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When Co-Creation meets Art for Social Change: The Street Beats Band

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Introduction

The concept of Co-Creation has been interpreted in this volume from a variety of perspectives: approaches from the Global North and Global South, from the perspective of scholars working with artists and NGOs on co-creative projects, as well as from the angle of non-profit organisations, instigating projects that bring together artists and communities to co-create knowledge and new understandings in marginalised neighbourhoods. This present chapter draws on work by the author on the interface between two conceptual frames: the notion of Co-Creation (Carpenter and Horvath, 2018) and its intersection with the 'Art for Social Change' movement (Marcuse and Marcuse, 2011), exploring the role that creative arts collaborations can have in knowledge creation to effectuate social change.

The use of the term Co-Creation in this chapter aligns with that set out in the Introduction to this volume, that is, the collaboration of a constellation of different actors (artists, local residents, researchers, community groups and other stakeholders) in cultural production, to address societal challenges such as marginalisation and stigmatisation (see Pahl et al, 2017 for a discussion of academic-artist collaborations). However, as the chapter will illustrate, the boundaries between these different actors are fluid, given that the notion of Co-Creation challenges the rigid binaries between 'academic' and 'non-academic' participants, and the boundaries between professional and non-professional artists. Wrapped up with this fluidity of roles are the way in which the balance of power plays out and shifts between different participants in a Co-Creation project.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that while the methodology of Co-Creation holds critical potential as a tool to challenge stereotypes and marginalisation, it nevertheless operates within the structural constraints of deeply embedded power hierarchies and hegemonic discourses that dominate received narratives. Drawing on the example of a Co-Creative project, the Street Beats Band (SBB), a community-based percussion band in Vancouver, Canada, the chapter argues that while such projects have potential to build community, empower participants and effectuate change in daily lives, it cautions against framing Co-Creation as a catch-all panacea for social exclusion and marginalisation, given the differentials of power that thread through urban society, related to class, gender, race and post-colonialism.

Conceptual frames: Co-Creation and Art for Social Change

As other chapters have demonstrated, there are a number of different interpretations of the notion of Co-Creation, as understood in the context of this volume. Chapter 1 draws up a general definition

of the concept, which involves the Co-Creation of knowledge and understanding around marginalisation, through the collaboration of residents, artists, researchers and urban stakeholders in creative arts practice. One of the key components is the disruption of existing hierarchies of knowledge production and social power, bringing together alternative perspectives through collaborative creative practice in order to interrupt traditional thinking and challenge stereotypes.

Co-Creation also necessitates a fluidity of functions, blurring the boundaries between traditional knowledge producers (researchers) and creative practitioners (artists), as well as collaborating with others who may have no previous association with either group (Haviland, 2017). This duality of roles is paramount in the process of Co-Creation, involving crossing disciplinary boundaries, exchanging skills and understanding, and collaborating with people from different backgrounds. Co-Creation involves crossing borders, so-called 'fuzzy boundaries' (Gubrium et al, 2014) between professional and non-professional artists, between researchers and residents as knowledge producers, traversing borders which are by implication wrapped up with power hierarchies, both within the project and more broadly at a community or societal level. The hybridity inherent in Co-Creation implies the need to balance interests, a mediation of alternative understandings and ambiguities which need to be negotiated by those involved in creative production.

There are crossovers between the notion of Co-Creation and the field of 'Arts for Social Change' (ASC) (Marcuse and Marcuse, 2011). ASC can be defined as 'Art that is created collectively by groups of people (who may not self-identify as artists) about what matters to them, through arts or dialogic processes that are facilitated by an artist or group of artists' (Yassi et al, 2016). It is more focused on creative production for social change rather than on knowledge production and engagement with researchers. The key focus of ASC is, therefore, the artistic production and the social change that may result from it. Co-Creation, on the other hand, emphasizes knowledge production, as well as a strong relationship between researcher and artist in that process, with the creative output acting as a vehicle for knowledge production. However, the two processes have distinct similarities. Both approaches involve professional and non-professional artists in creative collaboration to explore social issues and engage with participants to find new ways of seeing and understanding their worlds. There are also parallels in relation to the power dynamics at play, both visible and hidden, that need to be addressed within a reflective framework of ethical practice.

