

1. INTIMACY

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BRUCE Let's take a look at the list, the first one comes right out of questions... actually a couple of them, the first couple come up, right out of questions that we were bouncing around during the intimacy and intensity lab and I think it's also one that you and I, the three of us have talked about before and that's that question about the relationship between preparation and control in our work. It just seems to me that this is such a critical topic, I think for me it gets right at why we even try to do this work because I think it has to do with an attitude towards the care that we have to bring to the people that we work with and so I don't know if you've had a chance to think about it but I'm quite content to let you start with this one and I can respond as well.

MARTINA Definitely, preparation and control is something that we have to really face now especially with the app because normally when we turn out our work it's at least a human to human meeting, we meet the people and there's some sort of reciprocity forming even though they might not be verbal, it might be pre-verbal or just in the physical format. And with the app we don't know, we had to even further let go of that control because we don't know at all if people will stop the experience in the middle, will they kind of go down and stop for their washing, everything that we've been in control of, of kind of ritualising the experience of how to enter it and how you exit, how you're taken in and taken out of it and how you make space for an experience but then to do that in your home... everyone knows that that's very hard to make space for something in your house and then kind of just seeing the numbers come up, you know, that so and so many people have downloaded and so on and so many people experiencing it and actually every day there is fewer people experiencing it. But it's very strange because we have... most of those people don't have any connection to... after doing the talk it turned out that a lot of people have been doing it with their teenage children or with a family member so it was really nice to have that reciprocity. But it is also...

CHRISTER Also I'm thinking in terms of a format of... if you have immersive performance or some kind of situation-based work on site somewhere in a physical site you can very much choreograph what happens, where it happens and so on and how long does it take, and of course we can do timings a lot when we have people inside the experience, when they have the headphones with instructions then everything is in a way in our control to some extent. But everything beforehand, like to get the right lighting, for example, because they're using the screen on the phones as a kind of like makeshift VR goggles, one person is holding the screen towards the other person who is closing their eyes and then the light is synchronised, we've got the ear inside their headphones and then I'm also touching or guiding with the hand at the same time in a very choreographed way. And all of those things becomes like an extension of the medium and our medium, the tools that they can work with. But if you have it very light in the

room, for example, you wouldn't really experience the flickering of the light in the phone and...

MARTINA And do you mean then the control, like wanting people to really experience that and...

CHRISTER Yeah, because I think... it really depends, I think what you were saying like you get attunement or tuning in with someone if you can do it on site with someone, you can adapt to someone, what they bring in in a way to the...

MARTINA There's a problem with it because it kind of asks you the question with what is the essence of the experience, if the experience then is so fluctuating from moment to moment, or it's fluctuating from... and I have evidence of this because I remember trying the experience for the first time doing the act together with Christer and we hadn't tried it before but as we were working so hard with the children at the same time home schooling so when we tried it I was shocked how bad it was. I had a very bad experience of it, I thought, oh no, shit, it doesn't work, ah, but it was like, okay, it doesn't work too bad and then we did... the next day we didn't change anything, the recordings were made the same... I think we tried again and had completely the opposite experience and it's like, what is this, it's even our own work and...

BRUCE So what was the difference between the two?

MARTINA I think the difference was that it was just quite simple, I was not really present, it was just that I was not really present so the work is really made to be probably experienced for... it doesn't really consider that going in and out sort of energy...

BRUCE Something you said earlier which really jumped out at me which is about the loss of the ritual that when you're face to face you can sort of instil a sense of ritual in it which I think is one of the ways that we move people to a place to be ready to experience it. And when we don't have that control over that situation we have no idea how we're going to enter into it. And so a question I have for you, 'cause I was thinking about this in relation to our own work is to what degree do you actually consciously think of what you're doing as a ritual, or that there are rituals associated with it, to what degree is it something that sort of necessarily lifts people right out of their everyday lives and asks them to consciously step out of their everyday lives, to step into this place of ritual in order to actually to have a successful experience of your work, do you think?

MARTINA Yeah, I think we've been doing that almost all the time in a way but without naming it, without actually defining it as a ritual and I think it comes to... I think it's shown in the way that our work doesn't work that well in open situations where you mingle a little bit and they look at the artwork and then you kind of go in and out of it. You look at the painting and then you... you really need to stage a little bit how you enter the work and I think I myself prefer to look at artworks on my own rather than being in a social situation and going in and out of it. So I think that me has been reflected in the way that we have for many years taken people into the work and really considered where do they come from and how do they enter, what do they leave behind and how do

they enter the work. I think though... what is your view on that, Christer, how have you thought of our work as... how much have we considered the ritual being part of the work?

CHRISTER [Pause].

MARTINA The cloud is a ritual.

CHRISTER Yeah. I think almost every bit has that aspect to it and what does it mean with a ritual, I think it means the sort of prepare yourself to be present with yourself and whatever it's... what you're offered to... whatever comes, what you encounter and to... I think that nothing unusual with that because that's also like if you look at a painting or if you look at an installation, or a video, or a cinema, or like traditional theatre, it's all... kind of you need to have that same so I'm wondering what is the... is there anything special with the type of ritual that you prepare yourself for in this kind of work?

BRUCE I was thinking back to one of the first immersive, participatory things we ever made which is, I don't know how long ago now... it's over a decade and it was the piece where... I think I've mentioned it to you before where there's a solo performer, a solo audience member, at least in the first iteration and the individual enters the room and is invited to sit down and the performer takes the audience member's hands and the piece runs for about 35 minutes and they never let go of their hands so they hold hands for 35 minutes while this part story part exchange evolves. There is a narrative to it, about two thirds of it is actually scripted and it's actually scripted quite precisely and carefully and there's about a third of it which is just improvised exchange in which the performer leaves one point of the story, it's a male performer, leaves one part of the story he's telling and then takes wherever he is with it and brings the audience into it through their orange screens so ask them a series of questions and responds to their responses and weaves them back into the narrative and then picks up the narrative again and then carries on and that happens two or three times throughout the piece. But there is a beginning and there is an end and it's really important for the piece that they get all that way, so it's not just an experience, there is a little story that's being told and it ends... it's only in the very last moments where the hands are let go and that becomes... if the individual has all of the narrative, all the experience it's a very poignant experience. And I was aware the first time we did it, it was commissioned at a festival that was doing a series of one to one performances and we had... they set the whole thing up so that there was this quite... there was a common frame to all of these pieces and the frame that they put around it was not the most conducive for this piece. It was not unorganised but was very informal and there was lots of chatter and there was meant to be a buzz around the series of events which was about high energy and lots of exchange so when the audience member got to this piece, they were in an entirely open space, they'd also been told some information about the piece that we had provided but whoever the volunteer who was ushering them up to the space had heard about the piece... I think they said something like, you're going to hold hands for 30 minutes and it's about drowning, good luck. And so that's what the audience... the audience were in the first go round, that's what the audience members had when they

