

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

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Karl Taylor (KT): I didn't have any concept of live art or experience of performance until I went to university. My first lecture was with Brian Lobel, who I think was in America at the time so he did a pre-recorded introduction. We had Dominic Johnson who showed us some of his old work where he was naked and had piercings in his head, long chains hanging down to the floor, and red glitter and was pulling them out of his head and bleeding everywhere. He was like 'that was about ballet' and we were like what? I definitely went into university with an ignorant sense of wanting to be an actor and be in the Royal Shakespeare Company. Then, unexpectedly, all of that was in front of me. That was at Queen Mary in London and I think that course does quite well at tricking at people into joining it.

Stephen Greer (SG): [Laughs] You mean they think they're going to study quite a conventional form of theatre and then there's a bit of a switch?

KT: Yes, slightly.

SG: In a positive way [laughs]

KT: Yes, exactly. They said you'll learn to be a practice-based scholar and you're like I don't know what means but let's go. In terms of first impressions, being eighteen and going to London from a tiny little village, it was at that point of possibility, transformation, or blossoming. The fact that I was coming at it kind of confused, like when someone says this is

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

about ballet and you're like no it's not it's about someone putting hooks in his head, that sense of not being able to grasp it didn't feel alienating, it felt like this space of potential. It felt part of that transformational narrative, that this is something I didn't understand but I wanted to keep scrabbling away at it because I could feel myself changing as I did. I think that was definitely the way I met that kind of work. I was like if I don't understand it, I'll enjoy the process of understanding it. I think I've kept that spirit of having transformational experiences instead of didactic, educational processes.

SG: In the context of that programme, were you making your own work? Were you starting to see yourself as a creative producer? You said you'd gone to the course with the idea of becoming an actor, what was the image of yourself as a creative person that came through that experience?

KT: I was always quite academically minded. I knew that I wasn't a very good actor. I think I steadily accepted that as a truth [laughs]. That course is probably seventy-five per cent academic research and twenty-five per cent making as the process of enacting the research. It is in no way a kind of training course, but lots of people come out of Queen Mary who are quite research-minded, like performance as research. Then you've got Figs in Wigs. I think my view of myself in that course was just wanting to do well in the course. I probably still wanted to make work and be an artist for a little while. I still did briefly after university. In the final year of that course, in the module Performance Composition by Lois Weaver, there are about fifteen people in the class and every week they need to make a new performance, but also produce the night. You'd take turns doing each other's tech and someone does front of house. There would be new performance every single week. In those processes, I thought I'm going to be an artist, but I think quite quickly after university the crippling anxiety of going on stage put me off. I thought this feels like it probably won't go away so maybe this isn't for me. When I was at university still I was devouring any opportunity I could because I was in London, I was around all these weird people. One time Brian said I'm doing this show at Artsadmin, I need an assistant, any excuse to do anything and I was there. I wrote a letter to the Live Art Development Agency after my first year asking for an internship. I've still got the letter, it's really cringey. I did an internship there when they were doing that Performance Matters symposium. My internship was mostly getting ready for that and when I was there, I worked with Scottee for the first time. That's where I met

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

Scottee because he was doing this Eat Your Heart Out cabaret. I basically became an extra pair of hands or a groupie when I was at university with all these people, just being there to turn off lights and wash clothes. I ended up being a bit of a stage manager type person just to be close to people I suppose. Even though I never had real understanding of what a producer was, I had that practical comfort. I felt that I'd developed a confidence in seeing jobs that needed to be done and doing them independently. After university I didn't know what I was going to do and I was still working with Scottee and then I'd asked do you know Foxy and Husk, they used to do BUZZCUT? I saw one of her shows in Yard and then I was in a club and I saw her and I was like I love your show, do you want me to be your producer and then she said yes. I was her producer for about three years without any training and then I got the Artsadmin traineeship.

SG: What was it like at Artsadmin? I think I've spoken to a few people for whom Artsadmin was part of their development as artists or as producers in terms of there being an internship or a training programme that they were involved with.

