

9 words for Offsite 9

Bobby Tiwana interviews Fae Kilburn

Bobby: Hello I'm Bobby Tiwana, I'm a Creative Producer of Live Performance, the occasional short film and a hand full of podcasts about a thing or two. In this podcast I will be talking to contemporary artists commissioned as part of Offsite 9 to complement the touring British Art Show 9 in Wolverhampton. Welcome to 9 words.

Bobby: I'm joined by Fae Kilburn, a Fine Artist and Arts Facilitator. Why don't we start with, what do you do?

Fae: I'm a printmaker predominantly. I specialise in silk screen prints, etching, collagraph and I also combine those with sculpture and most recently I've been combining them with video, so if that you can't see my art you can feel it or hear it. So, it's all about inclusion and access.

Bobby: So just help me with that, so how do you feel it?

Fae: By combining the etchings with sculpture, sculptural forms. So, I've made a three-foot sculptural form and the outside edges are all etched with steel plates, and you can actually feel the etching, you can see it, or you can feel all the indentations. Yeah, just means that it becomes more of a sensory experience than the print being trapped behind a piece of glass on a wall.

Bobby: And what about the video? And what does the video allow us?

Fae: The video I started creating that during lockdown. I wanted people to just still be able to experience my art and I started to document my own experiences during lockdown, how I was feeling and recording my emotions and just what was going on around. There was so much going on around at that period. I then put those words into a silkscreen print and installed it in nature. Erm so I took photographs of my print installation and then overlaid the audio so people could hear the positive and negative experience layered and if they had vision, they could see the print installation as well.

Bobby: Did you say you put it in nature. So, was it exhibited in nature, or photographed in nature, installed?

Fae: So, I installed it in nature reserves. So, I used my daily walk that we all had, we had that hour's exercise and I started to walk and find different places to temporarily install my art and then I documented in those different places.

Bobby: So, the video is a video of that project, or can you experience the work in the video?

Fae: You can you experience the work in the video.

Bobby: Tell us about your current commission with Offsite 9

Fae: So, the current project was looking at what would be an inclusive future and as a disabled artist myself I focused on disability and I put an open call out to other disabled people who identify as neurodiverse, deaf or disabled and asked them what

experiences they've had, what barriers they've faced, any positive experiences they have as a disabled person as well. Cos often your disability can be a real positive, but we also face many barriers in society, and I asked them what they would like to see change for a more inclusive society, and they sent me written text and I incorporated this into a 11 ft, 11 metre sorry, print installation.

Bobby: So, is it, just out of curiosity 11m?

Fae: 11m

Bobby: Because you've included everything that came to you or for artistic reasons? Why 11 metres?

Fae: I wanted it to be large-scale. So that the print was accessible so that's why it's the size it is and I did incorporate an awful lot of what people, I edited it but I did incorporate it but there was so much powerful information, people had been so open and honest with me and I wanted to incorporate as much of their narrative as I could.

Bobby: And what were they saying?

Fae: Quite a wide range, there was individuals who were saying how positive their identity as a deaf person was, but their experience could be improved if sign language was incorporated within academic institutions from a very young age. And there seems to be, across the board that if raising awareness about disabilities, that needs to be included in schools, then there would be less stigma about disabilities. Other people wrote about how isolated they have been and the stigma they faced just purely for being disabled. So, it's been a really wide range of narratives that people and some yeah, I've been quite surprised at how open people have been and I've felt quite honoured at their honesty and openness to someone they don't know.

Bobby: Were there things that surprised you in the content? Did you learn anything?

Fae: Yeah, somebody wrote about their experience having leukaemia. And they wrote a poem about their experiences. I wanted it to be inclusive for people who have visible and invisible disabilities, that was the other thing. People often feel that things aren't appropriate for them because they have an invisible disability so that was something that I really wanted to make clear. And I had people write to me as they had mental health issues or they had autism, and somebody had been raped so it was really very, very, varied. And one individual wrote a note to herself, things she wished someone had told her, so she has given that advice to future people really.

Bobby: How big was your response, how many people did you hear from?

Fae: I've had 46 responses that I've included in the installation. I've collaborated with six artists to make portraits of each of them, that then incorporate text because I found that people really respond to portraits when words are incorporated, they connect with the person.

