

***The Othering Museum: How power performs in co-curatorial participation,
2013-2020***

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Abstract:

In the context of this research the term “othering” refers to a persistent *Us and Them* dynamic between museums and their participating public. To reframe a subject-positioning *of and by* museums as “providers” of postcolonial paternalistic engagements, professionals working in the sector have made several attempts in recent years to promote museums as egalitarian spaces. New identities have been explored such as *The Open Museum* (Glasgow Life, 2000), *The Happy Museum* (2011), *Our Museum* (Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2012) and more recently, *The Activist Museum* (Janes and Sandell, 2019). Whilst language goes a long way to communicate desired-for changes in power (Lynch, 2011) between the museum and the participant, this research shows that more must be done for the situation to be ‘no longer ... *Us and Them*’ (Bienkowski, 2016).

In order to examine how power performs in co-curatorial practice, three case studies and a survey will pursue how power performs in a museum context with different groups of people: working with volunteers, community participants, and professional partners. The survey asks museum professionals their opinion on the language used as best practice in participation. Using a combination of Critical Arts-based Enquiry (Finlay, 2014) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Sarantakos, 2015) the research investigates whether the performance of power is relational to *who* participants are, *how* the processes of participation are constructed, and/or the language used to frame them. To inform this discussion, I use my own practice as a participatory artist to test out a method of non-selective curation which further examines these issues.

The findings build on the work of Bernadette Lynch on empowerment-lite practice (Lynch, 2011) and the *Our Museum* initiative (2012-2015). It finds that embedding necessary

openness and shared authority into participatory work, as recommended by Lynch (2014) and *Our Museum*, will not effectively change the Othering found in museums, unless this change is also embedded in the structure of the museum, funders and government policy.

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The Othering Museum: how power performs in co-curatorial participation, 2013-2020.

Research Question:

Will implementing the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011) and the Our Museum project (PHF 2014, 2016) be enough to break down an enduring 'us and them' binary in museums? (Bienkowski 2014, 2016)

1.INTRODUCTION

As museums find themselves in the Covid-19 lockdown¹ (2020), implementing eight years of learning from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation initiatives *Whose Cake is it Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011) and *Our Museum* (Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2012-2015) is impossible due to closures. Paul Hamlyn recommend that museums address an othering '*Us and Them*' dynamic (Said, 1979; Tajfel and Turner, 1985) found in the language and practice of their work by embedding participation² into all aspects of the institution (Lynch, 2011; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016). The following research takes the opportunity of the closures to reflect on how far the recommendations have come and hopefully present ways forward when the doors to our museums open once more.

Borrowing a definition of 'Othering' from Taylor, Gross and Turgeon (2018:336) this thesis will investigate how this *Us and Them* (Bienkoswski, 2014, 2016) phenomenon performs in the practice of participation at several levels:

¹ The Coronavirus pandemic prohibits Museums across the UK from opening. This was in effect between March 2020 and is still in effect at time of writing.

² An explanation in how key terms, such as 'participation' are used in the thesis can be found in section 1.4.

The process of othering occurs when a more powerful group distinguishes themselves from a group that they define as inferior (Schwalbe et al. 2000; Schwalbe and Mason-Schrock 1996). Othering takes three forms: defensive, implicit, and oppressive.

In the context of museums, I will consider these 'three forms of othering' as; 'defensive' reframed as duty of care performances of protection, 'implicit' as discourse formations (Foucault, 1975) and yes, as somewhat oppressive over the participant as 'other'. The research will ask to what extent this othering is still present in the processes of participation, how far the language problematised by Lynch (2011) has been changed to alter the othering position and is there now greater transparency in decision-making processes? Is there shared authority between participating groups when participatory practice is applied and does this ameliorate the forms of othering? I ultimately ask the research question: will implementing the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011, 2014) and *Our Museum* (PHF 2014, 2016) be enough to break down the enduring '*us and them*' binary in museums? (Bienkowski 2014, 2016).

I suggest that the recommendations may not be enough to break down the enduring binaries because the binaries are systemic; performing as discourse formations that are subject to responsibilities applied to the museum, that the participant does not hold. Unless the museum and the participant have a shared understanding of museum responsibilities, and/or a radically open respect for the responsibilities each party holds, the *Us and Them* divisions will preside, and the museum will remain an othering institution. However, that is not to say that the recommendations won't be beneficial to both the

museum and the participant for they are being seen to deconstruct what needs to be in order to persuade the system to change.

As I began this research the *Our Museum* initiative (PHF, 2014-2016) was also implemented and two of the case studies (enquiries one and two) and a survey of professionals working in museums (enquiry three) happened at the same time. Each reconfirms findings from *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014, 2016) and Lynch (2011, 2014) - that participation needs to be embedded further in museums, and that re-visiting language plays a part in that. With the addition of a further case study enquiry (2019) and a revisit to the survey (2020), all four enquiries extend the *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014,2016) findings to offer several unique contributions (8.2); showing that more work still needs to be done at a structural level to enable museums to do what they want to do.

To clarify what I mean by museums and 'participation' I will consider the term not only as a verb expressing a process where individuals participate in creating an outcome together, but as a noun (Simon, 2010). That it is in itself an all-round name for what museums do regarding their engagement with audiences. Participation as a verb is the active process whereby an external audience, often a member of a targeted community participates with the institutional body to create a shared outcome (Simon, 2010). This outcome may be for instance an online forum to make shared decisions on how projects should proceed, the co-curation of an exhibition and/or joint interpretations for collections (a challenge that is central to this thesis) or simply a conversation about a collection. Participation as a noun has now become shorthand for all engagement processes made by museums: participation as a practice, not as an outcome of practice (Simon, 2010). As one method of participation, I will look at how this practice as a verb performs when the participant has an equal say in

how they are represented in a co-curatorial process. The participant should feel visible in the process and the outcome of participation. However, they are not given the power in which to participate fully (Lynch, 2011, 2014). It is this aspect of participation that is still yet to be understood by museums across the board. Foucault (1980:98) explains how power works:

Power is something which is performed, something more like a strategy than a possession. Power should be seen as a verb, not a noun, something that does something, rather than something which is held onto. In power/knowledge – Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or as something which only functions in the form of a chain...power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization...individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application (Foucault, 1980:98).

As the research proceeds this idea of power is found as somewhat confused in the practice of participation in museums (Ch 6) and one of the problems of power in this context is that its circulation, described by Foucault (1980) is prohibited from the participant. The participant is relegated to the periphery of these performances (or circulations) of power as 'them', outside from 'us', the museum. The binary between the museum and the participant also has connotations of implied hierarchies of knowledge. The museum holds sector specific knowledge and as the 'insider', the 'us' in the dynamic, have decision-making powers on who has access to that knowledge which is restricted from the participant, the 'outsider' (Tajfel and Turner, 1985). Similar binary positionings of *Us and Them* can be seen in the binaries between tutor/student; expert/learner; able/unable; with the pre-eminent positioning assuming a more knowledgeable position (see section 2.2.4). I do not feel that

this is a fully conscious action performed by museums, but it is ultimately undermining and disempowering for the participant promised so much more (Lynch, 2011, 2014, 2017).

When thinking about how museums are othering participants, my findings show that anyone outside of the museum experiences the *Us and Them* dynamic. This othering is performed regardless of diversity or position as a volunteer, a community participant, or a professional freelance partner. However, with concern, it is more pronounced if the participant is not a professional partner, is a person of colour and/or if they speak a language other than English. The thesis further outlines how this othering materialises in practice, with several auto-ethnographic observations of how power performs to negate participant decision-making; manifesting at times as coercive censorship and what Lynch (2011) calls empowerment-lite participation (discussed in 1.2). A further focus of the research will be whether these performances of power significantly change when a test method of non-selective curation (3.2.1) is applied and the problematised language by Lynch (2011) is mostly removed.

1.1.A focus on hierarchies of diversity: the how of Us and Them?

The idea for this research came from my own practice as a museum professional with a background in community arts. I saw community participants as a *dynamic, diverse* group of people whom I worked with (but I did not consider myself as particularly 'diverse', I am not sure many people do). This diversity, and whether I was part of that 'diversity', was something I became acutely aware of when working within museums on *The Intercultural*

Project (2011-2013)³, Enquiry 1 (EQ1⁴, 4.1). It was a project explicit in its aims to increase intercultural dialogue ahead of the Olympic, Para-Olympic, 2012 and Commonwealth Games, 2014. It was hoped that this dialogue would hopefully be achieved through the development of an exhibition and learning programme based on collections in the museum⁵(EQ1). The recruitment of participants found the museum working with predominantly ethnic minority participants who were widely deemed by the museum to be vulnerable. Most of the people engaged had a history of migration; some came to Scotland for economic reasons, some to be with family and most were seeking asylum. My role in the museums was as a Learning Assistant whose job it was to engage visitors with the collection and aspects of their own and others' heritages. I felt I had a distinct duty of care (2.2.3.3) to ensure the space of the museum would enable a secure and supportive place for intercultural dialogue. The intention was for economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to cross-culturally exchange their stories, ideas, and thoughts on a variety of collections, with what the museum called the local 'homogenous Scots'.

This distinction between two groups of people, where one is more 'othered' than the other (Hall, 1986) not only creates an *Us and Them* dynamic between participants, but it also presents the museum as likewise 'homogenous' further othering the non-so-called homogenous group. The distinction (Bourdieu, 1992) between those who were from the 'home' of Scotland and those coming into the space as outsiders (Tajfel and Turner, 1985) was not intended to be Othering (Hall, 1986), but was meant to achieve quite the opposite; to present aspects of Scottish heritage as welcoming the newly arrived. However, it could

³ The Intercultural Project is case study one. The name has been changed out of ethical considerations explained in Chapter 3.

⁴ EQ represents 'Enquiry' therefore EQ1 represents 'Enquiry One'.

⁵ The names of the museums are protected due to ethical considerations and will be annotated with the enquiry they refer.

be argued this definition reinforced the very binaries *The Intercultural Project* aimed to dissolve, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

I felt uncomfortable with the effect these distinctions were having on me, somewhat unconsciously, but alarmingly. As someone who has experienced the violence of Apartheid South Africa during the 1976 uprisings, I knew that being perceived as vulnerable disregards innate and learnt resilience; as a Dyslexic with episodes of debilitating Dyspraxia, I fundamentally understood that not knowing, or being able to use language does not indicate levels of intelligence. Further to this, I was, to an extent 'Othered' as a migrant, quite uncertain of my own heritage. And here I was, perceiving my role within the museum as a caregiver (Munro, 2014) to provide a responsible⁶ service to those who were perceived as vulnerable, as a provider of learning in a non-educational space with adults, some many years older than me and far more experienced in life, using not only positioning that was 'Othering' but also language (1.2.1). I was '*us*' assimilated into the museum, while the participating 'diverse' community I was working with was '*them*'; not 'homogenous', not Scottish and not the museum.

This othering found in how we, as museum professionals were categorising participants counteracted the precise mission of the museum as inclusive (Jamieson and Lane, 2010) and therefore, it is important to ask why, when an establishment who clearly wants to develop a space that invites people from all walks of life to have an equitable 'share of the cake' (Lynch, 2011), do they continue to perform with an authority, restricting this very aim?

⁶ During my career at the time, 2012 there was much rhetoric that museums should be 'safe spaces' for dialogue (Jamieson and Lane et al, 2010; Vlachou, 2019).

1.2. A focus on language: a recipe...learning from “Whose Cake is it Anyway?” (Lynch, 2011)

In my desire to address the dissonance showing up in my practice, I looked to what was being discussed in museums about this problem. In my experience, just about everyone working in museums had read the report *Whose Cake is it Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011) and it was already informing changes in our thinking about best practice and methods of meaningful participation (HLF, 2010). The core message was that to combat empowerment - lite practices (Lynch, 2011), a helpful term to describe exactly what I was feeling and doing, museums must be more aware of the language they use and how they use it.

Lynch (2011) determines that the language of participation has what she terms an ‘invisible power’ (2011:15) operating within museums; one that ‘subtly’ informs the practice of participation in such a way that it is ‘empowerment-lite’. This practice gives lip service to participants in their ‘decision-making’ under the guise of giving them greater agency. Which is ultimately dis-empowering when a museum dis-regards these decisions made by participants in favour of their own (Lynch, 2011).

As an artist working in the community, my work-based vocabulary was what could be called the language of participation. In agreement with Lynch and many others (Foucault, 1972; Hall, 1996; Derrida, 1976, 1978) I too suspected that the language I was using had this ‘invisible power’ (Lynch, 2011:15) which was problematically re-affirming positionings of *Us and Them*¹ (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016); where ‘us’ could be understood as the museum and ‘them’ was more often than not the community participant. I critically considered the common terminology that had become central to this work, terms such as: *enable*,

empower, inspire, provide, facilitate, encourage, educate, engage, transform, help, assist and *evaluate* as perhaps doing the opposite of what the language denotes (Lynch, 2011).

After reading *Whose Cake is it Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011), I reflected on what expectations I had of my own practice within this positioning of *Us and Them*? Was I uncomfortable with this, and if so, why? In *Whose Cake is It Anyway?* Lynch (2011) identifies that this language - typically used by museums to describe participation¹ - does create an *Us and Them* dichotomy with the museum positioned firmly as the service provider ('Us') and the beneficiary, the participant ('Them'). This positioning is also compounded by museums using language such as: "We *provide, develop, expand, foster, ensure, target* and *encourage*" (Lynch, 2011:16), revealing an institution's perception of its duty to *provide, serve* and *care* (Munro, 2014).

To show how this *Us and Them* positioning presents in the language I will deconstruct the word *enable* as an example.

<i>Us</i> <i>(museum)</i>	<i>Them</i> <i>(community)</i>
<i>en-</i>	Able
<i>em-</i>	Power
<i>en-</i>	Courage

Figure 1. *Power and Language*

This table shows the verb *enable* broken down to identify which subject owns which active participle. i.e., '*en*' is owned by '*Us*' (the museum) and '*able*' is owned by '*Them*' (the community participant). When separated it is evident that the column of '*them*' is already

'able' (it is a fully formed word on its own) and does not necessarily need the action of the column 'Us' to exist, as *able*. However, when the participle 'en' is pre-eminently positioned against 'able' it renders 'able' inactive commandeering the position. The same could be said for the practice of one actor presuming to enable an already able actor. I wondered where these words were coming from and why we (the museum and third sector freelancers) were so sure they were emblematic of best practice?

My experience of the discourse found me firmly rooted in a case of museums doing the opposite of what they say they are doing (Lynch, 2011, 2014). In other areas of my work, I found I was yearning to open up and tell participants exactly why decisions could or could not be made and in the spirit of sharing decision-making; it felt hierarchical and coercive not to. Conversely, I also felt that professionally I had a duty to protect the structural workings of the museum (Munro, 2014; Kidd et al, 2014) which prohibited such openness, which also felt dis-empowering. This disconnection I was finding in my work, is the premise for this research.

1.2.1. Can the analysis of language in practice also reveal dis-empowerment?

Lynch notes that dis-empowerment can be revealed in the analyses of the language used by institutions:

The more overt use of institutional power includes decision-making and agenda-setting that influences outcomes through inducement and persuasion based on the institution's authority. But, as the study found, power also acts in invisible ways on those upon whom the practice is based, as well as on those charged with its delivery (Lynch, 2011:15).

My research borrows this framing from Lynch (2011) to analyse the 'invisible ways' power performs upon those the practice is based on as well as on those charged with its delivery in the years following the publication of Lynch's findings (2011). Lynch (2011) explains that 'decision-making' is a performance of 'authority' and helps identify how *Us and Them* binaries between the participant and museum manifest. Building on her research this thesis explores why it may be too early for *Our Museum*¹ to proclaim that the museum sector is operating in ways that can be characterised as 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016).

My findings show this language not only has the power to separate *Us* from *Them* but can keep separations in place long after the discourse has been somewhat removed. The findings also agree with Lynch (2011) that without changing the discourse hierarchical processes in decision-making (Hall, 1996) will be far more difficult to address, and I will go as far as to say that it may even be impossible without that change starting at a government level. With this in mind, the research will focus on the language *in practice* and analyse how the 'invisible power' performs in a co-curatorial context. The following section will summarise some of the key definitions that will frequent the thesis and explain how I will use language, before moving onto how this research will unfold over eight chapters.

1.3. I will 'language': key definitions

Museums are the chosen focus of the research and are a helpful example of wider global community development. They aim to transform communities by creating access to greater cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Jane and Sandel et al, 2019). Parmian states that from the Seventeenth Century the purpose of museums was 'to go beyond the obvious and

the ordinary, to uncover hidden knowledge that which would permit him (for it was always him¹) a more complete grasp of the workings of the world (Parmian, 1990:57). Museums house, display and create opportunities using objects and object-based learning (Glasgow Museums, 2010) with artefact collections that represent heritage/s. However, museums are enmeshed in colonial and post-colonial heritage (Hall, 1996, 1997) and I will argue that this 'heritage' is *othering* participant actors.

The subject of this research is *participation* and the definition I will rest upon is one from participatory development, provided by Guijt (1998:1). Participation 'is to increase the involvement of socially and economically marginalized people in decision-making over their own lives'. In the context of museums, this decision-making is all about representations of self or cultural identities/heritages. The 'self' here is the *participant* who are taking part in the case studies (EQ1, the volunteer, EQ2, the community participant, EQ3, the professional partner). When thinking about who the participant is, '*community*' will feature in more detail in the literature review on community arts, but for clarity from the offset I will define the community as everyone who is not the museum. I will discuss *co-production*, *co-curation*, and *co-creation* as the methods of participation which are intended as non-hierarchical and egalitarian in terms of decision-making within museums (Simon, 2010). The 'co' participle denotes: a *shared-* production, *shared-* creation and *shared* – curation (Prentki and Preston, 2009). However, as this research will find, these terms are often collated and interchangeable by museums often confusing the practice. The case studies featured here examine how this power performs when the museum works with the volunteers, communities, and professional partners.

I will also argue in the literature review (2.2.2.1. and 2.2.2.2.) that museums are spaces informed by specific discourse formations (Foucault, 1972) and will throughout the thesis draw on Bourdieu's (1993) ideas on 'disposition' to explain how performances of power are actualised by these discourse formations as *[dis]positions* or *[dis]positional* thinking. The brackets denote that the positioning of the actor is informed by their dispositions (seemingly fixed ideas coming from discourse) which are difficult to shift.

Space itself is a tricky term to define with connotations of the geographical and psychological and will here refer to the psychological space of engagement, whereas *place* will describe the geographical and physical site.

This research will frame performances of power as operating between two opposing poles (Bourdieu, 1993) that illustrate irreconcilable duties being performed in this space and place of museums: with one pole felt as a responsibility to the museum sponsor (ICOM, 2007) and a second pole felt as a duty to open up processes to and with the participant as recommended by best practice (Our Museum, PHF, 2014, 2016). Bourdieu (1993) explains that these poles occupy different fields of cultural production (2.2.5). These 'fields' are described by Bourdieu as either *autonomous* or *heteronomous* (Bourdieu, 1993) and are impossible to bring into harmony. Heteronomy is the state of being that is ruled by a lack of self-determinism motivated by a political currency and/ or economic motives of responsibility; whereas autonomy is the right to self-govern outcomes motivated without consideration to political-economic or currency concerns and therefore gives freedom to make unencumbered decisions (2.2.3). Using critical arts-based enquiry, case studies two and three explore how this challenging position manifests in practice. The case studies (EQ1, EQ2, EQ4) investigate the re-framing of co-curation as a test method of non-selective

curation (3.2.1). This somewhat oxymoronic term dictates that when using this method, the curation is not determined by the museum selecting objects as the practice involves using all material created unless the participant decides to remove it. The curation is in *how* these materials are displayed not a selection in *what* is displayed. The objectives, grounded in theory developed in case study one respect the specialism of the museum with regards to access standards, but also respects the cultural lens of the community participant as an authority (e.g., to include self-representations that curators might miss during traditional selective-curation processes). This method aims then to represent the participant narratives more accurately and meaningfully.

Three case studies and a survey (a total of four enquiries) will examine how power performs when museums engage in co-curation with different groups of people: volunteers, community participants and professional partners. Using cultural theory (Foucault, 1973, 1977, 1994; Bourdieu, 1986, 1992, 1993; Hall, 1996, 1997; hooks, 1989, 1990) the research will compare two key variables: how the language related to Lynch's study (2011) is actuated in the practice of participation at four stages post *Whose Cake is It Anyway?* (Lynch 2011); and how does power circulate in co-curatorial decision-making as experienced in practice by the participants and practitioners involved.

1.4. The meeting of two influencing factors: how the thesis will unfold

When thinking about fields of cultural production, Bourdieu also talks about a 'meeting of two histories' (Bourdieu, 1993:63): the history of dispositions and the currency of dispositions. To organise the literature review I think about these 'histories' as how invisible

power in the language has first come about, as historical discourse formations (Foucault, 1992) informing practice, and second how it is performing in practice. Bourdieu calls the second history a 'currency' of dispositions: a genealogy of practice in how political and economic currency, and ideas around the value of participation, can be seen in practice (Lynch, 2011). This relational knot between the language of invisible power (Lynch, 2011) as [dis]positionally entrenched will unravel over the next chapters organised according to these two 'histories' (2.2 and 2.3).

The first part of (2.2) section one (2.2.1) will discuss what critical shifts the museum has made post Lynch's 2011 study (Sandel, 2004, 2009; Janes and Sandell, 2019; Lynch, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2017; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016; Kidd et al, 2011; Kidd et al, 2014). The second section of (2.2.2) will take a theoretical turn and look to the dispositional aspects pertaining to participatory work in museums (Foucault, 1975, 1977; Bourdieu, 1993; Hegel, 1806; Marx, 1859; Maslow, 1943, Henkel and Stirrat, 2002; Hall, 1996, 1997, 2000; Bhabha et al 1990, 1994, hooks, 1990, 1996, 1997).

The second part of the literature review (2.3) will review works discussing curatorial participation in section 2.3.1. This will also consider what museums could borrow from other disciplines to further address the problems raised by Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014, 2016), (Boal, 1973, Freire, 1974; Bishop, 2012; Prenki and Preston et al, 2009; Popple, 2009; hooks, 1989, 1996; Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004). 2.3.2 will then focus on the theoretical challenges presented to participation in this context.

Chapter Three discusses the methodological processes framing the study which is epistemologically post-positivist interpretivist. It also explains the reasoning for a Critical Arts-based Inquiry and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995, 2010; Finlay, 1989) to

analyse the data. A design of four stages of participatory action research will be identified and the methods implemented discussed.

Chapters Four presents case study one (EQ1) which serves as grounded theory, with auto-ethnographic observations and the analysis of evaluation documents from *The Intercultural Project*, 2013. It demonstrates that a duty of care can censor participant decisions.

Chapter Five presents case study two (EQ2), discussing three perspectives on the challenges under scrutiny: Section 5.1 explores the case study *Bricks and Mortar*, discussing empirical findings from auto-ethnographical research. This is followed in section 5.2 by findings from community participant interviews (n10) and questionnaires (n15). The participants were community members who had been involved in co-curating a performance and exhibition as part of the project. This section examines disparities between participants' perceptions of the 'frontstage' of participatory processes and the 'backstage' (Kothari, 2001) which contribute to, and reinforce, the problematised *Us and Them* dynamic identified by Lynch (2011, 2014) and *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014,2016).

Chapter Six presents a survey of museum professionals (EQ3, 7.1) and considers a critical discourse analysis of an online survey, powered by Survey Monkey (n39). This extended questionnaire (30 questions) explores how the language of participation features in the daily work of museum practitioners and how power is perceived to perform in practice. The findings show that although on paper arts/museum practitioners understand the problematic nature of the language of invisible power identified by Lynch (Lynch, 2011), they often struggle to situate and explore their practice outside the realms of this entrenched language. The second section of this chapter (6.4) revisits a small number of practitioners (n4) to discuss how they view participatory practice in 2020.

Chapter Seven is the final stage of enquiry and focuses on a third case study, *Museum Made Dark*. This project was a large-scale co-curated event hosted by a museum in partnership with non-museum professional freelance artists who explored the collections through a diverse combination of performance, film, installation, and music. (7.2) unpacks (n13) interviews with co-curating participants reflecting on their experience of working with the museum using non – selective curation followed by auto-ethnographic observations in (7.3).

Chapter eight brings the findings together in conclusion with recommendations for museums and participatory practice in general. The findings discuss how the practice of participation in museums is still entrenched in othering, othering anyone who is not the museum. But they show that a co-curatorial practice of non-selective curation can go some way to alleviate this problem. However, when thinking about power and participation even though museums themselves as institutional bodies have moved quite some distance from this damaging space, the partnerships they engage in and the expectations of the participants have not. Neither has the discourse found in funding and policy which continues to remain problematic as the institution struggles to counter the disharmony found in operational structures.

1.5. Conclusion to Introduction

In this opening chapter, the context of the research has been presented as a complex relational knot that has several frayed ends to discuss, the language in use, the discourse formations, and the methods in practice. This dissertation will investigate how museums perform an *Us and Them* othering dynamic ‘through the meeting of’ Bourdieu’s two histories (Bourdieu, 1993:61): a history of dispositions and of currency. To place myself as

the artist-researcher also within this framework 1.1 and 1.2 shed light on why this research is important to me. 1.3 offers definitions of key terminology, and 1.4 outlines a summary of each chapter.

The following thesis is a longitudinal study where I discuss in what circumstances invisible power is still found to construct empowerment-lite participation (Lynch, 2011) that 'others' (Hall, 1996) participants. The enquiries are situated two years after *Whose Cake Is It Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011) in 2014, four years later (2016) and eight years later (2020). Being mindful that embedding participation into all aspects of museum work has been recommended by Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (2014, 2016, 2018), the research also tests out an experimental method of co-curatorial participation which I call 'non-selective curation' (3.2.1). This method offers shared decision-making between the museum and participant and draws on a combination of long-practised theatre and contemporary arts participatory techniques (Boal, 1973; Prentki and Preston, 2009; Bishop, 2012) combined with a theory of 'radical openness' (hooks, 1989) and 'linguaging' (Phipps and Gonzalez (2005), both of which will be discussed in the following chapter. This developing model is used to investigate what practitioners can and cannot achieve in the context of museums to explore whether implementing the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (PHF 2014, 2016) will be enough to break down an enduring 'us and them' binary in museums? (Bienkowski 2014, 2016)

The following chapter will unpack key concepts pertinent to the research and consider what other scholars have written about the subject. These ideas will be wrapped into the context of museums and what they can borrow from other disciplines such as theatre and

community arts in their aim to be 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski 2014, 2016) before moving into Chapter 3 which will discuss how the research was carried out.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

As discussed in the introduction, recommendations to decentre museums from a centre-periphery model (Lynch, 2011; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016), have been made (Janes, 2009; Sandel, 2000, Sandel and Knightingale, 2012). However, the research will illustrate that these moves have not yet been successful and is determined to find out why power keeps the *Us and Them* binary in place. Perhaps it is the governmentality of the site (Foucault, 1977; Sandell, 2007), the language rooted in postcolonial discourse (Hall, 1997; Lynch, 2011), curatorial power of decision-making and a strong museum authorial voice (Wray, 2019; Lynch, 2011, 2013; 2017, 2019; Sandell, 2007), or perhaps it is a museum's disposition to serve (Bourdieu, 1996; Lynch, 2011)? The following literature review will bring a relational context to the 'ways' (Lynch, 2011: 15) power could be keeping the *Us and Them* dynamic in place as defensive, implicit and oppressive (Taylor, Gross and Turgeon, 2018). It will also consider in what ways this dynamic could be changed by looking out towards other disciplines, already well practised in activist and social justice participation, such as theatre (Boal, 1974; Prenki and Preston et al, 2009).

2.1.1. How will the literature reviewed contribute to knowledge?

Key museum voices are not unaware of the problems and there is a whole catalogue of critical works dedicated to the challenges (Hall, 1996; Sandell, 2002, 2007; Janes and Sandell, 2019; Anthony and Kidd, 2011; Kidd et al, 2014; Lynch, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2019; Janes and Sandel et al 2019). But still, museum workers are in a quandary (Ch 6) about how to represent individually diverse human experiences appropriately, and do

this work sensitively (Sandel, 2009; Kidd et al, 2014). There is a sense that they must reposition themselves from top-down hierarchical institutions to ones that facilitate a shared process of cultural communication. There is also a deep understanding that transparency in decision - making processes must be maintained to limit problems of misrepresenting cultural narratives (Lidchi, 1997; Hall, 1997; Bourdieu, 1993). However, museums cannot undergo these processes on their own, because the process of participation is a shared process with another (NMW, 2018). Perhaps with joined-up articulations of power as a shared openness (Lynch, 2019), 'participation' could then methodologically be effective in a transformational way underpinning all aspects of the museum service (Museums Association Code of Ethics, 2014).

But what could this look like and will implementing the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (PHF 2014, 2016) be enough to break down an enduring 'us and them' binary in museums? (Bienkowski 2014, 2016). Perhaps it will, and there is much literature on these desired-for outcomes to draw from (Sandel, 1998, 2003,2004, 2007, 2013; Sandel and Knightingale, 2012; Janes and Sandell, 2019; Lynch, 2011,2013 2014, 2016, 2017; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016; DCMS, 2016; HLF, 2010, PHF, 2016,2018). However, those who recommend a change in museums primarily focus on work that is *with* and *for* participants deemed not already 'accessing their cultural right' (DCMS, 2016). Those perceived as diverse, vulnerable and in some way in need of facilitation by the museum have been a key focus of much discussion (Sandel, 2004; Sandel and Knightingale, 2012; Lynch, 2016). I argue that overly focussing on research projects with underrepresented groups hides issues unrelated to diversity. Unless the same processes interrogate projects with participants who are not deemed as vulnerable and diverse by the museum, hidden dynamics to the power being performed may not be revealed and therefore be missed in

recommendations of how to fix it. This research aims to fill this gap with the inclusion of enquiry four to ask how museums participate with a community they do not perceive, at least in an obvious manner, as diverse, vulnerable or as having experienced post-colonial adverse positioning – in this case white arts professionals. This focus is not discussed in available critical literature, perhaps because there is a tacit belief that power could only perform in an othering manner if the participant is of an ethnic minority or has other protected characteristics based in sexuality or age discrimination (for example) - which is in itself alarmingly othering.

This, ironically, I argue further deepens the museum professionals' dispositional duties of care (see 2.2.2) in a deeply rooted fear of being racist. They then focus hard on cycles of how to fix the situation; re-affirming the very *Us and Them* positioning they are trying to change. Museums have been advised to stop trying to find the solution on their own and instead embrace an era of openness (Lynch, 2014, 2019; PHF, 2014, 2016) to find a shared solution *with* the participating public, but something is still stopping them from doing so at all levels. This research adds to that discussion by implementing a method of co-curatorial participation based on 'openness' to assess whether this will help the situation when participating with both diverse individuals and a professional group who are not considered as particularly diverse, as discussed in Chapter 3.

2.1.2 How the literature review addresses this complex knot

The introduction to the literature review has begun by thinking about how the research could fit within a body of work by key museum voices (Sandel, 1998, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2013; Sandel and Knightingale, 2012; Janes and Sandell, 2019; Lynch, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016). The following two broad sections (2.2 and 2.3) address how

this new research is framed by locating literature as part of a historical conversation and a 'meeting [point] between Bourdieu's two histories' (1993:63): a history of dispositions with a focus on language (2.2.), and a history of dispositions with a focus on practice (2.3). Section (2.2.1) first locates the contemporary museum as a sector in transition. Section (2.2.2) will be dedicated to the theoretical problems of *Us and Them* by looking at discourse formations as a history of dispositions that connect to ideas around power, participation discourse and governmentality, decision-making and ownership rights (Foucault, 1972, 1975; Bourdieu, 1986,1993; Hegel, 1806; Marx, 1859). This overview of discourse will then review how essentialist use of language informs identity (Bhabha, 1990, 1994, 1996; Butler, 1993; Derrida, 1976,1978; Hall,1996, 1997; Hall and Gay,1996; Rutherford, 1990, 1998) and could be 'othering' participants. 2.2. will conclude by taking a look at Bourdieu's fields of cultural production which I argue compounds the binaries of *Us and Them*, formed by discourse. Using Bourdieu (1993) will help explain the push and pull museums experience in trying to do the opposite of what discourse and governing policy tells them to do.

Section 2.3 will look at the practice of participation being performed by museums when thinking about the curatorial voice (2.3.1). This section will then look towards what can be borrowed from theatre, community arts and pedagogy before concluding with a theoretical discussion in on participant fears around decision- making and symbolic power, introducing what methods could be used to alleviate this (Bourdieu, 1992; Freire, 1974; Bishop, 2012; Simon, 2010; Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004).

2.2 A HISTORY OF DISPOSITIONS WITH A FOCUS ON LANGUAGE

2.2.1 A genealogical shift as museums attempt to solve the binary problem, 2011-2019?

When thinking about how contemporary museums are reconstructing themselves to be somewhat activist in a journey towards 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski, 2014,2016) the first section of the literature review will show how museums are deconstructing discourse through re-articulating a sense of identity and formulating changes in language. I discuss this here to expose current challenges museums are trying to navigate before looking at literature that helps unwrap these and find outsourced solutions that will change the discourse and hopefully then, practice. This will be presented as a genealogy of museum moves to address the problem since *Whose Cake is It Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011).

2.2.1.1 A critical shift post *Whose Cake is it Anyway*, 2011-2018?

One of the key movements during the period post-Lynch (2011) is, as discussed, *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014 - 2016) who supported eight organisations across the UK in 'a process of change' (Bienkowski, 2014:02). As a project directly connected to *Whose Cake is it Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011) the language Lynch problematises is key (see 1.2). This subsection will track several sector-wide discussions about power and participation in museums, before heading into a discussion of where historically this discourse comes from. Reflecting on how museums have or have not moved in their thinking I will also look at museum policy from one of the organisations *Our Museum* worked with, National Museum Wales.

As one of the larger Nationals NMW have in many ways been successful in embedding participation, notably at St. Fagan's (Williams, 2014) and it is in their more recent policy that learning from *Our Museum* can be most clearly seen (NMW, 2015, Events Strategy, 2018).

a. 2012/13 Repurposing as providers of 'cultural right'

Going back to 2012 and 2013, when Lynch's study was widely being circulated, the Museums Association launched a public consultation. The findings uncovered what the public perceived as important for museums to do as 'purposes' that should be embedded by 2020: that museums should be 'providing a forum for debate, promoting social justice and human rights.' (Museums 2020, 2013: 17). In order to focus on these rights and widen participation and decision-making this publicly endorsed mission for museums was something also acknowledged by Anderson, Sandell and Knightingale in 2012. The power embedded into the ideology of 'participation' and its symbolic connection to human rights were then outlined as follows:

Participation can be seen as part of everyone's "cultural rights", which have been characterised for museums as every person having the right to:

- 1) recognition of their own cultural identity
- 2) engagement with other cultures
- 3) participation in cultural activities
- 4) opportunities for creativity
- 5) freedom of expression and critical judgement.

(Anderson, Sandell and Nightingale, 2012)

Funder and policy directives (DCMS, 2016) also draw on these theoretical ideas of 'free will in decision-making' and the 'right to culture' as criteria for successful democratization of participation (HLF, 2010) These directives appear to use archaeologically Hegelian ideas (1807) of the 'Human' and 'Unhuman' (see 2.2.3.1.) when framing who is not accessing these rights and is therefore perceived as vulnerable. As these concepts conflate as repeated doctrines and are in continual usage, they can become ideological 'truths' within the practice of the museum (Foucault, 1969,1972) and can reaffirm the boundaries of *Us and Them* through a museums desire to provide these rights for another, instead of allowing 'them' to find them for [them]selves (Lynch, 2011).

b. 2014 *Our Museum* embeds

In 2014 *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014-2016) was putting into practice the learning from Lynch's study (2011) and access to cultural rights (Anderson, Sandell and Knightingale, 2012) as central to museum work. The strategy was to enable participation in museums to become sustainable and not be dependent on short-term funding drives that put participation at risk of empowerment-lite processes (Lynch, 2011). *Our Museum* was building in time and concerted effort towards relationship-building. 2014 was another critical shift for museums as not only was *Our Museum* active, but the Museums Association had published *Museums Change Lives* (2014) and Paul Hamlyn Foundation presented an interim paper, *Communities and Museums as Active Partners: Emerging learning from Our Museum*. This publication asked that the participatory process should be embedded as collaborative. It includes terms such as: [investing in] *sustainable partnerships with communities, involving, decision-making, participatory practice, local needs, community agency, capacity building, and reflection*. This paper proposes that the best museums 'place collaborative work at the

heart of their organisations [...] building sustainable partnerships with communities and involving them in decision-making' (Bienowski 2012:02). This same understanding of 'involving communities' can be found in *Heritage Lottery Funding Guidelines* (2010) reviewed in 2.2.5.2. and is picked up by at least one National Museum (NMW, 2015) in their Community Engagement Strategy just a year later, using exactly the same language.

As a partial offer in decision-making this could appear restrictive and 'empowerment lite' (Lynch, 2011) and I will discuss this in section 2.2.5.2 with a look at how Heritage Lottery Fund⁷ use the term (2010: 05). When thinking about the context of *Our Museum* 'involving' becomes something else as the project recommends that organisations accept, they do not have the capacity to do more than 'involving' at this time and should allow for slow but sustainable change. This partial offer is an example of museums doing just that. I will suggest that this use of the term could be more explicit, as 'involving' also taps into the same historic discourse that separates *Us* from *Them* as a withholding of knowledge.

c. 2015 a need to 'Future Proof' museums

More encouraging is the overt emphasis on community agency and capacity building as less 'centre-periphery' (with the museum as centre), indicating a shift of thinking that aims at true and meaningful participation (HLF, 2010). This shift was swiftly noted by the sector and saw *Future Proof Museums* (2015⁸) appear as a manifesto (or open letter) of intent to embed decision-making in museums, as a priori. Simon Stephens, Editor of the *Museums Association Journal* (2015:54⁹) joins the discussion and suggests that 'Museums can at least

⁷ I refer throughout to the Heritage Lottery Fund or HLF although the fund is now known as the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

⁸ In the *Museums Association Journal*, October 2015. Link to the *Future Proof Museum* website: accessed July 2019, 16th <https://www.a-m-a.co.uk/ama-training/long-term-programmes/futureproof/>

⁹ *Museums Association*, January 2015

show they are relevant to people's lives asking, 'how can communities affect decision-making in museums?' Janice Lane and Sybil Williams (2015:17) likewise recognise this need in conversation (Museums Association Journal, 2015):

[...] it is hard for the sector to dispel their perception that a museum is just a building with collections on display - not an active space for social exchange [...] I am interested in how museums more actively enable debate about the big issues society faces. We use them as community spaces to engage people with politics, generating knowledge to empower them to be informed decision-makers in civil society. But as people working in museums, what do we bring to this process of dialogue and "co-production" that undermines it from the start? Are we still working in ways that reinforce the museum/partner as benevolent "givers" of cultural access, where privilege may be presented as "the norm", rather than as active agents in exploring and sharing cultures and knowledge? (Lane, 2015:18-46¹⁰)

Here, Lane describes the same frustrations as Lynch (2011:11) when discussing 'empowerment-lite' participation in a co-production context. She considers there to be an undermining of collaborative working 'from the start' that is indicative of the processes involved in participation in museums. She likewise brings attention to the importance of the museum 'space', as a centre for dialogue. Lane here alludes to historical dispositions of 'people working in museums' who are 'still' stuck in a cycle of reinforcing the *Us and Them* museum dynamic. She explicitly states that the museum should be seen and felt as a 'community space'; owned by the community and not the museum.

¹⁰ Museums Association, January 2015

When looking at community engagement there is a firm desire to fulfil the premise of greater shared decision-making and ownership over the space and place of participation which can also be seen in 2015. National Museum Wales write in their Community Engagement Strategy (2015) "Community agency will be placed at the heart of our decision-making processes with regular participation and collaboration embedded as a way of working." As seen in the Heritage Lottery Funding guidelines, last updated in 2010 (2.2.1) museums permit themselves leeway to decide on when and how this community agency will take place by enabling 'regular participation'. The use of '*regular*' is encouraging and shows that there is a desire for these processes to be more frequent. However, this word also allows for the museum to determine when they do or do not embed community agency 'placed at the heart of decision-making', enabling the museum to mitigate against this reputationally. If needs be the museum here shows willing, in the same way they have since 2012 but without the need for full commitment. When thinking about the influence of *Our Museum* perhaps this is a wise manoeuvre, one where the museum acknowledges they do not as yet have the capacity to fully commit. Supporting this interpretation National Museum Wales state that 'working this way is not easy but will create more socially aware and democratic museums' (NMW,2015:4).

Here a new transparency is evident, as the museum recognises that participation is hard: the desire for change is there, but with no assumption the museum have arrived at the destination. Again, this is new to museum rhetoric as historically there has been a tendency towards overconfidence in the sector in what they can or cannot do (Lynch, 2011, 2014). This journey of transparency is encouraging but would be helpful to communicate consistently to practitioners, who are already confused as will be seen in (6.2), but here one of the *Our Museum* organisations does just that. Through this kind of acknowledgement,

the sector could manage reputational risk whilst also maintaining a professional identity as a socially active establishment, one gained over the past decade (Janes and Sandel, 2019).

d. 2016/17 Well-meaning and well on their way, but with professional dissonance

Further to Lane's assertions, 2016 saw the Museums Association publish their revised *Code of Ethics*. This stated that the sector should abide by 'public engagement and public benefit' principles. *Code 1* asks museums to 'reach out' (2016:6) to diverse audiences (subtly changing this idea from 'outreach'¹¹ as a term found in previous discourse). This subtle repositioning of 'reach out' from 'outreach' asks the museum to 'reach out' to audiences for assistance, as opposed to the museum offering audiences assisted learning. This subtle shift does a lot in terms of its influence on practice (Mrftab, 2004).

Psychologically, the power the museum exudes is rephrased as they acknowledge they do not have all the knowledge and ask the participant to instead share their knowledge.

<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Reach Out</i>
<i>Museum as keepers of knowledge and in a position of power</i>	<i>Museums need audiences to survive, community partners in a position of power.</i>
<i>Museum as invited space</i>	<i>Museums go into invented space</i>

Figure 2. Reach Out

I will show in the following findings (EQ2, EQ3, EQ4) that the impact of this language has started to change the discourse but has also divided the museum sector between those who are critically analysing the use of the language and those who tacitly accept it as best

¹¹ Learning and Outreach is a departmental term in museums that designates the team who engage the public.

practice ideologies, holding onto the old or exchanging language without changing practice.

Lynch discusses this professional dissonance in 2017 as still being a problem:

One is struck by how museums continue to define the rules of engagement, subtly denying conflict and the active agency of participants to express it, while claiming open 'negotiation' (Lynch 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; 2013a; 2013b; 2011a; 2011b; 2011c; 2011d; 2010). The so-called 'shared space' of the museum remains deeply political, yet ignores this fact, claiming for itself an illusion of neutrality and benign tolerance of all. (Lynch, 2017:115)

e. 2018, sharing objectives

As an example of how the language can be misconstrued, or indeed put on as a new participatory garment this 'reaching out' transforms as ideas around 'sharing'. 2018 finds these 'sharing' objectives, which Lynch criticises as speculative, can be seen in strategies for 'integrated programming'. This 'integration' position alludes to an offer of events that incorporate the ideas and performance of all parties – the public and the museum. It purposefully attempts to eradicate the *Us and Them* positions and instead aspires to create a method of programming that addresses the power of decision-making by the museum into the action of co-curated decision-making instead. As an example of this sector wide move National Museum Wales encouragingly state that they are 'embed[ding] cultural rights in our operation and in so doing [we wish to] develop models for involving people in our decision-making processes in terms of design and deciding of our events programme [by 2023]' (Events Strategy, 2018:07).

However, the invisible power of language is again subtle here (Lynch, 2011). When combined with language found in the *Community Engagement Strategy* (2015:04) this

problematic word 'involving' appears again, contradicting the idea that 'community agency will be placed at the heart of our decision-making processes'. The community does not have agency in 'involving' the museum, but the museum has the power to decide how and when to 'involve' the community (Foucault, 1977). This centre-periphery placement removes the community from 'the heart', the centre of decision-making and is instead still subject positioning the other. This does not therefore practice what it says it does (Lynch, 2016), or at least not yet which thankfully NMW (2018) does acknowledge.

There is something here also about encouraging 'public trust' in government-funded projects that is also hindering museums and confusing their message of moves towards transparency and openness. After all they have been charged with a 'duty to serve the public' (ICOM, 2007) or "a statutory duty on behalf of the nation [...] to educate the public.' (NMW, 2017:2). How does the museum let go of power when they have a duty to appear knowledgeable and as a reliable source of accurate knowledge as a government endorsed body? Indeed, whether museums can place community agency at the heart of decision-making (NMW, 2015) and at the same time be deciding when this can and cannot happen is, a challenging question, as will be seen in the enquiry case studies. It is encouraging though that by 2018, messages of transparency by *Our Museum* partners are found in the process of integrating decision-making (NMW, 2018). A new language is starting to appear as museums acknowledge they are situated part-way on a journey that hasn't yet reached its destination (Simon, 2010; Bienkowski et al, 2016) but this transparency does not go far enough in practice (Lynch, 2017:115).

2.2.1.2 The Activist Museum (Janes and Sandell, 2019) a new 'identity'?

As prolific writers on museums, Janes and Sandell (2019) are somewhat nostalgic in reflecting on how museums can 'transform', proposing that museums 'have always had some sort of 'adaptive intuition' to reinvent and transform themselves, however slowly and unconsciously' (2019:01). This 'adaptive intuition', I would argue, is more of a conscious focus, as museums wrestle with what they are and who they are for in the 21st Century and are reinventing their identity. The sector has, for example, undergone several high-profile re-definitions and transformations in recent years, as evidenced in the following propositions: the caring museum (Robertson et al, 2015); the mindful museum (Janes 2010), the museum as not neutral (Janes, 2009); the happy museum (Lynch, 2017); the open museum (Jamison and Lane, 2010); and the activist museum (Janes and Sandell, 2019).

These movements show a sector debating the politics of their role in representing challenging histories (Kidd et al, 2014), intercultural encounters (Sandel, 2009), and the (re)construction of multiculturalism (Weedon, 2004). These propositions have variously been accompanied by claims that museums are safe spaces (Jamison and Lane et al, 2010; Vlachou, 2019), or safe spaces for dangerous ideas (Barrier et al, 2016), spaces of care (Munro, 2014) and as activist (Janes and Sandel et al, 2019). However, in these adaptations, the same problems - discussed in the introduction to the thesis as *Us and Them* dynamics - occur.

It is interesting that to challenge this binary the new articulation is one of activism. This goes as far as proposing an agenda most forcefully outlined by Jane and Sandell (2019) as:

No one would dispute that museums exist to tell stories - about people, communities, and nations- but who is telling the story of the early 21st century?

Corporations and governments are, but it is the story of ceaseless economic growth. [...] The museum's community must move beyond the doomed economy of industrial growth to the recognition that the connection between individuals, communities, and the natural environment is the key to our collective wellbeing. It is incumbent upon all museums to help envision and create the new narrative in partnership with their communities, and then deliver this story using their unique skills and perspectives. (Janes and Sandell, 2019:02)

These transformations, I am in no doubt, are vital if museums hope to 'have a new story' (Janes and Sandell, 2019) and Janes and Sandell outline the importance of the following three outcomes to achieve this end:

- 1) To be open to influence and impact from outside interests.
- 2) To be responsive to citizens' interests and concerns; and
- 3) To be fully transparent in fulfilling these two expectations. (Janes and Sandell, 2019)

The activist museum could then be a useful progression in the development of fairer co-production/co-curatorial products that can rearticulate a multifaceted world.

To draw on 'transformation' transparency in museums would mean letting go of a certain power over knowledge. They would need to [re]position themselves as a resource, a facility that has a specialist knowledge they actively want to share. At present this sharing is conditional, not transparent, and still rife with 'invisible power' (Lynch, 2011). However, the agency 'Activist' (unlike 'Happy') gives the museum a space they can move within. It is a verb incarnation that can respond, without a fixed predetermined destination already agreed upon. By using this language Janes and Sandell are readdressing the [dis]position

created by discourse formations of the museum thinking and doing (Lynch, 2011). They are de-essentialising the museum's message away from a type of space and place, to a mission with a possibility of shared action.

2.2.1.3 bell hooks' radical openness, as key to activist spaces

When further thinking about Jane and Sandell (2019) three outcomes of 'openness', 'transparency' and 'responsiveness', bell hooks' (1989) theory of 'radical openness' comes to mind. She talks about how cultural spaces like museums are needed to revise the politics of location. hooks talk of these cultural spaces 'as spaces of silence' of where 'oppressive boundaries set by race, sex and class domination persist' (hooks, 1989:15). And spaces that are enmeshed in colonial and post-colonial heritage (Hall, 1996, 1997) must have sites of community resistance where a disruption (hooks, 1989) to this heritage can take place and must be found:

Black folks coming from poor underclass communities, who enter Universities or privileged cultural settings unwilling to surrender every vestige of who we were before we came there, all “sign” off our class and cultural differences, who are unwilling to play the part of the “exotic other” must create spaces within that culture of domination if we are to survive whole, our souls intact. Our very presence is disruption. [...] for me this space of radical openness is a margin- a profound edge. Locating oneself there is difficult yet necessary. It is not a “safe” place. One is always at risk. One needs a community of resistance (hooks, 1989).

This space of radical openness will need to be a space of honesty and transparent joint self-reflections by all actors involved, as the Activist Museum hopes to achieve (Janes and Sandell et al,2019); for those rendered 'voiceless', to be visible and heard by each other,

without presumptions and assumptions dredged from centuries of *Us and Them* discourse formations.

To embrace activism as truly open, transparent, and to respond to authentic presentations of selfhood (Hall, 1991) perhaps the museum will 'choose the margin of radical openness' (hooks, 1989) and risk the unsafe space of their own vulnerabilities, but in doing so achieve social justice aims (Williams, 2013; Sandel, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2013; Sandel and Knightingale, 2012; Janes and Sandell, 2019; DCMS, 2016; HLF, 2010, PHF, 2016, 2018). For 'Activist' as a radical openness gives a sense of authenticity and allowances for the museum to not be 'right'. It allows for communion and learning and progression. Perhaps this new incarnation of the museum will be able to address deep-rooted post-colonial dispositions the museum truly wishes to dispel. (Hall, 2000)

Finding the tools in which to do this is a challenge in itself, as is initiating engagement with individuals who make up multicultural groups. The museum worker must decide how they will start a participatory approach which will introduce each member of the group to each as equals. This is automatically difficult as the very position of the worker as a representative of the Western cultural institution with an agenda creates problems, as do some of the methods of participation I wish to discuss through looking at the discourse surrounding this work.

The following section 2.3 will now look to how there is a history of discourse that positions the institution as authoritative, and having responsibilities of care, over the participant.

2.2.2. A theoretical history of dispositions: duties to serve, governance, decision-making, and security.

My understanding is that *Us and Them* binaries are discourse formations that have been constructed over centuries (Derrida, 1967; Foucault, 1972, 1975, 1977). That this separatist power 'Others' (Hall, 1996) participants and is directly connected to, among others, Hegelian (1806) epithets. This is not a new idea and has been widely discussed in museums when considering their innate post-colonial heritage and how this residually informs practice, the institutional structure, and innate feelings of ownership (Sandell, 2004; Sandell and Knightingale, 2012; Janes and Sandell, 2019; Lynch, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2017; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016; Kidd et al, 2011; Kidd et al, 2014: DCMS, 2016; HLF, 2010, PHF, 2016,2018). However, there is little scholarship that explicitly connects 'duties of care' to a sense of ownership and decisions made in the space owned by someone or something that also has governmental power. Furthermore, there is little literature to support the idea that duties of care require an *Us and Them* othering to remain intact.

When thinking about the theoretical concepts that situate the museum as a pre-eminent caregiver, duties of care, decision-making, ownership, and governance may indicate why museums have a tendency, or [dis]position, to essentialize the language of participation as something absolute; negating the very praxis they strive to achieve and making them fixed in an unachievable desire for transformation.

2.2.2.1 Museums: ships built on discourse

To consider the space of museums as one aspect of how power is performing, using the definitions of Foucault (1977) is useful. Foucault describes institutional spaces as having governmentality; a power that the institution exudes through its ability to define and redefine its purpose versus the inability of the public to redefine theirs, with the institution. This imbalance in self-determination produces a system of real and perceived rules,

hierarchies, and beliefs in who has decision-making ownership over space and place, and only one party has the language to express this - the institution:

We live in the era of a "governmentality" first discovered in the eighteenth century. This governmentalisation of the state is a singularly paradoxical phenomenon: if the problems of governmentality and the techniques of government have become the only political issue, the only real space for political struggle and contestation, this is because the governmentalisation of the state is, at the same time, what has permitted the state to survive[...] since it is the tactics of government that make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public versus the private and so on. (Foucault, 1977, 1994: 221)

This territorial governing of occupants can be 'multifarious and concern many kinds of people, the head of a family, the superior of a convent, the teacher or tutor of a child or pupil' (1978, 1994:205), or indeed the museum professional over the participating audience. For Foucault, Sixteenth Century governments set up an economic structure that is hierarchically top-down with supervisory methods of surveillance to ensure compliance. This supervision to determine the appropriate economic outcome is explained using the metaphor of a ship:

What does it mean to govern a ship? It means clearly to take charge of the sailors, but also of the boat and its cargo; to take care of a ship means also to reckon with the winds, rocks, and storms; and it consists in that activity of establishing a relation between the sailors, who are being taken care of, and the ship, which is to be taken care of, and the cargo, which is to be brought safely to port, and all those like winds,

storms, and so on. This is what characterizes the government of a ship. The same goes for running of a household. Governing a household, a family does not essentially mean safeguarding the family property; what it concerns is the individuals who compose the family, their wealth and prosperity. (Foucault, 1978, 1994:209)

In this section from *Governmentality*, Foucault (1977) proposes that governing, 'taking care of', and safety are historically recognised as relational. When considering the space and place of the museum as a metaphorical ship, community participation can be likened to the journey, the sailors the co-producing participants and the cargo, their stories. All of which must be dutifully landed within a safe harbour by the 'care' of the Captain, the museum professional. This responsibility is something that is keenly felt by the governed, the participant, but also by those who are governing. This dispositional sense of power to govern as protection of the 'sailors and their cargo' undoubtedly seeps into the practice of participation and 2.2.2.2 will discuss how discourse aids and abets the formation of this duty of governance in participation.

