do things here. As a Māori, so empowering, so comforting. Drawing on Te Ao Māori = solace with radicalisms. Models of connection. Radical. whakawhanaugatanga, manāki.

Agent 32: Give a little, support of, Daniel Satele.

Agent 1: KARAKIA: how we scaffold learning, and come together through that process.

(LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Agent 34: STEAM not STEM

Agent: Shouting into the void...but together.)

End Minutes.