Bobby: So, you mean your audience?

Fae: Yeah, the audience seem to connect to the portraits really well.

Bobby: If there's text with them?

Fae: Yeah, text and portraits combined.

Bobby: How did you come to learn that?

Fae: Previous exhibitions I did self-portraits which combined the narrative again of other disabled people. People kept giving me feedback about how powerful they found those words. They're all on portrait so I decided to include the portraits of other people this time with their narrative of each individual and I selected six people. But because I couldn't meet up with them because of the pandemic I asked them to send me images of how they would like to be portrayed and then I created those into silk screen prints and incorporated the text as well. So those I've added the individuals' names as a collaborative artist.

Bobby: So, their contribution is their photo and of course their words if they're writing about themselves.

Fae: Yeah.

Bobby: And when you say photograph are they posing in a certain way, and you've replicated it?

Fae: Yeah so, some individuals have given me a face portrait, others has given me a full back portrait. So, it depends on their disability and how they want to be perceived. What their disability is. So, the portraits are very, very varied and some of them contrast with the words as well. So, one of the portraits is a very happy portrait but the words are very negative and about how she's been made to feel but when you meet her, she's very outgoing and very, a lively person that actually inside she's everything she's been through. Those are the words that first came to her mind about how she's been made to feel. So, the words, the text with the portraits are quite an interesting combination.

Bobby: When you, when people have given you their words, I suppose how much interaction is there between you, do you have to respond to the words, is there a degree of acknowledgement of empathy? How well do you know these people?

Fae: Some of them cos I've worked with them on other projects when I've done open calls and I've got to know them. Some of them I've never met before, never, but I've acknowledged everybody's contribution. Just because like I said being that open with a complete stranger, I think takes strength and I think it deserves an acknowledgement. And also, a lot of their experience of those are different disabilities to mine I have such varied disabilities I can identify a lot with, of how some of the individuals are feeling. So yeah, I did, I did answer back privately to all the individuals and also thanked everyone for contributing to, because I couldn't be able to make this project without everyone's contribution.

Bobby: Can we talk about your disability, and you've referred to yourself as disabled or your disability? What is that?

Fae: So, I have epilepsy and I've also got something called Marfan syndrome which affects everything in my body, including my eyes.

Bobby: Can you just spell that for me please?

Fae: Yes M-A-R-F-A-N and I'm registered blind because of the Marfan syndrome.

Bobby: So, you're saying it affects everything in your body?

Fae: Yeah so, the characteristics, I'm over 6 ft and so my joints, everything, so your bones are longer than they should be. I can't grow muscles; it affects the heart and the lungs. I'm hypermobile. I can't lift heavy things because I don't have that strength. I have to be careful of my heart and all those. So yeah, effects and you have extreme fatigue as well. So just every single thing in the body it impacts.

Bobby: And when was it diagnosed?

Fae: When I was about five.

Bobby: So, you've had it most of your life?

Fae: Yeah

Bobby: Why is inclusion so important to you? You know you talk a lot about inclusion in your practice?

Fae: When I was diagnosed with epilepsy when I was 6, I was straight away, school wanted to exclude me. So from a very young age I went from being included like everybody else to schools not wanting me because I was suddenly a disabled child and not being allowed to be in a playground, being left in corridors by myself, not being able to go swimming and that has continued my entire life people judging me not thinking I'm capable and that's purely because of my vision and my epilepsy and just having a label of a disabled person. And so, it's really important for me because of my lived experience that I make things accessible for other people because I know what it's like to be excluded and judged instead of being judged on what I can do that they're just making an assumption that I'm not capable.

Bobby: Did you understand when you were young, in a corridor, when the other children are in the playground?

Fae: I just remember looking out of a small window at everyone else having fun in a playground and me not being allowed. And my parents were told that they should be grateful that I was even allowed in a school and that somebody like me should be in an asylum. That's where they use to stick people like me. So, my parents just removed me and found another school. And I've spent my entire life just trying to prove people wrong because it's just made me more determined. In secondary school they didn't think I'd ever achieve anything and that's what people have always said to me, "you won't ever achieve anything." And in my final year of secondary school, I got this, an amazing art teacher and he was like "you should go to university," and that was the first time in my life, anyone apart from my family had ever believed in me. It was just, it was the most, it was yeah, it was amazing, so I, that's the other reason because I know how it feels when someone does believe in you. When I'm running workshops, I like to give other people that sense of belief because I know how it feels when no one believes in you.

