

Bodies of Water Symposium: Regenerative Art Practice – Regenerative Art Practice: Questions of Legacy Transcript

0:10 Beatrice Pembroke

Hello, everyone. Great to see so many of you. Thank you for being here and welcome and thanks to Seyi for that incredible visualisation. It was just the perfect way to land or float into our discussions today. Thank you, so good. I'm Beatrice Pembroke. I'm Executive Director for Culture and Science Gallery at Kings. I'm a white 40 something woman with a hair in the top knot and big glasses. And I'm going to sort of briefly frame our discussion before hearing more from our amazing panellists. So today, we're asking, why take the long view in a time of emergency, and in particular, what does that mean for the public art sector. We're living in many in what many now call an age of poly-crisis, as we've heard from other speakers, ecological breakdown, climate disaster, society is unravelling, and this creates a sense of urgency that is everywhere, pushing us into taking short term fixes. And our human brains are actually kind of wired to make us do that, and all our underpinning systems and narratives prioritise these immediate results. And of course, we need an urgent action in response to these emergencies. But today, we're going to look at how we might balance that urgency with a long-term view how we might foster a sense of collective responsibility for the millions of species that aren't even born yet. And we know that public art can help us resist that narrowing. It can stretch our imagination beyond the now, it can create space for connection and reflection and to ask questions that aren't just relevant today, but for many years, decades, centuries to come. So to take the long view is to accept that what we are commissioning or producing or creating will become part of a legacy inherited by generations we'll never meet. So when we talk about legacy, we can think of it in three ways. Firstly, what systems have we inherited? So the frameworks we operate in are often extractive, exclusive and carry these unsustainable practices. Second, what present realities do we need to confront? Because obviously, the work we're making cannot be separate from the ecological and societal realities we face. And third, what do we want to leave behind? So how can our projects open new possibilities for regeneration, repair and cultures of care. And as Justine said so beautifully, regenerative practice is to go beyond sustainability. So if sustainability is about doing less harm, we can think of regeneration as about repair and reciprocity, sort of asking us to actively improve the conditions of life for ecosystems and for communities, as Daniel Wahl said, but I

also, I think, for these future generations to come. So that might mean for us rethinking not just our materials and processes, but also our mindsets and value systems. And my own connection to this work started about seven or eight years ago when I set up *The Long Time Project* with Ella Saltmarshe and we both been grappling with feeling like overwhelmed by the climate crisis, but knew that arts and culture that we've been working in for so long, and in particular, storytelling and narrative were fundamental perhaps to some of the deep shifts that were needed to be made. And one of the key questions we started asking through that with collaborators, including Justine through *The Long Time Academy* podcast, and one we keep asking is, how can we be good ancestors? And to do that, we have identified five pathways to long time, so five ways of cultivating longer horizons in the public imagination. I guess these are a contribution to add to the ones that Justine has set out. So I'll walk us through them very briefly and point to an example of regenerative public art that might embody them. So I'll need my clicker. The first one is about deep time. Oh, that's me. So deep time - so this is about engaging with cosmic timescales, cultivating or at the vastness of time and reminding us of the tiny place that humans have in the epic history of the universe. And this is an image from Superflux and *The Quiet Enchanting* which I commissioned on the facade of Bush House on the strand in London, which is the biggest bit of new public realm in London for a decade. And *The Quiet Enchanting* takes place over several facades, Bush House going right round. And it's an invitation, a kind of into a mythic time of interdependence and ecological abundance, and refers to free modern poetics, pagan folklore, and asks how we can rewild ourselves, and if rewilding ourselves could change the world, there's much more behind it. So I invite you to there's some other images, and then the second pathway. That is another good project about deep time, but I won't go into it now. So the second pathway is about mortality consciousness. So we have a hunch that part of our inability to think long-term is our like difficulty of confronting our own death and impermanence. And this is Maya Lin's *What is Missing?* project. So it was a multi-sited project. Had online content, public billboards, interactive exhibits. And it's a global memorial to lost speeches, which many people have kind of added their own loss to, and it links that grief what's gone with responsibility to those yet to come. The third pathway is multi-generational emotions. So really kind of trying to cultivate care and empathy with those generations, past and future. This is part of Katie Patterson's *Future Library*. So 100 authors contributed a new text that remain unread until 2114 when a forest, as we see here, planted in Norway in 2014 - 100 years before - will be harvested to print the books. So it's a beautiful sort of 100-year artwork that connects us, or humans, sort of from future - to future readers that they won't see. The fourth pathway is interconnected world view, so recognising our entanglement with the non-human world, and again, there's much

we can learn from indigenous cultures who often have world views that foster these deep relationships with other species. There are so many beautiful examples of this, but I'm going to be cheeky and choose one that we were connected with, which is technically, is it a public art project? Some of you purists may not think so, but it's *Rights of the Deep* by Emma, Critchley, and it's an open letter and a contribution to the growing rights of nature movement, bringing together Pacific activists and scientists. And then the last one is the fifth pathway, is legacy stance so asking ourselves, what do we want to leave behind? And this is an image from the Congolese Plantation Workers Art League in Lusanga, whose land was seized generations ago for palm oil plantations by European companies, and whose labour was exploited, and they are now creating artworks sculpted in clay and reproduced in Cacao in Europe, sort of reversing the flow of value. And the sale of these works fund the post plantation, which is rewilding the exhausted land into agro forests. So five sort of suggestions of ways to think about how we might act with long-term responsibility, and how public art can be part of this renewal. And as we turn now to the panellists, I invite you to hold the kind of practical processes in mind, but also the narrative shift we have to make. So how we shift our processes and our stories in order to become good ancestors, we may need to work on both. So come up, join me. So I'm really pleased to be joined by Anne Duk Hee Jordan, the artist responsible for *Bodies of Water* and many other works that we're here about. And I think really the heart of this symposium; Mala Yamey, curator for UP Projects; Alice sharp, Artistic Director and Founder of Invisible Dust and Iman Dattoo, artist from Radical Ecologies. So Duk Hee, can I start with you? And so your work on your beautiful artwork that I can't wait to see, that is so rich and embodies so many of the things that we've been talking about so far. But it's coming to completion with *Snail on me* being launched in Wigan on Saturday. Can you tell us a bit more about these artworks and what you've learned from the process about regenerative practice, particularly when it comes to integrating that more than human element?

