

Art et al. Exhibition Response / 09

Pelican Project discuss and respond to the film Mirrored To The Core from the exhibition James Paddock: Life Could be Done So Much Better at the Exeter Phoenix

TRANSCRIPT

Podcast Introduction 00:02

Hello, and welcome to the second in a series of cultural criticism, created in conjunction with the Pelican Project in Exeter. Recorded in January 2024, the group discuss merits of the call an exhibition by James Paddock in the Exeter Phoenix.

Shelley 00:19

Hi, everyone do you remember me. I'm Shelley. And I was here, like, I think in November, we had a really good discussion. It was great fun making that up. So just going back through and editing it out. So there was a nice little concise bit of chat about the film. So today, we're going to develop on that, and we're going to use these, [a sound recorder] but I'll just run through how easy it is to operate these things so that whoever wants to take control can do so. Basically, all we really care about, there are two buttons on this that we care about. And they are the red one here. And the white one here, when we're recording somebody's voice or our own, this is a really good distance to hold it at this kind of a distance. If it's here, if I hold it here, I'm basically deafening the listener. And it will be unusable. And if it's here, it's going to be very quiet, won't be able to hear myself, this is a good distance. So it is super easy. Yeah, I feel like you're smiling at this.

01:21

Lauren I'm always smiling!

Matt Burrows 01:26

So this film is called *Mirrored To the Core*. And it's by an artist called James Paddock. And he is a Voice Hearer. And that means that he's got a mental health condition where he hears other voices inside his head, that aren't real, that we wouldn't be able to hear. And he lives in a place where he's come to terms with that. And he can, he can include these voices in his life. And he's making this film to sort of talk to everybody else about the experiences of people like him who are Voice Hearers. And it's, it's about two young people who, because of their condition, they can't, they finished school, but they can't have jobs, and they live on benefits, and they're wandering around in the streets. And they meet. And alongside them meeting, there are some voices that are sung. And they are the those are their voices that represents their voices that they can hear inside their heads. And they've already met, and they've just been waiting for them to meet in person in real life. So that's the sort of background to the film.

Shelley 02:50

So, how about we pass it around? And if we can think of a good question that might be asked about that film, what might we ask each other about it? So if I pass it to you, that's gonna hold you at this distance. And how did that film make you feel?

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Lauren 03:08

It made me feel like I can feel their pain and what they're going through. I kind of felt like, I almost wanted to cry watching it. Mostly because I know my friend wanted to be on medication all the time. Which must be a very hard thing to do. I learned a lot from listening to my friend talking about why he was in a mental home. What he did there and what the nurses and doctors did, which is quite interesting.

Shelley 03:32

How about we'll pass it around to Izzy.

Izzy 03:37

So here it is. So I personally found it a second time still hard to watch because the subtitles and generally complicate characters. There's different ways to handle that sort of matter. For instance, Shakespeare's Hamlet did it in the form of two or three hours, you know, monologue. That particular bit of Hamlet, to be honest, he is about just having a kill himself or not. He opted not to. But for me, personally, I can't relate to the characters, but it was good. It's got me like,

Shelley 04:07

Why do you think why do you think that's the case? Why How come you can relate to Hamlet, but not those characters there?

Izzy 04:14

My first think I thought was Tempest. And I actually like Shakespeare. I think Shakespeare knew human characters. He knew people. I just think the humans weren't made in a way you could sort of personality wise, relate to them. I think that's my thought.

George 04:30

We were just talking out there about T shirts, how you use that as a way to talk about and I know that there was a little bit of that in the in the in the

Izzy 04:38

There was to be fair

George 04:39

But there's obviously that show was using t shirts a lot. Yes. And a way of kind of like representing yourself with almost like fashion, things like that. I just wondered if you had any thoughts about that?

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Izzy 04:48

I suppose it could be fixed by using it over eye symbols or pictograms this funky imagery once so mean. So once I went my script with pictograms and my good memories, like I'm reading it or otherwise pentagrams helps to memorise things and it's like I'm reading it also, I have audiobooks.

