

Live Art in Scotland: Anthony Schrag

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Stephen Greer (SG): Maybe I can just start by asking you to talk a little about the broader landscape of your work. I know it's a body of work which is characterised by participatory arts projects, and I think I read an interview with you at one point where you said that you were approaching art as a practice of asking questions.

Anthony Schrag (AS): Yes.

SG: So maybe I can just invite you to talk a little bit about that?

AS: Yes. It's just really nice someone asked me that question, I've realised that no one's really asked me that in the past year because I've been so focused on students. So yes, my formal training was in writing and photography and these kinds of very individualised solo practices which were sort of sitting by myself in a room doing something. Through a series of events, I ended up in Glasgow where I realised, I wasn't really interested in the solitary nature of that work. I always thought it was far more interesting when other people could intervene because it opened up a series of conversations that I thought the really hermetic nature of making, or at least how art was taught and thought about. I have a small video which I start almost every one of my talks with, which is the stairs video where I'm walking upside-down on the stairs and accidentally forgot to lock the doors and someone came down the stairs and in that moment, which I initially thought was a mistake, I thought that's my interest and my passion actually, when you have an element of liveness and that kind of clue to go actually, this is not about something that's hermetic and sealed and just the

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artist's process. It had those spaces for intervention, and I think that's when I started getting into questions of both performance and that kind of led me to live art. I think there's a larger question about legacies and histories and where you come from and your education. I had come from a visual arts perspective and so my foray into live art offered me a space which I hadn't seen in visual art, because it was about those moments of exchange and those moments of performance. I hate to say it, but there was just far more chaos and I really like that process of chaos! [Laughs].

SG: [Laughs].

AS: You could probably still frame a lot of my work within the context of live art, by force of habit I started to call it participation and it's such a large practice, but the processes were very much the same, which was trying to create lived, live moments of exchange.

SG: So, it becomes about creating events and encounters, maybe more emphasis on encounters rather than objects?

AS: Absolutely. Fundamental. I've probably fallen off the cliff of live art in that context in that I was interested in not only those encounters, but relationships of dialogue. I'm not saying that live art doesn't have that, but I have in the past, because of my research, veered more into that and the relationships of dialogue, as opposed to just the encounter, but that is also quite central to the work.

SG: It was interesting when I read that interview where you were talking about an art practice as a practice of asking questions. What struck me was the Live Art Development Agency characterisation of live art as a cultural strategy which is about questions and questioning.

AS: Yes. I think that's very true, and sorry just to go on with that a bit, I suppose that often objects or maybe more traditional ways of making are providing some form of answer. It's not that they're shutting down a conversation, but they provide a thing you can then sit with. I think I was interested in going actually, I don't want that closing down of a conversation. I want people to leave with more questions always. I want that strategy of opening up as opposed to finalising.

SG: Maybe we can dip into a few of your works at that point. I'm interested in a few different projects you made with Deveron Arts in Huntly. There are a few of these: one of

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which was a project relating to fatherhood, which I understand was a series of activities and events which built up to *A Perfect Father Day*? So again, can you maybe tell me a bit about that project and that strategy of seeding that day event with smaller activities or interventions?

AS: Yes, I suppose I should add that is a really interesting place to go to because I used that consciously or not, as a model for a lot of my projects going forward. I have to credit Claudia Zeiske who is the director, who was able to help me think through that. I suppose what the recognition was is that certainly in the public realm, working in a context by which your audience is constantly complicated. I didn't want to say I'm doing this one thing, an audience whatever that is, this amorphous thing could be. So actually, could I then create these encounters that were specifically oriented towards specific groups of people. As you said, I did groups with the students and groups with the dads that were left there, groups with the mums and single parents and those sorts of things, and they were all centred around a different kind of question. To jump back a bit, the context was Huntly as a town, at that time many of the men worked on offshore oil rigs or away from home in the military so the village had very few men, so the commission was to come and explore that context. Not to necessarily provide solutions, but to say, what does it mean for a village to not have that? Again, going back to that question, it wasn't about fixing that, it was about going how can we use art as a way to interrogate this? What do those things mean? With the fathers that remained, we made beer because obviously beer drinking is a manly, dad-ly thing to do, but it was a sort of mechanism and a strategy to come together to develop something. I'm not sure it was performative, but it was definitely this encounter to say here's a thing that we're doing and surrounding that thing, we're asking these questions and we're leaning into some of these questions. I did a project called *Rent-A-Dad*, where you could rent me for a day to be a dad, whatever that meant. One of the examples was a lady called me up and said I don't know how to ride a bike and my eight-year-old son wants to ride a bike, can you come over and teach him how to ride a bike because that's something a dad does? So, we did that every Thursday and had dinner and chatted and the point was to ask that question with lots of people which all fed into that bigger event. The central metaphor was this tug-of-war between all the dads that were in the village and everyone else to illustrate and explore the idea of the different tensions of identity and assumptions around identity.

