Transcript of “Katie Lock interviews Prism Arts Trustee Vincent Walden”

*Please note: This interview was transcribed using software and may not be 100% accurate.*

Katie

Welcome to this trustee interview. Welcome, Vinnie. Thank you. Yes, I'm Katie and I work at Prism Arts as a visual arts lead artist and just give us a line about yourself please actually.

Vincent

I'm Vincent. I am a trustee for Prism Arts. And I've been recently getting involved with lots of sessions with the participant artists. Prism Arts, Also longtime friend of Katie's.

Katie

Dan. So it's trustee week. So this is why we're doing this Just to go check it out. Check how good it has been a trustee. Good before anything. What is a trustee and was a trustee for you.

Vincent

Okay, So? Well, I've only been in the trustee role for just over a year now, So my understanding of a trustee is a volunteer that looks out for the best interests of a charity. Because legally a charity has to have a board of trustees, doesn't it to make sure that it's steering the right way. But for me, a trustee, at least a position in Prism art is being able to represent people in the arts community that don't usually have the same ways of promoting themselves as we do primarily people with learning disabilities and difficulties.

Katie

That's the one, and autism, bang on. Let's go back into the time back machine. Okay. When and why did you become a trustee?

Vincent

Okay, so it was 2021 it was early October. And a friend of mine shared a post on social media, asking for people to apply to be trustees for Prism marts. And having known Katie for a long period of time And having seen her work with the charity and having done some workshops in the past, I already knew a bit of a background of the space and what the charity did. So I applied. Although I fell Underqualified, I felt as if, like, I'm new in business. I haven't worked for myself for that long. I'm not that old. What do I know about supporting a charity? What do I know about upholding the values of a charity that a lot of people are dependent on?

Vincent

But I had my first interview to be inducted into the charity when my son was four days old in 2021. I was in the bed next to my wife and it was asleep on me, and I was like, I think my wife had just fallen asleep. He was sort of asleep. And I was sort of like, I'm not going to come on camera for the obvious reason that I'm in bed. But I do have a good excuse. So it's just about take over to a year of me being a trusted wow.

Katie

Yeah, that's lovely. How you found over that year, what does the role involve?

Vincent

So when I initially took it, I expected it to be a lot more bureaucratic than it is. I was expecting lots of meetings with Hey, can you sign off on this? Can you sign off on that? Which it has been in some places when we've gone for funding from places like the British Arts Council? There has been plans put in place by the team that are employed by Prism Arts, and I've had to look through them and say, Yes, I agree with what you're saying. I think that this decision is the right decision for the charity, in my opinion, as a trustee. But what I have found, which I didn't expect, is I've been able to create a better connection with the participant artist, and I'm becoming a bit of a recognised person in the charity, which is very fulfilling for me.

Katie

Yeah, yeah, I mean, I think maybe now is the time to discuss our recent branding projects that we did a little creative collaboration. Yeah,

Vincent

I think that's a good point to kick off. So Katie operates a session with the artists, which is called Studio Arts, which is one arm of Prism arts, isn't it? Yes,

Katie

it's a sort of lead visual arts strand that looks at a lot of our visual communications side of things.

Vincent

And what's been happening with this has been producing a lot of work and a lot of work that would be suitable to be sold. But there was no visual. Brand has no identity. To connect them all together was I feel

Katie

like there's an identity within the group. It was just putting it into some form to some communication.

Vincent

So what we did is, as I worked professionally as a graphic designer self employed, we ran a series of workshops to get assets, textures, shapes, colours, things like that from the artists to build a branding platform for them that encapsulates them and has assets of each person in there. How have

Katie

you found that professionally for you, besides just being a trustee. But as a designer, how have you found that? Actually,

Vincent

as in working on that project?

Katie

Yeah,

Vincent

you know what? It was a breath of fresh air for a designer because I'm usually meeting with somebody who I don't know. I'm going to make up an example. Somebody that has business. Perhaps they sell sausages and they want to sell more sausages. So they've come to me and said, Right, I've got some sausage is great, but I need you to make them look better so I can sell more of them And I say, That's a good challenge. I'd love to do that, but with Prism Arts, it's a collective of artists that need visual representation and value added to their work by selling it in a marketplace. So having that hands on experience, where I'm not just working with one client, but a sector of clients, eight different people at any one time that all have different needs that needs supporting by the members of Prism marks. It's a massive challenge, and it's really interesting to find ways that even though I've been a designer for nearly 10 years now been working for myself for over two years. That project was unlike anything I've done before, but felt successful. It felt easy to achieve. And I think that's a big testament to the work that the artist produced.