10:34 Anne Duk Hee Jordan

Yes, thank you for having me. And yeah, this project started a few years ago, I think, like in general, initiation was already five years ago, if I'm right. So another three years of implementation of the artwork, there were a lot of changes, and we did a lot of research about material and what could have - or what does actually like a sculpture mean in the public art? So do we make another monument for another monument? What does it mean to build sculptures itself as the material? Because it's also everything what you use is in the world, and also somehow the engagement of the artwork. So for me, it was really like this thought of, yeah, what can I

UP

PROJECTS

contribute to this world in a more meaningful way, so that I'm not just like, making another sculpture of like steel. But of course, this is a sculpture made out of steel, but like, in a way that it can transform into, like, what does the sculpture need in its own surrounding and where it's placed? Because it's also like a big question where we are, and what surrounds us, and how environmental structures are built from the palm up. And then I try to convince UP not to do like, two sculptures, just one, because it's also a lot of work to do so. But also like, because one is made in Devon in South England, and then the other one, yes, in this beautiful rainy area. So I thought upon of calling the goddess of rain. And I was thinking of making kind of work which works for, like harvesting rainwater, but also fog, also like when you go up in the mountains, or if you're in the desert, they're building upon this kind of places where there's roughness, and how do they survive? So they are building really, like smart systems. And I thought of that, yeah, even if England is very rainy and there's a lot of water coming all the way down, but how to, how to, forward, like, to get to collect it, and also that you can use it and then, but then, also in, in a way of like, not only for humans, it's more like for the other beings. So in southern England, it was, we created this work of this barnacle based on the coastal area. And the barnacle is always like a coastal marine indicator for environmental issues and how also the sea is changing. So you can really read upon the barnacles what is changing. And then thought about the Roman concrete, because Roman concrete is really powerful. It's very old. It regenerates itself over the years, or like all the Roman concrete buildings we have, they regenerate themselves. So this was one part of it. Then, of course, like the muscles, the shells of it, which absorbs carbon, and then thinking of deep time as well. So because we also just like a blink of a very tiny time, so nobody cares about us after we are gone. So this is also like the carbon footprint we put in. So of course, like the carbon is also like all like saved energy, so it's like full power. It also can, like, purify the water, as we know. So this was a part of it. Then zeolite were like heavy metals in our body. If you take this, it can, like, take out heavy metals, like mercury and stuff. And then this all combined together, I thought of, like the structure of the earth crust, and so the barnacle was layered in this beautiful colors and it's like a symbol, or like, also like purifying the grey water from the rain, because it's also polluted, goes into the barnacle and drops down on the slate and goes into the soil, and is basically like a source for the soil, for the bees, for the birds and like, but not for the human. And then the other idea was, like, the same thing, like in in Haigh Hall. It's these beautiful woodlands. And I actually wanted to work with the swamp area, because you also have to generate or to keep it alive. You need to keep a swamp alive, otherwise it goes by all the time and but then it didn't happen because there was too many, yeah, policy of, like, vandalism stuff. And then I thought, okay, if I can't do that, then I will do at least, like, build, like an artificial natural pond into the wall garden, and then put gigantic slug, because

slugs are also, like, yeah, often seen as violators of the gardens. But of course, they also just want to live and eat. And then, of course, what do they do? They eat - so but in order to keep them away, there's, like, really this kind of horrible things, like cutting them in parts. In the sea actually, like, if you would cut like a sea slug in in half, so they would basically live further on, but not the one who live on land. And so I thought, like, we have to celebrate more of these beings. And then it became a kind of like a mystical, sluggish being where Popo, the goddess of rain. I made that up, of course, sitting on top so it doesn't exist like, but Popo does exist, like the Popo in Chinese mythology, like the goddess of the wind and forces and the weather also itself. So that the goddess of Popo will sit on the slug and will protect the weather of this area and collect the rain water - it trips into the artificial pond. And then with the community, like with Anna, she made, like an incredible job of, like getting all the ambassadors together, and like making the housing for the reptiles and for frogs and for other beings who can live in this pond. And this pond will be set up also as an edible landscape, and then this will also harvest the walled garden. So, and it's like, so this is kind of like a sculpture which I can live with, and hopefully the walled garden and Devon as well, because it's, it's does, if you talk about like algorithm. So it has its own algorithm in the way of this digital time age where we live, but it generates it into it into the landscape. So it's something which, for me, makes it very meaningful, because normally, as an artist, you're invited to galleries, museums, and then you have to do whatever, like, ah, make this and that, and then, okay, but like. And the other strange of like, public artwork or doing something out of the space. It's, for me, the most important, important part, to really try to make a change. And there is a change basically because this is very meaningful. And then in the galleries, museums, biennials, it's like it's for me, it's a world building. I can talk about the narration, storytelling, and talk about the issues, but I cannot really make a make a meaningful change, especially in times where we live now. It's the only part where I can contribute back to where we live on.