KT: There were a few people who had done it that I was involved with. I think I was being groomed to do it when I was at university because Mary Osborne did it the year before me and she was doing her Masters. I was so keen and offered to be an assistant at the Masters showcase so I knew her from that. Ed Hobbs did it the year before and he used to go out with Rachel Porter from Figs in Wigs, so I knew him from the Figs in Wigs lot. I always saw it as this dream pathway after university and from the beginning of university I kept spending as much time there as I could becoming familiar with the artists and helping them on their projects. That experience there was really amazing. My first project was Amy Sharrocks' massive *Museum of Water* exhibition at Somerset House and I was like previously I've turned off a light switch in the café at Artsadmin and now this is the biggest exhibition I've ever seen in my life at Somerset House. I was like oh my god this is crazy. I did an international festival in Brussels, a show at the Fringe, and did all the arts advisory projects. The scale was totally mind blowing. It was a steep learning curve.

SG: Did you have a mentor during that process? What was the structure of the internship?

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

KT: They've got two arms. There's a producing arm and then the advisory arm and so the traineeship is split half and half, so you do half your time in producing and half your time on advisory and you've got two line managers from each department. You have line managers who check in over the year and set goals and provide support. On each project I had a different project manager. I worked with near enough everyone on some project or other in quite an intense way. It was really interesting to see different styles of producing. The person who writes how they're going to manage every single minute of the day in a neat little circle and then the people who are chaotic. Different strokes for different folks.

SG: The change of context of coming to Scotland, had you been coming up to festivals or events in Scotland like the Fringe and other things prior to moving up here?

KT: Yes, funnily enough I never saw the Fringe as Scotland. I was like ah yes, the Edinburgh Fringe, it's just this festival that's really far away and it's quite cold. I never saw that as Scotland which is funny. I forgot a very important stage; I was co-president of the Queen Mary University theatre company and as part of that we took shows to the Edinburgh Fringe every year. I went for the first time with that and then at Artsadmin and then I just kept finding ways to go. I helped Scottee one year, I was working with Artsadmin another year, and I kept going. Moving to Scotland is purely because of BUZZCUT. I met Rosana when I was at university because I was being a volunteer for Spill and Rosana was doing *Walking: Holding* in London. I was one of the walkers in that. I got to know Rosana and then I think I went to BUZZCUT for the first time at Artsadmin to promote the bursary. I stayed for the whole week and totally fell in love with it, and I kept trying to find ways to come back. I came with Foxy and Husk one year. I came to volunteer one year. I was getting a little bit worn out by London in general and because I had this dreamy-eyed vision that the whole of Scotland is like BUZZCUT all the time, I was like fuck it. I think the year after I finished with Artsadmin, I moved up to Glasgow.

SG: I must either met you or seen you for the first time at BUZZCUT at the Pearce Institute and it felt like that year, and I don't know if this is what the memory of it was, was a step change in what the festival was doing in terms of access and I had a real sense that you were the person who had made that a priority or you were at the centre of BUZZCUT paying attention to that.

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

KT: Yes, I actually forgot the in between bit. Between Take Me Somewhere and BUZZCUT, I worked at Liberty Festival of disability arts in London. That was my first real insight into access provision in general. Artsadmin weren't really doing it at the time and this was a disability arts festival and I was learning everything including how BSL interpretation works, what a rest area is, and audio description. It was a really short contract and I was basically put in charge of completely managing the access of the disability arts festival so it had to be perfect. It was really massive and I probably shouldn't have been in charge of it, but I was and I learned a lot. It coincided with the conversation with BUZZCUT and I was like well I've got this budget here so we just copied that model. We were like we don't have a fifty-thousand-pound access budget, we've got a one-thousand-pound access budget, so what is the BUZZCUT version of a rest area. I think they were talking to Creative Scotland at the same time, so they just wrote it all into their Creative Scotland application as I was doing Liberty Festival.

