

Listening, Interpretation, Colonisation and Decentering – Reflections on With For About 2023: Care and the Commons

Dr. Fiona Whelan

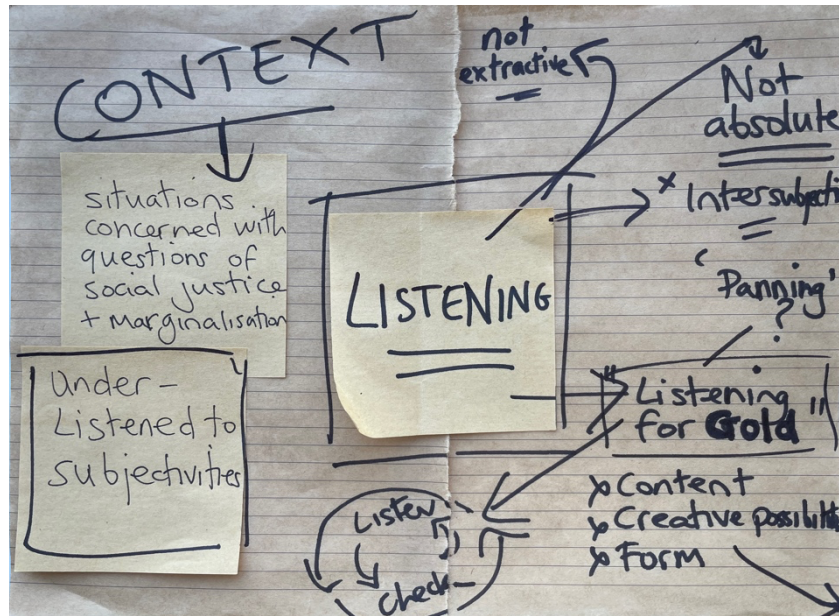


Image credit: Dr. Fiona Whelan, *mapping listening in practice* (detail), from a collaborative mapping process with Dr. Ciaran Smyth, supported by South Dublin County Council, 2023.

Introduction

As an artist and educator rooted in the field of socially engaged practice, attending conferences, talks, panel discussions and events is a valued component of my practice methodology – an important time and space to sidestep from one's daily commitments and processes, to dock into diverse ideas and thinking. Sometimes I have a specified role in the order of events and other times my role is as an audience member in attendance. Either way, I enjoy crossing out that slot in my diary and giving myself over to such an event, to some other person or group's careful curation of a day populated with different formal and informal sessions. A day where new thoughts and feelings can be evoked, different subjectivities elicited, and new unexpected conversations prompted with people I may or may not have met previously.

When asked to take on the role of Listener-in-residence at With For About (WFA): Care and the Commons in May 2023, I was excited to attend. Having seen the draft programme, I looked forward to being exposed to the content and contributors at this in-person conference, and spending a day hosted by Incredible Edible at Court Hey Park in Knowsley. But what was particularly unique in this invitation, was the opportunity to simultaneously attune myself to the embodied practice of attending a conference, reflecting on the specificity of this experience and pedagogical form.

To communicate my reflections, I have opted to write a series of vignettes, which like a conference, move between different

spaces and different registers of language. The content of my reflections embraces the full embodied experience of a conference from the formal scheduled presentations to informal conversations with others who are sharing the experience, to the personal private reflections that emerge.

Importantly, I do not intend to summarise the event or present an explicit overview of key themes that arose on the day. I've resisted any such tendency in favour of a more personal, partial, affective, and intersubjective experience of the conference. In writing this way, I find that multiple complex themes come into view in all their complexity, intersecting and threading through the passages of text – themes that are not easily reducible to summarising statements but exist in the inhabited, relational and textured experience of WFA 2023. Rather than attempting a complete analysis, I'm hoping that the writing that follows becomes as anthropologist Kathleen Stewart describes 'a contact zone for analysis', where the reader finds their own connections, resonances and understandings.¹

