

Re:freshers – Keynotes for the 21st Century

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Chair - Nima Poovaya-Smith	Alchemy
Gary Younge	Guardian
Feargal Sharkey	UK Music
Sarah Weir	Olympic Delivery Authority

Nima: Good morning everybody. We have three very different, and I know it's a word you will probably cringe at, but very distinguished speakers today, so I'm going to start introducing them in the order in which they are going. So, in my household at least, Gary Younge is essential reading, and I'm sure it is true for a lot of you. His writings on a variety of subjects relating to issues of diversity, are unstuffy, reflective and razor sharp. So it was no surprise, really, that he won the James Cameron Award for the Guardian last year, for his coverage of the Obama Election, and they particularly mentioned his moral vision and his professional integrity. And his most recent book, *'Who Are You, And Does It Really Matter In The 21st Century?'* had me and Lola Young so gripped that we decided it had to become part of the essential reading list for Leadership Advance this year. And I think, one of the reasons that Gary's writing is so compelling, both in his feature articles and in his books, and he's written three of them, and they make very good Christmas presents, by the way, is because he is such a fantastic storyteller. It is very people-centered, and at the same time, as someone who has always felt a sense of grief that anything to do with diversity, the language around it, as Sarah and I were saying earlier, is so impoverished, is so clunky and so clumsy and horrible, and then you've got someone like Gary, who gives it grace and elegance and depth, and I think that is absolutely fantastic. And there was a fantastic phrase, a passage, in his latest book that has stuck in my mind, where he says 'multiculturalism is not an ethos, it is a fact.' Governments do not create cultures, leave alone multi-cultures, this emerges, you know, it is something through the experience of people. It is difficult, it is dynamic, it is sometimes untidy and often challenging. And again, what makes this book so powerful is that there are so many anecdotes in it, and stories. When Gary is not writing for the Guardian, he is a Visiting Professor for Brooklyn College. I think it is the Belle Zeller Visiting Professor of Public Policy and Social Administration at Brooklyn College.

Now, Feargal Sharkey. How does one introduce someone like Feargal Sharkey, without descending into cliché, you know, legend, icon [laughter] John Peel, what did he say about *Teenage Kicks*, you know, there is nothing you can add to it, there is nothing you can subtract to it to make it better, sheer perfection. But of course his solo career has been equally dazzling, as also the work that he's now doing for the music industry, where he champions in a variety of ways the causes of, you know, professional musicians. But in amongst all of his brilliance, there is a very touching modesty, because what he did say was, 'I always try to remind myself' - and this is the man, you know, whom the Guardian has cited as one of the most influential people within the creative industries - 'I've always tried to remind myself that the last song I wrote wasn't as good as I thought it was, because it probably wasn't, and it was probably time to write another one'. Now Feargal comes from Derry, and the reason I mention this is because, I think, none of us could have been left unmoved by the launch of the Saville Report and the very dignified response of the people of Derry to this Report. But in addition to that, Derry is also putting forward a very, very exciting bid for UK Capital of Culture in 2013, and Feargal, of course, is one of the champions for this bid. And I would

like to wish you well, and the bid well. Please, if there is anybody here from Yorkshire, don't tell Sheffield that I said this. [Laughter] My life wouldn't be worth living!

So now I turn to, last but not, by no means, least, Sarah Weir. In 2006, London witnessed, I think one of the most spectacular examples of free theatre called *The Sultan and the Elephant*. It was staged by Artichoke, and it was put together, not put together, it was conceived by Royal de Luxe, but Sarah and her team were the people who took the risk, and who put the money up. And it was a big risk, you know, because it was one of those things that caused a lot of creative chaos and disruption. But she did it. And I think this is the whole mark of Sarah's life – big, bold risks. Because she had a very, dare I say it, lucrative career in the City, and then she put herself through some kind of psychometric testing, which I think is incredibly brave, with an education psychologist who says, you know, 'you ought to be in the Arts, you fit all these other things.' So she thought, ok, that's what I'll do. So in this fantastic address she gave, she said, 'suddenly, all my props had fallen away and I was only left with me. 90% of my income had gone, goodbye sports car, hello the No.19 bus. Goodbye champagne lunches, hello cheese sandwiches in a café' I quite like cheese sandwiches, actually – and so there you are. I think that's an inspiration for us all, to make that huge leap. She has been closely involved with the Olympics, and is Head of Arts and Cultural Strategy for the Olympic Delivery Authority. So, as she told me, it's the 'built' thing. But having said that, with a team of three she has managed to already raise £17.5 million, so try and beat that. So ladies and gentlemen, a warm round of applause for our speakers.

Gary Young.

Gary: Well, thanks very much, Nima, for the very kind introduction, and thanks very much, welcome for having me. I think with a conference on cultural leadership, one way to start a conversation is to ask, whose culture, first of all, and how to lead and where to lead. I'm going to read three little bits from my book, which really deal in different ways with that issue, and with the challenges that we face in even finding a kind of discursive framework, finding the language to talk about this in a way that doesn't give too many hostages to fortune. So the first bit is just about the potential and the pitfalls that surround the issues of identity: "Identity is like fire. It can create warmth and comfort, or burn badly and destroy. It's at the forefront of some of the most inspiring achievements in world political history, whether it be women's suffrage, the end of Apartheid or advances in gay rights, but it has also taken centre stage in some of the most lurid moments of global affairs – the Holocaust, the wars in Rwanda, Bosnia or Darfur. Identity can make connections over oceans, languages, generations and cultures. On the day the U.S. went to the polls in 2008 to elect a new President, Obama Sorin Ilie Scoica was born in a tiny Romanian village of Rusciori. When I saw Obama on TV, my heart swelled with joy, his Granny said. I thought he was one of us Roma, because of his skin colour. I called him Obama, because I hoped his name would bring him luck."

But identity can also sow division among those who live side by side. On the day that Obama Scoica was born, 94% of Black Californians voted for Barack Obama, and around 55% voted against gay marriage. Black churches were the focal point for both efforts. Now, no-one's immune from these contradictions. None of us comes to politics from a vacuum, we arrive with affiliations that mould our world view. It was no co-incidence that women led the charge for female suffrage, or the Ghanaian's spearheaded the battle for Ghanaian independence. Had they waited for men or the British Occupiers to come around to these ideas, they might still be waiting. So on one hand, we are clearly more alike than we are unlike – whether

it's the Manchester United supporting, fish and chip eating bombers of the London Transport system, the homophobic Denver Mayor who paid for sex with a male prostitute, or the Bush family and its long history of connections with the Bin Ladens. The 'other' is rarely as foreign or as threatening as we're led to believe.

On the other hand though, the ways in which we are un-alike, matter. For all that's common in the human experiences, the differences are stark, and in some respects getting starker, and it is these differences that increasingly create the framework for political activity, public anxiety and at times, moral panic. Within half an hour's train ride from Brussels, the polyglot home to both NATO and the European Commission, children in Flemish schools are not allowed to speak French in the playground. In China, they have banned the Buddhist Monks in Tibet from reincarnating without Government permission, in the hope of crushing Nationalist dissent. Obvious as it may seem, it bears emphasising - if only because so many well meaning people are in denial about it - that in all sorts of ways, our differences make a difference.

Now, one of the ways in which they tried to shut us up - and this can be particularly true for people at the sharp end, at the most vulnerable end of cultural leadership, the people who are most exposed - is through ridicule. And a primary stick with which they beat us with, beat you with, is the notion of political correctness. So I'm going to just spend a couple of minutes looking at what that's all about. Finding a working definition of political correctness is not easy. In the space of one month in 2006, the term political correctness was used in the British press on average, ten times a day, twice as frequently as 'Islamophobia', three times as frequently as 'homophobia' and four times as often as 'sexism'. During that period, political correctness referred to the ill-treatment of rabbits, the teaching of Gaelic, Mozart's Opera La Clemenza di Tito, a flower show in Paris and the naming of the Mazda 3P MPS. But the most honest definition I've seen was by Dennis O'Keefe in the Institute of Economic Affairs Report called *Political Correctness and Public Finance*. This was in 2000. He wrote 'political correctness is the free world's latest fashionable ideology. It's a mix of extremist egalitarian doctrines such as feminism, anti-racism, and multiculturalism. It is deeply threatening to social cohesion.'