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Those actions were about revealing the complicated nature. That's what my PhD work has been about, the central thrust of processes, and it goes back to that question: how can you use art as a way to reveal the complicated nuances as opposed to providing a singular utopian solution?

SG: So, the sense of productive or curious antagonism?

AS: Definitely. Yes. I use Chantal Mouffe's notion of agonism, which is an idea that antagonism is something that you clash against, whereas agonism is an idea that you both work towards a goal. For example, the goal could be thinking about Huntly in different projects. The goal could be different understandings of family and working then with a lot of different stakeholders and agents, we're all working towards the same thing. We don't have the same way of doing it. We really don't, but that's fine and actually we can clash, and that notion of clashing is central to all of my work and that goes back to again the questions, but also this idea of what Anne-Marie Copestack once said. Someone asked her, who do you work with? And she said I work with people who are not me, and to this day, I still go back to that because that is fucking brilliant!

SG: [Laughs].

AS: Because that is why I work with other people because I encounter them, and they are different. And whether that's a sort of participatory social engaged practice or whether that's a live art performance, that moment of encountering difference is the central nature of humanity and actually, we can only understand ourselves if we encounter difference. I think the problem is that a lot of times art in general and specifically participatory art and socially-engaged art has been dominated by very specific political narratives. Regardless of the fact that those are my political narratives and I'm a lefty liberal *Guardian*-reading asshole, my role as an artist is to make sure that there are plural voices. I always use my Grandmother Argument, and I'm sorry this is a bit tangential; you can tell I'm getting very excited. I call it my Grandmother Argument. My grandmother, all four-foot-six of her would've jumped in front of a bus to save me, she would've fought people, she loved me fiercely, but was also a racist *Daily Mail* reading Tory and I can't then in my work deny the fact that people hold certain ideologies because they believe that is the best way, they can make their loved ones safe. No one is out there just to destroy everyone. I hold this belief because I want my loved ones to be safe and so if I can start from that point and go actually,

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I'm not going to shut you down because you're a *Daily Mail* Tory reader and say you're wrong, that moment of encounter of otherness is the central part of humanity in my work I suppose.

SG: Yes. But it also sounds like that moment of encounter is not a singular moment. What you're talking about is a real commitment to working with a given community, or communities of people have appeared for that work to stand a chance of working.

AS: You have to, and that's I suppose where the crossover between live art and socially-engaged practices is a bit blurry is in that durational element, of understanding you have to be able to have multiple conversations and those take time to develop a point where you can have a productive agonistic experience with someone.

SG: Yes. I suppose we're talking about quite different economies of action where you maybe have an environment of live art production which is to do with festivals and venues which is very event-based and becomes a fundable thing which you can reproduce and tour, even if it is a live art action which is never the same twice. And then there is this other broader landscape of work which you couldn't. The project that you've just described at Huntly was not intended to be reproduced anywhere else, you might do a similar kind of project, but that was not its origin or its destination.