Shelley 05:06

So maybe an audio version of that.

Izzy 05:10

Perhaps it would perhaps, but you still need the human characters to be some sort of personality relatable. I mean I could understand stand the Hamlet but not this one, I think because you haven't quite got it there really [indistinct] way around it, but can't quite get it.

Shelley 05:33

So what did you What do you think those people were representing? There's something about they're not quite whole people that we're discussing now with Izzy, what do you think about that, like,

Lauren 05:43

They're representing people who've got voices in their head and have to deal with that with the rest of life. What that helps is taking medication. So it doesn't get worse. As some people have done terrible things after not taking the medication.

Kathy 05:59

How did the singing make you feel?

Lauren 06:02

Made me feel like you can understand the story a little bit better Because music does make you sad and happy. But if they were just talking, you wouldn't feel sad or happy. They're trying to understand each other, get to know each other. And kind of form relationships with each other. They probably became good friends in the end.

Shelley 06:27

Let's go around the table. Do you want to ask what he thought about the film? And then hold the microphone to your mouth and then to his?

Lauren 06:36

What do you think about the characters in the story?

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George 06:40

I thought I really enjoyed the way you felt a lot of empathy. So I really put myself in the shoes of those characters. And I thought it was interesting that funnily enough, coming off the back of one of the things you just said were like, taking medication was important. What was interesting that I got a different thing from that, where it was sort of almost celebrating the differences, which I thought was interesting for us all here today, in the sense of celebrating, it's okay to be different and celebrate those changes and sort of saying, hey, there's always somebody out there that's going through something something similar in the world. If that makes sense.

Lauren 07:24

I just thought of something. I feel like there's also set celebrate in that they don't have to be the mental home anymore.

George 07:30

Yeah, exactly. It's kind of out about and it's kind of and that's Yeah, okay. Yeah, definitely, I think

Charlie 07:36

Um, I kind of agree with you Izzy, I didn't find the characters, convincing enough to be like, completely in it. To use your words, if you can mean it. However, I thought the I thought the opera I thought the singing was amazing. And there were periods of that film, I thought some of like that some of the synth synth music on the opera was so evocative and just put me in such a place where I was really in it, which is quite interesting, because perhaps, perhaps that might have been a deliberate thing that I felt more engaged with the voices in the head rather than the the the dialogue from the characters.

Izzy 08:24

What do you think?

Kathy 08:27

For me, I think it's very much about just appreciating a moment in your life. And that, you know, that might happen. Over just that, that one time those people meet and it might never happen again.

George 08:42

He said about the it felt very flat for that sort of normal dialogue. And so it felt like you would have it, yeah, but it's completely deadpan. And we're almost intending to be awed by it. That made the Opera feel so much more parallel. That's what's really going on from that one.

Natalie 08:59

I thought it was really good, because it showed that there's people out there and they'd probably don't feel alone that there are people literally like others. And do you know what I mean? Like, a lot of people

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are locked away in hospitals and stuff like that. And now they're free. It's nice that there is, you know, someone to relate to having a life yeah, having a life and being free. Basically.

Aiden 09:26

I almost wanted to sit and watch it a second time to understand what I'd watched the first time. It was very unusual for the first time I've ever come across.

Ben 09:35

Sad?

Aiden 09:38

You thought it was sad?

Aiden 09:40

I thought, I thought very positive. Because it's the first time I've ever seen anything, I've come across anything that's that condition in a positive light rather than a negative. There was a lot of double meanings in things I think, and quite thought provoking. And it's it's obviously something in society that we people that are affected by it ignore it or are unaware of it and I think it's really positive to have that for us to be talking about it right now and I would sit and watch it again

Shelley 10:11

Do you know Ben why that made you feel sad?

