RCA Podcast: Being a working class creative

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**Christoph** 00:00

I was very, very worried that I was going to be the only working class guy.It's much more diverse than the sort of stereotype presents. You know, I have prospective students who send messages to the group, saying, I'm so glad this group exists, I thought it was going to be the only one. And I thought no one would understand. And people who discovered the group after they've started say, Oh my God, I wish I'd found this sooner. When you have this sort of bringing together of similar people with a similar goal. You can do some really amazing things you know and achieve a lot.

**Benji Jeffrey** 00:34

Hello, and welcome to this podcast from the Royal College Art, home to the next generation of creatives and the world's number one art and design university, representing the largest concentration of postgraduate artists and designers on the planet. We'll be bringing you insight into the philosophy behind the programmes at the RCA by talking to staff, students and the wider RCA community about what we do here, and how the work of architects, artists, communicators, designers and researchers, affect the world at large. I'm Benji and today I'll be talking to Melanie King and Christoph Jones about the Working Class Collective which is a society here at the college. Melanie is a member of the society and a PhD candidate whose practice based research considers what it is to capture the light that has been traveling 1000s if not millions of years on to photosensitive film. Christoph is a founding member of the society and a graduate of the contemporary art practice programme, who works with a diverse range of mediums including 3D digital design, video essays, painting, sculpture, performance, installation, and speculative fictional writing. Hi, Melanie, hi, Christoph. Hello, how are you both doing today?

**Christoph** 01:50

Very good. Yeah. Thank you very much.

**Melanie** 01:51

Very good also.

**Benji Jeffrey** 01:52

Good, fantastic. So let's start off with you telling us what the Working Class Collective is.

**Christoph** 01:59

So it's a group of artists and designers, alumni and some faculty at the RCA who are often from a working class background or have sympathies to working class struggle, who want to come together in the community to promote working class issues and ideas and identities and artwork and events, and just support each other generally. That's the primary goal of it really.

**Benji Jeffrey** 02:27

Nice, and Christoph, you set this society up?

**Christoph** 02:29

Yes. Yeah. I founded it with Jennifer Macmillan. Okay, great.

**Benji Jeffrey** 02:32

And that was in 2020.

**Christoph** 02:35

Yeah. 2020.

**Benji Jeffrey** 02:36

Okay. Was there any relationship between that and kind of what was happening in 2020? Or was it kind of a separate thing?

**Christoph** 02:42

Well, at the time, everything was on Zoom. Yeah. And Jennifer and I noticed that with the nature of Zoom being, you know, any one person speak, we kept getting interrupted. And it was very frustrating. And we couldn't really get our voices out. And it was hard to sort of present ourselves. And we found that people who were maybe more confident or privilege, the words already come up. To get it in. Yeah. Well, you know, getting a bit more attention. And I remember speaking to Jennifer, who's from Barrow - she has a northern accent, about how she felt and I also felt that that was affecting the way she was treated. Because with Zoom, you know, the parts of your personality that come through are a lot more your voice and, and how you look from the shoulders up and a lot less than, you know, the other elements that would present your personality, if you know, so, for example, she would say something, and she'd get a sort of lukewarm reaction. And then someone else later on might say the same thing and a southern accent, and would have a much more, you know, a bigger reaction, you know, and that was frustrating. And we sort of talking about this a lot, we'd find ourselves going in a little, our own zoom chat after the class is to have a little moan and talk about things. And we sort of realised that that, like class was a big part of this. And at the time, I was talking to Sarah Metcalf from the Working Class Creative Database, which is a similar organisation that's not affiliated with university. And I just liked the idea of setting up a society to sort of do what I said, you know, support artists, but also have a space that just shows that we're here, you know, that just having a working class group, forces people to sort of acknowledge that working class people exist at the ICA in the art world. And so we decided to set it up. And Mel was one of our first members. So yeah, how

**Melanie** 04:28

I kind of saw it on social media and thought, oh, my gosh, I need to join this. And yeah, I thought it was very important to start having conversations with people within the RCA as well. Yeah, just really important to meet other people meet other students that have similar issues. And also yeah, just find out more about other students.

