

oneplace seminar

Morning preparatory session

The morning session was to allow the residency practitioners to go through each topic area and raise any queries or points. These would then feed into the four afternoon sessions.

Each speaker is first introduced by their full name before their transcribed text and then by their initials.

Steve Chettle (SC)

Apart from the exhibition opening it's the first time we've got together as a group. It's just the way the project has developed over the year. Rob Vale and Helen Jacobs were first people in, followed by Christopher Mayo, then Samantha Donnelly and Lucie Potter and finally Sam Clayton and Mark Jacobs. That's the time trail. All of your work, early or late, is equally valid because you're working within the same context of the project.

It will be useful preparation for the afternoon sessions if we were to go through the four topic areas. We've got half an hour on each this afternoon. I was talking to Lucie yesterday and clearly she has her interpretation of the topics for discussion. It would be useful if those kinds of interpretations came out just so that we start thinking about topics so that when we go into this afternoon's session it's reasonably fluent.

Please ask questions of each other and make your own points so this can be a conversation between all of you as well as talking to the people in an audience.

At the moment I've indicated that in each session we have a short question and answers at the end of each session and we have a longer question and answers and a summing up at the end of the afternoon. I wonder if we should just allow a longer question and answers at the end of each session so that people's questions are fresh. Are you happy for it to be like that? (Agreement)

Session One

*Topics: **oneplace** as a project. How **oneplace** fits within a national context for artists and especially emerging artists.*

SC

This is to set the scene and allow you to talk about how you felt about **oneplace**. It was advertised nationally. You saw it advertised, asked for the project brief and description, which was comprehensive. You read about it and learnt about the nature of the project itself and you were all sufficiently interested in it to want to apply. You were also all successful in your applications and became part of the project.

The other part to that is how you see it fitting into a national context for artists in the sense that a core objective of **oneplace** was offering opportunities to emerging artists and arts practitioners. It wasn't age related. It was related to your relationship to your period of study at certain levels. Emerging practitioners were defined as having completed a professional training within the previous 5 years *or* currently engaged on an MA or other research course *or* having a non-institutional career development.

So, there's the context for emerging artists but also there's the actual support of emerging artists. We could have left it open to any artist but it was the idea of giving support to artists at the beginning of their practice which we felt was important.

Helen Jacobs (HJ)

Would you like us to outline what we've experienced of this sort of opportunity available to emerging artists and compare it to what we've actually experienced so far.

SC

Yes it's not about your career development which comes later. This is at the beginning. You see the advert, think there's an opportunity and you get the brief. It sets a context, what the project is trying to do. In a way that's the umbrella to the project. What the project is trying to do also comes into the challenges and your responses.

This is more how it began but also how you see it fitting in nationally about opportunities available for artists. You as practitioners are still looking at things around. I don't know how many projects like *oneplace* are available to arts practitioners at your career stage.

Rob Vale (RV)

It seems relatively rare. It's almost a classic residency or what you imagine a classic residency to be. It was very open. You know, it is a place and you're an arts practitioner who comes to the place and see what happens. And I think that's quite rare. Normally an opportunity is a bit more tailored than that, they're looking for a particular commission for a particular space, with very specific outcomes. Or you have an exhibition with this number of people; your work needs to be about this particular issue. All this was about Tatton Park. You asked for creative output.

HJ

There was no pressure to have anything physical at the end of it. Although our goal was to work towards making a body of work in some way, you didn't require that of us.

SC

No. That was an option but you could have just had a folder full of research notes and that would have been sufficient as long as it could be accessed by people at the exhibition. The objective was that whatever you produce should fit within the key criteria of Tatton Park of landscape, architecture, and people and be capable of being displayed and/or performed to make it accessible in the exhibitions.

MJ

Was it you who set the criteria of being emerging artists and then presented that to Tatton Park?

SC

I was originally asked to come in to talk to Brendan [Flanagan – General Manager of Tatton Park] about the possibility of Andy Goldsworthy working here and on a large scale commission. I suggested we needed to broaden it and one way of broadening it was to offer opportunities to other artists and arts practitioners, and to tie that in to an access and education programme so that when the commission concept was presented people were comfortable with the fact of art at Tatton Park. The commission didn't progress beyond the initial design stages because the whole funding landscape changed.

RV

It's quite useful to tie up to a named artist because when we were looking at opportunities it is a name that sticks out. However vague the connection may or may not turn out to be I guess it excites you as an artist to have that kind of association and then from a, perhaps, Marketing to getting it out there point of view.

Sam Clayton (SCL)

Andy Goldsworthy has some credentials.

SC

Yes. I think that's an important point not to forget for this afternoon.

Samantha Donnelly (SD)

I was thinking of questions very much within a national context - like an overview. I was thinking what was unique about it was the sense of the embedded education, interpretation and outreach that gave people that experience in those areas, a bit of a taste, and support about how to approach workshops, how to tailor that to age groups, planning, health and safety and that was quite a unique facet to the project I think.

RV

And also it went alongside a very open period at Tatton. In other residencies you often don't just create artwork; it has to be an artwork via the education programme. If you've got certain ideas about what you want to do with your work you've got to tailor it somehow by working through the agreement and it can be very valid but it's a different type of experience from that of **oneplace**.

SC

That's more down the community art route. When I was setting this up I was conscious we wanted to give arts practitioners the opportunity to develop their work but clearly tie it into education and access which validates the processes with funders. It means that the project escapes the charge of being elitist and funders may feel that they are just giving money to artists to do their own work.

That's why I organised the workshops at about 10% of your time, on the basis of you could do 35 days in total so that's 2 ½–3 days that a group can have access to you as an artist. As all of your workshops have in their own ways tied into your work then that gives people more opportunity to understand what you have been doing as arts practitioners.

It's a way of linking the whole up together, but I was very clear not to ask you to become community artists but rather artists who would interact and work with the community through the education and access elements of **oneplace**.

Lucie Potter (LP)

Yes. I've done a lot of workshop work and so I found it refreshing that here it was very much about me and my process and being able to share that in some way. Being able to tailor it to my workload was great, and it created something complimentary that had value in its own right. Whatever I wanted to take the brief through I was keen to do that and I was able to do that and I thought the support network was great. For the workshops we had a really good visual arts officer, Laura [Orchard], so I had some really good hardworking support and everybody was so kind.

What really excited me about **oneplace** as a project was the fact of coming to a landscaped park and having this opportunity for an extended period of work especially for myself whose work is really sited. I don't really go for making work for galleries and for sited practice this was just a fantastic opportunity and the fact it was well funded. There was real thought put into enabling practitioners to come here and the financial part being a very important part, so that enabled me to concentrate on my work.

Looking around for opportunities you know, not all of them are as open or provide this extended, you could say residency, this extended period of time and access to the site in the way this project has.

RV

In particular you know you're going to get something from it because it's so varied with lots of opportunities to dive into 'behind the scenes'. There's a lot of history to it and almost that background estate idea where people are doing their various tasks; there were various jobs going on; the hierarchy goes up and the option of being able to float through that, observe and document.

It seemed like it was almost harking back to the kind of work you see on the walls here, to have an artist a hundred years ago free to make their own paintings, there's just something very nice about trying to bring that back. It's a valid way of documenting and getting involved.

SC

Not dissimilar to [JMW] Turner at Petworth.

RV

Yes, you have the space and time and make some work.
Is there anything else?

HJ

It's just that it being directed at emerging artists, the evidence is quite something to get onto your CV really. It's something that if you applied to a normal arts residency that was open to everybody, you're up against a huge amount of people, and it's not necessarily easy to get on to and it's limiting the field of approval.

SC

That's a good point. It wasn't discriminatory; it was specific, within the first five years of graduating. I see what you mean by limiting the field, it equalises out the experience.

HJ

Talking about the workshops as well, I've only ever dipped my toes in to that kind of thing and it's great to have that under my belt and whether I go on to use that or not is irrelevant really, it gave me the experience and confidence to do that.

SC

If you say half your time is going to be taken up with workshops and for the rest of it you can make your own work, it may be a bit daunting if you haven't previously done many workshops, because you build your experience up bit by bit.

LP

It just takes a lot of energy and the proportion of it acknowledged that because the thing about running a workshop is you do put in the preparation and the energy required in running the workshop is a lot more than other places will acknowledge.

RV

Also it [the application forms] structured your budget quite thoroughly. If you've not done a project of this sort before and you've got a lump of several thousand pounds, you don't necessarily know how to split that up and with workshops it was pretty specific - this much time for preparation, this much for the actual workshop, another day for setting up the exhibition. It took you right through, it was up to you how you organised your time and how much time you needed. If you ended up doing fifty days it was your decision but you'd been covered and therefore didn't resent having workshops and seminar or whatever and it's very helpful for people who haven't done it before.

SC

It takes away the need to negotiate every step of the process because you signed up for a total amount of money from which you'll be able to carry out so many days of which you will do ten percent workshops and a talk and some mentoring and some exhibitions. In your application form it was all broken down, although in some cases we filled in the actual time as that was fixed.

HJ

It's testament to how much it's needed that eighty people applied and it's quite telling how popular this kind of residency is.

Christopher Mayo (CM)

Also for me I've never come across a project that was set up like this one so that was quite useful.

LP

I think that's a strength of the project as well, the cross-disciplinary approach to it which is interesting to someone who works with sound to be involved in a project where there's other practitioners and other approaches to a site.

What I'm finding valuable is the opportunity to exhibit together not only to see each others work but the opportunity today to come together to discuss salient and interesting points because I've experienced very little of that. It could have been set up so each practitioner worked separately at Tatton Park and then went without meeting any of the other practitioners.

SC

The original plan was to have a number of seminars and to offer three opportunities for practitioners to meet but the way the money came in precluded that so we have one seminar at the end of the project.

Session Two.

Topic: The challenges of responding to Tatton Park as an arts practitioner.

SC

This is very much over to you as a group and don't forget to ask questions of each other as well because hopefully with the exhibition you're familiar with each others work. And also if you want to refresh yourself I don't know whether the exhibition space is still open, for you to go and have a look if you need to.

HJ

I'm in quite a unique position in that I know what it was like for me and I also know what it was like for Sam and Mark, quite an interesting difference, and that's largely because of the changing nature of Tatton itself. Over three years Tatton's shifted quite considerably in how it's interacted with us as arts practitioners because I was at the beginning and the end.

I guess it might be that you were in the middle But it was fantastic for me, it wasn't a challenge at all, they made it very easy, all the staff were very helpful and incredibly open to anything and although they were incredibly busy they just found time and I really appreciated that and it made it a joy to be here.

As a result I feel I've created a really pleasing body of work that I'm happy with and it's quite rare that I can go away from something and not want to tweak it so it was great and I'll pass over to these two if they want to talk. I feel that at the end specifically having to get it done in time.

SCL

Yes it did seem like it was rushed. It came out of the blue after three years of waiting. Get it done quickly before the Biennial comes. It's quite difficult being asked if we can fit it in now, and we have to programme in other work, in advance. There are blocks of time that can't be moved so it was a bit pressured. Not being invited to anyone else's openings and then suddenly it was, 'can you get this work done' which I don't think anyone else had, that kind of pressure.

LP

I had a deadline at the end of March.

SC

We gave the deadline to everybody who was in Phase 2 of **oneplace**. Yours started in November didn't it? I can understand that it appeared rushed. That's the way the money came in. We did manage to extend your deadline to go beyond the March period which hopefully was helpful.

MJ

Having that as something we're discussing. We did manage to extend the deadline, it was flexible but, it was tight.

RV

I guess if you've been waiting for something for a couple of years as well, it's quite an odd experience to know you've got something in 2 years time.

MJ

We wanted it to stand up and it was a case of seeing what worked and making sure it did stand up.

