Participation boundaries

Any work produced by the company

can and, ultimately, should be

part of our professional programme,

so a huge piece of work, like *The Passion*,

that has a very famous actor in it,

and a thousand community participants,

we're not worried about whether that sits

within a participatory and community

frame, or a professional frame;

it's simply one of the shows that we're doing.

And as that, we present it

to the world as an NTW project.

And we, by and large, don't produce work

that we don't feel can sit in that way,

as work that we would show to a wider audience.

We have some smaller projects, like, currently,

the National Theatre Wales Assembly,

which is a series of, in a way,

relatively short interventions

in communities asking about a local question.

And that project often involves

local artists and participants

in making the evening,

but because the framing of it

is very clear that it's about a local question,

it tends to attract local people

who are interested in that question

and who would actually want it

to be asked, not through

an over-professionalised company.

If the piece has come up

from the community as an idea,

then it will be a question

of finding the right artists

to bring that idea to fruition,

and make sure that the piece

feels... fully embodies the original impulse,

but, at the same time,

is a completely produced

piece of work for the public.

So anywhere along that spectrum,

we can see a wide range of relationships

between the professional and the participatory.

So, all of the work gets framed

as National Theatre Wales produced work.

However, there is a second category

of work, which is work that comes

out of National Theatre Wales

Team Leaders projects.

So lots of things have been set up

by National Theatre Wales Team members

that are their own projects

that we haven't put our stamp on;

we've not produced them.

We've supported team members

and team leaders in producing them.

In those projects, there will often be...

have some National Theatre Wales

Team branding on them to indicate that that support

has happened, but we wouldn't, for example,

be ensuring the overall production quality

was of a particular kind.

So, at that point, where it's run outside of the company

but with our support, then it would become a different thing.

But for us, if it's a project

that's run by the company, at the moment,

we would present all of that work

as part of our main programme.

Whether or not we mix professional

and participatory within a project

completely depends on the project,

so certain projects might be very driven

by an incredibly specialised group

of artists who want to make

a particular kind of work, and, in those cases,

we might be looking for opportunities

for people to observe that process,

to be, in a way, maybe quite passively engaged with it.

In another project, it might be absolutely...

the goal of the artists might be to work

in a really interesting way

with non-professionals

to make the piece of work.

And there's a lot of very interesting artists,

in both visual arts and performance arts

at the moment, who have that kind of practice

very central to what they do.

So we're in quite a rich moment

in the arts, in general,

for a blurring of that boundary.

A lot of the artists, particularly,

that we happen to be involved with,

and, maybe, get attracted to us

in performance world,

are really interested in those boundaries.

And because, for example,

there's quite a lot of work

from younger theatre artists

around immersion and interactivity.

So the idea that there's a producer

on stage and a consumer in the audience,

or a product on the gallery wall

and a consumer in the gallery

is really becoming de-constructed aesthetically.

So the aesthetics of this, I think,

are very much in tune with the politics or the ethics.