16:00:46 (Clore Leadership Meeting, June 16, 4 pm)

16:00:52 Captioning Screen.

16:00:53 DRAFT TRANSCRIPT

16:00:54 **HILARY:** We have some participants joining us. Do take the
16:00:58 opportunity, whilst we're waiting for others to join, to
16:01:02 sign into the chatroom and say hello so we can see who
16:01:07 is joining us for this seminar today. We'll get started
16:01:10 in just a little while ... we're nearly 100 people
16:02:00 joining us so far. We're expecting a little over that
16:02:04 number, so we'll give it just another 30 seconds or so
16:02:07 and then we'll get started. Okay, I'm going to start if
16:02:49 that's okay with everyone.

16:02:51 Right, well, good afternoon. Hello and welcome to
16:02:54 this Clore Leadership webinar. Clore Leadership is
16:02:58 a resource for leaders and leadership in the cultural
16:03:01 and creative industries, and our webinar series is
16:03:04 curated to explore some of the issues faced by cultural
16:03:07 leaders at this challenging time. As we plan for the
16:03:12 ease out of lockdown, this webinar presents an
16:03:15 opportunity to share the lessons we've learned, as
16:03:19 cultural organisations and individuals, during Covid-19.

16:03:23 And we're delighted to be joined by a panel,
16:03:26 a really great panel, to review this from different
16:03:30 perspectives, and to share the different experiences.

16:03:34 Before we get under way, let me just share some
16:03:36 notes on how the webinar will work. Please do use the
16:03:41 chat function to sign in and say hi so we can get
16:03:45 a sense of who is with us today. Additionally, please
16:03:49 use this space to comment, to share thoughts, and to
16:03:52 also share any additional resources and links that you
16:03:55 think might be helpful for others. Your microphones are
16:03:59 muted, so that we can manage the process as smoothly as
16:04:03 possible. So if you do have a question, we'd like you
16:04:08 to use the Q&A function, and that's at the bottom of
16:04:11 your screen in the scroll bar. If you use the Q&A
16:04:15 function to raise a question -- and please ask very many
16:04:18 questions because it does help to keep the debate lively
16:04:21 and make sure that we're responding to the issues that
16:04:23 are arising for you.
16:04:25 We are going to be recording the webinar and sharing
16:04:28 for those who cannot attend, so this will be published
16:04:32 on our website. I'd like to say welcome to Kim, who is
16:04:36 our interpreter, and Kim is signing for one of our
16:04:40 attendees today.
16:04:42 The webinar is also being transcribed live, so if
16:04:46 that's something you would like to use, we've posted
16:04:49 a link in the chatroom box, and you will be able to
16:04:53 stream it in a separate browser. So have a look in the
16:04:57 chatroom at the top, we've posted a link to the

16:05:00 transcripts.

16:05:01 So that's the logistics out of the way. My name is
16:05:04 Hilary Carty, director of Clore Leadership, and I'm now
16:05:08 going to hand you over to our chair for this afternoon's
16:05:10 webinar, David Bran. David is CEO of his own
16:05:14 consultancy, Xtend UK, he's also chair of Battersea Arts
16:05:18 Centre Voluntary Arts and Brixton House, and that's just
16:05:24 a few of his pursuits. David, welcome.

16:05:27 **DAVID:** Thank you, Hilary. A pleasure to be here. I'm
16:05:30 going to be really just the light touch in this whole
16:05:33 affair, we've got four great contributors who we'll
16:05:36 start shortly. So let me given by introducing them.
16:05:39 Keith Merrin, the chief executive of Sunderland of
16:05:43 Culture, we've also got Kully Thiarai, who is the
16:05:49 artistic director for Leeds. I'm never sure whether
16:05:52 it's Leeds Culture or Leeds City or Leeds the terrain,
16:05:55 but I'll leave my colleague to embellish that. We have
16:06:00 Rhiannon White from the Common Wealth, our company and
16:06:04 then we also have Tarek Iskander, the artistic and CEO
16:06:10 of Battersea Arts Centre, whom you've already heard
16:06:13 I have a vested interest.

16:06:15 I think this topic is really timely because we are,
16:06:16 all of us, as Hilary said earlier on, immersed in a
16:06:25 range of experiences coming at us fast and furious. How
16:06:29 do we cope in the uncertainty? What are the challenges

16:06:31 of our personal adaptation as well as organisational
16:06:33 ones, and what kind of scope do we have for thinking
16:06:36 differently about our organisations? From my varied
16:06:42 roles as chair of three organisations, and there are
16:06:44 a couple of others that I won't embellish at the moment,
16:06:50 I'm trying my very best to make sure that those
16:06:53 organisations think bigger, think long-term, and think
16:06:57 differently about what we do, even to the extent where
16:07:00 one provides provocative questions but, it enables us to
16:07:05 avoid getting into the pattern of doing what we've
16:07:10 always done, doing the things that we did before, and
16:07:13 just waiting for this moment to pass to return to what
16:07:16 we are comfortable with. And I think one of the things
16:07:20 I've learned is that we need to start thinking very
16:07:24 creatively how we move forward.
16:07:27 Enough of my views on this. I think those
16:07:30 sentiments will be echoed and embellished by our
16:07:34 speakers.
16:07:34 We're going to begin with Kevin, Keith, sorry.
16:07:38 First mistake. Keith and then move on to Kully. So let
16:07:41 me move on to Keith and say Keith, what's your take on
16:07:44 both this issue of change, innovation, and what's it
16:07:50 meant for you and those you're working with?
16:07:53 **KEITH**: Hi, everybody. First of all I should tell you
16:07:56 a little bit about Sunderland Culture and what we do.

16:07:59 We're based in Sunderland, as you might expect, which is
16:08:02 in the northeast of England, a city by the seaside,
16:08:05 a beautiful city, but it has quite a lot of challenges
16:08:08 and inequalities within it, and with the communities
16:08:10 within it. We manage five venues, or deliver our
16:08:14 programme through five venues, including the National
16:08:17 Glass Centre, but also a contemporary art gallery,
16:08:19 a museum, a traditional arts centre, and we're in the
16:08:23 process of building a brand new performance venue and
16:08:25 I'll come back to that. Building something brand new at
16:08:28 this time is quite interesting.
16:08:30 But we're -- we're firmly a place based
16:08:33 organisation, and what that means is that we're really
16:08:37 interested in impact we have on our communities, to the
16:08:40 extent that our business plan is written not about what
16:08:43 we're going to do, but what the impacts that we're going
16:08:45 to have, and those impacts, those step changes we think
16:08:49 we'll make in our city around things like health and
16:08:52 wellbeing of communities, creative economy connectedness
16:08:57 amongst communities in the city, the confidence and
16:08:58 aspiration of young people, and the profile and
16:09:00 reputation of the city and its impacts on tourism and
16:09:04 people, and that sort of thing, which again is something
16:09:07 we might talk about.
16:09:09 It's also an organisation that's based around