Katie

Yeah, it's absolutely stunning. And I think I'd say to all trustees, you know, their possible future trustees who already there is that it's an open door. Everybody is always welcome to come hang out with our guys, actually see firsthand like you've done what we do, really, Just just getting in amongst, you know, pick up a pen, do some sketching without guys, just just get involved, really. And you're always welcome. And I think without a lot, you know, the more the better. Really, the more you sort of pop in and be like, Hey, how's it going? All of that, the better. It's lovely,

Vincent

I think. I think that's one thing that I would say to anybody that's going to be a trustee. Potentially, if you'd like to apply to be a trustee for Prism Mart. But also just a trustee in general, is that you can often feel that because you're part of the the bureaucratic side of the charity that you don't have any place in the physical part of the charity. You don't have any place coming and working with the artists. But I think if you've taken the initiative to to want to represent that community, then it's definitely worthwhile taking yourself into that environment. Take yourself out of the comfort zone and going spending a session with them.

Katie

Get out that comfort zone. It's good crack. It's good crack. Um, what kind of trustees are we looking to recruit to our board? The questions on my little list here. You You Do you feel equipped to answer that?

Vincent

I don't. But why don't I take a stab at it and you can let me know how far away I am? I think, actually, no, I'll rephrase that. I'm going to tell you what I think the board needs what the trustees should

Katie

tell me when you tell

Vincent

me from a physical sense what the charity needs. Tell

Katie

me what you want, What you really, really want. I'll tell

Vincent

you what I want. What I really, really want. Zig ahh zig ahh? Yeah. So I don't want any of those. So can you take the zig ah zig ah out of my basket, please?

Katie

Oh, no. You're getting check out. I'm going to send you an email. It's still in your basket. Don't forget, I haven't

Vincent

even given you my email yet. This is GDPR nightmare

Katie

I'm going to send you a newsletter, every week!

Vincent

please. Every week, every week, the same products reduced by 5%. Yeah. So now that we've dealt with that law breaking, I think a trustee for Prism Arts should be somebody first and foremost interested in the arts. Whether that's visual communication, whether that's fear to whether that's singing, whether that's anything that takes creative OOF!

Katie

OOF? come from your boots, that!

Vincent

That was my creative sound. Anybody that has that passion to create things creatively that was quite creative,

Katie

just creative really.

Vincent

I think there should be less of an emphasis of having dealt with charities before. I think there should be more of an emphasis on passion to support the charity because when I went in to apply, there were lots of questions, like, Have you done this before? Have you done that before? If you had experience and I just honestly said no, but I'm passionate about it, and I'm keen to produce. You know, the best I can for the people I care about in this charity. So that would be step number one, somebody that is passionate about the creative in general step number to somebody that is organised and is free with their time. Now, I'm at the absolute limit of what I can do in my own time in my personal practise. And sometimes things that I do for the charity do have to take a back seat. Because, of course, everybody has to earn a living.

Katie

Mmm.

Vincent

But if you're already up against the wall, dead busy, maybe think about finding a way to scale that back. If you are very keen about being a trustee because it needs, it needs time to focus on. I don't think you can just dip into one or two zoom meetings a year and feel effective as a trustee. I think you need to really get yourself involved.

Katie

I think that's a really good point. And I think it's good to be honest about that sort of thing and and not give people a sense of false expectations of low. Yeah, just rock up once a year you be involved, I think. But I think you always get you get more from what you give if that makes sense, I don't know if that's the exact saying

Vincent

I get what you mean. And I sometimes I feel bad. There’s a great administrator in the office called Steve who is absolutely fantastic. But sometimes the things that he needs from me, although they only take 10 minutes, they sit in my inbox for weeks and he'll send me an email and just says, Could you sort this I'm like, Yeah, I'm really sorry, Steve. I should have done that weeks ago. But I think I think there's that understanding there, isn't there.

Katie

But yeah, I think that lived experiences are really interesting again. If you're creative and you have lived experience of disability or your divergence of any kind were super interested from hearing from you because we're really passionate about making our board of trustees is diverse and reflective of what we do, what we stand for as much as possible so we can accommodate whatever needs and support that you need. If you'd like to be involved but you're thinking, Oh, maybe, you know, if you want things as audio instead of written down all of that. We're here for your baby.