Morning

It's a smallish room, cosier than expected. Others are taking their seats. There is the hum of chat. I met some people at dinner last night, so we say hello. Smiles and nods. A few niceties. I'm feeling good. I just had a cup of tea in a nearby tent. *A brew*. The atmosphere is welcoming. The sun is hot. *Dead hot*. I take my seat near the front. I'm tuned in to myself and what's going on around me. Despite my role as Listener-in-residence, it strikes me that so far, I'm not really behaving much differently from how I would at any conference I attend, except for my front-row seat perhaps. I will be introduced soon and will present some 'Notes on Listening' before the day kicks off, so I need to stay close to the activities. My notebook and pen come out of the bag, nothing new here. I'm rarely without them. A sort of compulsion of mine to write down what I hear, a good habit for listening or a bad one. I'm not sure, but it's such a habit now, I'd panic without some pages and any form of pen, pencil or marker, as a means to capture an experience in words. I've thought about this practice of notetaking before. How important it is to me. No audio recorders, no best recall, just in-the-moment notes, scrawled in any direction on a page to be deciphered later. Best attempts at quotes, verbatim phrases, key points. But I'm not just noting what is being said. I also note my observations, ideas, thoughts that flit through my mind as I listen, thoughts that may flit away as just as quickly. Caught in flight and captured with ink. Arrows connect parts of a page that make sense. Stars are used to note important things. Lightbulbs for ideas. All sorts of code and emphasis created in the moment. Ready, I sit and await the proceedings.

A row of chairs faces the room with a screen behind them. The hosts from Heart of Glass take these seats, with British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter and artist Pierce Starre to their left. I am immediately stirred from my comfort. I am here to listen. My imminent presentation is about the practice, power, and politics of listening, with references to listening without your ears, listening to the inaudible, creating the conditions for listening in a world that overemphasises voice. These themes have informed my collaborative art practice for over a decade. But as I look at Pierce, I feel unsettled by the inadequacy of the language I will use to describe my concerns. I imagine the possible translation of these phrases to communicate to someone who is Deaf.

A few seats behind me, I can hear someone speak about courgettes and peas to their neighbour. Despite being in a different country with different accents in my ear, I know this room. I know these people, even though I have never encountered them personally. The conference sets out with the provocation to ‘go beyond “othering” nature and reimagining a reciprocal relationship with it’, questioning how ‘we listen to and centre dismissed or sometimes inaudible voices (such as our more-than-human neighbours)’.² This of course positions these people centrally – the ones who can talk about courgettes and peas with complexity. I’m not so comfortable in these conversations. I don’t know enough, but I know that these conversations and eco-practices must not be exclusive in the face of the devastating human-induced climate crisis that surrounds us. For now, I remain aware of the judgements that are present in me and remain without the knowledge to decode the conversation I’m overhearing.

Conference presentation: Notes on Listening

Creating the conditions for listening

My arts practice is committed to exploring and responding to systemic power relations and inequalities through long-term cross-sectoral collaborations with diverse individuals, groups and organisations. These processes are typically rooted in complex relational networks and typically accumulate over time through a series of public manifestations. Around twenty years ago, starting into this kind of work, I developed ways of listening to those I was working with. Not just listening but demonstrating that I was listening, by constantly sharing back what I was hearing, and seeing the potential of that cycle. There was a particular project about power and policing in which young people had shared experiences of policing and being policed.³ Our collective of young people, youth workers and artists were planning an encounter with members of An Garda Síochána (the Irish police force) where these stories could be presented in some way and where we could unsettle power relations, and as we tried to figure out the aim of the encounter in our group, one young person said that what they wanted from this experience, was *to be heard* by the police. A clear ambition, but through conversation, we realised that we couldn’t guarantee that would happen in the encounter that we would create. You can’t ensure that because you are there and you are speaking, that you are being heard. What we could strive to do as a group, was to create the conditions for listening to occur. In fact, we realised that we needed to spend as much time on creating the conditions for listening as we had on

nurturing spaces for young people to share their voices.

