

## FailSpace: The Five Facets of Failure interviews

### PRACTICE TRANSCRIPT

Liam ([00:06](#)):

I think maybe a failure you do see in, like from a community point of view is that nobody might come to be an audience for the sharing. And actually the quality of the performances might not be deemed good enough to take place within the theatre. So there is that risk that the final product isn't considered to be of the standard that it should be. And we say, well, that's not why we're doing it. We're doing it because we want to work closer with the groups and create different types of energies and performances in the foyer space, that aren't necessarily anything to do necessarily with the work on the stages. But maybe that is a failure as well. Why shouldn't the work be good enough to be on a proper stage?

Christine ([01:13](#)):

So yeah, but I guess the thing that troubles me sometimes is that when we talk about any of those practices as the right way to do it or the wrong way to do it, it feels dangerous a little bit, you know because I think that there's a place for all of those things and all of those approaches. Maybe we miss something if we're so focused on the right and the wrong way of doing a process, maybe we lose sight of the artwork too.

Kayo ([01:56](#)):

I think there are a lot of artists who claim to be experts in participation or social engagement, whatever you like to call it. But basically they are saying that working with people is at the heart of their practice and they're very collaborative. And because our whole mission is to stimulate that creativity in the people that live in our area and it's our failing because we hired them without really knowing. There's been a few occasions where that happened and it becomes clear quite quickly that they're not really interested in participants. They're interested in basically getting the money to create their own personal artwork and for it to be the best it can be. And that might involve being either disrespectful or actually harmful to the participants. But I think that's an artistic failing as well. Listen, these are artists who describe their work as being collaborative and that it's at the heart of their practice. Well, if they're failing at that, that's not just failing the participants, it's also a failing of their art too.

Laurie ([03:17](#)):

We didn't hear from the company again until a couple of months ago when we finally got him to come to the Christmas fair meeting and we asked them to come up with an idea about teenagers and they came up with a stupid idea and we said, no, I'm sorry. I mean I went home, told my teenager and he said, that's a crap idea, <laugh>. And he laughed cos he doesn't normally say things like that. It's quite funny. He looked at me and Oh, I know crap ain't swearing. But it was quite funny, the shock on his face. He was like, that's a crap idea. It made me laugh, felt loud. I think actually it is not really their fault. They are in a tricky spot cos they are trying to please everyone. I don't even know they like the idea, but there are so many different people, you know, too many cooks or whatever.

Arthur ([04:20](#)):

We got this funding to do some strategic touring and we had evaluators and everything with us and when I went and had the initial meeting with them, they said, well obviously we'll be looking at who turned up and why. I was like, no, I don't think that's going to tell us about the success of the tour. I wanted to take a different tack and think more about the artistic intention for the work, the audience's perspective. And from our perspective too. Nobody ever asked me to do that before and I think that's a failing. We can talk all day about audience development, participation in numbers, but evaluation never focuses, you know, on the actual art.