SG: It felt like the first time I'd been going to stuff in Scotland where BSL was just present in every aspect. In all my other experiences of seeing stuff at the Fringe or at the Tron or The Arches, it was present but really contained. It was still the dominant model where there are three shows with a BSL interpreter and you've got to book for that. At BUZZCUT it was there in every aspect or far more present maybe. It felt like a very different approach.

KT: Yes, I think it was just trying to get that overall welcoming vibe. We had BSL interpreters on the welcome desk and in the bar. It was a learning experience. I think the reason we were able to do it is because the interpreters were excited by it. People were roping in their nephews who knew a little bit of BSL and there were people who were studying BSL. Everyone got on board with it and understood the vibe. You walk into the Pearce Institute and we're still pinning up the sign writing up what's happening today. It makes sense for someone's nephew who has a deaf parent who is there volunteering their time. It really feeds into the whole atmosphere and creates a more authentic experience of what the BUZZCUT vibe is. I look back on those and the what the energy was pretty fondly. As we got more money, it becomes more professionalised so it's less chaotic with not paying a seventeen-year-old relative to be a BSL interpreter.

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

SG: Maybe is a good thread through in terms of what BUZZCUT was doing then into what it's been doing more recently, that interesting thread of professionalisation. One thing that I was aware of in being at BUZZCUT over the years, and I think this maybe came up when I was talking with Rosana, was that it felt like BUZZCUT became really big really quickly and that the desire of people to present at BUZZCUT probably quickly stretched and outstripped what BUZZCUT with a tiny budget was able to do. Is that fair?

KT: Rosana will be able to talk about the early years far more than I can because I joined in 2016, but I worked on 2015 so I suppose I joined in year three. It's because it started so big. Whenever I was working with Nick and Rosana I was always following the model that had been set before. I think the initial invitation was so appealing and struck such a chord at the time. My understanding of it is that they just put the call out saying you won't get any money, we're not going to pay your travel, you might get some lunch and they got one hundred applications or something and they thought well, if they're being so generous then we need to be generous in return and put on sixty of them. It was always that kind of spirit, so it wasn't like it grew out of the means that BUZZCUT had. BUZZCUT never had the means to begin with and it was always trying to increase the resource to try and meet the original level of ambition. In doing that, as soon as money was brought into the equation, people buy into that. It was like we're not getting paid, you're not getting paid, this is for all of us. It's such a romantic and glorious thing that no one can find problematic, you can obviously, but I think it's a romantic way of engaging with your own labour. As soon as we get paid, even anything — the first year I was working four days a week and my fee was three thousand pounds and I was working for Scottee, Lucy McCormick, and Artsadmin on a freelance basis in the evenings — as soon as money was introduced a lot of our attention shifted to how to manage that. We had to work out how to approach money in a BUZZCUT way and that was an interesting process. We got paid a certain amount, artists got paid one hundred pounds each. We didn't increase our fee until we could increase the artist fee. A lot of our time was spent thinking about that sort of stuff instead of doing the festival. We got tired from doing it for so long.

SG: I mean there's maybe something about festivals as models. They're spectacular but they are, I was going to say a sink for time and energy, which is maybe really ungenerous,

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

because they generate energy too but they're so consuming. Doing them for a long time without experiencing burnout is a really highwire act.

KT: Definitely. BUZZCUT was the epitome of burnout. It was a shine bright, burn fast kind of thing. It's nice to look back on it with a glamorous tint now because for the past couple of years I've just looked back on it in a way that's tainted by that burnout. It's still very raw. When you look back on it now, it was a particular moment that something amazing happened. That really had huge problems too.

SG: That burning bright. Not the move fast, break sensibility, but so much action and energy in a really tight space without a lot of resource or structure to support it maybe.

KT: Yes, and that energy is infectious and magnetising and pulls people towards it, but people also get hurt in the midst of it. Who are you sacrificing on this alter of chaotic energy?

SG: Yes. At what point do you step away from it and say whatever the calculus is, it just doesn't work out.