Now in a world where feminism and anti-racism are extremist doctrines, it is little wonder that some people might feel threatened when racism and sexism are challenged. You can imagine O'Keefe's forbears lamenting the end of slavery after the American war of political correctness, or lambasting Suffragettes for demanding for political correct vote. So political correctness simply becomes a coded shorthand for an attack on both equality and civility. When Judge Graham Boll QC told the Criminal Bar Association dinner that an ideal candidate for promotion would have 'the breasts of a lesbian, the backside of a homosexual and a large black penis,' his words masqueraded as a joke about political correctness. When a Tory candidate for London Mayor, Steven Norris, wanted to put an end to limits on Stop and Search that were being used to inordinately stop young Black people, and including as well, one Black Lord and a few Black Bishops, he called for an end to politically correct policing. While the objects of these grips are largely invented, their root cause does have some basis in reality, thanks to advances of various campaigns for equality, the socially acceptable limits on what is reasonable to say and do, have tightened.

In the past, racially offensive jokes, remarks about your female colleague's breasts, or cracks about spastics, were considered a reasonable element of daily banter, both in and outside the workplace. Now they're not. We've abandoned them for the same reason we no longer

burn witches at the stake, or stick orphaned children in the poorhouse – we’ve moved on. Values change, societies develop, and their language and behaviour evolve with them. Now that’s not political correctness, that’s social and political progress. It’s not imposed by liberal dictate, but is established by civic consensus. Those who are unwilling and unable to move on, are welcome to their words and views but like anyone else who engages in antisocial behaviour, once they act on those impulses, they must live with the consequences. Those who struggle with this are not so much living in the past as struggling to accept the present. For what they really arguing for, is both the right to be insensitive, and for that insensitivity to go unchallenged. The first is their right, but like all rights, it comes with responsibilities and ramifications. The same freedom of speech that allows you to disparage large groups of people also allows those people to mobilise public opinion and legislation against you if you do so. The most peculiar thing about political correctness is that despite its rhetorical flabbiness, clichéd use and de-valued currency, it has still maintained considerable potency as part of a general backlash. It has managed to silence many who believe in progressive change, by branding them as worthy, pedantic and controlling. Many liberals start sentences with ‘I’m not politically correct but...’, and then go on to make a compelling case for equality, in the same way that many young women today say ‘I’m not a feminist but...’ before arguing why women should get equal pay for equal work. In short, the term political correctness has managed to stigmatise both civility and equality.

Now the last bit, a short bit I want to read is a challenge that we all have, in terms of being sure that we are not handing over hostages to fortune in the discussions that we have, both about our work and about the impact of our work. And one recent example I would say of this, is about how we understand the term diversity, and what we want it to do, is the inclusion of Diane Abbott in the Labour leadership, which was pitched as a kind of, as a gratuity – ‘look what we’ve managed to do. Look at that, aren’t we clever? We’ve let her in.’ And this is a problem, because it can make people - it’s not a problem that Diane Abbott’s in the race, it’s a problem in the way that it was framed - because it can produce a great amount of cynicism, with very little *product*. At the Republican Convention which nominated George Bush as its candidate in 2000, the leadership felt the need to transform the Party’s image, which many Americans regarded as backward looking, narrow and elitist. So to counter that impression, the three co-chairs for the convention were an African-American, a Latino and a White single mum. The headline speaker on the first day was Colin Powell, the primetime news slot the next day went to Condoleezza Rice. On the opening night, the Pledge of Allegiance was delivered by a blind mountaineer, while a Black woman sang the Star Spangled Banner. On one later night of the convention, the entertainment came from Harold Malvin, Black, and John Sekada, Cuban. The Convention was closed by Chaka Khan.

But while the emphasis in presentation was on race and ethnicity, the message was not directed at minority voters, whom the Republican party would effectively disenfranchise in order to ‘win’ in Florida. What the Republicans are doing is aimed more at White Americans, said David Bositis, from the Joint Centre for Political and Economic Studies. Moderates don’t want someone who is negative on race, and so it says something significant about America as a whole. So race had simply become a signifier of the Republican desire not to appear mean-spirited. Similarly, in 2002, the Daily Mail printed a picture of a range of non-White Metropolitan Police staff, with a caption stating ‘It is a picture that reflects changing times and attitudes within the Police Force. The exclusive picture of Yard employees shows Forces are beginning to reflect the racial mix of the community they serve’. But the reality couldn’t have been further from the truth. At the time, ethnic minorities made up about 25% of the

Capital's population, but only 4.5% of the Met staff. Just a month earlier, Sir John Stevens, the then-Met Police Commissioner, conceded that he might have to look abroad for Black and Asian recruits, because he couldn't attract them in the U.K.

Now some people call this diversity. A decent idea that can, in the wrong hands, be corporatized beyond all meaning. Having eviscerated from the issue of representation all notions of fairness, equality and justice, equal opportunity morphs, effortlessly, into photo opportunities. A way of making things different, and acting the same. It's what the radical Angela Davis once described to me as 'the difference that brings no difference, and the change that brings no change'. So to end with the point that it's very important, it's very important that we look different in the work that we do. But that importance only becomes real and can be harnessed and attached if it makes us act different. If we are going to look different and act the same, then that is pretty much a definition of tokenism, and cultural leadership that works through tokenism is cultural leadership that's really not working at all. Thanks very much.

[Applause]

Nima: Thank you Gary, that was fabulous. Just, I should have said this at the start, just to give you the structure of this morning's session, the three speakers are going to go, and then you will have the opportunity to ask questions, so don't worry about that. Feargal.

Feargal: Good morning everyone. I hope the coffee went well. I'm sure it was delightful Silver Service regulation, like mine! Thank you to all of you for the opportunity to come and speak to an audience like this. And there's a reason, in many ways, why I say that. If I was perhaps being overly sensitive, I come from an industry that had its birth in mavericks. We don't frequently get invited out to integrate with the outside world, so it's quite a pleasing thing. Now the ironic thing is, while we were an industry, and still are an industry, of mavericks, I think I could argue that we are one of the most purely entrepreneurial industries, if not in this country, certainly in the world. It always has been, it currently is, and it always will be, and I'm pleased to say the music industry still attracts the maverick tendencies. If you think about it over the last decades, many of the leaders in my industry wrote the rule book as they went along. They made it up every single day, and it is an industry where, should you choose to do so, you get to tear up the rule book and re-write it, every single day. Through the kind of cultures of the 1960s, 1970s, that meant the likes of Peter Grant, Andrew Lloyd Oldham, Brian Epstein, Peter Jenner, Andrew King, the incoming punk rock movement of the 1970s brought us the likes of Tony Wilson, Jeff Travis, Janet Lee, Martin Mills, Daniel Miller, Dave Robinson and Alan McGee. And like most of our iconic artists, these were people who broke the rules as a matter of routine and ambition, who pushed aside whatever barriers lay in their way, and found new ways of doing business.

Yes, it's true, they do indeed work in the music business. But the music business has always been way, much, much more than that. It's a way of life, not simply a career, and I don't think that at the time, certainly when I got into the business, there was much in the way of a degree in the music business. And in fact, I suspect my own life charts that very strange, quirky thing that we have, and I'm not sure that it would be remotely categorised as a textbook career trajectory. Since leaving school, I've been gainfully employed by Radio Rentals, delivering televisions. Yes, I drove a van, and I dropped people's colour TVs off. Now, as it turned out at the time, having a van was a very clever asset to have at your disposal, particularly when you're trying to be in a very fledgling rock and roll band. Shortly

thereafter, I began a career as an artist that lasted for fifteen, sixteen years, and at thirty years old, made the rather astonishing decision that I was giving it up. That entailed a year of sitting around at home going, 'what the hell did you do that for, big mouth?', whilst all my friends, family, loved ones sat around me going 'what the hell did you do that for, big mouth?'. I then went on to develop a career in the corporate record industry, ended up running a global record company. I think got appointed, by Government, to the Board of the then grandly referred to Radio Authority, who were responsible for the licensing and regulation of commercial radio in the U.K. And indeed that led to an appointment as Chairman of the Live Music Forum, and then subsequently an advisor to the Secretary of State. Not exactly a textbook career.

