

Interview with Deborah Cullinan, former Executive Director

Intersection for the Arts

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MW: Introduction: This interview is between **Megan Wilson (MW)**, artist and writer, and **Deborah Cullinan (DC)**, former Executive Director for Intersection for the Arts, and now current Executive Director for Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

MW: Thanks for meeting with me today Deb, I appreciate you taking the time. So we've had a really long relationship going back to, I think, 1997.

DC: It could even be 1996.

MW: It could be 1996. When I moved into the 2nd floor studio space at Intersection for the arts with Stephanie Syjuco, Catherine Ross, and Jeff Fohl.

DC: That was one way to make the arts organization work.

MW: That was the best studio ever at \$150 a month for 800 square feet of space.

DC: It is funny because now that I think about it, I had really forgotten about that particular moment in time. I was just recently on this Mayor's Office Nonprofit Stabilization working group looking at a set of circumstances that we all know. And there is the part about money and then there is the part about program and sharing space and making more shared space possible.

MW: It is so different. At that point I think four of us sharing 800 square feet for only \$150 a month each.

DC: Yeah. Can you imagine what that would be now?

MW: So considering the current situation with the changing face of San Francisco, can you talk a little bit about what happened with Intersection and what led to having to

move and make that transition from a very long history in a Mission District. Even though I know Intersection had existed in North Beach before that, and then transitioning now to South of Market.

DC: Yeah. So I am terrible with years and time, if it weren't for my son, I would not be able to tell you how old I am, so I'll try to get this right. So Intersection was always, as you know, really challenged in that space (at 446 Valencia Street in the Mission District) and it is not a typical story where there is a bad landlord or a displacement kind of situation. It was code issues especially in like the later part of our time there, we were getting too big for it.

And, so we did this strategic planning process and this was right before the economy revealed itself. So, in mid- 2008, and in the planning process, we were talking about our physical space and what it meant to not own a building, but to know that to really make it work we would have to put a lot of money into it and we were also talking about the fiscal sponsorship work that we did a lot of and this idea that we were incubating all of these projects towards a type of nonprofit stature if not status, and that there is decreasing support for that. We were talking about entrepreneurship and we were talking about different kinds of models for how artists can live sustainable lives. So, we did this strategic plan and out of it came some capacity, we thought we had the plan with capacity building - why we build capacity and of course, let me just be clear we are just talking about Intersection like most organizations of its size and of its nature that have always struggled. Always, always, struggled, and it takes this sort of tireless commitment and moments in our lives when something really scary happens and we can't navigate it because we did not set ourselves up to be able to respond to it financially or otherwise.

So we thought that this plan was great. We were going to try to build some capacity and then really look at how we could support more incubation and a different kind of shared structure for artists who are doing work in a community. And then, a couple of days after we got that plan together and we were going to try to paddle it around and do some fundraising around it, we got a call from someone about a building on Valencia Street that was available and it was one of the former New College buildings. We were immediately enamored by how perfect it seemed and the

potential of owning the building, having a bigger theater, and the gallery on the ground floor – pretty ideal for everybody. We got some encouragement from a funder to pursue it acknowledging where Intersection was, where everybody says a nonprofit organization that does not have any risk capital or any room at all to start pursuing a building could kill it. And that it sometimes becomes more about the building than about the art or the mission. So, all of those variables were in mind, but there was enough energy around what Intersection was doing to push it further.

So, those buildings were very complicated. They were tied up together, and they were related to a bunch of liens, there was a whole lot of stuff going on then with New College if you remember. And at the time, we also knew we were in competition for it, so we were trying to get control of the site before it went into a bankruptcy or before it got lost, and we sat down and figured out who it was through mutual people and sat down and it turned out to be Tim Freundlich who is one of the founders of the Hub. And so we had the sort of literally five-minute legendary thing where we each acknowledged - you are kind of cool. And the idea became why don't we try to look for something together. It would be really interesting to think about how art can integrate more into this model. This global network of social entrepreneurs and it would be cool if we could learn how to think about our businesses differently and how to support our artists in more of a platform kind of way. We played around with that building for a long time and it finally fell apart and then we started to look around together.