came in so they were in a bit of a party mood and they were bubbly and the piece was not about that at all. And we had built a very careful sort of decompression chamber at the beginning of the piece so ultimately people found their way into it but I was aware that what happens before the piece and around the piece and outside the piece was not being well enough taken care of. And we didn't even really know what the piece was in this first instance so we learned what it was in this first go round. But every time we've done it since then, and we've done it many times since then, we've been very, very careful, and increasingly careful, to set up this space that people have to pass through in order to get to it so that they're much more available to it. And they understand what kind of thing is going to be asked of them and what they can ask of the piece. And I think it's been a much richer experience increasingly from then. And we've done it since then... in that first instance there was nobody else in the room, just the performer and myself and it was this big dark room with what I thought was a very beautiful little design so that helped because you went into this dark room and there was a person sitting way over across the way under a tiny little bit of light who invited you into that space so even that travelling over the distance I think accomplished some of that intuit. But since then there were ten observers who were very, very sort of carefully placed at the edge of the lights so they weren't hidden but they were also not part of the dynamic that was going on and they kind of vicariously lived through the one person who was engaged with the performer.

And we've done it with as many as 100 people in a swimming pool and that actually was an entirely different experience but also quite wonderful because I think we were able to prepare it carefully. And so when I think about preparation there's the preparation that happens inside of the performance but there's always the preparation that happens outside and I wondered to what degree you choreograph that, you think your way through that and choreograph that as well as what happens inside the piece.

CHRISTER I think a lot of the site specificity that our work have used have sort of provided that. For example, when we make a piece in London after Steinway & Son's piano factory, people are arriving in the evening and met by someone that normally works in that piano... they have a shop there, you know, where they display the pianos, a sales room and this sort of piano salesman is then meeting the audiences and it's dark in the evening and so I think that sort of provides... the going there in the middle of the night to Steinway & Son's legendary piano headquarter is the sort of set up for that. I think that's one.

MARTINA Makes you ready to listen to... like want to actually get to the part where you're being played on the piano, you kind of are quite ready to listen...

CHRISTER That's one example but then the other one would be Symphony of Missing Room where we've chosen to do it in a museum so that situation of going to a museum and the expectations of that is then also in the... in a way the surprise of not being able to see any art but actually to build light folds and entering an artwork as an isolated... in a way looking at your own perception isolated in the way you would normally look at an art object. That sort of preparing for that kind of observation.

MARTINA And then for the cloud, I would say the cloud that you experience the unknown cloud on its way, it kind of starts even earlier because it starts probably with the mythology about the cloud so most people are met by... there's an unknown cloud moving across the Atlantic and it will arrive over London around this time and it was like a weather phenomenon and so you are kind of already forming a mystery around, well, that cloud can be... and some people have a very vivid imagination of what it is and what it can do and I think already that is some sort of like preparatory layer of it. And then the waiting ritual is like when you wait for the cloud and that can have different textures, of course, like sometimes it's very erratic and very stressful and then other times it's kind of really... but also people have a very diverse experience of the cloud and I think maybe the slow transition into it of the mythology allows it a little bit to be kind of in and out of it, you kind of accept what the group dynamic is there and it changes it somehow.

CHRISTER It's interesting when, Bruce, you told us about your experience of having an usher or like an invigilator to sort of shuffle people into a room. We had more or less exactly the same experience but with a face, you know which one, right...

MARTINA I know exactly which one...

CHRISTER It was at the Battersea Arts Centre which is a great space. They had something called the One on One Festival, it was like 2007 or something, I think. And so we had a piece there, I think it was about seven performers, it was only one person entering the room and the invigilator had actually told them that this is kind of like a scary piece, or something like this, and also the fact that the other works in the building had been maybe a bit scary in a way. Quite different from what we...

MARTINA Sexual...

CHRISTER Sexual like quite full on, like an encounter in that way which our work is not really so much even though it is, could be very much confrontation like a darkness or... but more a confrontation with yourself somehow.

BRUCE Yes.

CHRISTER But this really sort of like prepared them or like tainted the experience of what they had in our space, for sure, they were like we had so many... Colin McLean, our favourite performer, who is an 85 year old man, he was a priest, a Catholic priest, and in the military, and now he's a performer and he said, I'm wondering if there's going to be any screamers to this...

MARTINA Lots of them, people would come in with like really different expectations...

BRUCE Absolutely which is why it seems to me that there's the... bringing people to a museum on the one hand, for instance, prepares them for... I think there's a calming quality to it, there's a grounding to it but then playing against those expectations I think is also an equally significant part of the process so I think I've mentioned to you a piece that we just... feels like just because the world's so crazy but it was in December that we staged it first, where it was premiered, and it was in a museum but it was an experience inside a working museum that

was full of other people too and everybody experienced the piece through headphones and the piece was kind of largely hidden in the rest of the museum. There were a number of theatrical scenes that were playing out between two performers but where they were was not marked so no one really knew where they were, you could hear them in your headphones, and you could choose between any one... so the four were happening simultaneously and they continued to run and so you could switch between them but you could actually go through the entire performance and never find them. But what you might find is there was also like a full scale... there was the museum's display and then we had inserted into it a secondary display that was related to the mythology of these four stories 'cause I think I maybe mentioned to you it sort of imagines an alternative 20th century in which people with different cognitive and physical abilities were understood as super heroes. Basically the piece is about seeking out alternative relationships with otherness and with difference and so we imagined this history and the display of that history is told if you can find it in the museum and then these little scenes play out for different moments across that history. But what I loved about it was that people were both seeking out the performance but they were also aware that they were in a sense performing because there was this, whatever, 25 people who were moving through the museum which had a hundred other people in it and they were aware that people wanted to know what they were doing and that they were in a sense performing the pursuit of the performance.

And so I think it's also important to play against... there's huge potential in setting up a context which has limitations, which sort of does some preparatory work but then the preparatory work is not quite the right sit for what you want to do. So it still asks them to step out of their world, it still gives them a transitional space but it's not one that is so clearly primed to... predetermines their response that past work has already done.