2.2.2.2. Truth, Power, Participation and Discourse

Participation can be seen as essential to achieving decision-making powers through various declarations of rights since the middle ages right through to theatre methodology and Dadaist movement to activate audiences through the embodiment of active participation. I believe it is the discourse, and historical circulations of power embedded into the practice, that constructs how effective these processes are. French philosopher and cultural thinker Michel Foucault 'asserts 'that discourse determines the reality we perceive'. (Mills 2004) This discourse, for Foucault, is found in the construction of repeated doctrines or habits

which are assigned as truths or essential, due to their acceptance as such. In *Truth and Judicial Forms* (Foucault, 1975) he discusses how "certain knowledge of man was formed in the 19th century, knowledge of individuality, of the normal or abnormal, conforming or non-conforming. This polarisation happened through control and supervision or surveillance". "This knowledge is simply the outcome of the interplay, the encounter, the junction, the struggle, and the compromise between instincts". (Foucault, 1975:08) His use of the word instincts guides us to interpret that truths are not a fact but something we can garner, something we can interpret as something near to what we believe is true. But further to this idea that there is no fixed truth of any situation. Foucault explains that discourse is the textual language which circulates around a subject or situation of power that is ascribed a truth. These truths have often been posited within a binary structure of Male/ female/ Normal/ Deviant. These binaries have been produced according to Foucault through performances of power and have produced essentialist notions of identity. However, Stuart Hall suggests that discourses construct subject positions through their rules of formation and 'modalities of enunciation' (Hall, 1996:10) and Foucault determines that "it is in the relationship between the individual and the institution that we find power operating most clearly." (Mills 2004). It is for this reason that an analysis of the prevailing discourse used in museums in this field of work can clarify what the challenges are they are experiencing (Lynch, 2011).

In its Foucauldian (1972) usage, discourse (or more precisely discourse formation) is a mode of organising knowledge about material practices and configurations of power which have been archaeologically derived. Discourse is often rooted in organizations which both control and are structured by distinct disciplinary knowledge, such as a museum. Foucault (1972) asks us to consider the discourses of medicine or prison reform, as an example where

each reinforces certain structures of discursive authority (the voice of the doctor or the scientist, the regime of truth of the humane social engineer) and displaces others (the voices of the patient or the criminal, but also voices of the naturopath or the faith healer). This discursive authority can be witnessed in the museum whose power performs as an authority over the represented public participating. I argue that this authority is in a cycle of reinforced discourse that dictates how decision-making is perceived as a sacred right of those holding responsibilities attached to ownership of the site occupied. Foucault 'asserts that discourse determines the reality we perceive' (Mills 2004). This, for Foucault, is the effect of repeated doctrines or habits which are being assigned as truths or essential due to their acceptance as such. In *Truth and Judicial Forms* (1975) he notes how:

Certain knowledge of man was formed in the 19th century, knowledge of individuality, of the normal or abnormal, conforming, or non-conforming. This polarisation happens through control and supervision or surveillance [...] This knowledge is simply the outcome of the interplay, the encounter, the junction, the struggle, and the compromise between instincts. (Foucault (1975))

His use of the word 'instincts' guides us to interpret that truths are not facts but something subjective and relational. Further to this idea, there is no fixed truth of any situation as seen in Hall's identity theory (1996), as discussed in section (2.2.4). Foucault finds it necessary when talking about power to think about it in terms of how it occurs, likewise, Hall (1986, 1996) prefers to think about identity as not *what* it is but *how* it is? This 'how' is something described as a chain, linked to a history of construction dating back firstly to the Ancient Greeks, secondly to medieval times and the Protestant Reformation and latterly Eighteenth

century. For Foucault (1972) and Hall (1986, 1996) the way we perceive and use power and/or accept its presence is unavoidably linked to this catalogue of societal constructions.

Foucault situates this discourse as creating power which influences how we, in society, interpret situations and control our actions concerning the circulations of language, thoughts and actions. I completely agree with this hypothesis. In relation to my research, the discourse has conditioned how arts practitioners deliver and share their expertise. It has likewise conditioned how participants receive this knowledge and/or interpret it and the mechanics of museums as institutions. Foucault (1972) centres on the idea of 'Power and Knowledge' as being somewhat influential in the identity formation of an individual and that power moulds responses by the shaping of psychology and beliefs. It is the re-articulation of these beliefs as supposed 'ultimate truths' that performs as power. Museums tend to be fixed in their idea that best practice is 'participation', and 'participation' is, I would argue, informed by Foucauldian discourses of *Us and Them* binaries created through centuries of capitalist formations negating its very praxis (Marx, 1859).

But perhaps museums are much more than the rearticulation of histories or commonly held belief systems. Perhaps in their self-reflection, they can create new discourse formations that will better inform best practice. They represent human experiences, heritage, and multiple ethnicities and I wonder if, in their burgeoning self-awareness, they can call out their [dis]positional behaviour for what it is. They have after all 'evolved, from elite collections of imperial dominance to educational institutions for the public, and now [are somewhat considered as described in the Introduction as a 'mall', an appendage of consumer society' (Janes and Sandell, 2019:04). The challenge is how to represent these experiences when the institution is steeped in historical challenges and yes, informed by

discourses that are difficult to shift. I have faith that museums will find a way for 'participation' to be best practice, but they may have to look outside of themselves to find the means to do so. (2.2.3) will now seek to find why museums may need to look elsewhere for the answer, as they cannot easily come away from a historical discourse that connects ownership and decision-making rights to provisions of care and how these can be linked to capitalist endeavours.

2.2.3. Historical justifications for providing ownership of spaces and places to make decisions

As institutions that proclaims to have a statutory duty towards its public (ICOM, 2007), where concepts come from is important to locate if museums are to change. I argue that discourse of 'duty' is connected to capitalist ideologies of ownership (Hegel, 1806; Marx, 1859) which are equally important when thinking about Bourdieu's meeting of two histories of dispositions and currency performing (1993:63). These locations cite a particular influence on participatory workers occupying the museum. There are, after all, concrete references to concepts of 'security as ownership' which appear as early as the *Protestant Reformation (1517)*; the *Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789)*; taken forward by the Hegelian *Rights of Man (1817)*; and *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943)*. This idea of security is implied in this literature as coming from a place or space; private property or as a construct of the family home and is essential to the development of the temporal space of healthy relationships and/or entitlement to cultural expression and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Hegel describes this as essential to becoming fully 'human' (Hegel, 1806) as those who own the space and place are said to have greater freedoms to make decisions unencumbered by other stresses (Maslow, 1943).

At a first glance, the words 'Rights' and 'Needs' are pronounced and instil a feeling of necessity and truth; however, we know from Foucault (1975) that truth is not a fact. The language is however persuasive and when looking at Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* (1943). There is a clear indication that human ability to self-actualise and make decisions requires 'security' and museums in their duty to serve the public in their self-actualisation also are required (according to Maslow (1943) and Hegel (1817)) to provide a secure place in which to do so. Perhaps in their desire to enable the participant, often deemed as vulnerable, a provision of 'security' in the form of protection underpins duty of care provisions.

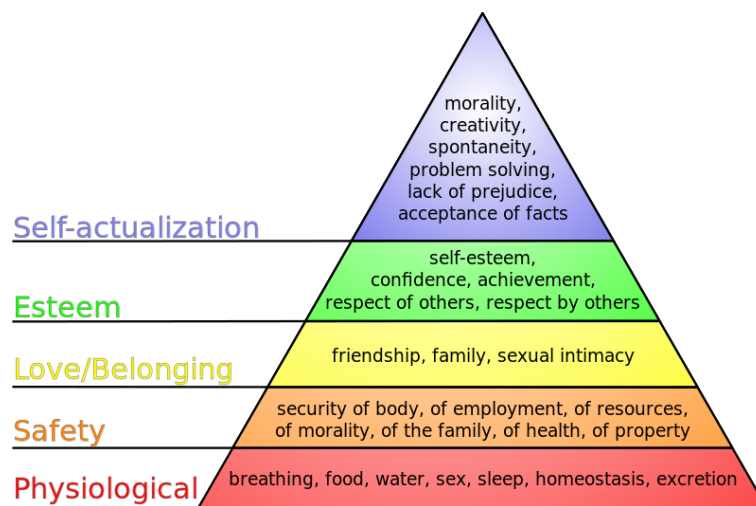


Figure 3. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943)

Fig. 3 shows how Maslow uses the terms 'Physiological', 'Safety', 'Belongingness' and 'Love', 'Esteem', 'Self-Actualization' and 'Self-Transcendence' to describe how human beings are motivated to attain the freedoms of 'Self Transcendence'. In the second tier of his pyramid of needs, he denotes that 'safety' comes from the security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of the family, of health and property. When these have been achieved the subject can gain friendships, family love and sexual intimacy because (according to Maslow, 1943) they are free to do so without an overwhelming need to fulfil

the previous tiers. These ideas grounding the concept of security do not historically begin with Maslow who conducted his study during the Second World War, but are part of a discourse that goes much further back.

2.2.3.1. Hegelian positions of Human and Unhuman Unfree

In the early 18th Century, Hegel proposed that 'universal ideas' were essential for humans to exist in society. Hegel's idea implies that 'movement' or Foucault's version of power comes from the State towards society, as a top-down delivery, explicit in its ownership of the power (Colletti, 1975). He, unlike Marx and later Foucault, also believed that free will can only come about if the person seeking free will is a participant in 'the complicated social contact of property rights and relatives, contracts, family life, economised, legal systems and polity' (Marx, 1849). People are not free unless participating in all spheres of moral and ethical life as participation in community and the polis. However, this participation in life was also structured through a binary of private/public areas. When thinking about participation it is the boundary between private/ public which aims to be reduced or deconstructed to equalize the power between the institution and participant. 'Freedom' to self-actualise for Hegel (1817) was also connected to whether 'man' had the free will to make decisions in life, unaffected by his economic conditions. Like Maslow (1943) Hegel believed that humans cannot be free if their decisions come from a place that will make their situation better or worse; this condition renders the individual as un-human and unfree. The only free and therefore fully human individual is the individual who does not have to consider his or her security when making decisions. Dramatist, Augusto Boal draws on Hegel's example of Prometheus when using the allegory of epic poetic protagonists, as

being the only worthy characters, due to their freedom to make decisions. He describes the freedom of the character–subject in *Theatre of the Oppressed* (Boal, 1968, 1979):

for example, [those] who do not need to work physically to earn their living and who have multitudes of men at their disposal who can satisfy their material needs, are thus able to freely externalize their spiritual impulses. [...] Prometheus, for example, is a free man. He is chained on a mountain, powerless to ward off the crows that come to eat his liver, which is restored each day so that the next day the crows may come and eat it again, and Prometheus impotently watches this daily feast. (Boal, 1979:90)

2.2.3.2. Is the museum participant oppressed as unhuman/ unfree to make decisions?

Prometheus is not oppressed in this story, as he chooses to endure the pain bestowed on him by Zeus out of pride. He is then, according to Hegel, free in his decisions whereas an unfree man or woman has no such choice in their oppression. Likewise, freedom from oppression is directly connected to wealth, property and as Maslow (1943) would say, only possible with self-actualization. Furthermore, when thinking about state dependence as the provision of security this act removes the dependents' awareness and ability to create their own freedoms. When thinking about the museum participant as dependent on the museum, they are unable to assert their own security rendering them vulnerable to the mercy of the state/the museum. This is a situation that locks the dependent participant into a state of silence, unable to assert their own safety from which the museum benefits (Marx, 1859; Freire, 1974).

When thinking about security as an inviolable human right (Hegel, 1806) ownership of space is a concept further constructed by religiosity. Parishioners are persuaded that the church or religious institution is a welcome, secure space for self-transcendence or transformation to get 'closer to God'. In this act of assimilation into the institution of the church, they would achieve spiritual tiers of Maslow's security of body, the safety of love, and belonging (1943) by the religious leaders of a symbolic building. Interestingly, during this time, the Protestant Church reformed the way they participated with parishioners, opening out a proffered shared ownership of the Church space to and for communities, akin to participation in museums. However, this myth of shared ownership and governance considered that God ultimately owned the church and that only his chosen representatives were morally able to have authority over decisions made. Using the analogy of the church the museum professional could be thought of as the 'chosen representative' to ultimately make decisions because they are charged with the governance of the space and place of the symbolic building.

2.2.3.3. Duty of care and religiosity

Further identifying this paternalistic power found in the religiosity of *Us and Them* dynamics, Henkel and Stirrat (2002) propose that contemporary participatory approaches found in development participation have an:

Ambivalence towards the 'beneficiaries' of their interventions strikingly like that of their Christian predecessors. Even though missionaries and Christian reformers of the past were often deeply concerned about the well-being of their flock, we know today how important their activities were in integrating populations into the fold of nation-state and the systems of colonial rule. In a strikingly similar way [...] projects

of the new development, orthodoxy tend to integrate the beneficiaries of their projects into national and international political, economic, and ideological structures - incidentally, structures about which the people concerned generally have very little control. (Henkel and Stirrat, 2002: 183)

Connecting the motivations of Christian reformers 'of the past' to the contemporary museum, the integration of beneficiaries into the dominant nation-state invites the beneficiary into the place and space owned by the nation-state (or analogous museum).

This disregards the beneficiary's need to 'self-actualise' their ownership over space and place in favour of the facilitated space provided within mechanisms of security and care. As Henkel and Stirrat allude, this space is governed by the providers leaving 'very little control' over the space and place for those invited to 'share' in it, again akin to Lynch's empowerment-lite machinations in the museum. This raises further questions about who has more right to ownership and decision-making over the space and place of participation, be that participation in their own lives or that of civic business or sociological political state governance.

However, it is this sense of sacred right to make decisions as a duty that positions the museum against the devalued public body, who are often categorized as vulnerable and in need of some sort of service. This perception of 'caregiving' as internalized by the church (Henkel and Stirret, 2002), or indeed the museum, renders those who receive care as less able, less moral, less free and in need of assistance and facilitation within a space they are invited to, but do not and will not own. I do not believe that the ideology of duties of care being provided is a necessity or fundamental 'truth'. It is instead a fallacy built on systems of power situated between opposing fields of cultural production and built on a meeting of

discourse formations and economic factors involved (Bourdieu, 1993), which helps create the need for the service to exist. Foucault (1977) asserts that power influences how we navigate the world as emancipated, suppressed, repressed and/or in resistance. He also asserts that 'discourse determines the reality we perceive' (Foucault, 1977; Mills, 2004) and if we are told we need a museum service that offers a provision of care because we are not capable of fulfilling that service ourselves, then we may believe it. This belief will create the very need and desire for duties of care to provide spaces of security where the economic realm of *Us and Them* binaries thrive (Marx, 1859).

In the next section, I will now look at the literature relating to how this openness or lack thereof, is connected to language, power and identity.

2.2.4. Identity signifies: the language of *Us and Them* and why it is important in the identification of who is positioned where

When thinking about the maintenance of *Us and Them* binaries as somewhat capitalist, Taylor et al. (2018) discuss how there is also what 'Schwalbe and colleagues (2000) call 'boundary maintenance' that:

occurs when privileged social actors construct and maintain boundaries.

Conceptually, othering and boundary maintenance similarly work to highlight difference. These processes differ in that individuals engage in othering to protect or project an individual identity. Boundary maintenance can achieve the same goal, but the focus and emphasis are more on maintaining the boundary than on the individual (Copes, Hochstetler, and Patrick Williams, 2008). As such, while othering is often a "me versus another" or "me versus them," boundary

maintenance often takes more of a group form, such that it is “us versus them.” (Taylor, Gross and Turgeon, 2018:337)

The museum “us versus them” can be seen to be maintained through the silencing of the other from participating fully in circulations of power, rendering their participation void and empowerment-lite (Lynch, 2011). I argue in the thesis findings that this othering of the participant is indeed due to the need for protection of the project or the museums ‘identity’. The following section will discuss identity theory and how this applies to the maintenance of *Us and Them* binaries and a denigrating position of the ‘outgroup’ as termed by Tajfel and Turner (1985).

With increased globalization,¹² visitation to cultural institutions could be expected to mirror the diversity we see on our streets. However, the footfall into museums has not been representative, and neither have we seen a diversification of their predominantly white middle-class staff (Sandell, 2002). The struggle scholarship reports over the past ten years asks how museums can expect to represent cultural transformation and hybridity when the subject (as object) is starkly different from their own cultural understandings? This is then further compounded by fixed notions of identity prevalent to white privileged discourses of 'othering' (Said, 1979; Hall, 1996) and binary positionings of *Us and Them* (Lynch, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017). These binaries can be located as occupying the same space as

¹² Grossberg defines globalization as a process, not a condition: "Globalization cannot be understood as a simple process of homogenization in which everything becomes the same (whether that means Westernized or Americanized or, perhaps Japan-ised). Instead, globalization must be seen as more of a process of negotiation, hybridization, or glocalization. ...the results are unique, composed out of the encounter between the global and the local [...] Globalization and medialization contribute to the increasing divorce between ‘front stage’ and ‘backstage ‘politics at the national level’” (Grossberg, 2000: 213).

Othering. Okolie, 2003 explains that this is a concept that is part of social identity theory and that the consequences of othering are rooted in 'lack':

Social identities are relational; groups typically define themselves in relation to others. This is because identity has little meaning without the "other". So, by defining itself a group defines others. Identity is rarely claimed or assigned for its own sake [...] Power is implicated here, and because groups do not have equal powers to define both *self* and the *other*, the consequences reflect these power differentials. Often notions of superiority and inferiority are embedded in particular identities (Andrew Okolie 2003: 2).

Rutherford explains that a sense of personal coherence is centred on the threshold between interior and exterior, between self and other (Rutherford 1998). This interior and exterior positioning can also be seen in Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory (1985). This theory focuses on two poles of identity situated within one individual: the 'personal' and 'social' identity. However, Tajfel and Turner (1985) are unable to develop how the personal identity position is constructed in the same way as the social. This suggests that it is more difficult to locate as a mixture between something created and therefore 'essential' and something socially constructed. Turner (1982) argues that 'identity (personal and social) which we stress at any moment is a function of the context in which a particular interaction takes place' (Jarymowicz 1998:55). Social identity can be qualified more convincingly because it does not rely on this 'mysticism' (Marx, 1859) and aims to look at intergroup relations as *ingroup* and *outgroup* (those who belong and those who don't) to address the globalized need to identify one from another; to keep distinct

diversity. Turner (1985) explains the opposition between the psychological aspect of identity – which refers to an individual's unity with its constellation of specific features – and the sociological aspect of identity - which refers to the idea of group membership and similarities - by distinguishing three levels of self-definition. These are firstly the supra-order level where the self is defined as a human being. This refers to a human identity based on comparisons between the species (similarity with the human race, differences with other forms of life). Secondly, an intermediate level of self-definition where the self is defined as a member of a group (with intergroup similarities and intergroup differences), referring to social identity based on intergroup comparisons (in-species), and thirdly, a subordinate level of self-definition where the self is defined as a unique being (differentiation between self and the others inside a group). These three levels of self-definition or identification explain differentiation as significant to the formation of identity, however, Turner does not indicate how this recognition of difference manifests itself or the processes of identification of difference. Without discussing these processes, the three stages of self-definition become a primary method in how identity is formed, outside of discourses of power and knowledge (Foucault, 1975) or the doubling seen in poststructuralist studies of language or indeed historical systems of oppression/suppression produced by a logo-centric positioning of the *other* (Said, 1979). Tajfel and Turner (1985) place the construction of identity through differentiation as a power that the subject holds in this process as opposed to within the societal construction of this identity (Hall, 1996), through representation.

Brewer and Gaertner propose that "Social identity is driven by two opposing social motives- the need for inclusion and the need for differentiation" (Brewer and Gaertner, in Brewer and Hewson et al. 2004:307). However, I do not accept that it is only these two opposing

motives that are the ingredients of construction as this positioning of the subject relies too heavily on self-determination and does not consider constructions of an identity out of the subject. This theory further postulates that an individual has a desire for a 'positive and distinct identity' and this desire will ultimately drive that individual to join groups; for example, social groups such as a school, a sports team or an art class to feel that they belong and to achieve a sense of identity. (Tajfel 1978:63, in Moghaddan 2008:95). The theory does not tell us what this identity constitutes as, other than that it is a 'function' by which a particular aspect of self is positioned; either as personal or social. Neither does it anticipate that dividing the concept as two separate, but interrelated, effects could be reductive when discussing multiple identities or hybridity or what happens when rejection from a group as an *ingroup* member occurs.

Tajfel and Turner's (1985) social identity position suggests that 'identity' is influenced by our surroundings and encounters but does not include the influences and self-determined encounters that are not motivated by the subject due to the wish to be included or to differentiate themselves from an 'other'. Cultural Theory questions these influences much further by suggesting that 'identity' is not something inherent at all, and neither is it constructed against two poles of 'personal' and social identity but is instead the method by which we articulate recognition of our difference from the *Other*; what we are not. Identity is a formulation of a moment in a process which is about everything and therefore constantly transforms: The individual as subject as opposed to object constructs identity through a never-ending process. (Hall, 1996, Butler, Rutherford, Grossberg)

What then is this identity? Although the term identity is sometimes inflated to cover almost everything that characterizes an individual or a group, most advocates of these movements

use it to refer to those chosen or inherited characteristics that define them as certain kinds of persons or groups and form an integral part of their self-understanding (Parekh, 2006:1).

The works of Stuart Hall have been crucial to unpacking this question in my research. In *Old and New Identities* (1991) he tells us that:

We have in more recent times a psychological discourse of the self which is [...]: a notion of the continuous, self-sufficient, developmental, unfolding, inner dialectic of selfhood. We are never quite there, but always on our way to it, and when we get there, we will at last know exactly which it is we are. (Hall 1991: 42)

If the 'selfhood' is one that is 'continuous', 'developing and 'unfolding' then the cultural representations of identity, or indeed the presentation of a museum (as a brand) cannot and should not be fixed. After all, museums are in the business of encouraging self-actualization in participants (Maslow, 1943).

By using Hall's Identity theory (1996) and hooks' (2009) notion of essentialization as a problem (2009) the language associated with participation can be seen to not only essentialize the practice but also those on whom the practice is performed¹³. Perhaps there is an underlying disposition from the museum that is essentialist. 'Essential identity' is thought of for Hall et al (1997) as characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. These 'criteria' are deemed for the essentialist as something determined at birth and unalterable. The idea for essentialists is that an identifying item is a visual marker seen in hermetic categories of skin colour or biological sex. The setting of two categories against one another in this way designates a situation where these two positions become the only

¹³ For example, 'safe space' locks out the possibility of 'unsafe space', rendering it unsafe (Derrida, 1967, 1978).

'truths'. Or as Jonathan Rutherford explains 'those terms that are pre-eminent and invested with truth, achieve that status by excluding and marginalising what they are not'. (Rutherford, 1998)

One of the big problems of essentialist thinking is that it allows for categorisations of objects which are based on a perceived 'value'. However, these 'values' have surely been historically determined since the beginning of civilisation through discourses created by a certain demographic and cultural sensibility (historically, the white western male). These have continued to cultivate systems of oppression and suppression which fuel (for example) othering racist, sexist, and homophobic rationales.

We know that the binary oppositions of male/female, white/black, straight/queer are dichotomies 'inscribed with gendered meaning' (Rutherford 1998:21; Butler, 2009) of hard/soft, culture/nurture, rational/emotional (Butler 1993,2000, Rutherford 1998) and through continued use these discourse formations I would argue are [dis]positionally felt in the museum practitioner. Further to this gendered meaning, there is an assertion of value being inscribed with the former as the original and the opposite as something subsidiary and therefore less in value than the 'original' (Rutherford 1998). This perspective likewise restricts any other possibility for the man or woman who feels they are genderless to be visible. Likewise, the bisexual and the hermaphrodite, for example, are all rendered invisible. Rutherford concludes that perhaps "the stasis of meaning regulates and disciplines the emergence of new identities; (Rutherford, 1998: 22).

2.2.4.1. The essentialist argument

The essentialist argues that without essentialism the situation of the subject is de-politicised (hooks, 2009). There is a sense of 'legitimization' to an essentialized concept as hooks clearly expresses in her critique on essentialism when thinking about black identity:

The unwillingness to critique essentialism on the part of many African-Americans is rooted in a fear that it will cause folks to lose sight of the specific history and experience of African – Americans and the unique sensibilities and culture that arise from that experience. An adequate response to this concern is to critique essentialism while emphasising the significance of the 'authority of experience'. There is a radical difference between a repudiation of the idea that there is a black 'essence' and recognition of the way black identity has been specifically constituted in the experience of exile and struggle. (hooks 2009:392)

It appears that to some extent the continuation of this 'holding onto' essentialism is out of, as hooks says, fear. I see this fear resonating within the museum sector as it holds on to essentialist *Us and Them* categorizations which I also believe are dispositional. According to Jonathan Rutherford, this fear has serious consequences:

By invoking its claim to universal truth, such a system of knowledge hides cultural diversity and conceals the power structures that preserve the hierarchical relations of difference (Rutherford 1998: 21).

Taking on board Rutherford's claim I contest that in the museum context anyone not the museum is different, or othered. Conversely, if anti-essentialist notions are embraced, the

potential for transformation could then be achieved allowing both the participant and the museum to transition between each other's otherness and 'linguaging' (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004) into 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016). This ethical stance is pushed further by hooks who identifies how this is possible:

When black folks critique essentialism, we are empowered to recognize multiple experiences of black identity that are lived conditions which make diverse cultural productions possible. When this diversity is ignored, it is easy to see black folks as falling into two categories: nationalist and assimilationist, black-identified or white-identified. Coming to terms with the impact of postmodernism for black experience, particularly as it changes our sense of identity, means that we must and can rearticulate the basis for collective bonding. (hooks 2009: 392).

On deconstructing these binaries, perhaps hooks would see that essentialist thinking marginalizes identity and with marginalization these identities are on the periphery of museums, essentialised as 'the other' (Sandell, 2007; Sandell and Knightingale et al, 2012). However, Poststructuralist thinking on identity prefers to delve into the *how* of identity which deconstructs these binaries, enabling transformation between classifying categories of who we are and what we are not (Derrida, 1967; Hall, 1996, 2000). It is possible then for the museum to achieve a non-essentialisation of their participants and of their own purpose. The next section will engage in the literature that presents methods that this deconstruction and transformation can perform within; moving essentialist thinking to an embracing of polyvocality that can co-create meaningful experiences.

Therefore, the activist museum, as described by Janes and Sandell (2019) sees the museum as having responsibility and innate ability as agents for change. The idea allows for transformational possibilities from museum output 'A' to a non-specified or predetermined output 'B'; it is through this transformation that new ideas can come in (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004). New thinking can emerge and be assimilated into new dispositions that may enable the museum to be more trusting in letting go of selecting what they think representation should be and instead opening to 'old and new possibilities' (Hall,1991).

We might ask how identity can be represented in gallery spaces which lock representations of identity into inflexible categorizations and interpretive labels. One of the ambitions of the activist museum approach (by Janes and Sandel et al, 2019) is to address these ethically complex issues and to make visible marginalised politicized stories in transition (such as those of migrants and refugees, as will be explored in this thesis). Museums are actively implementing ways to better represent and more importantly co-present minority groups through a 'shared authority' (Frish, 1990) and, more recently, anti-authorial curation (Wren, 2019). Yet marginalised individuals may not know how they want to be represented making this complex work (Cardiff Story, 2014; Bhabba,1990, 1994 hooks, 1996).

2.2.4.2. Identity cannot be fixed into representations

Hall discusses that identities are in constant transformation and are therefore difficult to 'grab hold of' and replicate as cultural statements for representation (Hall,1986). I agree with this and when thinking about who the practice of participation is with, whether that be volunteers, community participants or indeed professional partners it is critical to think not so much how these actors perceive themselves but how the museum positions them as subjects (Foucault, 1977). For, as having a pre-eminent position of 'Us' in the *Us and Them*

dynamic, it is the museum who has governmental power to frame this relationship and it is not within the participants' power to do so.

When deconstructing the binaries (Derrida, 1967, 1978,) we can see that essentialist thinking marginalizes identity. Poststructuralist thinking on identity prefers to delve into the *how* of identity which deconstructs these binaries enabling transformation between classifying categories of who we are and what we are not. (Derrida, 1967, 1978; Hall, 1996, 2000, Butler, 1993). The structure of identity is helpfully discussed by Derrida (1997, 1967) who metaphorically looks at the written word as a sign.

Derrida explains that the meaning of the sign is constructed through the identification of 'what it is not', an idea Rutherford also borrows (1990). This is helpful because the assumption could be that a sign is something essential, just as the assumption that the signified object of 'identity' is somehow essential. However, on closer inspection, we see that this essentialism reduces the word or object to a 'thing' simplified without the agency of interpretation and is, therefore (through this lack of possibilities) rendered meaningless. If the 'object' of the word becomes instead a 'subject' one signified by the signifier then the object (as subject) has multiple possibilities to it or multiple identities. These are determined by how the signifier is brought into agency, to signify the subject. What 'Identity' means, positioning it semantically as a singular entity; a noun, or as some-thing fixed, and separate helps position words as deeply problematic:

Hence 'identity' though ostensibly a noun, behaves like a verb, albeit a strange one to be sure: it appears only in the future tense. Though all too often hypostasized as an attribute of a material entity, identity has the ontological status of a project and a postulate. (Bauman 1996:19)

The concretizing process of naming does to the word (as an object) what is done to the individual when cultural identity is assumed as essentialist and fixed in nature. When assessing the identity of an individual, when categorized or named through essentialist positioning, there is no need for the plural of identity (identities) to exist because it cannot exist if 'identity' is singular and fixed. Therefore, the possibility of multiple identities is impossible and any thought of hybrid natures (Bhabha 1990, 1994) of transformation is ostensibly lost.

The activist museum allows for transformation to belong to the museum identity for if the word or indeed object are positioned as 'subjects' in the museum, this decentres objective essentialism. The rationale that identity is a fixed reality could then shift to a perspective of potential pluralities; opening the premise of identities with multiple representations, identifications, and interpretations as possible, whereas objectivity limits these margins. (Hall and Gay et al, 2000; Butler, 1993)

Within multi-ethnic society positions of identity that determine 'who' and (possibly more in focus) 'how' someone *becomes* conflicts with binary thinking. This friction has contributed to various societal problems contravening social justice maxims, such as anti-racism, anti-sexism, and anti-homophobia. This is relevant to my research as the multi-ethnic participants are individuals from marginalized communities and two out of three of the case studies feature ethnically diverse participants. Further to this they do not fit into the binary category's essentialist dictate. They have not one fixed identity as 'them', they are instead developing identities which are transforming as they translate themselves into a new cultural model. Compounding the fixing down of ideas as dispositional formations, section

2.2.5 will look to how locations of responsibility have been fixed in the structure of the museum and are in conflict to letting go of power and allow for transformation.

The next section will now come away from the historical formations of discourse to Bourdieu's idea around dispositions as found in his fields of cultural production. It is in the opposition of two poles that he finds impossible friction that museums could well be experiencing.

2.2.5. Bordieuan [dis]positions: locations of responsibility as opposing poles creating an altogether different binary

I wish to finish this section on the archaeology of discourse and how it manifests in binary positions in museums with a look to Bourdieu's fields of cultural production (1993). His work can help contextualise where museums find themselves in a position between letting go of power and their responsibilities to govern the metaphoric ship (Foucault, 1972), somewhat straddling two opposing dispositions forming 'identity'. Bourdieu explains that:

Although position helps to shape disposition, the latter, in so far as they are the product of independent conditions, have an existence and efficacy of their own and can help to shape positions. (Bourdieu, 1993:61)

These 'dispositions' are then more able to transform than Foucauldian 'discourse formations' (Foucault, 1973). The museum could be said to have a disposition to govern, to serve and have a duty of care over the participating community and with this, a currency 'historically' determined by discourse formations that are embedded into the everyday workings of the museums by funders (HLF, 2010) and government policy (DCMS, 2016) which are also dispositional. To return briefly to the site of museums as having power, a

power that positions the museum as governmental (Foucault, 1977), Bourdieu's fields of cultural production can be helpful to locate how dispositions are informed also by the location of museums. His 'fields of cultural production' have opposite understandings of value and value formation and are named by Bourdieu (1993) as heteronomous or conversely autonomous. The heteronomous field of cultural production has a 'value' base grounded in economic motivations; in the case of the museum what productions will produce greater footfall into the museum by the public and create a societal need for the museum to exist in the first place. This [dis]position favours responsibilities (or duties) over the museum's desire to 'let go' and allow others to make decisions (Sandel, 2009). In opposition to this is the autonomous field of cultural production likened by Bourdieu to the space of the wealthy freelance artist studio, where the artist is free to make 'art for art's sake', without the push and pull of responsibility to the 'economic' demands of a sponsor. [Dis]positionally this autonomous cultural production could be seen as an example of Hegelian freedoms to be human, completely free and unencumbered from making decisions based on the need for security and duty to another. (Hegel, 1817). Power and the performance of power can then be found in the location of the space and place of the museum as a heteronomous field of cultural production that invites the participant who is unencumbered with the same responsibilities. The participant occupies a field that is autonomous to the museum.

2.2.5.1. A friction between heteronomous fields of decision-making and autonomous

However, the challenge is that the participant has their own [dis]positional performances of power that will favour the dominant governmentality of the museum out of the lack of their 'own space and place'; they often do not have their own artist studio and are not, in

general wealthy. They may not hold the same responsibility to the museum sponsor as the museum professional, but they, in their own lives, are more often than not unfree (Hegel, 1817) to make decisions and are not privileged to own their own space and place for self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). It is here the complicated knot frays and who has power to make decisions is ambiguous, as the actor's wrestle with dispositional frictions attempting to occupy both the heteronomous and autonomous fields of cultural production at the same time, which is not possible.

Museums occupy an economic field (Bourdieu, 1993) that in many ways identifies them as cultural (re)producers. Further to this, they are charged with the duty to house, protect and interpret objects representing aspects of culture, which compromises how free they can be in allowing greater decision-making and ownership of the space and place of museums by non-museum actors. Museums interpret cultural objects on display for the enjoyment and/or learning of participants. This 'position' as (re)producers implicates the [dis]position of the museum as a service provider of cultural production. This service entails a level of decision-making on what cultural attributes and narratives are told and how these products are valued. The curator (or anyone) who makes these decisions is not unaffected by their own history of dispositions regarding how they view that decision-making power (Foucault, 1973, 1975).

Field theory identifies that all parts of the process of e.g., participation, stem from the economic field in which the practice occupies. The work performed by museums is therefore relational to the location of the museum as occupying the same economic space as the funders and is informed by the values set by the government (Bourdieu, 1993).

However, when thinking about decision-making, participants have the freedom to make decisions unencumbered by political-economic objectives but are otherwise hindered from the liberty ownership over the space would offer (Hegel, 1817). The participant's decisions cannot be carried out if they make decisions that do not fit within the responsibilities of the museum or predetermined cultural value. These decisions made by the participant (them) are often in direct opposition to museum (Us) policy (Museums Association, 2014) simply because the participant does not occupy the same comprehensions of the museum field of cultural production.

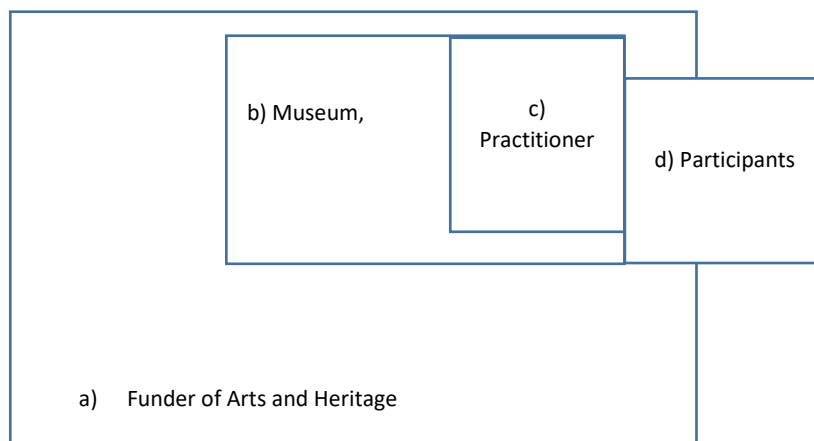


Figure 4. The field of cultural production

Figure 4 shows how the fields of cultural production are stacked, influencing each other as they occupy the same economic space. (a) has economic energy flowing towards the museum, due to governmental policy and (in this case) financial dependency on funders. The museum (b) employs the museum professional (c) to conduct the governmental, global (macro aims) of participatory objectives to create 'greater decision-making' and 'ownership' over the space and place of cultural production and ultimately society (DCMS, 2016). As for the participant (d), whose economic energy flows towards the museum, they do not occupy

the same economic site of influence and have their own motivations for participating, separate from the museum's.

As major voices in the fields of Cultural Theory and Sociology, Foucault and Bourdieu, both saw power as diffuse, often concealed and somewhat unquestioned. Both determine that the effect of this power - or as Lynch describes 'invisible' power (2011) - on how society performs does not exist in isolation from historical influences and therefore neither is the field of cultural production. The relational perspectives of the individual actors occupying the space of interaction cannot be disconnected from their perceptions of individual class, social and cultural capital or the values ascribed to such; these do not exist in isolation from the field of performance (Bourdieu, 1993). The following sub-section will discuss how heteronomous responsibilities can inform how the practice of participation proceeds. This will be presented as an analysis of Heritage Lottery Funding Guidelines (2010) as key to the work museums are often funded to do.

2.2.5.2. The language of the funder (2010)

The language used in Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) guidelines, updated every five years or so, can be seen to map to David Wilcox's *Ladder of Participation* (1994) as 'strands' *acting together* and *deciding together*. Wilcox's document underpins the way the industry and government directives think in terms of participation, which is crucial to understanding how the museum as an institution also understands these concepts. Wilcox's "Guide to Effective Participation" (Wilcox, 1994) is also promoted by *Our Museum*¹⁴ in their section on *What is participation?* and further features as part of the recommended reading for HLF's *Thinking*

¹⁴ <http://ourmuseum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/The-Guide-to-Effective-Participation.pdf>

about ...community? paper (2010). Wilcox's work offers a revision of Sherry Arnstein's work on the *Ladder of Participation* (1969), developing it as a model for deciding what level of participation an arts and heritage organization can aim to achieve. On reading the levels (or stances) three and four map directly to HLF funding guidelines (2010) as the same levels of participatory attainment expected to be put in place by funded organizations. *Thinking about ...Community Participation* (2010) sets out the criteria for best practice, including Wilcox's strands *acting together* and *deciding together* (HLF, 2010:9). One key element is that the proposed project must:

Help more people and a wider range of people, to take an active part in and make decisions about heritage.

The document also states that:

Real participation is active and gives people a meaningful personal stake in a project.

Involving people at the following levels can meet our participation aim:

Deciding together: creating opportunities for people to make decisions about and influence the direction of your project.

Acting together: creating opportunities for people to develop and deliver your project, taking a role in heritage conservation and/or learning activities.

Supporting others to take the lead: empowering people to have ownership of the project, make final decisions and deliver activities with some independence. (HLF,2010:09)

If we look more closely at the language, it is ambiguous about who ultimately holds power in decision-making. The word 'real' suggests that there is an alternative form of

participation that is not 'real' in alignment with Lynch (2011:11) in her description of empowerment-lite participation. This 'not real' participation is enforced passivity and not active (HLF, 2010:01) and is less meaningful than the 'real' version of participation the funders wish to fund, according to the guidelines. The binary positioning of real/unreal devalues the term 'unreal' as a secondary position which therefore holds the term 'real' as predominant and of superseding value (Derrida, 1978). There is an assumption here that active participation is 'real' and is something that gives people a meaningful stake in the project. This active engagement is more measurable in terms of evaluation and impact assessment. Active participation creates felt responses that can be measured, and then articulated.

The word 'involving' as discussed in 2.2.1 is also found here and likewise presumes that some projects do not involve their participants in the levels (or strands) the funder will support, but it is a slippery term that can have different levels of participation attached to it. This can also be seen in examples of *for* and *with* as desired for positions in how participation should perform. These terms are often found to cluster together in discussions of applied theatre and community arts methodological positionings which are considered best practice (Prentki and Preston, 2009). Here, 'for' and 'your' tap directly into the same discourse, where the delivering institution is positioned as the predominant partner (us), providing desired outcome opportunities 'for' the community partner (them). Moreover, there is a useful caveat found in 'with some independence' allowing the institution license to limit, or even renege on handing over power and ownership to participating actors. However, HLF do so in an awareness that organisations they fund can only go so far at this time. This is the same for variances of this caveat that appear more widely in other arts

funding discourse.¹⁵ The Paul Hamlyn Foundation state on their website for example that they 'are particularly interested in work that enables participants to shape the direction and delivery of the work.' This will be discussed as not necessarily a bad thing as there is clarity in how this power is performed (Simon, 2010), but the word 'shape' is ambiguous as it premisses a negotiable degree of power to the control it signifies. The delivering institution may have room to likewise shape the 'direction and delivery of the work', or as Lynch might suggest, may ultimately hold the cookie-cutter from which the participant can cut a 'shape' that is predetermined (Lynch, 2011:12). Lynch questions how much of the work produced fulfils these requirements, raising a concern that participation may be 'achieved' by well-meaning, but ultimately manipulative means.

Participation in the arts, as a governmental directive, is codified as a Cultural Right¹⁶ (DCMS, 2016) and on the surface, this appears positive in terms of social justice and building capacity in our communities. But, as discussed above, language can be both specific and mutable depending on how it is used and in what context (Lynch, 2011). Participation in praxis¹⁷ can do a lot more or a lot less than appears on paper. This is a cynical perspective but is something that will reoccur in the survey (EQ3) and final case study (EQ4). In Chapter 7 practitioners who were surveyed (EQ3) agree that funding directives reinforce a 'tick box' system, where arts and heritage organizations are having to reduce aspects of their projects to ensure they fit within the funding requirements. Further to this, museum practitioners are confused due to jargonistic expectations. When examining this language and the effect it has on practice, Lynch (2011) also conducted a study of funding documents and policy in

¹⁶ White Paper on Culture, (DCMS 2016)

¹⁷ Praxis is the reflexivity of practice. It is a pedagogic discipline. (Shaffer, 2003,2004)

2009. She found that language exposes how the museum relates to their community participants, to each other and how they position themselves in general as a service. She pulls out the wording from museum policy to illustrate this positioning as *we believe, we have a responsibility, we have a strong sense, we can make people's lives better, [we are] generators of well-being, we play a leading role, [we] increase racial tolerance, we nurture a sense of belonging, cohesion, identity, and pride* (Lynch, 2011:15). Lynch explains that when thinking about the use of this language who is not 'we' is somewhat affected:

One can acknowledge that the ambition here is genuinely to be of service, to help those in need. The organisation's self-image concerning its partners can come across in such terminology not only as patronising but continuing to undervalue the potential breadth of knowledge of its community partners. (Lynch, 2011:16-17)

The language used in the HLF guidelines resonates with these findings and presents an ambition for the sector to be of 'service' (Lynch, 2011). The language in use not only presents a museum that is "We" or "Us" in the "*Us and Them*" dichotomy but positions the practice as one that has a responsibility to nurture '*Them*'. As the research progresses it will show the museum is not immune to this phenomenon.

2.3. THE HISTORY OF DISPOSITIONS WITH A FOCUS ON PRACTICE

I will now think about the practice of participation as opposed to the language of participation. This section will look to what museums are doing to change dispositional representations of Us and Them (Lidchi, 1997) and how other disciplines, such as theatre, community arts and pedagogy could help in this transformation. This section will take in how power performs in curated cultural production and why this is a sensitive business. It

will also track how hooks' (1989) radical openness is somewhat practised in community arts. Furthermore, the literature review will look at how a process of 'linguaging' (Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) can be seen in the activism of theatre which could be helpful to museums.

2.3.1. Co-Curation: from one voice to many

When thinking about how stories of migration are handled, museums know that the position of the subject as object needs a crucial shift in thinking. In *Representations* edited by Stuart Hall, (1997) Lidchi describes representation as being 'about objects, or more specifically systems of representation that produce meaning through the display of objects' (Lidchi, 1997:153). I argue this assessment now extends to the representation of the multi-ethnic participant who, according to the desires of museums to be 'activist' through participatory means, has the opportunity to self-represent.

However, in this mode of representation the already othered participant has, to an extent, already been objectified through displayed recordings of oral histories, video footage of verbatim narratives and/or performances that have been 'selected'¹⁸ by the curator. This selecting process of curation, therefore, undermines the potential for real meaningful self-representation because it is the museum selecting what parts of the self-representation are visible, and not the individual represented as fully deciding how to represent themselves.

In agreement, Mason et al. have shown that the curatorial voice is too loud and that it has more power over the curated space and place of museums than the participant. These

¹⁸ In this research, I discover a potential alternative which I call *non-selective curation*.

curated decisions, therefore, construct a version of the subject as object (Lynch, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2019; Bourdieu, 1993; Boal, 1968).

Supporting an endeavour of co-productive collaborative methods Lavine (1991) in Mason, Whitehead and Graham (2013) proposes that museums embrace and display multi-identities as polyvocality, as one approach to shift from 'One Voice to Many Voices' (2013:163), but notes that it raises many questions:

Voice has emerged as a crucial issue in the design of exhibitions...How can museums make space for the voices of indigenous experts, members of communities represented in exhibitions and artists? ...How can the widely varying voices of museum visitors be heard by exhibition makers and reflected in their designs? Can an exhibition contain more than one voice, or can a voice exhibit more than one message? (Lavine 1991:151)

Mason et al. allude to this polyvocality as being not possible within traditional [selective] curatorial processes and the power enmeshed in museums (Hall, 1999). I agree with this view as curation historically involves the selection of objects to create a formalised cohesive narrative also informed by the museum's sense of what it is trying to achieve. This could be determined by the aesthetic, the accessibility and assumed level of interpretations the visitors might make. However, the curatorial process fixes cultural representations into those objects selected (Lidchi, 1997) creating an ethical problem. As will be seen in the case study enquiries (EQ1, EQ2 and EQ4) museums are attempting to move away from representational products that presume authority over the other (Hall, 1996; Said, 1979) as anti-authorial (Wray, 2019), and more dialogic (Freire, 1974; Sandell, 2007; Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004).

My thesis concludes that dialogic exchange can come into strange resistance. The power of the curatorial voice, that understands the museum's motivations for accessible standards of exhibition text, graphics and layouts, the political economy at work, the minutiae of collection availability and copyright, is not easily shared with community members and project participants (Lidchi, 1997). The decision-making in this part of the process is often therefore withheld from the participants creating an imbalance and reaffirming *Us and Them* paradigms (EQ2, EQ3, EQ4). Curatorial power then has an already cogent disparity in place which is difficult to unseat or reframe as proposed by *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014,2016). It raises many challenges:

This reframing of the relationships ... calls into question the traditional role of curators and – from one perspective - the museum's ability and responsibility to maintain quality, expertise, and professional standards. Viewed from the other side, this reframing problematises what counts as quality and accepted standards of museum practice and whose purposes they serve. It raises questions about different types of knowledge and how they come to be valued and validated within the public museum or gallery. This gives new impetus to the long-standing question within new museology of how to deal with conflicting perspectives, competing agendas, issues of control, and who has the authority to speak on behalf of others. (Mason, Whitehead and Graham, 2013:163)

Mason, Whitehead and Graham here discuss the question of 'who has the right to decide?' in participatory practices. A question that should be answered early (Prentki and Preston, 2009; Simon, 2010), so that participants can feel they can freely contribute their stories

within a structure they have full comprehension of (Simon, 2010). However, when thinking about who holds power this is all too often not clearly understood (EQ3).

2.3.1.1 Polyvocality or a cacophony: strained resistance to co-curation

In Janes and Sandell et al. (2019) Wray (2019) discusses the ethical conundrum of co-curation by examining the anti-authorial method. At the Venice Biennale (2003) the curator had purposefully given his 'authorial control to ten independent guest curators to do whatever they wished', he argued that:

'today's exhibitions, like a Greek tragedy, must address the clash of irreconcilable elements' and 'allow multiplicity, diversity and contradiction to exist inside the structure of the exhibition'. The exhibition should no longer resolve contradictions into one synthetic or singularly authored' concept but, instead, allow the 'madness of conflicts' to play out... to think 'against the grain' and they could 'reduce the influence of imposed, pre-packaged hegemonic views' (Bonami, 2003 in Wray, 2019:322)

In some ways, Bonami (2003) attempts to develop a radical openness to the curation of the exhibition and embraces 'madness of conflicts' as an act of justice. Wray explains that the result was the complete alienation of the visitor, who struggled to engage with the content or concepts. She warns that without the power of an articulated message all messages are silenced under a cacophony of thematic milieu, returning the exhibition (or museum in the case of my research) to a position of the apolitical (Sandel, 2004).

Addressing this cacophonous experience, when attempting to represent a polyvocality of 'conflicts and multiplicities', the Poetic Museum is an alternative that could articulate how

shared curation could balance this friction between authorial and anti-authorial curatorship:

Julian Spalding wrote on the Poetic Museum that collections are known to be at the heart of museums, but he feels that 'the heart of the social museum are emotions – pride, anger, joy, shame, sorrow. Emotions that arise from an epic range of stories. Social history museums are about people, not objects, and people are about emotions, not things. (Fleming, 2014: 23)

Fleming here reminds us that 'people are not objects' (Lidchci,1997). He also contextualises the power of museums as 'poetic' proposing that there is a mesh of nuances at play; felt as emotion. If the socially just museum wishes to be about people it perhaps must embrace the poetics as transformative, perhaps as dialogic and not fixed. In terms of the activist museum and how a 'shared authority' may help to achieve fairer representations the co-curator documents the subject, not object. This is paramount to Fleming's position and like the activist museum of Janes and Sandell (2019) understands the duality of emotions, the multifaceted nature of experiences and that 'destination' as not a fixed epithet. Non-selective curation attempts to balance these poetics by opening up to a non-predesigned outcome.

2.3.1.2. Feminist underpinnings of the 'poetic'

In the context of applied theatre as a method of co-curation based on the poetic, Wilkinson and Kitzinger also note the feminist underpinnings of these approaches and note that the deconstruction of authorial curatorship can 'create the social and political conditions which might enable others to speak [and be heard] on their own terms'. (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2009).

According to Levi (1979), speaking on one's own terms is exceptionally important to refugees and asylum-seeking participants who, to varying degrees, have experienced an inarticulate amount of trauma in their journeys. Through giving their stories a voiced shape, they can name their trauma, identifying it and in turn naming themselves in recognition of 'selfhood' (Hall, 1991), through narrative:

The survivors of trauma are indeed often seized by a compulsion to speak – to testify to 'the rest' – to those who were not there: The need to tell our story to 'the rest', to make the rest participate in it. (Levi, 1979:15)

Lynch likewise witnesses this same need to speak when working with Somali Refugees:

In cases in which people have undergone terrifying dramatic, life-altering experiences, such as those of these refugee women emerging from a war zone, the stories they tell themselves no longer even hold an appearance of continuity, the illusion of life's 'progress', to which most of us cling. 'Regular life' is thus clearly severed, blown apart. In these cases, the urge to recount the story can be very great indeed, significantly adding to the responsibility of the museum to be extremely careful in its ethical handling of the psychological impact of such experiences. (Lynch 2014: 87)

Lynch proposes that the telling of a narrative can itself be a form of resistance or struggle (2014:87). The difficulty of telling these narratives cannot be underestimated, however. The retelling of trauma can re-traumatise the victim¹⁹, and memory does not always serve to tell the 'truth', and emotion and feelings are at times inarticulate.

¹⁹ However, there is an increased understanding that working through episodes of re-traumatisation (EDMR for example) the victim can heal from their experiences. Are museums equipped to participate in this process, however?

Perhaps a shift toward representing the 'epic'²⁰ (Brecht, 1964), as opposed to a focus on representations of cultural identity per se is required (Janes and Sandell, 2019). *Epiches* (Brecht, 1964) are snapshot moments, primed for polyvocality and multiple interpretations because they do not have a beginning or ending that has been fixed through a premise or neatly wrapped in a neat ending. Representations as cultural statements are problematic as they can be reductive but positing a snapshot of a moment enables fluidity and the possibility of transformation. A focus on the 'how' of experience and emotion, instead of essentialized fixations of 'what', may allow the museum to co-present intersections of human experiences on curated topics in a more fruitful manner. The polyvocality of multi-ethnic dispositions could coexist together in one space by drawing on Spalding and Flemming (2014) and their ideas of the poetic and emotional to embrace polyvocality whilst also retaining an awareness of Wray's warnings to stay strong in the curatorial message, but one devised as a shared process. This process could be seen as non-selective curation. Section (2.4.2) will bring into the discussion how theatre and community arts could present useful models for museums to learn how to devise co-curated materials within this feminist underpinning of representations as fluid articulations of time. I will review literature that talks about activist applied participatory theatre, community arts and pedagogic processes and how these may well bridge anti-authorial curation with the authorial, in a non-didactic manner.

²⁰ Brecht (1964) talks about the 'epic' theatre as *episches*, episodes; that are non-linear, and experiential as opposed to fixed linear trajectories.

2.3.2. 'Communities of resistance' (hooks, 1989): with, for, or by as co-curation using theatre and community arts methods

Finding the tools to nurture this dialogic move and to become 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016) is a very live challenge for museums. Prentki and Preston's taxonomy of participation within community arts (particularly applied theatre), could help develop new shared positioning (Janes and Sandell, 2019). They propose that articulations of power can be redefined by thinking in terms '*for*', '*with*' and '*by*' participants. Most significantly perhaps, practice '*by*' sees communities making art themselves (even when facilitated by artists). This can be understood as community-generated with little to no outside intervention. Prentki and Preston describe this as a choice to 'do' participation as co-production, co-creation and/or co-curation, which is something that community applied theatre has done well.