Intersection was in the lead and this was a weird moment in my life where I started looking at real estate and learning a lot about it. The market at this point had fallen apart. It was so speculative and crazy. We got so many buildings into view and then we'd lose them to lunatic speculation or you name it. And, so initially, this was really heartbreaking because every time we would find a building, it was like, yeah this is it, my baby! It feels it is going to be it, and what happened for me during that time was that we started to navigate towards buildings that were always bigger than what we needed and that always included partnerships that were cross-sector and I think part of why that was happening is because things were falling apart and it was so different than right now. It was like blocks would suddenly close down and I was really struck by how block-by-block, it was really different. And I obviously am

committed to seeing this through and believe that artist and art center have a roll to play together as an anchor for a healthier neighborhood. And so it was this version of really naïve community development and kind of understanding that even blocks away it is really different. So, in one site we were Intersection, the Hub, and an affordable housing developer that is a mission-based and we are looking at doing on some transitional housing. We were looking into housing for kids that were coming out of foster care without a place to go and it was really gorgeous to play with what that would be like if they could relate to this hub structure and be working with artists - so it was stuff like that. At another point we were working with CCA around the time when all of the universities were having a real struggle housing artists and their students, a time when people were living in cars.

Okay literally the last building falls away and I am just like, I can't keep doing this. And at that point, we had started playing around with a small time developer who is in the South Bay and so I learned a lot about how that process goes and works and what that bottom lines all about versus what my bottom lines is all about. And so then after it fell hard, I got a call about what is now called the 5M Project and I sat down with the folks there and interestingly, it was being described very similarly to what we were trying to do. It just obviously has scale and resource and a kind of experience that we didn't have. So, I introduced Tim (Freundlich) from The Hub to them and we decided that it would not be a bad idea to give it a try.

So the way that that project is setup is that there is a kind of phase zero, let's play, let's populate all the vacant space, let's try to create as below market as we can and allow for a lot of synergy and a lot of creativity and let that feed how the longer term unfolds. And so at that time we said we would not do that because we know that story - that we are going to come in and it's going to be super awesome and we are not going to be able to stay because we can't afford it. And so that was immediately addressed and I'm not at Intersection anymore so I cannot tell you what is happening but I do know that Forest City remains committed to art being an integral component of the ongoing site. I think if you look on their website right now, you can get a sense, though I think they are shifting out websites right now, but I think you can get a sense of that even by looking at how they are laying out program.

MW: Uh-hmm.

DC: So, the idea is that Intersection is a part of the project – you don't bring an arts organization in at that early phase and then set them free or price them out. So, over the course of the time that I was there, we talked about the brick building that is on Minna Street and what role Intersection could play in activating that building and I think Forest City remains very committed to that building being part of what it provides to the community and that art be a very essential to that. And again I don't know because I'm not there, so, I can't speculate that it is all good news but that my sense is that remains.

And while development changes based on a whole variety of things from the politics to the wind factor to where you can put the mass or you can't put the mass all that stuff some of that might have changed but the commitment to the arts and to Intersection I don't think has changed.

MW: I think you might be aware that Forest City does not have a great reputation for its development practices

DC: Yeah. Atlantic Yards. (Laughs)

MW: Yeah, Atlantic Yards, amongst others. And part of that is the fact that they are a \$9-billion publicly traded corporation. And from what I have learned following the Atlantic Yards project is that this is very much Forest City's MO - to move into a community and bring on board community organizations, bring on board arts organizations for the purpose of selling the real estate projects that they are developing. Their bottom line is to make sure that they sell the luxury condos and the luxury shopping centers or whatever else is packaged with that. So I guess my question is, how then will they be able to stay committed to a piece of this that is not part of that bottom line that would have to in some way be subsidized. Because they are legally beholden to their stockholders and if that is not a profit-making entity which Intersection would likely not be, how do they actually continue that commitment?

DC: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, and again I can't answer because I'm not them and I have not yet the experience of running a \$9 billion corporation. But my collaboration with them and with the other developer and the way I've seen other things that are happening around here is all about value and sort of subsidizing that which is a valuable and draws energy, right? And the problem that we've had historically is that artists either come in because they can afford it and are kind of doing that inadvertently or the developer sees the value in the beginning but not in a sustained way. When I hear Alexa (Arena), who runs the staff here at Forest City, what I hear her say is that she is, as a human being, very committed to the idea that development can happen differently. She really is. She does work for a really, really big corporation and I think that makes her braver.

Yeah, and I think, I can't say for sure but if you have a belief if I have my Jane Jacobs Book here, if you have a belief that cities grow and change can be made in beautiful ways that are inclusive and you want to try to figure out how to do that, I don't know but I'm guessing that you either are going to try to do it in a small way because you have more flexibility or you going to try to do it in a disruptive way in a big way.

MW: Yeah.