KT: Yes, exactly. I can be nostalgic for the gorgeousness and all the beautiful interactions and the possibilities of that, that energy really is what I miss. I miss stepping into that room and feeling an energy. When you weigh it up against people's negative experiences, it cannot be worth it.

SG: Maybe we'll come back to what's involved in deliberate practices of care in the space of live art. I'm just thinking about what BUZZCUT has been doing in its relationships with Take Me Somewhere and festival structures there. There's a shift away from the festival model to working in partnership with the CCA and again adding a slightly different team of people in the CCA phase.

KT: That was always happening simultaneously at the beginning. The CCA [programme called Double Thrills] came about as a response to the closure of The Arches. That was thought up by Nick and Rosana. That was a crazy year because we were doing the festival and we were doing CCA and this tour of England called Let England Shake. That was really intense. That was very much feeling a responsibility to a community and it was like there's

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

not another point for people to gather, so we'll have to. That has been an interesting process because that very much began with piggybacking off the festival model. We weren't getting paid very much, we weren't paying artists very much. I think it was about three hundred pounds for a show. Louise Orwin's show, which I think would normally be touring at two or three thousand pounds, was three hundred pounds and so was Ira Brand's thing. We were scrimping and saving everywhere. We used volunteers instead of the CCA front of house because we're BUZZCUT and we're a community, we're not going to pay money for these sorts of things. That was interesting because that became the thing that I had more autonomy over quicker than the festival and that became a thing that I could change more quickly. I never had the feeling that the festival was wrong or that I needed to change it but couldn't because I wasn't in this position of power, it was just like this is how it's always been done so I'll just carry on doing it like this. Whereas with Double Thrills, it felt like there was more potential because it was fresher. One of your questions earlier on was who is feeding you or something like that and there is one moment that I will always remember, and I was like I'll take this for a metaphor for the rest of my life. I used to be a keen bean and help Duckie on their big pride shows as a runner. Simon Casson, the director, put so much effort into making sure there was enough beer in the dressing rooms and that they were ice cold. He was like you need to go to Tesco and buy every bag of ice in there, he was like this is absolutely essential. There is always too much and people just put it in their bags and take it home and he was like I know, we spend huge amounts of money on this, it's essential. What that boils down is possibly encouraging people to drink in a work environment, but what I took from it is that sense of hospitality and generosity. If that can permeate in terms of how artists feel in the space, then it can also expand into audiences and the whole experience becomes this thing of generosity and thinking that people's needs are being considered and thought about. Hospitality, generosity, and not stinginess.

SG: It's hospitality almost to the point of excess, or just a little bit of excess.

KT: A tiny bit of excess. Nothing super crazy, I'm talking about a five-pound bottle of white wine from Lidl, but it's there and maybe there are a couple of grapes just at as a spirit. Whereas before with the festival, it was like we don't have anything so we need to build this together, which is great, but there was another side of my learning which was lush and about making someone very comfortable so they can enjoy their work life. I think I got paid

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

fifteen pounds an hour to run around Duckie and get ice from Tesco and I was like this is so much money. I will always go back to work with Duckie. You can just tell that that's all there in their interactions with their audiences and everything that they do. I think that started to feed in more to Double Thrills in terms of asking what do you need and being a bit more in service to the artists and making sure that they have a comfortable experience as opposed to the festival which was a bit more like these are the parameters and you need to come here and we need to do this thing together.

SG: Yes. The way you're describing it, a little bit is to do with what resources you have and how you choose to spend them, but it also sounds like this emphasis on producing from a place of love, of wanting the artists and the audiences to feel loved. I don't know if that's an over statement. I'm smiling because I'm always thinking about how Duckie would talk about punters, and I always think about that as coming from a place of deep affection that Duckie has for their audiences and the communities that they work with.