MARTINA Is it also because it's an in between space so they kind of both with one foot they are in the reality still and other people are there not performing and then the other foot is kind of in the performative world and they cross and confuse each other.

BRUCE I think so.

MARTINA In that in between space, the confusion in that in between space allows you... sometimes I find it allows you to open up, almost like a child to the world. It really is quite immersive even though you are not immersed somehow.

BRUCE And I think it's also... I guess in particular that piece it was one of the things that we were thinking about is that even in an immersive context it feels to me audience members are always aware that they're not part of the rules, that they have been invited into it or they've been somehow stolen into it and that they are in part on display. I think this gets to perhaps one of the other questions we were looking at which is around the nature of intimacy in this type of work because I think many of us are pursuing a situation where there is sort of a legitimate intimacy between the performer and the audience but it's always inevitably one built on an awareness of different roles, different degrees

of power, different degrees of insight into what's actually happening and I think in that instance it was trying not to pretend that everybody is the same in this, that you are indeed different from the performers but you are also a performer.

MARTINA Ah, yeah.

BRUCE And to allow the audience member to both be unbalanced by that but also to be empowered by that, there's a degree of agency 'cause they know that they too have been given a performing role in the piece.

MARTINA Yes.

BRUCE And to what degree do you ever... do you build in an awareness of... on the part of the person who's experiencing the piece, that they too are being observed, does that enter into your work as well?

MARTINA Yeah, absolutely, it does and I think especially now with the app that you're actually starting from the window and then one has role A and one has role B and then you interact in the relationship to each other but actually the difference then to make... it's a different type of intimacy when you do it with... this is just for people in quarantine or if people from the same household, basically, so suddenly having really a history with the person you do it with. And then you use touch to create another type of intimacy than if you have, for example, when you go to a museum then have a hand then, you never see the person owning the hand so there's kind of an intimacy and yet it's kind of totally... you don't know the carrier of the hand so you don't have a history with that person. And I think that actually influences intimacy. And then I think we're into the app... we have built in, like into the roles that we want the role to observe the other person is as interesting as kind of knowing you're observed and going into your space so...

CHRISTER Also there are some moments where you forget about that you are with someone else perhaps, if you go really deep into it.

MARTINA If you really go deeply into it.

CHRISTER Then it kind of builds upon that, that fact that when you are handing over your goggles to the other person that... you don't have the goggles here but you are opening your eyes and then you see the other person that just carried you and they are closing their eyes now. So in a way that they've always been there and like they are... you know, because you have been so immersed and, of course, they have been guiding you but then in a way it's almost like you look at yourself in a way...

MARTINA You look at yourself but from the past so that the equation is building away that first one person enters a world and you look at them, imagining them, imagining themselves being there, look at me, I'm imagining a wall in front of me. And then you hear maybe the wall but you don't see what they see and then eventually you enter their world but you enter backwards through where they have been and you re-visit the places. And then the other person looking back they see themselves from the past so that's how we work that into the app. And I think the observation, yeah, in a different work where we used virtual reality

it's more about the friction between... I think when you are on VR often people really even if they know they're being observed they actually really forget about them being observed! People are so immersed... but I think it's actually interesting with the friction in between the virtual and the physical so therefore we have had like physical objects that remind them that they are in the physical world but it kind of emphasises again that in between space that I found more interesting than the full kind of complete immersion itself.

BRUCE How much is it important to you that people will forget themselves in your work?

CHRISTER I think it is important that they do, as Martina said before about the presence, being fully present, I think if you go through the piece and are constantly aware what you are doing and being seen I think you cannot fully enter it.

MARTINA That's right but at the same time it is about being fully present in not being fully present.

CHRISTER Yes, it's feeling fully present in the glitch between but then it's not about whether you can be that but then it's a different thing if you are aware of being looked at because then this is embarrassing or like... and you're not present in the glitch, you are present like on a third person, like fourth person, like seeing yourself from the outside.

MARTINA I think when that happens, when I have that it's almost like two molecules or... no, this is a personal experience I have, when I'm in the museum and I know I'm being observed and I'm still immersed and I know I'm being observed, if it clicks it's almost like a key, you find the right key and you kind of suddenly feel the two worlds at the same time so you sense observation but instead of the observation being something that kind of unsettles you it actually lifts you existentially, or it inherits a particular tone that is central to the work, oh, here it is, it's almost like if you feel the essence of it. The observation becomes part of that landscape and equation but it becomes more like abstract, like a sensation rather than maybe a purely social, oh, you know, I wonder what they are thinking about, not that kind of conversation, it's more, oh, I know, so it's more like a bodily... you allow that to become a bodily sensation of being observed but it has been removed from the connotations of good or bad, it has been removed from its label.

CHRISTER You are moving away from the social presence and awareness.

MARTINA And the definition of a negative or positive... it's just an observation and what that actually... what does an observation feel like, what is that human basic sense if it's removed from...

BRUCE Yeah, and I think it brings up a lot of questions about what observation means in the worlds we live in. I think we know we're under surveillance constantly, we know that 17 major companies are watching every one of our moves whether it's what we buy or what we look at online. There is this constant sense, I think, on the one hand that people are aware that they're being watched all the time, we put the little piece of tape over the top of the camera and computers because we know that anybody who wants to can look at us... we also somehow... yes,

exactly, and yet somehow... so there's that greater anxiety but there's also at the same time there's this acquiescence too but it's inevitable. It feels to me that being watched has become quite fraught in some ways, it's a sign of vulnerability, if people can see you then you're vulnerable but it's also become ubiquitous, people are watching us all the time. And it feels to me that kind of what observation you're talking about is a very, very different kind of observation and I always wonder to what degree it's about the identification with the performance event itself. So you become looked at differently because they're looking at you as part of something, of a dynamic, they're looking at you as part of a larger performance. So you know you're being watched but not necessarily, oh look at the colour of that person's shoes, or what did they have that's still in their beard for dinner, they're looking at you as part of the event and that's where it feels to me, and this is where a big question around preparation is important for me and for our work, is how do you prepare someone to be a co-author or to be a co-creator, how do you create a scenario where they actually feel that what they're contributing is making this a unique experience. So they're not just serving a role that you've set up and you could put anybody into, the piece is actually flexible and porous and interesting enough in you that it's waiting for you to arrive to make it. Make it what it really wants to be even though it's carefully prepared because I've always said I'm not interested in creating just an interesting environment and let's see where it goes.

CHRISTER No, no.