SC

I wouldn't do a project such as this in two phases anymore. I'd do it in one and I'd just say to the funder that's what we want to do, are you prepared to fund it? If you are that's fine, if you have any doubts about where the match funding is coming for the latter half, earmark the money, let's go off and raise it, and as it's raised, release it. Rather than work through a number of phases which have separate funding requirements and double the amount of work for some funders.

RV

Funding for longer term projects of any sort is usually project to project isn't it, they want an outcome and then another. You were looking at something that was longer term than that and the guys who were at the end of the line, it was kind of unfortunate. I guess you either have eight of us all working at the same time over a year or you spread it like you did.

SC

It [**oneplace**] was originally planned to be over three years and for practitioners to come in at regular intervals all the way through. I think also your [Sam and Mark] position is slightly different perhaps to a number of the other practitioners because of your other business commitments with very specific projects so there's the time challenge. It would be helpful if we could explore other challenges such as your responses to Tatton Park and its landscape.

RV

The time challenge is always there for anybody who's working. In the same way there are specific days when there are things to do and times when I was working on other projects so there's always the sense of juggling. I think I went into it with a proposal of a quite specific piece of work from day one.

I don't know if other people did that but from the application, when I'd seen Tatton Park I'd been working with a dancer already and just had the idea of what happens if I move her across the screen. So again it was slightly different, it was not so much a development of an idea over a period of time as the evocation of it. I knew I have a particular task to do, I'm stuck to seasons and I've got to get it done by the time of the [Interim] show. It was more of a classic film shoot which is quite odd.

HJ

Were you given any time at Tatton for doing the work and sticking to the seasons?

RV

Challenges for people to come up against challenges you mean? Yes there were loads. It was very challenging to make because either it fitted or you ended up with a gap. It was like a jigsaw puzzle. So it starts easy. You know what you're doing at the beginning of the project and I think there's always that buoyancy at the beginning.

People are very excited about the artist being there and I think we definitely rode that wave. And for my work in particular you are just filming scenes and you don't have to connect with art and it gets

harder and harder. Each piece you're doing has to link to another and you keep looking at the landscape to find pieces that fit.

LP

How did people find not having a dedicated workspace here, not being really residential, outwith the accommodation.

CM

I didn't actually do any work here, so it wasn't really a residency in that sense it was more like a place to gather inspiration and then go off and work. But yes I think it might have been interesting if there had been, if we'd had somewhere here to work. More like a traditional residency.

HJ

At the very beginning we were talking about bringing a container in.

SC

Well, the significant thing about Tatton is that it actually has no rooms available to use for studio and work space. If it had, one of the first things I would have asked would have been for a dedicated room that practitioners could use. We did we investigate the possibility of something like a mobile classroom but there were also issues of planning permission.

In the end we took the decision that residency practitioner would come to Tatton to research and collect information and then return to their own studios to develop and make the work

HJ

And there would have been gaps when it wasn't being used I suppose.

RV

The space for me was the film space where I was coming in and filming and going away and editing and if there is any space, particularly if someone's shipped in a container, there is something of an onus to be in it. And sometimes that's less helpful but it just depends on your practice. If you're a studio based artist and you are tied into the space to make that work then that's of interest.

HJ

And base yourself around it, like a staff room for cups of tea. I used the carpenters' to do some work.

RV

And in a way there's something quite nice about that integration, you know you'd come and have your dinner in the restaurant and people in the house would ask you what you're doing. I did some filming in the house as well. If you're stuck outside again you've not necessarily had that interaction.

SD

I was like Chris. I came in, went into the gardens and did work and then took it away, so I felt quite transient, but then it was more about me being in the space and that kind of thing. I think it would change it a lot if there was a dedicated room

HJ

Not necessarily for the better

SD

I don't know

SC

I can see advantages and disadvantages. If you had a space you could go to, to think; but if you're going to start making, where are all your tools? Are you going to bring them in? And move them out. If your practice or research is more lightweight in the sense of it being on paper which will go into a folder you can walk off with it. A space where people could produce their work might be more problematic.

You could look at it two ways. We felt people would use it to gather information and go off and make work in their studios or workspaces which are equipped in a way that they are familiar with. I know that if on a regular basis people have been going down to the hall and saying sorry I need to use all that equipment for the next four hours, it doesn't work. If you go to somebody's organisation where you need to use somebody's computer for even five minutes, or the printer, it just doesn't work. It's disruptive and can start to make things quite awkward.

SCL

Did you bear that in mind during selection?

SC

What, that you had your own studio spaces that you could make your work in?

SCL

The type of work that people did.

SC

No. We took the view that you were all practising in your own fields and you had your own resources to make things. I think the briefing application was fairly comprehensive. But we certainly didn't need to ask the question at interview about if we were appointed could you make physical work because we had left the option open. As we discussed earlier, we weren't saying you have to come up with a physical, tangible object.

It was more of the process and reaction and interaction with the place that was important, but you all ultimately did choose to make tangible pieces; that's just the way it worked with you as a group, or a loose group of individuals under the umbrella of **oneplace**.

RV

I set myself a difficult challenge and I probably could have made that a bit easier, but you felt that people here were ready, willing and able to help. I had to be able to get on site at any time at the drop of a hat for middle-of-the-night filming just to get the variety, and they made sure that was a possibility. You know, I got to go the music room, pull out all the old manuscripts with white gloves on, and play on harpsichords, and they could have said you're making a film so you don't need to do that.

LP

Yes I think the people here, the support, has been fantastic, each individual department. You know I've worked a lot with the rangers as well as people in other departments who may not be into creative arts and they've just been very interested and wanted to help and that's been such a fantastic facilitation.

There's been a couple of times when it has been challenging but that's simply because people are overworked like any place and so it's not because they're being obstructive, and I've found the lack of workspace or the residential thing tricky for me, coming down from Glasgow. I did find that because I do have to carry around a certain amount of kit, so I would be like the bag lady at Preston just trying to get off the train with about seven bags.

SC

I think that's an important point in that it could apply to everyone. On a practical basis just a small room with access so you don't have to bother any staff to store or look after equipment would clearly have been helpful for some of you. So that's something one learns.

LP

The practicality is staying over in the Wirral so I needed to rent a car, but I made those decisions and they were the right ones for me so.

RV

Staying with my sister always helped but she lives in Derbyshire so I had to get here, and I was driving towards Buxton and I heard it started to snow, and I thought I've got to get there, whereas you [Lucie] could just jump on a train, but those are the kinds of challenges are really, but there's the joy of the chase, that shot of the deer at the beginning, it's just a once in a lifetime opportunity.

LP

Was that in the morning?

RV

Yes really early in the morning, there was no-one around and they just happen to have fed the deer and you just think that was really worth it.

Session Three

Topic: Residency Practitioners' response to Tatton Park and its landscape.

SC

You're all different practitioners, but you've all been studying something of the same place but in your own different art forms and personal arts practice.

HJ

To be perfectly honest I found this a bit of a funny question because I kind of feel that's what our work is about and what the exhibitions for. If you want to know our response to Tatton you go and look at the exhibition.

RV

Well I suppose that's the visual version

HJ

But we're artists and we prefer to communicate visually.

RV

They did but through their art!

SC

The end result of today is a transcript. I know that there are your exhibition statements but I feel there is still a lot outside of your statements that can be articulated through conversation. It was also the fact that you've all had different responses. It would be helpful if you could discuss and describe how, as practitioners all engaged on the same project with the same brief, you approached it in terms of similarities and differences.

RV

It could be two people who were working at the same time but there's a massive difference in the way we're working in that you (Helen) were working in the house working away at things and you had much more of a day to day contact with the staff and you were more present than I was, lost in the big landscape out there. And that's interesting, particularly for the people here at Tatton.

SC

I'm going to bring this back to how you responded as artists and residency practitioners. If we move the practical questions to one side on this one because I'm hoping for this afternoon that we get a debate about the landscape here, and what that is all about. How it triggered you, because some of you knew Tatton before you applied and some didn't. You put forward a proposal which was convincing enough to get you onto a short list and even more convincing to get you the job. But this session is more about the aesthetics, the context, the concepts, and yes there are the finished works but this is all about getting under the skin of that.

LP

There were two areas or questions I'd like to put. One is looking at the extended or not so extended period of time of the residency and looking back within the landscape seasonality. The other question I have is the contrast of the place.

A landscaped park is an idyllic and constructed landscape according to a certain aesthetic. It's politically defined. It's interesting - a land of censorship and yet the reality of it is it's a noisy place. You know I could have embraced Ringsway or not but thinking that the contrast between listening to your comment about being here as a practitioner on a residency and kind of feeling as if you're following a model that's hundreds of years old and being an artist at a landed estate.

So there's just a couple of areas that I think I found interesting for me and having seen everyone's work here it would be interesting to talk about them

RV

Certainly I think that **oneplace** as a title I found strangely misleading because it's not one place but many many many different places and I guess we all either zoned in on a particular one little place and created something from that, or expanded out to cover the vast variety. I guess and it's a generalisation.

HJ

Not just physically but in time as well.

RV

Yes I mean mine doesn't have any autumn in it and it still slightly bugs me. I got around it by having shots that look very Autumnal so it works I guess but practicalities again, if you just physically weren't here in the autumn time. Actually I've done another piece subsequently on the back of this which did the same thing, it still didn't have any Autumn in it and I said look I'm going to come back and bung the Autumn in whether you like it or not because I want some colours. But that seasonal thing, do you as a practitioner coming into this, do you find an element and make some work about that or actually I'm going to create something much more generalised about the nature of Tatton.

HJ

You have to, to a certain extent don't you because it's so overwhelming. There's so much. I didn't know what I was doing when I came here so I was open to everything. I was just absorbing everything, talking to people which was necessary but I knew that I was going to have to focus to create work that wasn't wishy washy really.

SC

I suppose that's the difference in that you were all asked to respond to a place as opposed to a typical residency where you're given a workspace and you're told to get on with whatever you've been doing elsewhere but come out and interact with people and get them involved in the arts and help them make things. Here it was, there'll be something to show at the end of it to show you've thought and responded to the place but without there being any specifics, so I don't know if that makes it harder or easier. But I think because of what you were saying earlier on it was more welcome because it was an open brief.

HJ

Yes, and I did come with domesticity in mind for myself initially because that was where my work was coming from, and I channelled it to be about the landscape not just to fit the criteria of the whole project but because that was what was interesting, drawing in the landscape to the inside .

RV

Did people make work here that was a natural progression from what they were doing anyway? Did people come here and think that's a bit different to anything I've done before?

HJ

Both really. It was a continuation in that it followed trends, and certainly responding to such a huge space. I work domestically and it's a confined space and that's what the work is about in a way, but to be presented with a huge landscape that was somebody's' home was a completely different scale.

LP

But also it's a museum. It's an attraction and that kind of ambivalence you can't quite ignore.

RV

It's full of art work as well.

SC

I was thinking about Sam and Mark because when you came here your proposal was very specific in that it was very general. 'You said in your proposal that you wouldn't know until you actually got here. This is how we do it, we walk around and we think about it and we're not sure but eventually we'll come up with something. But you hadn't said this is what we are going to be making, so it would be useful this afternoon to talk about when you were going off for your walk. Obviously you picked up on the Coragic monument and the aeroplanes and there was some connection between the two. But there must have been other points when you thought of other options that you looked at.

SCL

There certainly were. We don't have a studio practice to bring. We work together and obviously bring ourselves but we don't try and continue what we have done before.

RV

It's a reactionary type of approach?

MJ

Entirely, it has to be.

SC

You respond to a place. In a sense everybody has done but yours is more general at the start. It's like you came with a blank sheet.

RV

It's hugely different to how I applied for it so it's interesting that we were both chosen.

SCL

At one point we thought landscape would be about mapping and computer work, and then we were making monuments, so we couldn't put on our CV one type of work.

RV

Whereas my proposal, I pretty much mocked up what it was going to look like, you know, I literally pulled a piece of plastic across to give some idea of what it would look like, and obviously it changes over the period right to the end.