19:56 Beatrice Pembroke

Beautiful thank you. I can't, can't wait to see it. But also see how it evolves over time and changes. So Alice, your relationship, or our relationship, human relationship to time, is a really strong running theme for your work, and particularly in the *Climate Clock* commissioning program that you're working on at the moment for Oulu - is it Oulu?

20:21 Alice Sharp

Oulu, actually, yeah.

20:22 Beatrice Pembroke

Oulu 26. Can you tell us a bit more about your approach and why you thought time was such a key area to address?

20:32 Alice Sharp

Yeah, thank you very much. I'm Alice sharp. I'm the Artistic Director of Invisible Dust, which, like Emma I found a long time ago, in 2009. So ever since then, I've been working bringing together artists and scientists to look at climate futures. And currently we've got a program that's just developing very excitingly in Brazil, it's going to be COP this year. So there's going to be a lot of discussion around our environment in Brazil. We were also working in Turkey, and we've got a big project with Raqs Media Collective, who some of you might know, in which opens during Frieze. So just to give a bit background to me, it seems a bit echoey - is it all right? Okay? It sounds okay, okay. Thank you. I'm working in Oulu, and it's spelled o, u, l, u, which is obviously why Beatrice was thinking the pronunciation. It's an amazing opportunity to create a public art trail, and it's part of Oulu, Finland's European Capital of Culture, and it opens next June. And I've been working like Duk Hee's project for a long time on this project. The central focus of *Climate Clock* is time. I've been really inspired by spending time in Oulu with the artists. And what has really struck me about Oulu is the brilliant whiteness of the winter. In Oulu, it's sub-Arctic, and the snow comes in November, and it leaves in April. So nearly half the year is covered in snow. You've got vast rivers which completely freeze over, and then very occasionally, you have a glimpse of water, which is this amazing, dark okra color, and ice roads and crossing the frozen sea, very low light across the horizon. It's got really vibrant, very short summers with a real verdant green. And Oulu people love the winter. They are very intrinsically connected to nature, and they have local customs like drilling on the ice for sea, for fish. It's also one of the world's most northern cities, and it's melting because of what we're doing. It's warming four times the rest of the earth. So when I started this project, I really wanted to respond and get artists to respond to this very important context. And this thought came to me that the climate clock is ticking, the snow is melting, and we are learning anew what our forebears knew, that time is not ours to command, that nature keeps its own time. What do I mean when I say nature keeps its own

time? Why should nature feel bound by our time? Actually, nature has had its own time since the beginning of time, and it's very different to our time. What I mean is by time is the rate of change for nature, and in *Climate Clock*, I paired each artist with a scientist to create a permanent public art trail around the Oulu region, reconnecting us to nature's time. But I think it's really interesting we're doing public art. What does permanent really mean? Artist Antii Laitinen, a Finnish artist, I'm working with is creating enormous kinetic spheres next to some rapids, and they're going to be cloaked in lichen among the trees. We met the lichen scientist. It will grow for hundreds of years. But what will his artwork mean or be then? And Takahiro Iwasaki is looking at the symmetry of snow crystals as old as the Earth itself. And what about Superflex they're building a sculpture. And is. It ready for sea level rise. It's right next to a harbour. Tellervo & Oliver are also making their own clock with moments contributed by local people and scientists, and Gabriel Kuri is exploring future climate risks and when we're ready to take them. So why is this important to us here in the UK? The Arctic is nature's winter mirror to climate change. The Arctic repels those rays that are heating the planet. Its warming is changing the earth systems, and with it, our seasons, our nature and our pace. The sea level rise that we will experience around the world is caused by the Arctic melt. So the centre of what I do at Invisible Dust is to bring together art and science and new thinking to meet these challenges. And it's great with time, because art and science understand time in much more profound ways than the rest of our machine time world. At the moment, we account for time on our mobiles, our calendars, some old-fashioned people like me have got watches, but in art and science, they reach back to times past and forward to times yet un-lived. Artists and scientists look at time in a very different way from our usual way of seeing time as a commodity. People like Duk Hee weave us back into a far older sense of time, time as an unbroken thread and fabric which connects us to the natural world. And I'm also working with Ranti Bam, who had an amazing piece in Liverpool a couple of years ago in the churchyard, and she's holding Stone Age time in her contemporary ceramic vessels, which she creates through the ancient tradition of embracing clay. And many people here will know Rana Begum; she's working with me to connect the imagining of shapes of sea ice and how it feels to stand on vast Arctic glaciers. These enormous formations are thousands of years old, and you'll know what I'm going to say next, they are sliding towards the sea. The Arctic could be ice free by summer 2040, so *Climate Clock* explores how we are forcing our notions of time onto nature, changing it and us. So I want to ask you, do you ever forget time? I remember when my father took his watch off on holiday. Is forgetting time, the time when you feel most yourself? Our world is getting quicker. We stretch out for our phones, demand instant access to vast array of moving and intricate decisions, creating lifestyles we're at odds with natural rhythms and cadences. So in *Climate*

Clock, the artists are asking us to reconsider our fast, changing lifestyles and take time, and in so doing, understand the preciousness and necessity of living interconnected with the Earth's own natural clock. Can art create a moment of pause? Bob Dylan said, "the purpose of art is to stop time". I hope these artworks will, and give us a temporary sanctuary when, like when my dad took off his watch, and where you can find a moment to think and feel Thank you. Thank you.

29:27

[Applause]

29:32 Beatrice Pembroke

Beautiful, thank you. We're holding on to that moment of pause. Iman Dato, you have recently published on the *100 Year Care Plan* for Radical Ecology, which was commissioned by Natural England. Can you tell us a bit more about that, and particularly about your approach being responsive to place?