Bobby: So, most of your life you've heard figures of authority, teachers and all of those people in our lives telling you, presenting the obstacles for you that you won't achieve and that's just made you more determined to prove them wrong.

Fae: Yeah.

Bobby: And like you've said you've done it again and again.

Fae: Yeah. On my BA I was told that when I did work about being partially sighted, they were like, "we can't mark that work because it's very difficult to mark because we don't see the world same as you do." And so, I had to change the way I worked to suit them, and I've recently just done my Masters, but my whole work was about inclusion and access and then I did a whole thing, project about losing my sight and becoming blind and the technicians on my Masters were amazing and they were the complete opposite. They were, "let's find ways for you to be working independently." But up until that point I've always... but people still judge me, if I go to a course if they find out they'll treat me one way if they don't know, if I just walk in, they assume I'm not disabled because it's not visible. But as soon as I ask, "can you just explain something to me because I can't see it," they'll suddenly be really patronising and I've even been told, "well you don't need to know because you can't see." And so that was the other thing that I found with the people that contributed to the exhibition. They have had a lifetime of experiences like that as well.

Bobby: And how did that make you feel, reading that?

Fae: Sad that society hasn't changed enough yet and I think in this day and age I think we should have moved on but at the same time disabled people have only had rights for 25 years. If you think that everyone says that women have only had rights for 100 years and that's so recent. Nobody seems that shocked that disabled people would have only had rights for 25 years, no one ever mentions that really. It was the 25th anniversary not that long ago and no one, it wasn't a big thing it wasn't really mentioned that much. And I think that's why we're still fighting for inclusion now and to be recognised.

Bobby: Do you belong or feel like you belong to a community or communities?

Fae: In 2015 I did a mentoring with DASH.

Bobby: What is DASH?

Fae: Disability Arts Shropshire and it was called Cultivate and you were mentored by another disabled artist and I was mentored by Pamela Newell and yes, she went through my portfolio and introduced me to the Disability Arts world and there I found for the first time a community that I did feel like I belonged in, in a world I didn't know existed. I think I'd been trying to, just, so hard to prove everybody wrong for so long that I hadn't realised there was this amazing world going on where disabled artists were creating amazing work because again Disability Arts it's not spoken about, and I have met some amazing artists, Tony Heaton, Rachel Gadsden, spectacular artists who are established disabled artists. But again, still face the same barriers. And I feel I belong there, but I also exhibit my work when I don't put that I'm disabled, it gets accepted into mainstream galleries but my issue is if it's mentioned that it's made by a disabled artist it often doesn't get acknowledged or it doesn't get acknowledged and that's what I have an issue with.

Bobby: So, they're not contextualizing it, they are not acknowledging that so therefore they're marking it invisible, interesting... Can we talk about transience? So, when we

talked briefly, you know just trying to identify a keyword that would help frame this discussion, your practice. Why did we come up with that word?

Fae: Because my recent body of work before this commission was commissioned by Attenborough Arts Centre and was a body of work called 'Transient Moments'. And it documented my sight loss, so going from partial sight to being a blind artist and my eyesight changes daily so that's where that word transient came from. My sight is just ever-changing, and I live in this for me, spectacular world, it's quite beautiful and abstract and the body of work I wanted to show people how beautiful sight loss can be in that it's not a negative.

Bobby: Can you describe, when you say your sight changes daily? What level of sight do you have if I can ask that?

Fae: So sometimes it's layers of translucent colours and so there's times where, this is going to sound strange but I can literally see through the person who's sitting in front of me to the object behind because it's just literally layers, everything's translucent and I'm quite captivated by that because I end up just staring at everything and going "this is quite mind-blowing and beautiful at the same time."

Bobby: So, is every object like that, the same kind of transient layers of colour?

