



# CHANGING THE STORY



Image: 'Workshop Space' Emilie Flower

## Working Papers Series

# #3

**Arts-based research practices and alternatives:  
Reflections on workshops in Uganda and Bangladesh**

Ruth Kelly and Emilie Flower, June 2018

# Arts-based research practices and alternatives

## Reflections on workshops in Uganda and Bangladesh

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### Summary

Sometimes those of us who are working for social justice are so caught up with tactics for resisting injustice that we forget to talk about what we are campaigning for; what we want the world to look like. But without imagining different possible worlds, we are left with the dreams of the powerful. For many, they are experienced not as dreams but as nightmares of insecurity, precarity, violence and hopelessness.

In July 2017, two groups of academics, artists and activists held research workshops in Kampala and in Dhaka to explore how art could help us imagine and inhabit new ways of being, feeling and knowing, opening space to begin to articulate alternatives. We worked from the premise that imagination is not just something we have; it's something we generate together, through shared experiences, languages and ideas; through image, stories, dance, and music. Tapping into the rich cultural and artistic heritage of the places we come from, participants used art to experience the world differently and to dream up visions of a more just and sustainable world.

The use of art in collaborative ideas-making and efforts to effect change is currently enjoying a resurgence amongst researchers, activists and international development practitioners. There is well-grounded critique of the unequal power dynamics associated with this kind of socially conscious art-making, and the risk of art-washing problematic practices. What is less clearly articulated is how the arts can lead participants – whether researchers, activists or development practitioners – to new ways of knowing and imagining, disordering familiar power and knowledge inequalities to make way for new ideas.

In this working paper, we (Emilie Flower and Ruth Kelly) situate, describe and reflect on the two three-day workshops in Kampala, Uganda and Dhaka Bangladesh. We explore whether and how arts-based research practices can disrupt dominant ways of knowing and performing 'development,' allowing activists and practitioners to explore different ways of knowing and to identify and articulate alternatives.

This is a paper primarily about research methods and approaches, although we also share some findings. We do not describe the participatory artistic practices that we used in any detail; there are plenty of toolkits that will do this far better.<sup>1</sup> Nor do we describe the details of the research methods employed; they are also well documented in qualitative methods texts.<sup>2</sup> Our aim is to describe an experimental process, in which we tried to disrupt our own practice and to embrace the disruptive power of the arts.

The research is nested in theory, our own experience as practitioners and our confidence in the methods we were using. We had the luxury of being able to carry out research without a pre-determined goal, with supportive departments and colleagues in the University of York and ActionAid, and

with flexible funding provided by the UK Research Councils and the University of York.

This paper is definitely not meant to tear to shreds current approaches in international development research and practice. Neither of us takes this approach in everything we do. There is much to preserve in how things have been done and the lessons we have learned along the years.

Rather, we want our readers to be excited by what we found out, interested in the creativity, entertain their scepticism and avoid critiquing their practice in contrast to our own. We hope we capture the flavour of this experimental, open research, where we sought to borrow and steal in the spirit of arts-based practices. Not all of what we describe will be new to you, but we think that the dimensions we describe aren't as well documented as other aspects of participatory approaches.

As researchers and writers, we are being normative, not neutral. We hope that you, reading this paper, feel interested enough to find points where you disagree and where you could add new insights, and hope that you might share these with us.

## **Authors**

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**Ruth Kelly**'s doctoral research (University of York, in collaboration with ActionAid) explores the potential for art and narrative to help communities and activists articulate alternative approaches to development. In the past, Ruth has worked as a policy adviser on campaigns run by international development NGOs Oxfam and ActionAid on themes including food prices, land rights, and tax, trade and investment policy.

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## Background to our research

The workshops that took place in July are part of a bigger project, led by Paul Gready at the Centre for Applied Human Rights and in collaboration with ActionAid, establishing a network of practitioners, artists and activists interested in exploring how art and creative activism can help us to explore the theme of development alternatives. As part of that project we are developing and testing new creative methodologies that might equip researchers and practitioners to perform research and participation in a way that elicits (rather than suppressing) alternative perspectives traditionally marginalised in development debates.