Ben 10:13

Sad fish diving [dying]

Charlie Is this is this to do something that you saw in the film or something that the film made you feel? That you saw in the film. So could you give us a bit more information about the fish dying bit?

Ben

Sad fish diving dad

Was it was it the music? It? Was it the music something? Music was it? Was it the dancing? Was it the dancing? Dancing or something different. So Ben's dad was a very talented dancer, ballerina

Shelley 11:03

Wow.

XXX 11:05

I can imagine that some of those some of the dancing made you think about that

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Shelley 11:13

Is it nice to be reminded of your dad?

Charlie 11:20

Yeah? I hadn't thought how much I think your dad would have liked that film as well because she was a huge fan of opera and dancing so I'm not surprised

Ben 11:30

Sad fish dying dad

Charlie 11:32

I'm not surprised at all that it's made you think about dad

Ben 11:50

Night- dad- diving [dying]

Charlie 11:55

Can you add a bit more to that. Are we thinking about when dad died, and that was it at nighttime?

Ben 12:11

Night- dad -dying

Charlie 12:13

Are you asking what time, so we don't know. We don't know exactly. We don't know but perhaps that's something you can talk, talk to mum about perhaps with Aiden when you get home. Would you like to say anything else about dad? It'd be really cool if you wanted to share a memory or tell Shelley about dad's dancing

Ben 12:43

Dancer

Charlie 12:51

Dancer, an amazing dancer. And should we tell what type of dancing he did?

Ben 13:09

Dancer - ballerina.

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Shelley 13:12

Amazing, because I was thinking about why you might make that correlation. There was a lot of spinning around if people weren't there. And they talked about that a lot. Is that what reminded you of your dad's ballet dancing?

Charlie 13:26

Was it the spinning?

Ben 13:27

Yes.

Charlie 13:29

Yes.

Shelley 13:32

And as as mentioned earlier, there was also a lot of operatic singing in the background and kind of instrumental music I guess.

Charlie 13:43

Could you use your talker to answer this question? Did dad like opera and classical music? You're nodding your head. Yes.

Shelley 13:56

Excellent. Thanks for sharing that Ben. Thank you

Lauren 14:05

It did remind me of two films. I don't know if you've heard of them? *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Girl Interrupted* it's both to do with mental health.

Shelley 14:14

What do you think of those films Lauren?

Lauren 14:16

I think they are quite interesting. Well, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is to do with a guy in Tennessee who pretends he's got mental health to go into a mental home so not to be in the prison anymore, which I'd find this a bit wrong to do that its disrespectful to people who actually have it.

Shelley 14:37

What does that teach the viewer through his eyes?

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Lauren 14:46

To appreciate everyone and respect everyone and moving forward not never to do crime again. The other the other movie it's to do with all these girls in a ward, you know, an in a section just for girls. And it's also set in the 60s its to do with that period and also teaches you that they used to split the man and ladies up from each other. It's good to make movies like this because it teaches everyone about mental health. So we don't judge people. I get judged sometimes by people for the way I dress. Which I I don't let it bother me really. Because you don't want to go through like getting upset all the time.

Shelley 15:30

Because I wonder what you think the artist was asking us to do in watching that film.

Lauren 15:39

Just to be kind and caring to people who've got things wrong with them.

Izzy 15:44

I guess to start it does say to don't judge anyone but you could argue any film about any difference saying don't judge anyone? Like Quasimodo for instance, Notre Dame stories? Or the guy with the hands, scissors I mean, you could say any movie even it's not mental things judging is basically is not to judge anyone. What its probably saying that it's like everyone has something but standing out is not a bad thing. Even your hands if you've got, generally, if your hands are scissors! I think it's showing you about standing out and everyone, everyone's like familiar. And he's not familiar. He's not scary. He's just different. Like Quasimodo. Caliban in the Tempest for instance. He has a problem that people were scared by him, couldn't stand Caliban. And I'm sure Charlie knows some Pelican members that could be Caliban types!

