

Lizzie Lovejoy 0:13

Hello, everybody, and welcome to the Change of Perspective podcast. I am your host, Lizzie Lovejoy. And today we will be talking to Annabel. How are you doing?

Annabel Turpin 0:22

I'm good. I'm excited to be here!

Lizzie Lovejoy 0:24

Could you give us a little bit of an introduction to who you are and what you do?

Annabel Turpin 0:28

So I am Annabel. I'm Chief Executive and Artistic Director at ARC in Stockton. I've been here for 13 years running ARC. And before that, I ran an arts centre in Maidenhead, in Berkshire. And before that, I worked at Warwick Arts Centre in Coventry. So I am arts centre through and through.

Lizzie Lovejoy 0:47

So do you have a creative background at all? Because when I was looking up what you'd done, you'd done psychology, and I find it quite interesting, the jump from psychology to visual arts and performing arts and all that creative stuff.

Annabel Turpin 0:59

I was once giving a talk to students, and they asked what my qualification was. And I had to admit that I didn't have a creative qualification. It was a bit of an awkward silence in the room. They were like, really? So no, I don't. I mean, I studied arts, art and drama at GCSE level, and passed, but then was going to go into law and then changed my mind and ended up doing psychology at university, coupled with sort of education, but very much theory, not teaching. And then I was going to join the police force. And then right at the last minute, I'd got a place, I was going in, decided that wasn't what I wanted to do, and I got a job in an arts centre and I've been in arts centres ever since. So I don't have a creative background educationally. I've always loved the theatre. I've always kind of gone to the theatre, and being involved in sort of events and things, so yeah, it's been more, I suppose it's been more of a hobby than an educational study.

Lizzie Lovejoy 1:56

Just out of interest, you said you went to the theatre a lot, what was the first thing you remember going to see?

Annabel Turpin 2:02

So I was really lucky as a child that my schools arranged theatre trips, that my parents both liked theatre. So it was always a real treat to go. It wasn't like an everyday thing. But like every now and again, we'd get to go on a theatre trip, and that was kind of a really big, exciting thing.

So that's a really good question, the first thing I remember. I mean, the first interesting thing I remember, is I grew up in Devon, and I remember going on a school trip when I was about 12 or 13, to a show at The Brewhouse in Taunton, and it was done - I mean, bearing in mind I'm quite old, so this was quite a long time ago - it was done in the dark and all the performers had like neon paint, so it was essentially a kind of, a sort of, I think they were called like Northern Lights or something, I can't remember what they were called, but something like that. So that was the first time I saw performance that looked slightly different to just people in sort of period costumes doing very traditional work. The RSC used to tour to the sports hall at my school, so I saw one or two Shakespeares in the sports hall as well, which kind of stuck in my mind a little bit.

Lizzie Lovejoy 3:10

The very first show that I remember going to see was when I was in primary school. And my school took us to the Civic, which is now the Hippodrome, and it was Winnie the Witch.

Annabel Turpin 3:22

I think that's a great example. I'm sure I was taken to stuff like that when I was when I was kind of really young. But it's further ago for me than you, so I can't remember.

Lizzie Lovejoy 3:32

Kind of leading on from the idea of the fact that your creative background isn't necessarily educational, but more just in terms of what you enjoy, and what you love, which I think is really key to going into the arts industry as a whole is that you have to love it. What led you to make the choice to work in an arts centre?

Annabel Turpin 3:49

When I was at school, I you know, I did drama at GCSE level, and I was always, you know, we did a school play every year, and I always wanted to be in it. And I'm really bad at acting, like really, genuinely bad. You know, everyone's got a story of an amazing teacher that changed their life, and I was really lucky that I had a drama teacher who completely got that I loved it, but wasn't very good on stage, so made me assistant director. So for three years, I think, I worked alongside her as assistant director on school plays. And that kind of fed my sort of creativity a bit and I was like, oh, so you don't have to be on stage. You can do things off stage that aren't technical. So I wasn't technical either.