BRUCE I'm interested in there being a sense of a fulness to the experience and a completeness to the experience that I don't ever want to surrender complete control over the event but I also don't want to fall onto so much of that that someone feels, well, it could have been me but, of course, it could have been my neighbour, it could have been my dog, really I'm just fulfilling a purpose here. And the other element of that for me is, I guess, I still after all these years... well, I guess I've come back to an interest in what people would call story. I started off initially thinking I was really just going to write plays decades and decades ago, that's what I wanted to do and although I was influenced by non-realistic theatre a lot I still understood it as a story that would get told and then I went through probably ten or 15 years of deeply resisting the confines of what people thought of as stories, working against those expectations and now for the last ten years at least I'm much more interested in using stories as a way to generate really interesting tension in the pieces so there's these expectations that people associate with stories that I then tried to place those in a context that they're very difficult to satisfy so there's that interesting tension between the expectations of a more traditional event and the piece that we're making. But that, for me, gets me to the place of how do I give audience members... how do I encourage them... an investment in the co-telling of a story. A story that can only be told because of what they have carried in their bodies.

MARTINA It's an interesting question, I think the most obvious answer that people imagine to that is the scenario that they will be co-creating in a kind of more obvious way so you co-create through really externalising or... you know, when you're

kind of playing a game you can choose that, you know, the branching, you kind of choose which outcome but some stories, that you said, have maybe like a beginning, a middle and an end so it has a pre-set story of some form and I think in our case it's been a lot about actually having a pre-recorded track that you follow, we even guide people through with their hands so you're not really controlling that way but all this space you have is your mind to fill out the gaps and see the sound as images that you own so you see... if you hear the sound of a forest you might see a forest that you remember and here is always a difficulty, that means that we cannot add, it's very sensitive, if we add too much into that story then we overwrite the visitor and if we add too little it's about nothing. So it's all about how you merge with that form and together you actually then in that equation, cross fertilisation you have your own agency and your own story. And for everyone that doesn't work, some people might want to have a more open, they want to really be able to affect the outcome more in the more interactive way. So for our case it's more like a score but we are interested in introducing and we are going to introduce now, just to see what happens to work, we are working on a new product where we work with branching so depending on group dynamic you will enter like different places in the system, will externalise so you do affect the outcome but not as an individual more as a group.

BRUCE

I think that branching model is one that many people are familiar with through video games and things, right, and there's this sense that, oh, there's infinite possibilities but, of course, there isn't. A video game is ultimately a finite system, there's only so many things that it can do and I think people are... you hear about the people who have played it so much that they've figured out every nook and cranny, there's nothing within the game that they haven't mastered. And there's both a satisfaction and a frustration I think in that. But I think you're right that the goal is how do you create a sense of choice without it being really explicit, without it being overly determined so I either go down this route or I go down this route. How do you allow it to remain open enough that's what's going to happen you or I could not have figured out because we're actually sincerely open to the audience member who's coming in as opposed to pretending to be open to the audience member. It's one thing to say, choose A, B or C, it's another thing to say, well, the entire alphabet is there for you to choose from but we now want you to choose, like this is a moment where we want you to feel active and where precisely it goes, we don't know, but we will meet you further down the road. I guess that's the kind of thing that we've been trying to work towards is how do we create an environment where there's confidence that we will meet them again so we give them the licence to work imaginatively in ways that we could not have anticipated but we've also established enough about relationships and even a contract in the piece that we will wait for them to work through that and they will want to come and meet us again. I think that's the biggest thing that we try to prepare for and build is an overall agreement that we will all be happier if we find each other again and again along the way. Do you know what I mean?

MARTINA I think so, have you found... this must be quite interesting for you as performers as well to kind of... how do you find each other again and what happens if you don't, and do you have examples when you don't find each other and what you learned from those moments as well?

BRUCE For sure, I think that the first piece that we made that really, really relied on that, 'cause I think the one that I described to you had some of that in it but the performer always knew where he was going back to so that wasn't being affected through his conversation with the audience members. And that was my biggest frustration with that piece is that I could certainly imagine some audience members feeling that, well, he was coming back to this anyway so it was nice to have the conversation with him but mostly he really wants to tell me this story. And so the piece that we made right after that one, we did imagine a sort of narrative world, we imagined a series of historical events and we imagined some relationships but we didn't bring a story into the piece at all, we just brought pieces of it into the piece and they didn't add up to an overall narrative but they did up to, I think, an overall atmosphere because we called the piece A Haunting, it was...

MARTINA It was the atmosphere that was the glue.

BRUCE It was but it was the atmosphere but it was also the dynamic because what the performers did is they would share a memory of either an actual or a fabricated memory from their childhood that was associated with a particular sensory experience so something they had smelt, something they had tasted, something they had touched and they would offer that up in exchange and then they would solicit something like that from an audience member. So what we didn't want was audience members telling us all about these horrific or beautiful sweet memories that they had that they might be embarrassed to tell, what we wanted to get at was was there a moment when you remember you're faced against a wall, or do you remember the smell of a lilac tree. Do you have deep seated memories that are associated with senses, and then instead of taking the elements of the actual memory which might have exposed things that audience members in retrospect would decide they didn't want to and I talked a bit about this at the... this was the piece I talked about in London. We would take that memory of a texture or a smell, or whatever the sensation was and weave that into the story they got told. So an audience member would see that moment of them scraping their knee or smelling perfume, or whatever, feeling the fabric on their mother's dress, they would see that and therefore feel themselves in the overall story that was being created but without it being sort of the thing that had happened to them in that moment. And I think that that was the way, one of the ways, that we were able to... once that pattern was established, once the audience saw that happened two or three times then they understood what the pattern of the show was.

CHRISTER Yeah, yeah.

BRUCE And so they would play to it because they knew it was their turn to add an element like that.