SC

It was a different level proposal. If it had gone much further we'd have said you don't need this because it's already done. In terms of your work it was clear there was a process there to apply and in your case there was a clear notion of your proposal. And we needed that because we weren't just going to appoint people who were going to go off and do the work they were doing anyway but be funded to do it. It still had to come back to this place.

RV

How did you approach it as a composer?

CM

Well I certainly had a specific proposal. I knew it was going to be about the history preserved in the house and the history preserved in the parkland, both these strange things and one tried to give the notion that it would be historically based, but when I actually got here, in the finished work there was absolutely nothing that had anything to do with what was in the proposal.

It was quite a long time afterwards; it must have been over a year between when I wrote the proposal and when I came to start work here. So I wasn't really interested in working in the same way as before and the ideas became very much more abstract when I came to actually react to the situation and the musical inspiration kind of gave me a sense of direction.

SC

I think that's perfectly valid if there's a substantial gap between the applying and being appointed, you expect there to be a negotiation when things have moved on. It's entirely reasonable for someone to come back and say well actually we don't work like that anymore and it would be unreasonable for the host to say sorry but that's what you said you were going to do, you've got to do that or it's all off and we'll go somewhere else. You can't force somebody to go back in time. So I think the flexibility was there.

RV

Yes because you didn't ask us to put exactly what we were going to do, just give an overview, it was our choice.

CM

I think the other thing for me was that this was quite open. Commissions are quite restrictive. I've never heard of a commission really where someone says you need to write a piece reacting to or being inspired by this, it's quite a strange thing, and also I wasn't sure how I would react to working in that kind of way. It's not that my work isn't inspired by things or concepts or whatever, but I've never been on a project where what those things were, was constrained in any way.

So if I was writing a piece and wasn't inspired by something and it wasn't working out I'd just switch to another completely different source of inspiration and a new set of completely different ideas whereas this was much more ...obviously there's a lot of scope in there but having to stick to the one idea was very strange.

SC

Can we remember to bring this point up this afternoon because I think it's really interesting, the differences between the way composers are commissioned or offered opportunities and the visual arts or film based media.

Your responses to Tatton Park as practitioners are key and the other two will set the context. It's your work; it's what you're here to do. The final session topic is how your work developed and changed. You started your work and then changed it. It would be useful to know how it has impacted on your work after the residency. Some of you are further down the line and Rob and Helen I remember talked about how it helped and assisted the development of your careers there are certain things to do with levels of experience. Rob you had some opportunities to exhibit and screen work in other parts of the North West.

You're at the sharp end; you're the people who have experienced it both in the practical, the aesthetic, the making side, and the seasonality. In order for people to look at it over a year we must allow them to have a whole year in order to do it. If they then have a problem with seasonality within that year it's not our problem because they've had the time.

RV

It's about parameters isn't it? If you say to an artist you've got a year here, there's an onus on them to represent that year and you may not want to do that you may want to tie yourself down to a duration of time.

SC

If someone had said they would do it in a two month period that's fair enough, but maybe it's in the notion of having it in the plan but you don't all have to touch on each season.

This concluded the morning preparatory session.

The seminar was a public event and the main sessions were held in the afternoon.

Session One

*Topic: **oneplace** as a project. How **oneplace** fits into a national context for artists and especially emerging artists.*

Introduction

SC

I'm Steve Chettle and I'm the Project Manager and Curator of **oneplace**. Welcome to the audience and welcome to the arts practitioners for **oneplace**. I'm going to give a fairly brief introduction to this seminar before we turn it over into four sessions this afternoon. **oneplace** was really started as a concept about five years ago, when I met with Brendan Flanagan, Tatton Park General Manager and Ian Banks who was the, then, Public Art and Architecture Officer for Arts Council England North West. We devised a project which was fairly multi-stranded. One part was Andy Goldsworthy working here. Another key part was having emerging arts practitioners from a variety of arts forms working to look at Tatton Park.

The project started properly with the first work being made in 2005 by Andy Goldsworthy but very shortly after that we had Rob Vale, Helen Jacobs (then Brigham, now Jacobs), working over the winter through the summer and that was Phase One.

Then we had Christopher Mayo who came in at the end of Phase One and worked through into Phase Two. Then we had Samantha Donnelly, Lucie Potter and Sam Clayton & Mark Jacobs. The thing about **oneplace** is it created a critical framework for the examination of Tatton Park's landscape. The core aspect was the examination of the historic current and future of Tatton Park landscape. It supported emerging practitioners, by that we meant practitioners working in any artform area who were within five years of finishing a formal academic course or was currently on an MA course. We did allow a non academic route. If anybody who applied was a fantastic artist for instance who hadn't gone to college they would have been considered.

We were encouraging engagement in a wide range of artforms. The finished works which you'll see in the exhibition that's on at the moment use sculpture, film, music and audio sound works so it is pretty varied and within sculpture there's also a variety of materials and approaches.

We also had a linked education and access programme so that gave people the opportunity to get involved. One of them is today with this seminar, which gives all the arts practitioners an opportunity to talk about the project. We're documenting it so we can get transcripts so they become a permanent legacy record. We had workshops, talks and exhibitions and you can see the exhibition that's on at the moment.

So today the seminar is the first opportunity for all the residency arts practitioners have had to meet and talk about their experiences of the project. It's going to have a legacy of transcribed material. It's also about being a critique of the project and it's about sharing knowledge.

We had a preparatory session this morning when we went through the headings of this afternoon's sessions. They are roughly half an hour a piece. We may make some of them a bit shorter because we decided the session after the break which is talking about responses to Tatton Park and its landscape is probably the core bit today because it's where the arts practitioners talk about their work in more detail.

So the first session we'll be talking about **oneplace** as a project, how it fits into a kind of national context for artists and also how it supports emerging artists. Then session two is the challenges of responding to Tatton Park and its landscape as an arts practitioner, session three is the arts practitioners response to Tatton Park and its landscape, and the final session is how the arts practitioners work has developed and changed, and any career impacts they've had.

In the running order we've got half an hour at the end for questions and answers and summing up but actually what we're going to do is allow a bit more time within each separate session for questions because it's probably a bit easier to ask a question at the end of a half hour session.

So that's what we're aiming to do this afternoon and so we'll start off. Loosely I chair it and steer it and hopefully everybody around this table will put in their contribution in terms of questions. It's a dialogue between people as well.

If we could have your response to **oneplace** as a project, how you saw it fitting in to a national context for arts practitioners and also as emerging artists, how you see it supporting you and fitting in to other schemes that you may support, or there may not be enough schemes around for emerging artists.

LP

I think early on in the discussion I soon found out that it's quite a rarity for emerging artists to come across a scheme like this that we all relished. I think we've come across one or two but it's testament that it was popular by how many people applied in the first place and it was particularly great that it could accommodate so many of us as well within the whole project.

RV

I think that it's interesting that it was an extended period of time working here. I think that's really valuable because it gives the different practitioners involved time to focus on the process involved; because it doesn't matter what you're dealing with, the process is done over time and it's very important.

Some opportunities say you can come and do something for a week where you have to turn up, perform, get it all ready, and it's interesting and valuable in some respects and does develop certain skills; but the extended time period of work and research here - its accessibility, were really valuable and I haven't seen that, especially as I say for emerging artists. Generally it's open to everybody who tend to prefer people with a lot more experience on their CV: so it's very valuable in that respect.

SD

I guess maybe the audience doesn't know about how the application process happened and what an artist does when they make an application. It went out in an advertisement sent out to artists, newsgroups, The Artist's Newsletter. So there was some publicity. There was a call for applications, and you submitted quite a detailed budget, education outline, and what your interest in Tatton Park was - a kind of proposal.

Those were sent to Steve and from that process people were short-listed. We came here for a day and we had a look round the gardens and we had a discussion and had lunch together. I think there were two days like that in 2005 and then after that people were appointed. And there were two phases, Phase One which happened immediately after which Helen and Rob were part of, and then Phase Two came on over the next couple of years really which is when we got involved although some of us were appointed in 2005. So that's how the project came into being.

RV

For all of us there are different commissions and different things out there that as an artist you can try and do. As we were saying earlier it's quite rare to get something like this that is relatively open in what it wants from you as an artist. Often there's a particular brief or a particular outcome or space that needs a piece of artwork and lots of different ways of producing art but what we got from this process was essentially asking us what we would do in response to this space.

We were talking earlier about even within that we had different approaches to how we came to that proposal stage. For my film piece that you see in the show I had a quite specific immediate idea of doing a particular film in a particular way. I didn't know how it would work out but I put that in the proposal. Saying this is what I want to do is essentially make this film of a dancer through a number of screens so it was quite specific whereas others were saying it was the exact opposite of that.

SCL

It had that freedom in the space that you could come at it in a structured way whereas Mark and I work in a very "let's see what happens kind of way" and Steve said it was a bit of a gamble. You could only go on our CV rather than our proposal, but it's rare to get such a free brief.

SC

It's also about being able to assess applications. I'm a consultant now but I started as a practising artist and I've gone through my career setting up projects. You know when you've looked at somebody's past work and how they approach that, that if they can bring that approach to a new place they're going to be able to produce a piece of work.

It was quite deliberate to keep the brief open within the specifics of looking at the landscape, looking at the architecture, the relationship between the landscape, the buildings and the people. That seems to be core elements of this place, and it was also important that the artists were given time to be able to concentrate on developing their own body of work but there was also a part of their work that was to do with allowing people access into it hence the access and education programme with a certain amount of days put aside for workshops. Well maybe you should talk about how that element fitted in as well.

LP

The fact that you were free not to have something substantial, well not substantial but something finished at the end of the project, that you could just do research or respond in your own way, fill sketch books without that pressure and you can feel more free to create and actually we all produced something tangible at the end because we had that freedom and I think without that freedom we would've all had quite different outcomes. But also with workshops, I don't have that much experience of workshops but knowing that that was part of the project with a challenge and an opportunity to try something new and I think that gave me the confidence to carry that out in the future if I want to.

I'm not necessarily an artist that wants to involve education in my practice and involve other people necessarily. I'm quite introspective in some ways as an artist but I enjoyed it very much and it has opened up new things for me which I would never have had the opportunity to do and it's something on my CV so people know I've had that experience for future projects.

HJ

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CM

I think also that there were these other attached elements like the lectures and the workshops which were tied in and gave you the opportunity to work on other practical skills in terms of working with children or groups of adults. In terms of presenting yourself and your work, I think that was a valuable experience to come along with it.

MJ

For us it was quite an interesting experience as well, we were working collaboratively and suddenly having to present our ideas to an audience via the lecture set-up meant we had to really pin down where we were and rationalise exactly where the ideas were coming from so it had a practical function as well as an educational.

SC

We'll come back to that in the last session as well. The process of setting up these projects is - you have a client; I come in, (I was invited in to develop it), I put forward a concept which is discussed, adjusted and then you then settle on the form for it and then you raise the money; the project gets advertised, at which point applications are made by arts practitioners We used that term because we had a brief where applicants could work in, for instance, fine art, craft, music, architecture or writing.

It didn't matter what the artform was it, was actually more importantly about people's approach to the project when they applied. The revealing thing today was the responses from the people who applied. The information was available off the web because we had a download. You applied and were accepted. When you got the information, when you opened something up, what was the first thought about this project.

LP

Fantastic! - A real feast. There's so much to get your teeth into.

RV

A really rich environment as I'm sure you all know. Tatton Park is full of potential either as an artist or a walker or somebody who's interested in plants. I mean the variety of what they put on here is huge and so as an artist there's a lot to respond to and we were talking about whether as an artist you pin down a particular little element of all that and try and make something to do with that or whether you look at the whole thing.

The big draw I think straight away was that idea of being able to move in and out fluidly of a working, existing stately home-like place and just experience it with a bit of a no holds barred approach. When you come as a visitor there's all those doors you can't go in with lots of people ferreting away doing things, you don't know quite what they're doing, and even the park itself is only a small percentage of what's really open. You know, there's all that farm land at the back, part of it is the bit where all the deer hide away, where you're not meant to go in, and potentially, if you wanted to push for it is the option of getting into those places and you feel quite privileged.