Annabel Turpin 4:29

So then I went off to university and worked in the Students Union as a kind of front of house steward and then doing a little bit of kind of house management. So I've got some of the events management, but didn't go to theatre for three years probably when I was a student. It wasn't really something we did, we went to sort of lots of gigs and things. And so when I decided not to go into the police force, a job came up at the arts centre and because I'd got the events management experience, and really loved the theatre and performance, it felt like it was sort of quite a good mix. I honestly don't think I would have got the job if I hadn't had that experience of working in the Students Union, kind of running events. That felt really critical at that particular point. And I suppose because I'd been to the theatre as a child, it was an environment I sort of felt vaguely comfortable in. And I know that's a real kind of privilege and not, not something that lots of people have the opportunity to do. So it was a bit of luck really, I think, that's the other thing, that that job came up at that particular time.

But then when you sort of trace it back and kind of go, yeah, actually, I did always do that drama stuff at school, that was always something I really liked. Even the police, this might be a bit of a stretch for some people, but I wanted to join the police because I kind of wanted to try and make it a better world and felt like if I was, you know, helping deal with people that were doing things wrong, then that might, might help. And I suppose ending up in a, in an organisation that is very much a kind of arts for social change organisation, rather than a very traditional entertainment venue, there is a kind of through line there if you choose to find it, in terms of that kind of social change agenda.

Lizzie Lovejoy 6:08

I totally agree with you. From my experience and what I like to do, I like getting other artists involved and getting the community involved in getting to celebrate that, and getting to be a part of helping people in that direction. And I think everything that you've done at ARC, it's like so wonderful, and it definitely shows that, especially when you're bringing volunteers in to do different things, and you're working with all sorts of different artists on all sorts of projects that really benefit the community, I mean, it's just, it's really quite inspiring. I thought it was interesting what you were saying about experience and gaining experience and how key that was for you. Is there anything you'd recommend to people for getting involved?

Annabel Turpin 6:43

I think just, just be curious more than anything. And I think that's, that's probably got me quite a long way. It's just asking lots of questions, and not being afraid to ask if I could have a go at things or take part in things. So for a big chunk of my sort of early career, I was involved a lot in spoken word and live literature. And I can honestly trace that back to a moment in the office, I shared an office with the events manager at the time, and he was going off to a meeting with somebody from the English Department at the University to talk about this new series of kind of author talks. And I said, and I love reading, that's the other thing I probably should have said about creative background, I've always read lots and lots and lots of fiction. And it just sounded really interesting. I said, Can I come? And he said, Yeah, of course, you know, come along, and great that someone was willing to do that. But you know, I was there to take the notes and get the coffee and all the rest of it. And it was a brilliant meeting, it was really inspiring to talk to someone from the English department who had all these contacts with different authors. And we ended up developing a whole series at

Warwick Arts Centre called Writers at Warwick. And from there I got involved in loads and loads of other things and went off to sort of do stuff in other places.

So, but literally, it came back to that day when I said, can I come to that meeting. And I sort of think if I hadn't done that, then there's a whole load of things that I wouldn't have kind of got to do. So be curious, offer to help, it's not about working unpaid, you know, people's time should be valued. And hopefully as a sector we've, we're kind of more aware of that. But yeah, be curious. Don't be afraid to sort of push yourself forward. And you know what, everyone likes talking about what they do. Sitting here today with you asking me about me, like, everyone likes talking about themselves. So don't be afraid to approach people that you're interested in or that you admire. And ask them. Ask them questions.

Lizzie Lovejoy 8:40

Curiosity is definitely key. I'd quite like to know how your experience differs, working up north in arts and working in other parts of the country. Because I imagine there is a difference.

Annabel Turpin 8:52

I had a brilliant time. I worked at an arts centre in Maidenhead as I say, it was a brand new arts centre. I was there about a year before it opened, so I got to open a new venue. It's a beautiful, beautiful building, I loved it. But I really didn't like the place. And I found the people quite challenging. Not the people I worked with, I had an amazing team, you know I worked with brilliant people. But there was a sense of entitlement in our customers and in our sort of local communities, I suppose. Lots of people, it's a very affluent area. So people have been brought up expecting to have access to amazing cultural experiences. That gets quite wearing, and it's quite hard to constantly exceed those expectations when people have got, you know, everything on their doorstep. There's so many arts centres in Berkshire. We, you know, we formed a group and obviously, lots of people travelling into London, access to all that kind of, you know, national work. So, it's quite hard when people just have that, as I say, that sense of entitlement.