- MARTINA Ah, so they would then bring another sensory memory and then they would see or experience it externalised...
- BRUCE And the performers would always be the ones who solicited it so it was always... when people would realise that their turn was coming... because we capped it at 40/45 people so that we knew before the performance is over one of the performers would have engaged with every audience member and pulled something from that individual and woven that into the larger narrative. And you could feel people getting ready for their turn and occasionally it would encourage someone to be bigger than life and a little silly and stuff but rarely did that happen. I think what people experience more than the performers, they experienced how the audience members had responded and they took those as their morals, as ways of engaging and therefore they were almost always authentic, almost always sincere and it was quite beautiful. And so I think that's one of the ways where we didn't have a particular story to tell but we had a way of telling stories that was consistent and that gave guidance to the audience, prepared the audience in the performance itself for the ways that they were going to engage with it.
- MARTINA Exactly, it makes me actually think a little bit of where... you know the piece that you experienced with the goggles inside, that was called Proscenium that actually takes place in a theatre, there's actually a missing part of that which you didn't experience and that is you would take off the goggles and you would end up in a totally dark room after doing all that journey and the voice in your headphones would suddenly ask for your name and you would reply and then the voice would kind of, then, okay, Bruce, so... and then it would kind of ask you questions, do you have a memory of... it was in particular of walking in nature, do you have a particular memory of walking in nature...
- CHRISTER And this person in the darkness and you were told that you were on the main stage in the theatre...
- MARTINA You're actually told that you are on the main stage of the theatre...
- CHRISTER It was darkened, yeah.
- MARTINA And then you would maybe say, yes, I have this memory of... actually I was in the desert and it was very windy and hot and then suddenly you would hear the sound of wind coming so we had a DJ then that would kind of then externalise... listening to all those groups, like, okay, forest, desert...
- CHRISTER We also used something called *altiverb* which is like an acoustic or reverb blueprint of a certain space, like a forest or in the snow so that when you spoke out your voice in the room, it sounded like you were in that space. And that really helped a lot for you to feel that you really were there.
- MARTINA And then it was quite open so kind of the guide would maybe say, okay, let's go... what do you see, what do you feel, what do you smell, okay let's go over there to that tree that you see and then you kind of go on this journey together and there was so many... and then this was actually done in couples so the other person... there were four people involved in one couple, so one guide and one visitor and the visitors could hear each other and the guy but occasionally the

other visitor would think that everything is recording because they never responded to the name, they never said their name, they just heard someone say, oh, my name's Bruce and I see a tree, you know, or I'm in a desert and then actually they come out of the work and people would mingle because they...

CHRISTER You forgot that they also met each other like they said...

MARTINA Oh, they did.

CHRISTER There's someone else here...

MARTINA Yeah, there's someone else here... inside your memory.

CHRISTER Inside your memory, do you remember who it is, like no, who is it, then you feel like... then you feel their hands, right, and then they would... sometimes they also tell their memory if it's the first time.

MARTINA Oh, yes, of course, and then sometimes the other person would start to talk about their memory but then occasionally the other person didn't so when they come out and mingle they were like, what, Bruce, you exist?

CHRISTER Oh, yeah, yeah, I loved that.

MARTINA I loved that when that happens so we were actually trying that both people would actually share, merge, two memories were being merged with each other somehow.

CHRISTER Yeah.

MARTINA But then sometimes only one person did it and then it created this weird after talk moment.

BRUCE So how is that in your minds the extension of the previous part, the Proscenium part? How did that... how is that the conclusion to that piece in your mind?

MARTINA It was almost like because in Proscenium, like the beginning part, because it actually starts with another section that wasn't explained, when you walk around with headphones in the theatre and you constantly kind of look for the main stage and you see this main stage from different angles, even when people are on it maybe working, you were walking under the stage over the stage and then eventually get the goggles and you're still searching for the stage so kind of end up at the stage and in the dark and you kind of almost stage your own memory and then inside that I think...

CHRISTER So in a way they're finding the stage, the main stage, they realise they're coming closer and closer to what's your own consciousness, how you sort of... in that darkness which is this, almost like this Plato's cave where you're sort of sitting and having this shadow world played up in your mind and you're creating... it's your memory but...

MARTINA And then in your memory the guide, or the actor inserts a house and by the end of this cycle, it's like, oh, you know, look I can also see something, says again there's a house, let's go inside the house and then suddenly a pre-recorded part so they place the house inside your desert and you enter the house and some people would still go like, oh yeah, that's my grandmother's house, or... and

then would say, there's a chair here and they sit down on the chair and there's suddenly a real chair and this is getting towards the end and then they suddenly open a window and you hear the sea and then from the darkness you just see this tiny, tiny little light and you see like an island, part of an island and a little bit of water somewhere far ahead of them...

CHRISTER Saw like a mist...

MARTINA And there's also a mist and then you realise that there is like a proscenium... eventually you realise you are looking at a proscenium stage and that kind of is the end of the piece.

BRUCE That element that you described which I didn't know because I didn't experience it in London where you actually move them through a physical theatre, that opens up a lot of issues, a lot of interesting questions for me because to the degree to which someone's imagination can be unleashed, to what degree do they need a concrete framework, what common framework, to work from. 'Cause that's very different than putting on a headset and starting to think about what a theatre looks like. So that those people who have worked in theatres will have some sense of what it means to move from backstage to front stage and to enter from the curtain and that type of thing. But for many people a theatre is entirely a foreign thing. But you've given them enough of an introduction to it that they have things to work with and then their imagination can really run and that sort of feels to me like another part of this issue of preparation that particularly if you're trying to create the experience for more than one person, if you're trying to create an experience that is somehow greater than the sum of its individual parts, it's a bit of a communal one, then how much preparation of the part to create that sort of common basis for someone to work from. What do you have to give them at the beginning that, well, we now all know what a maple tree looks like, whatever, because you've shown us a maple tree and so we all use that as a base of moving forward in this experience. 'Cause I think the idea of preparation for me is... You touched on this, Martina, is that much the same way as... okay, we're all going to tell a story together so now you can choose this, this or this I think there's the preparation that starts before a piece which says, we're going to do this and when you need that you put up your hands and when you see this colour it means that, there's all that kind of preparation but that feels to me like the least sort of important and probably the least significant in terms of the individual experience and it's much more the preparation that is unspoken, or that is atmospheric, or is environmental, the preparation that is suggested as opposed to directed, and then the preparation that ever so slowly takes part in a piece and accrues gently inside a piece, that moves someone in a way that they're not even conscious of into a preparedness or a presence. But it also opens up that question of asking people to wait and to have people sit in something for a period of time so that it doesn't have to be simple and straight forward and directive but you slow the world down for them in some ways which I find some audiences are really appreciative of and others become very impatient. And I don't know to what degree this waiting and sitting in stillness or silence plays a big part in your work.

MARTINA It's interesting what you say because it's almost like I think maybe in your work and as well as our work that the preparation is in the work itself, it's kind of a choreographic kind of... you know the people waiting for their turn and becoming excited and people starting to understand the pattern like you described of the work, it's kind of part of the preparation in a way and maybe the actual... it's kind of integrated in the work itself, perhaps the actual work is... I don't know how to describe... would you consider almost like working like a composer, you kind of have that preparation of the music and then you not having the actual climax of the music and much further into the music and have the prelude...