KT: Yes totally. That isn't to say that the other spirit wasn't coming from a place of love because it definitely was. I think it's always come from a place of love in terms of this thing doesn't exist and everyone would like it to, so come on everyone, let's do it together kind of thing. I have become more skilled at pulling money out of people than I used to be. Now I actually do know what I'm doing and I can get more resources so I'm turning into more of a motherly figure and caring for others rather than a sibling thing.

SG: At what point did Claricia [Parinussa] become involved as one of the producers or co-producers of Double Thrills? That's been a good few years now of that relationship.

KT: Yes, so Claricia came on board to help with producing the 2019 autumn season. She worked for about a year helping to produce the 2019 Double Thrills and with a bit of organisational thinking around what the future will be and helping design the 2021 festival. She left in October and then Bejal Desai produced the 2021 festival on a specific contract. That is a really interesting process, how I've learned how to introduce people into BUZZCUT because I was invited in as part of an equal collective, but then what happens in that is that the unspoken power dynamics don't get named and so they can't then be worked through. There's a very strange position of sort of being a member of a collective, but decisions get

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

made without being asked and there isn't a formal structure in place. It went from a collective which was Nick and Rosana living together and doing things together, to me coming in and being sort of part of it and sort of not, and then we invited Daisy Douglas in when Rosana left in exactly the same way that I had been invited in, but it increasingly became more complex in terms of how people have autonomy and how decisions are made. There was that point when it broke down a bit in terms of how those decisions are made and then eventually, Nick left, Daisy left and I was on my own and so I could rebuild it with more clear parameters. However, I didn't do that with Claricia. That dynamic was never really named, but Claricia is a fantastic thinker, producer, and powerhouse so it worked because she is very experienced and has many other interests outside of BUZZCUT and is a leader in multiple fields. Eventually we named it as more part-producing, part-consultancy, which then transitioned to BUZZCUT having a relationship with her company, IDY. Now IDY work as a consultant for BUZZCUT and then, I finally learned my lesson when I approached Bejal. I was like here is a contract to do this amount of works which will finish on this date and we may continue for another project, but I need to work as an assistant producer to deliver this work. I finally learned that lesson.

SG: [Laughs].

KT: Not that collectives will never work, but I need to learn strategies for how they work.

SG: Yes. My experience was always how do you navigate wanting to do the collective thing and all the opportunities for collaboration, energy, and egalitarianism that it feeds while also having some kind of structure where, as you say, you know how decisions are being made and that there is some way of protecting against exploitation and self-exploitation, which is such a big thing in the arts anyway. I think my experience of collective structures has been that there's an almost higher chance of those things coming up because you don't know where your job begins and ends.

KT: The thing that I was really recognising is the way that we were treating ourselves is the way that we passed on treating others. For Double Thrills, the artists might be getting three-hundred pounds but we're getting paid twenty-five pounds a day or something to produce it but it's fine because we're all in this together. Now, finally I'm paying myself. It's still not

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

loads, but it's definitely the beginning of what could be termed as a salary and there's absolutely no way that I can accept not paying artists for their time because then we're not in it together anymore. When you're in a position of power, it's the self-exploitation that perpetuates exploitation of others. That's a very cynical way of looking at it, but it is also true. I think that's the balance between this mix of spirit of mood and energy, it depends what mood I'm in. Either I am a terrible person for exploiting everyone and telling everyone it's fine because I was doing it myself. I put everyone in this position of horribleness. Or it's like oh my god, we created this spirit of collective action and that's amazing. I was talking to Elyssa Livergant when I was going down a bit of a rabbit hole of the negatives, she was like well, it also was a different economic time five years ago. I was like that's interesting. It didn't feel like a different economic time in terms of the amount of money I had but that's also interesting. Certainly, the conversation has changed.

SG: I feel like part of that model of exploitation and self-exploitation is almost like a centre of gravity. If you're not watching yourself or trying to keep an eye on it, that's the thing that the broader arts and culture sector drifts us towards. Even when funding bodies go, when you put in your bid you mustn't underpay yourself, you must cost artists' time effectively, so the intentions are there but it often isn't followed through.