16:09:12 collaborations, it's very kind of created out of
16:09:16 a partnership between civic and education, business,
16:09:20 leadership within the city, although it's independent of
16:09:23 all of those, it has a finger in all of those pies in
16:09:28 a sense, it's the only MP owned Sunderland, and it's
16:09:30 a city which has grown rapidly in terms of its impact
16:09:35 and profile and arts and culture over the last 3 years.
16:09:39 We only inferred our organisation three years ago and
16:09:41 it's developed rapidly, and that's relevant.
16:09:46 We reach audiences of around 2 billion people, and
16:09:48 we email some of them, and also bid a couple of years
16:09:51 ago unsuccessfully to be UK City of Culture, so we're an
16:09:55 ambitious city from a cultural perspective.
16:10:00 I suppose, like many of you listening in, when
16:10:04 Covid-19 hit and when we started to think about locking
16:10:08 down our venues, that was quite a significant moment.
16:10:12 I'm underlining it there a bit. We shut down five
16:10:17 venues, furloughed a lot of our venue based staff. But
16:10:21 interestingly, what we kept was city wide programme
16:10:28 staff, so as well as running venues, we've always run
16:10:30 quite a big programme across the city, which has ranged
16:10:32 from big, large scale, mass participation events through
16:10:36 to very granular work around communities and healthcare
16:10:40 and wellbeing and working with older people.
16:10:43 So immediately what we did, some of the venues

16:10:46 closed down, but we are keeping some of those staff
16:10:49 working in those cross city programmes. But I'd say,
16:10:51 and again, I suspect a lot of people are going to say
16:10:53 this, that what we did straight away was that in a way
16:10:56 our digital chance became our venues and that seemed to
16:11:00 be the right thing at that point, so we just sort of
16:11:02 almost started to treat those digital channels as if
16:11:05 they were venues, we put exhibitions on them and put
16:11:07 learning programmes on them. And they were great and
16:11:10 lots of people have engaged with them, and it's helped
16:11:12 to raise our profile, but I think we realised quite
16:11:14 quickly that that was maybe not looking at, you know,
16:11:18 not true to us as an organisation, and the way we like
16:11:20 to work with our communities, but also, really, not
16:11:24 taking the potential that was being offered by this new
16:11:27 way of working to anywhere near where it could go.
16:11:31 So then we started thinking about what are the needs
16:11:33 in our community, if we are an organisation that's
16:11:39 interested on impact in the community, what are the
16:11:41 needs now, and how do we start to reach them? And we
16:11:43 started -- a lot of the work we started doing was around
16:11:47 shipping the artists and creative community of the city.
16:11:50 As I said, we've undergone a rapid expansion in recent
16:11:53 years, so it means we've a lot of artists and creatives
16:11:57 who are new and emerging and haven't really established

16:12:00 their practice themselves, and we wanted to support and
16:12:02 maintain that infrastructure, so we put a lot of effort
16:12:05 into helping them access funding, keeping them engaged
16:12:08 and networked, and helping them to adapt to new ways of
16:12:11 working, really at the same time as we were having to
16:12:13 learn all that stuff ourselves, and maybe we'll talk
16:12:17 about this more in the conversation, is how people often
16:12:19 as the big MPO in the city and people look to you as the
16:12:23 leadership of that, and think you know what you are
16:12:25 doing, and actually you're making it up as much as
16:12:27 anybody else is, but trying to help everybody to get to
16:12:29 the same point.
16:12:30 We've also started doing a lot of very bespoke work,
16:12:34 so for example, working with the local authority to get
16:12:37 art, packs of art and creativity to some of the most
16:12:40 disengaged families in the city, some of the families
16:12:43 who are maybe not digitally connected or, you know, may
16:12:46 have one device in the house that's kind of constantly
16:12:49 fighting over getting to that. So, you know, can we get
16:12:52 those packs out to them? We've done that.
16:12:53 We also work a lot with older people and recognise
16:12:56 straight away that a lot of those people who have
16:12:58 engaged with our programmes in the past have -- sorry --
16:13:05 engaged with some of those programmes in the past, are
16:13:08 again, not digitally enabled so we've been doing simple

16:13:11 things like sending people art packs and then phoning
16:13:14 them up and talking them through how to use it, so
16:13:17 engaging all the people that way. Then I suppose now
16:13:19 we're starting to think about well, what's the next
16:13:23 phase of this? And obviously we're starting to think
16:13:26 about the reopening of venues, but also, not wanting to
16:13:30 lose that integration between virtual and physical
16:13:34 spaces, you know, how do we keep all those ways of
16:13:36 working, but at the same time open up the venues again?
16:13:40 We're starting to do some very specific things to
16:13:44 support the recovery of the city, so reengaging with
16:13:48 some of those groups. We work a lot with young carers,
16:13:50 for example, who for obvious reasons have been diverted
16:13:54 in lots of different directions, so starting to bring
16:13:57 those groups back together and think about how we
16:14:00 support their recovery. And just quickly to wrap up
16:14:04 from me, things that we've learned, actually not having
16:14:08 venues can be quite liberating. I know not everybody is
16:14:11 venue based. And it's really enabled that fluidity that
16:14:16 we always envisaged in the organisation across art forms
16:14:19 and across ways of working and across our teams, that,
16:14:22 you know, something like this is suddenly kind of put us
16:14:25 all into working in that way.
16:14:28 I suppose, we were talking, actually, just before we
16:14:30 kicked off, how much can be done remotely and the fact

16:14:32 that if you're stuck in Sunderland in the northeast of
16:14:36 England you often feel a long way from things, but I'll
16:14:39 spend an entire day or two days for a 1 hour or a 2-hour
16:14:43 meeting in London, or whereas suddenly all of those
16:14:48 things seem to have opened up where I can speak on this
16:14:50 webinar, for example, from a small room in my house.
16:14:55 I suppose one of the things that for us
16:14:58 organisationally for me, as leader in that position, is
16:15:01 we've been on this kind of rapid growth, as I say, we've
16:15:05 developed constantly working, trying to catch up,
16:15:08 I suppose, with what other cities have done, because
16:15:11 that's the model we've always worked to around cities
16:15:14 getting bigger, doing more, having more venues and
16:15:18 having bigger venues.
16:15:20 I suppose there is a question that's starting to
16:15:22 emerge around how we maintain that in this new
16:15:24 environment, is that actually the right way at all? Did
16:15:28 we have it right the first time, and everybody else
16:15:31 didn't, maybe? I don't know. And interestingly
16:15:32 reflected by our staff team who, you know, because we've
16:15:36 been working in this relentless growth mode for the last
16:15:39 3 years, it's actually really nice to have a bit of time
16:15:43 to slow down. I think David is telling me to wrap up.
16:15:48 So I suppose just the last thing I'd say is we focused
16:15:52 very locally, we really looked into our communities,