And obviously we were interested in finding people that didn't have access to the arts, and there are lots of people in Berkshire living in areas that haven't grown up with that kind of access in the same way. So, yeah, when I came to the north, it just felt entirely different. I sort of expected to arrive, and because ARC was not doing particularly well at the time, I thought there'd be a bit of a kind of go on, then, you know, Southerner, make it work for us, you know, and I expected a little bit more animosity I suppose. I felt very much like an outsider. I wasn't from the north, I never lived in the north. And my experience was so different. I was just met by brilliant, warm people who were kind of like, please help us make it work. Like, we just want it to be brilliant. You know, obviously, lots of money had been invested in ARC. And it's like, we just want it to work, please help us. And, yeah, a real sense of thank you, actually, thank you for coming and helping us. Whereas I expected the opposite, like a sort of a bit of rejection.

And I think it's just that, so there's kind of that that sort of welcome and openness, there's no expectations. And in some ways, that's really sad. Because everyone should expect to have access to the arts, I think it's, you know, a human right. But because people don't have those expectations, there's a real freedom in what you can do and what you can deliver. So that kind of, yeah, that openness, that curiosity, which I think is, you know, definitely alive and kicking in Stockton, and not least because it's been fed for so many years by the International Festival, which has just put such amazing spectacles on the streets for people to sort of encounter in their space, that that's definitely built up a sense of kind of curiosity and, and kind of critical thinking as well, like, you know, we've seen all these amazing shows. So that's what we're judging things against. It's just a very different set of expectations that you're met with. And as I say, in some ways, it's sad that those expectations are so low. But it does mean you've really got somewhere to go in terms of you know, what you can do with people.

Lizzie Lovejoy 12:05

You say you were expecting, obviously, animosity, I totally get that because there is this, this north south divide, I think, especially when we're talking about classism, there's a lot of anger. People who settle in the north are northern, maybe that's a controversial opinion. But my viewpoint is that if you have chosen to come to the north, then you are having the northern experience, and it is, you know, an experience on its own. So anyone who lives here, you are Northern, now you've chosen this place, and it chooses you back.

Annabel Turpin 12:31

I'll happily accept being an honorary Northerner. And I definitely consider myself to be a northerner, now. I love it here. I, I think when I when I moved up, I moved up for the job, I don't think I imagined that I would still be here 13 years later, with no intention of leaving, but but here I am. And I genuinely love it here. And I see how much there is to do here. You know, it feels like, there's still lots and lots and lots of things to address and tackle and do and achieve. So who'd want to be anywhere else?

Lizzie Lovejoy 13:03

Well, speaking of being all around the north, you're on, you're a board member on lots of different organisations and partnerships. How did you get involved in that? And what's your experience of it been?

Annabel Turpin 13:14

I suppose it stems back, this feels like a bit of thread now, but that kind of curiosity, I really like knowing what other people are doing. And I moved up from a very dense, densely populated, and lots of arts infrastructure area, to say there was so many arts centres, you know, we had our kind of own group, and I moved up here and I did feel quite isolated. You know, I love the fact that there's so much space, like physically and mentally, it just felt like there was so much space. But I did feel a little bit isolated. And we started doing stuff at ARC, and we thought things were going quite well. And I had a real fear that we might just like, stay here and keep doing what we're doing. And the rest of the world might be like, you

know, rolling by, moving on, changing, and we just kind of be stuck here doing what we do. So I made a real effort to make sure that I was leaving ARC enough, that I was getting out and visiting other places and getting involved in other things, so that I could see what other people were doing and make sure that we were doing the absolute best we could in Stockton.