DC: And my experience of her (Alexa Arena) as a person is that she is more inclined to try to disrupt. So what I understand the vision to be is that there is a sustained role for art to play and that art plays a kind of bridge role beyond everything else that is beautiful about what we do that maybe essential to more equitable opportunity for people than generally happens and what we, a lot of the work that we did was to try to look at how to bring folks together. An example would be being at the Hub, right? It is a really beautiful place and there is an opportunity for lots of different kinds of people with not a lot of resources to make businesses or to start making businesses happen, but who's going to go there? Like, what people will go there and what people will go there and why? What are the barriers, right? And there is a barrier in language and there are barriers in a lot of things about it.

MW: Yeah. I never found that very welcoming.

DC: Yeah.

MW: It's always been my observation, and especially when we were working on the *Broadside Attractions* project, was that it was a pretty homogenous space and culture.

DC: Yeah, and so I think that part of the idea is that as we are increasingly falling into more and more deep silos where those whose resources are very, very distant from those who are not, then it's just going to keep getting worse, right? And so I believe that art and definitely a kind of art practice can really draw people together and you have to start there. This is my theory. Then you have to start there because without knowing each other, there is the idea that it's your problem it's not mine. So, that is a big part of it. So what's the way in which art can be infused in a place that will be bringing together people with resources and people who can help to address problems potentially, what role can that kind of program play in the long term. But I've never developed anything in my life. So, I don't know.

MW: You developed Intersection. (Laughs)

DC: Yeah, but I understand that even a mall will subsidize the magnets, right? So, a Bloomingdale's or something like that is probably paying less per square foot than others who are paying to be around it and the idea is that art is worth paying a lot more for.

MW: It could be. I don't know for-profit development that well, but I do know it does come down to the bottom line.

DC: Yeah.

MW: And so if you have space that's been taken up by something that could actually be filled with something else that is going to be paying a lot more, they're going to go with that.

DC: But do you want it to work? Because I think the idea is that we want to try to create something where that can be the case.

MW: Yeah. I think that would be amazing. However, to some degree because I think there are other factors that we are not talking about, this is still somewhat of a homogenous discussion. Because there are the communities that have been here in the South of Market for a long time who are going to be deeply impacted.

DC: Uh-hmm.

MW: These communities are going to be impacted by the luxury condos that are going up and they are living in fear or with high anxiety because they know that this change is on the way and they know that they're housing and they're livelihoods are in danger because of these new housing developments that are coming and the luxury shopping centers that are moving into the neighborhood. That they can afford. And instead what's going to be taken away are the Filipino markets or the Filipino restaurants or the spaces that they know and that they go to.

DC: Uh-hmm.

MW: And then it's no longer the neighborhood that they've created and it is the same old story of gentrification ... so, I guess do I want it to work? No, I don't really want to look at another Bloomingdale's. I don't want another Nordstroms.

DC: Yeah, but that's not what I meant.

MW: I understand. I've known you a long time. And I know what you believe in and that wouldn't be your vision either but that's what I see as these glossy ideas for what this is going to look like. And it's really well marketed and I do believe that Intersection and other organizations are being used as these marketing tools to create that image to sell those spaces, to sell those shopping malls, to sell the condos because it looks amazing. We have created these incredible spaces and that is sort of similar to how Clarion Alley is this incredible space that now is so sought after by so many more for-profit interests. And we've (Clarion Alley) stayed very true to our original community-

based intent and not taken the money that people want to throw at us to become a commodity that serves their commercial interests. So, I think it's about keeping that integrity of what we all have created because it is beautiful. What Intersection has created over the years is amazing. What Clarion created, what the Luggage Store has created, what a lot of us have created, that really is about community and it is about our diverse communities. So I think that's my fear. Is do I want it to work? I want it to work in a way that is equitable. And that really represents the vision that we have created which is about truly sharing community and not about it being for a very small percentage or a culture that actually hasn't been that generous. (Laughs). That's the other thing. Is that the culture that's moving in is not necessarily that generous and not really about wanting to be a part of what's already here. But they want to change it as soon as they get here.

DC: Uh-hmm.

MW: What are your thoughts on this? I know it's a lot. I think these are great plans in theory. It is the fear of giving over, giving over and giving over. How do we protect the integrity and the amazing communities that we have created?