The themes of the research were developed by a group of academics and practitioners who are keen to see a change in the way development is done; it was normative from the start. The inclination of all those involved is towards applied research, oriented towards the possibility of real-world change. All of us have been involved in the human rights and development industries for some time and have personal experience of playing out the contradictions and hypocrisies of those industries, as well as positive and valuable experiences of working with inspiring colleagues from a wide range of countries and backgrounds.

The research sites, Bangladesh and Uganda, were chosen partly based on interest from ActionAid affiliates with good networks among activists and artists, but also because they are both 'laboratories' of conventional development where politics is closely bound up with the development industry and, at the same time, places where critical, alternative voices have emerged.

There is a huge body of work critiquing the international development industry for de-politicising processes of change and making existing structures seem inevitable.<sup>3</sup> But the considerable focus on critiquing this industry can mean that too little attention is paid to alternative approaches, contributing to their marginalisation. In developing the methodology for this research, I (Ruth) was inspired by the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos and of J.K. Gibson-Graham: while they start off questioning dominant paradigms – Western epistemologies<sup>4</sup> and capitalism,<sup>5</sup> respectively – they put considerable emphasis on uncovering and proposing alternatives – epistemologies of the South<sup>6</sup> and community economies,<sup>7</sup> respectively.

Our methodology and analysis is informed by the following themes and questions:

- **Performance:** Recognising that different actors (local, national, international), perform development in historically and culturally defined ways, whether and how creative methodologies can be used to help all actors (including the researchers) to break out of traditional roles, articulate aspirations, and enlarge the scope of what 'development' itself means.
- **Disruption:** whether and how art and creative activism can help to disrupt restrictive and dominant understandings of reality, open up new imaginary spaces, and uncover and direct attention to disruptive practice that challenges hegemonic and mainstream approaches.

## The promise of participation in international development

The emergence of participatory development and associated participatory action research (PAR) methodologies and tools in the post-war years has left a singular mark on the field of rural and community development, especially in the global South. Praised for their effectiveness and damned for their broken promises, these methodologies have morphed into a plethora of toolkits, handbooks and practices.

We hesitate before defining participatory methods and approaches too clearly: the field includes a massive ecosystem of different activities and tools; these terms don't mean just one thing. As a practitioner, using and seeking out participatory arts-based practices I (Emilie) trace my pedagogy to the work of two principle practitioners: the socialist 'conscientisation' of Paulo Friere; and the toolkits and techniques of rural extension worker and researcher Robert Chambers.

In his 1968 book *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Friere argues for the co-creation of knowledge through the use of a reflexive teaching method that allows people to find their own voice, understand their situation and fight for change. He calls this process 'conscientisation.' Friere was jailed and exiled for his radical ideas and his book was banned in many totalitarian regimes, including South Africa during apartheid. It was also adopted as a teaching aid by many American colleges and ushered in a reflexive process that underpins much participatory practice to this day.

Robert Chambers played a key role in bringing Freire's approaches in from the rebellious margins through his work creating and documenting a body of ranking and sorting tools that could be used with any group of people to visualise local knowledge and organise development from the bottom up. In the late 1990s, he was a key driver of the iconic *Voices of the Poor* project, taking priorities articulated by people living in poverty into the World Bank to inform the new Millennium Development Goals.

Participatory arts-based practices – film, photography, drawing, digital storytelling, mural, music, dance and theatre – occupy a specialist niche in the vast ecosystem of participatory methods. Some, like participatory video, my (Emilie's) own specialism, attempt to harness the technologies of art to magnify local voice, bridge divides between policy makers and marginalised groups, and open up new dialogues. At the other end of the spectrum, the reflexive process of making art is used as a form of therapy and to make visible strengths and dreams that lie hidden or unresolved.

In an influential critique published in 2001, Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari<sup>8</sup> argue that the focus in participatory practice on the empowerment of individuals or small groups, ignoring structural power, means that the imbalances that need to be so carefully circumnavigated through the use of complicated participatory tools continue; this leads to a 'tyranny of participation' where authorities create the illusion that they are listening while ensuring that everything remains the same.