16:15:56 working with the communities, with artists, and that's
16:15:58 brilliant and rewarding, and we'd like to continue that
16:16:01 going forward, but I suppose a slight risk about that is
16:16:05 about the risk of becoming very insular in that sense,
16:16:08 and we've always tried to bring new experiences and
16:16:10 artists' voices into a city which is actually not that
16:16:15 diverse in its population. And I think we are really
16:16:20 interested in how we can maintain that local focus, but
16:16:23 also bring those external voices and help our
16:16:26 communities to be part of a national and global
16:16:30 conversation rather than getting smaller and smaller.
16:16:35 **DAVID:** Thank you. I'm glad you saw the signs. I think one
16:16:38 of the things that struck me about your commentary,
16:16:41 Keith, is about the readapting to communities, the focus
16:16:46 about being clear about the diversity of the community
16:16:50 in terms of the elderly, the young people, the young
16:16:53 people and carers, going out to the communities, and
16:16:57 consolidating that experience. I think that's really
16:17:00 very important because certainly when you are
16:17:03 venue-bound you can often lapse into, "I'll wait until
16:17:07 they come to us", and you don't therefore get the
16:17:10 opportunity to interact and engage and build, and
16:17:14 I think, in many ways, forge a relationship that can be
16:17:19 therefore fruitful later on.
16:17:22 The other thing that struck me equally is that we're

16:17:24 all learning as we go along, and I hopefully we're
16:17:28 slightly more than winging it, but it must feel close to
16:17:32 that at times. We're trying to grapple with a new way
16:17:35 of working overnight, and I think many people dived into
16:17:39 the digital and found that it was another activity to be
16:17:44 busy with, but I think we all need to take stock of what
16:17:47 we are doing, as you are doing, in terms of reinvention.
16:17:50 But let me move on to Kully, who I think will be
16:17:54 building on some of the things you've already outlined
16:17:56 in terms of trying to invent a new elevation for the
16:18:04 arts in Leeds. Kully.
16:18:06 **KULLY:** Hi, everyone. I'm Kully Thiarai, the creative
16:18:13 director in Leeds 2023 and the reason why it's called
16:18:16 Leeds 2023 is because the city was bidding to be
16:18:19 European Capital of Culture in 2023, and just days
16:18:23 before it was due to go and make its presentations,
16:18:27 about its bid, of course all the UK cities were told
16:18:31 that they were no longer eligible because of us
16:18:35 departing from the EU.
16:18:39 However, I think one of the most brilliant things,
16:18:41 and extraordinary transformation process that had
16:18:43 happened in the course of spending time with artists and
16:18:49 communities and business, and the broadest sector, was
16:18:52 that there was a real appetite to come together and
16:18:58 whilst been bruised by the knock-back to say, you know

16:19:01 what? Let's do this anyway. That's what the city is
16:19:06 doing.
16:19:08 And the council, unusually, have committed
16:19:10 £12 million to make that happen with a view to us
16:19:17 raising significantly more to make it happen, but
16:19:19 there's a real passion and commitment there. I started
16:19:24 in January, so I guess my -- the context to this
16:19:28 conversation is that unusually, it's a very new
16:19:31 organised. So myself and the executive assistant had
16:19:36 been in post for a few months before we were joined by
16:19:40 the exec director who started two days before lockdown,
16:19:43 and our director of external relations who started about
16:19:49 six weeks ago. So it's a very peculiar experience,
16:19:53 novel experience, to build a team, and grow as an
16:19:56 organisation in isolation, if you like.
16:20:00 I mean it has been quite extraordinary, but that's
16:20:05 something really interesting about where does one place
16:20:08 oneself in a city which is culturally really rich and
16:20:13 mature, and where your focus is years ahead, where, for
16:20:18 some people at this moment in time, it's almost
16:20:20 impossible to work out, you know, how to cope with the
16:20:25 week ahead, never mind think about bigger futuristic
16:20:31 agendas. So part of my job, other than, you know, as
16:20:33 well sort of looking at all the traditional stuff I'm
16:20:37 looking at, business plans and additions and missions

16:20:40 and reevaluating where the bid had got to, has also been
16:20:45 about trying to hold the space for conversations that
16:20:49 are about being in the present, and being responsive and
16:20:55 supportive of what's going on. But remaining true to
16:20:58 the need of looking up what are the stepping stones that
16:21:02 we need to create in order to deliver a landmark year in
16:21:05 2023, and how do we support artists, organisations,
16:21:09 companies, individuals, the communities, to get us
16:21:13 there, and work with the City Council and the region,
16:21:17 really, to be part of a recovery process? So that
16:21:23 balance has been quite interesting, because of course in
16:21:28 some instances people do want you to jump in with both
16:21:31 feet and get involved, but of course there's also
16:21:33 a level of respect for those that have been doing all
16:21:36 that work forever. That's really important to say.
16:21:39 This is not our time to kind of come in charging along,
16:21:46 you know, and say, "Yeah, we can do this and we can do
16:21:50 that", because actually our job is to add value to
16:21:52 what's already happening, and enable people to find
16:21:55 their space and reflect on what they're doing, and of
16:21:58 course, different organisations, different groups of
16:22:01 artists have been able to pivot in different ways and
16:22:06 support those who have been embedded in communities have
16:22:11 very effectively been continuing to do that.
16:22:14 And in fact in just this -- yesterday morning, I

16:22:18 ended up in a kind of big strategic conversation where
16:22:21 somebody said, "Oh culture has stopped." And I'm going:
16:22:25 "Actually, I'd like to say that culture hasn't stopped."
16:22:28 Theatres and buildings have closed, but to say that
16:22:30 culture isn't happening any more is a mass
16:22:34 underestimation of what really is happening and
16:22:37 especially with those artists and organisations who are
16:22:41 really embedded in their communities who have done all
16:22:43 sorts of, you know, have put in all sorts of processes
16:22:49 and approaches to ensure that kids get fed, that food
16:22:54 parcels are going to out, medicine is being collected,
16:22:57 that, you know, sort of cultural outlets are open for
16:23:02 people to do drawings, sing in choirs, you know,
16:23:08 signpost to other things that are happening. So it's
16:23:10 really important to remember that whilst yes, there is
16:23:14 been a massive impact on our infrastructure, there is
16:23:21 also the whole other bit of the ecology which has been
16:23:24 fragile and unrecognised sometimes, but which is still
16:23:27 carrying on, and that's an important part for us to kind
16:23:31 of ensure that that isn't lost in the big conversations
16:23:38 that are about the strategic buildings, because of
16:23:42 course bricks and mortar are important, but so is the
16:23:45 people asset, and the people asset is what makes us
16:23:48 deliver what we deliver, really. And I guess none of
16:23:52 this also, you know, it's not just about Covid, is it?