LP

Yes, and not just for people visiting not being able to access places but a lot of people who work here said we envy you the time to just pore over what's here. There are so many resources and fantastic artefacts, and you go past it every day but you'd love to delve into it but you don't get the opportunity because it's a working environment . You feel very privileged.

HJ

Yes, and not just for people visiting not being able to access places but a lot of people who work here said we envy you the time to just pore over what's here. There are so many resources and fantastic artefacts, and you go past it every day but you'd love to delve into it but you don't get the opportunity because it's a working environment . You feel very privileged.

RV

I remember when we were here with Ellen and we did a tour around the house with a member of staff and it's not her job to do tours of the house but she knows everything about every bit of carpet, door and architrave, and it was just this endlessly long and really interesting tour and all these bits and pieces. You won't see any of that in the work I made, it's not an obvious link across but you did absorb yourself in a place. That's what, again putting it back in the context of a residency, particularly in the beginning as we were the first ones, but we did get that chance to get very deep into a place and experienced it as much as we wished to.

SC

I think it's important to explain what a residency is, often an artist or an arts practitioner would be placed within an organisation and very often they'll spend a great deal of their time working directly with people in that organisation. It could be a school or a hospital or any other kind of organisation where they would work closely with the users of that organisation to help them make artwork.

This residency has been more about the artists or practitioners being able to develop a body of work, whether they ended up with a physical tangible piece of work or a whole series of notes to do with research and they would go off and develop that later on and that would help, as long as they exhibited it didn't matter ultimately, as long as it fitted within the context, it wasn't like a community arts based residency. It was a residency here, and it was the way we identified the relationship between the arts practitioners and the place.

The bit that was more like a community arts based residency was through the workshops, and then the talks and the exhibitions were, not neutral, but certainly they were about an audience coming to listen or look at the thing so there was lots of different levels people could get involved with. The workshop part was quite important to get people over two and a half to three days to actually meet the artists in this formal situation and learn more about their work. So I suppose my question to you all is - you're always looking for opportunities.

The **oneplace** opportunity is nearly finished now. The exhibition is really the final part of your involvement, but when you're looking in Artists Newsletter or all the other places where you get arts opportunities, is this a common type of project in relationship to opportunities or is it an uncommon project and do you think it would be useful to have more of these type of projects to enable artists to develop their work and yet still be connected to an audience.

LP

I think they're becoming more common. I think what was very useful for myself was the fact that this residency seemed very well organised and a good amount of time taken into account for you to develop work here and a sufficient level of funding to facilitate that because you have the practicalities of, you know, you've got to live, pay the rent and whatever, so the fact that this was an extended period and funded.

On a personal level, for me, I was able to immerse myself in the process and at the same time I was able to actually upgrade some of my equipment so it was really beneficial to work with. But the structure of the residency, how it had been organised and set up, was supportive. In other aspects as well for me that was fantastic.

There are other residencies out there, as we said when we first started discussing this point, most of them are just open, so you'd have artists who are very well established against people like yourself and lots of places have a kind of pressure, they want to have a kind of positive outcome so it's fantastic that it was looking at specifically working with emerging artists and arts practitioners

CM

Working as a composer there are rarely any projects like this open to artists working in any artform including, as Steve said, composers and writers and it was interesting for me to work in this situation. Other similar opportunities for composers where you'd be working towards getting a commission or whatever, the only contact you have really with the organisation is they select you to do the work, you sign a contract saying "have this piece of work done by this day" Give them the piece by that day, and that's it; there is nothing else involved. This is a very different set up in that you're given a time and space to interact with, there's no pressure to produce an end product as we said before, although we all came up with different outcomes.

SC

I was interested that working within the area of music as a composer, you said that normally you're not given any brief apart from "write us a piece of music", that's very interesting because that is the most thoroughly open brief you can give.

CM

Well, you get different sorts of restrictions, a normal brief for a commission would be the instrumentation defined by whoever it was who was commissioning the piece, and the length and that's it, nothing else. Very rarely you may get commissions for more occasional music. I'm doing a piece for the Handel House Museum in London and they want a piece specifically about the life of Handel, but that's a piece with a text so it's a more occasional commission. But those sorts of things are quite rare.

SC

So we gave you some content but didn't tell you how long or what instruments; so it kind of balances. I can see your point about needing the instruments to be specified because presumably it's no use writing for a brass band if it's going to be played by people with violins.

CM

It's very unusual for a piece to be commissioned by anyone other than an ensemble because in the context of contemporary music who wants it, who actually wants to pay for it, the only people who needs it are the ensemble players, it's very rare to go outside the ensemble.

SC

That's very interesting because the only people who need the composition are the people who play the work. As a client Tatton Park set up the opportunity but there appears to be a gap in music that says actually it would be good if we could support young composers outside of the relationship with an end user.

RV

Composition is different anyway, it's like a stage in-between where people are enacting what you've written, it's like a playwright or something, you need that bit in-between, unless you're playing everything yourself and recording it down. Whereas, potentially, in your practice as artists, you tend to be physically making or physically doing. It gets more interesting when it's a collaboration involved, or in my case using a dancer in the piece. I wouldn't have been able to do it without that person being in the piece so we'd be in the same situation, so I think it was interesting that we did all make pieces of work.

Despite the idea that you don't have to make a piece of work on a residency of this sort I think there is still a degree of pressure from somewhere that there's something to be viewed, like people here today who have some sort of interest in the residency. If we'd all done a residency over three years and there was nothing more tangible than some notes or some photographs and there was a general idea that there were some artists working here and we've all had a good time, there'd be a degree of disappointment I would imagine from some avenues and I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing.

If you had a lot of residencies where artists were allowed to go and do exactly what they want with no restrictions on it at all, there's a degree of selfishness that comes to that in a way, but it's good to have some, and what was good about this was there was a degree of selfishness, you could come in and do what you wanted to do but as artists and practitioners you are interested one way and another in putting your thoughts and ideas out there, be it visually or audibly.

SC

You're all makers aren't you? I suppose when we put this together we were trying to make it as flexible as possible with an aim to potentially attract a wider group of people across different areas of arts activity, some of which I'm not necessarily familiar with: but it's almost inevitable as makers that you won't just want to spend the time doing research, you'll think well actually I'm getting paid and I want to make something for my own satisfaction. If it had been kept at just a research level that would have been quite extensive and that body of work would have been sufficient because it would have articulated something, it would have responded to something but the fact that you do get tangible pieces out of it is a bonus. There was never any stricture that you mustn't or you must. I suppose one always thinks that there might be, especially when the proposals were coming in.

HJ

We knew there was going to be an exhibition and you could show your research but the fact that you know there's going to be an exhibited event...the name itself suggests that you've got to have something to show. It's almost like you know there's a pressure to make, to produce, even if there's the idealistic thing that there isn't, there usually is, one way or another.

SCL

Can you recall what proportion of different practitioners applied?

SC

I can't to be honest. There was a spread, when we interviewed over the two days the first set of practitioners, it was fine art, craft, writers, film makers, photographers, so there was a broad spread across the art forms and dance as well. Having set one of these things up you don't really know if it's going to work or not and it's entirely down at that point to who applies. We happened to get some really strong applications, really strong, and it's testament to that strength by the actual work that's come out of the process of the arts practitioners coming here, and that was great.

The only certainty of practitioners on this was that we invited Andy Goldsworthy to work, but everybody else had to apply. It was all very open and even handed, but I was quite interested in the comment this morning about the definition of what we mean by emerging. What seems to have happened is that it levelled the playing field for a lot of people, and we're then looking at like for like, whereas there are some people who have been doing residencies for much longer and they are brilliant at it.

If you're looking at a specific outcome are we're going to give it to someone who's unknown or someone who's a certainty cert? The certainty normally. But with this one, because it was more

experimental, it did allow people who perhaps had less experience in some areas to get considered, which was really important.

HJ

I think there was a slant in the literature [project brief] to encourage artists especially from the north west who were emerging and it was to build up an artistic identity for the region as well and make it much stronger in the future for practitioners.

SC

We did do that, the original idea was to have slightly more residencies than we finally got but just over half of them had come from within the region, from Cheshire and the North West and then we opened it up to practitioners from across the UK. We were at one point looking at international practitioners so it was focussing on the region without stipulating only practitioners from Cheshire and the North West need apply.

I think it's important that the boundaries are kept open, Chris came from London, Lucie came from Glasgow, Samantha is from just outside Manchester, Helen is from Sheffield, but before then from Manchester, and Mark and Sam from Sheffield and then moving into West Yorkshire, Rob who moved into Cheshire. It's important that the opportunity was widespread without damaging the opportunities one way or the other. Let's open it up to the audience. If you do have a question please fire away because it may prompt more discussion, things we haven't thought about.

Audience question

It struck me that art is inspired by art isn't it? The house, the park and the gardens are intact works of art in themselves which are being used to inspire other pieces of art. I wondered if the place that inspired your work was in fact the best place to show the work. Would there be a case for displaying the work in a completely separate environment that somehow gives the public a chance to intuit what you've been inspired by rather than actually confronting the two things together.

RV

I had displayed it elsewhere actually. I pushed very hard for the option to have the piece shown here at any time for that very reason actually, because when you go round the house there's a lot of art and a lot of that art is about Tatton, it has been made for it, it has been commissioned for it and I think these pieces in a way continue that tradition if you like, it's that type of self-reflective piece, but it depends on the art work I suppose.

The film was shown on the big screen in the middle of Manchester, a very urban environment and it does something different there and in a way it's a very idealised piece, slightly idyllic. It also got shown on a giant, outrageously big Americanised Vegas looking set of screens that move along buildings, about thirty feet wide, massive, so the context was radically different and again, did something different so I don't think there's a best way necessarily, well I'm talking about my piece here, but I think it has a real relevance when you see it here I mean when you see it in America its, 'Isn't it great to see this little British stately home environment', very un-American looking especially in Dallas. It became rather quaint over there whereas over here it's not.

HJ

I don't necessarily think we all responded to Tatton as art because there are a lot of other aspects to Tatton and I think a lot of us picked up on that. It's not just the beauty and what's been created. It's also the people within it all the way up to modern day and acknowledging that there are a lot of tourists here, wandering around; you're tripping over the skirting boards that guide you through the

mansion, it's not all the façade. So in creating work that responds to it in its entirety it's good to see the contexts, to see the work scattered around the mansion and around the landscape and to see the points that we're picking up., it's not necessarily what you automatically see when you come here.

SC

When we put the project together the idea was that it started and went continuously for three years: but the money eventually came in two phases. As a planner it's very difficult for me to then go to another place like a gallery in Manchester or somewhere else in the UK and say this is what we've got. Because when you're selling a show you are normally selling an exhibition that's going to happen and has a reasonably clear content to it. You get tied into people's schedules, and because the money for **oneplace** came in over a period of time, you are into a very fundamentally different organisational set-up.

Touring exhibitions are horrendously time-consuming, it puts another layer on it but if I did another project like this again, when all the money is in, we'd start it and guarantee that everything we want is there at the end, and then go and sell it to other places I think. Certainly 'One Tree' did a tour but that was a different kind of project.

The fact that you can come here, see a contextualised exhibition then go out and see the areas in Tatton Park where the works are relating and responding to is quite important. I think neither one is better than the other. The practicalities are that the project has developed in the way it has and we'd always said the exhibitions would be in the Mansion House.

LP

My practice is very much one where I work with a site, with a place, I don't necessarily make work for a gallery about a place, there's a difference there, so I actually made a book for the exhibition of collated documentation. So it's a different process and my work very much makes sense here: it's a sound work of a particular route around part of the landscaped park. And I could take that away and put bits of it on the radio but it gets its sense here, particularly with my work.