That also led two years ago for me to reflecting at great lengths on my industry, an industry that I care about deeply and passionately. But I felt that it needed to take a different approach on life, and needed to look at itself very differently. I joined an organisation called British Music Rights, which at the time represented the interests of United Kingdom songwriters, composers, music publishers and their collections society. And through debate, dialogue, discussion, persuasion, myself and the Chairman, Andy Heath, persuaded the industry to set up an organisation that we know now as U.K. Music. U.K. Music is the first time in 120 years that my industry and the very sectors of my industry, have come together around the same table. To give you a flavour of this, there's always been a fantastic quote about Ireland, and I can never remember the author, and I should really find out. But in essence, what it actually said was 'there is no such thing as racism in Ireland. We're all far too busy being bigoted with each other'. That possibly, I suspect some might suggest, was not a bad description of the music industry for the last 120 years, but it damaged us in many ways as an industry. It left us incoherent, it left us unstructured, it left us without strategy, without vision, without management, a sense of direction, a sense of purpose. And U.K. Music's vision is to change, address and alter all of that for the future. It is fundamentally to give my industry one voice and one song. And indeed for many people, it's mere existence ten years ago would have been unthinkable. But the music industry has grown up. It's big, it's fragmented, and in many aspects, it is very difficult to define. To give you a flavour, CC Skills figures have highlighted that nearly half of those who work in my industry are self employed. That out of the almost 14,000 business, 81% of them employ less than five people. In terms of record companies, you could probably count on the fingers of less than both hands, the number that directly employ more than 10 people.

Yes, it's true, there are over four very large, multi-national record companies, and yes, it's true that there are four very large, multi-national music publishing companies, but the vast majority are small businesses, committed, passionate, determined, awkward, cantankerous, and obscenely independent individuals. And the U.K. still relies upon a remarkable pool of young, creative entrepreneurs. They are the lifeblood of my industry, and it is vital that the rule-breakers continue to come into my industry, and never more so than in this wonderful, utopian digital age we all now live in, where the internet has offered up so many extraordinary, remarkable opportunities, and the ability to reach an audience.

Now personally, I don't think there's been a better time to be a fan of music. The evidence of the talent around us, and whether that is Dizzy Rascal, Damon Albarn or Michael Nyman, to name but a few, the U.K. is still a global hub for creativity. I'll give you an example. Being creative in the U.K. – music, film, fashion, design – now actually contributes more to U.K. plc than all of the construction industry, the pension industry, the insurance industry and twice as much as the pharmaceutical industries. Or to put that in plain English for you, in relation

to music, I have to admit I get slightly tickled, when what some people might rather dismissively think of as nothing more than a bunch of kids making noise in the back room of a pub on a Friday night, well, as it transpires, when they grow up to become big boys and girls, the impact they have on all of our lives is just as vital, significant, vibrant and important as somebody from Oxford with a double First, currently working for a commercial bank in the City of London. And that makes me incredibly proud of my industry, and incredibly proud of our artists. However, music is now a grown-up, mature industry, and collectively we need to take that responsibility seriously. Collectively, we need to move forward and ensure that we are coping with the challenges that our industry faces, and that is going to require infrastructure, expertise, investment, resources. It is going to require leadership, and in the digital marketplace, it is even more vastly complex. For leaders, this brings a challenge. We, as an industry, need to upskill our existing employees. We need to ensure that those coming into our business are properly equipped, that they can fill any skills gap and find employment, and ideally we need mavericks, but hopefully very highly skilled, articulate, capable mavericks and graduates combined. Young people, brimming with brilliant ideas are the life-blood of my industry, and even if they have no formal education. And yet I must now see a future where I combine that with high-calibre graduates from the best universities this country has to offer, who can meet what new economic and technical challenges my industry is facing.

Going forward, the U.K. will be relying on the creative industries ever increasingly, as a driver of economic growth. Graduates who have previously headed for the City, I now want to see coming to my industry. Music needs them. To fulfill our potential, it is vital that our leaders in industry can break free from their traditional silos, that they can network with those from other walks of life, and other areas of employment, and other ideas. And to give you an indication of that, I've just left a breakfast with the Confederation of British Industry and the Mayor of this time, after having shortly had myself elected onto the CPI Council for Southeast London. Increasingly, my industry needs to find a common language, with technology companies, with brands, with ISPs, with politicians and a host of others. As a grown-up industry, we need to understand them, and we need to help them understand us. And for an industry as diverse, fragmented, fast-changing as the music industry, that is going to be a huge challenge. So what's the solution?

Well, as it turns out at U.K. Music, we've had some ideas. A couple of months ago, for the first time ever, we published on behalf of our industry, a vision of what we think we're going to look like in 2020. Liberating creativity defines my industry's future, and from that, we draw strategy policy from how we can achieve that, and from that we define strategy and policy from what engagement, help, support we need from the outside world. At the heart of it is that idea that as an industry, we must become more strategy, and that we are more likely to meet our goals if we act together. In terms of developing leadership, I believe that we have taken a fairly comprehensive approach. One that addresses the needs of our current leaders, and those who will be the future leaders of my industry. Those perhaps only now embarking on their careers. And indeed, next week, U.K. Music will be announcing the full detail of our first ever Music Leaders' Network. This, for the first time will physically bring together ten of the most senior leaders from different spheres of my industry. From different companies, sectors, regions and a partnership between the commercial and the publicly funded, and I truly believe for my industry, is a very significant move. The network will be of individual benefit, but more importantly, it will be crucial in establishing those links and understanding the differences between different industry sectors. The objective is that the Music Industry Leaders' network leads to far great cohesion, knowledge sharing,

and that this can be filtered into the ongoing work programmes and development of U.K. music. In terms of those already working within the music industry, last month U.K. Music launched its first ever skills audit in association with CC Skills. And drawing from input across the country, the results of that will be used to start developing potential skills gaps within my industry, and clearly then developing working with Universities, providers, how we can approach, support and fill those gaps.

We have, as an industry, begun to take the first, I suspect, very real, very practical steps. At present there are quite literally hundreds of music industry courses on offer at colleges and universities throughout the United Kingdom. In fact, depending on who I speak to, I currently get estimates that there are anywhere between 24,000 to 40,000 young people either on an HE or an FE course that apparently has something to do with my industry. It fuels people's hopes. It fuels the hopes of those young people, that they will develop a career in my industry. That there is such demand, I have to say, is an incredibly positive thing, however, not only can we not verify the quality of what many of these courses are doing, or indeed what those people are learning, this industry simply does not have the capacity to take in thousands of graduates. Last year U.K. Music announced details of its first ever accreditation programme. Over the next eighteen months, we will be focusing on the needs of those graduates, and on the needs of industry, and our aim is to create a network of fully functioning, high-calibre, degree level courses, accredited by my industry, with deep integration and deep-rooted support and vision for those young people, so that they will be given the most opportunity, support, and more importantly, develop experience and skills, that the industry itself feels, may provide them with the best opportunity for long-term career development.

On top of that, we have an even bigger agenda to address many of the difficulties that our music and entrepreneurs are currently attempting and failing to access finance, particularly sources of Government-backed finance schemes, such as the Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme. As you can probably tell, we like a challenge. We are going to take those challenges on. We are going to do everything we possibly can to ensure that the future for my industry, and for young people and people employed by my industry is not only bright, not only successful, but is going to become world dominating. The U.K. music industry is currently the second largest exporter of music in the world. Last year, one in ten of every single artist album sold in North America was made by a British artist. We aim to be number one within the next ten years. And part of our approach to doing that is based upon a very simple philosophy – the greatest asset that any nation, any country or any industry could possibly have is our young people. And if I might ask anything of you today is, that as we go forward over coming years as adults, we are very mindful towards the legacy that we must leave behind, for ultimately it is those young people that will carry that legacy forward, and they will be required to do that long after history has forgotten all of our names. My name is Feargal Sharkey, may your God go with you.