While they do not dismiss this critique, many practising participatory researchers continue to feel that participatory methods have considerable value. In a response to Cooke and Kothari, Samuel Hickey and Giles Mohan

identify examples of participatory development interventions that have led to what they call 'genuine transformations.'<sup>9</sup> The influential researcher Andrea Cornwall notes in particular the value of egalitarian consensus building dialogues that form a backbone to participatory practice; whether they are being used to empower individuals, contribute to healing processes or enable meaningful local impact, these methods do help people to work and create together where they might not otherwise have done.

## **Description of the research methodology**

In their work, J.K. Gibson-Graham describe a process of disrupting dominant ideas, constructing alternatives, and cultivating subjects who want to see and experience alternatives by adopting new ways of thinking and feeling.<sup>10</sup> A similar process of disrupting dominant ideas, describing alternatives and inhabiting new ways of doing, feeling and knowing emerged in our own practice.

A wide range of theorists point to the power of arts-based research practices to disrupt dominant conventions and paradigms,<sup>11</sup> – Boaventura de Sousa Santos sees value in how the arts distort reality and make the shifting, multifaceted, ambiguous nature of the world more obvious<sup>12</sup> – and to capture the sensory, emotional and embodied dimensions of lived experience more effectively than other social-science methods.<sup>13</sup> Like Gibson-Graham, arts-based researcher Susan Finley seeks to use the arts to cultivate subjects who desire alternative ways of being in the world; she argues that arts-based practices can render 'personal identity, culture and social order unstable, indeterminate, inchoate, and amenable to change,' allowing 'ordinary people, you and me, researchers as participants as audiences [to] implement new visions of dignity, care, democracy and other postcolonial ways of being in the world.'<sup>14</sup>

The use of art in collaborative ideas-making and efforts to effect change is by no means new, but is currently enjoying a resurgence amongst researchers, activists and international development practitioners.<sup>15</sup> We know from past experience that there is always a risk that art is merely tacked on to or even used to disguise existing ways of doing things; to 'art-wash' development. There is a well-grounded critique of the unequal power dynamics associated with this kind of socially conscious art-making. We wanted to explore and document a constructive dimension of this critique, testing how arts-based practises might lead to new ways of knowing and imagining for participants – whether researchers, activists or development practitioners – and asking whether these practices could disorder those familiar power and knowledge inequalities to make way for new ideas.

Some of the best examples of taking a participatory approach to research involve treating participants as co-researchers, including them in discussions about the direction of the research and in the analysis of the research findings, and acknowledging their expertise,<sup>16</sup> but the expertise that participants bring is usually distinguished from that of the researchers. So, participants are seen to bring experiential knowledge and researchers more theoretical knowledge. This model is not exactly replicated in our project. Our research involved intercultural exchange, rather than ethnographic or anthropological work with informants, and sought hybridised rather than 'authentic' knowledge.

As you, reading this paper, may have done in your own work, and partly because of the kind of participants that were involved in the workshops, we saw participants as valued colleagues and experts not just with regard to their personal experience, but also with regard to art and activism in Uganda and Bangladesh and, crucially, with regard to our theoretical discussions.<sup>17</sup> Like us, all participants had been exposed to different theories and perspectives in the context of their academic, activist or artistic engagement and many of the participants had themselves run workshops or trained others on related issues. And we, just like the other participants, brought our own immediate personal experience of knowing in different ways in different contexts, not just as an auto-ethnographic addition to our written analysis, but to our own practice and contributions in the workshop itself.

We share many of Cooke and Kothari's reservations about participatory practices, but it was important to take a participatory approach in the workshops to ensure that participants were able to share their experience and theoretical knowledge. In using an arts-based methodology, there were some insights that we (Emilie and Ruth) could access through observing what participants were doing and saying and through reflection on our own experience and behaviours, but there were other insights that could be accessed only when participants shared their own reflections on how they experienced the workshop and the relationship between the workshop and their pre-existing theoretical perspectives and knowledge. Taking a participatory allowed participants and researchers alike to experience behaving like an artist and to describe what that felt like.