AS: My current job as a Cultural Management lecturer, to me that's fundamentally about infrastructures. It goes back to what we said about legacies, the infrastructure of performance and theatre, that has been something that live art strategies have parasited on and have taken those strategies and infrastructural support to be able to replicate them. I think that's somewhat problematic because those infrastructures force types of production of work into certain forms because that's what the infrastructure requires. Similarly with participation and socially engaged practice, there are histories of art or social work or community arts which are infrastructures which require certain manifestations of the artwork regardless of whether that's what I want to do or not. I think you're absolutely right. There are certain productive ways that that work is replicated that, to me, aren't necessarily helpful.

SG: Maybe this is a good point to talk about the sort of practice that Deveron Projects is offering or the kinds of projects that they're eager to support. I know one of the other major

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pieces of work you did with them was *Lure of the Lost*, where you walked from Deveron to the Venice Biennale in 2015. A work which is a contemporary privilege to a secular sight of worship. Could you speak a little bit to that work and maybe how it came about through working with Deveron, was it an idea you had and came to them with, or did it come out of conversation?

AS: No, [laughs] and this comes back to Claudia. The fact that I'm referencing her and other people I think speaks a lot to the requirement for relations and good relationships between artists and curators and commissioners because those are the things that are far more important than artists' ideas. Claudia and I have often talked, I know she's obsessed with walking, I know that she loves those sorts of things. I'm very physical, in my PhD I write about physical engagement and that's another side of the live art that I think is really essential, that moment of encounter has to be embodied. She wanted to go towards the Scotland + Venice Biennale application. We'd done a lot of work on it, and we thought we were in with a really good shot, and we weren't. She was so disappointed by this; she and I had this conversation of how do we get there? Do we just go without that? I've saved it [laughs] she sent me a one-line email, saying, I'm still so disappointed. Do you want to do this? And she'd sent me a hyperlink and she googled Huntly to Venice as a map, so you did the map and then pressed 'Walking Route', and that was the link that she sent me. I was in the process of finishing my PhD, I was turning forty, there were other things going on in my life. The idea of doing something performative again in that sense was kind of exciting to me. I'm interested in asking questions. I'm interested in problematising the world. The idea of that, problematised me, I was like wow! What does that do? And so, the walk had all these really performative elements, there was the big red stick I was carrying. It kind of had those traditional things, but it really quickly, totally and utterly problematised my practice to a point where I don't think I've got over it because how do you make a practice about encounter when you're the only person? That was the reality of the walk. When I was walking thirty-five kilometres a day or when I was walking on top of the mountain there weren't other people [laughs].

SG: [Laughs].

AS: There just weren't other people to have encounters with! It was performative, it went back to that idea of me being in a room writing or me being in the darkroom making a

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photograph. That's unfair because there were points of encounter along the way, but no one else could share that with me and no one else could have that moment. It's not about being – my partner would probably argue this – it's not about being the centre of attention as the performer [laughs], but I think so much of my work is about presenting myself as a focal point for something and then dropping myself out of it. I do think that the best performances or the best performers are able to be that focal point that becomes invisible for other stuff to happen around them. That work was only about me and my experience, so that really made it weird for my practice because I can never talk about it again.

SG: When I was thinking about it, I was trying to contextualise it in my head. I was thinking about other works that are to do with duration and other works that are to do with endurance, but I couldn't quite sit it within the broader pattern of your other work and maybe that's why, it was an uncharacteristically solo work.

AS: Yes. Absolutely. I need to say that wasn't the only intention. The intention was that I would walk with people and stay with people, and I did, I did stay with people, and I wrote about all those things, but it became a very different thing.

SG: But as you say, the reality of walking that amount of distance and the route, the landscape you were on so much of that time, by necessity was you by yourself.

AS: Yes, which kind of makes me think of how much of an idiot I was to not think of that beforehand. That's the sort of thing I haven't really come to terms with myself, going well of course no one else is going to fucking walk thirty-five kilometres a day with you, what are you, an idiot? But I had to do that the first two weeks, where I went oh, right [laughs].

SG: [Laughs] There are certain knowledges, even when they're obvious, they're not accessible outside of the thing. However much you look back. At least that's what I say to reassure myself.

AS: [Laughs].