[Applause]

Nima: Thank you Feargal, for those really valuable insights into the industry, and some staggering statistics, and a fantastic ambition. Simple – be number one in the world. Thank you. Sarah.

Sarah: Thank you very much, and good morning. Before I started, I thought I'd have a quick look on Google, to see some of the words that might be used today. So leadership, innovation,

creativity and recession. And I had a quick look to see how many links there were to each of those four words. I don't know if anyone could have a guess at which do you think might have the most links to it – leadership, innovation, creativity, recession? Leadership. See, I thought, actually only one person said, and I thought recession. Leadership, let me just tell you, had 132 million links. Innovation at 109 million creativity at 45 million and recession had 43,000 million. I thought, that's interesting, and while I was flicking through that, I looked on Wikipedia, looking up sort of quotes about leadership, you know, there's endless reams and reams and reams of stuff about leadership, but one thing struck me, which I thought was relevant for what I'm going to say today, and it was someone called Alan Keith, so thank you to him, and he said, 'Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen'. So three things in that – leadership, so a leader is important, and for me that does not mean, and never has meant, I feel a bit uneasy about, you know, sort of 'come on guys, over the hill, you know, follow me!' type thing. Creating. Important. Creating a way for people to contribute. I often think that is what it is, when you're leading something, that you just create the right atmosphere, the right place, for other people to come forward and do things. And then making something extraordinary happen. When times are tough, just doing the ordinary isn't always going to be enough. If you're going to really do something special, think about what is extraordinary, what you're really believe in and what you want to do.

I'm out and about, which I am quite a lot, at the moment it is a bit doom, gloom and despondency, in fact even this morning I arrived here, and over a cup of coffee I heard one person say, 'oh, god, you know, times hard', 'how do you feel?', 'oh terribly about going forward,' and the other person said, 'yeah, well that's just how it is, isn't it?' And when sort of happens, I think 'oh my goodness.' If we all, you know, turn in, head down, it's all doom, gloom, despondency, then it sort of will be. Now I'm not trying to romanticise things, you know, things are going to be tough, and you know, looking ahead it's difficult. But it strikes me that this is the moment, and I've actually said this in my current job, to my very, very tiny team, when everybody is doing that, actually don't. Stand up, look out, check for opportunities, spot the horizon. Things will happen that people haven't noticed before.

And it maybe that I feel like that because maybe within my DNA, I started working in 1979, which was a recession, so it came out of the '73-75 period, economic instability, strikes, three day weeks, no electricity, which was fantastic, because when you were at school, which I was then, you know, homework – oh well, you know, couldn't do the homework, we didn't have enough candles in the house. You know, there was always a wonderful excuse, that things were never as good as they could have been. So I started working in '79, in a sort of a gofer job in a Lloyds Insurance Broking office, and I think there weren't really jobs, and I don't really know quite how I got that job, but I think the only reason they kept me was I was earning the princely sum of £1250 per year, which actually even then was quite cheap. Whereas you know, I'd open the post, make the tea, run around doing messages, and took the most boring bits of business into the Lloyds market which no-one else wanted to do, and I was probably more worth having than not having, because you know, at the end of the day, the bosses wanted to have their cups of coffee. It was very hierarchical then, you know, you got your cup of coffee and you got your messages. So I went through that period and somehow survived, kept my head down, everyone was losing their jobs.

Then when through the very heady '80s, which you know, I lived to the full, although I do remember the day, 19th of October 1987, Black Monday, I signed the contract for my flat, a flat that I thought exemplified how I should be at that time of my life. And I did feel very jittery doing

that, but I did it. I took the risk, and I think it was the right thing to do. So we fast-forward, 1991, I am now in a much more senior position, we're in another recession, and I'm now the Managing Director in this organisation, and we've taken over some smaller companies, and looked at the business and got rid of people, and done it, I think, really badly, and I didn't really know how to do it, and I still remember my chairman deciding at late notice that I should sack a whole load of people. He was going to, and I should do it instead. And I did it, hugely ineptly. I remember my PA wouldn't speak to me for days, you know, it's a day I look back on, actually, with you know, absolutely no credit to me, but what I learnt from that is, my god, I'm never going to do it like that again. It also made me feel that I don't know that this is the place I want to be. So I left the City in 1992, jumped out sort of into nothing. And then I'm going to just talk about a few examples of things, which even though some of them are 20th century examples of I think innovation, creativity leadership, I think they're still relevant now. So I worked at a gallery, Purdey Higgs Art Gallery, and they were down in Tower Hill. They were in an old dog biscuit factory, and actually there were lots of artists living down there in the 1980s, rents were very cheap, and lots of artists studios. But they needed to move, there was no lease, it was all a bit hairy. So I looked around for new premises for them, and I found them one by Tate Modern, before Tate had signed up. And Southwark in those days was very different, and I went around Hoxton, Old Street, all those areas, looking for galleries. I knew nothing, really, about how to find galleries or do deals or whatever, and I eventually found this developer who was the developer that we went with, and I was trying to get a meeting with him, and he was like 'sorry, who are you? Sarah Weir, art gallery, why do I want to talk to you? What do you know about anything? What do you know about property developing?' And of course he was right, nothing was the answer. But I rang a friend of mine who knew something more about this business, and I asked him to help me with what language should I speak, what words should I use – how do I do this deal? Because I didn't want to admit that I knew nothing, and so I went in and we did the deal, and off it went. And in those days, you know, contemporary art wasn't what it is now. Sales were very slow, we were living hand to mouth, it wasn't the big hot ticket. That's one example.

Then the Royal Academy is another one that sprang to mind when I was thinking about this morning. So I worked there, and that was a place that was quite a difficult place to work, because there were so many languages being spoken. You had the artists, the Royal Academy admissions, you had the students in the schools, you had the archivists, you had the librarians, you had all these different people who all thought the world revolved around their bit. And there was a lot of quite unnecessarily, I felt, tension and time-wasting, between not actually coming together, just speaking your own language and not being prepared to look at other things. And then of course there was management, M for Management, which was me because I was the Fundraising Director then. And one thing I instigated then, I was working, actually my second day, Sensation opened, and I remember standing in the gallery, it was with the person I was taking over from, and I really clearly remember a sort of whistle of wind going past my ear, and I don't know if you recall during Sensation, the eggs were thrown at the painting of Myra Hindley, and this guy was right behind me. What I remember noticing was that the eggs came from Fortnum & Mason, and I thought, what an odd place to go and buy eggs that you then want to throw in a gallery, but it's just across the road, so I suppose it's not that odd. But anyway. It struck me as odd. But the thing about that was that the sponsor in the evening wanted the painting to stay, because for them the edginess of the painting, and they wanted it to stay. So I remember that moment quite clearly, but also the Monet exhibition was on, 1999, it was then the biggest art exhibition even in this country, huge, 840,000 people, 24 hour opening at the end, you know, all of this is old-hat now, but then it was the first time that it had been

done. You couldn't get a ticket for love nor money. Sold out, non-stop, non-stop. One of the sponsors cancelled a breakfast at late notice. And I thought to myself, we could have tried to resell it, but I thought actually, let's invite all the galleries and museums, all the people working in them in a quite senior capacity to come and have that breakfast instead, see the Monet quietly. So I sent this invitation out, and there was a lot of consternation. People ringing going, well, 'why are you inviting us?' Because there was a lot of rivalry between all the museums and galleries. 'Why are you inviting us? Who else is going to be there? What's going to happen? What's the catch?' So I said, 'there isn't a catch. It's free, would you like to come.' So anyway, they came, and they were all a little bit nervous, and I sort of spoke to people, and out of that, you know, different partnerships and alliances did form. And I also instigated half a day off, for people to go and look at art once a month. I didn't really care what they looked at, I just wanted them to look at art, to think about art, I mean, I'm passionate about contemporary art, and I wanted them to talk about it much more than I thought they were. The story that is, that I was told this story many years later, by somebody, they'd embellished it, actually, a fair bit, and said how different things came out of that, without obviously realising it was anything to do with me. I didn't really say, I just smiled, and I thought well good, that something got left behind.