KT: It's because if you're only doing a gig for thirty people and you're paying yourself fifteen thousand pounds for it then you won't get it funded. Things that have three tour dates and will reach six thousand people for fifteen grand are the things that are going to get funded. It is interesting, the way I talk to artists now is definitely mimicking the Creative Scotland side of things. Whereas before it was like sorry, we've got no money but it'll be fun, now it's like you're not paying yourself enough, what are you doing. I'm trying to push that forward. I also think that's not always helpful because I would love to see more DIY little pop-up nights that are like fuck it, who cares, I'm going to work on this for half a day and it'll be nice. I think this narrative does stifle that spontaneity and possibility.

SG: Can we not have both, I guess that's the question.

KT: Exactly, yes. I've accepted that we have institutionalised on some level and so now I'm telling the institutional story and I will leave the DIY to the next generation. [Laughs].

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

SG: [Laughs].

KT: I also try and whisper in ears saying have you thought about putting on a night, but at the same time I'm telling people to pay themselves a Scottish Artists Union rate.

SG: The last thing I wanted to ask about is the relationship that you've had as a producer as part of Take Me Somewhere and that [event] as a festival which emerged out of the legacy of The Arches but has increasingly become its own thing.

KT: I got that job in a period of extreme instability with BUZZCUT. I think my application said I'm going to be here for a little while to get a regular income and just learn a bit more about it and then I'll go back to BUZZCUT. I don't think it's a coincidence toeing the party line and BUZZCUT becoming institutionalised happened at a pretty similar trajectory as me working at Take Me Somewhere, which I think is fine. I don't think that's a negative thing. I've definitely learned from Take Me Somewhere how to budget things properly and be aware that this is what it costs. Rather than trying to keep it under fifteen, it's like well no, this is what it costs. That has changed my level of confidence and ability to manage projects of a particular scale. It's also really crystalised for me what BUZZCUT is now because in the earlier days when I first started, it was doing forty-five things. It was this platform for artists' new work, it was an international connecting spot, it was a huge community gathering spot, there was a young people's company, it was a community engagement project in Govan, it was putting experimental work in spaces it isn't normally in. It just helped crystalised what BUZZCUT actually is, which is ultimately an artist development organisation or a space that allows for experimentation of projects. I think it matured, matured is the wrong word. Well, it's partly the right word, I just don't see maturing as a universal positive.

SG: Yes.

KT: Maturing is the right word but it's not necessarily a positive thing. I think it matured my outlook on BUZZCUT to make it more strategically useful in what is undeniably a capitalist, careerist trajectory. I can see how BUZZCUT can be an R&D centre for international export with Take Me Somewhere, which at the same time can partner with these organisations to allow them to reach performance audiences or to introduce performance into their programme where they wouldn't be able to otherwise. I've learned how to leverage

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

BUZZCUT more strategically because of its relationship with Take Me Somewhere and because of how Take Me Somewhere does that. It's very clear about its strategic aims and knows how to talk to people about them, whereas BUZZCUT was like we're just doing our thing, do you want to be involved. That allowed for a lot more possibility.

SG: As you say, with twenty things it maybe becomes which one can you do at any given moment and which ones can you do and what is the impact of it.

KT: I think BUZZCUT has a big nostalgic beauty. I think there is an impact to the festival but it's very difficult to measure who was impacted by seeing the work and whose practice was supported by it. I think there is a whole community of people around those two years who cut their teeth at BUZZCUT and would've had a different career path without it. I would imagine a generation of young artists who saw work there and that would have influenced them. I think now we're trying to be a bit more focussed on how we help a few people in a longer term, more holistic way instead of a chaotic blast of energy and whatever happens happens.