**Benji Jeffrey** 04:50

Hmm. And so what does it mean to you then to be working class? How do you define that?

**Melanie** 04:57

So for me, I guess coming from a lower income background. And we were kind of thinking about the kind of definition of what it means to be working class. And some of that I think is written by someone who's not working class, for example, being part of this specific social group, not from generational wealth, for example.

**Benji Jeffrey** 05:18

There are lots of kind of strange rules with analyte, that some people define it as, for example, if no one from your family has gone to university, for example, which becomes then about kind of culture, more so than than income.

**Christoph** 05:30

Yeah, when we were starting the society, we had long conversations about who we wanted to join, and who could join. And in the end, we decided not to have any definitional barriers. So anyone can join, we have members who are openly not working class, you know, who come from a lot of wealth. And that's fine. We're happy with that, because we didn't, we never wanted to group to be, firstly, we never wanted the group to be exclusionary in any way. And we want to encourage people to join who are sympathetic and want to support working class people and work towards improving situations for working class people. But also, we kind of realised that trying to define working class was so difficult, because there are as many definitions as there are working class people. So yeah, we thought it's easier just to allow everyone to self define, and if they want to join, then that's good enough, you know, they're more than welcome. If that's the case, you know, you know, I get asked a lot, what is working class? And I normally say, it's just whatever you think it is, basically, you know, whatever, you define it as if you're a working class person, and you consider yourself working class. And that's, that's good enough.

**Benji Jeffrey** 06:32

It's quite a difficult definition, though, isn't it? Because it can make you quite fractured thinking about the opposite side of, you know, the, there's great joy in kind of allowing anyone to be part of something but then actually, when it's when it lacks definition, it can mean that it loses definition. Yeah, exactly.

**Christoph** 06:50

And we found people who definitely have conflicting views on what it means and what the society should do. And I've seen in other working class groups that I've been members of, it's caused friction, you know, but that was always to be expected, you know, and we have ways to sort of make sure that we're having conversations about this, and it becomes constructive. But generally, I found that there are kind of unifying situations and traumas and experiences that everyone's sort of felt that make them feel compelled to join the group, or to support the group, even if they don't define themselves as working class, often is to do with work and wealth and discrimination. But also, you know, more positive things about what they like about being working class, the beautiful parts of the working class identity, you know, yeah. That they that they see as an element of being working class in themselves that they find beautiful. Not necessarily everyone has that experience.

**Benji Jeffrey** 07:45

Yeah, and particularly at the RCA, when we're so kind of international, this, this definition of working class quite often is a very British thing. So how do we how do you kind of approach that with with international students? Do they find it quite kind of jarring expression?

**Melanie** 08:00

I think so I think that has come up in some of our meetings. And I think one way to think about it is to think about like, being from a lower income background, and kind of thinking less about the British class system in some ways, and thinking about what it means to be from a lower income community from outside of the UK.

**Christoph** 08:20

I think we focus on this idea of classes of static structures, or hierarchical structures. And I think a lot of that is because we've had a monarchy for so long, which is, you know, a very clear top of the hierarchy. So this is sort of defined within British society. But I've had conversations with international students who say, you know, you guys over here, you really focus on class, I've never really noticed that in my country, we don't really have class, I say, you know, not to make assumptions about your culture in society, but you probably do. It's just not defined as openly and we don't, and it's not spoken about as sort of consciously in society. But inevitably, unless you live this, in this sort of utopian equal society, you probably have, you know, a class structure.

**Benji Jeffrey** 09:06

And I think one thing, I've noticed that your Instagram, you share a lot of testimonies from people. And a lot of the time I've noticed through those testimonies, is people saying 'no one gets it' seems to be a recurrent theme within that.