And then we go forward to the Almeida Theatre, I'm the Executive Director. And here's an example where it all nearly went wrong, and it went wrong because I turned inwards. So, I'm doing Almeida at the time when we come out of Islington which is our home, we go down to King's Cross, turn a big bus depot into two theatres, about which I have no knowledge about how to do, but then nor did anyone else, because it hadn't been done before, and then bring it back to Islington. And King's Cross, the lease ended here, and Islington the building is ready here, so we have a gap, a nine month gap. And everybody, all the experts, way more expert than me, every single person said, if you leave King's Cross here, and you only come back to Islington here and you have this gap, you will disappear. So you know, that's a slightly terrifying thought, because I can't get the King's Cross lease extended, however hard I try, I can't, I can't. So I've got to resign myself to the fact that, 'oh my god, we're going to go dark, it's going to go down, it's going to go bust, and it's on my watch.' Pretty scary, but I'd resigned myself to that was what was going to happen, because that's what everyone had told me was going to happen. And I just couldn't look up and out, and it nearly did. And then I talked to somebody, I actually allowed myself to open, and spoke to one person about this scenario, and she was just absolutely aghast and she said, 'well you can't possibly do that, don't be ridiculous, you know, there's another way.' And then I started opening my mind, and actually what we did was, I spoke to all the team, I spoke to all the staff, the key people, and I said look, what would you like to do in that nine month period. So people running the box office, and all that sort of thing, obviously there isn't a box office if there's no theatre. And some of the box office people came up with an idea of going to work at SHAPE, and so they went to SHAPE, the disability organisation, and they learnt all about theatres and stuff like Vocalise, and all the things that now are an absolutely integral part of how theatres are run, but it wasn't so much then, it really wasn't at the Almeida. And they brought the skills back. Other people went off and did different things, I actually did some financial training, tailored specifically for theatre, for all the techies, who at the beginning were like, uh, financial training, but you know, it changed totally the way we budgeted and the way we ran shows. And I persuaded the Arts Council to keep funding these people, not everybody, the main people, while they went away and did their thing, and then they came back at the end of the nine months, because the theatre without the people was nothing. And we also did some events during that time, and we did participatory theatre out on the street, Caledonian Road, I remember really well, the young

people and older people – I still think one of the best things we did. And I went out and talked to community centres, to people, encourage them to come to the theatre down in Kings Cross. They looked at me as if I was mad, like – ‘What? Who are you? Theatre? What’s this?’ You know, not interested, not interested, not interested. Kept on trying, kept on trying, and there is now a major project, which is a fantastic part of the Almeida for young people. And that sort of came out of that time.

Arts Council, thank you for mentioning the Sultan’s Elephant, that was very generous of you. Obviously it was not me, it was the wonderful Helen Marriage and Nicky Webb, Royal de Luxe, but I did play a part behind the scenes, and I think what I did there was I was very steadfast. I believed in that project, I believed in Helen, I believed in those people, and it’s fair to say that in the long period before that happened, you know, once it was a success everyone was, ‘oh yeah, that was me, I did that, that was great.’ But I can tell you, in the years beforehand, how can I put this, there was some quite spirited opposition, perhaps that’s the way to put it! And I just stood firm and it happened, and I feel very proud of what that was.

So then we end with my last job now, which is the ODA, and so I left the Arts Council, you know, 120 people, 120 million, blah, blah, and I started at the ODA with no budget and two people I’ve seconded from the Arts Council. And I’m responsible for integrating arts and culture into the Olympic Park. It was not in the original brief, in ODA parlance, we were not in scope, as it’s called. And do you know what, I’ve decided that this is the best place for me, I think I’m always better when I’m not in scope. I think that’s a trick that I’ve learnt, it’s taken me a long time to learn it, but I think that’s where I should be out of scope. So because of that, there was no money in their budget, so therefore, you know, if you start with that, the only way to go is up. And I created the strategy, which is very simple. It is to have art as part of the Park, not an add-on to the Park. Very simple. Along with design and along with engineering, all that ingenuity, have it as an integral part of the Park. And we’ve developed that over the last two and a half years, and we have leveraged about £17.5 million. People haven’t quite noticed that they’ve spent all that money on arts and culture. And I was just near the Park last night, at a project called the View Tube, which I’m quite proud of, which is a viewing platform near the Park, but Pudding Mill Lane Tube, with an artist we worked on, who has done a running bridge. So as you step onto the bridge, a ticker, like a big beacon at one end, it’s a hundred metres and there’s a ticker on it, so you can race yourself against Usain Bolt or whoever the fastest person in the world is. And it’s really for post-games, not so much for during the games. But we had a great wee walk down the greenway, and it was fantastic. And then the biggest project is Anish Kapoor, which is not our project, it’s the Mayor of London’s, but we’ve been working sort of behind the scenes, if you like, to make that happen.

So to summarise, in times of turbulence, I think as a leader, you know, wherever you are, I would say the following things: Stand up. Stand up tall, look out and watch for opportunities. You will spot things that other people haven’t seen, often in places that you can’t imagine that they’re going to be. Be really clear about what you want to do. Be really clear, and feel it and know it in your heart and in your head. If you’re not quite sure, and times are difficult, forget about it. Keep talking to other people. You know, the odd mistake I’ve made is when I didn’t talk to other people. The View Tube came out of us doing boat trips in 2008 from down the river to the Olympic Park. From Limehouse to the Olympic Park, and I talked about our work, a guy got onto the boat, he’s worked for the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation, and he and I started chatting. He’s called John Middleton, and

out of meeting him on that boat, having a chat, came the View Tube. I got some money from within the ODA, he put the other half up, half a million pounds, done and dusted, the project was up and running in three months. You know, that was great. We could do that because we were out of scope.

And lastly, never take no for an answer. When, years and years ago, I was a young Lloyds broker in the market, so you went into this big marketplace and there were underwriters where you did your business, and occasionally when they were just fed up with you going on and on about trying to get them to insure this property or whatever it was they didn't want to do, they would bring out a sign from under their desk, and it said 'what part of no is it that you don't understand'. Well as far as I'm concerned, every part of no, I don't understand. You know, you just keep going back. You keep going back and you keep on pushing. You know, if you really want something, if you have total belief in it, if you want it more than someone else, if you can imagine it, if you can see it, if you can articulate it, you will usually get it. Even if it's not in ways that you imagined. So you know, there's never been a time without creative thinking, and this isn't it. There's never been that time. There will be some people that won't survive, you know, that's true, I'm not going to romanticise things, but I think that those of us that do will be even stronger. Because at the end of the day, the only constant in life is change. Thank you.

[Applause]

Nima: Thank you Sarah. There were certain things that I felt, well, so many lessons there for me to learn from. We are slightly, you know, the whole thing started slightly late, so I'm going to open this to the floor straight away for questions. But before I do, just to recap, I think we've got three very distinctive styles of leadership. I don't really know if you think of yourselves as leaders, I'm sure you do, if you think about it. But you've got Gary, reflective, incisive and critiquing in what he writes, which of course has a big impact, and then you have statements like 'if you look different, but behave the same, then it is tokenism', and that I think captures something very, very powerful. And then you've got Feargal, and I think every art form should have a Feargal. I think, you know, U.K. Music is so lucky to have someone who has had the fantastic artistic credibility, because you know, he's been a great singer, musician, composer, etc, and now is championing the commercial aspects of the industry, and has such a big, big vision. And then you have Sarah, who I hope you don't mind me saying, is a buccaneer, you know, she slips like quicksilver into all these various crevices, and before you know it, she's disarmed things and has made things happen. So ladies and gentlemen, questions of our three fantastic speakers. And when you ask the question, if you could just state your name and say where you're from.

Anna: Hello. My name's Anna, I have a question, but I'll make it brief. I'm having difficulty knitting these contributions together, which were all very interesting, thank you. But Sarah was talking very much about being open, taking risks, creativity, and then Feargal was talking about we need structure and policy and I'm wondering how, or which way you have to go. And also, Feargal, all the examples he gave of mavericks in the music industry, were all very white and very male, and how will that structure and policy avoid tokenism?