16:23:59 It's -- you know, there is also the reality of what
16:24:03 the consequence of George Floyd has had on us
16:24:07 personally, on our communities and on our cultural
16:24:12 sector, and the different ways that people are managing
16:24:15 to cope with that or not cope with that, and the rawness
16:24:20 of some of those debates, and also the recognition that
16:24:24 there is a situation both in terms of Covid-19, but also
16:24:29 in terms of Black Lives Matter, has really shone a huge
16:24:35 light on what we already knew, which was the great
16:24:39 divisions in our communities, and particularly in the
16:24:43 arts sector. So actually, it's meant that we have to
16:24:46 have a certain level of responsibility and in that
16:24:48 space, and be open to those conversations.
16:24:51 So some of my time has been spent really offering
16:24:57 allyship to people who are feeling very bruised and
16:25:00 battered, finding space to create opportunities for some
16:25:05 reflection, just manage my own personal history in that
16:25:11 context, and what it takes to be a leader, and, you
16:25:15 know, what price do you pay in this kind of context?
16:25:23 Also, I suppose, really celebrate the extraordinary
16:25:26 individuals and artists that have made some brilliant
16:25:28 things happen in Leeds and beyond, you know, the fact
16:25:30 that there's a huge campaign that, a collective creative
16:25:35 called posters for the people that has gone
16:25:38 international, that started about just taking over some

16:25:40 of the spaces and the billboards to say thank you to our
16:25:45 key workers. But, you know, many of you will know the
16:25:48 work that Slum Low does, and supporting them in terms of
16:25:52 the fact that they're being a kind of hub for their
16:25:55 community.
16:25:56 So there's lots and lots of territory around that,
16:25:59 but I think perhaps that's enough to say for the moment
16:26:04 that actually, sometimes the nature of disruption whilst
16:26:08 painful, can also be the most extraordinary moment to
16:26:11 grab on to, and make change possible.
16:26:18 **DAVID:** Thank you very much, and I like that ending note.
16:26:20 This is an extraordinary moment. That's a superb
16:26:23 entrée, thank you. That's absolutely right, these are
16:26:25 extraordinary moments, and ones in which I think
16:26:29 following on from what Keith said earlier on, we're
16:26:31 trying to build that network of stakeholder engagement
16:26:36 which builds on what already exits, that respects the
16:26:39 fact that there are community groups and networks out
16:26:42 there working, that cultures always alive and well, and
16:26:46 we've got to keep on acknowledging it and cultivating it
16:26:49 and not presuming there's only a particular mode of
16:26:52 culture that's of value.
16:26:54 I was also struck by the fact that these challenging
16:27:00 times are times in which we have to really come to terms
16:27:03 with how we make a difference as opposed to how we just

16:27:07 drift and wait for others to do things for us, this is
16:27:10 not a period in which we can hope for change delivered
16:27:15 by others, we've got to go out there and make change
16:27:18 happen ourselves, and the George Floyd and Black Lives
16:27:21 Matter issue is one in which all of us have to take
16:27:25 a role in saying how can we make the world in which
16:27:28 we're working significantly different? Not just
16:27:31 incrementally better, because that's no great value so
16:27:35 far. But significantly different, going forward.
16:27:38 So I think -- thank you very much, I think that
16:27:40 builds nicely the momentum and I can see Rhiannon's head
16:27:44 nodding, very much so when you said about of the issue
16:27:46 of culture has stopped and she was definitely wanting to
16:27:48 leap in, if it were a possibility. So over to you, this
16:27:52 is your moment to leap in.
16:27:55 **RHIANNON:** Brilliant. So I've prepared a bit of
16:27:57 a reflection, so a bit of a rant, so be prepared.
16:28:01 I just wanted to add to Kully that culture hasn't
16:28:06 stopped. I think what I'm witnessing here in South
16:28:08 Wales is that culture is definitely getting us through
16:28:11 this time, and actually, what I've seen is communities
16:28:15 come together to make culture happen, you know, like
16:28:18 I've seen people become bingo callers on their street,
16:28:23 or play instruments or sing, you know, all these things
16:28:25 that form our culture and just to recognise that people

16:28:29 are making work continuously, and how important it is to
16:28:33 bear witness to watching what is coming from these
16:28:38 times.
16:28:38 So my name is Rhiannon White, and I'm artistic
16:28:43 director of Common Wealth, a small site-specific theatre
16:28:46 company based in Bradford and Cardiff, and I'm here
16:28:49 today in a personal capacity. As everyone, I feel like
16:28:53 is really important to set the context. So Common
16:28:58 Wealth is relatively small, we're a small team of seven
16:29:01 split across two locations, and the work we make in
16:29:08 spaces so we don't work in a building like houses,
16:29:11 social clubs, warehouses, and transform them into worlds
16:29:16 for audiences to explore.
16:29:18 Our work is experimental and conceptual, and it's
16:29:21 made with by and for working class communities. We
16:29:25 often work with people who have never performed before,
16:29:28 as protagonists to tell the stories of their own lives,
16:29:31 and we invite them to collaborate with us, and we see
16:29:35 that as a catalyst for change narratives and nurture
16:29:38 artists, future artists, and support social change
16:29:41 happening in our community and beyond.
16:29:43 We're really interested in what it means to connect
16:29:45 hyper local with the rest of the world, because it feels
16:29:48 like it's the borders go up, how do we hold on to
16:29:53 connecting digitally, even in a way to create

16:29:57 a connection with each other?

16:29:59 In a way, I feel like Common Wealth is made for
16:30:02 times like this, and as a small company we've been
16:30:05 really lucky to be able to be flexible enough to
16:30:07 navigate through and be responsive to the needs of our
16:30:11 communities both in Cardiff and Bradford. So for the
16:30:15 fact that the past year my kind of focus has been on the
16:30:19 community that I grew up in, which is a council estate
16:30:23 in Cardiff called Saint Mellens, and with support from
16:30:28 the Battersea Arts Centre, we've been able to embed
16:30:31 ourselves in this place. And this place I've got a bit
16:30:34 of a deep complex relationship with, I love and hate it,
16:30:37 and I want to fight for it, and I've got all these
16:30:40 feelings in what it means to be here. I guess, you
16:30:45 know, even though Common Wealth has been around for
16:30:49 10 years, it feels like a starting point, because work
16:30:52 like that takes a really long time, because this place
16:30:55 has never had a theatre, out of I think 17,000 people
16:30:57 live here, and out of a recent survey, 40 people
16:31:02 attended performs in theatre. We're starting from
16:31:06 a deficit, almost. So for me at this time, it's about
16:31:10 how we build trust and connection, and tell the story of
16:31:14 people and get them interested in what we're trying to
16:31:17 do here.