**Christoph** 09:20

Yeah. I think so the way I've sort of experienced that sort of rhetoric is, a lot of people feel like no one gets it and are the only one. And when they interact with the society, they suddenly realise they're not the only one. And a lot of them are so chuffed to, you know, because I had this experience as well. When it came to the RCA, I was very, very worried that I was going to be the only working class guy because you know, you hear these stories of the RCA and it's all wealthy art students, and it's not true, thankfully, it's much more diverse than the sort of stereotype presents. So when I started the society, and I realised that it wasn't just me and Jennifer, and there was dozens of people at the beginning that was very uplifting and then, you know, I have prospective students who send messages to the group saying, I'm so glad this group exists, I thought I was going to be the only one. And I thought no one would understand. And people who discovered the group after they've started say, oh my god, I wish I'd found this sooner. Because, you know, I felt like I was the only one, no one understood what I was going through, you know? And we say, Come and join the group chat and sound off, you know, because there's plenty of people who want to talk about this with you. Yeah.

**Benji Jeffrey** 10:24

And we've kind of focused in our chat so far on kind of being working class. But I wonder, do you find that it manifests in your work? Like, do you find that that identity is important to the way that you are creative?

**Christoph** 10:36

I mean, I used to focus a lot more on things like cost and politics quite openly in my work, especially my BA work. I think now, it's definitely influences it. But I think to someone who doesn't know how it wouldn't, it would be very difficult to spot those things button, you know, the sort of experiences and interests, sort of political interests and philosophical interests that I've had influenced my work in in ways. So I was doing a lot of work about like a fictional city, in my master's, my graduate work. And that kind of came from this interest in the built environment and how that affects people and structures and how people navigate that and how the built environment is sort of defined and and put in place by power, and wealth, and how much that considers the people in that environment? or doesn't, you know, so that's sort of how it's influencing me in, in that sense, modern work.

**Benji Jeffrey** 11:30

And what about you, Melanie? Is there is there a class distinction in the light that's coming from galaxies far, far away,

**Melanie** 11:37

not so much the galaxies, necessarily, but I was kind of saying before, like, the reason I started off down like analogue photography pathway, which is very much what I've been doing for the past 10 years, is because I couldn't literally afford a digital camera. And film was like, a pound at the time from the pound shop. And I could like develop the film myself. So it was much more accessible for me to actually work in an analogue sense. And that kind of sent me off down the pathway. And I also think that yeah, become a lot more DIY in the way that I do stuff, because I started out that way. And I also think there's an element of sustainability about that as well. And that, I think, has come up quite a bit in the testimonials as well, like quite a few of the testimonials there, like, people being really sad, because people have been making fun of them for using secondhand stuff that was actually left out for people to take. And yeah, like using the smallest amount of material to save money, but also that's quite sustainable as well. So yeah, that's come up through my work in that sense. But it's also I sense quite a big part of other people who are working classes kind of practice.

**Benji Jeffrey** 12:43

Yeah, it's like a, it's like the working class superpower. But like being resourceful. Making do. And it also kind of starts to speak to kind of intersectionality. So you were mentioning about kind of sustainability there. But also, within working class, there is a huge sense of intersectionality with the fact that, for example, you're more likely to be from a working class background, if you're a non-white person in the UK, how does that manifest within the collective? Or have you seen any examples - do you have any examples of ways this intersectionality is kind of manifested?

**Melanie** 13:15

Yeah, definitely. And I think as well, so having, like conversations with people and neglected, but also again, through like, the testimonials that people send, like, it's very much an extra barrier on top of these barriers that they already have. So yeah, it has come up quite a few times.

**Christoph** 13:30

Yeah, I think you mentioned identity earlier, you know, think when you're talking about, like racial discrimination, obviously, based on identity, and you combine that with issues of discrimination based on based on working class identity. And then like you said, Mel, that combined to just make things even worse, you know, so and also with disability, that's something which should have been brought up quite a few times by members of the society. So yeah, it does come up quite often.

**Benji Jeffrey** 13:59

Yeah. Because being working class as well, shouldn't shouldn't really have an aesthetic. But then actually, there, there is a perceived as aesthetic. And I wonder to what extent do you think that's kind of a useful thing? Because it can be or it's harmful? Or how do you see that within these kind of institutions?