Fae: Yeah, especially if there's white near something or metallic that seems to enhance the translucent layers. So, I find myself watching people walk by but only the middle of their bodies will be completely disappeared, and I'll just know that maybe the head will be there but the rest of them will be just completely disappeared and it's quite an odd experience but quite beautiful and I live in a very soft-focused world as well so there's no hard edges and yeah beautiful soft tones.

Bobby: And how, does it change daily? So, if that's an example of one day or one state?

Fae: So, the beginning of last year everything was spectacular, beautiful blues so I'd revisit the same landscape. And it would be bright blues to pearlescent blues, and I actually thought this new, this place I was visiting those were the colours of the landscape and it was my partner who said, "why are we revisiting the same place?" And I was like "it's this amazing blues," and he was like, "Fae the lake is brown," and he started to describe all the colours and I was like, "that's really disappointing." But my world is just so much more beautiful than yours, so we started to go around with colour charts, just kind of comparing what each other were seeing, and I made that into a book, I documented a whole year's worth of how my colours changed during the months and the times, because the time of day really varies. So, in the morning it'll be much brighter and clearer colours, the middle of the day becomes more muted and then by night-time I lose all my colours and it becomes black and white until it's nothing.

Bobby: And what is your vision like with just a lamp on in an evening?

Fae: Very challenging would be the word. There wouldn't be very much colour for me to, yeah and I wouldn't be able to see any one... I would then be relying on people's voices even more than I do now. Like I can't see, I don't know what you look like now.

Bobby: What can you see?

Fae: In this space here there's a lot of white that's the main thing, there's a block of dark where your torso is.

Bobby: And I was going to ask, you know, you talk about this soft-focused world that you're in. We know colour affects mood and emotion, of course what we see will as well, softly focused sounds you know, kind of calm and gentle but I can imagine at times it could be frustrating, if you're looking for something perhaps? Is there anything to say about emotion or your emotions and your sight?

Fae: That soft-focus as well, as well like I said it being beautiful it can be very unsettling because there's no contrast when I'm trying to walk on surfaces. So, steps can be really challenging, generally the bottom step and if I'm in nature then I don't know what I'm standing on. It can go very quickly from being a very pleasant experience to a very, experiencing apprehension. So, I created a video installation last year to give people that sense of unease. A beautiful video which incorporated my prints and a video of me walking, what it's like for me walking in nature but then projecting it on different surfaces which gave this unease of surroundings and I cut off all the sound so it's in a dark space and so you had no sound and again that intensified that unease, that really captured what my world was like. And the exhibition that I did recently at Rugby Museum, the 'Transient Moments'. The feedback I got from that, the people said the work, they found it really calming, and the prints that I have done were really calming and they could stare at them for a really long time and they found themselves going into quite a meditative state, which I found really lovely and one woman said for her, she'd had corrective surgery and when she saw the exhibition she got really emotional because the work reminded of how beautiful her world once was and although she's thankful for the surgery she's had, she actually misses that beauty because she's now in this world with harsh edges that she's not used to. I had some really interesting feedback from people who have not experienced sight loss, people who now feel they have a better understanding of sight loss after seeing my exhibition. From family members who had been trying to explain sight loss to them and they said they just couldn't understand it but now after seeing my exhibition that like "we really now feel like we understand what our parents are going through." So yeah, I feel that body of work has achieved what I hoped it would achieve, opening up a conversation about sight loss but also show people a positive because I wasn't looking for any pity or anything like that. So that's where the whole 'Transient Moments' originated from.

Bobby: Do you have anything else to say on how people respond to your work, that work as well as others? So, you know that is people with maybe visual impairments or other disabilities, plus non-disabled?

Fae: The feedback generally from exhibitions has been that work about disability for people who aren't disabled they've said that it gives them insight into a world that they didn't understand before and they found it really helpful. They didn't understand the challenges that people with disabilities faced or the barriers. And for people who are disabled they feel these exhibitions are actually giving them a voice, somewhere to actually express their lived experience in a way that they haven't had before. I think that's a real positive from both disabled and non-disabled people.

Bobby: Earlier you talked about mainstream spaces galleries exhibiting your work but not acknowledging your disability. Why do you think that is? And why is it important?

