

*“To create today is to create dangerously. Any publication is an act, and that act exposes one to the passions of an age that forgives nothing.”*

– Albert Camus (translated by Justin O’Brien) – from *Create Dangerously*, the speech he delivered at University of Uppsala in Sweden in December 1957, a few days after having been awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Collaboration. This fundamental ingredient of all working life is understood differently from different vantage points. Reflecting on this question was at the heart of the conversation between myself and QMUL social anthropologist Megan Clinch. Reflecting on our own vantage points, we pondered: how does the artist position themselves differently to the researcher? Does the outcome impact of the type of relationship built, and the expectations placed on those relationships – the honesty inherent or not in that framework. Are artists able to hold space differently?

What of power? What is the dynamic at play in different contexts – is honesty enough? Is transparency possible? Do either enable or ensure agency?

There are many ways to work with people. There are also increasingly specific terms to use to outline this work:

- / Socially engaged
- / Participatory work
- / Action research
- / Collaborative
- / Co-created

What do all these new words, names and trends mean – in practice? In lived realities? For the futures of those people / collaborators / participants subjects?

What of the shifting frames that define how our work exists into the future.

As artists, and as researchers, we must be accountable to the frame we’ve placed on people’s lives. At the same time, that frame will continue to have meaning and to gain and gather meaning, sometimes far beyond our intentions, expectations and predictions.

There is only one certainty in this space: that there is no one size fits all, no *right answer*, but many questions to be asked – over and over again to determine your North star.