SC

If I was looking at something similar where there are exhibition opportunities, where can they be? I suppose we go back to the point that we didn't actually state either way that you [residency practitioners] will produce a tangible piece of work. So when you then go to a gallery curator and they say what is it? Well, it might be sculpture, it might be architecture it might be a bit of writing, and it might just be loads of notes.

It has not quite got that solidity that that organiser might want and I suspect that you'd have to work on relationships with other places to say here's the nature of the project, if you understand that will you take the project on the basis of whatever work is produced will be contextualised so that people don't see it as a failure because there isn't a tangible object sitting on the floor, but that there is a whole schema of ideas which are in the note stage and if that becomes an acceptable relationship then you build on that because you keep them informed of how your project is coming along. That's time consuming and you'd have to factor all of that time in, if you do that it takes x number of weeks and we need to put that amount of someone's time in to cover it.

I know with Mark and Sam's work in particular the Choragic Monuments lanterns were put into two places, they were photographed. In the exhibition they're quite small, they're A4 but if they were blown up to large sizes so there was a physical sense and perhaps more explanation about what the project was trying to do, someone could see it anywhere else in the UK and get something from it because art does have to travel from time to time.

RV

Is it a very personalised project to have it here at Tatton Park or do you think it would transfer or travel?

HJ

I think my work would be completely different because I knew it was going to be exhibited here. I think it was created to be tied to this place.

RV

I think if we took the work we've made now and showed it somewhere else it would certainly work, as long as we contextualised it. It would be about Tatton Park and people may not know what Tatton Park is but we'd give them a sort of artistic representation of people's opinions of the place, and get back to what it was all about in the first place, about our interpretations of the place.

SC

I was thinking about when Helen's work was exhibited in the interim exhibition when both pieces were in the Steward's Room, apart from the plates which were always in the kitchen, the Archivist's Table and the Tabledoth were placed in two different rooms.

Yesterday I photographed the entire exhibition and I feel you could move Helen's tables into a gallery with a grey floor and white walls, but you'd have to put context photographs with it. You'd say this is the place it was made for, this is where it was exhibited, look at those two things to get the context and understand what the work was about. But if the work was just put onto a grey floor and white wall gallery on its own, people would look at it as an interesting object but it would lose context.

You [Rob] said personal and that's an interesting word, I would say it's very specific to this place. It's the same with Mark and Sam's piece, you could carry that over so that people would realise that they're looking at a particular place for a specific reason and as long as that's maintained and people, can access the work I think you're ok.

RV

The difference is in film, by default you're capturing and recording an actual place and so it has its own context in a way whereas an object that's made is separate from that context. Also with composition you could listen to it if it existed in that form, it would still work as a composition with a sort of resonance of somewhere else.

Session Two

Topic: The challenges of responding to Tatton Park as an arts practitioner

SC

Each residency practitioner had their own individual response to the place. We've probably touched on it in terms of the place but let's explore how you respond to a large place where you are not given a specific brief apart from an ephemeral context to work within. It's really about you telling us and asking each other questions about the kind of challenges you felt and what sort of challenges you had. It's about seeing where there are common areas or differences that might exist.

HJ

Pretty much the only challenge I had was honing down what I was inspired by and do some tangible work because I knew I wanted to create a body of work and I found Tatton overwhelmingly inspirational. So much here; and that was a challenge to bring it back to the kind of things I was interested in and the work that I was creating before the residency. How to carry on that thread, because I'm interested in carrying on that thread. It was the domestic inspiration that drew me to Tatton in the first place and how when you come to visit the Mansion you put yourself in the place; you imagine living there don't you. I think that's what draws a lot of people to stately homes. You want to pretend for a moment that you're a servant or you're a master, you know living in the rooms that was the thread I wanted to pick up, that was the challenge really, otherwise it was an absolute dream coming here.

LP

I touched on it this morning about the contrast of it being a very idealised, very beautiful, well maintained place, and then the reality of in terms of sound, it's actually a very noisy place sandwiched in between all these motorways, underneath the flight path. I had to make various decisions on that. Was that something I completely embrace, create a very noisy sound walk or be selective with that?

So the challenge for me specifically, like coming in to record the dawn chorus, and you'd just have the M6, really noisy, so it was good training. Say you had a robin there, I had to walk around the tree with my directional microphone and find the best angle. It wasn't just there's a robin, there you go, because actually over there, still in the same direction, is the motorway. So it was challenges of physical sound recording outside and inside as well, because even in this room you can hear a boom, an echo to my voice, and the realities of trying to create a good studio situation for recording a narration with Mansion staff here, David Crouch and Bill Coram. I didn't really want it to sound like a big echoey room because suddenly as you say it has its own context, the context was walking outside and that was a challenge for me.

SC

Rob, your involvement with sound was in filming. Did you have any difficulties with the sound?

RV

No because the sound that I put on the films was done afterwards so it's a different context but there's exactly the same issue of the idealised view of this place that I think most people have. It's tranquil and calm and again the reality is probably slightly different. The piece I made has that feel to it of being...there's no people there, there's no cars, there's no aeroplanes, there's no anything and it was a conscious decision to do that because I wanted the piece to be timeless in a sense because Tatton has this strange timelessness to it. Each garden has been built next to another one or on top of and disappeared and it's hard to get a sense of which era in history it's representing. It's quite timeless, so it's a similar thing, siphoning off the bits that I want to represent.

The major challenges for me where all practical and I set myself a fairly impossible task. I worked with my sister and she was very accommodating, but the challenge of making it appear that she was seamlessly transitioning between freezing winter shot to high summer shot and all the problems that go with that from which foot she was stood on six months ago and how dirty the shoes had got in-between, how you line all that up because it wasn't done after the fact, it wasn't digitised in any way, it's real. We just had little sticks on the floor and she was very good at remembering what she was doing and the whole piece follows a curve of dance styles, historic so it starts very early through to the middle part and contemporary and perhaps all the way back again

so you're not filming anything the way you would do if you could because you want this joyous idea of stepping from one place to another seamlessly.

So it was just a massive, massive nightmare of a challenge and to edit afterwards, unless you've got that kind of real feeling, amazing really and as I was chucking her out of the car in minus 12 degrees and saying there, run, go that way and then look beautiful and poised, and she's just...I have some lovely shots of her in three jumpers and size nine wellies over the top of her ballet shoes just looking so undignified stomping around and then to go straight to the setting up and filming you know, those were the challenges for me throughout. Purely practical.

SC

That's the advantage of setting an open brief. If I'd set that as a condition of doing it no-one would have accepted it. You've got the aesthetic and the practical challenges, given that it's a fairly open brief although it's specific to the place, so it's not saying you can do anything you like. It's saying if it's within the brief you can do anything you like. I know you, [Sam and Mark], didn't come to Tatton with an idea of a work, the proposal was very much about process, backed up by your successes before hand so you could turn round and say look, they've done work before, their process does lead to something, they've got a strong idea of how to do it, but you came without any, as you said in your statement, part of it is walking around the park together, drinking cups of tea, having a chat.

SCL

We had all these avenues of interest and we had to narrow it down, lets follow that avenue and see what we could make if we carry on researching that, will it go nowhere or backward, that was the difficulty for us.

SC

And was it also about identifying what was a strong piece of work because you have a process and all the process is in that but you might say it's not very good. How do you get to that point where there's something you want to go with as artists?

MJ

There was definitely a point where we realised we were both interested in one particular place within Tatton Park that we wanted to keep coming back to. Once we'd worked that out between we could then move forward. One of the things we decided we would never do was compete against the sculpture or the sculpted grounds because it's too big, there's no way we could, and that's set alongside of the constraints we have, which is why we ended up making little pieces but it has a presence now in comparison to the grandeur and historicism of the place.

SC

Without going back to the response to Tatton I need to pull it back to any other challenges

RV

An interesting challenge, again in terms of practicalities was, certain of the commissions and residencies wouldn't have been as open to letting me make the work we did because eventually I would be able to turn up at the gates and be let in at the drop of a hat and film because I was trying to capture, as well as different places, there's the variety of seasonal changes.

It's remarkably difficult to show winter particularly in any way that makes it look wintry other than someone freezing to death in a cold, grey environment so that option of being able to get through

the gates and get on to the site at any time helped those challenges and again it's down to the staff here, the rangers etcetera who took us in landrovers again to places we wouldn't go to, picking up on their expertise about which flowers would be out or areas that you just didn't know about, as an observer, trying to feed those into the mix, it really, really helped.

It would have been more challenging without that help and support and that expertise. A lot of the shots came from different people's particular areas of interest. I did a lot of talking to staff and visitors about if there had anywhere in particular that meant something to them or has significance and without the residency it would have been mostly places I liked, and we did film in all sorts of bits that weren't necessarily the most idyllic, the most beautiful, the Italian landscape.

SC

How many of you were familiar with giving talks to a general audience before?

LP

A bit

HJ

A bit

SD

Not much

RV

I have done quite a lot

MJ

It's a bit different at college. You don't have to go into so much detail about where your ideas come from. You make the assumption of an arts audience with the whole of art history. In some cases, you're inadvertently referencing something you learned at art school, although you don't know you're doing it you have an assumption sometimes that an audience has that knowledge and perhaps that's a failing with artists sometimes. I'm sure you've all encountered art that you just don't understand and just can't comprehend why it is art; but you're up against when you face an audience that doesn't have that art background. Yes, that's quite challenging.

SC

How about the workshops?

RV

It's quite challenging to make them relevant because again, with residencies, you often work through a series of workshops to produce a piece of work or a commission, whatever it is. These were not about that really; they were about delivering some work that was in some way linked to your practice that people could get a handle on, and again particularly for me with digital and film it's very difficult, particularly if you've got a large group to engage them in a meaningful way without an awful lot of equipment.

I ended up working with people with mobile phones and making little videos with those working with the idea of a changing environment in the background with a continuous element within it and it seemed to work pretty well. Also because there were less problems with it than Bluetooth and there again it's a good avenue into the kind of work you make because it's like that. A camera fell off the tripod during a shoot and broke and there were all sorts of problems, and again in the ideal workshop is 'we come in, we make something, doesn't it look nice, we've had a good time'. The reality is nothing like that - it's really hard work so you want to get that into the workshops as well, which definitely happened in mine - a real challenge.

SD

I had a group of children with special needs and a lot of them were in wheelchairs. It was absolutely throwing it down when we took them into the garden and the wheelchairs wouldn't work on the gravel. It was just horrendous but we had so much fun walking through that space and it was such a different experience I think mainly because everyone was soaked when they came back into the room but you do have the unforeseen to deal with.

RV

I did some work with one group - I think they were all excluded children. It was the last stop before being turfed out of the education system forever and we went off into the grounds to do the filming with phones, which I gave them, and said right go off and find where you want to film and I'll meet you back here and off they went. And the adults who were with them said they might not come back. We never do this. There was something quite good about coming at it without really knowing anything about the parameters they'd normally work under. And they did all come back eagerly with their pictures to get them all loaded on and there's something nice about giving people that responsibility, you know, I trust you to get engaged in this workshop without being penned in.

LP

I worked with a group with learning disabilities and we made a sound work in their local park. It's great working with a group where you don't have any assumptions or you're not placing any parameters and so we did sound recording with different types of microphones; just took them through the basics but we also did sound editing and the age range of the group was quite varied.

There was an older woman and even the person who was with the group was worried that it would be too technical for her, but the fantastic thing was that everybody had different strengths at different times and all of them had a go at sound editing and some of them were really into it. Some were more into recording but it really opened up experiences for them which was great for me, having this openness, what can you offer this group rather than alright here's a group, this is what we'd like you to do with them. It just went so much further.

Audience question

I was just wondering whether you found it more challenging the less familiar you were with Tatton where people came with an idea in their mind and found it easier to work through their concept or whether you didn't have any pre-conceived ideas if it was easier.