Fae: For me it's important if the work is about disability, it's important that it's acknowledged so that if anybody is going to an exhibition and they are disabled they can see work that they can connect with because currently generally in art galleries across the country there is a severe lack of work openly made by disabled artists. I don't go into galleries and see work that I can go that "I can really identify with that," and that really needs to change. In 2020 I interviewed a lot of the major galleries on why they're not exhibiting disability art and they said that some of them said that "it wasn't relevant to their collections, disabled artists don't make good quality work."

Bobby: They actually said that?

Fae: Yeah, they actually said that. "Disabled artists often delay their deadlines because of reasonable adjustments," and I don't agree with these things because I think that obviously non-disabled artists could equally make poor quality art and there's a lot of disabled artists who are making really good quality art. And our artwork can fit in mainstream galleries, and I did a whole dissertation, I made a book about it because I was shocked at what they had to say really.

Bobby: And what was the, if you were to summarise the book or what is the major headline that you would conclude with, what was the learning from that research?

Fae: The learning from the research was, that's a harder question actually.

Bobby: I mean the word ignorance comes as a major headline to me. Was that the major theme, you know that there's a lot of ignorance out there?

Fae: Yeah, I think there is, and I think it's ignorance, yeah, I also feel it's just an excuse they said that "until Disability Art is fashionable that's the only time it will go be going into mainstream galleries."

Bobby: They actually said that?

Fae: Yeah. And I don't, I don't think that I don't think any disabled artist wants their work to be in a gallery just because it ticks a box, or that it's fashionable. They want their work in a gallery because their work is good enough quality.

Bobby: But are they inferring that their programming policy suggests that it's fashionable things that they then programme, depending on who said that?

Fae: Yes, because they've all got tick boxes and interesting some of the galleries don't have disability on their tick boxes and they told me that, they have LGBTQ artists, they've got black artists on a tick box, but they don't have disability arts on a tick box.

Bobby: Did they say that might change in the next few years?

Fae: No

Bobby: Is there also a marketing issue, do you think, in their heads?

- Fae: Yes, because they said Disability Arts is not sexy. Now Disability Arts is different to disabled artists. Disability Arts is very political art and it's about activism. Where you can be a disabled artist and just be making art, they are two very different things, but Disability Arts is definitely missing from art galleries. And they are in no hurry to exhibit that, they said they are not political spaces, but I've seen many political exhibitions in galleries. So again, I just feel they were excuses to why art, disability arts is not in the mainstream settings. Unless it's funded by Disability Arts organisations but then they are getting paid to exhibit these artists work and that it shouldn't be that way either. They should be wanting to showcase the work.
- Bobby: And in your experience what is the Disability Arts sector like in the country?
- Fae: You've got artists like I said before, like Tony Heaton who's really established to Rachel Gadsden and Tanya Rob who, well Tony has been an activist for over 40 years. They're all full-time artists.
- Bobby: And when you say activist, what kind of activist has he been?
- Fae: Disability activist and he's been fighting for inclusion for over 40 years and when the Disability Discrimination Act was before, long before we even had that he was fighting for inclusion and Rachel Gadsden has done the closing ceremony for the Paralympics so they're big-name artists. And then you've got young emerging and mid-career artists like Charlie Fitz and she's an advocate as well for inclusion, so there's loads of amazing artists coming up creating work, powerful work that people can connect with because they identify with that lived experience and the barriers faced yeah, but it just has to be shown and seen.
- Bobby: Do you have any experience of children or younger people experiencing your work or other work by disabled artists? Non-disabled or disabled [children]?
- Fae: When they've come to exhibitions that I've done, I did one in Birmingham last year at the Hive. Recently at the Rugby Museum and Art Gallery in the Floor One Gallery I had some, it was during half-term week, one of the weeks so I had a lot of children come through and they didn't know that I was registered blind. And they were talking to me about the work, and they were like "I love the work," and "what inspired it?" And then when I spoke to them about what inspired it, they were like "oh, wow!" And they were really interested in the sight loss element and that was brilliant because they then came back again and brought more people because they were like "you've really got to meet, you've got to see the art, you've got to speak to the artist." And they were so enthusiastic, that's the thing, I think it's capturing people when they're young and they have that enthusiasm. Yeah, they were seeing people irrespective of what disability that, I'm an artist at the end of the day and that was first and foremost, I'm an artist and my art just happens to be inspired by my lived experience.
- Bobby: Do you think attitudes towards disability have changed in your lifetime?
- Fae: They have but not enough, like I said during my MA I noticed that the technicians had a much better attitude than my, when I did my BA in the 90s. I wasn't really welcome in the workshops in the 90s. Where on my MA I was welcome in the wood

workshops, in the metal. I did forging, so using metal and big flames all sorts of things, where I wasn't seen as a health and safety disaster.

