

**Transcript of a recorded of a conversation between Liz Gardiner and Dr Gillian Murray
(Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health, Glasgow, November 2019)**

Bio: Liz Gardiner taught Drama and English to High School students before a spell of maternity leave prompted her to become involved in community theatre groups. She is a founding member and now director of Fablevision, which supports creative community cultural development. Liz has a Masters degree in Cultural Planning and is currently undertaking a PhD.

Thank you very much Liz for agreeing to record an interview with me today, I would just like to start with your memories of community activism in Easterhouse.

My involvement with Easterhouse was very peripheral, because I -at that time- was teaching and was aware of what was happening in Easterhouse, through colleagues in Strathclyde Theatre Group -as it was then. We were all engaged with Hugo Giffard and exploring very experimental types of theatre practise, which was amazing and people like Bill Marshall and others were developing those ideas in partnership with local people in Easterhouse, and was very aware that Easterhouse was growing in its stature and in its profile.

Easterhouse was starting to become what we would recognise as an early community development trust. It had already made links with social enterprise activity in Spain and other European countries. It had already got some European funding confirmed and all it had to have was match [funding]. And there was talk of taking over the old Wills Factory to develop us a business centre for specifically local people who needed to find places to start up as there was absolutely nothing in Easterhouse at that time, there really was nothing.

A friend and colleague, Rita Winters was doing a big mosaic project and we were beginning to understand the power of socially engaged cultural activity and when people find their own voices through telling their stories in the likes of that mosaic, for example, and the power and energy that that created, and the ideas that spun off. Things like, there was an awareness that Easterhouse was full of betting shops and all the money went to Ladbrokes, so the idea of 'why don't we have a betting shop?' that, yes, pays people, because people are going to bet -that is what they are going to do. But if we have a betting shop that actually recycles the profits and puts them into community initiatives... So there was all sort of ideas that were bubbling under; were just about to take off, but distinctions like social enterprise, community development trust, that whole dialogue -it just didn't exist, so nobody knew what this was.

Glasgow City Council was a very paternalistic, Labour-councillor dominated council and saw it as some sort of threat, so basically Easterhouse Festival Society was killed off, and those who remained: Rita Winters, Bill Marshall and others, kind of came together. I had also been involved at that time in another initiative in Paisley called Cartwheel, which was born out of -and again with no understanding either of the power of culture or social enterprise, but purely entrepreneurially- on the back of the Manpower Services Commission we had established a theatre training initiative called Cartwheel, which was couched in the language of - Manpower Services, was designed for people learning to be electricians or chippies or brickies'- So we couched it in those terms managed to get lots of young people involved in making theatre, and, yes of course, they were building sets and were electricians sorts, but that wasn't what the Manpower Services Commission idea had been, and this theatre company became really powerful and young people were having a voice and touring around winning awards, as was happening in Easterhouse. They were going to the Edinburgh Festival and getting accolades -that really wasn't the idea- Cartwheel was closed down as well. So a kind of rump of us, from both of those -initiatives, we kind of, learning from that, we decided that we will never be embedded in one local authority ever again and will make sure we are light on our feet and are able to dance about and never be reliant on one political regime. So from there we set up Fablevision. We didn't know that was starting to experiment with social enterprise. We did not know what we were doing, just responding to situations. And I think that's very much what I see looking back - that I had no idea I was

a social entrepreneur until Sencot approached me and said: 'Will you think about joining the board of Sencot, because you are a social entrepreneur?' And I said: 'what is that?'

Fablevision, originally was about making theatre and engaging, particularly people with disabilities, and people with either learning difficulties, or a lot of people who were deaf -who didn't have a facility with language. We experimented with different kinds of communicating and from there we started to have residential programmes within specific communities, where we were working in partnership with local people getting local people involved - facilitating them to tell their own stories. We did a lot of work within social work originally, in the early days empowering people with disabilities, who then eventually set up their own theatre company called Birds of Paradise. And we ended up having the first equity card carrying people with disabilities through Birds of Paradise -and they are now winning prizes and have celebrated their own 25 years of existence- so really proud of that. And the interim was working in social work, mental health services within communities in local authority areas and finding packages of funding, and putting together packages of funding for individual projects, to make sure we got to do what we wanted to do. We didn't see ourselves as providing services, we were responding to what we saw was a need, or if there was a threat to within a community -be it their building, or a local park- where they wanted to have their voices heard and make a difference and transform that. We were using creativity and cultural approaches. I didn't know at that time that was cultural planning, until we started work with -revisiting almost- the Easterhouse area where we worked in Ruchazie.