29:55 Iman Dato

Hi, everyone. My name is Iman. I'm the Head of Research and Community at Radical Ecology. To tell you a little bit about Radical Ecology, we're an artist led studio for decolonial environmental action, and we're based in the southwest of England, in South Devon. And as an artist led studio, we're really thinking about the ways in which art can become this agent for environmental justice. And there's this constant sort of negotiation between the local and the planetary. So thinking and responding and embodying our local landscape being South Devon and thinking about the very extractive histories of that landscape, and sort of emancipatory restitution. Like reparative ways of, kind of relating to that landscape, but in relation to the sort of planetary injustices we're seeing unfold worldwide. And I think it's, it's from there that we can really start to make connections, for example, between the displacement that we're seeing as a result of local dam projects on Dartmoor too, for example, dam projects and the dispossession of people in Sarawak, which is what we're exploring with *Time of the Rivers*, which is an ongoing collaboration between our organisation and an organisation in Borneo thinking about the destruction of waterways and livelihoods. But also there was another project called *Invasion Ecology*, which was a land art practice in Dartmoor, where we were thinking about the invasive species, or deemed invasive species that we were seeing on our doorsteps, on our local walks, Himalayan balsam buddleia,

rhododendrons, but in relation to the sort of racial logics that underpin the field of invasion ecology, for example. And so yeah, that connection between the local and the planetary is really important in our work. And I think in relation to the *100 Year Care Plan* Beatrice that you mentioned. So to tell you a little bit more about that, that was commissioned by Natural England, and we were asked to create an assessment of our local woodlands, which is Dartington's North Woods. It's known as a "PAWS", which is a plantation on an ancient woodland site. So it was planted for economy, and it's full of trees like californias and redwoods or sequoias, douglas firs, cedars, and recently, it's undergone a change in management. So rather being that, rather than being managed in house by the Dartington Estate, that management has now been given to contractors, and what we're seeing is sort of a diminishing sort of resource and a change in how people are able to kind of access these local woodlands. So really we wanted to kind of go in to our words and really understand them from a position that sort of went beyond this idea of a nativist nostalgia, that went beyond this idea of wanting to go back to what these woodlands once were, what they could be, i.e., like this ancient sort of oak woodland. And rather than that, think about where these woodlands are now, currently in the present day. What are the ecologies that are novel and new emerging out of the sort of the human and non-human inter relationships and interactions that have brought sort of new ecologies to these woodlands? So what we did was really enter this process of deep listening, which is this technique pioneered by a musician called Pauline Oliveros, and it's about going beyond hearing and really listening and paying radical attention to your ecology. And that can be humans, non-humans, machines, everything around you. And so we were listening to the human and non-human agents who are part of these woodlands, part of our local ecology, and what sort of emerged when we were assessing this value was that the economic, the social, the biodiverse value of these woodlands, those aren't in conflict with one another, but actually the ways in which people kind of interact with these woodlands in our local environment sort of supported the idea that those values actually support and build upon each other. So for example, in order to harvest good quality timber from these woods, you need healthy soil. We also noted that by interviewing local residents, for example, who took their daily walks through these woods for their own mental wellbeing, they were also trained in archaeology and entomology. And when these woods were managed by the estate, they were contributing to monitoring them and assessing their biodiversity. This practice of deep listening also kind of informed our engagement with marginalised communities as well. So thinking about, I guess, attending like this, sort of focal attention on the voices and care workers who may not necessarily have access to green spaces like this. So Radical Ecology have ongoing work with a local youth group in Devonport and refugee and asylum seekers. So we brought them into the

woodlands and thought about what their connection their nature connection to these words were and what they could be in the future, and sort of what emerged from our engagement together was actually an arts program and an arts education programme and a speculation for a film school and a clay school or soil school that could exist and emerge as a practice from these woods over the period of 100 years. So I guess this idea of regenerative art practice and thinking through 100 years with this project sort of was the idea of like going beyond our own time on this earth and really thinking about the ways in which sort of we can bring about change that, yeah, goes beyond our own personal time on this earth, but sort of changes our perception of time and our engagement with time into something that is participatory. Because as soon as you do that, as soon as you're thinking in the lifespan of 100 years, you're going beyond the kind of very real-world struggles and systems that feel like they're tying you into a specific way of being in the world now. And you're able to sort of dismantle those, and you're able to think of new languages, lexicons, protocols and ways of doing things. And, yeah, it's really important for that kind of incongruous thinking that and interdisciplinary thinking that we strive to employ as artists.

37:12 Beatrice Pembroke

Brilliant, thank you. And then Natural England happy to think about commissioning on that really long-term basis, because that's often hard with?

37:20 Iman Dattoo

Yeah, so it's interesting you talking being part of this panel and regeneration and thinking about the evolution of that project, because initially the ambition was to sort of commission something longer term with an individual funding body, but that, but there are so many constraints within that. And one of the things we notice as artists is kind of not being able to think about, not being able to think long term, or feeling like we struggle to do that because we don't, we don't have the funding that enables us to do that. But actually what has emerged, which is quite interesting, is, through other pots of funding and through other projects, we are kind of taking an approach in Radical Ecology that is focusing on our education and brings in our local woodlands in a way that is more organic than what we originally sort of intended for. So my colleague, Ashish, who is the Director of the organisation, is running a film school or starting a film school at the moment from the studio. We're also carrying out programming within the woodlands, so it's happening in a more organic way and in a way that we didn't initially anticipate, but

that whole programme allowed us to think about our studio as engaging in art education in a really new way. So that's what feels exciting about it. And in relation to the comments on how we can't always be in control of the change, I think this is an example of that though - though we speculated within this plan, and that speculation isn't what has happened exactly in reality, is still informing our practice and methodology and approach long term.