Bobby: And the MA was recently?

Fae: Yes, I completed that last year at the Birmingham School of Art.

Bobby: Do you know much about sight loss and ageing? Because all I know is, as a headline, it's on the increase.

Fae: Well, there's a huge... Yes, I don't know off the top of my head I don't know the official statistics. But yeah, there is, a lot of people that came to my exhibition were older people with sight loss.

Bobby: Which exhibition?

Fae: The one at Rugby, the one about sight loss, people who came to it then brought their older relatives who, because you've got to see this because it's, your living this right now and they tended to be the older generation who were losing their sight, but is that because we're living longer?

Bobby: I don't know I don't know the answer. I know things like, I was surprised, it's like 50 plus. It's not even when you're that older. It's actually quite young.

Fae: I think when you are young, or at any age you take things for granted until you don't have them anymore and then you like "oh wow!" But I also think humans are amazing at adapting.

Bobby: Because of Marfan syndrome from five, did you have normal vision to five?

Fae: No, I've never had normal vision. It's always been poor but I'm sure if I had the vision, if I was suddenly given the vision, I had at five it would probably seem amazing right now. But no, I could never see. I always struggled to see the board and that was the first thing, that was why I was sent to have my eyes tested because I was just struggling even at a really young age. But then I lost my sight completely in my right eye when I was about 18. And then the left, what I always call my good eye just, it just deteriorated and I was registered partially sighted, and then blind, but it's not total blindness, where some people have total blindness, and that was the other reason for doing the 'Transient Moments', to show people that blindness comes in various forms.

Bobby: How's it affected your ability to mark make, you know, to make marks in your art? How's it affected what you like? I'm thinking of your references to maybe other artists you know in your training and growing up, and artists you like, how has their work changed for you because of your sight changes?

Fae: Growing up I loved German expressionists so, it was really bold, and I still love that work. I quite like Gerhard Richter I like that because his whole blurred work and Rothko's abstract paintings because they're based on emoting, how people react to the work, so yeah colour-field artists I seem to have gravitated to in the last year, in a way that I had never done before. I used to be a really interested in black and white work and now I've gravitated to much more colourful work.

Bobby: And what does a Rothko look like to you? Can you describe and which one are we talking about?

Fae: Because I, sorry, I don't know the name of the painting off the top of my head.

Bobby: Just describe it.

Fae: It's a large blue painting and it's got a pale blue line through the middle and yeah, it's actually it's, that's what it looks like to me and it probably doesn't look like that to anybody else actually, there could be far more variations in tones of blue than I'm actually seeing.

Bobby: And what kind of blue is the main body?

Fae: Quite dark, dark blue.

Bobby: And then a pale blue line?

Fae: Yeah.

Bobby: I am gonna look that up, I can sort of see it in my mind's eye, but I will look that up.

Fae: It's gonna turn out that it looks nothing like that but that's what happens when I go to art galleries and I'm looking at pictures and sometimes someone will tell me what's there and I'm often disappointed with what the reality of the painting is, and I actually like what my mind has seen more so. And other times I find it quite interesting that there's more in a painting than I've actually realised.

Bobby: Would it be accurate to say because of your sight, current sight there's a degree of abstraction that's going on?

Fae: Yeah, definitely.

Bobby: From something that is naturalistic, let's say to me, you know, to something that is more if I wanted to create that effect in a video let's say, I would have to use different filters or special effects to get it, whereas that is your vision?

Fae: Yes, there would be a lot of blurring having to go on. If I hadn't sat at the table, I wouldn't know there's a table there right now.