And 1990 city of culture that was a really defining time for us, because Strathclyde Region was approached by Glasgow City Council to be funding partners in this city of culture bid for 1990. And Strathclyde Regions priorities were very much social work and community development and those aspects, whereas the City Council was very much about profile and high culture and let's put Glasgow on the map. So there was a clash of ideologies there and Strathclyde Region had said we will put some money in, but only if those agendas are included in the city of culture bid -and that became an incredibly innovative approach- that had never been done before. Previous cities of culture had all been very much high art and opera, so this was a completely new, innovative initiative and Strathclyde Region looked around to see who was there, doing this sort of stuff, and the only people they could find were Projectability and Fablevision. So all of a sudden from scrambling around responding to whatever we could see and find together in funding packages, suddenly we had this 3 year -I can't remember how much it was, a lot of money in those days and in those terms- it was something like £200,000 over 3 years, which for us was a fortune. But of course we had to deliver all these enormous projects one of which was Ruchazie Ruchazie, which built a theatre in Balcomie Street in Ruchazie and the whole community told its story in outdoor, large-scale puppets. And we had actors on the back of a lorry, performing, on the tale bed. And we built the Gorbals at one end of the street and we blew that up, and had everybody streaming out of the Gorbals coming into this, what they thought was going to be new promised land, but of course it was just housing and nothing else -and the houses weren't very well built and they were damp and people got sick. So we told the whole story, or rather local people told their own story in this large-scale, high-profile production, which is still lives on in the mythical memory in Ruchazie. We also, during that period, launched Birds of Paradise, as Birds of Paradise and various other projects as well.

So by 1993 we were exhausted. We were absolutely exhausted and the money was not renewed. In fact, it was a case of: 'You have had all the money and now there is nothing in the coffers, so that's it then'. So once again we were: 'How do we operate?', 'How do we survive this?', 'What's the economic answer?' And we couldn't find one, and we were closing up shop. We were literally had the receivers in, when we received a phone call from Jean Hurstel in Strasburg, in France. And he and some of his colleagues were trying to set up a European network of artists and arts organisations who were working in this area of les banlieues: the marginalised areas -the excluded areas- because culture in Scotland and culture in France, they have both come from very different directions but with similar results. The arts and cultures in Scotland

developed from -there was the division between high arts and the rest- and high arts had all the funding and the money and the rest kind of it happened anyway, which -and it included activism- but again with no distinction in the landscape, because there were some aspects of that community type activity that were being funded -the likes of arts outreach from Scottish Opera, or Scottish Ballet, or service provision, like sports and arts --you know like-- workshops in community centres- they were being funded, but the kind of activism -and really going for quality- we were not even really included in the community arts scene in Scotland at that time, because the community arts scene very much prioritised the politics and the polemic and the quality really was not of particular interest -and we were convinced that it was both. If you are respecting a community and a people, then quality in the art is every bit as important as the message and the process and the engagement.

So we were really quite isolated in our approach, plus we had the whole Labour Party agenda of paternalism, coupled with, "let's build a concert hall and make a big splash" from the City Fathers. So there was that kind of whole cultural idea going on, which very much came from the Labour Party. Whereas in France the whole cultural movement had come from academia really and Jean Hurstel and the folks who were doing the type of work we were engaged with in Scotland, they had come through a much more academic route. So at first we had said no we are not going: 'we are closing up shop', and they insisted they would pay for it and everything would be covered, and they had to hear about what we were doing, because it was so terribly important. So we went and I spent the whole 3 days in tears in this auditorium. It was: 'Oh my god! There is other people in the world who think the same way as we do!', because we didn't even at that time have much relationship with what was happening in England or any of the other parts of the UK. We were very much isolated, so for me that was the turning point in my journey was meeting not only other practitioners who were doing it, but also thinking about it, talking and writing, and distinguishing the landscape and why, because when you are in it, you are feeling: 'it's something I am doing wrong', 'we are not getting anywhere here, it must be because we are not doing it right', and to actually to realise, no, there are folks all over Europe who are doing the same, experiencing the same things, and coming up against the same barriers. Its political it's not personal, and realising that was really the turning point for me personally in my journey.