39:02 Beatrice Pembroke

Thank you. We might come back to some of these questions. I think I'm sure the question for all of you, I hope, might raise some of these tensions. And Mala, Curator at UP Projects you've been working with Duk Hee on these beautiful bodies of water works in both Wigan and Devon. Can you tell us a bit more about the social and cultural contribution of the projects and how the two sculptures function ecologically?

39:30 Mala Yamey

Thank you so much, Beatrice. And hi, I'm Mala. I joined UP Projects in February. So I know Duk Hee's been working on *Bodies of Water* for five years, but I only joined the project in February, and it's been a very interesting whirlwind journey to get both sculptures up in A la Ronde in Devon and Wigan [*laughter*] in Haigh Hall. So I think Emma has briefly touched on this as has Duk Hee, but I kind of want to delve into our community collaboration programs and the learning programme that we've put together for *Bodies of Water*, because as both I feel Emma, Justine and Beatrice have touched on regenerative practices are all about really being very locally rooted and about the communities who are there. So we're very fortunately, working with Duk Hee who's based in Berlin, but the way we've worked with local communities is working with local artists on the ground. So in Haigh Hall and Anna has been thanked, but thank her again, Anna FC Smith has done an amazing job working with a group of five community ambassadors. So I'm going to name them: Karen Buckels, Marie-Clare Kenyon, Lee McStein, Ryan Millington and Farai Nhakaniso. Since last year in June 2024, and they've been reflecting on Duk Hee's proposals for *Snail on me*, the histories and the folklore of Haigh Hall and both politics of water and water management locally. And these workshops have been a space to collectively devise and co-curate the commissions and events which, if any of us, of you are joining us at Haigh Hall this Saturday, will be a wonderful day of co-creation and community-led events which have all been devised and selected by the ambassadors themselves. The other thing that you might have seen in the earlier

slides is all of the collages were actually made by the ambassadors at Haigh Hall, so, and they've entered our brand identity. So they've really, really been involved in the project. And Duk Hee's kind of mentioned this earlier as well, that they've actually created the insect houses out of stoneware. So when you see the work at Haigh Hall, which hope you will because it will be up for five years, you'll see that their legacy is really, really a huge part of the artwork. And the ideas have really gone back to Duk Hee as well as Duk Hee's ideas going to them. So it's been a really lovely flow, circular flow. At A la Ronde we've had similar workshops, but not as durational an approach, but we've been working with local artists, Richard Irvine and Emma Welton, who have been leading intergenerational, intergenerational workshops around the ideas of *I travelled 66 million years to be with you and then you came*. And the local issues of water management around the River Exe, the estuary of which is right by A la Ronde, which is a very contested estuary with a lot of issues around sewage and water cleanliness. So Richard Irvine, he led a dedicated workshop for pupils from Exeter Road Primary School and Ukrainian Refugees East Devon in summer last year, and they were collectively building large water filtration vessels using natural materials from the site of A la Ronde to explore where our water comes from and its overall importance in our daily lives. Emma Welton joined us this year to draw on the water filtration capacities of the barnacles on Duk Hee's sculpture to produce a musical workshop singing to the River Exe at the launch of our sculpture in June. So it's been really fun working with local artists on this project to really bring Duk Hee's work into the space where - spaces where they are. And so really, by working with these local artists, we've really been able to draw on local materials and embedded community knowledge to really situate both commissions and the wider project at a really regenerative level. And hopefully that these, especially the ambassadors at Haigh Hall, will kind of be these messengers to continue the spirit of this project, to really think about water and the ideas that Duk Hee has so amazingly put into these sculptures, which you'll see at site. Similarly, I'll touch on the learning resource. So back to Anna. I hope she's in the room. Anna and our wonderful producer, Jack Newbury, have been working on a schools programme and learning resource for key stage two, to build awareness around waters, environmental importance, and these this work resource is really drawn on Duk Hee's sculptures and the ideas, and includes creative activities to explore water collection, preservation and distribution of water through really hands on learning. And using these resource activities, Anna, I feel like she's getting lots of name drops, hope she appreciates. And both Anna in Wigan and then an East Devon-based artist, Josh Lucas, will conduct workshops for local schools near Haigh Hall and A la Ronde this school year. So a lot still going on while the sculptures are launching. And so really around the community and social part of this project, *Bodies of Water* really aims to encourage our communities and peers to respect