Projects harnessing ASC can be driven by different agendas. In exploring participation in art projects, Bishop (2006) argues that there are three main motivations for community engagement in the arts: First, the desire to create empowered and active subjects through arts practice, who are then catalysed to determine their own social and political realities. Second, the desire to de-hierarchise art, to share or hand over authorship from the artist to the community. Third, to develop stronger social and community bonds, through "a collective elaboration of meaning" (Bishop, 2006: 12). ASC projects are driven mainly by the first motive, with the overall objective to allow participants to take control of their social and political worlds.

However, with both Co-Creation and ASC, it is important to engage with the critical debates around the use of arts in social change and community-engaged practice. Some argue that creative practice should not be reduced to a tool to achieve social outcomes, but rather should be seen as a legitimate end in itself (Gray, 2007). Others point to the tension between what is defined as 'quality art' in traditional arts practice, versus the more flexible standards that are applied to community-based arts involved in Co-Creation and ASC (Belfiore, 2002). For example, in community-based projects, there can be friction between the emphasis on excellence of the outcome as assessed through the criteria of aesthetics, versus the value of the creative process itself, the artistic journey, and the value that this brings to participants as an end in itself. These debates are important to be

aware of when considering Co-Creation and ASC projects and will be explored further in the context of the Street Beats Band, a 'found object' percussion band in Vancouver.

In relation to the methodology, the chapter draws on a number of different sources of data, including documentary evidence such as the funding application for the Street Beats Band project and other publicly available sources and a total of 15 in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and project participants which were completed in 2018–19. These included community and professional musicians, 'binners', non-profit organisations involved in the project and representatives from the municipal funder. A total of five semi-structured participant feedback surveys were also completed after the final concert performances in November 2017, which were used in the analysis to feed in to an assessment of the project that was completed by the author in July 2019. The next section provides a background to the project and the constellation of collaborators involved. The chapter then explores the 'materialities' of the Street Beats Band project and the issue of power relations and then draws conclusions on the possibilities for Co-Creation to address social inequalities.

Street Beats background

This chapter is based on the author's collaboration with the not-for-profit organisation 'Instruments of Change', which is based in Vancouver, Canada. Instruments of Change was set up in 2008 by professional flautist and academic Dr Laura Barron. The organisation aims to empower people to become 'instruments of transformative change' in their own lives (Instruments of Change, nd). It leads a variety of co-creative, socially engaged projects that work with marginalised communities, both in the Global North and Global South, using musical expression as a vehicle for change.

Much of the work of Instruments of Change is situated at the interface of the two conceptual strands of Co-Creation as defined in this volume, and ASC, that is, broadly speaking an artistic engagement that impacts social change. This broad definition can take a variety of expressions with different combinations of professional and community participation, but in general, Instruments of Change categorises their projects in one of three ways: (1) work that is community-created and community-presented; (2) work that is community-created and professionally-presented; or (3) work that is community- and professionally-created, and community- and professionally-presented. According to Instruments of Change, when work is co-created with the community and professional artists (models 2 and 3), this tends to generate greater social change, with a more sophisticated art output, greater levels of expressivity, and wider audiences that may be reached, than if the work is created and presented solely by the community.

One of the projects led by Instruments of Change from 2015–17 was the 'Street Beats Band' (SBB) project, which aimed to bring together different communities in Vancouver to rehearse and perform a pre-composed percussion work at the New Music Festival. The Festival was organised by the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) in Vancouver in November 2017. The Street Beats Band project falls under the third model above, as the work was both community and professionally created and presented.

The Street Beats Band was a two-year project that aimed to bring together a constellation of different actors, including Vancouver's binner community, professional musicians and other community members, to collaboratively co-create and perform a large-scale specially-commissioned percussion piece, within the framework of an international music festival (Community Arts Grant Application Form, submitted by Instruments of Change to Vancouver City Council, 2017, unpublished).

The project developed in two phases and involved multiple communities. The first phase ran from September 2015 to November 2016 (Year 1) and started by engaging members of Vancouver's binner community and paying them to source recyclable materials to be converted into musical instruments. The binners are Vancouver's recycling community, who collect redeemable containers and other materials from garbage bins across the city to generate income through refunds received at recycling depots. Instruments of Change partnered with the Binners' Project, a non-profit advocacy organisation that coordinates the binners' waste collection throughout the city on a weekly basis, to work with a group of binners to source materials, clean them up and repurpose them as the Street Beats Band's percussion instruments. These ranged from simple buckets, cans and pans to 'created' percussion instruments, such as a shaker made from a tennis ball container half-filled with quinoa.