So I came back here enthused about networks and started setting up both local networks and a national network called the Artists and Communities Association in Scotland and Sheena Wellington was a key driver in that as well and we started having these dialogues and making these distinctions and eventually had in the year 2000 the Banlieues d'Europe network conference came to Glasgow. We had that in the Tramway and we talked through these distinctions and talked about the Scottish experience and I suppose I don't think it's possible to underestimate the role that whole movement played in moving activism and that sort of cultural planning approach into a more accepted mainstream. Actually surviving it continued to be the biggest challenge. Surviving it financially continued to be the biggest challenge, because there wasn't any funding for that kind of activity and various groups were experimenting in different ways.

The way Fablevision tried to do it was by setting up a trading arm Fablevision studios. The idea being that people who are long-term unemployed learning the skills, because we were doing that anyway -on all the projects we had folks long-term unemployed- all coming and learning, and having their lives turned around through being engaged and being creative and learning new skills and interacting. So it seemed an obvious thing to set up a trading arm and that would be long-term unemployed people engaged in those activities of making films, making publications, event management -because every project we did needed a film, needed a publication, needed event management, needed social media. Although all that web and social media - when I started out it was on an Amstrad typewriter- the whole thing has changed so fundamentally in my life time -I am very, very old. So we set up Fablevision Studios as a trading arm, so that the charity Fablevision could continue just to respond and engage with artists and local community groups of whatever persuasion or kind, and create whatever was needed as an intervention -whether that was in things to do with poverty, public-space development, seeing an artefact, or a building, heritage, whatever the area was that we wanted

to intervene, we were free to do that and the Studios then providing the services to the charity. So we were putting together funding packages as a charity employing the studios to deliver the support work for the charity projects. And the Studios were also bidding for contracts for local authorities -mainly other social enterprises actually- and that was when the whole Glasgow Social Enterprise Network (GSEN) development has been very important and -anyway I am jumping forward- so the setting up of the Fablevision Studios and Senscot invited me onto the board. I can't remember if I was invited onto the board, or was just at a conference as a recognised social entrepreneur, and I had not even heard that term before. So that was another big turning point for me in my understand of what was going on was finding Senscot, joining Senscot.

Roughly what year would that of been?

When was Senscot established?

2001. Between 1999 and 2001

I think I was in year 2 because the Laurence [De Marco] and Aidan [Pia] were already there, so was Liz Thomas, I think, was on the board at that time. So I think it was not the very first year, it was maybe year 2 or 3 when I started to get distinctions around social enterprise, community development trust, and I realised that an awful lot of what I had been trying to do over the years was to establish community development. For example, in Royston Road we worked in Royston Road between 1999 and 2003 with Russell McClarty who was the local minister, he was straddling two communities the Blackhill/ Provenmill community and the Roystonhill Community. And traditionally they were competing with each other for tiny wee pots of local authority funding, so his idea was: 'why don't we join together and actually try and do something really major?'