water. It's more-than-human inhabitants and surrounding biodiversity. And this is a belief that I really believe - that said it twice belief and belief - belief and ethic that the Wigan community ambassadors have truly embraced and practiced. And furthermore, really it's the hope of the schools programme and the learning resource as well to encourage the decision makers of tomorrow to really view the politics of water and more than human relations as a really integral part of their worldview. Going forward, I think Duk Hee has kind of touched on the ecological function of the sculptures, but I will kind of touch on a little bit before we move on. So Duk Hee is, has an amazing ability to playfully articulate deeper narratives through humour and scientific and historical research. It really draws attention to the politics of water management, and they have created these two site-specific sculptures. And as Duk Hee said, there's slugs, there's barnacles, and these are really underappreciated creatures that play a real, really crucial role in our watery ecosystems. So these sculptures actually do function in harvesting water, filtering it, and circulating rainwater, as well as providing habitats for wildlife at each site. So with the barnacles, this Roman concrete with the water filtration agents will actually clean the rain water, and we're measuring that on site to see how the rain water changes within the sculpture. But also is a habitat for these creatures, and I think there's a beautiful sort of photo somewhere of a lovely little caterpillar on a barnacle. So we're hoping that they have been well appreciated by the wildlife of A la Ronde. And similarly, you'll see at Haigh Hall, *Snail on me* - we've got the two big slugs, and we've got a snail head. So slugs, as Duk Hee said, are garden pests, and we will try to get rid of them. We put poison down, which is not very nice, but actually they are really, really important, and are crucial to kind of creating a garden, kind of ecosystem. So as Duk Hee said, it's got a fine seal mesh which attracts water particles, and then there's these water particles in the air will come down through the mesh, down through rain chains down into this newly created wildlife pond, which is connected to and will be connected to further the drainage system and storm water drainage of Haigh Hall's walled garden. So the idea is, the water collected through the sculpture will enter the water system of Haigh Hall. But also there are these insect hotels, as we said, and there's stumpery, and there's rocks, and there will be a wonderful planting scheme by Sylvia, who's in the room the Head of Horticulture at Haigh Hall. And these will all form further kind of places for biodiversity and insects and frogs. And whoever wants to come and visit Duk Hee's slugs will be there. And so really regenerative, regenerating the biodiversity of Haigh Hall's walled garden, through this new manmade wildlife pond and the insect hotels, as well as the stumpery, is something that really is about a point of legacy that we hope that *Snail on me* will form at Haigh Hall. And really coming back to the long-term view that Beatrice you've mentioned. But yeah, I'm sure we can touch on more of this.

48:05 Beatrice Pembroke

Brilliant thank you. And that spirit of water is sort of run the whole way through this session, starting with Seyi and reminding us that we're 60% made of water. But actually, before we turn to the audience, I wondered if you had any questions for each other. Otherwise I can just keep going. But is there anything burning that you would like to ask each other? Okay, I'm going to do another one if no one has anything burning. So maybe we can think about water, which is this strong recurring theme when it comes to regenerative art practice. Um, Duk Hee can you get us, get us going, get us flowing with a bit more. Why water? What is it that attracted to that? Why did you think of that as sort of a framing for the work, and it's so fundamental to what you were doing.

48:58 Anne Duk Hee Jordan

I mean, I was always attracted to water since childhood. So nothing changed. I think I used to go fishing as a girl. So I was the only girl going fishing, and this huge fishing, whatever how you call in Germany, I don't know the English word, which also was weird. So I took the fish and put them in our pond so that they could stay alive. And I was always really attracted to fish. And then I started diving at a young age, like, like, I think, at 12, and I kept on going. And for me, was this really amazing experience to dive and to see a completely different world, because, like, when you're underwater, it's basically a different feeling. I always say, like it's. Is the first time where you feel a three-dimensional feeling, really on your body, because the pressure on your lungs, on your organs, it's all getting compressed, and you have it from all sides. This is when we are on land, we don't have this kind of experience. And then also, like when you start doing, keep on going with the diving, and then everything gets really heavy on your back, because you're also turning older and wiser. And then you get rid of all the gears. And I started free diving. And this is also something which is really amazing, because you can just take one breath and go down, and then comes to this state of mind where you think you cannot hold longer your breath, but it's also basically a state of meditation. So if you start like being so it's not for me like going down, down, down, down. It was more like relaxing wherever I was, and to watch the octopuses and the fish, and then you become very like slow. And then it also, like your heart rate gets really slow. And this is like when they did all this kind of really cool experiments on animals that they took them underwater and they saw that they lived much longer if they would strangle them on air. So it's really like cruel, but it's basically because your blood goes colder, your whole oxygen gets like less, and then your heart rate goes down, and this is where you can basically live longer, actually underwater. This is something which always

struck me to Yeah, to be very close, and somehow it didn't stop. I mean, I do also, of course, other things, but it's somehow everything is related to me, like this is where everything started from, the very first moment on all the trees and everything, what we have comes basically from the marine land. So we go climbing or hiking on mountains. But then you basically see, and you realise, okay, I'm walking on a sea rock, on a sea bed, basically because everything changed and shifted during deep time. And so if we go to Finland, so, you know, Finland was once tropical. So, and now we have this age of like, think we are still in the ice age, but in a warmer ice age, and gets warmer and warmer. Of course, there's a climate change also going so, I mean, of course, maybe we just, like, speed it up much more. But also maybe it's a natural circle. So, and the next circle comes, we are gone - so...

53:08 Beatrice Pembroke

So, did you want to say anything else about that Alice or?

53:10 Alice Sharp

Just, yeah, I just think that water is such a strong theme, and I think Duk Hee's work is brilliant on so many levels. I don't know if people know about barnacles, for example, they stay on these rocks with crashing storms. Imagine managing to stay on a rock with those sorts of storms. Apparently, they stick to rock is one of the most powerful natural glues in the world, because you imagine they stay there for years. So there's really amazing things. The other thing I was going to say about water is, which is so brilliant, is there was water before there was life on the planet. So when you understand that you think of a whole different nature to water. And when we're looking at life on other planets, the first thing they always say is, where's the water? Because we can't have life without water. No planet without water can have life. So I think that kind of really shows the powerful nature of your ideas to do with the body and our connection to water. We're working on a project which is called *The Oceans Edge*. And I don't know if anyone here is a fan of Rachel Carson. Rachel Carson, for anyone who doesn't know, incredible environmentalists wrote these books in the 1950s one was called *The Edge of the Sea*, and it talks about barnacles. And I really recommend you looking at Rachel Carson. She took on the pesticides industry in the whole of the US during the 50s. She's a woman, and she's kind of the mother of the environmental movement, and she was also a marine biologist, and so we've called our project in sort of tribute to her *The Oceans Edge*. Now, as land dwellers, we always imagine we're on the edge of the land, but actually we're on the edge of the sea, and so that's why we're calling it

The Oceans Edge, and about the centre being the ocean, rather than the land. And all these types of perceptions change your view of water if you think about the oceans being the centre that changes it very much. Another thing that happened with our project is that we're working with the Amazonian Biennial during COP and they said, well, yes, but what's the link between the Atlantic, which is your project, and what's happening in the Amazon well, because of climate change. The water cycle that Duk Hee has mentioned is pulling up huge amounts of water, just incredible. We can't get our heads around it, and that is falling on the Amazon. And if you look up the Amazon, there is flooding, there is landslides, on top of all the deforestation. So the water in the sea has a massive influence on what's happening in the forest. So these kinds of circles, I think, which you talked about, I think are wonderful standing on a mountain, but then thinking about the sea, I think it's wonderful ideas.