DC: So I feel like there's this bigger problem that we don't have a policy in place that really supports the texture and diversity of all kinds and that inspires a kind of equity. The way I know how to go about these things is to throw myself into it and to try to see if collaboratively there are better solutions. I think Alexa (Arena) is lot like that too and that's why this sort of interesting partnership came about. But I feel like that's the big thing that we are still governed by the city and we need a set of policies that inspire change that is shared. I think that's the biggest challenge that we have had and how I even feel about the Non-Profit Stabilization Working Group, because you feel like you're having the same conversations that have been urgent before and are going to be urgent again. And at some point it's not going to be urgent anymore because so many people will be gone and so much will be lost.

MW: Right.

DC: So, I think if anything could happen it would be stronger policies and better thinking around how partnerships can happen between new resources or whatever it is that is emerging and what it is that makes the city so special.

And in this working group that is what I kept thinking is - what really makes the city great? In actuality, there is a win and again I hear what you are saying and the concerns that you express are things that I have to wrestle within, continued to wrestle within, and will here for sure, continue to wrestle with how to navigate in a way that you feel like you are pushing forward something that can help make change for more people in a positive way and in an equitable way. And it's tough too because the other part of it is it gets shut down and that makes it a lot harder to do the work. And the work is pretty lonely because you are doing it and it is crazy.

Yeah, and there is a real win for people because you bring yourself here, your company here, whatever because it is a beautiful place to be and what makes it beautiful is in part the landscape, but what really makes it beautiful is the people and the creativity and all those things that we care so much about and we should all be part of the solution there. We should all be part of being one of the greatest places in the world where new energy and new ideas can be welcomed but where that includes a real care being taken with people that have been here and that struggle. There is a really good friend of mine who is someone that I admire a lot. His name is Michael Rohd. He has a center for art and civic practice and a company called Sojourn Theater and they do a lot of work around poverty, a lot of kind of collaborative planning work. They built this board game at the request of a planning department in rural America that was having a really difficult time getting community stake holders and not just those that are allowed but people in the room that really think about what's the best to change that we can try to make together given all of the factors they go into it. And it's a board game and the idea is you learn how to play this game and you learn how to be together. Over time when you are with everybody in the room with very different interests and different needs and different beliefs, you really have to collaborate and negotiate and give up and give and suggest and it's something there.

I feel like and there's always with change, there is loss, and it seems like there is always got to be compromise. And I think your questions about the bottom lines are important ones because you've got to know your own. That's the only way you can show up fully to a collaboration. I mean that is where I'm in. I'm not going to stay on the sidelines, kind of pissed off. That is not me. I'm in, but I've got to know exactly what I will not give up.

MW: Right. That's what we have done with Clarion Alley. It's free and we want to share it with everybody. We will not let folks use the project to turn it into their commodity. And that's our bottom line. (Laughs)

DC: Yeah, yeah. And that just makes it easier. It is just clear.

MW: Yeah, it is clear. So the ArtPlace grant. It looks like they're investing in a lot of these creative placemaking projects and it sounds really exciting but it also sounds like code for gentrification.

DC: The ArtPlace?

MW: Yes, ArtPlace. The projects that they are funding including Intersection and one of the things that baffled me about that was - how are you giving this \$9-billion publicly traded corporation a grant for this much money? I mean I know Intersection was also a recipient of it.

DC: Intersection was the recipient.

MW: Intersection was the recipient but it was to collaborate with a \$9-billion corporation, who could pony up that money itself? Right? Which would then have freed up that funding for other arts organizations, right? It's like you're already working with a huge entity that has a lot of money.

DC: ArtPlace is pretty young and its first rounds of grantees were invited grantees and Intersection was the grantee. There is no granting to the corporation.

MW: But to do the project with 5M, which has those resources.

DC: I would say having written a grant that it was to do work at 5M in order to explore and really push the boundaries around what can happen in the context of what this sort of phase zero leads towards for a longer term project.

MW: So what was the funding for, I mean, that's a lot of money for a grant. It's almost a million-dollar grant, a three-quarter million-dollar grant.

DC: We used it for a whole bunch of projects so we did the 5Ws project, the chalkboards, a bunch of community partnerships. We did concerts in the street, we did a really fantastic theater project and bus tour of the neighborhood. God, there is a whole list. I actually probably could just get you a list of things because I'm not going to remember them all, but it was a lot about placemaking and public art and working in collaboration with community-based organizations. There was a speaker program. There were a lot a whole slew of different things.

MW: Maybe it was unfortunate that Intersection's placemaking work was put into the 5M project since 5M is Forest City Enterprises, the stated partner that already has a lot of money.