BRUCE Yeah I think so. For instance another piece we created had a... and this is something we tried to do in a variety of different ways but there is an insulation at the front end of the piece so that when you come in you're asked to spend sometimes as much as half an hour in a space which is full of artefacts and possibly bits of story or just information so the museum piece, the second time we did the piece it wasn't in a museum so we built a museum. We built a museum, it was in an old liquor store and one of the reasons why we used that was the walls were full of little cubicles where all the wine and all the liquor went and that sort of thing so we made each one of these cubicles into a display and we created this history and I wrote at least 150 little plaques to go with 150 little objects, the piece is called Tiny and it's about the tiny aspects of our lives. The slogan that we played with was, how hard it is to live tiny when the world wants you to live big, big, big and so the world has a fascination with super heroes at this point because they're bigger than life and everything flows up and the world becomes incredibly simplified because you either win or you lose and brute force is the answer to everything. And we wanted to turn that on its head so we called it Tiny and it's about all the non super things in a super hero world. It's about baking bread, about fixing a car and about figuring out how to use your phone, there are these four moments from history and each one is about something that people did in those moments. The first one is about learning to knit, and the second one is about how to bake bread, and the third one is about how you fix a car, and the fourth one is about how to figure out how to use a smart phone and there are these exchanges between two members across generations, a younger person and an older person and some sort of knowledge or experience is passed along with each of those exchanges. But before any of that happens there's half an hour where the audience is asked to enter into this exhibit and learn about the world. And each one of these little objects has something that in our world is very, very simple and it's a baseball glove or it's a little calendar but each one is attached to something of remarkable moment in this alternate universe to try and bring people's scale of expectations down to meet the piece... this tiny little object has a remarkable story attached to it and will actually find that the most interesting parts of this world are the tiny ones. So that when the scenes then start a half hour later the audience is in an entirely different place than it was when it arrived at the show. And I guess that's another example of, yes, trying to do too gently as opposed to pedantically or with heavy duty instructions to allow the... I'm staying away from the word "educate" to allow the audience to understand

what they know about the world of this piece before they then engage with the piece itself.

CHRISTER Hmm.

MARTINA Did you say that they ended up in a totally different place?

BRUCE Certainly their experience... what was reflected back to us is that they had an attention to small details that I doubt they entered with, the piece coaxed them into being interested in small subtle details because of the space they were asked to inhabit for a period of time.

CHRISTER Hmm, interesting that the format that you described of the small spaces where the bottles normally were it sort of sounds a bit like the precursor to the museum was called The Studiolo which is basically like an Italian prince, was kind of the first kind of museum that the world knows somehow where it was like he was used to go and invite his guests there and then drag out small little not box but like ... drawers, small drawers where he had different objects from the world, it's like a cabinet of... even before cabinet of curiosities, in a way, but it's like sort of his idea that... I guess also the museum is like that in a way that behind the walls of the museum there is art which is sort of saying something about the world outside it.

MARTINA Yes, yes.

CHRISTER And there's something when you put an object to isolate the world into that object, but it becomes... in here when you say, you're saying also basing the story around the object how it sort of expands a whole world in a way from the object and...

MARTINA I'm curious about if people bring their... kind of attention to detail, if that is being brought outside of the work, like you know when we speak about the preparation but also like how does it change perception of, for example, noticing details more...

CHRISTER I think that's sort of like what a piece like that does and when you're changing do you use... shifting the focus on different things and then it makes you to look in a different way, I think that's sort of how people enter our work, you also... like some people describe when they're coming out they are looking at physical objects like they don't know if it's real or not...

BRUCE Yeah, yeah.

CHRISTER And through this table, would it sort of like fall, you know like... I think the brain is a pretty flexible sort of thing and if you spend some time into something that sort of really like leaves like that it... you sort of carry it with you for some time.

MARTINA Yeah, I guess the thing with emotions that you do play with like ways of being in the world and so you kind of engage in that so it must change you... have people said anything when they... have they kind of, oh, I actually noticed things I never noticed before as I walked home?

BRUCE We've certainly had... it's quite anecdotal so absolutely some people have said that and much the same way that people after coming out of either of the other two pieces I described where they talked about being more attuned to the sight of something, the smell of something, the sound of something. I think that awareness doesn't last, I don't think it changes lives but I think... no, but I think in much the same way that when you're outside and it's freezing cold and you come inside you're much more attuned to the warmth or... I remember when that movie, I'm sure it must have made it to your part of the world, Sin City, the adaptation of the Frank Miller graphic novel, are you familiar with it at all?

CHRISTER What's it called?

BRUCE Sin City.

CHRISTER I think I've read about it but I'm not sure if I've seen it.

BRUCE And even further back I remember when the American film star and director, Warren Beatty, made a feature film about the Dick Tracey comic book and in both of those instances there was hyper colouration. In Dick Tracey it was really vibrant colour but in Sin City everything was black and white because the graphic novel is in entirely black and white with lots of red for blood because it's a very bloody story, like all Frank Miller's graphic novels. But the movie was shot in this heightened black and white which really sort of recaptured the... re-represented or re-presented the incredibly stylised version of the graphic novel. And I remember reading reviews by reviewers saying that for a week the world looked different to them after they'd seen this...

MARTINA No!

BRUCE And it felt like an exaggeration to me but he... and talking about coming out onto the street and being... not knowing what to do with all the colour because he'd been so immersed in this black and white. And I think there are people who are more sensitive to those experiences, I must confess I think I'm one of those so that I feel like after I've had a particularly vivid experience of one sort or another I see everything through the lens of that for a while.

MARTINA Yeah, the same here actually. And the back side of that is kind of if I am exposed to something, for example, really quite... like I miss a lot of good work in film because it gets simply the world... if I see a film that is quite dark... simply the world is transformed for like 24 hours being very dark.

BRUCE Yeah, yeah.

MARTINA After that... so it's kind of I guess the sensitivities back side like some people, like you said, are more sensitive to the...

BRUCE Absolutely.

MARTINA So when you make these pieces, do you then think about people that are not sensitive, or... like how do we think about... I guess we do these kind of works because we are sensitive to this, it's kind of like a choreographing of... do we unlock something in people that are not very sensitive, or is it completely like... is it a bit like being colour blind?