On the relationship of voice and listening

We live in a society that places such an overemphasis on ‘voice’, where there are multiple channels available for people to voice their opinions through social networking and user-generated websites and there are lots of projects based on the sharing of voices. But as scholar Gayatri Spivak says, “‘who shall speak’ is less crucial than ‘who will listen’.”⁴ In focusing on listening, we must make a shift from a ‘politics of expression’, to ‘a politics of impression’ (a concept I picked up from a group of Australian researchers) which sees listening more explicitly as a relational act between us.⁵ Listening happens between subjects. And so, it’s full of all the complexities and power dynamics and politics of relationships. How do we create the conditions for listening? It depends on who we want to listen and who/what is to be listened to. In any listening space, I think that we need to pay attention and listen to what is not said, and what is not uttered. In my practice with different collaborators, we have developed and tested different strategies to nurture listening – different artistic gestures, depending on the context, on who is listening and the power relations. As well as coming to understand deep-rooted reasons that some chose not to listen. Over time, I have become more tuned into the practice of listening, and the power and politics of listening.

Being a Listener-in-residence

Completely different to the role I’m used to as an artist in residence working collaboratively and long-term, I am before you today as a complete outsider stepping in for a single day as Listener-in-residence. Listening to you. And listening with you. I’m interested in immersing myself in the conditions that are being created here to support listening. I see the attention that is being given to listening in the schedule here and I also note the emphasis on the ‘non-human’ and ‘more than human’, and I’m excited to see and feel how listening extends to the inaudible and voiceless here today. To listen to what needs to be listened to, rather than what is just being said. I would just like to say two key things about my role here that emphasise my understanding of the practice of listening:

Positionality

Listening is not an objective exercise. As I listen here today, I don’t pretend to listen objectively because I am listening and therefore, I am part of what is heard – my prior knowledge and my positionality influence my listening, adding many layers of complexity to how I am listening here, and what I will hear. That includes my nationality as an Irish person in the UK, my class, gender, race, ethnicity, age etc. But I’m also not a fixed subject, I’m in flux, and we all have the potential to learn and unlearn and emerge differently from listening.

Partial perspective

It is important to me that I’m not attempting to listen to everything, to know everything. My role here is not to totally summarise the

day. Instead, I'm going to be in the day and make choices about where to be, like the rest of you, and I will miss things, and have my own understandings of things, and that will be my experience of the event that I will reflect on and share back. It is not total, only partial, incomplete, and purposefully so.⁶

The Politics of Listening

So why is any of this important? Because listening is political. It's an important feature of democratic conversation. Listening to others is a practice that enhances equality.⁷ So, listening can be understood as a good thing. But I want to share a note of caution as we set out on a day together that emphasises listening. I think it's very important to note that we are not talking here about listening as an act of tolerating what the other has to say or just analysing it, but rather positioning listening as an empathic act, needed to understand the other's position in the world. But, if I can go one step further, I also think that in advocating for listening, we should not set up a situation in which empathy becomes the end goal. And I'm thinking here of the concept of 'political listening' that is put forward by political scientist Susan Bickford which is about a type of listening that goes beyond a caring, empathic practice to a communicative interaction in which conflict and difference are central, just like that which arises from inequality.⁸ We live in this 'personalised culture' full of 'sentimentalizing empathy' as described by feminist researcher Patti Lather.⁹ So you can 'listen' and have empathy for another, and still be in an unequal power relation. Worse, your empathy can reinforce uneven power

dynamics.

So, as we strive not to other anyone or anything, we must also be careful not to ignore the power relations between us – human, nature, non-human. In a bid not to other anyone, we don't want to inadvertently create a sameness, and neutralise existing power relations through our empathy. Moving straight to find our common goals and interests. As Bickford says, in the face of major inequalities, to emphasise a common interest could be to hide the real conflict of interest. So, I'm interested in a type of listening that goes beyond tolerating difference and listening beyond empathy.

I'm here and I'm listening. Thank you for having me.

My presentation is followed by a brief grounding exercise by artist and therapist Madeline T Hall – or Maddie – where an audio clip of bird sound is played, and we are invited to close our eyes. It's my favourite sound, above most else, apart from my children's voices. Having just presented to a room of people, the momentary transportation to the trees outside is captivating as I listen behind shut eyelids to this pleasing cacophony and focus on my breathing. That is until my mind notes that I have no idea what birds I'm listening to. Species. Age. Gender. Size. No idea if they are in distress, near extinction, plentiful, content. I've no code for this. I'm listening on my terms. They are communicating but I can't actually hear them.