SG: The other strand of your work that I'm interested in is practice which is engaging in and with and in response to institutions and is maybe engaged in institutional critiques of different kinds. One project that I'm aware of is a series of events which resulted in a book called *It's Not Hard* and these were staged around the intermediate gallery space at the CCA

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in Glasgow, so maybe you could just tell me a bit more about that? It was a series of eight events? Something like that.

AS: Yes, I think it was originally planned to be ten, but there were logistic issues. I'd just finished my Master's degree, 2007 I think it was. My beginnings of early encounters of thinking about live art as a specific strategy that I could use in some ways – what was the Live Art festival in Tramway called? Can't remember now.

SG: I'm trying to think which one it was, The National Review of Live Art was still running at that point.

AS: It was definitely The National Review of Live Art that got me thinking about a lot of those questions. I suppose this talks a little bit about both specific communities and institutions, was that I was interested in how the infrastructure of gallery exhibition in particular could make space for more encounters and how we could develop those encounters as you mentioned. The structure again was very much: have an exhibition, take down the exhibition. Put up the exhibition, take down the exhibition. It was a very structured way of showing art, and I wanted to problematise that, I'm aware because I trained in Visual Arts at the MFA that there are these spaces between exhibitions. There are those days when someone's work is coming down and someone's work is going to go up, which for live art performance don't need that much time. That act of encounter if we keep calling it that or that exchange, we don't need those systems or those infrastructures. My proposition was, you have ten shows a year, give me the spaces between them. That was literally it. Rather than saying, here's a repetitive structure that you know of, let me fuck with that structure and so what I did was propose these eight shows and I did the first one because I hadn't got approval of funding, and I think it was literally fifty quid per performance. It was bonkers and most of it was totally done on goodwill because I think people were interested in not only messing with that infrastructure but how that work happens. Sitting back, objectively, there was an amazing process where there was a lot more excitement about visiting this space. At that time, I'd just left the Glasgow School of Art, I was becoming very conscious that there was a very big difference between the Glasgow School of Art and Glasgow, I hadn't really realised that the two were different things [laughs].

SG: [Laughs].

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AS: I was interested in looking at communities not just as, here's Toryglen, here's Shettleston. Let's look at communities as groups of people on top of each other and so artists, people, theatre groups of people, more performative groups of people, more experimental groups of people. These are all communities and how could I literally smash them together somehow. That's where the idea of having all of these different performative works came from, could I develop a program that smashes a lot of different people together? You have Benny he's a painter, that's his history, but he was really interested in how he could take the history of painting into something more experiential and did his dive through the painting work. Then you had people like Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdottir who is from a history of performance. It's fascinating, now that I reflect on it, these were digital performances. She was doing that in 2007, she was doing Skype performances in 2007!

SG: So, she was doing the pay-per-view performance art through a computer webcam?

AS: Yes, you could just log onto Skype. I don't even think it was pay-per-view, she just had these times, and you would just log on and she would do these amazing, weird performances and then hang up.

SG: It's interesting when you think about where people are coming from in terms of their histories or backgrounds. What it's making me think about is this program that you put together at the CCA and maybe more broadly, the curatorial strategy as a permission structure?

AS: Yes, totally. People keep saying, Anthony you're really good at organising things. I'm not! All I do is, do you want to do that? And most people go, yes, I do. So, you've given me the permission, fantastic, go for it [laughs]. If my job is just giving you permission to do that, fine there you go, you have the permission. But I think it's absolutely right because I think most people are really keen to explore different ways of working, and most people were going if the infrastructure says put a show on, or Stand on a stage, where is the space for people to literally merge? The infrastructures of culture have these replicated memes in some way.

SG: Yes.

AS: So, you don't have those spaces, yes.

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SG: I'm conscious of the way in which, funding, when it gets allocated to organisations like the CCA but more broadly is often getting categorised in a really blunt way of this is the budget for visual art, this is the budget for dance, this is the budget for theatre and performance. As I spend more time on this project, I'm seeing more and more that live art is coming from a budget labelled dance, or it's coming from a budget labelled visual art, and less often actually from a budget labelled performance. That might change again as I uncover more information.