SG: It's interesting the way you describe that because obviously the Live Art Development Agency is in the process of recruiting new leadership and I think in the original announcement or call out they said they would be interested in hearing from individuals but also groups or collectives to explore alternative approaches. I think somewhere in that material they said that part of what they imagined the future of LADA might be was doing less but doing it better, so actually slightly scaling down the range of things it might do in order to work with artists in the way you've just described of coming to work with people more holistically to think about the kinds of genuine support that they might be able to offer. I was also struck by you describing that learning from Take Me Somewhere and saying that this is just what things cost. Is part of that story also a dialogue with some of the artists that I know have been involved in the festival who are also being increasingly enabled to say this is the kind of project we're doing, this is a project at scale, it needs a stage this size, it needs a room of this quality, and if those things aren't available then we love you but we can't work with you.

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

KT: Yes. I think my position across BUZZCUT and Take Me Somewhere is really helpful because when I talk to someone in BUZZCUT, I can say BUZZCUT can't do this, don't work with BUZZCUT for this. It's because that comes back to that spirit of encouraging people not to scale down work to work at BUZZCUT. If you need forty thousand pounds to do it, we don't have that. It's quicker that I work at Take Me Somewhere where I can pass it on to LJ. Double Thrills has been a useful process for BUZZCUT to be a space for artists I'm not familiar with or LJ isn't familiar with or for artists who aren't super familiar with performance, or with the idea to try something out and then go onto Take Me Somewhere. There have been a couple of artists who have gone through that trajectory successfully.

SG: It feels like that trajectory is relatively organic. There isn't a sense of the pipeline from Scratch to Double Thrills to BUZZCUT to Take Me Somewhere. There isn't a feeder system, if it happens, it happens but I guess the fit has to be right.

KT: I think it is more organic, but the future of it we're unsure of. I'm not sure how much BUZZCUT and Take Me Somewhere should be formally interlinked. There is currently a decision about BUZZCUT forming part of Take Me Somewhere and so then conversations with artists can be very transparent. We can say these are the contexts we have, [audio drops out] one of which is artist development opportunities. The strength of that is that we can be a lot more transparent when we're talking to artists and be like these are the different contexts, they have different audiences, they've got different vibes, let's start from there as a conversation. I put this in our BUZZCUT evaluation to the artists, do you think BUZZCUT was strengthened or hindered by being part of Take Me Somewhere this year? And a lot of people said they didn't notice.

SG: [Laughs].

KT: The overriding thing that I took from this period of real uncertainty a few years ago was that no one cares. I was really like we were a collective and everyone is going to be furious if I take the reigns as director and then I was like no one cares. Absolutely no one cares. Maybe that's wrong. People just want stuff to be happening and they want opportunities for artists, and they want stuff to go and see. All the things that seem important on the inside, you're like I'm not sure. We thought the brand will get diluted and it'll be really

Live Art in Scotland: Karl Taylor

confusing and people will be protesting in the streets if BUZZCUT becomes part of Take Me Somewhere and then it's like no, we didn't even notice so don't worry about it. One thing that I'm not sure about again in terms of the future direction of it is understanding that the live art scene in Glasgow is very small and I do have a real awareness of having a level of curatorial power that is disproportionate. Between me and LJ there are very few contexts to do with live art that we're not somehow involved in the decision-making process. That is a problem. I'm trying to think about finding a way to possibly divest some of that power in BUZZCUT's direction whilst also learning all the lessons from just come and join etcetera. The easy way is to do curatorial panels which is what we did for the festival, but I'm trying to think of something a bit more embedded or long term, like a guest artistic directorship for a year or something. That's definitely a question that is going round at the moment, how can I recognise that I've got too much say in it. If I'm really honest, what I would like to do is probably step away from BUZZCUT and let someone else do it but I'm still not confident that it's in a shape to be passed on.

SG: Okay.

KT: It isn't really anything still. It's incorporated but we don't have any level of regular funding, it's just a sort of name. The process of me taking over was very difficult. It was an extremely stressful process that took an extremely long time. I'm quite stung by that and I don't want to do that to someone else. It sort of feels like I'm holding on and I'm trying to figure out what that process is of giving away curatorial power and autonomy without putting someone in a vulnerable or stressful position.