The project then recruited 40 community members in four different locations across Vancouver to rehearse and perform on these instruments as part of the Street Beats Band. Following six weeks of rehearsals, this urban percussion community band gave two performances at the Roundhouse Community Centre in Vancouver in November 2016, as part of the Modulus Festival run by the not-for-profit organisation 'Music on Main'. This first phase of the overall project was exploratory, investigating the different sounds and rhythms that could be achieved by the four community groups using the 'found object' percussion instruments, exploring the levels of rhythm complexity that the community were able to sustain, and possible teaching strategies to help the players learn the work.

The second phase (Year 2) tied in with Vancouver's hosting of the ISCM World New Music Festival in November 2017, which was also led by 'Music on Main'. The Vancouver-based composer, James Maxwell, was commissioned to write a piece for the Festival, and following Year 1 of the project, he subsequently incorporated some of the rhythms and motifs that were created during that first phase into his new composition, "Eight or nine, six or seven". He also accompanied the binners on alley walks and collected soundscapes, both of which also informed the compositional process.

Some 20 community participants then worked in three 'pods' or 'mini-bands', each led by a facilitator, to learn the specially-commissioned work over six weeks, which was then performed in two shows at the ISCM Festival, on the 'found object' percussion instruments before an international audience. The Street Beats Band were also joined by a nine-piece professional brass ensemble from the Music on Main All-Star Band which including six trombones, a tuba and two professional percussionists, with the whole composition being mixed in with recordings of sonic urban soundscapes (e.g. traffic sounds, birds, and rain) that the composer had sampled in the city. The key components of the Street Beats Band project are presented in Figure 11.1.

However, although labels are used to categorise the collaborators (musician, composer, facilitator, etc), in reality and in line with a Co-Creative approach, the boundaries were blurred between roles. The instigator, Laura Barron was also an academic, a musician and facilitator. The community participants performed alongside professional musicians in the International Music Festival, challenging traditional views of the profile of a 'professional' musician. Furthermore, the composition itself was also co-created in response to the community participants, as it was rewritten by the composer in light of the community's initial experimentation with the binners' found instruments, thus disrupting the hierarchy between professional composer and community musician, through the incorporation of the community's inputs into the composition. Similarly, during rehearsals, the professional musicians, composer and conductor all needed to play a leadership role, but also a facilitating and empowering role. There are no rigid binaries between the roles of researcher, artist, non-profit organisation and community participant, but rather, there are a

set of complex, layered and shifting experiences that overlap between them. These are fluid categories where individuals can pass from one to another according to their role in a particular situation.

Figure 11.1 - Key contributors to the Street Beats Band Project

- Instruments of Change: The project champion, a not-for-profit organisation that runs community arts programmes, that aims to empower people to use the arts, and music in particular, towards transformative change in their lives. Led by Executive Director, Dr Laura Barron, who is a professional flautist and was a full time academic for ten years, now dedicates her time to Instruments of Change.
- Music on Main: A non-profit organisation that programmes music events in the city and was
 the lead on Vancouver's bid to host the ISCM New World Music Festival in 2017. Led by
 David Pay.
- The composer: Vancouver-based composer, James Maxwell.
- **The Binner Community:** Engaged through the Binners' Project, a number of binners were employed to collect or 'curate' the instruments at the beginning of the project.
- Participants from the community-at-large: Recruited through four Community Centres in different neighbourhoods throughout the city in Year 1, and through further music-related networks in Year 2.
- **Facilitators:** Three professional musicians, employed as facilitators to guide the community participants in their learning and practice, and lead the performances.
- Conductor: Professional conductor, Janna Sailor.
- Music on Main All-Star Band: Professional musicians who accompanied the community Street Beats Band with brass and additional percussion sections, in the two performances at the ISCM World New Music Festival, November 2017.
- Audience members: Who attended the Modulus Festival in November 2016 and the ISCM Festival in November 2017.
- **City of Vancouver:** The funder of the project, through the Community Arts Grant Programme.