CM

I really didn't know anything about Tatton: I'd never even heard of it, and the concept I came up with in the application was what I thought I wanted to respond to. In the end, the actual work had nothing to do with this, so it wasn't easier or more difficult. It was just the reality was entirely different from what I thought, and my reaction to it was entirely different to what I thought it would so it was a case of needing to know and understand a place a bit at least before you see what you want to do.

But because of the scope of the project there was nobody checking up to say in your proposal you were going to do this, I just threw it away and started again.

SC

Well we did discuss it as Chris came in later and so there was an inevitable gap between his interview, being appointed and actually starting work. I think it's only fair that when the practitioner's own practice has moved on there has to be a certain room for negotiation for things changing; and Chris did explain why he made the changes.

If you'd been appointed straight off, would you have made those changes? Whether something had altered in your own practice, or whether it was the fact that, having applied and given a really strong application, you did your research on the web, and could generally understand the elements and components of Tatton but to get to that level of knowledge it's when you do come to a place when the thing changes again.

The only way around perhaps safeguarding against a radical change was to say to all applicants you must come and visit a place before you put an application in because it then becomes awkward if you're a very long distance away, you may want to come you may not.

HJ

I think it was part of the appeal for me that I'd been to Tatton before, it was a nostalgic thing which fed in to the work, memories of grandparents and parents, childhood memories really which makes the place all the more endearing and perhaps coming back as an adult I see the place quite differently and certainly I got to see a whole lot more of the place but I think that's all part of my work anyway, that kind of nostalgic feeling.

SC

It's an interesting area to think about, whether you could set up a project like this again and not ask applicants for proposals but just look at previous work, assess the skills, where you say "you can see the quality of work I've done but I want to apply to do a piece about Tatton within your project parameters and when you appoint me I'll go around and come up with a proposal" - you can do it either way. The only thing was that Tatton was newish to the arts, and of a project such as this. A previous project, *onetree* had been here, and a lot of that work had been made by the Makers in their own studios.

oneplace was a big ambitious project - not really up in the air as such but not really tangible - it become tangible once people were appointed. Asking for a proposal was a way of gauging how someone was going to approach it. And I'm quite happy if there are changes once people have been appointed because you have to allow for that. If we said to somebody draw us what you're going to make and if we accept you you've got to make it that's another way of approaching it but we weren't really asking for that on this one. Whether you can do it sight unseen: I don't know how radical you want to be.

RV

I think you always have an idea in your head of a place anyway even if you've never seen it, it's a stately home, it has got grounds, and it sparks off something. I visited as a child so I had a sort of idyllic notion of Tatton at Christmas and that changed as soon as I came. Inevitably the idea of being here is that your opinion of the place would alter, it was just a lot bigger than I thought and it had so much more variety and for me that meant that the piece just kept getting bigger: but I did want to get a representation of the variety and again I hadn't gone to a specific idea and work on that.

I also worked on the idea of the whole, and so you have to bite the bullet and say this is going to take four times as long but that's what happens. Doing ninety shots, it's silly if you stopped and thought about it before you begin, that's the thing. As we were saying earlier there's a lot of work in it and sometimes as an artist you get stuck on an idea and you just have to see it through to its natural conclusion.

SC

I agree, otherwise you'd be working on one piece for the rest of your life.

LP

That's the great thing about the residency and the extended period of time, like the seasonality of the land, of Tatton Park as a working enterprise that's visited by the public, events are happening all the time and the good thing about the residency is you're here, you get a sense of that. The staff members have been so open and so supportive in their different capacities that have helped with my work.

Session Three

Topic: The Practitioners' response to Tatton Park and its landscape.

SC

The more substantive area today is the response by the practitioners to Tatton Park and its landscape. Having touched on their work I think we're looking at dialogues where there are similarities and dissimilarities.

HJ

It's a hard question to put into words really what we like to represent in kind. It's quite a challenge sometimes. I suppose I was really drawn to the layers of history at Tatton and also the restrictive barriers that have been put in place for preservation's sake and the fine balance between looking after the heritage and also presenting it. How difficult that is because often you want to hide things away and protect them and in so doing you're not really revealing it to the world, you're protecting and nurturing it.

I linked that into my interest in the home and how you create that nurturing environment to protect your loved ones, your belongings, things that inspire you and in so doing you create these boundaries. I tried to find a visual language to bring that out and also to use the language that's here so a lot of the works I made were textiles and furniture, responding to what I could see here, so crafts came out a lot.

SC

You were looking at the relationship between the Edgerton family who were in the Mansion House and the Mansion House as part of a larger estate. In one of your pieces in you had a tiny little plaster Mansion House and a shaped doily which was the shape of the formal gardens. Another cloth was the estate and the cloth which hangs down to the floor is basically the rest.

HJ

It's the rest of what was opened by the family, the landholding.

SC

And so you chose to view Tatton from its interiors

HJ

Responding to the landscape and bringing it inside and that re-occurred. So for the Archivist's Table I used the marquetry top and brought a view of the mansion onto there. In the kitchen for the plates I was sneaking in a view of the Italianate garden which was only meant for the gentry, and bringing it into the servant's quarters, into the kitchen.

Also while I was here I had a go at making a camera obscura in one of the bedrooms and again I was taking the landscape and internalising it and seeing how that would dance across the furniture. I covered a lot of the furniture with the tailor-made covers that are pulled out over winter and so that was a good backdrop for the landscape to dance over, in real time as well. It wasn't a representation of the landscape it was the landscape that was beaming through a tiny pinhole. I really enjoyed that.

SC

Those covers are very sculptural aren't they and you brought one of those into the workshops.

HJ

That's right, yes. Because they were tailor-made there's something about the creativity involved in something so mundane and they were hiding all these beautifully crafted chairs and upholstered couches and all sorts and so you couldn't appreciate these beautiful objects because they were hidden from view. In the workshop I encouraged people to make their own covers for things they hold dear to themselves and imagine their precious objects and make covers for them.

SC

I remember when you applied and you had a piece - it wasn't a sleeping bag but it was that kind of shape with a cot that looked like a sarcophagus, it was quite chilling really.

HJ

It was using materials I see around me in the domestic environment and thinking about why we create these homes for ourselves.

SC

And it did extend your practice didn't it.

HJ

Yes, definitely.

SC

I'll throw that open to everybody else. You applied, put a proposal forward, then within that proposal you start thinking about the work itself. Did you think your work was extended in the way that it wouldn't have been otherwise had you been just working in your studio.

SD

We respond to a site, so if I'm responding to my studio or something else...

SC

But you changed your work didn't you - in your original proposal you were building some small paper sculptures.

SD

Yes because I guess it was a pretty long time between putting together a proposal to starting work, I'd actually changed my practice quite significantly in that time so when I came back to this place I was in a completely different frame than I had been prior to that. I was interested in the magic, mystic within the gardens and the kind of other-ness they have. The Japanese Garden how it was fenced off was very ornamental and how it had a trompe l'oeil to scale, and there was quite a lot of folly in it, so I was interested in that space but I'd always been interested in that space.

SC

Your proposal was specific to the Japanese Garden.

SD

That was because it had some relationship to my practice to me because it was quite domestic in scale. The trees there aren't huge, they're dwarfed, kind of crooked little things, and I quite like that quirkiness about it.

RV

The whole place is interesting because there's a kind of theatre to it as a place; they're like little sets almost. The house is as well. There's that national crustification which happens when there's a frozen moment. You can't go to Hampton Court and not be Tudor even though it's still sitting there now. Tatton has elements of that in it; slightly less in that it has many different aspects and areas, and the house is slightly different in that it's set in a different time period.

It's interesting that work can pick up on that oddity of that illusion of tranquillity and beauty in a way. The grounds almost revel in that. It's calm and idyllic and there's something really warm and...it draws you in from that point of view and aeroplanes were flying overhead and there were people with hiking boots in the background - it's not quite the same, but that's the reality. It romanticises you as a place, and you respond to that by slightly railing against it.

Your piece [Sam and Mark] specifically says there are aeroplanes flying overhead and brought it down to a different kind of level whereas my work revelled in and glorified that aspect because that's the nature of what film does. It gives you a box that big, and it doesn't matter what happens outside of that frame. That's why I can have all that stuff that you see around the edges which makes it work when you walk in but Tatton itself does that all the time.

There's a garden and you go up to it and you can't go in, you just look from the outside apart from the odd tour, and the rooms are the same. They all have doors that you don't go through and there's a room somewhere that's just full of chairs of all varieties. It's the weirdest of things, it's like, where you go for your chair set stuff, and they're all stacked on top of each other in ridiculous ways. It's all there hidden away. There's something really interesting about that and we idealise these kind of environments and these kind of surroundings and we think that's how it is and that's how it was, and it's just not the case, at all ...

LP

That all links in with the notion of the landscaped park. It's very big, it's a constructed landscape that historically obscured and eradicated any presence of people other than the people who owned it, and I think that's still very relevant today even though it is a landscaped park, there is something ...it's almost an example of how land is perceived today - is it a leisure zone, is it a work to be managed space and that's something I touched on with my research and something I'm very interested in from a personal perspective.

My wider family are all farmers but a lot of them are now selling up. My parents were farmers, (daughter and son) but don't farm themselves. So I've got that kind of personal history and listening to you talking about visiting Tatton as children there's that notion of land and of countryside and now I live in Glasgow which is a big city, I think yes its interesting and how much of the...where does the stage set end? I'm just noticing there's a great sky here; the way they've planted the trees here all around boundary wood so you don't see any ugly bits really, it's amazing.

Coming here as a practitioner and being given the opportunity to explore that at length, or in certain degrees in your own work, is not only rewarding on a personal scale but things become important because it creates this kind of commentary on culture, you know, in a quite specifically cultural place in the UK, the landscaped park.

MJ

It's interesting, what you were talking about earlier, the privilege of this residency, you get to go through those closed doors, and view chairs and things, part of our work was laid out monuments along the avenue opposite the Choragic Monument and at dusk waiting for it to go completely dark, that was the most magical I'd ever seen Tatton Park because you weren't completely overcome by aeroplanes and public visiting and people whizzing about in tractors and the general noise of machines.

RV

I had the same, at odd times, it just becomes somewhere else when the gaze is off it - everything calms down a little bit. The deer come out and they get on and do what they want to do. There is that theatre to it completely and you look at the whole sense of how we engage with places like this. You follow a tour and it goes round like this (general exchange) the park has these parameters everywhere, and what we had to do was literally get over those borders and say well I'm actually going to go in the Japanese Garden and she is going to dance over the bridge even though you can't walk over it a lot of the time.

I remember being really nervous about doing that, she said are you sure it'll take my weight? Well, at some point it must have been made to walk over unless it's completely a charade. Then you go out with the rangers into the, I can't remember what they call it, the uncared for bit, the let it do what it wants, and it has a beauty all of its own. They manage it slightly but it's left to be full of weeds and all this sort of thing, it's a different type of park, completely. It's interesting trying to tie that in to the other areas because they lend themselves more easily to setting up a shop and being repositioned to look great from the air, but these areas aren't and I was continuing the artifice if you like.

SC

There is that whole thing of the natural and the unnatural, the artificial. I live in Scotland and often when we're walking we disturb deer and they're there just because they're there, and then I come here after that proximity to deer in the wild and the deer here and they're the same except there's a different feel to the relationship because you know they're domesticated which is why they stand still rather than running away.

Actually none of your work is large size, it's big in scale but you all take on the size of Tatton geographically. We never said you couldn't build something big if you want to, but you've all made works that are really quite small.

SCL

But we made quite a lot of them.

SC

Was there something about Tatton that you weren't trying to challenge its size, you were looking at its qualities and attributes?

CM

In terms of the way I approached it, What struck me initially was that it was a very artificial framed picture, not in a bad way, but it is entirely contrived and it struck me as a really interesting frame for nature and the piece I ended up writing almost could have been almost anywhere except for that framework.