And what we realised was that Townhead church on Royston Hill was under threat -in fact it was being demolished- but the spire was an iconic landmark, so we worked with the local folk to try and save that spire. First of all to save the church, but we failed, and then just to save the spire. And we managed to stop the demolition of the spire, so gradually we started through a series of artist residencies and initiatives to envision a community space with the spire at the centre of it, coupled with an equally iconic community space around the Molendinar Burn waterfall -where St Mongo apparently first woke up in Glasgow- and The Molendinar runs under the Glasgow Cathedral and the source of it is at Molendinar. So it is an iconic historic place. So we did do that, and that was a whole 3-year process establishing Royston Road project as a community development organisation. But fatally councillors got involved -and again we were going all across Europe telling this story with local people- and the story was praised, it was winning awards it won the SURF Award it won the BURA Award, which is the British Urban Regeneration award, and various accolades. And councillors muscled in, and the next stages of the plans of the Royston Road Project had been to establish a trading arm, which would deliver environmental improvements, and involve unemployed folk. And we wanted to take over a space to develop workshop and start-up business spaces in the school that was closing down. But councillors got involved. David Harding the wonderful public artist and together - he had been heading up public art in Glasgow School of Art for years and years and is an iconic figure world famous for all kinds of innovative practise he was the Chair by that time- and the local authority decided to do it themselves basically. So we have never quite got to the bottom how to protect, I suppose, and keep those very precious initiatives alive in the face of that kind of hostility and take over. I mean those are very, very painful experiences and sometimes the fatal flaws are internal, not just external, because community organisations -within communities used to poverty and scarcity- when there is suddenly some money they all start to fall apart and compete for the money. And you know, there are so many layers upon layers of -its not ideologically- naivety was my kind of approach. I thought all you had to do was set up an

organisation and it would all be well, but the experience has taught me it is not just external factors that are the enemy it is very often internal stuff as well. Yeah, so where are we now.

That was 2003, introduced to Sencot that was another turn in the road and a realisation that these structures and, basically, I had been the source of setting up various social enterprises over the years. Some of them had been successful and had survived, others hadn't. What was very interesting was looking back over the whole Banlieues d'Europe experience and realising that many of the founding organisations and artists from that period –academics, artists- their organisations were still in existence like Fablevision was still there. Wochenklatur, you know, various ones that had been the original founding members were still there. Whereas so many organisations had been and gone, so there was obviously something very powerful in networking and being part of a both a local, national -Sencot type of organisation- and the international network. And Scotland has really pioneered the development of the landscape, you know, Sencot launched the Development Trust Association [Scotland]. Sencot launched the [Social Enterprise] Academy. Also Firstport -to start up organisations- a whole series of networks, both locally based and thematically based. So there is now a cultural social enterprise network and there are various themed social enterprise networks as well. The locally based ones, some of them have been hugely successful like GSEN and provide huge amounts of inter-trading and most of the Fablevision studios business -that's not the charity commissions- comes through GSEN. There has been a big debate in the cultural social enterprise scene, because -I have always maintained that- the enterprise should never come out of the art, if you like, that needs to be a separate thing. Because if you try and make the enterprise the art then you are diluting what you are doing. It's still an interesting debate and it is still an ongoing debate -none of these debates have really gone away. They are all still there and we are still ever more rigorously distinguishing what we are all doing.

So there is cultural regeneration which is a whole area. There is the regeneration of culture, which is another whole other area. There is cultural planning, which is where we have been involved. There is cultural development, arts and cultural development, which is what Glasgow City Council funds primarily. And until we get real distinction around what is the difference between cultural planning and arts and cultural development there won't really be easy access for the Govan Hill Baths Trust, or the Govan Docks Regeneration Trust, or any of these organisation that are trying to take a cultural and creative approach to regeneration, because there isn't the partnership and the funding there to allow those distinctions to flourish. Glasgow City Council sees Arts development as -you look at the landscape- and you see where there isn't theatre, or there isn't art, or there isn't music, and you put it in. Whereas the cultural planning perspective is about: 'let's work with the community', 'let's help that community identify what *is* -celebrate it, nurture it develop it'. Asset Based Community Development with culture and artistic/creative processes at the core... It's like two sides, and we haven't really had those debates properly, as to what we are trying to achieve and what is the best methodology for trying to achieve it. Leith Walk, there is another example of an emerging cultural social enterprise/cultural Development Trust -and it certainly seems to be that there is something really, really powerful happens when artists work together with communities, or the artists are the community and the artists are also the activists. There is something really powerful happens when that combination is present, but at the moment there is no real place for it -it's still regarded as an irritant. And I know there are initiatives now to develop networks of community activists so we can all learn from each other and look at these examples. Because these examples are very, very powerful examples of community activism. The Stove network in Dumfries is another one –Govanhill Baths Trust- but it's the creativity the underpinning cultural planning approach to my mind that is so powerful, but we haven't really quite teased that out yet fully.