**Christoph** 14:17

Yeah, I mean, I think there is a stereotype of speaking a certain way of dressing a certain way of working certain jobs of living in certain areas that are true for some people. And I've seen many artworks by working class artists that utilise those aesthetics. And that's, that's it because it's relevant to them, but I think, because that's become or maybe it's always been a stereotype of working class people, for for many people in society and in the art world, it can be quite problematic. You know, we were talking earlier about how you know, if you speak away and look away and you know, carry yourself in a certain way that may be seen as working class. It presents the opportunity for discrimination based on people who may see this as negative attributes of somebody. And also alternatively, if you don't have those aesthetics, you may be sort of discriminated against in the sense of someone doesn't believe that you're working class and you actually don't deserve support and help. Or that you're maybe you're an imposter. And so it kind of works both ways for potential for discrimination.

**Benji Jeffrey** 15:15

Yeah. So you've been working on your PhD for nine years? Yeah. And you've been completely self funding that right.

**Melanie** 15:23

Yeah. So that has been extremely tricky. And it was kind of insinuated by previous students that I might be able to find funding halfway through or something like that. So I continue to apply to funding, and really nearly got it on the last and third application. But that didn't happen. And by that time, I was already like three years in. So I just continued to try and fund it through working through commissions and things like that. And thankfully, that has worked out, but it may not have done. So yeah, that's been extremely tricky. And when I did question, I actually said, what is your kind of metrics for giving people funding? And they said, yeah, it's like merit based. So I think that's inherently tricky if you're working class, because you're not going to reach the same merit. If you're, if you haven't got time, if you haven't got funds, if you haven't got the same amount of focus.

**Benji Jeffrey** 16:14

Yeah, yeah, paradox, isn't it? Like it's impossible, and -

**Christoph** 16:17

- and you have to work work much harder to be able to get get those things, you know, I often sort of talk to people about, you know, people will say, well, you know, we're at the same university. So we had the same opportunities, right? And I say, well, not necessarily, because someone from working class background is spending 20/30 hours a week at work, and it's 20/30 hours a week, they're not working on that art practice. So for them to get to the same level, they've got to work 20/30 hours a week harder, you know, and, you know, and that's just to get to the base level, that doesn't include like having expensive materials, or going on research trips, or to go in and residencies and things like this, you know, and also, it means, you know, getting funding and having, you know, the sort of portfolio that is asked of you to get funding and things like that is much, much harder, when you spent most of your time at a job, which contributes nothing to your art practice or your portfolio, you know, yeah,

**Benji Jeffrey** 17:05

I'm a firm believer that, you know, everything is based on luck. Yeah. But you put yourself in the position for luck to happen. So that's not to say, you know, that, you know, you have to work hard, but with so many people that don't get that, you know, I was very lucky that I had someone who gave me some money, not family based to which helped me pay that if I hadn't have happened, I would never have done yeah, my MA.

**Christoph** 17:28

Yeah. Yeah, exactly. I mean, we were talking about this earlier, as well. So we see ourselves as working class, and many, many of the people in the group do, but to some people, they'll see us as extremely privileged to have things that they couldn't even dream of. And that's because of, you know, luck in many ways, maybe, you know, the way our family is structured, or we have had help from a relative or you've won the bloody lottery or something, you know, or out or you've just been in the right place at the right time. You know, I mean, the reason I apply to the RCA, because, exactly for that reason, I was in the right place, and I met an RCA lecturer, I was talking to them. And they're really interesting, and they're really interested in my work. And it was a great conversation at the end of it. Here's my card, and it's RCA. And I said you need to apply. And if they hadn't done that, I would never in a million years have applied because like we're saying, I didn't think I was right for you. I didn't think I deserved to be at the RCA. You know, so...

**Benji Jeffrey** 18:22

Let's flip it up a moment. And talk a bit more about joy, because I know that you've been putting on exhibitions right as their collective.

**Christoph** 18:28

Absolutely.