Vincent

You can just use that little snippet every time somebody needs help, you can get a look. We're here for your baby!

Katie

We’re here for your baby. It's diverging. Talk about divergence. This is it. We're going. So I think that's that's quite a lot of things off my list. There's anything else that you'd like to add before I do our sign off?

Vincent

So I think I would like to add that I found a lot of empowerment from being involved in Chris Smart. I think selfishly for me as a creative, it's a great thing for me to have on a resume. Now I know some people might be looking at thinking that could be really good for me, business wise. And unfortunately, if you look at it just that way, it actually is. I have it on my linked in. I proudly say that I am a trustee supporting arts with the visibility for disability difficulties, and I think if you if you really want to be involved in something like this. This can be a great opportunity to do it. You're not gonna get paid and that's the best part of it.

Katie

That’s the snippet there!

Vincent

It sounds weird. I get that. But I think if I was being paid for my time, I wouldn't appreciate as much because I know that I'm giving my time freely without cost to empower another person. I'm not doing it because I have been getting 50 quid or something like I'm doing it because what the charity stands for and what they're achieving is really important to me. And I think that's one of the best things of. It's kind of weird to say because I'm in this industry where people are being underpaid or not paid all the time and I'm purposely trying my hardest to make sure everyone around me is paid fairly and accurately, and I'm saying Hey, because you don't get paid But I think there's a real power to saying No, you can have my time free of charge because it's a selfless act and then it's great for promotion isn't shouting about it. I love having something to say. Oh, I was involved in this or I obviously this or I helped bring this to.

Katie

Actually, it does look really good and just to be able to embrace that side. And it should be a two-way street for both us and the trustees. We don't want to be like this big energy and time suck. We just we want to be able to make sure it's beneficial for you in both mentally and emotionally, but as well as the business as you say, it's going to go check it out. And the trustee, this really cool arts organisation, check it out.

Vincent

I think the last thing I would say before I sign off on the back of this project that we created the Studio Arts group creating branding one of the participants has gone forward with a local museum and said, Yes, I can create some branding and I know Vincent will help me support support me to do that, and that is really nice. And he didn't have to come to me to ask. He didn't have to. He didn't have to question his own ability. He just thought, That's something I'd like to do. There's something I know I can do, and I know it's something that the charity, and the trustees can support me to do so. He just said, Yes, I'll do it And the work I've got from him has been great. He's listened to feedback. It's really nice seeing, you know, as I'm somebody that's looking to transition a little bit more to teaching. Perhaps that's why I've become a trustee. Yes, just at the time it seemed like the right thing to do. It's really nice to see that positive feedback loop of help person create visual identity for themselves. See them want to provide that to the next person because that's how I got into design.

Katie

Yeah. Oh, that's beautiful. That's really nice. That's a really nice close to do. Lovely. Well, if a trustee sounds interesting to you, this is like the details

Vincent

You should do, like give us

Katie

some bad music. If a trustee sounds interesting to you, please visit www.prismarts.org.uk/trustee where you can find a role description trustee, Welcome pack and information on how to apply Follow Prism Arts on Facebook Instagram Twitter. This is really this is like medicine.

Vincent

That started very Tony Blackburn of you

Katie

Tony Blackburn!

Vincent

Welcome to Prism…

Katie

We're going to power through, and we've got the universal handle.

Vincent

The universal handle?

Katie

It’s a universal handle, which I love, @peopleatprism to follow our work. And would you like to shout out anything for this?

Vincent

I am just blown away by the universal handle, like a door handle can attach to any door

Katie

It’s magic. It's a skip and chip magic handle. It's not magic. It's

Vincent

no, I've got nothing I want to share. I don't think this is the platform for me to share but I think it's the right platform to say that... Follow Studio Walden on Instagram

Katie

Hey, Universal Handle the Universal Studio Walden.

Vincent

No, it's not even like Facebook. I had to use two Ns and

Katie

shocking. Shocking. Not just not as good as @peopleatprism

Vincent

bloody Henry David Thoreau. That's his. You know, he wrote a book called Walden and everybody Wants

Katie

Everybody Wants a Slice of the Walden, including Prism Arts. Well, I'm that Thank you for listening. There we go.