

Phonophobia

In May 2017 I undertook a week-long residency with Skimstone Arts in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, supported by Arts Council England's Elevate fund.

Phonophobia began life as a participative and interactive idea originally called *What if we could hear ourselves as other hear us?* Requiring only two tape recorders, microphones and of course willing participants, the project was designed to travel easily - to different regions of the UK and indeed to Europe and further afield. I began developing the work May 2017 in partnership with Skimstone Arts as part of a residency in Newcastle upon Tyne.

A conversation is recorded and played back to the participant or participants, bringing the speaker into a direct and often confrontational relationship with his or her own voice. The subsequent comments and observations are again recorded, layering original with commentary. In the unfolding of the process complex social and personal issues are brought to the surface, asking questions of orthodoxies and assumptions around identity, self-esteem, self-awareness and belonging. The work is accumulative and open-ended, a public engagement performance piece, a hub or forum around which people can gather to share values and discuss topics such as identity, inclusion, self-confidence and political readings of voice, accent and dialect.

I'm currently remixing the original radio piece, to be produced before the end of 2020.

My thanks to the following participants:-

Margaret Adams
Adrian Cadman
Zi Charanakram
Ben Chilcott
Dan George
Shelly Knotts
Finlay McDermid
Craig Mason
Claire Webster Saaremets
Peter Saaremets
Maksimilian Thompson