**Benji Jeffrey** 18:29

Could you tell us a bit about that?

**Melanie** 18:31

Yeah. Did you want to talk about the first exhibition?

**Christoph** 18:33

Yeah. So we were approached by a student who had a space, I think his dad owned this sort of office block. And there was one in Islington. And there was one sort of office space that was free for, I think, two or three weeks. And he said, You know, I like what you're doing. And this is why I said, you know, we don't want to make this a closed off group, because this is an example of someone who has sympathy for us, giving us a great opportunity, using their privilege to help us you know, so he said, we've got this, this space, it's yours for free for these this time, do what you want with it, let me know what I can do to help. So I was like, Okay, fine, let's do an exhibition. The group was relatively small at the time, I think we had maybe, barely 20 members. So I kind of organised it on my own. And I was, I was on a leave of absence from the University at the time. So I was working a full time job. And I was getting home at nine o'clock at night and working till midnight on whatever I needed to do for this exhibition. We got it from first interaction to opening night, I think was about five weeks, right? And we even partnered up with the working class creative database because we didn't have enough members to fill the space. Like, come on, come and join us. And it went amazingly well. And we made it all about this is working class artists from the London in the UK, and elsewhere, and we're putting on a show come along, and we had loads of great guests. Jeremy Corbyn was our VIP guest who came along that night. Yeah, it was very surprising. I nearly fainted when I saw him because he was going because we had several well known artists and things, and it went amazingly well, I think the private view, we had almost been nearly 300 people come along. It was crazy. And it was video all week. And we thought, Well, that went so well. Let's do it again next year. That wasn't stressful enough. Let's do it again. So we did it last year. And that was at a church in Bethnal Green, again, which we got for free, very kind of them to do that. And we did a similar sort of thing, just you know, there's no theme it doesn't have, there's a point for both of them, it doesn't have to be worried about being working class. And that was a very specific thing I wanted to say. It can be it's worked by working class artists not worrying about being working class, because, you know, people have to say what they want to say. Yeah. And again, it was very went very successfully. There was more people working at this time, so I didn't have to give up too much sleep to organise it, you know, and it was highly reviewed when the White Pube, were very appreciative of it and spoke very highly of it, and got a lot of footfall was really exciting. I think I'm pretty sure Jake Chapman was a visitor.

**Christoph** 18:33

Pretty, pretty sure.

**Christoph** 18:34

Well, I wasn't... So he said he was gonna go so he may have gone when I wasn't there.

**Christoph** 19:12

I thought you meant like saw someone from a distance!

**Christoph** 21:17

I always say that Banksy goes to the exhibitions, because I invite him to every exhibition I do. But I don't know what he looks like. So I just, yeah, exactly. So yeah, they're really lovely events. And they're really wholesome. And it's great fun to work with a bunch of people who have a similar understanding and a similar background, and who want to achieve a similar thing. And, and it's all done with zero budget. So if there's any money spent, it's our money. And it's things like, you know, if we want some leaflets printed, some will say, I'll go and do that this is how much gonna cost and everyone gives them a quid or something or five quid or whatever it is, you know. So it's completely a zero budget. But I think that it shows like, when you have this sort of bringing together of similar people with a similar goal, you can do some really amazing things, you know, and achieve a lot.

**Benji Jeffrey** 22:04

Is there anything else you want to share about that kind of joy?

**Melanie** 22:07

Definitely, I think the meetup that we have, I think they're quite joyful in some ways, because it's like, actually meeting people in real life that have similar experiences. And like, yeah, just forming kind of group of solidarity. I think that's quite joyful.

**Benji Jeffrey** 22:22

Yeah, for sure.

**Christoph** 22:23

And the meetups, we don't spend an awful lot of time talking about being working class a bit. If someone wants to talk about something, or I mean, there is a meet up, like three years ago, the whole idea was come along and just have a moan. That was, you know, a moment away from from other ears, you know, you can say what you like, but most of time, we're just chatting, we're just getting to know each other, you know, making friends essentially, you know, oftentimes, there'll be people there who, you know, don't would never interact because they're on courses on different campuses, or different parts of the campus. And you're just hanging out with like minded people, people with similar backgrounds who are also interested in art, have a beer, or coffee or coca cola or whatever you want. And just make some friends. That's really nice.