56:16 Beatrice Pembroke

Thank you. So I just want to shift now to think a bit more about our present reality and how we respond to it, particularly in the light of the growing use of artificial intelligence and other digital technologies that demand so much energy from the planet, and how we might harness that power of the digital but also continue our regenerative practice. Iman, do you want to say a bit more about what you've been doing at Radical Ecology, particularly with your low carbon website and other tools?

56:46 Iman Dattoo

Yeah, sure. I mean, I think there's even some research looking into the sort of water consumption of AI technologies, which is quite interesting. But yeah, we've really been thinking about the ways in which we harness digital technologies. And before I was a permanent member of staff at Radical Ecology, I was commissioned to develop their low carbon website, or our low carbon website, which is essentially this digital hub to archive and act as this repository of the sort of work that we're doing, and so that it doesn't exist in this bubble of our locality, but actually speaks to some of those trans local connections that I was mentioning earlier. And so I started looking into sort of low carbon digital technologies and ways of implementing low carbon design. So that's from kind of the use of digital imagery and kind of, sort of, yeah, digital imagery, which considerably reduces the file size, but then also, but then also thinking about hosting our website on a sort of static site, rather than having a dynamic site, for example. But really it started to go beyond that idea of implementing these sorts of low carbon strategies to actually

starting to think about the internet as a space to play and changing our behaviours with the internet, our engagement and interaction with it. We're often told about, like, how we should kind of engage with the digital like the way in which we use Instagram as an interface, for example, sort of informs this endless consumption of information, rather than this attention to sort of lingering and staying a while with information. So I was really thinking about these sorts of consumption patterns that sort of inform like the way in which we sort of take too much from a technology as well. So the website is structured as an archive in a way to sort of allow for lingering, allow for you to sort of consume and interact with the information on it in a way that invites you to stay a while and play and draw connections and take a moment. So really, it's a chance to sort of change and shift your behaviour with how you engage digitally. And it sort of went beyond like, I guess, my personal thinking of like, the opportunity costs that are sort of present when we're thinking about engaging with digital technologies. Like on the one hand, they're great for sort of creating those cross national, cross community interactions that can't like happen in physical locations all the time, but at the expense of sort of the internet being, if it were a nation it was, it would be like the fourth largest polluter in the world, which is like a staggering - it's a staggering statistic, but actually, like if we are able to shift our behaviour, and we are able to take these practices of care that we centre in our in ourselves and in in sort of our real environments, into the digital space, what can unfold from that? So, I wonder with AI technology as well, like, instead of consuming the tools and being told how we should engage with that technology, what if we were to sort of take ownership of it and think about the ways in which it can actually inform those care practices? And it's something that I've only sort of just started thinking about, but I think it would be really interesting avenue to explore further.

1:00:22 Beatrice Pembroke

Absolutely Okay. I'm going to talk. Turn now to all of you. Have we got any questions that you would like to ask of the panellists? Feel like we've been doing a lot of talking. Anyone have any questions? This is your chance. Brilliant. Thank you.

1:00:40 Audience Member

Oh, it's not really a question, but on AI, I think we should try and avoid it, really, because I think it's really harmful to the environment, using so much water. You know, all the data centers they want to build it, I'm going to try and avoid it, but it's already, you know, just on your every time you do a Google search, you've got all

white AI coming up and not found a way to turn it off yet. And also on Facebook comes with quite a lot of posts. There's loads and loads of what's going on in this, and that's all AI, I just think it's very, very worrying, very concerning. Yeah.

1:01:18 Alice Sharp

Yeah, I think that's a brilliant comment. I'm very pleased that you're mentioning that I'm just developing a project which is about AI and women at the moment, and how we see our environment, because I think it's very concerning that the people that are developing AI, which is our future. It is our future. Are in the moment, very wealth white men, mostly in America, but a few in places like China. But certainly women's voices are not happening with AI, and I think it's very, very concerning. The other thing is, is AI going to be put to good purpose, like Iman just mentioned? Is it going to be something which enables us to be more in line with nature and really connect and really go at nature's pace and all of these things, because there is a lot of possibility for changing our behaviour in a positive way. Or is it going to go into this very exploitative, advanced capitalism? You know, if anybody is aware of what's happening with AI at the moment, all the major companies, Amazon, you know, everybody actually - Stargate is something that Trump is putting huge amounts of money, trillions, not billions, trillions of pounds, is going into AI at the moment, because they can see it's going to make enormous profits, enormous profits. And I just wanted to because I knew this question was going to come up about AI. An algorithm doesn't just manipulate us, us as consumers, they transform us into unpaid labourers in our own surveillance. Every search click strengthens the ties that bind us. So that's something I read in a paper, which I think is brilliant, called *Le Monde Diplomatique*. It's an English version. I'm not that good at French, but I would really recommend anybody who wants to understand the world. It's like the Guardian used to be with analysis and really kind of amazing historical things. But I do think AI, we all need to really think about what we want from it, because it's going to change our society in a way that none of us can even imagine at the moment.