The materialisation of Co-Creation through the Street Beats Band

Co-Creation through the Street Beats Band started with the involvement of the binners in curating the percussion instruments at the beginning of the project. Binners are very much a part of Vancouver's downtown community, a constant presence on the street, collecting redeemable containers from bins to sustain their livelihoods and divert waste from landfill. Yet their status in the city is marginal, often conflated with panhandlers, and stigmatised due to the nature of their work. The SBB instigator, Laura Barron, built up relations with the binner community over more than a year, to create trust and confidence, and to "gain an appreciation for their expertise, and really humanising them, and getting to know them as people, and being privileged to witness their work" (interview, 31 October 2018). A number of binners were paid to collect materials that could be curated as percussion instruments and were accompanied on their alley walks to collect materials by

Laura Barron, and the composer James Maxwell, who observed how they listened to the city, and how they sifted, sorted and selected materials (such as buckets, cans and pans) that could be repurposed as instruments. In this way, the binners themselves contributed to the Co-Creation of the composition, not only through providing the instruments but also through giving the composer insights into their perspectives on the city, which also fed into the composition (Figure 11.2).

[Insert Figure 11.2]

Figure 11.2 - The binners curating instruments. Source: Lani Brunn

The very act of paying the binners for their time had a significant impact on their self-esteem, as it demonstrated the value of their work and an appreciation of their knowledge of the city and their skills in sourcing materials. They were proud to present the materials that they had found on the alley walks. It was also an engagement that involved planning beyond the immediate week ahead, which is the normal time scale of the Binners' Project. Many binners are challenged to think beyond the coming week ahead, due to complex issues of mental health, addiction or inadequate housing. Their involvement in the project was longer term, stretching over a month, so it challenged participants to think beyond the immediate week and to project themselves forward and plan ahead.

In fact, it was anticipated at the beginning of the project that the binners would be involved much more closely throughout the two years, including taking part in the final performance, which was anticipated as being a 'Binners' Symphony'. However, this longer-term engagement proved unworkable, given the difficult lives that many binners lead, working long and exhausting hours, and not being able to commit to a long-term project. One of the binners was more closely involved, in both curating instruments, attending rehearsals and performing in the first year show, but ill health prevented him from continuing into the second year. So, while the binners were an integral part of the SBB, through Co-Creating the instruments, their absence in the final performance meant that the public audience was not fully aware of their involvement and were not fully challenged about their preconceptions of the binner community.

The final performance, however, did involve a wide range of some 20 participants, from a variety of neighbourhoods in the city, and from different backgrounds, cultures and generations (see Figure 11.3). The experience gave participants a strong sense of community related to the project, in a supportive atmosphere, as the conductor noted: "the little boys would be helping the grandmas with their rhythms" (interview, 14 November 2018), and helped to build confidence amongst participants. One facilitator appreciated "the different inputs that different walks of life could bring to the group" (interview, 7 February 2019). Another participant noted that: 'Making music together is a one-of-akind bonding experience. People I considered strangers just weeks ago have become a part of me' (Campbell, 2017). Respondents commented that the strength of the community created through participating in the project was an important outcome of their involvement.

[Insert Figure 11.3 near here – The Street Beats Band Performance, November 2017]

Figure 11.3 - The Street Beats Band Performance, November 2017. Source: Jan Gates.

Although the Street Beats Band was not focused on community participants gaining a voice in a situation where they may have felt marginalised, as with other 'ASC' projects, it opened up other

possibilities, such as the opportunity to play alongside professional musicians, with other benefits of confidence building, the discipline of rehearsals, the focus and time management required, and collaborative skills of working in a group.

Additionally for the binners, further opportunities also opened up from the SBB – to be involved in a parallel project run by Instruments of Change in local schools, speaking to school children about repurposing waste as part of their environmental education class. The binners were empowered as experts, paid to share their expertise in recycling in a school setting, normally an environment from which they are excluded. This also contributed to the destignatisation of the binners in the eyes of the children and school community, where direct contact with individual binners helped to broaden the children's understanding of the binner community, and their value in society.

For the audience, the performance challenged them to question their preconceived ideas about what community engagement can achieve. The 300 or so audience members over two days were made up of Festival participants, composers and performers from around the world, as well as friends and family of the Band, who were all exposed to the fusion of ages, cultures and backgrounds in the Street Beats Band. They witnessed the high standard of musical ability that is possible with community engagement in the classical music world and opened up their minds to the possibilities of such Co-Creative approaches. A number of audience members provided informal feedback on the achievement of working at such a high level artistically, while also promoting a participatory approach. As one audience member expressed: "It was one of the most the successful instances I've seen of combining professional artists with community artists in a truly meaningful way [...] the two halves were really co-dependent and integrated" (interview, 14 February 2019).