16:31:18 So we started the year off really with a mega plan

16:31:21 to start that work, and we had artists booked and
16:31:25 workshops, and we had just commissioned our first show
16:31:27 and it felt really exciting, and then obviously Covid
16:31:31 happened and everything shut down, and the momentum
16:31:33 stopped and everything then turned inwards to us. And
16:31:38 at the time I remember asking myself like what, if
16:31:42 I were the people who live here, what would I want to
16:31:45 happen, and how would you build a relationship in times
16:31:47 like these? What do you even do? And like Kully was
16:31:52 saying, it didn't feel appropriate to go in all guns
16:31:54 blazing. It wasn't our place to do that, because we're
16:31:57 only just starting the journey with people, so we did
16:32:00 what we thought was best. We continued the
16:32:02 relationships we'd built with young people here, we sent
16:32:06 packs to women who we're collaborating with, young mums,
16:32:10 like activity packs for them to create theatre with
16:32:12 puppets in their own houses with their kids, and like
16:32:16 I said, we did everything we felt was right at that
16:32:18 time.
16:32:19 Then we decided to furlough, and we decided to
16:32:22 furlough all of our staff, bar one. For us on this
16:32:29 furlough, what it's meant is it's been a really welcome
16:32:33 time to rest and reflect, and I remember one of our
16:32:35 board members saying to us, sit in the uncomfortableness
16:32:41 of it, it's really hard, Common Wealth is like do

16:32:44 everything, but for us to take stock and take time and
16:32:47 rest and reset, and to witness and then come back
16:32:49 stronger, and it felt like really not even sensible, it
16:32:54 felt like a really appropriate way for us to operate.
16:32:59 And I guess like reflecting on everything that's felt
16:33:03 really fundamental for us going forward, because I think
16:33:09 for us as a company, what is important is responding at
16:33:12 the end of all this, because I feel like this is the
16:33:14 calm before the storm, and I know it's stormy for
16:33:16 everyone at the moment, especially people with
16:33:18 buildings, but when we come through this and
16:33:20 unemployment hits, it's going to, I think it's going to
16:33:24 be a long time of really carefully understanding what
16:33:28 theatre means to people, and we're going to make a lot
16:33:31 of losses along the way.
16:33:33 Again, that's, as Kully was saying, Covid has
16:33:36 highlighted so many cracks in society, both personally
16:33:40 for me, I've found cracks in my family but also in the
16:33:44 community that I live in. It's like amplified them.
16:33:47 And I think those cracks are being highlighted at the
16:33:50 moment, and that's a really massive gift for us, it's
16:33:53 a real gift for what needs to change. And I've been
16:33:57 really inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, by
16:34:00 the courage of protesters, and I reckon that it's an
16:34:04 incredible catalyst, you know, for us to learn from, for

16:34:09 us to take with us, they're showing us what is possible
16:34:12 and that change can be possible.
16:34:14 And I'm so inspired by it, and the protests have
16:34:17 given me a real sense of belief that things can change.
16:34:20 And I guess, like that's what I wanted to bring to this
16:34:22 conversation, like for us to really think about what
16:34:27 needs to change in our sector. We talk about it a lot.
16:34:30 In the ten years I've worked in theatre, this is what we
16:34:32 always talk about. How do we make sure we don't return
16:34:36 to the old ways and that people's experiences are all
16:34:38 put first and at the centre of our work, and that money
16:34:41 isn't just wasted and it's spent rigorously and reaching
16:34:45 far and wide, and structures don't go back to the way
16:34:48 that they were? The structures are dismantled and we
16:34:52 start again, we start with something new, and that we
16:34:55 see our public spaces as spaces for all of us, for
16:34:59 theatre, for local people, and spaces that we can
16:35:03 resource and use time and time again.
16:35:05 So yeah, I just wanted to finish by asking
16:35:08 a question for all of us to think about as we reflect on
16:35:12 Covid, on the sector, on the buildings and what future
16:35:15 is, and what change needs to be. I just wonder, while
16:35:21 what we're waiting for?
16:35:23 **DAVID:** [laughs] Okay, Rhiannon, that's a great question
16:35:26 and let's come back to that. I think that's key to part

16:35:29 of our conversation. What are we waiting for? I like
16:35:34 that. Rhiannon, what I took from your conversation were
16:35:37 a number of things. One is the issue of the importance
16:35:41 of us taking time to rest and reflect. One of the
16:35:47 anomalies of this whole period is that those in furlough
16:35:50 have had that time, those who are not in furlough have
16:35:53 probably had double or triple the pressure of work on
16:35:57 their shoulders, poorer communication, because they're
16:35:59 not in the same space, tensions of trying to do
16:36:02 something to keep the company alive in people's minds,
16:36:06 and trying to reach 101 people who are, if they're like
16:36:10 me, worn out by Zoom. I mean I'm zoomed out by it some
16:36:16 days. I feel I'm shriveling into a dried-eyed prune
16:36:21 with so much eye contact on the screen constantly
16:36:24 talking for hours and bad seating.
16:36:26 So I think there's a whole issue about how we
16:36:28 recalibrate individuals and reenergise the whole team
16:36:33 going forward.
16:36:34 The other thing that struck me was I think that the
16:36:36 very conscious statement you made about needing to think
16:36:42 about the communities you're working in, not just dive
16:36:46 in and say we're the great creatives, and therefore we
16:36:48 can fit anywhere, but give some real thought to the
16:36:51 relationship you have with communities, to the
16:36:54 contribution you can make, and to make over a period of

16:36:56 time, and I think you're right: that's really
16:37:00 fundamental for us. Because, to a great extent,
16:37:02 sometimes we've spent a lot of time thinking about the
16:37:05 art as being the most important thing and the
16:37:08 communities are somewhat secondary. And I think we've
16:37:11 got to change that conversation. So this is a great
16:37:14 time for us to turn to reconsider the orthodoxies that
16:37:21 we go forward with.
16:37:22 And I think what is the change is the right one
16:37:26 going forward. So let me then move on to Tarek, my
16:37:34 colleague and friend. Over to you.
16:37:38 **TAREK**: Thanks. Hi then, it's so nice to see so many
16:37:41 familiar names in the chat as well. I don't really know
16:37:44 what I was going to say initially, but the last few
16:37:48 provocations have popped so many things in my head that
16:37:50 I'm just going to wing it and say what ideas that has
16:37:53 put. I work at Battersea Arts Centre. Battersea Arts
16:37:55 Centre is in south London in Wandsworth, and we're both
16:38:00 a national and an international organisation in some
16:38:04 ways, and a very, very local organisation that couldn't
16:38:08 exist anywhere else in other ways.
16:38:10 I guess listening to the other provocations, all of
16:38:13 which I totally agree with, especially about the fact
16:38:15 that culture has never stopped and theatre has never
16:38:19 stopped in different forms, but it's clear we're in an

16:38:21 absolute crisis at the moment. And that's very hard to
16:38:24 learn and reflect in the middle of that crisis, and
16:38:26 that's quite tricky. Quite tricky having this
16:38:30 conversation in this moment when we're all, in different
16:38:32 ways, grappling with it. It's a crisis that is not
16:38:35 totally visible, and I think as people have described
16:38:38 some of it is still to come in terms of the fallout for
16:38:41 our communities and talkout for our society, and there's
16:38:43 so much grief and so many different ways happening now,
16:38:45 we have to completely acknowledge all of that, but at
16:38:48 the same time it would be totally wrong not to look at
16:38:51 what this means, and the harsh light that it presents
16:38:55 across our society, our industry, how things operate,
16:38:57 because it's a massive, brilliant opportunity, to reset
16:39:01 and rethink and reflect and dream.
16:39:03 And that's the kind of responsibility at the moment,
16:39:05 is to do what's critically important now, and there are
16:39:08 so many things that need to be done right now, and they
16:39:11 can't wait, whilst also having an eye to the future and
16:39:15 I guess, that's the unique challenge of something like
16:39:17 that.
16:39:18 I'm thinking about the things this has shed light
16:39:20 on. I think it's really shown the qualities that exist
16:39:25 in our society, how this pandemic has impacted people
16:39:28 differently, how the structure and qualities have played

