

Approaching the research process

Professor Pratap Rughani, University of the Arts London

Duration of audio clip: 1 minute and 29 seconds

Justine rarely speaks, so many of the things involved in the research process and language and the explanation and the sharing of ideas with the contributor, that was all now completely impossible. It was not possible to work in those academic ways, because I was working with someone for whom there wasn't a shared language. So the research can take you to a cliff, if you like, and then you have to decide how you can jump and where you go, whether you've got a parachute, or how you can move and create something a bit different.

I think that's very important, that research, in a sense, shouldn't know the answers. It should take you to the edge of how something might unfold. Part of what I wrote out of that film is a book chapter called "The Art of Not Knowing", and that feels really important as a kind of principle, that there should be a kind of human endeavour, a kind of enquiry that's underway that might be extremely inconvenient and difficult and lead you to other sorts of conclusions. Or it might threaten your, or my favourite ideas about things, but to me that discomfort is a mark of the integrity of the process. If it's feeling like my "research" is simply confirming my a priori views, my favourite opinions of life, then there's probably something very wrong there.