The project also destabilised accepted thinking of what a musical instrument is, both for the audience and the community participants, in relation to the materiality of the 'found object' instruments. As the instigator Laura Barron commented:

'It shifted paradigms a bit, in relation to their imagining what an instrument can be, and how accessible music making can be, how it can be right at their fingertips, that they don't need to go to the Conservatory, they don't need to buy an expensive instrument, that their voices and their found instruments can make music.' (Interview, 31 October 2018)

Individuals benefit from participating in art, because of its potential for learning, emancipation and empowerment (Bacqué and Biewener, 2013). The SBB achieved these outcomes for the participants, but the Co-Creation process goes beyond individual outcomes of community participation in art, to co-create new knowledge about places or communities, which challenges previously held views. In this case, although the binners were not as fully involved as anticipated, their association with the project contributed to confront audience views about community-based art and what can be achieved through community engagement in creative production. As an audience member noted: "Too often, I find, the community element could be eliminated without necessarily having an impact on the final presentation. But this wasn't the case with that [the SBB] at all."

These border situations unsettle audiences with new ways of seeing and understanding. The SBB drew on the binners' life experiences in border situations, blurring the boundaries between art and social action. By performing the piece with community participants at an international music festival, the process was also destabilising conventional views about who is 'a musician' and who has the right to be labelled as 'a musician'. In many ways, therefore, the SBB project can be seen as Co-Creation, as it crossed borders, disrupted concepts and disciplines, and questioned existing thinking.

Confronting power differentials in Co-Creation

As Matarasso notes (2019: 107) 'inequalities of power are created in the act of co-creation'. This arises for a number of reasons. The first relates to the level of skill, knowledge, experience and confidence of professional artists (musicians in this case), compared to non-professional community artists, which inevitably places the community participants in an unequal position. The second reason is connected to the power attached to the role of the instigator, who is the hub of the Co-Creation project, connected to all components, ranging from the funding body through to the artists, community participants and beyond. This gives them access to knowledge that underpins their authority in the Co-Creation process. While it is important to have a strong instigator and leader in Co-Creation projects, this concentration of knowledge also brings with it potentially significant command over other participants, a situation which should be acknowledged and negotiated from the beginning and throughout the Co-Creation exercise to integrate strategies for power sharing into the process.

In the case of the Street Beats Band, the instigator Laura Barron was conscious of her privileged role, both as the leader of the project, as a professional musician, and as a facilitator. Community participants acknowledged her grounded style, approachability and levelling manner, which contributed to breaking down power hierarchies in the project. However, she did need to make difficult decisions about whether to include certain participants from Year One in the Year Two performance year, due to the mismatch between the skills of some participants and the technicalities of the composed piece. It was felt that some participants would struggle to learn the complicated rhythms that were needed to play the work to a performance level, and so they were passed over in Year Two. She expressed her 'deep regrets about having had to make the executive decision to exclude some participants from Phase Two of the project. However, my motivations for making such difficult decisions are always in the interest of what is best for the greater good' (personal communication, 18 September 2019).

This raises issues that are frequently debated in relation to socially-engaged arts, that is, the relative importance of the product artistically, versus the value of the process to the participants, such as the importance of social relations and dialogical interactions. How important is the quality of the final artistic product, in this case the musical outcome, when the process taken to get there has the potential for significant and long-lasting impacts on the community members involved? While in general, Instruments of Change aims to valorise both the process and the final product equally, in this case, due to the connection with the wider ISCM Festival and the newly-commissioned percussion piece, the delivery of the final musical product at the ISCM Festival was given priority, although this meant excluding certain Year One participants from continuing into Year Two. This tension between the process and the product, between relational outcomes and object-based outcomes, is one that many Co-Creative projects grapple with while trying to bypass binary thinking that positions artistic outcomes against social ones. In each case, the aim is to achieve a balance that is most appropriate in the particular context.

Power relations in a Co-Creation project are also complicated by the issue of who gets paid for their participation and why. Payment to professional artists for their involvement is rarely questioned, but payment to non-professional artists is less common, partly due to funding constraints. In the Street Beats Band, the binners were paid for their time to collect materials and curate them as instruments. They were paid as a way of demonstrating the value of their knowledge and know-how of the city, its alleys and waste materials, in the context of a project that aims to destignatise a marginalised