16:39:32 out in lots of different ways, and I guess the question
16:39:35 for us, as cultural organisations, and obviously I come
16:39:37 at it from a venue perspective in terms of how to look
16:39:40 at things and also just to say I've only been working
16:39:45 there for a year, so maybe a fresh perspective to it,
16:39:48 what is our role within that Scotland, our role within
16:39:50 the consequences of that? How are we exacerbating some
16:39:54 of those inequalities and how are we contributing to
16:39:56 making them better? Those are important questions that
16:39:59 the moment throws for us.
16:40:00 It's impossible to ignore the incredible events of
16:40:03 Black Lives Matter, and again, it's impossible at this
16:40:06 moment, particularly when we all have so much
16:40:08 opportunity to reflect, so much opportunity to change
16:40:13 things, to not look things in the eye and say our
16:40:15 industry has been systematically structurally racist for
16:40:19 a very long period of time, and that these are things
16:40:22 that need to be addressed to reflect on. If you look at
16:40:25 our industry as a culture industry and theatre industry,
16:40:28 thinking about obviously as venues, we're really
16:40:31 struggling, I never like getting into an 'us and them',
16:40:33 because I feel like we're all part of one big economy,
16:40:36 but look at what has happened to the freelance community
16:40:41 and the vulnerability of that part of the sections with
16:40:44 people losing their livelihoods, with nothing to fall

16:40:46 back on, falling through the net of Government support.
16:40:49 What is in place to support that infrastructure and how
16:40:52 have we collectively done enough to support people?
16:40:55 And again, just the thing that's really struck me is
16:41:00 the difference between the commercial sector and
16:41:02 subsidised sector. So we are an MPO, but I have to say
16:41:07 our subsidy is 16% of our total turnover, so most of our
16:41:11 income came from hirers and other fundraising specific,
16:41:15 so this has been a massive shock to our entire
16:41:17 organisation. But we have different values. And when
16:41:21 all the narrative that comes out from our sector at the
16:41:23 moment is we are shut, nothing is operating, how do we
16:41:26 get reopened, that is an absolute commercial sector view
16:41:29 of the world and of the cultural sector. It is not the
16:41:32 view of the subsidised sector, because most of us have
16:41:35 kept working because we are essential, and the
16:41:37 creativity that is required at this moment, the
16:41:40 solutions that are required, the support, the networks
16:41:42 that those create are more critical now than they have
16:41:45 ever been, so why do we conspire in just playing along
16:41:50 with that kind of discussion? If this moment has
16:41:52 allowed everything, it has completely broken down the
16:41:55 capitalist models on which our entire industry is built,
16:41:59 selling tickets. So now we're forced to look at it in
16:42:02 the face and think what is essential.

16:42:04 So it's a very depressing time. I personally have
16:42:07 never been busier. I'm completely exhausted but it's
16:42:10 also a time of massive opportunity, and massive
16:42:13 responsibility, I think, for us to look at. I guess the
16:42:17 final thing I say is I guess this is the Clore
16:42:19 Leadership webinar, so I'm thinking what does leadership
16:42:22 mean at this particular moment? Leadership is not about
16:42:24 the heads of organisations, it's not about As and EDs,
16:42:28 it's about everyone in their own roles and stepping up
16:42:33 thinking about what needs to happen, and helping us
16:42:36 create the future.
16:42:37 I certainly think, in these moments, leadership is
16:42:39 not about having the answers. I'm totally winging it,
16:42:41 personally. Every kind of minute. Never had to grapple
16:42:45 with anything like this before. But I think the key
16:42:47 thing is similar to what Rhiannon just provoked us with:
16:42:50 it's knowing what are the right questions to ask. What
16:42:52 are the right questions at this moment is presenting?
16:42:55 And then working with people around you, with the
16:42:57 communities, with the young people, with the artists,
16:42:59 with everyone who is invested to come up with the best
16:43:02 answers that we can possibly come up with. And it's
16:43:05 creating the environments in which everyone can
16:43:06 contribute. So the questions at BAC we're having to ask
16:43:09 ourselves is should BAC exist at the end of this

16:43:12 pandemic? Is that a requirement, and is that necessary?
16:43:15 And if we do, what should that mean at this particular
16:43:17 moment?
16:43:17 What does universal access mean in a world with so
16:43:21 much inequality? Do we make that worse with the ticket
16:43:24 prices and things that we currently contribute to? What
16:43:27 does proper accountability mean to the artists, to the
16:43:29 young people, the people we work for, and our local
16:43:33 community? What does that actually mean in practice and
16:43:36 how do we hold ourselves to account and make our
16:43:38 structures respond to that? I've got no answers to any
16:43:40 of these questions, but it feels like, for BAC, these
16:43:43 are the questions to be asking, and I'm sure everyone in
16:43:45 their context of grappling with the same thing. But
16:43:48 what a moment. What an opportunity. And we can't miss
16:43:51 it.
16:43:53 **DAVID**: Thank you, Tarek. That, I think, built on nicely
16:43:57 the conversation we've been having so far. So inspired
16:44:00 off the cuff it worked very well, as far as I'm
16:44:03 concerned, so thank you. I think it raises a point
16:44:07 that's been raised by everybody, makes a key point, that
16:44:09 we've got to seize this opportunity, this moment now, to
16:44:12 do extensive discussions and explore a range of
16:44:15 questions. And I think it's not so much for me
16:44:19 identifying the right question, it's just the question,

16:44:23 and I think if we can begin to just question about what
16:44:25 is around us, and not accept what has been the right
16:44:31 framework, the appropriate framework, we can begin to
16:44:34 explore and discover. What happens around, I think --
16:44:39 also often happens around these challenging times, those
16:44:42 that we can think of, and as well those we can't yet
16:44:45 imagine, is we get a paralysis, a kind of anxiety that
16:44:50 generates, because we're not quite sure where to go, but
16:44:54 the pathway is not determined for us, and I think we've
16:44:57 got therefore to be, I think, emboldened to explore what
16:45:04 might a different narrative look like? What might
16:45:07 a different model look like? What might different
16:45:09 relationships look like, and how do we make things
16:45:12 viable? And I think that's the conversation we're
16:45:13 having, and that's the challenge that Rhiannon threw
16:45:16 down in terms of what are we waiting for?
16:45:19 I think we're waiting for the conversation, really,
16:45:22 and this is a time in which we haven't had enough
16:45:24 genuine conversations about how things might be
16:45:28 different, about how we tackle inequalities, how we
16:45:31 therefore avoid the persistence of communities that
16:45:37 don't engage, and we think it's okay, because as long as
16:45:42 there is enough of those who can spend, then we're
16:45:44 happy. There's a whole variety of things we've
16:45:47 tolerated in the past that have to be reviewed and