And I suppose that's how I see it, and I sometimes describe ARC as having sort of two personalities, or maybe me having two personalities, and one is about wanting to be the absolute best community arts centre we can be for Stockton and our local communities and the Tees Valley, and the other side is taking what we're doing and sharing it with people outside our local area, and looking at what they're doing and capturing what they're doing and bringing it back here. As you know, we run some kind of regional, North wide national networks, and that is a little bit about sharing what we're doing but it's also about listening and watching what everyone else is doing and bringing it back. It's rarely about bringing back the same thing or bringing back the solution. It is about bringing back the questions. So I look at what someone's doing in Bristol or London or Hexham. And you kind of go they're doing that, what are we doing? How are we addressing that? Or how does that work for us? So it's about finding out the questions to ask ourselves. And that's about making sure that what we do is, is rooted in our communities. So we're not doing what's appropriate for Bristol, Hexham, or London, we're doing what's appropriate for Stockton and the Tees Valley. But we're asking the questions all the time. So I think that's why I've chosen to be involved in other organisations.

So I'm a board member of Sunderland Culture, which is a city wide partnership, and I specifically joined that because it's a three way partnership between the University, the council and a private trust. And I thought that was really interesting to see how they work together, and I wanted to learn. Fortunately, I convinced them at the interview that I'd got something to offer. So I chair the Finance Committee, I'm a board member, and do all the other things that that board members do. But it is a two way thing, you know, I learned from doing that. It's a little bit about my development I suppose, as well as what I can give them as an organisation. And I very much hope it's balanced and they feel like they get enough from me to make it worthwhile. But I think that's why I choose to get involved in things.

I'm a board member of the Tees Valley LEP, the local enterprise partnership. You know, I get to sit in a room with people that run huge businesses and small businesses all across the Tees Valley, and that's a huge privilege, but you can really learn from that. I think as a, you know, the arts sector and even the sort of wider cultural sector, we spend a lot of time talking to each other, and I'm actually more interested in talking to people outside our sector, and finding out what's driving them and what are they dealing with, you know, how are we relevant to those people in their lives, in the lives of our customers, or staff or whatever? So it's just about learning I suppose. It's how I learn. I'm not very good at going on training courses, but hopefully I'm quite good at going and yeah, picking other people's brains and listening to what they're doing.

Lizzie Lovejoy 17:16

Well, you're a very forward thinking person. I walked into rehearsal today, and everyone was like, oh, have you seen Twitter, because everyone's going on about the Freelancers Policy.

Annabel Turpin 17:27

I suppose I'm very, I'm a doer, I'm very action orientated. So I've gone out, and you know, the Freelancers Policy is a really classic example. I've gone out and listened over the last year, and before that, to all the talk about how freelancers are being treated, and it's like, well, let's actually do something about it. And to be honest, all we've done is write down what we do and got some feedback from brilliant people, freelancers, about how we can improve it. But it's just like, let's do something, let's not just talk about it.

Annabel Turpin 17:59

And I think that's when I get a bit tired and a bit frustrated, as if I feel like people are just, in my partner's words, my partner always says it's people admiring the problem, and there's lots of admiring the problem that goes on, and I'm a bit like, let's just do something about it. And also, it might not be perfect. I think that's the other thing, and I've definitely learned this over time is that, if you wait until you're 100% ready to do something, when you can, you think you can do something that is absolutely perfect and will stand up to the scrutiny of people, then you're going to be waiting a long time, and you're going to be putting stuff off for a long long time. So our Freelancers Policy isn't perfect, we know that, we've even said as much, we've said it's a work in progress, we've said we'll review it, we'll change it if we get feedback, you know, the minute we get feedback, if we think it kind of needs it. But if we'd waited until, you know, everyone else had published theirs, and we can look at other people's, or waited until we felt really 100% confident that everything is in place then, it'd be five years down the line. And there's a moment now where we need to say, we've heard what you've said, and we're trying to do something about it.

So I suppose that's a little bit as I try and convert those conversations into things that we actually do, because that's where, that's yeah, that's where you see the change. That's when you see the difference.