That has been a great insight in to how your work has developed over the years. Could I just back track a wee bit and kind of expand on a few areas. You mentioned right at the beginning that you were actually teaching when you became part of the Easterhouse Festival Society. When did you make the leap to stop

teaching and start the community activism and community planning when did that distinction happen for you personally?

When I had my children took maternity leave and I had been feeling more and more trapped, I loved the teaching I loved working with the young people and also out in the wider community, but felt, always felt trapped in that system.

Was it primary school children?

No high school

What did you teach?

Drama theatre studies and English up to higher level. But I always felt trapped and not able to fulfil full potential within the education system. So when I was on maternity leave I started working with the Cartwheel Folk and set-up first of all freelance workshops then got together with the team that formed Fablevision.

Who was part of that initial team?

Bill Marshall who had come from Easterhouse and Rita Winters who had come from Easterhouse, Bert Scott who had come from Cartwheel and Ian Carmichael who had come from Cartwheel and myself.

Were they all from similar teaching background?

No not necessarily. We had all we all had links to Strathclyde Theatre Groups with Hugo Gifford, who was a great inspiration, who died very young sadly. And Hugo had been experimenting with all sorts of very innovative theatre practises that were all –Augusto Boal- about improvisation, exploring character and working with communities and creating huge pageants, which -the Golden City was one which went to the Edinburgh Festival and won huge awards. So that was an inspiration that whole sort of rich, experimental place when we were students: young and forming our ideas. And then we all went off and did, and come back -having learned that is wasn't going to be as easy as we had imagined. [Laughs]

Were you on the board of Easterhouse? What was your involvement?

No my involvement was just a few workshops and being involved peripherally through Rita and Bill. Basically by the time I had started getting involved it was the end of the society, it was being destroyed. It was being ravaged in the Press, and it was being ravaged by local politicians. So I had no formal involvement at all, but learned a huge amount from being around the guys who were going through it.

What were the types of criticisms being levelled at the Society?

The artists were on the make and had offshore bank accounts -with yachts- and Bill Marshall apparently owned an island. And -just ludicrous- There was no ability to understand why any human being would pour themselves into something with such passion and commitment that their whole lives became that thing, unless there was some money in it. There was not distinction about altruism and being so driven to create. And also to make a difference in a community where clearly there was a difference desperately needing to be made. There was no understanding why would somebody, or a team of people, would devote their lives to that -if there was no financial reward, 'there must be something we don't know about' was the attitude.

So the suspicion and the gossip started. Also there was, as Easterhouse got more successful, on the one hand it was winning accolades at the Edinburgh Festival it was hugely high profile. Frankie Vaughn -there were celebrities taking an interest in it- and it had attracted European funding and that was absolutely unheard of for a community organisation. So the other community organisations were jealous. There was a culture -and this is still the case- the politics of poverty. Where people are used to such tiny resources that when one success happens they all squabble internally, and destroy it. Or if one organisation is seen to be suddenly successful the others aren't, they will turn on it. And that was what was happening. Plus, the politicians, who felt threatened, I suppose. They weren't able to be paternally acknowledged for this largess, because as they hadn't given any largess. The Easterhouse team had done it themselves, so the politicians weren't able to take credit, so they felt redundant and therefore the only thing to do is destroy it.

[That] is how I interpret what went on, because it was just destruction and then once those stories get out and about: 'oh he has an offshore bank account', and 'she has secret money', and 'he owns an island', and there are all these hundreds of thousands of pounds coming into Easterhouse: 'where is it all going?' So once that suspicion starts, it's almost inevitable. I don't think that happens so much now, as there is better understanding through the work of Senscot and all the other networks and the landscape and the learning that we have now. But it was so innovative and it was so ahead of its time. And what is very interesting to me is that the role of the artists has been written out of that story over the years. When I now read about Easterhouse Festival Society in other academic journals and publications its talked about as a local community who just of spontaneously decided to set up Easterhouse Festival Society. So there is still no real distinction of that facilitation role and the role of the artists in inspiring what happened there and Craigmillar is a bit like that as well. Easterhouse and Craigmillar are very interesting as twins because Easterhouse was developed very much from an artist's -intervention of artists prospective- Craigmillar developed more from the sort or thinkers and the academics, but with the artists as well. So Craigmillar has documented a lot much more than Easterhouse has. Easterhouse was just doing it but Craigmillar actually documented it as it went. I don't know if you have spoken to Andrew Crummy?

