

KB: How do you feel about the process of the talk and how could it be improved?

BS: Often when we are talking we invite others to chip in as we go along and then move away from a structured talk but the more we can make it into a general discussion the better.

AJC: Yes, the formula is such that it doesn't really work when people speak from the audience.

BS: The size of the lecture theatre does make it much harder to open up a discussion. I think it's part of feedback again – it would be nice to know how you're doing as you go along and also what areas to take it into. You try to cover background, but maybe one part of the audience is more interested in how you make a living as an artist and you could explore that. Or how you get a show, how you start a career of exhibitions and then you can refer to the particular organisations. This is where I would find feedback quite useful.

PD: It felt more like giving a performance today. Given the

size of the venue as well – we have done artists' talks before but this was big scale! I have never seen our work that big before on screen. We were saying while we were playing our video at the start that it was great hearing it that loud and seeing it so big on screen. I don't know how you improve – that's the thing we talk about in our work: the way you do something and then you think about the ways you could improve it but then you don't do it again, do you know what I mean? It's never quite the same; it's always in a different context. So if we think about things we could improve from this talk for the next talk, well, it may be a different audience, a different way of working or context, a different setup.

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## Transmission *P r o v o c a t i o n*

**Guest:** Juneau Projects

**Host:** Alison J. Carr

**Interviewer:** Keith Barley

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KB: In your capacity as both host and guests, how much were you challenged tonight by the preparation of the talk?

BS: We do regular talks about our work ... so it was pretty easy for us to talk about it generally. But I think under the umbrella of provocation, I suppose it is more a matter of talking about different meanings of the work we have made.

PD: Yes, that's the challenge for us in a way, thinking about both how our work has changed and its relation to a theme. I suppose there is the pressure of whether you tailor the talk to that theme

or whether the relation to the theme is implied in terms of the work we talk about. It becomes a chance for us to think as we're speaking, to consider how that theme relates to our work, to examine how our work is progressing and where are we going with it. It is quite a gentle process but equally that can be a form of provocation; it doesn't necessarily need to be in your face.

KB: How was that for you, Allie, as you were sitting to the side? Did you get a sense of a challenge or something unexpected while you sat there?

AJC: I have known Ben and Phil's work for some time, but the works I know them for they didn't show, so it was new to me. It was a really nice selection they chose. I think all the work they showed was work with which I was unfamiliar. I knew that I was interested in interrogating them how they thought about humour. My opening question was about using humour and participation – I am curious about how they work with people who are not from a knowing art world. How do they not become the butt of a joke?

BS: It's interesting that you talk about humour in that sense because this is something we have come across before. I don't think we are even intentionally being that humorous and it is like it almost comes out of something much more gentle.

PD: I would say – for both of us – that we haven't made our separate work explicitly for quite a long time. I think our ways of working are a lot more serious than they may seem at first. If they have humour then they are also a lot more tragic. In the end it does come down to more of a sense of fun and enjoying working together. A lot of the way we communicate to each other is by making each other laugh. It's good if you can tell a joke or a story and get the other person to laugh – that's a good thing. I think that extends into the work. I do know what you mean about working with people and we have had to think hard whether we are exploiting people. Particularly when they are young people or children, we feel there is a real danger of exploiting the people who have

done the work for us – or that we may be accused of that. One of the things that we have considered is that of the legacy of a project, its continuation. For instance, we might have previously worked in a particular community, done the work there and then disappeared. In this situation, what legacy did we leave. We have always tried to make the music side of things especially interesting for the kids. We also make it not for profit, so when we have made a CD with the kids it's given away free. Or if it is sold, the money goes back into the community after covering the costs of production.

PD: We also have tried to say that collaboration is a two-way street, so as much as it's our work it's also a song they have written. So if they wanted to go away and go on Top of the Pops that's fine – they wouldn't need our permission.

[KB: I am interested in how you feel about being interviewed directly after a long talk when you might really want to go home?](#)

BS: It's fine! Actually it's probably better than before a talk because we are more warmed up.

PD: We haven't done this sort of interview before if I'm honest. I think it's nice to do it really. Quite often you do a talk and you just go off afterwards. It's interesting because it connects with the idea of legacy we were talking about. Mostly you don't return to where you've been and therefore you have no idea if a talk has had any affect or impact. The only time we have been able to think about that a bit more is when we had two fellowships one after another. Then you do have to talk about your previous years work at the start of the following year.

[KB: I am interested in something you touched on earlier and that is what happens on stage? Do you ever get a chance to stop and reflect?](#)

BS: We do get some time to generally discuss our work. Because we have been working for a period of time

everything comes out of something that has happened before, or a conversation or an idea. We don't really talk about those kinds of ideas behind the work much. So it's nice doing this. When we do a talk, afterwards our assessment of it is usually, 'Did that go OK, Phil?' – 'Yeah, it was OK', and that's pretty much it.

[KB: I wanted to ask you about process – do you feel that revealing process is something you're happy to do?](#)

BS: Yes, we are completely happy to do that. I think that's something that enters a great deal into our work. We touched on it a little in our talk but the processes we use in our work aren't necessarily the things we are interested in – we are interested in the results. So in a way we are happy to put those processes on display. The process itself isn't the main point of interest – it is just taking us to a point which is part of the work but isn't the defining thing. So there is no problem making the process explicit but at the same time it's not the overriding thing.