Feargal: The reality is you need all of these things, all at the same time. And in many ways, and other people in this room are at liberty to agree or disagree, for me the whole process of leadership / management has constantly been about trying to balance that marble on a pane of glass. Now clearly in terms of the music industry, do we have an awful lot of astonishingly bright,

clever, extraordinarily creative people? Well, absolutely, because otherwise that industry wouldn't have got to where it has got to at this point in time. But, at this moment in the industry's development, clearly I'm of a viewpoint that we could do with a little more structure, simply because I think it's causing some disadvantages to the industry. Clearly again you have a balancing act to do, because as an artist, the minute somebody tried to impose any kind of structure on me, by instinct they were told fairly promptly where to go and what to do. So it's trying to ensure that you do have that balance of aligning people who are creative either artistically or in terms of management and organisation, but ensuring that at the end of the day they are being supported and they are being nurtured. Truth is, it's part of that leadership thing again, this month, this week, I'm focused on structure, that will change in a month's time, it will be something else, and you constantly have to keep reviewing what you're doing, changing it, making sure that it's fit for the world that you're currently living in and the challenges you're trying to deal with at that minute in time. So for me, it's not one thing better than another, or one thing against the other, they should all hopefully be living in harmony with each other, and it's just trying to identify where the weak spots are and what you might do to support them and prop them up.

Sarah: Can I just add something to that – I think actually quite a good way of describing it might be to think about Gary and what he said, because if you like, and I'm being a bit lateral here, that the structure, for Gary, was that he's got these amazing words he was saying, the structure is that they're in a book. So you could have the words, and they could not be in a book, that would be fine. But I always think it's about looking for where is the edge of the page. I don't really have a problem with structure per se, give me the structure, and I will find out how you can most imaginatively fill that page with interesting words. Maybe that's the way that I would describe it. You know, a book can be very dull, and a book can be completely fascinating. A page can have interesting word on it, a page can be full of turgid management-speak that frankly nobody understands. So that's how I would see it. Structures are there to be worked with, worked around and pushed against, so have both. And when we have commissioned artists in the Park, it's quite interesting that, you know, sometimes they come in and they're oh gosh, the Olympic Delivery Authority, there's all this bureaucracy and there's this and there's that and the other, which in a way, there is. But our job is to weave our way through so that they can get on with their creative stuff. We can change, whether it's procurement, legal or whatever, which we have done. We've changed the way those things are all done, so the structure is there. We then say, look, that doesn't work for artists, ah well, you know, blah, blah, blah, and it's like, no, no, we haven't got time to mess around with it not working for artists, it's the Olympics, it's 2012, it's coming, we need to change it otherwise we won't have the artists. And so we've changed it. So I think if you think creatively, you can always ensure that structure can work for you, rather than against you.

Feargal: Can I just pick up on your last point, which I didn't answer by the way, which was the examples that I gave were all white and male. You're right. And it's something that we've been spending a huge amount of time over the last eighteen months talking about, looking at. It's clearly, certainly at the senior levels, my industry is dominated by that 50% of the population who a) isn't female in the first place, and that's before we move onto those that aren't fundamentally white and Anglo-Saxon in origin in some way or another. It is still an extraordinary ongoing piece of work on trying to find out why that is, and whether we have created some sort of glass ceilings in terms of management and promotion. It goes back to the Leaders Network that we will be launching next week, and trying to address some of those issues, and trying to find ways to reach out to people who are not white, and trying to

understand why they are not coming out into industry – are there some sort of barriers there, is there something that is preventing them from taking a professional career internally within a record company, publisher or whatever that might be. Clearly as an artist, the entry point into the music industry is about as low as it's ever going to get. If you could make a piece of music or in some way do that kind of thing, you're in. But listen, any thoughts you might have on that, I'd be only too happy and delighted right now, as it's a pretty hot topic of conversation, and something we want to try and get right.

Vanessa: Hi I'm Vanessa. I just wondered, Gary, with Obama now in power and halfway through his first term, the thing of being different and looking different, if you believe that there has been a change in America in terms of accepting that change. I part live in America, and I'm aware that some things have not changed at all, so I just wondered if you wanted to comment, looking out halfway through that first term?

Gary: Well, I can in a way that I think relates to the kind of broader questions that I was talking about first, because I think that with Obama, what you have is this very clear distinction between symbols and substance, not that he's insubstantial, but that what happens when Obama wins in 2008 is a very important symbolic victory. It shows how things are possible for at least one person, and that shouldn't be derided. I can't remember who it was that said, you shouldn't leave symbols to the symbol-minded. So it's important, and yet it's also important not to mistake it for that individual victory and advancement for collective victory and advancement, that if anything, Obama's rise was not consistent with the rise of Black America, but abhorrent to that in a time that he was getting on and getting higher, Black people were actually going from the recession they were already in, into a depression. Intriguingly and importantly, since Obama has been President, the gap between Black and White in terms of wealth and income, has grown. And so in there, you have, and has sparked a kind of backlash among a section of White America, which shows you that these very important individual and symbolic advances should never have been mistaken for a broad collective, substantial advance.

And this happens all the time, I think, in a creative industry let's say, I'll give two quite salient examples in terms of TV and radio. First of all, in TV if you look at the number of non-white people, or women, in front of the camera as opposed to behind the camera. Well in front of the camera, that's great. You know, that's very good, it's going out to lots of people that all these things are possible. But it's behind the camera where the decisions are made about scheduling, about editing, about priorities, and so on. And there hasn't been half as many, half as much substantial advancement behind as there has been in front. So you can get Black faces or female faces in high places quite quickly, but changing the structure or underlying structural problems is much more difficult. The other one is radio, which always makes me laugh. The Today Programme, which I sometimes call the whitest show on earth, they clearly feel that they don't need non-white people in there, because you can't see them. Which is crazy. I mean, there's nothing else which the BBC does which is as White as the Today Programme. And that's the only explanation I can think of, that it doesn't...and so there is some sense that racial experience or ethnic experience is a purely visual one. It's not an experiential one, it's not a possibly an ideological one, not necessarily, but it might be.

And so once again you get this difference between the photo opportunities and equal opportunities in the way that things look. And what's important in those moments is not to deride the people who are in the front of house, not to say 'well, you shouldn't be there', not to create

that space that says, for example, with Diane Abbott, 'well, because of the way that this was framed in a tokenistic way, therefore you are a token.' That's not her fault. She has every right to stand, and she should be there, if she wanted to. But quite often, that is where the focus will lie. So then the focus will come on the individual person who is the front of house, and they will say 'why haven't you changed this'. All of the pressure to change comes on a handful of individuals who are usually in the most vulnerable situation – they may be the first non-white person to be there, or so on, or the first woman to be in that situation, and they're the go-to person. This happened to me the other day, someone said, 'I wrote to the Guardian Media's Editor about something, they didn't get back to me, and then I wrote to you and you didn't get back to me'. And I said, well ok, I said, why did you write to me? And she said, well because you write about the things that I was upset about. And I said, well if I responded to every accusation of racism that was in the Guardian, I would never get to write about anything, that's all I would be doing. And I said, where do you work? And she said, Camden Council. And I said, well, how would you like it if every time there was a racial complaint, someone went to you, when there is an office in Camden Council that is supposed to deal with it? And so the other thing then is, all the pressure to do these things comes on to the most visible individual. In this case, people say to Obama, why haven't you cured racism? It's been two years now, and racism is still here. And that is an incredibly kind of problematic place to be.

Jocelyn: I would just like to carry on from what Gary was talking about, in the context of lesbianism, specifically lesbianism because the issues for gay men is constantly different than it is for women in terms of the way that we're marginalised, and in terms of the way that our experiences, especially those of us from BME communities, because you're actually looking at the issues of racism as well as the kind of discrimination you face as a lesbian, and you look to your communities in terms of support, and you find little to no reflection. There is not even the symbolic community of people that one can turn to, to reflect that kind of change, and therefore in the areas that all of you work, how far is that an issue that you take on board?

Gary: I'm not sure I fully understand the question, sorry. If somebody else does, then I can...