More importantly, we hoped that taking this approach would allow participants to disagree with us. Despite our efforts to treat participants as colleagues and experts, it is important to acknowledge the power we had in designing and defining the terms of the workshop. Our influence goes beyond that which qualitative researchers always have on what they are researching; our involvement in transnational advocacy networks means that we are heavily invested in relationships and agendas that drive and influence the research; we could not help but be strongly normative in our approach. Given our normativity and the multiple assumptions underpinning the research, we felt that it was important to share the theories behind the workshop with them, but in a way that was digestible and in a way that they could disagree with. In line with Santos' proposals for developing an epistemology of seeing (other non-Western knowledges), we wanted to create a 'contact zone' where differences could impel relationship and dialogue, rather than a situation where diversity is silenced by the fact that dominant participants assume or enact essential similarity between different cultural perspectives.<sup>18</sup> Seasoned performance ethnographer Dwight Conquergood calls researchers to make a radical commitment to dialogue, to resist the 'totalizing domination of a single viewpoint' bringing as many voices and perspectives as possible into the conversation in order to counter 'the normative with the performative, the canonical with the carnivalesque.'<sup>19</sup>

Participatory arts-based researcher Maggie O'Neill argues that bringing together arts-based and ethnographic methods can create a 'potential space,' that is, 'a reflexive/relatively safe space for dialogue, images and narratives to emerge that approach the world and research in a different way.'<sup>20</sup> This

liminal or potential space is not only cognitive, but can be a physical space: recognising the impact of the location of the research on what we could achieve was an important part of our methodology. The environment where research happens, including the different bodies and the setting, is an important dimension of and can even frame what is said.<sup>21</sup> In my own practice, I (Emilie) have felt that traditional settings for development interventions prompted or even constrained participants to perform in a particular way. I wanted to unsettle these constraints by carrying out the research in a messy, chaotic space associated with the arts rather than development.

## **Description of the venue and participants**

In July 2017, two groups of academics, artists and activists held research workshops in Kampala and in Dhaka to explore how art could help us imagine and inhabit new ways of being, feeling and knowing, opening space to begin to articulate alternatives.

At the beginning of July, we held our first workshop in Kampala, Uganda, in Makerere University Art Gallery, a rectangular one-room building with white walls and large windows, which is regularly used for art exhibitions. We invited a range of activists involved in creative campaigning, challenging corruption, unemployment and land grabbing as well as three artists who use different artistic mediums; film, poetry and rap music. A number of the activists have been arrested without charge for political activism on at least one occasion; as such, we have chosen not to name them in this paper. All of us are educated to a high level and we are all involved to some extent in the transnational networks of researchers and activists associated with the human rights and development industries; many of us also had experience of transnational faith networks, notably charismatic protestant denominations of Christianity. Three participants were parents and this theme was discussed in depth during breaks; one was a single mother, and the two fathers had significant or primary caring responsibility for their children. The gallery's curator, Hasifa Mukyala, and a Leeds-based expert in East African theatre, Professor Jane Plastow, joined for some activities.

At the end of July we held a second workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in a four-story villa that houses the ActionAid-supported Global Platform, which provides space for training activists and practitioners. We invited two experts in theatre activism: founder and Director of Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts in Chittagong, Sisir Dutta; and Ribon Khandoker Halima Akther, an Associate Professor at Jahangirnagar University who is also a director for a Dhaka-based theatre group. We also invited Alauddin Ali, expert in participatory action research at grassroots level and director of an ActionAid partner organisation, and Luna Noor, former president of Bangladesh Student Union and Community Party activist, as well as two up and coming artists, graphic designer Istela Kazi, from a relatively elite background, and Chittagong-based installation artist Shohrab Jahan. Three colleagues from Global Platform Bangladesh also joined us: Manik Mia and Duniya Khandoker are Bangladeshi; and Anusha Witt is Australian with family in Malaysia.

## Description of workshop activities

Despite overlap in our skills and interests, for the purposes of these workshops we took on clear roles; Emilie as facilitating artist and Ruth as academic researcher and observer. In practice our roles were often blurred: Ruth contributed to facilitation in explaining the theory behind the research and Emilie was fully involved in analysing findings.