Charlie16:41

You'll have to tell me more about Caliban.

Izzy 16:43

I'm sure you know of Pelicans though, which you might think might be scared by them if they don't know them?

Charlie16:51

So what is Caliban? Who is Caliban, remind me?

Izzy 16:54

Caliban he's the character in Tempest,

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Charlie 16:56

what's his character like?

Izzy 16:56

Um, he's a he's a son of a witch. But people were scared by Him because they don't, well, they don't know him.

Charlie 16:57

That's because when they see him and they get scared, I think that's really relevant to our group sometimes.

Izzy 17:08

I mean, he makes he makes some mistakes and some pretty serious mistakes. But he's had no one to teach him right from wrong in his life. His mom was basically. not not round as in dead? And no one has taught him right from wrong. Yeah, so.

Charlie 17:23

So a very interesting person to talk to about that idea is Aidan. I've had some really interesting chats, because, Aidan, remember when you first came to a Pelican event at Christmas?

Aidan 17:33

Yes.

Charlie 17:34

And you thought, "what the?", describe that feeling, like, just quite a hard hitting experience, and then very quickly realise everyone's lovely, and

Aidan 17:46

Yeah. When. I can remember it vividly that it blew me away. Because, like I said to Charlie, like this group of people, it's almost, they're hidden away from society. And until you're actually dropped into it into that group of people, you're unaware of them. And yes, it was a shock. And it took me a little not long. But I quickly realised that they were an extremely diverse and extremely wonderful group of people. And I think it was Sophie, I'd bent over to talk to Ben and she come running over and give me a wedgy!! That was the first time I ever met her and it was hilarious. And yeah, I mean, I haven't looked back and meeting I couldn't even imagine not being around these young people now. Particularly Ben, but all of them and it's changed my life. It's changed my outlook. And I think it's brilliant that we're talking about mental health issues as well because we've all got mental health issues. Just some of us are better at hiding it than others are. And I think we it's only recently that it's been acceptable to talk about it and it has been something which is hidden away.

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Charlie 19:05

I know from what Matt's talked to us before about the artist's experience both putting this together and wanting to celebrate like the really positive nature, elements of Voice Hearing. And I wonder how close it is to your experience if we understood it better if we're more immersed in that how it how it can be celebrated.

Izzy 19:27

Well, perhaps not just mental, but could be for mental but just not physical disabilities or physical ones. I mean, this one isn't great it seems really wrong really. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde one is really nice once horrible, but same guy. Yeah, so people will judge probably Jekyll for Hyde. People like Jekyll but hate Hyde. This is funny. And Quasimodo hasn't gotten that issue as sort of physically that way. And my bit my thing isn't visible. My thing isn't.

Shelley 20:01

What do you think about that idea, Lauren? That those two people might be the same person?

Lauren 20:06

It might just be imagining that there's another person like in front of him. That isn't really there.

Shelley 20:18

Also could be true, yeah.

Lauren 20:19

Because some people say to mental health people, it's not real. It's not there. But to them, it is real, because they can see we can't. Like people who go ghost hunting they, some of them can actually see the ghost, but we can't

Izzy 20:35

particularly if you're grieving I mean crikey. last year ago, it was a case of my dog. I was certain I saw her I'm certain of it It's probably because I was mourning still.

Shelley 20:52

That's interesting. So you're saying that there are times in our lives that we might all hear voices that aren't there?

Izzy 20:58

Three times my foot? No did not notice morning, your brains making you seeing things you want to see like, you're just grieving ? You know, as a thing, everyone has different not, if not, not a voice

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necessarily. But everyone's a person can be different version depends on what scenario you're in. So like, there's me performing. For instance, there's me and I'm doing drama performance stuff. There's everyday me. There's the thespian version of me when I'm here, my stage ego.

Charlie 21:36

So sometimes a bit blurred boundary with that.