Feargal: Well it sounded to me like two questions in many ways, I suspect, one being, and by the way, not that I spend an awful lot of time of my life in the lesbian communities, I'm not sure I'm capable of speaking with any authority whatsoever, but what I sense from some of what you said was, actually funnily enough, down to those words 'lack of leadership'. And someone out there in defining what that environment is, and where it needs to go, and how the hell it is going to get there, and leading the charge from the front. Within my own working environment, yes I am aware that there are people I work with and that are around me who are lesbians. But I don't think about those things any more than 'oh, are you really? Good for you. Right, let's get on with work'. So for me, those things... maybe it's just coming from my background. And I know it was a slightly frivolous quote, but it is actually true, that I grew up in an environment that was very heavily divided by sectarianism, and I've always tried to just take a much more open approach than that, but it may be just my own experiences growing up, that I'm incredibly happy to take people at face value, and all I kind of want is to give people as much respect as I can, and simply ask for nothing more back. As long as there is that exchange, I am a very happy man, regardless of what shape, size, colour, description people come. Works for me – can they get the job done, can they get it done on time, can they get it done on budget? There you go, I've got the three answers I need.

Gary: So were you saying that within BME communities there's a lack of community, I just didn't quite get it.

Jocelyn: Sorry, obviously I wasn't very clear, and perhaps that lack of clarity comes from my way of articulating it. But it was to say that, I was just following on from what you were saying, in terms of the notion of the symbols, yes, that people stand as symbols. And I was following on from that and saying actually, in terms of lesbian barely symbols, there are very few of even those, yes, to be able to begin that process of driving that cultural change that needs to happen. Because it's not just about being a lesbian from a BME community, it's about finding that reflection within music, within art, within culture, within all those diverse areas that reflect the diverse cultures that we live in.

Sarah: Can I just add something to that, because I think it is also that people are very multi-faceted, there's lots of sides to them, and what came into my mind when you were talking is actually when I was at the Arts Council, there was a, I can't quite remember the name of the Grant, anyway, there was a particular festival, I think it was a poetry thing which had been done, and the imagery on the front of this brochure was imagery which could be construed as the devil and a godlike figure, and then there was a poem bite, and actually rather wonderfully, it had the Arts Council's logo right under the devil's tail. Anyway, a big campaign of letters started about this, about this imagery, and that it was wrong, and I was writing the letters back. And I could see, actually it was quite a campaign, because they were talking about it being on the internet, and the people writing the letters struck me as if they were probably quite older generation, probably hadn't seen the internet, so they'd been asked to write on a particular subject. And once we got to about the 300th letter or something, I was thinking, god, who is this guy? Why don't we just take it off the site, or why don't they just take it off their literature. And then the young gentleman that had done it sent a letter to us, and it turned out that he was a young, black, gay Christian. And the reason that he wanted to write this poem and show this imagery was because he felt very outside his Church, actually that was the thing about him. And the letter was hugely moving and poignant, and what I then wanted to do was to actually send his letter to all of these people that were writing. But one of my colleagues said 'Sarah, just forget it. They won't read it, they won't read it.' But what really struck me is, you know, I started getting irritated with him, whoever this person was. I was fed up with writing all these letters. And that there were so many parts to him, and this was a particular part he took offence at. And I think this thing about, you know, representing a certain body who, when you are a person, I think it's quite a difficult thing sometimes. You know, I'm a gay woman, but I don't particularly think I can stand up for, and be, a whole load of other people. I can only really be me, and if some people see some reflection of something, that's great, and if some people don't, that's also great. And I sort of think that's how it is, really.

Gary: Yeah. I think there is a pressure for any under-represented group, for whoever gets to the front first, to embody, almost literally embody, everything about everybody, and actually not to live their life, but to almost kind of perform everybody else's life. Which does become an incredible, particularly in the creative industry, becomes an incredibly restrictive challenge. I mean, one of the things moving to New York that I was glad about, when I moved to New York, was that I wouldn't get, you know... Someone would be stabbed in London, or somewhere, some Black kid would be stabbed, and then I would be invited on Question Time. And I'd think well actually, I don't want to talk about that. And so I wouldn't. But there was kind of this constant struggle, and I would say, actually I'm a journalist, I'm not an

MP, and you would be almost to kind of voice opinions about things that either you knew nothing about, or that you didn't have a formed opinion on, that you were in the process of forming an opinion on, but in the absence of other voices, certain people get called on.

And I interviewed Chris Ofili at the beginning of this year, and he spoke about why he felt this need to go to Trinidad, to move to Trinidad. And he said, you know, 'I felt that there were these two Chris Ofili's out there, there was me, and then there was this performer.' And some of that's about him being famous and being successful, but some of it wasn't. Some of it was about, you know, I remember him talking about how he was invited onto the RSA, and he said, well, 'why would I do that? How would that help my work?' And the guy said, well, you'd be the first black person on the RSA. And Chris said, 'ok, but how would that help my work?' And then he said, which I thought was very funny and quite endearing, he said, 'does it come with a parking space? Because that would really be helpful in Central London.' But being the first Black person on the RSA, I don't know. I mean, he didn't say this, but this was his point, it was, I can see how that would help you, but I'm wondering how it would help me. Which isn't an argument for taking that position or not, but it is a description of those particular pressures that kind of emerge for different people at different times.

Yemisi: Thank you very much. I just wanted to say a big thank you, actually, to Gary personally, because I've been wondering why I've been so frustrated, and I've realised that of all the tokenism, and thank you for you for defining it for me. Because to understand that people are saying that being different, and it's just the same. I'm always trying to push for increasing or broadening, widening of African arts, and I get all the way there, and it will be a case of being pushed by whoever it may be to do exactly what had happened before. And they have a go at me when they go, either swearing, I don't want to do this, this is not what I wanted to do, and then get myself into trouble. But I think I'm going to continue getting myself into trouble for that reason.

But I did actually have a question – one of the things that I was thinking about what attracted me to the Cultural Leadership Programme right at the beginning was I wanted to know what the vision was for the Cultural Leadership Programme, and I wanted to almost kind of ask the panel in essence like, With the creative and cultural industries being built up so much of entrepreneurs, and there being so many leaders, what kind of vision might you be able to bring to the table, the vision for leadership in the cultural industries, just to discuss?

Sarah: I think my vision would be that more individual people have a chance to create...sorry, more individual people have a chance to fulfill more of their individual potential. And I think you can do that through big organisations and through small organisations. Because I think if people don't have the ability, because you know, some people are going to be very sporty, and be great at sports, some people are very bright and turn out to be a scientist, some people are going to be very musical or artistic in whatever way. And if there is a spark of that in music and the arts, for me, my vision is that you have a landscape where people don't think it's sort of odd that you might talk about the 'arts'. And actually I use that word advisedly, as I think the language is quite problematic as well. But just that it's part of your life and part of your culture that you have an opportunity to do that. So for the leaders, I think it's about creating the right atmosphere for that to happen, and some of that will be people who are running big institutions. Some of it will be people like Feargal, standing up for whole industries, but others of it will be people who just work with maybe a small group of people, and create something extraordinary. And I think if you have enough extraordinary projects going on, enough extraordinary things going on, then everyone just

accepts that that is a part of life. So that's my vision, that we are a part of life, as much as the scientists are a part of life, and the engineers are a part of life.

And I've really learnt that, actually, in the ODA, working in a construction company, you know arts and culture in a construction company, that's not really an easy bedfellow. Those people in that company, they're not interested in arts and culture, they're not really interested in the artists, they just want to build their bridge or build their road, or lay their pipes or whatever they're going to do. And it's encouraging them to think that actually, in the creativity of making sure they get the pipe in the right place, also you could have, if you had artists working alongside them on some of these underpasses, for example, you can get a much better way, that the underpass looks more interesting, looks different and will engage a lot more people. Now that's art, but in twenty, thirty year's time, I hope people just walk through that underpass and almost not notice that, but that's also being about leadership, cultural leadership, but in a, perhaps a tangential way. So I suppose my vision is that you see creative and culture throughout life more broadly, but also more deeply.