At the break, I tell Pierce about my thought process, my curiosity about how my language around listening would be translated to British Sign Language. Pierce immediately picks up on my use of the word 'translation'. The job is to be an interpreter, not a translator. I catch my mistake. An obvious one. It's Pierce's own interpretation that is communicated. Not absolute, but intersubjective. Pierce is a part of what is interpreted and signed. As am I.

Artist and researcher, Youngsook Choi's presentation is captivating. The tone. The storytelling. The non-linear approach. The beauty of her slides. The complexity of what is being communicated in her subtleties. And the story of Radhut the elephant deeply unsettles me. The presentation is immediately situated within a wider context. All connected. *The buzz of a new café opening here on the same grounds as the conference. The buzz underneath our feet. The buzz of a system that puts progress above care.* Youngsook's project, *In Every Bite the Emperor*, is described as a long-term ecological grief project across communities in Malaysia, South Korea, the UK and Vietnam. She speaks of the Essex 39 incident where 39 Vietnamese people died in the back of a truck while being smuggled to the United Kingdom. I know this story. Memories flood back of the individuals' faces from the news, the calls and texts they made from the truck. I remember the driver was from the North of Ireland. But Youngsook tells us the part of this narrative that doesn't make the news. The social-political context missing in the narrative. The marine ecosystem that was destroyed in two fishing villages in Vietnam because of 'a multi-national steel corporation [who] dumped their toxic waste directly into the ocean', and the loss of livelihoods leaving communities open to being preyed on by people smugglers.¹⁰ *The medieval order: gods, angels, humans, plants, animals.*

As it says on the Heart of Glass website, 'through this project and her practice, Youngsook challenges the privilege of Western thought and reimagines humans' relationship with the natural world, offering us a decolonial and multi-species approach'.¹¹ And now

there's a story being told of a man in a garden and a field full of dandelions. A coloniser. But when challenged about his colonising of the land, he claims *'There was nothing here before I came'*. *The dandelions laughed. No one could hear them.* I wonder would I have heard them. Does my listening extend to the more-than-human subjects that were named in the conference overview? *Interspecies solidarity*. Collaborator Bek Raheed is quoted. *'This world has many realms; every realm has its laws'*. Note to self in the margin – Write my response to the conference as a story.

About twenty-five years ago, I simultaneously learned some Irish Sign Language (ISL) through a weekly night class in Dublin where I live, and some British Sign Language (from friends in Belfast). I remember that I would regularly find myself informing 'hearing' people – friends, acquaintances, colleagues – that there were two different sign languages used on the island of Ireland. Different origins. Different characteristics. Different languages. The common first response was that it would surely be much easier for deaf people to have just one universal sign language, not seeing the significance of the uniqueness of Irish Sign Language, which finally in 2017 was officially recognised as a native language of the Irish state. I recall a resurgence in conversations about sign language during the Covid pandemic, when we all watched those nightly briefings on tv and got familiar with the presence of the interpreter. Many asked why there were two interpreters standing side by side at the Northern Irish briefings.

Youngsook says: *When you become a widow, you see widows everywhere.* Ironically, it makes me think of my experience of pregnancy. I remember noticing pregnant women everywhere. I don't think I see them around as much anymore. But there can't be less pregnancy now. Just less noticing.

While focused on the presentation, I become aware of the tapping of keys behind me in my left ear. An intrusion. Rapid typing from a different listener. A different kind of notes. Perhaps more linear, ordered. No arrows and drawings. I wonder if there is space in these notes for personal reflections. In the pub later, Maddie who was seated beside me at the conference tells me that she was reading my notes over my shoulder, noting with curiosity the chaos, the scribbles, the movement. We talked of the unknown person behind us both whose key-tapping became part of the presentation on colonisation.