2.3.2.1. Applied theatre positionings.

Applied theatre determines ahead of the project what position the participation will take. This means clearly stating that any institution involved is positioned as '*with*' or '*for*' the participant, or that the product will be created "*by*" the participant. This clear mission statement creates the levels of participation as:

The poetic choices made (whether intended at the outset or produced throughout the creative process) will define the applied theatre paradigm and ultimately whether it tends to speak '*for*', '*about*', or '*with*' communities and the issues concerning them. Each of these paradigms may be influenced (intentionally or unintentionally) by differing ethical-political priorities, as well as aesthetic sensibilities which may, or may not, be exclusive of each other. (Preston, 2009: 66)

These terms recognise organisational power and how it interacts with the process of community participation, as well as nodding to a series of ethical and political concerns that are neatly summarised by Preston:

As cultural workers, whether we are researchers writing about individuals, theatre-makers constructing narratives and stories, or facilitators, enabling people to write or perform their own stories, we have a responsibility towards ensuring that the representations that are made are produced through a climate of sensitivity, dialogue, respect, and willingness for reciprocity. (Preston, 2009: 65)

2.3.2.2 Shared goals as a sense of community

When working with participants who have had difficulty in accessing their cultural rights and spaces in which to articulate 'their own stories' this is particularly important. The arts have a unique ability to develop a dialogue between individuals as they work together to create what Nina Simon (2010) describes as 'shared goals' and shared goals can create a sense of community (Poppo 1995). If the group is of one culture, they will have some shared language, shared histories, shared interests and potentially similar goals. Simon (2010) in *The Participatory Museum* and Jeffrey Weeks (1990) among others tell us that a sense of belonging comes from participating in groups with shared interests and goals common to our own. Therefore, this group should be able to participate together productively as an *in-group*.¹ They may have shared language, shared histories and shared goals; however, the facilitator or practitioner is still outside of the group (is *out-group*) and tends not to share the same goal and interests. The museum staff can also presume that their histories and goals will be different to the participants because they are (more often than not) ethnically different. Compounding an 'us' and 'them' dichotomy. The aim here is

to expressly share the same objective in the project, be that to co-produce or participate in an expert-led exercise. Each is equally valid, but just different approaches, and as long as the participant knows what to expect they can consent. When co-producing or participating with a multi-ethnic group, not only does the museum often hold onto their objectives but so do the participants. All individuals in the room have varying differences between them. They may not have a shared language, shared histories, shared goals. The aim here is to create a space which creates these shared outcomes and then pursue the project objectives.

Simon (2010:184) also advises 'that finding the right model' of participation and co-curation for your institution is key: contribution; collaboration; co-creation; or hosted', (which can map to Prentki and Preston's taxonomy) gives structure in how power can perform at different levels. As already noted, in their thinking about applied theatre, Preston and Prentki determine an organisation can produce outcomes *with*, *by* or *for* participants (2009). They stress there is no 'best' type of participation in cultural institutions but, in agreement with Simon (2010), the parameters must be carefully chosen and articulated as each has entirely differing power dynamics in terms of ownership and decision-making.

2.3.2.3. Differences in the distribution of power

Differences include the amount of ownership afforded to participants, the levels of control over the process, and creative output given to institutional staff members and visitors. However, this seemingly simple articulation of parameters does not consider the [dis]positional fear participatory practitioners experience or the power of the heteronomous field of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993) they unknowingly occupy. Returning to Lynch's (2014) case study with Somali refugee women, the museum struggled

in the process of co-production. The professionals felt a loss of power over museum norms and performed a subtle but concerted effort to acculturate the women into the norms of the museums, to regain control. While acting as:

co-participants joining in the activities with the women, the museum maintained its position of distance, objectivity and privilege. [...] Never once did the museum willingly relinquish this position in the exchange, as someone who does not, and can afford not to engage in genuine dialogue (Asad,1973:17 in Lynch, 2014:89).

This is interesting and connects to the disparity found in whether the museum is doing what they say they are doing (Lynch, 2011), 'empowerment-lite practice' (Lynch, 2011) and a desire for radical openness (hooks, 1989) to achieve 'genuine dialogue' (Lynch, 2014:89). Lynch (2014) identifies the participatory practitioners; all have the same understanding of what they are saying and doing but are not sharing this level of understanding with the participants. My own research finds the same.

I can see a correlation here in Foucault's early work where he discusses that power comes from resistance, and there is an alignment of thinking that also connects to Freirean pedagogy (1974). Freire identified a specific moment in participation he called ownership shift, where the participant feels safe enough within the structure provided to be forceful in their own articulations of 'self', often through aggression, as a form of delayed resistance. In practice, Lynch (2011) describes power as emanating from the leading organisation which can gate-keep participant experiences, controlling the creative outcomes. The case of the Somali refugee women shows this resistance as occupying a space and place where the museum has the power to decide how the processes will work, gatekeeping this power from

the participants. In the belief they have some power, the participant will push against this resistance coming from the museum with performances of 'ownership shift' (Freire, 1973).

2.3.2.4. Community development and the targeting of the poor

Drawing on development participation first used by NGOs such as the World Bank, Cooke and Kothari et al (2001) discuss at length how participation performs in paternalistic subject positionings which are similarly gatekeeping. Cooke describes the phenomenon as compounded by the fact that many project participants are identified by local authorities as target audiences, in the development of active citizenship: the poor, the at-risk, the vulnerable and the minority. To quote him 'put simply, the rich get social psychology, the poor get participatory development' (2002:121). I agree with Cooke entirely in this when thinking about participation in museums and how power performs in this context. Due to the governmental target audiences, influenced by well-meaning (and necessary) Equalities Acts (2010) those who are not seemingly accessing their cultural rights are pursued (a strong word, I know) to do so. However, perhaps what appears to be a cultural right is different from one community to the next. It is useful then to think about how this gatekeeping of authority over participating individuals is a much bigger problem when thinking that those individuals are part of a much larger group, experiencing this othering of Us and Them (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016).

Raymond Williams describes how the growth of multiculturalism over the past twenty years brings with it a new emphasis to the word 'community': shifting from 'the community' as a singular group to 'multiple communities', embracing new meanings and complexities. This term 'community' is also described by Popple as consisting of multi-communities on a micro-level collating into "the community" on a macro level. Likewise, Popple (1995) takes

this micro perspective and assigns relational attributes to how for him community is considered:

Community has both descriptive and evaluative meaning and is as much an ideological construct as a description of a locality. The term not only exists in a geographical and material sense but also reflects peoples thinking and feeling as to where they believe a community exists [...] Community can be the warmly persuasive word to describe an existing set of relationships. What is most important, perhaps, is that unlike all other terms of social organization (state, nation, society etc.) it never seems to be used unfavourably, and never to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term. (Popple, 1995:03-4)

'Community' then, as a 'warmly persuasive word' is in effect coldly categorizing those who are not the museum, when used in this context. This categorisation separates the 'community' apart from the museum and as 'othered'.

2.3.2.5. Community arts as a specialism

Popple explains that community work is a specialised sensitive vocation - be it in community education, community arts or community development - and Popple (1995), using the example of community arts, explains that this work with communities is a long-term investment, one that is difficult to achieve:

It is not a profession like any other. It is a profession dedicated to increasing the expertise of non-professionals, getting more control over their collective circumstances. Community workers stimulate and support groups of people working to improve conditions and opportunities in their own neighbourhoods. The

immediate aims are often concrete-better amenities, housing, job opportunities; the underlying aim is an increase in confidence, skill and community self-organizing power which will enable the participants to continue to use and spread these abilities long after the community worker has gone. (Popple 1995: 05)

Schwarzmann (2005), describes community arts as 'any form or work of art that emerges from a community and consciously seeks to increase the social, economic and political power of that community. 'Community' is as basic to humans as 'flock' is to birds. Humans are designed for communal living' (Schwarzmann,2005). As a wide-ranging profession, it is surprising that there is little training bespoke to Community Arts and instead practitioners learn their trade 'on the job' often engaging in short modules at Undergraduate level to explore the profession. In St. Louis, there is one training institute dedicated to the vocation. Founded in 1997 The Community Arts Training Institute of St Louis advances successful partnerships among artists of all disciplines, social workers, educators, community activist and policymakers:

The CAT Institute is a catalyst for socially relevant arts-based programs particularly in community settings such as neighbourhood organizations, social service agencies, development initiatives and after school programs that are transformative and sustainable [...] the CAT institute succeeds because it creates a lively learning community of cohorts and a sense of partnership. This sense of community can take a little bit of ritual to achieve. (Weiss, 2012:310)

When thinking about museums the key messages they communicate could help manage the expectations and processes of the participants using community arts practice in the UK. These actions I would argue are also aligned with hooks' 'radical openness' (1989):

Be flexible; leave your expectations at the door; Open wide, you are among friends; Practice listening; Be a warrior, do the HAKA! Take reflections seriously; Lean into discomfort (Weis, 2012:310).

Weiss goes on to describe community arts as a successful methodology, because it is 'cross-sector':

Just training artists to work in the community settings would be missing the true notions of partnerships and collaborations. (Weiss, 2012:314)

The language directs the artist to be open, to not assume anything and practice active listening. In St. Louis they use a method of training that educates the artist in “negotiation, power and privilege, creativity, theories of learning, critical response, evaluation and assessment” (Weiss, 2012). Perhaps museums could build these into their training recommended by *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014, 2016). For as Weiss’ states in her reflections:

Don’t fear your own voice, Process! Process! Process! Share what you are learning, share what you already know. (Weiss, 2012:319)

There is much here the museum could gain from community arts practice in being explicit, in ‘know[ing] what they don’t know’ (Weiss, 2012). Until individuals have the experience and the opportunity to examine their own assumptions, they will be unprepared to participate effectively in partnerships that cross lines in human difference (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004).

For Weiss, when using community arts methodologies, the ‘process’ should be favoured over the product as the transformational goals of increased confidence and socialization ‘are paramount’ (Weiss, 2012).

2.3.3. 'A profound edge' (hooks, 1989): Theatre as participatory activism

Claire Bishop's work *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012) is an exploration of *how* this happens. By using both the metaphor of theatre and its historical influence on 'participatory arts' Bishop charts the history of this practice as a form of spectatorship that bridges the actor audience divide, and through the manipulation of space as a process that reconstructs the audience as active agents to the experience, makes them? more aware and not passive. Art, for Bishop, is used as a provocation to elicit change in the audience and inspire action. Bishop allows the reader to comprehend the machinations of participatory work through an explanation of *how*. In some earlier works on 'participation', this metaphor of theatre is not as explicitly utilised and tends to rest on explanations of what 'participation' *is*. What Bishop does for the non-NGO reader and for my study is position the analyses into a familiar climate where the participant referred to within the case studies presented, could be the reader. Goffman (1997)²¹ and Kothari (2002) in Cooke and Kothari's *Participation: A New Tyranny* (2002) also use the metaphor of theatre. They, however, refer instead to *what* participation is, mapped to the logistics of theatre as opposed to the processes of theatre Bishop describes. Their focus is on participatory development or transformational work, for example in Participatory Rural Appraisal, used in developing countries to democratise decision-making with locals and how it does or does not work. These works do not present the reader with a clear way through the theory wedded to this praxis by positioning them into a familiar climate from which they can translate the arguments of participation. Bishop's method is valuable to my

²¹ As cited in Cooke and Kothari 2002 p148

research due to her positioning of the reader as 'audience' and reminds us that through our own cultural engagements we too are all participants. By looking at what she calls 'the domains of theatre', Bishop suggests that the 'pre-history of recent developments in contemporary arts lies in theatre', and that participatory practice is an element of contemporary art. She pragmatically presents the removal of the actor-audience divide as contributing to the understanding of participatory processes that can provoke activism in the spectator. However, she only goes as far back as the 1870's introducing the Futurist movement which was in part endorsed by the propaganda machine of the Italian Fascists. Bishop describes how Tommaso Marinetti (1876-1944) insisted that the audience is within the action (of the theatrical performance) as part of the action. The audience was encouraged to come and go as they liked and in 'its Futurist iteration, this participation became directly antagonistic, with performers and audience making direct attacks on one another, frequently culminating in riot' (Bishop, 2012). Through being willing to undergo 'the scorn of the public' (Bishop, 2012) the Futurists were, in effect, relinquishing power over to the audience to seemingly democratise the space of performance as a shared place. This sharing of actor/audience realms became somewhat agonistic, however with this grasping of power to 'riot or not to riot' the audience quickly resist doing anything more 'autonomous' (Bourdieu, 1993) than waiting for the next participatory 'riot' to present itself. Instead of creating their own crossings of the actor/audience divide, they waited to be invited to cross Marinetti's. The Futurists would have revelled in the resistance of invented places and spaces created by the audience themselves. This did not happen.

Bishop (2012) shows in *Artificial Hells*, that simply providing the non-hierarchical space in which to traverse the actor/ audience divide is not enough as once the power shifts to the audience after a momentary rebellion as seen in Marinetti's *Serata* (1910), the audience do

not start their own performance, they wait for the next one by Marinetti to come along to participate in; as a new facilitated structure from within which they can revolutionize (Bishop, 2012).

When thinking about this resistance to revolution how theatre has changed its hierarchy in cultural production is useful. The structures from which the process of creating theatre have been devised since the Restoration of 1660, for example, removal of the elevated proscenium arch, were seen to address the hierarchy embedded in theatre that Marinetti wanted to deconstruct (Bishop, 2012). In a similar way protest theatre of the 1970s likewise did away with hierarchies of place to deconstruct the space of actor/audience divides.

Protest and Feminist Theatre was seen to:

restore the theatre to its traditional position of importance by recreating a fresh, unsullied language of theatre; to extend the social basis of theatre to include the working class, the oppressed and the dispossessed; and to make obvious the enjoyment and the possibility of creation - particularly collective creation - as something neither mysterious nor the privilege of the elite few but the democratic right and the inherent human capacity of the many (Craig, 1980:47).

This deconstructing of privilege was seen in how theatre was devised and where this process was performed. Part of this 'social basis of theatre' was to move away from purely economic determinations of value, evidenced by e.g., Big budget West End Shows. It was during protest and feminist theatre that the idea of 'against directory' (Davies, 1987) took hold. This way of working, with communities and individuals coming together, was opposed to an (essentially male) hierarchy found in theatre where the script was written by one

person of authority, then passed down to a director of authority, who then interpreted it for the actors to perform. To counteract this patriarchal system, theatre companies deconstructed the hierarchy of producer, director, and performer, and instead, the actors, directors and producers formed companies together where they were all 'actors'. They wrote plays together, staging them as an ensemble, often in non-traditional spaces (Boal, 1974).

Following on from this idea, the ensemble is one where all cast members have equal agency in the product created. The ensemble instead has no 'master' director and decisions are made based on embodied acts of dialogue. To co-create the performance, the ensemble goes through a process of devising epiches (Brecht, 1964) and co-creating the text often through a process of simultaneous dramaturgy (Boal, 1974).

This process improvises narratives as snapshots of human experience (Flemming, 2014). These improvisations are then, reflected upon and then fitted together as a series of group scenes, monologues, song, dance, and still images, perhaps as image theatre (Boal, 1968, 1974).

When this system is applied to non-professional community participants the ensemble is made up of what Boal calls 'Spect-actors' (1974, 2000). Unlike the actors of protest and feminist theatre the spect-actor is still in a space of transformation between audience and actor. This term applies to their [dis]position in the process as they straddle to learn the language of theatre and move from the oppressed position of a passive audience member to the revolutionary space of the actor. The term spect-actor indicates the duality of the audience as actor; as active and not passive in the devising process (Boal, 1968, 1974, 1979). In his most popular method 'Forum Theatre', Boal introduced the role of the *Joker*, which

in museum participatory contexts could be understood as the ideal facilitator. The joker has no agenda, no mission but that of assisting the spect-actors in the devising of their epiches to create problem-solving interventions.

Like Marinetti and the Futurists, to further embed a sense of ownership over the space and place of participation (and decision-making) Boal removes the hierarchy of the stage and performs his ensemble performances on the same level as the audience; again, removing the actor/audience divide. He does this to address the governmentality of traditional theatre and deconstruct the damaging binaries of *Us and Them* (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016).

When thinking about Bishop's (2012) example of the Futurist happenings that performed a somewhat artificial riot, the physical dissolution of the actor/ audience divide is not enough to deconstruct the [di]positional divide of *Us and Them* oppression, as the 'rioters' would only do so if given permission. Boal takes this deconstruction of the physical divide further by adding a process (Weiss, 2012) of what hooks would call 'radical openness' (1989) and a sharing of language (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004); the language of living, of culture and of dispositions to solve the problem of oppression by the deconstruction of the [dis]positional space. He uses the methods of Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed (1974) to create spaces for transformation where the fear Marinetti's audiences (or here participants) experience due to centuries of waiting for permission to 'riot' can transition into autonomous decision-making with shared authority and security.

In the final section of the literature review, this fear of decision making is unpacked by framing the phenomenon as articulations of oppression. Literature that helps determine ways in which museums could alleviate this fear as a shared process will also be discussed.

2.3.4. Transitioning participant fear: oppressions and symbolic power

This fear of deciding to rebel independently from facilitated rebellion (Bishop, 2012) is the same fear Freire discusses as a 'fear of change or freedom' in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1973). This fear of change is something Freire discusses as a fear of responsibility, that has ultimately been the successful outcome of centuries of dehumanization of the oppressed:

The struggle for humanization, for the emancipation of labour, for the overcoming of alienation, for the affirmation of men and women as persons would be meaningless. The struggle is only possible only because dehumanisation, although a concrete and historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed. Because it is a distortion of being more fully human, sooner or later being fewer human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so. (Freire, 1973:26)

Freire argues that this condition prevents the oppressed from truly believing they can make a difference. This dehumanised outcome also prevents the oppressed from feeling that they have the freedom to resist; to decide to cross the imposed mythological boundaries between public and private; the boundaries between actor and audience (Bishop, 2012; Cornwall, 2004; Kothari, 2002). To combat this lack of what Freire would call *conscientizaco*, an ability to be conscious of the language of oppression and have the language in which to resist, which firmly locks the oppressed into what he calls a theoretical culture of silence.

When thinking back to section 2.1, to achieve a position self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943) *conscientizacao*, is vital to a process of becoming conscious of the world by being able to

utilise the dominant - and often oppressive - majority language to name the world we live in. For Freire, the attainment of language is key to shaking off the shackles of this oppression. He does not suggest however that populations in oppressed societies should be homogenized into the dominant culture through the assimilation of the dominant language, he asks that the oppressed be enabled in the use of the dominant language so that they might use it as a tool to at least understand their oppression and be conscious in whether they choose to stay oppressed, or not. Without this language, the oppressed cannot be consciously aware of the world in which they are oppressed and therefore cannot resist, or indeed consciously comply.

In the context of museums perhaps the participant needs to learn the language of museums to resist a kind of culture of silence permeating participatory processes. But the museum must also allow the language of the participant to reside; to language together as an activist museum engaged in a 'disruption of oppression' (hooks (1989)). For hooks (1989), language too is a place of struggle and there is a danger in learning the language of the oppressor as that assimilation into a dominant cultural language is a betrayal of one's own:

The oppressed struggle in a language to recover us to reconcile, to remember, to renew. Our words are not without meaning, they are in action, in resistance (hooks, 1989:18)

Museums aim to co-produce as something likening to *conscientizacao* in an activist mission to achieve social usefulness. However, the danger hooks (1989) describes warns of a co-opting of language and culture residing in the oppressed as an 'exoticism' (Said,1979), which must be protected against first, and this can only be done by allowing hooks' radical openness (1989) to take place as a space that offers no dominance to dispositions

occupying the space. All in the margins of radical openness are allowed to speak their own language in a burgeoning awareness and acceptance of the existence of each other's.

Guilherme (2010) discusses how levels of consciousness of multiple narratives must be heard and understood:

Intercultural exchanges happen not only between individuals representing differentiated ethnic communities but also between the same individuals attempting, at the same time, to find their way through their multiple identifications and life stories. (Guilherme, 2010: 3)

Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) have another name for this process; 'linguaging'. The palimpsest machinations of cultural acquisition, affiliation and appropriation are achieved through language exchange:

'Linguaging' is a concept aptly developed by its authors to identify a 'life skill' since it is inextricably interwoven with social experience – living in society – and it develops and changes constantly as that experience evolves and changes (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004:2). It implies a; a lengthy process of discovery; of travelling back and forth; of learning and unlearning; trying, struggling, appreciating, and transforming. In sum, intercultural mobility eventually becomes a life journey, that is 'a journey into an intercultural being' (Phipps and Gonzalez 2004:22).

As central to the struggle museums likewise must learn and unlearn to have meaningful intercultural dialogue. Their process of 'linguaging' can only become meaningful if they trust, let go and relinquish the power of an authoritative position and allow the participant to cross over into the hidden realms of museum language to be conscious of the oppression

within. Museums appear to find this difficult, but to become useful to society perhaps they must embrace their role in languaging as a shared participatory process that requires trust and a new group formation which they are part of, not aside from:

Especially in the initial stages of team formation, attention must be paid to the development of trust between team members as it forms the basis for team identity, effective interaction, and integration. Trust in other people is defined as 'the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party' (Mayor et al 1995: 732).

Secondly, the process of dialogue must be taken seriously as a platform for action. Freire also discusses dialogue as a human phenomenon in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1973):

As we attempt to analyse dialogue as a human phenomenon, we discover something which is the essence of dialogue itself: the word...the word is more than just an instrument which makes dialogue possible: accordingly, we must seek its constitutive elements within the word we find lies dimensions, reflection, and action in such radical interaction that if one sacrifices – even in part – the other immediately suffers. There is no true word that is not at the same time in praxis.

- Action

= word = work = praxis

- Reflection

Human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only true words, with which men and women transform the world. To exist, humanly, is to make the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires a new naming. Human beings are not built-in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection. (Freire, 1973, 2003: 68-69)

The similarity between Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) and Freire, (1973) is in the languaging process as one of action, work, and reflection. This reflective process cannot be carried out in isolation, however, for that is not dialogue (Lynch, 2014). And those with power in the process of dialogue cannot undertake meaningful exchange with false words. For false words create a false consciousness and a culture of silence. Therefore, the power and the true motivation of who is 'naming the world' and why, must contribute to this trust. This will be a trust developed within the established co-languaging group of the museum and those they seek to hold intercultural dialogue with. The challenge of 'dialogue' as a process of equal exchange is explained here by Freire as:

Dialogue cannot occur between those who cannot name the world and those who do not wish the naming-between those denying others the right to speak their word and those who's right to speak has been denied to them. (Freire, 1973, 2003: 69)

Freire calls this power dynamic de-humanizing aggression and Bourdieu, in agreement, calls it symbolic violence²². In a museum context, the participant is not given the right to name their world because they do not know the 'language' of the museum.

2.3.4.1. Bourdieu and the symbolic power of language

Bourdieu also notes that language is an instrument of action (1977, 1991, 1992) and should therefore not be treated merely in semiotic terms, but also in action, as relational to the position of the speaker/ writer/ and space and place the language is uttered:

The power of words is nothing other than the delegated power of the spokesperson, and his [*sic.*] speech – that is, the substance of his discourse and, inseparably, his way of speaking – is no more than a testimony, and one among others, of the guarantee of delegation which is vested in him (Bourdieu, 1991:107)

In this quote, Bourdieu asserts that all language is reputational, it comes from somewhere else rooted in delegations determined by the position of the speaker, as an 'authorized language' and therefore disagrees with Freire that it is not only the ability to know words of the language, but it is having the [dis]position to use the language, that is power.

I too view language as something which has an effect, has power and is in action. I appreciate that semiotically the position of units within language can tell us much. Ivan Snook (1990) refers to Plato when thinking about Bourdieu and language. He notes that Plato had a theory that there was a relationship between language and reality: 'The function of language was to mirror the world of Forms and when it did so, the knowledge captured was true' (Snook, 1990:160). In an educational context, his process of learning is deemed as coming to terms with these realities expressed by language. However, this notion of truth coming from language does not hold up well, as 'an instrument, designed by and limited to the satisfaction of human needs' (Hollingdale, 1973: 131; see also Snook, 1990: 161; Nietzsche, 1967). Bourdieu recognises this fallibility of language because he does not isolate the semiotic values of language from the source or conditions of formation. The ability 'of

a person to gain power by speaking for and representing a group' he calls *ministerium* (Snook, 1990). Through an authority to speak, there must be an acknowledgement of the linguistic-cultural capital the speaker holds and the power of this ability to speak this language. Not only this, the transition from language production to language reception is organized around legitimacy. The symbolic power in determining or presenting oneself as the spokesperson for the group can be seen in Bourdieu's example of a priest to his ministry. The language used by a priest has symbolic power that creates a sense of order and recognition in the parish ministry with hierarchical persuasion, where the priest can use language to impose guilt on those s/he speaks to. However:

Symbolic power is a power which gives the recognition, misrecognition, of the violence which is exercised through it. Thus, the symbolic violence of a minister can only be exercised with this sort of complexity according to him, by those over whom the violence is exercised, encouraged by the denial that misrecognition produces. (Bourdieu, 1984:61)

2.3.4.2. When symbolic power becomes violence

Symbolic violence (1984) is the offence this power inflicts. First coined by Bourdieu, symbolic violence involves misrecognition of actions. Individuals and groups are regularly marginalized and dominated in society and this can be seen in the relationship between museums and their participants. The language positions the participant as the recipient of care and service (Lynch, 2011) that the participant may not need or indeed want. In cases where this violence is symbolic, the subjugated individuals see their domination as natural and through this subject, positioning is rendered less than the museum or as having no voice, as *un-human* (Freire, 1974). By viewing different social constructions as natural, when

'natural' is not a 'truth' (Foucault, 1975), the dominated agents participate in their subjugation. This is a tacit acceptance, at times an encouragement by the oppressed participants of *Us and Them* binaries. This self-subjugation is what Bourdieu considers symbolic violence (1984), which according to Bourdieu is perpetrated by both the dominator and dominated subconsciously using classification systems, gift-giving, and coercive participation within a society based on [dis]positions.

Within the vast context of a museum, it is no wonder that participation is a challenging field to occupy. Performances of power can be dangerously impactful as oppressive and silencing or hiding important narratives of cultural diversity and new and vital perspectives. It is for this reason the research is so important.

After a brief conclusion to the literature review, Chapter Three will describe how the research was undertaken within the cultural theoretical frame before proceeding to the first case study enquiry, *The Intercultural Project* (2013).

2.4. Conclusion to Literature Review

This chapter opened up discussions in scholarship around the performances of power in the binaries of *Us and Them* as positioned through language, space, and practice; formulated through historical and contemporary discourses as a history of dispositions with a focus on language (2.2) and a currency of dispositions with a focus on practice (2.3) (Foucault, 1972; Bourdieu, 1984). Section 2.2 discussed how museums were addressing discourse between 2011 and 2019 followed by a theoretically based conversation on where the discourse formations come from and how power is perceived in decision-making and ownership. This section provides the theoretical positions and arguments of such, moving into the realms

of identity theory when thinking about essentialism (Derrida,1967, 1978; Hall, 1996, 1997, 2000; hooks, 1990,1996, 1997; Rutherford 1990,1998) and notions of binary separations and how these binaries are compounded by the structure of fields of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993). Section 2.3 discussed the practice of participation as a 'currency' that museums use to address these binaries as the sector transitions curatorially from one voice to many voices. This section also asks what museums could borrow from theatre, community arts and pedagogy to change the discourse and practice in museums as a socially just act. Through this review of critical works the dilemma of *Us and Them* participatory paradigms was then reviewed from a theoretical position in 2.3.4 revealing a strong case for the use of 'radical openness' (hooks 1989, 1996) combined with 'linguaging' (Phips and Gonzalez, 2004) as a method of shared decision-making.

The following chapter will now outline how the research question will be answered through a methodological process of participatory action research using critical arts-based enquiry and critical discourse analysis.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses what methodological approaches were applied to answer the research question. It will serve as a space to discuss the advantages and or challenges of the methods chosen, and the processes involved. The chapter will begin by presenting the researcher positioning (3.1.1) before moving onto the mixed-method research design (3.2). Next, there will be an overview of the methods of enquiry (3.3), followed by the challenges and advantages of each method chosen (3.4) The closing sections will feature the methods of analysis (3.5) and finally a note on ethical considerations (3.6).

3.1.1. Methodological position

As a feminist researcher (Oakley, 1981) I cannot disengage with my own practice as a community artist working in theatre and museums. I am epistemologically positioned as constructivist and therefore I choose to approach the research with a post-positivist interpretivist lens in a deductive strategy of participatory action research, performing four stages of enquiry. Using the hermeneutic spiral (Sarantakos, 2005) the data is processed as Critical Discourse Analysis and a Participatory Action Research formulated arts-based enquiry. Pairing participatory action research as critical arts-based enquiry enables the research to draw on grounded theory. The grounded theory of this research comes from total participant (Bryman, 2004) researcher observations from EQ1, that are auto-ethnographic. To solely determine the findings of this research using one singular method however would be remiss as the research wishes to expose the nuances of the phenomenon and deconstruct where and how the power is performing. Therefore, I use a mixture of

methods to unearth the findings over four enquiries, comparing auto-ethnography with primary and secondary data from evaluation documents, field notes, interviews and questionnaires - qualitatively and quantitatively.

As discussed in the literature review when reflecting on binary positions of identity and 'the other', essentialist thinking is part of the problem within the foci of participatory work within museums. Therefore auto-ethnography (Trinh, 1991) is more appropriate than ethnography (Trinh, 1991) which locates *the other* outside of oneself, reinforcing these binary separations. However, auto-ethnography places the ethnographic observations from within the ethnographer's experience. As Trinh (1991:73) explains 'If you cannot locate the other, how are you to locate yourself?' I feel that Trinh's statement can also work both ways. If you cannot locate yourself, how can you locate the other? This is useful to ground perspectives in awareness of difference, to be able to notice anomalies and when unconscious assumptions are being made which may be affecting participant experiences. The challenge of using this auto-ethnographic method is that the self-reflective process must be robust, self-critical and considered with acknowledgement of 'blind spots' (Foucault, 1976) in understanding, unconscious bias and positional influences. Foucault determines that when analysing social conditions, we must consider our own perspectives and how these may contribute to the outcomes sought and achieved. I am critically aware that my position as a researcher already impacts the outcome of actions observed, just by my being there 'observing'. Therefore, to an extent my being active in my research as a practitioner or total participant makes no methodological difference, if I reflect and analyse this position. By choosing this position the "methodological nexus of 'meaning making' [is situated] within the body and being a critically reflexive researcher, to offer narratives transgressing normative and oppressive performativity [.]" (Spry, 2018:629) the researcher

becomes completely involved in the processes. They are sharing the space with the actors involved, as one of the actors performing a further role being analysed as opposed to being outside of the roles as a complete observer. Bryman's classification of 'total participant' is helpful to my own positionality:

[The] total participant, in which the ethnographer is completely involved in a certain situation and must resume a researcher stance once the situation has unfolded and then write down notes. (Bryman, 2004:302).

I am clear that my perspectives are inevitably subjective and will alter as positions of power and knowledge move (Foucault, 1980). To alleviate this, a continuous process of self-reflection, performed as participatory action research is part of the methodological process.

A 'self-observation effect' was one challenge I experienced in conducting the case studies. During the action research, I was aware, through the reflexive processes, that I was altering my own models of practice in response to engaging in theory and critical reflection (Finlay, 2017). Allowing for this evolution of practice critical arts-based enquiry (Finlay, 2017) enabled these changes to become part of the enquiry. This method enabled me to work through and understand that I was altering the space while analysing it. This involved me often self-censoring on a continuous loop. I tried to mitigate this confusing situation by writing down detailed field notes on how I felt and talking to my peers, who kindly confirmed that they too felt similarly as they reflected on their own practice, post the awareness-building of *Whose Cake is it anyway?* (Lynch, 2011).

Bryman in *Social Research Methods* (2004: 8-9) describes this process as part of his 'revision of theory' when using a deduction strategy:

Theory > Hypothesis > Data collection> Findings> Hypothesis confirmed or rejected>
Revision of theory.

When explaining this linear strategy, he warns that “the relevance of a set of data for a theory may become apparent after the data have been collected” (Bryman, 2004:9). With this in mind, I use a deductive method of participatory action research to immerse myself in these movements to deduce the phenomenon from inside of the observational paradigm. The epistemology informing this approach assumes that ‘people cannot be separated from their knowledge; therefore, there is a clear link between the researcher and the research subject’ (Dudovskiy, 2018). This approach is underpinned by a feminist commitment to avoiding the objectification of the subjects of my research. Oakley (1981) argues that (from a feminist position), researchers ought to tell interviewees about their own experiences so that the encounter becomes a mutually co-operative event. The level of trust and commitment this is likely to generate will result in more authentic information (Oakley, 1981). The benefits of engaging participants in this way can be seen in the findings of Chapters 4, 5 and 7.

As the case study participants are human subjects, a positivist approach; one that presents the subject as fixed, would not be appropriate here. Human subjects are in continuous movement and a positivist approach presents that there are 'positive', essentialist, universal objective truths which is not something which can be found in data coming from human experiences. The collection of demographic information attempts to qualify experiences across age, gender, ethnicities, and economic social status. This can be useful, especially when there are many respondents from similar backgrounds, however, the sample here is relatively small (n67), with a diverse range of backgrounds that are not fixed.

My position is that research only exists in moments and tells a partial story, a story which changes as soon as the moment has passed. This is no light observation as determinations over subject experiences cannot and should not be concretised as part of an identity *per se*, as people and experiences can be multiple and contradictory, changing from moment to moment, or as Hall says 'in the conjuncture'. (Hall, 2000,2009, Bhabha, 1994, 1990). Dramatist Augusto Boal's use of the myth of *Heraclitus and Cratylus* in *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1973) expresses this well:

To show the constantly changing nature of things, Heraclitus used to offer a concrete example: nobody can step in the same river twice. Why? Because on the second attempt it will not be the same waters that are running, nor will it be the same person who tries it, because he will be older, even if by only a few seconds. His pupil Cratylus, even more radical, would say to his teacher that nobody can go into a river even once, because upon going in, the waters of the river are already moving (which waters would he enter?) and the person who would attempt it would already be ageing (who would be entering, the older or the younger one?) Only the movement of the waters is eternal, said Cratylus: only ageing is eternal; only movement exists: all the rest is appearance. (Boal, 1979, 2000:3)

In the context of Museums, individuals known as 'participants' attend and participate in a process of 'participation' (Simon, 2010), a process which involves learning, communication, socialization. These processes are moving, adapting, and changing for each actor involved at any given moment. Therefore, the individual observed at minute one of day one of the enquiry is a different individual at minute two of day one, and so on. Likewise, the artist practitioner as the researcher is learning, communicating, socializing and is a different artist

practitioner-researcher, as each moment passes. This research design understands that findings are a snapshot of a movement, discovering what has been possible, what has happened and could happen again. Each of the individuals featured has a unique heritage and journey; one that is vastly different from their neighbour experienced through their particular cultural lens and informing their reception of worldly phenomena. This characterizes any 'participant', regardless of ethnicity or other essentialist categorizations of age, sex or presented gender. Identity is, according to Stuart Hall, constructed by the discourses individuals have, in differing ways, been exposed to (Hall, 1996); the cultural and social capital we hold (Bourdieu, 1986), the language and power dynamics we participate in (Foucault, 1972, 1976, 1982, 1983), and the governance we are subjected to (Foucault, 1977). These influences contribute to how individuals, groups, or communities experience unique worlds (Hall, 1994, 1996, 2000; Bhabha, 1994, 1996, 1990; Parmer, 1990; hooks, 2009.)

A post-positivist position allows for multiple perspectives while interpretivism enables a researcher to consider their conclusions may never be complete and can only be framed within a certain space and time as something in movement (Foucault, 1980). According to Bryman (2004), interpretivism is:

predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action. Its intellectual heritage includes Weber's notions of Verstehen; the hermeneutic-phenomenological tradition; [...]. (Bryman, 2004:12)

This research uncovers what could be interpreted as a cause and effect of power in participatory practice in a museum setting. This investigation analyses how power performs within variables such as the positioning of the museum practitioner, the governance of the site and participant levels as professional or non-professional, between 2013-2020.

3.2. Method Overview & Design

To examine how power performs in the context of co-curation in museums, the research includes four enquiries (three case studies and a sector-wide survey) that examine participatory experience at four different levels: the volunteer (Enquiry 1, *The Intercultural Project*: Ch 4) the community participant (Enquiry 2, *Bricks and Mortar*: Ch5) the museum professional (Enquiry 3, *A Survey*: Ch 6) and the professional participant (Enquiry 4, *Museum Makes Dark*²³: Ch 7).

To address the research question Critical Arts-Based Enquiry (Finlay, 2004) as a PAR design will build on the learning and experience of enquiry one (2011-2-13) as grounded theory. This theory reflects how power performs in the co-curation of an event and reflective booklet, along with participation in an intercultural learning program. The theoretical themes that are taken forward were developed through the critical discourse analysis of several evaluation documents and workshop reports produced by the learning assistants²⁴ combined with several auto-ethnographic observations.

Enquiry two, the case study *Bricks and Mortar* (2014) also uses a mixed method of auto-ethnography and critical discourse analysis, this time analysing (n15) participant

²³ The project names have been changed to anonymise contributions.

²⁴ A learning assistant role in museums is engaged in assisting the public in the interpretation of collections.

questionnaires (Likert, 1932) and interviews (n10). These methods ask how power performs in the co-curation of a theatre production. Alongside this mixed method is critical arts-based enquiry exploring whether a developing method of non-selective-curation can reposition the museum curator as 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016) by sharing authority over the curatorial process. This method aims to incorporate all materials developed into the end cultural product (see 3.3.3) as a non-didactic approach (Freire, 1973).

The third enquiry (2016/17 and 2020) focusses entirely on how museum professionals (n39) perceive how the language of invisible power (Lynch, 2011) performs in practice. This was conducted at two interims, 2016/17 and 2020. The method used was an online survey (powered by survey monkey) that directly asked practitioners who should have power in participatory processes and make the ultimate decisions?

Enquiry four (2019) uses the same case study method as enquiry two but without the Likert questionnaire (due to difficulties in distribution and collection during the Covid-19 lockdown of 2020). This enquiry is instead informed by auto-ethnographic observations and online interviews (n/ 13) conducted over video conferencing software. It functions as a case study that identifies challenges for decision-making in professionally partnered participatory co-curation, when the language of invisible power has been mostly removed from the discourse.

The findings from each stage of enquiry inform the next (Bryman, 2004:09). This mixed-method, approach (over a period of seven years), is valuable in ascertaining what constitutes as 'best practice' embedded over time (Bienkowski, 2016) and how power is performing in museum participation with a longitudinal lens within variable contexts.

Finally, the research determines whether implementing the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (PHF 2014, 2016) will be enough to break down an enduring '*us and them*' binary in museums? (Bienkowski 2014, 2016).

Interrogating just one perspective of this question would only partially expose what is going on, as the site of museums is one that is not only complex but is one that is shifting throughout the period of research. Further to this for a change in practice to be possible the perspectives of the participants and the museum professionals must be analysed together. It is these parties that have the power to persuade those who can implement change within the museum, if not within the entire context. This design hopes to register the journey museums have been on in the UK over the past seven years to look forward, by looking back.

3.3. Methods of Enquiry

This section will outline the methods used to investigate the themes derived from Enquiry one, as grounded theory. Four enquiries were implemented: three case studies and one online survey. After a brief explanation of the PAR (Bryman, 2004) design and of critical arts-based enquiry I discuss the test method of non-selective curation. This will be followed by a look at the challenges of each method and how these were overcome. 3.4 will then set out how the findings were analysed with a description of how I use Critical Discourse Analysis.

3.3.1. Non-Selective Curation

When thinking about non-selective Curation, how does it differ from a traditional selective process of curation? Selective or traditional curatorial methods would begin with the expertise (and distinct cultural lens) of the museum curator. They would then select objects for a display that are informed by these dispositions as an expert in a particular subject. However, throughout this process, the curator is working from their own lens infused with knowledge formed by entrenched discourse formations (Foucault, 1972). As discussed in the literature review (2.2.2), the power performing through discourse can belie a sense of 'truth', positioning subjects accordingly.

Non-Selective Curation differs by asking the subjects to select or create objects together, with the curator. The power performed allows for the expertise of the curator to inform *how* these objects work together when displayed in the context of museums and within their trained understanding of how audiences move around gallery spaces (for example), without the authority to select *what* does or does not feature. The case studies test this manoeuvring of curatorial power to choose objects for cultural representation, acknowledging the profundity of a postcolonial lens and unconscious bias within museum curatorial practice.

The premise of non-selective curation was discovered accidentally during case study one *The Intercultural Project*. The project had a specific agenda of using intercultural dialogue and cultural heritage to co-produce an exhibition, develop, and deliver a learning programme, an events programme and symposium on the work achieved ahead of the Commonwealth Games, Paralympic Games and Olympic Games. The curation of the

exhibition included all objects selected by the participants and did not use traditional labels, instead presenting objects with stories attributed by the community participants and developed from their own heritage and experiences. The hierarchy of curatorial 'facts' was essentially removed in an aim to accommodate the different cultural lenses and heritage 'truths' (Strachan and Mackay, 2012).

This approach, of accepting all objects chosen, was then again accidentally further developed during a spin-off exhibition I was asked to curate as part of the project with six primary schools. *Migration Through Children's Eyes* (2012) was an exhibition of children's writing, photography, sculpture, and painting. The curatorial process did not involve the selection of objects for display, but instead *how* they were displayed and what narratives they could communicate when situated next to each other. This method was not intentional at all but was influenced by the previous exhibition and a happy administrative error.



Figure 5. *Migration through children's eye's*

There were thirty-five children in each class and not all the artworks were labelled. There was no way of knowing which child had been represented and which had not. The decision was made to therefore include everything instead of risking one child not being included: and the experimental method of non-selective curation was born. The exhibition was commended by the V&A Museum of Childhood on its strength in communicating childhood

experiences of migration. This encouraged further investigation into its worth as a future method of practice in co-curatorial participation initiating this research.

The idea of non-selective curation was also tested during case study one, when working with the Volunteer Events Team who co-curated an exhibition to present their experience and process of working together interculturally, as an Events Team. The feedback, as will be discussed in (4.3) and later in the following case studies, was that participants did not feel that 'words were put in their mouths'.

Enquiry two, *Brick and Mortar* as a performance based co-curatorial project led to the further development of non-selective curation combining 'curatorial' decision-making with the devising method of theatre practice (Boal, 1974). The idea became more grounded in an ethical position (hooks, 1989) to equalise the curatorial power of the practitioner (or director in the theatre context) and minimise inadvertent symbolic violence over the participant/s; censoring them due to misunderstood cultural or experiential inflexion or indeed the co-opting of such. I used this method for the script development and the devising of the site-specific theatre productions.

Non-selective curation could be seen as a process where the 'curator' acknowledges a specialism but as part of an ensemble with shared authority over the curatorial process. It draws on methods used by Boal (1973) in Forum Theatre, the feminist ensemble of the 1980s and theatre happenings of the 1990s (Jackson et al 1993). The non-selective element preceding the curatorial action is there to remind the curator that they are not pre-selecting or curating with a predetermined 'cookie-cutter' approach to the exhibition idea but are instead just charged with bringing cohesion to the narrative, through their expertise to support the intentions of the co-creator (Lynch, 2011). It is here that sharing the

expectations that museums have in interpretation levels and accessibility would ideally be exchanged transparently. The non-selective curator has a responsibility to use their curatorial skills (be they artistic or other) to ensure that the representational product does not censor the contributor's stories, ideas, or creativity but instead curates what exists in a manner that will be understood by audiences. The objective is to reduce an overzealous presence of the curatorial voice, as Davies, (1995:11) expresses well “[S]elective memories cannot be avoided, but they can be counteracted”, which I discuss further in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 (Lynch, 2011; Lidchi, 1997).

In the next section, I will refer to an example from this case study where non-Selective Curation became effective, but where it also had its limitations which became apparent. This episode shows where non-selective curation helped navigate a situation where previously, in my own practice and that of my peers the representation of the story would have been either surreptitiously disappeared or discouraged; but through negotiation was present in the end product.

3.3.1.1. An example of Non- Selective Curation (Michelle’s story, enquiry two)

Michelle wanted to discuss how problematic it is for refugees to be forced into sharing residency with women from a different culture from her own. Being forced to share a home with anyone I didn't know would be extremely unsettling, I am sure. However, when attempting to represent Michelle’s story, as part of an organization that works with refugees her story without a doubt could have been perceived as having racist undertones, the language used certainly enhanced that point of view. However, Michelle’s use of English is as a second language (and newly acquired at that) and therefore this seeming overt

racism must be given the concession that she may have had difficulty in expressing the subtler frustrations of differing cultures coming together. Regardless, the partners could not take the risk of appearing to endorse these racist perspectives. Already committed to using non-selective-curation as the critical arts-based enquiry, as with all the community partner contributions Michelle's story had to feature, in its entirety, unless she decided not to include it. This was a challenge; therefore, it is a useful example to explain how this method works, or indeed can be limiting in its effectiveness in terms of redistributing power in authentic decision-making.

Michelle's story discussed her anger at having to share food making utensils and cookware with the women from vastly different cultures. Instead of scripting Michelle's story through simultaneous dramaturgy, I suggested we co-create a sculpture that represented her anger that sometimes the coming together of different cultural norms "doesn't work" (MR/AVFH/INT/2013). The result was a pile of kitchen pots, with knives and forks precariously balanced and jarringly skewered at acute angles. In between the utensils were verbatim sections of Michelle's words from the transcriptions of her conversation, embedded in the sculpture depicting a situation most of us would not experience, but would most likely feel the same way about. When exhibited as part of the exhibition at Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery in June 2014, a scholar in 'Translating Cultures' at the exhibition/museum/University? found that this was her favourite "and most important" piece because "it tells us it doesn't always work; that intercultural dialogue can be messy. We need to recognize that conflict happens." (Grossman, 2013)

It was important to represent Michelle's frustrations as it validated her experience and therefore validates other audiences' experiences that are somewhat untold, or unseen. By

not including this part of her offering, this part of her story; her whole story is in danger of being disregarded. With no censoring, or onerous discussions regarding racism (as an adult she has free will) we were able to share artistic skills that encouraged an alternative way of representing these challenging situations.

However, as will be discussed in the findings Chapter 5.2 the museum had gained, to an extent, a false consensus from Michelle (Lynch, 2011:11). She was coerced into co-creating a product that she felt only partially represented her story. We did not discuss with Michelle why we could not represent her story due to racist undertones because there was a fear of upsetting her. This fear of conflict prevented the organizations from being upfront with her about the racism and instead used a culture of celebration to coerce Michelle, encouraging instead the use of sculpture and not spoken word. This was well-intentioned, but still coercive. In an atmosphere of 'radical openness' this conversation would have been laid out to debate and come to an understanding, however as with the episode in EQ1 (4.3.1.2) the participant 'moved on' from the issue ultimately missing an opportunity to achieve a languaging between cultural understandings. In enquiry four the research investigates whether this coercive power is akin to Lynch's 'cookie-cutter' approach and is still present in 2020. Can this situation be mitigated by non-selective curation or will 'cookie-cutter' coercion due to prior informed sensibilities, perhaps based in fear or a duty of care, alter the representation anyway?

3.3.2. Critical Arts -based enquiry as Participatory Action Research?

Reason and Bradbury (2008) suggest that within a PAR (Participatory Action Research) process, 'communities [...] evolve as co-researchers'. My enquiry focuses on socio-political structures, cross-cultural interaction, cross-cultural presumptions, and psychological

approaches to participation as a socially just act. This combination allows for the testing of an arts-based method as an evolving variable against the context of changing discourse formations within the set stages of: Practice > Reflection > Fact finding > Strategic planning of the criteria for next case study > Practice > Reflection > Fact finding > ...and Repeat (Francis, 2002). Participatory action research (PAR) is conducted ethically *with* the subject or client group, not *on* the subject and/or client group. It builds learning from one method to another, keeping track of the movements of power within the process and working in a self-reflective, collaborative manner, to continuously re-evaluate the project as a deductive process of themes dominant and reoccurring. The epistemology draws on work from Lincoln and Guba 1985 as – credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability and lastly, the comparison takes precedence over measurement, and learning comes from exceptions, oddities, discrepancies, dissenters, rather than averages (in Chambers 1994a:960; 1994b: 1254, 1259).

Applying this method, each enquiry in my study builds upon the findings of the previous, drawing comparisons and highlighting disparities to critically examine *how* power performs in participation in museums - rather than a focus purely on measurements of when power operates. This model has been repeatedly used in community development projects interested in social justice since the 1970s, because it is based on a democratic ethos. Francis' plan (2002) makes sense to this research as the cycle of practice, reflection, action and further reflection as it enables the analysis of each enquiry to facilitate new occurring themes. Via this process, the research examines how power performs in the processes of participation and how it is represented in the discourse of museums. The cycle of reflexivity in the first case study informs the PAR re-design and choice of mixed methods in the second.

The second case study then informs the themes of the next participatory action research stage of critical arts-based enquiry.

Combining participatory action research with critical arts-based enquiry (Finley, 2005, 2011) is fairly situated within a Critical Pedagogy paradigm (Finley 2011:561):

What distinguishes critical arts-based research is its challenges to hegemony and tradition, to systemic gatekeeping and too insipid, colonizing habits of mind and ways of being. One of the characterizing features of the emerging genre of critical arts-based research is its fluidity - as to meaning, as to the functionality within liminal spaces between heterogeneous projects and social transformation (Finlay, 2011: 562)

Denzin (2008:62) writes that "Critical performance pedagogy moves from global to the local, the political to the personal, and the pedagogical to the performative." This perfectly describes my use of this research model. The case studies pedagogically move through several stages of self-reflection and active inquiry, to devise co-creatively performative representations that challenge oppression and achieve positive social change. As I will explain below, non-selective curation is the focus of this critical arts-based inquiry which aims to flatten out oppressive hierarchical participatory structures and increase social justice. Therefore, critical arts-based enquiry becomes useful as:

A multimodal, cross-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary, and multi-disciplinary methodology [...] using the arts in a project of social and political resistance to achieve social justice. The dedicated purpose of critical arts-based research is to confront what Henry Giroux (2013) describes as 'the dis-imagination machine' promoted by the post-9/11 neoliberal regime (Finley, 2018:561).

The stages Bryman (2004) sets out for Participatory Action Research (3.3.1) is the same reflective cycle as Critical Arts-based enquiry, showing their compatibility:

- 1) Practical application of the test practice method of non-selective curation.
- 2) Reflection on how this was applied and what were the challenges and opportunities experienced were mapped to the sub-questions and coding themes?
- 3) Fact-finding through interviews and questionnaires conducted with participants.
- 4) Strategic planning for next case study enquiry, making changes to the method according to the findings of the previous enquiry i.e., "more transparency needed over production schedule before the start (EQ4)

...and Repeat.

I do not analyse the artistic or representational outcomes but rather the processes. Throughout the process of each case study (enquiry one, two and four) I made auto-ethnographic field notes on my observations in how the method of non-selective curation (3.3.1.1.) was performing in the enquiries at each stage. These notes were categorized under thematic coding:

Sub-questions:

How is power performing at three levels: volunteering, community participation, and professional partnering?

Is the performance of power relational to who the participation is with, or relational to the processes of participation at an institutional 'operational' level?

To what extent is the Lynch's notion of 'empowerment-lite' present (Lynch, 2016).

Coded themes:

To what extent is non-selective curation allowing for decisions to be made by the participant, unencumbered by the organisation?

Does the participant exude feelings of freedom to make decisions and comfortability in the space?

Are the performances of power mirrored backstage as they appear frontstage (Kothari, 2001)?

I also made observations categorised as what this might look like, based on the grounded theory of enquiry one (this is not an exclusive list of observations but represents the primary elements of enquiry):

Is the participant demonstrating independent thinking?

Is the participant excited in presenting ideas?

Are they wanting to do more, or less? Is this fluctuating and if so when?

Do they want to share their ideas?

Using four cycles of the Enquiry, the research was able to account for a changing context of museum participatory practice.

Enquiry research design:

Enquiry	Method of enquiry	Identifier	Date performed
Enquiry one	Case study	The Intercultural Project	2013
Enquiry two	Case Study	Bricks and Mortar	2013/14
Enquiry three	Survey	Language of Participation	2016/17 & 2020
Enquiry four	Case study	Museums Made Dark	2019

Figure 6. Research Design

As a deductive process, I could not only determine how power performed when non-selective curation was applied but also how power performed regardless of the non-selective curation intervention. The following section will outline how the methods were used, followed by several challenges and how these were approached.

3.3.3 Case studies

The primary method of enquiry is a case study approach. During my career, I became acutely aware that community participation usually has a driving body, normally a cultural organisation which funds and directs the project process. Through each of the case studies below, I will explore how an *'Us and Them'* binary is implicit to such projects by investigating the backstage and frontage operations and how these performances of power are felt in the participant and museum professionals involved (including the artist-researcher as total participant).

The research was at times difficult as the teams I worked with were aware that I was also researching the process and therefore their practice. I tried hard to soften this observer

effect by overtly reflecting on my own delivery and practice to show that I am not exempt from observation (or indeed criticism).

Case studies are a qualitative method thought of as “thick” (Geertz, 1973:06), “deep” (Sieber, 1973) or “holistic” (Rist, 1977:44). They are a model to investigate a particular social phenomenon using situational units such as the foci of this study - participatory arts and heritage projects. They are “an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomena in its real-life context; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin,1991:23). The multiple sources in the case studies implemented here are the artist as researcher auto-ethnographic observations base on critical arts-based enquiry, the community participant responses to interviews and a Likert style questionnaire. As a research method, case studies are an "inquiry into a social issue or [to] refine a theory. The results have a wider application beyond the study itself... [as a] collective study" (Sarantakos, 2005: 211). The case studies described look into how power performs in decision-making and ownership over the space and place of community participation in museums, during co-curatorial processes.

Each of the case studies (see fig 6.) are performances of participation in practice with different levels of participation: the diverse volunteer, the diverse community participant and the non-diverse professional participant. The first case study explores participation with a group of volunteers with seventeen different languages between them and aged between 16-70's. Some are refugees and asylum seekers but also in the group are those who identify as White British. The second case study is also with a diverse group of community participants, some of whom are refugees, asylum seekers and those who identify as White British. The third case study (Enquiry 4) is with a group of freelance

professional artists, not deemed particularly diverse (none of the artists identify as BaME, for example) and acts as the final enquiry testing out the 'othering hypothesis' discussed in chapters 1 and 2. Supporting the case studies is enquiry three which is a sector wide survey on how the language of participation is perceived. A summary of this test and the findings built from enquiry to enquiry can be found in the Conclusion (8.1.1)

3.3.4. Questionnaires (enquiry two, n15/15, enquiry four n13/n18) and follow-on Interviews (enquiry two, n11/15, enquiry four n13/n18)

Fifteen participants from the *Bricks that Mortar* case study were asked to fill in questionnaires with fifteen questions, eleven of which were quantitative using a Likert Scale of 1-5, with 5 being 'Very good'. These questionnaires were followed up with interviews with ten of the participants, using the same questions to elaborate qualitatively on their quantitative responses. Each of the questions were the same in each method, however, in the interviews, the participants were asked to elaborate. This method meant that there was no anonymity to the questionnaire responses, which did mean that a level of observer effect was likely. The proximity of the relationship between myself and the participants may have influenced the answers they provided, especially given that the responses were not provided anonymously.