Bobby: What was it like when you were closer to it? Was it more visible when you're closer to it?

Fae: When I was closer to it, yes. It's like when you were saying this object would be distracting it's not because...

Bobby: The object you're describing is the microphone and a shield.

Fae: It's not distracting to me at all.

Bobby: But is there a danger you could walk into it?

Fae: Yes, people always say where did you get those bruises from? I don't know. It's a common occurrence, walking into things.

Bobby: And what about dreaming? You see, some of what you describe to me, to me it could sound, you know, it feels a bit like a dream type spaces which are imaginary,

where one might daydream, that blur between my reality and you know going into another reality like waking up or coming out of a dream.

Fae: Yeah, I think my dreams are much more vivid and clear, strangely.

Bobby: So hard edges?

Fae: Yeah, which is quite odd, that they're not my, that's what they feel like, they feel like they are very clear. But I think that's because in a dream, I've always had very vivid dreams. Yeah, they're always very clear and they're always like I'm really living them. Yeah, they're not out of focus and blurred like my real world.

Bobby: Does that mean there's reference, historic reference to when things did have more of a harder edge?

Fae: Yeah, it could be from my childhood, and I know that people who are totally blind when they, as artists they use their memories to create their art. So, it could be the same with dreams that it's what you remember as a child.

Bobby: And what role do the other senses play in your disability since, especially as your sight's got worse?

Fae: My hearing is really good, always has been but I use, it's even more important to me now. So, when I'm setting up a printing press or I'm working in my studio at home. Yeah, there's a sense that I'm relying on that and a sense of touch as well. So yeah, using markers to know where paper is if there's no one else around and that is even more important. Just the sense of touch and sense of hearing and as a printmaker the first thing you learn is the sound of rolling out ink, there's a right sound and a wrong sound. If it sounds like tar then you've definitely put out too much, there should be a really beautiful sound when you're rolling out your ink. So those have all been really helpful things that I learnt such a long time ago that have now become really important things because I can't visually see if that's too much ink, but I can hear and I can feel as well. Yeah so, those senses have really come to the fore now. And people kept, kept asking me at the 'Transient Moments' exhibition how I got this soft-focus look to my work? And I had to explain that that's just how I see so it's yeah it was, that was interesting as well. They were like, "we have never seen work that's so soft and so gentle, and so ethereal looking."

Bobby: So maybe a sighted person trying to achieve that effect would, it would be harder?

Fae: Yeah but I was just aiming to, it's hard to explain that it's the way I've used inks and some of the time it's I've broken some of the printmaking rules to get the look I wanted, putting inks in a different order or taking out colours, like I didn't use black because I don't see... until night-time I often, at that particular time, black was a really difficult colour for me to see, and I wasn't seeing red, so there were certain colours that were missing from the prints that gave that very a soft-focus look. But everyone who came kept on saying all this "how do you get this particular look?" The feedback was really helpful that I got from my exhibition, and it's encouraged me to keep going with that. I'd like to expand that body of work further.

Bobby: What was it called?

Fae: 'Transient Moments'.

Bobby: What are you planning for the future in terms of your art? What next?

Fae: I would like to carry on documenting my experiences of sight loss. Experiment with ways that I'm displaying it. And also work, I really love working with people so I really enjoyed this collaborative element of incorporating other people's narrative so I think I would have those two bodies of work. Yeah. I really enjoy engaging with people and I'd like to develop that as well because people kept sending, have sent more narratives but the deadline had passed so I'm still collating people's narrative that I can incorporate in the future.

Bobby: What have you learnt about yourself, because of your disability?

Fae: I think I'm a really strong individual. I'm strong and resilient. Like I said at the beginning it's not how people perceive me at all, because they think I'm quite quiet and, the exhibition that's on show at the moment I'd like to say the reason I've used Japanese paper is because it is, it appears to be very delicate and fragile but it's actually incredibly strong and that is how disabled people are so often perceived. That is the reason for using those materials, it's how I've been perceived all my entire life, but I feel I'm strong and resilient and I never give up.

Bobby: Is there anything else you want to say Fae?

Fae: No thank you. Thanks for having me today.

Bobby: Thank you, it's been a pleasure. Thank you, Fae.

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