Pierce is demonstrating that they are listening. While Youngsook stops speaking and the video plays with no audio, no words to interpret, Pierce looks at the video, but they don't just look, their body turns purposefully to show they are attending to the screen. Despite the stillness, there is an action here. A communication of listening as an active – not passive act.

Youngsook and her collaborator Wendi Sia, who is now on screen tuning in from Malaysia, introduce a tribe of nomadic people. Orang Asli, who make up less than 1% of the population there. *Semi-nomadic. Indigenous. They don't take the gold from the land. It doesn't belong to them. They won't trade land for money.*

Gold has become part of a practice metaphor for me. Listening for Gold. A central feature of my collaborative practice. A political commitment in spaces of under-listened-to subjectivities. An engine of sorts. The practice of being with people over time, immersed and listening. Listening for something that will be found in conversation. Something that stands out, catches on the ear. But importantly for me in my listening, the criterion for gold is not clear. I only know it's gold when I hear it. And the person who speaks it may not value it as gold. The process is subjective. I listen, I write it down, I classify it as gold temporarily and I share my findings back. Share with them what I heard, what I think is gold. Of most importance, this newly identified gold is not to be extracted, just to be lifted out, noted, discussed, given a little air to be seen differently. To see if it can offer a direction, become the basis of an idea, a concept. Of course, even if it's put back and not worked with, it is never the same as it was before it was lifted out and paid attention to. That new air stays with it. It brings a new consciousness.

As Wendi speaks, I am speed notetaking. Eyes on my page, hand moving at pace, occasionally glancing up at the screen to see if the image has changed. So much to note, little nuggets that will help me recall this presentation later. *The world has many realms and every realm has its loss.* As I write '...loss' I look up at the slide and I see my mistake – '*..every realm has its laws*'. The word is 'laws'. The difference in our accents, the annunciation of words from a Malaysian speaking English to an ear that is used to Irish English. I would have misheard the spoken word if not for the written text. *The soil is mourning. The land is a reminder of past trauma...Listen to elders... The elephant went missing and was found covered in a tin ore hut... Endless rows of the same trees were planted on the same day to be slaughtered on the same day... The elephant is disorientated and faints... Mining is the second largest cause of deforestation... Under British rule here is the largest place for tin production... The elephant trampled a woman while looking for his mother... On Trip Advisor you can see pictures here of bathing an elephant or riding one...*

In the taxi over here this morning, someone tells a story. We are sitting facing each other, an experience less possible in the Republic of Ireland where taxis are typically forward-facing. *The Iraq war was waged because of how a PowerPoint presentation was interpreted.* My companion's students are informed of this. To warn against skipping the spoken lecture and relying on the summarising PowerPoint with all its charts and bullet points. And gaps.¹²

At the break, as we all drink tea outside in the sun, someone approaches me. 'How was your listening?' she smiles, catching how bizarre a question this is as it leaves her mouth. Imagine if it wasn't bizarre. Imagine if it was a question asked of one another at dinner tables. How was your listening today?

On foot, in full flow, without notes or any writing on her slides, activist and scholar Radha D'Souza tells the room how the Tamil area of Sri Lanka never had migration history before the British arrived. Same as the aboriginals in Australia. Colonial legacies. Now the Tamils look for a homeland. In 2009, during the Tamil genocide, there were protests in London. The London public did not see this as anything to do with them. *Homeland is not the same as Nation State. Nation is not the same as Citizenship. We mix these up. We see nation state as our homeland. Even if you are from a place, you can lose access if you cross certain boundaries... There is no modernisation that happens without eviction from land for people... Modernism actually depends on separation, it's contingent on it... And that separation is violent... This is a structural violence that is accepted... Patriarchy is a land-centric society... land and people in unity... Modernity is a commodity-centric society... Removing people from land... Nature/land is property that can be bought and sold. Saleable. Once separated it's about us applying our labour (capacity to work) to nature... If you want nature and people united (foundational to human existence), you don't want rights over, just rights to be there. Not nation state. Just homeland... Nation state is not natural, it's a structure. A nation demands its own homeland.*

Pierce explained to me the sign they had chosen to use for the type of listening I had articulated in my presentation. A two-handed symmetrical movement, both hands out in front of the body, identically plucking something unseen from the air, which is brought to be deposited on the body, the chest specifically. A more typical reference to listening may have seen the fingers ending up positing their capture on the ears, but today they would land on the body. Note to self after this conversation - find out how someone using Irish Sign Language might interpret my description.