16:45:50 looked at. And if we are to learn, if we are to build
16:45:56 a collective sense of understanding, if we are to
16:45:59 therefore change structures and systems, otherwise we'll
16:46:02 have more flash moments in which we are appalled at the
16:46:07 injustice, but then do very little.
16:46:10 So I think this has been a great conversation about
16:46:12 our -- these are challenging times for us, as
16:46:15 individuals. There are uncertainties at large, and we
16:46:18 can't determine what the future looks like. But we have
16:46:23 to be able to explore difficult questions.
16:46:27 So let me open up the conversation among ourselves,
16:46:32 and some of our viewers, and see what emerges. Let me
16:46:37 go back Keith.
16:46:40 Keith, you've heard your colleagues share a range of
16:46:43 views. What struck you from what's been said, that you
16:46:47 want to build on?
16:46:50 **KEITH**: Yes, I suppose I'm kind of interested that we talk
16:46:52 a lot about what we can do within our sector and how we
16:46:55 can change our sector, and I suppose as an organisation,
16:46:58 we're always thinking about our community. What is it
16:47:00 our community needs right now? And I suppose, yeah,
16:47:05 trying to look at it more -- less about -- obviously,
16:47:08 yeah, we have assets and we have people, and we have to
16:47:11 a certain extent some money -- not much any more, and,
16:47:16 you know, how can we work with our communities to really

16:47:21 find out what their needs are and to direct support
16:47:24 where they need it?
16:47:25 I suppose I'm kind of interested in that kind of
16:47:27 conversation, what, you know -- and Rhiannon started to
16:47:30 talk about that. What does mass unemployment look like?
16:47:33 What does youth unemployment look like? Therefore, how
16:47:37 do we respond to those questions?
16:47:41 I don't have the answers.
16:47:42 **DAVID:** No, I think we're all searching for answers, and
16:47:49 searching for different ways of doing things, but
16:47:53 I think it's the issue of communicating with different
16:47:56 communities, the issue of engaging them, is something we
16:48:00 need to do far more of, and as a consequence, discover
16:48:03 together, maybe, some lasting solutions. Rhiannon, any
16:48:10 thoughts?
16:48:12 **RHIANNON:** I'm just really into this question that Tarek
16:48:16 posed, that I think is really good, I think every
16:48:18 person, every organisation should ask themselves whether
16:48:20 they should exist post-Covid. I think it's absolutely
16:48:24 brilliant, and I'll be asking myself the same question
16:48:27 about Common Wealth. What does that look like? Should
16:48:30 we even exist? And I think it's also just a reflection
16:48:36 on engaging with the communities. I think it's really
16:48:41 not just about talking to them; it's about how they're
16:48:45 seen in the work, it's about who's making the work, it's

16:48:48 about who's making the decisions in your organisations
16:48:50 and where they see themselves. So I think it's also
16:48:53 a systematic thing that needs to change, it's not just
16:48:55 about them as audience.
16:48:59 **DAVID:** Absolutely.
16:49:05 **TAREK:** David do you want to refer to the Q&A questions?
16:49:07 I'm trying to help you here.
16:49:09 **DAVID:** I was leaving you guys some space to reflect on your
16:49:12 conversation before I dive into them, but thank you,
16:49:14 Tarek. Let's see.
16:49:21 **HILARY:** I think there's a nice one, which is about what are
16:49:24 the panel happy to let go of, going forward? You know,
16:49:29 as we talk about shifts and changes, Jenny Rutter has
16:49:35 asked that question. What are you happy to let go of or
16:49:38 to lose in order to make way for this new future which
16:49:41 we're trying to anticipate?
16:49:45 **DAVID:** Great question. Thank you, Jenny. Anybody wants to
16:49:48 have a crack at that? Well, let me dive in and give you
16:49:57 space to think about it, since I think in terms of the
16:50:00 organisations I've been -- I'm associated with, I think
16:50:03 what we're needing to let go of is a sense in which we
16:50:12 think in old departmental terms, and therefore not about
16:50:16 how we enrich the team of people themselves to be more
16:50:20 creative. And in so doing, how we also incorporate the
16:50:23 community, not as a pure outreach addition, but an

16:50:28 integral part of our creative way of seeing and
16:50:30 thinking, because again, the orthodoxy has been the
16:50:34 theatres in the building and outreaches and add-on, and
16:50:37 I think changes some of those thinkings changing some of
16:50:41 those practices and engaging and naming communities,
16:50:43 I think working class communities, the BAME communities,
16:50:47 all need to be named and engaged so we're not pretending
16:50:50 there's some unanimous sameness which is clearly not the
16:50:54 case. And not only by using references that determine
16:50:59 how much income they spend, but determine how valuable
16:51:03 they are as to the community as a whole.
16:51:06 So going back to Keith, Rhiannon's point, let's
16:51:10 embellish the community as an integral part of what we
16:51:13 do.
16:51:16 **TAREK:** There's so many things, I'll be quick. So many
16:51:19 things I'm happy to let go of. Some of the things I'm
16:51:22 happy to let go of is the power that exits in certain
16:51:25 organisations and the kind of entitlement that goes
16:51:28 along with that, and entitlement to public funding and
16:51:30 entitlement to positions of power, which is often not
16:51:32 earned. To kind of the ways of operating, so
16:51:36 assumptions about how we operate, how we do the
16:51:39 practical, ritual aspects of our day-to-day operation
16:51:43 that serve to exclude people in multiple ways. I'm
16:51:46 happy to let go of power, personally. What I'm not

16:51:48 going to let go of is responsibility, because I find
16:51:51 ultimately you have to sometimes be accountable for what
16:51:54 you do, but I'm happy to do that. But I think also, as
16:51:56 a sector, maybe we should also be happy to give up some
16:51:58 money and be a bit poorer, just so we can do the right
16:52:03 thing, rather than being totally reliant on income
16:52:06 streams that totally destroys who we are and our values
16:52:09 and our purpose.
16:52:10 **DAVID:** Rhiannon, you were keen to come in there.
16:52:12 **RHIANNON:** I know a lot of what Tarek said is what I was
16:52:15 going to say anyway. So I'm happy to let go of quite
16:52:18 a lot of stuff also. And also, I think it's really
16:52:22 interesting when we think about passing things on,
16:52:24 because actually, in the community that I work in, some
16:52:28 people wouldn't even recognise this as a job, what I'm
16:52:30 doing. So it's something around development and passing
16:52:35 all of this on, then letting go, because we need to see
16:52:38 change in the sector. It's not about just passing on to
16:52:41 the next person who comes out of university, you know,
16:52:45 it's developing people along the way.
16:52:49 **DAVID:** Okay. Kully?
16:52:53 **KULLY:** I guess there are some interesting things about what
16:52:55 personally you want to give up, or let go of, and what
16:53:01 structurally we need to get rid of, and how much you --
16:53:04 how much power or control you have over that. So