Gary: First of all, the point you made about, and this relates to the second question, the point you make about getting in trouble is really important. I think it's very important to get into trouble. I think one of the sins, certainly in my profession, but I think possibly even more so in yours, but it's easier for me to talk about mine, is a desire that some people have to be taken seriously. Now that may seem paradoxical, but the desire to be taken seriously means operating under received wisdoms about what it is to be serious, which for example, I know in the last nine years for me, and this is not whether I want to point these policies or not, but the point is just a description of those moments. Opposing the Afghanistan War was about not being taken seriously, by and large, about being cast out at a certain moment as being a kind of a somewhat ridiculous figure in British commentary, of critiquing things like integration. And so I would often be described by various people as, you know, other people in the media as a bonehead, an idiot, one of the most ridiculous men in British journalism and so on. And they're not...making a conscious decision that I don't want to be taken seriously by you, I want to be as right as I can be in any particular moment, and I want to be as honest as I can be in any particular moment, and if that means not being taken seriously by you, then so be it, is actually quite important.

And that is connected with making trouble. That if the institutions that we're in aren't different when we leave them, then in some way, why were we there? Why were we not somewhere else, or why was someone else not there? And things only change when you make trouble. So we have to kind of expect, and to some extent embrace a discomfort that our presence and challenges might bring. And then we'd aim to be strategic about it, to be strategy about what you want to emerge from the discomfort you're creating, because the aim isn't to make people uncomfortable, it's to change things and improve things. But if that demands discomfort, if you have to be the person in the room who says 'sorry, that's really not working for me, and here's why, and it's also not working for any, you know, the kind of thing I want to do, or the reason why I am here', that's important. And it speaks to the second bit in terms of what leadership in the cultural industry is looking like. I think it is about harnessing the energy from the outside, that there are culture is everywhere, exists in all sorts of ways, and that part of the leadership I think in Britain at this moment is about taking all of that stuff that is going on outside, this kind of extraordinary moment. And particularly as we head into recession, which is a terrible time for people in their lives, so I'm not making light of that, but usually an enormous time, and enormously creative time. Hard times are very creative times, people have to get creative in order to live. Look at the

stuff that came out of the early 80's in terms of Britain's cultural product, and it's some of the most exciting stuff that we've done. And so to harness that energy and to be able to then challenge it in a way that challenges the existing structures and makes those structures operate differently.

Nima: Feargal, as someone who harnesses energy on a global scale.

Feargal: Can I suggest first of all, if you need someone to do some really good swearing for you, come and find me. I'm really, really good at it. God, I'm about to get slightly philosophical, at this time in the afternoon. I think, encompassing in many ways what Gary has just been saying. There was a little Spanish poet called *Fredrico Garcia Lorca* who wrote something that I've actually always considered words to live by. And it didn't matter what stage of my life I was at, whether that was running record companies, making music, sitting on Government committees, whatever, and what Lorca simply said was 'rules are necessary for beginners, but after that, they're only for the mediocre. All a good musician needs is strong intuition and a passionate heart.' For me, I've just developed that into the concept of leaders, leadership or leader, and for me, a leader ultimately is an individual, a person that sets the benchmark for which those that follow on will be judged.

Nima: Ok, two last questions, and they'll have to be quick because we are short of time.

Carly: Hi, Carly from National Foundation for Youth Music. I just wanted to pick up what Gary was saying about recessions being really creative times, and how that's at the same time up against really, often conservative funding schemes, and particularly in this current climate, I think a lot of the Art Schemes and frameworks are increasingly at risk of nurturing short-termers and apolitical outputs. And how do leaders in that framework, especially of smaller, funded organisations, kind of cut their own path, when possibly the only way of staying afloat is to toady a line that isn't necessarily in your own values and priorities, and if the answer lies in increasing commercial ties that Feargal was talking about in the case of U.K. Music, is that possibly at the risk of investing increasingly in popular art, or that which is, might not challenge boundaries or necessarily politics, and I'm just curious what the panelists might think about that.

Feargal: I mean, Gary can define what he was thinking about when he said creative times, but I'm inclined to agree with him, i.e., you can be creative in all kinds of ways. And if I really, really wanted to do something, whether I had funding from the State, the industry or anybody else, or indeed nobody, I would find a way to do it, if I truly, passionately believed in it, whether it upset people, whether it didn't, whether it made people happy or not, I would find a way to do it. And that's that old thing that Adam Smith was getting at, I suspect, when he wrote the *Wealth of Nations*. It's vitally important we're all capable of getting out there and getting busy, and recessions do that. For me personally, the last really good recession we had around here, generated a little thing called prog rock. Personally I think most teenagers have turned into a bunch of softies in the intervening twenty, twenty-five years, but I'm almost completely an optimist, and I totally believe there is right now, a teenager sitting in a bedroom, in a housing estate in Doncaster that's got the next fantastic idea, and we just need to go out there and find them and get terribly excited and that will be a very good thing.

Nima: Last question please, for the session.

Ruth: Thank you. Hi, I'm Ruth. I have a very open-ended question, I'm afraid, it's, I guess I've been thinking about time a bit recently, because it occurred to me last week on my way to work that even though I feel I've been to hell and back in my career so far, I'm actually about a third of the way through my working life, and I've got at least another thirty years ahead of me. So whilst you've been talking, we've had this slide behind you, which is about 21st century, and so I'm sitting here thinking again, we're only about a tenth of the way through that, and I'm just wondering how you think about time. An lot of what you've been saying so far is about what's happening next week for Feargal, or the next couple of years with the Olympics and so on, how do you think about time, do you think about time beyond the next few years, or beyond the next month? Is it useful to think about medium time or long term time? We've spoken about legacy, but actually I'm just concerned about how we think about the future and looking forward.

Sarah: I'm happy to start with this one. Yes, I think all three at the same time. So you need to do the present, you need to think about the medium term, but you need to imagine the long term. So when you talk about the Olympics, you see that's interesting, because for me actually, in 2004 before we got the Olympics, before London decided I should even almost bid for the Olympics, I was think about 2020. I was thinking ok, if so the Olympics comes, how out of that can we ensure that culture is much more at that Olympic table, because for the Greeks of course, culture, education and sport is what made up the Olympic ideals, you know, the holders of the human being, mind, body, spirit, and what I did was I sort of forced my way into the Organising, no they weren't called the Organising Committee, they were called the Bid Committee, that's it, the Bid Team, who didn't really want to talk to me, because they couldn't really work out why culture was so important. And I persuaded them to take on two people from the Arts Council who would then almost write the first blueprint, which would be the future, way, way, way beyond the Olympics. And one of those people was Hilary Carty, who is of course sitting here today, and her work from 2004 to 2006 set the scene for where we are now.

I was just the other day talking to somebody about, you know, culture of the Olympics, and he said well, it's at the Olympics, what do you mean? And I said yeah, but it wasn't in 2004 or 2006, it was that work then. And I remember sitting in an incredibly boring conference in Beijing about Culture, Education and Sport for the Olympics, really dull, long, long speeches, nothing terribly interesting being said, and then suddenly it was 2006, and I can't even remember the name of the guy, the IOC, International Olympic Committee person said, in among a whole load of other things, he said, 'culture and education at the Olympics are a must have, not a nice to have'. And I nearly fell off my chair, because it was the work that Hilary did that meant that he said that. And we texted her straight away to say, 'all that shit you went through, all those difficult times, all those sports people you had to deal with, it's been worth it, because it's here.' But that's because I was thinking way, way, way beyond the Olympics. So I think it's important to try to do now, think about the medium but also imagine the long term all at the same time. Because otherwise if you're not doing the long term imagining, if we hadn't done that back in 2004, you're at 2012, and nothing's happened. You know, you've got to be constantly having that big look ahead, as well as watching what's under your nose.

Nima: Ok. On that uplifting note, I would like thank the three speakers, for not only very thought-provoking presentations, but also demonstrating, they are genuine leaders, you know, visionary, innovative, but also the other two characteristics, that clearly, and I think are so

important to leadership, those clearly possess kindness and generosity, too important components, I think, of leadership. So a round of applause.

[Applause]

You have been an excellent audience, I think you should applaud yourselves as well. But before you go, I would like to thank Melanie Abrahams for curating this event, and as you can imagine, it takes a lot of hard work and attention to detail. So Melanie Abrahams, and her team, Diane Morgan for co-ordinating the overall project, and Hilary Carty for conceiving it.

[Applause]