**Benji Jeffrey** 23:02

And who?.. I mean, obviously, we can't go through everyone. But are there any kind of people in this group that you would want to like, share what they're up to? Or anything of note?

**Melanie** 23:11

Yeah. Did you want to go? And so Jacob Talkowski has done really well, recently. Um, he has, I think he graduated two years ago. And he's doing lots of amazing like sculpture, exhibitions and his work, and Zofia as well. And she's a jewellery designer who works with kind of electronic pieces like LCD screens and then uses recycled silver to make jewellery but also now sculptures.

**Christoph** 23:40

I've got a funny story about Jacob's artwork.

**Melanie** 23:42

Okay.

**Christoph** 23:43

So in the first exhibition, which was called Pure class, by the way, both of them were called Pure class. I was sleeping in the gallery in the in the evening. So because that exhibition, we had so few members that we didn't have enough people to individually. So I said, right, I'm gonna take a week off work. And I slept in the gallery every night, which was one of the weirdest experiences I've ever had. But um, Jacob's artwork was a load of, like, take-away polystyrene boxes stacked in this really incredibly beautiful sculpture. But they kept bloody falling over in the middle of the night and waking me up and in a big hall, it's like a grenade going off. The first time it happened, it scared the hell out of me. And he came in the next day. And I said, Jacob I'm going to knock your bloody sculpture over if you do that, again. I'm not been woken up at three o'clock in the morning again. And he still uses them.

**Benji Jeffrey** 24:35

That work was great as well. Because also you had the collective on the platform for the degree show this year. Yeah, as well. There were collections that were on there, bringing, bringing people from the collective together, right. Yes. That were curated by yourself.

**Christoph** 24:50

Me and Sarah, who's the former chair. Yeah. And we kind of went through our members picked a couple of people that we thought would fit whatever brief we'd been given by the uni.

**Benji Jeffrey** 25:01

So if people are interested in that if you go on RCA2022, or RCA2023, and look in the collections for the working class collective, you'll see a really nice kind of curation of those works.

**Christoph** 25:11

Yeah. And Sarah made all of us sound very intelligent. I would always ask her to do the writing, because she's better, better at than I am.

**Benji Jeffrey** 25:20

And who is because you've now left, Christoph

**Christoph** 25:22

I have.

**Benji Jeffrey** 25:23

And so there are new people running the collective. Is that correct?

**Christoph** 25:25

Yes, Mel.

**Benji Jeffrey** 25:26

Yeah. Oh, you're in charge. I'm so sorry. I didn't realise!

**Christoph** 25:29

Yeah she's the boss now.

**Benji Jeffrey** 25:30

You're the president, are you?

**Melanie** 25:31

I'm the Interim Chair, I think they call it. Yeah. And but because I potentially leaving in April, we still need to find somebody to be the Chair Chair.

**Benji Jeffrey** 25:47

And how does - so you mentioned that you've met up with other people from the database? Yeah. And there's also, isn't there something called a WANK? Have I imagined that the Working Artists Network Collective? That exists doesn't it?

**Christoph** 26:03

Something like that. Yeah. Let's say is that yeah.

**Benji Jeffrey** 26:06

Beyond the RCA, you know, you're obviously doing things that are outward facing and Christoph, you know, you're still kind of involved in the collective even though you've graduated, how is that working? Is it kind of building and growing?

**Christoph** 26:17

I mean, well, mainly, Mel has been putting so much work into it. It's amazing. Doing stuff that I promised I was going to do regularly every week, she actually does regularly every week. And it's gone exploded since I've left even but yeah, I'm still involved. Because it was my baby for three years, you know, so and I know a lot about like, sort of the dynamics and how to run it and who knows what and who to speak to. So I'm, I'm happy to just be around and support. But Mel does a lot of the heavy lifting now. But I couldn't seem to keep getting all the all the praise and glory, though.