16:53:09 personally, I guess, you know, in terms of -- I'm tired
16:53:14 of doing the fighting for years, I'm tired. I've had
16:53:17 enough. But I'll still carry on doing it at the minute
16:53:21 because it feels like people have learned the use of
16:53:26 language, but they haven't authentically understood what
16:53:32 we've been fighting for. And I mean that across --
16:53:37 I don't mean it -- I mean that across all sorts of
16:53:39 aspects of cultural provision and delivery, and
16:53:44 structures, and who has what power to control the
16:53:50 narratives. All of those things.
16:53:53 So I'd be very happy to let go of all of that, but
16:53:56 it doesn't feel like we're quite there yet, and haven't
16:53:59 been for some time. And whilst I absolutely appreciate
16:54:03 that, you know, there is a huge amount of pain in the
16:54:05 sector at the moment because -- and a lot of fear and
16:54:10 a lot of grief, actually, some of it, you know, some
16:54:15 artists and organisations have been carrying the burden
16:54:18 for a long time. That's not unusual for them. And so
16:54:21 even understanding that is a big step to recognising
16:54:27 there is levels of disparity around that.
16:54:29 Now that's not to mean that we all need to feel
16:54:33 humble about it, but it is about actually having
16:54:36 a really authentic conversation that has integrity, that
16:54:42 isn't about protecting positions or spaces, or power
16:54:50 networks. And those are hard things to say sometimes,

16:54:54 and even harder to put into practice, but until we kind
16:54:58 of collectively find a way of doing that, we're not
16:55:07 going to be able to shift significantly.
16:55:09 In terms of professionally and in the world of work,
16:55:17 it's very interesting to be running a thing that could
16:55:23 be anything at this moment in time, and I suppose one of
16:55:29 the things I really need to think about is that all the
16:55:33 years of trying to morph oneself into being the right
16:55:37 fit in order to make things possible, actually there's
16:55:41 something interesting about standing tall and going:
16:55:45 this is who I am, this is my history, this is what we're
16:55:49 trying to do, and some of that might be what you want,
16:55:52 and some of it might not be what you want, and therefore
16:55:57 shying away from not trying to be what everybody expects
16:56:00 you to be, I suppose.
16:56:02 So there's something interesting about the dynamic
16:56:04 of cultural moment for a city and a region in Yorkshire
16:56:10 where there is the possibility, because it's something
16:56:14 new to imagine a different sort of future, a different
16:56:19 type of thing, and some of that will be familiar and
16:56:21 some of that hopefully won't be. And if I can create
16:56:26 the space for others to challenge me on that, that would
16:56:29 be brilliant.
16:56:32 **DAVID:** We're coming to the end of the session, but I think
16:56:34 there's a whole range of points that we could never

16:56:36 summarise and weave together. So I won't pretend I can
16:56:41 put together a kind of fluid orchestration of issues
16:56:44 that have been discussed, but there have been some key
16:56:47 points I think that have been raised. There is the one
16:56:49 about the personal responsibility. What are we going to
16:56:53 do about things? How are we going to to make change and
16:56:55 make things happen for ourselves, and for the places
16:56:58 where we have some influence? How, in that context,
16:57:04 think about how we take a responsibility to upturn old
16:57:09 negative power basis in order that we can therefore
16:57:14 enable future folk to grow and explore and take over.
16:57:18 We can't just leave a vacuum. We've got to somehow
16:57:22 enable others to understand what is happening around
16:57:24 them, and the power to move things forward.
16:57:27 We've also got in the process we've been talking
16:57:30 about the inequalities, and I think we've got to
16:57:32 continue to make sure that we are not silent on
16:57:36 inequalities, and raise the varied natures of
16:57:39 inequalities around us that we are responsible to ensure
16:57:45 does not continue under our watch. We're responsible
16:57:48 for ensuring that we explore the questions, even when we
16:57:53 don't have the answers, that we're responsible to make
16:57:56 sure that, ultimately, the environment that the arts
16:58:02 creates is only operating and enabling, all the things
16:58:04 that drew us into it. It can truly be for a wider

16:58:09 constituency.

16:58:10 The uncertainties, I think -- we've always had to
16:58:12 grapple with uncertainties, and I think that's a really
16:58:14 important part of the creative psyche. And we've got to
16:58:17 continue to be encouraging folks say what's the
16:58:22 (inaudible) difficult, but what we have created is the
16:58:25 space, is the environment, is a culture for exploring
16:58:29 those difficult questions together. We're not alone,
16:58:32 and we need to make sure we have allies and friends, who
16:58:37 are all saying honestly, this is a really difficult,
16:58:40 challenging time. What are you doing? Because I've
16:58:42 really heard from this conversation interesting things
16:58:45 being done in all over the country that we can begin to
16:58:48 learn from, and the collaborations even between
16:58:52 Battersea Arts Centre and work done by Common Wealth
16:58:57 I think are an indication of some good practices that
16:59:00 have been taken around the country and built on. But we
16:59:03 have to, I think, remain resilient. I can hear
16:59:07 colleagues saying it's tiring, it's fatiguing and
16:59:11 exhausting, and I completely endorse that. But we can't
16:59:14 stop. We are at an important moment in which it might
16:59:18 well be that some of us hope a significant turning point
16:59:22 in the dynamic of discriminatory practices, and so if we
16:59:28 can change that, that will be phenomenal, and I wish we
16:59:32 can. But certainly, it does require that we are

16:59:35 thinking innovatively, creatively, and working
16:59:40 collaboratively together to make that happen.
16:59:45 I don't know if Hilary wants to say anything in
16:59:48 closing. I think I've tried to sort of pull together
16:59:51 some of the key strands, but I think it might be
16:59:52 worthwhile just handing back to Clore and see what
17:00:00 Clore's take might be on this.
17:00:02 Hilary, we can't hear you.
17:00:05 **HILARY:** I've only been doing this for three months, so I'll
17:00:08 get used to it in the end. Thank you very much, David,
17:00:12 and thank you to all of our panellists. It's always
17:00:16 tough to try to capture the range of reflections and get
17:00:21 all of the different perspectives. We've had a really
17:00:23 rich discussion which has questioned some fundamentals.
17:00:28 Should we exist? What should we take from Covid? You
17:00:32 know, Keith started out by reminding us that actually,
17:00:35 some of this has been liberating. That we have that
17:00:38 some practices that have made us more flexible, and what
17:00:42 do we want to keep in all of that? I think that as we
17:00:46 start the ease into the post-Covid period, it's really
17:00:52 important for us to consider those fundamental
17:00:54 questions. Lots of us have been saying it's not really
17:00:58 about going back, but much more about going forward.
17:01:01 And that does mean giving up some of the things, asking
17:01:06 the fundamental questions.

17:01:07 I think I'll leave you with two questions from our
17:01:10 panel, which were: what are you waiting for? And
17:01:13 actually, isn't it about time to let go of power, but
17:01:17 keep the responsibility? Thank you very much to Clore
17:01:24 Leadership for this webinar. We'll be putting the
17:01:27 webinar online, so if you want to visit it again, please
17:01:30 do come and join us on our Clore Leadership YouTube
17:01:33 page. Thank you very much for our panellists.
17:01:35 Goodnight.
17:01:37 **DAVID**: Thank you.
17:08:04
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