AS: I think you're right. I think that's a major issue with culture in general because those structures of management in culture are written by groups of people who are management. They have requirements to fit things together and you have to have a budget that fits this because that's the requirement of that structure. Those are habits in history that are hangovers of how you manage a factory or a business. That's not about culture, which is fundamentally a little bit more blurry. When you have a policy, which says this our strategy for the next couple of years is X. So, then you have all the organisations saying right well we have to do X because that's how we get our funding, and that feeds down to the artist who says well I don't want to do X, I want do Y. Well, that's very interesting, but could you make it do X? I always get really excited when I'm working with these organisations and go, I love your work, I'm working in a new paradigm, can you propose a new project for us in this new paradigm? And I go, well here's a proposal and they go, well that's great, can you make it work exactly the same as the old paradigm? Because it doesn't fit into our new paradigm.

SG: [Laughs].

AS: And you go, what's the fucking point!

SG: [Laughs].

AS: This might be contentious I don't know. That's my greatest fear with things like both live art and participation, which is that it's becoming a formalised structure which is fitting into a gap. And my excitement about live art was that it was wasn't, it was a mechanism to merge, to be a rebel base, to sink underneath things and go over things. I can't speak to live art so much because I think my domain over the last five or ten years is more participatory art, socially engaged practice, but the more that socially engaged practices becomes a formalised structure, the more those rebel bases are shut down because it infrastructurally

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fits into a little box. This is what this is now. The whole reason I got into this was because I could take that box apart, or not even imagine a box in the first place!

SG: So, I suppose the question becomes, for me at least, how do you create or design infrastructures of support and development which remain open? Which remain 'rebel bases' as you say? And how do you do that at the level of writing a funding policy? If you had that power in your hands, saying this is how I'm going to imagine and allocate money across a range of different disciplines. It's always interesting to me that one of the recurrent things is a whole sequence of really brilliant people working for the Scottish Arts Council and for Creative Scotland who are in the mixed arts, or whatever it's being called, seat at the table and are often sitting between or on multiple committees which are discipline-specific and they're doing the work of agitating for, or advocating for, people's work. Suddenly it sounded like I'm defending the inner workings of the Scottish Arts Council and Creative Scotland, which is not my style, but I'm interested in if you do want to create that space for open disciplines, what's the structure that facilitates it? Does there have to be a structure?

AS: I'm a big supporter of Creative Scotland because Creative Scotland is made up of people. There are lots of individual people within that who get it. They totally get that this is a problem and I think they wish to change those structures. I think it's a wider systemic and slightly the sector's issue, it's not Creative Scotland's issue. You have to remember that Creative Scotland isn't leader of the sector, it's the facilitator of the sector. So as a sector, we have to go, do you know what we want to have more of these blank spaces. I have endless sympathy for Creative Scotland because no matter what they do, they're going to be hated. You started talking about my work in institutions, my feeling is that most institutions are filled with people who get it. When I worked with The Gallery of Modern Art, Katie Bruce who's there, she gets it. She gets the fact that it's a blurry, murky space. She can't do anything within that because she's very limited by Glasgow Live, but she can say, you know what I can do, I can get an artist in to fuck that up. She's done that quite a few times, and I think most organisations and institutions, we have to remember that the people are there. I think it's easier if we work alongside and with institutions to go, how can you create these blank spaces? It reminds me of actually the whole reason I get tangential and I'm excited and I talk too fast – have fun transcribing this!

SG: [Laughs].

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AS: Sam Ainsley when she ran the Masters of Fine Art (at GSA) program was really conscious that what she did was provide a space. She created the edges, and said, right, artists are really good at filling the space, so I'll just give you the edges and you fill that space. So rather than saying, here's the box that you need to live in, it was, work within these boundaries. I think if I could suggest some form of infrastructure, it's the recognition that you need to be able to trust and take risks. Let's call this boundary, 'performance', or let's call this boundary 'art in a real time', or let's call this 'time-based art' and within that boundary, we've got X amount of projects, what do you want to do with it? That's all you need to do.