DC: I look at it really differently though Megan because Intersection for the arts over its entire life, when did it ever have an opportunity to receive a grant of that size? Now you call it a big grant but then you run around in the world and for some people it's really not a big grant. So what's wrong with Intersection because it positioned itself in this exploratory way, getting a phone call and getting invited to ask for \$777,000 you know, like to me I don't think it was put into the 5M project. It was Intersection. I can't express that enough to you.

MW: And of course, I think that Intersection deserves a grant of this size.

DC: I want to make sure of that. I get what you were saying, but that's not it. It was a grant to Intersection. And you know we try to leverage it of course to collaborate with Forest City to do other things and there is evidence to that as well.

MW: Right. Because it just seems like Forest City should be funding that collaboration since they do have the resources to do that.

DC: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MW: You know. That shouldn't be coming from money that actually should be just going to Intersection period.

DC: Right. But my take on it though and this is again my take that during that very first round, the leader of ArtPlace was looking around for projects that she felt were in the territory, whatever you think about it, right? Like I'm just saying and, and we wouldn't have been invited. I mean we were at the cutting edge. We were exploring already these things so that's, that's what I mean.

MW: So it's more of a question to ArtPlace as far as, what were they thinking as far as funding not 5M, but funding a collaboration with a huge publicly traded corporation. What are they interested in? Or how is that impact going to be for the contributing foundations that have social justice areas. There is something that is uneasy to me about ArtPlace as far as it being placemaking that to some degree seems like it's a gentrifying process.

DC: Yeah. I mean, I think that there is plenty of ongoing discussion about that in ArtPlace. There is plenty of criticism I think building something while you're flying it too, but also that they are really out there, there is plenty of criticism around it. I get it, I just worry about these organizations that struggle for so long and then they get into a situation where they are really trying to push the edge because that was the point of the whole thing. The point of the whole thing and hopefully for Intersection is an exploration around a new model and a new possibility for how an organization like that can not only sustain but can really nurture the local arts community in even more ways than it already has from the day I took it to 17 years later. And that was nearly killing yourself to do that and so the idea ultimately out of this I think is extraordinarily successful because it played around with venue in a way that very few arts

organizations can do, you know, it's, it's way more flexible at this point and can probably operate in a powerful way in a lot of different environments.

You know and to me that's what ArtPlace needs to continue to refine and think about what it means when it's doing this work. In its early days they were talking about economic stuff and vibrancy and all of this business but I also would love to see organizations supported in the form of risk capital to try something that could potentially be radical for it. And that's the thing like there's no room for that in these organizations. Intersection could not do anything unless it was assured the funding for it so to be able to give something a try and learn from it and try to move itself forward I think it's really, that part of it, I think is really great.

MW: Right. Or even if they were to fund something around bringing consortiums of arts organizations together for policy making to protect the arts and to protect the communities that are being impacted would be amazing. That's to me is what placemaking is really about. It's protecting the sacred spaces and even though change is inevitable, time is going to tell what the outcomes of all of these models and practices are.

DC: And well, you can't know, because they are long hauls.

MW: But we do know looking back over the last 30 years that the shift has slowly been moving towards this disparity. There is now much greater economic disparity and so it's about, what are those choices and what are those changes going to be that start to balance that out. Before it gets to a point where we're in major crisis mode. And I already think it's at a crisis point.

DC: Yeah, that's where I hope that we can find ways to push those conversations. I think there actually are solutions. It's not a matter that there aren't. We just have to get to them and to your question about one entity or person's bottom line over another, it's like we have to find that board game and create the shared space where until we are not in a world where real estate operates the way it does because that's probably fundamentally the problem here and we can't, that's not going to change anytime soon but we're still in capitalism. But that's the thing, we have to acknowledge each

other's ability to land on that bottom line that allows you to move in whatever direction, your entity or your thing needs to move. What is the picture, what's the best picture we can create together? Because right now it's probably more about who is making those decisions.

MW: It is.

DC: Yeah.

MW: Yeah. And it's about coming to it with more compassion and more empathy and understanding for folks who don't necessarily have that privilege.

DC: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's funny because one of the things that also really interests me and continues to interest me about what Alexa (Arena) at least is trying to do and some of the other people at Forest City that are on this side of the country is that, is to think about how to infuse a model like this with more collaborative exploration in the community like this in as many projects as possible and I think that's pretty radical. It's pretty radical but it's not radical enough, right? And so we're in this place where you have to start...we start there and you start pushing things forward and maybe some new models emerge and then it starts to take up and there is a really different paradigm over time. It just takes a long time.