The choice to follow up the questionnaires in this way was due to differing English language skills in the participant group. I wanted to analyse the immediate response with an opportunity for participants to expand on their initial Likert responses. This would enable a greater idea of what the participants thought about the project and their position in the co-production process.

The questions focus on the two key themes of this thesis, greater decision-making and ownership over the space and place of the co-production process. I first asked the participant if they felt *enabled* and an *equal* partner in creating what they wanted to *say*, *show*, and *perform* and how they wanted to express aspects of the culture and heritage.

Question six explicitly asks the participant:

6) *Do you feel the production team listened to you?*

1 2 3 4 5

And questions seven through to ten asked if they felt this was the case for each of the creative elements, theatre, film, and visual arts exhibition. The reason for this question was to indicate whether there was consensus or a disparity between how the participants responded to the other external partners to the project and the diversity of creative methods used. This theme is continued with question ten and eleven where the participants were asked whether they felt supported in how they wanted to display ideas and whether they felt they had the right to choose. On the questionnaire the word **you** is in bold to ask the participant to identify what extent they felt 'ownership' over the story they wished to share.

The reference points for the design of the questions are informed by the PAR process beginning at Enquiry one and the criteria set out by Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) as detailed in section 2.2.5.2:

10) *Do you feel you were supported in how you wanted to show your story and ideas?*

1 2 3 4 5

11) *To what extent did you feel you had the right to choose where performance and artwork went in the space?*

1 2 3 4 5

The more qualitative questions included can be seen in appendix G and were included to invite participants to think about the experience in terms of challenges and transformational opportunities they may or may not have experienced. The questionnaire and follow-on interviews using the same questions were developed with the language of participation and the *Us and Them* dynamics of this work in mind. The aim was to identify how the participant felt in terms of this dynamic and whether the 'decision-making and ownership' outcomes of the HLF funding were or were not achieved.

Case study three used the same questions with some alterations to correlate with the context of the enquiry. Such as, when thinking about questions 12 which was changed to:

12) *What difference did the way 'Museums Made Dark' was produced make to your creative contribution?*

This alteration enabled the specifics of the project to be stated as shorthand for the title (*Made Dark*). This enabled the participant to know the foci of the question as specific to the locus of the enquiry. However, for example in question 14 no changes were made as the question asks the locus has already been ascertained.

3.3.5 Online Surveys, the language in praxis (enquiry three, n39)

I developed an online survey (powered by Survey Monkey), aimed at consulting staff remotely. The link for the survey was sent to museum managerial staff to distribute to their

participatory teams and was featured on the Museums Association social media outlets.

The survey was anonymous, with the option to supply contact information, which five participants did opt to do. This was helpful for the follow-up interviews held in 2020.

This method of recruitment proved effective as it allowed respondents to consider the questions without the 'observer effect' of the researcher impacting on the processes. This began as a pilot study of staff at one of the national museums in preparation to circulate more widely in the following months. The pilot had responses from thirteen individuals, whereas the extended online survey (targeted across the UK), received (n39) responses. I will here consider relevant sections to illustrate how the survey did and did not work. In designing the online interview my main priority was to harness responses which were as authentic as possible. The language of participation, especially the concepts of *empowering* and *enabling* have been questioned and critiqued (Lynch, 2011) and therefore I had to think carefully about how I phrased the questions, piloting them and making changes to them in the final survey. I did not want respondents to pre-empt how they thought I wanted them to respond. I, as a fellow professional in their setting, am fully aware of how I would have filled out an online survey that discussed these very terms, and as such developed list of questions (n30) which increasingly probed for expanded answers. This was done with a mix of over thirty qualitative and quantitative questions. I did not want to be leading and had to phrase my questions in a manner that prompted an honest response, without the respondent feeling defensive or too self-aware of the underlying criticism of the terminology. Therefore, the wording was constructed to firstly identify an immediate response, followed by more qualitative questioning and 'open comment boxes. I utilised a similar approach to the mixed method applied in the case study Likert questionnaire (see appendix G). In terms of the data gathered, this approach worked well as the comment

boxes were mostly full. The first questions in the pilot and the online interview were largely the same. How participants related to their role in terms of *duty of care* and responsibility to their employers became important to the redesign of the main survey.

To look at an example, Question 7 from the final survey I will explain my reasoning for its framing:

Final Survey. Question7: To what extent do you think these ideas or themes are essential to good practise within your setting?

*I create a **safe space** for participation and **cross-cultural dialogue**? / I **facilitate** community participation. / I **empower** community groups and, or individuals to become more culturally engaged. / I **enabled** community groups and, or individuals to become more **active citizens**. / I aim to **share** my knowledge with the wider community, as a Museum and Arts and Heritage professional. / I **empower** myself as a practitioner when working in a participatory manner. / I **enable** myself as a practitioner when working in a participatory manner. / **Social Justice** is at the heart of what I do. /Participation creates opportunities for **transformation**.*

The words highlighted specify the language I have taken from the analysis of the contemporary discourse found in the policy and funding documents as outlined in Chapter three. In the final survey, these were structured somewhat differently, with an added demographic question at the beginning making this comparable question number 7, not 6. The final survey questions can be viewed in appendix H and the main difference is that I tried to place the practitioner within their practice in the final version, whereas in the pilot they were outside looking in. The reason for this 'tweak' was because I noticed in 2015/16, there was much more critical awareness of the power surrounding these terms and

frequent discussions in the workplace based on the *Our Museum* findings and recommendations. However, these discussions placed the participant outside of the experience too, as beneficiary, and I wanted to locate this as a phenomenon. When constructing these statements, I purposefully chose these terms in connection to the propensity of their uses in policy and funding documents and the case studies and language found in the *Museums Journal*, between 2012-16.

When revising the survey, I was able to change the construction of my questions to garner a more comprehensive answer. Another effective inclusion in the final version was a comment box after the Likert scale questions to enable respondents to add nuances they felt were missing from their numerical choices. This was often the case and proved a valuable combination.

3.4. Challenges experienced using a mixed method approach.

3.4.1. Observer Effect

Observer Effect (Denscombe, 2010) directly alters the subject behaviours and environments being observed. This phenomenon occurs because the subject is conscious that their words, actions, and physicality is being watched, and analysed, heightening or hindering 'authentic' responses through self-consciousness, self-censoring and self-awareness. It also potentially objectifies the subject, as the observer makes a judgement fixing their perceptions as generalisations, whereas a subject's behaviour could be starkly different in alternative, un-observed time, and space. Increased awareness of the ethnographic researcher's presence could alter the power dynamics of the partners and therefore the results of the research. The institutional partner may fear criticisms that may jeopardise

their funder's faith in the project, and participants may be curious as to why the 'presence' is happening (Denscombe, 2010).

There are two main sorts of observation, defined by Lacey (1976) - participant observation and non-participant. Participant observation involves the researcher becoming part of the group they observe: "[this is an] emotional experience in which the fieldworker learns[s] to live in and understand the new world" (Wicker 2007:202). Denscombe (2003) warns there is an increased risk of the 'observer effect' when participant observation is implemented as:

People are likely to alter their behaviour when they become aware that they are being observed. Unlike atoms, people can become aware of being studied-conscious of it-and then react in a way that is not usual. (Denscombe, 2010:67)

To overcome this 'effect' he suggests that the researcher "spend time on site, so that the researcher becomes 'part of the furniture' and for the researcher to have minimal interaction with those being observed." (Denscombe, 2010:69) However, as the artist - researcher, 'minimal interaction' was not possible but 'being part of the furniture' was. Likewise, I implemented a process of placing myself within the experience of 'sharing'. I did the activities I asked of the community partners to reduce the binaries of *us and them*, build trust and hopefully minimize observer effect.

3.4.2 Culture of Celebration

The *culture of celebration* is a concept developed from enquiry one, case study one. In brief, my observations of working with refugee and asylum seeker groups (aged fifteen years plus) indicated that this demographic go through stages of self-censoring when participating in

arts and heritage activities due to an institutional 'celebration' which avoids difficult conversations and personal history. The significant relief of relevant 'safety' in a new country means that these individuals are fearful of criticising any 'host' institution in case of rejection and or negative reporting to (for example) the Home Office. This creates a denigrating *culture of celebration* where participants may be outwardly *overly positive* and not wish to offend. Saskia Witteborn (2012) shows that the testimonies of forced migrants reveal that purportedly protective spaces, such as refugee and asylum seeker shelters and the communities in which refugees settle) are often actually 'spaces of risk', where forced migrants are exposed to lengthy bureaucratic proceedings, lack of privacy, physical immobility, criminalization, and distrust in their new communities (Chase *in* Denzin and Lincoln (2018:555). In case study two: *Bricks and Mortar* (Chapter 5) I illustrate how this can and did manifest in one interview with two refugee participants. The challenge here is that self-censoring in the interviews with community participants may be compounded.

3.4.3. Group dynamics

I conducted interviews with twenty-four participants out of a possible thirty-one actors involved in the case studies. These interviews were semi-structured, asking the same questions as the questionnaire (n15) but allowing greater depth of qualitative answer. I asked the participants whether they felt enabled, and/or empowered in what they were able to show, say and perform in their co-curated cultural production (full interview schedule in Appendix H). Further to this, they were asked if they felt equal in the participatory processes, were they listened to, did they feel represented and did they feel they had the choice in deciding what they wanted to do and where to be? Due to the

relationships built during the case studies, three of the interviews were more akin to an unintended focus group as participants brought along a fellow participant to be interviewed at the same time instead of their allocated slot. I could not ask them to wait for each other and be interviewed separately due to their other commitments and had to complete the interviews as group interviews.

Focus groups differ from interviews due to several potential phenomena of group dynamics. They are a “dialogic event[s] within which power relations between researchers and research participants are diminished and people collectively interrogate the conditions” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018:694). Our familiarity with each other a potential problem because the participants had prior knowledge and a relationship with me as the facilitator of this project, as opposed to an independent researcher whose objectivity could have been a strength. Being an anonymous interviewer without connection to the interviewee is beneficial as personal feelings are unknown. Likewise, any conflicts between them will not alter the findings. The demographic of the participant actors and the relationship they had with me as a researcher and practitioner created the environment for them to feel like they could be honest, but they also did not want to offend. Each participant had multiple reasons to be suspicious of an anonymous interviewer, to such a degree that being ‘interviewed’ by a person they did not know may have been extremely stressful and ‘triggering’ to them. For example, an asylum seeker may be fearful to honestly discuss anything they feel due to the intense and lengthy interviewing involved in claiming refugee status (Sirriyeh, 2018). This relates to my finding regarding the ‘culture of celebration’ (discussed in 3.4.2) and I will therefore discuss this as a complication throughout the thesis.

3.4.5. Language Barriers and non-verbal communication

Language barriers were likewise found to be a potential challenge when working with community participants in enquiry two. However, by using a mixed-method approach of a Likert scale, followed up by semi-structured interviews I could contextualise verbal responses, such as hesitations, retractions, and elaborations on individual answers rather than rely solely on written and ranked numerical responses.

As an example of how this combined mixed-method approach alleviated the reliance on just interviews, I will draw on an extract (KT-MN/EQ2/INT/2014). Throughout the conversation, responses become clearer. Participants were able to discuss their frustrations about the participatory process and their own cultural projections become apparent, which would not have been evident with a purely quantitative enquiry. However, I cannot dismiss the possibility that the responses were inauthentic due to repeat questioning increasing the potential for self-censoring or Adeline Complex (Cooke, 2002). In their interview ((KT-MN/EQ2/INT/2014) when asked "was it easier or harder performing in the flats than on a stage?" Mandita's response to the quantitative questionnaire was the Likert Scale of "1" categorizing her response as "harder". Whilst the Likert Scale numerical code illustrates an immediate emotional reaction, the interview explains the reasons for this choice. It was not so much that Mandita felt the act of performing harder in the site-specific space, but that she was disappointed by the experience because more people would have seen her performance if it were on stage. The context of the respondents is revealed; she has a lot of experience performing in community arts programmes, and the site-specific intimacy of no more than thirty audience members at a time disappointed her. Likewise, she was frustrated at the lack of audience capacity and comfort. Conversely, she was being

interviewed alongside Kiri who does not have the same experience of community participation and performance. Kiri is initially supportive of performing in the flats. As she pauses to contemplate, she reiterates the feeling of 'being in this house'. The reiteration doubles up the impact of the phrase. However, Mandita cuts in the conversation before Kiri can continue, further illustrating her discomfort in performing in the flats due to the "cold" as one of the reasons. Mandita further justifies her opinion with the introduction of two other participants who "complain[ed] sometimes". After a failed attempt to explain that performing on stage is "not the same" Kiri does not continue with her perspective, in favour of allowing Mandita to express her objections.

Therefore, quantitative methods may not elucidate the nuances found in language and non-verbal communication that more qualitative data can expose. They have their place, however, exposing the strength of immediate responses to a concept, idea, or question. For example, the ideology and effect of language can promote the opposite meaning than a more considered answer delivers which could also be compromised by the respondent self-censoring, correcting views, or altering their view.

3.5. Methods of analysis

3.5.1. Critical Discourse Analysis and the Hermeneutic Spiral

To analyse the materials gathered from the interviews, the survey, field notes and policy documents, critical discourse analysis was applied using the hermeneutic spiral as a methodological process (Reichert, 2000; Foster, 1995; Sarantakos, 2005). This method of deduction works within the theoretical framework of this thesis as 'a special technique of text interpretation' (Sarantakos, 2005). Hermeneutics is the 'art of translating these texts

[...] and central to this approach is *Verstehen*, which is how understanding is achieved rather than what understanding entails (Sarantakos, 2005: 312; Farber, 201; Gadamer, 1975; Honer, 1999; Sóffner, 2000:165). The hermeneutic spiral is a method of identifying dominance and power that Van Dijk determines as important, through the comparison of latent patterns, terms and the way meanings are produced:

The central element of this analysis is a constant comparison of the meanings of individual texts with those of the relevant life-worlds. This is seen as a spiral, the hermeneutic spiral, which rests on the belief that the 'understanding of texts evolves upwards through a spiral of understanding: Analysing the meaning of individual texts, relating this to the totality of the life-worlds in which they originated, and re-interpreting the separate texts anew.' (Foster, 1995:150)

Van Dijk (1993:249) premises that 'the way we approach these questions is by focussing on the role of discourse in the reproduction and challenge of dominance. Dominance is defined here as an exercise of power by elites, institutions or groups, that results in social inequality including political, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality.' Therefore, when analysing a variety of texts to identify a relational 'whole' the hermeneutic spiral can be useful in determining the discourses that prevail across textual contexts and time. Sarantakos (2005) explains that the technique is employed to link the unknown whole with the known parts and arrive at a full understanding. The technique involves an immersive reading of the texts in context to create critical understanding. The manner of this is determined through grouping themes emerging and contrasting these between samples. I then ascertained links and contradictions between the data to search for the central themes.

Apart from the auto-ethnographic participant observations all data collected in this research is either written through survey responses, written, and published, or transcribed from interviews.²⁵ I critically analysed these texts by exploring the context of the participant experience, what was not being said in the choice of language used and in how this language was communicated through, for example, pauses and, or hesitations. The process then looked at whether these 'pauses' and 'hesitations' were found repeatedly within answers to the same questions across the sample. If so, these instances became a theme that was coded alongside the choice of words and phrases.

I coded reoccurring themes across the texts to map similar and contrary responses. My analysis is not a linguistically focussed discourse analysis, but instead asks what the language is displaying in terms of power, or indeed in response to or resistance to power (Foucault, 1972) indicating how the practice is being formed.

The operationalization of the spiral (Sarantakos,2005:314) is in Appendix B and Sarantakos, (2005) in his description of the stages of deduction using the hermeneutic spiral applies terms such as 'inner' to denote the common context between sample texts. The comparison of the themes, which when gathered, form clusters of similar interpretations that spiral up as a deduced thesis finding. Through the comparative and contrasting stages of 'stage 3' and 'stage 4' the rigour of the study is tested, as the findings are interpreted against contrasting analyses of 'other texts'. The other texts in this process were policy documents informing the interviewees' practice.

²⁵ These texts analysed with CDA were field notes, evaluation reports, workshop reports, proposals, questionnaires, transcriptions of interviews and an online survey.

Taking relevant sections of the interview transcripts, I coded these into comparative themes: highlighting words and phrases, silences, pauses and hesitations. I also noted down when participants altered their comments, changing tack mid-sentence. These items were then critically analysed within the context of the interview, the surrounding units (each interview and policy document) and how they performed against the 'other texts. The subject positioning and author of the text's intentions are noted and deemed within this tradition as significant to the analysis and therefore the pauses and hesitations were considered as indicators of how the author performed in relation to the questions. Coding of 'self-correction', self-censorship' and/ or reframing of intention became themes that were useful to compare and contrast across samples to deduce how the power of discourse was performing when discussing participation in museums. Likewise, when sections were whispered, or the author elicited a change of tone Themes identified through these analyses were coded.

The mixed-method approach supports the use of the hermeneutic spiral when discussing the power of discourse as:

its focus is not on what to understand but how. It is about understanding how we understand the world, about the process, the rules, the pattern, the implicit conditions, and how explanation and understanding are transmitted to people from generation to generation' (Sarantakos, 2005)

When thinking about the context of the texts analysed, the study is exploring the discourse formations that have become [dis]positional in generational museum workers and generational participatory audiences performing within and against the parameters of experience given by the museum and cultural services.

3.6. Ethical considerations

Before moving on to conclude this methodology chapter I include here a note on how I will reference the human subjects and data to aid the reader going forward. All participants, organisations involved, and project names have been changed to protect anonymity and reputational concerns. This is the reasons that photographs included will be cropped to hide faces or will not feature.

When referring to a unit of data the reference point will appear as:

Respondent Number or code / Which Enquiry it belongs/ Type of sample/ Date.

For example, EQ4 (EQ standing for 'enquiry' and the following number denoting which enquiry) AC/EQ4/INT/2020 denotes Arts Collective/ Enquiry 4/Interview/2020, whereas R07/EQ4/INT/2020 denotes Respondent 7/ Enquiry 4/Interview/2020.

With these explanations in place, the conclusions will recapitulate on the methodology chapter before heading into the findings.

3.7. Conclusions to Methodology

This methodology proposes that a post-positivist epistemology is the most appropriate position in which to tackle the research problems studied in this thesis. It outlines how I explore three perspectives on museum participation in practice: the practitioner, the institution of the museum and the participants. These engagements in participatory processes and the performance of language involved are dealt with by a research design that is reflexively allowing for re-design to draw out the complexities of the phenomena.

3.7.1 Reflections on Method

On reflection there were a few methodological challenges. On testing out non-selective curation I would ideally have liked to have conducted multiple case studies at each period of the enquiry. I feel that the research findings are restricted here due to a lack of capacity to do that within the constraints of the PhD.

The survey was the most problematic stage of the data collection with problems arising from some of the respondents being unable to complete the online survey as they wished. This was due to an unforeseen browser issue that the service provider Survey Monkey was addressing. However, it is possible that this mishap was a happy 'challenge' as respondents turned to the 'comments' option to expand on their thinking instead of the 'drop down' menu that was causing problems. This proved extremely rich in detail. A further challenge is the sample size, which ideally would have incorporated a greater reach to survey respondents. In the time allocated for a PhD, this was not possible.

Critical arts-based enquiry was useful in determining how effective using 'non-selective curation' could be. However, I soon discovered that calling something 'non-selective' does not mean that in practice no selection happens. It does instead position the curator in a place of being *reminded* of their power in the selection process.

Towards the end of the research there has been a global pandemic – Covid-19. This situation prohibited face to face interviews in enquiry four. The interviews were conducted online using the Zoom platform and each lasted approximately 40-60 minutes. Observer effect may have been more pronounced in these interviews as the participants could also see themselves on the recorded screen, perhaps creating a hyper-awareness of how their words (and thinking) would be perceived. This could have resulted in a degree

of self-censorship, which I have considered as and when contradictions or revisions in answers manifest in the transcriptions. Consent was established as video recorded consent (Carpentier, 2017) and, as with the previous interviews, were fully transcribed²⁶ for analysis using the hermeneutic spiral.

Further to this was the challenge of my positionality as artist- researcher. I am known professionally as a curator with the partnering arts company for case study three (out with the context of the research), and whilst creating a sense of ease with the research participants who were aware of this, it potentially created a bias that positioned the museum as the outsider or 'other' to the case study. To attempt to alleviate this bias I was explicit that my position was as PhD researcher affiliated with Cardiff University and not the arts company. To address this potential for bias, I dedicate two interviews to the co-curators. One to the artistic director of the arts collective and one to a member of the museum events team speaking on behalf of the museum. My motivation in these final interviews, which were conducted after interviewing the freelance artists, was to give each actor space to reflect on the challenges they experienced in the participatory process and establish the 'backstage' / 'frontstage' narrative.

The mixed-method approach blends quantitative and qualitative data analysis enabling the research to be conducted in awareness of these altering conditions, whilst Participatory Action Research and Critical Arts-Based enquiry allowed for the unveiling of new questions to beget further findings along a trajectory of museum learning. The following chapters will correspond to each of the enquires from one to four.

4. ENQUIRY ONE: THE INTERCULTURAL PROJECT, 2013

4.1. Introduction

The first enquiry will specify experiences gained as total participant artist-researcher in 2013, whilst working with museums on *The Intercultural Project* (2011/13), a time located in practice, as when *Whose cake is it Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011) was first published:

[...] *The Intercultural Project* was an innovative project designed to support and celebrate the London 2012 Olympic Games and prepare for the 2014 Commonwealth Games by creating intercultural dialogue and developing a legacy of increased understanding of each other, our city and our collections.”

(Social Marketing Gateway (2003: 3)

The project had four strands; an eighteen-month community-led [co-curated] exhibition and, from August 2011, a learning programme focused on developing strategies for intercultural dialogue through a pedagogic process of *exploration, self-reflection, discovery, and practice*, 2012 to 2013; a school’s programme and a Symposium in 2012 (SMG, 2013:03). Spinning off from these strands were several volunteer opportunities (2013). These were developed in response to the main output, a co-curated exhibition and learning programme where opportunities to extend the value of the project were identified. These opportunities developed into Language Tour Volunteers and the Volunteer Events Team. I will first discuss findings from the development of Learning Programme and then follow this with an analysis of co-curation with the Volunteer Events Team.

4.1.1. The Learning Programme: training or learning.

To implement Lynch's (2011) recommendations to change oppressive language, we began thinking about what to call the 'learning programme', which began named as a 'training programme'. The premise was to train volunteers and service providers involved in the *Commonwealth Games, Olympic and Paralympic Games* to gain greater cultural and intercultural awareness. However, when researching how to create such a programme, we quickly realised that awareness and strategies for intercultural dialogue were in many ways connected to empathy and a sense of self-reflection and discovery. This was not something we could 'train' someone in but perhaps could facilitate this through pedagogic learning approaches (Freire, 1974). We felt that we could not assume to know what the participants did or did not feel in terms of empathy and therefore could not even begin to itemise a programme. For this reason, we began to think of approaches that were not rooted in 'banking methods' (Freire, 1974) but were instead experiential learning techniques such as dialogic learning, participant centred and above all anti-oppressive education. The process of discovery would come from the participant and the name of the programme would have to change from 'training' to 'learning'.

As untrained educators, we were not sure where to start and felt we were attempting to jump the pedagogic train without paying. After all, we were not educated ourselves in pedagogy, participation, or facilitation per se but had somehow found ourselves developing a pedagogic programme. The content we aimed to exchange was also on extremely sensitive topics, such as intercultural dialogue, unconscious bias, and prejudice. How could we do this appropriately, in a city with a dire reputation for sectarian conflict? Pure luck gave us the answer. We were not educators, but we were highly experienced as facilitators

in Applied Theatre (Prentki and Preston (2009), Issue-Based Theatre, Community Arts and Volunteer Engagement (Jackson et al, 2006). We would begin there because the theatre was something myself and my colleague innately understood. We understood the *ensemble*, ideas around *devising* and non-hierarchical co-creation such as *against directocracy*.²⁷ Similarly, methods involving emotional intelligence, such as emotional recall in performance, are often based around ideas of exploration, self-reflection, discovery and practice, the cornerstones of the programme. We were familiar with the techniques of Feminist and Protest theatre of the 1970' and '80s which utilised these methods; so, we began with Augusto Boal, developer of Forum Theatre and *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Boal was also neatly a contemporary of Paulo Freire and as more luck would have it, shared their thinking about education and theatre as complementary, (Boal, 2000, Freire, 2006).

Simon (2010) explains that:

For institutions with educational missions, participatory techniques can help visitors develop specific skills related to creativity, collaboration, and innovation. These skills are often referred to as "21st-century skills," "innovation skills," or "new media literacies".

Educators and policymakers define them as the skills necessary for people to be successful, productive citizens in a globally interconnected, multicultural world [...]

²⁷ Against Directocracy comes from Feminist and Protest Theatre of the 1970s. This method dissolves top-down directing ideology in favour of the ensemble. An ensemble is a group of actors who perform with no lead protagonist. Everyone has their part to play and all the cast have equal importance. This type of theatre is devised, which is a method of improvising together a script which will then be developed by the ensemble, not a director or scriptwriter with top-down delivery. Please Literature Review for expansion of this idea.

Participatory projects are uniquely suited to help visitors cultivate these skills when they encourage visitors to:

- Create their own stories, objects, or media products.
- Adapt and reuse institutional content to create new products and meaning.
- Engage in community projects with other visitors from different backgrounds.
- Take on responsibilities as volunteers, whether during a single visit or for a longer duration.

Some institutions have adopted participatory learning skills as part of their commitment to overall visitor learning.” (Simon, 2010:193)

This commitment to better represents the personal heritages of new and exciting audiences arriving in the museum, as articulated by Simon (2010), was felt within the team as a moral imperative. We wished to help community participants to become active citizens and self-direct. The Learning Programme objectives were to explore all of our perspectives on cultural awareness; our place in the world, our unconscious bias, and prejudices and to discover barriers to intercultural dialogue. To do this, participants, as per Simon’s recommendations, were encouraged to 'create their own stories, objects, or media product[s]', some, such as the Volunteer Events Team, took on 'responsibilities as volunteers, whether during a single visit or for a longer duration'; to continue to 'generate creative ideas both alone and with others and collaborate and interact with people from diverse backgrounds'. These processes all had an overextending objective to 'act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind.' (Simon, 2010)

The final section of the learning programme was designed to enable self-directed discovery and practice strategies that each participant could use to navigate barriers to intercultural dialogue, prejudice and unconscious bias through their active citizenship and self-led community events. The overall objective was to enable participants with tools to become self-reflective active citizens following a distinct pattern of *exploration, reflection, discovery, and practice*. The *practice* element fed into the Volunteer Events Team initiative, where a platform for creating an intercultural event idea could be implemented.

Social Marketing Gateway (2013) evaluated the project, and their findings were that “the Learning Programme [...] had real value in encouraging appreciation of the diversity and similarities between cultures” (SMG, 2013: 49) and that it “worked extremely well for most participants and enabled them to explore their own thoughts.” (SMG, 2013:49)

However, within this ‘working extremely well’ (SMG, 2013:49) there were insecurities felt by all actors involved which highlighted a power imbalance, performing in some way or manner which was separating the museum from the participant and I wanted to find out how and why.

4.2. *Us and Them* paternalisms as ‘othering’

There was an extensive piloting phase where a variety of activities were tried and tested, evaluated, and redesigned, however, this did not iron out some of the difficulties we experienced as facilitators working with a multitude of demographics. The project report (2013) states that 'there were 3000 participations in the learning programme over eighteen months 'from a wide range of backgrounds' including asylum seekers, unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees. Many of these participants were learning English as a second

language (a requirement to gain full refugee status). Participants were also encouraged to volunteer to gain references and prove their citizenship in their newly found homes.

This diverse demographic was grouped by the museum as 'service users', however they weren't the only demographic to attend the programme. A whole separate cohort participated independently from the predominantly mixed ethnic groups. These participants were civil servants, hospitality, housing officers, and education personnel who were grouped as 'service providers'. To an extent these categorisations were correct. The 'service users' did indeed use services offered by the museum, the local authority housing and educational bodies. However, the group categorised as 'service providers', notably grouped according to their professionalism did indeed provide services in their employment, but were also service users of the museum, the local authority housing and educational bodies, as all people who pay their council tax are. But here an *Us and Them* is determined through professional standing, with no consideration to whether these 'standings' were a true representation of any participant.

The programme was delivered in the same manner, with each grouping following the same process of *exploration, reflection, discovery, and practice*. It is not clear what the reasoning for this separation was, however in the context of this research it is indicative of the re-establishing of binaries experienced within the sector. These binaries, which reinforce notions of institution vs public or professional vs non-professional is racially implicated when the non-professional, the non-institution, the non-'us' is posited as the community participant who is predominantly deemed as a vulnerable ethnically diverse, a theme that will continue over the next chapters. At no time were these two factions mixed, even though one primary objective was "create[ing] an increased understanding of different

people with different cultural backgrounds.” (SMG, 2013:49). Interestingly the *Social Marketing Gateway* report describes recommendations in how the learning programme could be improved would be to bring different people together so that participants could experience interacting and sharing with different cultures. (SMG, 2013:49)

I remember clearly that there was also a pronounced duty of care imparted on the ‘diversity’ of the service users who were implicitly deemed more ‘vulnerable’ than the other group, who were predominantly white workers. I started to wonder whether the museum’s perspectives around who is ‘vulnerable’ or not was in response to English Language skills. Which worryingly recalled Freire’s (1973) notion of a lack of language as rendering one ‘unhuman’ (2.3.4) I do not proclaim that this thought process was in any way inspired by empirical findings but more so atmospheric hints of something unconscious, within the sector.²⁸

Further compounding this ‘hint’ was how the Volunteer Events Team were recruited. The participants were 100% previous visitors to museum events and/ or attendees of the learning programme from the ‘service users’ group only. The aim was to proactively address that invitations to participate would be completely open to anyone and that no targeting of audiences would marginalise potential participants. However, the service provider’s grouping was not included in this open invitation and, was closed to participants who the museum deemed as more ‘vulnerable’, as service users. This binary separation and the assumptions the museum made in reinforcing these distinct ‘camps’, made me think about what would happen *if* the presumed service users and service providers did mix whilst exploring their own thinking, regarding intercultural dialogue and cultural awareness. My

²⁸ This ‘atmospheric hint’ is further refined as an item in Enquiry two.

conclusion, at the time (and still now unfortunately), is that the service providers would self-censor their responses and the power exchanges would be unmanageable to navigate, rendering the space of the learning programme pointless at best and unsafe at worst. However, where else could this meeting occur for this inherent dynamic to change?

The objective of the learning programme was for participants to learn together, to be self-reflective and culturally aware of their own unconscious bias to be interculturally competent. However, some of these participants were also representatives of professional institutions (or public services) which may not appreciate their workers admitting to prejudice and a series of fallibilities. I can understand how this happened and why, but it does pose the question what is the service provider hiding or protecting from the participant when thinking about power? This is something I will return to again in Enquiries two, three and four.

The next section will discuss how as the project progressed my critical thinking about how the intercultural space of participation performs. This thinking was further compounded by the experience of the learning programme where I learned that everyone is diverse, regardless of how much interculturality they explicitly express (Bhabha, 1990; Hall and Gay et al, 1996; Hall, 2000).

4.2.1. To assume: makes an ASS of 'you and me'

I will next refer to several observations when a seemingly simple activity was stressful for the participants and therefore adverse power was in performance and was presenting the space as *Us and Them* unequally. During these activities, delivered to 3000 participations I

started to identify certain trends that inform the rest of the research, its design, and the consequent generation of data:

- There is a paternalistic *Duty of Care* within participatory work that restricts the sharing of experiences and self-identifications which may disrupt the harmony of the group.
- There is a censoring and self-censoring culture of celebration in refugee work and personal narratives aiding and abetting a Freirean 'culture of silence' (1974).
- There are entrenched assumptions about what best practice is and what it is not?

4.2.2. Auto-ethnographic observations: Paternalistic 'caring' for narratives of difference

In the following observations, I will set out the experiences that inform the PAR design and critical arts-based enquiry from Enquiry two onwards. These observations show how seemingly simple intercultural activities can be rife with the risk of symbolic violence and emotional labour.

4.2.2.1. Observation one: A denigrating Culture of Celebration

In the learning programme we wanted to experientially identify what language such as *Sharing, Isolation, and Ignorance* had on participants. This was followed later in the programme with an exploration of the terms *Community* and *Belonging*. We used Augusto Boal's method of *Image Theatre* (Boal 1974), which asks participants to physically create a shape (like a statue, or museum object) of a prescribed word. We asked, "if you were trying to explain with your body what this word means, how would you do it?"

For example, for *sharing* most participants stood with their arms stretched out, with hands cupped in an offering. We noticed as time went on and we were delivering the programme to more and more groups of multi-ethnic asylum seekers and refugees that they found it extremely easy to illustrate the concepts of *sharing*, *community*, and *belonging*, but found it extremely uncomfortable and difficult to illustrate *isolation* and *ignorance*. The last terms are conceptually more difficult to physicalise, however, we found that the same response was not apparent in other international groups such as students or volunteers. In the discussions during and after the activity, there were subtle indications that the participants from asylum-seeking and refugee groups felt they should not or did not have a right to focus on their negative experiences as they were grateful for being received. Their very real feelings of isolation and abuse were being denied. They felt they could not freely share that they were victims of racism for fear of seeming ungrateful or worse, being sent back to the conflict zones they had not long fled.

Deemed as governmental spaces (Foucault,1977), the buildings of the museum likewise incited a carefulness in what the participants would say in case they 'would likewise be sent back'. It is in this example that a culture of celebration extends from a practitioner duty of care. The refugee or asylum-seeking participant would rather resort to false celebrations of arrival, living, and integrating into a new culture than express their concerns, their worries and their longing for home and acceptance.

4.2.2.2. Observation two: Trigger warnings, censorship as a 'duty of care'

As the workshops developed, we found ourselves working within partner organizations, such as FE Colleges who ran ESOL (English as a second language) classes. These colleges felt the Learning Programme workshops could be used as an educational tool for exploring

language and helping newly arrived students learn about each other. They were particularly keen on the *practice* element where the programme guides the participants to create their own intercultural event. We, therefore, re-packaged the programme so colleges could deliver activities for themselves. One of these partnerships was a college who brought a group of young unaccompanied asylum seekers between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one to the museum to attend the Learning Program, after which they continued to explore the activities with their teacher. Having worked together to develop an exhibition of their stories, poetry and visual art, *The Intercultural Project* team were invited to attend an exhibition opening.

As a community artist my skill base is that I have worked with many refugees and asylum seekers in many different capacities. I know their stories, when allowed to be spoken are harsh, violent and at times have such candour that the measure and weight of expressed trauma is palpable. In my experience, refugees and asylum seekers have an overwhelming need to voice their experiences (Lynch, 2016, Levi, 1979) but the exhibition had none of what I was used to seeing. There was no narrative of before the students had arrived in the UK.

Nothing at all.

I asked the teacher 'why'? She quietly explained it was best they did not share stories of before, as they were traumatic. She felt it was more appropriate for them to talk about the fun things they did now. I understood her instinct, but it made me think what other outlets for trauma these young people had? Perhaps the museum, or the college (or the University) were places to explore and traverse these personal narratives? Are they space for non-judgemental sharing, or not? This left me with a feeling that in the role of educator our

entrenched feelings of duty of care, duties to serve (Lynch, 2011) and a deep-rooted sense of 'not causing harm' (Mill, 1859) were, in fact, creating confusion, halting the potential for participants to work through aspects of trauma and conversely causing harm by censoring them. Further-more to only consider the celebratory is creating a no go for articulating experiences that could lead to vital intercultural changes to oppression. This devaluing of negative experiences would surely leave these young unaccompanied men and women seeking asylum, as unvoiced. Silencing the already hidden, marginalised and spurned individual who has left their home because their opinions, political beliefs, faith, and identities were disallowed...again invalidating them, and violently (Bourdieu, 2009). This 'act of protection' gave these young people nowhere to go with their pain and anger, fear, and grief but everywhere to go with a false celebration of happiness. This was manifesting as symbolic violence that could end in a 'culture of silence' (Freire, 1974).

The protection of those who are presumed as, or are indeed, vulnerable to triggers is creating a concerning situation where the white privileged educator is deciding what is appropriate to share over the self-direction of the 'other'. This effectively silences participant life experiences in favour of something more palatable. This may appear to be a unique situation; it is not. This same situation has happened too many times, observed by me and colleagues in participatory projects in one moment asking the participant to share their stories but then, in the next, curatorially deciding that only the 'nice' things will be displayed (Lynch, 2011, 2014; Kidd et al, 2014; Janes and Sandell et al, 2019).

I am not suggesting here that we, as curatorial participatory practitioners, or facilitators should not protect those who may be vulnerable, for, perhaps that is instinctual. However, as discussed in the literature review, symbolic violence over another can be performed as

motivations of protection but does not lessen its violence. The facilitating professional may wish to protect the participant from over-sharing something they may regret not having kept personal in later years. This is again a valid proposition and could well be a case of professional expertise in judging the situation. However, making such a judgement over another adult presumes that adult is not capable of making the judgement for themselves. This is again violent in its power by not allowing the participant to discover their own boundaries in how much to share or not share of *their own* story. Coming back to the Literature Review, curatorial selection based on a culture of celebration through cultural assumptions can misrepresent the subject. This process can render the 'subject as object', which in its objectification is a further symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1993,2009; Butler, 1993).

In the next section, the case of the Volunteer Events Team will now be analysed as a learned extension of the Learning Programme. I wanted to open the co-curatorial methods used in the exhibition to event curation. I hoped to extend the teams learning in how the museum could *do* participation, by moving forward Lynch's recommendations to remove the 'cookie-cutter' participatory approach (Lynch,2011). We had money and time behind us; two distinct elements Lynch states as prohibitive to true and meaningful participation.

4.3. The Volunteer Events Team: We had time, we had money, 'we' experienced power

The Volunteer Events Team (VET) was extremely successful (SMG, 2013) but this success could easily have come undone. The challenges of which can be identified in my field notes, where I find reoccurring themes regarding the VET process: *Difficult power struggles, learning achieved, new skills developed, a platform for existing skills, empowering, and disempowering, not a comfortable space, frustrations on promises not kept, prescriptive vs*

organic, cultural sensitivity, trauma sensitivity. These responses to engagements with the volunteers reveal that power was circulating in an unsettling manner and was not consistent.

The Intercultural Project saw an events programme as a further opportunity to evaluate lasting messages from the learning programme. Events were not something initially proposed in the bid to Legacy Trust Scotland, however, they became extremely important to the project outcomes and evaluation, in terms of participation, partnerships and longitudinal evaluation. Reflecting on the Volunteer Events Team, I state:

We saw the potential to supplement evaluation immediately after the Learning Programme by tracking behavioural changes relating to cultural awareness and acceptance. (VET REPORT/ EQ1 /2013)

The language I used in this report is indicative of the language the museums used at the time. I know this because the document was written to persuade my colleagues it was a good idea and I, therefore, used the language that would resonate. I explicitly cite that museums are 'perfectly positioned to do this as we are a neutral space (VET REPORT/EQ1/ 2013:4)' which illustrates just how embedded this language of what the museum space is according to the rhetoric at the time, was as part of my own discourse. I continue on this track by using the same language as the SMG Evaluation describing the project as 'a *comfortable, safe and non-judgemental environment.* (SMG, 2013).

As a co-curated event, the participating actors used a democratic method of decision-making, using Ketso Kits²⁹ paired with theatre devising techniques to determine themes

²⁹ Ketso is a decision -making process developed in North Africa. www.ketso.com

they wanted to explore in the event. 'Spirit' was the national theme for Refugee Week 2012, and the participants wanted to think about how they could share an atmosphere that connected 'Global Spirit', 'Community Spirit' and 'Individual Spirit' by introducing interactive activity.

Working together over seven months, between February-September 2012 there was a significant risk of the group disbanding and was in many ways uncharted territory. Most participatory projects have a life span of around ten to twelve weeks, and we wondered how a group could be sustained over a longer period. We also wanted to see if we could create a longitudinal impact assessment in how the project outcomes had or had not manifested in the participants. This was achieved by inviting the volunteers back together in early 2013, to collect their certificates³⁰ and compile a booklet (see Appendix D) on their experiences, retrospectively.

Co-curated with me, facilitating on behalf of the museum the participants wrote the content, selected images and themes they wanted to focus on which were critical and appreciative of their participation, in equal measure. My assistance was editorial, to ensure that the content complied to museum standards but I was keen to ensure that the Volunteers were in full consensus about what they wanted to say. I made it clear that it was vitally important that they felt able to be completely honest about the process, as we would not learn together otherwise. In hindsight, this process was the beginnings of non-selective curation with an addition of radical openness (hooks, 1989).

³⁰ Many of the participants needed a certificate or other proof that they were involved with the museum to assist in their asylum claim.

The volunteers wrote that it 'was the appropriate management' (EQ1/BOOKLET/2013) of the group which enabled them to take stock of what can and cannot be achieved. And to 'reflect on their own experiences as well as on the events and outputs of the project.' (VET REPORT/EQ1/2013) This suggests that participation benefits from facilitation and that guidance from the museum is welcome. I will discuss the term 'appropriate management' below in *Observation One*, as this facilitation was deemed as key to the project it saved. However, what the volunteers do not say in their booklet is that this somewhat managed discussion came during a period that was extremely challenging for both the museum and the volunteers. The power dynamics between the museum and volunteer participants had shifted, with the volunteers, to a great extent, feeling overwhelmed by the autonomy they had been given. In resistance to this, they were blaming the museum for overloading them.³¹ It was evident through the discussions that in our (the museum's) hope to give over greater decision-making and ownership over the project outcomes, we had not been consistently clear in managing expectations at all.

This 'ownership shift' (Freire, 1974) is a phase in long term participatory projects I have now experienced as endemic. However, in 2012 neither I nor my colleagues were aware of this phenomenon. Once the volunteers were reminded that they were not obliged to do anything they did not want to, and that the responsibility for the coordination of the project was the museum's, they relaxed. The following section will present how the experience was felt by myself as the main representative of the museum through auto-ethnographic

³¹ This is interesting, as around the same time frame the same dynamic appeared in the next case study which I will later discuss as connected to Paulo Freire's understanding of the processes of Pedagogy of the Oppressed and the assimilation of power.

observations that describe some of the challenges and emotional labour exerted in the 'appropriate management' of the project.

4.3.1. Auto-ethnographic observations. Different responsibilities

Here I will concentrate on several themes which are found to impact on what 'appropriate management' and duty of care assumes to be. These themes reoccur in case study enquiries two and four: the culture of celebration, censorship and what happens if there are differences in agreed levels of participation.

4.3.1.1 Observation one. Mutiny on the participatory boat

A few weeks into the project 'we had noticed that the group felt confused about the two parts of the project' (VET REPORT/EQ1/2013). I noticed familiar side-ways glances that accompany this stage of the participatory process when power has circulated to the point that the participants (in this case volunteers) take the power and in resistance to it, force it back towards the museum. In almost every participatory project I have facilitated around the six-week mark this occurs. It is when the participants begin to feel comfortable and therefore feel they have some ownership over the project (a key aim of community arts and museum participatory practice). This ownership shift (Freire, 1974) can feel quite brutal to the facilitator who has, under instruction by the museum (or believes to have been due to the rhetoric of participation), given all power to the participant (even though power does not work in this way, see Foucault, 1980). This leaves the museum professional vulnerable to accusations of a 'lack of experience or professionalism' as and when they resist making decisions for the participant, hoping to address the cookie-cutter approach, unbeknown to the participant. The emotional labour exerted to navigate this circumstance is great, as the

participant, unsure of how far they can push with this newly experienced power, are trying to figure out "who's boss?" (DN/EQ2/INT/2014) and test the boundaries they feel in resistance to, to do so. I will discuss this phenomenon more in *Bricks and Mortar* as one of my key findings however due to the longevity of this project it was a marked behaviour and interesting to recognise.

The participants were angry that they were 'being taken a loan off'³². They felt a deep sense of responsibility for the outcome of the event and they discussed this among themselves, but not with the museum, discovered through reflective conversation in the curation of the booklet. This act of hidden conversations is a clear indication of invisible power at work and this was shown by the volunteers becoming more silent in the room when the facilitators were present, combined with knowing looks thrown at each other and regular deep sighing, indicative of discontent:

These volunteers felt that there was a lack of clarity around the overall structure to the programme which led to some uncertainties over what was expected of the volunteers and the respective roles and responsibilities of volunteers and museum staff. (SMG, 2013:46)

This was interesting because in the beginning sessions of the project the museum staff had been explicit, using multiple methods of communication, that the execution and curation of the project was the participants, but the responsibility lay entirely with the museum. The museum would co-curate and facilitate their ideas on their behalf as a platform for *them* to create *their* intercultural event. The museum professionals had explained, repeatedly, that they had limited capacity in terms of time, but would endeavour to support the volunteers

³² Glaswegian for feeling 'used'.

in developing the project. To ground the feasibility of this happening, the initial sessions were focussed on what skills the group had together, what ideas they wanted to formulate and how much time *they* felt they wanted to commit:

“When we were asked about what skills we had, we were perhaps shy to say anything and didn’t say much. When you wrote it down, we saw it was so dynamic and exciting...” (VET REPORT/EQ1/2013:33)



Figure 7.Mapping Ideas

In fig 7, the images show how collaborative mapping formed the development stages of the project, where a method of co-selecting³³ was implemented. The participants are smiling, happy at the possibilities and the ideas they have come up with. However, just a few weeks later this excitement felt like pressure. To address this rapid unrest, the facilitators opened up the conversation. Looking at the notes from that session I find that I:

³³ Co-selecting is a method deriving from the Ketso Method. Please see <https://ketso.com/>

Wrote up, presented and circulated bullet points about each part of the project. These reiterated the breakdown of roles, aims and objectives (which were, I reminded them created by the group) for the development of an event for Refugee Week. (VET REPORT/ EQ1/2013)

We proceeded to have a conversation to clear up any misunderstandings and grievances the participants had. When it came down to it, the reasons for this unsettled part of the process appeared to be more about the group not knowing who was in charge. When they were given the power to make the decisions, which felt unusual, they did not feel they had the right to go ahead with their plans. This was unsettling to them, and on reflection perhaps they were sensing the invisible power Lynch discusses in *Whose Cake is It Anyway?* (2011). After all, each decision they had made still had to be approved by the museum.

To move forward, we agreed on a timetable that reiterated the decisions already made in previous weeks and 'suggested' actions for the next phase and they felt much more comfortable.

Post project, the participants discussed this episode with Social Marketing Gateway revealing that:

the main issue raised by volunteers who participated [as present in the focus group], was related to the time commitment. Respondents talked about initially getting involved for two hours at weekends but mentioned that this had quickly increased to four hours and then whole days. [...] It is important to note that volunteers did feel that there was scope to opt-out as they needed to and that the pressure was not imposed upon them by the team, rather it was self-imposed. This feeling of self

–imposed pressure was that the participants felt "they had more time than the other volunteers [and] they should take on more of the burden." (SMG, 2013:45)

This idea of 'taking on more of the burden' is interesting, as due to the transient nature of refugee and asylum seekers most of the focus group were participants who had resided in the UK all their lives. Throughout the Volunteer Event Team project, there was a visible sense of responsibility over the refugee and asylum seekers by the White British participants. This could be seen in their acute desire to educate their fellow participants in aspects of British heritage: such as the food, the cooking, and the history (there was much excitement about pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, for example). These participants were also older than those who were refugees. It is directly possible that this sense of 'taking on more of the burden' also had an element of a White paternalism about it, which compounded a sense of responsibility that was indeed 'self-imposed' (Hall, 1997).

In hindsight, the participants may have a lack of clarity because the offer from the museum was one that attempted to be more open but confused the situation by retaining ultimate decision-making powers. Without clear guidelines, the participants did not know how far they could or could not go.

This observation exposes that the museum participatory space can feel *less than comfortable* and those *difficult power circulations* felt as *struggles* can be almost mutinous (VET REPORT/ EQ1/2013). This is a strong term; I use this for two reasons, one, it is the word I used to explain the situation to my colleagues at the time, and two, because this is how it felt. The power dynamics of a captain, here the facilitator, who is aiming towards creating a non-hierarchical pursuit with a group to feel as equal in the process as possible, is then attacked by the participants who, as the crew, do not want to be left without a

Captain; because they did not sign up to crew the ship themselves (2.2.2.1). This difference in expectations, and a lack of clarity from the museum over the level of participation desired created a power imbalance.

In the end, the Volunteer Events Team felt they were "part of something life-changing through friendships made in the group of like – minded people" (SMG, 2013:45), that it was "an opportunity to meet and talk and to change our minds" (SMG, 2013:45) and that they "didn't expect such a calming, supportive space." (SMG, 2013:45) The focus group SMG consulted, wanted to iterate that they experienced "many benefits of participation...mostly centring on the general atmosphere created within the space and the team and dynamics of the group. The atmosphere was described as fundamentally open and mutually supportive which was considered a strong foundation for working together." (SMG, 2013:45):

A further benefit of participation was in challenging the views of some volunteers about museums [...] they were able to see museums as living places rather than static collections. Those who experienced this change in perspective felt that initiatives such as the project were an excellent way of challenging and changing long-held ideas about the nature of museums (SMG, 2013: 46)

As a personal reflective account, I recall that the emotional labour entailed in this period of the project found me questioning my abilities a great deal. I felt judged, very much alone and in the firing line of aggression from the disenfranchised participant and the insecurity of the museum. Munro (2014) discusses this as common among museum professionals finding themselves in this work, some taking many months leave due to the stress. However, these examples show that risking the "mess of participation" (Phipps, 2012,

Simon, 2010) can also be extremely rewarding when trust between partners is established, re-established and promises are kept.

4.3.1.2. Observation two: Duty of Care or Symbolic Violence?

About three-quarters of the way through the Volunteer Events Team programme, after four months working together, I sat around a table with my colleague and five of the participants. It was *Refugee Week* 2013, and we had run a successful event with *Teatro Di Nascosto*³⁴ the weekend before where Annet Henneman (Fig 7) performed her monologue *Here their Voices*. We discussed with the participants what went well and improvements for next time. We were also considering how to curate an exhibition that would document the time we had spent together.

Henneman's monologue presented a montage of stories from Iranian, Iraqi, and Kurdish mothers. While in many ways it is a startling indictment of the challenges the Middle East faces in terms of conflict and aggressive censorship, it is also beautifully balanced with her deep love for this region and her familiarity with the people. Henneman, a theatre director and one-time journalist, created a method of 'Theatre Reportage' twenty years ago (Niccoli, 2015) which combines ethnography, theatre, and journalism. The stories are presented as artistic interventions in public spaces, that raise consciousness over refugee, asylum seeker and conflict zone living. Through theatre, the everyday tales of cooking, dressing, dancing, and song dramatically move into the violence of living in conflict and fear.

³⁴ <https://www.teatrodinascosto.com/>



Figure 8. Annet Henneman in Performance photo credit, Julia Bower

Mubin, one of the volunteers, had a strong unwavering respect for the military and patriarchal ideology of his home country, Iran. He felt that Henneman, and therefore the museum for hosting her performance had attacked his ideological truth and memory of his country with a violent misrepresentation. He was very upset and frustrated, which could be seen in his multiple attempts to explain how he felt about the performance, coming out in rapid and disjointed accounts, increasing in speed as more and more anger was released. A fellow volunteer Ana, originally from Pakistan, tried to appease him. As an artist and a woman, she understood what Annet was trying to do. She used her own story to describe Henneman's motivations for the performance. She told us something none of us had known before; the reasons she had left Pakistan. As an activist, she had politically fought against the regime and her brother had been decapitated in front of her for his political views. She wanted to explain to Mubin that she still loved her country but had to accept it had problems. She felt compelled to speak out about her trauma because she perceived Mubin as a friend and colleague. They had, after all, just worked on an event together effectively for almost six months.

However, Mubin felt he was not being listened to and was not inclined to listen to her story either. Ana, deeply re-traumatised, was crying while trying to ask Mubin to understand that two people can have very different experiences of the same place. Mubin was furious, ardently disagreeing. He felt the museum had done an injustice to him and Iran. Ana felt her story had been dismissed by his upset; the weight of the example she had just shared with him was pushed aside.

As the facilitator in the room, I simply did not know what to do.

My colleague and I knew that as adults this scene had to play out, that they had a right to air their differing opinions. But we were also aware that Mubin's indictment of patriarchal structures was being performed as anger towards a woman who had fled her own country, an oppressive patriarchal society. I felt I had a responsibility to move the conversation on to 'protect' the people in the room, to protect Ana as I was not only another woman but had a duty of care, and I attempted to get the group back on track.

This moment has ever since been a startling realisation that 'moving the conversation on' had left both Ana and Mubin with nowhere for their hurt and anger to go, in effect censoring them and adding to the culture of silence Freire discusses in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1974). We did move on and the conversation did change.

Lynch, describes this lack of capacity to facilitate conflict as:

The museum's frequent underestimation of the capacity of its visitors to respond and debate – to be challenged. Yet, as Strachan and Mackay note, many museum staff aspire to take a facilitative approach to support such dialogue, but there has been little analysis of the meaning (in practice) of the curator as a facilitator.

Museum staff are rarely trained in facilitation or given the opportunities and support to reflect on the impact of their own assumptions and approaches [...] (Lynch, 2013: 08).

With having time to reflect, I would do things very differently now, more confidently acknowledging the gravity of the conversation, asking everyone if they would like to continue to talk. I would give participants space to continue project work with my colleague or remain, as they wished. Perhaps it was my own fear of the topic and a sense of duty of care over the others who had likewise experienced trauma (such as Ana and Mubin) that motivated me to 'change the topic'? I was being 'looked to' to decide and I did not have the confidence to know how to do that. I had never been told; I'd never had training - I was the trainer and I was out of my depth, inexperienced.

Mubin never came back.

This example is a clear indication that the experiences participants have had, and how they might manifest within participatory processes; cannot be predicted by the museum professionals or community artists such as my colleague. We were aware that Mubin was a refugee because his pathway to the programme was through a Refugee Network. However, we had no idea that Ana was. And why should we? She had perfect English and was well established in the UK as an artist in her own right. But, like Mubin she was a refugee. This again moved my thinking to what constitutes as a *vulnerable* participant - or as a group of adults, what is our role towards each other in these situations? As my literature review on Identity discusses (2.2.4) categorisations of individuals are reductionist and cannot be relied upon. The problem (or opportunity) here was that Ana felt comfortable and therefore able to share her trauma because the museum had indicated

that it was a safe and comfortable space to do so. Further to this, she had experienced a supportive relationship with us, the museum professionals. Henneman herself, in a workshop with the participants, had explained that each person in the room had a powerful story with the right to be heard. But, as we discovered, the museum was not equipped at this time to manage this situation. This calls into question whether a museum can be equipped to manage these diverse and uncharted waters, at any time?