**Benji Jeffrey** 26:49

This is a public announcement that Mel should get the glory.

**Melanie** 26:52

No I think it's just like building momentum. I think - I think you started it three years ago. And it's just grown and grown and grown. And I just happen to step in when it's like building more and more.

**Benji Jeffrey** 27:06

Classic.

**Melanie** 27:09

Imposter syndrome.

**Benji Jeffrey** 27:12

So if anyone is interested in thinking through kind of like being working class within an artistic environment, have you got any kind of recommendations for galleries or writers or TV shows or anything that you think it'd be worth looking at?

**Christoph** 27:25

Yeah, so talking about imposter syndrome. There's a really great Guardian article by Natalie Ola called something like her. 'Imposter syndrome is a pseudo medical term for a class issue'. I think something if you Google that they'll probably come up. And that's a really, really interesting read. I think the title makes it pretty clear what the argument is. But I recommend that Owen Jones wrote a great book called Chavs, which is a bit dated, because it came out 10 odd years ago, but that was really, really sort of influential when I read it. And I recommend, I like David Graeber, if you heard of him know, he's like a anthropological philosopher, but he writes very funny essays and books and things. And I'm reading a book by him called Bullshit Jobs, which is about the phenomenon of like jobs, which people do but think, are bullshit, and totally pointless. But they seem to exist, like everywhere. And that's very interesting. And interestingly, as a service worker, he said that people who work in pubs and restaurants and things like that very rarely think of themselves as working in a bullshit job is normally what we'd normally consider like middle class jobs, office jobs, and law and banking and things like that stuff. The stuff that seems incredibly important.

**Benji Jeffrey** 28:37

Because everyone needs a drink, right? It's a really important service!

**Christoph** 28:42

Also, he's got a really beautiful, not too long essay called 'What's the point of we can't have fun'. That is basically breaking down this sort of idea, this sort of capitalist idea that to be idle, to have fun is a waste of time, and is lazy. And he kind of sort of suggests that the action of play is an evolutionary trait is not bone idleness. You know, for example, he talks about how worms when they eat enough, they'll dance, because they have enough calories to survive the day. So they play they entertain themselves. You know, I think it's really beautiful. And it's more than just that, but I'd definitely recommend that essay. It's, it's lovely. I've read it several times.

**Benji Jeffrey** 29:25

Sounds brilliant. What about you Mel?

**Melanie** 29:26

Well, I just wanted to say a little bit about resources. So I think the Working Class Creative Database, as you said, is really amazing in terms of not only showing your own work, but in terms of seeing other artists that are working across different sectors and different universities and different jobs. And also, you mentioned White Pube. Earlier, I think they're really good for like the funding library and I think they're doing a lot for like demystifying and democratising who gets funding as well. So that's really important, like moving on past university as well.

**Benji Jeffrey** 29:56

And that fund - I looked at the funding library the other day, it's wild now are like it's so organised and so expansive compared to the last time I looked at it. It's incredible.

**Melanie** 30:05

One of my friends actually used it for a PhD funding application that she then got.

**Benji Jeffrey** 30:10

Oh, wow, amazing. So successful as well.

**Melanie** 30:12

Successful. Yeah.

**Benji Jeffrey** 30:14

Amazing.

**Christoph** 30:15

Also, people can ask us if they want to, if anyone's got any questions, even if they're not at the RCA or studying at all, they can send us a message on Instagram or whatever and we will reply with, you know, the best we can and what is that Instagram handle? It is @RCAWCC.

**Benji Jeffrey** 30:32

@RCAWCC. Yeah, great.

**Christoph** 30:34

Same on Twitter as well, or X or whatever it's called.

**Benji Jeffrey** 30:37

Well that feels like an appropriate moment to wrap this up. Thank you so much for today. Thanks, Christoph, thank you, Melanie!

**Melanie** 30:42

Thank you!

**Benji Jeffrey** 30:44

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