CHRISTER Because that's what I'm thinking, I'm thinking about that as well like... been realising that sometimes for some people maybe our work is a bit almost inaccessible they cannot really enter it, they cannot really be present in it because they have a different way of being present and they focus on different things, let's say that if you are really like a person which is really brainy, which is clearly living in your head a lot and... which we do as well but if you enter a piece of ours and if you cannot really find yourself being present in your body then maybe these things... but to feel prepared is kind of like maybe passing under the radar.

BRUCE Absolutely, I mean I have had, interestingly enough, when we took the handholding piece to Vancouver which I think was actually one of its most successful stagings, it was one where we had just ten people in the audience but when the piece opened the room was full of... almost entirely full of reviewers and the spectrum of response to it was remarkable and at the time I was really... it rattled me a little bit but in retrospect I realised that what an accurate reflection of the work it is because there were some who were ecstatic about the piece and there were... one of the key reviewers in Vancouver talked about the script... he said the script is like it was written in pencil and then erased, like he felt there was nothing to it and yet to be totally honest with you, I think it's one of the best pieces of writing I've ever created. I love that piece and I think it's intensely poetic, I think it's circuitous and really carefully interwoven, I think it's full, full, full of beautiful moments and it meant nothing to him because it was so clear that he just didn't understand what was going on or why he would be there, or why we were doing what we were doing. And at the time I was quite disappointed and a little bit pissed at him because it was a big journal and it was opening day and... but in retrospect there was a) don't read the reviews, at least don't read them until you're finished your run and, secondly, he just didn't get it. And that's inevitable that there are going to be some people who don't get it.

MARTINA And we have the same thing and I think it maybe a lot of... like reviews in general might have, maybe not, I mean some reviews have a sensitivity, it's just a question of like how the chemistry and biology within us is working and what we kind of have based our lives on in a way and I guess for some people, yeah. And then I guess often reviews...

CHRISTER And it also depends from what kind of background the person writing is coming, like when we showed *Symphony of a Missing Room* in London at the Royal Academy of Arts to get a bit in the lift, London International Film Festival, there was some people writing from arts, you know, like someone, one review in Apollo Magazine which was very good and some in the Guardian, there was a lot of press in this one and most of them had a really good tone about the piece but then there was one in... I think it was the Independent, is it called, no, the Telegraph, theatre critic writing and this person thought the same as you were saying, like write in pencil and it vanished, there was nothing in it like there is nothing in there. He didn't understand because there was no content, it was like empty, substanceless, so really, really bad, I was like, how couldn't he... why, why...

MARTINA It's really interesting.

BRUCE And we have to, of course, as you say, just let those things go in terms of sort of the individual situation. But I think it's always instructive to suggest that there are going to be those for whom this just doesn't register, the way they perceive the world does not... you know, you say colour blind is, I think, a really good example that they're not going to see these colours.

MARTINA And it's summed up... the same person is colour blind but like I was, I felt I was colour blind and if I'm not ready and prepared for the experience and then I see the colour...

BRUCE Yes.

MARTINA ... it could be the same person and also like setting the expectations, you said like also how to play with people's expectations if they already had a very strong experience and then they enter the next one with a high expectation...

CHRISTER This gets even more interesting in terms of... 'cause I remember some people from... but let's say some others from the arts context who, maybe from the more traditional arts context, maybe were expecting more, looking at more sculptures and more traditional mediums would go through the experience in the Royal Academy, walking through the really history, like going deep into the sort of like fabric of the architecture of the Royal Academy and also really, you know, like as this is, really reflecting about the medium of visual art and how the viewer, them as the viewer walking through this, how they participate in the making of what they're imagining and what they see. And there was one person being really seduced by the piece, really entering it and the guy that... the performer that was leading this person thought this person really seems to be thinking this is a really amazing new experience for him but then afterwards he overheard the conversation he was saying like, this was like nothing, this is the most... really being very negative about it. So it's almost as if his rational brain and his expectations of himself, what kind of things he likes and appreciates...

BRUCE Override his own experience.

CHRISTER And when he came back to his senses he sort of like really, yeah, couldn't agree about...

MARTINA You know this happened to John Berger, you remember John Berger... I was a close friend of his and he actually experienced one of our early pieces in Simon's house and he was like... Christer said, like really seduced by it, he was like, wow, this is not... it's a very wide experience, it's... and he went really... and then eventually when he's come... becoming more sober from it and then he's suddenly remembered it was like, but, no, no. And then he started this really fierce discussion.

CHRISTER There's something missing in it...

MARTINA Yeah, it was really... so fascinating, I was just really hypnotised by this watching that scenario from the outside a bit I thought it was really interesting.

BRUCE We've had the flipside where, again in that piece, the handholding, where in the very first run a fellow actor came in who knew the performer who was

playing the lead role, a young thoughtful, very talented young actor, and he came in and the whole piece is full of these questions and answers and sharing of experience and he said nothing for the whole 35 minutes so that... the actor continued to ask him questions and he reassured him, I really am interested though, and he said nothing from end to end. And so Martin actually thought that he must have hated it and then he walked out and he immediately went onto social media and on Facebook and he said, you've got to go to this piece, it's fantastic, I just loved it and Martin followed up with him and said, I thought you hated it, he said, no, I just... I would never interrupt your performance. He was an actor, he was used to standing on the stage, you don't want the audience talking to you, so although he was constantly being talked to he just considered it a play and said he would never interrupt a fellow actor playing a role. So it's impossible to read how people are experiencing things.

MARTINA It's really impossible, even with the intuitive mind...

BRUCE But the flipside though of what we've been talking about is... or what I thought you were asking me and I'd be interested to hear your thoughts, is on to what degree do we have to anticipate people who do perceive the world quite differently. So people who are colour blind or people who have different kinds of cognitive capacities or people who are deaf or people who are blind, to what degree do we need to create these pieces with an understanding of their perception in mind. I think increasingly we have those... well, I would say one way of thinking about it is we have the obligation but I think thinking about those really expands the work in interesting ways.

CHRISTER Hmm.

MARTINA Yeah.

BRUCE You know, like it requires the creators to be thinking about all of these different planes upon which the work can be experienced.

MARTINA The diversity of people like how they are affected it's interesting to think of how all that can be integrated, I mean we had an experience of, again Proscenium, where you're in the dark and you kind of imagine a play, you know, do you have a memory of being in nature, and then there was... and there's a condition, what is it called, again, you know it's a condition where you actually... if you close your eyes and someone tells you about a sunset you don't see it, you basically have no images, you can't imagine... disphantasmia... it's a particular word and it's quite an unusual condition but I think Scarlet, remember Scarlet, she had it because when everybody else, do you see anything she was like, dark and then the actor was getting more and more desperate like, so if we turn this way do you see anything and she was like, just dark.