I recalled this example many times in my research asking how duties of care contributed to this difficult episode. Mubin felt his culture attacked by Henneman's performance and Ana had more faith in the museum as a safe space than we knew how to facilitate. As the facilitator in the room, I deeply felt a duty of care over the situation and became particularly 'British' in my management style and drew on the positive and celebratory aspects, avoiding the negative and instead championed what we had all achieved together to move the focus away from the trauma; I contributed to the very same culture of celebration I had seen at the college in the previous example. This sanitizing of the situation, the conversation and both disclosures was tantamount to symbolic violence. It was not a comfortable space' (Social Marketing Gateway, 2013) and was enmeshed with difficult power struggles (Hall, 1999) when faced with trauma sensitivity. In my paternalistic judgements (and inexperience) I decided to protect, to avoid more triggering, and in so doing, I 'othered' (Said 1978, Hall, 1096) the participants and inadvertently censored extremely important dialogue. I can say with certainty; my motivations were out of a perceived duty of care. In this duty, I felt I had a responsibility to preserve and protect the other refugees and keep the groups focussed on the good work they had achieved together. I would now do the opposite.

4.4. Conclusions to enquiry one: moving theory into enquiry

My reflections on EQ1 further confirm the work of Lynch (2011) and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (2012-2016). Language being used by the museum in understandings of who is homogenous and who is not, or who is vulnerable and who is not, creates binary separations of *Us and Them* in participatory practice and appears to create an expectation in the practitioner to provide a 'duty of care' over some participants and not others. This also creates a level of confusion within the praxis, when the practice does not feel in ethical alignment with the delivery methods of the project, and the diversity of the community participant.

The theory begins to consider that the position of *Us and Them* is compounded by an uncertain duty of care projected onto the community participant, by the museum practitioner. This 'care' may manifest as presumptive protective measures such as a *culture of celebration* manifesting as censorship or self-censorship when involved in challenging narratives (Kidd et al, 2014) and when thinking back to section 4.3.1.1 there are moments in the participatory process where the expectations of the practitioner and community participant differ, again disrupting the security of the participatory space, further undermining ownership by the participant.

During the experience, I came upon a method which could help to mitigate inadvertent censoring over representations due to this 'culture of celebration'. This method is *Non-Selective curation* (3.3.1). To recapitulate this is a test method of co-curation discovered through my own practise while working on *The Intercultural Project*. It asks that the museum representative, as either employee or freelancer, does not critically select items

produced by the participant, but instead incorporates all ideas given within the representational product. These items are then presented in a curated fashion with shared authority (Frisch, 1990), by participant and curator in ensuring aesthetic standards, and accessibility for diverse audiences (unless the community partner decides to withdraw the idea after further reflection). I tested this method out twice during *The Intercultural Project*, once in the co-curation of a booklet developed with volunteers on the participatory experiences, and then in the curation of an exhibition with four local schools (in partnership with Strathclyde University), *Migration Through Children's Eyes*. The results appeared to increase a sense of ownership and decision-making powers in the participants. Therefore, this method will be used in enquiry two and four where the participants will be asked whether their decision-making powers and sense of ownership through a process of non-Selective curation is increased. Alongside this method greater transparency in communication as radical openness (hook, 1989) will be applied.

5. ENQUIRY TWO: Bricks and Mortar (2013/14)

5.1. Introduction

Enquiry two takes forward the grounded theory produced by *The Intercultural Project* and investigates how power performs in co-curation with community participants. The enquiry will focus on how the museum professional (as total participant) and the community participant experience power in the co-curation process when non-selective curation is applied, and there is greater transparency of processes from the start. This case study will be presented as a combination of auto-ethnographic observations (5.2) which lay out backstage (Kothari, 2001) attempts to censor participant stories, followed by an analysis of questionnaires (n11/15) and interviews (n10/15) that present the front of stage perspective (5.3). It will look at the binary positionings of *Us and Them* as found in the language participants use to describe their experience, which differs wildly from the auto-ethnographic observations. (5.2). These findings will be concluded in (5.4) with an overview of what will be taken forward in enquiries three and four.

5.1.1. Bricks and Mortar, experiences of co-curation as non-selective

The case study *Bricks, and Mortar* (EQ2) was funded by HLF and was therefore required to meet the standards of what they call meaningful participation. The relationship between the language of the funders, as discussed in (2.2.5.2) and the participation 'stance' was explicit from the beginning as 'Acting Together' (HLF, 2010:09). *Bricks and Mortar* was funded to document the heritage of two iconic high-rise flats before being demolished. The

stories of refugee and asylum-seekers housed in these flats since 2000, were a special focus³⁵ and the production would feature as part of Refugee Week, 2014.

To move forward the investigation from enquiry one I consciously used non-selective curation, as a method of co-curation. This method, still in development, would aim to address the invisible power (Lynch, 2011) of the museum and its partners through a flexible approach to the participant needs, offering cogent transparency in what may have to be considered before a decision can be finalised. This would be a shared process of radical openness (hooks, 1996) to enable participants to decide how they wanted to curate their allocated spaces and with what. To evaluate the effectiveness of this test method, I would directly ask participants how equal they felt in the co-curating process, whether they felt listened to and if they could show what they wanted to show (see questions in Appendix G).

Three professional artists with extensive community arts experience were hired to facilitate the project. A theatre director (myself) with a museum background, a visual artist and a filmmaker. Each performance was vastly different: Oberon Court³⁶ featured themes of homelessness, migration, racism, loneliness, death, paranoia, and cross-cultural fear; thoughts of home, food and the partial 'view from a room' were all performed. Gatsby Avenue³⁷ shared themes of community and integration, but also the trauma of being woken to the terror of dawn raids (2005/6) forcibly removing asylum seekers from their homes. Non-selective curation was performed to develop the script by asking participants to respond to stimuli from newspapers and photographs; some of which were from their

³⁵ When Glasgow Housing Association were commissioned by the Home Office to house refugees and asylum seekers.

³⁶ Script can be found in Appendix E.

³⁷ Script can be found in Appendix F.

histories and some from the history of the buildings and local areas. These responses were recorded and transcribed as simultaneous dramaturgy (Boal, 1973). The script was then edited with the participants, rehearsed, and performed as site-responsive theatre.

The analysis of the co-curatorial process and experiences of the production are laid out in this Chapter. The first section of the findings will be presented as auto-ethnographic observations, the artist-researcher locates how the binaries found in the language have performed in the case study and will determine whether the community participant experience of co-curation differs not only to the observations made but to the volunteer experiences of enquiry one (2013). This will be followed by the analysis of participant feedback through questionnaires (n11/15) and interviews (n10/15) conducted postproduction, 2014.

5.2. Auto-ethnographic observations: different stages

Here I will first discuss several observations from the case study that present meaningful participation (HLF, 2010; Lynch, 2011) as disrupted by backstage (Kothari, 2001) attempts to protect the participant and/or the reputation of the organisation by acts of censorship. Backstage conversations reveal that the censoring of participants performed as a duty of care often cover up more political-economic motivations such as responsibilities to the funder and/or brand. This responsibility is not shared with participants, who are unaware of these pressures as that information has not been communicated within the promised transparency.

This section will discuss four observations of how power performed during the co-curation of Kiri's, Dylan and Caroline's scenes for *Bricks and Mortar*, 2014. These observations will

illustrate a worrying institutional duty of care performing as symbolically violent empowerment-lite (Lynch, 2011) practice, firmly constructing an *Us and Them* othering. I will connect these issues arising within the larger context of the enquiry as the organisation withholding ultimate authority and privileged knowledge.

5.2.1 Observation one. Kiri's Room: duty of care or symbolic violence

Kiri was very interested in the ghost stories that would be told about the building once it came down, the lives, the loves, and the many deaths. She identifies as a grey witch from Estonia and during her performance she introduces herself as such. Each of the participants did a similar thing, by introducing themselves in a way they felt represented their identities.

During the development of Kiri's script, a project assistant contacted me. She had been transcribing Kiri's scene with growing concern. She was worried that Kiri was making herself vulnerable by introducing herself as a witch and she, among others, thought we should take this bit out. I would like to mention here that Kiri was not consulted on this and the potential censorship of Kiri's self-identification is something I was not comfortable with. It made me think about 'duty of care' from a paternalistic othering perspective (Turner, Gross and Turgeon, 2018:337); a concern and worry that this request was coming from a position of judgement, where a decision would be made *for an-other* 'for their own good'. I was concerned that we had asked Kiri to write her script and present herself as she wished. Reneging on this agency suggested that Kiri's judgement was not sound.

Interestingly, none of the other community partner's introductions or self-identifications, for example, as a 'homeless man' or a 'gay refugee from Ghana', received the same duty of

care. Perhaps this is indicative of institutional bias and suggests there is a spectrum of what is acceptable diversity, something that will be discussed further in (5.2.2.) After all, to assume that audiences will receive these 'other' diversities as unacceptable calls into question an uncomfortable grey zone of bias that keeps hidden diversities, hidden (hooks, 1997).

The story of Kiri's experience of othering gets more disturbing when thinking about symbolic violence being performed onto community partners. The whole project was filmed to produce a follow-up documentary of the project. This documentary needed to be 'fit for purpose' so that new audiences could understand the project in its entirety. When viewing the final edit, I discovered that only Kiri's scene (out of ten) had been left out, everyone else was represented. The reason I was given, was that the dark side of the story and curation of her room was too different from everyone else's and did not fit in the new product. This explanation illustrates how the product was more important to the heteronomous interpretations of success (Bourdieu, 1993) than participant wellbeing.



Figure 9. Kiri's Room



Figure 10. Dylan's Room

If we look at these two rooms, which were situated directly next to each other in the flat, they are very different. In the direction of the promenade Fig 9 was experienced first and Fig.10, directly followed. Kiri's room (Fig.9) is painted black and the window is masked, making the room dark and atmospheric. Her narrative was of the ghost stories that would remain, and of the darkness tenants felt whilst living there. Whereas Dylan's room (Fig.10) draws a focus on the light coming from the window and through poetry, he draws on broad perspectives from having *A View from a Room*.

As a theatrical arc, this positioning worked well and enabled audiences to travel through alternating narratives as creative juxtapositions. However, this aspect was not represented in the documentary and was keenly felt by Kiri as that her contribution was unworthy enough to feature. She saw the edit of the film and was so upset she left the project, returning to the seclusion of her flat.

Speaking to her post-project Kiri explained that she had interpreted the exclusion of her scene as abject criticism of her ideas, her identity, and her value to the project. She felt that she was not appreciated in the same way as the rest of the cast and was instead a

'commodity' (KN/ EQ2/INT/ 2020). When taken out of context and piecing these two episodes together one could think something Machiavellian (1532) was going on. And, in a way, I too have presented a construct of a story. However, Kiri experienced these events likewise in isolation as the deliberations took place 'backstage' (Kothari, 2001), and this is exactly how she viewed it. An apology from the museum and partner organisation, with a promise to reintroduce her footage and a firm invitation to 'please come back' made no real difference to her feelings of exclusion. When I investigated what had happened, the reason the scene had been left out was because it had not been filmed in the first place. The producers felt it thematically 'didn't fit'; not filming this very short piece meant that any apology could not be fulfilled by reintroducing footage, because the footage did not exist.

The participatory processes, in this case, resulted in a manipulated version of the performance that was deemed 'more appropriate for viewing'. The documentary was viewed by the organization as a separate cultural product from the participatory performance, however this was not clearly articulated to the participants who were involved in filming (HLF, 2010:09), making some creative decisions, and a promise they would see each of themselves on screen.

When thinking about the representation of the ethnically diverse community participant, the production team were making decisions on what they deemed was appropriate or not; excluding the participants from these discussions on whose narratives could or could not be presented. In this case, the organisation are not as they profess merely facilitating but are instead constructing a version of a somewhat less co-created cultural production.

In Kiri's story, she experienced two episodes of symbolic violence. The first through a paternalistic duty of care and the second grounded in perceived reputational risk.

5.2.2. Observation two. Dylan and Caroline's Room: fear of radical openness for their 'presence is disruption'

On the landing, there was a different scene in play. Dylan meets Caroline, a refugee mother of three, from Sierra Leone. They witness each other over a year as both attend varying community projects, never speaking until *Bricks and Mortar*.

They found they had a common story to tell; a story of inter-racial dis-harmony and the housing crisis. They told me that they were desperate to tell it and created a scene where a refugee, temporarily housed in awful conditions, confronts a young homeless man who is sleeping on her landing. He is in crisis himself and the pair argue their frustrations and common misunderstandings of housing allocation; ultimately coming to a place of friendship through dialogue. They decided to perform the scene on the landing outside the flat we were given for the production at Oberon Court.

During his interview (discussed further in 5.2.2.3) I asked Dylan if he felt he was able to represent his story the way he wanted to - he gave his experience a mid-ground '3'. He was frustrated that he could not be realistic in the aggression that many real homeless men and women would have displayed towards the character of Caroline. He felt the scene should have been authentic, but he also wanted to protect Caroline as a friend, a woman and a refugee. Caroline too wanted this to be as authentic as possible but did not want the scene to come across as misogynistic, because that 'wasn't what the argument was about' (CN/EQ2/INT/2014), it was about who gets allocated a home first and why.

The motivations for this scene were very fitting and theatrically worked well in the dramatic trajectory of the play. However, this episode caused a great deal of consternation among the refugee organisation who were the lead partner on the project highlighting a dangerous

dichotomy between supposed ownership and decision-making powers and the requirements of the organisation. Due to the live nature of theatre and its potential to be improvised, the organization were concerned that this scene could be misinterpreted as endorsing reasons for young white males to behave violently towards refugees. This situation is something both Dylan and Caroline had experienced and was one they wanted to make sense of.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is public funding and the organisation felt they must retain neutrality in political opinion and this scene was certainly not neutral. This is a real fear from the organisation's point of view (Wray, 2019) and they were perhaps not prepared for the level of political interest and honesty the conversations would turn to. This was perhaps naïve or perhaps they simply underestimated the ability of the participants to be political as after all they had fully decided to co-curate and produce a devised performance set in iconic high-rise flats in City with a housing crisis. It is no surprise that this subject came up as being housed and having a home is the primary motivation in the lives of these participants. The community partners believed that their lived experiences would have space and time, to be shared as verbatim and did not expect this to be questioned.

Within the narrative curve and dramatic balance of the promenade script, I believed this scene added a much-needed perspective. I also felt strongly that had we cut the scene, after building participant expectations that they were allowed to curate their performances, we would be symbolically censoring them. This would no doubt be felt as invalidation of their story as equal partners in the process. Backstage the argument passed back and forth, and I was told in no uncertain terms that 'we can't be seen to do this' and it would be my responsibility to cut the scene or change it.

Eventually, after much arguing on behalf the participants a contingency plan was put in place; a plan that the participants had no idea about. The scene would be allowed if I, as the Director, was planted in the audience where I could divert attention away from the scene if any transgressions took place. I would be facilitating what the participants shared using my own emotional labour to judge when to jump in and take over, or not.

I decided on not and the audience came away with a different insight into the cross-cultural frustrations of being a person waiting to be housed in the UK.

Had I stepped into the scene, to take over the narrative and divert the conversation to the audience to comment, I would have been stopping Dylan and Caroline from sharing their experiences, their hard work in developing the scene and, ethically, their story and their trust in my respecting their decision-making and the self-actualisation of their stories would have evaporated entirely. This would have been a symbolically violent act asked of me (no, required of me) by the organisation I was working with. The scene was only allowed to remain with the 'support' of the Director masquerading as a duty of care, but one that had the power to intervene and stop it. The organisation believed it would preserve the reputational risk of the funded organisation and it was the only thing that, just a few days from performance, was between Dylan and Caroline's contribution being pulled all together and unbeknown to them.

Dylan and Caroline were both completely unaware of the conversation behind their backs and believed that their story was valued in the same way as the other ones. It begs that organisations must question just how open they are to shared authority and decision-making powers before they begin the work of co-curation, as fears of reputational risk are simply negating the very actions they presume to support.

The observations presented here highlight the gaps and the incongruences of power operating in intercultural negotiations that are albeit perhaps subconscious and somewhat dispositional; they are coercive and violent in their othering and censoring actions (Lynch, 2011, 2014, 2017). This phenomenon ultimately shows that reputational fear, which is also discussed as a finding in EQ4, is disallowing missions of openness. Likewise, there is still a paternalistic duty of care that is more comfortable with removing representations of conflict in favour of a silencing culture of celebration than embracing the opportunities for openness. The following section will discuss how within these performances of power (mostly hidden from participant view) are perceived by museum professionals when they reflect on the invisible power of language used in this context. It is a shame that in this enquiry participants actually felt increased agency in making decisions and felt a greater sense of ownership over the space and place of participation in which to self-represent, but this was not mirrored by the organisation who were in direct resistance to this achievement. This shows that to some extent non-selective curation is effective but requires a great deal of emotional labour from the museum professional to maintain this and a real need for all actors involved to be on the same participatory rung of the ladder (Arnstein, 1969) or 'stance' (Wilcox, 1996).

5.3. The frontstage power of non-selective curation

As discussed in (5.2.1 and 5.2.2) participants did not know that reputational risk and dispositional duty of care may have undone their 'feelings of equality' (DN/EQ2/INT/2014) and their mostly positive responses will now be presented. How power performed when applying non-selective curation will be shown as effective frontstage with an entirely different perspective backstage (Kothari, 2001). This phenomenon is one found across all

the enquiries as a tricky balance museum professionals tread when trying to create ethically charged 'meaningful participation', whilst occupying a field of cultural production (Bourdieu,1989) reliant on withholding the very power they wish give.

Non-selective curation was applied to all of the development of the scripts and performances. There are three ambitions at play in the implementation of non-selective curation. One: the participant would not experience a pre-conceived curatorial agenda. Two: the community participants' words and ideas would be exclusively accepted (the premise of non-selective curation is that contributions by participants would not be changed or altered in any way. However, this did not always happen as discussed in section 5.2.1.) Three: the participant would experience open dialogue about the construction of the performance and be allowed to contribute to the parameters of allowability.

When analysing data from questionnaires (n11/15) and follow-up interviews (n10/15) I coded the themes thematically from two positions: whether the participants felt a sense of ownership and decision-making in the co-curation participatory process and what actions the museums and partner organisation performed out of a duty of care and/or out of reputational reasons. I asked how enabled the participants felt in *saying, showing, performing, and presenting* their story as they wished. Language expressed was coded together and the responses were listed as: *not coerced; my; me; what I wanted; given the chance to; allowed; getting to do it; not disparaged*. The participants experienced a feeling of 'allowance' (DN/EQ2/INT/2014; MN/EQ2/INT/2014; KT/EQ2/INT/2014; SS/EQ2/INT.2014) to *do* and *say* what they wanted to in varying degrees, indicating a strong feeling of ownership over the words spoken and the story they performed with scores of 50% showing as 'very strongly agreed', and 50% showing as 'strongly agreed'. This highlights

that non-selective curation enabled their story to be heard the way they wanted it to. 76% also felt enabled in what they wanted to say in their story, with just one respondent, Michelle (3.3.1.1) feeling 'not at all' enabled. Further to this, 56% felt they could *show* what they wanted to show with just 6% (one respondent) listing this as a '1'. This participant was again Michelle (3.3.1.1.) who expressed that she did not feel she could *show* her story the way she wanted to.

There was an overall feeling of agency over the words they used and that they were given a platform to talk about emotional content they may or may not have had the chance to before. I asked all fifteen participants to answer eleven Likert style questions³⁸ where '1' denoted the least positive response, and '5' the most positive. These questions were followed by four qualitative answers. I then conducted semi-structured interviews with ten of the same participants, asking them to expand on their Likert scale indicator with their experiences of *Bricks and Mortar*. This enquiry focussed on two main areas, firstly how equal the participants felt during their participation e.g., did they feel enabled to make decisions? Secondly how comfortable the space was e.g., and how much ownership they felt over the space and place of the high tower flats, compared to a traditional stage or museum?

A key finding when analysing these results was that participant expectations of what co-curation would mean in practice differed. Some enjoyed the creative freedom non-selective curation gave them, others wanted more guidance and struggled with this approach as an equal partnership. Those who struggled were participants who had participated in a different approach to participation before and interpreted the creative freedom to make

³⁸ See Appendix G.

their own decisions as ‘a lack of care’ by the facilitating team. They also perceived that the facilitators must be inexperienced in their professionalism when they (as the professionals) resisted making decisions for participants. This is interesting as the same perception manifested in EQ1 (4.3.1.1) and as we will get to, in EQ4 (R07/EQ4/INT/2020).

The following sections will detail these findings before concluding this chapter and moving onto EQ3 (CH6).

5.3.1. Findings one: Non-selective curation: ‘my words, my space’

It was found that in the main, participants felt a greater sense of ownership over both the space and place of the participatory process. There is some indication that this is due to the implementation of non-selective curation (further discussed in 5.3.) as participants felt confident to contribute a body of written and performed work which was experienced as feelings of validation. This will be seen in the following findings as experiencing agency to do what they wanted to, coming from an unusual allowance to use their own words and the freedom to curate their own space, with co-curatorial support by 'artists who know [their] trade' (DN/EQ2/INT/2014: L112). Dylan experienced this as a feeling of being equal in the co-curation process. I will discuss these feelings of increased agency, validation, and 'ownership' as *My Room* and *My Story* which illustrate how the participants felt over-sharing verbatim narratives.

5.3.2.1. Ownership over the space: my room!

Each participant was given a room to curate as part of the performance. I found myself reiterating ‘that they could do whatever they wanted within the budget and health and safety parameters.’ As a starting point we set time aside for lengthy discussions about what

the participants wanted to share about the flats. Using Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, such as Image Theatre, Newspaper Theatre³⁹ and simultaneous dramaturgy the script organically grew from these conversations which were transcribed into verbatim. To retain transparency and radical openness (hooks, 1996; Lynch, 2016, 2017) the script was projected on the wall during each rehearsal to encourage trust that it was only the community participants words being used which had not been altered. I observed that the community actors felt a sense of pleasure and encouragement when they saw the script building with their own words.

When thinking about their feelings of ownership it was not only of the words used but of the space they occupied; 75% of the participants felt that performing in the flats was a positive experience compared to other projects they had been involved in. Indeed, in the interviews there is repeated use of 'my', preceding descriptions as the place of performance as my 'flat', 'cave', or 'room'. This clustering of 'my' describes feelings of ownership of the place with variations over the psychological *space*, such as *my story, my feelings, my hurt, my joy, and my rules* (EQ2/INT/2014) connecting to the words they used. The interview with Kiri illustrates the agency participants felt in creating a script 'as their own words' well:

C: In terms then of that space being your space and not the audience space would that be a one or a five?

K: Five.

C: Do you think that was important?

³⁹ A method where actors take articles from newspapers and magazines and deconstruct the discourse. We utilised this method of Boal by then asking the actors to respond to the narratives with their own stories. While they talked, they were recorded, and these recordings were transcribed in time for the next rehearsal.

K: Yes, because it is my space, my rules and you will listen to me.

(MAN-KT/EQ2/INT/2014: L32)

In the repetition of 'my' Kiri asserts ownership over the space and place. This case study achieves that sense of ownership through a combination of presenting representational products in a non-traditional place using a method of non-selective curation. The power of this can be identified with Kiri's description of how she feels about her room. The emphasis of (L32) with *you will listen to me* and the use of three personal identifiers of 'my', 'my' and 'me' indicates her 'owning' the place she has curated, the words she says and the actions she performs.

To look at another example, Marion (MN/EQ2/INT/2014: L7) does the same thing in her interview by repeatedly using 'my' to show high levels of ownership over her room as her narrative space. She repeats that it was '*my words*', '*my feelings*', '*my hurt*' when discussing her story (MN/EQ2/INT/2014: L7, 14-24).

Similarly, Sam considers her responses from a more collective view by frequently using the 'we' to show her feelings of ownership in what they wanted to say, show, and *perform*:

We could do whatever we wanted to do in there because it was about to be demolished. So, it was a nice space. We could design on the walls and everything...on stage you cannot really do that. Because the stage is for other people. But we could do whatever and have more time there.

(SS/EQ2/INT/2014: L1-5)

Sam's response identifies strong ownership over the place of the performance but in a slightly different manner. There is a sense of allowance here shown in line 2 with 'we could

do whatever we wanted to do', and this is connected to the space as not belonging to anyone else. Sam again repeats the use of 'we' (as opposed to my or 'me') suggesting that there is some sense of allowance to 'do whatever we wanted to do' and that this was a communal experience and not one with an epithet of *Us and Them*.

However, the sense of allowance participants experienced in how they told their story may be because they were each given their own space and place to curate and perform in. They had a space that looked and felt familiar as a domestic space. One, which potentially they felt more governance over because it was not owned by the museum or the partner organisation, but was a space and place borrowed for them to perform in. This may have encouraged a sense of familiarity and therefore feelings of ownership. As discussed in the literature review (2.3.2.1) greater feelings of [dis]positional ownership further encourage decision-making (Hegel, 1806; Boal, 1973) and this was indicated in comments such as, 'the audience came into my flat and heard my story... (MN/EQ2/INT/2014: L52). Indicative of this is an emphasis by participants on how important ownership over a full room for curation and performance was to them e.g., 'I really loved my room, it was really important - it really was' (DN/EQ2/INT/2014: L166).

In her interview Marion describes this feeling:

The audiences came into my flat and heard my story...and that was brilliant. Although it was not my flat, it was the same size. It was brilliant, brill. (MN/EQ2/INT/2014: L52-53).

When asked 'did the partner organisation and museum production team allow you to present your story how you wanted to express it?' There were very similar responses from most of the participants: 'No, No. people listened to me. I could talk about it... and there

was no “Oh don’t say this...or don’t say that... [there was] not a pre-designed conversation.’

(MN/EQ2/INT/2014: L50) or as Janet described:

I never felt [...] anything along the lines of –oh are you sure it was not x, y or z? I think you all made sure that it was all our points of view and never tried to guide us in any way to think a certain direction (JU/EQ2/2014: L1-13).

When responding to whether they felt enabled to *say*, *show*, and *perform* the stories as they wished participants were explicit that 'no one tried to put words into your mouth' (MN/EQ2/INT/2014: L113). This shared experience is reinforced on ten occasions throughout the interviews. This feeling of agency in the words they expressed is further connected to feelings of equality. Dylan says in line 36 to 38 of his interview:

If I wanted to say something, I could always say it and I got to the stage where I was probably [saying] a wee bit too much! It was really nice to have that feeling, that I was equal. (DN/EQ2/INT/2014: L36-38)

The questions also asked whether the participants felt 'listened to' and in this section Dylan (DN/EQ2/INT/2014) combines his experience with feeling equal. He directly connects this feeling to being listened to by the co-curating team. Explaining that in previous participatory projects he has experienced being 'disparaged' (L36), illustrating that being listened to and having ideas being accepted, used, and developed allowed him increased confidence and a sense of being an equal (DN/EQ2//INT/2014: L32). He brings this strongly to the fore in line 29, by stating that the facilitator hesitating for 'just a wee minute' is the 'worst thing that can happen.' This section exposes the power that the facilitator has, that in a slight hesitation they can dash the expectations of the participant and create in them a feeling of 'being disparaged'. Not only is this incredibly difficult for the facilitator to manage in terms

of controlling emotional responses, but they must also moderate how they react to participant needs at any given moment. The power circulating can be rapid in its effects and easily de-stabilise relationships and therefore outcomes. As an example of how easily this can happen, I will turn to how Tammy felt after an innocent comment was received.

Tammy felt 'very strongly' that she was 'able to say [her] story as [she] wanted to' (TD/EQ2/INT/2014: L11) but was also 'almost discouraged'. One of the co-curating team had called her 'naughty': 'I had performed two times. Isobel said that my performance was good, but a bit naughty' (TD/EQ2/INT/2014: L11). Through my own observations, I could tell that this was an interesting cultural misunderstanding between Tammy and my colleague. To be 'naughty' in Scotland is to be a little bit cheeky, it is a compliment often accompanied by a wink of the eye. However, Tammy took this as a criticism.

Her story discusses a first kiss, and as an African raised in an extremely Baptist environment 'naughty' has a different and quite damning connotation. In Tammy's belief system, this 'naughtiness' is tantamount to deserving much punishment, which she felt as a harsh indictment of her narrative about a kiss (a kiss that is much the reason she seeks asylum). This situation really bothered Tammy as she repeats her concerns throughout her interview, 'but why was it naughty?' (TD/EQ2/INT/2014; L13)

A key finding coming from the participant perspectives is that active listening develops increased feelings of ownership. However, these findings also show that assumptions and momentary lapses of emotional labour by the practitioner can compromise outcomes, in any moment.

5.3.2. Finding two: Operational othering due to heteronymous responsibility

When thinking about who owns the space and place operationally, this was held by the housing association partnering with the refugee organisation. The organisation had received the funding in partnership with museums and were therefore in theatre terms, the producers. This calls into question if the participant has no responsibility to the space, to what extent the participants can really achieve meaningful decision-making or is this performing as empowerment – lite (Lynch, 2011). The singularity of responsibility held only by the organisation kept the *Us and Them* binary intact.

Within this case study as with EQ1, the funders had provided money to feed participants and provide other needs such as transport and warmth to increase access for those who may be unable to participate due to the financial cost. The motivation for this would appear appropriate, as according to Maslow (1943) and even Hegel (1806) to be free enough to make decisions the primary 'needs' of security of space and body have to be attained first.

The provision of these needs firmly rested with the organisation and again reaffirmed the *Us and Them* positioning. The effect was that as and when the participants felt they were not being cared for enough, they exercised their discomfort through criticism of these provisions, or lack thereof illustrating as demands for more care.

The participants did not have the same responsibility to the funder as the organisation to maintain an '*acting together*' position, as equal partners and, to give them credit the organisation had not fully explained the opportunities of this position. The participants instead understood the not-so-subtle difference in their role as co-curators, but not quite,

as empowerment-lite (Lynch, 2011). Being unclear in the power involved they felt comfortable in this dynamic when it came to the provision of basic needs and in a somewhat Freirean fear of taking control over their participation were not inclined to contribute. Instead, the participant preferred to stay positioned as *Them* when it came to the provision of decent food, warmth, and rest times. The community partners did not feel they had the power to take their own self-determined breaks or bring their own food in, or indeed a heater for their room because of the implicit *Us and Them* separations of responsibility.

This created a fair amount of disharmony, as the community partners felt undervalued when their basic needs were not met (Maslow, 1954). Mandita describes this scenario who 'saw people complain sometimes-of the cold. Some people left because of it... (MA-NKT/EQ2/INT/2014: L41). The facilitators likewise felt this struggle between enabling decision-making and the difficulty in achieving agreements generated within this complexity of 'providing' whilst also trying to remove this powerful position. In doing so they appeared weak and incapable of doing either. This was felt as extremely disempowering by the facilitators who were often found in tears of confused frustration (Munro, 2014).

5.3.2.1. Ownership over the process: my story!

When thinking about ownership over 'my story' in terms of the content and how it was presented, two participants shared disappointment in how they could express their story. Michelle responded to the non-selective curation of her experience represented (discussed in 3.3.1.1) as it 'sort of...' illustrated her opinion that differing communities, living together 'doesn't work at all' (MR/ EQ2/INT/2014: L18). She did not know how she wanted to share it, but the sculpture discussed in the methodology was felt as an unwelcome compromise.

To compare the auto-ethnography of 5.2.2. I will detail Dylan' responses to the episode. He discusses at length that he felt his scene with Caroline could and should have gone much further to address the deep-rooted racial tensions in the City. Dylan expands that:

We must do it right and ...so, in the scene, Caroline's [character] attacks me a wee bit. I do not know whether I should have been more aggressive, to display that narrow-minded point of view "[that] *this is my country, you've got my flat*" ...you know what I mean...? Representing the bad attitude that happens, there's nay education, I mean the Scottish Government lets people in [...] [giving them flats]- where people are already suffering poverty and [then]they have other people coming in and that is when the Chinese-whispers start [....]

The play was good and funny, but there was none of that argument between somebody who is black and somebody who is white. I think if we... [should] have done more of that for my character [...]? (DN/EQ2/INT/2014: L46-56)

Dylan clearly wants to address the absence of conflict in the play and explains that his scene with Caroline was a missed opportunity. He wanted to represent the everyday occurrences of racial conflict, so has to find a resolution to them. Caroline, from Sierra Leone, likewise illustrates in her interview and in the scene (written by her⁴⁰) that she had felt threatened and abused during her re-settlement, which she wholly believes was racial abuse. Dylan and Caroline are extremely articulate in their responses and identify that these negatives in society need to be discussed, or they will not change. Dylan expresses that his experiences as a previously homeless man are also important to acknowledge as well as those of the refugees; not as more important, but as part of the governmental issue in how the

⁴⁰ Appendix E

introduction of new communities are handled. It is evident in the language he uses and more so in the absences seen in many ellipses, when his sentences drift off into silence; he feels dissatisfaction. When looking at the quote above, line 46 nods toward how good and funny the play was, but he does not end his sentence. He clearly wants to say more but is all too aware of the lean toward the 'funnier' aspects of life and it is here that perhaps a culture of celebration being performed is recognised by the participant.

As found in EQ1, encouraging 'celebration' diverted the practitioner from the real issues of racism which could have been discussed, in effect silencing the participants. Unbeknown to Dylan as discussed in (5.2.2), behind the scenes his own, Caroline's, and Michelle's (2.3.3.2.1.) contributions - in how far they wanted to express their stories of racial conflict - were systematically being censored.

Interestingly, both these instances were discussing the negative side of integration, a reality in their lives. However, as I observed, backstage conversations, unknown to the participants, conflicted with the frontstage performances of agreed allowability for participants to make these curatorial decisions. To briefly recapitulate, I was informed that the funded organization were concerned that a focus on negative aspects could be misinterpreted and their reputation as a Heritage Lottery Funded project could be compromised. I know that neither of these participants were asking to endorse racial conflict, what they wanted to do was open up dialogue to discuss the problem. Dylan especially wanted to show that racial differences can be overcome, as can be seen at the

end of their performance⁴¹ when Caroline offers him a biscuit, which they share and sit calmly together.

The inclusion of their work was successful in the end and the audiences found this part of the production one of the most effective episodes of the play. As an item developed by non-selective curation it shows that the method is successful but only if all actors involved are open to its power and backstage coercions are not enforced. This episode also shows that a culture of celebration is also apparent when racial conflict and/or trauma is concerned as seen in EQ1 (4.2.2.1).

5.3.3 Findings three. “Who’s the boss of me?”: ambiguity in power

The next section will consider how this power performs in the stance of 'acting together' (HLF, 2010) when using non-selective curation. Overall participants enjoyed the process of being allowed to co-curate with all their ideas seemingly accepted and co-developed through a method of non-selective curation. However, there was a good proportion who found this initially unsettling. Certainly, at the beginning of the process, there was a lot of confusion over 'who was boss?' especially from participants who had experienced participatory projects before. Walter says in his interview that 'It didn't work at first...I think we had to work on it a lot' (WL/EQ2/INT/2014: L12). This is confirmed by Dylan, saying that he:

did not know who to go to. Who was the team leader, you know? I would maybe say something to Mel and Mel would message you, or I'd say something to Iqbal,

⁴¹ The scene shows them sitting together on the landing and discussing their problems, not always agreeing but in the end, they share the last remaining biscuit in the packet.

and he'd say "Oh, see Carrie...", maybe it's something to do with that. I look for someone...Oh, you are the boss! (DN/EQ2/INT/ 2014: L102-104).

In this section of the interview, all the professionals involved were resisting the power of 'boss', because the stance of participation was 'with' the participants and 'acting together,' and not 'for' the participants. This was overwhelming to the participants who did not know these levels of participation had been decided upon – our levels of transparency were not it appears that translucent. While we, as artists, were trying to find our way, we were losing them.

The feelings of equality described by the participants are connected to what they are doing and with whom and were determined by their prior level of comfort with the discipline/medium being used. Tammy was predominantly involved in the painting side of things and when asked about how equal she felt in the performance she believed she should not have equal power in that:

you were the bosses. We could not comment about the position of anything because it is you who knew about everything about the project, so our work was to listen to you. We did not want to say...Oh, I want to stand here because we didn't know what was happening. It was you who knew where we as performers would stand. (TD/EQ2/2014: L32-34)

But when asked about the exhibition, she replies with a repeated 'Yes, Yes, that was ok'. Some of the participants felt it was a top-down relationship while others felt it was a co-exchange. For example, when asked whether there were points in the project she felt the production team were the leaders on, Marion responds with:

we all worked together, and all listened to each other and no one tried to put words into your mouth or take words away from you. It was a team effort that really, really worked and I would be happy to do it again' (MN/EQ2/2014: L119-121)

Marion then contradicts this opinion when it came to the artwork:

We should not have had an input into that...that was up to the people who did the artwork...where it should be. Because you can't say to Mehdi "I don't like that picture there...because Mehdi knows the story of his pictures and where they will be on the wall. (MN/EQ2/INT/2014: L155-157).

The disparities found in how participants understood who had the power to decide on what, shows that more clarity from the outset in the participatory stance of 'acting together' was needed. This could potentially alleviate the confusion which was disempowering for all.

5.3.4. Findings four. Therapeutic value in creative freedom

These examples indicate decision-making powers are not more easily circulated through a method of non-selective curation alone. It depends on the expectations of power as articulated by all actors involved, and levels of participation flowing and circulating between participants and practitioners. The circulations of power as acceptance, action and or in resistance are further compounded by the poetics of the site space and place (Lavine, 1991; Lidchi, 1997; Hall, 1997).

The next part of Dylan's interview discusses how this uncertainty is again based in questions around 'who is boss?' (towards the end of the interview he reflects that in the end not knowing 'who was boss', ultimately made him feel equal):

...I did feel equal, because it felt like ...I am writing this, I'm doing this...we have a wee scene in this. And this wee scene became this big scene. And we really felt that we were driving this ship as much as anyone else is. It was good to feel that, because it comes back to that thing ...you do not always feel equal when you do things with people. But when you see someone passionate about your idea and is saying 'that's a good idea'. I feel like it is a good idea because I know this lady knows here trade. And you grow...and that is when you know you are equal, when you've got a director of a theatre production, letting you know that you have good ideas...that's when you know you are equal. It is something you don't get a lot. (DN/EQ2/INT/ 2014: L105-115)

Dylan here indicates that this feeling of equality is something that does not happen a lot in participatory fields, and he is surprised at the allowance and acceptance of his ideas he experienced. This further indicates that his expectations of the level of participation and how it was executed, were different from how he has experienced it before. In this difference, he found great achievement, ownership over his story, a room to own (for a time) and the decisions he made to get there. When thinking about learning processes, Dylan was learning to explore his imagination and was at first 'out of his comfort zone', however, this initial discomfort became an empowering journey of self-discovery and selfhood.

Throughout, the process of non-selective curation was not without risk and questions remain around how much risk is too much risk? Just a few years before the project began, Marion had suffered a stroke. This was as a result of her role in stopping the dawn raids at Kingsway flats. As part of her message, Marion co-curated a brutal sound performance of

armed Border Agency Police arresting a man and his family, something she heard every morning, before dawn. At another point, Caroline performed her story in front of a huge A0 portrait of her dead husband and brother. In the kitchen, Malia had co-curated her set design that featured enormous wires and sockets protruding from the walls to illustrate her acute paranoia of being watched. She told the audience, in ironic humorous detail, that she believed every wire, every socket and everything electrical thing was recording her and was bugged by the UK Border Agency.

These performances of verbatim trauma are a risk as participants could be re-traumatised (Levi, 1979). However, the participants repeatedly expressed they felt a sense of something nearing therapeutic value in their verbatim theatre, co-curation, and co-creations. Perhaps because they chose 'how they wanted to say it' (Q1/EQ2/QNR/2014) and did not feel coerced into saying or doing anything. Or perhaps because they were not 'disparaged' (TD/EQ2/INT/ 2014: L36) from doing so. Caroline explains this as performing almost 'exactly what happened to me, so I feel relief. I feel much better from that day' (CH/EQ2/INT/2014: L7-8).

The emotional labour⁴² performed by the participants was described as reliving old memories and the responses coded together were words, such as *exhausting, exhaustion; relieved my pains and troubles, a sense of relief, therapeutic, the audience in tears, empowered, felt part of it, but my Heritage is confusing*. This labour was acknowledged across the board as painful, but valuable. Memory and the performance of memory was experienced as validating, at the time of the production⁴³ and was experienced as *relieving*

⁴² I bring in emotional labour here because these stories were after all featured as part of theatre performances that the audiences paid for.

⁴³ I cannot presume to know whether this feeling altered later.

pain (CH/AVFH/INT/2014), was *therapeutic* (CH/EQ2/INT/2014, MF/EQ2/INT/2014, MN/EQ2/INT/2014, DN/EQ2/INT/2014) and *empowering* (MN/EQ2/INT/2014, MF/EQ2/INT/2014, DN/EQ2/INT/2014, MA-NKT/EQ2/INT/2014, SS/EQ2/INT/2014).

However, several of the participants also felt that this was not without *exhaustion* (JU/EQ2/INT/2014, MA-KT/EQ2/INT/2014, WM/EQ2/INT/2014, MN/EQ2/INT/2014). Janet, who has some special educational support needs, describes the process of being interviewed as:

[it was] interesting, going down and reliving old memories...it was also quite exhausting, that has to be said. Both my Mum and Dad were pretty much wiped out by the experience (JU/EQ2/INT/2014: L 22-24).

It is here that some questions around managing expectations as a duty of care surface. We have discussed the expectations of the participant affecting how well looked after, or not, they felt in the case study; however, it is also the expectations of the professional that are impacting the space. There is power performed by the professional that presumes that non-professionals can perform in the same manner, as equal, to them who are trained in their professionalism. This is not always the case and perhaps then the professionals do have a duty of care to not put undue pressure on the non-professional to achieve the same level of ability. Janet had never been interviewed for a documentary before, and the process of repeating information for a series of 'takes' was for her, valued but exhausting: 'because we had never done anything like that before (JU/EQ2/INT/2014: L24 -13).

Likewise, the repetition of rehearsals in the November cold could not be comprehended by the community participants as necessary, as would have been by professional actors. There

is then disparity in the professionalism of *Us and Them* when thinking about experience and knowledge, and to treat the participant as equal to a professional also negates social justice.

5.4. Conclusion. Findings from enquiry two

The effectiveness of non-selective curation was tested during the co-creation stage of devising the script and performances. We used Boal's method of simultaneous dramaturgy (Boal, 1973) with a participatory position of 'with' by 'acting together' (HLF, 2010). This was shown to be effective in producing significant agency over the co-curation. However, the heteronomy of the funded partnership compromised the cultural production due to the political-economic factors, such as reputational needs of the organisations.

Auto-ethnographic observations firmly presented a difficult environment the practitioner occupies when attempting to facilitate meaningful participation. This section (5.2.1) identifies that there is acute symbolic power being performed in backstage negotiations that reconstruct *Us and Them* binaries. Section (5.2.) documents the participant experiences frontstage who are unaware of these backstage ramifications. Fifteen questionnaires and ten interviews were conducted with participants and these asked how equal each participant felt in the processes of decision-making and ownership. In the main, the participants felt more equal, but there were problems around expectations of care not being met and confusion over who had ultimate control.

Together these findings of 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 elucidate the organisation's duty of care as hindering social justice ideals but as difficult to balance as equity over expectations must also be considered. The museum and the funded partner find this collaboration difficult as they do not perform with transparency in their backstage negotiations. They make

heteronomous decisions, to appease the political-economic pressures on cultural production and to retain control (Bourdieu, 1993). This control limits how much decision-making the participant can in reality assume. However, the participant has no understanding that there are limits to their decision-making or what these limits are unless they are told. Ultimately the collaborative element of co-curation seems to keep participation within certain parameters as the museum and funded partner retain the ultimate decision-making powers. The facilitator is often stuck in the middle of this, unofficially policing those lines and sometimes seeking to challenge them.

The othering found in enquiry one can therefore also be seen in EQ2, when museums work with the community participants. One, through censoring performances out of a duty of care and two, censoring acts out of reputational risk and brand preservation.

In this case study, there is a hidden diversity that is not accepted with the same equity as skin colour diversity and/or difference in language and accent. As discussed, Kiri is white Estonian and was deemed as vulnerable; Dylan as white Scottish was deemed as less vulnerable than Kiri. Marion, as a white woman was understood as capable of working through her trauma if supported by the Director, but Kiri was making herself too vulnerable to self-identify. There was an attempt to censor Kiri's self-identification as an Estonian Witch, but when this did not happen a censoring of her contribution occurred instead. Marion was neither coerced and nor was she censored.

Further to this the not-so-subtle categorisations of vulnerability were abjectly resisted by participants. For example, Caroline, as a Black woman wanted to make very clear in her performance that she may have depression, she may have trauma, but she is not vulnerable; she is very capable. In her script she writes:

I used to work as an instructor in agriculture, supervising people, now people are supervising me. (CH/EQ2/SCRIPT1/2014:6)

Caroline wanted Dylan's presentation of what some homeless men feel in her scene to be allowed to show her resilience and that asylum seekers could show power through dialogue (CN/EQ2/INT/2014).

However, her decision to do so was almost censored out of 'protection over her' as a vulnerable community member and out of the reputational risk to the museum and partners. Similarly, Kiri explains in her interview that she made an explicit choice to only discuss the ghost stories of the flats because her own story, is too personal. The duty of care that attempted to censor both Kiri's and Caroline's performances had not given them credit to be able to decide what they wanted to share for themselves as fully functioning adults.

Marion was also explicit in her decision to talk about her story, a story that triggers her trauma, but this was not thought of with the same hierarchy of vulnerability. There is then disparity in who receives a duty of care through censorship and who does not, and that does not depend on skin colour alone but is more specific to anyone who is not identifying as British.

This seems to be linked also with an assumed hierarchy of vulnerability and concerns about wider/public sensitivities. That is sometimes to do with protecting participants from paternalistic concerns and at times about protecting the organisation from public censure as reputational concerns. The implications of othering are therefore more pronounced if the participant is a person of colour or ethnic minority origin. In enquiry one this othering was shown towards the volunteer as more vulnerable than the museum in the co-curatorial

partnership. This vulnerability in *Bricks and Mortar*, whilst pronounced, is more censoring out of a duty of care when the participant is Black or of ethnic minority background and perceived as 'vulnerable' such as refugees and asylum seekers. Those participants who are White but are also deemed vulnerable - due to poverty for example - are not censored by a duty of care but censored out of reputational risk. This othering perspective found in (EQ1) and (EQ2) is something I will further explore in the next case study EQ4. The following chapter will discuss how the power performing in EQ1 and EQ2 is perceived by museum professionals (EQ3) and how the language of invisible power informs them.

EQ3 will examine what the language has been doing in this practice between EQ2 and EQ4. As a survey of professional practice, it asks museums professionals what the language of 'invisible power' (Lynch, 2011) does in praxis? Who is it museums believe ultimately has the power to make decisions and how important do they perceive this language to be in their practice? Through a series of questions, the incongruences of practice may be revealed to ascertain why *Us and Them* binaries are manifesting as symbolically violence backstage and undermining participant agency.

6. ENQUIRY THREE: A SURVEY OF LANGUAGE IN PRAXIS

6.1 Introduction

This Enquiry will function as a 'sense check', where I will present what other museum professionals say about how the language of 'invisible power' performs in practice with an analysis of a sector-wide survey (n39) (Lynch, 2011). Section (6.2) and (6.3) will detail the findings of the survey. (6.4) will bring the survey findings up to date with a revisit to four of the survey participants in 2020. This section will lay out how museums have progressed in their understanding of participation, according to these respondents. This addition will helpfully bridge enquiry three with enquiry four, actioned in 2019.

6.2. Online survey (n39): denotations of best practice, the language of *Us and Them*

The survey asked museum professionals how they feel about the 'language of participation' identified by Lynch (2011) as problematic. Terms such as: *empower; enable; facilitation* and *social justice* are situated as what these mean in praxis. The themes were revealed using a CDA hermeneutic spiral where repeated words, phrases, themes, tenses, and examples used in practice were coded together and analysed in consideration of the discourses and environments in which the information was given (Foucault 1969,1972). n39 professionals completed the survey, answering a series of 31 provocations. The provocations focused on how museums aim to *empower, facilitate* and *be socially just spaces for cross-cultural dialogue* (Janes and Sandell, 2019; Lane, 2010 et al). The following sections will outline the findings and themes that emerged.

6.2.1 Findings one. No consensus: disparities between what is and what is not best practice

What signifies as best practice in museums is contested throughout the survey findings. (R17/EQ3/SV/2016), was part of 84% that felt in agreement with the idea that participation should be:

...a two-way dialogue and not doing to people or presuming that the experts know best. Actively engaging, listening, and responding to your audience needs has to be at the heart of effective delivery. (R10/EQ3/SV/2016: Q17).

This idea of not 'doing to people' (Line 1) shows that this practitioner is aware of the *Us and Them* positioning of the museum against the people they 'do projects to' - and this 'doing to' is suggested as a top-down performance of power. This idea is clearly understood by practitioners responding to this survey which correlates in a timely fashion to the discourse shared in *Whose Cake is It Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011). Lynch asks whether museums are doing what they say they are doing? The survey suggests that no, not across the board, as there is an inconsistency between what practitioners of 2016/17 think about what participatory language is, and what it does. Using the example of 'democratization,' respondent (R8 EQ3/SV/2016: Q17) explains that the language does not always do what it describes and therefore objectives fall short:

...it should be about democratization - however, it is often about ticking boxes and the representation is not a true reflection of the community. (R8/EQ3/SV/2016: Q17).

The practitioner here describes how the motivation for democratization is often about 'ticking boxes' for funding needs, suggesting this is a motivation in play. They explain that

the methodological choice is 'often' connected to where the money comes from. Likewise, the language used is connected to the 'tick boxes' funding applicants must meet to be considered (HLF, 2010). Respondent 12 brings the language back to intention, that it should be used for the 'right reasons', which indicates that often, the wrong reasons are part of this context:

It is a specialist language indeed. A language that we use for reporting and funding. Like anything with language - it is the intention behind it which is the power. Empowerment? I guess so - I provide tools and resources for people. (R12/EQ3/SV/2016: Q24)

This quote by respondent 12 positions the *Us and Them* relationship in a new way. Here the dynamic is between policy directors and funders, not the museum and participants. The museum becomes participant-like, receiving funds and/ or 'knowledge', and positioned as 'Them'. Perhaps there is similar coercion achieved by policymakers over the museum, as a participant in cultural production. This would certainly explain why the language of invisible power (Lynch, 2011) is strongly upheld within the practice of participation. In EQ4, this is a question that the research will come back to as this phenomenon becomes again prevalent.

Respondent 12 discusses that 'participation' has a language of its own, and the survey asks how this language, in practice is or is not, accepted as ideal by the practitioners. There is a strong indication that colleagues working in museums instinctively, or perhaps instructively (Lynch, 2011, Bourdieu, 1993) are aware of the concept of 'invisible power' from reading *Whose Cake is it Anyway?* (Lynch, 2011). For example, respondent 12 talks about the complexity of language, explaining that the questions cannot be answered without thinking

about the full context of museums. This response recognises that the language being problematised is relational and should not be understood as standalone components:

It is more complex than the options allow. In part 'it' [participation] democratizes space' and in part, it is 'socially just'.⁴⁴

(R12/EQ3/SV/2016: Q17, L1-2)⁴⁵

The word 'part' indicates that the language of participatory practice is relational to something else, to other 'parts'. Each element contributes to the overall aims of democratization and social justice, which cannot be achieved alone. For example, a praxis that only aims to give power to the participant will not achieve social justice because this transformation may be temporary. This may be because capacity for partnerships between the museum and the participant are possible, or perhaps the participant does not feel able to accept this power (2.3.4).

When thinking about the semiotic value of *em-power* and *en-able*, a dominant position of the museum over the participant is denoted (see 1.3). For example: "em" + "en" represent the giving of 'power' and 'ability', 27% of practitioners accept this language as positive to their practice. 34% did not entirely agree with it, and some practitioners feel that the terms are somewhat 'patronising' (R9/EQ3/SV/2016: Q24). Respondents (R9/EQ3/SV/2016/Q24, R19/SV/2016/Q24, R23/SV/2016/Q24) suggested that the community or individual 'might already feel empowered' (R26/SV/2016: Q24), while those who agreed that museums 'empower' communities fully endorsed this as a positive objective, with responses such as: *positive* (R30/EQ3/SV/2016: Q24) (R36/EQ3/SV/2016:

⁴⁴ Please see Appendices H for a full example of survey questions and format.

⁴⁵ Appendix H.

Q24), *makes people feel positive* (R30/EQ3/SV/2016: Q24), *fine* (R37/EQ3/SV/2016: Q24), *important* (R33/EQ3/SV/2016: Q24, Q38, Q40; R38, EQ3/SV/2016: Q24, Q38, Q40, R40/SV/2016/Q24, Q38, Q40).

However, when disputed as best practice '*empowerment*' was thought to not increase power for the participant. Further to this, practitioners were 'uncomfortable with this language', asking whether anyone can be empowered by another. Respondent 5 explains their discomfort, but does not go on to say why:

I know what this is saying, but I am uncomfortable with the word to empower. I do not think that we should take credit for empowering people. (R5/EQ3/SV/2016: Q24)

Collating views on *empowering* with *enabling* the survey also asked practitioners to respond to the same statement with the word '*enabling*' in place of '*empower*'. 16% agreed that the museum does indeed enable, 14% did not, and 11% felt it is 'easier said than done' (R6/EQ3/SV / 2016: Q24, Q25, Q26, Q27, Q28, Q29). What I find interesting here, is that the word *enabling* was not deemed as contentious as *empowering* to museum professionals. When there were negative views on the language used it was because it felt patronising (R23/EQ3/SV/2016: Q25 R19/EQ3/SV/2016; R19/EQ3/SV/2016: Q25; R26/EQ3/SV/2016: Q25) and condescending (R34/EQ3/SV/2016: Q25). In the 'expanded comments' respondents posited questions back with some criticism, showing a sense of knowing that the terms hold disagreeable power:

Enabling them to do what? They might be quite enabled in other ways. (R13/SV/2016/Q25)

And:

I think we are very casual with our language, but I am not sure I would like this if I was part of the community that was being spoken about. (R26/EQ3/SV/2016: Q25)

Both these comments illustrate a learned perspective on the language as paternalistic and somewhat patronising (Lynch, 2011) and how that may inform their disagreement of this positioning their practice.