1:03:43 Beatrice Pembroke

Agree, and I would say it's already in our reality. You know, it's not the future. It's already woven into so much of our lives, healthcare, justice, dating, everything. So it's about what we've actually got a second round of a show coming, which is about female and non-binary artists and technologists who have been working and playing with AI for some time. So that's coming in the spring at Kings. Any other

questions? I think there was a mic somewhere, but if you need one, I can run it over to you.

1:04:29 Audience Member

Um, hi, I'm Molly Stroyman. I'm a Climate Adaptation Officer for Lewisham Council, and I'm working on projects relating to supporting community connect to waterways. And I suppose one of the - I suppose it would be helpful for me to hear if and hearing some of the comments around some of the difficulties in and constraints in working in public space, if there's anything that we as public officers and policy makers, commissioners of work, things that we can do to make it easier to work with us and to deliver work. And then, if it's if I can be a little bit cheeky and ask a second question as well, which is, we want to be supporting underrepresented groups and artists to have more influence and say, and a place in creating spaces and making that work. And I suppose I'm also just reflecting on access to space materials, depending on the sort of type of work or space, whether you know artists who maybe don't have access to large, large spaces to work in. And I don't know if there is any sort of suggestions and happy to take this into conversations later with people and others in the room as well. But ways of making that more equitable access as well would be really great to hear about from yourselves, as people have been working in this area.

1:06:29 Beatrice Pembroke

Right, big, fundamental questions, any reflections beyond the feedback?

1:06:50 Alice Sharp

I think, I think there's lots of different things. And I think actually Suzy at the back wanted to chip in, so maybe she could chip in on the local authority side, because she's been doing some brilliant work in Sunderland and Durham, and maybe I'll chip in after that.

1:07:13 Audience Member

Thanks so much. Hi. My name is Suzy O'Hara, and as Alice says, I'm a curator and an academic at the University of Sunderland in the faculty of media and creative industries. And I'm really proud to be part of a national initiative that's been led by

Queen Mary in London and University of Glasgow, which actually touches exactly on the question there in terms of climate adaptation. And we're part of a multi-million pound UKRI initiative that's funded for coastal resilience and community coastal and community resilience programs, and it's part of a national network called Coast R. So it may be worthwhile. Just looking up Coast R, and you can kind of see a lot of stuff that's bringing together policy makers, climate adaptation local authority specialists as well as community leaders and academics working in this space, and to really kind of start to try and unpack exactly some of the questions that you've been talking about there. So we actually hosted a hack-a-thon event in University of Glasgow yesterday, and it was just really wonderful, actually. I think it's a really vibrant and dynamic space right now that people are really starting to think and call for, you know, an embedded community response in term, in a very co-developed and co-created way to these management plans moving forward, and also really in the room yesterday, calling for this longer term regenerative and sustainable thinking, and in regards to climate adaptation solutions. So there's a lot of really kind of, I would hope, radical imagination kind of being infiltrated into these spaces. And I've been brought in to do some arts-led interventions within these pilot sites that they're going to be current - they're currently kind of working on developing data around. So again, just kind of really in making sure that the arts and perspective and potential is embedded in this, in the centre of these multi stakeholder kind of initiatives, is also what I'm seeing happening now in this space too. So it's a positive, it's a positive, kind of yeah, vibe at the moment, I think, in this space, and long may it continue.

1:09:28 Alice Sharp

Yeah, just, I mean, the underrepresented question that you ask is obviously fundamental to the arts and to our future, and I think that's really, really important to get people who are facing various things around the world to speak from their own perspective and to actually create artworks which link up with other ideas, philosophies, that kind of thing. So currently, I'm working with Raqs Media Collective, who are Delhi-based. I've been working with them for about two years, looking at the monsoon. So another watery connection, the monsoon is obviously shifting. It's shifting not only in India, which is, like you know, the biggest population in the world, but it's shifting right across Southeast Asia. And who better to look at a future of uncertainty than Raqs Media Collective, which, if anyone knows them, are incredible philosophers, thinkers in these huge times of uncertainty. So I would really recommend thinking about in your area those sort of big thinking artists who bring in these really imaginative solutions. And with Raqs, we're doing an

installation in London which opens in the week of Frieze, I think it's the 15th or 14th of October. And just that opportunity to really bring in these, I mean, people are mentioning here sort of decolonial approach, the thinking of how we can go forward when we've got such an unpredictable future and wonderfully and in fact, Mala worked with me previously with Raqs Media Collective, and they talk about the monsoon as a constant friend, and they say beautiful bit of text from Monica from Raqs says, what use, what was, was constant is no longer constant as a friend. What an amazing metaphor for something which is affecting so much of the population of the world now. So I think artists like that, who can think about things in this incredibly imaginative way, are really helping us understand these really substantial problems. And I just wanted to say in terms of Justine, I want to really congratulate her, in terms of this idea of regeneration. If you think about sustainability, sustain means continue. The difference with a regeneration is you co-evolve, you coexist. And I think that's a real fundamental that she's put into this symposium. And I just want to say thanks to her for that.

1:12:15 Beatrice Pembroke

Absolutely and thank you. That is a perfect way to close. I'm afraid we're at time. But I want to thank you Alice, to Duk Hee, to Iman to Mala. Thank you so much for all your reflections and thank you all for listening and joining our conversation. I hope we can all carry that recollection of water within us. Think of those barnacles. Think of your snails and that incredible moment we had for Seyi's visualisation with the rain coming down. Thank you and enjoy the rest of the day.

1:12:52

[Applause]