No but I have read his mum's book, Wee Yellow Butterfly

Let the People Sing was her first one

Sorry, I am confusing it, Wee Yellow Butterfly is about Easterhouse and Let the People Sing is about Craigmillar. I have got both. And I was wondering, at the time -was there much dialogue?

That's what I was saying, about recognising the role of networks later on -when I discovered Banlieues d'Europe... To be fair Chris Affleck and others in Easterhouse had realised the power of networking. They had been involved with the Mondragon social enterprise in Spain and they had already realised the power of looking to other examples and learning and bringing that learning back. But from a personal point of view it was only from the Banlieues d'Europe experience that I really got it. The difference between knowing something and then getting it, is huge. You can learn something intellectually, but its only when you actually experience it that you really get it. And for me it was 1993 sitting in the Banlieues d'Europe network conference, listening to others and hearing my own experience echoed, which was so overwhelming, personally, but others had, before me, realised that it was important. But no, we didn't do much networking until the Arts and Communities Association and what -the networking that we did do- we spent an awful lot of time fighting with each other.

There was a Community Arts Network in Glasgow just around about the time of Easterhouse and then up to 1990s, but, as I say, there were ideological divisions that because we had never distinguished and talked about it, we saw those ideological divisions as -one was bad and wrong, and the other was the only way to be- so we spent an awful lot of time fighting with each other, rather than understanding the role of each. The

distinction and the diverse role of each and how all that diversity coming together that makes it work. We didn't actually network and share practice, we weren't mature enough, or able to see that, at that time, so we just fought and there was factions -and those divisions still exist- but again because there has been more dialogue there is a lot more understanding now. And again I think Sencot, and the organisations that Sencot has supported into being, had a huge role to play in those distinctions.

What kind of spaces are required for those dialogues to happen? Is it as you mentioned, the different structures of Sencot, or is it conferences? If you were planning part of the social enterprise strategy today...

I just literally completed that census and I kept the saying networks, and let the networks develop their own responses -and support them in the development of their own responses- because the networks coming together they know what they need and they start to recognise what's needed and can be supported into delivering that. And what we are planning now is to have a coming together, well, it was supposed to be, a coming together of Sencot, Social Firms Scotland and Social Enterprise Scotland, but Social Enterprise Scotland are probably going to be going their own way, and it will be a coming together of Sencot and Social Firms Scotland. I hope the government understands why what Social Enterprise Scotland is proposing is not acceptable to us, because what Social Enterprise Scotland is proposing is to allow organisations that are not code compliant, or are not going to abide by the asset lock -and those of us in this dialogue are clear that the asset lock is the key --as soon as there is personal profits and shares, it's a completely different animal-- and we feel that we are being labelled as dyed in the wool, or old fashioned, or something- so we need to have these distinctions, very clearly discussed now. This is a very important time for these distinctions to be clearly articulated, because if there is an acceptance that the asset lock is not paramount then we will just be diluted.

And this is what has happened over my lifetime, you know, initiatives start up and are hugely important and sound and have integrity -the community arts movement of the 1960s, for example, was activism -was committed artists with a mission to make a difference in the world- that then became diluted with local-authority speak and it lost its power and it lost its teeth and it just became service delivery. And those of us who were the activists in that community arts movement were marginalised and we had to then find other ways -it's been my journey- has been years and ducking and diving and finding, like water, you get the block coming up so how do you find your way round that? So community arts movement became diluted but emerged as cultural planning in the 1990s.

My passion with cultural planning -and I realised that I was a cultural planner. I was actually practising, was actually working with communities to identify their resources, their history or their heritage or their landscape. Or their buildings, or their people or their culture -their myths and legends- and helping them celebrate those. I was a cultural planner and am a cultural planner, and it was very much, I could see clearly that that was the methodology that was what Patrick Geddes reported in the early part of the late 19th century early 20th century. And I could see what culture planning was, and then, that became diluted and we started to get cultural regeneration described as cultural planning: 'Let's build a big building and have arts happening in it, and that will be cultural planning'. And so, the cultural planning agenda got diluted and taken off track and stuff was being described as cultural planning, which -to my mind- was not cultural planning at all. So I am now trying to get distinctions around all that.