CHRISTER I mean that is quite often... not often, it happens...

MARTINA It happened.

CHRISTER You could have this kind of... yeah, I mean... and also maybe some on purpose, some people maybe wanted to sort of...

BRUCE Right.

CHRISTER ... challenge the piece and not say like ...

MARTINA But it's interesting to think of like when... if you create something how do you then... because it almost becomes then a framework or a... I think it almost needs to focus in particular on people that don't see images, okay, what do we create, so it would be a research to meet people and really look into ...

BRUCE Yes...

MARTINA ... how do they perceive the world, what are they... what kind of senses are the most prominent one and then you would shape the experience for them. I guess it's harder to do a piece that would be really kind of fitting with everyone, I think it's almost more interesting to kind of focus it, or people being blind or...

CHRISTER Let me give you a really interesting example, you remember the image that we used for Proscenium, like this image of a stage and then this kind of like talking hands... it was basically a drawing from this American psychologist, he wrote this book called *The Wife that Mistook*

BRUCE *The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Fish?*

CHRISTER Yeah... no, for a... for something, yeah but...

BRUCE I thought it was a fish, there's one about a red shoe... Oliver Sachs.

CHRISTER So basically he used sort of like a small thing... something he'd written this was basically, he thought that perhaps the people that cannot hear, that are deaf, can have the most appreciation for English theatre, he said. And why he said that was because sort of he thought about this sort of like the way of the speaking hands that it must be so like something and he said it in the same sentence he said something about what is it like, how is it with... you know, if someone... if they are hearing voices what are they saying then, are they then saying... no, if they're dreaming, about hearing voices... but I have to send you this quote, do they then see hands moving in mid air, gesticulating like if they're hearing like...

BRUCE Voices.

CHRISTER Yeah, voices, like if they... and maybe he said something about if you are schizophrenic do they then see hallucinations of hands moving in mid air, it's like an interesting thing to think about different sensory modalities, how that sort of changes.

MARTINA And we have... there are so many variations of people's ... I mean I see, for example, colour not always but I see like colours like sometimes...

BRUCE Auras?

MARTINA Psychological states that I don't know but I would know the pattern of Christer, for example, of colours he has in different states and then I see unknown patterns on other people which I don't know exactly what they... some people are more like they have the same colour constantly, it's more stable. Some people change all the time and so I don't know, I mean I don't always see it but that's also like... we all have such... we live in such unknown...

CHRISTER And it's also like this thing about how you... how much do you, when you create something how much do I imagine my audience and how much can I imagine my audience but it's my limitations to do so.

BRUCE Absolutely.

CHRISTER I think as an artist I think it probably should be always about my interest and my... what is making me... yeah, it needs to be sort of by interest the reason I'm involved in something and like it should be... like a mutual interest in someone.

MARTINA The core of the work...

CHRISTER I'm thinking about like how... for example... we had an audition once and there was a visually impaired person coming there, I'm not sure maybe she was totally blind.

MARTINA She was.

CHRISTER And she was going to audition and lead Martina and we were going to judge if she would be a good performer of ours.

MARTINA With the hands, yeah.

CHRISTER And then at that point we didn't really think about like what it would mean to have her in the museum like among expensive sculptures so like if she was blind. But the interesting thing in the audition was that when she was leading, how did she lead?

MARTINA She was extremely practical, of course.

BRUCE Of course.

MARTINA Pragmatic at the same time, so all this kind of poetic approach we have to the movement there wasn't at all in her case and also she had...

CHRISTER Sort of speaking out.

MARTINA She was speaking out and the poetry...

CHRISTER What did she do?

MARTINA I don't remember what she said, but everything poetic came out through the mouth instead.

BRUCE Oh wow.

MARTINA It was really fascinating.

BRUCE And I think your point about how much we can anticipate from our audiences, how much we have to anticipate, right, I think it's a really important question and it's one of the reasons why... the way that, for instance, Pil and I work is that in her dramaturgical role she's often the one who will say, but what about someone who perceives it this way, but what about someone who brings this because I'm working from what I'm interested in and when I worked as a dramaturg I often asked those questions of others but when I'm creating myself I'm most often interested in, oh, I'm really fascinated in this so I'm going to

persue this. So having that other voice that says, yes, but you're not the only one who's going to experience this, this is a really good one.

CHRISTER Yeah, yeah.

BRUCE But I think that it's that difference of thinking between what is the audience experience going to be like and what are the audience's experiences going to be like. And even if something you add into it, you know that only two people out of a hundred will have the sensibility or the condition to experience it in some ways I think it enriches the work, the expression I often use is it increases the viscosity, it's thicker, it's denser, there's more going on in it when you're anticipating these other... some of the work that I'm doing right now is that I'm just at the very front end of the research is exploring how deaf performers experience sound and to think about how... we're going to be working with a theatre person and a musician and a dancer who are all deaf to see how they experience sound as a way of imagining how to help those who actually can hear hear more fully, to expand what it means to hear. And the theatre artist that we're going to be working with she calls her deafness her super power because it so expands her awareness of the world, the fact that she doesn't hear and so much about reliance on meaning comes through her eyes and her ears, she feels like a super hero because without that ability to hear her senses are so much more robust, her other senses are so much more robust.

MARTINA And open I guess in a way, does it make her also vulnerable and sensitive like you know when you open... when you filter everything through that if you're really sensitive and perceptive does that make oneself also really vulnerable, is there a robustness but I guess as well a vulnerability to overload.

BRUCE Well, that's a great question and because we haven't even begun the work yet I don't know the answer to that but I do know that all three of these... I don't think it's a coincidence that all three of these performers are very strong personalities, they are sensitive, clearly, and they're I think quite open but they're also quite affirmative, quite confident and I don't think that's a coincidence, I think that there are strategies that one calls upon to engage with the world when the world considers that you're at a disadvantage. That is about really insisting upon one's own strengths, there's something quite remarkable about that.

MARTINA So it becomes a super power, of course.

BRUCE That's what she calls it, yeah. I'm looking at the time, I don't know... it's two hours in, not quite two hours... I have a 3:15 appointment here which would be in eleven minutes from now. I'm also aware that we've got almost two hours worth of material to be transcribed, I feel sorry for whoever is going to be... editing this, yes, but there's obviously much, much more we could talk about. Perhaps totally apart from this recording which we said we would do for the project, we can continue these conversations, I'm going to turn the recording off if that's okay with you.