

## Conversation with Kay

Amit Rai

School of Business and Management

1. How do you think Black Lives Matter is affecting or has been a part of your practice? We both talked about our relationship to BLM, Kay as a black man whose trajectory has included Africa, America, and the UK; and I as a South Asian man whose trajectory has included India, America, and the UK. The Movement for Black Lives has transformed people's understanding of racial inequality and the institutionalisation of white supremacy in the USA and in UK. This is a critical moment when Asians, Latinx, and radical white comrades can develop thoroughgoing practices of solidarity with black peoples, and certainly in higher education when the Business school to the Drama department are rooted in white supremacy, I have been working with other people of colour to respond to this moment with radical care.
2. What would you say are the important aspects of your methods in the Smiling Boys project? This was one of the important aspects for me in Kay's excellent project. He engaged in what I think was a capacious participatory method that energised and inspired the young people. For me, the question concerning method is one that is perennially deconstructed in the social sciences, with participatory action research being the new in thing that everyone claims to be doing. Kay's practice help me to deconstruct that claim anew. Bravo!
3. What does it mean to talk to young black boys about emancipation from white supremacy in London? In Lambeth? I think this question should turn us back to the Black Radical Tradition such as in the work of Angela Y. Davis, Assata Shakur, Cedric Robinson, June Jordan, Robin D. G. Kelly, Fred Moten, and many others today (especially important to Afro Pessimism). What Kay did in his project is to rekindle the flame of emancipation from all oppression for these black young people from working class backgrounds, a fire that will be ready for the 'fire next time' (Baldwin).
4. What do the boys do about those things they have less direct impact on, say the gentrification of neighbourhoods of colour in London? This too is a difficult question, as life conditions are changed very easily, and never only through some kind of vague attitudinal change. Kay's project highlights this. This has been critical for my own thinking about what organisational change might mean at the Live Art Development Agency, as it goes through its own radical encounter with the Movement of Black Lives. As a Board member involved in that process of making LADA an anti-racist arts organisation, I have been inspired by Kay's practice.