Izzy 21:40

Well, firstly, Thespian is based on me, she's based on me. And then there's me performing and there's me every day. I have been told I am constantly in day-to-day life, although I have been told I'm more confident when I'm actually on stage.

Aiden 22:03

that's very interesting point. Because from my own personal, a lot of people think that I'm quite a confident person. And I can act confident when I need to. But actually, I'm incredibly shy. And I don't deal with crowds. But I can put a front on when I need to. And that's what's in. We're all the same. We're all multiple personalities within ourselves. And again, it's something we don't talk about. Now I'm very introverted. And I like my own company. I like Ben's company I like the relationship, me and him have it works.

Izzy 22:48

Sometimes its irony because it's mean, on one hand, typical of talking to a bunch of strangers that I'll never be seeing again, with March 8th. But parts of my past easy doing strangers, talking to a talk therapy to actual trained professional is going be much harder. In this case being a version of myself, in this case, your just being version of yourself, but your performance set up, so you're confident that you're performing, its all good doing that yet you would go to professionally trained person, you struggle. But those people you could never going to see again and can't help you with anything. Ironic isn't it?

Charlie 23:27

it's interesting how different contexts make you feel different, even like a recorder can make you feel completely different person all of a sudden,

Izzy 23:36

when you went to talk about it's like, "errr, what?". Its ironic isn't it? And yet I can talk to Nat about it perfectly calmly. But it's really it's the irony isn't it

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Shelley 23:46

Are you saying certain situations are more uncomfortable than others. Do you have a similar experience?

Lauren 23:53

I get nervous being around loads of people. When I'm when I go to my brother's house and I'm around those people, I tend to just sit there on my Nintendo Switch because I feel so nervous around people. And trying to chat because as well as those people it's hard for me to think of what to say.

Shelley 24:13

So you prefer a smaller group like this.

Lauren 24:15

Yeah,

Shelley 24:15

yeah.

George 24:16

If I'm teaching a group of strangers, I've got a mask on and I'm 'George The teacher' whereas actually, if suddenly one of you came in, you'd be like, why is George being weird.?, yeah, so I've got a kind of mask.

Izzy 24:30

Because if persons it wasn't some kind of teacher of teach that cant tell who it is going to be you're still performing to be fair.

Charlie 24:39

Yes, performance.

Izzy 24:40

You're still performing in life. But then go, oh, then suddenly I know do something bizarre. It's suddenly sometimes your worst critic can be yourself.

Aiden24:55

It's interesting what Izzy said about being a different person on stage. I have to go on stage a few times. I absolutely hated it. Because centre of attention goes back to what I'm saying. Drama on the other hand when I first came, it's a situation I would never put myself in having to adlib get up in front of people and do what we do. again, I love it now..

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Izzy 25:24

It depends on, if it's a Thespian thing I'm so madness, if it's a Shakespearean version. What? A version of myself. Yes, yes. I'm still performing, though. That's the thing. I've got spotlights on my face and I'm still performing.

Aiden25:37

Well its good therapy.

Izzy 25:38

I mean, like it is.

Aiden 25:39

Very good therapy.

Charlie25:43

Taking us to places I didn't think we'd get to today. And it has been quite has been quite what's the right word? You can help me out. It's been quite a conversation. So if anything, anything comes up later in the day or look like a catch-up with me or George or Shelley or anything after the session and just remember, that's totally normal. And okay, if you want to come and chat to us, or maybe next time you see us in a session, or something comes up. Go on Aiden and Ben enlighten us. Where are you going this afternoon? (conversation fades out)

Podcast Outro 26:18

Recorded on behalf of Ear Nose Throat Productions. Many thanks to those who took part in this session. Ben, Aiden, Izzy, Lauren, Natalie, Mark, Charlie, George and Kathy. Thank you also to Piano Plant, whose tracks Archive of the Universe, The Letter and Project Life from their Devon stream session have also been used in this production. I'm Shelley Hudson. Thanks for listening.