I (Ruth) framed the workshops with a brief description of the work of Max Haiven and Alex Khasnabish on the radical imagination circulated to most of the participants in advance: without investing time in imagining how things could be, we are left with the dreams of the powerful; a revitalised political imagination is not just something we have, but something we generate together, through shared experiences, languages, art and ideas.<sup>22</sup>

We spent a lot of time moving around and filling the large empty gallery space in Kampala by using theatre games,<sup>23</sup> arrangement of chairs, etc. and participants occupied the smaller space in Dhaka, partly through movement, but largely by sitting or lying on the floor - we quickly got rid of the chairs. In both places, as one participant put it, we made a mark on the space, by drawing around our bodies and using those frames for further arts-based inquiry; in Uganda, with chalk directly on the walls and, in Bangladesh, with pastels, chalk, poster paint and fabrics on the sugar paper we had used to cover the walls. Both spaces were turned into film sets on the third day: in Dhaka we taped our blue bed sheets over a wall to create a backdrop, while in Kampala participants chose a location in the gallery and its gardens where they would perform a poem composed in response to a powerful session on oral poetry led by Susan Kiguli.

In Dhaka, we departed from what we had done in Kampala by focusing more on traditional cultural archetypes and on visual culture, identifying local cultural historical heroes that inspired participants. Some participants recorded discussions by drawing cartoon images as others spoke about a range of themes including what constitutes good and bad art. Inspired by Bengali utopian literature, we imagined worlds 100 years in the future. We visited the National Museum together which inspired discussion about who owns the narrative of Bangladeshi history.

In each workshop, we made time for breaks and informal discussion before and after each structured activity, which often continued into the evening. In both places, I (Ruth) introduced participants to theory about how workshops bring together different dimensions of experience - sensory, performative, theoretical, political - using the metaphor of catching fireflies in a net. I used different cartographic projections and poetry<sup>24</sup> to illustrate how systems of knowledge are all distortions of reality, representing some information and making it seem important while leaving other information out.

On the margins of the workshop in Kampala, we visited a number of artists' studios in Kampala and attended a performance of traditional Ugandan dances. One evening, a participant introduced us to a union organiser and gave us a walking tour of key sites in Kampala, including the National Theatre, now at risk of privatisation.

After the workshop in Dhaka, we visited a number of art galleries and studio spaces, viewing works by hundreds of Bangladeshi artists and discussing the role of art in activism with a number of artists. Ruth also spent a day at the department of fine and performance arts at Dhaka's Jahangirnagar University.

## **Summary of findings**

This short piece of very intense research (despite not being crammed with methodological steps and timetables) generated many avenues of thought.

In Kampala, reflections by participants at the end of the workshop prompted us (Emilie and Ruth) to begin thinking about how the arts can facilitate embodied cognition or thinking by doing: just draw; just write; just shoot; just move. Other themes included how to maintain the tension of disagreement rather than falling into bland consensus and the idea of deference in art. We reflected on the value of laziness in the creative process and the effectiveness of inefficiency. Our Ugandan colleagues insisted on the importance of specifying the link between our research and activism in practice, discussed in more detail in the final section of this paper.

The idea of embodied cognition continued to come out in the workshop in Dhaka, but also the discomfort that participants feel in this type of experimentation. We thought about the instrumentalisation of art in international development and identified key tropes and taboos in politically-oriented art, notably the ambiguity of the theme of violence. We were struck by the prominence of visual art in vernacular culture, and by the way that the use of colour helped participants to talk about their emotions. The artistic response prompted reflections on the difficulty of getting past romanticised visions of the future to capture a vision with a more critical edge.

While the workshop in Uganda was conducted almost exclusively through English, the workshop in Dhaka was bilingual, with participants often lapsing into Bangla to explain important points, creating a separation between those who didn't speak Bangla (Emilie, Ruth and Anusha) and other participants, which meant that we missed out on some of the theoretical discussion.