group in Vancouver society. The professional musicians from Music on Main were paid for their involvement in the final performance, as were the instigator of the whole project, the composer, the facilitators and the conductor. The community participants were seen as volunteers and were not paid. However, if the community participants are recognised as musicians, equally implicated in the act of Co-Creation, there are strong arguments from an ethical and power perspective for them to be paid as well. And yet some would argue that financial remuneration is not necessarily the most appropriate means of compensating community participants for their involvement, given the potential for disempowerment and a sense of obligation if payment is made in exchange for participation. Others argue that community members benefit from participation in non-monetary ways through personal development, capacity building and other skills, so payment is neither necessary nor appropriate. In the Street Beats Band, community members were provided with free food at every rehearsal and refreshments in the Green Room at the two performances, in addition to the 'free' skills-building education they received. These complexities around payment are often resolved by default through a lack of available funds to remunerate all community participants, but they nevertheless raise important questions about fairness and equality of treatment in a Co-Creation project, issues of reciprocity, and the perceived value of different participants' contributions.

Co-Creation aims to disrupt traditional thinking and challenge stereotypes, ultimately to bring about societal change. But these are grand objectives, which are not necessarily achievable through small scale projects. Many Co-Creation projects achieve significant impacts at individual and community scales. In the Street Beats Band, individual impacts at the personal level were identified through participants gaining skills, confidence and knowledge. At the community scale, the rehearsal groups came together as a whole, shared ideas and resources, and developed trust through their communal experience of practicing and performing together. However, wider social transformation is harder to identify, not only because it is a long-term process and the project was a small scale intervention, but also because of the difficulty of accomplishing such change, within a framework of structural constraints that limit wider social transformation related to gender, class, race and post-colonialism. The involvement of the binners in the broader project could have contributed to individual and societal change, but the constraints of their difficult lives meant that they could not and/or did not participate more fully. This case therefore illustrates the potential of Co-Creation to build community and to confront barriers and prejudice, but tempered with a realism of the power of structural constraints that limit deep social change.

Conclusions

Co-Creation aims to be a creative and democratic process through which different voices come together in a common artistic endeavour that brings participants into creative contact, and contributes to their discovering, understanding and sharing experiences. The Street Beats Band brought together the notion of Co-Creation with principles of ASC to empower participants and challenge traditional views of community-engaged practice by marrying professional and non-professional musicians in an international professional setting. Overall, the project adhered to ASC principles, while also drawing on elements of Co-Creation as defined in this volume, by bringing together different stakeholders to address issues of marginalisation, and emphasising community and empowerment. Although researcher engagement and knowledge creation were not explicit aims of the SBB, one of the outcomes was participants' enhanced understanding of different perspectives and world views of those who took part, particularly through the engagement of the binner community. The project reached significant achievements in the final show at the ISCM New

Music Festival, with a high-level work performed mainly by community musicians, some with no formal musical training, playing on repurposed object instruments that had been curated by binners. The binners' connection with the project helped to challenge the community participants' views of the binner community, although as the binners themselves did not perform at the final New Music Festival, the impact on the audience's perception of this marginalised community was more limited.

This case study illustrates that a Co-Creative process such as the Street Beats Band can build community, as well as confront conventional thinking and challenge ideas and expectations. Participants came together to collaborate and create music together, to make sense of and explore their worlds. The Street Beats Band provided an arena for building voices, confidence, trust and space for dialogue between different groups. But, as the chapter has illustrated, within the Co-Creation process there are inevitable inequalities of power that risk creating dominant and subordinate relations, when professional and non-professional artists collaborate, and when the necessary 'instigator' is required to initiate, lead and make decisions for the project. As Laura Barron commented: 'I am well aware of the limitations of this work, and recognise it as an incomplete vehicle for social change' (personal communication, 18 September 2019). Tensions and dilemmas embedded in Co-Creation are unavoidable, due to different visions, interests, and inevitable power hierarchies. These issues should be acknowledged, addressed and negotiated by those involved.

What this chapter has argued is that Co-Creative projects offer critical potential to catalyse individual and collective impacts, with community participants benefiting in a myriad of ways from the creative and collective process of artmaking. These benefits include participants' feeling of achievement, a sense of community and communal identity, and building cross-generational and cross-cultural understanding. However, at the wider societal level, changes are necessarily more limited. While impacts can be seen at the individual and community level, the power of Co-Creative or ASC projects to address some of the deep-seated societal challenges is more limited. As 'incomplete vehicles for social change', they cannot dismantle the structural forces that underpin inequalities, but they do have the capacity to impact on the people who can trouble those structural forces, to question inequalities related to gender, class, race and post-colonialism, and challenge societal inequities through the process of Co-Creation.

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