Lizzie Lovejoy 19:24

Speaking of, you've kind of covered this already, just in the natural thread of the conversation, but how have you seen art, performance, culture, all of that change across the north over the course of your career?

Annabel Turpin 19:37

I am happy to say that I've certainly seen a shift in whose stories are getting told and who's telling them. Not nearly enough of a shift at all. But when I think back even to what ARC's programme looked like when I first got here and what it looks like now, I'm really proud of the shift that we've undergone, who we're listening to. And I think it's a little bit about getting to know your communities and making sure that what you're presenting is something that they're going to be interested in. It's that basic, you know, we use the word relevant, and I'm now having to say, we were using the word relevant a long time before Arts Council, England were using the word relevant, because it's now part of their strategy, but it's been

part of our artistic policy, since about 2013, I think, if not before, but relevance is really important.

Annabel Turpin 20:31

And I think there has been a shift generally, into people wanting to make work that is more relevant to more people, which by its nature means it has to tell more different stories and be told by more different people. You know, there's such a long way to go, it can feel quite hard sometimes, and it can feel like no progress is being made. But progress is very slowly being made. And I've certainly seen that in the time that, you know, I've kind of been looking, sort of thinking about other, other changes.

I suppose there's been a bit of a relaxation around form, which I find really interesting, because I think for what I see as being a very traditional traditional form of theatre, not even, you know, other art forms, but the kind of, you know, two 45 minute halves with a 20 minute interval kind of theatre, I think there's less of that and there's far more interesting versions that are far more open and far more accessible to lots of different people, and a sort of shift in behaviour. Yeah, that's and you know, we're trying to drive all those things, I suppose, as well. So I would say they've changed because it's things that we're trying to change. But I think we are seeing a bit of it.

Lizzie Lovejoy 21:49

So we've talked a bit about what you've done at ARC, what you've done before ARC, but I'd quite like to know what brought you to ARC in the first place?

Annabel Turpin 21:58

It was the building, actually. So I'd been at my last venue for about nine years, I'd been director there for about six years, and I was ready to leave, it was a relatively small, much smaller than ARC. So I was ambitious, I wanted to kind of, you know, move to somewhere bigger. And I particularly wanted to go somewhere that was independent, that wasn't part of a local authority. And if this doesn't sound too odd, I wanted to go somewhere that was struggling, I wanted to go somewhere where there was a real challenge, because in my previous venue, it was brand new, it opened, it ran into problems, and we managed to turn it around and get it to a really positive, sustainable position. And it's still open today, which is a good sign, that's credit to other people, but you know, it's still there. And I felt like I learned so much through going through that process, because we came so close to closing, like so close, that I wanted to apply that knowledge somewhere else, because I knew that next time I could do it better, I could do it quicker and better.

So I was looking around at different organisations and I saw the job at ARC come up, and I was like, I've never been to Stockton. But I knew about ARC because I'd been, I'd sort of watched it as it had kind of been built from afar. And I came up for the interview, and it was a very, you know, bleak day. And I remember standing in the Swallow Hotel where I was staying overnight because the interview was the next morning, and I was on the phone to my



partner and I was looking out at the High Street. And this was at the height of the recession. So there was a big window and I was looking out and I was like, oh, it looks a bit grim, there's not many people, the shops look really old. Yeah, it just didn't didn't feel very warm. And he was like, and honestly I was gonna have to try and persuade him to move with me, so I wasn't really doing a very good sales job.

And then I came into ARC that evening, I walked up, I did a little bit of exploring, and I came into ARC. And there was someone behind the bar who was just absolutely lovely, and said oh have a seat, I'll bring your drink over. I was like, oh, this is really nice. And I sat in the bar for a little bit, and then I went back to hotel. And then I came the next day and had like a full tour, and just fell in love with the building. And I was like, this is amazing. This is like the most incredible building in Stockton. You could just do so much with all this space. And I just got really excited about it. I love buildings.