Sociologist and academic Sunera Thonbani responds from a Canadian perspective. What the British did there. *A nation-state built on genocide and slavery. Those who cannot make the transition to modernity fail. So, they are put on reservations. Indigenous doomed to extinction. Racialised nation continues to reproduce itself. The demonisation of black and brown bodies after 9-11. Now we are at a crisis of global proportions. Climate (land) + Migration (people). Who gets to claim the commons? The indigenous are not getting their land back. Basic foundational logic. Reclaiming the commons = Abolition of private property.*

We have Indian food for lunch under a very hot sun. I join a picnic table and a conversation on the Covid pandemic and collective trauma. How some were worse off. Different experiences of lockdown. I find myself talking about author Arundhati Roy's presentation 'The pandemic is a portal' which I watched live on my computer in an upstairs bedroom during the first lockdown in Ireland when nothing was clear.¹³ It was the first of so many online presentations but the one that has etched into my mind. *How the virus was akin to an x-ray on different countries, exposing their bare bones. The vocabulary of war that was being commonly used. The cultivation of fear. How panic is lucrative. And the portal. And how we were urged to travel lightly through it and leave some luggage behind. Leave the bauxite in the mountain. Keep writing and keep telling a different story.*

Despite being in India many times when I was younger, I never knew until a conversation at the WFA conference about the relationship between Irish and Indian histories, why our flags are the same colours.

Afternoon

Groups gather and set off in different directions around the grounds for afternoon workshops. Outdoors, I hope for some shade in the heat. Following artist Frances Disley – or Fran – the workshop leader to a clearing between some large trees. I see another breakout group in the near distance spreading out and lying on the grass. Fran speaks about trees. *Trees are out of pace with us.* My attention is returned to the ones around me. *We think about trees as helping us, our well-being, anxiety, but what can we do for them?* I think of how I had picked my spot on the grass because of the shade from the trees above. *We need to decentre ourselves.* The more research done, the more she is convinced that humans should be less active with trees. Leave them be. *Gardens cost money – economics. Science and botany – exclusive. Trees are regulating their nutrient intake themselves. Sending nutrients to smaller trees. We don't need to control them.*

We drink lemon balm out of small cups, poured from a shared flask.
The smell is noticed first as we are asked to keep our eyes closed.

We are invited to pick a tree and spend time with it. Pay attention.
Touch it, hold it. A small magnifying glass reveals a hidden world.
A world not visible to my eyes (which are worsening since the
pandemic due to the amount of time spent on screens). As a group
we identify a family of Horse Chestnut trees in the immediate area,
and we connect them with wool. Walking back and forth making
lines in the air. Making visible their connectedness. Seeing them as
related.

Back in a taxi, two opposite two, I mention the current protests against migrants in Ireland. A small rural community where neighbours are organising and stacking hay bales to block access to an old hotel being temporarily used to house migrants. When confronted with reductive anti-foreigner arguments, my usual first response to date has been to mention how many Irish people live abroad. The key question in the taxi is asked: *How can we change the discourse? People don't see the connections between migration and ecology. The crisis of ecology and humanity as one. If you want to stop them from being here, then we need to stop bombing their homes and exploiting their resources.*

Fran spoke in the workshop about the contentious practice of naming plants. What we strip them of by naming them with words, languages and categorisations. Sitting on the grass, we imagine other visual names beyond words and paint them on large sheets of paper.

I always preferred learning sign language to any other language because of its visual and spatial nature, the creation of words with your hands and body and face. Symbols, gestures, bodily grammar that felt easier to remember than syntax. But like any language when not used, it leaves you, well it gets lost in you, but is always hovering there somewhere to be re-found. Note to self in the margin. Go back to Sign Language classes.