SG: It's interesting. This conversation is making me think about the broader landscape of Scotland and knowing that institutions and structures which are active in Glasgow at the moment or feel like they've been active over the last ten or twenty years, are really different to the ones in Edinburgh. Also, places like Dundee and Aberdeen are sites for where live art seem to be turning up so far in my research, even when there is notionally national bodies like Creative Scotland who in themselves are recognising those differences.

AS: Yes.

SG: Maybe we can loop back to that idea of permission structures. I think I read again in another interview where you had suggested that Glasgow had created a permission for itself through the year of culture to take a risk on lots and different things. When I read that, my counterthought was, in Edinburgh it feels like a lot of that permissiveness is attached to the Festival. You'll get it out your system in August, and then we'll get to go back to slightly more stayed institutions the rest of the year, which is maybe very unfair to Edinburgh, but was my experience.

AS: No, I think you're absolutely right. I think it's very important that I recognise that there are spaces that are trying to create a bit more space within that, so it's not always that way. For me, it's a cultural thing again which is maybe more of an intangible infrastructure. In Glasgow, it was always called an "opening". That's the first work I did in *It's Not Hard*, it's called an opening. You are *open*, people come, and you do shit, and that's it. In Edinburgh, it's called a "private view". It's the same activity, but they have these two different names and there's two different names with a really different history and heritage, and not to glorify Glasgow in that sense because I think it's got its share of problems, but I do think

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there's a permissiveness which is not evident in Edinburgh because Edinburgh has bigger, heavier structures that are harder to shake because of the Festival, because of the capital, because it's demographic. I think you're right, yes.

SG: It's interesting where I'm seeing the work of sometimes individuals or very small groups of individuals working in those larger structures creating programmes which are brilliant but when they leave, the programme leaves with them.

AS: Yes.

SG: I'm thinking about things like Body Parts which was a whole series of performance art festivals at the Royal Scottish Academy, but really only lived for a certain period of time because of a combination of people both inside and outside the building.

AS: That's the flipside of my argument. I might sound like I'm contradicting myself, but I think sometimes that's okay for those things to end and to die and to move on because you don't want to formalise it, you don't want it to become another festival. That's the thing, the festival has become such an institution that you can't fight that beast, and so sometimes these shorter spaces are really lovely because they existed for a moment. For me they're just like those moments of encounter. They may have happened over the series of five, six years but you think, that's wonderful, what a great time to have that encounter. Let's not formalised that encounter in the same way, that means it lives in an exhibition and now it does this, because it kind of kills it. I recognise that's the tension between support and wildness. You always want to live on that edge of marginality where you go you've got enough support to live but you're not being taken in by the civilising factor, the colonisers. That's a horrible post-colonial metaphor. Forget I said that!

SG: [Laughs]. But the point there about how do you sustain a practice or a sector without civilising it and I think that is unfortunately maybe the appropriate metaphor.

AS: Yes. I think possibly it's not endemic just to live art, I think it's all sectors. I think it's probably more viscerally felt in live art performative spaces because of that issue of funding. Miss Annabel Sings does these amazing queer cabaret performances here which I would categorise close to the live art side of things. She can make a living out of those in the sense that she can sell tickets, but you know if she does that it goes into a different question of funding models and funding structures, so do you have to then sell your soul to a capitalist

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structure, or can you find other ways of support which don't fix you into one way of working?

SG: One of the last things I was curious to hear your thoughts about was the role of artist-led institutions and galleries. So, Transmission is one of the major ones in Glasgow and I'm conscious of a number of other ones in Dundee.

AS: Generator Projects in Dundee.

SG: Yes exactly, Generator Projects. There's an ecology there which often involves, as I understand it, committee structures where the people leading it are involved in managing it. The commitment is to two years or three years, there is the principle of turnover.