6.2.2. Findings two. Othering language, “but I like this one better!”

The positioning here in terms of ‘othering’ is interesting as it shows that a post-colonial impact of empowerment is something understood by some museum professionals, perhaps informed by literature such as Sandell, (2002, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2013) and Lynch, (2011, 2014). This kind of response was especially found when practitioners were asked to think about words such as 'empower'. However, when using words with the same sentiment, such as 'enable', respondents perceived this as more acceptable, while in practice it performs in the same way as 'empower'. Perhaps, the word 'enable' has not, as yet, undergone the same critical treatment by the respondents as the word 'empower'.

Contradicting these aversions to language that have been identified by scholars as othering, paternalistic and denigrating, 16% of practitioners agree that enabling the individual or community participants is an 'important thing to do' for museums. They go on further to say that to 'enable suggests opening doors, cutting down barriers - [and is] surely a good thing' (R33/EQ3/SV/2016: Q25). Conversely, respondent 19 presents this language as 'again patronising, it denotes that the museum has more authority than the community' (R19/EQ3/SV/2016: Q25). R19's understanding of this positioning articulates that this

participatory language is partly responsible for the *Us and Them* dynamic. And, because there is disagreement in what this best practice denotes, a cohesive way forward is not currently possible.

6.2.3 Findings three. Institutional [dis]positionings

The *Us and Them* dichotomy also appear to be perceived as less pronounced when using the language of 'facilitation'. Two respondents (R13/EQ3/SV/2016 and R38/EQ3/SV/2016) suggest that facilitation is needed for participants to access the collections, which are normally protected for conservation reasons. This facilitation supports participants in using museum specialisms such as handling objects under specialist supervision:

I like this one better. I don't like 'our', but the fact is that for them to access their heritage stored in our buildings, then we still have to conquer the institution."

(R13/EQ3/SV/2016: Q29)

And:

We have a role as a facilitator, we can be neutral in discussions. We should be here to show people what is available and to help them explore our collections depending on their interests. (R38/EQ3/SV/2016: Q29)

Othering can be noted here as both practitioners use 'our' and 'we' to denote the museum and 'them' as the participant. These two examples show how difficult it is to describe the work done in museums without this positioning. There are innate binaries of insider/outsider (Tajfel and Turner, 1985) for while collections are situated *inside* a building the participant would need assistance to view them as they are outsiders. Here the *Us and Them* is explicitly binary due to the current workings of the museum and is shown to be

something difficult to change. Open access to objects would require an infrastructure overhaul.

How the museum views its role as transitioning from housing and protecting objects into something more socially useful has been a relatively speedy process. In this lengthy answer respondent 12 also discusses how the power involved should not be avoided but instead embraced. Museums as experts should feel able to say so:

I do not believe that the museums are JUST there to serve people. A large part of it is - and therefore we need specialists - we need experts to preserve our collections and to research. We need people who are good communicators and educators. We need experts who know our collections, where they sit nationally and internationally, who can make decisions about acquisitions and disposals. It is a vast network which relies very much on experts. However, museum experts are not always experts. We all have our specialisms. And that is exactly what it says on the tin - a specialism. I [have] a specific field. Communities have much more to offer museums. Why do we say that we 'offer people a voice' when we work in a community setting? How much of this really feeds back to our organizations? or do we tend to tick a box, by working on a short-term project have a nice launch and then walk away, saying that we have reached our target audience? Or as I have seen in many projects, it is labelled as 'participatory' and all that means is that a group have participated. They have had a project 'delivered' to them and they take part, 'participation' needs to be quantified here. A stronger sense of 'participation' is when the partnership is equal, and all sides are respected, this truly has the possibility for the non-museums partner to take ownership of the museum process. And likewise,

for the museum partner to take ownership of the community process. We need to be invested in each other for us to learn and pool our expertise in a way that will benefit your community. This can be true, but so too is the reverse (R12/EQ3/SV/2016: Q16, Q17).

This response outlines the diversity of the museum role, and in line 3 we can see that the respondent capitalises '*JUST*' (R12/EQ3/SV/2016: Q16, Q17, L3) to emphasise the conversation that is circulating about museums as existing to serve the community. This respondent informs us that without the specialisms unique to museums such as the maintenance of collections, there would be no collections and no museums. Respondent 12 wants colleagues to be mindful of this and opens up questions of power (R12/EQ3/SV/2016).

When thinking again about power and facilitation, it is interesting that R12 is very clear that museums should hold onto the fact they are a specialist in their field. This recommendation to keep hold of your specialism as a professional may seem obvious to other sectors but for decades museums engaging in participatory practice have tried to democratise the space of decision-making processes by giving the participant ownership over the place and space (Boal, 1974, 2000; Freire, 1973). I would argue said practitioners can be fearful of expressing their specialism in case this is perceived as didactic.

With limited training in pedagogical approaches, museum practitioners tend to undermine their specialisms in the process. Not so much democratising the space and place to allow for shared decision-making, but instead, they appear to give overall power to the participant, while trying to retain some power through invisible and covert means (Lynch, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2017).

6.3 A vagueness in Power and Participation

The second section (6.3.1) will discuss how respondents feel about this language as positing power (6.3.2) where there is an ambiguity in how this power is perceived across museum workers and (6.3.3) what this does to 'empowerment-lite' practices, in museums.

6.3.1 Findings one. Ambiguity: who is the boss of who?

The findings show that most practitioners feel ambiguous as to who should have power in the participatory process and decision-making. The survey asks a series of questions to elicit a nuanced response (Appendix H). Responses to these questions were loaded with negative connotations. None of the practitioners felt that they should have the power within the process.

This is worrying as 'power' is often collated positively with knowledge, as even necessary for knowledge to be shared (Foucault, 1972). However, further to this, 10% of practitioners believe that no one should have power and 24% felt that the participant has final say over the product and process. As a centre for pedagogic approaches to learning and a sector that wants to embed participatory methods that will one-day share decision-making, this is somewhat confusing as only 52% of practitioners surveyed believe that power should be shared by everyone.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ In the pilot, the discussion around power again strongly suggested that 'everyone' should hold the power with 70% of respondents suggesting this. However, a further 20% said the participant, and 10% the practitioner, should hold the power.

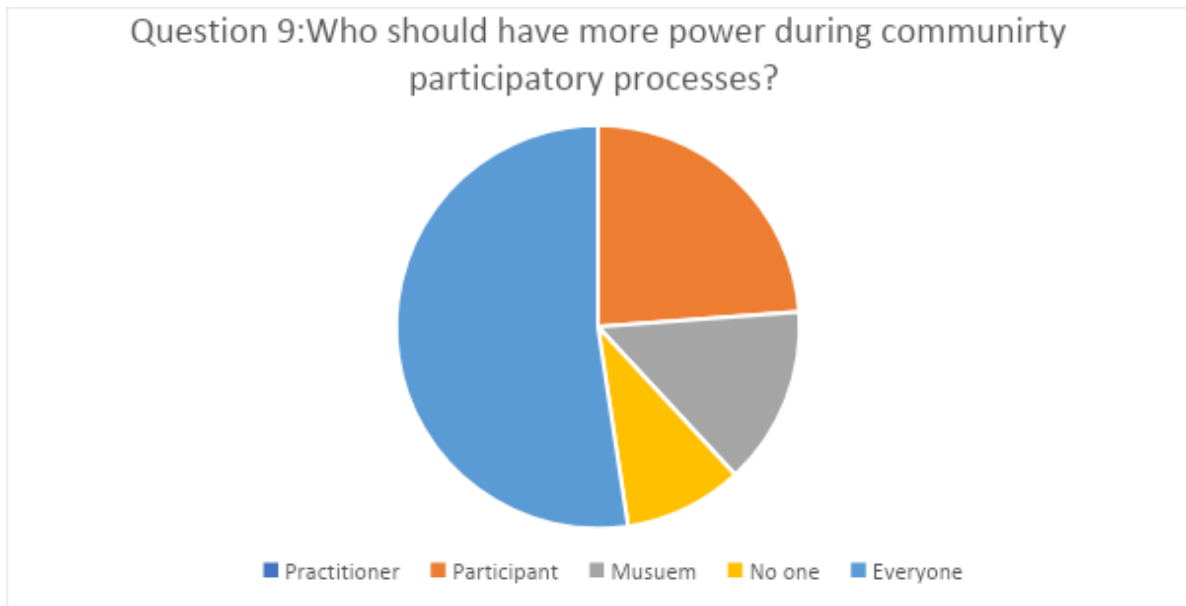


Figure 11. Who should have power in participation?

This significant finding is then contradicted in the following questions (Q10-11).

Articulated more explicitly by connecting this idea to 'decision-making' (HLF, 2010, DCMS, 2016) the survey asked who has "*the final decision over the product/ process?*" 48.15% of respondents concluded that the museum institution has final say over the product/process. As respondents transitioned between Questions 9 and 10, they do not connect 'power' with 'decision-making processes'. Two things are apparent here. First, the practitioner does not like the term 'power' when thinking about their practice and separates themselves from the museum with regards to this aspect. Secondly, when the questions collate power with decision-making, then practitioners acknowledge it is indeed the museum who holds the power. It is interesting that in 2020 (R13/EQ3/INT/2020) explains that museums are vague in their understandings of what power is and is doing - and therefore resists letting it go.

6.3.2 Findings two. Practising empowerment-lite

The survey finds that empowerment-lite practice in museums (Lynch,2011) is still performed in 2016. Respondent 24 stresses that the community "is rarely [...] given the power" (L1). This illustrates that the museum is still not doing what it says it is:

I think that this [the language] is often used but it is rare that the community or the individual is given 'the power'. (R34/SV/2016/Q24)

This problem of power, who has it and who gives it, is primary to the *Us and Them* question. 11% of practitioners hint 'enabling' an – 'other' is complex in praxis, they discuss this as a knowledge-based premise which museums can only do with a full understanding of the person they attempt to enable:

It is a worthy aim, but full of pitfalls based on assumptions made by us. Completely understanding needs and managing expectations is essential. (R39/ EQ3/SV/2016: Q25)

Overall, the practitioners surveyed accepted that 'more needs to be done, but it takes time and money.' Partnership working was viewed as something that should be reciprocal and meaningful in its applications, with one practitioner stating that they 'worry that people can feel used and discarded by temporary projects (R13/EQ3/SV/2016-17). The following section will take forward this 'worry' and how a duty of care is key in these practitioners' roles.

6.3.3 Findings three: Moves toward the margin, partnerships and duty of care

Partnership working became the focus of responses when asking Questions 12 and 13 (see Appendix H). I would like to pull out a couple of sections from respondent 12 (see Appendix H). In terms of power, who has it, and the relationship of 'power' to 'knowledge' (Foucault, 1969, 1972) respondent 12 ascertains that partnership working is needed to 'work safely with people with diverse needs'. Having this knowledge enables the museum to create an informed space of participation through specialist understanding. With the absence of this knowledge, the space is thought to be precarious. Here the museum professional is acknowledging they have a duty of care over another.

As seen in EQ2 when thinking about expectations over non-professionals to perform in the same manner as professionals, there is a social justice duty of care to provide equitable access to participation. Museums here are showing this care by deferring leadership to partnerships skilled in specific diversities. However, no one can know the life story of another in its entirety and that means that perhaps all participants should be thought of as diverse, potentially vulnerable, and not just those with visible protected characteristics (hooks, 1996).

I will end the chapter with a reflection on how - given all of the difficulties that have been introduced from the data - museums still need to address the *Us and Them* positioning between the institution and the community participants. This *Us and Them* dynamic is established due to the institutional positioning of the museum as the service provider, the party getting paid, and ultimately, the funded body accountable for the cultural production.

There is an interesting debate coming from these findings that the dissolution of *Us and Them* may be more problematic in practice. The museum professionals must hold on to their specialisms and not give away their power. They are considered by the practitioners surveyed to be the facilitators of equitable access to collections that would not normally be open to the public. This enabling of the community is a responsibility because the public often own the institution through taxes paid. However, practitioners express caution in these positions postulating that yes, they can be othering.

Overall, there is an innate desire by the museum practitioner to move towards a more socially just model of practice, but they are aware this has not come to fruition as yet. The more critical practitioners who do not automatically accept the position of participation in museums perceive that the institution needs to understand that the processes are organic and therefore reliant on flexible, sustainable partnership building.

6.3.4 Interim conclusions to (6.2 and 6.3)

The findings concur that *Us and Them* positioning between the museum and the community participant is still apparent in 2016/17. These findings reconfirm those of Lynch, 2011; and Paul Hamlyn Foundation (2014-2016) and reveal that the majority of practitioners endorse the rhetoric of participation, re-establishing this binary. Further to this, practitioners feel that the problematized language (Lynch, 2011) of participation is not best practice to use, or indeed, cannot be. However, most practitioners still, in respect to the respondents here, accept the concepts connected to the problematised language as important to the work of museums, further indicating a lack of consensus as to what is best practice in this setting.

The main finding from the survey is akin to the observations made in EQ2 and will be seen in EQ4. Not all practitioners agree on the same definitions in the praxis of participation. For example, there is tacit acceptance among most practitioners in 2016/17 that 'enabling' is still best practice but 'empowering' is not. There is, however, also a consensus that participation is difficult, and meaningful participation is not always possible when differing cultural backgrounds are participating. Practitioners do not feel as 'secure' in their praxis and hope to better involve informed partnerships for more equitable participation.

To bring these perspectives into 2020, and to be relevant to EQ4, section 6.4 will discuss findings from follow-up interviews conducted with four of the above respondents (R13/EQ3/INT/2020; R37/EQ3/INT/2020; R38/EQ3/INT/2020 and R39/EQ3/INT/2020). These interviews will set the scene for the final case study of Chapter 7, that seeks to determine how power performs in professional partnerships other than communities that are often deemed as non-professional and somewhat vulnerable.

6.4. Survey revisited, 2020

The following section revisits four of the respondents that are museum professionals still working in the sector. They are asked during their interview how they perceive embedded participation in museums today⁴⁷. The findings particularly look at the language in praxis since 2016, highlighting that the position of the museum as provider still pervades. However, it is noted that this language has mostly changed to deliberately create new discourse formations that are now rooted in cultural rights (R38/EQ3/INT/2020).

⁴⁷ See Appendix H for the follow-up questions in 2020.

Each section will present findings thematically linked to (6.2) in preparation for the final enquiry (EQ4). 6.4.1 examines the use of language to determine whether it is still binary, while 6.4.2 considers whether there is still a pervasive ambiguity over who has power in participation, letting go and in shared responsibilities.

The respondents all agree that museums have embedded collaboration to a greater extent 'than it was five years ago', but that there is a still 'a way to go' (R13/EQ3/INT/2020; R37/EQ3/INT/2020; R38/EQ3/INT/2020; R39/EQ3/INT/2020). R13 and R39 explain the current context as a period of reflection, where museums are evaluating the learning from *Our Museum* (2014-2018) and how effective this work has been within the sector:

Recognising what is good and is not good is where museums are looking to now [...] Community engagement and participation is more mainstream but still not across the board. I think that major museums particularly, have come a long way, some have still got a way to go (R13/EQ3/INT/2020: 21-22).

R13/EQ3/INT/2020 particularly considers the work of the larger museums such as the nationals as progressive. This is interesting as eight fairly large organizations participated in the *Our Museum* programme⁴⁸ and ideas of 'collaboration' are now more mainstream and less centre periphery (Lynch, 2011; Bienkowski, 2014,2016).

6.4.1. Findings one: some language is still binary

Thinking back to where the research began in 2013 is the language of invisible power still present (Lynch, 2011)? Or have the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011) and

⁴⁸ Glasgow Museums, National Museum Wales, Belfast Exposed, Hackney Museum, Bristol culture, Tyne and Wear Archives & museums and The Lightbox, Woking.

Our Museum (PHF 2014, 2016) been enough to break down an enduring '*Us and Them*' binary? (Bienkowski 2014, 2016). The respondents were confident that language was still problematic but they 'no longer use big words'(R37/EQ3/INT/2020) to describe participatory processes. However, the following section will show the same phenomenon as found in 6.2 and 6.3 where respondents feel they have removed the 'words' of invisible power (Lynch, 2011) but perhaps not in practice. In the analysis of their interviews, as with the survey, the language still positions the museum 'as the provider' (Lynch, 2011).

For example, R37/EQ3/INT/2020:05 describes the work of museums as 'deliver[ing] learning content, we also provide activities and engagement' (R37/EQ3/INT/2020:6-7):

We actively work in partnership with communities and other organisations to provide experiences that are meaningful to these audiences. (R37/SV/2020:09)

There is a contradiction in the premise of 'with' participation in this sentence as the respondent talks of working in partnership 'with' communities but then 'to' them, positioning the museum as the provider. This contradiction could [dis]positionally create a default practice of 'for' positioning as opposed to 'with' (Prentki and Preston, 2009; Simon, 2010). Had R37 said 'we together provide experiences', the inclusion of 'together' would alleviate the power in the positioning of 'provide', allowing for active agency among the community partners.

The same distancing of the community as outside of the museum is evident when R38 uses the word 'involving' (R38/ EQ3/INT/2020:15). Here the respondent describes the museum as being, '... at the head of work involving community'. This language is similar to its use in the HLF (2010) funding guidelines (5.1), which under closer inspection allows the museum discretion in how 'involved' the community is allowed to be, a position the participant is

not also privileged to (Foucault, 1977). This somewhat governmental power is not necessarily a bad thing if the power is expressly shared with the participant, after all Nina Simon advises that levels of participation need to be decided upon when thinking about how much power is being shared (Simon, 2010). However, as seen in 5.2.1 to avoid symbolic violence, the practitioners must be consistent in how they present their offer. What do they mean by involving the community? They must ensure the participant has agency to make an informed decision in how they experience that level of power (Freire, 1973).

The professionals interviewed know that there is fear in committing to participatory methods of collaborative work, which can also be seen in responses to question two R37/EQ3/INT/2020' ⁴⁹. Here they again use the adjective of 'involving' (HLF, 2010) when discussing the participatory relationship between the museum and the community. They explain that 'there is still a lot of fear around involving communities. Still, a lot of work is 'for' people, not 'with' them. (R37/EQ3/INT/2020:20-23). The respondents know that positioning of 'with communities' is more desirable than 'for' as throughout the interviews they reflect on previous practice as having positively moved away from this 'for' positioning. However, both (R13/EQ3/INT/2020) and (R37/EQ3/INT/2020) recognise that there is more to be done as the respondents find this 'for' practice as 'still in the realms of 'outreach' (R13/SV/2020:26-27). Similarly, (R38/EQ3/INT/2020:14) describes 'engagement' that does not go far enough and is tokenistic (Arnstein, 1968; Wilcox, 1986).

When thinking about this positioning R37 decides the word 'engagement' is now seen as problematic (R37/EQ3/INT/2020: 13):

⁴⁹ See Appendix H

I have actually gone away from the word engagement which is always problematic [as] its actually about working alongside people and sharing space with people, decision-making and ownership and all those kinds of things. (R38/EQ3/INT/2020:13-15)

The professionals interviewed were overtly conscious of the words they use. R38 here shows a shift away from the language problematised in 2012-2016 and is able to articulate that 'sharing space' and 'working alongside' people are part of the practice positioned as '*with*'. Perhaps this is because the practitioners are more reflexive about their participatory practices since embedding the recommendations of Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (PHF, 2014,2016)? Likewise, the practitioners revisited all spoke of a 'spectrum' of participation representing different levels of engagement and positioning on the part of the partner organisation or individual, within praxis. (R13/EQ3/INT/2020) joins this discussion by suggesting that museums should use the work of Nina Simon (2010) much more, 'as the distinctions [she] sets up' allows for the praxis of participation to be less confused (L73-75). They go on to use the example of 'participation' and 'collaboration' as having different engagement levels:

I think again that 'participation' does not suggest anything quite as strong as 'collaboration'. (R13/EQ3/INT/2020: 72-73)

Useful when looking at these semantics, Simon (2010) sets out levels of participation that are not better or worse than each other, but instead clearly defines that the level of power in decision-making should be thought of as a relationship between the participating community and the museum. These methods can also be seen in the influences of activist theatre (Boal 1973) and the art of the Situationists (Bishop 2012), with street reclamation

and encouragement of active participation in creative play which is better performed with clear boundaries (Simon, 2010).

6.4.1.1. A journey towards 'cultural rights'

The first stage of Enquiry 3 (2016/17) found that museum professionals were insecure in what language meant in practice, due to a lack of an alternative discourse. In 2020 the respondents expressly move away from this problematised language. They create new formations (Foucault, 1973) rooted in desires for cultural democracy to inform aspects of their work. This move bases decisions on cultural rights as determined by *The Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) to enable the museum to be more democratic in their decision-making processes. R38 describes this move:

We've started using 'cultural rights' [...]. I think there is still a paternalism that floats around with some of the language and that is problematic and [we] move away from it as well. I mean the bottom line is [...] are people comfortable in what they can get and what they can give? [...] Is it easy for them to find routes in [to the museum] and is it easy for them to decide what they want to do when they are, they are there? [...] [Participants] should be able to decide [their] own route in. Our job is to make that completely open and a variable as A further challenge is the sample size, which ideally would have incorporated a greater reach to survey respondents. In the time allocated for a PhD, this was not possible....]. We make that simple. I think participation is better than engagement. (R37/EQ3/INT/2020:65-78)

Participation as a cultural right that should look and feel like the site of museums, has an openness to it, where the participant can self-guide and choose what they want to do and when. R37 wants the museum to 'make it easy' for this to happen and for it to be 'simple'.

However, catering to differing variable pathways is perhaps 'easier said than done' (R13/EQ3/INT/2016). As discussed in the literature review (2.2) participant identity is not fixed and its fluidity makes it difficult to create bespoke pathways that would suit everyone and anyone throughout time (Bhabha, 1990,1994; Derrida,1978; Hall, 1996,1997,2000).

When thinking about assumptions and power, plus paternalism and expectations; language and discourse formations are not the only prohibitive factor in making cultural rights simple. There is also a participant fear in decision making, and histories of oppression that hinder access to cultural rights, through repeated cycles of a culture of silence (section 2.3.4, Freire, 1974). This silence is often compounded by governmentality (Foucault, 1977) and presumptions made over what is appropriate for participants to be exposed to and what is not (EQ2, 5.2.1). The problems of *Us and Them* as othering are still being performed, but the language has changed.

The next section (6.4.2) will review findings about how practitioners feel this shift in language and an agenda of cultural rights perform in practice. All the practitioners interviewed agreed that it has shifted (R13/EQ3/INT/2020:20) but when thinking about the *Us and Them* dynamics, how this performs as power is seen as more noticeable at an operational level.

6.4.2. Findings two: ambiguity in who has power

There were conflicted responses found in the survey of 2016/17, in terms of who had ultimate power in decision-making. 24% of respondents said that participants had the power and 52% said everyone should. However, when the questions were analysed together, it was found 48% agreed that ultimately the museum made the decisions. In 2020

there is much less confusion from the professionals who explain that there is power in the hierarchical structures of the museum (R38/EQ3/INT/2020) which means that currently the museum holds ultimate power in decision-making and they appear more reconciled in this. There is a sense here that museums have made their peace with this hierarchy since 2016/17 and view this power as part of their responsibility to represent national narratives and objects of importance (R37/EQ3/INT/2020). There also appears to be two motivating factors in this acceptance of decision-making as a responsibility.

The first is a duty of care, perceived as a moral imperative and part of the role of museums to ensure that interpretations are accessible to the widest possible audiences (R37/EQ3/INT/2020; R38/EQ3/INT/2020; R39/EQ3/INT/2020). The other is reputational responsibility. R38 explains that the museum has a responsibility to be an inclusive voice and that the challenge is that when left to it, participating communities 'write for themselves and what they are interested in', which is potentially excluding other communities:

We do not always get it right, but we are not producing it for you, we are producing it for other people and that's always been a really interesting factor for me in community engaged...community co-curated and community-led exhibitions and things like that. People will write for themselves and what they are interested in. We always have had to do a lot of work on ...whose it for? (R38/EQ3/INT/2020:164-168)

This dispositional duty of care that the museum has over the community to be impartial, inclusive, and accessible to other communities means that 'people writing for themselves' are prohibited from doing so. As Wray (2019) warns, this can lead the museum back to a

space of un-democratic neutrality. As with EQ2, the chance of censorship is also likely which will result in participating communities being subjected to symbolic violence - unless an acceptance of people writing for themselves (R38/EQ3/INT/2020:76) can be achieved.

6.4.2.1. Letting go of power and slowing down

The interviews identify an air of positive, but slow, change within the sector. Change is perhaps purposefully slowing down due to insights from *Our Museum* (2014-2018) and is, therefore, not a bad thing. Lynch, (2011) illustrated the negative effects of a short-term approach to community engagement, which was traditionally 'project by project' delivery with short term funding attached. It appears that museums are now more comfortable with a long-term slow approach that will instead embed cultural democratic participation at a deeper level (R38/EQ3/INT/2020; R39/EQ3/INT/2020). Within this slow change, all four respondents felt that participation as an ethos is much more accepted across staff working in museums. However, they felt that curators, and at times directors of the museum, still found it difficult to 'let go' of power. The reason for this is that power in community collaboration is not entirely understood, or clearly articulated, in terms of how museums can do it.

R39/EQ3/INT/2020 explains that:

The resistance has gone. The question has moved from 'why' are we doing this, to 'how' are we doing this? Everyone wants to work in this way – sometimes the perception of what that power is is hmmm... what is the word ...is vague. So, collections, who owns the collection... sometimes the curators find it difficult to let

go of interpretation or display, or re-interpretation. That is still there. But where we were five years ago it is a completely different place. (R39/EQ3/INT/2020:44-48)

There is a contradiction in R39's response, one that was likewise present in 2016/17 across the survey. There is a cogent desire to be positive in moves towards a best practice that is masking the reality. By stating that the 'resistance has gone' R39 suggests that a clear breakthrough has happened since 2016. The respondent wants to acknowledge that 'everyone wants to work this way' (R39/ EQ3/INT/2020:45) but that it is not quite across the board. There is uncertainty in the meaning of 'power', which they articulate as 'vague' (R39/EQ3/INT/2020:47) which begs the question how can the resistance be truly broken through?

All respondents described the curatorial aspects of museums as still finding it difficult to 'let go' (R39/EQ3/INT/2020; R37/EQ3/INT/2020; R38/EQ3/INT/2020; R13/EQ3/INT/2020). For example, R38 does not feel there has been such a 'dramatic change' (R38/ INT/2020: 2-7), describing a situation where good practice has always been recognised but that now there is more acknowledgement through concerted efforts to share knowledge:

I do not think that the processes and the participatory methods have dramatically changed if they've been good, they've been good, you know...the best example of that were people who were working in partnership with agencies, who really understood the communities they were working with and were showing this expertise with the community partners. I feel that that level of quality is actually there (R38//EQ3/INT/2020:2-7).

R38/EQ3/INT/2020 recognises that best practice in partnership working comes from those practitioners who understand the organisations they work with and approach the

participation from a 'with' positioning. This respondent goes on to explain that recognising this work in practice is partly the problem as it is difficult to quantify and therefore articulate. This adds to the argument in how participation is valued and why this may still be misunderstood in terms of 'power'. Cultural change and social/spatial justice can be articulated in the practice of museums but cannot easily be measured.

6.4.2.2. Operational resistance to sharing power

(R38/EQ3/INT/2020) adds that the hierarchical structure of the museum also plays a part:

It is still difficult because our governance structures are still very hierarchical, and they are still heavily weighted to the 'great and the good'. Particularly if you look at the bigger Nationals - I think on a project level we are and have been a lot less precious around decision-making. Making decisions about how budgets get used, most museums at whatever level of consultation will still be making the bulk of decisions about where that money is going. Basically, where the budgets and resource go are where the work is. So, our audiences do not get a huge amount of say at the moment of our programme on offer to them. We are involving them more and involve them in decisions around the programme- but not to [decide on the financial elements] ...that is still ... a long way to go yet. (R38/EQ3/INT/2020:118-129)

Both R37/EQ3/INT/2020 and R39/EQ3/INT/2020 reflect that decision-making by participating communities and professional partners is on a project level and that decisions around how the project is programmed, the cost and how it is spent ultimately come from the museum. When thinking about the heteronomy of museums then, this strongly suggests that the field of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993) would influence the content

produced due to the financial pressures, in some way. The practitioners all indicate that the museum is working towards further embedding decision-making at a central level, but that the structures are just not in place to manage these as yet. R39 describes the stage museums are at:

Paul Hamlyn Foundation embedded that process and now we are reviewing how that works. The stage we reached was that these forums gave voice to the community, but it was one step removed from central decisions. We are thinking about ways of making that more core. It is happening with young people. So young people are on our events group, are on our engagement decision-making group so with young people that is happening, but we need to revise and develop how we are doing that with other communities (R39/EQ3/INT/2020:38-43).

All the respondents referred to projects where participants have more say in programming and how money is distributed when they are youth-centred. Are museums more comfortable with offering decision-making to this demographic because they are of an age where the power to rescind is more naturalised? When thinking about the *Us and Them* dynamic, where the youth participant is 'them', the relationship is inherently paternalistic due to age and more pronounced responsibilities of a 'duty of care' over 'them'. The case studies of EQ1, EQ2 and EQ4 are all with adults and therefore perhaps that invitation to make core decisions is not so easily managed and the paternalism of *Us and Them* is more covert.

When thinking about partnership working in general, R38 creates a framework here that supports the recommendation of R13/EQ3/INT/2020 that British museums use more of Simon's (2010) methods. The respondent asserts that 'boundaries are ok', and that

openness is not always what is termed in this thesis as a culture of celebration and doesn't always have to mean 'yes'. However, R38 also expresses that this relationship is two-way, and the partners also need to understand the museum responsibilities for a true relationship to be fruitful. They go on to connect this relationship-building of openness as:

The actual thing might happen, but you are on a continuum. You have to build in ...sometimes you have to work with people for a year or a year and a half before you move into any kind of space before you do anything because you have to get to know each other first to build trust enough. To actually understand what is going to be beneficial for you both anyway.... (R37/EQ3/INT/2020:212-216)

R37 suggests a process of 'linguaging' (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004) here, as a reciprocal cross-cultural exchange that embraces boundaries and articulations of power to transition through them. They also determine that it takes time and planning to get to a shared place of what is beneficial for both parties.

6.5. Conclusion: Findings from enquiry three

Chapter six investigated how museum professionals working in the sector felt about the context in 2016/17 and then in 2020. Section (6.1) identified how language was being used in the rhetoric of museums at the time of enquiry. Section (6.2) focussed on findings from an online survey conducted with n39 museum participatory practitioners. In theory, the survey results demonstrated an understanding that the expectations of this language should be explicit, and everyone should be on the same ladder of participation before beginning. In 2016/17, there was little consensus over what the terminology of participation means in practice (Arnstein, 1969; Wilcox,1996) and when thinking about

power, there was again no consensus. However, when practitioners were asked who ought to have the power in decision making, this power was consistently understood as the museum's responsibility. This finding shows a discrepancy between what museums said they were doing and what practitioners were actually doing (Lynch, 2011, 2014). One key finding was that many professionals did not think that the language translated into praxis was 'always' possible or at least was 'easier said than done'.

Section (6.4) revisited (n4) survey respondents to find out how they feel about the language of participation and its practice in 2020.⁵⁰ The findings were that museums have come some way in embedding collaborative participation methods, but that this still had a 'way to go' (R13). There is movement in the changes to discourse formations journeying to a language of cultural democracy (R37). However, this is hindered by hierarchical governance and curators still holding on to ultimate decision-making, especially when financial decisions and programming are concerned. For sure, the professionals interviewed were conscious of the language they used, often catching themselves and altering it mid-sentence. But there is also a continued ambiguity in not so much who has the power in decision-making, but what that power is within the museum hierarchical space.

Overall, there appears to be less angst around participation, with the professionals here quite happy to undergo a developing journey toward cultural democracy, that may be slow but is in the right direction. This is encouraging, as the hidden, backstage dynamics of *Us and Them* binaries found in enquiry two are then in full view and acknowledged. In this healthier space of slow but steady movement, museums can more readily be transitioned

⁵⁰ See Appendix I for questions.

or, if the museum is brave, be 'languaged' (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004) into a space of co-curation.

A key finding is a conflict between the heteronomous fields of cultural production versus the autonomous desires for shared autonomy *with* participants. Results show that museums cannot (as yet) achieve both in the same space and place due to a political economy of structural governance, responsibilities of care and a fear of letting go. Chapter 7 will illustrate how these limitations perform in 2019 with enquiry four, *Museums Made Dark*.

As the final cycle of participatory action research, it will focus on the findings derived from EQ2 and EQ3 by examining whether non-selective curation is a suitable approach to co-curation with professional participants to increase decision-making and how the operational power performs in this context. The critical arts-based enquiry will pay particular attention to the operational power in play and whether this is mirrored in the practice of museum professionals' language and practice.

7. ENQUIRY FOUR: MUSEUMS MADE DARK, 2019

7.1 Introduction

When the survey of 2016 was conducted a lot was going on in museums. *Our Museum* had been in full implementation and was informing practice across the UK recommending training across all museum staff to embed participation, increase partnership working and to consistently come away from the language of invisible power (Lynch, 2011; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016). With providence, Bienkowski (2016) explained that it would take five years to embed institutional change within museums. This final enquiry asks several questions coming from the participatory action research: one, to what extent has this change been embedded by 2020 to be 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski, 2014, 2016). Two, to what extent can non-selective curation be performed meaningfully and effectively as a participatory method? Three, how does power perform in decision-making between the museum and the professional participant?

As the final stage of enquiry, Chapter seven will interrogate whether the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (PHF 2014, 2016) have been enough to break down an enduring '*Us and Them*' binary in museums by investigating how power performs when working with non-diverse professional participants (Bienkowski 2014, 2016). The chapter will begin with an analysis of interviews (7.2) conducted with the professional participants and curators, followed by auto-ethnographic observations (7.3). Moving forward the findings from enquiries two and three, this stage of the participatory action research will also seek to understand how power performs at an operational level in the partnership and whether the partners are othered in the same way as the volunteers in EQ1

and the community participants of EQ2. Does their professionalism and perceived non-vulnerability change the levels of 'duty of care' the museum feels towards them, and if so, how does this manifest?

7.2. Professional participant experiences of power

The following findings section (7.2.1) will outline how the professional participant felt in this situation, whereas (7.2.2) will think about how this power is performing and (7.3) will present auto-ethnographic observations. To produce the findings thirteen interviews (13/n18) were conducted, eleven of which involved artists participating in the creative output of the event. Two were with co-curatorial leads in the event partnership – one from the museum, and the other, the artistic director of the umbrella arts collective.

7.2.1. Community Agency at the heart of decision-making'?

7.2.1.1 Findings one. The novelty of creative freedom

When thinking in 2020 about how the museum aims for community agency to be at the heart of decision-making, non-selective curation should be able to open up how far this mission has or has not come and what other elements may hinder the effectiveness of such a model. Non-selective curation as discussed throughout this thesis is a participatory test method based in co-curatorial decision-making, transparency and radical openness (hooks,1996) with core elements that are tried and tested by theatre and contemporary arts since the 1970s. It is all about shared decision-making and the removal of *Us and Them* binaries (Boal, 1973; Prentki and Preston, 2009; Johnson, 2004; Bishop, 2012). The Creative Director (AC/EQ4/INT/2020) of the art collective explains that she too is influenced by theatre, but it is the Futurists, Situationists and DADA that have historically influenced their

work as they create a political statement of equity through contemporary 'happenings' and medium as the message (Bishop, 2012). This creative disposition permits participation between the event and the audience, developed with a non-hierarchical methodological approach to curation (AC/EQ4/INT/2020; Boal, 1973; Bishop, 2012). Their co-curative process is alike to non-selective curation as it does not 'select' what can or cannot happen, but instead curatorially facilitates, with a self-acknowledgement of shared expertise how what happens is produced together as an ensemble piece or devised production. This common understanding of non-selective curation addressed the differences in participatory stance found to disrupt meaningful participation in EQ2. This enquiry then acts as a control element to the research.

Working within this method the artists, on the whole, felt the museum had a disposition of 'allowance', and this was initially appreciated as a gift of creative freedom:

I felt like you guys were really, from the off, were just like, yeah, it is great, go with it. So, I feel like you gave me a lot of creative freedom in that. I did not really hear anything like, oh could you do it like this, from anyone. It was just going for it, you know. (R 11/EQ4/INT/2020: 1-3)

Gina's (R11/EQ4/INT/2020) comments reflect that she felt an acceptance of ideas. This connects to how Dylan felt in EQ2, that he experienced no 'disparagement' in the development of his ideas and that his creative freedom to make decisions was a welcome change from other projects he had participated in (DN/AVFH/INT/2014). The artists felt a similar increase in creative freedom, which contributed to elevated decision-making because the museum and co-curating partners were seen to say, 'yes instead of no' (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020):

It was kind of nice. They were just like, yeah, it sounds great you should try it. And I was Okay, well no-one has ever let me do that before, um and that was really nice. Because even though you have restrictions, you have people going just do it and we will sort out the restrictions later (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 33-36).

Similarly, Daffydd (R01//EQ4/INT/2020) felt as empowered as Gina, however, he makes a distinction between the preparation and the actual performance:

When it came to presenting the actual work. You know, there were no assumptions. It was not as if like, okay we know the general gist, and this is how we're going to realise it [...] it was actually really good that collaborative interaction on the day. (R01/EQ4/INT/2020:54-59)

Thinking about this distinction Daffydd offers, the next two sub-sections will show how equal the participants felt in the decision-making processes of *Museum Made Dark*.

7.2.1.2. Findings two. Equality in decision-making: 'my space'?

The artists felt 'there was always a conversation about it' (R07/EQ4/INT/2020:161) but ultimately, they were assigned the space they occupied. They were mostly comfortable with this arrangement as the type of space they needed had been considered well and if the space did not work an alternative was found. However, many of the artists (8/n11) felt it was difficult to make a proposal without knowing the museum space. If and when this was changed last minute, it was the 'biggest challenge' (R03/EQ4/INT/2020; R03/EQ4/INT/2020; R05/EQ4/INT/2020; R08/EQ4/INT/2020).

The assignment of spaces was experienced by 45% of the artists as marginalising their creative output. One artist (R08/EQ4/INT/2020) was given a completely different space to work with than their proposal had asked, without consultation. Another at first believed their work 'would pervade' the entire event but was 'reduced' (R06/EQ4/INT/2020) to an annexe. Both the artists whose performances required them to walkabout⁵¹, had initially been told they could perform on the balcony, but were then refused access on the night by security, altering their performance at the last minute. These last-minute alterations were perceived as somewhat disrespectful of the artistic process. But, as experienced ensemble performers, used to playing in non-traditional spaces (mostly for purposes of audience interaction), the artists went with it (R03/EQ4/INT/2020; R10/EQ4/INT/2020; R11/EQ4/INT/2020), chalking this challenge up as the museum having a 'different understanding of their worlds' (R03/EQ4/INT/2020:118-123). Tina expresses this frustration as:

...that was really difficult...you are just thrown into museum constrictions without really knowing...what are the actual restrictions... before going in and there was the time pressure? (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 89-91)

The following section will continue this discussion on feelings of equality and how 'curated' the participants did or did not feel.

7.2.1.3 Findings Three. My words, my room: an equal a partner or 'curated'?

Overall, the artists felt they were equal to the process when developing work in 'my space' (R01/ML/2020) but not when thinking about the wider event. They felt it was 'genuinely

⁵¹ 'Walkabout' is a particular style of festival performance based on Boal's 'Invisible Theatre, 1974.

collaborative' (R01/EQ4/INT/2020) but interestingly as with 'ownership shift', (Freire, 1974) questioned what actual curation there was (R06/EQ4/INT/2020:284). This should not be interpreted as a failing of non-selective curation and could indicate the opposite. When thinking about theatre devising methodologies the best devised work should feel as if no direction/curation has occurred (Jackson, 1993). On reflection Rob says that 'it's obvious now that [curation] was exactly what you were doing' (R06/EQ4/INT/2020:58):

This sums up a whole discussion around curation. I do not know what I feel about curation, I think it's often an inflated term for 'selection'. I mean, what actual curation took place? For me, and this is not a comment on this particular event...I am a bit old school, and the artists make the work, and you can dress up notions of curation around that as much as you like. Ultimately the artist has the vision for the work itself. The creation of the event was on a larger scale, organizing those and making them work together. I would not wish to be part of that, to be honest, but I felt I was part of that to be fair. We were involved in discussions with you [the artist-researcher] mostly, but I would expect that. I would expect to be part of that process. I was there to deliver work. (R06/EQ4/INT/2020:49-57)

Rob's reflections on the process here describe well the desired outcome of non-selective curation. He quite rightly identifies that curation could be an 'inflated' term for selection, but then questions what selection 'actually took place'. He notes that this is not what happened to recall that there was a focus on 'curation of the event on a larger scale, organizing those and making them work together' (L54). This is helpful, as his experience rightly expresses the aims of the method. He adds that he would expect to be part of the process and not excluded from it.

Tina (R07/EQ4/INT/2020) felt quite differently. She felt equal 'as a maker' but not 'as a participant' as she 'didn't really know what was happening'. She adds that she also didn't feel equal 'when asking questions...but as a maker you just get on and do... and then you've done your thing. But if you are a participant, or an observer or a selector of your own work, then [...] ...what's actually happening? No one really knows.' (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 134- 140)

The uncertainty that this manifested was described by Daffydd (R01/EQ4/INT/2020) as a problem between the size of the organisation and his expectations:

Having worked with [the collective, which is a small organization] ... there is a translation isn't there. And I think the larger you get the slower...not slower ...when its more independent organisation it is a more immediate conversationand I found it was ...um yea...less, nimble I guess with [the museum] ...it was just a bigger machine, it felt less personable, I think. (R01/EQ4/INT/2020:12- 23)

'Time' again appears to be an obvious explanation as to why things may not be running smoothly. However, the research finds that Daffydd is more on target with his deliberation that the smaller organisation can be more nimble than a large national museum. This nimbleness will be a subject returned to in 7.3.

7.2.1.4. Findings four. Creative freedom or empowerment-lite?

Drawing on from Daffydd's (7.1.1.1) suggestion that his feelings of allowance were not felt throughout the process; how the museum sustains 'yes or no' decisions must be considered. Tina discusses here that during her decision-making processes she was initially led to believe she had creative freedom but found that this freedom was not offered 'across the board' by all museum personnel:

[the arts organisation] in general were more like, okay 'let us try and get you there'; or 'let's try and get something similar to what you want'. More of a ...like you know, how you work with artists and... compromising. And then there was like the technical staff who were just like 'no'. And your kind of going...Ookkaaay. (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 105-109)

Tina (R07/EQ4/INT/2020) felt confused and unsupported during the development of her installation as she was receiving contrary information by the museum departments and the co-curatorial partners. It was apparent that not all the actors involved were on the same page regarding participatory processes after all (Simon, 2010). The co-curatorial team offered creative freedom that could not or would not be supported by the museum, such as already stretched capacities of the technical team. Tina follows on, that she truly believes that the willingness to say 'yes' was sincere by the museum, but that they did not necessarily know how to do it:

I think it was cool because the museum was like, this sounds great...this sounds great. But [...] did not necessarily understand what it takes to get to that point. (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 102-104).

This can easily manifest as the participant deeming that the museum does not know what they are doing. For example, R07 further discusses this problem:

It was nice that there was a lot of creative freedom...umm and I think when you are an artist trying to think of a concept and idea that is really difficult. So...just having that...it was quite nice, but then I think... maybe the museum didn't quite know how to manage that amount of creative freedom? (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 8-11)

This is interesting when thinking about the balance of power here. In a co-curatorial situation that should be embracing transparency and radical openness, suspicion brewing that the museum may not know 'how to handle creative freedom' is a significant challenge that could have been overcome by a conversation. It begs the question, why was the expertise of the museum questioned but not the art collective's? In the next section, the motivation behind how this confusion transpired is explained through the reflections of the lead co-curating partners.

7.2.1.5. Findings five: A rigidity: process cannot elicit a 'yes'

In interview (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020:100-127) explains the reason that 'no' is not always fully explained to participants, as at times this is too complicated:

I feel like I kind of struggle [when working with] the museum and kind of external artists and contractors because I have a real understanding and respect for what the museum can and cannot do. Because, you know, there are barriers, there are conservation barriers, there are resource, huge resource barriers, there are financial barriers for the museum. But what the museum does have is a lot of awesome people working for it and some phenomenal spaces and some even more phenomenal collections. So, the kind of the playground of what artists can do in there is... you know, beyond anything else that can offer really [...]
(MSM/EQ4/INT/2020:100-108)

While identifying the barriers museums face in offering full creative freedom, MSM clearly articulates that creative freedom can be accommodated if the output has already been formulated. What cannot be accommodated is the unknown creative output that a site-

responsive artist devising their work in the space needs to be allowed. This is a fundamental difference in the development of the output that explains where the friction between the professional creative and the museum found themselves. The museum felt that being open and transparent in their boundaries would be enough to inform the artists what they could and could not do. However, the artist did not know what they wanted to do or not until they were in the space:

So, being really open and allowing people to come in and play with the spaces is not as simple as opening the doors and saying come on in and tell us what you want to do. You know, ... marrying the expectation for me was really important, without stifling the creativity. So, where we start as an internal team is to tell me what this is, and we might only be able to deliver this. But at least we know where the ambition is and we can get the museum to come along with us and test things, and kind of manage the risk I guess really. So, for me, that kind of opening gambit was please, tell us what you want to do and how you want to do it, and you will be frustrated by some of these processes because you won't understand. Because I didn't understand when I first started working in the museum. (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020:109-119)

MSM here repeatedly asks 'tell us what you want to do' (L110), 'tell us what you want to do and how you want to do it' (L116). This repetition feels infused with frustration, a frustration felt during the process which also shows that the museum was prepared for radical openness and for a conversation about what was and was not possible. This was frustrating because this conversation did not (could not) arrive.

MSM later explains that they would have liked more from the art collective (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020: L144), but that perhaps the conversation about that wasn't as clear as it could have been. It is to the museum's credit that the learning from this is part of the process of 'linguaging' through experiences of unspoken assumptions that create conflict (Phips and Gonzalez, 2004):

ummm... I... I probably would have liked more from them, I think. I would have liked them to push the boundaries a bit more. There's definitely... there's so much I'd do differently now in hindsight [...] I probably frightened them... do you know, they were probably like well what do we give you and what do we not give you? So... it's hard to articulate really, what more I would have expected from them really at that point. And I guess I was telling them, well you've got free reign, but you haven't really. Whereas what I meant by that really was you have got free reign, but some of this might not be possible because of the barriers and I will guide you through that. I guess, is what should have been the kind of emphasis, I guess in the beginning (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020:144-153)

Through the analysis of EQ4, what the museum 'would have liked more of' was certainties before the artists entered the museum space. If the project had more time embedded into it for the artists to try different ideas and devise ahead of time, then the museum could have achieved more clarity about what could and could not be achieved. However, what occurred was a situation where the museum needed definitive answers which the participants did not have. In the following section, this will be discussed as disempowering to the participant and akin to a cookie-cutter approach mentality.

7.2.1.6. Findings six: A fluidity in non-selective curation works in opposition to the definitive cookie cutter

In response to how they experienced the early stages of the project curation, the art collective (AC/EQ4/INT/2020) reflect on how this lack of clarity over parameters was experienced by them. However, it must be noted that the lack of clarity came from both parties due to different understandings of what their processes require.

As part of the creative process, the artists were mostly responding to the space and performances of their peers. This is the same way as a community participant or volunteer did when non-selective curation was applied in EQ1 and EQ2. The difference is that the artist can articulate this process as part of their creative method and indeed praxis, as site-responsivity. Most came with an expectation that there would be more restrictions than they experienced and were 'pleasantly surprised' (AC/EQ4/INT/2020) by how open the museum was:

Yes, it was quite a surprise ... [...] I did not feel like that was very rigid it was more fluid, and I was pleasantly surprised at how much room there was for ...it felt like everyone was trying their best to accommodate everything and it felt really...fine. Once it was in process. [...] It started with this rigidity in a sense which, I was then pleasantly surprised by the level of flow and fluidity overall in a sense. (AC/EQ4/INT/2020:29-35)

The arts collective here discusses the process overall as 'more fluid' (L29) than expected. However, there is a hesitancy in AC's speech patterns referring to the 'beginning part of the process' (AC/EQ4/INT/2020: L32). This is described as a 'rigidity' in that they felt like more of a facilitator (instead of co-curator) of a pre-conceived idea (Lynch, 2011):

I think it comes back to the point that when you are curating you are imagining how things will go but that [had] already been taken care of – so within that what curation can you actually do...especially when 'it's got to be in this area, and it's got to look like this!' That is not what I would consider curation, that's what I would consider facilitation. You have got the artist there; they have been given the space and then we just put them in that space. (AC/EQ4/INT/2020/Q4/2020: L82-86)

What was confusing was a lack of consistency in the terminology used and degrees of allowance in how decisions were made:

The co-curation regarding choosing artists from proposals provided was done well and was inclusive, it felt that everyone was engaged and connected at this stage. I think the problem for me initially was being given a theme to work with, I would have liked there to have been more openness/discussion at this earlier stage of the project. The style of working we have placed a lot of emphasis on this initial vision/concept and even though I understand the museum has an agenda, it did contradict our working style to the extent that I felt more like a facilitator rather than a curator. Maybe there could be a system where the more open proposals are encouraged and within those proposals, certain objectives that need to be met by the museum are incorporated. Such as "ensuring there is an educational aspect" even though I felt the museum team were willing to take risks and step out of their comfort zone, within the process, I think the unwillingness at this initial stage was limiting in terms of idea generation (AC/EQ4/INT/2020:122-133).

Interestingly, the arts company here allude to a similar philosophy to the HLF requirements (2010) for early engagement between participants and the organisation to inspire feelings

of ownership. Likewise, MSM explains the frustration at having to give rigid parameters, which in hindsight could have been addressed by more time. As the co-curating professional partner, the collective felt that they had very little creative freedom as the museum had already pre-decided much of the look and feel of the event before their involvement; in many ways because they have to due to the three-year lead-in.

As artists they would normally have responded to the site first but felt the museum was instead placing the commissioned artists into already designated shapes, performing as a cookie-cutter (Lynch, 2011). This felt dis-empowering and somewhat confusing as the event was marketed as 'in collaboration with [the collective]⁵²' and therefore held reputational risk for the participant. This collaborative stance meant something different to each partner and neither felt confident enough nor had the shared language to clarify their expectations⁵³.

In response to this criticism, the museum identifies a problem within their institutional structure (also referred to by R38/EQ3/INT/2020) that programming is completed at least three years in advance, which means it is very difficult to include professional participant early engagements, or at least till now.

The rigidity the Creative Director describes could also be due to the hierarchy of decision-making that was apparent in EQ4 and interestingly mirrors that of *Bricks and Mortar* (EQ2).

Project	<i>Museum Made Dark</i> , 2019	<i>A Bricks and Mortar</i> , 2013/14
Ultimate decision-making powers	Museum Events Team	A Refugee organisation

⁵² As stated on the publicity for the event.

⁵³ This lack of confidence in clarifying expectations will be further discussed in sections 7.2.2

Collaborative decision-making powers on the creative whole (subject to approval from the lead organization).	Museum Events Team & Arts organisation	R'org & Heritage Learning Facilitators (x 3 artists)
Decision-making powers on their creative output only (subject to approval).	Commissioned artists (participants)	Community partners (participants)

Figure 12. Hierarchy of decision-making in the case studies.

Within this structure, the early 'rigidity' experienced by the Creative Director was not the same as by the participating artists, as these early discussions were behind closed doors (Cooke and Kothari et al, 2002; Cornwall, 2004; Hicks and Mohan et al, 2004). However, as will become clear inconsistent messages and a lack of clarity in the hierarchy of decision-making created the same confusion and disempowerment. Decisions thought to have been made by the participants were overturned by those with ultimate decision-making powers, at times unbeknown to the participants until late in the process.

7.2.1.7. Findings seven: A lack of time and being in different 'worlds'

Unaware of these frictions in decision-making, frontstage of the production most of the artists found communication with the museum 'was really good' and that there was 'lots of mutual understanding...' (R02/EQ4/INT/2020:118-123). However, for some, there was an overt lack of 'understanding of each other's worlds [... which] was quite territorial' (R03/EQ4/INT/2020:07). There was frustration that decisions would change and be reneged upon resulting in feelings of being 'trivial' (R06/EQ4/INT/2020:30-31). Some of the artists also discussed feeling intimidated by the space and institution itself (AC/EQ4/INT/2020) and

realised their own expectations were problematic. This difference in understanding of different 'worlds' created numerous problems for all involved as assumptions were made that could not be followed through. When thinking about these differences these could be interpreted as different cultures and the process of languaging offered by Phipps and Gonzalez, (2004) seems an appropriate measure to help in the bridging of these differences in a transparent exchange of knowledge, as 'language' in the future.

There was very little time in the run-up to the event to develop work responding to the museum *in* the museum. This was very difficult for some of the artists who work site-specifically as they had to imagine the museum and respond to that remotely. This required inserting their creation into the pre-determined shape at the end of their creative process, as opposed to this output evolving from within the space. Notwithstanding expectations potentially misshaping the result, this work-around, though frustrating, was not impossible.

Time was frequently considered by the participants as a problematic factor when discussing the 'get in'⁵⁴. This event had only one hour forty minutes to install sixteen acts with accompanying technical equipment and accoutrements. To express how challenging this could be, events on this scale would normally block out two full days for such an endeavour. This is an incredibly tight turnaround for the museum staff to facilitate as the technical equipment and security measures needed to be in place before the public could be allowed into the space. To dramatically alter visual and auditory experiences they hoped to achieve, the amount of work involved was fertile ground for emotional labour (Fineman, 2003; Munro, 2014).

⁵⁴ The 'get in' is a theatre term for the setup of an event.