In the final listening circles, seated on tree stumps, I'm part of a group of about eight to ten people who have attended the day's conference. Someone speaks of guilt – a British person – asking what they are to do with guilt.

Evening

In a Liverpool pub after the conference, we pull together three tables and a large group sit together committed to further conversation. The mood is energetic as the day is unpacked over wine, pints, peanuts, and pots of tea. Complex discussions in all directions warrant a notebook and pen but would have to rely on recall. The notebook doesn't belong in the pub. I send one email to myself, on my phone when standing at the bar waiting to order a round. Reminders to find the memory of the conversation in my brain later. *Notetaking. Neurodiversity. Language. Colonisation. Identity. Migration. You can't de-colonise the curriculum without de-colonising the entire institution. Colonisation beyond race. Beyond the West. Taiwan. Hong Kong.*

When I return to the table, Radha is sharing a reflection on British colonialism and in a movement of her two hands to emphasise her point, she signals to myself and Youngsook, who are on either side of her. I am part of the colonised 'We' she refers to.

Later another story is told, of a child being sorry for something they had done to another. The adult asked if the child had *said* sorry. The child explained that they *were* sorry. They did not need to say it. They felt it. *Many say sorry for past colonial acts. But they do it again. Was it not more important to feel sorry?* I shared something about the Irish language as it relates to feelings. 'Tá brón orm' which means 'I am sorry', would directly translate as 'I've sadness on me'. As I articulate this to those seated opposite me, I

recognise my hands in use, as I place the sadness on my chest with both hands. Just as Pierce had done when signing about listening. The feeling temporarily posited on the body to rest there, with the possibility to seep through, to be shed or to linger.

References

¹ Stewart, K. (2007). *Ordinary Affects*. United Kingdom: Duke University Press. p.5.

² Heart of Glass. (2023). With For About 2023. Available at: <https://www.heartofglass.org.uk/project-and-events/events/with-for-about-2023> (Accessed: 6th October, 2023)

³ *Policing Dialogues* (2007-11) was a project of Fiona Whelan and Rialto Youth Project, Dublin, led by What's the Story? Collective. See fionawhelan.com

⁴ Spivak, G. (1990). 'Question of multiculturalism', in G.C. Spivak and S. Harasyn (eds.), *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*, p.59–66, New York: Routledge.

⁵ O'Donnell, P., Lloyd, J., & Dreher, T. (2009), 'Listening, pathbuilding and continuations: A research agenda for the analysis of listening', in *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 23:4, p.423–39, original emphasis, cited in Grossman & O'Brien, 'Voice, listening and social justice: a multimediated engagement with new communities and publics in Ireland', in *Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture*, 2 (2011).

⁶ The concept of a 'partial perspective' comes from: Haraway, D. (1988). 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Questions in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), p.575-599.

⁷ Benjamin Barber describes listening as 'a mutualistic art that by its very practice enhances equality' in Bickford, S. (1996). *The Dissonance of Democracy – Listening, Conflict and Citizenship*. New York: Cornell University Press, p.13.

⁸ Bickford, S. (1996), *The Dissonance of Democracy: Listening, Conflict, and Citizenship*. United States: Cornell University Press. p.2.

⁹ Lather, P. (2009). 'Against Empathy, Voice and Authenticity'. In Jackson, A.Y and Mazzei, L.A. (Ed.) (2009). *Voice in Qualitative Inquiry*. London: Routledge, p.20.

¹⁰ See Choi, Y. (2023). Prologue. With For About: Care and the Commons, Knowsley, Merseyside. 25th May 2023.

¹¹ Heart of Glass. (2023). In Every Bite of the Emperor. Available at: <https://www.heartofglass.org.uk/projects-and-events/projects/in-every-bite-of-the-emperor> (Accessed: 6th October, 2023).

¹² See Bumiller, E. 'We Have Met the Enemy and He Is PowerPoint', *The New York Times*, 26 April 2010. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/world/27powerpoint.html> (Accessed: 6th October, 2023).

¹³ See Haymarket Books. (2020). *The Pandemic is a Portal: A Conversation with Arundhati Roy*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmQLTnK4QTA> (Accessed: 6th October 2023).