The things that really interested me when I got here were the basic natural occurrences, you know, light passing overhead, filtering through trees and this really rapid change of weather and things like that. There's nothing specific about that, those elements of Tatton Park, it was just the artificial framework that really governed how I put the works together.

I've always had an interest in musical amateurism and like having the tools for the task in hand, and one of the things I wanted to do in this piece, a quite visual attempt to express these elements almost with the wrong tools for the job. It's difficult to come up with any direct analogies between what you've seen and what you've done but somewhere in my brain that was the connection.

HJ

I think one of the things that influenced me was the idea that how can I add something to something that's already so full? So that making something that was very large would have been over-egging it almost so I wanted something sympathetic to the space and that reflected a lot of the sensibilities of the space because I've added to it quite considerably in respect of the location.

RV

Something that I wanted to do, in a very literal way ...defining those areas visually and juxtapose them. When you walk around Tatton you are in a particular zone in a particular time and it's all really quite segmented off and in a way one wants to sort of get that experience we have of being able to move seamlessly through those zones because it came out of that notion of what that means, **oneplace** is a collection of many places and trying to do something with that notion of what would happen if the boundaries were disappearing, you could just literally flit through time and space in the way that she does, what feeling does that give you?

I tend to look at the piece and it gives you the sense of freedom to it, of what she's doing and the timelessness, like the girl in the red shoes. Getting those elements in was key for me and to play with those restrictions and how many stems to the restrictions like preservation and order and control.

LP

I was just thinking about your question about not making another monument to add to the collection of monuments to heritage and other things, and I suppose my work as a walk out in the park, there are already existing walks and if you want to, you could spend days here and every day you would walk around the park and see something new. So in a way I suppose part of what my and other people's practice is about is kind of extracting things, presenting small sections back that are mixed up in some way. Also the context itself dictates the output, and doing a sound walk, the pace is quite leisurely.

I had considered doing it in the gardens and there you got one stage set and then you go to the next, and it's a completely different garden which could have been really interesting for a sound walk but it would have been much more intense. So I thought I'd make work in the parkland and I was keen to have it accessible to people. That's one of the reasons why I chose the park and not the gardens, especially for local people to walk in the park. But in terms of the length of it for me, it was a major work outside of Glasgow, and a major work in terms of its length. It's about forty two minutes long.

Previous walks I've done, the longest have been about fifteen minutes, so a very different kind of size. It was almost tailored to the size of the place it was in, so it was in the parkland which opens out. There are places where it looks different from different vantage points, but it has that kind of openness and flow to it that in a way demanded a walk but not the definitive walk. If you were to do the walk without listening to the sound I don't know if it would be a twenty five minute walk but I made it slower because there's something I find very interesting about walking and listening, a bit like reading a book.

I guess there's something about turning each page, taking each step, and the parkland here is quite special, very special; it's a quite privileged experience but I think it's interesting about not wanting to make any more monuments to a monument in a way - a sort of anti-monumentality of scale that's touched all of our responses here which I think is quite telling, in there's very much an awareness now whereas when this house was remodelled and built and the different temples put in, there wasn't that kind of self-consciousness and cultural consciousness there is now.

RV

It's interesting, what you were saying about that piece slowing down. My piece certainly has that slower pace to it. It's not frenetic in any way, and I think a lot of us picked up on that - the duration - and there is a sense of pace here.

It was quite hard to stick with that in a way, particularly when you're filming to make yourself say she's only going to be in the shot for maybe twenty seconds because she's on a particular pace but it takes twenty minutes to set up and she just goes whoof okay we're done, that's good. You almost want to stick with it a bit longer and get more out of it but there is something about working here that does dictate a little bit on scale, on pace, on those sort of grounds it's hard to pin down. It would be very hard to make a loud raucous neon glowing type piece here I think.

SC

It is possible.

RV

It's possible, if you were raging against or juxtaposing.

SC

Wilful defiance, see what happens.

RV

I don't know if anyone did that. Potentially yours (Sam and Mark) did slightly rail against that kind of monumental aspect.

SC

There is an element of time in everyone's work though isn't there, yours [Sam & Mar]) required the time to go from light to dark, Helen in terms of your camera obscura.

RV

And even the materials you used and the processes were slow paced, they didn't produce results quickly at all, it was hard work, you know, arbitrary and all that, there is that aspect to it that everything needs to be carefully and slowly managed, having things growing for months on end and the time is long here.

SC

Going back to that notion of larger scale - it's just speculative, but do you feel there's a place for that anymore in the landscape, where you deliberately place pieces that were not of the place? A bit like, I suppose, an American sculpture park.

LP

I'm just thinking about when we were driving out last night and there were a couple of skips that were filled with....I think they were mending the fence or something, they were cutting down all the rhododendrons and they were massive, these skips, but where they are in the parkland they're just the right size to look like someone's been doing some gardening and they're like a gardening basket. I think the scale is appropriate to its context and so I agree that the Morrison's work by the lake is a very successful work because it's sited and it works on that scale.

I don't know if it's related to size – it's more intention and I think the intention of the monument is something that people are, well not necessarily wary of, but it's a monument to something which is one representation of, say a historical event, and in this day and age it's admitted that there's always more than one point of view. It's not necessarily Rule Britannia anymore because we live in a society that, for many good reasons, is multi-cultural so the idea of a monument being able to encapsulate and represent a group of people's intentions is kind of not so current.

SCL

The genesis of this project was Andy building something monumental possibly to be seen from the air.

RV

But even at that large scale I don't think would have been visible from above. It's almost invisible when you're stood on it. There are different reasons, but we all came to this with that initial idea of making something in reaction to the environment and if your reaction to the environment is to ignore it and kick it about and stick something that's got nothing to do with it in it, it's a valid way of doing it

but when it's getting to a place and reacting to it you'd have to do an awful lot of work to push yourself back to that sort of work.

SC

I don't think the project was written in such a way that it was going to specifically discourage, it wasn't necessarily encouraging, it was more of a- we'd like your emotional and intellectual responses to this place.

RV

And there's a degree of respect. We hadn't necessarily done something like this before and so there was a bit of an onus on you as an artist to at least engage people in the process of what you're doing, you're not just coming to trample all over their flowerbeds.

LP

I think that's interesting - that links into, we were talking about the place but an important aspect for me was very much the people. People make a place and this place is interesting because there are different types of people in it. People who work here and help manage it and help people who visit. Talking about in terms of what was a challenge and we agreed in varying degrees that the support from the people who work here has been fantastic and it's been very important for me to work with different people.

Because I was out in the parkland the rangers were really fantastic in taking me round different places and taking me birdwatching and things like that. As a sound recordist I don't necessarily know all the bird calls and it's interesting because coming into a place isn't just about geography – it's about people, which makes it into history anyway, I mean history is only of concern to people. You know, the trees carry on growing.

RV

When you wanted to represent the park visually in a way as a series of environments next to each other there was definitely that idea of going up to people and saying where do you know in this park, which particular place is of interest to you. There were various stories which would come out attached to various areas, particularly when you talked to people who know the place really well.

You almost get that sense of saying, don't just get stuck in the formal garden, percentage wise as in your work [Helen] the percentage of the total is quite small and there's a depth to them . I was very concerned with getting out into the bigger picture and getting that into the piece. Not as a tribute, but as a representation of what goes on here and the people who inhabit it. The majority of people who come to Tatton will not come into the house, they're just travelling through the grounds and walking every Saturday or whatever and it's trying to capture some of that.

SD

One of the reasons I chose the Japanese gardens to work in was because the actual landscape scared me in some ways just because it was so big and that means that anything I did in there would just look ridiculously pathetic so I wanted something that I felt was manageable.

RV

I liked that too, it was such a draw, such an oddity. I was desperate to do get in there and do something, brilliant, so it was definitely going to be in there, there was no way I was going to leave it out because there would be the whole thing of people would say where's the Japanese Garden?

SC

You [Rob] could have just stayed in the Japanese Garden but you didn't and that was an important decision to take when you mapped the park.

RV

It was the variety. I wanted to do that thing of people who really know it look at a shot and think I don't know where that is, and wanting to know and to get back out. It's that representation of somewhere you think you know, like with your sound walk if you walk it with this in your head it's different again.

LP

I like when you were talking about mapping because mapping a place for me is as much about the stories as the people who may know a place have or the experiences they may have had, a particular something. The process that I went through had a lot of different parts to it, not only outdoor field recordings and going on visits with the rangers and all of that outdoor work all the contextual archival work, but pulling it together I wrote a script, just a starting point because you can't say to people, look I'd really like you to help me with my script, 'well what do you want me to say?'

So I started with a script that was informed by different stories that people had told me here and also the knowledge of David Crouch [Mansion tour guide] who helped me with the majority of the narration. He knew a lot more than I did. I'm an artist, I've come here, I've done a bit of research about the place, I'm here for a few months in comparison to people who've been here for years and have that wealth of understanding and knowledge. So talking about mapping a place and how that is not necessarily a...I mean I did make a map and it is a map, but for me it's not just some kind of linear representation of a place. To me it's as much about engaging with the people in it and using that, being in some kind of way a facilitator or channelling this massive amount of knowledge and experience and presenting it back in my work.

Audience question

You've all been very complimentary about members of staff you've come into contact with while you've been working here. Considering you've worked with people like the rangers and you might just have been very lucky to come into contact with some rangers who understood what you were about but most people seem to be most sympathetic to your work projects and talked to you very well. That's very rewarding to know actually isn't it that you've had such a good reception while you've been here.

RV

I think there was a mutual sense of we don't particularly know each others fields but we're interested in what each other does.

Audience question

And you can accommodate can't you - everybody else's point of view and every body else's specific interests

RV

Yes, definitely. In my experience it wasn't "some arty farty chap who's going to come and wander about with a camera and not do any real work", there definitely wasn't any of that.

HJ

Well no-one said it to your face anyway.

RV

But I think it was because I was interested in what they were interested in. If I was going at it like, I don't care about you tending your trees I just want to know this and this, then you get a degree of abrasiveness back obviously, I mean you come to somebody and you say okay you know this place, where would you want me to see? Hopefully people who work here are going to spark and go actually now you askand maybe they've never been asked from that point of view because they have to go and do the bits that they have to go and do and so it's good to give that opportunity both ways.

SC

I suppose when somebody new comes into the area that you operate in whether it's working in Tatton Park or as an artist and start asking your view about it, it freshens it up doesn't it because you're looking at it to a certain extent through their eyes. It's an important relationship really. Yes, you could have come in and said I don't need to talk to anybody, I can see what I want, and certainly some of you needed that connection and out of your interest people get interested if they're reasonable about human relations. There's a lot in this project about human scale and the human relationship with the place which is important.

RV

I had quite a lot of interest. I think you always do when you're stood there with a camera but there's almost too much respect for the camera. You get a lot of TV companies and thingsthe TV company has arrived and they all do exactly what they need because it's TV. I don't quite know why it exists but it does. You know people are attracted and they walk past the camera and you think you're here to have a walk and you've walked right through my shot, but there's definitely that interest. What are you doing with this, when you're working outdoors?

So people got a different experience of the process by watching us make it and they saw the reality of being out there. It all being quite candid and not looking very pretty most of the time so it's a shame in a way that you can't document that, have another camera behind you covering that, it's as much an interesting area as the piece itself.

Session Four

*Topic: How Arts Practitioner's developed and changed and any career impacts from **oneplace***

SC

This is the last session which is about the practicalities. When we set up **oneplace** one of the questions we asked of Practitioners who filled out a project report, is let us know how the project helps you with your career development.

It has been touched on to a certain extent, how did your work develop or change because of **oneplace** and have there been any career impacts. I know we've touched on some of it but we can bring it back in at the risk of repeating earlier points.

HJ

I got so absorbed into making the Archivist's Table, I really enjoyed making that, so I made a table from scratch and starting to home-craft and as my practice has gone along I've picked up things, I've learned new crafts. It's not that I'm stuck on one thing to get really good at it, I've become a jack of all trades and I think that's in contrast to the previous view of artists that they become an artisan or an expert in their field and so I enjoyed being able to dip my toe in all sorts of different things.