The same thing happened with the social enterprise movement. We started in the late 1990s early 2000s with a really clear vision of what social enterprise is, and we do now have a code, which is very clear -a social enterprise has a board of volunteers, who are not shareholders; any profits are reinvested in the social aims - very clear- and then somehow over the years that has been hijacked, or diluted and now we have social businesses calling themselves social enterprises that really are just businesses with a social purpose. Nothing

wrong with them, nothing wrong with any of it. Of course we need social businesses with a social purpose, of course we do, and of course cultural buildings are very important but we need to be clear about what they are, and where the distinctions are, and what they are going to deliver, and what they are going to achieve. If we set up social businesses with shareholders who can have return on investments, we can't expect to deliver a society of equality we need to know what we are going to deliver by going down whatever route we go down. And I think that is the biggest challenge now is because the community arts movement is still there and there is still so much that could be made happen, brilliantly, cultural planning we can still make it happen brilliantly, social enterprise brilliantly, but we need A to understand what we are talking about and B share a language. We need to have others sharing the same page and supporting the networks that are delivering the initiatives. We need cross sectoral working together with understanding of what we are actually doing instead of bandying words about that are actually not what we are needing.

So, can you see two distinct networks and support mechanisms developing for these different activities one for social enterprise with an asset lock and one with enterprises that have a social purpose, but will work more closely with the private sector -do you think there is going to be a split?

I think there is a split and the problem at the moment that we are trying to pretend there isn't. And I think until we are really, really clear and its we who need to be really, really clear -not the ones who are ignoring the asset lock because -there are support mechanisms for those organisations, those businesses -there's business gateway, there's Scottish Enterprise -there's all sorts of support for that type of activity. We need to make sure that we protect the support for the code compliant the asset lock organisations or they will disappear they will be annihilated because they cannot possibly compete against what basically is traditional capitalism - traditional business - it is not compatible or comparable and if we try and pretend that they are the same we will lose our social enterprise movement which has been so innovative and world renowned.

I was thinking about how you were talking about 'being water' making your way around these different kind of phases of dilution across your work. And you have talked about how you have had to put packages of funding together before the City of Culture funding, and for a period afterwards. I have heard similar stories from other practitioners that is just immensely stressful and exhausting and that can be a real barrier to sustainability, because just the piecemeal and the constant of funding cycle is exhausting, even if you can have enough money together to continue with?

It is totally unsustainable and that is where the idea for the Fablevision Studios came from -was to try and find a way of breaking that deadlock of constantly trying to put funding packages together. The idea was that the Fablevision studios would have a constant stream of commercial contracts that would then feed the charity and then the charity would be able to pay the bills in the meantime while it put together the next fragile funding package, by, with, and for the next community organisation. I would love to say it has been a huge success, but we have just bumped along the bottom. We are still here, but I can't say it has been hugely successful. It probably would have been in someone else's hands, but I think there are very different skills required for that kind of entrepreneurial, responsive, interventionist approach and I am naturally that -I am not naturally a manager of a social enterprise- basically that is marketing, selling and bringing in contracts: running a business and we have had various managers over the years who have been that and developed it reasonably well, but I am sure if there had been equal passion into both that there would have been more successful sustainability.

But it remains a difficult thing to balance?

Impossible, actually, absolutely impossible, totally impossible -35 years on I can say unequivocally it is impossible.

So, what keeps you going? What keeps you doing the impossible?

Just what else would I do if I didn't do what I want to do, and respond when there is something needing to be done, I don't know what else I would do.

Last question. I would like to return to talk about how letting people tell their stories and gave lovely few examples and I am thinking over the 35 years have the types of voices, have the types of stories have they changed or has there been a bit of continuity?