In both workshops we were struck by the value of bringing together artists, activists and academics. Not only do they bring different references, but they also used these to challenge each other. In addition their varying expertise took over at certain times. In Dhaka the theatre director, Ribon led the scripting and costume design of the collaborative scenario and installation artist, Shohrab, brought questions to conversations that were designed to prevent resolution. In Uganda Susan's academic rigour and full bodied descriptions of poetry inspired the other participants, while the debates between activist colleagues drew the artists closer to their work.

We had introduced materials from local and international artists, poets and authors, brought in activist and academic theory, arts-based methods and vague outcomes, and mixed people from different backgrounds some of whom were slightly hostile to those of other participants (in Bangladesh many artists avoid the development industry) or intimidated by them (in Uganda the rarified space of academia is far removed from most people's

lives). Together we explored what it might mean to behave like a researcher but also to behave like an artist.

## **Researching like an artist**

Overviews of arts-based research practices tend to categorise by medium, rather than by technique. I (Ruth) suggest an alternative categorisation, distinguishing the following practices that could be adopted by the researcher or by research participants:

- behaving like an artist;
- creating an artwork;<sup>25</sup>
- responding to an artwork;<sup>26</sup>
- using art to communicate findings;<sup>27</sup> and
- reading art as a theoretical contribution in itself.<sup>28</sup>

Such a categorisation also allows us to move beyond strict distinctions between different artistic genres and mediums where such distinctions are not helpful. For some arts-based researchers, classification by medium is not a matter of convenience, but reflects reality; for example, Patricia Leavy argues methods in different genres are not interchangeable but require knowledge of the discipline from which each artistic medium emerged and what it is good for.<sup>29</sup> However, this sits uncomfortably in the Ugandan context where, as Susan Kiguli points out in her academic work, 'no community performance... can be complete without a mixture of music, dance, play and poetry',<sup>30</sup> and in the monic perspective to art taken by participants in Bangladesh, who see different mediums as inseparable.<sup>31</sup>

With notable exceptions,<sup>32</sup> much literature on arts-based research methods discusses what is discovered through a reading of the final product, rather than what is discovered through the process of making art. We were struck by the disruptive power of the experience of behaving like an artist to disentangle, shake, upturn and interrogate ideas about dominant political and economic structures and conventions.

In the course of the research we identified a number of ways that researchers might access new insights by behaving like artists through: embodied cognition; unaccounted-for time and space; deference to expertise and skills; awareness of performativity (on-stage/off-stage dynamics); and noticing what's there not what we expect. The techniques and materiality of arts-based methods can help participants to inhabit alternative epistemological standpoints. Each of these dimensions will be discussed in more detail in the next version of this working paper.

But a warning. Delving into the roots of artistic practice is a little like pulling on the loose thread of a knitted jumper; it is an endless unravelling of threads that reaches deep into history. We cannot hope to fully describe what it is to behave like an artist or define this behaviour; however, we are developing fuller descriptions of some of the disruptive and thought provoking practices of artists that we intentionally embraced as part of our arts-based practice. The emphasis of this approach is not getting information from people, nor is it making information together. It is about growing a collective confidence in your ability to work individually and together which creates a fertile environment for new and disruptive ideas to flourish.

## Conclusion: skills to survive

Towards the end of the process, we returned to the question of whether the arts-based practices we used had helped us to imagine and articulate alternatives. At least three participants felt that the arts provided a platform for critical thinking, to provoke people to think more deeply. One participant said that practising arts allowed participants to 'gain skills to survive' in the face of the unexpected:

I think in a way we are talking about utopias, we are also talking about daring and thinking about the unexpected, inviting the unexpected to be part of what then we begin to create as a norm. So it's not a stable space.

