

The Carnival of Invention: Conference Report

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The Collaborative Poetics Network's 'Carnival of Invention' was held on 15th June 2018. The event was comprised of two distinct parts. The first part was hosted at the University of Brighton's Falmer Campus. The second, evening, session was in Brighton city centre, where a networking meal was followed by music and spoken word performances.

The Carnival showcased a new methodology in social research, collaborative poetics (CP). This method brings together expertise from artists, academics and community participants, to share knowledge in engaging and accessible ways, and to promote social change. The Carnival demonstrating the benefits of this approach, and of participatory, arts-based research more generally, and promoted collaboration between artists, community practitioners and academics.

Over 40 contributors from around the world came to share their work, through workshops, presentations, installations and displays. There were almost 100 individuals registered for the event. The richness and diversity of the day included 13 hours of scheduled programming. It was an ambitious and creative way of including many different dimensions of arts-based research and offering an experiential introduction to this field.

Dr. Helen Johnson opened the event by performing an original spoken word piece. A short video introducing CP was then shown, demonstrating its possibilities in research. Subsequently, an interactive panel discussion enabled members of the audience to pose questions to members of the CP Network. This rich opening discussion continued throughout the day.

The remainder of the day was filled with parallel participatory sessions. The themes explored in these sessions were diverse, and the mediums used to explore these just as creative and varied in nature. However they shared a connection to social justice and the capturing of individuals' lived experiences, demonstrating the richness of the content that can be evoked by using creative, participatory methods.

The daytime programme was followed by an evening event at The Latest Music Bar, 'Change the Story, Change the World,' which saw three poets (Kate Fox, Joelle Taylor and Jacob Sam-La Rose) and one musician (Quiet Loner) perform. These performances demonstrated how spoken word and music from accomplished artists can capture individuals' everyday lived experiences and connect the audience to the heart of the story.

In the wake of overwhelmingly positive feedback from Carnival delegates, we are looking forward to the possibility of a follow-up event in 2019. For further information on collaborative poetics please see:

<http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/collaborativepoetics/>