Having said that I've really taken to the woodwork I did for this project and I would like to pursue that and have a studio. I've got a bursary to go to the college of art and design and I was creating a piece of work there and getting help with that and using their workshop, so I'd really like to follow that through and see where it takes me really. It's quite nice to have that freedom to be able to absorb a craft. I'm not sure I would have had those circumstances to do such a thingI don't want to give up all the things that add on ...

SC

You also talked about gaining experience in terms of making presentations and talks and professional development.

HJ

Very much so - and gaining confidence that no amount of training at University can teach you how to respond to an audience or talk to an audience. It has always been something quite difficult to me to vocalise thought processes behind art works, it's quite against the grain really because you're creating something to put forward to an audience so putting it into words is all good practice. It becomes an inevitable part of the process.

SC

I'll open this to everybody. Presuming that you had applied for other projects, if you were just finishing **oneplace** now, and you want to put two or three paragraphs in saying this is what I got from the project that I could bring to you, which you didn't necessarily have in the same quantity when you started, what kind of things would that be? How do you show what you've gained from this project that would be good for your next client?

RV

It gives you a new piece of work to show. In one way and another you need to make work to make more work because people judge you on past work. What it gave me personally was a fully formed piece that stands up to scrutiny and particularly using dance in a filmic art work because I've done bits of that.

I was interested in doing it mostly because family was involved in those areas and it gave me the chance to work with Alice [The dancer and Rob's sister] particularly over a long period of time to develop dance and film and also, what do you do with landscape? How do you just do landscape as filmic work. So for me that's what it does, it gives you the opportunity to develop something, take that and look back over it and say, in a way, I've done this. And so there's a direct link to ideas.

SC

I was hoping that would be one of the outcomes because you're all emerging. What moves you further on, what makes you more employable, what makes you not just a better artist but what increases the opportunities for you.

RV

I did a piece the year after this which came directly from them seeing this piece and really liking this idea of using many landscapes and a collage of different screens. There's an eight screen piece in Withington, in the Genesis Breastcare Centre in Manchester in their waiting areas. It's like this piece without the dance really. It's really odd, but essentially it uses a whole load of different places across the whole of the North West which I filmed over a full year to get my Autumn in and all those shots represent places that have a particular significance to patients and staff so I had to bomb around the place looking for these locations that they were talking about and filming them.

Sometimes there's a direct link between someone saying I like that kind of work and I want something similar and then there's producing a multi-screen piece and there have been a lot of multi-screen art works now, and it's about managing your time and managing a project of that size and being able to show that you can deliver.

SC

Well you've all been successful at producing tangibles and that's presumably something you can take along to your next potential residency or commission, and you can apply what you've learned here into new situations both with the body of work and in terms of your skills which, as Helen was saying she found it really hard to articulate.

HJ

I feel, looking at the artists here, I don't think they're emerging anymore. I still feel like an emerging artist and perhaps everyone else does too, but we have a professionalism now which we didn't have at the beginning of the project when they put themselves forward as emerging artists.

SC

You applied in 2005 and we're now three years beyond that.

RV

It's a long time

SC

I don't know how many years since you finished training.

LP

So am I the only person who was a later addition?

SC

Yes because all the other Practitioners were selected from the initial first round of interviews.

MJ

I think with me and Sam it was slightly different because we worked together professionally collaborating on other people's art so this gave us the opportunity to stop and wander round and drink tea have some of our own ideas and create work.

SCL

Because we don't have a studio we only make work in residencies which is why we come with no practice as such and this gave us the opportunity - as you said it gave us something in hand for when people ask us what have we done.

SC

Of course you have the work at Yorkshire Sculpture Park and you've worked here, so that's two large works. I feel a grant coming on...

RV

That happens though, all artists end up either railing against or embracing the grant when you start developing an idea or a theme and you get known for it. You apply for a grant and think "I'd like lots of screens and dancers"...but yes, every time you do something like this it gives you the potential to do more. It's the only difference between emerging and established - established just means you've emerged for a while.

SC

Well, what do we mean by emerging? I've just always thought it's a time period from when you graduate, the first two years from when you leave college, if you're still making work after then you're much more likely to be working the rest of your life unless you have a severe change of direction. But as you said earlier, if you're constantly pitching against people who have five or ten years of experience and a lot of those jobs want a definite tangible result at the end of it and you're still at the experimental stage you're less likely to get the work than somebody who can say actually I've done this. Now you have all done it, and it moves you up quite rapidly I would have thought, being able to show finished work.

LP

This was my first major work outside Glasgow. I've done shows and exhibitions all over the city but all small things. But to be invited to come and spend an extended period of time and build up that body of research and work has just been fantastic. Previous to that I'd actually done sound walks inside houses and very much a domestic kind of thing; and also Victorian because Glasgow is a Victorian city, and so here, it's not really about the Victorian, it's about the eighteenth century landscape parkland, and field recording which is such a thing in itself.

I came here with just very basic kit that I've been used to using, because you tailor how you do it to your means, and I then had the means to update my equipment. In terms of a learning curve of technical skill for me it's just been fantastic, absolutely fantastic, quite scary at times, but now, as you say, I've produced the, for me, first major work, it's great. I feel a lot more confident having given a talk to people and this discussion today is very important. I think you're right that there is that thing about when you're making something whether it's creative and professional or whether it's something you do as a hobby.

You're immersed in that process and that's the value of that process in a way: but if you want to engage other people in that - that's also important you know, we're social creatures - then you have to have some ability to a degree to stand back and not assess, but articulate, the process - not just to other people but to yourself and that's really valuable. Otherwise you go through your residency process which is great, but if you haven't had that kind of standing back and analysing different parts of it then it's a kind of amorphous experience.

SC

I think that's what asking everybody to write a short report at the end is about. You actually have to think about it and write down - this is what I was trying to do - this is what I did. These are the strong points. These are the weaknesses - things to improve. It was a mini critique.

LP

But that's two skills as well because it's one thing talking to people and it's another thing about writing, especially in terms of being called upon in a creative capacity. You have to be adequate and so it's been good for that.

RV

I think that when carrying out a project and budgeting and all the time that's involved, artists notoriously undersell the amount of time they put into their projects. It's very hard to get round because people allocate certain financial amounts to certain things but when you look at the kind of pieces some of us were making and the time involved, even though this was a well funded project and the days were quite well allocated compared to some other projects you still dramatically run over, particularly the edit phase which I knew would happen given projects before the Tatton one, but this was extraordinary, how much time was involved. But then for future projects you can at least try and be more realistic.

SC

To be more specific - if someone came along and said I really like that film, I want you to make one for us, you'd know more accurately how much time it would take based on real experience. There's an element of research and development there and quantification. I do it in my consultancy, the number of times I think that took a lot more time than I thought, because we're not dealing in blocks, squares and cubes, we're dealing in process, and process always takes longer than you think. I would hope that this project would have at least reasonably well funded you to do that.

RV

And it was up to us how many days we took. It was up to us to decide if we were going to be business like and work out precisely how many days to take or if we said "actually I just want to make this piece, I'm inspired to do it, and that's that", and if it's a difficult place to work well you just want to get this done. In my case as well, working with Alice, I was paying her as well, but it's complimentary when it's your sister.

The amount of time and effort she put in to being with us day to day and on call, again, realistically, it would be hard to do that if you were working with a dancer in a more professional capacity. It gives you that kind of idea that if I was doing this without it being my sister, realistically you're two artists on one project and you'd need a more structured contract.

LP

Yes, I think you're right. The openness about this project and the fact that it was sufficiently well funded meant that it was very much left up to us practitioners as to how much work we put in. It was such a fantastic opportunity for me that I just allocated a good chunk of my time towards it and I have a much better idea now if I was going to do a similar length of work and the facilities required. But you get an opportunity and you've just got to go with it.

SC

There are some very positive outcomes - extensive pieces of work at a reasonable level of fee, financial support, and time to develop your work and also you know how long it has really taken. So when you get into other bids you will know if you are bidding for the same quantity of work and the fee won't cover all of it, but you will know it won't cover all of it and that's your choice. Or you can indicate you get something that's perhaps half the size of that because you know now more accurately what you can produce. It sounds commercial; but actually you all have to still make a living off your work.

Audience question

Do you see art as finding a trademark or a sort of niche anymore or, from what you've done can you see yourself developing in a certain sort of way in the arts?

LP

Both, because you get involved in a process in responding to a place and at a certain point in my research I have to make a decision with what I'm going with otherwise it's just a diaspora of "this is interesting and that's interesting", that ultimately, for me anyway, I have to take it somewhere. I work a lot with sound but not exclusively so. It's interesting how, for the practitioners who were accepted to the project that there was a time lapse between their initial proposals and when they were actually here at Tatton and producing related but different work. I think that's to do with your practice and its development over time.

Landscape is something that I'm very interested in and that kind of contrast between countryside, nature, and what that means in our western society. On the one hand it's very useful commercially if you have some kind of differentiation because people can go "oh you're the such and such person", but in an ideal world you get to do stuff that you feel passionate about.

Audience question

Having worked here do you think you all want to be doing something in an environment that's totally different to test your skills that you've learned here or are you tempted to be led further into this sort of environment?

RV

I certainly don't have that luxury of choosing; "well now I want to go and work in that environment". You can work towards that and try to open up ways of doing that but it takes an awful lot of work and what's more likely is you'll see a particular opportunity or you'll see a residency and you'll think "yes I can do something similar" or there are aspects of this that fit that. That's where it comes from and I don't think we aim for a house style or a brand but there are bits that interest you that keep coming up from the smallest things from ages ago. I made some pieces which didn't have the screen the right way up, it was a tiny little thing, you've got a portrait on a landscape shot instead of a landscape on a portrait and that stuck for ages.

I spent all my time with the camera on the side and it went fizzling off into turning it every which way in order to get away from that screeny feel. So there's little things like that happen but in terms of, yes I want to go and work in lots of stately homes now, well not necessarily but I'd really like to go and work in another one, I think it'd be really interesting.

I'm doing a piece on council estates and projected on a crescent in the middle of town and it's very sequenced. It has real comparisons because instead of five it's a hundred, but a hundred individual

shots that all link together that you see at the same time so it's that same idea of images that flow, so you're taking that aspect but in this instance working with loads and loads of different people.

It has a totally different feel it would be a much more loud and brash piece I suppose but it has resonance I think, and it's just the process I suppose, you're plodding on, taking bits out and trying to fuse them together. You're right; it is things like the technology, the equipment you've got that massively impacts on what you do. It was the same with your piece, you started talking about that idea of 'I'll just do it with one person playing' and you got to the end and thought, no it's got to be more.

Audience question

It must be hugely difficult to keep up with that sort of thing with all the developments that are going on, the boundaries that you come across and all the rest of it.

RV

Well, it's back to the business aspect a bit, if you're running a business and you need machinery to make whatever it was you were making, you've got no choice but to go out and get it, and one way or another it should end up paying for itself. It's no different in an arts practice or it shouldn't be.

LP

Unless that's your thing – a lot of practitioners work with outdated equipment for certain reasons.

RV

Yes, absolutely! I worked for ages with little pinhole cameras because they were about thirty pounds, I just went off with them for ages and ages. I never used any colour, I hadn't used colour for ages, again because I like the parameters of what can I do in this particular area and you just move through, so I wasn't desperate to stick with the biggest and the best.

SC

Thank you. Having devised the project it's very clear to me that it has worked very well for you as practitioners and your work has worked very well for Tatton Park and **oneplace** as a project and an environment. A lot of people seem to have engaged with it and for me that's great. Five years down the line and we've had a success. I'd like to thank the audience for coming along and asking some really good questions, and I'd like to extend a special thanks to all the residency practitioners for all their hard work which is very much appreciated.