Overall, this was managed very well by the museum, however when discussing the challenges of the 'get in', Rob described how he held back from 'bothering' the technicians. He also repeatedly used language to describe his needs as 'trivial' (R06/EQ4/INT/2020:27). His response here is a fair example of how most of the artists felt as they could see that the museum was stretched to provide for their needs:

This goes back to my problem of holding back from approaching the technicians. If there was one person, that I [could] say to, 'I need this in place now', they would have made that happen and dealt with the personalities. Because if they are getting everyone at them, you know then they are having to manage all of that on a personality level which they should not have to. (R06/EQ4/INT/2020: 65- 68)

Rob uses language that shows he feels less than equal to the museum, explaining how he felt 'trivial' and that he did not want to be 'bothering' them. Had he felt in a position of privilege, of equal value, he would have felt his work needing the same attention as any other professional, but in this situation, he does not and instead express his feelings of separation and marginalisation. He also alludes here to the emotional labour (Kidd et al, 2014) that was being conducted by all museum staff involved in their earnest desire to provide for the participants and protect them and their reputations (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020). This is one of the junctures where power was pronounced as the museum took on this responsibility instead of taking the opportunity to delegate. The artists, who are used to working as an ensemble expected to pitch in but in this setting, they felt that this was prohibited. The power in this was felt by R07 who suggests a model of working that would ease the pressure the museum experienced and would allow the artist partner to also feel

more included in the process, a direct objective of the *Community Engagement Strategy 2015-2020* and *Events Strategy 2018-2023*:

Artists could have particular roles on the night, or things like that, which just makes ...it makes you feel a bit more involved in the curation aspect. (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 284-286).

When thinking about embedding participation across all parts of the museum, working as per R07's suggestion could be exciting. During *Museum Made Dark* the technical team were overly stretched while delivering a high-quality experience. It is interesting that in the next event the technical department reverted to no communication with participants and refused to collaborate with any of the co-curatorial team. This is somewhat understandable as the structures were not yet in place to support a co-curated event, however, it clearly identifies how power performs in an institution trying to do too much, too soon. This resulted in a significant number (5/n11) questioning whether the lack of time and money given to the event was a reflection on how much they were valued as artists, as will be discussed in the following section.

7.2.1.8 Findings eight: A lack of respect - but who was boss?

This difference in working methods was interpreted by R01 as a conflict between the intimacy of a small organisation co-curating with a large museum (R01/EQ4/INT/2020). This was confusing as to who was the ultimate decision-maker, or boss. Initial conversations were good but 'felt' different when situated in the museum. Some artists already had a good working relationship with the arts organisation and knew what to expect from them, therefore did not need to communicate with them all that much. The artist participant felt,

- as discovered in *Bricks and Mortar* - more creatively supported by the co-curator performing non-selective curation, than the organisation itself. This feeling left them with the opinion that the museum should be more 'respectful' (R07/EQ4/INT/2020; R08/EQ4/INT/2020; R10/EQ4/INT/2020; R04/EQ4/INT/2020):

It was not necessarily the artists or what was happening that was underrepresented ...but...um, or the co-curators. It was more about the museum. Getting them to treat us as people ...as well as artists. (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 213-217)

R07 also speaks of respect earlier in their interview, explaining that: "I respect the museum and everyone there [...] but it's got to be the same respect back" (R07/EQ4/INT/2020: 110-114).

This question of respect from the museum was also considered in terms of 'value' with R08 left questioning how much the museum valued the event. To defend the museum here, this particular participatory response to the institution 'as disrespectful' or 'taking a loan' of them can also be found in EQ1 and EQ2. In each of the enquiries, there has been a point where the participant, who feels the power achieved in being given creative freedom in unexpected circumstances, criticises the lead organisation as disrespectful, uncaring, and lacking in professionalism. Paulo Freire, (1974) discusses this phenomenon in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as an 'ownership shift' which can initiate these feelings as and when the 'oppressed' feels they have newly found power and the 'language' (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004; Freire, 1974) in which to exercise that power.

On the flip side, the museum professional feels acute disempowerment when *Us and Them* shifts to *Them and Us* as the power has negatively turned and often those in 'ownership shift' close ranks disallowing the perceived 'oppressor' access to change the dynamic.

Within this milieu the museum continued to try and say 'yes', offering at times more power than they withheld to the participant artist and the participating arts organisation. This solution to the problem left the museum professionals reputationally exposed and easily undermined by the participants and they, the museum, found themselves positioned as *Them* - while the *Us and Them* binary switched (Freire, 1973).

The institutional structure is also not yet able to navigate differences between the two worlds of an autonomous vs heteronomous field of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993), creating disparities between expectations and deliverables. The museum here acknowledges that more time must be embedded to build respectful and mutually understanding relationships. When considering the current policy of one *Our Museum* organisation (NMW, 2015, 2017, 2018) they are however more inclined to do this with community partners and not professional partnerships. In this case study, most of the artists had already achieved mutual understanding with their artist peers; the unknown variable was the museum as the oppressor, in a Freirean context.

7.2.2. Two 'back stages': how power performs on different pages, skirting the margins

Before finishing up these case study findings the research will consider how a 'duty of care' performed as symbolic power. Duty of care was performed by the museum in its measures to manage risk. This included mitigating business risk, reputational risk and trying to have a clarity of responsiveness. These measures exercised as symbolic power show that in ways the museum 'has a way to go' to achieve desires for meaningful participation. (NMW, 2018; R13/EQ4/INT/2020; R37/EQ4/INT/2020; R38/EQ4/INT/2020; R39/EQ4/INT/2020).

7.2.2.1 Duty of care supersedes transparency: performing as paternalistic power

Within the context of a duty of care, MSM discusses why museum specific information is held back:

I guess [I'm] kind of protecting them ... they do not necessarily need to know all the ins and outs of [...] conservation. Because a lot of experts at the museum will talk in a language that is relevant to their area, so conservation for example... or tech... tech in a heritage building kind of way, will not necessarily [know the tech] that the artists would have been used to seeing. So, not all of that is needed to be shared, because actually it is really complex. I find myself wading through what I need to know because we are all talking a different language. When I talk to the conservation team, they would rather I didn't bring 500 people in and get them drunk around the exhibitions. But they are comfortable with the fact that we have to do that, and we have to evolve. I would rather that I did not have to think about decibels for x amount. [...] because things will start bouncing around in cases! So, I guess I was... my concern was that letting them go and decide [on their creative ideas] and come back, would be utterly soul-destroying for them if I then went, "no none of that, do you know what I mean?" (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020)

MSM here talks explicitly about the challenge of subject-specific language. She does not want to put more pressure on the participant to have to translate museum modes of thinking and doing, which could be confusing. Instead, she hopes to alleviate this pressure, but by taking away the participant's agency to try and learn and language (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004) this protective measure creates 'uncertainty', empowerment-lite practice and 'ownership shifts' in *Us and Them*.

When thinking about transparency and cultural democracy this can be seen as performing a paternalistic power in deciding what information to give or not give the participating actors. It at the same time positions both the museum and the practitioner in a situation of emotional labour (Fineman, 2003; Munro, 2014). When the museum does share this information, the artist has full knowledge of the reasons why the museum has said 'no' and will accept it or find creative ways to navigate the problem. However, when they do not have the full information, they have a [dis]position to 'push' the boundaries (R07/EQ4/INT/2020; R04/EQ4/INT/2020) which is a direct threat to the reputation of the museum.

7.2.2.2. Reputational risk performing as Us and Them power

As an autonomous site of cultural production this would not be so much of a problem and in some ways would appear radical and a little punk, but in a museum with strict conservational and ethical boundaries, this 'push' of restrictions (discussed in 7.3) cannot be performed without potentially dire consequences to collections, participants, and audiences. The museum then has good reason to retain ultimate decision-making powers, as the structure of the 'field of cultural production' they occupy does not enable a mixed heteronomous/ autonomous mode of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993). The political economy of its government-sponsored model holds the museum in rigid parameters in responsibility to provide care, protection, and increased power to make the very decisions they cannot offer out.

At the outset, the reputational risk experienced by the museum was shared with complete transparency. The risk they experienced was mainly financial, however MSM shared these

challenges with the professional partners at the very beginning of the process to set the parameters of working. This was not hidden as a backstage censoring of decisions, as seen in EQ2. The professional participants did however feel reputational risk that they did not share with the museum. This lack of communication created a reversed *Them and Us* positioning that the museum was unaware of until it was too difficult to correct. This dynamic left the museum powerless in being able to damage control the risk because they did not know.

(AC/EQ4/QSR/20200) reflects that they are now aware they should have spoken up about how they were feeling, which was also manifesting as the participants undermining the museum and making 'backstage decisions' in direct conflict with the museum:

There were also many personal realisations for me around communicating more effectively, taking on too much and speaking my truth, for example, I do not think I communicated fully enough my concerns [...].

The main issue was that most of the artists felt a reputational concern regarding the ticket price (£23). They found this prohibitive to most of the artist community, friends, and family but on a moral standing they considered it confusing that the museum, normally having a free entrance for all had created an 'exclusive party'. AC was particularly concerned about this aspect:

Yes, I was concerned about our reputation about [the ticket price] to be honest. Mainly because of the timing [as] we had another project in the pipeline that we were really selling the idea of inclusive and free access to arts and culture, so the timing was not ideal to put something out there that was very expensive, just as we were kind of launching this big all access to free arts and ...culture and so ummm

yeah, maybe if we had done it this year? It would not have been that bad ...but it was the timing for me really it was not ideal. (AC/EQ4/INT/2020: L54-56)

When asked 'Did anyone say anything to you about this?' AC/EQ4/INT/2020 replied that:

Yes. Yes. It was the biggest, most [thing people commented on]. Yeah, people did say things not, they did not elaborate, it wasn't this kind of full feedback. There were just comments made let say, a lot of comments made and that was concerning, that was worrying. AC/EQ4/INT/2020:61-63)

It was not only the co-curators that felt this but the artists R07/EQ4/INT/2020; R10/EQ4/INT/2020 and R11/EQ4/INT/2020 all commented on this disparity of free access and exclusivity. Ultimately this was a confusing message to both audiences and participating actors:

It felt like a big jump I think because I just was thinking about our reputation of being 'free' but also the museum has that. The museum offers this incredible stuff for free and that is a problematic thing... (AC/EQ4/INT/2020:61-63)

In response to this reputational risk, the museum had to self-generate the income to support the pilot event, as there was no budget for the exercise. This was understood by the arts collective but had not been filtered across to the other participating artists, creating an unequal level where some were 'informed' and others not:

In a perfect world, it would be a funded programme. And it would not be about profit-making. I made it really clear from the beginning that it would never be a profit-making program and it would be about [being a] self-funded element, initially

[until a track record could receive external funding or grants]. (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020: 111-116).

For MSM/EQ4/INT/2020, the event was about the social benefits and really about engaging the artists. The museum had attempted to be explicit about the financial situation decisions, but this message simply was not believed by some of the participants who later, in interview, expressed that they could not fathom how a museum with a priceless collection could be without excess funds (R10 /EQ4/INT/2020). This is often a problem museums face, as in many ways they are skilful at appearing less poverty-stricken than they are, again I would argue, out of a duty of care to provide a good, trusted and accessible service.

(MSM/EQ3/INT/2020) explains that had this reputational risk been discussed before the ticket price had been announced they could and would have addressed this by reducing the size of the event to be better managed within the financial constraints and therefore reduced the price:

[It] would have been good to know [our participant] reaction to that right at the beginning, because that is a conversation that we could have had. Rather than be... prescriptive, but it was not. It was a conversation at the beginning. Whereas if [they would] said, let's bring down the content because the cost undermines our whole ethos, I would have got that. But ...then that is really difficult for [them] to manage that. I totally get that. (MSM/EQ3/INT/2020: 516-524)

The participants did not have the confidence to discuss their fear and as (MSM/EQ3/INT/2020) rightly acknowledges, this situation would have been a really tricky conversation to broach. They perceived it as something hindering the flow of communication between them and the museum. The museum was explicit in its aims for

transparent conversation, but participants felt unable to do so and were instead resistant to ask for what they wanted. The creative director, in interview, states she felt somewhat intimidated by the institution at the time and could have been more vocal, so would be more open about her concerns in the future. This friction between the museum and the participants' inability to communicate is reflective of the governmentality of the space and expectations that arise from this. The space has a negative impact on the participant who feels subservient to the air of governmentality and lacks the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1993) of museum specific contextual language to voice their concerns. This is also difficult for the museum to predict and may only be resolved as museums and their participants commit to building an open and shared language.

7.3. Auto-ethnographic Observations: different worlds

This section will auto-ethnographically present three observations that illustrate examples of how power performs when *Us and Them* flips. It will present two episodes where the professional participant felt they had to push boundaries to preserve their reputation instead of communicating these needs to the museum. This is a similar situation found as in the backstage performances of power in EQ2, where the organisation did not communicate their reputational fears transparently to the participants, executing as undermining decisions and empowerment-lite (Lynch, 2011).

7.3.1. Observation one. Museum mitigations: duty of care to protect participants from risk

The museum was very explicit in its aims to alter a historical reputation for saying “no” to the artist community (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020). The events team explained very clearly that the process of working together would be difficult as the museum is learning to work in new, more inclusive participatory ways. They would try to be as accommodating as possible, but at times they would have the ultimate decision-making power as they held the financial and business risk.

The transparency the museum embedded in the participatory process was explicit and shows that museums have come a long way since 2014. This opening gambit is completely in line with *Our Museum's* aims of moving towards 'clarity' and culturally democratic models of working that are less internally focused. In the room, there were the co-curatorial partners, several museum specialist collection curators, the head of events and the researcher-practitioner. There was an emphasis placed on being one team 'together' (no longer *Us and Them*) to show the arts community that the museum wants to work *with* them, not just for them or indeed, against them. This would entail a united front.

It is unfortunate then that as the project progressed, this 'togetherness' became fractured with the co-curatorial partners and the artists instead forming a unit of their own 'togetherness' that was separated from the museum. Within this new *Them and Us* dynamic the artist community, used to pushing boundaries, made independent decisions that were in direct conflict to museum policy. Further to this, problems occurred when promises were made by the co-curators to the participating artists that the museum could not deliver on, inadvertently creating what was perceived as empowerment-lite (Lynch, 2011). This gave the impression to some of the participants that the museum was out of their depth, further

undermining the 'together-ness', to a point that many did not recognise that *Museum Made Dark* was a museum product, but one they merely hosted.

As an institution that has a reputational responsibility to all clients and users, this was difficult to undo and I observed that the museum was more disposed to fixing the problem by taking on more responsibility for the issues rather than risking the creative partners' reputations. This could be interpreted as being conflict-averse, however, I observed that the museum felt a duty of care to their participant's reputations as a priority and disadvantaged themselves by protecting them.

The museum has a [dis]position to take full responsibility for the mishaps in all communications with participants and in their interview (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020) discusses how balancing the reputations of both parties while trying to fix problems was intense (MSM/EQ4/INT/2020). She explains a desire to understand the artist community and is more open to recognising that the museum is a challenging environment than considering that perhaps the partner organisation is likewise challenging. There were many instances I observed where representatives of the museum were found apologising to artist participants for negative instances they were not responsible for.

When thinking about power, the museum had gifted too much to the participants in their aim to offer shared authority without clearly detailing what those expected responsibilities were. This left the arts collective in a situation of reputational risk, where they did not know how far they were expected to exercise autonomy. Further to this, the museum was at reputational risk because they found themselves fighting fires in a heteronomous responsibility that was being compromised by participants working autonomously. The artists were not aware of the reasons for museums working at different speeds or why they

could or could not do what the artists were [dis]positionally used to. This is the same dynamic the museum practitioner facilitating participatory work found themselves in in EQ1 and EQ2.

7.3.2. Observation two. Whose project is it anyway?

An example of one of these 'fires', might appear at first a slight transgression for the art collective but was extremely problematic to the museum. As the opening was looming, the collective created social media content without this being approved by the museum. For an arts company, they did exactly what they would normally do in any other situation and being unaware of the strict protocol did this as a matter of course, because they could do it quicker. The problem occurred when they did not use accessible language required of the museum or include museum-based funding logos. Further, these announcements unintentionally marketed the event as belonging to the collective, not the Museum. The implications of this are vast reputationally (for both parties) and risks complications with the funders of the event and the future success of a new museum brand.

This undermined the museum's pilot with much of the audience and many of the artists involved believing that *Museum Made Dark* was merely hosted by the museum and was actually organised by the local arts collective that had been hired to participate.

The motivation for releasing social media information before the museum could, was due to being more aware of their audiences than the museum. The arts collective understood the 'surprise' element of the event was getting lost underneath a lack of any information and they reputationally attempted to correct this. However, the [dis]position of the arts collective as being used to having autonomy and a 'just do it' attitude cannot so easily be

rectified in the museum whose processes are infused with a statutory duty to serve their audiences in an accessible way (Bourdieu, 1993).

7.3.3. Observation three. “Just doing it!”: Decisions made that should not be made

The theme was galactic space, and it was mid-July. Light pollution became a hindrance to the creative ideas that had automatically visualised black holes, night skies and darkness. As part of their remit, the collective's vision was to ensure the event looked busy as a 'carnival of starlit peculiarities' (AC/PROPOSAL/2020). In an aim to do their best and populate the museum with more available artists, the collective invited previously unselected artists to join, without the knowledge of the museum. There are two problems with this. First, participating artists saw that other participants had 'snuck new artists in' (R07/EQ4/INT/2020) undermining the process of the open call and the museum in doing so. As a government-sponsored organisation, the museum must be seen to be following procurement policies as open and with a fair selection process. Bringing artists in under this radar contravened government directives.

The museum must also comply with correct risk assessments and health and safety information for all artists involved, including a signed contract of regulations for bringing in creative work. This increased the workload of the museum to conduct these as last-minute requests, adding stress to an already stretched experience.

In an autonomous space and as an organisation that does not need to operate within these requirements, the art collective would have been 'as nimble' as they needed to be. Making the right creative curatorial decisions to get audiences through the door - without having

to be concerned about the fair selection and security aspects. However, in the setting of a museum that is publicly funded and housing priceless collections, these ethical restrictions cannot be crossed unproblematically. The friction between these two ways of working, and in this setting, became exhausting and confusing for all involved.

7.4. Conclusion to enquiry four

When thinking about whether the museum 'others' professional participants, the answer is yes, the participants did experience being othered. However, this othering is different to that experienced by the volunteers of EQ1 and the community participants of EQ2. The professional participant is still treated as needing a duty of care that is somewhat paternalistic as the museum does not want to overwhelm them with museum specific language, hindering the process of meaningful participation. Further to this, the participating artists felt a distinct lack of respect that seemed acutely positioned in the realms of *Us and Them* when their creative freedom, initially exalting, was then constricted or reversed. What EQ4 shows, even more, is that when participation is performed *in* the museum space with professional partners, the participant also 'self-others' (Freire, 1974). In 2020, this indicated that anyone who was not the museum was still othered in a somewhat paternalistic sense and that the museum itself is restricted from creating a 'no longer *Us and Them*' situation (Bienkowski, 2014,2016) by the professional participants who, out of their own sense of reputational risk, will separate from the museum.

The co-curatorial balance between participants is still impacted by a duty of care performed over the participant by the museum, and a duty of care is performed entirely by the museum without reciprocated care by the participant. Therefore, radical openness and

linguaging is not occurring as per what appears to be the core aims of an activist, culturally democratic museum. Non-selective curation can only go so far and while there was a positively received 'creative freedom' unexpectedly experienced by the artist participants, they felt that this 'freedom' was then revoked, changed, or compromised by the museum that did not know how to facilitate it.

The museum also perceived they had a greater risk than the co-curatorial participant (as also seen in EQ1 and EQ2) creating an imbalance in the relationship. The participants did not understand the gravity of making autonomous decisions unapproved by the museum while also being encouraged to be more active in the partnership without these parameters being clearly explained. This was not helped by confusion around what 'facilitation' and 'curation' meant in a museum context.

When thinking about whether the stipulations by Paul Hamlyn Foundation have been embedded in the museum thus far, there is evidence of the continued will to be transparent in negotiations and to offer increased decision-making. However, as this case study finds, this offer of participation is negated by the institutional structures that prohibit the museum from meaningful participation negated by duties of care, creating insecurity and empowerment-lite situations.

When thinking to what extent non-selective curation, based on theatre methodologies, can help the museum achieve these goals, it is evident that a lack of time to create the ensemble was problematic. With a need for more inclusive collaboration between all artists as well as the co-curators, a linguaging process to inform both parameters in the specifics of decision-making protocol within the museum is needed from the outset. Without this, the artists felt disconnected to the whole, manifesting as feelings of underrepresentation and 'being

trivial' or marginalised in the bigger picture. However, the participating artist did feel they had greater decision-making power when they were 'in their space'.

As with the previous case studies, non-selective curation is effective when all actors are on the same participatory ladder (Simon, 2010). However, this is impossible to maintain in the heteronomy of the museum field of cultural production attempting to be autonomous or inviting in [dis]positionally autonomous agents.

The findings from the final stage of participatory action research show that it is still too early for 'no longer *Us and Them*' (Bienkowski, 2016). Because *Us and Them* is paramount to the provision museums must have, to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. By 'letting go' of power they will have to create a field of cultural production which is autonomous from funders or governmental directives which is not possible in the current business model.

Further compounding this site of friction is the museum striving to fully understand the needs of their participants and learn their cultural 'language', whereas the participant is either not allowed the opportunity to learn the language (because knowledge exchange is prohibited) or is uncomfortable in sharing their needs with the museum.

8.CONCLUSION

8.1. Introduction

When considering if implementing the recommendations emerging from Lynch (2011) and *Our Museum* (PHF 2014, 2016) will be enough to break down an enduring '*Us and Them*' binary in museums (Bienkowski 2014, 2016), I performed four cycles of critical arts-based enquiry that used a participatory action research design of critical arts-based enquiry. The findings suggest that the *Us and Them* dynamic will continue to be active within museums regardless of language changes, or the embedding of meaningful participation, unless these changes are made at a level that addresses disparities between heteronomous responsibilities and desires to be more autonomous.

The method of non-selective curation has been demonstrated to be an example of 'meaningful co-curatorial participation' and is itself an original contribution to knowledge in this thesis. It shows that using theatre and community arts methodologies for inclusive decision-making in the context of museum work can be somewhat successful. Participants experienced feelings of increased agency in decision-making and ownership over the space and place of participation, especially when off-site and performing in a site perceived as non-governmental. Challenges occurred when museum professionals would undermine these feelings of agency if the participant decision-making was in conflict with heteronomous responsibilities to the funders and/or museum brand and their innate dispositional duty of care (EQ1, EQ2, EQ3, EQ4). Extending Lynch's findings (2011), the subject positioning of the museum 'to serve' - found in the language of funding and policy – is complicit in the performance of 'empowerment-lite' practice. This is sometimes leading to museum professionals performing symbolically violent acts of censorship, somewhat

covertly, 'backstage' of the processes. The museum or their partnering organisations were seen to renege on decisions through 'last-minute changes' (R07/EQ4/INT/2020) or direct censorship of content (KT/EQ2/OBS1/2014) on several occasions.

Further to this, the research extends Lynch's thinking (2012) and finds that a position to 'serve' performs as a seemingly innocuous 'duty of care'. However, this duty of care can perform like the very power that censors participants. This happens through what I call a culture of celebration (EQ1, EQ2,) and mitigations of reputational risk (EQ1, EQ2, EQ4). The museum professionals have gone to great lengths to change the discourses problematised in Lynch's findings of 2011. In many cases, museum professionals will check themselves mid-sentence and correct the language they utter in alignment with those recommendations. However, these discourses run deep and as the next section will discuss, are difficult to shift. Ultimately this research finds that museums are in an impossible position. They are making strategic changes to try and implement recommendations that they be more open and transparent to engage in the sharing of knowledge - and power - with participants as equals. However, they are simultaneously told that they have 'a statutory duty on behalf of the nation [...] to educate the public' (ICOM⁵⁵, 2007; NMW, 2018) and therefore, to be of service.

8.1.1. A Summary of the PAR critical arts-based enquiry: how the findings were deducted over four stages

The process began in autumn 2013 and concluded in the summer of 2020. This longitudinal strategy allowed for a deductive study that corresponds with ongoing transitional work the

⁵⁵ Icom is a global communication platform for museums <https://icom.museum>

sector has been engaged in for over a decade (Janes and Sandell, 2019; Sandell and Knightingale, 2012; Sandell, 2007; Simon, 2010; Bienkowski, 2014, 2016; Lynch, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017). The following summary will track how the findings were deduced enquiry by enquiry.

Enquiry one, *The Intercultural Project* (2013)

Enquiry one asked how power performed in participation in museums, 2013, with a close look at *The Intercultural Project* as the first case study. This case study focussed on museum participation *with, for* and *by* diverse participants and a volunteer events team. The critical arts-based enquiry found that non-selective curation could create agency in decision making with participants expressing they didn't feel 'words were put in their mouths'. Further to this open communication about the processes, it alleviated 'ownership shift' (Freire, 1973) and enabled the participants to feel acknowledged in the process. However, there was symbolic violence performed through a 'culture of celebration' that non-selective curation did not ameliorate.

Enquiry two, *Bricks and Mortar*, (2013/14)

Thinking about how this 'culture of celebration' could be removed, enquiry two brought forward the findings from enquiry one that asked for more self-reflection from the professional and transparency in communication, to increase feelings of 'equality' and agency in participant co-curation of '*my story*' and '*my room*'. This would be seen as 'saying yes' to each idea and allowing for difficult conversations to happen.

Non-selective curation was still compromised by backstage empowerment-lite interventions made by the organisations as 'duties of care' and perceived responsibilities

of public funding. This created limits to how much decision-making the participant could achieve; however, the participants who were mostly unaware of these conversations felt 'their decisions did not go far enough'. It was discovered that the limits to decision-making had not been explained to the participants (Bourdieu, 2008) or the facilitators (to be able to tell the participants). This was compounded by not all of the practitioners working from the same participatory position (Simon, 2010, Arnstein, 1969) which resulted in an ambiguity in who has power.

The themes that were taken forward to enquiry three were: to what extent do practitioners agree on what constitutes as best practice and what is informing conflict between a desire to be open and socially just and closed backstage communications that negate this desire.

[Enquiry three - a survey of museum professionals \(2016/17\) and \(2020\)](#)

Because the power in language has been identified by Lynch (2011) as being problematic in the context of museums, including an *Us and Them* positioning found connected with language, this enquiry focuses entirely on how the museum professional deems this language performs in practice. When thinking about the Critical Arts-Based Enquiry this PAR Stage asks who holds the power in these processes, either through the positioning of the museum or the language used when reflecting on the participation. This stage of the research was revisited in 2020 to bridge the findings with the final case study.

The findings were that in 2016/ 17 there was little consensus in what constituted best practice or who should have 'ultimate' decision-making powers. There was also a tacit agreement that a duty of care was essential to the safety of participants, who were largely 'othered'. When revisiting respondents (n4) in 2020 they showed a greater understanding of the power in language, explicitly discussing actively removing language criticized by

Lynch (2011) and trying 'not to use big words' (R13/R38/SV/2020). There was also an increase in consensus about what is best practice and that museums had not as yet moved forward in these aims. The interviews of 2020 identified that power at an operational level was thought to be having impact on the museum journey to cultural democracy. The institutional structures were thought to disallow meaningful participation to be fully appreciated (R13/R38/R39/SV/2020). This power was found to perform as a tendency to be over concerned by a duty to serve, to fix problems from a position of authority - providing structures for cultural democracy, as opposed to sharing and developing these responsibilities with their partners. Questions around how this power was performing in praxis were taken forward in enquiry four.

[Enquiry four- Case study three \(2019\)](#)

This case study took the themes from the findings of the previous PAR stages and asks how a museum co-curates with professional partners. *Museum Made Dark* invited a local contemporary art collective to be co-curatorial partners. The collective is known to use a method of curation based in theatre 'happenings'⁵⁶ which was compatible with the critical arts-based enquiry of non-selective curation. This case study used the same 'open invitation' as enquiry one (case study one) and two (case study two). However, this time the targeted groups were professional artists. When thinking about Bourdieu's fields of cultural production (1993), this was a specific choice methodologically, as the previous investigations had been shaped by the political economy of funders' demands and the fact

⁵⁶ A style of curation that draws from 1990's street reclamations, situationist movements and theatre installations that just 'happen'. There is an essence of 'ordered chaos' (Roberts, 2020) here where the curators trust that seemingly discordant pieces will come together cohesively, which they always do. There is a not selective, against directocracy at play too, which in feminist theatre and performance art is devised without top-down direction or curation but is instead guided by the ensemble.

that the partnerships were between paid employees and non-paid volunteers or community participant partners. In *Museum Made Dark*, all the participants were paid a nominal fee of £150 and the funding was a mix of core museum funding from the Government and the ticket entry price to the event which would offset the costs. Eleven of the sixteen participating artists were interviewed by webcam (Zoom, 2020). Due to the Coronavirus lockdown of Spring 2020, face to face interviews were not possible but the questions were the same as those used in enquiry two *Bricks and Mortar*. There were also two further interviews with the lead representatives of the Museum team and the co-curatorial team at the arts company.

Enquiry four looked at how power at an operational level performed co-curatorially with a partnering organisation and professional participants working *with* both. This case study too found that there is conflict between a desire to be open and a responsibility to protect and withhold information. This sat within the push and pull of conflicting ideologies rooted in opposite fields of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993). This highlighted that not only does the museum other the partner/participant, but the participant 'others' themselves. This happens when the participant finds themselves presented with their own historically perceived dispositions of the institution as governmental (AC/EQ4/INT/2020). This enquiry found that no matter how much the museum appears to let go of power at different stages of the participatory process the participants' resistance will still hinder their own meaningful participation. This inversion of power from the participant will inform miscommunication through a lack of languaging (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004) from both parties. This is compounded by the museum performing a duty of care to protect the participant which does not treat them as equal and is therefore othering. This inequality is shown in believing the participant would be overwhelmed or 'does not need to know' the

complexities of the museum; a decision made by the museum for the perceived benefit of the othered participant without their knowledge or consent.

8.2. Contributions to knowledge

8.2.1. Contribution one: a 'duty of care' can translate into symbolic violence.

This thesis has presented a longitudinal study over seven years and confirms the 'invisible power' of language to create *Us and Them* dynamics (Lynch, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2017) with its paternalism (2012). The language remains especially prevalent in the work of practitioners and has a long history (Hegel, 1589). When thinking about how this history informs participatory practice, the participant [dis]positions cannot be removed from the field of cultural production that they occupy (Bourdieu, 1989). Likewise, the museum occupies a field of funded policy which further occupies a field of government policy (see Figure 2). Therefore, the museum professional is influenced by the structures of museum funding, and government policy (EQ1, EQ2, EQ3, EQ4) directives, that strongly reinforce the same historical discourse formations which are then experienced as essentialised truths (Foucault, 1973,1975). By performing these as a duty of care over the participant who occupies an entirely different field of cultural production, who do not share this 'truth', they perform a symbolically violent act.

This position is also counterproductive to participation as a model for social justice because it is co-opted as a capitalist construct (Marx, 1859). While preserving the protected space of the museum as a site of equitable access to collections it maintains the need for *Us and Them* binaries, negating equity, but certainly providing the need for museums.

By maintaining the *Us and Them* paradigm the economically charged provision of 'care' which may continue to inculcate a mythical need to be 'made safe by another', negating active citizenship and self-actualisation. Being on the receiving end of a 'duty of care' hinders the ability for the 'oppressed' (Freire, 1974) to become critically aware.

8.2.1.1. Duty of care performing as a culture of celebration is symbolic violence

A duty of care finds museum professionals deciding when to be transparent about their processes (and decisions) and when not to in an act of 'protection' over the participant. Justification for this lack of transparency is often paternalistic, 'protecting' the participant from themselves (from perceived over-sharing (EQ1, EQ2) or perceived reputational risk (EQ4)). The case studies found that museum professionals were likely to err on the side of celebration to ameliorate exposures to trauma or conflict (EQ1, EQ2). This culture of celebration is justified out of a duty of care, in the protection of either the participant or the reputation of the museum as a place of safe exchange (Wray, 2019). However, this lean to the celebratory censors participants from actuating their self-representations, narratives of trauma and indeed resilience (Jane and Sandel et al, 2019). This 'protection' from the museum could be performed to not overwhelm the participant 'with complex museum inner workings and language' (EQ4). This duty to protect the participant from themselves creates a situation that is opposite to social justice or what is deemed as meaningful participation (HLF, 2010). If the museum assumes a practice that promises autonomy, or at least suggests it is possible for participants to self-direct - but in practice dis-allows this self-regulation - the museum performs a violence over the participant. This is symbolically violent because the renegeing on autonomous decision-making has been performed out of a presumption of superiority over the participants, by the museum. The participant is being

perceived as of unequal abilities in comparison to and by the museum professional, to make decisions for themselves. The professional, out of a perceived duty of care, steps in. Furthermore, the participant does not understand the language or reasonings as to why the experience is 'empowerment-lite' when they are promised more, because the museum has not offered full information. The participant then experiences a lack of sector-specific use of language and action and is unable to defend their decision-making. This renders them silent and therefore oppressed in the position of 'them' (Freire, 1974).

Bourdieu (2009) stipulates that for symbolic violence to occur the participant must be persuaded to have complicity in the authority in what he calls the *ministerium* (1984). This describes the ability "of a person to gain power by speaking for and representing a group" but having this power by removing the ability for the group to do likewise. In having the authority to speak, there must be a degree of privileged linguistic-cultural capital that the speaker holds over the underprivileged other. As discussed in 2.2.2 the transition from language production to language reception, is organized around legitimacy and here the museum presumes 'legitimacy' over the publicly owned space and therefore over the public. Bourdieu asks, who really has the authority to speak for another in the space occupied?

Symbolic power is a power which gives the recognition, that is to say, the misrecognition, of the violence which is exercised through it. Thus, the symbolic violence of a minister can only be exercised with this sort of complexity accorded to him, by those over whom the violence is exercised, encouraged by the denial that misrecognition produces (Bourdieu, 1984:61).

Within this context, the museum uses their 'duty of care' to power 'misrecognition', under-representation, censorship, and violence exercised through it as 'protection'. Without access to the language of presumed authority the participant is rendered silent (Freire, 1974; Bourdieu 1984).

8.2.1.2. Duty of care performing as a culture of silence is symbolic violence

In their bid to make museums more culturally democratic and socially useful, museum professionals want to co-curate with their participants in what could be termed a process of *conscientizacao* (Freire, 1974) which still has an *Us and Them* defacto positioning. This process risks a co-opting of the oppressed participant experiences, without the museum offering up theirs to the same extent (Lynch, 2016). When thinking about how languaging is used to form meaningful intercultural relationships, the museum and the participant could be viewed as having differing cultures; as having different languages (EQ4, 7.4):

Languaging' [...] implies a lengthy process of discovery; of travelling back and forth; of learning and unlearning; trying, struggling, appreciating, and transforming. In sum, intercultural mobility eventually becomes a life journey, that is 'a journey into an intercultural being'." (Phipps and Gonzalez 2004:22).

Training in this sharing of 'languages' to come to a common understanding between museums and prospective participants could be offered to all, professional and non-professional. As stated in 2.2.3, 'collaborative participation as co-curation performed on an equal non-hierarchical positioning involves processes where habitual dispositions of power can be negotiated by retraining dispositional power dynamics. This may help to navigate Freirean (1974) fear of decision-making by all actors involved and this retraining, perhaps

through ‘linguaging’ (Phipps and Gonzalez) could be a dual process of true ‘meaningful participation’ (HLF, 2010).

Linguaging is methodologically consistent with non-selective curation and the disciplines of devising theatre as it is based in pedagogic exchange. Theoretically then, non-selective curation could help museums to reposition their participation, not as gifting, but instead, as evolving.

8.2.2. Contribution two: Othering is endemic in ‘the museum’

The three case studies (Enquiries 1, 2 and 4) demonstrate that ultimately the museum others anyone who is not the museum, sometimes in an attempt to protect the ‘other’ (8.2.1). In the case of *Museums Made Dark* (2019) the othering of professional artists was justified as ‘protection’ of the participants’ reputations and as part of a duty of care not to ‘overwhelm them by too much transparency’. The effect was that the participant artist felt they ‘did not know what was going on, or what their part in it was’ (R07/EQ4/INT/2020). This othering, through empirical findings, did not ascertain whether there were racial connotations as to who was othered in *Museums Made Dark*, as all the participants were white. They were also professionals, and in the previous case studies, poverty was an indicator of increased othering.

Even though the research finds that the museum others anyone that is not the museum (as evidenced through the practices of participation recounted, and the analysis of policy and government directives), it was notable that this othering was more pronounced if the participant was black, in poverty or spoke a first language other than English. Without a third case study focused on white professionals, the structures of the *Us and Them* binary

could be perceived as a post-colonial problem. However, the addition of this case study shows that although post-colonial issues are found in the othering of black and ethnic minority participants, it is also an issue of institutional authority over anyone who is not 'the museum' that pervades in 2020.

How the othering of the *Us and Them* dynamic was performed was not exclusively from the side of the museum. Another phenomenon found in each of the enquiries when performing non-selective curation was an instance of 'ownership shift' (Freire, 1973) that flipped the positioning as *Them* and *Us*. The museum was still pre-eminent in having the power (2.3.3) but as '*Them*'. Each participant group enacted an 'ownership shift' partway through the project where they became empowered to resist the parameters for participation as set up by the museum professionals. The volunteers of EQ1 closed ranks in resistance to the museum staff, questioning the professionalism and ability of the practitioners involved to manage the process properly. It was only through an open discussion with the volunteers about the situation and a clarification of roles and responsibilities when the partnership could return to a place of trust. This process, akin to radical openness (hooks, 1996), was referred to as 'appropriate management of the project' and was understood to have saved it (EQ1/BOOKLET/2013). Further to this, the volunteers felt their frustrations were valued, as the whole episode was recorded in the co-produced booklet on their experience.

The community participants of EQ2, had a period of similar resistance where they felt there was a lack of care being demonstrated by the museum and partnering organisation, with the result that one participant (SS/EQ2/2014) refused to take part until it was resolved. As with EQ1, this 'ownership shift' occurred just before the event each case study prepared for, went live and could be, according to Freire (1973) performed out of a fear of failure and

having responsibility for it. This fear in some of the participants presented as anger. This anger was described as a feeling of personal risk that was not supported by the museum. This happened in all three case studies (EQ1, EQ2 and EQ4).

In EQ4 the professional participating artists also closed ranks, but far quicker than in the previous case studies. This appears to have been an aim to self-organise due to distrust of the museum and confusion over who was in charge. They too became disparaging towards the museum with comments such as, 'perhaps the museum didn't know what to do with creative freedom' and, 'they could treat us as human beings, with more respect.' However, these perspectives are very similar to the ownership shift responses of EQ1 and EQ2 and show a certain pattern of experience that connects to insecurities in not knowing who was making ultimate decisions. In EQ4 this ended up being quite extreme with the artists almost othering the museum by switching the positions of *Us and Them* entirely. Perhaps this was possible because they have more of the sector 'language' than the non-professionals.

In all of these cases, a process of a transparent conversation helped or even reversed the situation back to a place of health. However, each of the case studies also shows that these open conversations have to happen at the start of the process and be revisited at several junctures.

8.2.4. Contribution three: the use of theatre as a methodology

This research is unique in that it combines theatrical ideas and co-curatorial participatory methods. This is not something that has been tested in museums thus far to address the binary between *Us and Them*. This is interesting to me, as theatre has a long tradition of collaborative activism. Theatre has of course been used in museums for generations, for

example, Boal's work on Forum Theatre has been used extensively to consult audiences and participants on their experiences (Lynch, 2011). Theatre performance has also been extensively used to create live interpretation and encourage performed debate (Anthony and Kidd, 2012). New to the museum context is the unique contribution of combining egalitarian theatre methods such as Boal's 'simultaneous dramaturgy' (1973), the ensemble, methods of devising ideas and the dissolution of the actor/audience divide as tools for non-selective curation. That combination is shown in this thesis to increase a sense of decision-making power in participants and to facilitate a greater sense of ownership over the participatory space, often resulting in outputs that are brave and polyvocal in their execution.

8.2.4.1. Contribution four: A test method of non-selective curation can help break down the 'Us and Them' binary, to an extent

The findings show that this method cannot alone remove the power of *Us and Them*, which sits within a complex push and pull between operational service provisions and participatory desires for cultural democracy and social justice. This is made more difficult when museum staff try to 'fix' situations by tapping into a culture of celebration and/ or taking on full responsibility for any problems occurring, which can in effect mean taking on extreme emotional labour (Fineman, 2003). This can happen very easily with the museum professional often giving away too much power. This is tricky as the museum has to retain some power because it has a dual purpose to house the collections and provide access to these. They cannot give all the power to the public as they have a specialism to preserve, however in an aim to appear open and willing to offer participants decision-making they often give away too much. [Dis]positional 'duty of care' as a responsibility directed by museum policy as seen in 7.1 creates a damaging culture of silence disabling the partner/

participant from making decisions with full consent, knowledge, or shared authority. This can create empowerment-lite situations, which have been shown by Lynch to be ultimately disempowering (2011).

Non-selective curation can however increase decision-making and a sense of ownership for participants over 'my story' (my space) and 'my room' (my place). This happens when a process of active listening and 'allowability' (EQ2 and EQ4) is implemented and then truly followed through. This method is also more successful when paired with the development and presentation of the cultural product performed in a seemingly 'autonomous' place, such as the high tower flats in EQ2. As an egalitarian method, 'non-selective curation' requires all practitioners involved to allow the participant to perform shared authority, including partner organizations. It can then enhance a feeling of equality and empowerment among the participants. However, if all parties are not invested in this method, then a more serious act of censorship and symbolic violence can be performed through retraction of decision-making. In these instances, a participant who has developed trust in the method of non-selective curation and who has been encouraged to make decisions has their decisions instead 'disparaged' and revoked; a painful experience, felt violently (KT/EQ2/INT/2014).

These findings suggest that while the language remains problematic, there is a praxis that is confused due to the heteronymous structures of the museum as a publicly funded institution trying to practice as an autonomous space for meaningful participation. As contrasting 'fields of cultural production', they conflict and cannot occupy the same space. The power performing in this nuanced phenomenon manifests as symbolic violence over the partner/ participant (client/ user) of the museum. This occurs when the museum

attempts to be transparent but cannot or will not share full reasoning for and when their ultimate decision-making powers are used.

Further to this, a culture of celebration censors' participants from being able to assert their narratives, complaints, or indeed creative freedom. This insecure position finds practitioners erring on the side of celebration (EQ1, EQ2), with the denial of refugee experiences of trauma as a resistance of difficult histories (Kidd et al, 2014). This is seen to be performed out of a paternalistic duty of care and responsibility to adhere to public funding requirements. These responsibilities can be seen as reputational protection, a need to be 'neutral' in their representations that do not appear to endorse challenging histories (Kidd et al, 2014, 2016) which may or may not hold complex prejudice or perceived governmental criticisms.

8.3. Extensions to the knowledge that compliment but are not unique

8.3.1. There is a resistance to transitional openness

A publicly funded museum is heteronomous in its decisions, determined by government funding directives. However, because the practice of participation is often presented as more autonomous than it is, the effect is a lack of transparency concerning backstage censorship over the participant (Kothari, 2001). This reneges on the decision-making powers and sense of ownership participants have managed to generate through the project. This is confusing for the museum sector, as while they continue to endorse this desire for methods that promote autonomy and agency in the participant, they are also restricted in how far this can be performed. This dynamic presents museums as spaces

where difficult conversations can happen (Kidd et al 2014; Jane and Sandell, 2019; Vachlou, 2019), while at the same time being averse to being involved in those very conversations. This position occurs as a conflict between historically capitalist dispositions, rooted in the economic pressures of the museum as a heteronomous hierarchical space and place, and a desire for democracy. Therefore, the museum practitioner is attempting to do the impossible. Hiding this contradiction further problematises the goodwill museums hope to achieve, manifesting as a lack of transparency and symbolic violence. This lack of transparency is a choice to protect the museum and/ or protect the participant that they presume will be overwhelmed by their sharing of knowledge.

The reinforcement of dispositional thinking by the continued circulations of binary-producing language further re-constructs these habitual practices, which, over centuries of practice are difficult to shift without an alternative structure in which to reposition them. The relationship between the museum, partner and the funder cannot be underestimated. If the funding is public money, then the content of the cultural product cannot cross into political ground, it must remain 'neutral' (Wray, 2019). As discussed in the literature, this neutralises meaning (Wray, 2019) and, in many ways, creates political colour-blindness (hooks, 2009).

This cements Freire's culture of silence (Freire, 1974, 2006). If these community participatory projects are to activate the public body into active citizens in a meaningful culturally democratic manner, is this process a political act? It is one that is ultimately emancipating the oppressed. This process therefore cannot be a cultural production of apolitical representational products, but one that demands autonomous cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993).

This research ultimately finds that 'meaningful participation' (HLF, 2010) cannot be achieved unless the museum and the participant can occupy the same field of cultural production (Boal, 1974; Bourdieu, 1989) where both parties have the same shared responsibilities and/or a radically open understanding and respect for what responsibilities each holds. If museums can perform participation in fully autonomous spaces unencumbered by government policy that contradicts practice by demanding professionals have a 'duty of care' or finds a way to manage spaces of autonomy within the current structure, meaningful participation could be achieved. I contend that theatrical approaches can help with that.

8.4. Thesis overview

This thesis presented a longitudinal study (between 2013-2020) as a kind of genealogy of discourse. It explored the research question through the lens of cultural theory. The Introduction began by presenting the research question, followed by a discussion on my positioning as artist-researcher and how Lynch's study of language features (2011). This was followed by a brief discussion of why this research is important, drawing on my experiences as a community artist. I expressed how I felt about the othering language Lynch (2011) identified and what it was doing to my own practice.

The Literature Review critically outlined the broader concepts pertinent to this thinking. This was organised into two broad sections: the history and language of dispositions and the currency and practice of dispositions. Each section had two sub-sections the first of which consulted current discourse and practice in museums, looking to changes in how museums present their mission between 2011 and 2019, followed by critical theoretical explorations into where discourse derives and what this means in practice.

The methodology proposed that a post-positivist epistemology would be appropriate due to this non-essentialization. It outlined how the thesis would explore three positions; i) the volunteer; ii) community participants and iii) creative partners. The challenge of this methodology was that the findings were not entirely generalizable, in part due to the constant shift of the phenomenon. Practitioners were already reflecting on the language of participation in use across the sector, in part due to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation interventions and the reflective practice of the museum professionals who contributed.

A further challenge was the sample size, which ideally would have incorporated several more case studies and a greater reach to survey respondents. In the time allocated for a PhD, this was not possible, however, the mixed method approach blended the quantitative and qualitative data analysis across two key dynamics – the practice of participation and the language of participation. These two dynamics of participation enabled the research to illustrate a relational value between the two: the language informs the habitus and vice versa.

The investigation was structured by a 'critical arts-based enquiry' approach which was organised around three case studies (presented in chapters 5, 6, 7 respectively). Each case study involved auto-ethnographic research, in-depth interviews (plus survey responses for enquiry 3, Ch6) conducted with participants, museum actors and partners. Each of these were analysed using critical discourse analysis. These methods were applied with an awareness of altering conditions, while participatory action research and the critical arts-based enquiry allowed for the redesign of enquiry that moved forward through each stage, resulting in the findings of enquiry four.

8.5. Closing thoughts for future research

Future research could be conducted to assess how power performs within the governmentality of the museum site, compared to off-site. There was much material in the data that suggests a connection between self-censorship and ownership-shift (Freire, 1974) that could be fruitfully investigated. Perhaps it would be useful to further investigate the conflict between heteronomous fields of cultural production and autonomous fields of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1989) when museums attempt to combine them. How would this perform in practice, and would the institutional structures performing as *Us and Them* empowerment-lite be lessened? How would non-selective curation fare in a site that was perhaps co-owned, with shared responsibilities and duties of care? I would find this interesting and indeed activist as the structures of governmental and [dis]positional oppression would be repositioned. Non-selective curation as a method of co-curation uses the concept of the ensemble which represents the breaking down of hierarchical structures within society. In the ensemble, there is no Director and 'against directocracy', asks all involved to utilise their experiences, specialisms, and expertise together to create diverse representations. The theatre of this era came away from the site of the traditional theatre space, with its governmental patriarchy enmeshed in its walls. It was deemed that staying solely within the theatre building metaphorically re-established *Us and Them* binaries that 'against directocracy' was, to an extent, able to dissolve out-with the theatre building (Bishop, 2012). In this same manner, the museum must, again and again, be reminded that the power museum walls imbue may be counter-productive to activist aims.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM CO-CURATING PARTICIPANTS AND STAFF [combined]

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CONTACT NUMBER/ EMAIL:

I consent for the use of **my first name only [anonymised in final thesis], my image and contributing stories and art work, including audio and film recordings** to be used in Carolyn Newman's (nee Westwater) research at Cardiff University.

I consent for the use of **my voice and image through audio and film recordings** to be used in Carolyn Newman's (nee Westwater) research at Cardiff University.

I understand that my thoughts and ideas about my own practice, and participation in museums will be anonymised and I can retract my contribution at any time.

I understand that my story and ideas about how I want to be represented, and how I wish to engage in the arts and heritage sectors may be used in Carolyn Newman's research and feature as part of her case studies, written works and suggestions for heritage sector organizations as online blogs and on website pages.

Carolyn Newman's research may feature as part of her PhD, potential journal articles and/or published written works. The findings may appear on online blogs and website pages.

Any omissions to permission: i.e. "Yes, I give permission but not on website pages".

SIGNED:

DATE:

APPENDIX B. OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE HERMENEUTIC SPIRAL

Operationalization the Hermeneutic Spiral (Sarantakos,2005:314)

(Paraphrased)

Step one - eliciting and understanding the meaning of individual texts.

- Read the texts and search for themes.
- Become empathetically immersed in the available textual descriptions.
- Focus on meanings not analysis.
- Identify taken for granted' assumptions and viewpoints of the author.
- Enhance understanding of themes and sub themes.
- Ascertain the frequency of occurrence of such meanings to assess their importance.
- Scrutinise meanings, their nature and significance within the wider context.
- Triangulate with our understanding of other contexts, and in individual texts.
- Ascertain how the contexts are linked and eventual contradictions between them.

Step two – identify themes and sub themes.

- Link themes with each other
- Search for central themes.

Step 3 – Thematic clusters

- Assign groupings of text which have a commonality of meanings.

Step 4 -

- Contrast them with other texts.
- Make reference to other texts or forms of data.

APPENDIX C. VOLUNTEER EVENTS TEAM REPORT, 2012 -2013

Brief overview

The Learning Programme was an experiential participatory learning experience encouraging exploration, reflection, discovery and practice. The final module of the Learning Programme asked participants to discuss ideas for an intercultural event.

The project team also developed and organised intercultural events, some in partnership with venue staff. The events aimed to:

- 1) Provide opportunities for the participants on the learning programme to 'practice' their learning.
- 2) Model good practice by providing the 'platforms for dialogue' we discussed in the Learning Programme.
- 3) Provide more opportunities for visitors to engage with the Exhibition objects.

Following interest from learning programme participants in developing their event ideas, we recruited a team of volunteers to develop and deliver at least one intercultural event. Recruiting a small team meant we were able to undertake a more in-depth and intensive version of the learning programme over a longer period of time. We also saw potential to supplement evaluation immediately after the Learning programme by tracking behavioural changes relating to cultural awareness and acceptance.

The Volunteer Events Team contributed nearly 900 hours of volunteering time to the project (with more unrecorded hours at home between February 2012 and February 2013).

We planned that the team would:

- Meet once a week February to August 2012 to create and deliver an event for Refugee Week 2012 based on the theme of *Spirit*.
- Document their process from February to August through photography and writing weekly in personal journals.
- Create an exhibition on their process of working together as an intercultural group.

There were a few revisions to our plans. The team:

- Met once a week from February to beginning of September 2012.
- Undertook training in event planning, arts facilitation, photography, storytelling and African drumming.
- Attended numerous Events for inspiration.
- Created the marketing for their events.
- Delivered a 'practice event' for *Festival of Museums 2012*
- Delivered *Across Cultures*: their event for Refugee Week 2012.
- Selected and edited a choice of images for their community exhibition.
- Selected the writings from their journals for the labels accompanying their images.
- Interviewed members of the public about why the Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games were important to intercultural dialogue.
- Delivered interactive activities in the exhibition space.
- Facilitated their exhibition for Doors Open Day 2012.
- Created a booklet on their experiences of planning and delivering an event planning, documenting their processes, creating an exhibition and working together as an intercultural group.

The team:

The team were seventeen volunteers who spoke 15 first languages between them. Ages ranged from 17 years old to 66 years old.

The team came from: Ghana, Afghanistan, Egypt, Ukraine, India, Sudan, Somalia, Kurdistan Iran, Russia, Kurdistan, Vietnam, New Zealand, Scotland.

Facilitation of team:

The sessions were facilitated by Carrie Newman and [NAME] Learning Assistants. Carrie instigated and led the volunteer events team project. Freelance intercultural artist Brendan Jackson¹ delivered training in photography and assisted the volunteers in curating their exhibition.

The facilitators and volunteers documented the process. The session outlines below are based on session reports written by the facilitators during the project. The volunteers have also documented the process; their report can be accessed on [NAME].

Overview of the stages of the project:

February - Formation of the team:

The team invited all previous participants in the Project to an introductory day long workshop with Brendan and Carrie. We aimed to invite a diverse group of people to meet and contribute to activities and form a diverse volunteer team which was not manufactured. This was successful as a mix of ages and cultures came together and stayed together for the majority of the project.

Recruitment and development day:

Group number: 16

Facilitated by: [NAME] and Carrie.

During this session the group looked at the skills they were able to bring to the project; what objectives they had and their initial ideas for their exhibition.

Below are some comments from that session about understanding of project, how we might evaluate it and answers to the question 'what would you like to get out of this project.'

"Meeting new people, meeting people I didn't know anything about and finding out what journeys brought them here..."

"Making connections... learning trust."

"I was here last week (at the museum) meeting with a group of women of different cultures and ages. Something magical happened. We talked about the objects in the Curious exhibition. When we talked there were no borders, when in the world there seem to be so many borders, political or religious..."

"I liked the idea of being involved in the process of an event and finding ways to use different mediums."

"An event is a gateway, a transition, to widen our horizons and open up possibilities of other ways of thinking and knocking down barriers."

"When we were asked about what skills we had, we were perhaps shy to say anything and didn't say much. When you wrote it down, we saw it was so dynamic and exciting..."

"Building friendships... "

"Learning about other people, learning something new."

"Practising another language and listening."

"Asking questions and sharing: Who am I, where do I come from, how was I brought up?"

"To create something for the community..."

"To meet people..."

"I am curious to explore the regional diversity here, how people think..."

"I believe life is a journey. I'm looking forward to hearing about other people's journeys, how we all got here. I was born in Glasgow and I know Glasgow, but I want to learn from other stories."

"All I know is I know nothing, so I am curious to learn. I am interested in improving my communication skills."

"...to discover myself."

"...to listen and to find ideas. To find out what you are thinking about me, what you think about yourself and how we live in this world."

"I would like us to learn to respect each other and to stop fighting."

"I travel a lot and people ask me where I'm from and where I've been, and I would like to bring these experiences of other places here and show how other people live."