So yeah, when I was offered the job I was like no, we're going there. And I'd had such a warm welcome, despite the fact that I'd sort of looked out and thought, oh, it looks you know, looks quite harsh, like quite quite a tough environment I suppose, as it was then. Look at it now. There's a gorgeous fountain and an amazing thing that pops up at one o'clock which I absolutely love, the Stockton Flyer. So it's been transformed in the time that I've been here. So I'm glad, but it was the building really that sold it to me.

Lizzie Lovejoy 24:48

Yeah, it's strange because I feel like I had a similar experience but not on a on a visual level, on a people telling me about a location. There was already a lot of assumptions, and it was Stockton and Hartlepool specifically, those two locations, people that had assumptions and were like, Ah, you won't want to go there. You don't want to work in those areas. And with both Stockton and Hartlepool, I was thrilled by what I found when I actually went and especially I get what you mean by like walking up to ARC, because it's such an unexpected building, as you like, exit the High Street and you just see it.

Annabel Turpin 25:22

Definitely, no, I love it. And it still is an amazing building. It's interesting people were like, oh, wouldn't you, wouldn't you prefer it if it was like on the High Street or on the river? Or what would you change about it? And I'm like, it is what it is. It's amazing. Let's make it the best it can be. So I'm a firm believer in yeah, celebrating what you've got.

Lizzie Lovejoy 25:39

You've already said earlier in this conversation that you worked with different spoken word artists, and on different projects, how have you interacted and worked with different creatives and artistic people?

Annabel Turpin 25:49

Lots of different ways. I mean, I suppose over the years, I've morphed into being a producer for want of a better word. And I know that's a word that's used in lots and lots of different ways. But it goes back to, I suppose to those what were author readings. And, and this is back quite a long time ago and that series of writers talks at Warwick where the English department was saying, we're bringing this amazing author in to do a talk to students, you know, they could give a public talk as well. And I was like, okay, that's fine. And everyone used to think it was really funny that I used to make them turn up early, and do a little walkthrough. And I was like, we're not having one of those public events where they shuffle on at the beginning, and nobody's thought about anything, and it just, it looks really ill thought through. So I used to say like, What music do you want playing when the audience come in, we're going to have a formal start, it's not going to start when someone clears their throat, which is how lectures start. This is a public event, it will start when we give clearance. And you know, we do it properly.

Annabel Turpin 26:46

And I suppose in a very, very gentle way, we just started to what I would call 'eventise' those talks a little bit. We used to produce a programme, so you know, there was a little biog of the author and a list of the books they've done and some recommendations, which again, you don't get if you just go to a kind of very kind of standard author reading. So we were just trying to make them into events a little bit more than than just talk.

And then when I kind of moved on, I started doing a little bit of programming, particularly around yeah, kind of literature and spoken word, a little bit of comedy, when I'd moved to kind of a venue in Maidenhead, but it was much more on the sort of event organisation side. And then through various initiatives, we got money to like properly work with an author. So I made a show with an author called Patrick Gale, based on one of his short stories. It's a brilliant short story called Wig. He came in, and he he performed it, kind of as a reading, although he's a very animated reader. But we worked with a sound artist who like composed an amazing soundtrack, and our technical manager did the lighting. So it was a way of making a show out of a short story that felt a lot more satisfying than just listening to someone read an excerpt of their book. And that was a kind of a sort of formula that we were really interested in.

And I went on and made a show with Jackie Kay, with a poet called Val Bloom, and we toured the shows, they went to lots of different venues around the country. And it was like, this is a thing, like we can make stuff, we've never done this before. And then just as I came to ARC, I kind of worked on probably the most ambitious production that I've been closest to, which was a piece of work by Jonathan Coe, the author Jonathan Coe. We worked with a band called The High Llamas and three strings players, so we've got a band, some kind of classical musicians, an author and three actors. And somehow, we managed to create a show that we took to Latitude Festival, it came to ARC and toured to a couple of other venues.

That was like the biggest one because it was so many people to manage, and so many different types of people. So you know, the classical musicians were like, Musicians Union

through and through, and it was like we're downing tools at this time, because this is our break. And the band were like rolling in at midday, not wanting to start early for rehearsals. And the actors were just like, lovely actors straight out of drama school that would just do anything you asked them. So it was a real interesting kind of mix of cultures, especially getting them to Latitude Festival. But that was probably like one of the biggest shows I've worked directly on where I've kind of been in the rehearsal room the whole time.