I don't know if the stories have changed or if I have changed. What I am engaged in primarily currently is a European Transnational Project with 6 cities. It's called Memory of Water, and what we are doing is we are looking at post-industrial water front heritage zones -so my focus is Govan grading docks- and we have partners in Stockholm and Sweden, Gothenburg, Austend, Limerick in Ireland, Levadia in Greece and particularly Gdansk in Poland, who I have actually been working with now for 5 or 6 years, because there are so many resonances between Govan and Gdansk both routed in activism -Gdansk with Lech Walesa and us with Jimmy Reid. Both have written the women's voices out of the story. We suspected that these things probably didn't happen just with these heroic men and so it has proved we have discovered that actually it was the women that were running it and these heroic men were fronting.... so.... Finding those stories, finding those histories and telling the stories again from the women's perspective that has all been very exciting.

But what I have been trying to do is really focus on: 'what is it that is missing between the artistic interventionism and the actual delivery of planning outcomes on the ground?' Because Govan Graving Docks was earmarked by the owners and developers -the owners are also house builders to 750 high rise flats- and these are iconic A listed --the last of their kind-- certainly in the UK -and there had been a series of artistic interventions some through Fablevision. Previous ones, it's been a magnet for artists over the years, and so what actually needs to happen to make that leap between the activism and the interventionism and the actual changing planning outcomes on the ground. And again its actually impossible. However, we are doing it. I suppose, the realisation of the reality of capitalism, for me, has been huge. I was very, very naive and thought we could actually set up a Govan Docks Regeneration Trust, which was done, that would be able to take ownership of the Docks. And worked with activists, Ian MacGillivray, for about 10 years now to create a new dialogue around the docks -his activism was quite traditional and confrontational and direct- and what we have brought into the mix is that symbolic and much more questioning, creative approach, involving local people and a whole sort of consultation process, artistic interventionism that creates a new seeing of the Docks, locally, so that local people see the treasure that they have in their midst. And this is happening all in these 6 cities all over Europe with exactly the same problems and issues. I think the one closest to us is Gdansk. Both Govan and Gdansk now won some victories. We have both have been following very similar paths with both activism and artistic interventionism and we have both -Gdansk managed to save their cranes so their cranes now have a historic order on them so they can't be demolished. We lost our cranes in Govan, but we have managed to put a stop on the 750 homes, so now it's like what is next and what is needed to actually take these things forward in both Govan and Gdansk, and can't remember what the question was now.

Stories and continuity and change?

So the story hasn't really changed, but, I suppose, what I was trying to say was that my reaction has changed. And I am much more dialogic-so my approach now is about- okay here's this huge problem and rather than taking one approach lets involve dialogue, lets involve 6 European cities, lets involve the local councillors and politicians and the national councillors and politicians, who have now got a conference and exhibition, that will happen in Scottish Parliament in June that will involve SNP's and all the partners from

the 6 cities. There is also an installation in the Scottish Parliament, which is about me and the Govan Graving Docks, and that is a permanent installation and this exhibition in June will be temporary, but -so try to be more strategic in the approach- rather than assuming that all that is needed is something gorgeous to happen and everybody will understand that we can't possibly build high rise flats on the Govan Graving Docks, which is where I think I was 20 odd years ago. But understanding that that is not enough, just to create the gorgeousness and we actually have to have structures and strategy in place, and all these dialogues need to happen. Not just about the Graving Docks, not just about cultural regeneration but also all the dialogues about social enterprise, it all has to happen together. Sometimes I feel the way my life has gone is, I started out thinking -I just want to make a difference with this wee thing and that will change everything- but actually I have to make a difference here at a level above first, before I can make a difference with this wee thing, and actually I have got to make a difference here at two levels above before, I can make a difference there, so that I can make a difference with this wee thing, no actually, I have to make a difference here three levels above before I can make a difference here, and it's like those dolls, those Russian dolls and now I am too old to really do it too late -does that make sense?

It makes absolute sense, and I by no means think it is too late. Sharing that understanding is a really great thing to do and we can hope that some people will listen.

I am now doing this PhD again in the hope it I can make a difference and you know the PhD -the idea of that- is to try and get the clarity and the distinctions and confidence with the distinctions myself, so that I can talk more powerfully and clearly about the distinctions and what I see from my own personal perspective and my own experience on that journey to try and spread some understanding.

That is a good place to finish unless there is anything else, we need to cover. I will stop the recording there and I look forward to reading your PhD.