MW: And, and you know I would love to support that. However, I keep thinking, and knowing how these businesses do operate – but also believing that these individuals really do have the best intentions and probably are very much on board with those paradigms and visions for how things should work - but all it takes is one call from the CEO to say “Oh no, sorry that's not going to work because that's going to cut into our bottom line and our shareholders are not going to be happy.”

DC: And so in that way I wonder what's the right kind of dialogue that we are pushing as responsible people in this situation that doesn't result in that because we are pushing it forward and that's the question I have about it.

MW: I think it's straight up asking and getting a commitment. What is your commitment and I want to see that commitment on paper. I want to see what are the outcomes that you have, what are the measurements that we can use and have a written MOU, a community-based MOU that says 'we will not be evil.' (laughs)

DC: Well and that goes back again to policy and models for how cities collaborate and then implement change. I think we're at this moment where we recognize that we need to create structures and models for participation. And that's kind of what you're describing which is there is participation, we have EIR, we have the entitlement process, we have the environmental reviews, we have community processes, but we don't. That mostly turns into a relationship between the city and the project, ultimately. And so where in that could there be the part where the community gets to have a say.

MW: Where is your commitment and your MOU to us?

DC: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I actually think that's a very reasonable thing. I think that you're right to say that the majority of these people, the majority, I don't know if all, but the majority have really great intentions and then there's this crazy kind of process and structure in place that pulls people very far away from what's the best thing. You know and I think most people would sleep better and sigh with great relief to know that there could be something transparent where you're just saying, okay this is the point where we understand bottom line. We've gotten to the point where we understand what we cannot do.

And what we can do. And I feel like when it comes to conceptual design and in some ways that entitlement EIR process allow for that when it comes to environmental factors and when we talk about environmental factors we mean more than the environment and so it's just that some, at the end of the day, that does go to planning, they get reviewed, there might be some community process and then there are recommendations and there are things that people will budge and people won't budge, but there is a breakdown there in terms of how community gets to participate and we're like a small town in some ways too so there are some people that are professional community participants which is great. Great because we need

something but it also does I think probably intimidate and/or exclude more of a truly inclusive community process.

MW: And really what I'm finding in having a lot of these conversations with folks is their capacity. They just don't have the capacity to participate which is, what makes me think we need funding opportunities for and even something like ArtPlace to shift so that it is more about creating that capacity for organizations to be part of the actual decision making and policy making so that, it really is about true equity and about the vision of these organizations that looking through most of the them, like Intersection have been amazing and really truly community anchors over the years and really worked with the community and to be able to have that continuity rather than all of a sudden it's like you see that unravel. You see everything that you've created unravel because somebody decides they aren't going to profit from it.

DC: Yeah, I think from an arts policy perspective, I think you talked to Tom DeCaigny already, but we have really, great leadership and a super good opportunity to try to think about what's the kind of arts landscape that we're aiming for here. And what's the kind of policy and funding structure that we would need to really achieve it. I'm on the board of the Community Art Stabilization Trust (CAST) also because of my interest in all of this, and that's one potential solution that should be organizing and collaborating with others to look at it and so there can be some real estate stabilization around purchase, putting buildings into trust, nurturing organizations. I think one of the beautiful things about CAST is you can either buy the building out of the trust or you can walk away with some equity. And then CAST is committed if that's the choice maintaining that as an arts asset. So it's one thing and then how do you kind of put some other things and make it so that it's not enough, right? Like the two buildings right now that we have are not enough. They're not going to tip the need. So what else can we do all together?

I think it's very exciting because I think there are enough people who care about this and with resource or who are in leadership positions that we could probably actually get somewhere.

MW: Yeah, I hope so and I am hopeful for that. I feel like there is, and there has been momentum that is gaining. Folks finally are becoming more interested in getting involved and having deeper conversations and actually taking action whether through conversation or through creative actions that are challenging what's happening.

DC: Yeah, you need it all.

MW: You need it all.

DC: It's like Julia Butterfly. Right? You needed someone to sit in the tree and then you needed other things to be happening and all of it together.

MW: Right. Yeah. You know I love the 'Google bus' protests (laughs) and those discussions around public space so we don't end up moving further and further towards privatization because so far what we have seen from those models has been devastating. Pretty much anytime that we've seen the public losing its power and being moved toward the private sector it's had a devastating impact.

This has been really great Deb, thank you so much for taking the time to meet today and engage in this conversation.

DC: Thank you. It's been great to reconnect.

(END OF INTERVIEW)