Rather than coming up with concrete examples of alternatives, I (Emilie) feel that the workshop contributed to discussions of alternatives by offering a different way of approaching research and practice, that is, an alternative process to use in engaging with and challenging dominant paradigms in international development and politics more broadly. This conception is more exploratory and creative than goal driven and milestone driven; looks to develop a way of being rather than a blueprint for a better world. (But it's important to see these findings in context: an emphasis on ideas in a research project so interested in 'process' rather than output, is bound to find that the process is the utopia.) As such, the workshop could be understood as contributing to the tradition of feminist utopian writing. Rather than imagining and describing the revolutionary substitution of the world for an alternative blueprint, feminist and proto-feminist writers through the centuries have tended to imagine gradual reform and ongoing change, with learning, adaptation and shared power described as pragmatic responses to a changing world.<sup>33</sup>

In his work, Santos argues that alternatives are needed to stimulate resistance: the right takes advantage of the power of resignation to stifle resistance in its claim that there are no alternatives. However, in the light of potential tension between short-term and long-term goals, he argues for 'open-ended formulations of an alternative society whose strength relies more on the intensity with which it rejects the current state of affairs than on the precision of alternatives advanced;' such formulations are very different from those that underpin the 'Eurocentric critical tradition.'<sup>34</sup>

In uncertain territory, process-oriented utopias, or stories of how we have lived together and learned, are more useful than descriptions of worlds. The process of negotiating or mapping this territory and working out ways of life can be understood as retrospective storytelling, retracing our own steps or those of the ancestors. As we negotiate a constantly changing world and uncertain future, our movement is informed by these stories, but also by a scanning movement, as our whole bodies reach out and respond (or adapt) to the continually moving and changing environment.<sup>35</sup>

## Postscript

A few weeks after the workshops, one of the artists sent us the following reflection:

I never really saw myself as an activist but an artist. But perhaps what I can say is the workshop reawakened my need to make more careful art. More intentional art. Art that speaks more clearly than we usually allow. For me, meeting those Activists inspired me and listening to some of their stories made me bolder. I'm not saying this just because it might appear nice in your report but I'm very sure my activism will be bolder in my work. There are some Activists who truly inspired me and made me question why I don't take enough risks for the things I believe in. So as an artist, I found that I need activism to remind me of why I do art and what I stand for.

## End notes

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Insightshare 2010

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Ferguson 1994; Escobar XXX, Sharma 2008; Ghosh 2015. Similar critiques have been made of human rights, see for example, Slaughter, Mutua, Kennedy

<sup>4</sup> Santos 2014a)

<sup>5</sup> Gibson-Graham 2008a

<sup>6</sup> Santos 2014b

<sup>7</sup> Gibson-Graham 2006

<sup>8</sup> *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, 2001

<sup>9</sup> 'Participation : From Tyranny to Transformation' (2004)

<sup>10</sup> 2008a, x; cf. Gibson-Graham 2006

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Bleiker 2009; Eisner 1997; Finley 2005; Jones 2006; Leavy 2009, 254; O'Neill 2008; and Pelias 2008

<sup>12</sup> 2014a, 161

<sup>13</sup> Jones 2006, 69; O'Neill 2008, 8-9, 12

<sup>14</sup> 2005, 689

<sup>15</sup> Stupples and Teaiwa, 2016

<sup>16</sup> cf. Banks and Armstrong et al. 2014; Pain, Whitman, Milledge and Lune Rivers Trust 2012

<sup>17</sup> For further discussion, see Barber 2007, 98

<sup>18</sup> cf. Santos 2014a, 218; see also Askins and Pain 2011, 805, 807

<sup>19</sup> 1982, 11, cited in Madison 2012, 186

<sup>20</sup> 2008, 9

<sup>21</sup> Madison 2008, 394

<sup>22</sup> 2014

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Boal 1998 [1974], 135-8

<sup>24</sup> Kei Miller 2014

<sup>25</sup> cf. Kiguli and Plastow 2015

<sup>26</sup> cf. Pink 2007, 75-94

<sup>27</sup> Leavy 2009, 4, 63-64, 135-136

<sup>28</sup> cf. Nelson 2013

<sup>29</sup> Leavy 2009, 259

<sup>30</sup> Kiguli and Plastow 2015, 32

<sup>31</sup> For a discussion of how different textual genres interrelate in a specific cultural context, see Barber 2007, 36-43

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Askins and Pain 2011, Finley 2005 and O'Neill and Hubbard 2010

<sup>33</sup> Johns 2015, 177-178, 186-187

<sup>34</sup> Santos 2014a, 23, 28

<sup>35</sup> Ingold 2000, 232, 242, 244