"When Kelvingrove was built I think it was for a World Exposition about showing Glasgow to the world. With a project like this we can show Glasgow the world."

"I am fascinated by people's stories... I thought about the Proclaimers song about Scotland's story..."

"I find it fascinating that we have so many people from so many different communities in Glasgow now."

“It’s an opportunity to meet and to talk and to change our minds.”

“I like to see the style of different people from different countries, the music and the dance...”

Initial thoughts on documentation which were then implemented.

A variety of suggestions were made and implemented.

Suggestions made	How they were implemented
Record selections from the journals and play back or turn comments into a cartoon strip.	The group wrote their thoughts on culture, intercultural thinking and Glasgow in journals.
Set up a private Facebook group that people can post information to as they wish.	This became a central point for communication. Volunteers who moved on or moved away from Glasgow continued to contribute to the project through facebook.
Use a video camera and ask different people questions (could be at an event they visit, for example). Examples of questions: Why do people want to come together from different cultures? What stops us coming together? Are people curious? What prevents us from being curious.	This consideration became central to the learning aims of the project.
Record the exchange of stories, how people introduce themselves and what they share of their journey.	This was a huge part of the project as participants shared their stories.
Write a short introduction to themselves, a short story and share with group.	This became an interactive game in the exhibition. Visitors had to match up the story with the volunteer’s photo.
Have a camera and make photographs of one day, or over a week of what they do in Glasgow.	Became the materials for the exhibition.

A few suggestions were not implemented i.e.

Look into existing literature/research on the subject of intercultural dialogue, different cultures. (Learning Assistants did research but volunteers didn’t.)

CITY =Lively. Friendly. Green. Comfortable. Well connected to city.

HOME = me; ours; us; love; happiness.

CITY =Cultural heritage. Family. Magic. Peaceful.

HOME = family; comfort.

CITY =Windy. Unsafe. Busy. Green. Too many dogs.

HOME = family; friends; happy; warm; welcoming.

CITY =Unpeaceful. Unsafe. Good transport. Busy. Unfriendly.

HOME = lovely; thrifty people.

CITY =Strong. Great. Exciting. Foggy. Lovely.

HOME = warm happy life.

CITY=Shopping town. Safe town. Cheeky. Noisy town. Happy town.

HOME = love; where you want to stay; home is the world where we are born.

CITY=Good. Noisy. Freezing. Nice. Quiet.

HOME = relaxed, not under pressure.

CITY=Friendly. Busy. Quiet. Fog. Fighting.

HOME = family; community.

CITY=Cold. Convenient. Safe. Warm. Quiet.

Volunteer programme from February – August

February sessions:

Date: 02/02/12 – Learning Programme

Facilitator/s: Carrie and [NAME]

Group: 17

This was the first session with the VETS, and they had to fill in three forms.

- Volunteer application form
- Equal opportunities form.
- Registration

Therefore, the first section was dedicated to admin. We then delivered a version of the LP so that everyone involved had been through the same cultural awareness process. This became ice breakers, a mapping exercise and an exercise to mind map cultural markers. We used the floor map, which the group really enjoyed.

Date: 11/02/12

Focus: - Event planning training

Facilitator/s: Carrie and [NAME]

Group numbers: 13

During the first half hour Carrie recapped the previous week with Brendan. We had noticed that the group felt a little confused about the two parts of the project, so Carrie wrote up, presented and circulated bullet points about each part of the project. These reiterated the breakdown of roles, aims and objectives (which were created by the group) for the development of an event for Refugee Week, as well as the documentation for their exhibition at the end of the project. Then did a presentation on event planning tools.

1) An activity (SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis) with the group on Event planning in museums. The second half of the session was on initial ideas

and feasibility using this SWOT analyses. We took photos of each person to begin producing the card game and for the map. The group wanted to produce a map using photos of each team member to show where they were from. The group also wrote down stories which they shared, and Martha photocopied.

Date: 18/02/12

Focus: Exploring the Spirit theme for Refugee Week

Facilitator/s: Carrie and [NAME]

Group numbers: 11

We covered tables with paper tablecloths and mind-mapped ideas about what '*spirit* means 'in a '*global*', '*community*, and '*individual*' context. The volunteers then voted with stickers which words they felt as a group expressed what *spirit* meant.

They decided that Spirit is:

"Shaped experience, shared experience and the communication of this".

It was close to Shrove Tuesday and [NAME] brought in pancakes and showed off her grandfather's griddle. She said that this was inspired by talking about Russian pancakes the week before. We then went on a visit to the Sharmanka Gallery to look at how objects tell stories.

March - events attendance

During the month of March, we asked the volunteers to attend some of our [NAME] Events to get ideas for their own. They also helped with evaluation and documentation of the events, giving them practice in this area.

Date: 03/03/12 – Working Songs event

Facilitator/s: Carrie / [NAME]

Group numbers: 10

The group who attended the event carried out evaluation and photography of the event. They also asked people to for contact details and encouraged them to fill out evaluation forms / cards.

Date: 17/03/12- Storytelling event

Facilitator/s: [NAME]

The group who attended the event participated in the storytelling activity which familiarised them with the objects and collected evaluation and documented event.

Date: 31/03/12- Spring Clean event

Facilitator/s: Carrie

Group: 6

The group who attended the event participated in the storytelling activity, collected evaluation and documented the event.

April sessions – development and photography.

Date: 07/04/12

Focus: photography

Facilitator/s: [NAME] and Carrie

Group: 6

Report: It was Easter Saturday, and the group had their second session with [NAME] brought in Easter cakes for everyone. The group were allocated cameras and spent the session learning new techniques with Brendan and coming up with ideas for how to display their documentation in the exhibition space.

Date: 14/04/12

Focus: - storytelling

Facilitator/s: Carrie and [NAME]

Group: 8

We looked at the storytelling aspect of the event and produced a timetable for the intercultural event on 19th May. We discovered that Kalabok (a Russian children's story) is the same as the Gingerbread man, a story in India and another in Sudan. We began to make puppets and came up with ideas to dress the function room. [NAME] is going to take photos of landscapes for the backdrop for the puppet show. Each person was allocated a role.

Date: 5/04/12

Focus: puppets

Facilitator/s: Carrie

Group: 9

We mounted the puppets onto sticks, and then rehearsed the three versions of the Kalobok story. We then recorded the voices telling the story in preparation for next week. We also had a rehearsal of the percussion piece.

[NAME] and [NAME] brought in Gingerbread men and [NAME] and [NAME] had a go at decorating them, we are considering doing this as an activity on the 19th and 23rd. [NAME] also brought in a copy of *Govan Together* for everyone. This is a locally produced broadsheet specific to Govan town.

A couple of interesting things happened today:

[NAME] started today and he was welcomed very warmly by the group. When we were discussing the percussion piece [NAME] said "don't worry we will teach you – hey we're experts now and everyone clapped which was really nice – as it was a moment when we all realised how far we had come in just a few months. [NAME] also said a cracker when we were about to rehearse a new version of the story "I don't mind what I do – I'm out of my box!" This again received a laugh from everyone. The group dynamic is really close and supportive.

Date: 21/04/12

Focus; – Music.

Facilitator: Carrie on A/L so [NAME] facilitated this session.

Group: 9

[NAME] from Pan African Arts Scotland led a two-hour session with the musical instruments. Some people were a bit tentative, but he eased everyone into it by getting people to just experiment with playing different instruments. We worked on identifying the rhythm and playing in time, and we also worked on improvisation. He used the cowbells to create a solid rhythm and by the end of the session everyone was able to listen to this and create their own rhythms with their own instruments on top of the beat. He recorded what we had been playing and played it back to us. The VETs were really pleased with what we had achieved, and they felt much more confident about the upcoming performance.

Date: 28/04/13

Focus: Music

Facilitator: Carrie on A/L so [NAME] facilitated this session.

Group: 9

The VETs worked with [NAME] to create the story of the Gingerbread Man using music. We each played a character in the story using different musical instruments. We recorded this piece which could be used alongside the puppet show. We then worked on the 10-minute improvised performance pieces for Festival of Museums, developing what we had done the week previously. We chose areas around the museum for each person to be situated and then we practised a 'pied piper' routine where we form a trail to one location resulting in a group performance. This worked really well. [NAME] has lent us his bell so that we can continue to practice this before the event.

Note – It was [NAME] 25th birthday so [NAME] brought in birthday cupcakes and helium balloon for him. He was very chuffed. He told us that many people in his country don't celebrate birthdays, but some people do. He said he hadn't done anything for his birthday this year, so I think he was really pleased with this.

May sessions –Practice Event and Prep

Date: 19/05/13

Festival of Museums

The event was attended by the Language Café and was particularly busy that day. Some of the ongoing issues surrounding the Language Café impacted on the confidence of the volunteers during their event as:

Children were not being supervised by their parents.

Instruments were therefore being destroyed by over-zealous children playing them.

Crowd control became problem.

It was "Interesting and enjoyable but tiring.... We learnt a lot about what is and is not achievable".

The volunteers summed up what they did for the event:

- We included storytelling of the *Gingerbread Man* and *The Kolobok* as recordings on a CD.

- A list of the stories and projections of our photographs on a DVD.
- Our recorded music on the theme of the Gingerbread Man.
- Children could make puppets and engage in their own storytelling.
- We taught the participants how to play Warri.
- Each of us had a percussion instrument which represented one of the cultures in our group.
- We played these instruments with an individual beat, coming together gradually to create our band.

Date: 26/05/12

Debrief session:

They had a practice event on the 19th of May for Festival of Museums which was extremely busy. The learning from this practice event was “less is more”. During the following weeks debrief we discussed ways to bring ‘calm into the room’, sticking to roles and supporting each other. We also discussed the importance of regular breaks. The debrief used a Ketso Kit method with Carrie facilitating an objective feedback session.

June sessions- Refugee Week Event:

The June sessions were further development of ideas, practice and reworking of stories, organizing equipment and marketing their event.

Date: 23/06/12

Refugee Week

The event was successful with children and families staying on average for 1.5 hours in the function suite at St Mungo Museum engaged in various activities led and developed by the volunteers. Each activity had 3 volunteers stationed to allow for breaks and individuals to join their partner for the storytelling activity.

The activities were:

Storytelling – the team discovered 34 comparative versions of the Gingerbread Man. They chose six to present to children. Each pairing delivered their storytelling session in a way they wished supported by either (sometimes both) Carrie and [NAME].

Warri board - tournaments and teaching the game.

Puppet making – cut outs of puppets were made for children to make based on the Gingerbread Man stories.

Projections of photographs taken since February of the project [NAME].

Percussion instruments – these were played in different areas of the museum individually and then coming together as a band.

The activities were all either on the floor or close to the floor which slowed down the pace of the event.

August – Exhibition preparation- Third session with [NAME]

The group brought in all their cameras and we printed out their photographs. We then edited down the extensive collection of photos to key stages. Decided on the narrative of the exhibition and began grouping ideas for display.

Date: 08/09/13

September – Launch of exhibition

The launch went well with all the volunteers arriving for refreshments –Gingerbread Men, tea and coffee. The exhibition stayed up in the community exhibition space, Level 1 in St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art for one month. The volunteers have kept the exhibition, hoping to have a future showing in another venue. This is kept in the crate store of St Mungo's.

During the process of working towards the exhibition the volunteers began to recognise how much they had achieved. They expressed a wish to formulate their experience into a book that could pass on their learning and experience working together interculturally, their process and the outcomes. Due to staff sickness this unexpected phase of the project was shelved until January 2013.

January 2013

Booklet preparation and editing:

After a break of five months the volunteers were brought together to collect their certificates for the previous year's participation. Carrie proposed the next stage of their project i.e., compiling a booklet of photographs and journal extracts explaining the process the team had gone through, its challenges and outcome. The team also discussed a continuing presence at St Mungo's facilitated by [NAME] of Pan African Arts Scotland. This was meant by a great deal of enthusiasm. The following week the core volunteers met to compile their booklet. The core group are three Scottish members who were all aged 50 years and above, however one young woman from Iran continued to come to 50% of the sessions as did a young man from Ghana.

Carrie continued to facilitate this process. Through four sessions the volunteers created their content and choice of photographs. They also edited the final version of the booklet. However, Carrie found that through the discussions the team mainly spoke and wrote suggestions in bullet points. She wrote these up to reflect the conversations as closely as possible the volunteers then checked the content she produced. Therefore, they were able to edit anything that didn't reflect their intentions. This process was time-consuming but ensured the volunteer voice was preserved. This booklet will be available online and hard copies will be distributed to the team.

Legacy

The volunteer events team will continue beyond the end of the Curious project, partnership with Pan African Arts Scotland, and St Mungos Museum Team. The team will have a free

meeting space at the museum and will be facilitated by [NAME] and [NAME] (Glasgow Museum Learning Assistant). Each year the team will create an event for Refugee Week, based at St Mungo's. They will also have further training and events opportunities through Pan Africans Arts Scotland.

The team hope to build on their intercultural awareness, their shared development and commitment to creating effective platforms for intercultural dialogue. their experiences of working together for a year their experiences researching objects through participation in "Knight and the Crescent Hare" at The Burrell Collection¹

Facilitation of the project and its ethos

The length of the project meant there was a significant risk of the group disbanding. However, the length of the project allowed for learning and reflection on the development of an intercultural group, how they would work together and the long-term challenges they would face.

One year after the project started the feedback has been extremely positive with these key elements for success noted:

The projects flexibility is key to its success. But also, the facilitators should stress that as a volunteering experience everyone involved should only participate in how much or how little they want to – and that this can change and is completely up to them.

Having a regular familiar 'home' was essential to the cohesion of the group and their identity.

The reflective process enabled the group to grow and learn from each other and different ideas.

The "appropriate management "of the group enabled the group to take stock of what can and cannot be achieved. And to reflect on their own experiences as well as on the events and outputs of the project.

Testimonials:

"I am truly inspired 'how we got here'? We shared the map of our journeys, just part of something which is making a difference".

We need to build a real diverse culture which truly respects and understands each other but keep it simple – stories- laugh- music; time out.

I am excited about what we will grow into as a group.

I have been meeting people from all over and my communication skills improved, and I started to understand others easily.

I became more open than before and made me able to connect with others in different ways.

APPENDIX D. BOOKLET (Text only)

Volunteering

Objects and Us: A Curious Journey

This booklet was developed as part of the project. [NAME] was led by Glasgow Museums as part of the Scottish Project, which was funded by Legacy Trust UK, creating a lasting impact from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games by funding ideas and local talent to inspire creativity across the UK and by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland.

[NAME]was:

- A community – led exhibition focusing on [NAME]museum collections and the stories those objects inspired.
- A learning programme on Cultural Awareness.
- A school's programme using objects.
- A programme of events using cultural themes from the objects in the exhibition, to bring people together.
- A conference to reflect on the learning from the project.

All photographs of the exhibition objects are courtesy of [NAME]Museums Collection and unless otherwise stated, all images in this booklet are courtesy of the Volunteer Events Team.

Volunteer Events Team

The volunteer events team began to work together in February 2012; we were twenty individuals from all walks of life with seventeen first languages between us.

The team at [NAME] Museums invited all previous participants who had attended either an event or the learning programme to be involved. This created a group of individuals from different cultures who came together because they were invited, not specifically picked due to their diversity.

The stages of our unique organic journey as an 'events team' were mapped to the [NAME]Project aims.

We asked:

- Who is Curious?
- What brings people together and can they have a common purpose?

We discovered some answers by:

- We participated in a learning programme on intercultural dialogue led by [NAME]
- We attended weekly sessions for eight months to plan an event for Refugee Week June 2012.
- We wrote our thoughts about the project and working together interculturally in a journal.
- We worked with a professional artist to document our process using photography.
- We delivered two successful events, from which we learnt great lessons.
- We used extracts from our journals and photographs to create an exhibition about our volunteering experience in September 2012.

In this booklet we will show:

- What can be achieved when a volunteer group has a regular facilitated space to meet in for free.
- What is created through a structured, facilitated approach?
- What happens when different generations and cultures work towards a goal together?
- How groups grow when they feel an investment has been made in them.
- The importance of reflective practice by engaging in self –reflection, discovery and practice.
- What happens when a group is allowed to try new things out and revise plans?
- The benefits and challenges of a long-term project.
- The fusion of ideas that come from being in a diverse volunteering group.
- What we, as volunteers learnt from our participation, reflection, discovery and practice.

Who are the Volunteer Events Team?

The team was a mixture of new and existing museum volunteers.

The key ingredients to its success were:

That managers, facilitators and volunteers were working together as a diverse mix of ages and with seventeen first languages between us. This diversity allowed us to exchange our different cultural ideas, celebrate common purpose, and learn from each other. This was aided by our own desire to be involved with [NAME]

Where our journeys to Scotland and volunteering with the [NAME]project began:

Ghana, Afghanistan, Egypt, Ukraine, India, Sudan, Somalia, Kurdistan Iran, Russia, Kurdistan, Vietnam, New Zealand, Scotland.

The challenges and barriers to intergenerational and intercultural dialogue we could have faced:

- Language barriers
- Generational barriers
- The possibility that the group would splinter into cliques
- Prejudice between cultural groups

These were overcome through:

- Participation in the learning programme. The programme prompted us to think about individual journeys and stories. This process meant that when we all met together, we were ready to be open to new things and to hear new diverse voices without judgement.
- Having an open space to meet, as a platform for dialogue.

At the beginning, we defined our volunteering objectives.

Through a workshop led by museum professionals we discovered that we were interested in exploring:

“Shared experiences – connectedness- making connections between the things we all have in common.”

This was done by taking time to understand each other’s differences.

- We communicated these experiences through learning together and creating events.
- We wanted to explore together what it means to work interculturally.

Phases of the project:

- Participation in the Learning Programme- we discussed barriers to cultural engagement, communication and self-reflection as active citizens.
- Practical sessions with an artist in how to document our project.
- A practical session with the Assistant Museum Manager on event planning.
- A session on how to successfully market an event.

- Observation of events held at St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art. These were Working Songs, Springtime Rituals with the Project, Bi – Lingual Storytelling with University of Glasgow, and Our Stories by Pan African Arts Scotland.
- Development of event ideas.

Communication tools used:

- Facebook page.
- Debrief sessions for feedback.

Outcomes from project:

- Practice event.
- Across Cultures (Event for Refugee Week 2012).
- Exhibition of whole project and this booklet.

Facebook Page

A Facebook page enabled us to keep in contact.

(<https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/334186726633557/>)

- A place to share our photographs including images of our homelands.
- Facebook was a place to keep in touch with members of the team who moved away from Glasgow.
- We were able to show others our journey, achievements and cultural thinking.

Defining moments and a fusion of ideas.

- Talking about our personal responses to the objects in the Exhibition introduced us to each other's personalities and unique journeys.
- We put our photographs on a world map to show where we all come from. This helped us connect with the diversity of our group.
- Sharing food together whilst sharing stories helped us to get to know each other better.
- A visit to the Sharmanka Kinetic Theatre at Trongate 103 inspired us.
- Through discussions about food (pancakes), storytelling from Russia (Sharmanka) and storytelling from Scotland (Scottish Storytelling Centre) we discovered that all our separate cultures shared similar children's stories such as The Kolobok and The Gingerbread Man.
- Helping out at different events at St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art showed us what can work at an event.
- We were each given a small digital camera and a journal each to document our project.

PLANNING & PANCAKES

The ideas all began with Shrove Tuesday, February 2012

- [NAME] brought in pancakes for the group to try. She also brought in a griddle to show the international members of the volunteer team how to make Scottish pancakes.
- Through sharing these stories [NAME] began to talk about Russian pancakes and the Soviet Union.
- This very early conversation began the 'connectedness' we experienced when the story of The Kolobok (which is a little round bun, eaten around the same time as Shrove Tuesday) was told by [NAME]. Everyone in the whole group had a similar children's story. It was exactly the same as the British version The Gingerbread Man.
- The connections came from sharing pancakes.
- The Kolobok story resonated with very similar versions the group had read as children.
- Nikki – The Mouse and the Lion (India), [NAME]– The Bird in the Tree (Sudan), – The Kolobok (Russia and Ukraine) and [NAME], Carrie– The Gingerbread Man (British).

“One of the many nice days ...how easy it is to talk, and makes everyone prepared to listen, sharing ideas led to Kolobok from Pancake Day”.

Excursions: finding out about storytelling and objects at Sharmanka Gallery, February 2012

- Eating pancakes together and talking about Russia and Scotland led us to visit the Sharmanka Kinetic Gallery at Trongate 103.
- This visit was out with our schedule, but it was continued learning and we decided to all go together.
- Stories from Russia and Scotland began to be exchanged between us as we were drawn into the combination of objects, music and storytelling.
- This got us thinking about how these 'cultural markers' of music and storytelling tradition are universally experienced across the world.

“These were “good stories for storytelling and the event”.

We sat around a big table and each of us told a story; [NAME] spoke first. Her story was The Kolobok which we all realised was just like The Gingerbread Man. Later we found 42 different versions of the same story from around the world.

We then began workshops with [NAME] in how to play percussion instruments and drums. During these workshops we created a music CD of our own composition for the theme of the Gingerbread Man rhyme.

Run, Run as fast as you can.

You can't catch me,

I'm the Gingerbread Man!

Events which inspired us,
March 2012.

We attended several project events at [NAME] in February and March 2012. These events inspired some of the content for our own event.

By experiencing other peoples 'intercultural events' we could decide on what cultural markers and intercultural objects we thought worked best.

- Working Songs was an event inspired by the songs people sing when making butter. Many people impulsively got up to dance together to the music and this inspired us to use music in our event.
- Bi-Lingual Storytelling was an event with four different storytellers from Scotland and Russia. They were very engaging, and this inspired us to use storytelling in our event.
- Our Stories by [NAME]. Another well attended event had African storytelling and music which reinforced our ideas to use music and storytelling together.
- Springtime Rituals was about "out with the old and in with the new". We explored diverse stories, pagan rituals and songs from Chinese New Year. The event alerted us to the importance of marketing.
- Human Library was an event run by the Team in partnership with Glasgow Libraries for Aye Write Festival 2012. The event showed us how important it is to create a space for dialogue.

It was a good, fun day.

More Eating Together & Easter,
April 2012

Sharing Experience: Eating Food together and Objects

The Christian festival of Easter is celebrated at the end of March or early April. Northern Europeans boil and decorate eggs, sometimes rolling them down hills or hiding them for an "Easter Egg Hunt". This festival follows a period of fasting or abstinence of favourite foods called Lent. We realised as a group that internationally we all celebrated similar events in

our religious and cultural calendars at the same times of year. For example, Muslims celebrate Eid and Ramadan which have a strict element of fasting.

This led us to discuss the importance of food as a celebration cross culturally and to refer back to the objects in the Exhibition. Many of them had functions that were to do with sharing food and drink together.

- Most cultures share different teas or coffee which could relate to the Clarice Cliff Tea Set.
- Most cultures celebrate with food and music which could relate to the Feasting Bowl and Kissar.
- At Easter we also had our second photography session with Brendan Jackson.
- We began to learn about composition and colour and how to use our pocket digital cameras to best effect. In these photos we could see immediately how much closer we had got as a group. We were actually standing closer together and our smiles were broader.

Planning for Refugee Week 2012

- The theme this year was Spirit, and we decided a good place to begin planning was to find out what we all felt the word 'spirit' meant.
- We used a World Café format to examine what Spirit meant and to begin to think about our marketing. On three tables we had paper tablecloths and pens. On each tablecloth we found three different titles:
Global Sprit; Community Spirit.
Individual Spirit.
- We then wrote our responses to these terms directly onto the paper tablecloths.

As a group this democratic approach allowed us to discover what we meant by 'spirit' and we realised that the theme connected us again as we could easily see that we each had a similar feeling about what 'spirit' meant, regardless of our age or ethnic background.

We felt this connectedness enhanced the harmony of the group. This was a lesson in empathy, peace and togetherness. When we all met, there was no fighting; no wars, just talking, sharing and respect for each point of view.

We were all individuals in one world living together.

We were then able to identify what we wanted to communicate in our event.

Our shared experience

This discovery enabled us to create a 100-word brief on our planned event for Refugee Week 2012 which was included in the Scottish Refugee Week brochure.

Coming back to the 'individual'.

A focus on the individual journey, story and response to objects is a key methodology from the Project.

“Through being allowed to show your own unique individual perspectives a sense of joy and power over your own experience can create empathy between people and build bridges”.

Doing this together as individuals gave us a rich experience.
Developing our skill for the events

We practiced percussion beats with Pan African Arts Scotland.

We made puppets for storytelling.

Music became our clarion call to gather audiences.

We learnt the ancient game of Warri.

A lot of people in the group knew how to play the game under different names such as Oware, Manacala and Aware. We decided to teach visitors to the museum how to play the game as it was another way to share experiences.

How to play Warri

You need 48 beans or seeds to play. Place 4 seeds in each circle.

The game is for two people only and you sit opposite each other.

- You should have 24 seeds that are now in the circles nearest to you. The aim of the game is to capture your opponent's seeds. You are the first player. You must choose one of your circles and take all the seeds from your circle then distribute them one by one in each circle to the right.
- If you run out of circles on your side continue to distribute them into your opponent's circles. Your shot finishes when you have distributed your last seed. It is now your opponent's turn.
- Continue the game each taking a turn at moving your seeds on your side of the board.

But how do you win?

- If you are distributing your seeds and the last seed is placed into a circle on your opponent's side making the final count 2 or 3 seeds then you get to take these seeds and put them into your blue circle on the right-hand side of the board. Also, if there are any circles directly behind the one you have just taken the seeds from in a consecutive unbroken sequence on the opponent's side that contains 2 or 3 seeds, and then you can also capture these seeds and put them into your double-hooped circle.

Good luck!

Make your own Warri board!

Take a 12-egg carton and cut off the lid. Then cut off both ends of the lid and glue them to end of the carton. You should now have 12 cups and 2 storage pots. Paint and decorate your board as you wish. You may want to use some African-inspired art for this! You now need to get 48 beans or seeds which can be bought cheaply in any food shop. You may also want to paint your beans to make your game really colourful. Now enjoy playing with your new Warri board and see if you can teach others how to play!

"Practice makes perfect".

Our practice event for Festival of Museums, May 2012

What we learnt and why it was important!

- Interesting and enjoyable but tiring.
- The practice event was extremely busy.
- We learnt a lot about what is and is not achievable.

What we did for the event:

- We included storytelling of the Gingerbread Man and The Kolobok as recordings on a CD.
- A list of the stories and projections of our photographs on a DVD.
- Our recorded music on the theme of the Gingerbread Man.
- Children could make puppets and engage in their own storytelling.
- We taught the participants how to play Warri.
- Each of us had a percussion instrument which represented one of the cultures in our group.
- We played these instruments with an individual beat, coming together gradually to create our band.

How we felt after the practice event as written in our journals.

- The event for Festival of Museums was hard work.
- There were a lot of children, who were not being supervised by their parents.
- There was a misunderstanding between participants about the use of photography during the event. We realised that different cultures have different attitudes to photography.
- The room felt crowded and out of control as we tried to do too much.

- We wanted to work out what went right and what could be improved on for our event for Refugee Week 2012.

So, we addressed these issues by:

- Having a reflective debrief and Ketso Kit session.
- To do this we used the Ketso Method which allows each person in the group a democratic voice without having to stand up in front of everyone and be negative.

We realised that we needed:

- Adequate publicity which was targeted.
- A structure for health and safety awareness.
- Clarity about the role the volunteer performs.
- Clarity about who is responsible for the health and safety issues.
- To be more realistic.
- Needed to re-design how we delivered the activities to enable crowd control.

What happened next?

We debriefed on the practice event to look at what could be done better.

We were all a little disheartened about how the practice event went, but Carrie our facilitator came back the next week with a breakdown of roles and responsibilities and reminded us that as volunteers we didn't have to do any more than we wanted to do in terms of time and commitment.

We had all committed to the project and had forgotten that it was a volunteer placement, and, in some ways, it was now feeling like a job.

We all as a group discussed our feelings and listened to each other.

Through this dialogue and appropriate facilitation, we were able to make clear decisions of how to improve our working relationships, roles and our next event.

Across Cultures Event,
23rd June 2012

What we learnt and why it was important

- We performed as a band once, instead of four times.
- We recovered floor cushions from material sourced from Ghana by Pan African Arts to bring the children's activities onto the floor. This meant that the room felt less crowded and the pace of the event was slower as people had to sit and spend some time at the activity instead of running from one thing to the next.

- We had a clear area that was not on the floor but was low level for the Warri boards.
- Reading the stories instead of them being pre-recorded allowed us to connect with the audience more. Each pair was able to do as much or as little with their story as THEY wanted and felt comfortable in doing.
- We put clear signs in the event venue to say photographs would be taken.
- We put clear signs up around the venue to ask parents to supervise their children at all times.
- Our facilitator assured us that the health and safety elements were NOT the volunteer's responsibility, and neither was child supervision.
- We were there to learn and have fun.

The Case of the Kolobok Exhibition, September 2012

This exhibition showed our process of working together interculturally.

It featured photographs taken by us as we documented our project from February to September 2012; our Let Glasgow Flourish tree; a DVD of our Kalobok and Gingerbread Man stories plus interviews with the public about the intercultural importance of the Commonwealth Games coming to Glasgow 2014; our map and stories about who we are quotes from our journals.

- We worked with an artist called [NAME] who helped us learn how to frame a photograph to document our process of working together.
- We had all been given small digital cameras and Brendan showed us how to get the best photographic quality from them we could.
- All the photographs in this booklet, unless otherwise identified, were taken by us.

What materials did we create for our exhibition?

- Our personal stories were linked to the map of our birth places.
- We created a series of photographic panels which showed the development of the events for Refugee Week 2012.
- There was a video of our photographs of Glasgow and interviews with visitors about the importance of the Commonwealth Games coming to Glasgow 2014.
- An area for children to sit on cushions and play with the percussion instruments
- The Gingerbread Man Storybook was on display so visitors could read the comparative versions from around the world.
- Our tree was placed at the opening of the exhibition space, and we asked visitors to write on paper hands what they enjoy about culture and the exhibition and hang these on the tree.
- DVD of us all reading the performed stories.
- A comments book for visitors to add to.

- An interactive event led by Nikki for Doors Open Day.
- Conversations about the project with Christine for Doors Open Day.

Exhibition Launch,
8th September 2012

- We had an opening event with Gingerbread Men and refreshments.
- It was a celebration to mark what we had achieved.
- There were speeches, tears and pride.

What we learnt and why it was important

- It looked very professional it reflected our journey well.
- It celebrated our success.
- An element of our project was to share our experiences over the period of volunteering with [NAME]
- We were aware throughout our volunteering experience that the exhibition would gather our stories on the way, and it was good to see it all come together.
- It has become documented evidence of our process, including photographs, video and written word.
- Our conversations continue.

Some learning from the Exhibition:

- We could have been more focussed in our marketing.
- We could have created more interactive participation for visitors to contextualise the exhibition.
- Clear guidance in the form of handouts could be given to staff to ensure that the DVD played throughout the day.
- We could have provided a timeline to accompany the exhibition which contextualised it.
- We could have even more communication between us all so that handovers between volunteers and staff go more seamlessly.

Our Tree

Let Glasgow Flourish

The Tree was a symbol of:

- Our hopes and dreams for Glasgow and ourselves.
- Our legacy as volunteers growing.
- Us deciding to keep meeting at St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art.

We also used it in our exhibition for visitors to write their thoughts about culture on paper hands and then hang on the tree.

This idea was inspired by conversations at the museum that Let Glasgow Flourish.

Words on reflection

- “Above all [NAME] has helped me to live in the moment, a skill I had lost in the melee of everyday life. It is fabulous to see how much people enjoy themselves. The laughter seems heartier, the singing and dancing is joyful, the smiles are broad and genuine, the greetings warm and welcoming and the emotions deep and often moving. It has been the most enriching experience I have had in years.”
 - “Interest in other cultures, supportive environment, calming space, time to reflect, finds self – own culture.”
 - “Benefits – culture in general, growth, real interest in how people come together, talk to each other”.
 - “Individual, group and society- diversity of group- how we integrated provides lessons for the community, outreach, in-reach ...integration legacy and the future.”
 - “I learned about culture.”
 - “I did teamwork, which is really enjoyable.”
 - “My daughter really enjoyed playing the music and hearing the stories.”
 - An awareness of the true value of everyone being a ‘unique’ human being.”
 - I have been meeting people from all over and my communication skills improved, and I have started understanding others easily.”
 - “I became more open than before and it made me able to connect with others in different ways.”
 - “I was here last week (at the museum) meeting a group of women of different cultures and ages. Something magical happened. We talked about the objects in the exhibition. When we talked there were no borders, when in the world there seem to be so many borders, political and religious...”
 - It’s an opportunity to meet and to talk and to change our minds.”
- Legacies that continue to grow from being involved in this project.
- The continuation of the benefits of our approach to dialogue.
 - Visits to exhibitions and performances such as the Red Road Exhibition and Mwana by Ankur Productions.

- Participation in the Symposium where we spoke about our experience as participants.
- Participation in Theatre Reportage and Annett Henneman, working with refugee stories and performance.
- We were invited to participate in another volunteering project to make two Handling Kits of cultural objects at St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art.
- We were invited to a further volunteering opportunity with Ankur Arts and the Burrell Collection called The Knight and the Crescent Hare.
- We will continue as the Volunteer Events Team where will meet at St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art facilitated by Pan African Arts Scotland.

Useful Contacts

- Volunteer Events Team at St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art, please contact Caroline Currie on 0141 2761625 / caroline.currie@glasgowlife.org.uk
- Pan Africa Arts Scotland, please contact Gameli Tordzro 0141 3343706 / info@panafricanartsscotland.org.uk
- Brendan Jackson <http://www.brendanjackson.co.uk/>

References that may be useful

- World Café - <http://www.theworldcafe.com/method.html>
- Ketso Kit and Method- <http://www.ketso.com/>
- Human Library- <http://humanlibraryuk.org/>
- Sharmanka- www.sharmanka.com/

APPENDIX E. ENQUIRY TWO – OBERON COURT

SITE 1: AUDIENCE GATHER IN THE PARK OPP FLATS

WALTER: Tell me a story

Tell me a story

Tell me a story before I go tae sleep.

KIRI: Tell me about the birds and the bees,

CAROLINE: Tell me about they little trees

ALL: Tell me a story before ah gae tae sleep.

MARK: The Gorbals 2013. [NAME] flats are nearly the last block of the notorious High Rises left to be demolished.

SUE: Gorbals could mean rough village Garbh (Rough) Baile (Village)

CHARLIE: In 1900's the Gorbals was Scotland's most diverse community with many people migrating from a lot of different countries.

DYLAN: 1841 - 7 out of 10 inhabitants living in Gorbals had been born in Ireland.

KIRI: In later part of 1880s due to Czarist persecution immigrants from Russian Empire, including Lithuania, Estonia and Poland. Even as late as 1940's you could see shop fronts with Hebrew lettering.

MANITA: In 1946 the first Scottish mosque was in a converted Gorbals tenement building.

And in the 1950's the Asian community really arrived

WALTER: As did the Italian community, we have all come from many different countries and want to tell you this story. In the last ten years the Refugee community have been mainly housed in the High Flats such as these living side by side many different kinds of people from Glasgow, the Highlands, and the islands from all over the world.

SONG: Shiri yaanaka unoendopi

Huya titambe

Ndirikuenda kumakore

Kuti ndifanane nemakore

Shiri Yakanaka unoendepi

Huya Titambe
Ndirikukwira kumakore
kuti ndifanane nemakore!

(Translation:

Lovely bird please come down to this place.

I'm flying up to the sky.

I want to be like the clouds)

MALI: ***ENTERS FROM PATH SL OF PARK WITH TROLLY***

Hey what are you all looking at? Huh? ...First time I came to that place.... Then they move you to another accommodation.

So, what happened the other day? I was missing you know my food, my home food, and I didn't know where to get it. So, I made this Doreenand er – this lady is from.... you know, each time you meet a black person you become so excited, so they started laughing.

MARK/MALI: “Oh, we're both from Zimbabwe”.

MALI: Then I asked them where I could get Mealie Meal. Then he told me, saying.

MARK: “Oh, you have to go Mama Africa.”

MALI: So, I was scared, like those high-rises, how do I get there? And I didn't know the buses. They spoke.

MARK: “Oh you can walk”. It is just behind Tesco.” *(Goes to flats)*

MALI: But the way he was describing it, to me it was like some... I don't know...some places very far away. Then, what happened, again they invited me to their place. Then I asked them where they were staying. And they were just staying a block behind us. I was in 53 and they were in 63!

SONG: Shiri yaanaka unoendopi

Huya titambe

Ndirikuenda kumakore
Kuti ndifanane nemakore

Shiri Yakanaka unoendepi
Huya Titambe
Ndirikukwira kumakore
kuti ndifanane nemakore!

***MALI GOES TO FLAT WITH HER TROLLEY, CHRISTIANA
AND THE REST OF THE CAST LEAD THE AUDIENCE
AFTER HER.***

CAROLINE: (Singing) God Made Everything
God made everything.
Beautiful oh – oh –oh beautiful
God made everything pretty.
So very fine....
There must be a power a wonderful power...

SITE 2: OUTSIDE OBERON COURT

MANITA: Over the last 40 years I have passed these High-Rise flats, and always the sun is shining on them. They were beautiful...and so quiet, no kids playing, just a few with their Mum or Dad. The view from the outside was beautiful with sometimes shadows dancing on the walls. Honest to God, I would stop in the traffic and just look at them, so much I was beeped! But then I went inside for the first time after 40 years ... maybe they are now top old? But it's not so beautiful inside, it's cold and dark and damp. People looking sad and crowded. I was shocked. Come, come and see what you think?

SITE 3: LOBBY

MARK: When I arrived, I didn't know where I was going. the main door opens...I saw the windows of the concierge and I thought it

was the Home Office again. I thought there would be another interrogation another interviews again. But there wasn't. I was taken to a flat many floor up, I had never seen flats like this before, not in my country.

AUDIO - SOUNDSCAPE BEGINS

There was no conversation at all, except I was told that I must keep it tidy at all times. It was in the middle of the night. Then the person gave me an envelope with 35 pounds in it ... and I found on the bed a small tube of toothpaste, and a toothbrush, a small tub of soap and a small plastic bag. I had arrived.

TV 1- LIFT STORY ONE ON TV

SITE 4: LIFTS

AUDIO - LIFT STORIES IN THE LIFT

SITE 5: LANDING 1

TAMMY:

Hello everyone. Have you been to these flats before? I would like to tell you about the advantages of living in the flats.

- 1) The concierge is there to look after you
- 2) If you have lots of luggage the lift is there to help you up with it
- 3) If your flat is at a high level it will be easy to reach it because of the lifts.
- 4) Easy to find some friends because a is population
- 5) Never feel lonely because people are always around
- 6) Easy to party because noises ...they don't penetrate the walls of this High Rise?
- 7) Because they are so high the views are very good.

LANDING 2

Caroline opens the door and steps out.

DYLAN: It's alright hen, I won't cause you any bother.

CAROLINE: But why are you lying outside in the foyer?

DYLAN: Because I'm homeless and I really need to sleep.

CAROLINE: Why are you homeless?

DYLAN: Drug problems, lack of support, no houses this is Glasgow hen what can I say!

CAROLINE: A few only been in the country a few months, I got this flat.

DYLAN: That's because your priority, a single man in Glasgow isn't much of a priority

I've been waiting over six months now, in the library, during the day and skippering at night.

CAROLINE: Skippering?

DYLAN: Sleeping rough? The Hamish Allen Centre gave me a sleeping bag and I doss from here to there.

CAROLINE: I thought Glasgow was such a wonderful city.

(Sits down beside Dylan)

When I came to Britain, in December 2000 from the war in Sierra Leone, I claimed asylum in London, at the refugee council and I was accommodated at the hero tower hotel for a month with my older daughter and I was also 3 months pregnant. My name came up on the housing list Glasgow, I had never heard of Glasgow, but I never had an option. The coach came and here I am, I found myself living in Topside oval on the 17th floor of the flats I can remember that day, because it was first time I seen snow. I started to believe in my future that my troubles were over but when I started to go through asylum process began to take its toll, couldn't sleep, eat I wasn't allowed to work. I used to work as instructor in agriculture supervising people, now people are supervising me.

The stresses mounted... court dates, I started not been comfy in my own house, addicts on my landing, harassing me and teasing me when I was in the lift. I started college night classes, but the harassment got worse, I was thrown in the lift,

my baby's pram was kicked, and I was even spat on, you don't get that in my home country.

My expectations of any European country were that they were perfect in every way. No poverty, people were well mannered and enriched with religious beliefs on which my life stands upon.

DYLAN:

Let me tell you. This is the Gorbals, these flats were made because of shortage of housing and the slums that people had to live in. There have always been problems here.

Always.

The library is situated on the main street, thirty meters away from the chemist and you wonder why school kids know the terminology of the junkie. We should be educating these young minds, keeping them safe but instead nine-year-olds are looking through Facebook photos in the library "he's a junkie...she's a junkie" they don't all come from broken homes.

100 yards away is the Twomax building, its purpose is to offer accommodation to the homeless. It's a waiting game, a dingy lit room, with a very unfriendly receptionist. Unsympathetic to the needs of the vulnerable. Hours pass in this room, days, weeks, months. The library know becomes your home during the day, and at night the Hamish Allen centre offer you a sleeping bag for you to lay your head under a bridge. And no wonder there is a cue at the chemist.

SITE 6: KITCHEN

MALI:

When I went into the kitchen. Cupboards were empty. Wanted a cup of tea but no sugar, tea bags, milk, coffee. ... And I was shivering, I was cold. And I said to myself, we'll let me go down to Reception. Went back to reception for help, but, surprise, couldn't help. Instead [they] asked me to go to Tesco in the middle of the night. I didn't have a clue where Tesco was. The gentleman said walking distance. I was just following the main road till I met these guys who were coming, walking with Tesco pickup bags. Then I asked them where Tesco was, and they directed me. So, I went into Tesco and picked up

what I wanted. Of course, I didn't have enough money just the five pounds they gave me with my toothpaste, in the little plastic bag..., they were helpful, the guys, they showed me where Tesco was walking distance. So, I managed to get myself sugar, milk, tea bags. I walked back along in the dark. People were looking at me. I think they were shocked – a woman walking in the middle of the night. Of course, I didn't know where I was, how dangerous the place was. So, when I got home, I was relieved. And what I did was took the bath. After bath I took ate a nice cuppa. But I couldn't sleep 'cos there were cables running around, so I didn't know if it was a trap. Even my relatives were calling me. Then I just told them, "don't ask me so many questions 'cos I think I'm under a trap and I think the Home Office is trying to trick me, do don't ask me any questions to do with that asylum thing".

SITE 7/ LIVING ROOM 1

CHARLIE: Me and Sue met in a London church. We were sharing some ideas in church and we ended up asking "where do you live?"

"...Dundee, I live in Dundee".

We exchanged numbers and from that day we were friends."

AUDIO - Phones Sally Audio of sound effect

Sue? I got the house here at YMCA! In Glasgow!

SUE: Hello Charlie. Where? In Glasgow? I'm at the YMCA.

CHARLIE: I'm in the first building ...the grey building ...7...

SUE: Where? Oh, I see you! Look up where are you are!

CHARLIE: Ahh whhhhahah

LIVING ROOM 2

THE AUDIENCE CAN STAY FOR 5 TO LOOK AT EXHIBITION AND FOOTAGE ON THE TV, MUNA AND MURAI CONTROL TV IN LIVING ROOM

TV- POTRAITS FROM BASH

SITE 8 / VAMPIRE STORIES

PROJECTION - VAMPIRE HUNT FILM

KIRI: My name is Katrin and I am a Witch. I live here in Oberon Court flats and I want to tell you about the dark side, the dark stories of the flats. The first story is about the Vampire with the Iron Teeth and the second is the White lady and the third, well you will make that up.

AUDIO - 2 X STORIES

The third story is about what ghost stories will be on this site in ten years' time? We have had deaths, births, love, suicide. What memories, and stories will be told about here. Please write them down if you like.

SITE 10:

DYLAN: This is what I see from my room with a view.

I see a mass of different people and cultures blossoming like the most exotic of gardens, my personal own window box eight teen stories up.

I see the planes and their paths flying over the night sky, as the stars catch my eye, man's always looking further in search of the final frontier, but the biggest telescope couldn't see the wonderment of what I see from my room with a view.

I see the seasons change now summer is near, the boys with the tops off, more tattooed than physique, the girls wearing sun visors loungers and hats my own royal ascot at the bottom of the flats.

The blue lights are flashing off my walls no wonder there's teeth marks in ceramic cup, it makes me wonder the youth centre you close, now the kids are in plain sight vulnerable and exposed.

I see the frost attacking my window the smell of burnt ember its cold and I'm saddened, late in November. The end is upon us and were on too pastures new, and too the future I can only hope for a room with a view.

SITE 11: WHOLE FLAT

**AS AUDIENCE WAIT FOR LIFTS TO GO BACK DOWN, THEY HAVE UN-
GUIDED TIME IN THE FLATS TO LOOK AT EXHIBITION, PHOTOGRAPHS
WITH ACCOMPANYING STORIES.**

AUDIO OF PROCESS.

TV CAN GO ON AGAIN.

SITE 12: LIFT 2- AS BEFORE

SITE 13: LOBBY 2

TV - SUITCASE STORIES ON TV AS AUDIENCE GET DOWN LIFTS

LOBBY 3:

**TV - BLOW DOWN FILM PLUS IMAGES OF INTERIOR OF FLATS AS SLIDE
SHOW**

WALTER: Hi my name is Oberon Court; I've been here a long time
now.

The concierge is my ears, this is what I hear.

"Where are my keys?"

"The lift is jammed again".

"Is wee Joe in?"

"Merry Christmas"

"Happy New Year"

Fed up with banging.

The windows are my eyes, what a beautiful view.

Seagulls always flying, river Clyde...wow!

Citizens Theatre cool!
Drunken people a lot at weekends.
Clyde so sweet, Glasgow Green.
Door's my mouth, what a crazy view.
The night life is so beautiful.
Love sexy buildings, people always come in.
Heartbreak when other buildings come down.
People always singing.
Lift is my heart, people always noisy, and people rowdy.
Always washed and smelling good, always up and down,
people going up or going down, never quiet.
I've been, from a teenager someone who loved the building,
fell in love with the view.
Happy but short lived, when they come down... I'm hurt and
deserted.
I'm a busy building.
I live here so long and now it's time for me to come down, I
don't care, I've had a ball up here...they are doing something
now...ooopps... here I go!

SONG- ALL TOGETHER:

Knocking on Heavens Door
Mamas take this badge off of me, I don't need it anymore.
It's getting dark too dark to see, feels like I'm knocking on
heaven's door.
Knock, Knock, knocking on heaven's door.

SONG- ALL TOGETHER:

Beautiful Glasgow

END

APPENDIX F. ENQUIRY TWO – GATSBY AVENUE

GATSBY AVE SCRIPT

SITE 1: LOBBY 1

AUDIO – SOUNDSCAPES

SITE 2: LOBBY 2

**TV - SCENE BETWEEN MARION AND JANE – HOW THEY MET AND
KINGSWAY EYE FOOTAGE ETC**

IMPORVISED

SITE 3 – LIFT STORIES

SITE 4-LANDING 1

AUDIO – DAWN RAID

TV- TIMELINE SLIDE SHOW

PROJECTOR –PHOTOS

SITE 5 – LIVING ROOM

WITH MARION, AUDIENCE SIT AND HAVE A CHAT ABOUT DAWN RAIDS.

**IMPROVISED – DISCUSSES HER MEMEORY OF THE DAWN RAIDS AND THE
REFUGEE FRIENDSHIPS SHE BUILT TYHEN LOST**

AUDIO - AUDIENCE CAN HEAR DAWN RAID FROM OUTSIDE.

TV – INTERVIEWS FROM FLATS

SITE 6- KITCHEN

AUDIO – EMYS STORY

SITE 7- PAULA AND NIA'S

AUDIO – INTERVIEW WITH PAULA AND MISSY'S WORDS

SITE 8 – IQBAL

AUDIO – TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS

TV- IQBALS FOOTAGE

FAZIQ: Did you know how cold it was here?!

Yes!!! The weather here is really cold, especially in winter.

But my place, my home is colder than weather.

Cold... Cold... It is a really cold!! Cold .

Cold of lonely!!

Cold of absence!!

Cold of sadness!!

Cold of empty!!

Most interesting part, it is no real heater.

Yeah, here is really cold!!

Can you believe that I am living in 20 meters squared without a proper heater!!

I have just one old fashioned, broken and rubbish fireplace with two bars working.

Can you imagine how I pass my days and nights with only this!!!!

OoOoh, My God!!

I die from cold!!

How can I rest here!!!

How can I study here!!

How can I live here!!!!

SITE 9 – LANDING 2

PROJECTOR - A DOCUMENTARY IS SHOWN ON A WINDOW

TV – TIMELINE

SITE 10 – LANDING 3 / PARTY

AUDIO- MR BOJANGLES

JANET PLAYS PIANO AND THE REST OF CAST DANCE WITH THE AUDIENCE

END

APPENDIX G. ENQUIRY TWO QUESTIONNAIRE

Enquiry Two case study questionnaire. The same questions were used in the semi-structured interviews.

Please circle the number you feel measures your response with 1 being the lowest or that you feel wasn't good and 5 being the highest and you feel is very good.

- 1) To what extent do you feel that PROJECT enabled your story to be heard in the way you wanted it to be?
1 2 3 4 5
- 2) Did the production team allow you to present your story how **you** wanted to express it?
1 2 3 4 5

I.e., in terms of:

- | | | | | | | |
|------|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| i) | What you wanted to SAY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ii) | What you wanted to SHOW | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| iii) | The way you wanted to PERFORM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| iv) | Elements of your HERITAGE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| v) | Elements of your CULTURE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
- 3) Was performing the show in the flats a positive experience compared to other projects you have been on? 1 2 3 4 5
- 4) Was it easier performing in the flats than a stage?

1 2 3 4 5

5) Was it harder performing in the flats than on a stage?

1 2 3 4 5

6) Do you feel the production team listened to you?

1 2 3 4 5

7) Do you feel you were an equal partner in creating the show?

1 2 3 4 5

8) Do you feel you were an equal partner in creating the exhibition?

1 2 3 4 5

9) Do you feel you were an equal partner creating the film elements?

1 2 3 4 5

10) Do you feel you were supported in how you wanted to show your story and ideas?

1 2 3 4 5

11) To what extent did you feel you had the right to choose where performance and artwork went in the space?

1 2 3 4 5

12) What difference did it make to your story performing it in the flats?

13) What did you find difficult during rehearsals and workshops?

14) What do you feel you have learnt or gained from being part of the project?

15) Any other comments?

APPENDIX H. EQUITY THREE – ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q2: Where is your Museum or other Arts and Heritage setting?

Q3: How long have you worked in an Arts and Heritage setting?

Q4: Are you an Internal member of staff or freelance/ contractor?

Q5: What Community groups and/ or individuals does your work mostly engage with? Q6: Would you consider your work as 'front line' community engagement?

Q7: To what extent do you think these ideas or themes are essential to good practice within your setting?

- I create a safe space for participation and cross-cultural dialogue.
- I facilitate community participation.
- I empower community groups and / or individuals to become more culturally engaged.
- I enabled community groups and/or individuals to become more active citizens I aim to share my knowledge with the wider community, as a Museum and Arts and Heritage professional.
- I empower myself as a practitioner when working in a participatory manner.
- I enable myself as the practitioner when working in a participatory manner.
- Social Justice is at the heart of what I do. Participation creates opportunities for transformation.

[FOLLOWED BY] Comment box.

Q9: Who should have more power during community participatory processes?

- You as the practitioner/ professional
- The participant
- The Museum or other arts and heritage settings
- No one
- Everyone

Q10: To what extent does the Museum or Arts and Heritage setting ultimately have the final decision over the product/ process?

Q11: To what extent does the participant have the final decision over the product/ process?

Q12: How secure (or safe) in your practice do you feel when working with diverse communities in a participatory manner?

Q13: Please elaborate on answers?

Q14: Do you ever feel confused about "how to do 'participation' with divers community partners and / or individuals?

Q15: Please elaborate on your answer?

Q16: Why do you choose ' participation' as a method to engage diverse communities/ and individuals with your arts and heritage products/ processes?

- I don't choose this method of engagement.
- Because I'm told to by my manager and the Museum to do so
- Because it is a method which is socially just
- because it democratizes space and is therefore fair
- Because it is the way I work

Q17: Any other reasons?

Q18: Do you believe that Community Participation is the best way for Museums to achieve greater engagement in culture, by minority audiences?

- Yes
- I'm not sure.
- No

Q19: Please elaborate

Q20: Do you believe that Museums and Arts organizations ca be more socially just?

- Yes
- I'm not sure.
- No

Q21: Please elaborate?

Q22: Do you believe that museums can help to create greater social cohesion?

- Yes
- I'm not sure.
- No

Q23: Please elaborate?

Q24: We empower the community / individual through their engagement with museums and other arts and heritage settings.

Q25: We are enabling the community / individual through their engagement with museums or other arts and heritage settings?

Q26: We create a safe space for dangerous ideas.

Q27: We create a safe space for dialogue.

Q28: Our role is to encourage the community / individual to become active participants in our products and/ or processes, but also more widely in society.

Q29: We are here to facilitate the processes of community / individual participation in our products / and processes.

Q30: Participation in Museums builds cohesion, social justice, greater health and wellbeing and tackles poverty.

Q31: Social Justice in Museums should be paramount to our work because"

APPENDIX H. ENQUIRY THREE - FOLLOW UP INTERVIEWS (2020) QUESTIONS

Questions on current co-curating practice in museums

The purpose of these questions is to contribute to a PhD longitudinal study on participation in museums, the language in use, the positioning of the museum and current trends.

All contributions will be anonymised and museum staff who contribute to this research may request at any time for their feedback to be removed from the study by contacting Carrie Westwater at WestwaterCA1@cardiff.ac.uk / JOMEC@cardiff.ac.uk

Your feedback will be contributing to a final chapter in a PhD thesis, produced by the postgraduate school of Journalism, Media and Culture at Cardiff University.

Q1: What is your role in Museums or other Arts and Heritage settings?

Q2. What are your thoughts on current practices in community engagement in museums?

Q3. What language would you associate with 'co-curation' and 'participation'?

Q4. When thinking about how museums position themselves how does 'power' perform in museum co-curatorial practices, what are your thoughts?

Q5. Could you express how you would envision the ideal space of the museum regarding community engagement/ participation?

Thank you very much for your time and thoughtful contribution to this continuous **conversation!**