AS: Again, being paradoxical that's really problematic because where's the institutional legacy and history? Where's the learning that happens over the course of that time? And it's really interesting, certainly when I was in Canada before I came to Scotland, there were a lot more artist-run spaces than there are here, and that has a lot to do with the funding structures from Canadian Arts Council and culturally, you needed to have those spaces which the funding structure of the arts council in Creative Scotland didn't really require the necessity for. If you have places like The Embassy, and Transmission and Generator, great ideas, really lovely spaces, really gives scope for new, exciting, emerging things to happen, but if there is that committee system that constantly turns over, how are they well managed? I teach Cultural Management, the whole fucking point of my job is to say that we need to manage culture effectively. But we have to be able to do that in a way that doesn't kill culture, and so the management structure of a committee works really well. But then I would argue that maybe you need something like the longevity of a board that operates on top of that, or maybe there's a few non-decision making directors who are purely the manager who are funded by say Creative Scotland, who are that institutional legacy or that institutional history. I think there are ways of doing it. I think the problem is that there's an antagonism against the funding structures, [where some artists] go against them for being bastards.

SG: Yes, and I think maybe certainly during the eighties and nineties the argument coming out of places like Transmission, and I'll try not to sort of ventriloquize their point of view, is also that the resistance was sometimes about very specific remedies. It's about going, you

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must have a paid administrator and groups like Transmission sort of resisting that as a solution to the perceived problem, or the real problem. It's interesting that that sort of resistance to a particular mode of professionalisation plays out in a whole bunch of other domains. I'm certainly aware of it in the history of theatre in the UK.

AS: It drives me absolutely bonkers! I'm sorry this is not about live art, but there is an assumption that professionalisation means the death of the art and yes, I think we've talked about that, but that doesn't mean to say you can't have really good managers. I know there are a lot of people like that who are not interested in making art who are really fucking good managers, but they're sort of thought as somehow lesser than the artist. To me, this is a problem that comes from a sector because it basically says, you're *just* an arts administrator. Actually, that arts administrator is the reason that this can happen so stop being so fucking bitchy about those people. And I've seen it quite a lot, mostly against me [laughs] where I think the sector assumes that management and professionalisation is out there to kill the work. In some ways that is true, but I also think there needs to be a recognition that if we want to create those rebel bases, we need to have allies who can do the management. There's a beautiful text by Zygmunt Bauman called Culture and Management. He talks about this idea that management exists to control culture, and culture exists to take down management and management exists to control culture and culture exists to take down management and they can't ever be separated because if you separate them, then one's going to dominate. I know we're veering off live art, but to me that's where I think there needs to be a greater understanding of these systems. Sorry.

SG: No that's perfect. Was there anything else you wanted to talk about? I'd said we'd speak between half an hour and an hour and we're coming towards the end of that time.

AS: Just tell me if I've gone off track and I haven't answered.

SG: No, it's all been really great. It's interesting talking about that question of infrastructure. One thing, and again I'll probably cut this off the end of the [laughs] recording for the transcribing purposes, is that next year, hopefully when we're able to meet in person again, the project is going to have a series of public events or forums and there's going to be a research symposium, but then a whole series of far more public things, one in Glasgow, one in Edinburgh, one in Dundee and possibly one in Aberdeen. We'll work that out over the next six months. If you're available, it would be lovely for you to be involved. One of the

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questions is exactly what we've just been talking about, what does the structure of support look like for live art in Scotland, or what might it look like? Because I think it's something that Creative Scotland both explicitly and behind closed doors is interested in trying to think about how we support that sector. I don't know if you ever came across it, it probably came out at the same time as you were working on *It's Not Hard*, was that sector review that Scottish Arts Council produced. It's really interesting, I read that now and so many of the same dynamics are in place with a few notable changes, which is the loss of The Arches in Glasgow and the closure of New Territories.

AS: To me, and I had this conversation with Annabel the other day because she was talking to some of my students, to me the solution lies somehow in spaces, specific places like The Arches, like Transmission, like Tramway, spaces that can be permissive spaces because to me that's the solution. If you go back to Virginia Woolf, five hundred pounds and a room of one's own, that's all you need right?

SG: [Laughs].

AS: I think that's really true for a lot of live art, what we need are spaces to do that. Places like CCA do that really well, they have that Open Space strategy, they are limited and pertained because they've committed to things like being a living wage practitioner, they can't do all these things for free, so I totally get why they can't, but their approach is really useful. I think if there could be more spaces like that, that are managed to be permissive, I think that solves a lot of problems.