And then, since I've been at ARC, I've acted really as a producer for people. I did a secondment to Dep Arts and worked with some bigger companies. But here we obviously produce mainly solo artists, theatre makers, people that are sort of in the driving seat of their own work. So my role's very facilitative, it's about talking to them about their ideas, helping them plan budgets, funding applications, find partners, book tours, rebook tours when COVID happens, done that a few times. The best moment is when you sit down with an artist and they tell you about their idea, and you realise that you can help them make it happen. And that is just the best bit of the job.

Lizzie Lovejoy 30:07

What's your favourite project that you've worked on? I know that's really hard to pick!

Annabel Turpin 30:12

Am I allowed to have things that we've presented, rather than things that I've directly been involved in?

Lizzie Lovejoy 30:17

Totally

Annabel Turpin 30:18

I think probably one of my favourite projects is still the show we made with Invisible Flock a few years ago called Bring the Happy. And it was an amazing show they did in several different places, but they spent three weeks in a shop unit in the High Street in Stockton, gathering in stories from people, and then made a show that happened at The Point two or three times that they described as 'somewhere between a wake and a wedding'. And it was just one of the most moving experiences I've had, standing in The Point, watching local people hear their stories celebrated in such a beautiful way. There was something really special about it, and just the interaction, being in the shop. And they had these gorgeous maps laid out so people could put their kind of stories in a particular place in sort of Stockton and the Tees Valley. And just watching the way the company and the people in the shop with them interacted with people as they came in. It was like a, yeah, it replicated that welcome I suppose that I got when I arrived in Stockton. So all those little bits, it just felt like every bit of that project was beautiful and gorgeous and captured something really special.

Annabel Turpin 31:34

And we've done similar things since. I think Taking The Time installation that we opened with, again, that had an element outside the building, so maybe there's something in that that I find appealing, but it maybe feels like we're really stretching into our communities, and really tapping into some of the magical, amazing, sad and happy things that happen in people's lives and finding a way of noticing that. I don't want to use words like commemorate and celebrate because they're not our things. But noticing those things, acknowledging those things.

Annabel Turpin 32:07

That's something that I think we can be really good at, you know, I often say people are really lonely. People feel very isolated, people feel like, you know, they're not listened to. Decisions and government things all get, you know all happen a long way away from where I am. So sometimes that acknowledgement of people's lives, or elements of people's lives, is really important. All of my favourite projects probably have an element of that in them.

Lizzie Lovejoy 32:33

That's absolutely beautiful. There really is something about that whole, you know, I see you. And you know, thank you for giving me your time. There is something about that moment. And you're right ARC has done quite a few of those projects that really get you and show the community.

Annabel Turpin 32:50

So I was reminded of one recently actually when the Globe reopened. So when Invisible Flock were working here, there were lots of stories as you would imagine, from older people about things they went to see at the Globe, how the High Street had been, because they were based in the High Street, how the High Street had been. Invisible Flock, working with Hope and Social that were the band that worked on that show with them, wrote this brilliant song called When the High Street Roared that was like a celebration of what the High Street used to be. And I'd forgotten all about it and I was working at home the other day, and you know the Globe had just opened that day, and Hope and Social had tagged them in on Twitter and said, here's our song for you! This is the song we wrote. So I had this beautiful moment stood in my kitchen listening to the song and all the kind of memories, the memories all had numbers, the stories all had numbers, called out the numbers and then a line from them. And it was lovely. So there were a million stories in there about the High Street and the Globe that just yeah, felt really special to listen to.

Lizzie Lovejoy 33:47

Thank you so much for being on this podcast.

Annabel Turpin 33:51

It's been really lovely to talk to you. I've really enjoyed it.

Lizzie Lovejoy 33:53

Thank you very much everybody for listening. Thank you Annabel for taking part. This has been A Change of Perspective and we'll see you guys next month. Bye